Review of History and Political Science
June 2015, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 12-24
ISSN: 2333-5718 (Print), 2333-5726 (Online)

Published by American Research Institute for Policy Development
DOI: 10.15640/rhps.v3n1a2
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.15640/rhps.v3n1a2

Sleepwalkers in Athens: Power, Norms, and Ambiguity in Thucydides

Kostas A. Lavdas[1]

Abstract

This paper reevaluates different readings of Thucydides, assisted by an analysis of the causes of the Peloponnesian War. The paper argues that Thucydides' own account of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War hints at a more nuanced and pluralist methodology compared to the one that has traditionally been associated with his celebrated approach to the "truest reason" of the war. Relations between the "immediate" causes and the "truest reason" why war broke out can best be understood through the prism of a particular approach to levels of analysis, one that strives to master a more abstract understanding in order to transcend and harness the richness, the complexity, even the ambiguity of actual interactions, interactions that Thucydides understood so well. But the complexity and ambiguity of actual interactions do not seem to lead to war as an inevitable outcome. In the absence of a systematic approach to the relations between levels, harnessing the sensitive understanding of actual events preceding the war manifests itself almost as a response to an *aporia*: what Thucydides implies is that – given the participants' mind-sets, preconceptions, norms, culture, and interests – a number of conditions that must be analysed at a higher level of abstraction may render a certain outcome probable.

Keywords: Thucydides, norms, power politics, decision-making, bounded rationality, international relations

1. Introduction

The tradition which has marked out Thucydides as the first systematic exponent of the role of power politics in international relations should not lead us to erect an impassable barrier between this approach to international interaction and approaches that wish to explore other dimensions and parameters. This becomes evident if we consider the fact that Thucydides himself did not appear interested in erecting such barriers. The roles of bounded rationality, of norms and normative change, and of irrational behaviour are crucial in the monumental *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The pursuit of power by city-states, the competing entities of the international system of the ancient world, provides an element of rationality to realist and neo-realist readers. Echoing the views of many, Robert Gilpin (1984: 291) argued that Thucydides is "the first scientific student of international politics". As Joseph Nye has suggested, Gilpin's own work "represents an updating of Thucydides' classical Realist theory of hegemonic transition, which has disappeared in Waltz's nearly static neorealist world. Like Thucydides, Gilpin focuses on the ways in which uneven growth leads to cycles of rising and declining hegemonic states and the onset of great systemic wars" (Nye 1988: 245). Then again, as scholars have recognized for some time, norms also play important roles in the *History.* But unlike the pursuit of power, normative behaviour changes over time. This certainly applies to international norms.

How do international norms change? Slavery now appears abhorrent, while aggression across recognized borders has become unacceptable. Thucydides had shown – among so many other things – that norms of cooperation that count ultimately are neither religious nor based primarily on custom and tradition.

[1]The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 160 Packard Avenue, Medford, MA 02155, USA. Phone: 617-6274166 / 617-4871326, Email: kostas.lavdas@tufts.edu

In the overall framework of the approaches to the evolution of norms, in which ideas as well as actors play key roles at different stages (Florini 1996: 363-389), Thucydides has his own place and contribution.

The main point of this paper is that Thucydides' own account of the outbreak of the great war hints at a more nuanced and pluralistic methodology compared to the one that has traditionally been associated with his celebrated, "scientific" approach to the "truest reason" ("*ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν*", 1.23) of the war. Although the significance of Thucydides in the systematic study of international relations is immense, the nature of his contribution may be much more complex. On a secondary level, the present analysis lends support to approaches that question the views on the static nature of state interests. Views on the static nature of state interests are implausible, we would argue, with reference (not just to recent constructivist analyses, but even) to Thucydides' own work. We read Thucydides' *History* as a great narrative built around a number of thematic patterns. In attempting to reconstruct the dense Thucydidean narrative, we focus on three such patterns. First, the dynamics of contestation between and amongst what Thucydides calls *homoiotropoi* (similar) powers and *diaforoi* (different) powers. Second, we focus on the process of disentangling normativity from the customary and religious norms prevailing among Greek *poleis* before the Peloponnesian War. In this context, this paper aims to cast light on what we will call *the emancipation of ruthlessness*; a normative break that came as an early result of the aforementioned disentanglement, leading to grim consequences for those involved. Athenian imperialism became the main vehicle for that emancipation. Finally, the paper turns to the great historian's account of the outbreak of the war, aiming to offer a different nuance in a densely populated literature often marked by rigor and erudition as well as diversity and conflicting interpretations.[2]

2. Norms, Decisions, and Ambiguity

In the seventh year of the war, the Spartans – having suffered a defeat at Pylos and agreed upon an armistice – approach Athens in order to settle the conflict with a treaty ending the war in mutually acceptable terms (4.16 – 4.23). Sparta's envoys suggest that it would be in the interests of Athens if the Athenians decided to accept their proposal and employ their present success to their advantage, so as to utilize the current twist of the conflict and gain honour, reputation, and all that will be agreed upon with the other side, without risking a continuation of the war with the "other" great power – Sparta – that may have been defeated at Pylos but has repeatedly shown in the past that is fierce in war and in fact remains exceedingly resourceful and dangerous as a foe. The envoys argue that Sparta's time of misfortune was due to errors of judgment but should not be mistaken as implying a loss of power: Athens would be well advised to settle now in a way that would be "at once satisfactory to your interests, and as consistent with our dignity in our misfortune as circumstances permit" (4.17). Cleon the demagogue managed to stir and direct Athenian emotions against a serious debate on the Spartan proposal. As a result the envoys, after a lengthy presentation, abandoned all hope of changing the Athenians' mind. The envoys from Sparta, Thucydides explains, thought on the one hand that "whatever concessions they might be prepared to make in their misfortune, it was impossible to express them before the multitude and lose credit with their allies for a negotiation which might after all miscarry, and on the other hand, that the Athenians would never grant what they asked upon moderate terms". So they hastily left Athens "without having effected anything" (4.22).

But the role of demagogues in general – and Cleon in particular – was a well-known factor in Athenian politics and its weight should have been anticipated, especially after the death of Pericles. Maybe the Spartans had second thoughts about their peace offer or perhaps they were trying to accommodate their own uncertainty about whether this was a good idea. Whatever the explanation for the Spartans giving up so easily, it appears that the Athenians (who were going to regret this decision) were caught between unrealistic expectations (since there were Spartans trapped on Pylos following their defeat, Sparta would be prepared to concede more) and a general confusion over longer-term objectives. After all, the Athenians had earlier requested a treaty, which Sparta had turned down. In this and in several other instances – including when they had an advantage – the Spartans appeared at first to calculate on the basis of a combination of a longer-term horizon and a less specific mode of understanding games of reciprocal cooperation and engaging in them.

[2] In this paper both the Strassler (Strassler 1996) and the Hammond editions (Thucydides 2009) have been used, while the Loeb edition has also been consulted throughout (Thucydides 1928). All numbers in brackets refer to books and sections in the *History*.

In other words, the Spartan approach manifests elements of mixed and diffuse reciprocity, as opposed to simple, *tit-for-tat* reciprocal cooperative moves (Lepgold and Shambaugh 2002; Lavdas 2010; Lavdas and Chryssochoou 2011). For example, norms of self-restraint combined with a consistent interest in the longer-term horizon of relations were characteristic of the Spartans' approach to their victory in Mantinea (Kagan 2003: 239-243) while a similar attitude by Sparta resulted, as we will see below, in the frustration of Corinthian and Theban demands in the crucial days and weeks after the eventual surrender of Athens and the end of the war.

Understanding norms of self-restraint, understanding norms of any kind for that matter, requires a consideration of the relations between the rational dimension of human action (the *homo oeconomicus*) on the one hand and its normative dimension on the other. The latter aspect has been the research domain of a norm and culture-based model of human action. In matters social, political, economic, technical, or aesthetic, it is expectations that make the role of norms so crucial. Norms serve to regulate activity but tackling norms is not the same as discussing moral issues. Debating values means debating conceptions of the good life, in accordance with which we ought to live. On the other hand, norms express expectations on the various settings of social action and orient such action towards patterns. And, since norms refer to a number of areas of human endeavour (technical, aesthetic, economic, civic, and so on), reasons for compliance with norms vary. Because norms in general are relative to temporal and spatial variation, focusing on norms opens the door for a discussion which eschews the binding dimensions associated with the analysis of values (Rorty 1987: 26-66). As is also clear in the work of Thucydides, norms had originally been associated with custom and religion and the break with that tradition was in itself no small feat. It is therefore important to understand how norms arise and how they mutate and change. In fact, different types of norms have something crucial in common: they all evolve because they are subject to selection (Florini 1996). Norm evolution can be understood as a three-stage process (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). The first stage is the emergence of a norm (which in fact means the emergence of a new, transformed/ mutant form of a norm); the second stage involves broad norm acceptance; and the third stage involves internalization. The first two stages are divided by a threshold or 'tipping' point, at which a critical mass of relevant actors adopt the norm (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998: 894-909). What they call a third stage, however, is in fact a level-of-analysis shift within the contours of stage two. An alternative depiction of a norm's life-cycle would involve norm mutation, norm prominence, and the norm getting challenged. A new mutation, no matter how favourable to fitness, may require some help in getting established: it is actors that play key roles in helping particular norms acquire prominence.

3. Ambiguity, Rationality and Abstraction in Thucydides

With these concepts in our repertoire, let us return to Thucydides. Before concentrating on our three thematic patterns, we will endeavour to establish that Thucydides' methodology is such that allows us to draw inferences that go beyond the acclaimed "objectivity" of a great chronicler. To begin with, the view of Thucydides as a "mere" objective, great chronicler was already – and justifiably – undermined by early realist readings. The point, however, is that apart from the realist emphasis on certain important aspects of the great historian's work, the methodology which underlies the narrative allows for other, equally important, thematic patterns to develop through the *History*. For realists, the *History* was about seeking timeless truths on the state's self-interested search for power, or the need to balance against the rise of such power. Werner Jaeger's classic study paved the way, emphasizing "this political necessity, the mere mathematics of power politics": namely, that Sparta's fearful response to the growth of Athenian power was the true cause of the war (Jaeger 1976[1939]: 488). Morgenthau and others followed in these steps (Morgenthau 1978: 38). A fundamental realist proposition – that international relations is about states pursuing interests defined in terms of power – is one that realists recognized in Thucydides' text. Better still, they owe this proposition to a particular tradition of reading and interpreting these aspects of Thucydides. The historian himself invites this approach, when he declares, in the introduction to the *History,* that the themes he wishes to illuminate are of timeless relevance. He sought an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which will probably repeat war and conflict "in the same or a similar pattern" (1. 22).

It is however clear that a number of other interpretive possibilities are now open. As W. R. Connor observed several years ago, a new direction in Thucydidean studies emerged after the late 1960s, marked by an increasing interest in Thucydides' own emotional involvement in the events of which he writes (Connor 1977: 289). While this may have resulted in writings of uneven quality, it also opened the door to more sophisticated accounts of the interactions between the historian and his environment and the impact of such interactions on the History. Crucial for our analysis in this paper has been the suggestion put forward by Adam Parry, the distinguished classicist.

Parry has shown that the means of expression employed by Thucydides indicate that he was trying to harness the abstract vocabulary, which the Greeks were able to develop in the post-Homeric world, in order to simultaneously impose meaningful order and render "eternal" the episodes in the *History*. As A. Parry, T. B. L. Webster, and others have shown, there were no abstractions proper in Homer.

"In the Homeric world everything is felt as a substantial thing, a concrete for our abstract […] a word like *menos* resists definition. It is something lived, rather than thought. A man has it, and when he dies, he loses it: *apo gar menos heileto chalkos*: the bronze took his *menos* away" (Parry 1970: 12-13). A degree of abstraction was developed by Hesiod, and reached its height in Herodotus. It is with Thucydides that we reach a "social abstraction", i.e., a modality in writing in which abstract words appear as independent entities in sentences. Of course, they still imply human modalities, whereas with Aristotle another stage of abstraction is reached: abstract words need not refer to any human state or behaviour. Still, the remarkable thing about Thucydides is that he is analytical as well as engaged and that – as Parry (1970) suggests – the style to accomplish this is *struggle*: antithesis, variation, juxtaposition, a rather terse but also superbly condensed and meaningful discourse. For Thucydides, history is the search for the conditions that may encourage the intellect (*gnome*) imposing itself on harsh reality, and the fundamental desideratum is a reality in which the intellect is in control of things. So Thucydides launches an era that can express – among other things – nuances, ambivalence and ambiguity as they relate to abstract notions and ever more distant templates. We will revisit this aspect when we tackle the outbreak of the war; a more general implication is evident in the discussion of the erosion of cultured life brought about by war. War as a constant feature of humanity has immense but also contextually conditioned implications for the human soul. In a famous passage describing the revolution in Corcyra (7.82.2), a pensive Thucydides remarks that "war is a violent teacher", one that imposes itself by destroying practices, mores, and morality (7. 82. 2): "war is a violent teacher, and brings the moods of most men into harmony with their present conditions". War subjugates everything "*στα παρόντα*": "*ta paronta* – immediate, going reality assumes control of everything, and all language, including moral and political terms, becomes meaningless" (Parry 1970: 19). In this and other passages, Thucydides makes a fascinating point about the relations between human possibilities, extreme material conditions and the frailty of signification. He sensed that man was entrapped in a situation where force, the immediacy of threat, and chance were his masters (Parry 1970: 19).

Moving on from the general role of war in deforming humanity to the particular conditions prevalent in the Hellenic system of international relations, Thucydides proceeds to distinguish between wars on the basis of whether the warring parties resemble each other in terms of being a sea power (like Athens, but also Corinth) or a land power (like Sparta, but also Thebes) but also in terms of regimes, institutions, and political culture (Hanson 1996, Lavdas and Chryssochoou 2011). Indeed, the fact that the war between Athens and Sparta was a prolonged contest between *diaforoi* powers gave that conflict some of its distinguishing features. Conflict between *homoiotropoi* powers (such as, Thucydides suggests, Athens and Syracuse) may be more difficult to resolve in military terms, because of similar mentalities and the adoption of similar tactics: both Athens and Syracuse were competent at sea. On the other hand, conflict between *diaforoi* powers (such as Athens and Sparta) is of grander dimensions, as different systems and worldviews clash, but it may lend itself to easier military resolution (7.55, 8.96). At the same time, the cohesion of each bloc played a major role in the balance achieved, as Athens' allies tended to have democratic or tyrannical regimes, while those that sided with Sparta were oligarchies. Regime type was a clear indicator of preference for an alliance, hence the willingness of both sides to intervene when called upon by domestic interests, in order to safeguard or topple a regime (Lavdas and Chryssochoou 2011: 90-96). In his magisterial work, Ste. Croix (1982, 1989) has asserted that the masses in the cities of the Athenian empire welcomed political subordination to Athens as the price to pay in order to be able to escape from the hated rule of their own oligarchs. That may explain the fact that, in most cases, revolts against Athens were the work of minorities. Unlike oligarchy, both tyranny and democracy were associated with financial enterprise, shipping, and expansionist thinking (Watson 2009: 52). War between Athens and Sparta became, in the end, a particularly protracted conflict. It led to direct confrontation over practices, institutions, and norms.

4. The Outbreak of the War

In his account of events leading to the outbreak of the war, Thucydides discusses two episodes that resulted in disputes between Athens and Corinth, Sparta's important ally.

The first concerns Epidamnos and involved a dispute between Corinth and Corcyra (1.23 – 1.55) while the second concerns Potidaea, a Corinthian colony but at the same time an Athenian ally, and involved the Potidaeans' attempted revolt against Athens and Corinth's readiness to assist them (1.56 – 1.66). The events that led to war were preceded by crucial meetings, first in Athens and later in Sparta, where the relevant parties and their allies presented their cases, debated and not so much negotiated in the modern sense as they tried to increase their influence and at the same time expand their options.

4. 1. Major Developments Preceding the War

At the beginning of the *History*, we encounter an eloquent analysis of the dispute over Epidamnos in 435 BC. Beset by civil unrest and threatened by a coalition between domestic factions and hostile neighbours, Epidamnos, a city in the Ionian (modern Adriatic) Sea, decided to look for help first in Corcyra, then in Corinth. Epidamnos turned first to Corcyra for help, since it had been colonized by the Corcyraeans. When Corcyra rejected their appeal, Epidamnos turned to Corinth, having also recourse to the knowledge that the founder-colonist was a Corinthian and having consulted the oracle at Delphi. Corinth, the mother city of Corcyra, saw in this development an opportunity to expand its influence in the Ionian Sea. So the Corinthians accepted the challenge and a force was dispatched to Epidamnos, provoking consternation and dismay in Corcyra (1.24 – 1.26). The Corcyraeans offered to submit their dispute with Corinth to arbitration in order to avoid military conflict. At the same time, the Corcyraeans hoped to be admitted to the Athenian alliance (the Delian League), a development bitterly opposed by Corinth (1. 24 – 1.45). The Corinthians consider the Corcyreans disloyal: they accuse Corcyra of having revolted in violation of unwritten international Hellenic norms (Cohen 2006: 270). After all, Epidamnos had asked Corcyra for help, and Corcyra had rejected their appeal (1.24 – 1.25).

Having decided to seek help from Athens, the Corcyraeans sent envoys to the powerful city to present their views and ask for help. When news of this reached the Corinthians, they, too, sent envoys to Athens to put their case before the Athenians. The meeting in Athens and the ensuing impasse was a first crucial step in the direction of the great war (1.31 – 1.45). What the Corinthians emphasized in Athens was the universal value of international norms. By contrast, the Corcyreans aimed to appeal to Athenian self-interest: by admitting them into the alliance, the Athenians would be doing what is in their interest, which is more important than the rights and wrongs of the Corinthian claims about Corcyraean disloyalty and violation of international Hellenic norms. According to this argument, crucial strategic advantages would accrue to Athens by virtue of Corcyra's location and sea power. The Athenians accepted the Corcyreans into the alliance, offending Corinth, which was Sparta's ally but, as the course of the ensuing war proved, Corcyra never became an important asset to the Athenians (Cohen 2006: 271). So the meeting resulted in favour of Corcyra but her defensive alliance with Athens was a fudge. Athens did not in any coherent way wish for a general conflict to break out. Even when the Corinthians had left and an alliance was concluded with Corcyra, the main aim of the dominant view in Athens was to localize the conflict without failing to appear steady and supportive to allies. The combination was not easy, especially as demagogues were keen to exploit gaps and insecurities to enhance their power. Be that as it may, the Athenians appear to tread gingerly when dispatching limited military aid to support Corcyra, instructing the commanders not to engage with the Corinthians unless they were about to actually invade Corcyra and land on Corcyraean soil (1.45 – 1.46).

A similar wavering is evident in the events surrounding the dispute over Potidaea. Potidaea, an Athenian ally of Corinthian descent in northwest Aegean Sea, was in a difficult position following the dispute between Athens and Corinth but was also tempted to abandon the Delian League because of the neighbouring Macedonians' apparent frustration with Athens. When Potidaea appeared ready to revolt and Corinth offered help, Athens intervened (1.56 – 1.66). Corinth turned to Sparta, her powerful ally, for help. Aiming to keep the conflict localized and avoid Spartan involvement, Athens dispatched envoys to influence Spartan deliberations. Donald Kagan has aptly presented the Corinthians' tactics in the meeting in Sparta. The Corinthians aimed "to persuade Sparta that its traditional policy of caution and reluctance to fight was disastrous in the face of the greatness and dynamism of Athenian power". But "since the facts of Athenian behaviour did not support their case", the Corinthians "resorted to generalities" (Kagan 1991: 212). Archidamos, the Spartan king, was reluctant and full of reservations to the end. As Hanson nicely put it, the Spartans voted to fight in the autumn of 432 BC, then waited to begin hostilities for six months and when their ally Thebes eventually attacked Plataea, an Athenian ally but one against which Thebes had a grudge, the Spartans "realized that they had to either move or apologize for the reckless preemptive act of their Theban ally" (Hanson 2005: 35). One might even speculate to the effect that the existing balance of power could be seen as acceptable, even beneficial to both Athens and Sparta: a balance had held since 445 BC and despite opportunities that presented themselves neither had moved to disrupt it. Indeed, the accord had been severely tested during the Samian crisis (440-439 BC) but it had held.

Could it be that Sparta – always in need of the Corinthians' navy – was under greater pressure by her ally than Thucydides appears to acknowledge (Hawthorn 2014: 47-49)? Both Sparta and Athens manifested an unmistakable reluctance to move to war between the two blocs. But while the facts of Athenian behaviour did not manifest a readiness to escape the confines of localized conflicts, their rhetorical presentations were provocative.

The audacity of the speech delivered by the Athenian envoys at the meeting in Sparta is an example of the novel approach to openly defending imperialism as a way of consolidating the city's perceived superiority. Was this because of the moderately bellicose approach sustained by Pericles, who was after all exceedingly influential in Athens at the time (Hawthorn 2014: 49-50)? But the notion that Pericles was an expansionist has been disputed convincingly and with rigour: Kagan has shown that a Periclean grand strategy, if ever there was one, was to consolidate the Athenian empire by limiting it to a defensible size and by maintaining peace with the two main rivals, Sparta and Persia (Kagan 1991: 117-135, 228-245). It appears that the key point was the Athenians' determination to keep a firm hold on the Delian League: they want to avoid war, if possible, but not at the cost of damaging the perception of their capacities and imperial power. The Athenians openly recognize that their motives in building the empire were fear (*δέος*), honour (*τιμή*), and self-interest (*ωφέλεια*) (1. 75). Provocative in the sense that they could not retreat from a robust defense of their great power, the Athenians do not want to risk diluting the perception of their superiority (Orwin 1986: 72-85). This is a speech which on the one hand tends to vindicate certain structural realist ("balancing-against-power") readings of Thucydides while on the other hand it exposes, as we will suggest, the shift to a new, post-traditional normative orientation which however could only promise an uncertain future. Athenian approaches, often based on complex motives in which notions of short-term self-interest appeared to prevail at the end, proved myopic on various occasions in the 27-year war. Thucydides insists on various occasions that it is the uncertainty inherent in human endeavours that makes it even more necessary for reasonable actors to plan beyond immediate gains. There is recognition, emphasized at various points throughout the *History*, that the future is uncertain and the fortunes of war constantly shifting. When things change, the norms and institutions one ignored in order to seize a temporary advantage "may no longer be available for assistance when one is in unforeseen and dire need" (Cohen 2006: 271).

4. 2. "Truest Reason" and Levels of Abstraction

So why did Athens and Sparta break the Thirty Years Treaty and go to war? In one of the most influential passages of history ever written, Thucydides suggests that in explaining (not the outbreak of the war but) the collapse of the Treaty, we need to establish a distinction between what most translators choose to render as "immediate causes" ("*τὰς α'τίας προύγραψα πρώτον και τας διαφοράς*") and the "truest reason" which remains "unacknowledged" in public discourse ("*αληθεστάτην πρόφασιν, άφανεστάτην δε λόγω*"). With regard to the latter, some translate "reason" (Hammond 2009: 13, "real reason, true but unacknowledged") while others opt for "cause" (Strassler 1996: 16, in a free rendering which omits half the sentence: "the real cause"). For Thucydides, the "truest reason" (the most plausible translation) is "the growth of Athenian power that instilled fear of Athens in the Spartans and made them [*αναγκάσαι*] go to war" (1.23).[3] But evidence of the days, weeks and months that led to the great war suggests that both powers were reluctant while no obvious reason for Spartan "fear" of Athens had presented itself. To state that "the Athenians knew that there was bound to be war with Sparta unless they gave up their ambitions (which of course they could not do" (Rhodes 2009: xiv-xv) begs the question: what mechanisms – political, military, psychological, cognitive – were set in motion that instilled the fear to the Spartans in such a way that the existing balance of power was considered no longer beneficial or simply redundant and therefore dangerous? As mentioned, the balance of power could be seen as beneficial to both Athens and Sparta, while the allies – some of them exercising pressure in favor of a military solution – did not appear to be as influential, Thucydides admits. Nor is the undoubtedly interesting notion of the spread of democratic regimes that alarmed the Spartans (Hanson 2005: 12-14) adequate as an explanation in view of the complexities of alliances and the compromises accepted by an Athens that aimed at hegemony not regime uniformity (see Hawthorn 2014).

[3] The crucial sentence that explains the "truest reason":
"τους Αθηναίους ηγούμαι μεγάλους γιγνομένους και φόβον παρέχοντας τους Λακεδαιμονίοις αναγκάσαι έστο πολεμείν" (1.23).

The "truest reason", what "made" (*αναγκάσαι*) the Spartans go to war (others translate "forced" the Spartans into war) is not so much a state of mind that characterizes a set of actors as it is a result of the historian's search for an explanation couched in terms different from the ones that were used in variable and often contradictory ways by the actors themselves. Without taking sides on the argument whether, in this context, *aitia* (*α'τία*) and *profasi* (*πρόφασιν*) are used interchangeably (Schuller 1956: 972-984) or maybe the historian gives a special, "scientific" meaning to the latter, influenced by Hippocratic medicine (Jaeger 1976/1939 based on C. Cochrane's classic notion of the 1920s), it appears that what Thucydides aims to distinguish can be viewed as follows. The distinction is between a more abstract level of analysis, preoccupied with structural conditions (which "remain unacknowledged" in everyday discourse) and what we would now call the level of analysis that focuses on immediate causation (the apparent conflicts and disputes).

There has been speculation, based on purely argumentative grounds, that this paragraph was written by Thucydides at a later time than the rest of Book I, representing a change of mind about the causes of the war (see, e.g., Strassler 1996: 16) or perhaps to be interpreted in the context of his alleged effort to shift blame to Sparta (see, e.g., Rhodes 2009: xiv-xv). But this is pure speculation. Furthermore, Thucydides confirms his interpretation of the "truest reason" for going to war at three different points in the text. Crucially, when he presents the end of the meeting in Sparta, which resulted in the resolution that the Thirty Years Treaty had been broken, Thucydides reiterates the view that "in voting for war on the grounds of breach of the treaty the Spartans were not so much influenced by the arguments of their allies as by their own fear of the increasing Athenian power, seeing much of Greece already subject to them" (1.88). A comparison with the outbreak of the First World War in the summer of 1914 is especially telling. Despite later assertions, nobody at the time thought that the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914 would result in a colossal conflict. Even as events played out, some key participants refused to clearly see what was coming. In 1914, some key actors had an apparent preference in keeping the conflict localized as much as possible (Austria-Hungary against Serbia); others saw in developments an opportunity to settle old scores and redraw boundaries; there were some who remained undecided until the very last moment; still others became entangled in the belief that the other party will blink first. At the same time, despite different motivations and dispositions, most of them felt that their backs was against the wall and that they were "acting under external constraint, a matter of great import to nearly all the actors in the July Crisis" (Clark 2013: 527).

The Great War came about as a result of these actions and other such as these, making it difficult and maybe pointless to engage in a 'politics of blame' that would have to rely on a solid understanding of the actual causes of the slaughter and the relative contribution of each and every actor in its outbreak. In this context, the links between localization – general conflagration came to preoccupy many key actors as events unfolded but the persistent lack of clear strategic objectives coupled with often inadequate and fragmented information led to an apocalyptic outcome (Clark 2013: xxv-xxix, 78-93, 168-241, 523-525, 555-562). Because of a multitude of background factors, even most of the actors who were thinking in terms of localizing the conflict, were in the end not particularly keen to prevent it. Conditioned by the past but unclear about future scenarios, they were "sleepwalkers, watchful but unseeing, haunted by dreams, yet blind to the reality of the horror they were about to bring into the world" (Clark 2013: 562). There is an unmistakable similarity with the participants in the crucial meetings first in Athens and later in Sparta before the two powers went to war. A combination of tactical considerations, concern with saving face, preconceived schemes, emotions exploited by demagogues, fragmented knowledge of the situation, bounded rationality coupled with an uncertainty characteristic of times of normative shifts and mutations, led to decisions that ignited the Peloponnesian War.

It is tempting to suggest that the indeterminacy of outcomes and the search for explanations at various levels – for example in the account of the Athenian disaster in the Sicilian expedition – shows that Thucydides provides us with a first glimpse at what became known in contemporary international relations as the level of analysis problem (Singer 1961). Indeed, it has long been assumed that Thucydides's "complex realism" used and combined factors from a number of analytic levels in order to account for behaviour at all three basic levels: systemic, nation-state, and individual decision-making (Doyle 1997). But it is a very particular approach to levels of analysis, one that strives to master a more abstract understanding in order to transcend the complexity and often the ambiguity of empirical interactions, interactions that Thucydides understood so well: it concerns levels of abstraction. In other words, the richness and the complexity of actual interactions do not seem to lead to war as an inevitable outcome.

And in the absence of a systematic approach to the relations between levels, the sensitive understanding of the complexity of events and interactions leading to war manifests itself almost as an *aporia*: it appears that neither Athens nor Sparta – the great powers – wish to provoke a great war; at the same time, smaller powers, allies, colonies and other actors play various roles (occasionally changing hats) but they do not appear to yield decisive influence over the big two, so – instead of delving deeper into the intricacies to construct a scheme that stems *from them* – a more abstract, "truest" reason must be discerned. The Athenian Thucydides discovers this truest reason in Spartan underlying anxiety over the growth of Athenian power. What he implies is that – given the participants mind-sets, preconceptions, norms, culture, and interests – there are conditions that must be analysed at a greater level of abstraction and these conditions rendered a certain outcome probable. But once the great war became a reality, mind-sets and even norms started changing at breakneck speed.

5. From Mytilene to Melos: Emancipation of Ruthlessness

As the years of war dragged on, Athens was undergoing a process of change from within. The Athenian polis of the fifth century, that became the quintessential paradigm of classical Greek antiquity, was transformed through protracted all-out war. Of course, the idealized account of the Athenian regime presented by Thucydides (in the Periclean Funeral Oration) emphasized both the civic commitment by the citizen and the confident and relaxed quality of life in Athens. The focus throughout was on the balance accomplished by Athenian political life (for free male citizens) between what we would call – in modern terms – participation and individual freedom, public-mindedness and respect for self-development: the civic greatness of the Periclean Age was exemplified in a civilized way of life, in culture and, characteristically, in the art of the fifth century (Connor 1984). Thucydides is equally sophisticated in his analysis of the implications of the Peloponnesian War for Athenian democracy. As the war conditions became chronic and peace appeared more and more elusive, the Athenian polity was transformed. "Instead of a polis", Thucydides tells us, Athens gradually became a militarist system: as a result of the war, Athens came to resemble "a fortress", while the city's institutions, culture, and practices became seriously affected (see the magisterial expression at 7. 28.1:

"*τῶντεπάντωνὁμο῾ωςἐπακτῶνἑδε῀τοἡπόλις, κα᾽ἀντ᾽τοῦπόλιςε῀ναιφρούριονκατέστη*").

Cleon the demagogue's efforts, after the fall of Mytilene, to persuade the Athenians to kill all male inhabitants and sell women and children as slaves mark the first major departure from the moderate imperial policy advocated by Pericles. In the end, Cleon did not succeed in persuading the Athenians, but the complex and nuanced debate itself manifests the gap between the arguments advanced and the views that were dominant a decade before (3.36 – 3.50). Then, a few years later, the Athenians inflicted on Melos the terror Cleon had earlier tried to persuade them to inflict on Mytilene. It is in the context of the so-called Melian and Delian dialogues, that we find the most acute attempts to rationalize and legitimize the Athenians' departure from the traditional norms of international relations in the Hellenic world. The cynicism evident in the Athenian statements in the famous passages that constitute the Melian Dialogue (5.84 – 5.113) has led scholars to the view that Thucydides presents, in effect, an Athenian hubris. Culminating in the statement that "right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must" (5.89), the Melian Dialogue has traditionally been cited as an example of imperial arrogance ultimately leading to imperial downfall.

In his erudite account, Lebow (1984: 10-11) has observed that it is didactic to compare and contrast the Melian Dialogue with Pericles' Funeral Oration, a famous passage also used by Thucydides to convey the Athenian approach to international hegemony. It worth quoting Lebow at length: 'Delivered at the onset of the war, the Funeral Oration reflects a quiet self-confidence that derives from knowledge of Athenian power, political, economic and also moral [...] Athens need seek no opportunity to demonstrate resolve. Rather, Pericles argues, it should use its power moderately and only when necessary in defence of vital interests [...] The Periclean strategy was suitable to the Athens of 430 B.C., a power bursting with self-assurance and revelling in its political, economic and cultural ascendancy in the Hellenic world. However, thirteen years of war […] had changed Athenians' view of themselves and of the world […] In the process, they had often sacrificed principle for expediency and honour for interest and in doing so had transformed the nature of the Athenian alliance. […] As the Athenians sensed that their power was waning, or at the very least might be perceived that way by their enemies and allies alike, they felt the need to convince others of their power and resolve in order to deter both adversarial challenges and allied defections' (Lebow 1984: 10-11).

To this view of the Delian League one needs to add another dimension: as is often the case with alliances, the League – even before the war – came to represent different things to different partners. Although some found the contributions to be onerous, others saw in it an external guarantee of domestic democratic politics. But it is with regard to the Athenian optic that Thucydides has in fact made a more fundamental point. Orwin's (1989) analysis comes closer to grasping the significance of the Melian dialogue from an essentially political perspective. Although his focus is on the cognitive shifts associated with the evolving Athenian understanding of war, interests, and morality, Orwin's work provides a prism which may also be used as a step to further analysis. Orwin argues that the Athenian position, shifting but not inscrutable, ultimately implies "the emancipation of necessity from the gods, or the emergence of absolute necessity". Unlike traditional piety, Athenian discourse (recognizing in practice certain exceptions to piety) implies that some things are more fundamental for human beings than piety. While the Athenians do not go so far as to deny that the gods chastise impiety, wherever it is willful (i.e., wherever it is truly impiety), they do deny "that the gods can reasonably expect us to put the sacred first, ahead of the necessities to which we are subject as human beings" (Orwin 1989: 237).

Orwin's ground-breaking approach is supported by a stimulating reading of the Delian Debate. While from the point of view of a cursory reading of the Melian Dialogue it would appear that, for the Athenians, piety has lost all authority as a rule, passages such as the one concerning the occupation of the shrine of Apollo at Delion indicate significant nuances, which in fact – we suggest – point to the normative mutation in progress. As he suggests, the Athenians "can live neither with piety nor without it". The Delian dialogue, "this neglected passage in book 4, in which the Athenians first extend their characteristic outlook on international relations to those between god and humankind, is crucial for grasping the logic of their unfolding political theology of imperialism. I mean that doctrine that achieves its zenith in the most notorious episode in Thucydides, the so-called Melian dialogue (5.84-113, esp. 103-5). Our passage is equally crucial, however, for grasping the discovery of the notion of political necessity in the strict sense, that is, of natural necessity as opposed to the radical contingency of a world ruled by gods-a discovery that is the basis of all real political philosophy or science" (Orwin 1989: 237-238). There was clearly a clash involving cultural and broader civilizational dimensions. But what was novel about the Athenian approach, in addition to its combination of commercial prowess and expansion abroad and political sophistication at home, was the aspiration to overcome and redraft the norms of international coexistence. Arguing against the often constricting influences of communal mores and of religious norms, the Athenians claim they are both capable of and justified in aiming to transcend inherited mores.

Furthermore, Athenian emancipation from the traditional mores of an inter-communal system of international relations led to short-term and longer-term implications. The short-term emancipation of ruthlessness, apart from being abhorrent in ethical terms, did not serve the Athenians well: aiming to escape the limitations imposed by religious and traditional norms, they missed the opportunity to reflect on the normative requirements for the pursuit of the long-term interests of the *polis*. Sparta proved to be comparatively more prone to longer-term strategizing. When the war finally came to an end and Athens capitulated, Corinthian and Theban demands that Athens be destroyed met with Spartan refusal (see Kagan 1987). Crucially, Sparta's refusal to oblige her allies was not based on religious or moral arguments. Not anymore. Instead, the Spartans refused to destroy a city that had played a key role during the Persian Wars, at a time of grave danger for the entire Hellenic system of international relations, while opting for the continuation of the existence of a humbled, weakened but present Athens as a factor in that system. In fact, Spartan self-restraint and longer-term calculation served Sparta well. Within twenty years Sparta and Athens enjoyed a reconciliation based in part on their mutual suspicion of the growing power of Thebes and in part on the reappearance of the Persian threat (Hanson 2005: 291). Norms had shifted but the Athenian adventurism with normative emancipation was not exactly followed by Sparta. The role of norms has been the focus, among others, of Monoson and Loriaux (1998). But their unsurprising conclusion (that Thucydides suggests that's precisely when the norms of moral conduct are disrupted that states and individuals find it difficult to chart a prudent course of action) cannot account for Thucydides' cold and analytical examination of the Athenians' adventurist approach to norms in the Melian and Delian episodes.

His overall secular approach to matters human and physical encourages an analytical approach to the adventures and the mutations of normative patterns prevalent in the Hellenic world before, during, and after the momentous War.[4]

[4] As Bolotin (1987: 15) reminds us, when Thucydides refers to the plague that hit Athens, he does not share the view that the epidemic represented divine or cosmic punishment for Athenian hubris; instead he explains that it was widespread in Africa before coming to Athens and ridicules those who thought it had been foretold by an ancient oracle.

And *that* is why he insists that the War he narrates is of immense importance to humanity: not because of the discovery of some laws of behaviour in international relations, as some realists would have us believe, but because of the momentous normative change brought about in the course of the conflict, smashing traditional mores, encouraging the mutation of norms, clearing the table for a rethinking of international conduct and – in the process – provoking disputes, ambiguity, confusion even. Last but not least, there are interesting lessons here for small states in international politics. In late-20th century Europe, after the end of the Cold War, some of these states tried to adapt long-standing traditions of neutrality to their new environments. Yet norms associated with neutrality have never been the most prominent among their contributions. First because, as Thucydides had remarked, an actors' neutrality does not always increase the chances for peace. The continuing debates on the structural conditions leading to the Peloponnesian War notwithstanding, it is clear that the immediate causes of the War had a lot to do with neutrality: Corcyra's attempt to remain neutral when faced with domestic upheaval and calls to intervene at Epidamnos in effect invited intervention from Corinth, leading to hostilities between Corcyra and Corinth, both eventually appealing to Athens and to Sparta.

At a later stage, the Melian "small-state" evocation of neutrality led Athenians to the view that if Melos was allowed to opt out, any other ally would be tempted to do the same (see Rubin 1987: 355-356). Second, neutrality has not been the small states' strongest normative contribution because of oscillations and, in most cases, eventual capitulation to the realities of international alliances. Indeed, even within the EU, despite initial strengthening of the small states' voice, developments have led them to reconsider some of their earlier strategic choices in order to keep pace and exercise a degree of influence (Wivel 2005: 393-412). Yet there are norms that small states did help diffuse and acquire prominence. These include the civilian, economic, and cultural projection of international identity, the adherence to international law and institutions, and the emphasis on openness and pragmatic cooperative solutions to problems of cooperation. Small states in Europe have generally been able to pursue successful and influential strategies of international adjustment, based on a clearer focus on a narrow set of economic interests and objectives than characterises the large states and on dynamic responses to the real or perceived conditions of vulnerability (Keohane 1971; Katzenstein 1985).

6. Conclusion

The paper's aim has been to reevaluate the reading of Thucydides through the prism of an analysis of the causes of the Peloponnesian War. We argued that Thucydides' own account of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War hints at a more nuanced and pluralist methodology compared to the one that has traditionally been associated with his celebrated approach to the "truest reason" ("*ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν*", 1.23) of the war. Relations between "immediate" causes and the "truest reason" why war broke out can best be understood through the prism of a particular approach to levels of analysis, one that strives to master a more abstract understanding in order to transcend the complexity and often the ambiguity of actual interactions and decisions that Thucydides explored in an analytical manner. The great historian implies that – given the participants' mind-sets, preconceptions, norms, culture, and interests – a number of conditions that must be analysed at a greater level of abstraction made a certain outcome probable. In this narrative, the evolution of norms is doing part of the explanatory work at many levels. Normative approaches to international relations have come a long way since Thucydides attempted to dissect the role of norms in different phases of the humanity-transforming, 27-year-long conflict. Although neorealists insist that capabilities determine relations and the balance of power (Waltz 1993), most observers would now agree that intentions matter as well as capabilities. But if intentions matter, then so do norms, which influence intentions, and they also impact motives. A recent formulation of a cultural-cum-normative approach to IR by Lebow (2008), insists on taking into account the motives of actors. Propensity for risk-taking, he argues, "varies not only in response to whether gains or losses are perceived to be at stake, but, more importantly, the nature of those gains and losses" (Lebow 2008: 366). The nature of gains and losses can be construed in a number of ways.

Following Thucydides, Lebow reminds us that Greeks explained policy decisions "with reference to three distinct motives: fear, interest and honor" (2008: 417). Other views on the assessment of the motives of actors are possible: Thucydides is the sophisticated individual in fifth-century Athens who can "look at human nature and the ever-changing complexities of the political world in the eye rather than divert oneself to the past or some hopeful future or another world altogether" (Hawthorn 2014: 239). The point, at any rate, is that the transformation of norms affects contents as well as tactics. A cultural theory of international relations remains extremely valuable, so long as it can provide links between the evolution of cooperation and transformations at the level of the content of actors' strategies and, also, motives.

In this context, Thucydides showed how the disentanglement of normativity from pre-established religious and moral codes opened the door for rational calculation, but he also showed that the prevalence of short-term, myopic, instrumental rationality coupled with the emancipation of aggressiveness from piety and religious mores led to grim consequences. Caught in the predicament which arises from the harsh demands of war, having escaped the requirements of religious norms and traditional morality, the actors are prone to miscalculations. In the tripartite scheme of motives, the move away from fear and honour would entail greater emphasis on rationality, provided that man is able to impose his intellect on the environment, which – as Thucydides argued – was close to impossible in a situation of prolonged and unpredictable warfare while the normative correlates of action were also challenged (Table 1). In fact, the collapse of traditional normativity was the ancient equivalent to the collapse of an international system of cooperation without something new being ready to take its place.

Mutation	Prominence	Challenge	
Norms	Established norms mutate and change	A critical mass of relevant actors adopt the new norms	Norms challenged by increased non-compliance
Motives	"Honor" – "fear" – "interest defined in relation to honor and fear" / combinations tested in crises	"Interest" – "fear"	"Interest" in search of new normative correlates / trial & error, experimentation

Table 1: Life-Cycles of Norms and Asserted Motives in Thucydides

It is the exploration of the richness, the complexity and the ambiguity of international interactions and of decision-making that renders the *History* the first systematic text in the analysis of international relations. Thucydides' further attempt to harness that complexity is also ground-breaking but in a very specific sense: it exemplifies some of the problems, dilemmas and *aporias* that preoccupy scholars to this day. An astonishingly "modern" intellect, Thucydides was keen to distinguish between the reasons for decisions and the arguments chosen to announce, justify, and rationalize them. But the complexity of the issues and the historian's grasp of this complexity make any reading that claims to discern "laws of international interaction" appear strained and superficial. At any rate, the forces of long-term, consistent strategizing became even weaker after the death of Pericles. Thucydides' admiration for the Athenian statesman was not the only reason why he projects a clear, calculating and at the same moderate Periclean strategy in the early phases of conflict. When Archidamos invaded Attica, Pericles set in motion a systematic plan of restraint and steadiness, with a prolonged conflict that would avoid a major land battle, would result in serious attrition for the enemy, would guarantee continued command of the seas, and ultimately send a message to Sparta that the war was futile (Kagan 1991: 228-245). The eventual failure of that strategy after Pericles had died, the plague broke out, Cleon the demagogue gained in influence, Sparta approached Persia, and Athens decided to embark on the Sicilian expedition in a classic example of imperial over-extension, cannot eclipse its brilliance and potential for success.

Accordingly, this paper should not be taken as proposing to juxtapose Thucydides the sophisticated analyst with an eye for nuance to Thucydides the theorist of strategy; as we suggested from the outset, such barriers are meaningless when reading Thucydides. There are clearly important aspects in Thucydides that lend themselves to the development of strategic thought and analysis and there has been scholarship of considerable rigor and commitment that has documented these aspects (Platias and Koliopoulos 2010). The interest of the great historian in abstract concepts and meanings and his innovative eye for them, referred to earlier in this paper, was conducive to the development of strategic schemes and patterns. In view of this, we have suggested that the indeterminacy of outcomes and the search for explanations at various levels shows that Thucydides provides us with a first glimpse at what became known in contemporary international relations as the level of analysis problem (Singer 1961) but in a particular version of it: levels of increasing abstraction, in an attempt to move beyond the complexity of actual interactions and the ambiguities of decision-making, a complexity that Thucydides understood so well. But in the absence of a systematic approach to the relations between levels, the sensitive understanding of the complexity of events leading to the war manifests itself as the response to an *aporia*: it appears as if neither Athens nor Sparta – the great powers – wish to go to war, smaller powers, allies, colonies and other actors play various roles (occasionally changing hats) but they do not appear to yield decisive influence over the big two, so – instead of delving deeper into the intricacies to construct a scheme that stems *from them* – a general reason must exist. The Athenian Thucydides discovers this "truest" (i.e., most abstract) reason in Spartan underlying anxiety over the growth of Athenian power.

In actual analysis, Thucydides reflected on tendencies and their implications that may constrain or enable actors, on the complexity of factors that may affect particular outcomes, on inter-state interaction, on the role of domestic politics and – last but on least – on the psychological intricacies associated with the decision-making of individuals at critical junctures. As Christopher Clark has written with regard to another great war that occupied the West at a much later stage of political, technological, and cultural development, even when rational decision-making was aimed at in earnest, "the bitter choices between opposed options divided not only parties and cabinets, but also the minds of key decision-makers" (Clark 2013: 537). In Athens and Sparta, decision-makers were led to a prolonged great war neither side appeared to wish for through a series of moves that were disjointed, variably influenced by third parties but also genuinely interactive, in an environment emptied of traditional norms and blindly searching for new patterns.

References

Bolotin, D. (1987). Thucydides. In L. Strauss & J. Cropsey, eds., History of Political Philosophy, Third Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Clark, C. (2013). The Sleepwalkers: How Europe went to War in 1914. London: Penguin Books.

Cohen, D. (2006). War, Moderation, and Revenge in Thucydides. Journal of Militar Ethics, 5. 4, pp 270-289

Connor, W. R. (1977). A Post-Modernist Thucydides? The Classical Journal, 72, 4, pp. 289-298.

Connor, W. R. (1984). Thucydides. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Doyle, M. W. (1997). Ways of War and Peace. New York: W. W. Norton.

Finnemore, M. & Sikkink, K. (1998).International Norm Dynamics and Political Change. International Organization, 52, pp. 887-917.

Florini, A. (1996). The Evolution of International Norms. International Studies Quarterly, 40. 3, pp. 363-389.

Gilpin, R. G. (1984). The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism. International Organization, 38, pp 288-304.

Hanson, V. D. (1996). Introduction. In R. B. Strassler, ed., The Landmark Thucydides. New York: Free Press.

Hanson, V. D. (2005). A War Like No Other. New York: Random House.

Hawthorn, G. (2014). Thucydides on Politics: Back to the Present. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jaeger, W. (1976 [1939]).Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture. Vol. 1. Trans. G. Higet. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kagan, D. (1987). The Fall of the Athenian Empire. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Kagan, D. (1991). Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy. New York: The Free Press.

Kagan, D. (2003). The Peloponnesian War. London: Harper Perennial.

Katzenstein, P. J. (1985). Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe.Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Keohane, R. O. (1971). The Big Influence of Small Allies. Foreign Policy, 2, pp.161-182.

Lavdas, K. A. (2010). Normative Evolution in Europe.LEQS 17/2010.

Lavdas, K. A. and Chryssochoou, D. N. (2011). A Republic of Europeans: Civic Potential in a Liberal Milieu. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Lebow, R. N. (1984). The Paranoia of the Powerful: Thucydides on World War III. PS, 17. 1, pp. 10-17.

Lebow, R. N. (2008). A Cultural Theory of International Relations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lepgold, J. and Shambaugh, G. H. 2002. Who Owes Whom, How Much, and When? Understanding Reciprocated Social Exchange in International Politics. Review of International Studies, 28, pp 229-252.

Monoson, S. and Loriaux, M. (1998). The Illusion of Power and the Disruption ofMoral Norms: Thucydides' Critique of Periclean Policy. American Political Science Review, 92, 2, pp. 285-297.

Morgenthau, H. (1978). Politics among Nations. 5th ed. New York: Knopf.

Nye, J. S. (1988). Neorealism and Neoliberalism.World Politics, 40. 2, pp. 235-251.

Orwin, C. (1986). Justifying Empire: The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta and the Problem of Justice in Thucydides. Journal of Politics, 48. 1, pp. 72-85.

Orwin, C. (1989). Piety, Justice, and the Necessities of War: Thucydides' Delian Debate. American Political Science Review, 83.1., pp. 233-239.

Parry, A. (1970). Thucydides' Use of Abstract Language. Yale French Studies, 45, pp. 3-20.

Platias, A. G. and Koliopoulos, C. (2010). Thucydides on Strategy: Athenian and SpartanGrand Strategies in the Peloponnesian War and their Relevance Today. New York: ColumbiaUniversity Press.

Rhodes, P. J. (2009). Introduction: Thucydides and his History of the Peloponnesian War. In Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, translated by M. Hammond, with an Introduction and Notes by P. J. Rhodes. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rorty, R. (1987). Pragmatism and Philosophy. In K. Baynesetal., eds., After Philosophy: End or Transformation? Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rubin, A. P. (1987). The Concept of Neutrality in International Law. Denver Journal of International Law and Policy, 16, pp 353-376.

Schuller, S. (1956). About Thucydides' Use of Αἰτίαand Πρόφασις. Revue Belge de Philologieetd'Histoire. 34, no. 4, pp. 971-984.

Singer, J. D. (1961). The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations.World Politics, 14. 1, pp. 77-92.

Ste. Croix, G.E.M. de (1982). Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World. London: Duckworth.

Ste. Croix, G.E.M. de (1989). The Origins of the Peloponnesian War. New edition. London: Duckworth.

Strassler, R. B. (1996). The Landmark Thucydides, with an Introduction by V. D. Hanson. New York: Free Press.

Thucydides (1928). History of the Peloponnesian War, vols I-IV, translated by C. F. Smith, Greek-English edition. Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library/Harvard University Press.

Thucydides (2009). The Peloponnesian War, translated by M. Hammond, with an Introduction and Notes by P. J. Rhodes. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Waltz, K. (1993). The Emerging Structure of International Politics, International Security, 18, pp. 44-79.

Watson, A. (2009). The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis. With a New Introduction by B. Buzan & R. Little. London: Routledge.

Wivel, A. (2005). The Security Challenge of Small EU Member States: Interests, Identity, and the Development of the EU as a Security Actor. Journal of Common market Studies, 43. 2, pp. 393-412.