

THUCYDIDES

\*

HISTORY OF THE  
PELOPONNESIAN  
WAR

\*

*Translated by Rex Warner  
with an Introduction and Notes  
by M. I. Finley*

PENGUIN BOOKS

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Published by the Penguin Group

Penguin Books Ltd, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ, England

Penguin Books USA Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, USA

Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia

Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 10 Alcorn Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4V 3B2

Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd, 182-190 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand

Penguin Books Ltd, Registered Offices: Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England

This translation first published 1954

Revised with a new introduction and appendices 1972

33 35 37 39 40 38 36 34 32

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Printed in England by Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

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## BOOK THREE

## REVOLT OF MYTILENE

- 1 NEXT summer, at the time when the corn was ripe, the Peloponnesians and their allies marched into Attica under the command of the Spartan King Archidamus, the son of Zeuxidamus. They settled down in the country and laid it waste. As on previous occasions, the Athenian cavalry went into action wherever possible and prevented the mass of enemy light troops from leaving the protection of the main body of the army and doing harm in the districts close to the city. The Peloponnesians stayed in Attica for the period for which they had come supplied, and then retired and dispersed to their various cities.
- 2 Directly after the invasion of the Peloponnesians the island of Lesbos, except for Methymna, revolted from Athens. Even before the war the Lesbians had wanted to revolt, but the Spartans had not been willing to receive them into their alliance; and now they were compelled to revolt before the time that they had planned. They were waiting until they had narrowed the mouths of their harbours and finished the fortifications and the shipbuilding which they had in hand; also for the arrival of various supplies which were due to come from Pontus - archers, corn, and other things that they had sent for. Meanwhile, however, the Tenedians, who were enemies of theirs, the Methymnians, and a certain group of individuals in the city itself, people who represented Athenian interests in Mytilene, informed the Athenians that the Mytilenians were forcibly making the whole of Lesbos into one state under the control of Mytilene, and that the various activities on which they were so busy were planned in cooperation with the Spartans and with the Boeotians, who were their kinsmen, for the purpose of making a revolt; and that unless preventive measures were taken at once, Athens would lose Lesbos.
- 3 At this time, however, the Athenians were suffering from the

plague and also from the full force of the war which had only just broken out. They thought it would be a very serious thing indeed to have to fight Lesbos as well, with its fleet and with its untapped resources. Thus, rather through a process of wishful thinking, they at first believed that the accusations were untrue. Later, however, when they had sent out representatives and failed to induce the Mytilenians to abandon the idea of the union of Lesbos or to give up their warlike preparations, they became frightened and decided to take action before it was too late. They hurriedly sent out a fleet of forty ships that had been equipped for sailing round the Peloponnese, under the command of Cleippides, the son of Deinias, and two others. It had been reported at Athens that there was a feast held in honour of the Malean Apollo outside the city, and that the whole people of Mytilene took part in this feast; so there was a chance, if they acted quickly, of catching them by surprise. If this plan worked, so much the better; if not, they were to order the people of Mytilene to surrender their ships and to demolish their fortifications, and, if they failed to comply with these demands, to make war on them.

So the fleet set sail. The ten triremes of Mytilene which happened to be serving with the fleet according to the provisions of the alliance were kept back by the Athenians and their crews placed under arrest. Nevertheless news of the expedition reached Mytilene through a man who crossed over from Athens to Euboea, went on foot to Geraestus, found a merchant ship on the point of sailing, and got by sea to Mytilene on the third day after he had left Athens. So the people of Mytilene did not go out to the temple at Malea. Instead they reinforced the unfinished parts of their walls, and their harbours, and stood on guard.

- 4 Soon afterwards the Athenian fleet sailed in. When the commanders saw what the situation was they said what they had been instructed to say and, as the Mytilenians refused to obey, they made war upon them. The Mytilenians, suddenly forced into a war for which they were unprepared, did make the gesture of sailing out with their fleet to fight a little way in front of their harbour, but were soon chased back again by the Athenian ships, and immediately began to enter into negotiations with the Athenian commanders, wishing, if they could, to have the Athenian fleet recalled

for the time being on any reasonable conditions. The Athenian commanders themselves were doubtful of their ability to deal with the whole of Lesbos, and so they accepted the overtures made to them. An armistice was made, and the Mytilenians sent to Athens a delegation including one of the people who had already informed against them, but had now repented of his action, to try to persuade the Athenians to withdraw their fleet and to make them believe that there was no danger of any revolutions in Mytilene. At the same time they sent ambassadors to Sparta in a trireme which escaped the notice of the Athenian fleet anchored at Malea to the north of the town; for they had little hope that their representatives in Athens would do any good.

The mission to Sparta reached their destination after a difficult voyage across the open sea and started conversations with a view to securing military aid. The mission which had gone to Athens returned without having succeeded in any of its objects, and thus Mytilene and the rest of Lesbos, except for Methymna, went to war with Athens. The Methymnians fought on the Athenian side, as did the Imbrians, the Lemnians and a certain number of the other allies.

The Mytilenians now marched out in full force against the Athenian camp, and in the battle that took place they had rather the better of things, but they lacked confidence in themselves and retired to their city without venturing to camp in the open. Afterwards they kept quiet, not wishing to try their fortune again until they had the support of whatever forces might be coming to them from the Peloponnese. For Meleas, a Laconian, and Hermaeondas, a Theban, now arrived. These two had been sent out to them before the revolt, but had not been able to get to Lesbos before the appearance of the Athenian fleet. Now, after the battle, they managed to steal into the place in a trireme and persuaded the Mytilenians to send another trireme with ambassadors back with them to Sparta. This the Mytilenians did.

6 The Athenians meanwhile were much encouraged by the inaction of the Mytilenians. They summoned forces from their allies, and these forces arrived all the sooner because they saw so little evidence of vigorous action on the part of the Lesbians. They brought their fleet round to a station south of the city and built

two fortified camps, one on each side of the city, blockading both the harbours. They thus deprived the Mytilenians of the use of the sea, though they and the other Lesbians who supported them had control of the land. All that the Athenians held was a small area round their camps; Malea was used only as a port for their ships and a place for their market.

7 While the war in Mytilene was going on as I have described it, the Athenians also sent out, at about the same time of the summer, a fleet of thirty ships round the Peloponnese. This fleet was under the command of Phormio's son Asopius, the Acarnanians having requested that the commander sent out to them should be either a son or a relation of Phormio. Various places on the coast were laid waste by this fleet as it sailed off Laconia. Afterwards Asopius sent most of the ships back to Athens and with twelve ships came himself to Naupactus. He then raised an army from the whole country of Acarnania and marched against Oeniadae. The fleet sailed down the Achelous and the army laid waste the land. Oeniadae, however, showed no signs of giving in, and Asopius, after dismissing his army, sailed himself to Leucas and made a landing at Nericus. On his way back he was killed and a large number of his troops destroyed by the people of those parts who had come out against him, supported by a few soldiers of the garrison. Afterwards the Athenians sailed away, having recovered their dead from the Leucadians under an armistice.

8 Meanwhile the ambassadors from Mytilene who had been sent out in the first ship had been told by the Spartans to come to Olympia, so that the other allies also could hear and discuss what they had to say. They therefore went to Olympia, in the Olympiad at which Dorieus of Rhodes won his second victory, and when, after the festival was over, a meeting of the allies was called, they made the following speech:

9 'Spartans and allies, we know what the established rule among the Hellenes is on this subject. When a state revolts in the middle of a war and deserts its previous allies, those who welcome it into their alliance are just so far pleased with it as they find it useful to them, but otherwise think the worse of it for having betrayed its former friends. And this is a perfectly fair way of looking at things, so long as there is a like-mindedness in policy and feeling, an equality

in power and resources between the state that revolts and the state from which it revolts, and so long as there is no reasonable excuse for making the revolt. These conditions did not apply with regard to us and the Athenians, and no one should think the worse of us for revolting from them in time of danger, after being honoured by them in time of peace.

10 'Justice and honesty are the first subjects with which we shall deal, especially as we are here to ask for your alliance, and we know that there can never be a firm friendship between man and man or a real community between different states unless there is a conviction of honesty on both sides and a certain like-mindedness in other respects; for if people think differently they will act divergently.

'The alliance between us and Athens dates from the end of the Persian war, when you withdrew from the leadership and the Athenians stayed to finish what was left to do. But the object of the alliance was the liberation of the Hellenes from Persia, not the subjugation of the Hellenes to Athens. So long as the Athenians in their leadership respected our independence, we followed them with enthusiasm. But when we saw that they were becoming less and less antagonistic to Persia and more and more interested in enslaving their own allies, then we became frightened. Because of the multiple voting system, the allies were incapable of uniting in self-defence, and so they all became enslaved except for us and for Chios. We, supposed to be independent and nominally free, furnished our own contingents in the allied forces. But with the examples before us of what had already happened, we no longer felt any confidence in Athenian leadership. It seemed very unlikely that, after having brought under their control the states who were fellow members with us, they would refrain from acting towards us, too, in the same way, if ever they felt strong enough to do so.

11 'If we had all still been independent, we could have had more confidence in their not altering the state of affairs. But with most of their allies subjected to them and us being treated as equals, it was natural for them to object to a situation where the majority had already given in and we alone stood out as independent – all the more so since they were becoming stronger and stronger and we were losing whatever support we had before. And in an alliance

the only safe guarantee is an equality of mutual fear; for then the party that wants to break faith is deterred by the thought that the odds will not be on his side.

'In fact the only reason why we were left with our independence was because the Athenians, in building up their empire, thought that they could seize power more easily by having some specious arguments to put forward and by using the methods of policy rather than of brute force. We were useful to them because they could point to us and say that we, who had votes like themselves, could not possibly have joined them unwillingly in their various expeditions and could only be doing so because the people against whom we were being led were in the wrong. By these methods they first led the stronger states against the weaker ones, leaving the strongest to the last in the certainty of finding them, once all the rest had been absorbed, much less formidable to deal with. If, on the other hand, they had started with us, when all the other states still had their strength and had also a centre round which they could stand, they would not have subjugated them so easily. Then also, they felt some alarm about our navy, in case it might come together as one force and join you or some other power, and so become a danger to Athens. Another factor in securing our independence was the trouble we took to be on good terms with the Athenian assembly and with their various leading statesmen. Yet, with the examples we had of how they had behaved to others, we never expected to be able to maintain ourselves for long, if this war had not broken out.

12 'How could we feel any genuine friendship or any confidence in our liberty when we were in a situation like this? The terms on which we accepted each other ran counter to the real feelings of both sides. In wartime they did their best to be on good terms with us because they were frightened of us; we, for the same reason, tried to keep on good terms with them in peace-time. In most cases goodwill is the basis of loyalty, but in our case fear was the bond, and it was more through terror than through friendship that we were held together in alliance. And the alliance was certain to be broken at any moment by the first side that felt confident that this would be a safe move to make. So it is wrong to condemn us for breaking away first simply because Athens had not

yet taken action against us, or to say that we ought to have waited until we were quite sure what action they would take. For if we had the same ability as they have for planning action and then putting it off, we should be their equals, and there would be no need for us to be their subjects. As it is, they are always in the position where they can take the initiative in aggression; we should be allowed the initiative in self-defence.

- 13 'These, Spartans and allies, are the reasons and the causes for our revolt. They are clear enough to convince our hearers that we have not acted improperly, and they constitute sufficient grounds for us to feel alarmed and to look round for what security we can find. Indeed, we wanted to do so long ago, and when it was still peacetime we sent ambassadors to you on the subject: but we could not get your help, since you refused to accept us. Now we have responded immediately to the invitation of the Boeotians and we have decided to make a double break with the past – a break in our relations both with the Hellenes and with the Athenians. As for the Hellenes, we shall no longer join the Athenians in acts of aggression on them, but shall help in the work of liberation; and as for the Athenians, we shall take the initiative in breaking away from them, instead of waiting to be destroyed by them later.

'However our revolt has taken place earlier than we intended and without adequate preparations. This is all the more reason why you should take us into your alliance and send us help quickly, thus revealing yourselves as people capable of helping those who should be helped and at the same time of hurting your enemies. Never has there been such an opportunity. Owing to the plague and the expenses they have incurred, the Athenians are in a state of exhaustion; part of their fleet is sailing round your coasts, and the rest is engaged in blockading us. It is improbable that they have any ships in reserve, and if you invade for the second time this summer with naval and military forces at the same time, they will either be unable to resist your fleet or will have to withdraw their own from your shores and from ours.

'And do not think that you are endangering your own persons for the sake of a country that has nothing to do with you. You may think that Lesbos is a long way away, but you will find that the

good it can do you is very close at hand. It is not in Attica, as some people think, that the war will be won or lost, but in the countries from which Attica draws her strength. Her financial power comes from the tribute paid by her allies, and this will be greater still if we are conquered. For there will be no other revolts, our resources will be added to theirs, and we shall be treated more harshly than those who were enslaved before us. But if you give us your whole-hearted support you will gain for yourselves a state which has a large navy (which is the thing you need most); you will be in a much better position for breaking the power of Athens by detaching her allies from her, since the others will be greatly encouraged to come over to you; and you will clear yourselves of the charge that has been made against you of not giving help to those who revolt. Once you come forward in the role of liberators, you will find that your strength in the war is enormously increased.

- 14 'We ask you, therefore, to respect the hopes set on you by the Hellenes, and to respect Olympian Zeus, in whose temple we stand as suppliants. Come to the help of Mytilene. Be our allies, and do not desert us. It is our own lives that we are risking, but we are doing so in a way by which the general good of all will be the result of our success, and an even more general calamity, if you will not listen to us, will follow upon our failure. Be the men, therefore, that the Hellenes think you and that our fears require you to be.'
- 15 This was the speech of the Mytilenians. When the Spartans and their allies had heard it, they accepted the proposals made and welcomed the Lesbians into their alliance. They decided on the invasion of Attica and instructed their allies, who were present, to gather at the isthmus as quickly as possible with two-thirds of their total forces. They themselves were the first to arrive there, and they got ready machines for hauling the ships across from Corinth to the sea on the side of Athens, so that they could attack simultaneously by land and sea. In all this they showed great energy, but the other allies were slow in coming in, since they were busy in harvesting their corn and tired of military service.
- 16 The Athenians were aware that these preparations were being made on the theory that they themselves were weak, and wished to make it clear that the theory was a mistaken one and that they

could easily beat off any attack from the Peloponnesian fleet without recalling their own fleet from Lesbos. They therefore manned 100 ships with their own citizens (excluding the knights and the Pentacosiodemimni) and with their resident aliens, sailed out to the Isthmus, where they made a demonstration of their power and carried out landings just as they pleased on the Peloponnesian coast. The Spartans, finding that matters were not at all what they had expected, came to the conclusion that what the Lesbians had said was untrue; other difficulties faced them in the non-appearance of their allies and the news that the thirty Athenian ships round the Peloponnese were now laying waste the country near Sparta itself. They therefore returned home, but later they got ready a fleet to send to Lesbos. A total of forty ships was ordered from their various allies, and Alcidas was appointed as admiral to sail with the fleet. The Athenians also went back to Athens with their hundred ships when they saw that the Spartans had gone.

17 At the time when this fleet was at sea, Athens seems to have had almost the largest number of ships in action at the same time that she ever had, and beautifully equipped too. Yet the numbers were as great or greater at the beginning of the war. Then a hundred ships were guarding Attica, Euboea, and Salamis; another hundred were sailing round the Peloponnese, and there were other ships at Potidaea and in various other stations, making a grand total of 250 on active service in one summer. It was this, together with the campaign at Potidaea, which was the chief drain on the revenue. For the hoplites in the garrison at Potidaea were paid two drachmae a day (one for the soldier and one for his servant). From the beginning there were 3,000 hoplites, and the number was not reduced till the siege was over. Then, too, there were 1,600 men with Phormio who left before the end of the siege. The crews of the ships were all paid at the same rate. This was the expenditure of money at first, at a time when Athens had the very largest number of ships in service.

18 At the time when the Spartans were at the Isthmus, the Mytilenians, supported by a force of mercenaries, marched by land against Methymne in the belief that they would have the place betrayed to them. They made an assault on the city, but nothing went as they had expected and they withdrew to Antissa, Pyrrha, and

Eresus. They made arrangements for the internal security of these places, strengthened their walls, and then quickly marched home again.

After the Mytilenians had retired, the people of Methymna marched out against Antissa, but they were defeated by the Antissians and their mercenaries, who came outside the walls to fight. Many of the Methymnians were killed and the rest retreated as fast as they could. When the Athenians were informed of this and realized that the Mytilenians were masters of the whole country and that their own soldiers were too few to keep them in check, they sent out at the beginning of the autumn Paches, the son of Epicurus, with 1,000 citizen hoplites under his command. The hoplites rowed the ships themselves, and when they arrived at Mytilene they built a single wall completely surrounding the place, with forts, garrisoned by soldiers, placed at various strong points. Thus Mytilene was now firmly blockaded both from the land and from the sea, and winter was approaching.

19 The Athenians still needed more money for the siege, though they had for the first time raised from their own citizens a contribution of 200 talents. They now sent out twelve ships to collect money from their allies, with Lysicles and four others in command. After sailing to various places and collecting contributions, Lysicles went inland from Myos in Caria across the plain of the Maeander up to the hills at Sandius. There he was set upon by the Carians and by the people of Anaia; he himself and a great part of his army were killed.

20 In the same winter the Plataeans, who were still being besieged by the Peloponnesians and the Boeotians, finding themselves in distress as their provisions ran out, and seeing no hope of help coming to them from Athens or any chance of survival by any other means, made a plan with the Athenians who were besieged with them by which they were to leave the city and do their best to force their way over the enemy's surrounding wall. The originators of the scheme were Theaenetus, the son of Tolmides, a soothsayer, and Eupompides, the son of Daimachus, who was one of the generals. The original intention was that they should all join in the attempt, but later half of them shrank back from being involved in what seemed to them too risky a venture. There remained

about 220 volunteers who persisted in the idea of breaking out. Their method was as follows: they constructed ladders to reach to the top of the enemy's wall, and they did this by calculating the height of the wall from the number of the layers of bricks at a point which was facing in their direction and had not been plastered. The layers were counted by a lot of people at the same time, and though some were likely to get the figure wrong, the majority would get it right, especially as they counted the layers frequently and were not so far away from the wall that they could not see it well enough for their purpose. Thus, guessing what the thickness of a single brick was, they calculated how long their ladders would have to be.

21 The wall of the Peloponnesians was constructed in the following way. There were in fact two walls, each forming a circle, one directed against Plataea, and one facing outwards to guard against any attack that might be made from Athens. Between the two walls was a space of about sixteen feet, and inside this space were built the huts where the men on guard were quartered. The building was continuous, so that the impression made was that of one thick wall with battlements on either side of it. Every ten battlements there were towers of some size and of the same breadth as the wall, reaching right across from its inner to its outer face, and built so that there was no way past the towers, the only way being through the middle of them. On nights when it was wet and stormy they did not man the battlements, but kept guard from the towers, which were roofed in above and were not far away from each other.

This was the structure of the wall inside which the Plataeans 22 were penned. And now, when everything was ready, they waited for a stormy night with wind and rain and no moon, and then they slipped out of the city, led by the men who had been the originators of the plan. First they crossed the ditch that surrounded the town, and then they came up to the enemy's wall without being detected by the men on guard, who could not see them in the darkness or hear the noise they made as they approached, because it was drowned by the blustering of the wind. They also kept a good distance away from each other, to prevent the risk of their weapons clashing together and giving them away. They were

lightly armed and only wore shoes on the left foot, to stop them slipping in the mud. They reached the battlements at a place half-way between two towers which they knew to be unguarded. The ones who carried the ladders went first and set them in position; next twelve light-armed men, with daggers and breast-plates, climbed up, led by Ammias, the son of Coroebus, who was the first to ascend. His men followed him, and six went to each of the two towers. After them came more light-armed soldiers with spears; their shields were carried by others who came behind them, and they were to give them their shields when they came in contact with the enemy. It was not until most of them had ascended the wall that they were discovered by the sentries in the towers. One of the Plataeans had knocked down a tile from the battlements as he was getting a grip of it, and it made a noise as it fell. The alarm was given immediately, and the troops rushed out to the wall. In the darkness and the storm they had no notion of what the danger was, and at the same moment the Plataeans who were left behind in the city made a sortie and attacked the wall at a point opposite to the place where their comrades were climbing up, so as to distract attention from them as far as possible. So the besieging troops stood still in a state of confusion, no one daring to leave his own sector to reinforce any other point, and unable to guess what was happening. The 300 troops, however, who were specially detailed for service in an emergency, went outside the wall and marched in the direction of the alarm. Fire signals of an enemy attack were made to Thebes; but the Plataeans in the town also displayed a number of fire signals from their own walls, having them all ready made for this very purpose, so as to make the enemy's signals unintelligible, to stop help coming from Thebes, and to prevent the Thebans from having a true idea of what was happening, until their own men who had gone out had escaped and got into safety.

23 Meanwhile the Plataeans were climbing up on to the wall. The first who ascended had captured the two towers and killed the sentries. They then took up their stand in the passages through the towers to prevent any reinforcements coming through against them. They also set up ladders from the wall and sent a number of men up to the tops of the towers; so, by hurling their missiles



both from above and from below, they kept back the enemy from approaching. Meanwhile the main body planted a number of ladders against the outer wall, knocked down the battlements, and kept passing over between the towers. As each man got across he formed up with the others at the edge of the ditch, and from there they shot their arrows and hurled their javelins at all who came up along the wall to prevent their comrades crossing over. When the rest had got across, last of all, and with some difficulty, the men on the towers came down and ran to the ditch, and at that very moment the enemy force of 300 came up, carrying torches. The Plataeans, standing in the darkness at the edge of the ditch, could see them better than they could be seen themselves, and shot their arrows and hurled javelins at the parts of their bodies which were unprotected with armour. The light of the torches made it even more difficult for them to be seen in the darkness, so that even the last of them managed to get across the ditch, though it was a hard business and difficult going. Ice had formed on the surface, not hard enough to walk on, but of the watery kind which comes when the wind is more in the east than in the north, and the snow which fell in the night, with the great wind which was blowing, had raised the level of the water in the ditch so much that they could only just get across with their heads out of the water. Nevertheless it was chiefly because the storm was so violent that they managed to escape at all.

24 The Plataeans then set out from the ditch in one body and took the road to Thebes, with the shrine of the hero Androcrates on their right. They imagined that this road, leading into their enemies' country, would be the very last one that they would be suspected of having taken, and, in fact, when they were on it they saw the Peloponnesians with torches trying to find them on the road to Athens in the direction of Cithaeron and Druos-Kephalae. The Plataeans went for rather more than half a mile on the road to Thebes, and then turned off it and took the road leading to the mountains in the direction of Erythrae and Hysiae. On reaching the mountains they made their way safely to Athens, 212 of them all told. Some of them had turned back to the city before crossing the wall, and one archer had been taken prisoner at the outer ditch.

Finally the Peloponnesians gave up the pursuit and returned to

their positions. The Plataeans in the city knew nothing of what had taken place, and were informed by the men who turned back that the whole of the escaping party had been destroyed. So as soon as it was day they sent out a herald to ask for a truce so that they could recover their dead; but they abandoned the idea when they learned the truth. In this way the Plataeans who made the attempt got across the wall and reached safety.

25 At the end of this same winter the Spartan Salaethus was sent from Sparta to Mytilene in a trireme. He went by sea to Pyrrha, and from there went on foot along the bed of a water-course to a place where it was possible to get through the surrounding wall, and so slipped into Mytilene unobserved. There he told the magistrates that Attica was going to be invaded, that the forty ships which were to help them were coming, and that he himself had been sent in advance to tell them the news and to take charge of things generally. The Mytilenians were encouraged by this and became less inclined to try to make terms with Athens. So ended this winter, and so ended the fourth year of this war recorded by Thucydides.

26 Next summer the Peloponnesians sent out to Mytilene the forty-two ships under the command of their admiral Alcidas. They themselves and their allies invaded Attica, so that the Athenians would have trouble on two fronts at once and would find it more difficult to take action against the fleet going to Mytilene. The commander in this invasion was Cleomenes, acting for King Pausanias, the son of Pleistoanax, who was still under age. Cleomenes was the brother of Pleistoanax. The invading forces destroyed everything that had started to grow up again in the districts which they had laid waste previously, and they went on to destroy such property as had been left untouched in earlier invasions. Thus this was the worst invasion of all except the second. The enemy prolonged their stay in Attica and overran most of the country, since they were constantly waiting to hear news of what their fleet, which they thought must have arrived by now, had done in Lesbos. Finally, however, when none of their expectations was realized and their provisions had begun to run out, they retired and dispersed to their various cities.

27 Meanwhile the Mytilenians were forced to come to terms with

the Athenians. Their supplies of food had run out, and the ships from the Peloponnese, so far from putting in an appearance, continued to waste time on the way. The surrender took place under the following circumstances. Salaethus himself had given up hope of the arrival of the ships, and he now issued heavy armour to the people (who previously had been only equipped as light troops), with the intention of leading them out to battle with the Athenians. But as soon as the people found themselves properly armed, they refused any longer to obey the government. They held meetings among themselves and demanded that the authorities should openly produce all the food there was and distribute it among them all; otherwise, they said, they themselves would come to terms with the Athenians and surrender the city to them.

28 The government realized that they were quite incapable of preventing this and also that they would be in danger themselves if an agreement was concluded without them. They therefore joined in coming to terms with Paches and the Athenian army. The terms were as follows: Athens was to have the right to act as she saw fit with regard to the people of Mytilene, and the army was allowed to enter the city; the Mytilenians were to send representatives to Athens to put their case, and until these representatives returned, Paches was to undertake not to imprison or enslave or kill any of the population.

Though these were the terms of the surrender, the party among the Mytilenians who had been most active in the Spartan interest were still terrified – so much so indeed that, when the army entered the city, they felt it necessary to go and take refuge at the altars. Paches raised them up from their suppliant position, promising that he would do them no harm, and put them in custody on Tenedos until he learned what decision the Athenians would come to about them. He also sent triremes to Antissa and occupied the place, and took various other military measures which seemed desirable.

29 Meanwhile the Peloponnesians in the forty ships, who should have hurried to the relief of Mytilene, wasted a lot of time in their voyage round the Peloponnese itself, and then proceeded on their way in a leisurely manner, finally arriving at Delos without being observed by the Athenians at Athens.

From Delos they went on to Icarus and Myconus, and there first heard the news that Mytilene had fallen. Wishing to obtain more precise information, they sailed on to Embatum in Erythraea, arriving there about seven days after the surrender of Mytilene. Here they got the information they required, and began to discuss what they should do in view of what had happened. Teutiplus, a man from Elis, made a speech giving them the following advice:

30 ‘Alcidas and fellow commanders from the Peloponnese, I propose that we should sail to Mytilene just as we are and before they know that we are here. In all probability, since they have only just taken the city, we shall find that their precautions have been greatly relaxed; and this will certainly be so by sea, where they have no idea of having to face any possible attack, and where, in fact, our main strength happens to lie. It is likely, too, that their land forces, after their victory, will be dispersed about the houses in the city and not properly organized. So that if we were to attack suddenly and by night, I think that, with the help of those inside the town who are still on our side, we ought to be able to gain control of the place. Let us not be afraid of the danger, but let us remember that this is an example of the unknown factor in warfare, and that the good general is the one who guards against such unknown factors in his own case, but exploits them for attack in the case of the enemy.’

31 Alcidas, however, was unconvinced by this advice. It was then suggested to him by some of the Ionian exiles and by the Lesbians who were in his fleet that, if this risk seemed too great to him, he should seize one of the Ionian cities or Cumae in Aeolia, and use it as a base for organizing revolt in Ionia. This, they claimed, was a distinct possibility, since they would be welcomed everywhere. Their aim would be to cut Athens off from this, the greatest of her sources of revenue, and at the same time to involve her in more expense if she decided to maintain a fleet against them. They said, too, that they thought they could persuade Pissuthnes to come in on their side.

Not even this plan commended itself to Alcidas, whose main idea was, since he had been too late for Mytilene, to get back to the Peloponnese as soon as possible. He therefore put out from Embatum and sailed along the coast to the Teian town of Myonnesus.

There he put to death most of the prisoners whom he had taken on the voyage. Later, when he was at anchor at Ephesus, a deputation of Samians from Anaia came to him and told him that it was not the right way to set about the liberation of Hellas by massacring people who had never raised a hand against him, who were not his enemies, but only allies of Athens under compulsion, and that unless he stopped, so far from turning any enemies into friends, he would turn most of his friends into enemies.

Alcidas saw the force of this argument and released all the prisoners from Chios whom he still had and a few others from other places. For when his fleet was sighted the people made no effort to run away; instead they came to meet the ships, under the impression that they must be Athenian, since they never even imagined that, with Athens in control of the sea, a Peloponnesian fleet would come across to Ionia.

- 33 From Ephesus Alcidas set sail in a hurry and fled. While he was still at anchor off Clarus he had been sighted by the Athenian ships, the *Salaminia* and the *Paralus*,<sup>29</sup> which happened to be sailing from Athens. So, in fear of a pursuit, he set out across the open sea with the firm intention of not putting in to land anywhere at all, if he could help it, until he reached the Peloponnese.

Meanwhile news of his presence had reached Paches and the Athenians from Erythraea – in fact from all directions. For, since the cities of Ionia were not fortified, the inhabitants were greatly afraid that the Peloponnesians, even if they had no intention of remaining, might, as they sailed along, make landings and lay waste the towns. And now the *Paralus* and the *Salaminia* arrived with the news that they had seen the enemy fleet at Clarus. Paches, therefore, immediately set out in pursuit and went after them as far as the island of Patmos. From here he turned back again, since it appeared that Alcidas had got away out of reach. In fact, since he had not managed to overtake the Peloponnesian on the open sea, he thought it a lucky thing that they had not been discovered anywhere else where they would have been compelled to build a fortified camp, and so have given the Athenians the trouble of organizing a regular blockade by sea and land.

29. These two ships were the élite of the Athenian navy, in service throughout the year for special missions.

- 34 As he sailed back along the coast he put in, among other places, at Notium, the harbour of Colophon, where the Colophonians had settled after the upper city had been captured, at about the time of the second Peloponnesian invasion of Attica, by Itamenes and his foreign troops who had been called in as a result of the political ambition of individuals. However, the exiles who had settled at Notium again split up into two hostile parties. One of these called in Arcadian and foreign mercenaries from Pissuthnes, quartered them in a part of the town which they cut off from the rest by a wall, and so formed a separate state with the help of the pro-Persian party among the Colophonians from the upper city. The other party at Notium had fled into exile and now called in Paches. Paches invited Hippias, the general of the Arcadian mercenaries inside the fortification, to meet him for a discussion, promising that, if no agreement was reached, he would see that he got back again safe and sound to the fortification. Hippias therefore came out to meet Paches, who put him under arrest, though not into chains. He then made a sudden attack and took the fortification by surprise. He put to death all the Arcadian and foreign troops who were inside, and, later, as he had promised, he brought Hippias back there, and, as soon as he was inside, he had him seized and shot down with arrows. He handed over Notium to the Colophonians, excluding the pro-Persian party among them. Later the Athenians sent out settlers and made a colony of the place under Athenian laws, after having collected together all the Colophonians who could be found in other cities.

- 35 Paches then returned to Mytilene and reduced Pyrrha and Eresus. He found the Spartan Salaethus in hiding in the city and sent him to Athens, together with the Mytilenians whom he had placed in Tenedos and others whom he considered implicated in the organization of the revolt. He also sent back the greater part of his army. He himself stayed behind with the remainder of his forces and settled matters in Mytilene and the rest of Lesbos as he thought fit.

THE MYTILENIAN DEBATE<sup>30</sup>

36 When Salaethus and the other prisoners reached Athens, the Athenians immediately put Salaethus to death in spite of the fact that he undertook, among other things, to have the Peloponnesians withdrawn from Plataea, which was still being besieged. They then discussed what was to be done with the other prisoners and, in their angry mood, decided to put to death not only those now in their hands but also the entire adult male population of Mytilene, and to make slaves of the women and children. What they held against Mytilene was the fact that it had revolted even though it was not a subject state, like the others, and the bitterness of their feelings was considerably increased by the fact that the Peloponnesian fleet had actually dared to cross over to Ionia to support the revolt. This, it was thought, could never have happened unless the revolt had been long premeditated. So they sent a trireme to Paches to inform him of what had been decided, with orders to put the Mytilenians to death immediately.

Next day, however, there was a sudden change of feeling and people began to think how cruel and how unprecedented such a decision was – to destroy not only the guilty, but the entire population of a state. Observing this, the deputation from Mytilene which was in Athens and the Athenians who were supporting them approached the authorities with a view to having the question debated again. They won their point the more easily because the authorities themselves saw clearly that most of the citizens were wanting someone to give them a chance of reconsidering the matter. So an assembly was called at once. Various opinions were expressed on both sides, and Cleon, the son of Cleaenetus, spoke again. It was he who had been responsible for passing the original motion for putting the Mytilenians to death. He was remarkable among the Athenians for the violence of his character, and at this time he exercised far the greatest influence over the people.<sup>31</sup> He spoke as follows:

30. See the Introduction, pp. 27.

31. This wording is echoed by Thucydides in vi, 35 when he introduces the Syracusan 'demagogue' Athenagoras.

37 'Personally I have had occasion often enough already to observe that a democracy is incapable of governing others, and I am all the more convinced of this when I see how you are now changing your minds about the Mytilenians. Because fear and conspiracy play no part in your daily relations with each other, you imagine that the same thing is true of your allies, and you fail to see that when you allow them to persuade you to make a mistaken decision and when you give way to your own feelings of compassion you are being guilty of a kind of weakness which is dangerous to you and which will not make them love you any more. What you do not realize is that your empire is a tyranny exercised over subjects who do not like it and who are always plotting against you; you will not make them obey you by injuring your own interests in order to do them a favour; your leadership depends on superior strength and not on any goodwill of theirs. And this is the very worst thing – to pass measures and then not to abide by them. We should realize that a city is better off with bad laws, so long as they remain fixed, than with good laws that are constantly being altered, that lack of learning combined with sound common sense is more helpful than the kind of cleverness that gets out of hand, and that as a general rule states are better governed by the man in the street than by intellectuals. These are the sort of people who want to appear wiser than the laws, who want to get their own way in every general discussion, because they feel that they cannot show off their intelligence in matters of greater importance, and who, as a result, very often bring ruin on their country. But the other kind – the people who are not so confident in their own intelligence – are prepared to admit that the laws are wiser than they are and that they lack the ability to pull to pieces a speech made by a good speaker; they are unbiased judges, and not people taking part in some kind of a competition; so things usually go well when they are in control. We statesmen, too, should try to be like them, instead of being carried away by mere cleverness and a desire to show off our intelligence and so giving you, the people, advice which we do not really believe in ourselves.

38 'As for me, I have not altered my opinion, and I am amazed at those who have proposed a reconsideration of the question of Mytilene, thus causing a delay which is all to the advantage of the

guilty party. After a lapse of time the injured party will lose the edge of his anger when he comes to act against those who have wronged him; whereas the best punishment and the one most fitted to the crime is when reprisals follow immediately. I shall be amazed, too, if anyone contradicts me and attempts to prove that the harm done to us by Mytilene is really a good thing for us, or that when we suffer ourselves we are somehow doing harm to our allies. It is obvious that anyone who is going to say this must either have such confidence in his powers as an orator that he will struggle to persuade you that what has been finally settled was, on the contrary, not decided at all, or else he must have been bribed to put together some elaborate speech with which he will try to lead you out of the right track. But in competitions of this sort the prizes go to others and the state takes all the danger for herself. The blame is yours, for stupidly instituting these competitive displays. You have become regular speech-goers, and as for action, you merely listen to accounts of it; if something is to be done in the future you estimate the possibilities by hearing a good speech on the subject, and as for the past you rely not so much on the facts which you have seen with your own eyes as on what you have heard about them in some clever piece of verbal criticism. Any novelty in an argument deceives you at once, but when the argument is tried and proved you become unwilling to follow it; you look with suspicion on what is normal and are the slaves of every paradox that comes your way. The chief wish of each one of you is to be able to make a speech himself, and, if you cannot do that, the next best thing is to compete with those who can make this sort of speech by not looking as though you were at all out of your depth while you listen to the views put forward, by applauding a good point even before it is made, and by being as quick at seeing how an argument is going to be developed as you are slow at understanding what in the end it will lead to. What you are looking for all the time is something that is, I should say, outside the range of ordinary experience, and yet you cannot even think straight about the facts of life that are before you. You are simply victims of your own pleasure in listening, and are more like an audience sitting at the feet of a professional lecturer than a parliament discussing matters of state.

39 'I am trying to stop you behaving like this, and I say that no single city has ever done you the harm that Mytilene has done. Personally I can make allowances for those who revolt because they find your rule intolerable or because they have been forced into it by enemy action. Here, however, we have the case of people living on an island, behind their own fortifications, with nothing to fear from our enemies except an attack by sea against which they were adequately protected by their own force of triremes; they had their own independent government and they were treated by us with the greatest consideration. Now, to act as they acted is not what I should call a revolt (for people only revolt when they have been badly treated); it is a case of calculated aggression, of deliberately taking sides with our bitterest enemies in order to destroy us. And this is far worse than if they had made war against us simply to increase their own power. They learned nothing from the fate of those of their neighbours who had already revolted and been subdued; the prosperity which they enjoyed did not make them hesitate before running into danger; confident in the future, they declared war on us, with hopes that indeed extended beyond their means, though still fell short of their desires. They made up their minds to put might first and right second, choosing the moment when they thought they would win, and then making their unprovoked attack upon us.

'The fact is that when great prosperity comes suddenly and unexpectedly to a state, it usually breeds arrogance; in most cases it is safer for people to enjoy an average amount of success rather than something which is out of all proportion; and it is easier, I should say, to ward off hardship than to maintain happiness. What we should have done long ago with the Mytilenians was to treat them in exactly the same way as all the rest; then they would never have grown so arrogant; for it is a general rule of human nature that people despise those who treat them well and look up to those who make no concessions. Let them now therefore have the punishment which their crime deserves. Do not put the blame on the aristocracy and say that the people were innocent. The fact is that the whole lot of them attacked you together, although the people might have come over to us and, if they had, would now be back again in control of their city. Yet, instead of doing this, they

thought it safer to share the dangers, and join in the revolt of the aristocracy.

'Now think of your allies. If you are going to give the same punishment to those who are forced to revolt by your enemies and those who do so of their own accord, can you not see that they will all revolt upon the slightest pretext, when success means freedom and failure brings no very dreadful consequences? Meanwhile we shall have to spend our money and risk our lives against state after state; if our efforts are successful, we shall recover a city that is in ruins, and so lose the future revenue from it, on which our strength is based; and if we fail to subdue it, we shall have more enemies to deal with in addition to those we have already, and we shall spend the time which ought to be used in resisting our present foes in making war on our own allies.

40 'Let there be no hope, therefore, held out to the Mytilenians that we, either as a result of a good speech or a large bribe, are likely to forgive them on the grounds that it is only human to make mistakes. There was nothing involuntary about the harm they did us; they knew what they were about and they planned it all beforehand; and one only forgives actions that were not deliberate. As for me, just as I was at first, so I am now, and I shall continue to impress on you the importance of not altering your previous decisions. To feel pity, to be carried away by the pleasure of hearing a clever argument, to listen to the claims of decency are three things that are entirely against the interests of an imperial power. Do not be guilty of them. As for compassion, it is proper to feel it in the case of people who are like ourselves and who will pity us in their turn, not in the case of those who, so far from having the same feelings towards us, must always and inevitably be our enemies. As for the speech-makers who give such pleasure by their arguments, they should hold their competitions on subjects which are less important, and not on a question where the state may have to pay a heavy penalty for its light pleasure, while the speakers themselves will no doubt be enjoying splendid rewards for their splendid arguments. And a sense of decency is only felt towards those who are going to be our friends in future, not towards those who remain just as they were and as much our enemies as they ever have been.

'Let me sum the whole thing up. I say that, if you follow my advice, you will be doing the right thing as far as Mytilene is concerned and at the same time will be acting in your own interests; if you decide differently, you will not win them over, but you will be passing judgement on yourselves. For if they were justified in revolting, you must be wrong in holding power. If, however, whatever the rights or wrongs of it may be, you propose to hold power all the same, then your interest demands that these too, rightly or wrongly, must be punished. The only alternative is to surrender your empire, so that you can afford to go in for philanthropy. Make up your minds, therefore, to pay them back in their own coin, and do not make it look as though you who escaped their machinations are less quick to react than they who started them. Remember how they would have been likely to have treated you, if they had won, especially as they were the aggressors. Those who do wrong to a neighbour when there is no reason to do so are the ones who persevere to the point of destroying him, since they see the danger involved in allowing their enemy to survive. For he who has suffered for no good reason is a more dangerous enemy, if he escapes, than the one who has both done and suffered injury.

'I urge you, therefore, not to be traitors to your own selves. Place yourselves in imagination at the moment when you first suffered and remember how then you would have given anything to have them in your power. Now pay them back for it, and do not grow soft just at this present moment, forgetting meanwhile the danger that hung over your heads then. Punish them as they deserve, and make an example of them to your other allies, plainly showing that revolt will be punished by death. Once they realize this, you will not have so often to neglect the war with your enemies because you are fighting with your own allies.'

41 So Cleon spoke. After him Diodotus, the son of Eucrates, who in the previous assembly also had vigorously opposed the motion to put the Mytilenians to death, came forward again on this occasion and spoke as follows:

42 'I do not blame those who have proposed a new debate on the subject of Mytilene, and I do not share the view which we have heard expressed, that it is a bad thing to have frequent discussions on matters of importance. Haste and anger are, to my mind, the

two greatest obstacles to wise counsel – haste, that usually goes with folly, anger, that is the mark of primitive and narrow minds. And anyone who maintains that words cannot be a guide to action must be either a fool or one with some personal interest at stake; he is a fool, if he imagines that it is possible to deal with the uncertainties of the future by any other medium, and he is personally interested if his aim is to persuade you into some disgraceful action, and, knowing that he cannot make a good speech in a bad cause, he tries to frighten his opponents and his hearers by some good-sized pieces of misrepresentation. Then still more intolerable are those who go further and accuse a speaker of making a kind of exhibition of himself, because he is paid for it. If it was only ignorance with which he was being charged, a speaker who failed to win his case could retire from the debate and still be thought an honest man, if not a very intelligent one. But when corruption is imputed, he will be suspect if he wins his case, and if he loses it, will be regarded as dishonest and stupid at the same time. This sort of thing does the city no good; her counsellors will be afraid to speak and she will be deprived of their services. Though certainly it would be the best possible thing for the city if these gentlemen whom I have been describing lacked the power to express themselves; we should not then be persuaded into making so many mistakes.

‘The good citizen, instead of trying to terrify the opposition, ought to prove his case in fair argument; and a wise state, without giving special honours to its best counsellors, will certainly not deprive them of the honour they already enjoy; and when a man’s advice is not taken, he should not even be disgraced, far less penalized. In this way successful speakers will be less likely to pursue further honours by speaking against their own convictions in order to make themselves popular, and unsuccessful speakers, too, will not struggle to win over the people by the same acts of flattery. What we do here, however, is exactly the opposite. Then, too, if a man gives the best possible advice but is under the slightest suspicion of being influenced by his own private profit, we are so embittered by the idea (a wholly unproved one) of this profit of his, that we do not allow the state to receive the certain benefit of his good advice. So a state of affairs has been reached where a good

proposal honestly put forward is just as suspect as something thoroughly bad, and the result is that just as the speaker who advocates some monstrous measure has to win over the people by deceiving them, so also a man with good advice to give has to tell lies if he expects to be believed. And because of this refinement in intellectuality, the state is put into a unique position; it is only she to whom no one can ever do a good turn openly and without deception. For if one openly performs a patriotic action, the reward for one’s pains is to be thought to have made something oneself on the side. Yet in spite of all this we are discussing matters of the greatest importance, and we who give you our advice ought to be resolved to look rather further into things than you whose attention is occupied only with the surface – especially as we can be held to account for the advice we give, while you are not accountable for the way in which you receive it. For indeed you would take rather more care over your decisions, if the proposer of a motion and those who voted for it were all subject to the same penalties. As it is, on the occasions when some emotional impulse on your part has led you into disaster, you turn upon the one man who made the original proposal and you let yourself off, in spite of the fact that you are many and in spite of the fact that you were just as wrong as he was.

44 ‘However, I have not come forward to speak about Mytilene in any spirit of contradiction or with any wish to accuse anyone. If we are sensible people, we shall see that the question is not so much whether they are guilty as whether we are making the right decision for ourselves. I might prove that they are the most guilty people in the world, but it does not follow that I shall propose the death penalty, unless that is in your interests; I might argue that they deserve to be forgiven, but should not recommend forgiveness unless that seemed to me the best thing for the state.

‘In my view our discussion concerns the future rather than the present. One of Cleon’s chief points is that to inflict the death penalty will be useful to us in the future as a means for deterring other cities from revolt; but I, who am just as concerned as he is with the future, am quite convinced that this is not so. And I ask you not to reject what is useful in my speech for the sake of what is specious in his. You may well find his speech attractive, because

it fits in better with your present angry feelings about the Mytilenians; but this is not a law-court, where we have to consider what is fit and just; it is a political assembly, and the question is how Mytilene can be most useful to Athens.

- 45 'Now, in human societies the death penalty has been laid down for many offences less serious than this one. Yet people still take risks when they feel sufficiently confident. No one has ever yet risked committing a crime which he thought he could not carry out successfully. The same is true of states. None has ever yet rebelled in the belief that it had insufficient resources, either in itself or from its allies, to make the attempt. Cities and individuals alike, all are by nature disposed to do wrong, and there is no law that will prevent it, as is shown by the fact that men have tried every kind of punishment, constantly adding to the list, in the attempt to find greater security from criminals. It is likely that in early times the punishments even for the greatest crimes were not as severe as they are now, but the laws were still broken, and in the course of time the death penalty became generally introduced. Yet even with this, the laws are still broken. Either, therefore, we must discover some fear more potent than the fear of death, or we must admit that here certainly we have not got an adequate deterrent. So long as poverty forces men to be bold, so long as the insolence and pride of wealth nourish their ambitions, and in the other accidents of life they are continually dominated by some incurable master passion or another, so long will their impulses continue to drive them into danger. Hope and desire persist throughout and cause the greatest calamities – one leading and the other following, one conceiving the enterprise, and the other suggesting that it will be successful – invisible factors, but more powerful than the terrors that are obvious to our eyes. Then too, the idea that fortune will be on one's side plays as big a part as anything else in creating a mood of over-confidence; for sometimes she does come unexpectedly to one's aid, and so she tempts men to run risks for which they are inadequately prepared. And this is particularly true in the case of whole peoples, because they are playing for the highest stakes – either for their own freedom or for the power to control others – and each individual, when acting as part of a community, has the irrational opinion that his own powers are greater

than in fact they are. In a word it is impossible (and only the most simple-minded will deny this) for human nature, when once seriously set upon a certain course, to be prevented from following that course by the force of law or by any other means of intimidation whatever.

- 46 'We must not, therefore, come to the wrong conclusions through having too much confidence in the effectiveness of capital punishment, and we must not make the condition of rebels desperate by depriving them of the possibility of repentance and of a chance of atoning as quickly as they can for what they did. Consider this now: at the moment, if a city has revolted and realizes that the revolt cannot succeed, it will come to terms while it is still capable of paying an indemnity and continuing to pay tribute afterwards. But if Cleon's method is adopted, can you not see that every city will not only make much more careful preparations for revolt, but will also hold out against siege to the very end, since to surrender early or late means just the same thing? This is, unquestionably, against our interests – to spend money on a siege because of the impossibility of coming to terms, and, if we capture the place, to take over a city that is in ruins so that we lose the future revenue from it. And it is just on this revenue that our strength in war depends.

'Our business, therefore, is not to injure ourselves by acting like a judge who strictly examines a criminal; instead we should be looking for a method by which, employing moderation in our punishments, we can in future secure for ourselves the full use of those cities which bring us important contributions. And we should recognize that the proper basis of our security is in good administration rather than in the fear of legal penalties. As it is, we do just the opposite: when we subdue a free city, which was held down by force and has, as we might have expected, tried to assert its independence by revolting, we think that we ought to punish it with the utmost severity. But the right way to deal with free people is this – not to inflict tremendous punishments on them after they have revolted, but to take tremendous care of them before this point is reached, to prevent them even contemplating the idea of revolt, and, if we do have to use force with them, to hold as few as possible of them responsible for this.



- 47 'Consider what a mistake you would be making on this very point, if you took Cleon's advice. As things are now, in all the cities the democracy is friendly to you; either it does not join in with the oligarchies in revolting, or, if it is forced to do so, it remains all the time hostile to the rebels, so that when you go to war with them, you have the people on your side. But if you destroy the democratic party at Mytilene, who never took any hand in the revolt and who, as soon as they got arms, voluntarily gave the city up to you, you will first of all be guilty of killing those who have helped you, and, secondly, you will be doing exactly what the reactionary classes want most. For now, when they start a revolt, they will have the people on their side from the beginning, because you have already made it clear that the same punishment is laid down both for the guilty and the innocent. In fact, however, even if they were guilty, you should pretend that they were not, in order to keep on your side the one element that is still not opposed to you. It is far more useful to us, I think, in preserving our empire, that we should voluntarily put up with injustice than that we should justly put to death the wrong people. As for Cleon's point - that in this act of vengeance both justice and self-interest are combined - this is not a case where such a combination is at all possible.
- 48 'I call upon you, therefore, to accept my proposal as the better one. Do not be swayed too much by pity or by ordinary decent feelings. I, no more than Cleon, wish you to be influenced by such emotions. It is simply on the basis of the argument which you have heard that I ask you to be guided by me, to try at your leisure the men whom Paches has considered guilty and sent to Athens, and to allow the rest to live in their own city. In following this course you will be acting wisely for the future and will be doing something which will make your enemies fear you now. For those who make wise decisions are more formidable to their enemies than those who rush madly into strong action.'
- 49 This was the speech of Diodotus. And now, when these two motions, each so opposed to each, had been put forward, the Athenians, in spite of the recent change of feeling, still held conflicting opinions, and at the show of hands the votes were nearly equal. However, the motion of Diodotus was passed.

- Immediately another trireme was sent out in all haste, since they feared that, unless it overtook the first trireme, they would find on their arrival that the city had been destroyed. The first trireme had a start of about twenty-four hours. The ambassadors from Mytilene provided wine and barley for the crew and promised great rewards if they arrived in time, and so the men made such speed on the voyage that they kept on rowing while they took their food (which was barley mixed with oil and wine) and rowed continually, taking it in turn to sleep. Luckily they had no wind against them, and as the first ship was not hurrying on its distasteful mission, while they were pressing on with such speed, what happened was that the first ship arrived so little ahead of them that Paches had just had time to read the decree and to prepare to put it into force, when the second ship put in to the harbour and prevented the massacre. So narrow had been the escape of Mytilene.
- 50 The other Mytilenians whom Paches had sent to Athens as being the ones chiefly responsible for the revolt were, on the motion of Cleon, put to death by the Athenians. There were rather more than 1,000 of them. The Athenians also destroyed the fortifications of Mytilene and took over their navy. Afterwards, instead of imposing a tribute on Lesbos, they divided all the land, except that belonging to the Methymnians, into 3,000 holdings, 300 of which were set apart as sacred for the gods, while the remainder was distributed by lot to Athenian shareholders, who were sent out to Lesbos. The Lesbians agreed with these shareholders to pay a yearly rent of two minae for each holding, and cultivated the land themselves. The Athenians also took over all the towns on the mainland that had been under the control of Mytilene. So for the future the Mytilenians became subjects of Athens. This completes the account of what took place in Lesbos.

## THE END OF PLATAEA

- 51 In the same summer, and after the conquest of Lesbos, the Athenians, under the command of Nicias, the son of Niceratus, made an expedition against the island of Minoa, which lies off Megara. The Megarians had built a tower there and used the island