Thucydides on Innovative Leadership and Its Limits: Pericles of Athens

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The history of ancient Greece is teeming with vibrant examples of political leadership, yet perhaps none promises to be as illuminating for us as Pericles of Athens. The city of Athens is widely regarded as the birthplace of the democratic way of life, the fertile bed in which the seed of this idea was nourished and sprouted for the first time.[1] Insofar as the Athenian regime was democratic, its citizens lived amidst a political context comparable in some key ways to what we know in the United States and in other contemporary democracies.[2] Pericles for his part was the most important leader of Athens and the chief influence of the so-called golden age of the city. This judgment on the significance of Pericles is expressed elegantly by Donald Kagan, who asserts that democracy can flourish only when three conditions have been met: first, good institutions; second, citizens with knowledge of democratic principles or in possession of character consistent with democracy; and third, a high quality of leadership, which at times is "the most important [condition] and can compensate for weaknesses in the other two."[3] Not only was Pericles the embodiment of this kind of leadership, in Kagan's

view, but it was his reforms in the fifth century B.C. that helped
to bring the Athenian regime to maturity, elevating the classical
ideal of democracy.[4]

For at least this reason, the life of Pericles deserves to be well
known by students of political leadership in the present. To the
extent that the leadership of this influential Athenian statesman has
been addressed directly, scholars have done so from different
angles and to different ends. While some have discussed what we
might learn about the general subject from ancient writers, others
have associated the example of Pericles with specific themes in the
field of leadership studies.[5] Others still have explored the question
of the significance of Pericles' leadership for healthy politics.[6]
Surely one reason for this diversity of approach is that Pericles'
story is a large and complex one, neither straightforward nor easy
for readers to grasp. Despite notes of familiarity between our
political context and the experiences of Pericles, the vast scope of
the ancient Athenian's program of leadership is bound to look stun-
ning. What strikes readers of the sources for Pericles' life, the two
richest being Thucydides' *War of the Peloponnesians and the
Athenians* and Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*, is just how far the reach
of his influence extended.[7] The history of Pericles recounts a story
of statesmanship in both Athens and the greater Hellenic world; of
empire building and complex military tactics during the early part
of the war between Sparta and Athens; and of a public works
project for Athens the likes of which had never been seen in the
Greek world.

Beyond these large objectives, there remains something even
grander and more comprehensive about Pericles' example: by
means of a complex rhetorical strategy with his followers, he sought
throughout his career to innovate what it means to be an Athenian
citizen.[8] This is an aspect of Pericles' leadership that has been
largely underappreciated in the literature. One of the great features
of the treatment of Pericles in Thucydides' *History*, specifically, is
that it brings to light the nature of his political rhetoric as an effec-
tive instrument for his leadership. Thucydides' text shows us a
political leader who communicated with his audience by means of

crafting subtle narratives about the citizen body of Athens and the regime as a whole.

Accordingly, it is both possible and useful to relate the example of Pericles to a growing literature that locates the essence of leadership in storytelling. Howard Gardner's work in developmental psychology is at the forefront of this body of scholarship. Gardner sets forth a cognitive model of leadership based on the insight that leaders communicate with followers by means of the stories they tell.[9] Rather than employing varying forms and degrees of rational argument in their communications with followers, the most effective public leaders rely on the power of narratives in order to influence others.[10] To delineate this model of leadership with the term *cognitive* is to express that the place where leadership occurs, for Gardner, is in the mind, both of leaders and of those led. "The ultimate impact of the leader" depends on the stories that he or she relates to followers and embodies in front of them, in addition to how receptive the followers are to accepting such stories. Primarily these stories are about matters of group identity and, in the process of leadership, must be related to a complex and meaningful constellation of stories already in play within the collective mind of the audience.[11] Precisely how these narratives are related, finally, and the kind of story presented are factors that animate a threefold typology of leadership. Gardner explains that leadership can be either ordinary, where the traditional story of the group is related back to the group; or innovative, where the leader takes a story latent in the group and gives it a fresh twist; or finally visionary, where the leader creates a wholly new story for the group.[12] The continuum expressed here moves from more common to rarer forms.

To sharpen our focus on Pericles' leadership, this essay seeks to clarify his role as an innovator with respect to the Athenian way of life and to examine the means by which he sought to reform Athens. What was the nature of the grand changes effected by Pericles, and how exactly did leadership function in his project for innovative reform? Drawing on Gardner's cognitive theory of leadership, I argue that it can be illuminating to view Pericles in terms

of his practice of using formidable storytelling abilities to innovate the narratives that the Athenians told about themselves. Particularly with respect to the Athenians' self-concept as a seafaring people, Pericles is adept at taking narratives of identity latent in the citizenry and shaping them into something new, creatively suiting the objectives of his project of leadership. The texts on Pericles, in particular Thucydides' *History*, show that these specific innovations were grand in scope and include the urbanization and secularization of Athens, as well as the development of Athens as a naval people. Thucydides also shows, however, that for all of his success, Pericles was unable to invest his reforms with the power to endure. Accordingly, the ancient historian demonstrates something more deeply true and complete about leadership than does Gardner. Specifically, Thucydides' *History* brightly clarifies for us the limits of innovative leadership that are naturally a function of the context in which such a project takes place.

Thucydides and Plutarch on the Character of Pericles

If Thucydides' work remains the richest source for understanding the leadership of Pericles, the biographical sketch by Plutarch serves a useful purpose for us in filling out the details of his life. Both texts work together to provide a reasonably full portrait of this famous statesman's character in light of his objectives as a public leader. He was born in 494 to Athenian parents, his mother Agariste and his father Xanthippus, and his origins were notable for being thoroughly aristocratic.[13] Agariste, for instance, was a daughter of the Alcmaeonid family, one of the oldest and most distinguished in Athens.[14] As Plutarch confirms, these origins supplied Pericles with important advantages as he embarked on a career of leadership in and for the city. He possessed considerable estate and, coming from one of the oldest Athenian lines, enjoyed the company of friends with status and influence. Moreover, these family origins seem to have paved the way toward Pericles' emergence as a democratic reformer, as his family's history embodied an anti-tyrannical mission. His maternal grandfather Cleisthenes was the revolutionary who threw the tyrant Pisistratus out of Athens

two generations earlier—the event understood to have initiated the democratic regime in Athens with Cleisthenes' emphasis on *isonomia*, or equality before the law—and his father was himself distinguished as a brilliant general in the war between the Greeks and despotic Persia (Plu. *Per*. 3.1–4 [202–3]).[15]

It was, however, not simply advantages of birth that set Pericles up for a career in public leadership. Most important, he was well known in Athens and elsewhere in the Hellenic world for his extraordinary virtues of character.[16] On introducing Pericles' first speech in his history, Thucydides refers to him as "the first man of his time at Athens, ablest (*dynatōtatos*) alike in counsel and in action" (Th. 1.139.4). Christopher Bruell argues that it is precisely the public "visibility" of his virtues, such as honesty and loyalty, that provides the key for understanding why Pericles was so successful with his followers.[17] Among these virtues was a robust intellect that Pericles actively sought to use to improve the public condition of Athens.[18] He received a thoroughgoing education, as befitting a young nobleman. Pericles studied natural philosophy with Anaxagoras, an experience that led him away from superstition and toward a more physical understanding of nature. Plutarch, identifying him as "a great natural genius" (Plu. *Per*. 8.1 [207]), explains also that deep admiration for his mentor Anaxagoras affected his own disposition, such that he came to embody an "elevation of purpose and dignity of language," "a composure of countenance," and "a serenity and calmness in all of his movements" (Plu. *Per*. 5.1–2 [204]). Pericles was known for his calmness and even-handedness with others, attributes especially indispensable for good leadership when facing crisis conditions.

Pericles' most powerful instrument for forging and sustaining a tight bond of influence between himself and his followers was his oratorical skill. Thucydides for his part presents three speeches in his history delivered by Pericles to the people of Athens at crucially different times in the war, all of which are paragons of public rhetoric.[19] Plutarch, who knew Thucydides' presentation well (cf. Plu. *Per*. 15.5 [215]), is quick to highlight that the leader of Athens was among the most talented and sophisticated public speakers the

world had ever known. In the advantages of "the art of speaking," he was "far superior to all the others." His voice was sweet and he possessed a "volubility and rapidity in speaking" (Plu. *Per*. 7.1 [206]). Pericles strove to harness a quality of precision in his speech that is difficult to fathom. He "was very careful what and how he was to speak, insomuch that, whenever he went up to the hustings, he prayed the gods that no one word might unawares slip from him unsuitable to the matter and the occasion" (Plu. *Per*. 8.4–5 [207]).

Creative Adaptation of an Old Story:
Pericles' First Speech in Thucydides' History

Plutarch, then, calls attention in his *Life* to the oratorical skills of Pericles in this generally descriptive way. A significant advantage of focusing on the presentation of Pericles in Thucydides' *History*, by contrast, is that it allows readers to observe a supremely talented political leader's use of rhetoric in action, for the historian has crafted direct speeches that the character Pericles delivers to his audience (cf. Th. 1.22.1).[20] We readers encounter in this text a Pericles who communicates with his followers in stories and holds authority in Athens, in part, because of his ability to relate stories effectively. In the history are two especially colorful examples of the storytelling of Pericles, the best known being the idealized version of Athens found in his famous Funeral Oration of Book Two. Scholarly work on leadership that has examined Pericles in earnest, such as books by Mark Menaldo and Waller Newell, has focused on this particular speech at significant length. Important as the Funeral Oration is, I argue that the other speech—the comparatively underappreciated first speech of Pericles at the end of Thucydides' Book One (Th. 1.140–44)—displays this leader's project of comprehensive innovation in a most revealing way.

Pericles delivers this speech in 432 at an Athenian assembly convened to discuss the events immediately prior to the beginning of hostilities. The Spartans had formally demanded that the Athenians end their siege of Potidaea, a city in the North Aegean, and lift their crippling sanctions against the city of Megara, suggesting that war might be avoided if the Athenians were to comply. Thucydides

reports that there was vigorous debate in the Athenian assembly over the proper course of action, as members of both the peace party and the war party were eager to make their opinions heard (Th. 1.139.4).

In the midst of this lively and earnest discussion, Pericles steps forward and makes his speech in order to guide the Athenian citizens on the proper course.[21] He argues generally for a policy of no concession to Sparta, indicating that this has always been his position regardless of changing circumstances in the run up to the war (cf. Th. 1.127.3). Pericles establishes the core argument of his speech by developing a contrast between Athens and Sparta, the purpose of which is to demonstrate his own city's superiority in wartime. Athens is very rich in the capital so necessary for fighting a long war, whereas Sparta populates its military with farmers who are slow to mobilize and cannot afford being absent from home for long (Th. 1.141.2–5). As fierce as they are reputed to be, the Spartans lack the wherewithal for fighting a modern war. The Peloponnesian League, an association of cities led by Sparta, structurally hinders speedy action as well, for the league has no "single counsel chamber requisite to prompt and vigorous action" (Th. 1.141.6). Athens, finally, possesses the most skilled and well-equipped navy in the world, whereas Sparta lacks extensive familiarity with the sea and would be overwhelmed in a naval battle.[22]

The intended purpose of the contrast between Athens and Sparta is, of course, to build confidence in the Athenian cause and to inspire pride in Pericles' auditors, the citizens and soldiers of Athens. Just as clear is that this contrast deals in a specific narrative commentary on the collective character of Athens. The efficacy of Pericles' rhetoric hinges on his ability to show the Athenians an impressive portrait, in fine detail, of what it means to be an Athenian. It is important, then, that Pericles continues his speech by more sharply defining this portrait of Athens. Indeed, on the heels of his contrast between the differing ways of Athens and Sparta, he makes a breathtaking suggestion on the Athenian approach to the war.

> Suppose that we were islanders: can you conceive a more impregnable position? Well, this in future should, as far as

> possible, be our conception of our position. Dismissing all thought of our land and houses, we must vigilantly guard the sea and the city. No irritation that we may feel for the former must provoke us to a battle with the numerical superiority of the Peloponnesians. A victory would only be succeeded by another battle against the same superiority: a reverse involves the loss of our allies, the source of our strength, who will not remain quiet a day after we become unable to march against them. (Th. 1.143.5)

Pericles presents his audience with a hypothetical statement: what if Athens were not the landed city on the Attic peninsula it is but, instead, a city located on an island? What if the Athenian citizenry had the specific character of islanders? Despite this not being an accurate description of the geography of Athens, Pericles argues that the citizenry can and should imagine themselves in these terms. The Athenians should prioritize "the sea and the city" at the expense of the land and their material property—it is significant that Pericles brings the ideas of sea and city together here so as to unite them. He concludes his thought with a stirring call to a new conception of Athenian character: "We must cry not over the loss of houses and land but of men's lives; since houses and land do not gain men, but men them. And if I had thought that I could persuade you, I would have bid you go out and lay them waste with your own hands, and show the Peloponnesians that this at any rate will not make you submit" (Th. 1.143.5).

In sum, the speech at the end of Book One shows Pericles dealing on the level of narratives that shape the collective identity of the people of Athens, even if subtly so. This leader offers a richly drawn and compelling story of what it means to be Athenian, doing so for the purpose of influencing his followers. The citizens of Athens are exhorted to transform their long-held self-understanding completely, to change the way they see themselves; nothing less will work. In thinking of "Athens" not as the landed territory of the city but as an island—or by extension as a ship or fleet of ships—Pericles seeks to initiate a change that would be boldly innovative

in orientation, uprooted from the land and unfettered by the traditions of the past. His essential message is to cease feeling tied down to tangible possessions, which is too traditional a way of living, but rather to understand oneself as unbounded by these things as if one were constantly moving on water.

The narrative that Pericles relates to his Athenian compatriots is, however, not wholly novel, and this fact provides one further key for unlocking the leadership dimensions of the speech. Upon listening to such a suggestion, all Athenians would immediately have thought of the celebrated deeds of Themistocles, an Athenian leader and general from the generation prior. Themistocles is an important figure in Athenian military history, for he is the one who persuaded the Athenians to build a fleet (Th. 1.14.3), a development that set the stage for Athens becoming the most powerful naval force in the world. Thucydides suggests that for this very reason, one might consider Themistocles to be the father of Athens' empire: "he first ventured to tell [the citizens of Athens] to stick to the sea and forthwith began to lay the foundations of the empire" (Th. 1.93.4).[23] He was, however, well known for more than this. During the war with Persia, Themistocles persuaded the Athenians to leave their city en masse in order to commit fully to the battle of Artemisium. Risking total destruction of the material property of Athens at the hands of the Persians, the Athenians committed to taking refuge on the sea in their ships.[24] This daring strategy was one significant key to Athens' success in fending off the Persian invasion, thereby preserving the existence of Athens as an independent regime. It cemented Athens' character as the most prominent seafaring people of Greece.

Pericles, then, refers to a story well known to his audience and foundational for Athenian identity. As Gardner's typology of leadership holds, innovative leaders take a story latent in the group and give it a fresh twist. Pericles does precisely this with respect of Athens' collective character as a people connected with the water, giving it a new orientation and promulgating it toward innovative ends. Whereas Themistocles had recommended movement into the ships as a specific strategy of war, Pericles effects a much more

comprehensive social innovation in that he encourages the Athenians to transform their self-understanding in ways that use that specific war strategy as a paradigm.[25] Moreover, to cement the foundations of his own authority for leadership, Pericles walks in the footsteps of a great individual who came before him. He actively associates his own name with Themistocles in the hearts and minds of the Athenian people, fusing his name together with the renowned general from the previous generation.[26] Pericles' strategy is to demonstrate, however subtly, his connection to this other important leader so as to enhance and solidify his own influence.

The Reforms of Pericles

Having shed light on Pericles' function as a leader concerned with innovating the regime of Athens, it remains to explore the nature of his reforms. As has been noted, Pericles sought to move the regime of his city in bold, innovative directions and to undercut the effect of tradition on the Athenian people. Thucydides' *History* shows him attempting three major reforms in this general spirit.[27]

Pericles sought, first, to transform the Athenians from a land-based agrarian people to one that finds its home mainly in the city. Athens, much like all other cities in the Greek world, had long been a place that identified strongly with the land, with the farms that were supported by the land and had been tended by many generations of Athenian families. This self-conception was animated by the ideal of hearth and home connected with the tradition of rural living. Any kind of urbanization movement was bound to be difficult because, as Thucydides reports, "most of [the Athenians] had always been used to living in the country" (Th. 2.14). It was Pericles, however, who strongly urged the citizens living in the countryside to quit their farms and move behind the city walls.[28] Thucydides explains that Pericles "gave the citizens some advice on their present affairs in the same strain as before"—in other words, in line with the new story that he has artfully crafted for Athens in his first speech. "They were to prepare for the war, and to carry in their property from the country. They were not to go out to battle,

but to come into the city and guard it, and get ready their fleet, in which their real strength lay" (Th. 2.13.2).

One aspect of this plan is Pericles' divesting himself from his own country estate and donating the land to the Athenian commons, which he does in 431 as the war is beginning. It is possible, on one hand, to take a somewhat cynical view of his motives with this donation. Pericles enjoyed a relationship of guest-friendship (*xenia*) with Archidamus, one of the kings of Sparta at the time and leader of the Spartan military effort. He may have suspected that the Spartan army would have spared his estate on account of this relationship, thereby sowing prejudice against Pericles in Athenian public opinion. His donation of the land served, then, to prevent such an eventuality. That said, and on the other hand, it is clear that Pericles prioritizes Athenian interests with this very public move. In an address to the assembly, reported by the historian as an indirect speech, he notes even "that, although Archidamus was his guest-friend, yet this friendship should not extend to the detriment" of Athens (Th. 2.13.1). As the most important Athenian leader during this time, Pericles embodies the spirit of his proposed change visibly in front of his followers, removing himself from the country and fortifying his own interests in the city.

Thucydides tells us that Pericles' followers listened to this advice, despite the radical nature of the proposal, and that urbanization is largely accomplished in the run up to the war (Th. 2.14). The most immediate purpose of urbanization is to counteract fears that the Spartan army, which had recently arrived by land, will pillage the countryside, it being manifestly safer inside the city walls. It is not mere safety, though, that provides the justification for urbanization; there is a deeper motive at work. Pericles, who had not only undertaken the basic program of political education available to all men in Athens but had also been educated in the ways of natural philosophy by Anaxagoras, sought to convert Athens from being a traditional god-fearing people into a regime that was much more secular in orientation. The faster pace of life in a city, in which the citizen was constantly inundated by new ideas and material things, was more conducive to a way of life based on

secular rationalism—and vice versa. This policy of secularization was the second intended reform of Pericles' innovative leadership.[29] His motivation for pressing forward with such a radical reform was to support his vision of political life in which the city of Athens and her empire provide every good, in every way, for citizens, both as individuals and as members of the collective. As Timothy Burns explains, the "city as Pericles conceives of it is to be self-sufficient. . . . [I]t will need nothing and point to nothing beyond itself. . . . To him, the city needs the gods no more than it needs a Homer who sings the praises of the gods. The Athenians, as he sees it, must and can be liberated from their ancestral piety and redirected to a love of their city and to noble deeds on her behalf."[30]

Thucydides fills out the details of this secularizing reform in many subtle ways. When describing just how important life on their old country land was for Athenian citizens and how Pericles' policy of urbanization was met with "deep . . . trouble and discontent," he clarifies that the citizens felt significant pain at "abandoning their houses and the hereditary temples of the ancient state" (Th. 2.16.2). The old homes and the gods of these hereditary temples go together in a deeply rooted religious devotion characteristic of the Athenian citizenry, as it was for all other cities in ancient Greece.[31] When the people moved behind the city walls, however, many had to find places to settle, and Thucydides reports that many of the sacred laws were violated in the process of settlement (Th. 2.17.2–3). Moreover, one feature of Thucydides' presentation is that Pericles speaks about the gods only one time ever, this being when in a long passage of indirect speech in Book Two he refers to the Athena Parthenos statue. He refers to the statue, however, not in the spirit of pious reverence, but to explain that the massive plates of gold in which Athena was then clothed could be removed to help pay for the war effort, if necessary, for the "self-preservation" of the city (Th. 2.13.5). For Pericles, even the physical representations of the city's gods were to be subordinate to the overarching objectives of Athens' regime, namely, empire and the war policy that expanded and defended it.[32]

The fullest and clearest picture we have of these two innovations is the famous Funeral Oration of Book Two, Pericles' tour de force that sets forth, as Newell has said, an "idealized vision" of Athens and her citizens.[33] It is beyond the scope of this essay to provide a detailed treatment of the oration, in part because its primary burden has been to clarify Pericles' leadership through a detailed treatment of his first speech. One notes, however, that its general message is to cast glory on the wonders of the city, in particular the democratic way of life it supports, and on the larger empire that is an extension of the city. The Funeral Oration is the longest exposition of the Athenian way of life in Thucydides' text, and this vision for public life is fundamentally secular in character.[34] Nowhere in the speech does Pericles offer thanks or glory to the gods for the lofty successes of Athens, which should be a model for the rest of the Greek world (Th. 2.39.1, 2.41.1). Rather, the city thrives because of the natural-born virtues of the Athenians themselves (Th. 2.39.1).[35] Pericles' own interpretation of Athenian history is boldly innovative in orientation and in purpose. While the remote ancestors of the city deserve praise, their honor pales in comparison to that of the more recent generations of Athenians and, especially, those of the present day (Th. 2.36). It does not stretch the imagination to think that Pericles implies that future generations of Athenians can be even better so long as they continue to progress toward the political ends, most importantly the empire, that Pericles has set out for them.

Pericles' third major innovation, finally, has been discussed at some length already: he sought to increase the power of Athens as the world's major naval superpower, taking the reins from Themistocles and developing the navy in a massive way. Such was, to conclude, the logical consequence of his broader intention to shift the Athenians' self-conception. In the narrative of Athens and Athenian citizenship that Pericles innovates, one moves from an agrarian society in the beginning; to the city of Athens as the core of Athenian-ness; to Athens as no longer a city but an abstract idea, like ships floating on water—and, of course, defended forcefully and securely by ships floating on water.

The Leadership of Pericles and the Limits of Innovation

The history of Pericles' innovative leadership recounted to this point seems by and large to be an optimistic one, a story of success.[36] Indeed, it is difficult to read Thucydides' text and not be impressed by the favorable picture of Pericles on display—to the extent that some commentators choose to identify Pericles as nothing less than the mouthpiece of Thucydides, especially with regard to the execution of war strategy.[37] In one of the most revealing passages from the *History*, in which Thucydides provides his own analysis of one of the leaders in the war, the historian explains that Pericles succeeded by always making an accurate assessment of Athens' capabilities and resources, both during peace and during wartime. By persuading his fellow citizens about the best course of action in line with correct "foresight concerning the war" (Th. 2.65.6), Pericles demonstrated to his followers that he was "the best man for the needs of the state" (Th. 2.65.4). One proof of this claim is that the condition of post-Periclean Athens rapidly becomes worse—a condition that Thucydides chronicles at length in the *History*. The generation of leaders succeeding Pericles does "the very contrary" of what their earlier leader had advised for the city, "allowing private ambitions and private interests . . . to lead them into projects unjust both to themselves and to their allies," entailing "certain disaster on the country in the war" (Th. 2.65.7).[38]

Pericles' ability to communicate with the Athenians by means of artful and creative rhetoric provides an unobstructed view of the character of leadership in a democratic regime and serves, therefore, to clarify the dimensions of an important truth about leadership more generally. A leader in the context of democracy must exercise influence over followers through the power of persuasion, and the success of such leadership depends on the quality of a leader's persuasiveness with the public. This argument is assuredly not new and is, I think, rather intuitive.[39] Still, Thucydides' portrait of Pericles as an effective storyteller sheds light on how the leader engages in the project of persuasion to ends that are intended to be innovative. He manipulates the stories that followers have of themselves. It indicates, furthermore, just how comprehensive the

intended aims of persuasion can be. The medium through which Pericles sought to change the very self-identity of Athens was, in fact, speech.

Thucydides continues his evaluation by pointing to the underlying cause of Pericles' rhetorical effectiveness. Far from his being on the same level with his audience, he succeeded precisely because of the vast distance between himself and his followers.

> Pericles indeed, by his rank, ability and known integrity, was enabled to exercise an independent control over the multitude—in short, *to lead them instead of being led by them* (*kai ouk ēgeto mallon hup' autou ē autos ēge*); for as he never sought power by improper means, he was never compelled to flatter them, but, on the contrary, enjoyed so high an estimation that he could afford to anger them by contradiction. Whenever he saw them unseasonably and insolently elated, he would with a word reduce them to alarm; on the other hand, if they fell victims to a panic, he could at once restore them to confidence. (Th. 2.65.8–9, emphasis supplied; cf. Plu., *Per.* 15.1–5 [215–16] and 39.1–3 [234])

The key to Pericles' effectiveness lies in the relationship between his own virtues of character (i.e., "his rank, ability and known integrity") and those of his audience, and this helps us readers to see something deeper about the nature of persuasion in democracies.[40] Rather than being slavishly beholden to his audience for their good opinion and support—the equivalent of "being led by" his Athenian followers—Pericles had the elevated confidence to do what was necessary to steer his followers in the right direction by saying to them the right thing at the right time. He was independent of the people, in part because of his reputation to have been higher than the common run of people as a matter of virtue. As a result of these observations, Thucydides concludes that "what was nominally a democracy was becoming in his hands government by the first citizen (*hypo tou prōtou andros archē*)" (Th. 2.65.9). This comment

has received a good deal of scholarly attention over what it says about Thucydides' assessment of Pericles and what it perhaps says about Thucydides' assessment of the Athenian regime. Regarding the central problem explored in this essay, however, Thucydides' statement implies that democracy is the regime where strong and confident leadership is most badly needed, given the much less rigidly defined structure of authority characteristic of such a regime. In short, Thucydides' comments on the unequal nature of Pericles' character and status helps us to see the underlying causes of his effectiveness in Athens.

We readers, then, come to see an image of Pericles as a figure larger than life, a leader who was capable of guiding the whole city—indeed, the empire that was the extension of the city—through the power of his massive and sublimely gifted personality. How likely is such an example of leadership to be duplicated? One of the most important features of Thucydides' treatment of Pericles is that he intends to prompt readers to raise this question and to reflect on the rare conditions for effective leadership in a democracy.[41] More than this, Thucydides also intends to have his readers reflect on the prospects for success for leaders who undertake such innovative reforms of their communities. In the end, just how effective was Pericles in promoting the longevity of his reforms, such an important element for successful innovation?

Thucydides' text shows, even if somewhat gently, that Pericles' program of innovative leadership was not entirely effective, certainly not in the way this leader had hoped it would be and not in a long-lasting manner. The historian demonstrates, for instance, that Pericles' reforms were severely weakened by the plague of 430, which wiped out one-third of the Athenian population and shattered morale in the city.[42] In the midst of terrible suffering, the people of Athens were moved to interpret old oracles and prophecies in ways that implied they were being punished by the gods (Th. 2.54.1–3). In other words, old religious opinions and habits remained in the Athenians' self-understanding, notwithstanding the attempt of Pericles to loosen their grip.[43] Even though the citizens were unable to bury the bodies of the dead properly, they

chose to bury them shamefully out of pious respect for the need for burial (Th. 2.52.4). One observes, then, the very deep roots that these religious opinions had in the hearts and minds of the Athenians. Thucydides is clear that Pericles' policy of urbanization is even responsible for exacerbating the evils of the plague, because the crowding of spaces naturally occurring in the movement behind city walls led to unsanitary conditions. It is only after Pericles delivers another powerfully persuasive speech to the Athenians—the last speech of his recorded in the history and delivered "with the double object of restoring confidence and of leading [the Athenians] from these angry feelings to a calmer and more hopeful state of mind" (Th. 2.59.3)—that the citizens recover some semblance of the character that their leader had hoped to inspire.

For these reasons, Thucydides' presentation of Pericles is best read as a message of caution for political leaders who hope to succeed in affecting a lasting comprehensive reform of their communities. He demonstrates, in ways that Gardner does not emphasize, that there are powerful limits to persuasive speech as a mechanism whereby leaders attempt to reform the stories that citizens tell about themselves, setting their communities on an innovative path. These limits concern, in part, the forces of physical nature. Readers of the *History* see the innovative storytelling rhetoric of Pericles as ultimately ineffective at holding Athenian citizens to their new secular mode of being, for even the powerful rhetorical skills of Pericles cannot provide a countervailing force to the despair brought about by the plague. Another aspect of these limits is the formidable—perhaps unshakable—hold that unwritten laws, broadly understood, have on citizens. Reframing a collective story requires a transformation of the habits, traditions, self-concept, values, and so forth, of a people who have long been used to living according to these guidelines. Pericles did not even go so far as to attempt the "visionary" reform referred to in Gardner's leadership model, whereby he would seek to create a wholly new story for Athens. Yet the innovations that were comparatively more modest did not have the strength to persist outside of the physical presence of Pericles himself, so necessary for keeping

his Athenian audience persuaded.[44] These reflections suggest that "ordinary" political rhetoric, whereby the leader communicates the traditional story back to his or her audience, may be the most effective and enduring form of leadership, despite or perhaps because of its prosaic character.

After the death of Pericles—meaning after the Athenians lost the leader whose physical presence could keep the diverse movements internal to the regime pointing toward a common objective— the regime reverted to its earlier ways in important respects.[45] Factional strife, which Pericles had been able to keep at bay, began to rear its ugly head in destructive ways. Thucydides closes his famous evaluation of Pericles by calling attention to this fact about the domestic condition in Athens after the death of its leader (Th. 2.65.7), as noted above, yet the historian's comment should be read as communicating a double meaning. Thucydides' comment reflects well on Pericles while he lived but also demonstrates the leader's inability to get his innovative reforms to last. Newell argues that this reemergence of factional strife suggests that "Pericles was a happy accident, not a real solution. His successors pulled apart what he had held together."[46]

Conclusion

Thucydides' treatment of Pericles enhances our understanding of political leadership primarily on account of its complexity. The example illustrates, on one hand, how truly innovative leaders operate, particularly within the context of democracy. By shaping narratives about the identity of the citizen body through public speech, Pericles seeks to push through his novel reforms. Taking an extended look into the history of Pericles, then, helps to clarify the function of persuasion in democratic political leadership. On the other hand, great as he was as a leader for Athens and successful as he was while living, Pericles proved unable to make durable the reforms he proposed. This was because of the insuperable problem of natural forces fighting back against his leadership, brought to bear on his history by the plague, as well as situational obstacles in the social context of the people he sought to reform. For all its

advantages in helping us to conceptualize how leaders operate and classify different degrees of change, Gardner's cognitive model of leadership does not provide as much insight about the limitations to innovative leadership that are inherent in the nature of things. Thucydides, by contrast, helps readers to see these limitations more clearly. While the innovative reforms of Pericles had assumed that the moral opinions of Athenian society are susceptible to being shaped, Thucydides' work as a historian of leadership during the war shows just how fragile such innovations of collective identity can be.

Notes

1. See, e.g., Paul Woodruff, *First Democracy: The Challenge of an Ancient Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 3–6.
2. This is not to say that the character of democracy in classical Athens was simply equivalent to what we know in the modern period. In this connection consider the classic treatment of the differences in Benjamin Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with That of the Moderns," in *Benjamin Constant: Political Writings*, ed. Biancamaria Fontana, 309–28 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and also Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern: The Ancien Régime in Classical Greece* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 172–204. See also Ryan K. Balot, who refers to an "ocean" separating ancient democracies from those of modern regimes, but who agrees also that proper reflection on the ancients can help to illuminate our own democratic way of life: Balot, *Greek Political Thought* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 51.
3. Donald Kagan, *Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 3.
4. Recently Mark A. Menaldo has been critical of Kagan's interpretation of Pericles as a leader, especially regarding the full extent of Pericles' democratic ambitions: Menaldo, *Leadership and Transformative Ambition in International Relations* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013), 128–29 and 134–36. See also Bernard J. Dobski, "The Enduring Necessity of Periclean Politics," *Polis* 34 (2017), 65–66.
5. One finds cursory treatments of Pericles by authors exploring what the classics can generally teach us about leadership: see, e.g., Thomas E. Cronin and Michael A. Genovese, *Leadership Matters: Unleashing the Power of Paradox* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2012), 77; Michael

A. Genovese and Lawrence A. Tritle, "Leadership and the Classics," in *Leadership Studies: The Dialogue of Disciplines*, ed. Ronald A. Riggio and Michael Harvey, 39–95 (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2011), 41–42. Other authors provide far deeper and more complex treatments by exploring what Thucydides himself can teach us about leadership: see, e.g., Waller R. Newell, *The Soul of a Leader: Character, Conviction, and Ten Lessons in Political Greatness* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 256–68; and Mary P. Nichols, "Leaders and Leadership in Thucydides' *History*," in *The Oxford Handbook of Thucydides*, ed. Ryan K. Balot, Sara Forsdyke, and Edith Foster, 459–73 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017). Menaldo's impressive book (*Leadership and Transformative Ambition*) interprets Pericles' leadership as a classic example of "transformative ambition" and investigates how his approach to international affairs shaped his domestic policy. Finally, whereas Arthur Cotterell, Roger Lowe, and Ian Shaw interpret Pericles as an example of leadership "integrity," providing a model for how contemporary leaders of industrial organizations should operate, Kleanthis Mantzouranis applies the example of Pericles to the question of leadership ethics. See Arthur Cotterell, Roger Lowe, and Ian Shaw, *Leadership Lessons from the Ancient World* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 89–102; and Kleanthis Mantzouranis, "Thucydides' Assessments of Pericles and Alcibiades as a Lesson in Leadership Ethics," *Polis* 35 (2018), 523–47.

6. For contrasting views on this question, see Timothy W. Burns, "The Problematic Character of Periclean Athens," in *On Civic Republicanism: Ancient Lessons for Global Politics*, ed. Geoffrey C. Kellow and Neven Leddy, 15–40 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016); and Kagan, *Pericles*.

7. On the grand nature of Pericles' leadership, consider Newell, *Soul of a Leader*, 267: "Through his blend of imperialism and prudence, [Pericles] for a time embodied Athens in his own person. After his death, the two parts of this synthesis fly apart, revealing two opposed layers of opinion in Athens that had been concealed by his prominence."

8. The richness of scholarship on leadership rhetoric demonstrates that the rhetorical strategy of effective leaders is often complex. On the place of leadership rhetoric in democratic theory, see, e.g., John Kane and Haig Patapan, *The Democratic Leader: How Democracy Defines, Empowers, and Limits Its Leaders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 71–91; and Nannerl O. Keohane, *Thinking about Leadership* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 155–93. Stephen Skowronek and Jeffrey Tulis discuss leadership rhetoric in the context of the American

presidency: see Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Made: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1997); and Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

9. Howard Gardner, *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 9. Gardner is not the only scholar who defends a model of leadership as storytelling. See *inter alia* Stephen Denning, *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action through Narrative* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007); and Annette Simmons, *The Story Factor: Inspiration, Influence, and Persuasion through the Art of Storytelling* (New York: Basic Books, 2006). Cf. Boas Shamir, Hava Dayan-Horesh, and Dalya Adler, "Leading by Biography: Towards a Life-Story Approach to the Study of Leadership," *Leadership* 1, no. 1 (2005): 13–29.

10. Jerome Bruner, who sharply distinguishes argument from story, explains the difference like this: "[A]rguments convince one of their truth, stories of their lifelikeness. The one verifies by eventual appeal to procedures for establishing formal and empirical proof. The other establishes not truth but verisimilitude." Jerome Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 11–43.

11. Gardner, *Leading Minds*, 14–15 and 41–62. Consider in this connection Nathan Harter's recent work on "coherence" in leadership, which also takes a cognitive approach to exploring the ways that leaders inspire agreement or consensus among the members of the group. Nathan Harter, *Leadership as Coherence: A Cognitive Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2015). Scholars in the field of management studies have used similar concepts to describe "collective identities." Consider Andrew D. Brown, "A Narrative Approach to Collective Identities," *Journal of Management Studies* 43, no. 4 (2006): 731–53.

12. Gardner, *Leading Minds*, 10–11.

13. All dates in this essay are B.C.

14. Herodotus lists the generations of the Alcmaeonidae in his *History* (bk 6, chap. 131), an account that culminates in the birth of Pericles.

15. All citations to Plutarch's work in this essay are made in parentheses in the body of text, referring to the chapter and section numbers in the Loeb edition of Plutarch and also, in brackets, to the page number of the English translation cited from the following edition: *Plutarch's Lives, Volume 1*, the Dryden translation, edited with preface by Arthur Hugh Clough (New York: The Modern Library, 2001). On the significance of *isonomia*, see also Kagan, *Pericles*, 14–18; and John Lombardini,

"Isonomia and the Public Sphere in Democratic Athens," *History of Political Thought* 35 (2013): 393–420.

16. For instance, Thucydides explains (I.127) that it was Pericles and the influence that he had on Athens that worried Sparta the most. All citation of Thucydides' *War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians* in this essay will be made in parentheses in the body of text, according to the standard book, chapter, and sentence numbers. The following edition of this text, with the newly revised edition of the translation by Richard Crawley, has been used: *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

17. Christopher Bruell, "Thucydides and Perikles," *The St. John's Review* 32 (Summer, 1981): 24. Cf. Plu. *Per*. 15.5 [215]: "The source of [Pericles'] predominance was not barely his power of language, but, as Thucydides assures us, the reputation of his life, and the confidence felt in his character; his manifest freedom from every kind of corruption, and superiority to all considerations of money." Cotterell, Lowe, and Shaw, as noted above, highlight the integrity and honesty of Pericles: see *Leadership Lessons*, 94–98.

18. Leo Strauss comments that Pericles' "superior intelligence is manifest to the *demos* because it is intelligible to the demos; he is, so to speak, an open book for the *demos*." Leo Strauss, *The City and Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 219. See also Genovese and Tritle, "Leadership and the Classics," 42.

19. Consider, as evidence, that the Funeral Oration of Pericles (Th. II.35–46) is often discussed in the same context as another paragon of public rhetoric, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. See, e.g., Newell, *Soul of a Leader*, 223, 257–58; Clifford Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 26–27; Simon Stow, "Pericles at Gettysburg and Ground Zero: Tragedy, Patriotism, and Public Mourning," *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 2 (2007): 195–208; and Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 52.

20. On how to understand Thucydides' presentation of the speeches in the *History*, consult Clifford Orwin's authoritative explanation: Orwin, *Humanity*, 207–12.

21. For a particularly illuminating account of the dramatic context surrounding Pericles' first speech, see S. N. Jaffe, *Thucydides on the Outbreak of the War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 182–83.

22. This basic character contrast between Athens and Sparta—the former city being quick to move and decisive in action, the latter slow and

stodgy—is a theme treated elsewhere in Thucydides' text. See, e.g., the speech of the Corinthians at 1.68–71, esp. chap. 70, which offers a sketch of the contrast between the two cities that seems generally to agree with Pericles' arguments at the end of Book One. Dobski explains ("Enduring Necessity," 73) that the "Corinthians make several appeals to bolster the Peloponnesian' confidence and to soften any concerns that might delay their attack. In the end, however, their case for going to war relies on aggravating the fears of the Peloponnesians."

23. See also Strauss, *The City and Man*, 212. Edith Foster notes that there is similarity between Themistocles and Pericles in their respective attitudes toward empire: *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 131.

24. For more information on these particular deeds of Themistocles, see Plutarch, *Life of Themistocles*, esp. 10–11 [153–55]; cf. Herodotus, *The History*, bk 8, chaps. 1–23 and 40–41. Themistocles figures into the section of Thucydides' *History* known as the Pentecontaetia: see Th. 1.90–93 and 1.135–38.

25. Cf. Burns, "Problematic Character," 16; and Paul Diduch and Travis Hadley, "The Moral Foundations of Political Trust: Thucydides' Pericles and the Limits of Enlightened Statescraft," *Anamnesis* 5 (2016): 48: "Pericles believes that what was originally experienced under Themistocles as a traumatic necessity . . . can be employed as a catalyst for progress."

26. The histories of Themistocles show that he had a somewhat fraught relationship with the Athenian people, to the extent that he even chose to live in Persia as a guest of the Great King after having been ostracized by Athens. That said, the *glory* of his deeds in battle would not thereby have been diminished in Athenian public opinion. After all, the Athenian envoy at the Spartan Congress, recounted earlier in Book One, famously defends their actions in the war against Persia by explaining that Athens had provided "the ablest commander" (Th. 1.74.1). Thucydides himself assesses the leadership of Themistocles by saying that he "was a man who exhibited the most indubitable signs of genius; indeed, in this particular he has a claim on our admiration *quite extraordinary and unparalleled*" (Th. 1.138.3, emphasis supplied). Kagan (*Pericles*, 26) refers to Themistocles as one of "two political giants of an earlier generation." On these points generally, consider Plutarch, *Life of Themistocles*, 22.1–3 [162] and 31.1–5 [168–69]. On the Athenian policy of ostracism, see Kagan, *Pericles*, 17; and Menaldo, *Leadership and Transformative Ambition*, 136–38.

27. I am grateful to Paul Diduch and Travis Hadley ("Moral Foundations," 42–67) for their illuminating discussion of the reforms of Pericles.

28. Plutarch notes that Pericles, early in his tenure of public leadership and before the war with Sparta, encouraged certain Athenian citizens to leave the city and work as agricultural laborers in other areas of Hellas. He did so "to ease and discharge the city of an idle, and, by reason of their idleness, a busy meddling crowd of people; and at the same time to meet the necessities and restore the fortunes of the poor townsmen, and to intimidate, also, and check their allies from attempting any change" (Plu. *Per.* 11.5 [211]).

29. Leo Strauss has stressed how Pericles sought to liberate the Athenians from their dependence on the gods and on Homer, the poet who educated Greece about the gods. See, e.g., *The City and Man*, 159 and 218–19; and Leo Strauss, *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy*, with an introduction by Thomas L. Pangle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 90–91.

30. Burns, "Problematic Character," 17, and see more generally 15–19 on Pericles' secular vision of political life. See also Diduch and Hadley, "Moral Foundations," esp. 53–55; and Rahe, *Republics*, 185.

31. John D. Mikalson, *Athenian Popular Religion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 83–85, 102–3. See also the classic study on the religious character of the ancient Greek family, laws, and city: Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City: A Study on the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome*, with a new forward by Arnaldo Momigliano and S. C. Humphreys (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

32. Not all interpreters see Pericles as espousing such a clearly cut doctrine of secular politics. See, e.g., Vincent Azoulay, *Pericles of Athens*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 119–22.

33. Newell, *Soul of a Leader*, 257–58. Newell's interpretation here lends support for seeing Pericles as an effective storyteller in his public leadership for Athens: "Apart from the speech itself, he presents not a shred of evidence that Athens was as Pericles describes. Indeed, Pericles himself may have considered it a vision of an ideal Athens, of what the city *must* be in order to survive the coming challenges." Cf. Ryan K. Balot, "Pericles' Anatomy of Democratic Courage," *American Journal of Philology* 122 (2001): 522; and Genovese and Tritle, "Leadership and the Classics," 41.

34. Cf. Orwin, *Humanity*, 20: "We sometimes hear that Pericles expounded the first 'secular' vision of society. To leave it at that, however, is both to

understate the case and to overstate it. Pericles presents Athens as the first 'atheistic' society and hardly less resplendent than that which Marx envisaged for the end of history. Perfectly self-sufficient at the highest level of human happiness, Athens can dispense with the gods because there is no longer any role for them to play."

35. Even so, Menaldo argues that Pericles, in the Funeral Oration, seeks to effect a "transformation of citizen virtue" in Athens, modifying traditional self-sacrifice in a more individualistic direction. See Menaldo, *Leadership and Transformative Ambition*, 149–53.

36. For studies that interpret Pericles in this manner, consider *inter alia* Carolyn Dewald, "Paying Attention: History as the Development of a Secular Narrative," in *Rethinking Revolutions through Ancient Greece*, ed. Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne, 164–82 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 175; Adam Parry, "Thucydides' Historical Perspective," *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972): 47–61; and Harvey Yunis, "How Do the People Decide? Thucydides on Periclean Rhetoric and Civic Instruction," *American Journal of Philology* 112 (1991): 179–200.

37. The apparent success of Pericles has also been questioned by scholars, who wonder whether Thucydides views Pericles favorably at all. For scholarship in this vein, consider, e.g., Steven Forde, "Thucydides on the Causes of Athenian Imperialism," *American Political Science Review* 80 (1986): 433–48; S. Sara Monoson and Michael Loriaux, "The Illusion of Power and the Disruption of Moral Norms: Thucydides' Critique of Periclean Policy," *American Political Science Review* 92 (1998): 285–97; Orwin, *Humanity*, 191; Clifford Orwin, "Stasis and Plague: Thucydides on the Dissolution of Society," *Journal of Politics* 50 (1988), esp. 843–46; and Strauss, *The City and Man*, 141, 151–53, 192, and 218–19.

38. Thucydides' grim portrait of democratic leadership in Athens culminates in his depiction of Alcibiades, and ultimately in his description of the constitutional upheavals in Athens and other cities in Book Eight of his *History*, in which Alcibiades figures as an important player. For a brief period of time in 411, the oligarchs in Athens were successful in modifying the constitution, in which a council of four hundred ruled the city and many democratic institutions were suspended. For Thucydides' discussion of these events, see 8.53ff.

39. In addition to the texts cited in footnote 8, consider, e.g., Bryan Garsten, *Saving Persuasion: A Defense of Rhetoric and Judgment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from*

Roosevelt to Reagan (New York: The Free Press, 1990), esp. 3–49. Cf. Gardner, *Leading Minds*, 13.

40. Mantzouranis's discussion of the implications of Thucydides' presentation of Pericles for leadership studies ("Thucydides' Assessments," 545–56) highlights these "central requirements for ethical leadership" without stressing the importance of Pericles' inequality of character and status.

41. Cf. Gardner, *Leading Minds*, 42: "Through sheer physical power, one can gain—and maintain—a position of authority over other people. . . . If one wishes to persuade others, however, it is necessary to convince them of one's point of view." Gardner's insight fits with Thucydides' here in that it underscores the challenge of securing authority over other people in democracies. That Pericles was so elevated in character and status was key to his effectiveness in Athens.

42. See William H. McNeill, *Plague and Peoples* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1976), 120–21.

43. See Nichols, "Leaders and Leadership," 463.

44. Gardner (*Leading Minds*, 11) recognizes that "visionary leadership is far more readily achieved in specific domains (like particular arts or sciences) or in specific institutions (like a university or a corporation) than in the guidance of an entire society." In other words, he agrees that "genuine visionaries" will be very rare in political societies. That said, the reflections of Thucydides interpreted in this essay indicate that genuine innovators, so to speak, will perhaps be almost as rare, considering the long-term ineffectiveness of such a political and rhetorical genius as Pericles of Athens.

45. Rahe (*Republics*, 177) identifies Pericles as the one largely responsible for these consequences, "for he made no provision for his replacement."

46. Newell, *Soul of a Leader*, 267. He continues: "Alcibiades is preceded by the coarse and violent Cleon, Nicias by the cautious Diodotus," leaders whose deeds are recounted in the remaining books of Thucydides' history.