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14. ABSTRACT

This essay provides clarity to Thucydides' ambiguous account of Athens' campaign to Pylos during the Peloponnesian War. The Pylos campaign is significant in the Peloponnesian War because it is the only example of an Athenian decisive victory over elite Spartan troops on land, which enabled the political space for negotiations that could have ended the Archidamian War (these negotiations failed). a critical geographical error in Thucydides' depiction not only negates the likelihood of the Spartans executing their amphibious assault as portrayed, but also calls into question the accuracy of his account and the scrupulousness of his motives. It is true, sometimes, that truth is stranger than fiction. On its face, Thucydides' account of the Pylos campaign seems to fit neatly into this platitude. When subjected to a thorough analysis, Thucydides' account is opaque, haphazard, and incomplete. Studying the author's evidence that the Athenian strategy is deliberate enables a reader to glean new lessons of strategy from the campaign. Such a reading facilitates an appreciation for the brilliance and flexibility of the Athenian plan. The Athenians forced both the Peloponnesian fleet and Spartan land army to divert from their original strategic actions and into unfavorable positions, from which they never recovered.

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Thucydides at Pylos and Sphacteria: Assessing Strategy over Chance

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Thucydides at Pylos and Sphacteria: Assessing Strategy over Chance

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Thesis: The Athenians were successful in the Pylos campaign because they rapidly and unexpectedly transitioned from a strategy of exhaustion to a strategy of annihilation, exploiting their relative advantage to further their own capacity for operations while diminishing Sparta's ability to cope with the unfolding circumstances.

Discussion: This paper aims to provide clarity to Thucydides' ambiguous account of Athens' campaign to Pylos during the Peloponnesian War. The Pylos campaign is significant in the Peloponnesian War because it is the only example of an Athenian decisive victory over elite Spartan troops on land, which enabled the political space for the negotiations that could have ended the Archidamian War (these negotiations failed). In analyzing the Pylos campaign, first, one must consider the possibility that it was both brilliant and deliberate, rather than haphazard and propitious as Thucydides implies. Such a view, consequently, enables a more thorough analysis of Athenian plans and actions that both decimated the Peloponnesian fleet and defeated Sparta's most elite land forces. Critical factors that enable such an analysis include Demosthenes' ambiguous position and authority, the Athenian fleet's delay at Zacynthus, the incomprehensible Spartan incompetence at the Bay of Navarino, and the probability of collusion between Demosthenes and Cleon. Moreover, a critical geographical error in Thucydides' depiction not only negates the likelihood of the Spartans executing their amphibious assault as portrayed, but also calls into question the accuracy of his account and the scrupulousness of his motives. Consequently, a more critical analysis of Thucydides' writing leads to an improved understanding of shifts in Athenian strategy following Pericles' death, including the fluid and rapid transition from a strategy of exhaustion to a strategy of annihilation at Pylos and Sphacteria. Ultimately, it is Athens' ability to transcend the paradigm of its own maritime superiority that enabled them to destroy Spartan cohesiveness while dictating the terms of the encounter.

Conclusion: It is true, sometimes, that truth is stranger than fiction. On its face, Thucydides' account of the Pylos campaign seems to fit neatly into this platitude. Yet, when subjected to a more thorough examination, Thucydides' account of Pylos is opaque, haphazard, and incomplete. Studying the author's evidence that the Athenian strategy is deliberate enables a reader to glean new lessons of strategy from the campaign. Such a reading facilitates an appreciation for the brilliance and flexibility of the Athenian plan. Quite simply, the Athenians, through little exertion of their own troops, forced both the Peloponnesian fleet and Spartan land army to divert from their original strategic actions and into unfavorable positions, from which they never recovered.

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PREFACE

My journey to comprehending Thucydides' "History" began as a student at the Expeditionary Warfare School in 2014. The historian Dr. Williamson Murray facilitated an elective that surveyed great works in military history, one of which was of course Thucydides. Dr. Murray held that week's discussion at LtGen Jon M. "Dog" Davis' quarters aboard Fort Meade. As we were about to begin, LtGen Davis instructed us to wait as he stepped outside. He returned with BGen Vincent R. Stewart, who had been mowing his lawn and had not prepared for a discussion on the Peloponnesian War in any way. Regardless, BGen Stewart cited passages from memory, and noted motivations and strategies of both sides. His mental acuity and perspicacity was impressive and exciting. From that moment on, I have tried to further my own understanding of Thucydides' enigmatic "History," and apply its lessons to the contemporary environment.

Building on this foundation, I carried my curiosity into Command and Staff College's Advanced Studies Program: "Mind at War." My interest was piqued in that excellent seminar by the idea of comparative duplicity and deception in both Greek and Chinese military traditions. This initial idea led to an inquiry of the Greek *polytropos*, or many-sided, Odysseus, and how he seems to be the physical manifestation of Sun Tzu's teachings. Ultimately, and in a gratuitously circuitous manner, the study of Odysseus led me to a deeper exploration of Thucydides. I must, of course, thank Dr. Nathan Packard and Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Glathar, USMC, for their mentorship in "Mind at War," and Dr. Anne-Louise Antonoff for her patience, guidance, and wisdom during both seminar and the writing process. Finally, for his contributions to both my study of Thucydides and my personal growth as an officer, I must acknowledge Dr. Hunter R. Rawlings, III and his amazing elective at Command and Staff College, which provides the foundational understanding for much of this essay.

INTRODUCTION

Thucydides' account of Athens' Pylos campaign is significant in the Peloponnesian War because it is the only example of an Athenian decisive victory over elite Spartan troops on land. The Athenian victory enabled the political space for the negotiations that could have ended the Archidamian War.[1] In analyzing the Pylos campaign, first, one must consider the possibility that it was both brilliant and deliberate, rather than haphazard and propitious as Thucydides implies. Such a critical analysis of Thucydides' writing leads to an improved understanding of shifts in Athenian strategy following Pericles' death, including the fluid and rapid transition from a strategy of exhaustion to a strategy of annihilation at Pylos and Sphacteria. In fact, this perspective reveals the campaign to a review of military strategy, rather than an assumption that chance holds all the cards.

By filtering the historian's account of the campaign through the theories of Sun Tzu, John Boyd, and Hans Delbrück, however, one comes to understand the Athenian plans and actions that both decimated the Peloponnesian fleet and defeated Sparta's most elite land forces. Quite simply, the Athenians, through little exertion of their own force, drove both the Peloponnesian fleet and Spartan land army to divert from their original strategic actions and into unfavorable positions, from which they never recovered. To that end, this essay will search Thucydides' text to understand Athenian strategy from an Eastern perspective: the ability to translate strategic positions and relative advantage into a pattern of achieving a maximum effect while expending a minimum of energy. Ultimately, the Athenians are successful in the Pylos campaign because they rapidly and unexpectedly transition from a strategy of exhaustion to a strategy of annihilation, exploiting their relative advantage to further their own capacity for operations while diminishing Sparta's ability to cope with the unfolding circumstances.

Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War is, for all intents and purposes, a tragedy that not only documents the momentous events and horrific actions of the brutal 27-year conflict between Athens and Sparta, but also provides a vehicle for critical analysis of war, warfare, and people. Yet, a discerning reader will recognize that Thucydides' own account merits more critical reading than its definitive reputation would warrant, as the work probably lies somewhere in between the realms of literature and history.[2] Perhaps no episode in Thucydides' narrative is more deserving of scrutiny than his depiction of the Athenian campaign to Pylos in 425 BC.

Taken at face value, Thucydides' account of the Pylos campaign appears to be a product of mere happenstance, marked by error, and notable for the author's dismissal of Athenian generals. A literal reading of the text, therefore, tends to trivialize the success of the campaign. Yet, the historian does provide clues that defy such casual analysis. Seen through a different lens, one grounded in military theory rather than cultural convention, Thucydides' own evidence allows the reader to glean new lessons of strategy from the campaign and appreciate the brilliance and flexibility of the Athenian plan. A comparison between these two lenses thus lends a deeper historical meaning to the great literary text.

THE LITERAL LENS: TAKING THUCYDIDES AT HIS WORD

Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction. Thucydides' account of the Pylos campaign seems to fit neatly into this platitude. The Pylos campaign is significant for several reasons. First, Pylos provided the Athenians the greatest defeat of Spartan forces in the entirety of the Peloponnesian War. Second, the campaign is subject to oddities not present in the rest of Thucydides' account, including the primacy of Athenian land power, employment of Spartan sea power, and numerous occurrences of chance. Third, Pylos is significant because it enabled the first opportunity for actionable peace negotiations in the war, although the Athenians ultimately denied the Spartan

requests. From a historiographical perspective, Thucydides' account of the Pylos campaign is opaque at best, and his use of chance in this section is unique in comparison to the rest of the narrative.

Thucydides' account begins with a crucial, but easily overlooked question: what was Demosthenes' position when the expedition departed Athens? Furthermore, why did the assembly grant him "permission to use the fleet, if he wished," for operations on the Peloponnesus?[3] Thucydides' description of Pylos exhibits considerable flaws when compared to the thorough nature of most of his work. The most famous of these errors is Thucydides' inaccurate geographic depiction of the harbor at Pylos in 4.8.6, which in and of itself precludes the Spartans from executing their plan as the historian describes.[4] The anomalies and inconsistencies of Thucydides' account call into question his sources, his knowledge of the campaign, and his motivation for creating the narrative.

Even more noteworthy is Thucydides' reliance on chance to describe the events of the campaign. These chance occurrences include the storm that forced the Athenians to land at Pylos, weather that did not permit the Athenians from departing Pylos, bored sailors who developed fortifications to occupy time, Messenian privateers who happened to arrive with arms for the Athenians at Pylos just barely before the Spartans' assault, the Athenian fleet that coincidentally travelled only as far as Zacynthus after leaving Demosthenes, the Athenian fleet's surprise of the conservative and usually prepared Spartan land force and Peloponnesian fleet, Nicias' resignation from leading the reinforcing expedition and the fortuitous appointment of Cleon as its leader, the accidental burning of all foliage on Sphacteria by bored and hungry Athenians, which exposed the Spartan positions, and finally the great luck that the Messenians recognized a goat path on the East side of Sphacteria, of which the Spartiates were unaware despite the fact that they had resided on

the island for 72 days.[5] These chance events not only enable the tempo of Thucydides' narrative, but also facilitate the author's ability to state what he either does not know or is unwilling to compose.

Whatever Thucydides' motives for misrepresenting the events of the Pylos campaign, a more critical analysis of the campaign, in which one challenges Thucydides' description of chance, may prove beneficial. In fact, it allows one to observe the campaign in a different manner. In this fashion, one may recognize a ruthless, secretive, and measured strategy, rather than one beholden to randomness and chance.

THE THEORETICAL LENS: REINTERPRETING THUCYDIDES

Modern theorists generally agree on a definition of strategy as the choice that binds a state's available means and its policy goals.[6] A more comprehensive definition posits that strategy, as the "highest level of thinking about war," requires choice from the state and that binding means with ends is an art in and of itself.[7] It includes priorities, sequencing, and a theory of victory.[8] Priority, of course, indicates treating one objective with greater importance than others. In a similar manner, sequencing simply means that a state will attain one goal, then a subsequent or consequent goal. A theory of victory, however, might include why a state might believe it will be successful or through which approach or activities.[9] In more specific terms, strategy stipulates how "kinds and quantities of military action should generate the effect either persuading" an adversary from continuing their strategy, or "of physically denying them the ability to fight on."[10] Ultimately, strategy requires a deep awareness of a state's own capabilities and intentions and those of its opponent, along with the flexibility to adapt to a dynamic environment.[11]

An elucidation of the typologies of strategy is also pertinent for the discussion at hand before attempting to appreciate Athenian decisions. For immediate purposes, it is most appropriate

to study the means employed in the Peloponnesian War through the pre-nuclear, Delbrückian model of annihilation or exhaustion. In a strategy of annihilation, a belligerent seeks decisive battle to achieve its strategic goal, culminating with the complete destruction of an opponent's will or capability to resist.[12] In contrast, a state that utilizes a strategy of exhaustion may engage in battle if necessary, but may also strive to achieve its aims through other means, such as territorial occupation, destruction of crops, or blockades.[13] Throughout the Peloponnesian War, the two belligerents employed both types of strategies. In general terms, however, the Spartan application of a strategy of annihilation, and the Athenian deployment of a strategy of exhaustion defined the strategic themes of the war.[14]

The question then arises of how to assess the Spartan and Athenian strategies during the Pylos campaign. One may find an appropriate framework for such a discussion in the works of a modern military theorist, John Boyd, and the Eastern classical thinker from whom he drew much inspiration, Sun Tzu. Their ideas, while not explicitly "strategic," pertain across the range of military operations.

According to Boyd, the aim of strategy is to "[d]iminish [the] adversary's capacity while improving our capacity to adapt as an organic whole, so that our adversary cannot cope – while we can cope – with events/efforts as they unfold."[15] Moreover, Boyd recognizes the fundamental aim of maneuver warfare as compelling the enemy to "generate many non-cooperative centers of gravity, as well as to disorient or disrupt those that the adversary depends upon, in order to magnify friction, shatter cohesion, produce paralysis and bring about his collapse."[16] This collapse is a product of cultivating an environment of ambiguity and fomenting deception, establishing novelty in the system, exploiting the unfamiliar with rapid or abrupt maneuvers, and concentrating energy as an eruption of violence.[17] Ultimately, according to Boyd, maneuver warfare surprises an

opponent, shocks him into disorientation and paralysis, surprises them, and disrupts his essential state of being.[18]

Fundamental to this aim are Sun Tzu's harmonizing concepts of *hsing* (strategic positions) and *shih* (relative advantage).[19] In this context, *hsing* is the awareness of the capabilities of one's own force, the comprehension of germane factors in the environment, and the recognition of the point in which "accumulated potential reveals itself to be completely"[20] in favor of action, which ostensibly requires judgement.[21] Similarly, *shih* is the "dynamic power and integrated force that combines the effects of material things, natural forces, and human factors in some action."[22] Sun Tzu emphasizes a time component associated with *shih*, in that an expert leverages *shih* "when his timing is precise."[23] Again, Sun Tzu accentuates the significance of judgement and timing as crucial to success in exploiting *shih*.[24]

Therefore, the combination of adaptable *hsing* and variable *shih* describes a singular model through which to understand and shape a strategic environment.[25] This conceptual understanding not only leads to a greater awareness of the true capabilities of the opposing forces, but also facilitates a comprehension of how and when to intervene in a system to ensure the greatest probability of success. Put simply, the aim of a strategist is to modify a system "upstream" through *hsing* to maximize the desired outcomes in the form of the "downstream" *shih* of cascading and consequent actions.[26] The Athenian conduct of the campaign at Pylos exemplifies an intuitive grasp of this strategic logic, as natural in Thucydides' day as in Sun Tzu's.

STRATEGY IN THE ARCHIDAMIAN WAR

Thucydides argued that the Peloponnesian War produced an opposition of the preeminent maritime and land powers.[27] However, it may be more useful for the conversation at hand to

consider the strategic dichotomy, instead, as one of annihilation versus exhaustion.[28] The fundamental Athenian policy goal was the maintenance and preservation of the status quo, which enabled the continuing rise of their own power and influence.[29] Consequently, the Athenians were capable of employing a defensive strategy to leverage their own substantial capital while exhaustively depleting Sparta of its resources.[30] In serving their strategy of exhaustion, Pericles, ostensibly Athens' greatest general, directed all citizens to abandon their lands outside the city walls, transport their belongings to within the confines of Athens' walls, and forego any decisive land engagement with the Spartans, even as the latter invaded Attica.[31] Moreover, Pericles argued for maintaining Athens' maritime supremacy and for extensive raiding against the Peloponnesus.[32] Ultimately, Pericles' strategy of exhaustion sought to leverage Athenian advantages in naval power while denying Sparta the ability to retaliate on land.[33]

Conversely, the Spartans, as a revisionist power of sorts, pursued the disruption of the status quo.[34] The result of this policy aim was preventive war, intended to shatter Athens' network of alliances and hobble their rising power and influence.[35] Nevertheless, even as Archidamus, the Spartan king, attempted to advocate patience and expand the Peloponnesian naval capability, the Spartans opted for war, "as the honor of Sparta demands."[36] Sparta erroneously saw its advantage in land forces and, more specifically, its hoplites as a sufficient means to bring about the destruction of Athens' army. By contrast, Archidamus, in his speech in Book 1, argued for a conservative approach to the onset of war. Had the Spartans delayed their invasion of Attica, Archidamus argued, they could have ostensibly increased their naval power and increased their strategic positions.[37] Such an approach would have amplified Sparta's *shih.* The preference for decisive engagement instead led to annual incursions into the Attic peninsula, where the Athenians permitted the Spartans to raze and plunder the countryside, thus preserving their own *shih* while

the Spartans depleted theirs. Consequently, Sparta's supremacy on land was of little use, as it had no opponent of significance for the preponderance of the Archidamian War. However, Archidamus presaged Sparta's fundamental strategic flaws that would ultimately negate its primacy on land: the absence of Peloponnesian naval power for expeditionary operations, and the inability to keep Sparta itself from being consistently vulnerable to Athenian maritime incursion on the Peloponnesus. This imbalance of potential vs. expended resources and strategic advantage from the very outset played a fundamental role in the outcome of the Pylos campaign, one every bit as significant as "chance." In effect, the Athenians were making their own luck, while the Spartans were depleting theirs.

DEMOSTHENES, CLEON, AND MUTUAL INTERESTS

Demosthenes is one of the most intriguing figures in all of Thucydides' "History." He appears to be unique among Thucydidean generals not only in his political insignificance, but also in his audacity and adaptability as a strategist.[38] Moreover, Demosthenes is also distinctive in his ability to create his own luck through preparation, maximizing strategic advantages, and learning through experience. His first appearance occurred in Acarnania as general of an expedition, where the inhabitants urged him to construct walls around Acarnania.[39] Instead, Thucydides explains that Demosthenes is "persuaded by the Messenians… to attack the Aetolians."[40] This passage is significant because it indicates an established relationship between Demosthenes and the Messenians that is important enough for the general to have modified his plan. Moreover, the linkage between Demosthenes and the Messenians provides context for his use of their forces during the Pylos campaign.

However, Demosthenes' campaign against the Aetolians resulted in nothing short of disaster. The general underestimated the Aetolian force who used a mix of light troops, archers,

and javelin throwers to decimate the Athenians. The Aetolians also utilized fire to limit Athenian maneuverability and enhance the shock of the attack.[41] The result, according to Thucydides, was the loss of "about one hundred and twenty Athenian hoplites… all in the prime of life. These were by far the best men in the city of Athens that fell during the war."[42] Furthermore, Thucydides asserts that after his defeat Demosthenes remained in Naupactus, "being afraid to face the Athenians after the disaster," for fear of exile or execution.[43]

Nevertheless, while he hid in Naupactus, Demosthenes involved himself in its defense against the Spartans and Ambraciots. In a series of unconventional victories, Demosthenes employed similar tactics to those of the Aetolians. Against the Spartans, Demosthenes used ambush tactics to exploit the effects of archers, javelin throwers, and maneuverable light troops.[44] When facing the Ambraciots, Demosthenes leveraged the linguistic similarities of the Messenians and their adversary to deceive Ambraciot sentinels, ultimately slaying the force in a pre-dawn ambush.[45]

Following his successful defense of Naupactus, Demosthenes can return to Athens. Thucydides states that the campaign facilitated the procurement of significant treasure, which Demosthenes brought to Athens "in person, his return to his country after the Aetolian disaster being rendered less hazardous by this exploit."[46] His self-imposed exile and reconciliatory delivery of the war spoils, together with the fact that the assembly elected Demosthenes as general-elect for 425-424 BC, all indicate that Demosthenes had a strong desire to maintain his position as a general.[47] Moreover, this context fills Thucydides' explanatory gaps regarding Demosthenes' position and authority during the Pylos campaign. At the same time, Thucydides' emphasis on redemption conforms to a Classical Greek understanding of reward and punishment, as opposed to the inherently self-actuating logic of war, if not life itself.

In Cleon, Thucydides finds the type of politician of which Pericles had warned Athens. Specifically, Cleon represents the most violent and aggressive factions of Athens, and Thucydides' portrayal of him stands in stark contrast to that of the revered Pericles.[48] However, Thucydides also states that Cleon, despite his violent tendencies, is "by far the most powerful with the people."[49] Thucydides' representation of Cleon is the first leader in the "History" that appealed to the worst nature of the assembly, rather than what is best.[50] Moreover, it seems that Cleon's aim was the consolidation of his own personal power and influence, albeit for what he perceived is best for the state.[51] This idea of personal gain at the expense of public interest is at the heart of Thucydides' obituary for Pericles, where he asserts that Athenians allowed their private aspirations to both curtail the interests of the state and act in an unjust fashion.[52]

The idea of collusion in some fashion before and during the Pylos campaign between Demosthenes the general and Cleon the politician is not new.[53] Nevertheless, revisiting this idea through an analysis of strategic capability and conscious intent, as opposed to sheer happenstance, produces a more nuanced understanding of their relationship and interactions. Demosthenes, following his catastrophic defeat in Aetolia, needs a champion in Athens if the assembly is to re-elect him to general, which is his intent.[54] Even with his victory over the Spartans and Ambraciots, Thucydides indicates that Demosthenes is not necessarily a popular figure in Athens.[55] He must buy back favor. It is therefore necessary for him to use his recent windfall of war spoils to provide monetary compensation both to Athens in general, and to any politician who might further his cause. Similarly, Cleon's aims include personal gain, and the advancement of his own status, position, and influence.[56] Furthermore, Thucydides makes it clear that Cleon is exceptionally influential with the people and is most persuasive with the assembly.[57] Therefore, these Athenians have the ability and motivation to form a partnership to further their mutual interests.

Thucydides certainly provides few details regarding the possibility of a collusive relationship between Demosthenes and Cleon. However, one theory states that the relationship begins in 426 with Demosthenes' loss in the election, and his subsequent return to Athens with his share of the war spoils.[58] In fact, Thucydides provides an indication that the assembly's sentiment is somehow swayed to grant Demosthenes permission to "use the fleet, if he wished," an authority unique in all the war.[59] But Thucydides offers several other deliberate hints to indicate that the pair were coordinating with one another.

Most notably, as Nicias urged the assembly to select Cleon to reinforce Pylos, the latter not only is prepared to make a recommendation on force size and structure, but also does so immediately.[60] This request for forces moreover is unique because it did not represent a typical Athenian configuration of hoplites and sailors. Instead, Cleon asked for, and received, a mix of light troops and archers, which was more representative of Demosthenes' recent experiences in Aetolia and Amphilochia.[61]

Cleon's selection of Demosthenes as his colleague affords another opportunity to explore their relationship. Thucydides indicates that Cleon was somehow aware of both Demosthenes' tactical plans to assault the island of Sphacteria and the fact that the Athenians had burned the vegetation on the island, exposing the Spartan positions.[62] The final example of collusion occurred as Cleon approached Pylos to reinforce Demosthenes. Thucydides' portrayal of the scene is ambiguous but offers the possibility of close coordination and communication between the two Athenians. Specifically, the historian explains, "Cleon arrived at Pylos with the troops which he had asked for, having sent on word to say that he was coming."[63] Despite Thucydides' ambiguity regarding who has asked for which troops, it is a relative certainty that the pair had been communicating and coordinating for longer than Cleon's immediate approach to Pylos.[64] With this

foundational context, and an understanding that Demosthenes designed the Pylos campaign, and Cleon enabled him, the possibility of further analysis of the details of the campaign becomes apparent, with an eye toward understanding the two sides' relative strategic potential and their exploitation of advantages, rather than blind acceptance of luck, chance, and fate.

OPENING OF THE PYLOS CAMPAIGN

The strategic environment of the Peloponnesian War presented Athens with a complex situation in the summer of 425 BC. In Sicily, the Syracusans and Locrians exploited civil unrest in Messana.[65] Near the mouth of the Ionian Gulf, a Peloponnesian fleet of 60 vessels supported Corcyraean exiles in operations against that city.[66] Finally, Agis, the Spartan king, led the annual invasion of Attica where he laid waste to the countryside.[67] In response, Athens deployed a fleet consisting of 40 triremes, and at least 8,000 men, including 400 hoplites and 80 archers.[68] According to Thucydides, the Athenians elected Eurymedon and Sophocles to lead this expeditionary force in destroying the Peloponnesian fleet off the coast of Corcyra, and subsequently quelling insurrection in Messana with their colleague, Pythodorus, who had preceded them.[69] In fact, one might argue that the destruction of the Peloponnesian fleet was the primary aim of the expedition. Such an objective would be in accordance with the prevailing Periclean strategy that Athens had utilized since the war's outset, which sought the destruction of any Peloponnesian naval capability and the conduct of amphibious raids along the Peloponnesian coast.[70]

Interestingly, the Athenian assembly authorized Demosthenes, both a private citizen and general-elect for the coming year, to "use the fleet, if he wished upon the coast of the Peloponnesus," in conjunction with Eurymedon and Sophocles' campaign.[71] Demosthenes, exhibiting a great deal of foresight, immediately argued for the expedition to make landfall at Pylos

to "do what was wanted there."[72] To this point, Demosthenes recognized that a direct approach against the larger Peloponnesian fleet might not be appropriate. Rather, an indirect action, such as establishing fortifications 45 miles from Sparta, might drive the Peloponnesian fleet to commit to an unintended or unfavorable course of action.[73] Such thinking suggests the idea of making the enemy complicit in his own undoing by appearing to offer a weak target while masking strength – a very Sun Tzu-esque approach. Furthermore, Demosthenes appreciated specific elements of terrain, topography, and demography at Pylos that appeared to escape his colleagues. Specifically, he believed Pylos to be unique among territories on the Peloponnesus and comprehended that the Athenians could leverage the native Messenians against their Spartan enemies.[74] It seems, then, that Demosthenes' intimate knowledge of Pylos was likely the result of a previous excursion to that place, potentially on his return voyage from Naupactus in 426 BC.[75]

Thucydides claims that Demosthenes was unable to convince Eurymedon and Sophocles of Pylos's strategic significance.[76] Missing from this account, however, is a clear depiction of sequencing: the generals may have desired to attack the Peloponnesians at Corcyra before any expedition on the Peloponnesus, while Demosthenes appears to have recognized some element of urgency that required an immediate action.[77] It is clear from the passage (4.3) that Demosthenes had guarded his plans for Pylos with the greatest of secrecy, most likely to maintain strategic surprise against the Peloponnesians.[78] To this point, Thucydides clearly articulates a timeline in which Demosthenes made his plans known to his colleagues only after the fleet had departed on their expedition, indicating an element of concealment and deceitfulness on his part.[79] In what may be one of the truest depictions of chance in Thucydides' Pylos narrative, the Athenians ultimately made landfall at Pylos to escape the effects of a squall.[80] When one considers how the fleet had

already set course, however, it seems evident that Demosthenes again made his own luck, being in the right place to exploit chance at the right time.

ATHENIAN FORTIFICATION AND DEFENSE

Next, Thucydides unfolds a most peculiar episode in which the Athenians developed fortifications at Pylos. According to the historian, Demosthenes vociferously argued in favor of establishing a base of operations at Pylos and employing the native Messenians both to man the garrison and to conduct incursions into the Laconic interior.[81] The generals, however, were unconvinced, due perhaps to Demosthenes' lack of authority inherent in his unofficial position and the value Eurymedon and Sophocles placed on achieving their original mission.[82] Nevertheless, the Athenian rank and file, bored and wanting occupation, determined for themselves to defy their generals and fortify the site.[83]

A superficial reading of this passage (4.3.1-4.4.3), however, will not suffice. Thucydides' account of the fortification of Pylos is simply inadequate, and if true bears larger social and political implications for Athenian society. The historian, in this case, indicates that Athenian troops, through their mutinous acts, defied the direction of their elected generals and fortified their position of their own accord, motivated by boredom and enthusiasm that endured in hard labor for approximately six days.[84] An alternative reading might expose differing motivations, other than boredom. There exist many different interpretations of the passage, including to the identity of whomever Demosthenes was addressing, the oddity of Thucydides' syntax in the passage (4.4.1), and even the possibility that Athenian troops became aware of the potential need for fortifying their position through eavesdropping and rumor.[85] The Athenians, only 45 miles from Sparta, may have sought protection from some survival instinct or out of fear. Thucydides states that they spared "no effort to complete the most vulnerable points before the arrival of the Spartans."[86] To

this point, the historian offers many examples of mutinous events and failed leadership in his writing; however, the fortifications at Pylos constitute the singular occurrence of mutiny and insubordination leading to force protection.[87]

Conversely, it is possible that Demosthenes' planned to fortify the position as part of a larger strategy. Thucydides emphasizes that the Athenians, "having no iron tools," used whatever means available to erect their works.[88] However, he also goes to great length to stress Demosthenes' understanding of the "stone and timber on the spot," indicating that perhaps he thought the terrain sufficient for defense, and subsequently changed his mind once on the ground.[89] Regardless of the actual intent, Athenian reactive fear or Demosthenes' proactive strategy, Thucydides' account of Athenian fortifications cannot be taken at face value, and casts doubt on the author's retelling of the entire Pylos campaign. At the very least, the historian continues to withhold the blessings of good fortune from the misfortunate general, rather than explicate the process of learning from experience.

The Athenian development of fortifications at Pylos caused a dramatic response across the Peloponnesian force. In fact, it appears that these fortifications instigated a Spartan reaction not yet observed during previous Athenian raiding in the Peloponnesus. Agis determined to abandon his sortie on the Attic peninsula after only 15 days.[90] Moreover, the Peloponnesian fleet abandoned its support of Corcyraean exiles, dragged its triremes across the isthmus of Leucas to expedite their journey and avoid Athenian detection in open water, and prepared for an assault on Demosthenes' garrison.[91] Meanwhile, Thucydides presents Demosthenes' position as insufficiently defended: he maintained only five ships with untrained and unarmed sailors, and the Spartan horde was approaching by land and sea.[92] In response, Demosthenes dispatched two triremes to Zacynthus, not the original Athenian destination of Corcyra, to "summon" Eurymedon and Sophocles "to his

assistance."[93] But why was the fleet at Zacynthus? And how did Demosthenes' unusual position carry any military authority whatsoever? Certainly, this passage deserves further critical analysis.

The first point of consideration is the location of the remaining 35 triremes of the Athenian fleet. Instead of continuing with their plan to destroy the Peloponnesian fleet at Corcyra, Demosthenes' messenger found Eurymedon and Sophocles at Zacynthus, approximately 150 miles south of their original destination.[94] Furthermore, the fleet had been at Zacynthus for approximately one week.[95] A likely explanation for the Athenian fleet's position is that Eurymedon and Sophocles, believing that Demosthenes' occupation of Pylos would instigate action on the part of the Peloponnesians, were utilizing Zacynthus to support either an ambush or counterattack.[96] Secondly, in utilizing the word "summon," Thucydides seems to indicate coordination and planning between Demosthenes and his colleagues.[97] It may also be possible that Demosthenes himself assumed some form of authority over the two generals, indicating both a previous collusion regarding their return and a respect for Demosthenes as a commander.[98] Once again, moreover, the Athenians are preparing to exploit their own "luck," which has already bestowed on them significant strategic advantage.

In the continuing narrative, the landward Spartans arrived and the Peloponnesian fleet continued to approach. The Spartans, determining to avoid an open water naval engagement, utilized a complementary strategy of a blockade of Sikia Channel and Pylos Cove, the Spartiates' occupation of Sphacteria to support the blockade, an amphibious assault into Pylos with 43 triremes, and a landward attack against the Athenian fortifications.[99] However, before the Spartans could enact their strategy of annihilation on the unarmed Athenians, a Messenian privateer "happened to have come to them [Demosthenes' detachment]."[100] This chance encounter with the privateer provided the Athenians not only with weapons and shields, but also with 40 additional

Messenian hoplites.[101] Once again, Demosthenes was in a position to create his own good fortune and gain an advantage.

The Messenian privateer episode therefore merits critical examination. It is, of course, possible that Demosthenes was fortunate enough to gain a windfall of both hoplites and weapons shortly before the Spartan assault begins. Conversely, it is also possible that Demosthenes' windfall is no product of chance or luck, but rather the result of thorough and deliberate planning to facilitate his defense.[102] Thucydides' portrayal of the privateer's appearance as a coincidental encounter seems both improbable and unbelievable. If the reader, however, recognizes Demosthenes' strategic acumen, then the Messenian privateer episode becomes one more synchronized element in a coordinated plan.

In response to the anticipated Spartan amphibious assault, Demosthenes established both landward and seaward defensive positions.[103] First, he placed the preponderance of his force against the land-based Spartans. Next, Demosthenes established a hasty defense at the high-water mark to prevent a Spartan lodgment. He used his remaining three triremes to create a system of obstacles at the beachhead. Consequently, Demosthenes covered those obstacles with both hoplites and archers, desiring to exploit the difficult terrain and obstacle network against a numerically superior Spartan amphibious force.[104] For their part, the Spartans assaulted at the precise location Demosthenes anticipated, unsuccessfully attempting to overrun the Athenian position for two days.[105] The Spartans culminated on the second day, and dispatched some of their fleet to acquire the tools for siege engines.[106]

As the Spartans began siege preparations, Eurymedon and Sophocles returned from Zacynthus with the Athenian fleet and four additional Chian triremes.[107] However, the Athenians were unable to reinforce Demosthenes immediately as Spartan hoplites and ships crowded the

beach.[108] Thus, the Athenians diverted to the deserted island of Prote, where they remained overnight.[109] The following day, however, the Athenians returned to Pylos and the Navarino Bay, expecting to meet some element of the Peloponnesian fleet either in open water or at the entrances to the bay.[110] But the Spartans, in the most intriguing element of the entire campaign, failed to put their triremes out to sea, enabling the Athenians free passage.[111]

As a result, the Athenians created a scene of massive chaos by ramming and destroying Peloponnesian triremes, and towing off others that belonged to fleeing crews.[112] This sudden, and apparently unexpected, defeat at the hands of the Athenians broke the cohesion of whatever semblance of Spartan defense existed, and produced a maddening fear that the Spartiates on Sphacteria were now completely isolated.[113] Ultimately, the Spartans sued for an armistice that permitted Athenian blockade and a limited resupply of Sphacteria under Athenian supervision.[114]

This Spartan catastrophe is unique in all of Thucydides' "History" because it depicts not only a devastating Spartan defeat, but also an uncharacteristically chaotic Spartan response to Athenian tactical action. Thucydides portrays the Spartans as the most professional of all Greek militaries, with a reputation for ferocity, and who "consistently [maintained] military supremacy on land."[115] If this representation is accurate, then no excuse short of incompetence exists for the Spartan failure to organize any form of defense, either land or maritime. It is possible, however, that both those Spartans who fought from land and those who constituted the amphibious portion of the attack were unaware of the presence of the Athenian fleet.[116] But it is exceedingly unlikely that the Spartiates residing on Sphacteria, whose purpose appeared to be prohibiting Athenian envelopment via the island, could have failed to see the approaching 41 triremes.[117] Moreover, it may be possible that either the Spartiates on Sphacteria maintained no practicable method of communicating with their counterparts, or that the Spartiates assumed the remainder of the force

was aware of the Athenian fleet's presence. Regardless of the cause, the Spartans were wholly unprepared for the Athenian fleet, resulting in what Thucydides exposes as complete shock and panic.[118]

NEGOTIATIONS, BLOCKADE, AND THE PYLOS DEBATE

Accordingly, the Spartans dispatched envoys to Athens to negotiate the terms of a peace accord. Thucydides gives the Spartan envoys a speech that emphasizes the historian's depiction of chance during the battle, and that the Athenians should not "suppose that fortune will always" be on their side.[119] Not only did the Spartans offer the terms of a just peace, but they also provided an opportunity for negotiation through plenipotentiaries and compromise to achieve an agreement.[120] Thucydides explains that Cleon assailed the Spartans for desiring to "confer in secret," as opposed to arguing their positions in the presence of the assembly.[121] The Spartan envoys, however, were unable to publicly negotiate any concessions for fear of losing influence with their allies.[122] Ultimately, the peace negotiations failed, the Spartan envoys returned home, the armistice concluded at Sphacteria, the Athenians retained the Peloponnesian fleet after alleging a Spartan violation of the truce, and Cleon forfeited the soundest opportunity for reasonable and just peace during the Archidamian War.[123]

Following the collapse of the peace negotiations and the end of the armistice, the Athenians and Spartans resumed their hostile activities at Pylos and Sphacteria. With the seizure of the Peloponnesian triremes, the Athenians now maintained a fleet of 70 ships.[124] For their part, the Spartans continued their unsuccessful attacks against Athenian fortifications in search of any opportunity to regain custody of the isolated Spartiates on Sphacteria.[125] But the Athenians found the blockade exceedingly difficult to enact. Indeed, they themselves were now wanting for water, as Pylos itself had only one single spring.[126] To this point, the Athenians were guilty of two gross

miscalculations: the hardship that the blockade would require, and the resolve of the Spartiates, especially the Helots.[127]

The news of the difficult blockade forced action within the Athenian assembly. Their fear was especially poignant both because the approaching winter would make the continued blockade impossible, and because they regretted having rejected the Spartans' terms for peace without substantive negotiation.[128] In response, and following Cleon's slander of the Athenian informants, the assembly determined to deploy Cleon himself and Theagenes as commissioners to Pylos to uncover the objective truth of the situation.[129] This nomination, however, placed Cleon into a dubious position: in undertaking the commission, he had either to repeat the observations of those messengers he had recently slandered, or prove himself a liar.[130] Cleon, who was "by far the most powerful with The People,"[131] employed his skillful rhetoric in stating that the Athenians, "if they believed what was told to them,"[132] should immediately send an expedition against Sphacteria. Furthermore, Thucydides' commentary renders Cleon as denigrating Nicias because the latter had not yet departed with an expedition himself.[133] Moreover, Cleon claimed that if he were in command, the Athenians would have already occupied Sphacteria.[134]

Consequently, Nicias informed the assembly that, "for all the generals cared, he [Cleon] might take what force he chose and make the attempt [against Sphacteria]."[135] Thucydides then states that Cleon believed Nicias' resignation to be "merely a figure of speech," and that he "never supposed that Nicias would go so far as to retire his favor."[136] Moreover, Thucydides declares that Nicias went on to confirm his resignation and to incite the assembly against Cleon. With no favorable alternative, Cleon undertook the expedition and stated that he was unafraid. Furthermore, he immediately requested troops in the form of Lemnians and Imbrians, as well as peltasts from Aenus and 400 archers from another location. With this force, Cleon argued that he could either

kill all the Spartiates on Sphacteria, or return them to Athens alive, within 20 days.[137] Thucydides describes an assembly that is amused by Cleon's absurd proposal, and who were motivated by both the departure of Cleon and the possible defeat of the Spartans. The Athenians thus granted Cleon command of the second Pylos expedition. Ultimately, Cleon selected Demosthenes as his colleague, having recently gained confidence in the general after hearing "he was contemplating a descent on the island."[138]

The interaction of Cleon and Nicias, known as the Pylos debate, is interesting for two reasons. The first is Nicias' position at the time of the debate, which Thucydides does not specify. An argument exists that the Athenians had previously appointed Nicias as the general for the expedition.[139] To this point, Thucydides, throughout his history, portrays Nicias as cautious to a fault.[140] Moreover, Thucydides indicates a passage of time in 4.26 in describing how the Athenians and Spartans each fared during the blockade.[141] Also, when Cleon argued to the assembly for his generalship, he was exceptionally clear that his force would not utilize any Athenian hoplites, indicating that either he did not require this force or the hoplites were perhaps not ready.[142] The combination of these factors and Thucydides' clear description of Nicias' resignation seem to indicate that the Athenians did, in fact, elect Nicias as the original general of the Pylos expedition, and that the general simply had not yet departed before receiving the information that the blockade was increasing in its difficulty.[143] Nicias' position becomes important, however, when juxtaposed with the second item of interest within the Pylos debate: Cleon's assumption of command.

Thucydides portrays Cleon in the Pylos debate as both reluctant and antagonizing. Cleon "perceived the disfavor with which he was regarded,"[144] and provoked Nicias to the point of resignation.[145] What is more, Thucydides renders Cleon as naïve, surprised, and frightened when Nicias resigned his position.[146] Intriguingly, Cleon seemed prepared for such a turn of events. In

fact, he immediately identified the precise force composition necessary to undertake the assault of Sphacteria and was cognizant of a scheme of maneuver that could supposedly produce Spartan defeat within 20 days.[147] The immediacy of Cleon's proposal offers two alternatives. The first, which one may likely discard with the other instances of chance in the Pylos campaign, is that Cleon was simply lucky. The second possibility is that Cleon had been communicating with Demosthenes, and that the former was aware of the latter's intentions for Sphacteria and desires for force augmentation.[148] On this point, it is beneficial to consider the confidence with which Cleon requested his forces and made his claim: he knew that Demosthenes had a plan, and was sufficiently prepared to execute immediately.[149] Again, the collusive organization between Cleon and Demosthenes enabled the Athenian reinforcement against Sphacteria, and furthers the idea that the Pylos campaign was the product of deliberate strategy rather than chance.

FIRE, AND THE ASSAULT ON SPHACTERIA

In the meantime, Demosthenes began his preparations for the assault on Sphacteria. Following his recent disaster at Aetolia, the general determined to employ fire against the Spartiates to determine their composition, disposition, and strength on Sphacteria. Thucydides, however, again provides a vague representation of Demosthenes' aims, even doubting whether he intended to purposefully ignite the island.[150] The historian, in 4.30.2, describes the fire as a random occurrence, resultant from aggrieved Athenians trying to cook their supper away from the camp.[151]

However, Thucydides provides insight into Demosthenes' thoughts in a preceding passage when he states that the general "thought the woods would in great measure conceal from him the mistakes and forces of the enemy," while the vegetation would enable the Spartiates to "fall upon his troops [Athenian] unexpectedly wherever they pleased."[152] Moreover, Thucydides asserts that

whichever force controlled "the thicket" would enjoy a tactical advantage over their opponent.[153] Given this context, it is wholly unlikely that the fire on Sphacteria was an act of chance, and more probable that Thucydides is, once again, denying Demosthenes credit for his performance in the campaign.[154] Ultimately, the Athenian removal of Sphacteria's vegetation enabled Demosthenes to identify landing sites, gauge the difficulty of the landing itself, and observe the Spartan force.[155]

Following the fire, Thucydides describes Cleon's arrival at Pylos "with the troops which he had asked for, having sent on word to say that he was coming."[156] This clause, and Thucydides' ambiguous use of pronouns, offers two interpretations. The first is simply that Cleon received those forces that he himself desired prior to his appointment. The second interpretation is that Cleon was, in fact, arriving at Pylos with the forces Demosthenes had requested, and that, furthermore, he had sent word ahead to Demosthenes that the assembly had granted the general's request. If one is to believe that collusion existed between Cleon and Demosthenes, then the coordination and communication of the second interpretation further the case for their mutually beneficial relationship.[157]

Next, Cleon and Demosthenes dispatched a herald to the Spartan camp on the mainland to urge the surrender of those isolated on Sphacteria.[158] Following the Spartan refusal, the Athenians conducted an amphibious assault on the southern portion of Sphacteria just before daylight with a force of approximately 800 troops.[159] The Athenians completely surprised the Spartiates, many of whom were still asleep or were attempting to arm themselves.[160] In the course of the attack, Demosthenes denied the Spartiates any form of hoplite battle. Instead, the general harassed the Spartiates with lightly armored skirmishers and archers, checking their preferred method of fighting and forcing them to remain stationary instead of advancing to meet the Athenians.[161] The

Spartiates withdrew to a fort on the northern portion of the island, but possessed no effective means of countering Demosthenes' overwhelming combination of skirmishers and archers.[162]

As the Spartiates culminated in their fortified position, a Messenian commander proposed to Cleon and Demosthenes a new course of action that enabled the combined Athenian force to conduct an envelopment.[163] Consequently, Thucydides invokes the memory of the Spartan defeat at Thermopylae, where the Persians exploited a neglected pass to envelop the defenders.[164] The Athenians, having surrounded the Spartiates, controlling all approaches to the Spartan position, and killing the Spartan commander and his deputy, showed restraint and offered the Spartiates the opportunity for parley.[165] Ultimately, Cleon and Demosthenes claimed 292 of the total 420 Spartans as prisoners, with the remainder perishing either in the blockade or during the battle.[166] Cleon, therefore, fulfilled his promise, and defeated the Spartans within the promised 20 days.[167]

OUTCOME OF THE PYLOS CAMPAIGN

Thucydides describes the Spartan surrender at Sphacteria as the most surprising event of the entire Peloponnesian War.[168] The historian goes further in stating that it was "the general opinion that no force or famine could make the Spartans give up their arms, but that they would fight on as they could, and die with them in their hands."[169] Moreover, the Helots began to desert, and the Spartans feared that a revolution was at hand. They dispatched envoys to Athens in a vain attempt to regain both the territory of Pylos and their prisoners, but the Athenians refused them.[170] Indeed, Sphacteria is the greatest disaster Sparta encountered during the war's entirety.

The Athenians secured a fortified base on the Peloponnesus. From this position, their Messenian allies were capable of not only raiding Sparta, but also enacting a Helot uprising. Regardless, the Athenians had exploited the Spartans' greatest vulnerabilities in the Peloponnesus: directly threatening Sparta itself, and the growth of Messenian nationalism.[171] Moreover, the

Athenians elected Nicias to lead a campaign against Cythera in the following year.[172] As the Athenian occupation of Naupactus and Pylos revealed, the Athenians effectively denied safe havens for future Peloponnesian maritime capability throughout all the Hellenes. The campaign, in sum, offers a classical example of making the most use of a Sun Tzu-esque emphasis on preparations and knowledge of the enemy, which enables one's own forces to prevail while expending the least possible resources.

For his part in the Pylos campaign, Cleon returned to Athens as the hero. He earned sufficient prestige to render him not only capable of retaining his generalship, but also able to dictate Athenian war policy until his death at Amphipolis.[173] However, Thucydides does not indicate any praise whatsoever for Demosthenes upon his return to Athens. Demosthenes apparently returned to his previous status as a general, during which time he would lead a reinforcing effort at the disastrous Sicilian expedition. This may have been possible because of his partnership with Cleon. In this argument, Demosthenes' goal in their quid pro quo agreement was a victory at Pylos that enabled his return to Athenian generalship. Cleon, in providing the necessary political will for the campaign, and in delivering Demosthenes' required forces, fulfilled his end of the bargain. In return for Cleon's participation, however, Demosthenes had to give credit for the victory at Sphacteria to Cleon, consequently furthering his political influence and personal popularity.[174]

EVALUATING THE CAMPAIGN

If, then, one is to believe that the Pylos campaign was "brilliantly conceived and carefully planned," the next logical question is, of course, exactly how did the Athenians enjoy such success at Pylos?[175] In part, the victory was a product of a rapid and unanticipated shift from a strategy of exhaustion to a strategy of annihilation. Athenian strategy at Pylos serves as a marked and

unexpected change from Pericles' conception of strategic defensive and exhaustion of the Spartans. First, Thucydides hints that the Athenians' initial objective of the campaign was to destroy the Peloponnesian fleet after learning of its arrival at Corcyra.[176] This shift is significant, because it is the first instance in Thucydides' "History" in which the Athenians seek decisive battle, in clear contrast to Pericles' wishes.

More than that, however, the Pylos campaign serves as an excellent model for diminishing an adversary's capacity to implement strategy, while simultaneously furthering one's own. The Athenian strategy at Pylos fittingly applies the Sun Tzu metaphor of affecting waterflow in the upstream to shape anticipated future outcomes in the downstream environment. Fundamental to these complementary endeavors are the Chinese conceptions of *hsing* (strategic positions) and *shih* (relative advantage). The Athenians exploited their favorable position at Pylos to destroy the Peloponnesian's naval capability and nullify Sparta's most elite troops, the Spartiates. The Athenians, therefore, leveraged their *hsing* (strategic positions) by recognizing own ability to deceive and surprise the Spartans. Similarly, the Athenians exploited their *shih* (relative advantage) both to threaten the Spartan homeland and to destroy the Peloponnesian fleet while initially committing only a small force. In other words, Athens lulled Sparta into believing that it would continue its exhaustive strategy, but the former's violent transition diminished the latter's capacity to adapt, ultimately leading to Spartan surrender and a request for peace.

The Spartan defeat at Pylos, then, was a matter of diminished capacity resulting from superior Athenian *hsing* and *shih*. First, the Athenian fortification at Pylos drove Agis to unexpectedly abandon the Spartan invasion of Attica for fear that the Athenians were now capable of striking at Sparta directly.[177] Consequently, this Spartan response caused a haphazard reaction to the Athenian position of advantage. In fact, the Athenian strategic position at Pylos forced the

Spartans to fight from the sea, through both an amphibious assault and maritime battle, areas in which they were neither prepared nor proficient.[178] Moreover, the Athenian employment of native troops furthered the Spartan inability to cope with the changing situation by empowering Messenian nationalism and undermining Spartan authority and legitimacy on the Peloponnesus.[179] Ultimately, the Spartans were unable to effectively counter the Athenian strategy. The Athenian position was too strong, and the advantage too stark. Sparta's reaction, therefore, was reckless, and not in line with its stated theory of victory: the destruction of the Athenian forces in Attica via hoplite battle.

In this light, the Athenian strategy increased not only the chaos of the Spartans' experience, but also their own capacity to adapt to and shape the environment. During the Pylos campaign the Athenians improved their relative position of physical advantage through the employment of Naupactus as a base of operations, the occupation of Pylos as a forward operating base, and the anticipated seizure of Cytherea to deny the Spartans any naval access to the Peloponnesus whatsoever. In this manner, the Athenians had flexibility in their quest for maritime supremacy, which enabled them to choose either to continue their strategy of exhaustion or to transition to one of annihilation. Following the Athenian encirclement, the Peloponnesian navy would be incapable of circumnavigating the Peloponnesus. Likewise, this Athenian strategy facilitated a choice to transition to annihilation through the destruction of the Peloponnesian fleet. Simply put, the Athenians could occupy their positions at Naupactus, Pylos, and Cytherea, and wait for the Peloponnesian fleet to make itself vulnerable, at which time the Athenians would strike. This is, of course, precisely what unfolded during the battle in Navarino Bay, when the Athenians destroyed the unsuspecting Peloponnesian fleet.

Moreover, the Athenians furthered their ability to increase their capacity while diminishing that of the Spartans through the employment of the Messenians at Pylos. As previously mentioned, the Messenians represented a significant critical vulnerability to the Spartans in that they constituted the potential to undermine the latter's credibility and legitimacy on the Peloponnesus.[180] But the Messenians also enabled Athenian flexibility between exhaustion and annihilation. In this manner, the Messenians not only presented a persistent menace to the city of Sparta itself through insurrection and raiding, but also freed Athenian troops to continue the attrition and exhaustion of the Peloponnesian fleet at sea.

Ultimately, Athens leveraged its *hsing* of a strong navy, flexible strategic approach, and Messenian nationalism to achieve a *shih* that the Spartans were unable to overcome. The Athenian objective was the destruction of the Peloponnesian fleet. Their strategy facilitated this aim physically through either exhaustion or annihilation. Should their strategy fail, the Athenians would remain comparatively strong, having invested a relatively small number of replaceable troops in the form of Messenians. Furthermore, the Athenians, despite expending a relatively small amount of their own energy, forced the Spartans into an unsystematic decision to counter the fortification of Pylos. The Spartan reaction, therefore, was not in line with their strategy, was the result of a certain amount of unpreparedness and surprise, and consequently played directly into the hands of Demosthenes and the Athenians.

In a Boydian sense, it is easy to recognize the essence of maneuver warfare personified in the Pylos campaign. In fact, the Athenians disguised the campaign in ambiguity and deception from the outset of the expedition directed ostensibly against Corcyra. Moreover, as events unfolded, the Spartans continued to be unsure of the strategic environment, during which time the Athenians forced the Spartans into novel actions, such as conducting an amphibious assault, while

they lay prepared to transition to an eruption of unanticipated violence when the fleet suddenly arrived from Zacynthus. Thucydides' account of the Spartan defeat at Pylos and Sphacteria portrays all the elements of Boyd's payoffs of maneuver warfare. Athens' strategy disoriented the Spartan and, consequently, the latter faced a mismatch between the events they anticipated and the events that unfolded. The return of the Athenian fleet surprised the Spartans, causing sufficient disorientation to lead to a debilitating and paralyzing shock. Ultimately, the Athenians disrupted the entirety of the Spartan resistance, shattering its cohesion and exploiting friction and paralysis to bring about Sparta's collapse at Pylos and Sphacteria.

Nevertheless, Athens' strategy was reliant on one critical assumption: that the Spartans would continue to believe in the existence of the paradigms that defined Athens as a maritime power and Spartan as a land power.[181] In fact, the Athenians were willing to intervene in the Spartans' decision-making system by reinforcing typical and expected strategic behavior.[182] Instead, Athens was able to shatter their adversary's cognitive system because it transcended this paradigm and behaved in a truly novel and unanticipated fashion.[183] At its core, Athens allowed Sparta to believe that its deployment of the fleet to Corcyra was simply the continuation of the war's previous campaigns extended into the current year. However, Demosthenes' strategy to occupy Pylos destroyed Sparta's conception of Athenian capabilities and intentions. With its conceptual understanding of Athens shattered, Sparta had lost Pylos before the first forces clashed. In transcending the Spartans' paradigm, the Athenians were able to exploit preparatory efforts in deception, intelligence, and maneuver to fight solely on terms of their own choosing. For these reasons, the Athenians, in dictating when, how, and where the fight was to occur were able to destroy Sparta's harmony and coherence with as little expenditure of their own energy as possible.

CONCLUSION

Pylos, as a campaign, stands alone in all of Thucydides' history because of the level of Athenian success and the disaster of the Spartan defeat. Moreover, Pylos is unique because of the author's opacity, bias, and outright errors. Factors that clouded the analysis of Pylos include the strangeness of Demosthenes' position, the probability of collusion between Cleon and Demosthenes, and the incomprehensible Spartan strategic errors and unpreparedness. But a critical analysis, coupled with some element of a thought experiment, enables the reader to consider and evaluate the Pylos campaign despite the fog of Thucydides' narrative.

In fact, a more thorough analysis probably sparks more questions about Thucydides' account of Pylos. Why does he make so many factual errors? Who were Thucydides' sources? And what was Thucydides' motivation for recalling the campaign in the way he does? This leaves the reader with two fundamental choices: believe that truth may be stranger than fiction and that events of chance may have compounding effects on a campaign conducted with foresight and skill, or recognize that the reader can only understand the campaign through Thucydides' bias and that the reader is subject to the author's interpretation and opinion, rooted in classical reverence for auspicious circumstances without any real contribution of cunning or calculus.

It is also fair to acknowledge Demosthenes' strategic brilliance before and during the campaign. First, Demosthenes' choice to seize Pylos as a military objective provided an exceptional complement to Athens' plans to neutralize the Peloponnesian fleet through the occupation of Naupactus and the future seizure of Cytherea. Second, Demosthenes' adaptability is certainly unequalled in Thucydides' narrative. His ability to learn from his defeat at the hands of the unconventional Aetolians, and consequently apply their fighting technique at Sphacteria, is remarkable and unique in the "History."[184] Moreover, Demosthenes' use of fire on Sphacteria displayed an additional acclimatization in which the general employed Aetolian tactics to conduct

reconnaissance and limit Spartan tactical options.[185] Finally, Demosthenes was capable of resurrecting himself from complete disaster at Aetolia through his partnership with Cleon, ultimately regaining his political influence and Athens and returning to the generalship he valued so greatly.[186]

Considering all of this, however, Thucydides goes to great lengths to conceal the Pylos campaign. Rather, the author treats Demosthenes' success as a product of increasingly ridiculous feats of chance, rather than deliberate strategy. Thucydides, then, leaves the reader to ponder why the author represents Demosthenes in such a way. A definitive answer to this question must await deeper classical scholarship, but the preceding analysis posits the need to consider the problem and suggests two alternative possibilities. First, it is possible that, as an historical actor himself, Thucydides maintained some animosity toward Demosthenes and was unwilling to emphasize his success. The author clearly articulates the enigmatic general's animosity toward Cleon in various passages. Perhaps the Pylos campaign caused Thucydides to categorize Demosthenes as resembling Cleon in that he valued personal gain over the public good, and that he represented the basest of the Athenian people.[187] Second, it is possible that the Spartans whom Thucydides uses as sources colored the narrative of the Pylos campaign and obscured the objective truth in his account.[188]

It is, however, unfair to judge Thucydides too harshly. The historian himself claims to be critical of his sources and attempts to independently verify accounts when possible.[189] Moreover, Thucydides' primary sources in retelling the Pylos narrative are almost certainly Demosthenes, the Spartans themselves, and possibly Cleon. Historians and classicists are unlikely ever to authenticate the events of Pylos or answer any of the campaign's lingering questions. Ultimately, Thucydides proffers a dense and obscure account that, in offering a window on early

manifestations of maneuver warfare and the application of Sun Tzu-esque concepts in the classical era, requires extensive critical analysis and interpretation from the reader. Such effort will reward the reader with a deeper appreciation for the conceptual continuity and intuitive logic inherent in warfare through the ages.

NOTES

[1] Thucydides structures his “History” in a fashion that depicts two wars, which a tenuous peace

interrupts. The first period of war, totaling seven years (431-424 BC), is known as the Archidamian War. For analysis on how Thucydides frames his writing, see Hunter R. Rawlings III, *The Structure of Thucydides' "History"* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 7-8, 13.
[2] Rawlings III and Rusten, xi.
[3] Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler, trans. Richard Crawley, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 224.
[4] Loren J. Samons, "Thucydides Sources and the Spartan Plan at Pylos," *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 75, no. 4 (Oct. – Dec., 2006): 525, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25068002.
[5] Thucydides, 224-244.
[6] Williamson Murray, introduction to *Successful Strategies: Triumphing in War and Peace from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4.
[7] Eliot A. Cohen, "What's Obama's Counterinsurgency Strategy for Afghanistan?" *WashingtonPost.com*, December 6, 2009, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/04/AR2009120402602.html.
[8] Eliot A. Cohen, "What's Obama's Counterinsurgency Strategy for Afghanistan?" *WashingtonPost.com*, December 6, 2009, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/04/AR2009120402602.html.
[9] Eliot A. Cohen, "What's Obama's Counterinsurgency Strategy for Afghanistan?" *WashingtonPost.com*, December 6, 2009, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/04/AR2009120402602.html.
[10] Colin S. Gray, *War, Peace, and Victory: Strategy and Statecraft for the Next Century* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 20-21.
[11] Williamson Murray, introduction to *Successful Strategies: Triumphing in War and Peace from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4.
[12] Gordon A. Craig, "Delbruck: The Military Historian," in *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret, 326-353 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 341. See also Athanassios G. Platias and Constantinos Koliopoulos, *Thucydides on Strategy: Grand Strategies in the Peloponnesian War and Their Relevance Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 16-17.
[13] Craig, 341-342.
[14] Platias and Koliopoulos, 35.
[15] John R. Boyd, "Patterns of Conflict," (Unpublished briefing, last modified in January, 2007, by Chet Richards, Chuck Spinney, and Ginger Richards), retrieved from http://dnipogo.org/john-r-boyd/), slide 134.
[16] Frans P. B. Osinga, *Science, Strategy and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 168.
[17] Osinga, 168.
[18] In this essay, surprise is typified as "[d]isorientation generated by perceiving extreme change (of events or efforts) over a short period of time." Similarly, Shock will be defined as a "[p]aralyzing state of disorientation generated by extreme or violent change (or events or efforts) over a short period of time." See, Osinga, 168.
[19] Derek M. C. Yuen, *Deciphering Sun Tzu How to Read The Art of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 71.

[20] Jullien Francois, *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 42.
[21] Francois, 42. See also Sun Tzu, *The Art of Warfare*, trans. Roger T. Ames (New York: The Random House Publishing Group, 1993) 115-116, 126-127 150; as well as Derek M. C. Yuen, *Deciphering Sun Tzu How to Read The Art of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 78-80.
[22] William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), PDF e-Book, 18.
[23] Sun Tzu, 115-116, 126-127 150; as well as Yuen, 120.
[24] Sun Tzu, 120.
[25] Sun Tzu, 127.
[26] Yuen, 79-80; and Francois, 42.
[27] Thucydides, 230.
[28] Platias and Koliopoulos, 35.
[29] Platias and Koliopoulos, 39-40.
[30] Platias and Koliopoulos, 41.
[31] Thucydides, 83, 98.
[32] Thucydides, 83.
[33] Platias and Koliopoulos, 43.
[34] Platias and Koliopoulos, 40.
[35] Platias and Koliopoulos, 40.
[36] Thucydides, 48.
[37] Thucydides, 45; Platias and Koliopoulos, 64.
[38] Eric Charles Woodcock, "Demosthenes, Son of Alcinsthenes," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol 39 (1928): 93-108, http://www.jstor.org/stable/310601, 97, 108; George Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), 16-17.
[39] Thucydides, 206.
[40] Thucydides, 206.
[41] Thucydides, 209.
[42] Thucydides, 209.
[43] Thucydides, 209.
[44] Thucydides, 214-215.
[45] Thucydides, 216-217.
[46] Thucydides, 218.
[47] Graham Wylie, "Demosthenes the General – Protagonist in a Greek Tragedy?" *Greece & Rome* 40, no. 1 (Apr., 1993): 20-30, http://www.jstor.org/stable/643215, 22.
[48] A. G. Woodhead, "Thucydides' Portrait of Cleon," *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 13, Fasc 4 (1960): 292, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4428400.
[49] Thucydides, 176.
[50] Mabel L. Lang, "Cleon as the Anti-Pericles," *Classical Philology* 67, no. 3 (Jul., 1972): 162, http://www.jstor.org/stable/268454.
[51] Lang, 164.
[52] Thucydides, 127.
[53] See, for example, Cawkwell, 52-53.
[54] Woodcock, 102.
[55] Wylie, 27.

[56] Harriet I. Flower, "Thucydides and the Pylos Debate (4.27-29)," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte*

Geschichte, Bd. 41, H. 1 (1992): 55, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4436223; Wylie, 23-24; Lang, 164.
[57] Thucydides, 176.
[58] Allen B. West, "Pericles' Political Heirs. II," *Classical Philology* 19, no. 3 (Jul., 1924): 202, http://www.jstor.org/stable/263209.
[59] Thucydides, 224.
[60] Thucydides, 239; Anthony Miller, "Thoukydides 4.30.4: Kleon, Demosthenes and Collusion over the Pylian Campaign?" *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 51, no. 4 (August 1998): 443, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4432858.
[61] Thucydides, 239; Miller, 443.
[62] Thucydides, 239.
[63] Thucydides, 240.
[64] Miller, 444.
[65] Thucydides, 223.
[66] Thucydides, 223.
[67] Thucydides, 223.
[68] William Shepherd, *Pylos and Sphacteria 425 BC: Sparta's Island of Disaster*, (New York: Osprey Publishing, Ltd., 2013), 30.
[69] Thucydides, 223. In fact, one might argue that the destruction of the Peloponnesian fleet was the primary aim of the expedition. Such an objective would be in accordance with the prevailing Periclean strategy that Athens had utilized since the war's outset, which sought destruction of any Peloponnesian naval capability and amphibious raids along the Peloponnesian coast. See, specifically, A. J. Holladay, "Athenian Strategy in the Archidamian War." *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte*, Bd. 27, H. 3 (3rd Qtr., 1978): 399, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4435620; as well as H. Awdry, "A New Historical Aspect of the Pylos and Sphacteria Incidents." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 20, (1900): 14, http://www.jstor.org/stable/623738.
[70] See, specifically, A. J. Holladay, "Athenian Strategy in the Archidamian War." *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte*, Bd. 27, H. 3 (3rd Qtr., 1978): 399, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4435620; as well as H. Awdry, "A New Historical Aspect of the Pylos and Sphacteria Incidents." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 20, (1900): 14, http://www.jstor.org/stable/623738.
[71] Thucydides, 224. On Demosthenes' position as general-elect, see Woodcock, 97. On the probability that the Athenian assembly granted Demosthenes' authority to use the fleet see Alan L. Boegehold, Appendix A "The Athenian Government in Thucydides" to *The Landmark Thucydides A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler, trans. Richard Crawley, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 580.
[72] Thucydides, 224.
[73] Woodcock, 98.
[74] Thucydides, 224. As well as Woodcock, 98.
[75] Thucydides, 218.
[76] Thucydides, 224. What is unknown is how Demosthenes was able to ultimately convince his colleagues to make landfall at Pylos and enact his plan. Thucydides neither includes any conversations between the Athenian leadership nor provides any hints of the dialogue that must have occurred. Instead, the reader must make inferences regarding Demosthenes' persuasive abilities, the consequent Athenian actions at Pylos, and the probability of acquiescence by both Sophocles and Eurymedon.

[77] Robert B. Strassler, "The Opening of the Pylos Campaign," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*

110 (1990): 111, http://www.jstor.org/stable/631735. Also see Thucydides, 224.
[78] Strassler, "The Opening of the Pylos Campaign," 110.
[79] Thucydides, 224.
[80] Thucydides, 224.
[81] Thucydides, 224.
[82] Thucydides, 224.
[83] Thucydides, 224.
[84] Strassler, "The Opening of the Pylos Campaign," 113.
[85] There exist many different interpretations of to whom Demosthenes argued, the oddity of Thucydides syntax in the passage (4.4.1), and even the possibility that Athenian troops became aware of the possibility of fortifying their position through eavesdropping and rumor. For further analysis, see M. H. B. Marshall, "Thucydides iv. 4. 1," *The Classical Review* 21, no. 3 (Dec., 1971): 320-323, http://www.jstor.org/stable/708576.
[86] Thucydides, 224.
[87] Strassler, "The Opening of the Pylos Campaign," 113.
[88] Thucydides, 224.
[89] Thucydides, 224.
[90] Thucydides, 226.
[91] Thucydides, 226.
[92] Thucydides, 226, 228.
[93] Thucydides, 226.
[94] Thucydides, 225-226.
[95] For an analysis of the amount of time the Athenian fleet remained at Zacynthus, see Strassler, "The Opening of the Pylos Campaign," 122.
[96] Strassler, "The Opening of the Pylos Campaign," 122.
[97] Thucydides, 226.
[98] Such an arrangement would be unusual for the Athenians. However, Demosthenes' position and mandate granted by the assembly for the Pylos campaign is already extraordinary. If Demosthenes, in fact, had the permission "to use the fleet, if he wished, upon the coast of the Peloponnesus," then it is possible he did maintain some degree of authority over his colleagues in this case. For an analysis on Demosthenes as one of the great commanders in Thucydides history, see Wylie, 20-30. For analysis on Thucydides admiration of Demosthenes, and the possibility that Thucydides omits Demosthenes' motivation and strategic acumen purposefully, see Woodcock, 93, 101-104. For a thorough argument on Demosthenes' military genius, see Cawkwell, 17, 52, 71-74.
[99] Thucydides, 226-230. This passage includes perhaps Thucydides' most famous inconsistency: his erroneous description of geography at Pylos and Sphacteria. Disputing Thucydides on this point is beyond the scope of this work. However, it is worth consideration that Thucydides portrayal of the harbor at Pylos would negate the Spartan naval strategy employed in the battle. See Strassler's footnote (4.8.6.b) in Thucydides, 227, for a description of the error, and Samons, 525-540, for an analysis of Thucydides portrayal of the Spartan plan.
[100] Thucydides, 228.
[101] Thucydides, 228.
[102] Woodcock, 99.

[103] Interestingly, Thucydides provides only a cursory portrayal of Demosthenes' landward plan

for defense, and no description of that portion of the battle, leaving the reader to infer that the Spartans had little effect on Athenian fortifications. See Thucydides, 228 and Shepherd, 49.
[104] Thucydides, 229.
[105] Thucydides, 229. Thucydides does not fail to emphasize the irony of the Athenian maritime power defending a land-based position against the amphibious assault of the preeminent land power, Sparta.
[106] Thucydides, 230.
[107] Thucydides, 230.
[108] Thucydides, 230.
[109] Thucydides, 230.
[110] Thucydides, 230.
[111] Thucydides, 230-231.
[112] Thucydides, 231.
[113] Thucydides, 231.
[114] Thucydides, 231-232.
[115] Victor Davis Hanson, Appendix F "Land Warfare in Thucydides," to *The Landmark Thucydides A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler, trans. Richard Crawley, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 605.
[116] Shepherd presents a convincing argument that the preponderance of the Peloponnesian forces may have established their camp somewhere in the inner portion of Navarino Bay. If this were the case, then it is possible that the Spartans, excluding those at Sphacteria, may not have been aware of the Athenian fleet's approach. See Shepherd, 51-53.
[117] For a thorough analysis of a possible and likely plan, see Samons, 534-535.
[118] Thucydides, 231.
[119] Thucydides, 233.
[120] Thucydides, 233-234.
[121] Thucydides, 234.
[122] Thucydides, 234.
[123] Thucydides, 234.
[124] Thucydides, 235.
[125] Thucydides, 235.
[126] Thucydides, 237.
[127] Thucydides, 237-238. The Spartans promised freedom to those Helots capable of successfully evading the Athenian blockade by either boat or swimming.
[128] Thucydides, 238.
[129] Thucydides, 238.
[130] Thucydides, 238.
[131] Thucydides, 176.
[132] Thucydides, 238.
[133] Thucydides, 238-239.
[134] Thucydides, 239.
[135] Thucydides, 239.
[136] Thucydides, 239.
[137] Thucydides, 239.
[138] Thucydides, 239. Thucydides' inclusion of this passage, "[m]oreover, the firing of the island had increased the confidence of the general," at the conclusion of the Pylos debate (4.29.2)

seems to indicate that not only are Demosthenes and Cleon in communication with one another, but also that the former is keeping the latter informed of the tactical details of the unfolding situation on Sphacteria.
[139] Flower, 43-46.
[140] For specific examples of Athenian failures stemming from Nicias' caution, see the Sicilian expedition, Thucydides, 456-458.
[141] Thucydides, 237-238.
[142] Thucydides, 239. On the possibility that the hoplites were not available, see Flower, 45.
[143] Flower, 43-46.
[144] Thucydides, 238.
[145] Thucydides, 238-239.
[146] Thucydides, 239. For further analysis of Cleon's probable deception of the assembly, as well as shrewdness and duplicity, see Woodcock, 100.
[147] Thucydides, 239.
[148] Miller, 443.
[149] Miller, 443.
[150] Thucydides, 239-240.
[151] Thucydides, 240.
[152] Thucydides, 239.
[153] Thucydides, 240.
[154] For an analysis on Thucydides' treatment of Demosthenes, see Cawkwell, 54-55.
[155] Thucydides, 240.
[156] Thucydides, 240.
[157] Miller, 444-445.
[158] Thucydides, 240.
[159] Thucydides, 240. On the geography of Sphacteria, see Thucydides, 243.
[160] Thucydides, 240.
[161] Thucydides, 241.
[162] Thucydides, 242.
[163] Thucydides, 242. The issue of the Messenian path is worthy of consideration for two reasons. First, if Thucydides' account of the campaign is to be believed, then the Spartans will have occupied Sphacteria for approximately 70 days. Consequently, how could the Spartans, the premier fighting force of all the Hellenes, not recognize the significance of an exposed approach? The answer perhaps lies in the second consideration. Thucydides' two primary sources for the Pylos campaign are likely Demosthenes and whichever Spartans with whom he may have spoken during his exile from Athens and time residing in Sparta. It is possible that Thucydides is omitting critical information from this passage either to willfully protect the Spartan image or because the Spartans have given the historian an incomplete or inaccurate account.
[164] Thucydides, 242.
[165] Thucydides, 243.
[166] Thucydides, 244.
[167] Thucydides, 244.
[168] Thucydides, 244.
[169] Thucydides, 244.
[170] Thucydides, 246.

[171] Cawkwell, 52.
[172] Thucydides, 253.
[173] Miller, 443.
[174] Woodcock, 102-103. See also Donald Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 152.
[175] Wylie, 23.
[176] Specifically, the quote, "Off Laconia they heard that the Peloponnesian ships were already at Corcyra, upon which Eurymedon and Sophocles wished to hasten to the island," Thucydides, 224; also see Awdry, 14.
[177] Thucydides, 226. Thucydides' explanation for the Spartan abandonment of the Attica campaign in this passage is also a point of contention. The historian claims the Spartans would have had "many reasons" to shorten their campaign to only fifteen days, only one of which was the Athenian fortification of Pylos. The other causal factor seems to be limited provisions and poor weather. However, it is difficult to imagine the Spartans, whose diet and discipline were equally harsh and famous, abandoning a military campaign for reasons of bad food and weather.
[178] Thucydides, 229-230.
[179] Cawkwell, 52.
[180] Cawkwell, 52.
[181] Thucydides, 229.
[182] For a more thorough analysis on a hierarchical approach to intervening in systems through reinforcing feedback loops, see, Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), 155-156.
[183] Meadows, 164.
[184] For a depiction of Aetolian force structure and tactics, see Thucydides, 208-209. For Demosthenes' adaptation and employment of Aetolian-style tactics, see Thucydides, 239-244.
[185] Similarly, Demosthenes' learning experience with the employment of fire can be found at Thucydides, 209. His subsequent employment of fire on Sphacteria can be found at Thucydides, 240.
[186] In fact, Demosthenes was so anxious following his defeat at the hands of the Aetolians that he remained at Naupactus, refusing to return to Athens for fear of the consequence; see Thucydides, 209. Of course, Demosthenes can return to his previous position by returning his war spoils earned during the Amphilochian campaign (see Thucydides, 218), but it is his success at Pylos and partnership that solidify his future position with the assembly.
[187] Thucydides obviously offers Cleon as a foil to the now deceased Pericles. In fact, Cleon appears to wholly embody those attributes Thucydides believes lead to the demise of Athens. Specifically, see Thucydides, 127, "[w]hat they did was the very contrary, allowing private ambitions and private interests, in matters apparently quite foreign to the war, to lead them into projects unjust both to themselves and to their allies – projects whose success would only conduce to the honor and advantage of private persons, and whose failure entailed certain disaster on the country in the war." Moreover, Thucydides emphasizes Cleon's dissimilar character from Pericles in several passages including 176, 234, and 238-239, in which time the historian makes it apparent that Cleon's desire is to further his own individual power and influence over the assembly.
[188] Thucydides asserts in 5.26.5 that he spends some amount of time with the Spartans during his exile. Specifically, he states that he "had leisure observe [the Spartans'] affairs more closely." See Thucydides, 316.
[189] Thucydides, 15-16.

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