

Thucydides on the two sides (1.18-9):

Ten years afterwards the barbarian returned with the armada for the subjugation of Hellas. In the face of this great danger the command of the confederate Hellenes was assumed by the Lacedaemonians in virtue of their superior power; and the Athenians having made up their minds to abandon their city, broke up their homes, threw themselves into their ships, and became a naval people. This coalition, after repulsing the barbarian, soon afterwards split into two sections, which included the Hellenes who had revolted from the king, as well as those who had aided him in the war. At the head of the one stood Athens, at the head of the other Lacedaemon, one the first naval, the other the first military power in Hellas. [3] For a short time the league held together, till the Lacedaemonians and Athenians quarrelled, and made war upon each other with their allies, a duel into which all the Hellenes sooner or later were drawn, though some might at first remain neutral. So that the whole period from the Median war to this, with some peaceful intervals, was spent by each power in war, either with its rival, or with its own revolted allies, and consequently afforded them constant practice in military matters, and that experience which is learnt in the school of danger. The policy of Lacedaemon was not to exact tribute from her allies, but merely to secure their subservience to her interests by establishing oligarchies among them; Athens, on the contrary, had by degrees deprived hers of their ships, and imposed instead contributions in money on all except Chios and Lesbos. Both found their resources for this war separately to exceed the sum of their strength when the alliance flourished intact.

Excerpt from the speech of the Corinthians to the Athenians on the Corcyraean alliance (Thuc. 1.40):

[4] And yet you have the best possible right to be neutral, or failing this, you should on the contrary join us against them. Corinth is at least in treaty with you; with Corcyra you were never even in truce. But do not lay down the principle that defection is to be patronized. [5] Did we on the defection of the Samians record our vote against you, when the rest of the Peloponnesian powers were equally divided on the question whether they should assist them? No, we told them to their face that every power has a right to punish its own allies. [6] Why, if you make it your policy to receive and assist all offenders, you will find that just as many of your dependencies will come over to us, and the principle that you establish will press less heavily on us than on yourselves.

Corinth attacks Corcyra (Thuc. 1.46):

Meanwhile the Corinthians completed their preparations, and sailed for Corcyra with a hundred and fifty ships. Of these Elis furnished ten, Megara twelve, Leucas ten, Ambracia twenty-seven, Anactorium one, and Corinth herself ninety. [2] Each of these contingents had its own admiral, the Corinthian being under the command of Xenoclides, son of Euthycles, with four colleagues. [3] Sailing from Leucas, they made land at the part of the continent opposite Corcyra.

Corinth, Corcyra and Anactorium (Thuc. 1.55):

The Corinthians on the voyage home took Anactorium, which stands at the mouth of the Ambracian gulf. The place was taken by treachery, being common ground to the Corcyraeans and Corinthians. After establishing Corinthian settlers there, they retired home.

Corinth, Potidaea and Macedon (Thuc. 1.56):

Almost immediately after this, fresh differences arose between the Athenians and Peloponnesians, and contributed their share to the war. [2] Corinth was forming schemes for retaliation, and Athens suspected her hostility. The Potidaeans, who inhabit the isthmus of Pallene, being a Corinthian

colony, but tributary allies of Athens, were ordered to raze the wall looking towards Pallene, to give hostages, to dismiss the Corinthian magistrates, and in future not to receive the persons sent from Corinth annually to succeed them. It was feared that they might be persuaded by Perdiccas and the Corinthians to revolt, and might draw the rest of the allies in the direction of Thrace to revolt with them.

Macedon (Thuc. 1.57):

Not only was Corinth at length openly hostile, but Perdiccas, son of Alexander, king of the Macedonians, had from an old friend and ally been made an enemy. [3] He had been made an enemy by the Athenians entering into alliance with his brother Philip and Derdas, who were in league against him. [4] In his alarm he had sent to Lacedaemon to try and involve the Athenians in a war with the Peloponnesians, and was endeavoring to win over Corinth in order to bring about the revolt of Potidaea. [5] He also made overtures to the Chalcidians in the direction of Thrace, and to the Bottiaeans, to persuade them to join in the revolt; for he thought that if these places on the border could be made his allies, it would be easier to carry on the war with their co-operation. [6] Alive to all this, and wishing to anticipate the revolt of the cities, the Athenians acted as follows.

A private enterprise? (Thuc.1.66):

The Athenians and Peloponnesians had these antecedent grounds of complaint against each other: the complaint of Corinth was that her colony of Potidaea, and Corinthian and Peloponnesian citizens within it, were being besieged; that of Athens against the Peloponnesians that they had incited a town of hers, a member of her alliance and a contributor to her revenue, to revolt, and had come and were openly fighting against her on the side of the Potidaeans. For all this, war had not yet broken out: there was still truce for a while; for this was a private enterprise on the part of Corinth.

Speech of the Corinthians to the Spartans (Thuc. 1.68):

Lacedaemonians! the confidence which you feel in your constitution and social order, inclines you to receive any reflections of ours on other powers with a certain skepticism. Hence springs your moderation, but hence also the rather limited knowledge which you betray in dealing with foreign politics. [2] Time after time was our voice raised to warn you of the blows about to be dealt us by Athens, and time after time, instead of taking the trouble to ascertain the worth of our communications, you contented yourselves with suspecting the speakers of being inspired by private interest. And so, instead of calling these allies together before the blow fell, you have delayed to do so till we are smarting under it; allies among whom we have not the worst title to speak, as having the greatest complaints to make, complaints of Athenian outrage and Lacedaemonian neglect. [3] Now if these assaults on the rights of Hellas had been made in the dark you might be unacquainted with the facts, and it would be our duty to enlighten you.

Speech of the Athenians to the Spartans (Thuc. 1.76):

You, at all events, Lacedaemonians, have used your supremacy to settle the states in Peloponnese as is agreeable to you. And if at the period of which we were speaking you had persevered to the end of the matter, and had incurred hatred in your command, we are sure that you would have made yourselves just as galling to the allies, and would have been forced to choose between a strong government and danger to yourselves. [2] It follows that it was not a very wonderful action, or contrary to the common practice of mankind, if we did accept an empire that was offered to us, and refused to give it up under the pressure of three of the strongest motives, fear, honor, and interest.

And it was not we who set the example, for it has always been the law that the weaker should be subject to the stronger.

The Spartan decision...sort of... (Thuc.1.79):

Such were the words of the Athenians. After the Lacedaemonians had heard the complaints of the allies against the Athenians, and the observations of the latter, they made all withdraw, and consulted by themselves on the question before them. [2] The opinions of the majority all led to the same conclusion; the Athenians were open aggressors, and war must be declared at once.

King Archidamus to the Spartans (Thuc. 1.80-85):

I have not lived so long, Lacedaemonians, without having had the experience of many wars, and I see those among you of the same age as myself, who will not fall into the common misfortune of longing for war from inexperience or from a belief in its advantage and its safety. [2] This, the war on which you are now debating, would be one of the greatest magnitude, on a sober consideration of the matter. [3] In a struggle with Peloponnesians and neighbors our strength is of the same character, and it is possible to move swiftly on the different points. But a struggle with a people who live in a distant land, who have also an extraordinary familiarity with the sea, and who are in the highest state of preparation in every other department; with wealth private and public, with ships, and horses, and heavy infantry, and a population such as no one other Hellenic place can equal, and lastly a number of tributary allies—what can justify us in rashly beginning such a struggle? wherein is our trust that we should rush on it unprepared? [4] Is it in our ships? There we are inferior; while if we are to practise and become a match for them, time must intervene. Is it in our money? There we have a far greater deficiency. We neither have it in our treasury, nor are we ready to contribute it from our private funds. 81. Confidence might possibly be felt in our superiority in heavy infantry and population, which will enable us to invade and devastate their lands. [2] But the Athenians have plenty of other land in their empire, and can import what they want by sea. [3] Again, if we are to attempt an insurrection of their allies, these will have to be supported with a fleet, most of them being islanders. [4] What then is to be our war? For unless we can either beat them at sea, or deprive them of the revenues which feed their navy, we shall meet with little but disaster. [5] Meanwhile our honor will be pledged to keeping on, particularly if it be the opinion that we began the quarrel. [6] For let us never be elated by the fatal hope of the war being quickly ended by the devastation of their lands. I fear rather that we may leave it as a legacy to our children; so improbable is it that the Athenian spirit will be the slave of their land, or Athenian experience be cowed by war. 82. Not that I would bid you be so unfeeling as to suffer them to injure your allies, and to refrain from unmasking their intrigues; but I do bid you not to take up arms at once, but to send and remonstrate with them in a tone not too suggestive of war, nor again too suggestive of submission, and to employ the interval in perfecting our own preparations. The means will be, first, the acquisition of allies, Hellenic or barbarian it matters not, so long as they are an accession to our strength naval or pecuniary—I say Hellenic or barbarian, because the odium of such an accession to all who like us are the objects of the designs of the Athenians is taken away by the law of self-preservation—and secondly the development of our home resources. [2] If they listen to our embassy, so much the better; but if not, after the lapse of two or three years our position will have become materially strengthened, and we can then attack them if we think proper. [3] Perhaps by that time the sight of our preparations, backed by language equally significant, will have disposed them to submission, while their land is still untouched, and while their counsels may be directed to the retention of advantages as yet undestroyed. [4] For the only light in which you can view their land is that of a hostage in your hands, a hostage the more valuable the better it is cultivated. This you ought to spare as long as possible, and not make them desperate, and so increase the difficulty

of dealing with them. [5] For if while still unprepared, hurried away by the complaints of our allies, we are induced to lay it waste, have a care that we do not bring deep disgrace and deep perplexity upon Peloponnese. [6] Complaints, whether of communities or individuals, it is possible to adjust; but war undertaken by a coalition for sectional interests, whose progress there is no means of foreseeing, does not easily admit of creditable settlement. 83. And none need think it cowardice for a number of confederates to pause before they attack a single city. [2] The Athenians have allies as numerous as our own, and allies that pay tribute, and war is a matter not so much of arms as of money, which makes arms of use. And this is more than ever true in a struggle between a continental and a maritime power. [3] First, then, let us provide money, and not allow ourselves to be carried away by the talk of our allies before we have done so: as we shall have the largest share of responsibility for the consequences be they good or bad, we have also a right to a tranquil inquiry respecting them. 84. And the slowness and procrastination, the parts of our character that are most assailed by their criticism, need not make you blush. If we undertake the war without preparation, we should by hastening its commencement only delay its conclusion: further, a free and a famous city has through all time been ours. [2] The quality which they condemn is really nothing but a wise moderation; thanks to its possession, we alone do not become insolent in success and give way less than others in misfortune; we are not carried away by the pleasure of hearing ourselves cheered on to risks which our judgment condemns; nor, if annoyed, are we any the more convinced by attempts to exasperate us by accusation. [3] We are both warlike and wise, and it is our sense of order that makes us so. We are warlike, because self-control contains honor as a chief constituent, and honor bravery. And we are wise, because we are educated with too little learning to despise the laws, and with too severe a self-control to disobey them, and are brought up not to be too knowing in useless matters,—such as the knowledge which can give a specious criticism of an enemy's plans in theory, but fails to assail them with equal success in practice,—but are taught to consider that the schemes of our enemies are not dissimilar to our own, and that the freaks of chance are not determinable by calculation. [4] In practice we always base our preparations against an enemy on the assumption that his plans are good; indeed, it is right to rest our hopes not on a belief in his blunders, but on the soundness of our provisions. Nor ought we to believe that there is much difference between man and man, but to think that the superiority lies with him who is reared in the severest school. 85. These practices, then, which our ancestors have delivered to us, and by whose maintenance we have always profited, must not be given up. And we must not be hurried into deciding in a day's brief space a question which concerns many lives and fortunes and many cities, and in which honor is deeply involved,—but we must decide calmly. This our strength peculiarly enables us to do. [2] As for the Athenians, send to them on the matter of Potidaea, send on the matter of the alleged wrongs of the allies, particularly as they are prepared with legal satisfaction; and to proceed against one who offers arbitration as against a wrongdoer, law forbids. Meanwhile do not omit preparation for war. This decision will be the best for yourselves, the most terrible to your opponents.'

Thucydides on Spartan decisions (Thuc. 1.118):

All these actions of the Hellenes against each other and the barbarian occurred in the fifty years' interval between the retreat of Xerxes and the beginning of the present war. During this interval the Athenians succeeded in placing their empire on a firmer basis, and advanced their own home power to a very great height. The Lacedaemonians, though fully aware of it, opposed it only for a little while, but remained inactive during most of the period, being of old slow to go to war except under the pressure of necessity, and in the present instance being hampered by wars at home; until the growth of the Athenian power could be no longer ignored, and their own confederacy became the object of its encroachments. They then felt that they could endure it no longer, but that the time had come for them to throw themselves heart and soul upon the hostile power, and break it, if they

could, by commencing the present war. [3] And though the Lacedaemonians had made up their own minds on the fact of the breach of the treaty and the guilt of the Athenians, yet they sent to Delphi and inquired of the god whether it would be well with them if they went to war; and, as it is reported, received from him the answer that if they put their whole strength into the war, victory would be theirs, and the promise that he himself would be with them, whether invoked or uninvoked.

Corinthian speech to the Spartans (Thuc. 1.121):

To apply these rules to ourselves, if we are now kindling war it is under the pressure of injury, and with adequate grounds of complaint; and after we have chastised the Athenians we will in season desist. [2] We have many reasons to expect success,—first, superiority in numbers and in military experience, and secondly our general and unvarying obedience in the execution of orders. The naval strength [3] which they possess shall be raised by us from our respective antecedent resources, and from the monies at Olympia and Delphi. A loan from these enables us to seduce their foreign sailors by the offer of higher pay. For the power of Athens is more mercenary than national; while ours will not be exposed to the same risk, as its strength lies more in men than in money. [4] A single defeat at sea is in all likelihood their ruin: should they hold out, in that case there will be the more time for us to exercise ourselves in naval matters; and as soon as we have arrived at an equality in science, we need scarcely ask whether we shall be their superiors in courage. For the advantages that we have by nature they cannot acquire by education; while their superiority in science must be removed by our practice. [5] The money required for these objects shall be provided by our contributions: nothing indeed could be more monstrous than the suggestion that, while their allies never tire of contributing for their own servitude, we should refuse to spend for vengeance and self-preservation the treasure which by such refusal we shall forfeit to Athenian rapacity, and see employed for our own ruin. We have also other ways of carrying on the war, such as revolt of their allies, the surest method of depriving them of their revenues, which are the source of their strength, and establishment of fortified positions in their country, and various operations which cannot be foreseen at present. For war of all things proceeds least upon definite rules, but draws principally upon itself for contrivances to meet an emergency; and in such cases the party who faces the struggle and keeps his temper best meets with most security, and he who loses his temper about it with correspondent disaster.

Spartan actions before the declaration of war (Thuc. 1.126-7):

This interval was spent in sending embassies to Athens charged with complaints, in order to obtain as good a pretext for war as possible, in the event of her paying no attention to them. [2] The first Lacedaemonian embassy was to order the Athenians to drive out the curse of the goddess; the history of which is as follows....This, then, was the curse that the Lacedaemonians ordered them to drive out. They were actuated primarily, as they pretended, by a care for the honor of the gods; but they also knew that Pericles, son of Xanthippus, was connected with the curse on his mother's side, and they thought that his banishment would materially advance their designs on Athens [2] Not that they really hoped to succeed in procuring this; they rather thought to create a prejudice against him in the eyes of his countrymen from the feeling that the war would be partly caused by his misfortune. [3] For being the most powerful man of his time, and the leading Athenian statesman, he opposed the Lacedaemonians in everything, and would have no concessions, but ever urged the Athenians on to war.

Plataea and Thebes (Thuc. 2.2):

The thirty years' truce which was entered into after the conquest of Euboea lasted fourteen years. In the fifteenth, in the forty-eighth year of the priestess-ship of Chrysis at Argos, in the Ephorate of Aenesias at Sparta, in the last month but two of the Archonship of Pythodorus at Athens, and six months after the battle of Potidaea, just at the beginning of spring, a Theban force a little over three hundred strong, under the command of their Boeotarchs, Pythangelus, son of Phyleides, and Diemporus, son of Onetorides, about the first watch of the night, made an armed entry into Plataea, a town of Boeotia in alliance with Athens. [2] The gates were opened to them by a Plataean called Naucleides, who, with his party, had invited them in, meaning to put to death the citizens of the opposite party, bring over the city to Thebes, and thus obtain power for themselves. [3] This was arranged through Eurymachus, son of Leontiades, a person of great influence at Thebes. For Plataea had always been at variance with Thebes; and the latter, foreseeing that war was at hand, wished to surprise her old enemy in time of peace, before hostilities had actually broken out.

The beginning of the war (Thuc. 2.7):

After the affair at Plataea the treaty had been broken by an overt act, and Athens at once prepared for war, as did also Lacedaemon and her allies. They resolved to send embassies to the king and to such other of the barbarian powers as either party could look to for assistance, and tried to ally themselves with the independent states at home. [2] Lacedaemon, in addition to the existing marine, gave orders to the states that had declared for her in Italy and Sicily to build vessels up to a grand total of five hundred, the quota of each city being determined by its size, and also to provide a specified sum of money. Till these were ready they were to remain neutral and to admit single Athenian ships into their harbors. [3] Athens on her part reviewed her existing confederacy, and sent embassies to the places more immediately round Peloponnese, Corcyra, Cephallenia, Acarnania, and Zacynthus; perceiving that if these could be relied on she could carry the war all round Peloponnese.

The two sides (Thuc. 2.9):

The allies of the two belligerents were the following. [2] These were the allies of Lacedaemon: all the Peloponnesians within the Isthmus except the Argives and Achaeans, who were neutral; Pellene being the only Achaean city that first joined in the war, though her example was afterwards followed by the rest. Outside Peloponnese the Megarians, Locrians, Boeotians, Phocians, Ambraciots, Leucadians, and Anactorians. [3] Of these, ships were furnished by the Corinthians, Megarians, Sicyonians, Pellenians, Eleans, Ambraciots, and Leucadians; and cavalry by the Boeotians, Phocians, and Locrians. The other states sent infantry. This was the Lacedaemonian confederacy. [4] That of Athens comprised the Chians, Lesbians, Plateans, the Messenians in Naupactus, most of the Acarnanians, the Corcyraeans, Zacynthians, and some tributary cities in the following countries, viz., Caria upon the sea with her Dorian neighbors, Ionia, the Hellespont, the Thracian towns, the islands lying between Peloponnese and Crete towards the east, and all the Cyclades except Melos and Thera. [5] Of these, ships were furnished by Chios, Lesbos, and Corcyra, infantry and money by the rest. [6] Such were the allies of either party and their resources for the war.

The Peloponnesian Army (Thuc. 2.10):

Immediately after the affair at Plataea, Lacedaemon sent round orders to the cities in Peloponnese and the rest of her confederacy to prepare troops and the provisions requisite for a foreign campaign, in order to invade Attica. [2] The several states were ready at the time appointed and assembled at the Isthmus; the contingent of each city being two-thirds of its whole force.

Thessaly and Athens (Thuc. 2.22):

Ancient alliance brought the Thessalians to the aid of Athens; those who came being the Larisaeans, Pharsalians, Cranonians, Pyrasians, Gyrtonians, and Pheraeans. The Larisaeian commanders were Polymedes and Aristonous, two party leaders in Larisa; the Pharsalian general was Menon; each of the other cities had also its own commander.

Heraclea Trachinia (Thuc. 3.92):

About this time the Lacedaemonians founded their colony of Heraclea in Trachis, their object being the following. [2] The Malians form in all three tribes, the Paralians, the Hiereans, and the Trachinians. The last of these having suffered severely in a war with their neighbors the Oetaeans, at first intended to give themselves up to Athens; but afterwards fearing not to find in her the security that they sought, sent to Lacedaemon, having chosen Tisamenus for their ambassador. [3] In this embassy joined also the Dorians from the mother country of the Lacedaemonians, with the same request, as they themselves also suffered from the same enemy. [4] After hearing them, the Lacedaemonians determined to send out the colony, wishing to assist the Trachinians and Dorians, and also because they thought that the proposed town would lie conveniently for the purposes of the war against the Athenians. A fleet might be got ready there against Euboea, with the advantage of a short passage to the island; and the town would also be useful as a station on the road to Thrace. In short, everything made the Lacedaemonians eager to found the place.

Brasidas' campaign (Thuc. 4.78):

About the same time in the summer, Brasidas set out on his march for the Thracian places with seventeen hundred heavy infantry, and arriving at Heraclea in Trachis, from thence sent on a messenger to his friends at Pharsalus, to ask them to conduct himself and his army through the country. Accordingly there came to Melitia in Achaia Panaerus, Dorus, Hippolochidas, Torylaus, and Strophacus, the Chalcidian Proxenus, under whose escort he resumed his march, [2] being accompanied also by other Thessalians, among whom was Niconidas from Larissa, a friend of Perdiccas. It was never very easy to traverse Thessaly without an escort; and throughout all Hellas for an armed force to pass without leave through a neighbour's country, was a delicate step to take. Besides this the Thessalian people had always sympathized with the Athenians. [3] Indeed if instead of the customary close oligarchy there had been a constitutional government in Thessaly, he would never have been able to proceed; since even as it was, he was met on his march at the river Enipeus by certain of the opposite party who forbade his further progress, and complained of his making the attempt without the consent of the nation. [4] To this his escort answered that they had no intention of taking him through against their will; they were only friends in attendance on an unexpected victor. Brasidas himself added that he came as a friend to Thessaly and its inhabitants; his arms not being directed against them but against the Athenians, with whom he was at war, and that although he knew of no quarrel between the Thessalians and Lacedaemonians to prevent the two nations having access to each other's territory, he neither would nor could proceed against their wishes; he could only beg them not to stop him. [5] With this answer they went away, and he took the advice of his escort, and pushed on without halting, before a greater force might gather to prevent him. Thus in the day that he set out from Melitia he performed the whole distance to Pharsalus, and encamped on the river Apidanus; and so to Phacium, and from thence to Perrhaebia. [6] Here his Thessalian escort went back, and the Perrhaebians, who are subjects of Thessaly, set him down at Dium in the dominions of Perdiccas, a Macedonian town under Mount Olympus, looking towards Thessaly.

The Hetoimaridas Debate (Diod. Sic. 11.50):

When Dromocleides was archon in Athens, the Romans elected as consuls Marcus Fabius and Gnaeus Manlius. In this year the Lacedaemonians, now that for no good reason they had lost the command of the sea, were resentful; consequently they were incensed at the Greeks who had fallen away from them and continued to threaten them with the appropriate punishment. [2] And when a meeting of the Gerousia² was convened, they considered making war upon the Athenians for the sake of regaining the command of the sea. [3] Likewise, when the general Assembly was convened, the younger men and the majority of the others were eager to recover the leadership, believing that, if they could secure it, they would enjoy great wealth, Sparta in general would be made greater and more powerful, and the estates of its private citizens would receive a great increase of prosperity. [4] They kept calling to mind also the ancient oracle in which the god commanded them to beware lest their leadership should be a "lame" one, and the oracle, they insisted, meant nothing other than the present; for "lame" indeed their rule would be if, having two leaderships,³ they should lose one of them. [5] Since practically all the citizens had been eager for this course of action and the Gerousia was in session to consider these matters, no one entertained the hope that any man would have the temerity to suggest any other course. [6] But a member of the Gerousia, Hetoemaridas by name, who was a direct descendant of Heracles and enjoyed favour among the citizens by reason of his character, undertook to advise that they leave the Athenians with their leadership, since it was not to Sparta's interest, he declared, to lay claim to the sea. He was able to bring pertinent arguments in support of his surprising proposal, so that, against the expectation of all, he won over both the Gerousia and the people. [7] And in the end the Lacedaemonians decided that the opinion of Hetoemaridas was to their advantage and abandoned their zest for the war against the Athenians. [8] As for the Athenians, at first they expected to have a great war with the Lacedaemonians for the command of the sea, and for this reason were building additional triremes, raising a large sum of money, and dealing honourably with their allies; but when they learned of the decision of the Lacedaemonians, they were relieved of their fear of war and set about increasing the power of their city.