

### Thucydidean Themes in Livy's 3rd Decade

1. Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote up the war of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians as they fought against each other. He began to write as soon as the war was afoot, with the expectation that it would turn out to be a great one and that, more than earlier wars, this one would deserve to be recorded. He made this prediction because both sides were at their peak in every sort of preparation for war... (Thucydides 1.1, Paul Woodruff trans.)

Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Πελοποννησίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων, ὡς ἐπολέμησαν πρὸς ἀλλήλους, ἀρξάμενος εὐθὺς καθισταμένου καὶ ἐλπίσας μέγαν τε ἔσεσθαι καὶ ἀξιολογώτατον τῶν προγεγενημένων, τεκμαιρόμενος ὅτι ἀκμάζοντές τε ἦσαν ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμφοτέρωι παρασκευῇ τῇ πάσῃ...

2. In a preface to just a section of my work I am able to make the claim that most historians have made at the beginning of their entire opus: I can say that I am going to provide an account of the most momentous war ever fought. This is the war the Carthaginians, led by Hannibal, waged against the Roman people. For no other states or nations that have come into conflict had greater resources than these two peoples, nor had the combatants themselves ever been stronger or more powerful than they were at that time... (Livy 21.1, J. C. Yardley trans.)<sup>1</sup>

In parte operis mei licet mihi praefari, quod in principio summae totius profecti plerique sunt rerum scriptores, bellum maxime omnium memorabile quae unquam gesta sint me scripturum, quod Hannibale duce Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullae inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit.

3. It was decided that ambassadors be dispatched to Spain to examine the plight of the allies... This embassy had been authorized, but not yet sent, when, sooner than anybody had anticipated, word was brought that Saguntum was under attack. (Livy 21.6.3-5)

placuissetque mitti legatos in Hispaniam ad res sociorum inspiciendas... hac legatione decreta necdum missa, omnium spe celerius Saguntum oppugnari allatum est.

4. There were some who felt that such a critical step should not be taken hastily, and that they should await the return of the ambassadors from Spain. This last view seemed the safest course... (Livy 21.6.7-8) While the Romans were engaged in these preparations and deliberations, Saguntum was already facing an all-out assault. (Livy 21.7.1)

erant qui non temere movendam rem tantam expectandosque ex Hispania legatos censerent. Haec sententia, quae tutissima videbatur... Dum ea Romani parant consultantque, iam Saguntum summa vi oppugnabatur.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequent translations of Livy in this paper are also taken from Yardley.

5. They are definitely innovators and quick to form their plans and carry out whatever action they resolve. Your quickness, however, is to preserve the status quo, to make no further resolutions, and in your actions not even to complete what needs to be done. And again, they are bold even beyond their strength and risk-takers beyond their judgment and hopeful amidst danger, but your way is to act short of your power and to mistrust your judgement even over certainties... (Thucydides 1.70.2-3, Steven Lattimore trans.)<sup>2</sup>

οἱ μὲν γε νεωτεροποιοὶ καὶ ἐπινοῆσαι ὄξεις καὶ ἐπιτελέσαι ἔργω ἃ ἂν γνῶσιν: ὑμεῖς δὲ τὰ ὑπάρχοντά τε σώζειν καὶ ἐπιγνῶναι μηδὲν καὶ ἔργω οὐδὲ τὰναγκαῖα ἐξικέσθαι. αὐθις δὲ οἱ μὲν καὶ παρὰ δύναμιν τολμηταὶ καὶ παρὰ γνώμην κινδυνευταὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς εὐέλπιδες: τὸ δὲ ὑμέτερον τῆς τε δυνάμεως ἐνδεᾶ προᾶξι τῆς τε γνώμης μηδὲ τοῖς βεβαίοις πιστεῦσαι...

6. News of the destruction of Saguntum reached Rome at about the time that the envoys came back from Carthage with the report that everything pointed to war. (Livy 21.16.1)

Sub idem fere tempus et legati qui redierant ab Carthagine Romam rettulerunt omnia hostilia esse, et Sagunti excidium nuntiatum est.

7. They realized that they had never come to grips with a more ruthless and combative foe, and Rome had never been in such a shiftless and enervated condition. (Livy 21.16.3)

Nam neque hostem acriorem bellicosioremq̄ue secum congressum nec rem Romanam tam desidem unquam fuisse atque imbellem.

8. Your fiancée... has been kept intact for you so that she could be given to you as a gift, inviolate, as befits my dignity and yours. In return for that gift I ask only this—be a friend of the Roman people! And if you think I am a good man, with the sort of personality that the tribes here earlier came to know in my father and uncle, then rest assured that there are many like us in the Roman state. (Livy 26.50.6-7)

Sponsa tua... servata tibi est, ut inviolatum et dignum me teque dari tibi donum posset. hanc mercedem unam pro eo munere paciscor: amicus populo Romano sis et, si me virum bonum credis esse, qualis patrem patruumque meum iam ante hae gentes norant, scias multos nostri similes in civitate Romana esse.

9. He especially inspired enthusiasm for the Lacedaemonians among the Athenian allies. For by being the first to go out, and by showing himself a good man in all respects, he left behind the lasting conviction that the others were of the same sort as well” (Thucydides 4.81.2-3)

μάλιστα ἐπιθυμίαν ἐνεποιεῖ τοῖς Ἀθηναίων ξυμμάχοις ἐς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους. προῶτος γὰρ ἐξελθὼν καὶ δόξας εἶναι κατὰ πάντα ἀγαθὸς ἐλπίδα ἐγκατέλιπε βέβαιον ὡς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοί εἰσιν.

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<sup>2</sup> Subsequent translations from Thucydides in this paper are also taken from Lattimore.

10. By behaving justly and moderately toward the cities, he caused many to revolt... (Thucydides 4.81.2; cf. Brasidas's treatment of Amphipolis at 4.105-8).

τό τε γὰρ παραυτικά ἑαυτὸν παρασχῶν δίκαιον καὶ μέτριον ἐς τὰς πόλεις ἀπέστησε τὰ πολλά...

11. A young man had come who was very much like the gods, he said, a man who was victorious everywhere thanks to his generosity and kindness as much as his military power. Allucius then held a troop-levy amongst his dependents, and within a few days returned to Scipio with 1,400 handpicked horsemen. (Livy 26.50.13-14)

venisse dis simillimum iuvenem, vincentem omnia cum armis tum benignitate ac beneficiis. Itaque dilectu clientium habito cum delectis mille et quadringentis equitibus intra paucos dies ad Scipionem revertit.

12. There were even criticisms of the commander's personal appearance—not simply unlike a Roman, but unlike a soldier. He would saunter around the gymnasium in a Greek cloak and sandals, it was said, and spend his time on books and exercising—and his entire staff enjoyed as much idleness and easy living, tasting the delights of Syracuse. Carthage and Hannibal were gone from Scipio's mind, they said, and the whole army ruined through lack of discipline—like the one in Sucro in Spain earlier and that in Locri now—was an object of fear more to the allies than to the enemy. Some of these criticisms were valid, and some, being partly so, also range true... (Livy 29.19.11-13 – 29.20.1).

ipsius etiam imperatoris non Romanus modo sed ne militaris quidem cultus iactabatur: cum pallio crepidisque inambulare in gymnasio; libellis eum palaestraeque operam dare; aeque segniter molliterque cohortem totam Syracusarum amoenitate frui; Carthaginem atque Hannibalem excidisse de memoria; exercitum omnem licentia corruptum, qualis Sucrone in Hispania fuerit, qualis nunc Locris, sociis magis quam hosti metuendum. haec quamquam partim vera partim mixta eoque similia veris iactabantur...

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