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THE MELIAN DIALOGUE IN THUCYDIDES:
A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

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The Ohio State University
1970

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INTRODUCTION

When we first read the Melian Dialogue in English, we are stunned to tears by its ageless statements of the human predicament. When we first read the dialogue in Greek, we are at once bewildered by its syntactical intricacies and then spellbound by the subtlety and complexity of its antitheses. Indeed, the Melian Dialogue holds a universal fascination for the individual reader. Exactly what causes this universal fascination? The following study attempts to answer this question by analyzing in detail the form and content of the Melian Dialogue.

First it is necessary to consider the Melian Dialogue in the light of the actual historical events of 416 so that we may evaluate the degree of historical accuracy found in this section of the History. Only then can we begin to estimate the subtlety of stylistic detail and the depth and power of the political philosophy wrought by Thucydides' creative genius. Primary sources—epigraphical and historical evidence—will be arranged in chronological order and pertinent Greek texts will be quoted along with their translations.

The second chapter reviews in detail what the major ancient critics said about Thucydides' style in general and the Melian
Dialogue in particular. Their appreciation of Thucydides' rhetorical and poetic manner and diction was often highly developed, and their comments illuminate an aspect of Thucydidean criticism which has often been neglected.

Finally, each chapter of the dialogue is analyzed according to major thematic divisions and stylistic devices. The themes of the Melian Dialogue are intensifications of the general themes found throughout the History; likewise, the stylistic devices are here elevated to their highest and most sublime level. We must study each chapter—in fact, practically each word and phrase of the dialogue—in order to grasp the many-leveled, multi-partite whole with its breath-taking tragic effects of "pity and horror."

A final chapter surveys some of the more important interpretations of the Melian Dialogue and embodies my own conclusions.

The literature on Thucydides in general and the Melian Dialogue in particular is voluminous. Modern critics have not been ignored and the bibliography provides access to the scholarly literature; but the focus of this dissertation is upon the text itself, and my major purpose and intent is to provide an intensive scrutiny of Thucydides' historical art in his treatment of this crucial episode.

A stylistic approach to Thucydides is neither radical nor modern. As Marcellinus mentions in his life of Thucydides, some ancient critics considered the History more poetic than rhetorical:
The following study will try to show that these critics were not incorrect, despite Marcellinus' reservations.
The following study will try to show that these critics were not incorrect, despite Marcellinus' reservations.
CHAPTER I

MELIAN HISTORY AND THE MELIAN DIALOGUE

In order to understand the positions and arguments of Melos and Athens in the Melian Dialogue, the actual historical reality of their relationship must be examined.

Epigraphical evidence for Melos' political relationships is meager. There exist only two inscriptions, IG V.1.1 and ATL A9, to guide historical criticism about the place of Melos in the vacillating and nebulous network of political interrelationships which embraced the Greek world in the fifth century B.C. The only other evidence consists of a few scattered comments in Herodotus, Xenophon, Isocrates, and Plutarch, together with the Melian narrative of Thucydides.

Three fragments found on the Acropolis (IG 1.54 and 1.99 = IG 1^, 97) describe a naval campaign which Kirchhoff identified with the Melian expedition in 416 B.C.\(^1\) Meritt has shown that Kirchhoff's identification is incorrect. Although there are some points of similarity between the inscription and the Thucydidean account—thirty Athenian ships, twelve hundred Athenian hoplites, and three hundred bowmen were sent in each instance—the divergencies preclude

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any possibility that the expeditions could have been identical: the inscription lists one hundred and fifty volunteers and peltasts whom Thucydides does not mention; Thucydides lists Chian and Lesbian ships, Athenian cavalry bowmen, and fifteen hundred allied hoplites which the inscription does not include.  

A mass of critical material has grown up around the only politically oriented epigraphic evidence now in existence. This study will deal primarily with the interpretation of the inscriptions themselves and their connections with literary evidence. First, the historical and epigraphic evidence will be presented in chronological order; then, this evidence will be applied to the statements found in the dialogue.

480 The independent spirit of the Melians is seen in Herodotus (8.46): the inhabitants of Seriphos, Siphnos, and Melos were the only islanders who did not offer earth and water to the Persians. The Melians furnished two penteconters at the battle of Salamis (8.48). Herodotus also notes that the Melians were descended from Lacedaemonian, i.e., Doric, stock: Μῆλιοι μὲν γένος ἐόντες ἀπὸ Λακεδαιμονος. Even in this early piece of evidence one can see a dominant theme of the dialogue--the

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importance to the Melians of their Lacedaemonian heritage.

The names of the Greek allies who fought against the Persians were written on the Delphic Serpent Column (SIG\(^3\) 31) and on the base of the bronze Zeus at Olympia (Pausanias 5.23, 1-2). Herodotus (8.82.1) seems to imply that the Delphic inscription was the master copy. These listings are important because of the groupings of states:

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<td>Siphnos</td>
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<td>Lepreon</td>
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Each of the columns is headed by a political power: Sparta, Athens, Corinth. Under each power her followers are listed. Melos is listed under Athens. This is not as final or decisive a statement of political conduct as it may seem at first glance. As the editors of the ATL explain,

... the three categories of names on the Serpent Column no doubt indicate, first, the allies who depended on Sparta direct, and next, the two "subsidiary hegemonies" of Athens and Korinth ... the "Athenian
group" on the Serpent Column is composed of those Greeks whom a strategy of defending Peloponnese would plainly abandon to Persia. Melos, as Herodotus notes, made a small contribution at Salamis; she sent only two penteconters. Siphnos and Seriphos each contributed one; Siphnos had a doubtful place on the list, and Seriphos is not mentioned. As a result, it is clear that this epigraphical material implies no formal agreement of any type between Athens and Melos. Nevertheless, eight of the eleven islands mentioned in the Athenian grouping later paid tribute to Athens. Thus the Athenians must have considered Melos as being in some sense part of their sphere of influence. Melos' geographical position in the Sporades, adjacent to the Cyclades (which were definitely under Athenian influence and directly opposite Laconia) offered a natural incentive to the Athenian extension of power as well as a possible base for naval operations against Sparta.

431 Thucydides lists the allies of the Athenians at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War (II.9, 4): ἄνατολις ἡγεσία ἔντος Πελοποννήσου καὶ Κρήτης πρὸς Κέλλον ἀνίσχοντα, πᾶσαι αἱ Κυκλάδες πλὴν Μήλου καὶ Θήρας ("the islands between the

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4Ibid., p. 197.
Peloponnesus and Crete toward the east, except Melos and Thera”). Here, Thucydides considers the Melians as the allies of neither Sparta nor Athens. The mention of Melos and Thera emphasizes their position as isolated political units and suggests Melos' later importance.

The Athenians attacked Melos with sixty ships and two thousand hoplites. Nicias was in command. Though they laid waste the island, the Athenians could not force the Melians to submit (Thucydides 3.91.1-3). The Athenian army was large, and, as Gomme notes, "Nicias does little with it." Once again the Melian love of autonomy is clear. Though the Athenians ravaged their land, the islanders did not yield. Thucydides clearly states the reason for the Athenian attack: even though the Melians were islanders, they refused to become Athenian subjects or to enter into an alliance with Athens; and the Athenians wanted to force them into becoming members of the Athenian League:

\[\text{τούς γὰρ Μηλίους ἄντας νησιώτας καὶ οἷς ἔθελοντας ὑπακούειν οὐδὲ ἐς}\]

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to αὐτῶν ἡμιμαχίαν ἔνει ἄροιλοντο προσαγαγέσθαι (3.91.2)
("for the Athenians wished to bring over the Melians, islanders who did not want to be subject or to join the alliance"). The entire purpose of this expedition may be a natural extension of Athenian leadership as manifested indirectly on the Serpent Column.

?428-421 IG V.1.1 (Tod 62) is a stele listing donations to the Spartan war effort. The Melians, τοῖς Μαλίοις, made two separate contributions. There is a great deal of controversy over the date of this inscription. Fraenkel and Meyer place it at the end of the Peloponnesian War. Kolbe and other scholars follow Kirchhoff in setting the date earlier than 421. Roehl suggests a date immediately after Plataea and Mycale; Kahrstedt believes the inscription is dated after 424. Cary places the inscription at 428 exactly. Adcock posits a dating of 427: he suggests that the Spartan admiral Alcidas stopped at Melos on his way to the Aegean theater in May of 427, and also perhaps on his return;

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Alcidas may have then collected the contributions. "We may conjecture that the harbouring and comforting of Alcidas was a cause of the considerable expedition which Nicias led against the island in the early summer of 426." At most, however, this would be the immediate and not the underlying cause of the attack, particularly since Alcidas' campaign was unsuccessful. Apart from the problem of the dates, certain facts become evident: 1) That Melos contributed money to the Spartan war effort need not have violated her neutrality; there is no mention of troops anywhere. 2) If the Melian contribution occurred prior to the Athenian attack, it probably did not cause it, except, as mentioned above, in a minor way. It is highly unlikely that a small donation by the Melians would have been noticed or even known to the Athenians. Furthermore, Thucydides clearly states that the reason for the attack was the Melian refusal to join the Athenian League. 3) If the Melian contribution occurred after the Athenian attack, it may have been prompted by the attack. The Melian donation then might have been a gift to the Spartan cause to insure help in case of another Athenian advance.

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The existence of this stele indicates that some sort of political alliance, though perhaps tenuous and ill defined, must have existed between Melos and Sparta.

Melos is found on the Athenian Tribute Lists, A9, 1.65. The editors of the ATL agree that this was the first time Melos was assessed; but they argue that it was never a tribute-paying member of the Athenian League. Ferguson, Ferrabino, and Cloché hold the same view. No actual evidence is offered to show that the Melians did not pay the assigned tribute; the fact may be deduced from Thucydides' statement regarding the Melian refusal to participate in the Athenian League (3.91.2) and from the Melian argument in the Melian Dialogue. But some other states included in the lists did not make their payments:

... one must never forget that many cities in the assessment list are known never to have paid tribute at all, including Melos and probably many of the Pontic cities, that many were included for their propaganda value, like the cities beyond Phaselis, long after they had ceased to belong to the Athenian empire, and that large areas of Thrace were in revolt.\[^9\]

That Melos is included on the tribute lists is no doubt a

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concrete indication of the Athenian feeling that Melos was definitely within her sphere of influence and ought to be a tribute-paying member of the Athenian League.

Under the command of Cleomedes and Teisias, the Athenians disembarked on Melos with thirty-eight ships, twenty-seven hundred hoplites, and three hundred twenty archers. Before attacking, they sent envoys to negotiate with the Melians. First, it is clear that the Melians had an oligarchic government. The Athenian ambassadors were led before the Melian official governing board rather than a general assembly:

"The Melians did not introduce these envoys before the popular assembly, but they told them to state the purpose of their expedition before the magistrates and the oligarchs."

Secondly, in this later expedition, the Athenians brought fewer ships than in the first but seven hundred more hoplites as well as three hundred twenty archers. This would indicate the Athenian intention of finishing what they had started ten years earlier. The exact political relationship between Athens and Melos in 416 is not clear. Thucydides states that the Melians were neutral at first, but were open enemies of Athens after 426:  

The Athenians were not completely sure about the Melians' intentions, and were wary of any attempt to take control.
The Melians are Lacedaemonian colonists. They did not want to become Athenian subjects like the other islanders: at first they remained neutral; then, when the Athenians ravaged their land in order to force them to join, they turned to open warfare."") The interpretation of the phrase "open warfare" (πόλεμον φανερόν) is crucial to the interpretation of the Melian Dialogue. There are two possible implications: first, that Melos had been secretly aiding the anti-Athenian forces before 426; and secondly, that after 426 Melos may have openly allied herself with the Lacedaemonians.

In any case, in 416 the Melians and the Athenians were in a state of open war and had been so for the previous ten years. The Athenians built a wall and besieged the city of Melos. Twice the Melians broke through this barrier. A new force was sent from Athens, and this, combined with the help of traitors among the Melians, forced the city to submit. The Athenians killed the men, enslaved the women and the children, and colonized the site with five hundred settlers. (5.116.2-4.)

The Melians were not easily conquered. Twice they seized part of the Athenian wall. Only because of reinforcements sent from Athens and the action of traitorous Melians was the city forced to surrender. Again, the stubborn, freedom loving spirit of the islanders was manifest. That the city fell
because of treason, γενομένης καὶ προδοσίας τινός, ἢψ’ ἑαυτῶν (5.116.3), explains the refusal of the Melian magistrates to allow the Athenians to speak before the popular assembly: an anti-oligarchic, possibly pro-Athenian, faction must have existed.¹⁰

Plutarch states that Alcibiades encouraged the assembly to vote for the execution of the Melian men (Alcibiades 16, 4-5); Andocides agrees (κατὰ Ἀλκιβιάδου, 4, 22). Thucydides does not mention Alcibiades but only "the Athenians":

καὶ ἠλθόντος στρατιάς ὑπερου ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ἄλλης, ὡς ταῦτα ἐγίγνετο, ἡς ἤρχεται Ἀλκιβιάδης ὁ Δημέως, καὶ κατὰ κράτος ἦδη πολιορκοῦμενοι, γενομένης καὶ προδοσίας τινός, ἢψ’ ἑαυτῶν εὐνεχόμεναν τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἄστε ἐξείνους περὶ αὐτῶν βουλεύσαν. οἱ δὲ ἀπέκτειναν Μηλείαν ἄστους ἠμένας ἔλαβον, παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναικὰς ἡμαρ-νόδισαν.

Because these events had occurred, another army came from Athens later, led by Philocrates, the son of Demeas. Now the Melians were strongly besieged; furthermore, there was treason among some of their men. They surrendered on the condition that the Athenians should decide their fate. The Athenians killed as many of the adult males as they had seized, and enslaved the women and children.

For this slight divergence there are several possible explanations: perhaps Thucydides had not heard of Alcibiades' involvement; perhaps he was aware of it but wished to strengthen references to οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι repeated throughout the dialogue.

¹⁰"L'Oligarchie qui dominait à Melos se méfiait de peuple, qui sentait trop la vanité d'une résistance." George Méautis, "Le dialogue des Athéniens et des Méliens," REG (1935), 254-255.
and thus emphasize the Athenian political philosophy with its subsequent consequences, as Cornford suggests. Perhaps, too, the romanticized image of Alcibiades became in practice a symbol of the ambitious imperialism which led to Athens' downfall. This image attracted and became identified with incidents in which the man had not actually been involved. The siege of Melos proved to be costly. In praising Timotheus, Isocrates said that he made the Athenians masters of twenty-four cities for a smaller sum than had been spent in attacking Melos (Antidosis 15.113). The editors of the ATL show that the money spent at Melos had to be borrowed from Athena. The Melian campaign, then, was not a minor one. In the Birds, Aristophanes mentions in passing the extreme starvation of the Melians. In her analysis of the Melian Dialogue, Jacqueline de Romilly comments, "l'expression de 'faim de Mélos' (186: λιμός Μηλίς) paraît employée de façon proverbiale, ce qui impliquerait notoriété mais non indignation." The use of the expression "Melian starvation" involves no moral censure but is merely a reference to a well-known fact, expressed in a phrase that already has the ring of a proverb.


12Vol. III, p. 357.

Lysander liberated Melos and restored the island to the surviving Melians (Xenophon Hellenica 2.2.9; Plutarch Lysander 14.3).

In the Panegyricus (4), Isocrates twice mentions that Athens had been reproached for her actions at Melos (100, 110). His defense is that Athens did not treat her subjects as she treated the Melians, that other states also treated their enemies harshly, and that it was expedient for control of the empire. In the Panathenaicus (12), again, Isocrates mentions that Athens was criticized for her treatment of the Melians, Scionians, and Toronians, peri ta Melion pathe kal ximwanaion kai Toronianon (63). A major point of his defense is the insignificance of the islands in question. Some Greeks did not even know they existed: temin mén gar synepes peri neodria toalota kai teiakota to megethos eiramartion, ò pollon ton 'Ellhnon oð' isasiv (70). As de Romilly clearly points out, it was the attacks by the opponents of Athenian imperialism after 404 which emphasized the significance of Athenian actions at Melos. Only after 404 do the Athenians regret their

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14 Isocrates reflects Thucydides' influence on fourth century political writers when he echoes in part the arguments of the Athenians themselves and provides a defense for Athenian action against the Melians.

15 de Romilly, p. 237: "Il semble donc bien que l'événement n'ait pris cette importance qu'après coup, au moment où les adversaires de l'impérialisme s'en emparèrent."
treatment of the Melians, because of their fear of reprisals (Xenophon Hellenica 2.2.3).

From the foregoing remarks, certain facts are evident:

1) The Melians were independent Dorians, proud of their autonomy.

2) The Melians had some type of alliance, whether formal or informal, with the Lacedaemonians, since they contributed money to their war efforts. Because the date of the inscription recording their contributions is uncertain, the date of this Melian-Lacedaemonian relationship is also uncertain. 3) The Athenians no doubt felt that the conquest of Melos was a logical extension of the power of the Delian League, as the listing on the Serpent Column and the inclusion of Melos in the tribute list of 425/4 indicate.

4) In 416, the Melians were not neutral. They had been engaged in open warfare with Athens for ten years. 5) The Melian campaign was extensive, costly, and poorly managed. 6) The excesses of the Athenian reprisals after the siege at Melos were not stressed until after 404.

The disparity between these facts and the impression gained from a reading of the Melian Dialogue is significant. Of course, not every comment in the dialogue is necessarily indicative of the actual historical situation in 416. The dramatic presentation of conflicting themes leads to an oversimplified view of the relationships between Melos and Athens and Melos and Sparta at that
time. Yet the reader cannot help noticing the ambiguity of the Melian case, as M. Amit notes. For example, in V.86, the Melians state that the result of the debate will be war if they do not yield, subjection (δουλεύων) if they do: μὴ ἔνδοξοι πόλεμον ἡμῖν φέρουσαν, πεισθείς δὲ δουλείαν. This statement implies that they are not now at war; yet from V.84.2 it is clear that, whether or not Melos has joined the Spartan alliance, there is a state of war between Athens and Melos. Δοῦλεύων could mean to become a tribute-paying member of the Athenian League; its antithesis, ἕλευσθεία, simply not to pay tribute. The editors of the ATL maintain that δουλεία is "the political subjection of one state to another . . . . It is the passive state answering to the active state of ἄρχῃ (i.e., δουλεύων = ἄρχεσθαι)."

This interpretation of the essential political meanings inherent in the word holds true for other passages in the dialogue (δουλεύσαι, 92; οἱ δουλεύοντες; τοῖς ἐτι ἔλευσθέρως; πρὸ τοῦ δουλεύσαι, 100; τὴν ἕλευσθείαν, 112.) But it is also clear that in these same passages the Melians have extended the meaning of the word so that it includes a concept of personal liberty as well. Throughout the dialogue, the Melian argument counters the Athenian contention that δουλεία is a political expediency by elevating the theme of ἕλευσθεία with noble, aristocratic idealism—in other

17 Vol. III, p. 357.
words, by shifting the connotation of the words and the whole level of meaning to another plane of reality.

The Melians make a plea for neutrality (94): "οὕτω δὲ θυγχῖαν ἄγοντας ἡμῶς φίλους μὲν εἶναι ἀντὶ πολεμίων, ἐξιμμάχους δὲ μηδετέροις, ὥσπερ ἀν δεξάσθε; ("You would not then agree to these terms: that we be neutral, friends rather than enemies, but allies of neither side?") This is not a description of the Melian position at the time the dialogue is taking place. It is a statement of future conditions to which the Melians will conform should the Athenians agree. At the time of the dialogue, the Melians are in open conflict with the Athenians (84); they have some type of alliance with the Lacedaemonians. This alliance is openly mentioned (104): τῆς δὲ δυνάμεως τοῦ ελλείποντι τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων ἡμῖν ἐξιμμαχίαν προσέσεσθαι, ἀνάγκην ἔχουσαν, καὶ εἰ μὴ τοῦ ἄλλου, τῆς γε εὐγενείας ἐνεκα καὶ αἰσχύνης βοηθεῖν. ("Furthermore, we trust that our alliance with the Lacedaemonians will provide for our lack of power: as indeed it must help us because of our blood relationship as well as their sense of honor, if for no other reason.") Τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων ἡμῖν ἐξιμμαχίαν is strictly "our alliance with the Lacedaemonians." Whether or not this alliance exists in fact in 416 or whether the Melians only intend to form an alliance in the future is a moot point.

"Ὅσοι γὰρ νῦν μηδετέροις ἐξιμμαχοῦσι, πῶς οὐ πολεμώσοσθε αὐτοῖς, ἦταν ἐς τάδε βλέποντες ἰσχύσοντα τοῖς θῆμας καὶ ἐπὶ σφαῖρῃ ἑκείνῃ; ("Consider this: given the number of neutral nations at the present time, how can you not make them hostile when they see
your actions here and realize that you might one day attack them also?"
This statement would seem to imply Melian neutrality at
the time of the debate, although it may refer only to Melian
neutrality in 426.

The Melian case, then, is at best ambiguous and at worst
completely false.

The historical and geographical reasons behind the
Athenians' actions are presented only once in the Athenian case,
and then indirectly. When the Athenians state that their conquest
of the Persians is as ineffective an argument as the Melian re­
fusal to fight on the side of the Athenians because of Lacedae­
monian kinship (89), they are in effect acknowledging and then
dismissing the validity of both arguments. No doubt the Athenians
developed natural proprietary sentiments regarding Melos because
of their hegemony during the Persian wars; however, the Athenians
refuse to consider either of these points. Instead, their case
is developed along sophistic lines of argument.

In relating these facts to the Melian Dialogue, the reader
is faced with several alternatives: 1) Thucydides did not know
that the Melians were not neutral in 416. 2) He realized that they
were not neutral then, but he presented the actual arguments they
offered to the Athenians. 3) Although realizing that the Melians
were not neutral in 416, he wanted to portray as vividly as possible
certain characteristics and tendencies of the Athenian Empire at
that period; this could best be accomplished by presenting a small,
neutral state as a foil or antithesis.
There are other possibilities. Thucydides may have intended the Melian appeal to be a sophistic parody of the ideals of a previous generation, knowing that his audience would realize the Melians' non-neutral position. The carefully structured dialogue, nearly perfect in antithesis and balance of theme and form, indicates the historian's artistic purpose, whether modelled on sophistic rhetorical forms or not.

This thesis—the predominance of artistic and philosophic considerations over historical detail in Thucydides' *History*—can be further elaborated. One might question whether an actual or historical Melian Dialogue ever took place at all, or whether perhaps there were two, one in 426 and another in 416, since certainly it is expedient to persuade an enemy to capitulate by negotiation rather than by force. Regarding these questions, there is no evaluation save our own personal consideration of Thucydides' methods and statement of purpose. But it seems most likely that the discrepancy between the actual circumstances in 416 and their presentation in the Melian case is due to Thucydides' artistic and philosophic purposes. The position of the Melian Dialogue in Book 5 may also be due to that same purpose, since the Melian Dialogue here immediately precedes the description of the Sicilian Expedition.

As to the horror of the Athenian reprisals, Isocrates points out that the measures taken were common to the period. The Melians realized what could happen: πρὸ τοῦ τὰ δεινότατα παθεῖν (5.93) ("instead of suffering horrendous treatment").
At the time, such shocking action surprised no one. Only later, after the war, did the incident cause the Athenians embarrassment. But the highly stylized presentation of antithetical arguments immediately followed by the brief and vivid account of the siege and consequent Athenian retaliation stuns and horrifies the reader. It is the powerful effect of Thucydidean style which endows the incidents at Melos with an emotional impact which they did not possess in 416.

In conclusion, Thucydidean style and its artistic and philosophic purposes is the probable explanation of 1) the disparity between the actual historical situation in 416 and the circumstances indirectly implied by the Melian Dialogue; 2) the presentation of the Melian case as an injured neutral state; 3) disregard of the historical and geographical bases of the Athenian argument; 4) the inclusion of the Melian Dialogue in Book 5 rather than in Book 3; 5) the strong emotional appeal of the whole episode, an appeal not realized historically until after 404.
CHAPTER II

THE ANCIENT CRITICS AND THE MELIAN DIALOGUE

What the major ancient critics have said about rhetorical and stylistic principles is vitally relevant to the Melian Dialogue. Their comments about rhetoric indicate that both the Melian and the Athenian cases utilize rhetorical arguments which were prevalent at the time; their analyses of Thucydides' style possess the authority and expertise of native speakers. Their criticisms are not always favorable; the later critics show a tendency to judge in terms of fourth-century standards as exemplified in Lysias and Demosthenes, and consequently they sometimes disparage an earlier, more rugged style. Despite this drawback, the ancient critics present a complete and integrated analysis of Thucydides' fundamental stylistic characteristics.

The critics and their relevant remarks will be presented in chronological order, except for Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who will be considered last because of his detailed discussions of Thucydidean style and the Melian Dialogue.

Aristotle's Rhetorica sets forth the essentials of rhetorical principles in a clear, concise, and orderly way. Earlier
philosophers---Socrates, Plato, the Sophists---discussed the nature of rhetoric and its moral implications, but it is Aristotle who lucidly and systematically provides the first extant specific definition of rhetorical principles, arguments, and figures. His comments about rhetoric pertain to the Melian Dialogue in three aspects: the arguments employed by the Melians and Athenians; the formal presentation of these arguments; and the effective use of meter and antithesis.

Both the Melian and Athenian cases are based on the utilitarian principles arising from the arguments of political oratory. One of the most effective rhetorical devices which Aristotle describes is θεος or character portrayal.  

1Plato's Gorgias is particularly important to the moral implications of rhetorical theory. In this dialogue, Callicles upholds the natural law of the strong ruling the weak (483 D ff.) ---that same law which is stated by the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue. This is a sophistic influence that is primarily philosophical rather than rhetorical.

Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided. This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak. It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses. Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions. (1.2.4, 1356a)³

In the Melian Dialogue, the Melians and Athenians stress their probity and moral rectitude, ὄμως δὲ πιστεύομεν τῇ μὲν τῇ ἐκ τοῦ θείου μὴ ἐλασσόσεθαι, ὥστε ὅσοι πρὸς οὐ δικαίους ἰστάμεθα (104) ("Nevertheless, we believe that we will not be second best in the matter of divine providence because we are godfearing men taking a stand against the unrighteous"). οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐξω τῆς ἀνθρωπείας τῶν μὲν ἐς τὸ θείον νοµίσεως, τῶν δὲ ἐς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς βουλήσεως δικαιοῦμεν ἢ πράσσομεν (105) ("We are considering and actually accomplishing nothing but what men have always held as an established belief about the deity, nothing which men have not always desired for themselves").

The last sentence in Aristotle's comments, διὰ δὲ τῶν ἀκροατῶν, ἤταν εἰς πάθος ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου προαχώσειν ("Secondly, persuasion may come through their hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions") recalls the emotional basis of the Melian appeal. This πάθος is most subtly built up; indeed, it takes its primary strength not from any stylistic artifices but from the innate universal struggle between absolutes inherent in the Melian plea, which speaks to the emotions of the reader. The Melian πάθος, then, is almost entirely subjective.

The Athenian argument conforms strikingly to the aims of the political orator as described by Aristotle. The terminology in Aristotle's text and in the dialogue is similar:

Rhetoric has three distinct ends in view, one for each of its three kinds. The political orator aims at establishing the expediency or the harmfulness of a proposed course of action; if he urges its acceptance, he does so on the ground that it will do good; if he urges its rejection, he does so on the ground that it will do harm; and all other points, such as whether the proposal is just or unjust, honourable or dishonourable, he brings in as subsidiary and relative to this main consideration. Parties in a law-case aim at establishing the justice or injustice of some action, and they too bring in all other points as
subsidiary and relative to this one. Those who praise or attack a man aim at proving him worthy of honour or the reverse, and they too treat all other considerations with reference to this one. (1.3.5, 1358b)

Aristotle reiterates the pragmatic nature of the political orator, once again in terms reminiscent of the Melian Dialogue:

Now the political and deliberative orator's aim is utility: deliberation seeks to determine not ends but means to ends, i.e., what it is most useful to do. (1.6.1, 1362a)

Other arguments which were or became commonplace in oratory are listed by Aristotle:

All orators, besides their special lines of argument, are bound to use, for instance, the topic of the Possible and Impossible; and to try to show that a thing has happened, or will happen in future. Again, the topic of Size is common to all oratory; all of us have to argue that things are bigger or smaller than they seem, whether we are making political speeches, speeches of eulogy or attack, or prosecuting or defending in the law-courts. (2.18.3-4, 1391b)

These are the very same arguments repeated by the Melians throughout the dialogue, particularly in chapters 90, 98, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110.

There are two methods of developing these standard lines of argumentation: example and enthymeme. Aristotle clearly
defines the two and differentiates between them:

When we base the proof of a proposition on a number of similar cases, this is induction in dialectic, example in rhetoric; when it is shown that, certain propositions being true, a further and quite distinct proposition must also be true in consequence, whether invariably or usually, this is called syllogism in dialectic, enthymeme in rhetoric. (1.2.9, 1356b)

Maxims are a type of enthymeme:

We now turn to the use of Maxims, in order to see upon what subjects and occasions, and for what kind of speaker, they will appropriately form part of a speech. This will appear most clearly when we have defined a maxim. It is a statement; not about a particular fact, such as the character of Iphicrates, but of a general kind; nor is it about any and every subject—e.g. "straight is the contrary of curved" is not a maxim—but only about questions of practical conduct, courses of conduct to be chosen or avoided. (2.21, 1394a)

Certain statements of the Melians have a sententious ring:

τὸ αὐτὸ ἐν κινδύνῳ γινομένῳ εἶναι τὰ εἰκότα καὶ δίκαια ("every person in a risky situation should have the advantage of a set system of fairness and morals") (90); τὰ τῶν πολέμων ἔστιν ὅτε κοινοτέρας τὰς τόχας λαμβάνοντα ἢ κατὰ τὸ διαφέρον ἐκατέρων πλῆθος ("in times of war fortune is often more impartial than the size of
the antagonists would suggest") (102). Many Athenian comments are aphoristic; e.g., τὸ ξυμφέρον μὲν μετὰ ἀφαλείας εἶναι, τὸ δὲ δίκαιον καὶ καλὸν μετὰ κινδύνου δρᾶσθαι ("expediency is associated with security, while justice and nobility are accomplished only with great risk") (107), and almost all of chapters 105 and 111.

Aristotle's comments about metrics elucidate the intricacies of Thucydidean style in the Melian Dialogue:

Τὸ δὲ σχῆμα τῆς λέξεως δεῖ μήτε ἐξίμετρον ἐίναι μήτε ἀρρυθμῶν, τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀπίθανον (τευτόνδαι γὰρ δοκεῖ), καὶ ἀμα καὶ ἔξισθαν: προσέχειν γὰρ ποιεῖ τὰ ὀμόφω, τότε πάλιν ἤξειν ὁπερ ὁν ὑπὸ τῶν κηρύκων προςλαμβάνουσα τὰ παυδὰ τὸ "τίνα αἰρεῖται ἐπίτροπον ὁ ἀπελευθεροῦνενος;" "Ὑθεύων". τὸ δὲ ἀρρυθμὸν ἀπέραντον, δεῖ δὲ στερεάνθαι μὲν, μὴ μέτρων δὲ: ἀδήξε γὰρ καὶ ἀγνοώσον τὸ ἐπείρον. περαιώτεται δὲ ἀριθμοὶ πάντα: ὃ δὲ τοῦ σχήματος τῆς λέξεως ἀριθμὸς ῥυθμὸς ἔστιν, οὗ καὶ τὰ μέτρα τρίμματα: διὸ ῥυθμὸν δεῖ ἧξειν τὸν λόγου, μέτρων δὲ μὴ πολύμα γὰρ ἔσται. ῥυθμὸν δὲ μὴ ἀκρίβισθα: τούτῳ δὲ ἔσται ἐὰν μέχρι τοῦ ή. τῶν δὲ μνήμων ὃ μὲν ἠρφός σεσμῆς ἀλλ' οὐ λεκτικῆς ἀρμονίας δεόμενος, ὃ δ' ἵππος αὕτη ἔστιν ἡ λεξίς ἢ τῶν πολλῶν (διὸ μᾶλλον πάντων τῶν μέτρων λαμβανομένη δίδυμον λέγονται), δεῖ δὲ σεμάνσει γενόθει καὶ ἑκοτίσῃ. ὃ δὲ τραχαῖος κορδακικότερος: διαλέι δὲ τὰ τετράμέτρα: ἐστὶ γὰρ προχερὸς μνήμος τὰ τετράμετρα. λειτεῖται δὲ παιάν, ὃ ἔρχοτο μὲν ἀπὸ Ἑραμηνύμχου ἀρράμενοι, οὐκ ἔχοι δὲ λέγειν τίς ἢ. ἔστι δὲ τρίτος ὁ παίαν, καὶ ἔχομεν τῶν εἰρημένων τριὰ γὰρ πρὸς δ' ἐστίν, σκέινας δὲ ὃ μὲν ἐν πρὸς εὖ, ὃ δὲ δύο πρὸς ἐν, ἔχειν δὲ τῶν λόγων ποιῶν ὁ ἡμιάλος: οὕτος δ' ἔστιν ὁ παίαν, οὐ μὲν οὖν ἄλλοι διὰ τὰ τὰ εἰρημένα ἀφετέοι, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ μετρικῶν: ὃ δὲ παιὰν λιπτέος: ἀπὸ μόνον γὰρ οὖν ἑστὶ μέτρων τῶν μηθέντων μνήμων, ὡστε μᾶλλον λανθάνειν, νῦν μὲν οὖν χρώναι τῷ ἐνὶ παιὰν καὶ ἄρρητοί (καὶ τελευταίοις), δεῖ δὲ διαφέρειν τὴν τελευτὴν τῆς ἀρχῆς. ἔστιν δὲ παιὰν δύο εἶδη ἀρχικημίας ἀλλ' ἐστιν, οὐν τὸ μὲν ἐν ἀρχῇ ἀρμόστε, ὡστε καὶ χρώναιν οὕτως δ' ἔστιν οὖν ὁ ἀρχεῖ μὴ ἡ μακρὰ, τελευτώσω δὲ τρεῖς βραχείας, "Ἀλαγοινὲς ἔτει Ἰωκίαν," καὶ "Χρυσοκόμα Ἐκατε παῖ Διόσ", ἔτερος δ' εἰς ἀντίκα, οὐ βραχεῖα ἄρχουσα τρεῖς, ὃ δὲ μακρὰ τελευτάλα.
The form of a prose composition should be neither metrical nor destitute of rhythm. The metrical form destroys the hearer's trust by its artificial appearance, and at the same time it diverts his attention, making him watch for metrical recurrences, just as children catch up the herald's question, "Whom does the freedman choose as his advocate?", with the answer "Cleon!" On the other hand, unrhythmical language is too unlimited; we do not want the limitations of metre, but some limitation we must have, or the effect will be vague and unsatisfactory. Now it is number that limits all things; and it is the numerical limitation of the form of a composition that constitutes rhythm, of which metres are definite sections.

Prose, then, is to be rhythmical, but not metrical, or it will become not prose but verse. It should not even have too precise a prose rhythm, and therefore should only be rhythmical to a certain extent.

Of the various rhythms, the heroic has dignity, but lacks the tones of the spoken language. The iambic is the very language of ordinary people, so that in common talk iambic lines occur oftener than any others: but in a speech we need dignity and the power of taking the hearer out of his ordinary self. The trochee is too much akin to wild dancing: we can see this in tetrameter verse, which is one of the trochaic rhythms.

There remains the paean, which speakers began to use in the time of Thrasymachus, though they had then no name to give it. The paean is a third class of rhythm, closely akin to both the two already mentioned; it has in it the ratio of three to two, whereas the other two kinds have the ratio of one to one, and two to one respectively. Between the two last ratios comes the ratio of one-and-a-half to one, which is that of the paean.
Now the other two kinds of rhythm must be rejected in writing prose, partly for the reasons given, and partly because they are too metrical; and the paean must be adopted, since from this alone of the rhythms mentioned no definite metre arises, and therefore it is the least obtrusive of them. At present the same form of paean is employed at the beginning as at the end of sentences, whereas the end should differ from the beginning. There are two opposite kinds of paean, one of which is suitable to the beginning of a sentence, where it is indeed actually used; this is the kind that begins with a long syllable and ends with three short ones, as

Διλογενες | ειτε Αυκι|αν,

and

Χρυσεοξομ |α Ίξατε | παι Διός.

The other paean begins, conversely, with three short syllables and ends with a long one, as

μετα δε γαν | οτσατα τ' ωκ | εανδν η | φανισε νοξ.

This kind of paean makes a real close: a short syllable can give no effect of finality, and therefore makes the rhythm appear truncated. A sentence should break off with the long syllable: the fact that it is over should be indicated not by the scribe, or by his period-mark in the margin, but by the rhythm itself.

We have now seen that our language must be rhythmical and not destitute of rhythm, and what rhythms, in what particular shape, make it so. (3.8.1-7, 1408b-1409a)

Aristotle's approbation of the paeon is important when the nature of rhythmic endings in the Melian Dialogue is considered. Even more important is his distinction between rhythm (ρυθμος) and meter (μετρον). Aristotle's comments here, together with those of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Demetrius, form the basis for my analysis of rhythm patterns in the Melian Dialogue.

Aristotle's distinctions concerning types of antitheses, with illustrations and discussions, are rewarding in the study
of the Melian Dialogue:

tόδε ἐν καλοῖς λέξεως ἢ μὲν διηρημένη ἔστιν ἢ ἐκ
ἀντικειμένης, διηρημένη μὲν, οἷον "πολλάκις ἐθάμμασα τῶν
tῶν πανηγυρίων συναγαγόντων καὶ τοὺς γυμνικοὺς ἀγώνας
cαταστησάντων", ἀντικειμένη δὲ ἐν ἤ ἕκατέρῳ τῷ καλῷ ἢ
πρός ἑναντίον ἑναντίον ἀγιείται ὅ ταῦτῳ ἑπέζευκται τοῖς
ἑναντίοις, οἷον "ἀμφοτέρους δὲ ὄνημα, καὶ τοῖς ὑπομεί-
ναναῖς καὶ τοῖς ἀλοιποῦμεναῖς τοῖς μὲν γὰρ πλείω τῆς
όμοις προεπετήσαντο, τοῖς δὲ ἵκαιν ἡν ὁ ὀκεῖοι κατελῖπον".

ἐναντία ὑπομονή ἀκολούθησα, ἱκανῶν πλείον. "Ὡς τε καὶ
tοῖς χρημάτων δευτέρους καὶ τοῖς ἀπολαῦσαι βουλομένους"

ἀπόδειξις κτίσαι αὐτίκα. καὶ ὅτι "συμβαίνει πολλάκις
ἐν ταύταις καὶ τοὺς φορτίους ἀπεχθέν καὶ τοὺς ἐφρονίας
καταρρέων". "εἶδος μὲν τῶν ἀριστεύων ξεώρων, οὐ
πολὺ δὲ ὄστερον τὴν ἐρχήν τῆς θαλάττης ἔλαβον". "πλεῖο-
ναί μὲν διὰ τῆς ἔκπεφου, πεζεύσα τε διὰ τῆς θαλάττης,
tῶν μὲν Ἐλλησσονοῦντον ξεύσα, τῶν δὲ ἱλίω διαρρέας." "καὶ
φύσε πολλατά ὡντα νόμῳ τῆς πέλεως στέρεοι,
οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν κακῶς ἀπῆλυσον, οἱ δὲ αἰσχρῶς ἐξώρωσαν.

καὶ διὰ μὲν τῶν μισθών οὐκέταίς χρησάμεθα, κοινῷ δὲ
πολλοὺς τῶν συμμόχων περιοριζομεθάνατα." "ὁ ἔξωτας
ἐξεῖν ἡ τελευτάτας καταλείψεις". καὶ δέ εἰς Πειθόλαθον
τις εἰσεν καὶ Λυκόφραν ἐν τῷ δικαστήριῳ." οὕτω δὲ
ὑμᾶς οἴκω μὲν ὡτε επάλλουσο, ἠκόμης δὲ ὡς ὑμᾶς ἐν

一方面是 μὲν οὖν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἔστιν, παράσως δὲ ἐὰν
ἴσα τὰ κάλα, παραμονήσοι δὲ ἐὰν ὁμοία τὰ ἐσχάτα ἐκ

ἑκάτερον τό καλόν ἀνάγχη δὲ ἢ ἐν ἀρχῇ ἢ ἐπὶ τελευτής
ἐκεῖν, καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ μὲν ἐν τῷ ἄθροιστα, ἐπὶ τῇ τελευτής τῶν ἐσχα-

tος συλλογῆς ἡ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀνόματος πτώσεις ἡ τοῦ αὐτοῦ
dιόμη: ἐν ἀρχῇ μὲν τὰ τοιαῦτα, "ἀγρόν γὰρ ἐλαβεν ἀργὸν

"παρὰ τοὐτοῖς παράρρητοι παρ' ἐπέεσσαι

ἔστι τελευτής δὲ "οὐδὲν ἢ αὐτῶν τοιaque τετοικάνει, ἀλλ' αὐτῶν παιδίων γεγονέσθαι", "ἐν πλείστοις δὲ φροντίσαι καὶ ἐν

ἐλαχύσαται ἐνίοτον". πτώσεις δὲ τοῦτο "ἀξίος δὲ στεφθήναι

χαλκοῦσι, οὐδ' εἴπο τόν χαλκοῦ;" παρά τοῦ ἔτοιμα "οὔ τ' αὐ-

tὸν καὶ ἠχαίρετα κακῶς καὶ τὸν γραφείας κακῶς". ἀπὸ

συλλαβῆς δὲ "τί ἂν ἐπαθεῖ πεισθεί, εἰ ἄκρα ἑδείς ἀργόν;

ἐστι δὲ ἰδιά τάντα ἐχεῖν ταύτα, καὶ ἀντίδειπσθε ἐἶναι τὸ

αὐτὸ καὶ πάρισι καὶ ἐμοιοτελευτόν.
The periodic style which is divided into members is of two kinds. It is either simply divided, as in "I have often wondered at the conveners of national gatherings and the founders of athletic contests"; or it is antithetical, where, in each of the two members, one of one pair of opposites is put along with one of another pair, or the same word is used to bracket two opposites, as. "They aided both parties—not only those who stayed behind but those who accompanied them: for the latter they acquired new territory larger than that at home, and to the former they left territory at home that was large enough." Here the contrasted words are "staying behind" and "accompanying," "enough" and "larger." So in the example, "Both to those who want to get property and to those who desire to enjoy it," where "enjoyment" is contrasted with "getting." Again, "it often happens in such enterprises that the wise men fail and the fools succeed;" "they were awarded the prize of valour immediately, and won the command of the sea not long afterwards;" "to sail through the mainland and march through the sea, by bridging the Hellespont and cutting through Athos"; "nature gave them their country and law took it away again;" "some of them perished in misery, others were saved in disgrace;" "Athenian citizens keep foreigners in their houses as servants, while the city of Athens allows her allies by thousands to live as the foreigner's slaves;" and "to possess in life or to bequeath at death." There is also what some one said about Peitholaus and Lycophron in a lawcourt, "These men used to sell you when they were at home, and now they have come to you here and bought you." All these passages have the structure described above. Such a form of speech is satisfying, because the significance of contrasted ideas is easily felt, especially when they are thus put side by side, and also because it has the effect of a logical argument; it is by putting two opposing conclusions side by side that you prove one of them false.

Such, then, is the nature of antithesis. Parisosis is making the two members of a period equal in length. Paromoeosis is making the extreme words of both members like each other. This must happen either at the beginning or at the end of each member. If at the beginning, the resemblance must always be between whole words; at the end, between final syllables or inflexions of the same word or the same word repeated. Thus, at the beginning

Δυρδν γαρ έλαιεν Δριν παρ' αυτω
and

εἰς πλείοντο παραρρητοὶ τ' ἐπέεσσιν.

At the end

οὐκ ἠφήσαν αὐτὸν παιδίον τετοκέναι, ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ αἵτων γεγονέναι,

and

ἐν πλεῖσταις δὲ προντίσι καὶ ἐν ἐλαχίσταις ἐλπίσιν

An example of inflexions of the same word is

ἄξιος δὲ σταθήναι χαλκοῦς, οὐκ ἄξιος δὲν χαλκοῦ;

Of the same word repeated,

οὐ δ' αὐτὸν καὶ ἔναν ἔλεγες κακῶς καὶ γάρ γράφεις κακῶς. Of one syllable,

τί δ' ἐν ἐπαθεὶς δεινόν, εἰ ἄνδρ' εἶδες ἄργον;

It is possible for the same sentence to have all these features together—antithesis, parison, and homoeoteleuton.

(3.9.7-9, 1409b, 1410a)

Clearly, the Melian Dialogue embodies several of the rhetorical principles which Aristotle elucidates in the Rhetorica. This is not surprising since both Thucydides and Aristotle experienced the general trend of rhetorical development as influenced by the Sophists. The influence of Gorgias and Antiphon can be seen, although a precise identification of Thucydides' debts is hotly disputed. Stylistic mannerisms of Gorgias are apparent in the Melian Dialogue, as we shall see.

In the Poetics, again Aristotle does not mention Thucydides by name. But he makes a provocative distinction between the nature of poetry and history that has a direct bearing upon the understanding of Thucydides' art and philosophy. Furthermore, the mention of Alcibiades may imply an oblique reference to Thucydides.

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From what we have said it will be seen that the poet's function is to describe, not the thing that has happened, but a kind of thing that might happen, i.e., what is possible as being probable or necessary. The distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse—you might put the work of Herodotus into verse, and it would still be a species of history; it consists really in this, that the one describes the thing that had been, and the other a kind of thing that might be. Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars. By a universal statement I mean one as to what such or such a kind of man will probably or necessarily say or do—which is the aim of poetry, though it affixes proper names to the characters; by a single statement, one as to what, say, Alcibiades did or had done to him. (9, 1451a,b)

The limitations of the Aristotelian definition become evident upon contrast with Thucydides' statement of purpose (1.22.4):

διὸ δὲ βουλήσασθαι τὸν τε γεγομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκέπασαι καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὕτως κατὰ τὰ ἀνθρώπων τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίως ἔσεσθαι. ἀφέλεια χρίνειν αὕτα ἀρχὸντος ἔγειρ.

... but whoever shall wish to have a clear view both of the events which have happened and of those which will someday, in all human probability, happen again in the same or a similar way—for these to adjudge my history profitable will be enough for me.

Aristotle expresses the universal statement of the poet in the same terms which Thucydides uses to define the purpose of his History. Either Thucydides was indeed a poet or Aristotle was ignorant of the universal implications in Thucydides' History. This consideration is particularly relevant to the Melian Dialogue since that is the example par excellence of the Thucydidean presentation of conflicting philosophical, political, and ethical values.

It is evident that Aristotle does not provide any direct discussion of Thucydides' purpose or style, but the implications of his comments are vital and revealing. Two major conclusions seem to be inescapable: the limitations of Aristotle's definition of history and the magnitude of Thucydides' conception of the historian's role.

The author of the Rhetorica ad Alexandrum echoes many of Aristotle's observations about practical rhetoric. He offers a definition of expediency with which the Athenians of the Melian Dialogue would no doubt agree; certainly it is a definition that embraces the Melian predicament:

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What is expedient is the preservation of existing good things, or the acquisition of goods that we do not possess, or the rejection of existing evils, or the prevention of harmful things expected to occur. (1422a)7

He goes on to explain that expediency may be argued from the point of view of analogy (διομοίον) or of opposites (ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἐναντίων), 1422b.

The arguments which the treatise suggests should be used in justification for going to war are the very ones rejected by the Athenians as commonplace and empty:

The following are the arguments for making war on somebody: that we have been wronged in the past, and now that opportunity offers ought to punish the wrongdoers; or, that we are being wronged now, and ought to go to war in our own defence—or in defence of our kinsmen or of our benefactors; or, that our allies are being wronged and we ought to go to their help; or, that it is to the advantage of the state in respect of glory, or wealth or power or the like. (1425a)

On the other hand, the author of the Rhetorica ad Alexandrum lists as desirable for putting an end to a war arguments similar to those used by the Melians:

When we are trying to stop a war that has already begun, if those whom we are advising are getting the upper hand, the first thing is to say that sensible people should not wait until they have a fall but should make peace while they have the upper hand, and next that it is the nature of war to ruin many even of those who are successful in it, whereas it is the nature of peace to save the vanquished while allowing the victors to enjoy the prizes for which they went to war; and we must point out how many and how in- calculable are the changes of fortune that occur in war. (1425a,b)

Once again it appears that either the arguments presented on both sides in the Melian Dialogue were common in ancient theory or that the power and greatness of the Melian Dialogue helped to make them a rhetorical commonplace. More interesting is the fact that the Athenians turn aside from standard rhetorical pleas and boldly state their position, whereas the Melians rely upon traditional and moral arguments.

Longinus mentions Thucydides directly and offers nothing but praise. He calls his style ὑπηγορίας τι καὶ μεγαλοφροσύνη ("lofty and majestic") and places him in the company of Homer, Plato, and Demosthenes (14.1). 8

Longinus singles out Thucydides for his excellent use of figures of speech; one of these, hyperbaton or inversion, he

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defines as follows: ἐστὶ δὲ λέξεων ἡ νοστήσεων ἐκ τοῦ κατ’ ἀκολουθίαν
κειμημένη τάξις καὶ οἰονεῖ ... χαρακτὴρ ἐναγωγίου πάθους ἀληθευ-
στατος ("By hyperbaton we mean a transposition of words or thoughts
from their usual order, bearing unmistakably the characteristic
stamp of violent mental agitation.") In his judgment, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον
ὅ θουκυδίδης καὶ τὰ φύσει πάντως ἡνωμένα καὶ ἀδιανέμητα ὅμως ταῖς
ὑπερβάσιν ἢ τ’ ἄλληλων ἁγείν δεινότατος ("Thucydides surpasses all
other writers in the bold use of this figure, even breaking up
sentences which are by their nature absolutely one and indivisible.")
(2,21,3) The style of the Melian Dialogue is often tortuous;
chapters 85, 90, 91, 95, 103, 111 provide excellent examples.

Thucydides' description of the massacre in Sicily, when
the men were reduced to drinking bloody, muddy water, is an example
of the most effective kind of hyperbole: ὅ γὰρ τὸ πράγμα ἐνεκα
τῆς ὑπερβολῆς παραλαμβάνεσθαι δοκεῖ, ἡ ὑπερβολὴ δ’ ἐσλόγως γεννᾶσθαι
πρὸς πράγματος ("We can see that these circumstances have not been
dragged in to produce a hyperbole, but that the hyperbole has grown
naturally out of the circumstances"). (38.3,4). This example adduced
by Longinus seems to suggest that hyperbole for him means vivid
rather than exaggerated writing. The Melian Dialogue in its entirety
is extremely effective; a particular example of hyperbole may be
seen in the Athenian statement that the Melians should surrender
before suffering "the most dreadful things." Certainly this threat
is the obvious outgrowth of the situation.

Another figure of speech, metabole, is a particular favorite
of Thucydides. Longinus observes the dramatic effect of a switch
to the historical present: "Οταν γε μήν τὰ παρελθόντα τοῖς χρόνοις εἰσάγης ὡς γνώμενα καὶ παρόντα οὐ διήγησαν ἔτι τὸν λόγον ἄλλ' ἐναργῶν πράγμα ποιήσεις ("When past events are introduced as happening in present time the narrative form is changed into a dramatic action") (25). He notes Xenophon's and Thucydides' use of this device. Grammatic metabole is obvious to any reader of the dialogue. The type of time-change described by Longinus may well be illustrated by Thucydides' portrayal of the Melian position in 416 as it had existed in 426.

After his discussion of other figures such as asyndeton and periphrasis, many of which are common in the History although Longinus does not specifically call attention to Thucydides' use of them, the critic stresses their cumulative emotional effect:

"All [these figures] which I have mentioned help to render a style more energetic and impassioned, and passion contributes as largely to sublimity as the delineation of character to amusement") (29.2). This statement is corroborated by Dionysius' judgment about Thucydides' portrayal of the emotions, as will be shown; the use of rhetorical figures and the generic delineation provide both sublimity and amusement; or, better, pleasure (ηδονή). Thus, throughout his treatise, Longinus considers Thucydides a literary genius whose History incorporates the highest stylistic principles.  

9One passage, 34.4, may be another example of Longinus' esteem for Thucydides' style:
Clearly he sees Thucydides as an inspired historian who writes in a majestic manner, a judgment not without bearing upon our response to the artistry of the Melian Dialogue.

Not unlike Longinus, the author of the essay *Demetrius on Style* considers Thucydides in general an exponent of the elevated (μεγαλοπρεπής) style. He provides a detailed analysis of many

Lovell translates this as,

"But Demosthenes followed a great master, and drew his consummate excellences, his high-pitched eloquence, his living passion, his copiousness, his sagacity, his speed--that mastery of power which can never be approached--from the highest of sources."

But W. Hamilton Fyfe translates:

"But Demosthenes no sooner 'takes up the tale' than he shows the merits of great genius in their most consummate form, sublime intensity, living emotion, redundancy, readiness, speed--where speed is in season--and his own unapproachable vehemence and power."

(London: William Heinemann, Ltd.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 223-224. In a note (c, p. 223) he says, referring to ἔλον (i.e., "taking up the tale"), "a Homeric phrase used of one minstrel taking up the tale where the other dropped it." The Greek here is difficult; the application to Thucydides arises because of a similarity to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Thucydidès* 23. See the excellent discussion in D. A. Russell's edition of Longinus' *On the Sublime* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 164. His translation is: "... but he [Demosthenes], when he takes over, gathers all at once to himself excellences finished to the highest perfection of his sublime genius--the intensity of lofty speech, living emotions, abundance, versatility, rapidity where it most matters, all his unapproachable vehemence and power ... ."
characteristic Thucydidean features; in particular, he considers his use of clauses, diction, meter, and metabole.

Lengthy clauses, according to Demetrius, contribute to an elevated style (2.44). He then illustrates the force of the rounded period in Thucydides by rewriting a sentence from the History (2, 102):

Megaloprepēs δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐκ περιαγωγῆς τῇ συνθέσει λέγειν, οἷον ὡς Θουκυδίδης: "ὁ γὰρ Ἀχελώος ποταμὸς ῥέων ἐκ Πίνδου ὄρους διὰ Δολοπίας καὶ Ἱγραιών καὶ Ἀμφιλόχων, ἀνωθεν παρὰ Στράτσων πάλιν ἐς βάλασαν διεξεις πιὸ Οἰναίδας, καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶς περιμενών ἀποροφ ποιεὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ ὑδάτος ἐν χείμωνι ὑπατεῖσθαι." σύμπασα γὰρ ἡ τοιαύτη μεγαλοπρέπεια ἐκ τῆς περιαγωγῆς γέγονεν, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ μέγιστος διαπάθεια αὐτῶν τε καὶ τῶν ἀκούοντα.

Εἰ δὲ οὖν διάλογος αὐτῷ εἶπο τις: "ὁ γὰρ Ἀχελώος ποταμὸς μὲν ἐκ Πίνδου ὄρους, ἐκβαλλεὶ δὲ παρ' Οἰναίδας ἐς βάλασαν πρὸς δὲ τῆς ἐκβολῆς τὸ Οἰναίδων πεῖδον λίμνην ποιεῖ, ἀστὴρ αὐτῶς πρὸς τὰς χειμερινὰς ἔξοδους τῶν πολεμίων ἐρωμα καὶ πρόβλημα γίνεσθαι τὸ ὑδωρ" εἰ δὴ τις οὖν μεταβαλὼν ἔρρυνεσθαι αὐτὸ, πολλάς μὲν διαπάθεια παρέξει τῷ λόγῳ, τὸ μέγεθος δὲ ἀφαιρεῖται.

Elevation is also caused by a rounded form of composition, as in the following passage of Thucydides: "For the river Achelous flowing from Mount Pindus through Dolopia and the land of the Agrianians and Amphilochians, having passed the inland city Stratus and discharging itself into the sea near Oeniadae, and surrounding that town with a marsh, makes a winter expedition impossible owing to the floods." All this impressiveness arises from the rounded period and from the fact that the historian hardly allows a rest to himself and the reader.

If the sentence were broken up and made to run as follows: "For the river Achelous flows from Mount Pindus and empties itself into the sea near Oeniadae; but before reaching the outlet it converts the plain of Oeniadae into a marsh, so that the water forms a defence and protection against the attacks of the enemy in winter,"—if the
phrasing of the sentence were to be varied in this way, there would be many resting-places in the narrative but its stateliness would be destroyed. (2.45-46)

Demetrius points out a fact of much value for any antithetical study of the dialogue: Thucydides' clauses are often so closely balanced that they contain an equal number of syllables:

εἴδος δὲ τοῦ παραμοίου τὸ ἱσόκολον, ἐπὶν ἰσας ἔχῃ τὰ κάλα τὰς συλλαβὰς, ὥστε Θουκυδίδης, "ὡς οὖσαν συνπάννοιτο ἀπαξίων τῶν τὸ ἔργων, οἷς τῇ ἐπιμέλει τῇ εἰδίκει τοῖς ἀνερείῳτοις". ἱσόκολον μὲν δὴ τοῦτο.

Under the heading of symmetry of members comes equality of members, which occurs when the members contain an equal number of syllables, as in the following sentence of Thucydides: "This implies that neither those who are questioned disown, nor those who are concerned to know censure, the business." Such, then, is equality of members. (1.25)

Thucydides' diction, according to Demetrius, is harsh and rugged because of word choice as well as word positioning:

καὶ ὁ Θουκυδίδης δὲ παράχου σχεδόν φεύγει τὸ λέον καὶ ἰμαλεὶς τῆς συνδέσσας, καὶ δὲ μᾶλλον τί προσκακούντι ἐνικεῖ, ὥστε αἱ τὰς τραχείας ἀδύου πορευόμενοι, ἐπὶν λέγη, "ὅτι τὸ μὲν δὴ ἔτος, ὡς ἀμολογίτη, ἀνοσοῦν ἐς τὰς ἄλλας ἀδικεῖς ἑνίκησεν ὑμῖν, τρεῖς μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἑδύνεται ἄδει ἐς τὰς ἑπεταν, ὅτι "ἄνοσον ἐς τὰς ἄλλας ἀδικεῖς οὐ ἑνίκησεν, ἀφήνητο δ' αὐτὸν τῇ μεγαλοπρέπειᾳ.

"Ὡστε γὰρ δύομα τραχύ μέγεθος ἑργάζεται, οὕτω συνθέσει. ὄνομα δὲ τραχύ τὰ τέ "κεκραγών, ἀντὶ τοῦ "βαοῦν," καὶ τὸ "ῥηγύμενον" ἀντὶ τοῦ "φερόμενον," οἷοι πάσαιν ὁ Θουκυδίδης χρητά, ὁμοίως λαμβάνων τὰ τέ ὀνόματα τῇ αὐθεσσά. τοῖς τε ὀνομασί τῶν σύνθεσιν.

Thucydides almost invariably avoids smoothness and evenness of composition. He has rather the constant air of a man who is stumbling, like travellers on rough roads; as when he says that "from other maladies this year, by common consent, was free." It would have been easier and pleasanter to say that "by common consent, this year was free from other maladies." But this would have destroyed the effectiveness of the sentence.

Composition makes style impressive in the same way as a rugged word does. Instances of rugged words are "shrieking" in place of "crying," and "bursting" in place of "charging." Thucydides uses all expressions
of this kind, assimilating the words to the composition and the composition to the words. (2.48, 49)

Demetrius also comments on Thucydides' use of meter as an effective technique in his work. His words are worth quoting in full, because metrical patterns in the Melian Dialogue are important and effective:

| "Ἀρδόμαι δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ μεγαλοπρεποῦς, ὃς περὶ νῦν λόγον ὁμόλογους. ἐν τριαὶ δὲ τὸ μεγαλοπρεπὲς, διανοεῖ, λέγει, τῷ συγκεκριμένῳ προσφόρῳ. σύνθεσις δὲ μεγαλοπρεπῆς, ὃς φησιν Ἀριστοτέλης, ἡ παιωνική. παῖνος δὲ εἶδος δός, τὸ μὲν προκαταρκτικὸν, οὐ ἀρχεῖ μὲν μακρά. λέγουσιν δὲ τρεῖς βραχεῖα, οἷον τὸ τοιῶν, "ἡρέατο δὲ," τὸ δὲ καταληκτικὸν διατέρμα αὐτοτροφοῦν, οὐ τρεῖς μὲν βραχεῖα ἄργουσι, λέγει δὲ μία μακρὰ, ὡσπερ τὸ "Ἀραβία.

Διότι δὲ εἰ τοῖς κώλοις τοῦ μεγαλοπρεποῦς λόγου τὸν προκαταρκτικὸν μὲν παῖνοα ἄρχει τῶν κώλων, τὸν καταληκτικὸν δὲ ἔπεσθαι, παράδειγμα δὲ αὐτὸν τὸ Θουκυδίδειον τόδε, "ἡρέατο δὲ τὸ κάκον ἐξ Ἀλκιπίδας." τι ποτὶ οὖν Ἀριστοτέλης οὕτω διεισάγει; ὅτι δὲ καὶ τὴν ἑμιβαλήν τοῦ κώλου καὶ ἄρχην μεγαλοπρεπὴ εὐθὺς εἶναι καὶ τέλος τοῦ δὲ ἔσται, ἕν ἀπὸ μακρᾶς ἀρχόμεθα καὶ ἕν μακρὰ μέγαμμεν. οὕτω γὰρ μεγαλεῖν ἡ μακρὰ, καὶ προλεγομένῃ τὴν ἑπτάκρονοιν εὐθὺς καὶ ἀπολήγουσαν ἐν μεγάλῳ τινὶ καταλείπεται τὸν ἀκούοντα. πάντες γοῦν ἰδίου τῶν τε πρώτων μενονεύσι καὶ τῶν υστέτων, καὶ ὑπὸ τούτων κυνομεθα, ὡς δὲ τῶν μεταξὺ ἑλατον ὡστερ ἐγκρυπτομενῶν ἡ ἐκαταληκτικόν.

Δῆλον δὲ τοῦτο εἰ τοῖς Θουκυδίδων οἰκεῖον γὰρ ὅλου τὸ μεγαλοπρεπὲς ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτῷ ποιεῖ· οὐ τοῦ τυμφανοῦ μακρᾶτης, καὶ κυνόνειται τῷ ἀδριβοτότῳ παντοδαπῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ μεγαλοπρεποῦς αὐτῆς ἡ σύνθεσις μᾶλλον ἡ μᾶλλον περιποιεῖτο τὸ μέγαστον.

Δεῖς μὲντοι λογίζεσθαι, ὅτι κὰν μὴ ἀκριβῶς δυνάμεθα τὸς κώλους περιτιθέναι τοὺς παιώνιας ἐνθεῖ καὶ ἔθεν ἀμφιτέρους, παιωνικὴν γε πάντως ποιήσαντες τὴν σύνθεσιν, οἷον εὐ μακρὰς ἀρχάμενοι καὶ εὐς μακρῶς καταληκτίσαντες. τὸ γὰρ καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης παραγγέλλειν ἑώκεν, ἀλλὰς δὲ τὸ διῆτον τοῦ παιώνως τετεχνολογηθέναι ἀκριβεῖαι ἐννέα. διότι Θεόφραστος παράδειγμα ἐκτείνει τομέας μεγαλοπρεπεῖς τοῦ τοιοῦτον κώλου, "τῶν μὲν περὶ τὰ μηδενὸς ἐξαιρετοῦσινον" οὐ γὰρ ἐκ παῖνων ἀκριβῶς, ἀλλὰ παιωνικῶν τί ἐστι. παραλαβεῖν μεντοί τῶν παιῶν ἑρὶ τοῖς λόγους, ἐπειδή μικρὸς τις ἐστι καὶ ᾠσφαλέστερος, τὸ μεγαλοπρεπὲς μὲν ἐκ τῆς μακρᾶς λαμβάνων, ὃς λογικὸν δὲ ἐκ τῶν βραχείων.
I shall begin with the elevated style, to which to-day the title "eloquent" is given. Elevation consists in three things: "thought," "diction," "appropriate composition." According to Aristotle, the paeanic rhythm is elevated. There are two kinds of paean, the "procatarctic" (initial), beginning with a long syllable and ending with three short ones, as ἡρξατο δὲ: and the "catalectic" (terminal), the converse of the former, that is to say, beginning with three short syllables and ending with a single long one, as Ἀραβία.

In the elevated style the members should begin with a procatarctic paean and be followed by a catalectic paean, as in this passage of Thucydides: "Now it was from Aethiopia that the malady originally came." What, then, is the reason why Aristotle advised this arrangement of syllables? Because the opening member should both begin and end impressively; and this will be so if we begin with a long syllable and end with a long syllable. For the long syllable has in its very nature something grand, and its use at the beginning is striking, while as a conclusion it leaves the hearer with a sense of elevation. Anyhow, we all remember in a special degree, and are stirred by, the words that come first and the words that come last, whereas those that come between them have less effect upon us, as though they were obscured or hidden among the others.

This is clearly seen in Thucydides, whose verbal dignity is almost in every instance due to the long syllables used in his rhythms. It may indeed be said that, while the stateliness of the writer has many sides, it is this marshalling of words which, alone or chiefly, secures his greatest elevation.

We must, however, bear in mind that, even if we cannot exactly furnish the members with the two paemons at either end, we can at all events give a paemonic
character to the arrangement, by beginning and ending with long syllables. This is seemingly what Aristotle recommends, although, for the sake of precision merely, the two sorts of paean are prescribed in his treatise. On the same principle Theophrastus has given as an instance of elevation the following member: "Those who philosophize in matters that are worth nought." This particular sentence is not precisely composed of paeons, yet it is paemonic in character. The reason for employing the paean in prose is that it is a mixed measure and so safer, deriving its elevation from the long syllable and its prose quality from the short ones.

Among other feet the heroic is solemn and ill-adapted for prose. It is clangorous; not full of good rhythm, but without it. Take, for instance, the following words: "This land, our land, reached now by me." Here the reiteration of long syllables exceeds the bounds of prose.

The iambic measure lacks distinction and is like ordinary talk. Indeed, many people speak iambic lines without knowing it. The paean hits the happy mean between the two, and may be said to be composite. The paemonic structure may, accordingly, be employed in elevated passages after the manner thus described.

Long members also contribute to grandeur of style, e.g. "Thucydides the Athenian wrote the history of the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians," and "Herodotus of Halicarnassus sets forth in this History the result of his inquiries." A sudden drop into silence on a short member diminishes dignity of expression, elevated though the underlying thought and the words may be. (2.38-44)

He further discusses the importance of long syllables in Thucydides' style by considering their onomatopoetic value:

"Εν δὲ τῷ μεγαλοπρεπὲς χαρακτήρι σύγκρουσις παραλαμβάνοι τὸν πρόπον ἄτοι διὰ μακρὸν, ὥσ τὸ "λαᾶν ἀνώ ὠθεσκε". καὶ γὰρ ὁ στίχος μηδὲν τῷ ἐσχέν ἐκ τῆς συγκρούσεως, καὶ μετὰ μηται τόν λίθον τήν ἀναφοράν καὶ βιάν. ὁσαυτὸς καὶ τὸ "μή ἥπειρος εἶναι" τῷ Θουκυδίδειον. συγκροτοῦνται καὶ διήθογγοι διήθογγοι, "ταύτην κατώφησαν μὲν Κερκυραίοι· οἰκισθής δὲ ἐγένετο." It is the concurrence of long vowels which is most appropriately employed in the elevated style, as in the words, "that rock he heaved uphillward" (ἀνω ὠθεσκε). The line has gained length through the hiatus, and has actually reproduced the mighty
heaving of the stone. The words of Thucydides "that it may not be attached to the mainland" (μὴ ἥπειρος) furnish a similar example. Diphthongs also may clash with diphthongs, e.g. "the place was colonized from Corycra; of Corinth, however, was its founder" (Καρκυ-ραίων ὀικετής). (2.72)

Demetrius cannot overlook one of Thucydides' most salient stylistic features, metabole in case usage. Not only does the critic praise this figure as a characteristic of the elevated style; he also suggests that it be imitated:

In framing a sentence it is well, in order to attain elevation, not to keep to the same construction, but to follow the example of Thucydides when he writes: "And being the first to step on to the gangway he swooned, and when he had fallen upon the forepart of the ship his shield dropped into the sea." This is far more striking than if he had retained the same construction, and had said that "he fell upon the forepart of the ship and lost his shield." (2.65)

Demetrius is a thorough and exact stylistic analyst. His detailed examples provide valuable critical standards for an evaluation of the Melian Dialogue. It is reassuring to observe that Demetrius' thoroughness did not blind him to either the rhythmic elements or poetic vocabulary inherent in Thucydides; his passion for analysing detail drove him to attempt an examination of Thucydides' originality:
A touch of poetic diction adds to the elevation of prose. Even a blind man can see that, as the proverb has it. Still some writers imitate the poets quite crudely. Or rather, they do not imitate them, but transfer them to their pages as Herodotus has done.

Thucydides acts otherwise. Even if he does borrow something from a poet, he uses it in his own way and so makes it his own property. Homer, for instance, says of Crete:

A land there is, even Crete, in the midst of the dark-sea-swell, Fair, fertile, wave-encompassed.

Now Homer has used the word "wave-encompassed" to indicate the great size of the island. Thucydides, on his part, thinks it a right thing that the Greek settlers in Sicily should act in unity, as they belong to the same land and that a wave-encompassed one. Although he employs just the same terms as Homer—"land" in place of "island," and likewise "wave-encompassed"—he seems nevertheless to be saying something different. The reason is that he uses the words with reference not to size but to national unity. (2.112-113)

Dionysius of Halicarnassus of the first century B.C. is the first literary critic we possess who considers Thucydides' work in detail. First, his analysis of Thucydides' style will be summarized. Then, his commentary about the Melian Dialogue will be discussed. The pertinent passages cited are from four of Dionysius' works: On Literary Composition, the Second Letter to...
According to Dionysius, Thucydides' History is the outstanding prose example of the austere style, which he describes in terms of a bold architectural metaphor. He lists eight characteristics of this style:

1. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

2. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

3. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

4. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

5. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

6. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

7. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

8. Words are rugged and distinct and appear in combinations that are harsh rather than smooth:

The characteristic of the austere arrangement is this:

— It requires that the words should be like columns planted and placed in strong positions, so that each word should be seen on every side, and that the parts should be at appreciable distances from one another, being separated by perceptible intervals. (Lit. Comp. 22)

These effects are achieved by

a. harsh consonant and vowel sounds in adjacent words:

b. the use of long words:

It does not in the least shrink from using harsh sound-clashing which jars on the ear; like blocks of building stone that are laid together unworked, blocks that are not square and smooth, but preserve their natural roughness and irregularity. (Lit. Comp. 22)
It is prone for the most part to expansion by means of great spacious words. It objects to being confined to short syllables except under occasional stress of necessity. (Lit. Comp. 22)

c. the use of poetic and archaic words:

It is often adopted a figurative, obscure, archaic and strange diction, in place of that which was in common use and familiar to the men of his day. (Second Letter to Ammaeus, 2)

d. a use of particles, conjunctions, and prepositions that is almost poetic:

In the employment of conjunctions and prepositions, and especially of the particles which serve to bring out the meanings of individual words he allows himself full poetic liberty. (Ammaeus, 2)

2. The clauses also embody impressive and stately rhythms (Lit. Comp. :22):

Dionysius stresses the rhythmical quality of Thucydides' style:

The translations of the De Thucydide are mine.

... [he] aspired to form and to introduce into historical composition an individual manner of his own, one which was neither absolute prose nor downright metre, but something compounded of the two. (Ammaeus, 2)

3. Metabole (variatio) is present in many forms.

καὶ οὕτε πάροιχα βούλεται τὰ κάλα ἀλλήλους εἶναι οὕτε παρόμοια οὕτε ἀναγκαῖα δουλεύοντα ἀκολουθία, ἀλλ' εὐγενὴ καὶ λαμπρὰ καὶ ἀλεύθερα

[The austere style] tries to make its clauses not parallel in structure or sound, nor slaves to a rigid sequence, but noble, brilliant, free. (Lit. Comp. 22)

Dionysius stresses Thucydides' use of metabole as a striking characteristic of his style:

εἰπὲ δὲ
tῶν σχηματισμῶν, ἐν οἷς μάλιστα ἔβουλήθη διενεχεῖν τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ, πλείστην εἰσενεγκάμενος πραγματείαν,

He takes the greatest trouble to vary his constructions, since it was in this respect chiefly that he wished to excel his predecessors. (Ammaeus, 2)

These variations are shown

a. between words and phrases:

τοτὲ μὲν λόγον ἐξ ὁνόματος ποιῶν, τοτὲ δὲ εἰς ὄνομα συνάγων τὸν λόγον·

At one time he makes a phrase out of a word, at another time he condenses a phrase into a word. (Ammaeus, 2)

b. between nouns and verbs:

καὶ ἵνα μὲν τὸ ῥήματικὸν ὄνοματικὸς ἐκφέρων, αὕτις δὲ τοῦ ὑπομα ῥῆμα ποιῶν

Now he gives a nominal in place of a verbal form, and again he converts a noun into a verb. (Ammaeus, 2)

c, d. between common and proper nouns, and active and passive verbs:
He inverts the ordinary use of nouns and verbs themselves, interchanging common with proper nouns and active with passive verbs. (Ammaeus, 2)

e, f. between singular and plural, and between genders:

*πληθυντικῶν δὲ καὶ ἑνικῶν ἀλλάτων τὰς φύσεις καὶ ἀντικατηγορῶν ταῦτα ἀλλήλων, θηλυκὰ τ' ἀρρενικοῖς καὶ ἀρρενικὰ θηλυκοῖς καὶ οὐδέτερα τούτων τιῶν συνάπτων, εὖ δὲν ἢ κατὰ φύσιν ἀκολουθία πλανᾶται.*

He varies the normal use of the plural and the singular number, and predicates the one in place of the other. He combines feminines with masculines, masculines with feminines, and neuters with other genders; and the natural agreement of gender is violated thereby. (Ammaeus 2)

g. between cases:

*ἐτι τῆς τοιαύτης ἐστὶν ἀρμονίας καὶ ταῦτα ἰδία· ἄγχιστροφὸς ἐστὶ περὶ τᾶς πτώσεως,*

Further, the arrangement in question is marked by flexibility in its use of the cases. (Lit. Comp. 22)

4. The aim of this style is to stir the emotions:

*φύσει τ' ἐοικέναι μᾶλλον αὐτὰ βούλεται ἡ τέχνη, καὶ κατὰ πάθος λέγεσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ κατ' ἤθος.*

[The austere style] wishes [its clauses] to suggest nature rather than art, and to stir emotions rather than to reflect character. (Lit. Comp. 22)

One need not see a contradiction between Dionysius' remarks here and the observations made by Aristotle and Longinus earlier concerning both ἤθος and πάθος in Thucydides. The character delineation of the historian is generic (especially as seen in the Melian
Dialogue) and Dionysius quite rightly wishes to stress
the more obvious and dominant emotional coloring of
Thucydidean style in general.
Dionysius mentions this feature of Thucydides’ style
again in the second letter to Ammaeus:

χρώματα δὲ αὐτής τὸ
τε στριφόν καὶ τὸ πικρόν καὶ τὸ πυκνὸν καὶ τὸ αὐτηρὸν
καὶ τὸ ἐμβριθές καὶ τὸ δεινόν καὶ φοβερόν, ὑπὲρ ἀπαντᾶ
δὲ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα τὸ παθητικὸν.

Its [Thucydides’ style] "colours" are solidity, pungency,
condensation, austerity, gravity, terrible vehemence,
and above all his power of stirring the emotions. (Ammaeus 2)

5. The austere style does not strive after periodic form:

περίοδον δὲ αὐτήν καὶ συναπαρτησούσας ἑαυταίς τὸν
νοῦν τὰ πολλὰ μὲν οὐδὲ βουλετάται· εἰ δὲ ποι' αὐτομάτως ἐπὶ
tοῦτο κατενεχθείη, τὸ ἀνεπιτήδευτον ἐμφαίνει καὶ
ἀφέλει, οὐκ ἀποθέναι τισιν ὄνομάτων, ἵνα ὁ κύκλος
ἐκπληρωθῇ, μηδὲν ὄψισιν ἄνω τῶν νοῶν χρωμένη, οὔτε ὅπως αἱ
βάσεις αὐτῶν γένους θεατρικαί τυχεῖ ἡ γλαφυραί, σπουδὴ
ἐξουσία, οὐδ' ἵνα τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ λέγοντος ὅσιν αὐτάρκειας
συμμετρομένη μὰ Δία, οὕτ' ἄλλην τινα [πραγματείαν] τοι-
αὐτὴν ἐξουσία ἐπιτήδευσαι οὐδεμίαν.

And as to periods, it does not, as a rule, even
attempt to compose them in such a way that the
sense of each is complete in itself: if it ever
drifts into this accidentally, it seeks to empha-
size its own unstudied and simple character, neither
using any supplementary words which in no way aid
the sense, merely in order that the period may be
fully rounded off, not being anxious that the periods
should move smoothly or showily, nor nicely calculat­
ing them to be just sufficient (if you please) for
the speaker's breath, nor taking pains about any
other such trifles. (Lit. Comp. 22)12

This lack of concern for a fully rounded period often
leads to anacoluthon, a change of construction in the
same sentence, leaving the first part broken or

12Unlike Demetrius, Dionysius finds no real sense of a
rounded periodic structure in Thucydides. See above, p. 42.
unfinished:  

καὶ ἐφ’ ὃν ἐνθυμημάτων τε καὶ νοημάτων  

ἀι μεταξὺ παρεμπτώσεις πολλαὶ γνώμεναι διὰ μακροῦ  

τὴν ἀκολούθιαν κομίζονται, τά τε σκολιὰ καὶ πολύπλοκα  

καὶ δυσεξέλκτα καὶ τά ἄλλα τὰ συγγενῆ τούτως.

In his enthymemes and his sentences the numerous parentheses often delay the conclusion for a long time, while there is much in him that is tortuous, involved, perplexed, and similarly defective.  
(Ammaeus 2)

6. Many varied figures are used:  

εὖροι  

ὥστε τὸ δοξακοῦν τῶν θεατρικῶν σχημάτων κείμενα  

παρ’ αὐτῷ, τὰς παρισώσεις λέγω καὶ παρομοιώσεις καὶ  

παρονομασίας καὶ ἀντιθέσεις, ἐν αἷς ἐπεξέφασε Γοργίας  

ὁ Λεοντίνος καὶ οἱ περὶ Πόλου καὶ Δικύμινον καὶ πολλοὶ  

ἄλλοι τῶν καὶ αὐτὸν ἀκμασάντων.

Moreover, not a few of the showy figures will be  

found to be employed by him,—I mean those pari-  
soses, paromeoses, paronomasiae, and antitheses,  
which are so lavishly used by Gorgias of Leontini,  
by the school of Polus and Licymnius, and by many  
others who flourished in his time.  
(Ammaeus 2)

In the glossary to his edition of Dionysius' letters,  
W. Rhys Roberts cites Sandys' classification of anti-  
theses, which clarifies Dionysius' terminology.  

a. ἀντίθεσις = parallelism in sense  
b. παρίσωσις = parallelism in structure  
c. παρομοιώσις = parallelism in sound  

1) ὀμοιοκάταρκτον  
2) ὀμοιοτελευτον  
3) παρονομασία\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{13}P. 199. Sandys, Cic. Orat., p. 45.
7. There are a few connectives and articles (διώγοσύνδεσμος, ἐναρθρος).

8. Solecisms, or lapses from conventional grammatical usage, are frequent:

πλέιστα δ' ἄν τις εὑροι

par' αὐτῷ τῶν σχημάτων, προσώπων τε ἀποστροφαῖς καὶ

χρόνων ἑναλλαγαῖς καὶ τοπικῶν σημειώσεων μεταφοραῖς

ἐξηλλαγμένα καὶ σολοικισμῶν λαμβάνοντα φαντασίας.

There will be found in him a large number of constructions which by changes of person and variations of tense, and by the strained use of expressions denoting place, differ from ordinary speech and have all the appearances of solecisms. (Ammaeus 2)

ή δ' ἐν τοῖς σχηματισμοῖς κανόνης τε καὶ πολυτροπία

καὶ ἡ ἑξαλλαγὴ τῆς συνήθους χρήσεως, ἐν ἡ μάλιστα

diaφέρειν αὐτὸν ἡγούμεθα τῶν ἄλλων

His novelty and variety in his constructions, and his departure from established usage, which we consider to be the chief point of difference between him and all other writers. . . (Ammaeus 3)

In summary, Dionysius considers Thucydides' conciseness as his most distinguishing characteristic:

ἐκδηλώτατα δὲ αὐτῷ

καὶ χαρακτηρικώτατα ἐστὶ το τε περισσότερον ἐκαθός τῶν

διήγημάτων πλείστα σημαίνειν | πράγματα καὶ πολλὰ συν-

τιθέναι νόημα ἐπὶ καὶ ἐπὶ προσδεχόμενον τι τῶν

ἀκροατῶν ἀκούσεσθαι καταλιπεῖν, ὡς ὑπ' ὧν ἀσαφῆς γίνεται

τὸ βραχύ.

The most obvious of his characteristics is the attempt to indicate as many things as possible in as few words as possible, to combine many ideas in one, and to leave the listener expecting to hear something more. The consequence is that brevity becomes obscurity. (Ammaeus, 2)
The four components which combine to form this characteristic conciseness are archaic and poetic diction, metabole, harsh word enjambments, and brevity:

In fine, there are four "instruments," so to say, of the style of Thucydides,—the artificial character of the vocabulary, the variety of the constructions, the roughness of the harmony, the speed of the narrative. (Ammaeus, 2)

Dionysius' analysis of Thucydides' work is thorough and perceptive. Without doubt he is impressed by this master of the austere style. But Dionysius himself prefers a style which is εδοχρατων, an harmonious blend of the austere and the florid styles, as shown in Demosthenes' works. That is why Dionysius prefers Herodotus to Thucydides:
The first of excellences is that without which style is of no worth in any of its aspects—language pure in vocabulary and true to Greek idiom. In this respect both are correct writers. Herodotus represents the highest standard of the Ionic dialect, Thucydides of the Attic. . . . Third in order comes the so-called "concision." In this Thucydides is commonly held to excel Herodotus. It might, indeed, be objected that it is only when united with clearness that brevity is found to be attractive; if it fails in this, it is harsh. However, let us suppose that Thucydides is in no way inferior because of his obscurity. Vividness comes next in order as the first of the extraneous excellences. In this respect both authors are decidedly successful. After this excellence the imitation of traits of character, and of emotions, presents itself. Here the historians divide the credit, for Thucydides excels in expressing the like excellences, Herodotus in his choice of language and style. But in grace, persuasiveness, charm and naturalness, Thucydides at intensity, of all literary virtues, the most important is propriety. In this Herodotus aims at naturalness, Thucydides at intensity. Of all literary excellences the most important is propriety. In this Herodotus is more careful than Thucydides, who everywhere shows a want of propriety. My friend Caecilius, however, thinks with me that his etymologies have been imitated and emulated in a special degree by Demosthenes. It may be said in general that the poetical compositions of Thucydides are so carefully and perspicuously written that they may be said to have been written for the purpose of being read aloud. In this respect, also, Herodotus is wholly inferior to Thucydides. In the adverb, in the use of the preposition, in the use of the conjunction, in the use of the particle, and in the use of the adposition, Herodotus is far inferior to Thucydides. In his choice of language and style, Herodotus aims at naturalness, Thucydides at intensity. Of all literary excellences the most important is propriety. In this Herodotus is more careful than Thucydides, who everywhere (and in his speeches still more than in his narrative) shows a want of propriety. My friend Caecilius, however, thinks with me that his etymologies have been imitated and emulated in a special degree by Demosthenes. It may be said in general that the poetical compositions of Thucydides are so carefully and perspicuously written that they may be said to have been written for the purpose of being read aloud. In this respect, also, Herodotus is wholly inferior to Thucydides. In the adverb, in the use of the preposition, in the use of the conjunction, in the use of the particle, and in the use of the adposition, Herodotus is far inferior to Thucydides. In his choice of language and style, Herodotus aims at naturalness, Thucydides at intensity. Of all literary excellences the most important is propriety. In this Herodotus is more careful than Thucydides, who everywhere (and in his speeches still more than in his narrative) shows a want of propriety. My friend Caecilius, however, thinks with me that his etymologies have been imitated and emulated in a special degree by Demosthenes. It may be said in general that the poetical compositions of Thucydides are so carefully and perspicuously written that they may be said to have been written for the purpose of being read aloud. In this respect, also, Herodotus is wholly inferior to Thucydides. In the adverb, in the use of the preposition, in the use of the conjunction, in the use of the particle, and in the use of the adposition, Herodotus is far inferior to Thucydides. In his choice of language and style, Herodotus aims at naturalness, Thucydides at intensity.
(as I should not shrink from calling them) of both are beautiful. The chief point of difference is that the beauty of Herodotus is radiant, that of Thucydides awe-inspiring. (Letter to Pompeius, 776-777)

In his final judgment, Dionysius' pragmatic nature as well as his devotion to the ideals of fourth-century rhetoric cause him to censure Thucydides' obscurity. The critic first notes the difficulty of Thucydides' style:

εὐφρόσυνην γὰρ τινὸς ἐδωρὶ οἴον πάντα τὰ Θουκυδίδου συμβαλέτω, καὶ εὖ ὅτι χωρὶς ἐξηγήσεως χρηματικῆς ἕνα.

For it is easy to count the number of scholars who can understand all of Thucydides, and even so they cannot understand some parts without a grammatical commentary. (Thucydides 51.940)

Dionysius' major criticism of Thucydides is lack of clarity in word, thought, and construction:

Συγγραφέων μὲν οὖν ἄρχατων, δόσα καὶ ἑλέναι, Θουκυδίδου μιμῆσθαι οἴδας ἐγένετο κατὰ ταῦτα γε, καθ' ὃ διοικεῖ μᾶλλον τῶν ἀλλῶν διαφέρειν, κατὰ τὴν γλωσσοματικὴν καὶ ἄφησιμαχὶν καὶ ποιητικὴν καὶ ἔννοιαν λέξιν, καὶ κατὰ τὸς ὑπερβούς καὶ πολυπλοκὸς καὶ εὖ ἀποκοπῆς πολλὰ σημαντῶν πράγματα βουλομένης καὶ διὰ μικρὸς τὸς ἁποδιαίρεσιν λαμβανομένης νοῦς, καὶ ἔτει πρὸς τοῦτοις κατὰ τὸς σκιατος καὶ πεπληρωμένας ἐκ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν οὐξυρίας καὶ οὖθ' ἐν ἀπάτῃ ποιητικὴς χάρας ἔχοντας σχηματισμοῦς, εἰ δὲν ἡ πάντα | λυμαινομένη τὰ καλὰ καὶ σφόντων παρέχουσα ταῖς ἄρεταις ἀσάφεια παρῆλθεν ἐς τοὺς λόγους.

For of all the ancient historians, as far as I know, not one was an imitator of Thucydides regarding those stylistic flaws in which he especially appears to differ from others, i.e., in obsolete, archaic, poetic, and unfamiliar terminology; and in thought expressions which include a shade of meaning beyond the ordinary, are intricate and interwoven, express many ideas in an abrupt style, and force the reader to supply conclusions. In addition to these features, his constructions are clumsy and irregular, detached
from natural combinations and have no place even in poetry. Because of these flaws, his diction shows a lack of clarity which destroys all his excellences and darkens his strong points. (Thucydides 52.943)

Only a few orators, notably Demosthenes, possess enough critical judgment to be able to imitate Thucydides' speeches:

I do not hesitate to suggest that men preparing political speeches make use of an undistorted judgment such as Demosthenes did—who, of all orators, I am convinced, was the greatest—they should imitate those portions of Thucydides' writings in which appear conciseness, eloquence, strength, accent, magnificence and those accompanying excellences which are evident to everyone. Those sections which are cryptic, difficult to understand, dependent on a grammatical commentary, tortured, and filled with solecisms should be neither praised nor imitated. (Thucydides 55.952)

At the end of his treatise, Dionysius reasserts the basis of his censure against Thucydides' speeches: their lack of clarity forbids any practical value:
Why do we not agree that the narrative part of his work is exceptionally praiseworthy and well adapted for practical use except for a few instances? but that the speeches are not at all suitable for imitation, since only part of them is easily intelligible, and that therefore it is not possible for everyone to use him as a stylistic guide? (Thucydid 55.951)

Dionysius' thoroughly detailed analysis of Thucydidean characteristics is valuable for all students of the History. His comments on the inappropriateness of Thucydides' speeches for rhetorical imitation clearly indicate what critical measure he is using. Often he repeats that the standard of all literary analysis is appropriateness both in subject and style (τὸ πρέπον):

διὰ δῶρον τὰς τὰ πρέπον ἑστὶ τὸ τόις ἔποκεμένους ἀρμόδιον προσώποις τε καὶ πράγμασιν, ὥσπερ ἔκλογὴ τῶν ὁμολόγων ἐκ τις ἢ μὲν πρέπουσα τοῖς ἔποκεμένους ἢ δὲ ἀπρεπῆς, οὕτω δήποτε καὶ σύνθεσις.

It is admitted among all critics that appropriateness is that treatment which suits the actors and actions concerned. Just as the choice of words may be either appropriate or inappropriate to the subject matter, so also surely must the composition be. (Lit. Comp., 20)

It is no surprise that Dionysius' criticism of the Melian Dialogue is based upon his sense of what is appropriate. This is shown in the terminology he uses:

οὔτε . . . ἄξιον, 38.909; οὐκ ἤν προσήκοντα, 39.911; οὐκ οἶδα ποτὲ . . . ἃς προσήκοντα, 40.919; καὶ οὔτε Ἀθηναίοις οὔτε Ἑλλησι πρέποντα εἰπήθαι, 40.915; ἢρ οὐν ὡσπερ τοῖς Μηλίοις οἰκεῖοι καὶ προσήκοντες . . . οὕτως καὶ τοῖς Ἀθηναίων στρατηγοῖς πρέποντες . . . οὐκ οἶδαι . . . προσήκεν, 41.918-919.

When the Athenians refuse to offer any pretext to justify their attack (Thucydides 5.89), Dionysius comments adversely:
Thucydides states the first enthymeme unworthy of Athens and unfit to be uttered at such a colloquy: "Indeed, we ourselves will not offer a long, incredible speech filled with fine pretexts, for example, that we rightfully rule because we drove back the Persians, or that we are now attacking because you have injured us." This is the argument of one who would claim that the campaign was against non-offenders, since he wished to base his argument upon neither of the above motives. (Thucydides 38.909)

When in the same chapter the Athenians first state the natural law that power rules weakness, Dionysius objects,

It would have been fitting for the Persian kings to speak thus before the Greeks; it was not fitting for the Athenians to tell other Greeks, whom they had liberated from the Persians, that justice belongs only to the realm of equals, and that force against the weak is the province of the strong. (Thucydides 39.911)

Commenting on the Athenian diatribe against Hope (5.103) Dionysius says:

οδύνα οἴδα τόσο ἐν τις ἐπινεύειν ὡς προσήκοντα εἰρήναι σφαγηνοὺς Ἀθηναίοις, ὡς λυμαίνει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἢ παρὶ τῶν θεῶν ἔλεγς καὶ οὕτως χρησίμων όφελος οὕτω μαντικῆς τοῖς εὐσεβῆ καὶ δίκαιον
I cannot understand how anyone could praise these words as fitting to be uttered by Athenian generals: that hope in the gods causes men’s ruin, and that not even men choosing a pious and just life have the help of either oracles or divination. In any other circumstances, this would be especially high praise of Athens—their submission to the gods in every matter and in every crisis and her accomplishing nothing without divination and oracles. (Thucydides 40.914)

Regarding the Athenian statement concerning divine favor and the natural law (105), Dionysius offers a similar complaint:

I am not sure how the phrase 'Αθηναίοις μὴ καταδουλουθείν, Ελληνίδα μηδὲν ἀμφισβητήσαν εἰς αὐτούς, οὕτως καὶ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις στρατηγοῖς προῦντες ἰδίᾳ ἤδη τὰ τῶν δικαίων μήτε ξεπείδηκεν ἠδέως μήτε λέγεται, ἀλλὰ τῶν τῆς βίας καὶ πλεονεξίας νόμον εἰλαθοῦντες καὶ ταύτα εἶναι δίκαια τοῖς ἐσθενεῖσιν ἀποφαίνοντες, δόμα τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις δοξεῖ; ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ ὅτι οἵτινες τοῖς ἑκ τῆς εὐνομίατάτης πόλεως ἐπὶ τάς ἐξω πόλεις ἀποστελλομένους ἱστόρεος ταῦτα προσφέρειν λέγομαι, οὐδὲ ἐν αὐτοῖς μὲν μικροχόληταις καὶ μηδὲν ἐφοροῦν ἐπιφανεῖς ἀποδεικτικοὶ Μηλίους πλέον τοῦ καλὸν ποιεῖσθαι πρὸς ἑαυτὸν τὴν ἴσον καὶ τἄντα ἴσομαι εἶναι τὰ δεινὰ ὑπορέειν, ἵνα μηδὲν δεχθῶν ἐνακασθὼς πρῶτος, τοὺς δὲ προελευμένους τὴν τε χώραν καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐκλείπειν κατὰ τὸν Περαιάκων πόλεμον Ἀθηναίος, ἵνα μηδὲν αἰσχροῦ ὑπομείναν ἐπιτήκμα, τῶν ταῦτα προσωρομένων ὡς ἄνωτον κάθησαν.
How could it be fitting and proper that the Melians make speeches about freedom, begging the Athenians not to enslave their Greek city or to do wrong against her? How could it be appropriate for Athenian generals to be unwilling to consider or speak of justice but to pursue the law of force and greed, and declare that what seemed right for the strong was just for the weak? I think it would not be fitting for leaders dispatched from one well-minded city to another outside its sphere of influence to say this type of thing. I think it is unlikely that such a small and inglorious state as Melos would take honor into account rather than safety and be ready to undergo all difficulties so that she would not be forced into doing anything shameful. I also think it unlikely that the Athenians, who chose during the Persian war to leave their city and country lest they be forced to fulfill some dishonorable command, would condemn others making exactly the same choice, as being unintelligent. (Thucydides 41.918, 919)

But in the Melian Dialogue, the most prudent of the Greeks offer the most shameful enthymemes and present them in a most disagreeable style. (Thucydides 41.920)

The above statements indicate a definite sense of moral indignation on Dionysius' part. But morality is not his only concern. Τὸ πρέπον implies not only moral propriety but also rhetorical appropriateness, i.e., suitability for imitation by other orators. Indeed, in the light of Dionysius' overriding concern with oratorical style, it is difficult not to believe that his sensibilities are offended primarily on rhetorical grounds.14 The didactic nature of Dionysius' judgments concerning

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the Melian Dialogue is clearly stated in his concluding remarks:

Representatives sent by cities are likely to think and to speak on behalf of their fatherland relying on elements in their power which are similar to both sides; and all of them take up the topics that they have in common with the cities to which they have come. (Thucydides 41.920)

In other words, negatively put, any one who becomes a diplomatic representative should never make a speech like the Athenian case in the Melian Dialogue which denies both countries' strong points.

Thus, because the comments are not appropriate to what for him is the aim of rhetoric, namely persuasion, Dionysius condemns the dialogue as unsuitable for imitation, mimesis.15 The modern Thucydides with his 'imitator' Philistus. As the latter's works are not extant, this is of much less interest, and in any case Thucydides is declared the greater writer in almost every respect. This makes the conclusion all the more significant: 'Philistus has a mutual euphony of style, and an understanding of the right measure. For actual court cases he is a more useful model than Thucydides.' This sentence reminds us that Dionysius' main concern remains the student of oratory." pp. 101-102.

15 See also below. "Style is forgotten in these indignant protests (38-40) which can perhaps be justified under the heading of suitability to the situation or the attitude (διάθεσις) of the author. The Athenians did not talk like that, we are told; in any case Thucydides did not hear this from the parties concerned, so that he is not keeping his promise to report as far as possible what was actually said. These sentiments are, Dionysius insists, quite out of character, a clear example of Thucydidean malice (μητακακία) against Athens. Such ethical strictures seem childish to us, but there is a point to them. In depicting and exposing Athenian ambitions by means of a dramatic device of very doubtful historicity, Thucydides is here much closer to drama than to history, and if Dionysius is blind to the grim and bitter irony of the Melian dialogue, many critics have been equally blind since." Grube, p. 107.
reader, grasping the profound philosophical and political message of the dialogue, cannot agree with him.

Stylistically, Dionysius makes a sarcastic comment about only one of the many solecisms in the Melian Dialogue. He does not approve of either Thucydides' conciseness, which leads to obscurity, or his solecisms. He cannot approve of either, since he is presenting examples of rhetoric suitable for imitation.

If anyone thought it correct to use the word endings as above, could he not anticipate all solecisms both in number and in case by calling them "figures of speech?" For, after writing "the reasonableness of a peace conference cannot be denied," and putting the case endings in the singular, as indeed is correct, he adds, "a state of war is already present and not merely a possibility"; and, as though it were preferable to have the article (τοῦ) and the pronoun (αὐτοῦ) agree, he also adds the "to this," in accordance with the singular number and neuter case he has just written. This word (αὐτοῦ), fitting neither the feminine singular nor the neuter plural nouns does not preserve either sequence of thought or the case usages sanctioned by custom. Perhaps the Melian response should have been written with αὐτής in place of αὐτοῦ. (Thucydides 37, 907-908)
But much more important is the fact that Dionysius accepts the Melian Dialogue as being non-historical, that is, not an actual report of what had been said:

That the writer did not happen to be present at the dialogue and that he did not hear what had actually been said from an Athenian or Melian who had been present and from whom he could have received information for his History, can easily be deduced from the fact that after the campaign at Amphipolis he was exiled from Athens and spent the rest of the war in Thrace. Now we must consider if he created a dialogue in conformity with actual events and in harmony with the entire character of his work, "following as closely as possible the concerted agreement of truthful witnesses," as he himself declares in the preface to his History. (Thucydides 41.917, 918)

Dionysius' reasons for rejecting the historical accuracy of the Melian Dialogue are not sound. After all, Thucydides' retirement in Thrace need not and did not prevent him from seeking out reliable sources of information for his work (History 1.22). But it is stimulating to see that Dionysius accepts the dialogue as a literary creation; in fact, he consistently uses the expression, "Thucydides makes the Athenian answer (ποιεῖ)," just as though Thucydides were a playwright rather than an historian. Dionysius would have been willing to accept and approve the Melian Dialogue
as a literary work rather than the account of an historical event, had it been appropriate to the aims of rhetoric.

Far more serious is the charge of malice he imputes to the historian: "I would not be surprised if Thucydides, bearing a grudge against his city because of the verdict against him, had not made notorious these discreditable sentiments for which others would also hate her (Thucydides 41.920)."

In defense of Dionysius one can only say that he could see no explanation but malice for the obvious violation of every rhetorical aim in diplomatic negotiations. The ideals of rhetoric as stabilized in the fourth century B.C. had so permeated subsequent practice and theory that even this great critic-historian could not fully grasp Thucydides' philosophic and political purposes.

Though positing any relation between rhetorical theory and the Melian Dialogue is risky because of the dialogue's unique nature, yet the reader cannot help wondering at the similarity between many common rhetorical arguments and those used in the Melian Dialogue. Some of the most obviously similar arguments are: 1) moral excellence of the speaker; 2) emotional appeal of the statement; 3) expediency of a certain course of action; 4) possibility, futurity, and magnitude; and 5) development through example, enthymeme, and maxim.

This evidence reinforces the previous suggestions that the moral character of the Melians may be a rhetorical pose and that some of the appeal of their case may arise from its emotional basis. Furthermore, it appears that the Athenian case based on
expediency is not a hard-hearted, merciless attack but a common rhetorical argument.

Even in glancing over the scattered comments of these critics, the modern reader is impressed with their sense of the oral—the importance of long vowels, enjambments, repetitions, and clauses so carefully balanced that each has the same number of syllables.

The following list summarizes the fundamental poetic characteristics the ancients thought were basic to Thucydides' style:

1. Separateness and distinction of words
   a. Harsh consonants and vowel sounds in adjacent words
   b. Long words
   c. Poetic and archaic words
   d. Poetic use of particles, conjunctions, and prepositions

2. Rhythmic clauses
   a. Paeonic endings
   b. Same number of syllables in balanced clauses

3. Metabole (variatio)
   a. Words and phrases
   b. Nouns and verbs
   c. Common and proper nouns
   d. Active and passive verbs
   e. Singular and plural
f. Gender

g. Cases

4. Emotional impact

5. Anacoluthon

6. Figures
   a. Antithesis—parallelism in thought
   b. Parisosis—parallelism in structure
   c. Paromoeosis—parallelism in sound
      1) Homoeocatarcton—same beginning
      2) Homoeoteleuton—same ending
      3) Paronomasia—assonance, word-play

7. Employment of ἀθος or characterization

8. Solecisms

These characteristics are a necessary part of the anitheses in form and content which cause the Melian Dialogue to be a significant high point of the History.

The observations of the ancient critics provide the groundwork for any stylistic analysis of the Melian Dialogue. Their detailed and perceptive comments help us to identify various Thucydidean devices, e.g., his use of word-play and figures of speech, his sense of rhythm, his awareness of sentence structure in terms of both balance and metabole, his appreciation of rhetorical argument, and his evocation of ἀθος and πάθος—all in the service of his philosophical, political, and historical purposes. But the ancient critics can only provide guidelines, not set patterns for
my analysis of the Melian Dialogue. For only in the case of Dionysius of Halicarnassus do we have any specific insight into the dialogue itself.
CHAPTER III

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF STRUCTURE AND THEME
IN THE MELIAN DIALOGUE

Thucydides is an artist. His stylistic devices of rhythm, alliteration, and rhyme fuse together with and reinforce his antithetical, balanced statements of theme. The powerful intellectual and emotional effect of the Melian Dialogue is the result of Thucydides' unified vision of his work as a literary and artistic expression of conflicting political, philosophical, and ethical views of reality. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate Thucydides' subtle and complex co-ordination of theme and style in the Melian Dialogue by a systematic and thorough analysis of each chapter.

First, the most essential themes will be discussed in respect to the dialogue as a whole. Then, the most common and obvious rhythmic patterns will be noted in conjunction with recurring themes and stylistic devices, and their relationships.

There are eight basic themes in the Melian Dialogue: fear vs. trust, chance (τὸ χή), morality, natural law, intellect, risk vs. security, reality vs. appearance/illusion, and pragmatism. A brief discussion of each follows.
Fear vs. trust

Throughout the dialogue, fear (φόβος) is a motive for Athenian actions; trust (πίστις) is a key Melian principle of action. The Athenians admit that rebellious subjects and independent islanders are more to be feared than other ruling powers and free mainland states (91, 99); that they wish to avoid the charges of not attacking independent islands because of fear (97); and that they are not afraid of being left behind in the divine favor (105). Fear is thus an important element in the Athenian principle of empire.¹

The Melian statements express a trust based primarily on the moral concepts of divine providence (104) and social obligation (109, 108); both are emphatically repeated in their closing summary (112). Much of the pathos in the Melian Dialogue arises from the reader's personal involvement and disillusionment when Melian faith and trust are arrayed against and vanquished by Athenian power and their fear of losing it—the root and cause of all their sophistic reasoning about futurity, pragmatism, and the natural law.

The Athenians use some form of the word πίστις ("trust") five times. In three of these instances (105, 109, 113), the theme is repeated in a mocking tone, deriding this basic Melian principle. Even in an early chapter, the Athenian statement

that they will not offer λόγων μήκας ἀπιστον ("A long, unbelievable case") (89) contains a hint of irony.

**Chance**

Chance (τὸ χή) in its various word forms suggests three ideas: the argument from probability and the themes of fortune and divine providence. The argument of probability (εἰκός) is used by the Melians (86, 96, 98, 102) more often than the Athenians. There is a delightful ambiguity in the word εἰκός: it connotes both probability and morality. The Melians consider fortune (102) and divine providence (104, 112) as essential elements in their sphere of being. Because of this reliance on fortune and divine providence, the Athenians reprove and condemn them (111, 113).

**Morality**

Morality is one of the most basic yet most emotive themes in the dialogue. Many words suggest this theme: εἰκός ("equitable," also with its suggestion of probability as noted above), δικαιος ("just"), δικάκω ("judge right or just"), ἔξελω ("think right," "honor"), ἄποικος ("a settler or colonist from one's polis," i.e., someone bound to the mother city in blood relationship and therefore in moral obligation), ἄληθες ("truly," "truthfully"), ἀγαθός ("morally good"), τιμωρία ("vengeance"), κακότης ("baseness," "cowardice"), δειλία ("cowardice"), ἀνδραγαθία ("manly virtue," "bravery"), αἰσχών ("disgrace," "dishonor"), ὀσίος (pious), ξυγγένεα ("blood relationship"), θεῖος ("divine"), δοξή ("seem right"), δόξα ("honor," "glory"), καλός ("good," "honorable"),
The Melians consider a moral context essential to their philosophy: because of their righteousness and justice, divine providence will protect them; because of the moral obligation involved, the Lacedaemonians must come to their assistance. Thus, much of the Melian argument depends on this theme. The Athenians relegate morality and ethics to a non-real type of situation; they juxtapose the natural law of "might makes right" with the Melian moral-ethical context and mention the foregoing moral terms only to deny their effectiveness and relevance.

**Natural law**

This law is a most important concept to the Athenians; it justifies their actions. It is stated most clearly in c. 105:

> ἤγονμεθα γὰρ τὸ τε θεῖον δόξη, τὸ ἀνθρώπειόν τε σαφῶς διὰ παντὸς ὑπὸ φώσεως ἀναγκαίας, οὗ ἂν κρατῇ, ἀρχεῖν ("For we realize through both our religious beliefs and actual factual instances that gods and men always rule wherever they have power in accordance with the force of natural law").

This same idea—that the strong rule and the weak must comply—is expressed throughout the dialogue in the following vocabulary: δύναμις ("power," "strength"), προέχω ("to be superior"), ἀνάγκη ("force," "necessity"), ἀσθενής ("weak"), κρατέω ("to be strong"), δεῖ ("it is necessary"), ἁχυρός ("strong"), βραχύς ("small," "little"), ἥσσων ("less," "weaker"). The Melians use this kind of word in only three chapters, and then
only in irony or rebuttal (90, 104, 110).

**Intellect**

Both Melians and Athenians use nouns and verbs expressing the ideas of reason, intellectual activity, thinking, planning, and judgment as the basis of their statements. Much of this is natural; the concept of the dialogue itself as well as the intellect-centered atmosphere of the fifth century would demand expression in such a vocabulary. But the reader must be astonished by the constant repetition and emphasis, particularly by the Athenians, of this motif, especially in the most critical chapters (105, 111, 113): in effect, the non-intellectuality and non-rationality of the Melians is one of the most repeated Athenian criticisms.

**Danger vs. security**

Security (σωτηρία) is above all what both Melians and Athenians seek; danger or risk (χίνδυνος) is what both avoid. These themes are present in nearly every chapter. Σωτηρία is closely allied with ἰσοφαλεία of the σφάλλω image.

**Reality vs. appearance/illusion**

In the opening chapters of the dialogue (85-88), the Melians point out that the actual presence of Athenians on their island (the real situation) contrasts strongly with the peaceful discussion the Athenians propose (superficial appearances). In the later chapters, particularly 103, 111, and 113, the Athenians condemn the Melians for not recognizing actual existing circum-
stances but rather living for illusions—μέλλοντα, things about to be; and ἔλπίς, vain hopes. Further, the ultimate Athenian condemnation of Melian trust in morality and τὸ χειρὶ is that this attitude does not represent a true view of reality and thus is actually an illusion.

**Pragmatism**

The expedient (ἔπειτῇ δείκτος) and the useful (χρήσιμον) are guidelines for Athenian thinking and as such are repeated throughout the discussion. The Melians rephrase the words in various contexts (90, 92, 98, 106, 112) in vain attempts to persuade the Athenians of the validity of the Melian philosophy.

The foregoing themes are interwoven in a variety and complexity of meanings. One of Thucydides' most effective yet subtle organizing devices in the presentation of themes is the λόγος/ἐργον relationship. The importance of this concept is clear when the nature of the Melian Dialogue is considered. Its essential conflict is philosophical. The Melians and the Athenians have different conceptions of reality: it is the conflict between these two outlooks which creates the basic antithesis of the dialogue.

The juxtaposition of the Melian and Athenian ways of thinking is at times openly apparent, at times cloaked in subtlety. The λόγος/ἐργον relationship is a primary stylistic tool in explicating the multi-leveled complexity of themes in the dialogue.

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Both the Athenian and the Melian philosophy can be considered as the total fulfillment of a complete λόγος/ἔργον relationship. The λόγος element in both philosophies is in general a principle of action; the ἔργον element is the action itself, the realization of its λόγος-principle. ἔργον is always the concrete, actual circumstances of the situation; it is expressed in action words and figures.

It is the λόγος-principle which differentiates the Athenian and the Melian philosophies. To the Melians, the λόγος-principle is an abstract concept, usually involving a moral and ethical judgment. To the Athenians, the λόγος-principle is the generalized statement of the natural law that might makes right and that the strongest always rules; their λόγος-principle, then, is almost always stated in conjunction with ἔργον terminology.

The possibilities of irony and subtle word-play within these two concepts of λόγος alone are enormous. Yet there are other meanings inherent in the image. Often, λόγος refers to man's ability to reason verbally in a discussion, i.e., in the Melian Dialogue itself. Then, too, the damning criticism of the Athenians regarding Melian philosophy is what the Athenians consider the extension of the Melian λόγος-concept into λόγος = non-reality. Furthermore, the Athenian philosophy is posited solely on human reason; the Melian outlook allows for faith, trust, and emotion. The variations and connotations in the verbs of knowing used in the dialogue are heavy with suggestion.
Another stylistic device which Thucydides uses to its fullest advantage in the Melian Dialogue is the σφάλλω figure. This most graphic means of integrating themes is used primarily to illustrate the Melian political and philosophical position (88, 90, 98, 102, 104, 108, 110), and is echoed by the Athenians in a mocking manner (85, 97, 99, 101, 103, 107, 111, 113); in two instances its use is extended to the Lacedaemonians (106, 110). Verbal images of standing, sitting, turning, falling, together with the substantive and adjectival forms (Δφαλέα, Δφαλής) fashion a vivid picture of the Melian plight. The heightened use of this image is sustained throughout the dialogue, so its appearance as the final word in the dialogue is particularly forceful.

Analysis of individual chapters will clarify the forceful though subtle implications of these fundamental stylistic devices.

Astonishingly enough, rhythm patterns in words and phrases throughout the dialogue very often fit generally accepted patterns. This realization is in direct contradiction to the findings of A. W. De Groot: he states that "it is Thucydides who appears to be entirely or almost entirely careless of the arrangement of long and short syllables in the sentence." This conclusion, as well as others which he posits, are based on a method which H. D. Broadhead (among others) has criticized with justice:

As for the end of the sentence, De Groot's method is to count the syllables backwards, and to regard a

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group as the clausula if the syllable preceding that group is "indifferent." On the assumption (which I cannot accept) that mere successions of syllables constitute rhythm, this is a satisfactory way of marking off the clausula or cadence. De Groot then takes a clausula, e.g., -wu-, (it being shown by statistics that the length of the preceding syllable is "indifferent"), and compares its frequency with such a group as found throughout the sentence. How does he effect this? He starts (say) with Thucydides I., chap. 1, and dissects the text into 1,000 slices, each containing 8 syllables; no account is taken of punctuation (he aims at a perfectly objective presentation of the facts!), or of grammatical coherence of ideas, and of course the end of the sentence is included. There are 128 possible groups of 8 syllables. He sorts out those groups that have (e.g.) -wu- at the end, discovers how often it occurs (26 times out of a thousand cases), then takes two lots of 1,000 sentence-endings, and finds the average figure is 61. Result: 2.6 per cent. for sentence-metre, 6.1 per cent. for clausula, from which it is perfectly clear that -wu- is a favoured clausula. I cannot conceive of a more extraordinary way of comparing rhythms. 4

As I will show, rhythmic patterns are apparent in the Melian Dialogue. Their artistic import I take for granted, although any subjective analysis of this sort is not susceptible to absolute scientific proof. I have kept these subjective judgments to a minimum; many of them I have included in my notes. It is important to realize that the interpretation of the rhythms will be dictated by the sense and the sound of the words. The dramatic exchange in the dialogue form suggests that the actors and the readers could make what they would of these patterns. Even in poetry no one can dogmatically pronounce except in the most general terms upon the emotional effects of, for example, a dactylic or spondaic line in

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a certain context. In this study, the clausulae selected were those that conveyed definite thematic thoughts and ideas found at the end of sentences, independent clauses, and anacoluthic statements.\(^5\) The following chart illustrates the kinds of clausulae found in the Melian Dialogue and their frequency. The metrical patterns I have identified are commonplace, and the terminology I employ is that of any handbook on meters. More intricate (i.e., choral) patterns I have, of course, ignored. I have emphasized only the endings of clausulae; as Demetrius notes (p. 44 above), other units of a sentence are equally important. Much more work needs to be done on rhythmic patterns in Greek prose (not only in Thucydides). The ancient critics confirm their sensitivity on this point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Kind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>semi-heroic (explained below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>double spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>triple spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>cretic + spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>trochee + spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>paean 4 + spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>trochee + double spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>spondee + cretic = double spondee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>trochee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>double trochee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>dactyl + double trochee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>spondee + trochee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>paean 1 + trochee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>cretic + spondee + trochee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^5\)Ancient criticism, as we have seen in the previous chapter, (especially pp. 29ff.) confirms that rhythmic patterns (and stylistic devices as well) were inherent in the art of rhetoric; there is no reason to assume that Thucydides did not adopt such a traditional feature and confirm its position in the art of Greek prose-writing.
Of the metrical terms used above, the only one which requires explanation is the heroic or semi-heroic rhythm. This is the rhythm which corresponds to the second half of a dactylic hexameter (- - | - - - - - - ); if it is strongly reminiscent of that line,
differing from it only by a syllable, it is called semi-heroic. Once again our ancient critics allow great flexibility in the identification of a rhythmic phrase; Demetrius talks about the paenonic character of a unit. As long as the meter is rhythmically reminiscent, it is worthy of note. Meter is the term usually used for poetry, rhythm for prose. Since it is the poetic meters which are startling when identified in prose, for the purpose of our discussion, meter and rhythm are synonymous terms.

From even a glance at the clausulae in the Melian Dialogue, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of these endings fit definite metrical patterns which were no doubt recognized by Thucydides' readers. Furthermore, of the eleven unclassified endings, six are the same, e.g. (\textendash\textendash) in their last four syllables.

Whether Thucydides skillfully chose these metrical endings, intending to make the most of the rhythmic possibilities inherent in his subject, or whether he unconsciously followed verbal patterns familiar to him is beside the point. The important fact is that the clausulae in the Melian Dialogue have a definite rhythm and that this rhythm is a forceful device of Thucydidean style. The Melian Dialogue must be considered as a whole, a complex weaving of related themes emphasized by recognizable rhythmical forms. The manner in which this intricate interrelationship is developed must be considered in each separate chapter to realize fully the

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degree of Thucydidean subtlety. First the Greek text of each chapter will be presented; then, an English translation; and finally a commentary on content and style.

85. ATHENIANS: These arguments are not being presented before the general assembly lest the common people, hearing a seductive and unquestioned case, become deceived by a continuous speech. Of course we realize that this is the implication of your bringing us before the magistrates only. Well, then, you sitting here should act with even more circumspection. Decide the question according to each point, not in one speech but with an immediate reply directed against any statement which does not appear to suit the purpose. First tell us if our proposal is satisfactory.

The Athenians open the discussion by criticizing the Melian action of holding the dialogue in the presence of their magistrates only. This closed discussion, claim the Athenians, indicates Melian distrust of the usual custom of set, balanced speeches; and, by extension, a lack of confidence in λόγος—man's faculty of speech. In fact, the Athenians imply a tacit Melian charge of deceit and trickery, ἀπατηθῶσι ("become deceived").

7 The meter of μὴ ζύνεγετέρες ῥήσει ("a continuous speech"), a dactyl followed by spondees, emphatically establishes the fact that this dialogue is not the usual set of balanced speeches like those of the other conferences which Thucydides reports.
The phrase continues in a jingling, dactylic pattern which is difficult to ignore: o\i\ polloi ἐπαγωγα καὶ ἰνελεγκτα ("the common people, hearing a seductive and unquestioned case"). Immedi-
ately the Athenians assert their intellectual standard, γνωμοκρυντω ("we realize"), which is the determining factor in their entire case: the sophistic doctrine of reliance on and glorification in man's intellectual power.

Ironically, the Athenians urge the Melians to act, ποιήσατε; and further, to act with an idea of safety, ἔτι ἄφραλέστερον. Here we find the first occurrence of the σφάλλω figure; ἄφραλέστερον connotes the root meaning of the theme, while καθημένου ("sitting") is the first in a series of posture-descriptions relative to the Melian plight.

In a phrase with a positive-negative variation, καθ' ἐκαστον γὰρ καὶ μηδ' ὁμοίως ἐνὶ λόγῳ ("according to each point, and not in one speech"), the Athenians repeat that this dialogue is in fact a λόγος. The phrase τὸ μὴ δοκοῦν ἐπιτηθείως λέγεσθαι ("in any statement which does not appear to suit the purpose") once more reiterates the reality of this λόγος-discussion in two ways. First, πρὸς τὸ μὴ δοκοῦν ("which does not appear") implies a rejection of non-reality; this is the first appearance of the reality-appearance/

8 Why could the effect not be one of mockery towards both the Melian aristocratic distrust of o\i\ polloi and their suspicious attitude towards rhetoric? I certainly should like to read it that way.

9. The dactylic ring of ἦς τοὺς ὀλίγους ἰγαγη may indicate Athenian ridicule of an oligarchic government.
illusion theme. The subsequent λέγεσθαι is sarcastic because of the connotation of non-actuality attached to the word by the Melians. Second, the thematic concept of ἐπιτηδείως ("to suit the purpose") enforces the effect of concrete pragmatism on the part of the Athenians. Furthermore, μὴ δοκοῦν is used in the double sense of seeming (morally) good or right as well as suggesting appearance in contrast to reality. Thus the phrase represents the moral character of the Melian position; juxtaposed with ἐπιτηδείως, it is an example of the irony prevalent throughout the dialogue. The final emphatic positions of χρίνετε ("decide") and εἴπατε ("tell us") indicate the close correlation between human reason and its expression in speech forms which is a basis of the Athenian philosophy. The dactylic rhythms of χρίνετε and εἴπατε stress this thematic importance. The climactic position of εἴπατε is strengthened all the more by the preceding paeanic ὡς λέγομεν ("our proposals").

86. MELIANS: The Melian council members answered, "It is fitting for us to enlighten each other at leisure; this cannot be denied. But war, not merely impending but actually here, presents an aspect vitally different from the type of discussion that you propose. In fact, we can see that you have come as absolute arbiters of whatever will be said: so that in all probability the result of these talks will bring us either war if we prevail because of our just claims and consequently do not yield; or League
membership—slavery, to us—if we are won over by your arguments.

In their opening comments, the Melians neatly reiterate the Athenians' basic intellectual principle, ἐπείξεια τοῦ διδασκειν...οδ ὑγεῖται ("it is fitting for us to enlighten each other at leisure; this cannot be denied"): the Melians at first appear to agree with the Athenians on the appropriateness of the intellectual exchange. It would seem that they retract the charge which the Athenians attributed to them in chapter 85 of the deceitful and treacherous aims of this λόγος-discussion. But as the next half of the sentence shows, there is a vast difference between the Athenian and Melian views of λόγος and ἔργον.¹⁰

The Melian statement of existing circumstances is a highly effective Gorgian jingle utilizing dactyls and alliteration: (οδ ὑγεῖται) τὰ δὲ τοῦ πολέμου παρόντα ήδη καὶ ὁ μέλλοντα διαφέροντα αἀτοῦ φαίνεται ("This cannot be denied. But war, not merely impending but actually here, presents an aspect vitally different from the type of discussion that you propose"). φαίνεται ("presents an aspect") may, as some commentators have suggested, be meant to soften the Melians' abrupt statement of their predicament:

¹⁰Perhaps we are prepared metrically for the antithesis: οδ ὑγεῖται ("cannot be denied") has an unusual stress, almost a first paecion, with the long last syllable emphasizing the preceding dactyl. This metric device calls attention to the fact that although the Melians do not deny the propriety of the preceding statement, they are emphatically denying any similarity between the circumstances described in that first statement and the present, real state of affairs on Melos. The theme of reality vs. appearance/illusion is clear.
in other words, it may be a concession to the Athenians. At any rate, the word definitely emphasizes this predominant theme of reality-appearance/illusion because the Melians immediately strengthen it by the word which directly follows: ἰδοὺμεν ("we can see"), a word of concrete Aristotelian reality as well as of intellectuality. The Melians clearly indicate the dichotomy inherent in the Athenian position: the λόγος (ἐπεξήγησα) and the ἐργον πόλεμον are at variance. Λόγος here is not the discussion itself, but rather the reasoned idea which is the basis of the discussion. Thus the Melians and the Athenians already differ in their use of λόγος, the former having an abstract, the latter a concrete, conception of the term. This dichotomy is more fully explicated in the second half of the chapter: the Melians show again their conception of the Athenians as men dealing primarily in intellectual judgments of words, κριτας... τῶν λεξηθησομένων ("absolute arbiters of whatever will be said") while they picture themselves suffering the concrete realities of their position, πόλεμον... δουλείαν ("war... [or] league membership").

Δουλεία here, as elsewhere throughout the dialogue, connotes both the subjective, intellectual idea of slavery, i.e., lack of independence, and its outward expression, membership in the Athenian League. Κατὰ τὸ ἐξίκος ("in all probability") obviously introduces the sophistic argument from probability; but it also implies and indeed almost prefigures (as does ἐπεξήγησα, "it is fitting") the theme of morality on which the Melians rely heavily and which is clearly introduced with δικαίω ("just claims"). The entire
phrase $\epsilon_{\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\omicron}$ κατά τὸ $\epsilon_{\lambda\chi\delta}$ ("in all probability the result of these talks") is characterized by a readily identifiable heroic pattern. 10 $\delta\omega\varepsilon\lambda\zeta\iota\alpha\nu$ ("league membership--slavery, to us") is a strong closing word. From it the final sentence derives its force, effectively stressing the Melians' independent spirit and love of freedom.

AΘ. Εἰ μὲν τοῖς ὑπονοίας τῶν μελλόντων λογοθέτη κἂν ἂλλο τι ἐννοήκετε ἢ ἐκ τῶν παρόντων καὶ ὅπως ἐπὶ σωτηρίαν βουλεύσωσι τῇ πόλει, πανομοίωτ' ἂν· εἰ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦτο, λέγαμεν ἄν.

87. ATHENIANS: Well, if you have met to propose your apprehensions about the future, or for any other reason than to plan rationally for the security of your city in a realistic and clear-sighted manner, we will leave the discussion. But if you have come for this purpose, we will continue to confer.

The Athenians do not answer the primary Melian objection in the previous chapter—the warlike presence of the Athenians on Melos. Instead, responding only to the second half of the Melian statement, they condemn a key Melian point, the probable outcome of the discussion (an ἐργον theme) by considering it as a future concept (what the Melians would like to consider λόγος-idea) and thus unreal. This is effected with ὑπονοίας τῶν μελλόντων ("appre-

The solemn, sonorous tone could help to establish the growing prominence of the themes of probability and morality. The last statement, the final clausula in the chapter, reveals Thucydides' frequent use of metrical patterns reminiscent of the last half of the epic hexameter: πείσθεν οὖ ὁ δικαιος ("league membership--slavery, to us--if we are won over by your argument"). Demetrius (above, pp. 44ff.) dislikes the heroic rhythm in prose, but his example is one that is entirely spondaic. Thucydides (as Lamb notes; see above, p. 82) is fond of the more readily identifiable heroic (i.e., with at least one dactyl). Why else except because he found the rhythm rhetorically effective?
hensions about the future)—λόγος-idea and unreality) opposed to
ἐκ τῶν παρόντων καὶ ἄν δράτες ("in a realistic and clear-sighted
manner")—ἐργον-reality).

Cleverly, the Athenians use the same verb that the Melians
have just used: δρόμειν, ἄν δράτε; thus they are actually saying,
"Yes, you 'see' things rightly in this respect: we have come as
'judges of the discussion,' and you indeed have no choice but that
between war and δοῦλεία. It is this situation of yours which is
real and actual; and you must make a realistic decision." It is
on this concrete expression of the actual that man's rational de-
cisions (cf. βούλευσαντες) are based, according to the Athenian
philosophy. Σωτηρία ("security") is the result of this rational
assessment of the real situation; here, for the first time, the
Athenians stress the theme of security which is unquestionably
vital to the Melians.

Obviously, the Athenians are in the driver's seat; they
control the discussion, παυοίμεθα, λέγομεν ("we will leave . . .
we will continue to confer"). That this λόγος-discussion can
take place (λέγομεν) only on the basis of the existing situation
and the Melians' intention of saving their city is stated in a
strong and definite concluding dactylic rhythm:

παυοίμεθα, ἄν
εἰ δ' ἐπὶ τούτῳ λέγομεν ἄν ("we will leave the discussion. But
if you have come for this purpose, we will continue to confer.").
88. MELIANS: It is natural and understandable that men situated in circumstances like these turn to many avenues of expression and thought. But this meeting is indeed about our security. Let the debate proceed in the manner you suggest, if that seem fitting to you.

While conceding some points to the Athenians, the Melians maintain their independent concept of reality. The opening words suggest a reference to the sophistic arguments of φύσις (human nature) modified by a possible concession to the intellectual; εἰκός μὲν καὶ ξυγγνώμη ("it is natural and understandable"). In addition to "the natural," εἰκός implies as well probability and morality (cf. ἔπειξεν, 86). ξυγγνώμη suggests its intellectual root meaning, -γνώμ- ("knowing"). Εν τῷ τοιῷδε καθεστῶτας ("situated in such circumstances") is a concrete reference to the Melians' present circumstances, as well as an embodiment of the σφάλλω theme.12

The Melians show that they understand the Athenian concept of λόγος—discussion and must agree to it in the jingle καὶ λέγοντας καὶ δοκοῦντας ("expression and thought"), where λέγοντας ("expression") is no longer the λόγος-idea but rather ξρόγον (speaking is the action) juxtaposed with the λόγος-idea δοκοῦντας ("thought," the rational process). Τρέπεσθαι ("turn") continues the σφάλλω image.

In the statement ἡ μὲντοι ξόνοδος καὶ περὶ σωτηρίας ἦδεν πάρεστι ("this meeting is indeed about our security") the Melians

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12 The spondaic-dactylic meter leads into the familiar paeanic: τῷ τοιῷδε καθεστῶτας ἐπὶ πολλά. Is it accidental that the rhythm coincides vividly with the use of the σφάλλω figure as a graphic representation of the Melian position?
show that, since the εὖνοδος (the actual meeting) is definitely a fact, ἐργον, the λόγος—i.e., the discussion—must be associated with abstract argument. This section of the chapter is particularly startling in its metrics: ἢ μὲν τοι εὖνοδος καὶ περὶ σωτηρίας ἤδε πάρεστι, καὶ ὁ λόγος ὃ προκαλεῖσθε. One could identify spondees and dactyls in the beginning of the sentence (we start with a heroic rhythm); more definite are the paeon and the dactylic spondaic close (another heroic metrical unit). ἡ is repeated in the last syllables of τρόπῳ and γνωσθῶ. Rhythm and sound contribute to the feeling that the Melians are emphatically acquiescing to Athenian suggestions, though only verbally. But the thematic antithesis subtly introduces the fundamental though hidden disparity in outlook. This underlying difference is brought home in the phrase εἰ δοκεῖ ("if that seem fitting to you"). Though perhaps merely a polite and traditional form of expression, here it takes on the further dimension of a lack of reality, an extension of the true Melian evaluation of the Athenian λόγος as well as of the illusion/appearance theme.

Τρόπῳ ("manner") is the climax of the extended σφάλλω image in the chapter. Περὶ σωτηρίας ("about our security") re-states one of the basic aims of the dialogue. The two basic themes of reality-illusion/appearance and security are thus forcefully joined in the σφάλλω image.

ἈΘ. 'Ημεῖς τοῖνυς οὔτε αὐτῷ μετ' ἀναφάτον καλῶν, ὥς ἡ ἀκαλός τοῦ λόγου καταλύσαντες ἀρχημὲν ἡ ἀδικοῦμεν νῦν ἐπεξερχόμεθα, λόγων μίκρων ἀπιστὸν παρέχομεν, οὐδ' ἡμᾶς ἀξιόκειτε ἡ ὁτι Λακεδαιμονίων ἄποικοι ὑπερὲς οὕτως ἐξευθρατεῖ.
89. ATHENIANS: Very well. We will not present a long, unbelievable case composed of essentially ethical arguments, as, for example, that our empire is morally justified because we overthrew the Persians, or that we are now taking the offensive against you because we have first been attacked. We ask you to realize that you will not persuade us by arguing that you did not fight with us because you are Lacedaemonian colonists or that you have not attacked us, but instead by arguing for what is practicable in relation to what we each honestly think can be accomplished. You must understand, as we do, that in an argument based on human limitations, justice is determined by the balance of power between equals. The strong demand what is practicable; the weak comply.

The Athenians expand their explanation of their philosophy, which embraces the whole of their view of reality. They have already stressed the external and concrete aspects of their position (ἐργον), which is but half of their philosophy. Now they introduce the λόγος-concept or abstract general law which shapes and permeates the actual circumstances (ἐργα). This λόγος-concept is the natural law of "might makes right."

First, the Athenians show that they are completely aware of reservations concerning the deceit of a λόγος-argument. In the first part of the chapter, they propose to drop whatever makes a λόγος-discussion ἀπιστον, untrustworthy. In view of the later uses of the fear-trust theme, this introduction of the word must be an ironic comment on the Melians' emotive philosophy, based primarily on reliance on the gods and human obligations. Further,
what the Athenians intend to reject—concepts of justice, δικαιώσ, ἀδικοῦμενοι, ἡδικήματε, as well as the blood relationships which imply moral obligation, ἀπολογοῦντες—are the very bases of the Melians' λόγος-reasoned idea. In one cutting analogy, the Athenians consign these concepts to the realm of ὀνομάτων καλῶν; translated above as "ethical arguments," the phrase implies the antithesis of "word" and "reality"; in addition there is the skillful ambiguity of καλῶν which can mean both "morally good" and "artistically pleasing." Thus the Athenians claim that these arguments have no relation to the actual situation. It is with this charge—that of a non-realistic attitude towards existing circumstances—that they will damn the Melians. Certainly the Athenians refuse to consider arguments which are forceful and perhaps even reflect the true causes of the Athenian-Melian situation; the Athenian conquest of the Medes and the Melian relationship to the Lacedaemonians. But these arguments are not valid in the present circumstances; they are not part of the real "now" which the Athenians stress: Athenian power in 416; their presence on Melos; their ability to force the Melians to surrender.\(^\text{13}\)

Now that the Athenians have illustrated the negative

\(^{13}\)The rejected arguments stand out from the rest of the chapter in their easy rhythms, in which dactyls and paeanics predominate:
Melian position and condemned it, they portray graphically their own concept of reality: the fusion of a λόγος-idea embodying the abstract generalization of a natural phenomenon, and the expression of that λόγος in ἑργον or actual physical manifestation of the natural in the life of man. As always, the intellectual foundation of their philosophy is stressed: ἀληθῶς, φρόνοιμεν, ἐπισταμένους, πρὸς ἐλθότας. But there is an ἑργον idea as well: ἐλθότας has the suggestion of its original visual meaning. 'Αληθῶς ("honestly") is particularly striking because of its moral connotation; perhaps the word is meant to echo the ideals of the Melians and to prepare for their subordination to the Athenians' natural law.

The λόγος of the Athenian philosophy is expressed in the universal tenet δίκαια μὲν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπεῖῳ λόγῳ ἀπὸ τῆς ἔσος ἀνάγκης κρίνεται ("in an argument based on human limitations, justice is determined by the balance of power between equals"). This λόγος-statement contains definite references to ἑργον ideas in the following words: 1) ἀνάγκη, a concept often related to ἑργον; 2) ἀνθρωπεῖῳ, an adjective which recalls the Protagorean maxim, "man is the measure of all things"; and 3) κρίνεται, a verb re-emphasizing the intellectual standard. It is clear that concrete, material circumstances are a determining factor even in the abstract λόγος-concept, the one half of the Athenian philosophy.

The other aspect of the Athenian philosophical position is stated with equal lucidity in a balanced conclusion to the sentence and the chapter: δυνατὰ δὲ οἱ προσχοντες πράσσουσι καὶ οἱ ἐσθενεῖς εὐγχροοῦσιν. ("the strong demand what is practicable;
the weak comply"). Almost all are tangible words of action and reality. The meter points out the λόγος/ἐργον dualism that exists for the Athenians. Both δίαπράσσεσθαι (ἐργον) and ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπειν λόγο (λόγος) are predominantly spondaic, emphasized all the more by the change in rhythm with which the sentence closes.

A latent irony in the Athenian position lies in the statement of their philosophy here. Previously (chapter 86), the Melians have been objecting to the λόγος-discussion of the dialogue. Here the Athenians extend the concept of λόγος to mean the reasoned idea behind one's actions. Now, in the Athenian view, the Melians' cry for justice (δίκαια) belongs not to ἐργον or the outward, circumstantial half of reality but to the λόγος or abstract generality—the natural law. The Melians are condemned because it is obvious that, through their physical weakness (according to the Athenians' philosophy), not justice (δίκαια), but only the practicable (δυνατά) is available to the Melians. In other words, submission is the only course open to them, δυνατά δὲ . . . ἐξυγχωροῦσιν.

ΜΗΛ. Ἡ μὲν δὴ νομίζομεν γε, χρήσιμον (ἀνάγκη γάρ, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἦν πάντα τὸ δίκαιον τὸ ἐμφέρον λέγειν ὑπεθεσθε) μὴ καταλύειν ὡς τὸ κοινὸν ἀγαθὸν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἄλλῳ ἀλλὰ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀληθείαν πεισάντα τιμηθήναι. καὶ πρὸς ὑμῶν οὐχ ἡσυχὸν τὸν, διότι καὶ ἐπὶ μεγάλης τιμωρίας σφαλέστε ἂν τοὺς ἄλλους παρδεχέσθε γένουσθε.

90. MELIANS: But really, we think it advantageous (and it is necessary for us to think this way since you have advised us to disregard justice and to consider profit) for you not to dismiss the idea of "the common good." Every person in a risky situation should have the advantage of a set system of fairness and morals, even if his argument lacks perfection.
Certainly this would work no less for your advantage, since otherwise eventually you would fall the victim of a similarly harsh vengeance to become a warning to others.

The Melians attempt to posit their arguments along Athenian lines which, although unwilling, they realize they are forced to do. Their λόγος now becomes cloaked in έργον terms; i.e., justice and morality can be expedient and advantageous. This allows them to turn to one of their strongest arguments, the sophistic appeal to example.

First, the Melians acquiesce in the rational basis which the Athenians posit as the foundation of all philosophies of life, νομίζομεν ("we think"). Next they admit the validity of expediency, χρησιμοποιούμενον. But in the anacoluthic parenthesis which immediately follows, the Melians indicate their disapprobation of Athenian philosophy by condemning the λόγος-discussion, λέγειν ὑπέθεσθε ("you force us to speak this way") with the έργον concept of ἀνάγκη, meaning both "necessity" and "force," possibly in ironic reference to the Athenians' natural law. This disapproval is voiced in the semi-heroic cadence of λέγειν ὑπέθεσθε which naturally emphasizes the preceding statement of the motive of profit, τὸ εὐμφέρον, juxtaposed with its antithesis τὸ δίκαιον ("justice")--a head-on collision of two forceful themes. Μὴ καταλύειν ("not to dismiss [the idea of the common good]") follows immediately after the close of the parenthesis and thus receives an added force.

Significantly, the Melians use a strong, concrete verb of outward physical action (καταλύειν, "destroy") to describe Athenian inten-
tions in their negative plea; τὸ κολνὸν ἀγαθὸν ("the common good") is a subjective, inward-structured contrast.

In the next clause, the Melians suggest that moral standards should remain firm, especially in a risky situation. Ἐνθὸτα καὶ δίκαια (a "set system of fairness and morals") should be available to all who are actually in dangerous circumstances. 'Εντὸς τοῦ ἀκριβοῦς πείσαντα ("even if his argument lacks perfection") recalls the λόγος-discussion of the Athenians and the ἔργον, or predicament, of the Melians. There can be no question but that here the Melians are referring to themselves; they are indirectly asking for consideration even if their arguments do not persuade the Athenians. Ὀφεληθήναι ("advantage") is another example of the theme of pragmatism assumed here by the Melians and incorporated into their moral system, at least for the moment.

Very smoothly the transition is made to an example involving the Athenians. Τοὺς ἀλλοὺς παράδειγμα ("a warning to others") must mean that the Athenians would become an example of a people who did not have mercy on others and to whom therefore no mercy would be shown. This phrase is a λόγος-concept, conveying the idea of an abstract form or ideal to which is related the external ἔργον statement, μεγίστη τιμαρία σφαλέντες ("plunging into the harshest vengeance"). Σφαλέντες is the first use of the σφάλλω image with relation to the Athenians: by describing the possible position of the Athenians in this figure, the Melians are in effect

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14 This statement is emphasized with dactyls and trochees: γιγνομένω εἶναι τὰ ἐνθότα καὶ δίκαια.
placing them in their own present situation. Further, they are considering them in the light of their own moral standard, for μεγίστη τυμωρία ("harsh vengeance") suggests a structured ethical outlook. This argument from example is the Melians' strongest case against the Athenians up to this point in the dialogue.

91. ATHENIANS: Even should our empire end, we have no fears about our fate. Ruling powers like the Lacedaemonians (though of course our dispute here is not against the Lacedaemonians) are not so much dreaded by a conquered people; it is rather, I would guess, subjects who have attacked and overpowered their former rulers. Allow us to face the risk in this regard. But now we will make two points clear: we are here for the material advantage of our empire; and we are taking part in this dialogue for the security of your city. We want to bring you into our empire without difficulty on our part; and we want your security to be assured for the advantage of us both.

The Athenians reject the Melians' prophetic example of Athenian disaster and restate their view of present circumstances, stressing once again ἐργον, concrete reality, particularly in the themes of risk-security and pragmatism. Their opening statement is overwhelmingly breezy, offhandedly hubristic: "Even should our empire end, we have no fears about our fate." They then relegate the Melian argument to ineffectuality by describing the possible future avengers as οὕτω δεῖνοι τοῖς νικηθέσιν ("not so
much dreaded by a conquered people"). Even so, we see the appear-
ance of the theme of fear (δεινον) so decisive in Athenian thinking.
Their reference to the strong, κρατήρως, relating to their rebell-
ious subjects, refers to the natural law; further, the statement
turns the discussion back to its immediate topic, the subjection
of other peoples by the Athenians. By this change of subject from
supposition to actual circumstances, the Athenians suggest again
that the Melians are dealing with non-reality—daydreams, illusions
—rather than the real, actual situation. The anacoluthic state-
ment, ἡστὶ δὲ σοὶ πρὸς Λακεδαίμονιοις ἡμῖν ὁ ἄγων ("though of course
our dispute here is not against the Lacedaemonians") sarcastically
strengthens this idea of present reality.15

After a strong reminder that the Athenians will face
danger on their own terms (κυνὸς κυνοῦσθαλ), the second half of the
chapter is set off in a neat pairing of balanced clauses and
phrases. Ἐπὶ φιλία τε πάρεσμεν τῆς ἴμμετέρας ἀρχῆς ("we are
here for the material advantage of our empire") and ἐπὶ συντηρἰᾳ
νῦν τοὺς λόγους ἐροῦμεν τῆς ἴμμετέρας πόλεως ("we are taking part
in this dialogue for the security of your city") match, phrase to
phrase: Ἐπὶ φιλία ἐπὶ συντηρἰᾳ; τῆς ἴμμετέρας ἀρχῆς/τῆς ἴμμετέρας
πόλεως. In both clauses, πάρεσμεν and νῦν τοὺς λόγους ἐροῦμεν
are in the pivotal middle position. Perhaps πάρεσμεν indicates
Athenian control of the circumstances, a reminder of the reality-

15 Throughout the first part of this chapter, the meter is
heavily spondaic and καὶ Λακεδαίμονιοι gains prominence because
of the natural dactylic character of its syllables.
illusion/appearance theme; while νῦν τούς λόγους ἔρουμεν intimates the complete Melian dependence on the outcome of this dialogue as well as the Athenian almost existential emphasis on the "now" of the present moment. The juxtaposition of ἄρχεσι and πόλεως, the Athenian desire to consolidate Greece in a single political union in contrast with the Greek independent city-state, is the basic political antithesis of the dialogue and of the History. Ἔπ' ἰδρήλα/ἐπὶ σωτηρία are not contrasting but complementary: the Athenians intend that their own material advantage and Melian security be one and the same. Here, then, these two themes are joined. Βουλόμενοι ἀπόνως μὲν ἄρεῖ, χρυσίμως δ' ὅμας ἀμφιτέροις σωθήναι ("we want to bring you into our empire without difficulty on our part, and we want your security to be assured for the advantage of us both") is also carefully structured: ἀπόνως/χρυσίμως; ἄρεῖ/ὅμας . . . σωθήναι. Who can underestimate the veiled threat in ἀπόνως with its double meaning, "without difficulty to us" and "without pain to you"? Certainly both meanings continue the theme of pragmatism, which once again is correlated with the idea of security, σωθήναι. ὡς δὲ ἔπ' ἰδρήλια τε πάρεσμεν coincides with the expression of both the pragmatic and realistic/existentialistic outlook of the Athenians with its semi-heroic character. The dactylic ring of βουλόμενοι ἀπόνως could emphasize (is it ironic?) the worst possible situation in which the Melians might find themselves; although everyone need not agree with this interpretation. A dactyl and double spondee (the ending of a spondaic dactylic hexameter) conclude the chapter
as the Athenians stress what they claim is the aim of the discussion: security for both parties, ἀμφοτέροις σωθήναι.

ΜΗΛ. Καὶ τός ἵνα τοῖς ἔγκλημα ἡμῶν ἐν οἷς ὑμῶν δουλεύωσιν, διὸ καὶ ὑμῖν ἀρξαί.

92. MELIANS: How could it possibly be as advantageous for us to become tribute-paying members of your empire as it would be for you to have this superiority over us?

In an ironically posed question which echoes the Athenian attitude of realism and pragmatism, the Melians challenge the mutual advantage, χρήσιμον, of the Athenian proposal. 'Ἡμῖν δουλεύσαι and ὑμῖν ἀρξαί ("for us to become tribute-paying members of your empire" and "for you to have this superiority over us") balance in an ἔργον concept as well as in construction. The entire sentence consists of spondees, except for its most important word, χρήσιμον, a dactyl—a startling effect.16

ΛΘ. Ὑμῖν μὴ πρὸ τοῦ τὰ διενότατα παθέναι ἡμῖν καθαίρει ἦν γένος, ἡμεῖς δὲ μὴ διαφθείρασθε ἡμᾶς κερδαὶ.

93. ATHENIANS: You would be subject to us instead of suffering horrendous treatment, and we would profit by not destroying you.

The Athenians answer in most concrete terms: τὰ διενότατα παθέναι ("suffering horrendous treatment"); ὑπακούσαι ("be subject"); διαφθείρασθε ("destroy"). Κερδαίνομεν ("we would profit") echoes the theme of pragmatism dominant in the last few chapters. At

16 This is meant to imitate the harsh authoritarianism of the Athenians in tone as well as in thought.
this point the Athenians do not sugar-coat their intentions of reducing Melos: πρὸ τοῦ τὰ δεινότατα παθεῖν ("instead of suffering horrendous treatment"). They threaten the Melians in a term suggesting their own outlook based on fear (δεινότατα). The forthright utilitarian question posed by the Melians has goaded the Athenians into making this blatantly direct reply.

ΜΗΛ. "Ωστε [δὲ] ἡ συναίνεις ἡμᾶς φίλους μὴ εἶναι ἀντὶ πολέμων, ἐρμίκους δὲ μηδὲνων, σὺν ἄν δέξασθε;

94. MELIANS: You would not then agree to these terms: that we be neutral, friends rather than enemies, but allies of neither side?

The Melians' plea for neutrality is simple, artless, and emotionally effective. They once more revert to their own idealistic position, dropping their pose as Athenian pragmatists. Their proposal of peace ("Ωστέ δὲ ἡ συναίνεις") is stated in dactyls.

It is important to note that the Melians do not necessarily claim to be neutral, although neutrality is definitely a proposal for the future. The Melians, then, might have been in open warfare with the Athenians in 416; at least, their statement in this chapter would not preclude that possibility.

ΑΘ. Οὐ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἡμᾶς βλάπτει η ἐχθρα ἡμῶν ὡσον ἡ φίλα μὲν ἀσθενείας, τὸ δὲ μίσος δεινόμενος παράδειγμα τοῖς ἄρχομένοις δηλαδένον.

95. ATHENIANS: No, because your enmity toward us does not harm us as much as your friendship; since to our subjects friendship with you would seem proof of our weakness, while your hatred of us would seem a proof of our power.

In this complicated and subtle statement, the Athenians
set off the concrete effect of their relations with the Melians, 
βλάπτει ("harm"), with the λόγος-concept of παράδειγμα ("proof"),
which is characteristically like the other Athenian λόγος-concepts
in that it encompasses definite realistic facets; here, ἀρχομένοις
("subjects") and δυνάμεως ("power"), refer to the natural law.

The sentence hinges upon ἡ φιλία ("friendship") which is
not only the subject of βλάπτει but also the appositive of παρά-
δειγμα. The kernel of meaning in the chapter lies in the juxta-
position of ἔχορα and φιλία and that of ἀσθενείας and δυνάμεως.
The moral-ethical connotations of ἔχορα/φιλία are subordinated to
the natural, supremely realistic implications of ἀσθενείας/δυνάμεως.
Once more the moralistic viewpoint of the Melians is made secondary
to the natural law as posited by the Athenians.

ΜΙΛ. Σκοποῦσι δ' ὑμῶν οὗτως ὁ ὑπόκοοι τὸ εἰκός,
ἀπετίθεσις τὸ μὴ προσήκοντα καὶ ἄνοι ἀποκοι ἀντε ὁ
πολλαὶ καὶ ἀποστάτες τινὲς κεχερώθηstrate ἐς τὸ αὐτὸ
τελέσιαν;
96. MELIANS: Do your subjects, then, consider it
fair to place those who have no connection with you
and the colonists and insurgents whom you have re-
strained in the same class?

The theme of morality is expressed in ἔλκος ("fairness")
and the just obligations implied in μὴ προσήκοντας ("those who
have no connections") and ἀποικο ("colonists"). The verb σκοποῦσι
("consider") combines the theme of concrete reality ("see") with
that of intellectuality ("consider").
97. ATHENIANS: They judge that none of these lack a just case; but they think it is because of power that some states have persevered in their independence, and because of fear that we have not attacked them. Thus in addition to a more extensive rule your subjection would also offer us security, should you not succeed in remaining independent, especially since you are islanders and weaker than the other sea powers.

The Athenians answer the Melians' implied objection by restating their λόγος/ἐργον philosophical view, with concentration on ἐργον and repeated emphasis on the present circumstances, that is, the political and military weakness of the Melians.

The opening word, δικαίωματι ("a just case"), implies both morality and legality; it is certainly a λόγος-concept, which the Athenians follow immediately with the concrete ἐλέειπεν in its basic meaning of "leave behind." This interplay occurs again: φόβος ("fear") is completed by ἐπιείναι ("attack"). In fact, these two examples of a λόγος-concept followed and completed by an ἐργον-word encompass a third, weaker example: κατὰ δύναμιν, the idea of power which suggests the λόγος-natural law, is followed by περιγίγνεσθαι ("persevere, also meaning "succeed"). All of these complements indicate once again the complete Athenian philosophy; all are dependent on the ever-present intellectual basis, ἡγούνται ("they think"). But of these three, only two (κατὰ δύναμιν ... περιγίγνεσθαι and ἐπιείναι) are relevant to the existing situation, which is the key Athenian determinant. Their opening clause disposes of δικαίωματι (and the Melian εἰκός to which it corresponds) as being of little import in a philosophy concerned primarily with δύναμιν and φόβος. The rhythm brings out graphically the antithesis
of morality and the existing situation in Athenian eyes: in the
phrase Δικαίωματι γὰρ ὁδηγεῖσθαι, this antithesis is seen visually
with the ethical, moral λόγος-concept back-to-back with an emphatic
negative almost surprisingly expanded (through ἔλλειψειν) into a
realization of definite circumstances. The rhythms echo the paenic
and dactylic: the basic reason—that the Athenians will be accused
of cowardice in not attacking—is also marked out by a dactylic-
paenic rhythm in effect: ἡμᾶς δὲ φόβῳ οὖν ἐπίέναι.

The Athenians then turn to the argument that they stress
most throughout the dialogue, the overwhelming importance of exist­
ing circumstances. The Melian submission, τὸ καταστραφῆναι, would
result in two concrete gains for the Athenians: more extensive
rule and security (πλεόνων ἀρξαί and ἀσφαλείς); the latter word is
indicative of the risk-security theme as well as the σφάλλω figure.
The reason for the Melians' submission, stated bluntly, is their
weakness opposed to the Athenians' strength: ναυκρατόρων καὶ
Ἀσθενέστερος; this is in conformity with the natural law. The
passage is filled with alliterative v's, t's, and p's: γρωμαται
ναυκρατόρων καὶ Ἀσθενέστερος ἐπέγυν θυτες.

The last clause in the Greek is not merely carelessly tacked
on but artfully placed as a conclusion and summation of the Athenian
threat with its rhythm and powerful impact of negative suggestion
and ominous doom: εἰ μὴ περιγενολοθεὶ ("if you should not succeed").
98. MELIANS: Do you not think that security is found in neutrality? Again, since you have prevented us from discussing the question of justice and convinced us to consider profit, it is necessary here too for us to make known what is advantageous for us and to try to persuade you of it. By chance the same thing may be advantageous for you.

Consider this: given the number of neutral nations at the present time, how can you not make them hostile when they see your actions here and realize that you might one day attack them also? What then are you accomplishing by this move if not strengthening the case of your present enemies as well as dragging in others, unwilling and without any intention of becoming hostile?

In this chapter the Melians seem to conform to Athenian philosophy outwardly but in essence they uphold their own attitudes and furthermore even provide ammunition for the Athenian attacks against their unrealistic attitude.

The Melians posit their argument under a rational basis, νομίζετε ("do you not think?"). They admit the concrete existence and necessity of security (ἀσφάλειαν) which here again is joined with the αὐτοκεφαλός figure. The next sentence is crucial for both an understanding of the Melian philosophy and for a realization of their argument in this chapter, especially in the clause ἡ νόμος τῶν δικαίων λόγων ἡμᾶς ἐκβιρβάσαντες τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐξιμικρόφιτος ἔπαλεν πείθετε ("since you have prevented us from discussing the question of justice and convinced us to consider profit").

As noted above again and again, the λόγος of the Melian philosophy in its true essence is always expressed in pure abstract concepts, while that of the Athenian philosophy includes definite ἐργον-based
ideas. The clause just mentioned above implies this basic contradi-
cction. The Melians consider \( \tau \alpha \nu \delta \iota \kappa \alpha \iota \omega \nu \lambda \dot{o} \gamma \omega \nu \) ("the question of justice") an integral part of their \( \lambda \dot{o} \gamma \omega \zeta \)-concept; the Athenians instead consider \( \dot{\epsilon} \gamma \mu \mu \phi \dot{o} \rho \rho \dot{o} \) ("profit"--the theme of pragmatism) and other concrete-oriented ideas as the \( \lambda \dot{o} \gamma \omega \zeta \)-concept of their philos-
ophy. \( \dot{\epsilon} \chi \beta \iota \beta \alpha \acute{\alpha} \alpha \tau \tau \tau \zeta \) ("prevented"), a reminder of the force of
the natural law, emphasizes the pathetic plight of the idealistic
Melians, as indeed its dactylic rhythm indicates. \( \pi \epsilon \iota \theta \epsilon \tau \epsilon \tau \) indicates the \( \lambda \dot{o} \gamma \omega \zeta \)-discussion method which is at basis the Melian
Dialogue itself. This clause (\( \dot{\alpha} \omicron \pi \eta \rho \rho \ldots \pi \epsilon \iota \theta \epsilon \tau \epsilon \tau \), "since you
have prevented us from discussing the question of justice and
convinced us to consider profit") is placed between two affirma-
tions of reality: the opening word, \( \delta \iota \zeta \) (which may also be a
subtle acquiescence to the natural law of necessity), and the re-
mainder of the sentence, which is a Melian attempt to approximate
the Athenian concept of reality.

This latter half of the sentence deserves close study, for
in it \( \chi \rho \omicron \sigma \iota \mu \omicron \nu \delta \iota \dot{\alpha} \sigma \omicron \kappa \omicron \tau \tau \tau \zeta \) ("make known what is advantageous"--again
the theme of pragmatism) is practically an Athenian \( \lambda \dot{o} \gamma \omega \zeta / \dot{\epsilon} \rho \gamma \omicron \) relationship, with the \( \delta \iota \dot{\alpha} \sigma \omicron \kappa \omicron \tau \tau \tau \zeta \) including the idea of \( \lambda \dot{o} \gamma \omega \zeta \)-
discussion which is definitely enunciated and approbated in \( \pi \epsilon \iota \theta \epsilon \theta \omega \tau \theta \alpha \iota \pi \epsilon \iota \theta \epsilon \tau \epsilon \tau \) ("try to persuade"). Between these two phrases again
is placed a revealing clause, \( \epsilon \iota \tau \gamma \chi \acute{\alpha} \nu \epsilon \iota \ k \alpha \ \dot{\omicron} \nu \dot{\omicron} \ \tau \dot{\alpha} \dot{\omicron} \ \dot{\omicron} \mu \phi \dot{o} \rho \rho \dot{o} \nu \) ("by chance the same thing may be advantageous for you"), which is
not merely parenthetical but a foreshadowing of the importance of
this theme of \( \tau \dot{\omicron} \chi \iota \) in the Melian philosophy. Even at this point,
the Melians are relying heavily on probability—here, the chance of a coincidental similarity in outlook.

The objection itself is stated in the most emphatic terms: πολεμώσεσθε ("make hostile"); ξυμαχοῦσι; even βλέπαντες ("see") has the concrete idea of physical vision rather than intellectual hypothesis. Again, all is based on the intellect: ἡγήσωνται ("realize"). Only in the last sentence does the Melian philosophy reveal itself, when ὅπαρχοντας πολεμίους ("strengthening your present enemies"), definitely an ἔργον statement, is balanced by μὴ μελλήσαντας γενέσθαι ("without any intention"), a λόγος-concept verging very nearly on futurity and therefore illusion. The final statement, the Melian attempt to show the self-destructive tendency of Athenian imperialism, ends with a hexameter cadence, ἀκόντας ἐπάγοντες.
cause of destruction and failure.

First, as always, the rational basis is reiterated, νοµίζουμεν ("we think"). Then the Athenians discuss the actual sources of danger to themselves; and again, their motive of fear is evident --δεινοτέρον ("threat"). The free mainlanders who will "take their time" (διαμέλλοντι) about defense preparations perhaps suffer from that fatal malady of preferring illusion to reality. Ἀναγκαία, the necessity (or perhaps force) of Athenian rule--that most evident aspect of the natural law which they profess as the basis of their philosophy--may cause their subjects to rebel, as the Athenians well know.

In their realistic appraisal of the situation, they make it clear that the Melians also are indeed a threat to them. The rebels and the Melians might turn to irrational fanaticism (τὸ ἀλογίστῳ ἐπιτρέψαντες)--the great ἀμαρτία. Not acting in accordance with one's intellectual assessment of the existing situation is the great, unpardonable error which destroys men. We see the subtle irony of ἐπιτρέψαντες ("turn"), an echo of the σφάλλω image to describe the erring Melians and revolutionaries. Ἀλογίστῳ ("irrational fanaticism") and προοπτον ("manifest"), because of their intellectual connotation, are as irrevocably damning as a rational basis is vitally necessary to both Melians and Athenians. Again, the theme of risk (κίνδυνον) reinforces the existentialist theme of present circumstances; προοπτον emphasizes κίνδυνον but has a condemnatory implication of its own, reinforcing ἀλογίστῳ and extending the guilt of the unthinking man who foresees imminent
danger but continues to advance toward it. In this last sentence, then, the Athenians skillfully and cleverly interweave the themes of (un)intellectuality and risk with the σφάλλω image, and thus forcefully condemn all three concepts.

ΜΗΛ. Σὺ ποι ἀρα, εἰ τοσαῦτα γε ἔμεις τε μὴ παυθήμαι ἄρχῃ καὶ οἱ δουλεύοντες ἥν ἀπαλλαγήμα τὴν παρακατο-

MELIANS: If you and your subjects really face such a great risk—you, not to lose your empire and the tribute-paying members to get out of it—then we who are still independent would be base cowards if we did not try everything before joining your league.

The Melians defend their actions by seizing upon the concept of danger and magnifying it, παρακατοδύνασσιν ("such a great risk"), thus cleverly turning the Athenians' words into an excuse against evil and cowardice. The dactylic rhythm of τὴν παρακατο-

Once more, the Melian philosophy is entirely evident. They describe their own condition as ἑτὶ ἐλευθεροὶς ("still independent"), a term which connotes both the moral abstraction and the physical and political state of freedom. Then suddenly they turn to the λόγος-concept of πολλῇ κακότης καὶ δειλίᾳ ("the avoidance of base cowardice") as all-important: this is the Melian type of λόγος-concept, entirely abstract and moral. To be sure, the chapter closes with the ἐργον words δουλεύσαι ("join your league," again with its double meaning) and ἐπεξεξελθεῖν ("try everything"), but the difference between the Melian and Athenian philosophies is again made clear. The Melians act on the basis of abstract values;
the Athenians face reality. The expression of these abstract terms is voiced in a definite heroic rhythm: τοις ἐλευθέροις πολλὴ κακότης καὶ δειλία.

ΑΘ. Οὐκ ἦν γε σωφρόνως βουλεύσατε· οὐ γὰρ περὶ ἄνδραγαθίας ὁ ἄγνω αὐτῷ ἵναν ὑμῖν, μὴ αἰσχύνης ὀφελεῖν, περὶ δὲ σωτηρίας μᾶλλον ἡ βουλή, τὸ ὅσ τούς κρέσσονας νικᾶρυ μὴ ἀνθιστασθαί.

101. ATHENIANS: Nonsense; you are not thinking logically. Here you are not involved in a fair fight for the sake of valor, in order not to forfeit your sense of honor. Rather, your concern is for your own security, to avoid defyng those much stronger than yourself.

The Athenians reply to the basic differences between their philosophy and that of the Melians, "Οὐκ ἦν γε σωφρόνως βουλεύσατε, by charging the Melians with a lack of good sense, since they do not appreciate the intellectual realism of the Athenian argument. The Athenians strongly and definitely correct the Melian concept of a reality conditioned by morals; they point out explicitly that the λόγος-concept of abstract moralities (ἄνδραγαθίας, "valor" and αἰσχύνη, "sense of honor") does not correspond to the actual situation which is based on an intellectual assessment (βουλή, "provision") and which deals with concrete realities (ἀγών, "fight"; σωτηρίας, "security"; ἄνθιστασθαί, "defiance"), regulated by a λόγος-concept embracing the natural law (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἵνου, "fair"; κρέσσονας πολλῷ, "much stronger").

The Athenians once again relegate the Melian position to that of an abstract non-reality having no bearing on actual concrete circumstances. Their last comment (heavy with spondees) suggests the seriousness of opposing the Athenian philosophy and Athenian
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The implied failure of the Melian stand against Athens bitterly recalls the σφάλλω image of defeat inherent in the dialogue.

ΜΠΙΛ. 'Αλλ' ἐπιστάμεθα τὰ τῶν πολέμων ἐστιν ὅτε καὶ τά σχέσεις τῶν σοφώτεροι λαμβάνοντα καὶ τὰ διαφέρον ἑκατέρων πλῆθος καὶ ἢ μὲν ἔδει ἐνθές ἄνθρωπον, μετὰ τὸ τῶν δραμάτων ἐτῶς καὶ στῆναι ἐπικός ὅρθος.

102. MELIANS. Certainly; but we also know that in times of war fortune is often more impartial than the relative size of the antagonists would suggest. Furthermore, for us, submission is immediate despair; but action offers at least a hope of standing firm in our position.

The Melians reaffirm their concept of reality, i.e., a λόγος which includes abstract moral concepts complementing the ἔργον of concrete circumstances. They emphasize τὸ χάρη ("fortune") and ἔλπις ("hope") which in the following chapters the Athenians regard as important factors in the reality-appearance/illusion theme.

Immediately the Melians refer to their straitened circumstances, τὰ τῶν πολέμων ("in times of war" -- ἔργον); they join this to one of their chief abstract themes, τάς τῶρχας ("fortune"). The second half of the chapter repeats this ἔργον/λόγος concept in two balanced sections. Τῶς καὶ ἐκθές ("immediate submission") and ἄνελπιτον ("despair") repeat this ἔργον/λόγος Melian view of reality; δραμάνθον ("action") and στῆναι ὁρθῶς ("standing firm") are ideas complementary to ἔλπις ("hope"). The στῆναι . . . ὁρθῶς construction is particularly effective since it is a definite concrete image surrounding ἔλπις with its intimation of moral intention. Δραμάνθον and στῆναι ὁρθῶς together create the most effective use
of the σφάλλω image in the dialogue. Here the Melians reanimate this figure which they have been using all along as almost a living, moving symbol of their determination. The Melian statement that "submission is despair" is definite with its strong dactylic-spondaic rhythms:

"καὶ ἡμῖν τὸ μὲν εἶξαι εἴθὸς ἀνέλπιστον."
is clearly defective. 'ελπίς is described with another abstract, παραμόθιον ("consolation") but in contrast with the concrete danger of reality (κινδύνως) and in circumstances of reality: περισσοτέρας ("resources"); χρωμένους ("use"); βλάψί ("harm"); καθέλε ("destroy"). The rhythm is that of the dactylic hexameter, κινδύνως παραμόθιον ούσα. Is it intended to be ironic, a mock heroic echo of the vain hopes of the Melians?

In the second half of the nicely balanced metabole, τοῦς μὲν . . . τοῖς δὲ, the Athenians cleverly alternate the λόγος-abstract/ἐργον aspects of the situation: ἀπαν τὸ διἀρχον ἀναρριπ-τοῦσι ("men who risk all their interests on a single chance" with the abstract δάπανος γὰρ φόσει ("profligate by nature"); and in the last phrase, both aspects are very effectively juxtaposed: γιγνώσκεται ("known"--λόγος)/σφαλέντων ("plunge"--ἐργον)/φυλάξεται ("safeguard"--ἐργον)/γνωρισθεῖσαν ("known"--λόγος)/ελλείπει ("leave" --ἐργον). The theme of risk is predominant in this opening sentence, and there is a hint of pragmatism in χρωμένους. That the true character of ἐλπίς is difficult to recognize (γνωρισθεῖσαν, γιγνώ-σκεται) is an intellectual reason for condemnation. Significantly, σφαλέντων ("plunging"), an application of the Melian-centered σφάλλω image, is used here to describe those men deluded by hope.

In terms reminiscent of the natural law, the Athenians describe the concrete circumstances of the Melians' plight: ἀσθενείς τε καὶ ἐπὶ βοσῆς μᾶς ἄντες ("powerless and subservient to a single whim of fortune"); they encourage them again to form the correct rationale behind their actions, μὴ βούλεσθε παθεῖν ("you do not
want to experience . . . ").

By connecting ἀνθρωπείας ("through human expedients"), σκέφτηκα ("maintain security"), and φανερὰ ἐλπίδες ("manifest sources of hope") the Athenians show a co-ordinated concept of reality which they approve. In direct contrast they condemn ἀφανείς (ἐλπίδες) ("the arcane"); μαντικὴ ("prophecy"); χρησμοῦ ("oracles"); and ἐλπίδων ("hope"). The result of these misrepresentations of reality is destruction and ruin, λυμαίνεται, as opposed to the all-important theme of security, σκέφτηκα. Thus the Athenians describe hope as primarily anti-intellectual and non-realistic; it works against the natural law and the nature of man, and so leads to destruction.

This is a strong affirmation of the visible over the invisible; even, perhaps, as Dionysius interpreted the passage, of the human over the divine.

Once again, the λόγος-concept/ἐργον relationship which is effectively realistic, according to its fullest exposition here by the Athenians, deals with abstracts only as they relate immediately to concrete reality and can be supported by some physical means of power. The Melian λόγος which admits pure abstract and moral concepts is relegated to a position of illusion in contrast to the Athenian λόγος, which they consider reality.

ΜΗΛ. Χαλεπῶν μὲν καὶ ἰμαίσ (οὗ ἢπο) ινοthesize πρὸς δύναμιν τε τὴν υμετέραν καὶ τὴν τύχην, εἴ μὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἴσου ἔτοι, ἀγνοίξασθαι ὅμως δὲ πιστεύωμεν τῇ μὲν τύχῃ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ μὴ ἀλασσόμεθα, ὅτι δεινοὶ πρὸς αὐτὸς ἀκαίριος ἰστίμεθα, τῷ δὲ δυνάμει τῷ ἑλλείποντε τῇ Ἀλεξάνδριοι τὴν ἡμαῖν ἰχνεύξιαν προσέχοσθαι, ἀλαχοὶ ἔχουσαν, καὶ εἰ μὴ τῶν ἄλλων, τῇ γε ἐνεγκείνεις ἑνκεκαὶ αὐτήδει ἐνεβρέθη, καὶ εὖ παντάπασιν οὕτως ἀλόγως ἡροϊσμέθα.
104. MELIANS: You may be sure that we too realize the difficulty of competing against both your power and Fortune (unless she is more than impartial). Nevertheless, we believe that we will not be second best in the matter of divine providence because we are God-fearing men taking a stand against the unrighteous. Furthermore, we trust that our alliance with the Lacedaemonians will provide for our lack of power: as indeed it must help us because of our blood relationship as well as their sense of honor, if for no other reason. Thus, all in all, we are not so unreasonably overconfident.

The Melian response is a reaffirmation of their view of reality: the correlation of concrete circumstances with an abstract λόγος-concept based on morality and the supernatural.

First, the intellectual basis, νομίζομεν ("we realize") is not only repeated but emphasized in εἴδε τοιτε ("you may be sure"). The Melians realize the concrete nature of their struggle, χαλεπὸν ἀγωνίζομαι ("the difficulty of competing"); but for them this struggle has a distinct two-fold nature: πρὸς δύναμιν τῇ διμετέρων ("against your power; δύναμιν is evocative of the natural law")—ἔργον; καὶ τῇ τόχῃ ("and against fortune")—λόγος-concept. Their statement of philosophy is based more on faith and emotion, πιστεύομεν ("we believe"—the theme of trust), than on a concept of rationality. The first half of their statement, which deals with the λόγος-concept section of their philosophy, consists of a pair of balanced λόγος/ἔργον correlatives: τόχη ἐκ τοῦ θείου ("divine providence") and μὴ ἐλασσόσεσθαι ("we will not be second best"); ἐδοξοῦμεν πρὸς ὁ δικαίους ("God-fearing men against the unrighteous") and ἵσταμεθά ("we take a stand"); ἵσταμεθά is a concrete integration of the σφάλλω image into the Melian statement.
of philosophy. This latter phrase is one of the most metrically balanced phrases in Thucydides: ὄντες ἄστικοι πρὸς ὀδοὺς δικαίους ἰστάμεθα, with paonics at either end of the line.

The second half of the statement, which deals with the concrete realities of the situation, is naturally expressed in a string of ἔργον words: δυνάμεως, ἀνάγκην, ἐλλείποντι, ἓμβαρμαχίαν, Λακεδαιμονίων, but completed with the λόγος-abstract concepts ἐσπευσίας ἕνεκα καὶ αἰσχὸν ("because of our blood relationship as well as their sense of honor") as is inherent in the Melian philosophy. Δυνάμεως and ἀνάγκην suggest the natural law, perhaps in a double meaning: Lacedaemonian strength and power must help the Melians; yet this same force will operate against the Athenians' natural law of "might makes right." Thus each half of the Melian statement reflects the other; each concept, the λόγος-abstract and the ἔργον, is a small image of ultimate reality, since each shows within itself the same dichotomy-combination.

Most tellingly and emphatically, καὶ ὅπαντ' ἀπασχόλησαν ὁμοίως ἀλόγως θρασυνόμεθα ("thus, all in all, we are not so unreasonably overconfident"), the Melians declare that this, their own statement of a philosophy of life, is a valid expression of man's intellectual capabilities; that their point of view is not irrational and non-intellectual, as the Athenians claim.

It is obvious that the Melians consider their view of reality, based on trust in divine providence, τύχη, and moral obligations, as valid a world view as that of the Athenians.
AΘ. Τής μὲν τοίῃς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον εὐμενείας οὐδ’ ἴμης οὐδέκα λελεῖσθαίν οὐδ’ εἶπεν γὰρ ἔξω τῆς ἀνθρωπείας τῶν μὲν εἰς τὸ θεῖον νομίστως, τῶν δὲ ἐστὶν αὐτοῦς βουλήσεως δικαιοσύνης ἡ πράσσομεν. ἡγομένη γὰρ τὸ τε θείων δόξη τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τε σαφῶς διὰ πάντως ἐποίησες ἀναγκαῖος, οὗ ἂν κρίθη, ἀρχεῖν καὶ ἴμης ὅτε θύτες τῶν νόμων ὅτε κειμένῳ πρῶτοι χρησάμενοι, ὅτα δὲ παραβρότους καὶ ἐσόμενοι εἰς αὐτὶ καταλείψοντες χρόμεθα αὐτῷ, ἔσοδος καὶ ὄμης ἂν καὶ ὅλους ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ δυνάμει ἴμης γεγομένους ἰδὼνται ἂν ταῦτα. καὶ πρὸς μὲν τὸ θεῖον οὕτως ἐκ τοῦ εἰκότος οὐ φαβοῦμεθα ἐλασσόσεθαίν τῆς ἡ ἢ ἡ Λακεδαίμονος δόξης, ἢν διὰ τὸ αἰσχρὸν δὴ βοηθήσειν ἴμης πιστεύετε αὐτοῦ, μεγαράσαντες ἴμην τὸ ἀπειρόκακον οὐ ζηλοῦμεν τῶν ἄφθουν. Λακεδæμονῶν γὰρ πρὸς σφᾶς μὲν αὐτοῦς καὶ τα ἐπιχύρα νόμων πλέοντα ἁρετή χρώμαν πρὸς ὑς ἄλλους πολλά ἃν τις ἔχων εἴπειν ὡς προσψέφρωνο, Ἐξελεύον μάλιστ’ ἀν δηλώσειν ὅτι ἐπιφάνειται ὅν ἴσων τὰ μὲν ἤδεα καλὰ νομίζουσι, τὰ δὲ ἐμφάστων μὲκαί ματ. καὶ δι’ ὑπὸ τῆς ἢμετέρας ἡν ἄλλος σωτηρίας ἡ τοιαῦτή διάνοια.

105. ATHENIANS: Well, we think we will not come out second best in this matter of divine approbation either. We are considering and actually accomplishing nothing but what men have always held as an established belief about the deity, nothing which men have not always desired for themselves. For we realize through both our religious beliefs and actual factual instances that gods and men always rule wherever they have power in accordance with the force of natural law. We did not posit this law nor are we the first to follow it. We found it already in existence; and after we have made use of it we will leave it as it is, an eternal law. We know that if you or anyone else had our power, you would do the same. So in all probability we are not afraid of coming out behind in divine providence.

Now, regarding your presumptuous confidence in the Lacedaemonians, if you really think that they will come to your aid because of their sense of honor—well, we must congratulate you on your innocence, but we certainly are not envious of your stupidity. The Lacedaemonians show exceptional virtue towards themselves and their native customs, but towards others—there are many instances we could quote, but to summarize briefly, their actions make it clear that they, most obviously of all the men we know, judge the enjoyable noble, the advantageous just. And I would have you know that this sort of outlook does not favor your present irrational attitude toward security.
In destroying the Melian case, the Athenians first repudiate the λόγος-abstract concept of the Melian philosophy which incorporates themes of τύχη and morality, i.e., pure abstracts; they emphasize their own λόγος-concept which includes ἔργον, i.e., natural order expressed in outward form. Then they show the Melians' self-deception in relying on Lacedaemonian help.

The Athenians must finally answer the Melians' outright statement of religious belief. Again they posit an intellectual basis, οἴομεθα ("we think"). They clearly indicate that they are dealing in the realm of λόγος-concept, πρὸς τὸ θεῖον εὑμενείας ("in this matter of divine approbation"), but they complete their thought with the concrete image λελείψεσθαι ("come out second"). Δικαλοῦμεν ἢ πράσσομεν ("we are considering and actually accomplishing") is a definite λόγος/ἔργον distinction embracing their entire attitude towards the gods and morality, which is considered in two aspects, ἐς τὸ θεῖον νομίσεως ("an established belief about the deity") and ἐς σφαίρας αὐτοῦς βουλήσεως ("what men have always desired for themselves"). This latter dichotomy may be a refined λόγος/ἔργον distinction; it certainly is an objective-subjective metabole. More important is the position of ἀνθρωπείας ("human") as the conditioner of these ways of thinking. Thus, although the Athenians consider the λόγος-rational principle of action in conjunction with ἔργον, it is limited by the sophistic concept of ἀνθρωπείας or human basis: for the Athenians, man is the maker of his own attitude towards the gods.

Even more clearly does the Athenian rationale appear in
the next sentence. Their intellectual conviction, ἡγούμεθα ("we realize") is that their concept about τὸ θεῖον ("the gods") is known through δόξα ("religious beliefs"), i.e., a λόγος-concept, while their knowledge about τὸ ἀνθρώπειον ("men") is known σαφῶς ("clearly") through "factual instances" (ἔργον).

The λόγος/ἔργον concepts are complementary and reveal the unified truth of concrete reality: ὅπου φύσεως ἀναγκαίας, οthal κρατῆ ἐρχείτο ("[they] always rule wherever they have power in accordance with the force of natural law"). The whole Athenian statement, then, is expressed both in abstract, non-sensual, mind-perceived terms and in concrete, visual, realistic examples. There is more than a slight denigration of the λόγος concept; since τὸ θεῖον is not known σαφῶς, to the Athenians it is intellectually the weaker argument.

Certainly the Athenians describe this natural law, νόμον, which is their λόγος-concept, in a realistic sense. Θέντες τὸν νόμον, characterized by a dactylic stress, may imply a λόγος-concept involved in the rationale behind the law as well as in its actual positing, but χρησάμενοι (whose natural dactylic rhythm again emphasizes the pragmatic character of the Athenians), παραλαβόντες, χρώμεθα, δυνάμει, δρῶντας leave no guess as to its practical application. Χρώμεθα ἀπτῷ ("we make use of it") also shows this primary Athenian attitude in its heroic rhythm. Further, this natural law is the ultimate statement of reality: καὶ ἡμεῖς οὕτε θέντες τὸν νόμον οὕτε κειμένως πρῶτοι χρησάμενοι, ὅτα δὲ παραλαβόντες καὶ ἐσόμενον ἐς ἄλλοι καταλείψοντες χρώμεθα ἀπτῷ
("we did not posit this law nor are we the first to follow it. We found it already in existence; and after we have made use of it we will leave it as it is, an eternal law"). There is no idea of futurity or illusion concerning the almost eternal existence of the natural law; the Melians cannot condemn the Athenians for being non-realistic. In fact, the Athenians emphasize the present actual existence of the law: they seize upon the natural law for the now-moment of reality (γενομένους), expressed in a dactylic-paemonic lilt: τῇ αὕτῃ δυνάμει ἡμῖν γενομένους ("anyone possessed of our powers").

Again, the Athenians reaffirm the support which human reason, εἰδότες ("knowing") gives to their philosophy. In summary of the first half of their rebuttal (καὶ πρὸς μὲν τὸ θεῖον οὕτως ἐκ τοῦ εἰκότος οὗ φοβοῦμεθα ἔλασσόσεσθαι, "so, in all probability, we are not afraid of coming out behind in divine providence"), the Athenians make it clear that their concept of a unified reality, with emphasis on concrete circumstances, is final and correct; and that their incorporation of τὸ θεῖον into the natural law is the only logical intellectual approach.

In answer, then, to the Melians' point regarding divine favor, the Athenians have no cause for fear (οὗ φοβοῦμεθα) since they have shown that the gods are also subject to the natural law which they obey. The οὗ φοβοῦμεθα is primarily ironic: the Athenians' philosophical basis is intellectual, not emotional. Yet the theme of fear which haunts the Athenians resounds in οὗ φοβοῦμεθα, and perhaps the phrase has another meaning, striking
deep into their basic motives. Once again the concrete nature of their thought, ἔλασσωσεσθαι ("coming out behind"), as opposed to the conceptual (τὸ θεῖον), is apparent.17

To summarize briefly the first half of the chapter, the Athenians reply to the implied Melian accusation of non-morality and non-religion that the gods (and in fact the whole set moral system of the Melians) are subservient to the natural law under which and because of which the Athenians are a ruling power.

The Athenians then turn to refuting the second half of the Melian statement. With only a phrase, τῆς ... δόξης ("regarding your presumptuous confidence in the Lacedaemonians"), they destroy the Melian argument: by using δόξης ("opinion"), it is evident that the Athenians consider this approach to be the application of a λόγος-concept which is non-realistic in the fullest sense of the word rather than that Athenian λόγος-concept which is based primarily on the concrete realities of the existing situation. Thus the Athenians relegate what had been the Melians' ἔργον-argument of possible physical assistance to the ineffectuality of a λόγος-non-reality. Though the dactylic jingle of δὲ ἡ λαξεδαιμονίους is natural, its ring in this context becomes mocking.

The Athenians criticize the fundamental Melian concepts of

17 There may be a mocking touch to this dismissal of τὸ θεῖον as an external intervening force in the phrase ἔλασσωσεσθαι. Ἐλάσσωσα ("in all probability"—and implying chance, τόχη, from the build-up of previous chapters) must be stressed as an ironic comment on the Melians' dependence on τόχη; it connotes the theme of morality as well and so has a dual meaning.
morality and trust in a λόγος/έργον/λόγος arrangement: αἰσχρῶν ("sense of honor")/βοηθήσειν ("come to your aid"). πιστεύετε ("trust"); the last phrase of which, πιστεύετε αὕτως, has an heroic rhythm. This is followed by the bitterly effective and cutting statement, μακαρίσαντες δὴν τὸ ἀπειρόκακον οὐ ξηλοῦμεν τὸ ἄφρον ("we must congratulate you on your innocence, but we certainly are not envious of your stupidity"). Ἀπειρόκακον, not merely "innocence" but "lack of experience with evil," taken with μακαρίσαντες, can only be heavily ironic. If indeed (as seems likely from the historical evidence), the "injured neutral" argument of the Melians is only a pose, then for the Athenians to congratulate the Melians on a lack of experiencing evil which the Melians have been imputing to their aggressors all along can only be the height of irony. That this is so would seem to be indicated by the rhythm. The phrase is emphasized by the preceding τὸ αἰσχρῶν οὐ ξηλοῦμεν δὴν πιστεύετε αὕτως, already discussed, and contains two paeanic rhythms found precisely on the taunts "congratulate" and "innocence": πιστεύετε αὕτως μακαρίσαντες δὴν τὸ ἀπειρόκακον. Ἀφρόν ("stupidity," "non-rationality") as condemned here and elsewhere throughout the dialogue, indicates the worst possible human situation, since it is the denial and rejection of that basic human tool, intelligent reason, which is the fountain of both arguments.

In the objection itself, the first half, Λακεδαίμονιοι γὰρ πρὸς μὲν αὕτως καὶ τὰ ἐπιχώρια νόμιμα πλείστα ἀρετὴ χρῶνται ("the Lacedaemonians show exceptional virtue towards themselves and their
native customs") presents a fascinating juxtaposition of "native customs"/"virtue"/"show" which suggests an ironic reference to the ineffective concept of philosophy of the Melians. The criticism is heightened by the combination of themes of morality ("virtue") and pragmatism—a trenchant comment on the "idealism" of the Lacedaemonians who (like their enemies, the Athenians) subordinate morality to pragmatism. The statement is actually the part of a antithesis. The section is the second half of the objection, ρος δὲ τῶν ἄλλων πολλὰ ἀν τις ἔχων εἶπεν ὡς προσφέρονται, ἔννεφλῶν μάλιστ' ἀν ἤλθος ὅτι ἐπιφανεστάτα ὃν ἐσμεν τὰ μὲν ἴδεα καλὰ νομίζουσιν, τὰ δὲ εὐμφέροντα δίκαια ("but towards others—there are many instances we could quote, but to summarize briefly, their actions make it clear that they, most obviously of all the men we know, judge the enjoyable noble, the advantageous just"). Δηλώσεις ("make it clear") and ἐπιφανεστάτα ("most obviously") show the qualities; that the Athenians are judging according to their rational bases is shown by ἐσμεν ("we know"); and that the Lacedaemonians do not share the Melians' philosophy is shown by ἴδεα καλὰ νομίζουσιν... εὐμφέροντα δίκαια ("they judge the enjoyable noble, the advantageous just"), a confusion and shift from the relationship recognized by the Melians. The last jibe, that the Lacedaemonians actually consider what the Melians judge as just to be what the Athenians think is pragmatic, is couched in an heroic rhythm: ἐυμφέροντα δίκαια.
This chapter is the only section of the dialogue which brings to the fore the classic νόμος/φύσις antithesis; earlier, νόμος and φύσις appear to be a single concept (the natural law). Indeed, the Athenians state clearly that the natural law is exactly that, a product of nature, and not of their making: gods and men rule ὑπὸ φύσεως ἀναγκαίας ("in accordance with the force of nature"), i.e., "natural law." They go on to state (as cited above), "we did not posit this law nor are we the first to follow it. We found it already in existence; and after we have made use of it we will leave it as it is, an eternal law." Obviously the Athenians in this case equate νόμος and φύσις.

But in the condemnation of Melian hopes in the Lacedaemonians, the Athenians suggest a dichotomy in the Lacedaemonians' moral standards: "they show exceptional virtue towards themselves and their native customs," καὶ τὰ ἐπιχόρια νόμιμα, with νόμιμα connoting customary and perhaps legal usages; but in respect to others, they "judge the enjoyable noble, the advantageous just," τὰ μὲν ἴδεα καλὰ νομίζουσι, τὰ δὲ ἐξουθένησα δίκαια; νομίζουσι and its preceding νόμιμα suggest human laws which may or may not be in conformity with the natural law. But the νόμος/φύσις antithesis is only suggested; it is not developed here or elsewhere in the dialogue.

The final Athenian statement utterly condemns the Melian position for its lack of rationality: ἀλὸγον ("irrational") is a direct comment on this, and even the prefix in διάνοια ("attitude") has an adverse effect. Sandwiched in between these two recrimin-
tions is ἱστορίας ("security"), a reminder of that most vital goal for both parties. Significantly, this theme of security is kept for the last, and therefore most emphatic, sentence in the chapter; and it is joined with the censure of irrationality, a primary Athenian ploy in the dialogue.

106. MELIANS: But we are particularly confident in this very pragmatism of the Lacedaemonian character. For their own advantage they will not want to betray their Melian colonists; otherwise, they will occasion the disloyalty of their Greek sympathizers and at the same time help their own enemies.

The Melians respond to the Athenians' second charge, that the Lacedaemonians will not support the Melians. They emphatically state that they have a particular confidence in the Lacedaemonians (μᾶλλον πιστεύομεν): this repeats their use of the theme of trust (πιστεύομεν) in chapter 104 and contrasts sharply with the rational, intellectual basis constantly utilized by the Athenians. The complementary joining of λόγος-concept and ἔργον in the Melians' philosophy is shown in an ἔργον/λόγος/λόγος effect in the first half of their statement: τῷ ἐγκαταστάτῳ ("pragmatism")/αὐτῶν Μηλίους ἀποστόλος ὅντας ("their Melian

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18In fact, the reference to τῶν μὲν ἐθνῶν τῶν Ἑλλήνων ("their Greek sympathizers") later in this chapter may be a subtle reference to an intellectual judgment on the part of those Greeks and thus a tacit and flattering reference to that same intellectual basis of argument.
The impact of this chapter lies in the Melians' skillful maneuvering of themes and style, in order to present a view of the Lacedaemonians which incorporates both their own moral ideals and Athenian pragmatism.

107. ATHENIANS: So then you do not think that expediency is associated with security, while justice and nobility are accomplished only with great risk. And risk is the very thing which the Lacedaemonians are generally the least inclined to face.

The Athenians reaffirm their objection. First, they assert the intellectual element which should be the basis of the Melian philosophy also: οἷς εἴσοδος ("you do not think"); this is ironically emphasized by the use of οὖκ ὄνων. According to the Athenians' outlook, which they have consistently represented throughout the dialogue, τὸ ξυμφέρον ("expediency") is allied with ἀσφαλείας ("security")—two definite ἔργων concepts; but, as the Athenians
restate the argument in terms of the Melians' λόγος-concept/ἐργον philosophy, τὸ δὲ δίκαιον καὶ καλὸν ("justice and nobility") is allied with the ἐργον κινδύνου δρασθαί ("accomplished with great risk"). The implications of κινδύνου are also imperative; this is the concrete ἐργον effect of a λόγος-concept which has become a λόγος-illusion since it is out of touch with existing circumstances.

ΜΗΛ. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν κινδύνων τὸ ἡμῶν ἔγεικα μᾶλλον
ἐγγύτερον ἃν ἐγκεφαλίσασθαι αὐτῶς, καὶ βεβαιώτερόν ἂν ἐστὶν λαός γομέμων, διὸ τρίς μὲν τὰ ἔργα τῆς Πελοποννήσου ἐγγεῦσας κείμεθα, τὴν δὲ γνώμην τῷ ξυγγενεῖ πιστότεροι ἑτέρων ἐκείνη.

108. MELIANS: We think that they would be inclined to face these risks, considering them more tenable in our behalf than for anyone else because of our position close to the Peloponnesian sphere of action and because of our greater trustworthiness due to similarity of attitude.

The Melians reply in a beautifully balanced sentence, which clearly and concisely incorporates both the λόγος and the ἐργον aspects of their philosophy and which re-emphasizes the intellectual basis of their outlook. Ἡγούμεθα ("we think") shows the rational basis of the Melians' thoughts: νομίζων ("considering") extends this rational basis to the Lacedaemonians, incidentally showing the extent to which the Melians evaluate it. In the opening lines of the chapter, the Melians stress the ἐργον side of their argument: κινδύνους ("risk"); ἐγγεύσασθαι ("face"). But the basic reasoning behind their conviction of Lacedaemonian support is, as usual to them, dual: ἐργον--πρὸς μὲν τὰ ἔργα τῆς Πελοποννήσου ἐγγὺς κείμεθα ("because of our position close to the
Peloponnesian sphere of action—κείμεθα is a manifestation of the σφάλλω image) and abstract concept, including morality—τῆς δὲ γνώμης τῷ ξυγγενεῖ πιστότερον ("because of our greater trustworthiness due to similarity of attitude"). Ξυγγενεῖ may possibly suggest a moral bond, because of its root meaning; in γνώμης the Melians once more stress the intellectual basis of the relationship, perhaps to influence the Athenians favorably. The Melians' faith in their more favored situation in the Lacedaemonians' intellectual assessment of the situation, και βεβαιοτέ­ρους ἢ ἐς ἄλλους νομεῖν provides an interesting adjunct to the risk-security theme. The Melians use the word βεβαιοτέρους to describe κυνδύνους; certainly the Lacedaemonian action would not be safe or secure; yet the Melians want to show that it would not be entirely foolhardy, so they choose βεβαιοτέρους as a median description of the possible situation. The chapter closes with a dactylic rhythm: πιστότερον ἐτέρων ἑσμέν.

ΛΘ. Τῇ δ' ἐχθρῷ γε τῶς ἐναγωνισμένους οὐ τῷ ἰτίοις τῶν ἐπικαλεσαμένων φαίνεται, ἀλλ' ἐν τῶν ἔργων τῆς ενίμης πολὺ προέχῃ ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ πλέον τι τῶν ἄλλων σκοποῦσιν (τῆς γοῦν οἰκείας παρασκευὴς ἀπίστια καὶ μετὰ ἕγγραφων πολλῶν τοῖς πέλας ἐπέρχονται), ὅστε ὥστε εἰκὸς ἐς νῆσον γε εἰς τοὺς ἡμῶν τινάρατάρον ὑπών ἑτον 15 περαιώθηναι.

109. ATHENIANS: The thing which encourages men who are about to fight is obviously not the virtuous attitude of the ones invoking aid but rather any actual advantage in which they might be strong. It is this sort of advantage which the Lacedaemonians consider more than other nations; at least, it certainly seems that a lack of confidence in their own resources causes them to attack even nearby areas with many allies. So it does not seem likely that they would
sail across to this island as long as we are masters of the sea.

The Athenians' reply depicts the Lacedaemonians as partaking in the Athenian rather than in the Melian concept of reality. To begin, the Athenians posit ἐχυρόν ("encourage"), i.e., an emotional rather than an intellectual basis of action; this is later emended to σκοποῦσι ("consider"). Ἐχυρόν perhaps may be read as a subtly sarcastic reference to the Melian emotional bias in previous chapters; when actual Lacedaemonian actions are described, in accordance with the Athenians' philosophical concepts, the visual-intellectual verb is used. ὀ ὁ τὸ εὐνουχί ("virtuous attitude") may also be ironic; certainly no rational sense, as implied in νοῖς, is meant, but rather τῇς δὲ γνώμης τῷ ἐχυρόνων ("similarity of attitude") as in chapter 108. The use of this negative expression together with φαίνεται ("to be obvious") is an ample indictment of the Melians' unrealistic outlook; for φαίνεται suggests not only a clear intellectual conviction but also appearance merely, or semblance of reality. There can be no question but that these concepts clash with the evident ἔργον ideas of ξυναγωνικῶμενοι ("men who are about to fight") and ἐπικαλεσάμενων ("the ones invoking aid"). This opening clause is merely the negative statement of the positive ἔργον concept embodied in the final clause, ἀλλ' ἂν τῶν ἔργων τις δυνάμει πολύ προόχω ("but rather than any actual advantage in which they might be strong"). The latter half of this comment is emphasized by an alliterative π as well as dactylic meter: τις δυνάμει πολύ προόχω. The Laceda-
monians correctly realise (σωποῦσι) this clear restatement of the Athenians’ λόγος/ἐργον concept. The anacoluthic statement τῆς γοῦν οἰκείας παρασκευῆς ἀπιστία καὶ μετὰ ἡμιμάχων πολλῶν τοῖς πέλας ἐπέρχονται ("at least, it certainly seems that a lack of confidence in their own resources causes them to attack even nearby areas with many allies") is the concrete ἔργον proof of their application of this theory. Οἰκείας . . . ἀπιστία are an ironic parody of the Melians’ λόγος-concept involving moral obligation and trust; the rest is ἔργον. The inherent mockery in the words τοῖς πέλας ἐπέρχονται ("attacking even nearby areas"), in contrast with the distant Melian position, as it happens, appears in a paenic meter. The use of οὖν εὐκός ("it does not seem likely") is the sophistic argument of probability as well as a negative reminder of the Melians’ moral thesis. The following statement shows the characteristic Athenian combination of a λόγος based on natural phenomena and ἔργον: νῆσον ("island") and περασοθήκαι ("sail") are strict ἔργον: ἡμῶν ναυκρατόρων ("as long as we are masters of the sea") is the "natural law" once again.

ΜΗΛ. Οἱ δὲ καὶ ἄλλοις ἄν ἔχοιευν πέμψαι· τολὰ δὲ τὸ Κρητικὸν πέλαγος, δὲ οὗ τῶν κρατούντων ἀποροπήρος ἡ λῆψις ἡ τῶν λαθείν βελομένων ἡ σωτηρία. καὶ εἰ τοῦτο σφιλάλαλον, τράπωντί ἢ ἄν καὶ ἐς τὴν γῆν ὁμῶν καὶ ἑπὶ τοὺς τοιούτους τὸ λειπάντων τῶν ἡμιμάχων, ἃς οὖν μὴ Βρασίδας ἐπῆλθεν καὶ οὐ περὶ τῆς μὴ προσηκοστῆς μᾶλλον ἡ τῆς οἰκειοτέρας ἡμιμαχίως τι καὶ γῆς ὁ πώς ὁμῶν ἔσται.

110. MELIANS: There are others whom they could send. The Cretan sea is wide; it is more difficult for even a powerful navy to capture war ships on these waters than for those wishing to evade capture to find safety.
And even should the Lacedaemonians fail here, they could turn toward your own land and the rest of your allies—the ones Brasidas did not reach. Then your struggle will not be directed against territory which is not your own; it will be for your own empire and in fact your own land.

The Melians answer with three cogent arguments, all utilizing the theme of probability. The chapter is almost entirely concrete, ἔργον, in outlook; the typical Melian abstract-based philosophy is incorporated only at the end.

The arguments of probability which the Melians use are

1) ἄλλος ἀν ἔχολεν πέμψαι ("there are others whom they could send"—note the ἔργον word πέμψαι); 2) πολὺ δὲ τὸ Κρητικὸν πέλαγος, δι᾽ οὗ τῶν κρατοῦντων ἀπορώτερος ἡ λήψις ἢ τῶν λαθεῖν βουλομένων ἢ σωτηρία ("the Cretan sea is wide; it is more difficult for even a powerful navy to capture war ships on these waters than for those wishing to evade capture to find safety"), with the ἔργον concepts πολὺ ("wide"), τὸ Κρητικὸν πέλαγος ("Cretan sea"), λήψις ("capture"), λαθεῖν ("escape"), σωτηρία ("safety"), and κρατοῦντων ("powerful"—a reminder of the natural law). The all-important theme of safety is also present. 3) Καὶ εἰ τοῦτο σφάλλοιτο, τράποιτ' ἄν καὶ ἐς τὴν γῆν ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς τῶν ἐνυμάχων, ὅσοις μὴ Βρασίδας ἐπηλθε ("and even should they fail, they could turn toward your own land and the rest of your allies—the ones Brasidas did not reach"). This last example, Brasidas' ravages in the northern sphere of action, is an effective taunt against the Athenians. Σφάλλοιτο, τράποιτο furnish another example of the σφάλλω image extended to the Lacedaemonians, as in chapter 106. The last
statement is subtly constructed. First there is the negative statement, "not against territory which is not your own") and its positive restatement, "it will be for your own empire and in fact your land"; both are antithetical because of the negative. The dactylic rhythm can be made to accent the words "for your own empire and in fact your land". The arguments which the Melians use in this chapter are valid; and in fact the final supposition did actually occur.

ΛΘ. Τοῦτον μὲν καὶ πεπειραμένοι οὐν τι γένοιτο καὶ ἐρμα καὶ οὐκ ἄνεπιστήμωσιν οἵ οὐδ' ἀπὸ μᾶς πάσσων ὁ πολιορκεῖς Ἀθηναῖοι δι' ἄλλου φόβου ἀπεχάρησαν. ἐνικημέθη δὲ ἐτὶ φήσαντες περὶ σωφροσύνης βουλεύσαν οὐδὲν ἐν τοσοῦτο λόγῳ εἰρήκατε ὡς αὐθωναίοι οὐ πιστεύοντες μεταπέτασιν σωφρόνων, ἀλλ' ἱκεὶ τὰ μὲν ἱσχυρότατα ἐπιφανεῖς μὲλέταν, τὰ δ' ὑπάρχουσα βραχέα πρὸς τὰ ἱσχυρότερα περιγίνοντα. πολλὴν τε ἁλογίαν τῆς διανοίας παρῆκε, εἰ μὴ μεταστημάτισεν ἔτι ἱμαῖς ἄλλο τι τῶν συφραγώντων γράφεσθαι. οὐ γὰρ δὴ ἐπὶ τὴν ἑυτητεταφείτην περιγίνεσθαι. πολλοί τε ἀληθεύετο περὶ τῶν αἰτήσεων καὶ προσβασίων κυρίως πλεῖστα διαφθέροντας ἀνθρώπους αἰσχύνης τρέψεθαι. πολλοί γὰρ τε ὑπομένουν, ἐτι ἐς αὐτά φέρονται τὸ αἰθήμον καλούμενον ὁνόματος ἐπαγωγὴν ὑπάρχει ἐπεσκόπασι τῇ ἁπασθεὶς τοῦ ῥήματος ἐξ ἐξαιρετικῶς ἀναγεγράφασιν ἐκάκωσι περιπέτειαν καὶ αἰσχύνην αἰθήμον μετὰ ἄνακος ἢ τίχοι προσλάβεται. οὐ γὰρ, ἐν εὐ βουλεύσει, φυλάσσετε, καὶ οὐκ ἄπειρες νομεύετε τόλματ' ἐς τὶς μεγίστης ἁπασθεὶς μέτρια προκαλομένης, ἐξαιρετικῶς γεγένηται ἐκάκωσι τῆς ἁμέταν ἀυτῶν ὑποτελείας, καὶ βουλευτικῆς αἵρεσις πολέμου πέρι καὶ ἀναφερόμενοι μὴ τὰ χείρων φιλοκυρίας· ὁς σύμμετρος τοῖς μὲν ἱκείς μὴ εἰκονίζει, τοῖς δὲ κρίνεται καλῶς προσφέροντα, πρὸς δὲ τῶν ἐφόσον μέτροι εἰσὶ, πλεῖστ' ἐν ὀρθοντικό. σκοπεῖτε οὖν καὶ μεταστάτων ἱμῶν καὶ εἰσφερόμενη πολλακις ὅτι περὶ πατρίδος βουλεύσεις· ἢς μᾶς πέρι καὶ ἐς μᾶς βοηθήσεις τε καὶ μὴ κατορθώσασαν ἔσται.
III. ATHENIANS: Any one of these events could possibly occur; in fact, we have already experienced some. You yourselves are not ignorant of the fact that we Athenians have never withdrawn from any siege through fear of anyone. But we are cognizant of the fact that although you declared that you were here to take counsel about security measures, you have not uttered one word in this argument on which any man could rely as reasonable grounds for security. Your strongest arguments are your hopes for the future, while your present resources are too frail to succeed against those already set out against you. You will exhibit a very unreasonable attitude of mind if after you have dismissed us you do not consider some other more rational alternative than those you have mentioned. Now be sure that you do not turn to that sense of honor which has often destroyed men in the face of foreseeable and thus shameful risks. For although many men can foresee the sort of circumstances into which they are being drawn, that thing called "shame" lures them on by the force of its seductive name, and they are overpowered by a word: willingly by their own action they plunge into irremediable disaster, and they incur a greater shame through folly than they would have through chance. This is what you will guard against if you take good counsel; you will not think it wrong to be inferior to a great city-state offering moderate terms: alliance, payment of tribute, but retention of your own territory. When a choice is offered between war and security, do not contentiously hold out for the worse. After all, the states which are most successful are those which do not yield to their equals, behave respectfully to their superiors, and are moderate to their inferiors. Now reflect on these points, and after we have gone, consider thoroughly and often that you are taking counsel about your country, your one and only country; and on this one decision rests her future, for better or worse.

In a final, resonant, theatrical passage of complex subtlety, the Athenians again condemn the basic fallacy of the Melian philosophy, its lack of a realistic approach to the existing "now" circumstances.

The Athenians admit the validity of any argument of probability; then they make these arguments ineffectual by showing that,
although such events have occurred in the past, the Athenians have not allowed the possibility of similar events to dissuade them from any action. This concept is expressed in a subtle and possibly ironic λόγος/ἐργον distinction: πεπαιρμαμένος ("we have experienced"), indicating the Athenian ἐργον position, and οὐκ ἀνεπιστήμωσιν ("you yourselves are not ignorant"), indicating the Melian realization, couched in a double negative and perhaps referring also to the Melians' lack of true ἐπιστήμη, knowledge. Πολιορκία ("siege") is also a factual statement of the present Melian position; φόβον forcefully introduces the theme of fear, that important determinant of Athenian action. A paeanic rhythm stresses the last phrase, φόβον ἀπεχώρησαν, and so emphasizes the secondary though obvious meaning that the Athenians will certainly not leave this siege at Melos through fear of the Lacedaemonians.

The next sentence is effective in its complex condemnation of the Melian philosophy. The Athenians begin with ἐνθυμομεθα ("we are cognizant") which naturally enough indicates their intellectual bias but also suggests the θεμος or emotion which is so much a part of the Melian argument; in the latter case it is used ironically. Ψάντες ("although you declared") is also used ironically in the sense of a λόγος-intention or direction, as is βουλεύειν ("to take counsel") since the Melians have not used their rational faculties in accordance with Athenian thought, and as is περὶ σωτηρίας ("about security measures"), since the Melians have not truly considered their safety in the ἐργον of
existing circumstances. This ironic λόγος-statement, φήσαντες
περὶ σωτηρίας βουλεύσειν ("although you declared you were here
to take counsel about security measures") is completed by the
similarly ironic ἐργον statement, οδηγὰν ἐν τοσοῦτῳ λόγῳ εἰρήκατε
("you have not uttered one word in this argument"). In this
comment, λόγῳ becomes the ἐργον "speech" or "argument" as is
shown by εἰρήκατε. The object of the latter should have been
an argument founded on human needs and capabilities ("Ἀνθρωποί,
"men"); intellectually based (νομίστειαν, "as reasonable grounds");
and ἐργον-oriented (σωθησέσθαι, "for security"). Πιστεύσαντες
("rely") is again used ironically to condemn the Melian emotional
bias and reliance on the theme of trust. The final clauses of
the sentence are a balanced condemnation of the Melians' unbalanced
world view. Τὰ μὲν ἵσχυρότατα/ἐλπιζόμενα μέλλειταί ("your strongest
arguments are your hopes for the future") is an ἐργον/λόγος-
illusion relationship, cleverly mnemonic in its jingling rhythm,
ἵσχυρότατα ἐλπιζόμενα. In contrast τὰ δ' ὑπάρχοντα βραχέα πρὸς
tὰ ἡδη ἀντίτεταγμένα περιγίγνεσθαι ("your present resources are
too frail to succeed against those already set out against you")
is a definite ἐργον statement. The phrase τὰ δ' ὑπάρχοντα βραχέα,
an important statement of the actual Melian situation, can be
stressed metrically; certainly the repeated ρ and χ are effective.
Taken together, both clauses are a striking statement of the
reality-appearance/illusion theme and its utilization by the
Athenians in condemning the Melian outlook. Ἰσχυρότατα ("strong-
est") and βραχέα ("frail," "weak") also imply the natural law.
The reason for the condemnation of the Melian philosophy is basically its lack of both correct reasoning and intellectual-ity. This is stated first negatively, ἀλογίαν τῆς διανοίας ("very unreasonable attitude of mind"), once again with the prefix δι- taking its primary meaning of "apart from"; and then reaffirmed in a positive injunction, σωφρονέστερον γνῶσεσθε ("consider some other more rational alternative").

Forceful in concept and style is the next Athenian admonition. The sentence begins with an expanded sandwich construction, ἐπὶ γε τὴν ἐν τοῖς αἰσχροῖς καὶ προβητοῖς κινδύνους πλείτα διαφεύγομεν ἀνθρώπους αἰσχύνην ("to that sense of honor which has often destroyed men in the face of foreseeable and thus shameful risks"); and ends with the surprising ἔργον injunction which finishes the introductory negative, τρέψοι ("turn"). The paean rhythm of ἐπὶ γε τὴν emphasizes the article so that the listener cannot miss the fact that its noun is far removed in a climactic construction. Ἀισχροῖς καὶ προβητοῖς κινδύνους ("foreseeable and thus shameful risks") is a λόγος-moral concept/ἔργον construction; αἰσχροῖς is a sarcastic reference to the Melians' λόγος-abstract frame of reference, since the word precedes but thus emphasizes the ἔργον of προβητοῖς. Διαφεύγομεν ἀνθρώπους ("which has often destroyed men") is a concrete ἔργον description and condemnation of the λόγος-abstract and moral concept αἰσχύνην; the importance of man as a frame of reference is once again seen.

The Athenians continue their condemnation of a judgment on reality which incorporates any purely abstract, and thus to
the Athenians, illusory and deceptive, concept. Προορωμένοις
("although many men can foresee") includes both the λόγος-concept
idea of understanding and the ἔργον suggestion of physical sight;
the word is actually an extension of the intellectual, rational-
istic theme running throughout the dialogue. The rest of the
statement illustrates the λόγος/ἔργον confusion which the Athen-
ians are condemning in the Melians' philosophy. In the first
third of the statement, the effectively damning λόγος-concept
αἰσχρὸν καλούμενον ("that thing called shame") is followed by
δνόματος ἐπαγωγοῦ δυνάμει ("by the force of its seductive name")
—a phrase which joins the illusion-appearance motif of δνόματος
to an ironic suggestion of the natural law, δυνάμει. The same
phenomenon is seen in the next part, in which the λόγος-concept
βήματος ("a word") is preceded by ἡσυχαίζει ("overpowered") and
followed by ἔργον ἐμφασιστὶ περιπέσειν ("by their own action they
plunge into disaster"). Certainly these examples of Thucydides'
use of the λόγος/ἔργον distinction as a stylistic device are the
clearest and most evident in the dialogue. Yet the most irrevoc-
able condemnation of the Melian λόγος-concept is αἴσχισην αἴσχιο
("a greater shame"), followed by δνοίας, that reprehensible folly
of man, diametrically opposed to his intellectual faculties.19
The paeonic rhythm in ἐκόντας περιπέσειν stresses that important
concept, perhaps with a hidden reference to the Melians' stubborn-

19 The rhythm of the phrase leading to "that thing called
shame," together with the elision of its article causing a repeti-
tion of the same syllable, is definitely dactylic: γαρ προορωμένοις
ἐτεlesc δια φέρονται τὸ αἰσχρὸν καλούμενον.
ness. 'Αισχόνη αδεχώ is outstanding merely for its repetitive value; in addition, the phrase leads to the subsequent dactylic condemnation of Melian folly.

The Athenians close with two injunctions that the Melians form a right view of reality. The first repeats the command to reason correctly, εὖ βουλέσθησθε ("if you take good counsel"); νοµεῖτε ("think"). The first time, the suggestion is coupled with the definite ἐργον verb φυλάξεσθε ("guard against"); the second time, it is joined with the negative οὐκ ἀπεπέρα ("not wrong")—possibly proposed as an ameliorating substitute for the Melians' loss of recourse to a moral standard. This is an extremely important section because here, for the first time, the Athenians offer "peace" terms to the Melians.20

The text of this offer stresses the ἐργον outlook: πόλεως, μεγίστης, ἀφαλείας, ἐμμάχους, ἀποτελεῖς, πολέμου, ἡσυχασθαι (suggesting the natural law). The last cut, ψυλοκυθησαι ("contentiously hold out for the worst") is an ἐργον description of Melian action which must have been insulting in the extreme. This first injunction is concluded with a repetition of that natural law which is the Athenians' λόγος-concept and philosophical basis. The ἐργον

20 This proposal, buried in sophistic themes and injunctions, is clearly marked by the rhythm: μετρία προκαλούμενης ("offering moderate terms") vaguely reminiscent of the heroic line, opens the proposal. The rhythm of that proposal is undistinguished except for the dactylic stress in διετέραν ("your") and the paeanic in ὑποτελεῖς ("payment of tribute"), the latter, of course, being the one point most desired by the Athenians and most abhorred by the Melians. Is there a warning note in the dactylic αἴρεσεως πολέμου πέρι ("no choice between war... .")?
terms are obvious: εἰκοσι ("yield"), κρείσσος ("superior"), ἕσσους ("inferior"); but more important are the words καλῶς . . . ὀρθodusτο ("behave respectfully") which also have a simple, concrete meaning ("to be upright in stature") as well as a moral connotation and were perhaps intentionally used by the Athenians to sugarcoat this natural law for the Melians. Further, ὀρθodusτο connotes the σφάλλω image.

The final suggestion of the Athenians repeats this injunction to reason rightly; first, with σκοπεῖτε, a verb suggesting even the physical action of "looking at" things rightly, and second, with ἐνθομείεσθε ("reflect"), in which, as in the opening sentence of the chapter, is the sense of feeling or emotion; though this is quickly allied to the definitely intellectual βουλεύσθε ("you are taking counsel"), there is the hint that the Athenians are attempting to reach the Melians at both levels, emotional as well as intellectual.

The Athenians emphasize the one concrete circumstance which deeply influences the Melians, πατρίδος ("country," "fatherland"); they insist that the Melians rationally consider its welfare, βουλή ("decision"): both words are highlighted by the use of μᾶς and μίαν: ης μᾶς πέρι is particularly effective because of its position at the beginning of the clause. Μὴ κατορθώσας is the negative restatement of τυχοῦσαν; there is in addition the root meaning, ὀρθός, connoting both the theme of morality and the σφάλλω image, while the motif of τόχος suggests Melian reliance on fortune and the gods. The concluding statement has an heroic
112. Then the Athenians left the meeting. The Melians met in private and since the situation seemed nearly the same as before the discussion, they made the following reply:

MELIANS: Athenians, the situation seems the same to us as it did at first. We will not in this short span of time deprive this seven-hundred-year-old city of her liberty. We will endeavor to find security by relying on the divine providence which has preserved our city until this time as well as on the assistance of men, in particular, the Lacedaemonians. Finally, we propose that we be friends, yet neutrals; and that after you have made a truce which seems agreeable to both of us, you withdraw from our country.

The Melians conclude their argument with an emphatic refusal to become a tribute-paying ally of Athens, a recapitulation of their philosophy, and a reiteration of their proposal of neutrality.

The opening verb δοκεῖ ("seems"), preceded and emphasized by ούτε ἀλλὰ ("not otherwise"), has the moral connotation of "seem right;" very possibly the verb might also suggest the idea of non-reality, as in its extended meanings of "imagine" and "fancy."

The Melian refusal is couched primarily in ἐργον terms, ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ ("this short span of time"), πόλεως ("city"), ἐπικαθδισα ἦν
("seven hundred years"). 'Ελευθερίαν ("liberty") strikes the reader as being the exceptional example of a λόγος-abstract concept; but to the Athenians and Melians it has the concrete negative meaning of non-alliance with the Athenians. The phrase ούτ' ἐν διλίγοις χρόνοις, marked with paemonic meter, emphasizes the Melian acceptance of time and its significance in direct contrast to the Athenian now-centered mentality.

The Melian outlook on reality, in its final repetition, is carefully balanced both in λόγος-abstract concept and in έργον, physical circumstances. The λόγος-concept σφυγώμενος τόχος ἐκ τοῦ θείου ("the divine providence which has preserved our city") contains the έργον idea σφυγώμενος ("preserving"); the έργον half, τῇ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ Λακεδαίμονίων τιμωρία ("the assurance of men, in particular, the Lacedaemonians") has the abstract idea of τιμωρία ("assistance") as one of its bases. Thus, both the Melians' λόγος-concept and έργον are closely interrelated. Both phrases are dependent on πιστεύοντες ("relying"), a verb which, as noted above, expresses a basic attitude of the Melians and which has emotional rather than intellectual connotations. Finally, the aim of their outlook in this particular circumstance of reality is safety (αὑράσθαι), as they noted at the beginning of the dialogue in chapter 88 and as both Melians and Athenians have stressed as a primary goal throughout the dialogue.

The Melians close with one last appeal for neutrality, based at first entirely in concrete images: φίλοι ("friends"); πολέμιοι ("enemies"); γῆς ("country"); ἀναχωρῆσαι ("withdraw");
σπονδάς ποιησαμένους ("having made a truce"). That they are formulating a proposal is highlighted by the anapestic-paeonic rhythm of προκαλούμεθα δὲ ("we propose"); the major points in their proposal have a strong rhythmical emphasis: πολέμιοι δὲ μηδετέροις, ἀναχωρήσατ, ποιησαμένους.

Only at the end is there an immediate juxtaposition of a Melian λόγος-concept in softened terms, δοκοῦσιν ("seem") with the Athenian ἔργον idea ἐπιτήδειοι ("agreeable," "suitable"—theme of pragmatism); ἄμφωτέροις ("to both of us") concludes and completes the phrase as a mute, pathetic plea for a common understanding acceptable to both philosophies.

That was the reply of the Melians. As the Athenians concluded the discussion, they said,

ATHENIANS: Well, it seems to us from these deliberations that you must be the only persons who judge that future events are clearer than those before your eyes; you see indistinct events as having already materialized merely by wishful thinking. You have staked most on the Lacedaemonians, Fortune, and vain hope; you have trusted most in these; and you will be overthrown.

The final Athenian comment is a sarcastic condemnation of the Melian position. Ἀπὸ τῶν τῶν βουλευμάτων ("from these deliberations") is an ironic criticism of the Melians who have allowed other considerations, i.e., simple faith (πιστεοῦσι) to
prevail over unadulterated human reason. ἄσκετε ("you seem") has again the double meaning of, first, appearing almost as a non-reality and, second, seeming to act rightly; since the concept is formulated in the second person, the insult to the Melians is apparent. The Athenian mockery continues in a balanced set of clauses: τὰ μὲν μέλλοντα τῶν ὄρωμένων σαφέστερα κρίνετε ("who judge that future events are clearer than those before your eyes"); with a λόγος-illusion idea, μέλλοντα ("future events") contrasting to pure ἔργον, ὄρωμένων σαφέστερα ("clearer than those before your eyes"), and based, again with heavy sarcasm, on the verb κρίνετε ("judge"). The second half, τὰς ἀφανῆς τὰς βούλεσθαι ἐς γιγνόμενα ἤδη θεᾶσθε ("you see indistinct images as having already materialized merely by wishful thinking") again contains the λόγος-non-reality concepts ἀφανῆ ("indistinct events") and τὰ βούλεσθαι ("by wishing") in contrast with the ἔργον γιγνόμενα ("already materialized") which this time is re-stressed in the ἔργον-intellectual verb θεᾶσθε ("you see"). Both τὰς ἀφανῆς and γιγνόμενα perhaps gain emphasis from their paeanic meter.

Finally, the Athenians repeat what to them is the confused thinking of the Melians. ἔργον and λόγος are hopelessly and non-relatedly intermingled: καὶ Λακεδαιμονίως, καὶ τὸ χάρι καὶ ἔλπις ("on the Lacedaemonians, fortune, and vain hope"); the emphasis is on the Melians' foolish actions in the present circumstances, comparable to those actions and conditions described in chapter 111, παρά-βεβλημένοι ("you have staked"—also stressed with paeanic rhythm); their trusting and emotional rather than intellectual base of
action, πιστεύοντες; and their definite, real ruin, σφαλήσωθε, the ultimate, final culmination of the σφάλλω image.

From the preceding study, the complexity of Thucydidean style is evident. The basis of this style is the word. Startlingly independent because of its tortured positioning, each word indicates at least two levels of meaning: 1) the theme or themes inherent in its connotation; and 2) the relationship between the word itself and either the λόγος-εργον or the σφάλλω image. Next, the phrase—the extension and expansion of the individual word—increases the possibilities of thematic interplay and relationship of images as well as emphasizing these concepts by rhythm, rhyme, and alliterative devices. The clause or period, expressing a complete thought and so embracing the word and phrase in their most developed form, is also the culmination of their levels of meaning; in addition, Thucydides uses the phrase and clause most dramatically as the bases of his antithesis. The whole dialogue is an obvious antithesis of emotion pitted against intellect, and tradition against the immediacy of the present moment, all in contrast to the infinite possibilities of action- and thought-combinations present in the image figures. It is this elaborate style, at once concentrating yet extending the implications of its political-philosophical message, which is the ultimate cause and font of the emotional impact in the Melian Dialogue.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In considering the historical background of the Melian affair, we have seen that the Thucydidean presentation of historical facts in the Melian Dialogue is certainly hazy and probably inaccurate: Melos is portrayed as an injured neutral state, and the historical and geographical bases of the Athenian agreement are purposefully discarded. Further, a study of ancient critical comments about Thucydidean style has illustrated by a striking similarity in terminology the universal rhetorical arguments utilized in the Melian Dialogue (such as the moral excellence of the speaker, the emotional appeal of the statement, expediency, probability, futurity, magnitude, and development through example, enthymeme, and maxim) as well as its poetic characteristics (separateness and distinction of words, rhythmic clauses, metabole or variatio, and figures of speech). Finally, a thorough analysis of the dialogue has shown that its content (a stunning antithesis of political and philosophical themes; chance (τοχή), morality, the natural law, the intellect, fear vs. trust, risk vs. security, pragmatism, reality vs. appearance-illusion) is subtly and effectively spotlighted both metrically and stylistically (the use of
two complex image-figures or organizing devices, the λόγος-έργον relationship and the σφάλλω image).

The Melian Dialogue is a many-leveled statement. Our involvement is time-centered: the Athenians consider only the present moment; the Melians include past traditions and future hopes. Our involvement is also space-centered: geographically, the encompassing universality of the Athenian Empire in comparison with the small island of Melos; and artistically, a series of almost paratactic chapters, with no outstanding climax: the impression is that of a uniform, sustained horror, because of the unremitting intensity of the multiple facets made one by the art of Thucydides. Further, our involvement is not visual but auditory, as the work was intended for oral presentation: verbal jingles, balanced and metabolic clauses and phrases, familiar rhythms enhance the meaning. Our other senses are also aroused; the use of the σφάλλω image particularly brings into prominence physical position and action. The dialogue is not just one statement concerning one concept, but a combination of political, ethical, social, and philosophical concepts related to each other through several methods: 1) thematically, by simple association of content; 2) through organizing stylistic devices such as the λόγος-έργον relationship and the σφάλλω image; 3) through metrical rhythms and jingles; 4) through the vocabulary itself, in which words often have a double connotation.

The first attack of Melos in 426 was not unusual. The destruction of Melos in 416 was not extraordinary. Yet Thucydides,
utilizing all the weapons of his considerable stylistic arsenal, magnified and immortalized the discussion preceding this incident. His purpose can only have been to emphasize the philosophical and ethical questions presented therein. But did Thucydides have a didactic purpose in writing the Melian Dialogue? Was he condemning Athenian imperialism, or perhaps Melian hybris? Modern critics disagree about this issue.

George Méautis holds a point of view which is not overly sympathetic to the Melian plight and which in fact condemns the Melians for their error of judgment, γνώμης ἁμάρτημα:

Ainsi donc, par la simple juxtaposition des événements, en s'en tenant strictement à la succession des faits, l'historien est parvenu à nous montrer la valeur symbolique de tout le dialogue, à nous faire voir combien néfaste est, pour l'homme, une fausse appréciation des caractères et des choses. La destruction de Mélos, qu'il raconte avec cette pathétique sobriété qui est la marque de son génie, les efforts désespérés de résistance, la faim qui brise les énergies, le découragement final, la trahison qui livre toute la population mélienne, le massacre des guerriers, l'esclavage des femmes et des enfants, cette disparition complète d'une ville libre, riche d'un passé qui n'était pas sans gloire, tout cela, d'après Thucydide, n'est que la conséquence de cette erreur de jugement qui empêcha les Méliens d'avoir une claire vision de la réalité.¹

This interpretation of the dialogue is certainly present in the text; but only the most objective, stony-hearted reader can fail to be moved by the Melian statement, at least for the first few readings.

In almost direct contrast to Méautis' theory, Cornford considers the Melian Dialogue as an artistic work fulfilling a three-fold aesthetic purpose; one aspect of this purpose is to illustrate the pathological state of mind of the Athenians in blasphemying the gods, and in showing insolence (ὀρπίς) and blindness (ἄτη). His line of thinking is one approach to the dramatic interpretation of the History and so gains at least a modicum of validity.

De Romilly considers the Melian Dialogue as a condemnation of Athenian imperialism: she states that Thucydides is illustrating the fact that Athenian imperialism is bringing about its own destruction; the Melian Dialogue thus illustrates the end of Thucydidean sympathy for Athenian imperialism. De Romilly proves her point in this way: the Melians mention the risk which the Athenians face in their imperialistic policy three times, "and each time a door seems to open on a catastrophic future." These instances occur at the ends of the sections into which de Romilly has divided the dialogue: 1) σφαλέντες ἄν, chapter 91; in reply the Athenians consider how serious a defeat this might be; 2) chapter 98, ὅσοι γὰρ . . . ἔπαινεσθε; the Athenians mention those whom they most fear; 3) chapter 110, τράμοιντ. . . ὁ πόνος ὑμῖν ἔσται; the Athenians reply with a threat. Personally, I do not agree


with the details of her proof: the Melian Dialogue is not composed of any easily recognizable sections, since its logic lies rather in the antithetical character inherent in its very form. But certainly Athenian imperialism is presented in no flattering light.

In his series of lectures, *Thucydides on the Nature of Power*, A. Geoffrey Woodhead suggests that, for Thucydides, power and its use have of themselves no moral overtones; he concludes, "... at Melos it is the misuse of victory which is to be re­proved, not the imposition of Athenian power on the Melians, which was not contrary to right or to justice according to the interpretation of these terms that we have seen to be valid."^4

Woodhead's outlook coincides with that of Felix Wassermann, who comments that since the dialogue was written for the readers of 404 or later, it is undoubtedly a prelude to the Sicilian disaster, and is meant to illustrate, not condemn, the modified Periclean imperialism shown there. That the Melian Dialogue would have been the center or focal point of the *History*, had Thucydides finished the work, is further proof of Thucydides' impartial non-disapprobation of the Athenian attitude.\(^5\) We cannot admit the validity of the final statement, based on a probable


supposition rather than the actual text. It is difficult to prove that Wassermann is wrong in his assumption of Thucydidean impartiality in the dialogue, because the proof of Thucydides' condemnation of Athens' role therein is purely emotional—the reader's "pity and horror" upon reading the dialogue and its aftermath. Could Thucydides have been so impartially objective that he was insensitive to this most human reaction? Certainly no reader can deny the emotional effectiveness of the Melian Dialogue. De Romilly notes that the moral dilemma—the eternal conflict between force and justice—illustrated with such striking power in the dialogue form is in essence insoluble:

Par la maieutique que permet le dialogue, les thèses sont étudiées plus avant, par la discussion serrée qu'il établit, elles se montrent dans leur cohérence, et si chacun reste sur sa position, c'est parce qu'apparaissent bientôt derrière les figures athéniennes et méliennes, celles, éternelles, de la justice et de la force. Le conflit entre les deux principes est aussi impossible à résoudre, aux yeux de Thucydide, que celui entre les deux peuples: comme lui, il ne se résout que par un état de fait.6

It is precisely this description of the universal human condition illustrated with such piquancy in the particular circumstances of Athenian pragmatic imperialism versus Melian idealistic independence which is the source of its emotional appeal. I think that Thucydides, writing later from the vantage point of national and personal disillusion, was condemning neither side but rather mourning the irrevocably fated paths of destruction which both

6Thucydide et l'Impérialisme Athénien, p. 257.
states followed. The aesthetic purpose of the Melian Dialogue, then, is illustrative of the tragic character of the History as a reflection of the individual human predicament.

To sum up, in a wider view of the History as a whole, the Melian Dialogue assumes a major and potent role. That the themes it emphasizes are also the vital life-lines of the History is clear from even a superficial glance at the material in Book One. Power and the natural law are the bases of Thucydidean political philosophy in the Archaeology (1.8, 9). The famous comparison between the future archaeological sites of Sparta and Athens is really a lesson in reality/appearance-illusion (1.10). Thucydides' statement of purpose is fraught with terms of intellectuality and pragmatism. The Corcyraean-Corinthian debate (1.32-43) is neatly balanced in its use of moralistic and pragmatic terms.

The Athenian speech (1.73-78) includes the themes of pragmatism, risk, fear, and intellectuality, as well as a clear statement of their adherence to the natural law. The Lacedaemonians finally decide on war because of fear (1.88). Themistocles is praised because of his intellectual powers (1.138). And so on, throughout the remainder of the first book, and indeed the whole of the History.

It is in the Melian Dialogue that these themes are antithetically woven into an emotional climax—the apex of the History, looking back to the speeches of the Athenians and Pericles, and forward to the Sicilian debacle.
Thus the dialogue is the vital core of the work for a paradoxical reason: it embodies the abstract generalization of the sets of political, ethical, social, and philosophical antitheses around which the History takes its shape; and it is also the very moving, particular example of the application of these abstract generalities.
## APPENDIX
### MAIN THEMES IN THE MELIAN DIALOGUE

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**APPENDIX**

**MAIN THEMES IN THE MELIAN DIALOGUE**

**Continued**

- άνέλπιστον ἥλιος
- σωτηρίας
- σωφρόνως βουλεύσθη βουλή
- ἐπιστάμεθα
- κρείσσονας
- ἀνδραγαθίας αἰσχύνην
- κοινοτέρας τὰς τόχας
- δεινοτέρους
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# APPENDIX

## MAIN THEMES IN THE MELIAN DIALOGUE

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ancient Sources


Modern Sources


