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BRASIDAS AND THUCYDIDES: HERO AND HIS HISTORIAN

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I- THUCYDIDES' PORTRAIT OF BRASIDAS

Thucydides creates an extended *aristeia* for Brasidas in his narrative, retelling his story in glorious episodes that can be compared with epic in their focus on the exploits of an heroic individual.¹ The historian recognises Brasidas for his bravery, military accomplishment, wise advice and leadership. This paper reviews the image Thucydides creates and attempts to understand it in its historical and literary context. For Thucydides was writing after the recognition of Brasidas as a hero, not just at Amphipolis in Thrace, but also at the religious centre of the Greek world, Delphi. Aristophanes and Plutarch add to our understanding of the reception of Brasidas in the fifth century, but it is Thucydides' heroic portrait of him that speaks most to the prestige generated by the recognition of him as a hero in Thucydides' lifetime, and indeed the implications of this recognition on Thucydides' attempt to revise his own reputation in Athens. In this paper I bring together the evidence for the introduction of cult to Brasidas and explore the political significance attendant on the creation of this new cult in the Thraceward area.

Thucydides is our most important source for Brasidas. He creates Brasidas as a hero for his reader. It has been argued that part of the reason for Thucydides' focus on Brasidas as an individual is because Brasidas himself was a source for the historian.² However, the nature of the portrait, especially its focalisation of thought

¹ Well argued by Howie 2005, p. 208-216; Hornblower 1996, p. 60.

² Hornblower 1991, p. 365; Grundy 1948, p. 36-37; Proctor 1980, p. 15; for Clearidas and/or someone else close to Brasidas as Thucydides' source, Westlake 1980, and 1968, p. 148, 153. See Thucydides, V, 26, 5

through Brasidas, does not arise from the nature or quality of the historian's source of information. Instead, it reflects a rhetorical strategy in which Thucydides as author infers motives from the actions of his characters.³ That is not to say that Thucydides' personal experience of military action against Brasidas was not significant in the narrative choices he made as a historian. Indeed, Thucydides inserts himself into Brasidas' story and has Brasidas recognise him as a man of influence in the Thraceward area. Brasidas anticipates that Thucydides' arrival would encourage the people of Amphipolis to resist and so he is forced to act quickly to prevent this happening (IV, 104, 4-105, 1). Through this focalisation, Thucydides lifts his own prestige as a commander by the respect shown him by Brasidas.⁴ We are naturally led by Thucydides' narrative to draw parallels between his own decisive and swift actions to save Eion from Brasidas, and Brasidas' own unexpected and fast seizure of Amphipolis.⁵ These positive images of active and successful military leadership stand in contrast to the negative characteristics drawn by Thucydides of Brasidas' Athenian opponent, Cleon.⁶ The persona Thucydides creates for Brasidas also contrasts with his report of the negative characteristics that define a Spartan—inactive and risk-averse—a view he attributes to the Corinthians (I, 69, 4; I, 71, 1).⁷ Brasidas is not at all slow and procrastinating (cf. I, 84, 1). Significantly, his innovation and his daring expedition to Thrace reflect characteristics the Corinthians define in an Athenian (I, 70, 2-9).⁸

As Thucydides' narrative unfolds, elements of the Homeric scheme for a hero's *aristeia* are developed in Brasidas.⁹ Thucydides characterises Brasidas as "a man active in

for his claim to access to informants on both sides. Randall 2003, p. 53 argues that Thucydides does not mention that Brasidas was Ephor in 429 (Xenophon, *Hellenica*, II, 3, 10), concluding that he must not have had a Spartan source on this.

³ For discussion of focalisation and the need for caution in assuming sources from any inference of motive, Rood 1998, p. 20-21, 48-52.

⁴ Ellis 1978, p. 28-29 argues that Thucydides' account is actually misleading, designed to overturn the negative view of him as a general held by his contemporaries.

⁵ La Roi 2019; Westlake 1962.

⁶ For the contrast with Cleon, see Westlake 1968, p. 81-82, 162-163.

⁷ All references are to Thucydides unless otherwise specified.

⁸ For national characteristics as a "significant part of his work", Luginbill 1999, p. 86. See also I, 118, 2 and VIII, 96, 5. For Brasidas as "the antithesis of the conventional Spartan", Westlake 1968, p. 148, 150, 153; Heilke 2004, p. 130-131.

⁹ Identified and discussed in full by Howie 2005, p. 208-216.

everything” (ἀνὴρ δραστήριος ἐς τὰ πάντα: IV, 81, 1). As a speaker, he is successful, his rhetoric persuasive. Thucydides calls him “a speaker of ability”, even if he does qualify this praise with, “for a Spartan” (ἦν δὲ οὐδὲ ἀδύνατος, ὡς Λακεδαιμόνιος, εἰπεῖν: IV, 84, 2).¹⁰ He is depicted along the lines of Phoenix’s characterisation of a Homeric leader: “to be a speaker of words and one who accomplishes deeds” (μῦθων τε ῥητῆρ’ ἔμειναι πρηκτῆρά τε ἔργων, *Iliad*, IX, 443).¹¹ Presenting his history after the war, Thucydides’ narrative development of the qualities of Brasidas would, in part, respond to the views of contemporaries who had exiled him for his failure against Brasidas (V, 26, 5).¹²

Thucydides builds a heroic image through the narration of episodes in which he features Brasidas, putting him in front of the reader in significant and heroic military roles, such as when he saves Methone (II, 25, 2) and fights at Pylos (IV, 11-12). Thucydides also foregrounds him on other occasions, finding opportunities to mention him even when he does not have a major role to play. Thucydides identifies Brasidas as one of three advisors (ξύμβουλοι) who support the general Cnemus in 429 BC (II, 85, 1), singling Brasidas out for mention in the attribution of a speech, even though it was actually a joint effort by the generals (ἔπειτα ὁ Κνήμος καὶ ὁ Βρασίδης καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι τῶν Πελοποννησίων στρατηγοί: “then Cnemus and Brasidas and the rest of the Peloponnesians’ generals...”, II, 86, 62). The naming of Brasidas and not the other generals indicates a desire on the part of Thucydides to highlight him in his narrative. Similarly, in the account of a daring plan to attack the Piraeus, Brasidas is named alongside the Spartan commander, whereas the other leaders are not (ὁ Κνήμος καὶ ὁ Βρασίδης καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ἄρχοντες τῶν Πελοποννησίων: “Cnemus, Brasidas and the other leaders of the Peloponnesians”, II, 93, 1). In the summer of 427 BC, Brasidas joins the Spartan naval commander Alcidas at Cylene as an advisor: III, 69, 1. We are reminded that he is still with Alcidas at Corcyra (III, 76, 1 καὶ Βρασίδης αὐτῷ ξύμβουλος ἐπέπλει: “Brasidas also sailed with him as an advisor”), where he is singled out for offering advice even though it was not taken (III, 79, 3). In reporting such advice, Thucydides states

¹⁰ For Brasidas as a speaker see Sears 2015; Burns 2011.

¹¹ See Hornblower 1996, p. 38, 43-47 for the use of Homeric language by and about Brasidas; Howie 2005, p. 208-216. For further discussion of the Homeric influence on Thucydides in his construction of Brasidas, Pulice 2014 and more generally Smith 1900; Mackie 1996; Rengakos 2006. For the ancient view, Marcellinus, *Life of Thucydides*, 37.

¹² Marcellinus, *Life of Thucydides*, 46, asserts that Cleon’s slander was responsible for Thucydides’ banishment but this may be an assumption drawn from the portrayal of Cleon in the *History*, as Marcellinus’ explanation suggests. On the idea of the public performance of early histories, see Basile 2019, p. 87.

that he knew about it from an unspecified source (ὡς λέγεται: “it is said that...”). He does not state this as a fact as is his usual practice, instead distancing himself from the veracity of the report. Nevertheless, by reporting such advice Brasidas is given significance in the narrative as a “wise-advisor”.¹³

In the summer of 424, Brasidas is shown taking decisive action to prevent Megara falling to surprise attack by the Athenians (IV, 70-74). Thucydides focusses the narrative on his leadership, how he called in allied troops to join his own, and challenged the Athenians to a battle, which they refused to fight. Again Brasidas is highlighted for the reader (IV, 70, 1); the force is identified as “Brasidas and his army” (Βρασιδᾶς καὶ τὸ στράτευμα IV, 73, 1).¹⁴ He is also reintroduced, with his full name, “Brasidas, son of Tellis, a Lacedaemonian” (Βρασιδᾶς δὲ ὁ Τέλλιδος Λακεδαιμόνιος, IV, 70, 1) although we have already been introduced to him before.¹⁵ The other commanders working with him are not mentioned until the conclusion of the episode when the Megarians open their gates “to Brasidas himself and the leaders from the other cities” (τῷ [...] Βρασιδᾶ αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων ἄρχουσιν, IV, 73, 4) and only then do we realise that he was not the sole commander there, as the focus on him had led us to believe. Significantly, the other commanders are never actually named.

Thucydides does not normally specify his sources, but in the portrait of Brasidas he gives an indication of there being a wider body of knowledge that he draws upon. For example, Brasidas received recognition in Sparta for his defence of Methone.¹⁶

καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου τοῦ τολμήματος πρώτος τῶν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἐπηνέθη ἐν Σπάρτῃ.

For this bravery, he was the first man commended in Sparta during the war (II, 25, 2).

Identification of those deserving of post-battle honours is regularly reported elsewhere. Herodotus says there were official honours awarded to the three Spartans most distinguished in battle at Plataea (Herodotus, IX, 71, 2); he records the name of the most distinguished individuals at Thermopylae (Herodotus, VII, 226-227) and the best and bravest at Mykale (an Athenian: Herodotus, IX, 105). He records a voting process to determine who should be awarded the prize of valour (τὰ ἀριστήια) after

¹³ For the “wise advisor” figure in Thucydides, see Marinatos 2016.

¹⁴ As also IV, 71, 2.

¹⁵ II, 25, 2 and III, 69.

¹⁶ Cf. I, 22, 1-3; V, 26, 5.

Salamis (Herodotus, VIII, 123).¹⁷ Alcibiades states (in Plato) that he was awarded the prize for valour by the Athenian generals (Plato, *Symposium*, 220d-e). Thucydides plays upon this wider body of knowledge in relation to the celebration of heroes in his portrayal of Brasidas. For his action at Pylos, Thucydides repeats the high praise for Brasidas, saying that he was “the most distinguished man of all” (IV, 11, 3). Thucydides implies that there was a formal recognition of Brasidas’ achievements and that he, as historian, is merely echoing and perhaps enhancing this praise.

For the community to acknowledge distinction in a battle, there had to be a verified account of the action in circulation. We find reference to such community memory regarding heroes in Pausanias:

καὶ Μάρωνός ἐστιν ἱερὸν καὶ Ἀλφειοῦ· Λακεδαιμονίων δὲ τῶν ἐς Θερμοπύλας στρατευσαμένων λόγον μάλιστα ἀξίως μαχέσασθαι μετὰ γε αὐτὸν δοκοῦσι Λεωνίδα

Also [in Sparta] there is a sanctuary of Maron and of Alpheios; they think that, of the Lacedaemonians who took part in the Thermopylae campaign, these men deserved most recognition for their fighting after Leonidas himself (Pausanias, III, 12, 9).

Notably, the memorial that Pausanias describes was a *hieron* or “sacred space”, which means that the two men were receiving religious cult as heroes. The community memory of their worthiness for recognition is thus tied to religious cult and includes a narrative element (*logos*). Thucydides intimates the existence of a similar *logos* that recognises Brasidas’ heroism.

Thucydides builds a picture of Brasidas as a decisive leader, wise advisor and distinguished warrior. At the key battle of Pylos, Brasidas’ bravery stands in contrast in the narrative with the hesitancy of the other captains, steersmen, and allies; he shouts to them to press the attack (IV, 11, 4) and leads the way himself (IV, 12, 1). Brasidas fights valiantly in the forefront of the battle until he is wounded and loses consciousness (IV, 12, 1). Hornblower notes how epic vocabulary enhances the epic tone of the description.¹⁸ Thucydides reminds the reader of the behaviour expected of a Spartan: he would not surrender and he would fight until he fell, as the Spartans had done at Thermopylae (referenced for the reader at IV, 36, 3, making direct comparison between the situations).¹⁹ When Thucydides comments on the surrender on Pylos

¹⁷ See Borimir 1988, p. 551-553; for Athens, Hamel 1998, p. 64-70; further, Pritchett 1974, p. 276-290.

¹⁸ Hornblower 1996, p. 46, 166.

¹⁹ Cf. Herodotus, VII, 104, 4-5 for this as a Spartan *nomos*. For the idea that Thucydides drew on Herodotus’ narrative of Thermopylae in his account of Pylos, see Foster 2012.

of 292 Laconians, 120 of which were full *Spartiatatai* (IV, 38), he tells us that, “for the Greeks, this was the most unexpected event in the war” (παρὰ γνώμην τε δὴ μάλιστα τῶν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον τοῦτο τοῖς Ἕλλησιν ἐγένετο, IV, 40, 1), thereby defining the reader’s expectation. Thucydides’ reference point here is the general opinion of Greeks: an expectation of and admiration for the sort of Spartan virtue that Brasidas displayed.²⁰

After he falls, Brasidas loses his shield, which is taken by the Athenians and put on display as a trophy:

ἡ ἄσπις περιερρήνῃ ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἐξενεχθείσης αὐτῆς ἐς τὴν γῆν οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἀνελόμενοι ὑστερον πρὸς τὸ τροπαῖον ἐχρήσαντο ὃ ἔστησαν τῆς προσβολῆς ταύτης

His shield slipped off into the sea. The Athenians later picked it up, after it had been thrown up on land, and used it for the trophy which they erected for this attack (IV, 12, 1).

The loss of a shield in battle could be expected to be characterised as cowardice. Indeed, under Athenian law this was defined as cowardice with loss of citizenship as the penalty, although Plato notes that the circumstances of the loss should be taken into account.²¹ Thucydides turns this potential charge of cowardice into a claim for even greater heroic recognition. The observation that the Athenians identified Brasidas’ shield and used it as a trophy adds to the general picture that Thucydides creates in which there is acknowledgement both in Sparta and Athens for Brasidas as the pre-eminent warrior in the battle.²² In Diodorus’ later reworking of episodes on Methone and Pylos the heroic pedigree of Brasidas is clear.²³ That Brasidas was recognised in Sparta with a cenotaph in a prominent place also speaks to a lasting reputation there.²⁴

II- EVIDENCE FROM ARISTOPHANES

Aristophanes makes it clear that Brasidas was well known to an Athenian audience in the 420s. He refers to him by name in both the *Wasps* and in the *Peace*:

²⁰ On the Spartan ideology of courage, see Scott 2017.

²¹ Plato, *Laws*, 943d-945b. Cf. Andocides, I, 74; Lysias, X, 9; Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 353-354; *Wasps*, 16-25. See Harris 2013, p. 208-209; also Anderson 2008, p. 255.

²² For battlefield trophies, Pritchett 1974, p. 246-275; Pausanias (I, 15, 4) tells us that the shields were displayed in the Stoa Poikile; for an extant example, Agora B 262, *IG I³ 522*: Geagan 2011, A2, 5-6.

²³ Diodorus, XII, 43, 3; XII, 62. A more detailed discussion of Diodorus’ portrayal in connection with Thucydides’ Brasidas will follow in a later section of this paper.

²⁴ Pausanias, III, 14, 1. The identification of this cenotaph as something of note indicates that it was substantial; cf. Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 27, 2. For Spartan memorial practise: Low 2006, p. 86-88, 100-101.

Χορός: σοὺς λόγους ὦ μισόδημε καὶ μοναρχίας ἔραστά,
καὶ ξυνῶν Βρασιίδα καὶ φορῶν κράσπεδα
στεμμάτων τήν θ' ὑπήγην ἄκουρον τρέφων;

Chorus: Have words with you, an enemy of the people, monarchy's lover,
you who are an accomplice of Brasidas, wear a tasselled
coat and keep your beard unshaven?²⁵

The opponent of democracy described here is accused of loving monarchy, following Brasidas and dressing like a Spartan with an untrimmed beard.²⁶ While we can agree with the Scholiast that “following Brasidas” in effect means “Laconizing”,²⁷ the use of his actual name in the play reflects the impact Brasidas was having in Athens. There is an expectation on the part of the poet that his Athenian audience would be familiar with this name and its significance. The audience do not need to be told that he is a Spartan nor who his father is.²⁸ The reference speaks of “joining Brasidas” (ξυνῶν Βρασιίδα), which implies knowledge of the success he had had in Thrace since arriving in the summer of 424, persuading cities to revolt from the Athenians, as well as the fear that he might entice more cities to do the same (IV, 81, 2-3). The branding of a hater-of-the-*demos* as a lover of monarchy in rhetorical antithesis is comic exaggeration.²⁹ The political divide along pro-democratic/anti-democratic lines (reading lover of monarchy as a comic version of the ultimate oligarch)³⁰ is nevertheless aligned with the reality of Athenian politics, particularly the politics of their empire as reflected in another contemporary source, the Old Oligarch.³¹ In the case of Brasidas, Thucydides gives examples where locals sought alliance with Brasidas and revolt from Athens: those who called upon the Spartans were in opposition to the *demos* while the change of external

²⁵ Aristophanes, *Wasps*, 474-476. *Wasps* was performed at the Lenaia festival, Gamelion 422 BC (i. e. January aprox.): Hypothesis to *Wasps*, 32-33.

²⁶ On Spartan costume see MacDowell 1971, p. 197. Style of dress as a national and class marker is noted I, 6, 1-4; for further discussion Geddes 1987, p. 309.

²⁷ Σ 475b.

²⁸ Aristophanes' reference to the siege of Scione (*Wasps*, 209-210) shows how topical the campaign was.

²⁹ In 464-471 the enemy of the poor is identified as tyranny. For the accusation of conspiracy against the democracy in Aristophanes (and elsewhere), see MacDowell 1971, p. 180; Konstan 1985.

³⁰ For natural progression from oligarchy or democracy to monarchy, Herodotus, III, 82, 3-4.

³¹ [Xenophon] 1, 5: ἔστι δὲ πάσῃ γῆ τὸ βέλτιστον ἐναντίον τῆ δημοκρατία: “The best is opposed to democracy everywhere on earth”; also [Xenophon] 1, 14-18; 3, 10 and *passim*. For summer 424 as the probable date of this text, Forrest 1970.

allegiance by revolt from Athens was accompanied by an internal political revolution.³² The use of the word *erastes* in a political context may reflect political rhetoric of the day, echoing as it does Pericles' words in Thucydides where he calls upon the citizens to become the lovers, *erastai*, of their city.³³

Peace, 640 also names Brasidas. Here a similar political viewpoint is presented: Athens' allies face an accusation of disloyalty.

τῶν δὲ συμμάχων ἔσειον τοὺς παχεῖς καὶ πλουσίους,
αἰτίας ἂν προστιθέντες, ὡς φρονεῖ τὰ Βρασιίδου.

[The orators...] started to shake-down the rich and substantial allies, pinning on them charges of sympathy with Brasidas' cause.

The accusation reported is that the wealthy and “fat” (or/and “thick”³⁴) allies support Brasidas; the speaker (Hermes) also alleges that the orators, led by Cleon were looking to profit themselves by making such accusations against rich foreign-Greek targets.³⁵ This was not the first time that Aristophanes had mentioned such a charge, linking accusation of betrayal in the Thraceward region to a member of the wealthy class.³⁶

The Athenians and Spartans concluded a peace treaty only a few days after the performance of the *Peace*; Aristophanes is reflecting specific concerns from that moment in time.³⁷ He also demonstrates an understanding of Brasidas' strategy in the Thraceward area that Thucydides shared (V, 20, 1), while revealing a widespread fear in Athens that an element of the population of the allied cities was sympathetic to Brasidas. The political sentiment expressed here is aligned with the position argued by

³² At Acanthus (IV, 84, 2), Amphipolis (IV, 103-104), Torone (IV, 110), Scione (IV, 121); Mende (IV, 123, 2 cf. IV, 130, 4-7).

³³ II, 43, 1: τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς χρῆ [...] ἐραστάς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς: “the Athenians remaining must [...] become the city's lovers.” For discussion of the strength of the metaphor, see Hornblower 1991, p. 311.

³⁴ Aristophanes uses the word “thick” to mean both “fat/wealthy” and “thick-headed”: *Peace*, 639; *Wasps*, 288; cf. *Clouds*, 842. The Scholiast points out that by “Brasidas” Aristophanes means “the Lacedaemonians”, Σ, *Peace*, 642.

³⁵ See Aristophanes, *Peace*, 648; Sommerstein 1990, p. 163.

³⁶ *Wasps*, 287-289; it has been suggested that Aristophanes is alluding to a charge against Thucydides: see MacDowell 1971, p. 172-173.

³⁷ The treaty was concluded 25th day of Elaphebolion 421 (Thucydides, V, 19, 11); the *Peace* was performed at the Dionysia, Elaphebolion 10-16; Mikalson 1975, p. 124-130, 137. Sommerstein 1990, p. xv-xvi argues that the treaty would have been agreed by the date of the performance.

the “Old Oligarch” (*Athenian Constitution*, I, 14): that the Athenian *demos* targeted “the wealthy and better-class citizens amongst their allies” (οἱ πλούσιοι καὶ οἱ χρηστοὶ ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν) taking their money and rights and seeing them as a threat to their own power in Athens; whereas there was sympathy for the upper-classes in the allied cities amongst Athenians of the same class and they would protect their social equals (οἱ δὲ χρηστοὶ Ἀθηναίων τοὺς χρηστοὺς ἐν ταῖς συμμαχίσι πόλεσι σώζουσι). This again substantiates the point made by Thucydides, that it was an anti-democratic faction in the allied cities that fermented revolt and was in contact with Brasidas. However, for Thucydides it was Brasidas himself who was the key; he is foregrounded in Thucydides’ account as it was he who had encouraged subject cities to want to revolt.

[1] καὶ τοὺς συμμάχους ἐφοβοῦντο μὴ ἀποστῶσιν. [2] ὁ γὰρ Βρασιδᾶς ἔν τε τοῖς ἄλλοις μέτριον ἑαυτὸν παρέχε, καὶ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις πανταχοῦ ἐδήλου ὡς ἐλευθερώσων τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐκπεμφθεῖ. [3] καὶ αἱ πόλεις πυνθανόμεναι αἰ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὑπήκοοι τῆς τε Ἀμφιπόλεως τὴν ἄλωσιν καὶ ἂ παρέχεται, τὴν τε ἐκεῖνου πραδότητα, μάλιστα δὴ ἐπήρθησαν ἐς τὸ νεωτερίζειν, καὶ ἐπεκηρυκεύοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν κρύφα, ἐπιταριέναι τε κελεύοντες καὶ βουλόμενοι αὐτοὶ ἕκαστοι πρῶτοι ἀποστήναι.

[1] They were also afraid that the allies would revolt. [2] For Brasidas demonstrated in other ways that he was moderate and made it clear in his speeches everywhere that he had been sent out to liberate Greece. [3] When the cities which were subject to Athens heard about the capture of Amphipolis, what had been proposed and Brasidas’ lenient terms, they were even more excited towards revolution and sent messages to him in secret urging him to come to them, each one wanting to be first to revolt (IV, 108, 1-3).

Discussion of the detail of the treaty had taken place over the winter (V, 17, 2). Aristophanes suggests that the peace has been eagerly awaited in Athens and should be greeted with widespread joy. However, this is not how Thucydides chose to describe the situation. He does give general reasons as to why Athens and Sparta were ready for peace (V, 14, 1-4),³⁸ but it is two political figures, one in each city, Nicias and Pleistoanax, whose personal and political aims Thucydides draws on to explain why the treaty was

³⁸ He says that the Athenians had lost confidence in their own strength after Delion, afraid that more allies would revolt (V, 14, 1-2); the Spartans are given three motives: the failure of their strategy, fear of helots unrest, the implications of the expiration of the treaty with Argos (V, 14, 3-4). While Cleon and Brasidas were alive (IV, 117), the Athenians had wanted a truce to take measures to prevent Brasidas causing more cities to revolt; the Spartans had wanted to capitalise on Brasidas’ success while it lasted and recover their men captured on Sphacteria; the text here is difficult and probably corrupt: Hornblower 1996, p. 459-464; Gomme 1956, p. 656-663.

made (V, 16). He also names two men who had stood in the way of peace being made: Brasidas and Cleon. It was their deaths, he says, that allowed peace to be concluded.

In the *Peace*, 234-286, Aristophanes identifies two principle proponents of the war, characterising them as the “pestles” that War wants to use to grind up the Greek cities in his giant mortar. War cannot proceed, because the Athenians had just lost their pestle, the tanner, a reference to Cleon.³⁹ The Spartans, we are then told by “Din-of-battle,” have also lost their pestle:

Πόλεμος τί ἔστι; μῶν οὐκ αὐ φέρεις;
 Κύδοιμος ἀπόλωλε γὰρ
 καὶ τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοισιν ἄλετριθανος.
 Πόλεμος πῶς ὦ πανούργ’;
 Κύδοιμος εἰς τὰπὶ Θράκης χωρία
 χρῆσαντες ἑτέροις αὐτὸν εἶτ’ ἀπώλεσαν.

War What is it? Surely you have one this time?

Din-of-battle No, because the Spartans have lost their pestle too!

War How, you evil little man?

Din-of-battle In the Thracian region
 they lent it to other people and then lost it (Aristophanes, *Peace*, 281-284).

Brasidas is not named here—he does not have to be. There is a clear expectation that the audience will recognise the allusion to his death. We know that the assembly had received regular news of Brasidas’ campaign in Thrace and had made decisions about the military response required: Thucydides reports this eight times in books IV-V.⁴⁰ Aristophanes confirms that Brasidas was a figure well known in Athens.

The depiction of the political position in Athens is of particular interest. In the *Peace*, the deaths of the two pestles of War give the protagonist of the play and the community the opportunity to embrace peace. That these two political figures, one Spartan and one Athenian, could be the key instruments of War, is a comic simplification of the political situation. Yet the idea that the political agenda was driven by these two individuals for specific personal motives is one which Thucydides reiterates (V, 16, 1).

καὶ ἐτεθνήκει Κλέων τε καὶ Βρασιδᾶς, οἵπερ ἀμφοτέρωθεν μάλιστα ἠναντιοῦντο τῇ εἰρήνῃ, ὁ μὲν διὰ τὸ εὐτυχεῖν τε καὶ τιμᾶσθαι ἐκ τοῦ πολεμεῖν, ὁ δὲ γενομένης ἡσυχίας καταφανέστερος νομιζῶν ἂν εἶναι κακοῦργῶν καὶ ἀπιστότερος διαβαλλῶν.

³⁹ Line 270: see Sommerstein 1990, p. 145.

⁴⁰ IV, 82, 1; IV, 108, 1-2; IV, 108, 6; IV, 117, 1; IV, 118, 12-14; IV, 122, 4-6; IV, 123, 3; V, 2, 1.

Cleon had died, as well as Brasidas, the two men who had been most opposed to peace on either side—one from the success and honour which came from the war, the other because he thought that, if there were peace, he would be much more visible as a criminal and when he made his slanders he would be trusted a great deal less [...].

The motives Thucydides gives for their opposition to peace are personal ones.⁴¹ He simplifies any politics about the war in both Athens and Sparta to “Athenian” and “Spartan” positions (IV, 117). The Athenians had wanted time to take measures to prevent Brasidas causing more cities to revolt; the Spartans had wanted to capitalise on Brasidas’ success while it lasted. Thucydides’ assessment of Cleon’s motives echoes Aristophanes’.

Ἀλλαντοπώλης
 οὐχ ἵνα γ’ ἄρξῃ μὰ Δι’ Ἀρκαδίας προνοούμενος, ἀλλ’ ἵνα μᾶλλον
 σὺ μὲν ἀρπάξης καὶ δωροδοκῆς παρὰ τῶν πόλεων, ὁ δὲ δῆμος
 ὑπὸ τοῦ πολέμου καὶ τῆς ὀμίχλης ἅ πανουργεῖς μὴ καθορᾷ σου,

Sausage-Seller [to Cleon]

No by Zeus, you are not planning this so *Demos* can rule in Arcadia, but so you may pillage and take bribes from the cities; and so because of the war and the gloom, the *Demos* does not get a glimpse of the crimes you commit (Aristophanes, *Knights*, 801-809).

The expression of the politics of peace found in Aristophanes, particularly with respect to Brasidas and Cleon, is reproduced in Thucydides.⁴² Thucydides is scathing in his assessment of the popular view in general (I, 20, 3),⁴³ and is very much aligned with Aristophanes’ image of Cleon opposing peace for the dubious motive of hiding his crimes. Indeed, he actually seems to draw upon the comic profile in his characterisation of Cleon’s motivation.⁴⁴ With respect to Brasidas, Thucydides’ conclusion confuses outcome with motive. Brasidas’ motivation to oppose peace “because he was successful” (διὰ τὸ εὐτυχεῖν V, 16, 1) is anticipated in Thucydides’ narrative by the Spartans’ own view that they should act “while Brasidas was still successful” and exploit his success (ὥς

⁴¹ On Thucydides’ expression of the motives, Rood 1998, p. 78-80.

⁴² For the oligarchic view of the democracy facilitating crime more generally: [Xenophon] *Athenian Constitution*, 2, 20. For the relationship between Thucydides and comedy, Romilly 1963, p. 186; Rusten 2006, p. 552–554.

⁴³ Cf. also VI, 54, 1. For the argument that Aristophanes’ political views were not aligned with the popular view and had little influence on it, see Stow 1942; for a more nuanced reading of Aristophanes’ political position, Pritchard 2012.

⁴⁴ For the significance of Thucydides’ use of Aristophanes’ Cleon in a post-war context, Foster 2017, p. 137-146.

ἔτι Βρασίδας ἠϋτύχει IV, 117, 24). This is a motivation similar to one which Thucydides immediately passes to Nicias (also V, 16, 1): “Nicias wanted [...] to preserve his good fortune” (Νικίας μὲν βουλόμενος [...] διασώσασθαι τὴν εὐτυχίαν), an ironic anticipation of his tragic death to come. The idea that lies behind the motive itself is a traditional one: that success and good fortune are not lasting, articulated by Solon in Herodotus in the form “count no man happy until he’s dead” (Herodotus I, 32, 4-9). Brasidas’ second motivation, a desire “to be honoured” (διὰ τὸ [...] τιμᾶσθαι), reiterates what the reader has just been told, that after his death he was indeed “accorded honours” (τιμὰς δεδώκασιν, V, 11, 1).⁴⁵ The foreshadowing of actual outcomes by inferred motivation is a common rhetorical strategy by Thucydides and should not be mistaken for actual knowledge of a person’s reasoning.⁴⁶ Aristophanes demonstrates that Brasidas was well known in Athens, suggests delight at his death, but does not heroize him at all. The positive image of him in Thucydides appears to be a later development, which we can attribute in part to the historian himself but also to the reception of Brasidas’ memory elsewhere in the Greek world.

III- BRASIDAS THE HERO OF AMPHIPOLIS

The identification of Brasidas’ motive to keep the war going as desire “to earn honour” highlights another key point about the context in which Thucydides was composing his narrative: Brasidas had already been recognised as a hero. That his *aristeia* was therefore on the public record can provide a partial explanation for Thucydides’ focus in his narrative on Brasidas’ accomplishments. Thucydides writes about Brasidas in retrospect, in full knowledge of his elevation to hero status (IV, 81, 2-3):

ἔς τε τὸν χρόνον ὕστερον μετὰ τὰ ἐκ Σικελίας πόλεμον ἢ τότε Βρασίδου ἀρετὴ καὶ ζῦνεσις, τῶν μὲν πείρα αἰσθημένων, τῶν δὲ ἀκοῇ νομισάντων, μάλιστα ἐπιθυμίαν ἐνεποίει τοῖς Ἀθηναίων ζυμμάχοις ἐς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους. [3] πρῶτος γὰρ ἐξεληθὼν καὶ δόξας εἶναι κατὰ πάντα ἀγαθὸς ἐλπίδα ἐγκατέλιπε βέβαιον ὡς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι εἰσιν.

At a later time in the war, after the Sicilian campaign, the excellence and ability of Brasidas at that time, which some had learned about though direct experience, while others believed from its report, were the principal reasons for the enthusiasm of the Athenian

⁴⁵ On his desire for success, cf. IV, 117, 2.

⁴⁶ For inferred motivation in Thucydides, Rood 1998, p. 20-21, 48-52; Schneider 1974. For the development of the historian’s role as authority in interpretation of the material of his inquiry, see Basile 2019, p. 81-109.

allies for the Lacedaemonians. [3] For he went out to them first and showed himself to be good in every respect; so he left a lasting expectation that the others would be like him.

Ahead of his narrative of the actual events in Thrace, Thucydides reflects on the overall significance of Brasidas' campaign, noting in particular the reception and impact of the account of Brasidas' "excellence and ability" (ἀρετὴ καὶ ξύνεσις).⁴⁷ He tells us that while some people learnt of Brasidas' excellence by their own experience, for the others it was something "they believed through an account of it" (τῶν δὲ ἀκοῆ νομισάντων).⁴⁸ This wider appreciation of Brasidas' virtues through their retelling is reflected in an heroic tradition found in later texts, such as Diodorus and Plutarch. Diodorus builds on Thucydides' depiction of Brasidas as heroic, emphasising Brasidas' glorious acts on the battlefield (ἀριστεύσας) and his hero's death (ἥρωικῶς) at Amphipolis.⁴⁹

ὁ μὲν οὖν Βρασιδᾶς ἀριστεύσας καὶ πλείστους ἀνελῶν ἥρωικῶς κατέστρεψε τὸν βίον

So Brasidas was the bravest in battle and killed the most men before he ended his life heroically (Diodorus, XII, 74, 2).

While such retellings of the story may be derived in part from the account of Brasidas' actions in Thucydides,⁵⁰ they also include generic anecdotal elements, such as the story of Brasidas' appreciation of a mouse that bit him⁵¹ and his mother's noble reaction to the news of his death.⁵² Thucydides acknowledges that there were accounts (ἀκοῆ) of Brasidas' character in relatively wide circulation soon after his death. In

⁴⁷ On these virtues as, "honourable conduct and ability", Hornblower 1996, p. 271-273.

⁴⁸ On τὰ τε πρότερον ἀκοῆ μὲν λεγόμενα, not confirmed by fact (ἔργω δὲ σπανιώτερον βεβαιούμενα) but becoming believable, see I, 23, 3; cf. Herodotus, II, 99, 1 on the distinction between knowing by experience and hearsay.

⁴⁹ For Brasidas' bravery (ἀνδραγαθία) and reputation for bravery (μεγάλη δόξα ἀνδρείας) at Methone: Diodorus XII, 43, 3; for the glory he gained when he lost his shield at Pylos, Diodorus, XII, 62, 5: τοσοῦτον τοὺς ἄλλους ὑπερβαλόμενος ἀνδρεία, ὥστε τῶν ἄλλων τοὺς ἀποβαλόντας τὴν ἀσπίδα θανάτω κολάζεσθαι, τοῦτον δ' ἐπὶ τῇ αὐτῇ αἰτίᾳ ἀπενέγκασθαι δόξαν. "[Brasidas] [...] was so much braver than the others that, although when others throw away their shields they are condemned to death, when he did the same thing he won glory for himself."

⁵⁰ - Diodorus, XII, 43, 2-3; XII, 62; XII, 67-68; XII, 74.

⁵¹ The mouse story is repeated by Plutarch, *Moralia*, 79e; 190b; 219c; the same story (with minor variation) is attributed to Agesilaus in *Moralia*, 208f.

⁵² For the archetypal "Spartan mother's" response to news of his death: Diodorus, XII, 74, 3-4; Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 25, 5; *Moralia*, 190b; 219d; 240c. For Brasidas' reputation, there is an anecdote implying Augustus' admiration: Plutarch, *Moralia*, 207f.

particular, accounts of his excellence and ability that added up to his lasting reputation were in circulation among the Athenians' allies and impacted their decisions in 412 BC and later.⁵³

That Brasidas had achieved an honourable death defending an allied city added to his reputation. He had achieved a glorious end—dying nobly on the battlefield.⁵⁴ In addition, what marks him out as different to other mortals (even mortal Spartans) was his adoption by Amphipolis as a hero.

μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὸν Βρασίδαν οἱ ξύμμαχοι πάντες ξὺν ὅπλοις ἐπισπόμενοι δημοσίᾳ ἔθαψαν ἐν τῇ πόλει πρὸ τῆς νῦν ἀγορᾶς οὐσης· καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν οἱ Ἀμφιπολίται, περιειρξάντες αὐτοῦ τὸ μνημεῖον, ὡς ἥρωί τε ἐντέμνουσι καὶ τιμὰς δεδώκασιν ἀγῶνας καὶ ἐτησίους θυσίας, καὶ τὴν ἀποικίαν ὡς οἰκιστὴ προσέθεσαν, καταβαλόντες τὰ Ἀγνῶνεια οἰκοδομήματα καὶ ἀφανίσαντες εἴ τι μνημόσυνόν που ἐμελλεν αὐτοῦ τῆς οἰκίσεως περιέσεσθαι, νομίσαντες τὸν μὲν Βρασίδαν σωτήρᾳ τε σφῶν γεγενῆσθαι καὶ ἐν τῷ παρόντι ἅμα τὴν τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων ξυμμαχίαν φόβῳ τῶν Ἀθηναίων θεραπεύοντες, τὸν δὲ Ἄγωνα κατὰ τὸ πολέμιον τῶν Ἀθηναίων οὐκ ἂν ὁμοίως σφίσι ξυμφόρως οὐδ' ἂν ἠδέως τὰς τιμὰς ἔχειν.

Afterwards all the allies, attending in full armour, buried Brasidas in the city in front of what is now the agora. The Amphipolitans enclosed his tomb and from that time on they have sacrificed to him as a hero and have paid him the honor of games and annual sacrifices. They appointed him the founder of their colony, and knocked down the Hagnonic buildings and removed anything that might survive as a reminder of him as the founder. They believed that Brasidas had been their saviour and in the present circumstances also nurtured an alliance with the Lacedaemonians through fear of the Athenians; they also believed that because of their hostile relations with the Athenians, Hagnon would no longer receive his honours from them with any enjoyment nor with any benefit to them (V, 11, 1).

Thucydides tells us of the hero's public burial with an honour guard, as well as the creation of a cult space and memorial. Where they buried him is significant—the agora—as this was a space where burial was restricted to acknowledged heroes and heroines.⁵⁵ He also speaks of religious cult to the hero, including games and sacrifices.

⁵³ For people understanding correctly from report, “ἀκοῆ”, cf. IV, 126, 3 and VI, 53, 3.

⁵⁴ Thucydides marks the glory this brings in Pericles' funeral oration II, 34-46, especially II, 42-43; cf. Herodotus, I, 30, 4-5; for discussion of the significance of the 'beautiful death' in Athens, see Loraux 2018; Pritchard 2018.

⁵⁵ For the significance of a burial in the agora, Parker 1983, p. 42-43. For the cult to the *oikistēs*, Malkin 1987, p. 204-240; Kearns 1992, p. 71-72. For the connection between the agora and a hero's tomb, Kolb 1981, p. 5-7.

Brasidas was recognised as the city's founder (οἰκιστής) and saviour (σωτήρ). Aristotle testifies to his knowledge of the cult sacrifice to Brasidas (τὸ θύειν Βρασιδά).⁵⁶

Thucydides himself knew Amphipolis well. Beyond his family links to the area, testified in antiquity,⁵⁷ he tells us of his own local military operations (IV, 104-107, 1; V, 26, 5), a command he may well have received because of his local knowledge and connections. Thucydides demonstrates personal knowledge when he slips beyond the narrative time to a later (narratively speaking) "present".⁵⁸ This narrative strategy is found in reference to the hero memorial for Brasidas:

τὸν Βρασιδαν [...] ἔθαψαν ἐν τῇ πόλει πρὸ τῆς νῦν ἀγορᾶς οὐσης

and they buried Brasidas [...] in the city, in front of what is now the agora (V, 11, 1).

In describing the performance of the cult to Brasidas, Thucydides also uses the present tense (ὡς ἥρωι τε ἐντέμνουσι: "they sacrifice to him as a hero", V, 11, 1) suggesting, in addition to the ongoing nature of the act of worship, that Thucydides may have been an eyewitness to the cult himself.⁵⁹ A cist grave with a cremation burial discovered at Amphipolis (under the museum) has been conjecturally identified with the hero. The grave contained a gold crown and larnax, along with pottery which has been taken to be from votive deposits.⁶⁰

The establishment of the cult is significant in terms of the politics of the city. Herodotus, in detailing cult to Miltiades in the Chersonese, says it was normal practice

⁵⁶ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1134b 23. For the difficulty in understanding Thucydides' own religious position, Furlley 2006.

⁵⁷ Thucydides tells us he had the rights to gold mines in the area and was an influential man in the region (IV, 105, 1). Marcellinus, *Life of Thucydides*, 2-19 (citing Pherecydes, Hellanicus and Didymus) expands that information, linking him by family with Chersonese tyrants and by marriage to the daughter of the king of Thrace, but the account is probably derived from unsubstantiated inference: Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1877; Plant 2016, p. 119-120.

⁵⁸ καὶ οὐ καθείτο τείχη ὥσπερ νῦν "[...] and the walls not reaching down to it as at present"; [...] τὴν ὁδὸν ταύτην εὐθείαν ἤπερ νῦν κατὰ τὸ καρτερώτατον τοῦ χωρίου ἰόντι τροπαῖον ἔστηκε "the straight road, where the trophy now stands as you go by the steepest part of the hill" (IV, 103, 5; V, 10, 6).

⁵⁹ As Gomme 1956, p. 655; the idea that he spent exile in the region (as Marcellinus, *Life of Thucydides*, 25; 31; 45-47; 55) is supported by this reading. Malkin 1987, p. 229-230 takes the tense to reflect ongoing practice.

⁶⁰ Koukoulis-Chrysanthaki 2002, p. 66-72, pl. 11B-D, 12A-D.

(ὡς νόμος) for a colony to establish a founder-cult.⁶¹ Thucydides draws our attention to the political implications of the change of founder, from Athenian to Spartan, yet the reason he gives for the change suggests religious factors should be taken into account too. He tells us that the people of Amphipolis believed that their original founder, the Athenian Hagnon, would have no interest in offerings from their city after the change of allegiance. This presupposes a community belief in the material benefit that would accrue from the cult.⁶² The worship of the founder was a religious act that helped to mark the separation of a new *polis* from its mother city as well as the creation of its own identity.⁶³ So when Brasidas was accorded the position of “founder” this was a significant religious act on the part of the city. It amounted to the symbolic refounding of the city under new patronage, with the loyalty of the city transferred on a religious level to an enemy of Athens.⁶⁴ In addition, Brasidas was accorded hero status as saviour, not just founder, and accorded appropriate cult.

καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν οἱ Ἀμφιπολίται, περιείρξαντες αὐτοῦ τὸ μνημεῖον, ὡς ἥρωϊ τε ἐντέμνουσι καὶ τιμὰς δεδώκασιν ἀγῶνας καὶ ἐτησίους θυσίας, [...] νομίσαντες τὸν μὲν Βρασιδαν σωτῆρά τε σφῶν γεγενῆσθαι

and the Amphipolitans having enclosed his tomb, ever afterwards sacrifice to him as a hero and have given to him the honor of games and annual offerings [...], for they considered that Brasidas had been their saviour

⁶¹ Herodotus, VI, 38, 1. Malkin 1987, p. 189-240; cf. Sears 2015, p. 217-219 who argues that such a founder cult was not necessarily universal and may have been particular to the Thraceward area.

⁶² That there was a prior cult at Amphipolis to Hagnon as founder while he was still alive, as Thucydides implies (cf. V, 19, 4; V, 24, 1) seems extraordinary. Discussed by Malkin 1987, p. 231-232; Hornblower 1996, p. 449-456; Currie 2005, p. 164-166. For the broader implications for the understanding of founder cult, Mackowiak 2018.

⁶³ Malkin 1987, p. 200-202. Thucydides notes that Hippocrates, tyrant of Gela, refounded and colonized Camarina, with himself as founder (VI, 5, 3). When Hiero re-founded Catana as Aetna, he was acknowledged as its founder and cult paid to him after his death. When the original people of Catana returned, they threw down the memorial to Hiero (Diodorus, XI, 66; Strabo, VI, 2). For the status the mother-city expected in the colony, see I, 25, 4.

⁶⁴ For the idea that the change in hero also reflected an internal political change at Amphipolis from democracy to oligarchy, see Simonton 2018.

His appointment as the *oikistès* is distinct from his designation as *sôtèr*, saviour, of the city.⁶⁵ Brasidas was accorded both honours.⁶⁶ A city may establish the worship of a hero as founder who is not saviour or a saviour who is not the founder: a city may also worship a hero who is neither and may even have been an enemy.⁶⁷ While the memory of Brasidas' martial valour may allow Alcibiades in the *Symposium* to liken him to Achilles, the idea of the hero as a saviour and protector reflects an evolving idea of the hero that develops in the fifth century.⁶⁸ This act of religious homage would have required divine sanction. A city needed the approval of Delphi for the appointment of an *oikistès* or hero.⁶⁹ Likewise, the appointment of a city's new hero and new founder, and the change brought about by the rejection of the previous *oikistès*, had to have Delphi's approval. Significantly, Delphi would not always give such approval: when Cleisthenes of Sicyon attempted to get rid of the hero Adrastus, the Delphic oracle refused to sanction the change (Herodotus V, 67).

IV- BRASIDAS AT DELPHI

A further important piece of contextual evidence for us to consider comes from Plutarch, a priest of Apollo at Delphi.⁷⁰ He tells us that there was a Treasury at Delphi dedicated in the name of Brasidas and the Acanthians.

Ἄκανθίων θησαυρὸς ἐν Δελφοῖς ἐπιγραφὴν ἔχει τοιαύτην· “Βρασιδάς καὶ Ἀκάνθιοι ἀπ’ Ἀθηναίων.”

⁶⁵ On role and cult of the *oikistès* see Graham 1964, p. 29-39; Malkin 1987, p. 189-240. For the development of the saviour cult in the fifth century and heroization of war dead, Currie 2005, p. 89-119, 288-291; Hoffmann 2000.

⁶⁶ Miltiades was made the *oikistès*, but not named a hero (Herodotus, VI, 38). Temesius of Clazomenae founded Abdera in Thrace, but was driven out; when it was resettled by the Teians, they instituted a hero cult to him (Herodotus, I, 168).

⁶⁷ We have examples of the enemy being made a hero after being defeated or dying: Philip of Croton (Herodotus V, 47, 2); Onesilus (Herodotus, V, 114); Artachaeas at Acanthus (Herodotus, VII, 117).

⁶⁸ Plato, *Symposium*, 221c. On the implications of the heroization of Brasidas for the evolution of the *polis* hero in the fifth century, see Mackowiak 2018, p. 319-320.

⁶⁹ Dorieus made a mistake by not consulting the Delphic oracle: Herodotus, V, 42, 2.

⁷⁰ *Moralia*, 700e; 792f; *Syll.*³ 829a = *CID* IV, 151.

The Acanthians' treasury at Delphi has this inscription: "Brasidas and the Acanthians, from the Athenians."⁷¹

The marking of a victory with an offering to Delphi was not in itself unusual in the fifth century, but the dedication of a treasury was. Treasuries were more commonly dedicated in the sixth century.⁷² The Treasury of Syracuse, built after the defeat of Athens in 413, was the only other one known to have been constructed in the fifth century; the normal dedication at this time was a statue, statue group or tripod.⁷³ The joint dedication by an individual and a city is also unusual, as is the naming in the dedication of an individual who is not a king or tyrant. You again have to go back to sixth century tyrants to find treasuries dedicated by individuals.⁷⁴ The Acanthians, by this dedication, were therefore making a strong political statement: they were publicly aligning their city with a Spartan; celebrating their victory over the Athenians; making a public statement about the material gain that it had brought them (the booty from the Athenians); and announcing their new status as an enemy rather than ally of Athens.⁷⁵ It seems unlikely that Brasidas dedicated the treasury himself.⁷⁶ We are told that Pausanias had spoils from the victory offering at Delphi dedicated in his own name but this was considered a grave offence and the memorial was re-inscribed by the Spartans with the names of the allies (I, 132, 2-3).⁷⁷ The inclusion of Brasidas in the dedication inscription testifies to the wishes of the people of Acanthus who had it made.

⁷¹ Plutarch, *Lysander*, 1, 1, 2. Plutarch repeats the text of the inscription in *Lysander*, 18, 1 and *Moralia*, 400f-401e.

⁷² For a list of offerings, see Scott 2010, Appendix C-D.

⁷³ Dedications in the second half of fifth century include: statues, for victories over the Spartans (Argos); statue for victory over the Athenians (Megarians); statue of a horse and riders (Thessalians); statues of a young man and Hermione (Sparta): Scott 2010, p. 144, 150, 152, 167-168, 170.

⁷⁴ On building a treasury see Herodotus account of the Siphnians (III, 57, 3). Treasuries may house donations from a donor without a treasury: e.g. Gyges and Croesus used the Corinthians' treasury at Delphi (Herodotus, I, 14, 1-2; I, 50, 3; I, 51, 3-4).

⁷⁵ Delphi refused an offering from Themistocles, a late fiction (Pausanias, X, 14, 5), see Scott 2014, p. 122.

⁷⁶ Pouilloux, Roux 1963; Rups 1986, p. 99 notes that it may have been dedicated as early as 424/423; the consensus view is that Brasidas was honoured after his death: Currie 2005, p. 169.

⁷⁷ Thucydides attributes the deletion to the Spartans, but in [Demosthenes] 59, 98 the Greeks and especially the Plataeans are identified as demanding it; cf. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 873c. For discussion, Trevett 1990, p. 409-411; Fornara 1967, p. 291-294 argues the erasure only happened after Pausanias' second return.

The treasury held a statue which many people believed was of Brasidas.⁷⁸ Statues of victorious generals and heroes were often dedicated at Delphi⁷⁹ and Brasidas would fit into both categories. In contrast, Plutarch thought the statue was actually of Lysander, which is possible as we are told he was responsible for a deposit there of silver and a chryselephantine trireme. Plutarch cites Anaxandridas of Delphi as his source for the silver: presumably this was because the money had gone by Plutarch's day so he was unable to testify to it himself. It may have been Anaxandridas who identified the statue in the treasury as Lysander rather than Brasidas too.⁸⁰

The position of the treasury is not certain. Plutarch's description of his tour of Delphi with a guide is not of itself definitive enough to map the treasury's position onto the archaeological remains at the site.⁸¹ Current consensus is that the Treasury of the Acanthians and Brasidas is building 506 or 303 (Bommelaer's plan); Bommelaer notes the stonework technique of 303 makes it a better fit than 506 for a 422 date.⁸² Interestingly, there are traces of more than one phase of the building. Partida argues for reconstruction and renovation in 422. She sees the archaeology then matching the account in Plutarch; that is, originally an archaic date, with renovation later in the fifth century. She also argues that it was placed in the north-east sector so as to be near the site of the cult to Neoptolemus, characterising the building's purpose as at least in part to honour a hero.⁸³ Scott argues that the building or rebuilding of a treasury was a hostile political act aimed at confronting the Athenian Treasury with a rival building.⁸⁴ However, while the actual site of the Acanthian Treasury remains uncertain, the direct impact on the view of the Athenian Treasury cannot be known. Nevertheless, the building or rebuilding of a treasury with spoils from Athens was a strong political statement of independence from Athens by the Acanthians.

Thucydides gives no indication that the Acanthians were part of a major victory against the Athenians that might account for the booty "from the Athenians" used to fund the building of their treasury. Brasidas' men did pillage Amphipolis outside the

⁷⁸ Plutarch, *Lysander*, 1, 1.

⁷⁹ As well as gods; e. g. Pausanias, X, 5-10.

⁸⁰ Plutarch, *Lysander*, 18, 1-2 = Anaxandridas of Delphi *BNJ* 404 F2; see Rzepka 2016.

⁸¹ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 400f.

⁸² Bommelaer 1991, p. 160-162; Partida 2000, p. 106, 120; cf. Dinsmoor 1912, p. 476-480.

⁸³ Partida 2000, p. 121.

⁸⁴ Scott 2010, p. 105.

walls but the Acanthians are not mentioned as having taken part and this booty was not from Athenians (IV, 104, 2).⁸⁵ According to Thucydides, the Acanthians agreed to revolt from Athens and joined Brasidas after much debate, swayed by his persuasive oratory and fear for their crops (IV, 84-88). There was no battle; rather, it was the combination of persuasive rhetoric about freedom along with an undisguised immediate threat that brought a majority to agree to revolt (IV, 86 cf. IV, 87-88). There is some evidence that the Acanthians did support Brasidas in other campaigns after their revolt from Athens. A small hoard of coins including a few from Acanthus have been found north of Macedonia; Psoma argues that this is evidence for payment of the salaries of mercenaries and the provisioning of Brasidas' troops for his campaign against Lyncestis (IV, 124-128).⁸⁶ All of this does suggest that there may be a gap in Thucydides' account. Brasidas' death in the summer of 422 (V, 10, 11) was only two years after the revolt of Acanthus (summer 424: IV, 84, 1) so there is only a small window of opportunity for him to have been actively involved with them.⁸⁷ It is likely that the dedication was made after Brasidas' death and when he had already been named a hero at Amphipolis. Just as Amphipolis had made a public demonstration of its religious commitment by nominating Brasidas as their founding hero, the joint dedication of the treasury was a decisive public demonstration by the Acanthians of religious allegiance to Brasidas. Brasidas' glory and fame may in themselves have also been attractive to the Acanthians, elevating the status of their treasury by the link to this hero.⁸⁸

By including Brasidas as a co-dedicator of their treasury, the Acanthians focussed attention on the personal relationship of the city to the Spartan general. This was particularly significant when, after Brasidas' death, in the terms of the Peace of Nicias, Sparta effectively abandoned the allies who had revolted from Athens (V, 18, 5), including Acanthus and Amphipolis. In response, the allies did not accept the treaty (V, 21, 2). Brasidas had personally sworn an oath to uphold Spartan commitments to ensure the autonomy of cities which revolted (IV, 88, 1). The idea of an ongoing

⁸⁵ The Acanthians march with Brasidas against Lyncestis, but no booty is mentioned here and the enemy again are not Athenians (IV, 124, 1).

⁸⁶ Psoma 2009.

⁸⁷ Spoils could be sent to Delphi promptly after a battle, as Thucydides implied happened after the battle of the Mantineans and Tegeans in IV, 134, 1.

⁸⁸ For the story of the founding of Acanthus, Plutarch, *Moralia*, 298a (race between Andrians and Chalcidians); no founding hero is identified, but Herodotus tells us that they adopted the Persian Artachaeas at Acanthus (Herodotus, VII, 117).

personal loyalty to Brasidas testifies to the good name he left behind and how his oath of loyalty to the people of Acanthus was remembered, something we find reflected in Thucydides (IV, 81, 3; IV, 108, 2-5). Significantly, although we do know that a city could change the named dedicator of its treasury at Delphi when political circumstances changed,⁸⁹ the Spartan political betrayal in this instance does not seem to have affected the Acanthians' religious loyalty to Brasidas, nor Amphipolis' ongoing cult to him as their hero (IV, 88, 1). Indeed, Thucydides' description of the good reputation won by the first Spartan who had appeared in Thrace may be read as an ironic reflection on the contrasting views on later Spartan commanders, such as Lysander.⁹⁰

CONCLUSION

The heroization of Brasidas was a significant honour bestowed upon him after death that helps us understand local political sentiments in Thrace in the 420s as well as exemplifying religious concerns that Thucydides does not address in his narrative. The role that Delphi had to play in the approval process for a hero (and the process for the replacement of a hero) shows wider acceptance of the situation in Thrace in what was a crucial time in the first phase of the war. Brasidas received cult locally as the new founder and saviour of the city of Amphipolis.

Acanthus exploited its link with Brasidas for prestige in the Hellenic world by associating him with their treasury at Delphi.⁹¹ In addition, Delphi's support for the recognition of Brasidas at Amphipolis where he replaced an Athenian founder, and at Delphi itself where he was recognised in the Treasury of Acanthus, reflects both the political and religious dominance of Delphi by the opponents of Athens in the second half of the fifth century.⁹² In terms of Brasidas' relationship with both Amphipolis and Acanthus, we can see the power of his personal and public profile. The personal authority of Brasidas and the esteem in which he was received was reflected in the treatment of him and his memory after his death. The personal relationship he generated with various allies appears to have been stronger than the relationship they had with Sparta.

⁸⁹ The Corinthians rededicated the treasury of the tyrant Cypselus (Plutarch, *Moralia*, 400d-e).

⁹⁰ For Brasidas as hero and tyrant, Sears 2019. The Athenians were ultimately unsuccessful in attempts to re-establish their dominance of the region (V, 83, 5; VI, 10, 5); the Acanthians noted in 383 BC that they were still living under their own laws as an independent city (*ἀὐτοπολίται*: Xenophon, *Hellenica*, V, 2, 11).

⁹¹ For the personal and civic prestige of a treasury, Neer 2004, p. 63.

⁹² Scott 2014, p. 119-138.

The allies rejected the peace treaty yet maintained their regard for the hero Brasidas. In the heroization of Brasidas we see an antecedent to the cults of Lysander and later Alexander.⁹³

In assessing the significance that he accords Brasidas in his narrative, the fact that Thucydides was exiled as a direct result of Brasidas' success must also be taken into account. Thucydides builds for the reader an image of a military hero against whom, against all odds, Thucydides was able to prevail. His contemporaries saw things differently, sending Thucydides into exile for failure in his command in Thrace. However, by his own account, Thucydides faced a hero at Eion with success: this is the lasting image that Thucydides has given us.⁹⁴

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Abbreviations

BNJ = Worthington I. (éd.) (2007-), *Brill's New Jacoby* [online].

CID = Rougemont G. (éd.), *Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes*, Paris, 1977-.

*Syll.*³ = Dittenberger, W., von Gaertringen, F. H., Kirchner, J., Pomtow, H. R., Ziebarth, E. (eds) (1915-24), *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*, 3rd edn., Leipzig.

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⁹³ For the earlier development of cult to an individual, see Mackowiak 2018, p. 316-318. For Lysander and Alexander, see Badian 2012; Hamilton 1979; Flower 1988; Beck-Schichter 2016.

⁹⁴ For the way Thucydides manipulates the reader's view on his success at Amphipolis, see Ellis 1978, p. 28-29; Westlake 1962, p. 276-277.

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