The Promethean Library



Pericles and Fabius

Two Lives of Leadership from Plutarch, a Casebook

Plutarch

The Lives of Pericles and Fabius Maximus and their Comparison, translated by Aubrey Stewart

Casebooks · No. 1

Pericles and Fabius



A Casebook

Pericles and Fabius

Two Lives of Leadership from Plutarch, a Casebook

Two complete Lives and their Comparison in the translation of Aubrey Stewart

With twelve leadership cases, decision points, debriefs, notes and a seminar guide



The Promethean Library · Casebooks · No. 1
Transatlantic Press

Pericles and Fabius
Two Lives of Leadership from Plutarch, a Casebook

The Promethean Library · Casebooks · No. 1
Published by Transatlantic Press
Series editor: Martin Robert Genter Jr.
First digital edition, November 2026

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How this edition was made. The introduction, headnotes, questions, reflections, practices, notes, glossary, chronology and reading list were drafted with the help of artificial intelligence and checked by hand against the readings and against published sources. Every quotation in them matches the readings printed in this book word for word, and every fact was checked against a published source before it was printed. The publisher keeps a record of the source checked for each fact. No quotation, fact or story was invented. The readings themselves are copied unchanged from the translations named under Sources of the Texts.

Typeset in EB Garamond and Cinzel. Trim size 5.5 × 8.5 inches.

True virtue, indeed, appears more glorious the more it is seen, and a really good man's life is never so much admired by the outside world as by his own intimate friends.

Plutarch, Life of Pericles, translated by Aubrey Stewart

Contents

Before You Begin 7

Introduction 8

How to Use This Casebook 14

Case 1: A Public Character 16

Case 2: Rivals and the People 26

Case 3: The Building Program and Sole Power 31

Case 4: Caution in the Field 41

Case 5: The Samian War 46

Case 6: Refusing to Yield 53

Case 7: Holding the Walls 59

Case 8: The Delayer Takes Command 68

Case 9: Minucius 76

Case 10: Cannae and After 86

Case 11: Tarentum, Scipio and the End 95

Case 12: Plutarch's Verdict 103

Seminar Guide 108

Notes on the Texts 111

Glossary 117

Chronology 120

Further Reading 122

Sources of the Texts 123

Edition Notes 124

Before You Begin

This book holds two whole lives and one short essay by the Greek biographer Plutarch. The lives are those of Pericles, who led Athens in the middle of the fifth century BC, and Fabius Maximus, who saved Rome from Hannibal two centuries later. The essay is Plutarch's own Comparison of the two men. Nothing is cut. Every word of both Lives and the Comparison appears here, in order, in the Victorian translation of Aubrey Stewart.

The book is arranged as a casebook. Plutarch's text is divided into twelve cases: seven on Pericles, four on Fabius and a last one on the Comparison. Each case opens with a headnote that sets the scene and ends with a decision point, a short statement of the problem the leader faced, taken only from what the reading itself reports. You are invited to stop there and decide what you would do before you read on. After the reading comes a debrief of four or five questions.

Paragraphs are numbered: 9.4 means Reading 9, paragraph 4. Many of Plutarch's chapters are a single long paragraph, so a reference may point you to a page of text rather than a line. The questions and the Notes on the Texts at the back use these numbers. A glossary, a chronology and suggestions for further reading follow the notes.

Stewart spells Greek names as the Greeks did: Perikles, Kimon, Pheidias, Korkyra. This book's own prose uses the familiar forms: Pericles, Cimon, Phidias, Corcyra. You need no Greek, no Latin and no history beyond what the headnotes supply.

Introduction

Two Men Who Waited

The two leaders in this book are famous for what they refused to do. Pericles refused to march out and fight a Spartan army that was burning the farms of Attica in sight of the city walls. Fabius Maximus refused, month after month, to give battle to Hannibal while Hannibal ravaged Italy. Both men were mocked as cowards by their own people. Both were stripped of power or forced to share it. Both, in Plutarch's account, held to their judgment anyway.

That is why Plutarch put them together. He tells us so at the start: he chose Pericles and Fabius because they "especially resembled one another in the gentleness and justice of their disposition," and because "they were able to endure with patience the follies of their governments and colleagues" (1.4). Patience under pressure is the thread that runs through both Lives. But the Lives are not sermons on patience. They show a great deal else: ambition, vanity, rivalry, cruelty, grief, a building program that still stands, a war that some blamed on one man's pride, and in Fabius's last years a bitter struggle to stop a younger general whose plan turned out to be right.

A leadership casebook needs exactly that. It needs real decisions, made under uncertainty by people who could not know how things would turn out, and an honest record of what followed. Plutarch gives us both, along with his own verdicts, which you are free to dispute.

Plutarch and His Purpose

Plutarch was a Greek, born in AD 46 at Chaeronea in Boeotia, and he lived past AD 119. For many years he also held a priesthood at Delphi. He wrote in Greek under the Roman Empire, and his best-known work, the Parallel Lives, sets famous Greeks beside famous Romans. Twenty-two pairs survive, along with four single lives. The pairs were chosen for a likeness of character or career, and a pair usually ends with a short formal comparison like the one in Case 12. Plutarch himself calls this pair his "tenth book" (1.4).

He was not writing history in our sense. He was writing moral portraits. The opening chapters of the Life of Pericles say so plainly: the reader should seek out "the acts of good men, which when narrated incite us to imitate them" (1.1). Plutarch admires what is useful for life and has little patience for skill that serves no higher end. He wants his reader changed, not only informed.

That purpose shapes his method. He collects anecdotes, sayings and jokes from comic poets. He quotes hostile witnesses and then argues with them. Again and again he admits he does not know. On the causes of the Peloponnesian War he ends with a confession: "the real history of the transaction will never be known" (9.10). On a cruel story told by a Samian historian he says the man "prefers writing an exciting story to keeping to the exact truth" (8.6). That frankness is one of the pleasures of reading him. It also means a careful reader must keep asking where a story came from.

Pericles and the Athens He Led

Pericles was born in Athens in about 495 BC and died there in 429. His father, Xanthippus, was a commander in the wars against Persia; his mother, Agariste, came from the powerful and controversial family of the Alcmaeonidae. After the Persian Wars, Athens led a league of Greek cities, the Delian League, founded in 478 BC to carry on the fight against

Persia. Most members paid money instead of supplying ships. In 454 or 453 BC the league's treasury was moved from the island of Delos to Athens, and the league became what Plutarch calls the Athenian empire.

Pericles rose as a leader of the popular side. His ally Ephialtes stripped the old council of the Areopagus of most of its powers in 462 or 461 BC and was murdered soon after. In 461 the conservative leader Cimon was ostracized, sent into exile for ten years by a vote of the people. A second rival, Thucydides son of Melesias (not the historian), was ostracized in 443 or 442; the sources give both years. From about 444 Pericles was elected general year after year. Athens' generals were a board of ten elected annually, and his authority rested on persuasion and re-election, not on any office above the others. The historian Thucydides, quoted by Plutarch, judged that Athens under him was "a democracy in name, but really an aristocracy, because the government was all in the hands of one leading citizen" (3.1).

Under Pericles the Athenians built the Parthenon, begun in 447 BC under the general supervision of the sculptor Phidias, and the great gateway of the Acropolis, the Propylaea. They fought a hard war against their own ally Samos. They made the Thirty Years' Peace with Sparta in the winter of 446 to 445 BC, and they broke with Sparta again in 431, when the Peloponnesian War began. Pericles' strategy was to avoid a land battle with the Spartan army, bring the country people inside the walls and strike back by sea. In 430 plague broke out in the crowded city. The Athenians removed him from office and fined him, then elected him general again in 429. He died of the plague that year. The war went on until Athens surrendered in 404.

Fabius and the War with Hannibal

Quintus Fabius Maximus was born in about 280 BC and died in 203. He was consul five times, in 233, 228, 215, 214 and 209 BC. Rome's consuls were two magistrates elected each year, who commanded its armies. In an emergency the Romans could name a single dictator, an extraordinary

magistrate with full authority to meet one crisis and then lay it down. Fabius was named dictator in 217 BC.

The crisis was Hannibal. The Carthaginian general crossed the Alps into Italy in 218 BC and destroyed Roman armies at the Trebia that year and at Lake Trasimene in 217. Fabius's answer was to shadow Hannibal through the hills, keep his own army safe and refuse a pitched battle, letting the invader wear himself out far from home. The Romans called this cowardice. They gave his deputy equal command; then, after his term, they elected a consul who promised a quick victory. In 216 BC, at Cannae, Hannibal destroyed the largest army Rome had ever fielded. After Cannae, Fabius's caution looked like wisdom, and he became, in a phrase Plutarch borrows, "the shield" of Rome (17.4). In his fifth consulship, in 209 BC, he retook Tarentum. In his last years he fought hard against Scipio's plan to carry the war to Africa. Scipio crossed in 204 BC and defeated Hannibal at Zama in 202. Fabius had died the year before. Later ages named a whole style of strategy after him, and his best-known nickname, Cunctator, means the Delayer.

Why Pair Them

Plutarch's Comparison (Reading 20) is short, but it raises the hardest questions in the book. Which is harder: to steer a people swollen with success, or to rally a people crushed by defeat? Is a leader who was right when his country suffered better than one who was wrong while his country won? Plutarch's own answer is mixed. He thinks Pericles' long war a "great blot" on his fame (20.3), and he thinks Fabius was wrong about Scipio. He praises Pericles' clean hands and great buildings, and Fabius's generosity to a rival who had humiliated him.

The pairing also sets two kinds of power side by side. Pericles held no permanent office, yet he controlled Athens through speech, money, reputation and the habit of re-election. Fabius held the highest emergency office Rome had, yet he could not stop other commanders from losing battles. Plutarch notices the irony (20.3–20.4). For a modern reader the

contrast is useful: it separates authority that rests on office from authority that rests on trust.

Read in that light, the two Lives make a natural course in judgment. Each case asks a version of the same few questions. What did the leader know, and what could he not know? Whose approval did he need, and whose could he do without? What would waiting cost, and what would acting cost? Pericles and Fabius answered those questions differently in different years, and they were not always right. Pericles, by Plutarch's account, could be harsh to rivals and to rebellious allies; Fabius could be cruel at Tarentum and jealous of a younger man. The value of the casebook lies less in their answers than in watching two able people work through hard choices with incomplete information, under the eyes of a public that was often angry and sometimes right.

Reading Plutarch Critically

Plutarch wrote more than five centuries after Pericles and about three after Fabius. He drew on historians, philosophers, public decrees and the jokes of comic playwrights, and he did not always know which to believe. Some stories in these Lives are almost certainly gossip. Modern scholars doubt, for example, that Aspasia was ever brought to trial; the story may come from a comic play. On the death of Phidias, ancient writers disagreed. Where this book's notes can point to such doubts from a reliable source, they do.

None of that spoils the casebook. A case study is never the whole truth. It is a record good enough to argue about, and Plutarch's habit of setting rival accounts side by side gives you material for the argument. When he says "some say" or "it is said," notice it. When he gives a speech word for word, remember that no one took it down at the time.

The Translation

Aubrey Stewart (1844 to 1918), a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, translated these Lives for a four-volume Plutarch published in London by George Bell in 1880 to 1882, with thirteen Roman Lives translated earlier by George Long (1800 to 1879). Pericles, Fabius and the Comparison are Stewart's work. The text here comes from the 1894 printing. Stewart writes clear Victorian prose, with a few old words ("despot" for tyrant, "intrigues" for love affairs) and some long sentences. Read him aloud and he moves well.

How to Use This Casebook

Reading alone. Take one case at a sitting. Read the headnote, then stop at the decision point. Write down, in three or four sentences, what you would do and why. Then read the passage and the debrief. Your first answer is not a test. It is a record of your instincts, and it is often most useful when Plutarch's leader chose differently. Keep the notes; by the end you will have a sketch of your own habits of judgment beside those of two famous men.

In a seminar. The decision points work best when no one has read ahead. A leader can give out each headnote alone, let the group argue the decision for fifteen or twenty minutes, and only then turn to the reading. The Seminar Guide at the end gives a two-hour plan and a four-session plan, with ways to keep the outcomes hidden.

In a leadership course. The twelve cases fall into a few clear themes that a course can follow: how a leader builds a public character (Cases 1 and 8); how a leader handles rivals (Cases 2, 9 and 11); how a leader spends public money and resists bribes (Cases 3 and 4); when to fight and when to wait (Cases 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10); what happens when private life and public power collide (Cases 5, 6 and 7); and how to judge a leader's whole record (Case 12). The debrief questions are tied to paragraph numbers so that a discussion can stay close to the text.

A word of caution. Plutarch is not neutral. He admires both men and says so, and his stories often carry a moral. A good debrief asks not only whether the leader was right but also how Plutarch wants you to judge, and whether you agree. The cases are ancient, but the questions are not.

Read the decision points as honest puzzles. Each one states only what the reading reports about the situation. Nothing is added: no invented details, no modern parallels. Whatever modern comparisons the reader brings are the reader's own.

Case 1: A Public Character

Plutarch opens with an argument about what is worth our attention. We admire a fine perfume and look down on the perfumer, he says, but virtuous action is different: it makes us want to do likewise. That is why he writes lives, and why he has paired Pericles of Athens with Fabius Maximus of Rome (1.4).

Then he turns to Pericles himself. Born in Athens in about 495 BC to a father who had commanded against the Persians and a mother of the old Alcmaeonid family, Pericles grew up rich and well connected. Plutarch describes his teachers: Damon in music, Zeno of Elea in argument, and above all the philosopher Anaxagoras, who taught that an ordering mind, not chance, shaped the universe. From them, Plutarch thinks, Pericles took his lofty style of speaking, his calm face and his contempt for superstition. The comic poets laughed at the shape of his head.

The readings cover Plutarch's opening chapters and the formation of Pericles' public manner, up to the nickname "the Olympian."

Decision point: As a young man Pericles "greatly feared the people" (2.17). He was rich, of noble birth and had powerful friends. Old men said his voice and his looks recalled the tyrant Peisistratus, and he feared he might be banished by ostracism. Then the great figures of the older generation left the stage: Aristides was dead, Themistocles banished, and Cimon, the favorite of the nobles, was often away on distant campaigns. Should a man in Pericles' position enter public life at all? If he does, on which side, and how should he carry himself so that his gifts do not become a danger to him?

Reading 1. *Why read lives. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 1–2), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

❧

1 One day in Rome, Caesar, seeing some rich foreigners nursing and petting young lapdogs and monkeys, enquired whether in their parts of the world the women bore no children: a truly imperial reproof to those who waste on animals the affection which they ought to bestow upon mankind. May we not equally blame those who waste the curiosity and love of knowledge which belongs to human nature, by directing it to worthless, not to useful objects? It is indeed unavoidable that external objects, whether good or bad, should produce some effect upon our senses; but every man is able, if he chooses, to concentrate his mind upon any subject he may please. For this reason we ought to seek virtue, not merely in order to contemplate it, but that we may ourselves derive some benefit from so doing. Just as those colours whose blooming and pleasant hues refresh our sight are grateful to the eyes, so we ought by our studies to delight in that which is useful for our own lives; and this is to be found in the acts of good men, which when narrated incite us to imitate them. The effect does not take place in other cases, for we frequently admire what we do not wish to produce; indeed we often are charmed with the work, but despise the workman, as in the case of dyes and perfumery which we take pleasure in, although we regard dyers and perfumers as vulgar artizans. That was a clever saying of Antisthenes, who answered, when he heard that Ismenias was a capital flute-player, "But he must be a worthless man, for if he were not, he would not be such a capital flute-player!" and King Philip of Macedon, when his son played brilliantly and agreeably on the harp at an entertainment, said to him, "Are you not ashamed, to play so well?"

2 It is enough for a king, if he sometimes employs his leisure in listening to musicians, and it is quite a sufficient tribute from him to the Muses, if he is present at the performances of other persons.

3 If a man devotes himself to these trifling arts, the time which he wastes upon them proves that he is incapable of higher things. No well nurtured youth, on seeing the statue of Jupiter Olympius at Pisa, wishes that he were a Pheidias, or that he were a Polykleitus on seeing the statue of Juno at Argos, nor yet while he takes pleasure in poetry, does he wish that he were an Anakreon, a Philetas, or an Archilochus; for it does not necessarily follow that we esteem the workman because we are pleased with the work. For this reason men are not benefited by any spectacle which does not encourage them to imitation, and where reflection upon what they have observed does not make them also wish to do likewise; whereas we both admire the deeds to which virtue incites, and long to emulate the doers of them.

4 We enjoy the good things which we owe to fortune, but we admire virtuous actions; and while we wish to receive the former, we wish ourselves to benefit others by the latter. That which is in itself admirable kindles in us a desire of emulation, whether we see noble deeds presented before us, or read of them in history. It was with this purpose that I have engaged in writing biography, and have arranged this tenth book to contain the lives of Perikles and of Fabius Maximus, who fought against Hannibal, men who especially resembled one another in the gentleness and justice of their disposition, and who were both of the greatest service to their native countries, because they were able to endure with patience the follies of their governments and colleagues. Of my success, the reader of the following pages will be able to judge for themself.

Reading 2. *Birth, teachers and a public manner. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 3–8), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Perikles was of the tribe Akamantis, and of the township of Cholargos, and was descended from the noblest families in Athens, on both his father's and mother's side. His father, Xanthippus, defeated the Persian gen-

erals at Mykale, while his mother, Agariste, was a descendant of Kleisthenes, who drove the sons of Peisistratus out of Athens, put an end to their despotic rule, and established a new constitution admirably calculated to reconcile all parties and save the country. She dreamed that she had brought forth a lion, and a few days afterwards was delivered of Perikles. His body was symmetrical, but his head was long out of all proportion; for which reason in nearly all his statues he is represented wearing a helmet, as the sculptors did not wish, I suppose, to reproach him with this blemish. The Attic poets called him squill-head, and the comic poet, Kratinus, in his play 'Cheirones,' says,

"From Kronos old and faction, Is sprung a tyrant dread, And all Olympus calls him, The man-compelling head."

And again in the play of 'Nemesis'

"Come, hospitable Zeus, with lofty head."

Telekleides, too, speaks of him as sitting

"Bowed down With a dreadful frown, Because matters of state have gone wrong, Until at last, From his head so vast, His ideas burst forth in a throng."

And Eupolis, in his play of 'Demoi,' asking questions about each of the great orators as they come up from the other world one after the other, when at last Perikles ascends, says,

"The great headpiece of those below."

Most writers tell us that his tutor in music was Damon, whose name they say should be pronounced with the first syllable short. Aristotle, however, says that he studied under Pythokleides. This Damon, it seems, was a sophist of the highest order, who used the name of music to conceal this accomplishment from the world, but who really trained Perikles for his political contests just as a trainer prepares an athlete for the games. However, Damon's use of music as a pretext did not impose upon the Athenians, who banished him by ostracism, as a busybody and lover of

despotism. He was ridiculed by the comic poets; thus Plato represents some one as addressing him,

10 "Answer me this, I humbly do beseech, For thou, like Cheiron, Perikles did'st teach."

11 Perikles also attended the lectures of Zeno, of Elea, on natural philosophy, in which that philosopher followed the method of Parmenides. Zeno moreover had made an especial study of how to reduce any man to silence who questioned him, and how to enclose him between the horns of a dilemma, which is alluded to by Timon of Phlius in the following verses:

12 "Nor weak the strength of him of two-edged tongue, Zeno that carps at all."

13 But it was Anaxagoras of Klazomenae who had most to do with forming Perikles's style, teaching him an elevation and sublimity of expression beyond that of ordinary popular speakers, and altogether purifying and ennobling his mind. This Anaxagoras was called Nous, or Intelligence, by the men of that day, either because they admired his own intellect, or because he taught that an abstract intelligence is to be traced in all the concrete forms of matter, and that to this, and not to chance, the universe owes its origin.

14 Perikles greatly admired Anaxagoras, and became deeply interested in these grand speculations, which gave him a haughty spirit and a lofty style of oratory far removed from vulgarity and low buffoonery, and also an imperturbable gravity of countenance, and a calmness of demeanour and appearance which no incident could disturb as he was speaking, while the tone of his voice never showed that he heeded any interruption. These advantages greatly impressed the people. Once he sat quietly all day in the market-place despatching some pressing business, reviled in the foulest terms all the while by some low worthless fellow. Towards evening he walked home, the man following him and heaping abuse upon him. When about to enter his own door, as it was dark, he ordered

one of his servants to take a torch and light the man home. The poet Ion, however, says that Perikles was overbearing and insolent in conversation, and that his pride had in it a great deal of contempt for others; while he praises Kimon's civil, sensible, and polished address. But we may disregard Ion, as a mere dramatic poet who always sees in great men something upon which to exercise his satiric vein; whereas Zeno used to invite those who called the haughtiness of Perikles a mere courting of popularity and affectation of grandeur, to court popularity themselves in the same fashion, since the acting of such a part might insensibly mould their dispositions until they resembled that of their model.

15 These were not the only advantages which Perikles gained from his intimacy with Anaxagoras, but he seems to have learned to despise those superstitious fears which the common phenomena of the heavens produce in those who, ignorant of their cause, and knowing nothing about them, refer them all to the immediate action of the gods. Knowledge of physical science, while it puts an end to superstitious terrors, replaces them by a sound basis of piety. It is said that once a ram with one horn was sent from the country as a present to Perikles, and that Lampon the prophet, as soon as he saw this strong horn growing out of the middle of the creature's forehead, said that as there were two parties in the state, that of Thucydides and that of Perikles, he who possessed this mystic animal would unite the two into one. Anaxagoras cut open the beast's skull, and pointed out that its brain did not fill the whole space, but was sunken into the shape of an egg, and all collected at that part from which the horn grew. At the time all men looked with admiration on Anaxagoras, but afterwards, when Thucydides had fallen, and all the state had become united under Perikles, they admired Lampon equally.

16 There is, I imagine, no reason why both the prophet and the natural philosopher should not have been right, the one discovering the cause, and the other the meaning. The one considered why the horn grew so, and for what reason; the other declared what it *meant* by growing so, and for what *end* it took place. Those who say that when the cause of a

portent is found out the portent is explained away, do not reflect that the same reasoning which explains away heavenly portents would also put an end to the meaning of the conventional signals used by mankind. The ringing of bells, the blaze of beacon fires, and the shadows on a dial are all of them produced by natural causes, but have a further meaning. But perhaps all this belongs to another subject.

17 Perikles when young greatly feared the people. He had a certain personal likeness to the despot Peisistratus; and as his own voice was sweet, and he was ready and fluent in speech, old men who had known Peisistratus were struck by his resemblance to him. He was also rich, of noble birth, and had powerful friends, so that he feared he might be banished by ostracism, and consequently held aloof from politics, but proved himself a brave and daring soldier in the wars. But when Aristeides was dead, Themistokles banished, and Kimon generally absent on distant campaigns, Perikles engaged in public affairs, taking the popular side, that of the poor and many against that of the rich and few, quite contrary to his own feelings, which were entirely aristocratic. He feared, it seems, that he might be suspected of a design to make himself despot, and seeing that Kimon took the side of the nobility, and was much beloved by them, he betook himself to the people, as a means of obtaining safety for himself, and a strong party to combat that of Kimon. He immediately altered his mode of life; was never seen in any street except that which led to the market-place and the national assembly, and declined all invitations to dinner and such like social gatherings, so utterly that during the whole of his long political life he never dined with one of his friends, except when his first cousin, Euryptolemus, was married. On this occasion he sat at table till the libations were poured, upon which he at once got up and went away. For solemnity is wont to unbend at festive gatherings, and a majestic demeanour is hard to keep up when one is in familiar intercourse with others. True virtue, indeed, appears more glorious the more it is seen, and a really good man's life is never so much admired by the outside world as by his own intimate friends. But Perikles feared to make

himself too common even with the people, and only addressed them after long intervals—not speaking upon every subject, and, not constantly addressing them, but, as Kritolaus says, keeping himself like the Salaminian trireme for great crises, and allowing his friends and the other orators to manage matters of less moment. One of these friends is said to have been Ephialtes, who destroyed the power of the Council of the Areopagus, "pouring out," as Plato, the comic poet, said, "a full and unmixed draught of liberty for the citizens," under the influence of which the poets of the time said that the Athenian people

18 "Nibbled at Euboea, like a horse that spurns the rein, And wantonly would leap upon the islands in the main."

19 Wishing to adopt a style of speaking consonant with his haughty manner and lofty spirit, Perikles made free use of the instrument which Anaxagoras as it were put into his hand, and often tinged his oratory with natural philosophy. He far surpassed all others by using this "lofty intelligence and power of universal consummation," as the divine Plato calls it; in addition to his natural advantages, adorning his oratory with apt illustrations drawn from physical science.

20 For this reason some think that he was nicknamed the Olympian; though some refer this to his improvement of the city by new and beautiful buildings, and others from his power both as a politician and a general. It is not by any means unlikely that these causes all combined to produce the name. Yet the comedies of that time, when they allude to him, either in jest or earnest, always appear to think that this name was given him because of his manner of speaking, as they speak of him as "thundering and lightening," and "rolling fateful thunders from his tongue." A saying of Thucydides, the son of Melesias, has been preserved, which jestingly testifies to the power of Perikles's eloquence. Thucydides was the leader of the conservative party, and for a long time struggled to hold his own against Perikles in debate. One day Archidamus, the King of Sparta, asked him whether he or Perikles was the best wrestler. "When I throw

him in wrestling," Thucydides answered, "he beats me by proving that he never was down, and making the spectators believe him." For all this Perikles was very cautious about his words, and whenever he ascended the tribune to speak, used first to pray to the gods that nothing unfitted for the present occasion might fall from his lips. He left no writings, except the measures which he brought forward, and very few of his sayings are recorded. One of these was, that he called Aegina "the eyesore of the Peiraeus," and that "he saw war coming upon Athens from Peloponnesus." Stesimbrotus tells us that when he was pronouncing a public funeral oration over those who fell in Samos, he said that they had become immortal, even as the gods: for we do not see the gods, but we conceive them to be immortal by the respect which we pay them, and the blessings which we receive from them; and the same is the case with those who die for their country.

Debrief

1. Plutarch says we may be “charmed with the work, but despise the workman” (1.1). What separates, for him, the skill we admire from the character we want to imitate? Do you accept the distinction?
2. Pericles took “the popular side, that of the poor and many against that of the rich and few, quite contrary to his own feelings, which were entirely aristocratic” (2.17). Was that prudence, ambition or hypocrisy? Can a leader rightly champion a cause for reasons of self-protection?
3. He stopped dining with friends and spoke to the people only at long intervals, keeping himself “for great crises” (2.17). What does a leader gain by distance, and what does he lose?
4. When a man abused him all day in the market-place, Pericles had a servant “take a torch and light the man home” (2.14). Plutarch also

reports Ion's view that he was "overbearing and insolent in conversation." How would you weigh the two pictures?

5. Before speaking he prayed "that nothing unfitted for the present occasion might fall from his lips" (2.20). What would that discipline look like in a leader today?

Case 2: Rivals and the People

Pericles could not match Cimon's private fortune. Cimon fed poor citizens at his own table and left his orchards open for anyone to gather the fruit. Pericles, Plutarch says, answered with public money: pay for jurors and other offices, money for festivals, grants of land abroad. With the people behind him he attacked the old council of the Areopagus, whose powers his ally Ephialtes cut back in 462 or 461 BC, and he helped send Cimon into exile by ostracism in 461.

This reading covers those years and the rise of a new rival, Thucydides son of Melesias, a relative of Cimon, who organized the nobles into a separate bloc. Plutarch admits that his sources disagree sharply. Some writers say Pericles made a secret deal with Cimon's sister Elpinice; one even accuses him of arranging the murder of Ephialtes. Plutarch rejects that charge and names, from Aristotle, a different killer.

Decision point: Cimon was in exile, banished partly through Pericles' own efforts as a friend of Sparta. Then a Spartan army invaded the territory of Tanagra. Cimon came back in full armor and took his place in the ranks of his tribe to prove his loyalty, but the friends of Pericles drove him away as an exile. Cimon's friends then fought and fell together in their ranks. The battle on the frontier was lost, the Athenians expected a hard summer against the Spartans, and they now felt "great sorrow for their treatment of Kimon, and a great longing for his restoration" (3.2). Pericles was the man most identified with Cimon's exile. What should he do?

Reading 3. *Cimon, Ephialtes and Thucydides. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 9–11), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Thucydides represents the constitution under Perikles as a democracy in name, but really an aristocracy, because the government was all in the hands of one leading citizen. But as many other writers tell us that during his administration the people received grants of land abroad, and were indulged with dramatic entertainments, and payments for their services, in consequence of which they fell into bad habits, and became extravagant and licentious, instead of sober hard-working people as they had been before, let us consider the history of this change, viewing it by the light of the facts themselves. First of all, as we have already said, Perikles had to measure himself with Kimon, and to transfer the affections of the people from Kimon to himself. As he was not so rich a man as Kimon, who used from his own ample means to give a dinner daily to any poor Athenian who required it, clothe aged persons, and take away the fences round his property, so that any one might gather the fruit, Perikles, unable to vie with him in this, turned his attention to a distribution of the public funds among the people, at the suggestion, we are told by Aristotle, of Damonides of Oia. By the money paid for public spectacles, for citizens acting as jurymen and other paid offices, and largesses, he soon won over the people to his side, so that he was able to use them in his attack upon the Senate of the Areopagus, of which he himself was not a member, never having been chosen Archon, or Thesmothete, or King Archon, or Polemarch. These offices had from ancient times been obtained by lot, and it was only through them that those who had approved themselves in the discharge of them were advanced to the Areopagus. For this reason it was that Perikles, when he gained strength with the populace, destroyed this Senate, making Ephialtes bring forward a bill which restricted its judicial powers, while he himself succeeded in getting Kimon banished by ostracism, as a friend of Sparta and a hater of the people, although he was

second to no Athenian in birth or fortune, had won most brilliant victories over the Persians, and had filled Athens with plunder and spoils of war, as will be found related in his life. So great was the power of Perikles with the common people.

2 One of the provisions of ostracism was that the person banished should remain in exile for ten years. But during this period the Lacedaemonians with a great force invaded the territory of Tanagra, and, as the Athenians at once marched out to attack them, Kimon came back from exile, took his place in full armour among the ranks of his own tribe, and hoped by distinguishing himself in the battle amongst his fellow citizens to prove the falsehood of the Laconian sympathies with which he had been charged. However, the friends of Perikles drove him away, as an exile. On the other hand, Perikles fought more bravely in that battle than he had ever fought before, and surpassed every one in reckless daring. The friends of Kimon also, whom Perikles had accused of Laconian leanings, fell, all together, in their ranks; and the Athenians felt great sorrow for their treatment of Kimon, and a great longing for his restoration, now that they had lost a great battle on the frontier, and expected to be hard pressed during the summer by the Lacedaemonians. Perikles, perceiving this, lost no time in gratifying the popular wish, but himself proposed the decree for his recall; and Kimon on his return reconciled the two States, for he was on familiar terms with the Spartans, who were hated by Perikles and the other leaders of the common people. Some say that, before Kimon's recall by Perikles, a secret compact was made with him by Elpinike, Kimon's sister, that Kimon was to proceed on foreign service against the Persians with a fleet of two hundred ships, while Perikles was to retain his power in the city. It is also said that, when Kimon was being tried for his life, Elpinike softened the resentment of Perikles, who was one of those appointed to impeach him. When Elpinike came to beg her brother's life of him, he answered with a smile, "Elpinike, you are too old to meddle in affairs of this sort." But, for all that, he spoke only once, for form's sake, and pressed Kimon less than any of his other prosecutors.

How, then, can one put any faith in Idomeneus, when he accuses Perikles of procuring the assassination of his friend and colleague Ephialtes, because he was jealous of his reputation? This seems an ignoble calumny, which Idomeneus has drawn from some obscure source to fling at a man who, no doubt, was not faultless, but of a generous spirit and noble mind, incapable of entertaining so savage and brutal a design. Ephialtes was disliked and feared by the nobles, and was inexorable in punishing those who wronged the people; wherefore his enemies had him assassinated by means of Aristodikus of Tanagra. This we are told by Aristotle. Kimon died in Cyprus, while in command of the Athenian forces.

3 The nobles now perceived that Perikles was the most important man in the State, and far more powerful than any other citizen; wherefore, as they still hoped to check his authority, and not allow him to be omnipotent, they set up Thucydides, of the township of Alopekae, as his rival, a man of good sense, and a relative of Kimon, but less of a warrior and more of a politician, who, by watching his opportunities, and opposing Perikles in debate, soon brought about a balance of power. He did not allow the nobles to mix themselves up with the people in the public assembly, as they had been wont to do, so that their dignity was lost among the masses; but he collected them into a separate body, and by thus concentrating their strength was able to use it to counterbalance that of the other party. From the beginning these two factions had been but imperfectly welded together, because their tendencies were different; but now the struggle for power between Perikles and Thucydides drew a sharp line of demarcation between them, and one was called the party of the Many, the other that of the Few. Perikles now courted the people in every way, constantly arranging public spectacles, festivals, and processions in the city, by which he educated the Athenians to take pleasure in refined amusements; and also he sent out sixty triremes to cruise every year, in which many of the people served for hire for eight months, learning and practising seamanship. Besides this he sent a thousand settlers to the Chersonese, five hundred to Naxos, half as many to Andros, a thousand

to dwell among the Thracian tribe of the Bisaltae, and others to the new colony in Italy founded by the city of Sybaris, which was named Thurii. By this means he relieved the state of numerous idle agitators, assisted the necessitous, and overawed the allies of Athens by placing his colonists near them to watch their behaviour.

Debrief

1. Plutarch says Pericles, unable to rival Cimon's generosity, "turned his attention to a distribution of the public funds among the people" (3.1). Is there a real moral difference between private charity and public payment as a way to win support?
2. After Tanagra, Pericles "lost no time in gratifying the popular wish, but himself proposed the decree for his recall" (3.2). Was this statesmanship, or the act of a man who saw which way the wind blew? Can it be both?
3. Plutarch dismisses Idomeneus's charge that Pericles had Ephialtes killed, calling it "an ignoble calumny" (3.2). What kind of evidence does Plutarch use to reject it? Is it enough?
4. Thucydides son of Melesias organized the nobles into "a separate body" so that their strength would not be lost "among the masses" (3.3). What did that tactic gain and what did it cost? What does it suggest about how opposition is best organized?
5. Pericles sent colonists abroad to relieve the state "of numerous idle agitators" and to watch the allies (3.3). Which of these purposes would he have spoken of in public?

Case 3: The Building Program and Sole Power

In 454 or 453 BC the treasury of the Delian League was moved from the island of Delos to Athens. The league had been founded to carry on the war against Persia, and most of its members paid money rather than supplying ships. Under Pericles that money helped to pay for the great buildings of the Acropolis. The Parthenon, designed by Ictinus and Callicrates, was begun in 447 BC under the general supervision of Phidias, who also made the gold and ivory statue of Athena inside it.

Reading 4 covers the building program and the fierce debate over it. Plutarch is dazzled by the speed and beauty of the work, and he also passes on the scandal that clung to it. Reading 5 covers the years after Pericles' last great rival had gone, when he governed Athens almost alone, and ends with his invitation to all the Greek cities to meet in council at Athens.

Decision point: The party of Thucydides attacked Pericles in the assembly. The common treasury of the Greeks, they said, had been taken from Delos on the excuse of protecting it from the Persians, and Pericles had taken away even that excuse. "Greece has been outraged," they argued, "and feels itself openly tyrannised over, when it sees us using the funds which we extorted from it for the war against the Persians, for gilding and beautifying our city" (4.1). Pericles had to answer before the people, and the opposition kept pressing the charge that he had wasted public money. How should he defend the program, and to whom is he answerable: the allies who paid, or the citizens who voted?

Reading 4. *The building program. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 12–14), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

❧

1 The building of the temples, by which Athens was adorned, the people delighted, and the rest of the world astonished, and which now alone prove that the tales of the ancient power and glory of Greece are no fables, was what particularly excited the spleen of the opposite faction, who inveighed against him in the public assembly, declaring that the Athenians had disgraced themselves by transferring the common treasury of the Greeks from the island of Delos to their own custody. "Perikles himself," they urged, "has taken away the only possible excuse for such an act—the fear that it might be exposed to the attacks of the Persians when at Delos, whereas it would be safe at Athens. Greece has been outraged, and feels itself openly tyrannised over, when it sees us using the funds which we extorted from it for the war against the Persians, for gilding and beautifying our city, as if it were a vain woman, and adorning it with precious marbles, and statues, and temples, worth a thousand talents." To this Perikles replied, that the allies had no right to consider how their money was spent, so long as Athens defended them from the Persians; while they supplied neither horses, ships, nor men, but merely money, which the Athenians had a right to spend as they pleased, provided they afforded them that security which it purchased. It was right, he argued, that, after the city had provided all that was necessary for war, it should devote its surplus money to the erection of buildings which would be a glory to it for all ages, while these works would create plenty by leaving no man unemployed, and encouraging all sorts of handicraft, so that nearly the whole city would earn wages, and thus derive both its beauty and its profit from itself. For those who were in the flower of their age, military service offered a means of earning money from the common stock; while, as he did not wish the mechanics and lower classes to be without their share, nor yet to see them receive it without doing work for

it, he had laid the foundations of great edifices which would require industries of every kind to complete them; and he had done this in the interests of the lower classes, who thus, although they remained at home, would have just as good a claim to their share of the public funds as those who were serving at sea, in garrison, or in the field. The different materials used, such as stone, brass, ivory, gold, ebony, cypress-wood, and so forth, would require special artizans for each, such as carpenters, modellers, smiths, stone masons, dyers, melters and moulders of gold, and ivory painters, embroiderers, workers in relief; and also men to bring them to the city, such as sailors and captains of ships and pilots for such as came by sea; and, for those who came by land, carriage builders, horse breeders, drivers, rope makers, linen manufacturers, shoemakers, road menders, and miners. Each trade, moreover, employed a number of unskilled labourers, so that, in a word, there would be work for persons of every age and every class, and general prosperity would be the result.

2 These buildings were of immense size, and unequalled in beauty and grace, as the workmen endeavoured to make the execution surpass the design in beauty; but what was most remarkable was the speed with which they were built. All these edifices, each of which one would have thought, it would have taken many generations to complete, were all finished during the most brilliant period of one man's administration. We are told that Zeuxis, hearing Agatharchus, the painter, boasting how easily and rapidly he could produce a picture, said, "I paint very slowly." Ease, and speed of execution, seldom produces work of any permanent value or delicacy. It is the time which is spent in laborious production for which we are repaid by the durable character of the result. And this makes Perikles's work all the more wonderful, because it was built in a short time, and yet has lasted for ages. In beauty each of them at once appeared venerable as soon as it was built; but even at the present day the work looks as fresh as ever, for they bloom with an eternal freshness which defies time, and seems to make the work instinct with an unfading spirit of youth.

3 The overseer and manager of the whole was Pheidias, although there were other excellent architects and workmen, such as Kallikrates and Iktinus, who built the Parthenon on the site of the old Hekatompedon, which had been destroyed by the Persians, and Koroebus, who began to build the Temple of Initiation at Eleusis, but who only lived to see the columns erected and the architraves placed upon them. On his death, Metagenes, of Xypete, added the frieze and the upper row of columns, and Xenokles, of Cholargos, crowned it with the domed roof over the shrine. As to the long wall, about which Sokrates says that he heard Perikles bring forward a motion, Kallikrates undertook to build it. Kratinus satirises the work for being slowly accomplished, saying

4 "He builds in speeches, but he does no work."

5 The Odeum, which internally consisted of many rows of seats and many columns, and externally of a roof sloping on all sides from a central point, was said to have been built in imitation of the king of Persia's tent, and was built under Perikles's direction. For this reason Kratinus alludes to him in his play of the 'Thracian Woman'--

6 "Our Jove with lofty skull appears; The Odeum on his head he bears, Because he fears the oyster-shell no more."

7 Perikles at that period used his influence to pass a decree for establishing a musical competition at the Panathenaic festival; and, being himself chosen judge, he laid down rules as to how the candidates were to sing, and play the flute or the harp. At that period, and ever afterwards, all musical contests took place in the Odeum.

8 The Propylaea, before the Acropolis, were finished in five years, by Mnesikles the architect; and a miraculous incident during the work seemed to show that the goddess did not disapprove, but rather encouraged and assisted the building. The most energetic and active of the workmen fell from a great height, and lay in a dangerous condition, given over by his doctors. Perikles grieved much for him; but the goddess appeared to him in a dream, and suggested a course of treatment by which

Perikles quickly healed the workman. In consequence of this, he set up the brazen statue of Athene the Healer, near the old altar in the Acropolis. The golden statue of the goddess was made by Pheidias, and his name appears upon the basement in the inscription. Almost everything was in his hands, and he gave his orders to all the workmen—as we have said before—because of his friendship with Perikles. This led to their both being envied and belied; for it was said that Perikles, with the connivance of Pheidias, carried on intrigues with Athenian ladies, who came ostensibly to see the works. This accusation was taken up by the comic poets, who charged him with great profligacy, hinting that he had an improper passion for the wife of Menippus, his friend, and a lieutenant-general in the army. Even the bird-fancying of Pyrilampes, because he was a friend of Perikles, was misrepresented, and he was said to give peacocks to the ladies who granted their favours to Perikles. But, indeed, how can we wonder at satirists bringing foul accusations against their betters, and offering them up as victims to the spite of the populace, when we find Stesimbrotus, of Thasos, actually inventing that unnatural and abominable falsehood of Perikles's intrigue with his own daughter-in-law. So hard is it to discover the truth, because the history of past ages is rendered difficult by the lapse of time; while in contemporary history the truth is always obscured, either by private spite and hatred, or by a desire to curry favour with the chief men of the time.

9 When the speakers of Thucydides's party complained that Perikles had wasted the public money, and destroyed the revenue, he asked the people in the assembly whether they thought he had spent much. When they answered "Very much indeed," he said in reply, "Do not, then, put it down to the public account, but to mine; and I will inscribe my name upon all the public buildings." When Perikles said this, the people, either in admiration of his magnificence of manner, or being eager to bear their share in the glory of the new buildings, shouted to him with one accord to take what money he pleased from the treasury, and spend it as he pleased, without stint. And finally, he underwent the trial of ostracism

with Thucydides, and not only succeeded in driving him into exile, but broke up his party.

Reading 5. *Sole power. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 15–17), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

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1 As now there was no opposition to encounter in the city, and all parties had been blended into one, Perikles undertook the sole administration of the home and foreign affairs of Athens, dealing with the public revenue, the army, the navy, the islands and maritime affairs, and the great sources of strength which Athens derived from her alliances, as well with Greek as with foreign princes and states. Henceforth he became quite a different man: he no longer gave way to the people, and ceased to watch the breath of popular favour; but he changed the loose and licentious democracy, which had hitherto existed, into a stricter aristocratic, or rather monarchical, form of government. This he used honourably and unswervingly for the public benefit, finding the people, as a rule, willing to second the measures which he explained to them to be necessary, and to which he asked their consent, but occasionally having to use violence, and to force them, much against their will, to do what was expedient; like a physician dealing with some complicated disorder, who at one time allows his patient innocent recreation, and at another inflicts upon him sharp pains and bitter, though salutary, draughts. Every possible kind of disorder was to be found among a people possessing so great an empire as the Athenians; and he alone was able to bring them into harmony, by playing alternately upon their hopes and fears, checking them when overconfident, and raising their spirits when they were cast down and disheartened. Thus, as Plato says, he was able to prove that oratory is the art of influencing men's minds, and to use it in its highest application, when it deals with men's passions and characters, which, like certain strings of a musical instrument, require a skilful and delicate touch. The secret of his

power is to be found, however, as Thucydides says, not so much in his mere oratory, as in his pure and blameless life, because he was so well known to be incorruptible, and indifferent to money; for though he made the city, which was a great one, into the greatest and richest city of Greece, and though he himself became more powerful than many independent sovereigns, who were able to leave their kingdoms to their sons, yet Perikles did not increase by one single drachma the estate which he received from his father.

2 This is the clear account of his power which is given by Thucydides the historian; though the comic poets misrepresent him atrociously, calling his immediate followers the New Peisistratidae, and calling upon him to swear that he never would make himself despot, as though his pre-eminence was not to be borne in a free state. And Telekleides says, that the Athenians delivered up into his hands

3 "The tribute from the towns, the towns themselves, The city walls, to build or to destroy, The right of making either peace or war, And all the wealth and produce of the land."

4 And all this was not on any special occasion, or when his administration was especially popular, but for forty years he held the first place among such men as Ephialtes, Leokrates, Myronides, Kimon, Tolmides, and Thucydides; and, after the fall and banishment of Thucydides by ostracism, he united in himself for five-and-twenty years all the various offices of state, which were supposed to last only for one year; and yet during the whole of that period proved himself incorruptible by bribes. As to his paternal estate, he was loth to lose it, and still more to be troubled with the management of it; consequently, he adopted what seemed to him the simplest and most exact method of dealing with it. Every year's produce was sold all together, and with the money thus obtained, he would buy what was necessary for his household in the market, and thus regulate his expenditure. This did not make him popular with his sons when they grew up; nor yet did the women of his family think him a liberal man-

ager, but blamed his exact regulation of his daily expenses, which allowed none of the superfluities common in great and wealthy households, but which made the debit and credit exactly balance each other. One servant, Euangelos, kept all his accounts, as no one else had either capacity or education enough to be able to do so. These proceedings differed greatly from those of Anaxagoras the philosopher, who left his house, and let his estate go to ruin, while he pursued his lofty speculations. I conceive, however, that the life of a philosopher and that of a practical politician are not the same, as the one directs his thoughts to abstract ideas, while the other devotes his genius to supplying the real wants of mankind, and in some cases finds wealth not only necessary, but most valuable to him, as indeed it was to Perikles, who assisted many of the poorer citizens. It is said that, as Perikles was engaged in public affairs, Anaxagoras, who was now an old man and in want, covered his head with his robe, and determined to starve himself to death; but when Perikles heard of this, he at once ran to him, and besought him to live, lamenting, not Anaxagoras's fate, but his own, if he should lose so valuable a political adviser. Then Anaxagoras uncovered his head, and said to him, "Perikles, those who want to use a lamp supply it with oil."

5 As the Lacedaemonians began to be jealous of the prosperity of the Athenians, Perikles, wishing to raise the spirit of the people and to make them feel capable of immense operations, passed a decree, inviting all the Greeks, whether inhabiting Europe or Asia, whether living in large cities or small ones, to send representatives to a meeting at Athens to deliberate about the restoration of the Greek temples which had been burned by the barbarians, about the sacrifices which were due in consequence of the vows which they had made to the gods on behalf of Greece before joining battle, and about the sea, that all men might be able to sail upon it in peace and without fear. To carry out this decree twenty men, selected from the citizens over fifty years of age, were sent out, five of whom invited the Ionian and Dorian Greeks in Asia and the islands as far as Lesbos and Rhodes, five went to the inhabitants of the Hellespont and

Thrace as far as Byzantium, and five more proceeded to Boeotia, Phokis, and Peloponnesus, passing from thence through Lokris to the neighbouring continent as far as Akarnania and Ambrakia; while the remainder journeyed through Euboea to the Oetaeans and the Malian gulf, and to the Achaeans of Phthia and the Thessalians, urging them to join the assembly and take part in the deliberations concerning the peace and well-being of Greece. However, nothing was effected, and the cities never assembled, in consequence it is said of the covert hostility of the Lacedaemonians, and because the attempt was first made in Peloponnesus and failed there: yet I have inserted an account of it in order to show the lofty spirit and the magnificent designs of Perikles.

Debrief

1. Pericles argued that the allies "had no right to consider how their money was spent, so long as Athens defended them from the Persians" (4.1). Is that a fair account of what the allies had paid for? How would an ally have answered?
2. The second half of his defense was about work: the buildings would leave "no man unemployed" (4.1). Does a good economic result settle a question of justice?
3. When the people said he had spent "Very much indeed," he offered to put the cost on his own account and inscribe his own name on the buildings (4.9). What did this gesture risk, and why did it work?
4. Once he ruled alone, Plutarch says, "Henceforth he became quite a different man" (5.1), using the people's hopes and fears "like a physician dealing with some complicated disorder." Is that a portrait of a statesman or of a manipulator?
5. Pericles did not add "one single drachma" to his inheritance (5.1), but his household complained of his stinginess and Anaxagoras

nearly starved (5.4). What does the story of the lamp and the oil say about a leader's duties to those who serve him?

Case 4: Caution in the Field

For all his power in the city, Pericles was famous as a careful general. Plutarch collects his campaigns: a wall across the Chersonese to keep raiders out, a voyage round the Peloponnese, a show of force in the Black Sea. He also describes the dreams of empire that Pericles held in check: talk of recovering Egypt, of attacking Persia's coast, of Sicily, Etruria and Carthage.

Then came a dangerous year. Euboea revolted, Megara turned hostile and a Spartan army under the young king Pleistoanax crossed into Attica. Pericles' answer, as Plutarch reports it, involved money rather than battle, and his accounts afterward contained a famous unexplained item. The reading ends with his harsh settlement of Euboea.

Decision point: Tolmides, a general "elated by previous successes and by the credit which he had gained," was about to invade Boeotia "in a reckless manner," and had persuaded a thousand young men to follow him "without any support whatever" (6.1). Pericles had no power to forbid him. He had his own rule: he would not begin a battle of doubtful outcome, and he used to say that none of his countrymen should die through any act of his. What, if anything, should he do or say? And how far should a cautious leader go in restraining a bold colleague?

Reading 6. *Caution in the field. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 18–23), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 In his campaigns he was chiefly remarkable for caution, for he would not, if he could help it, begin a battle of which the issue was doubtful; nor did

he wish to emulate those generals who have won themselves a great reputation by running risks, and trusting to good luck. But he ever used to say to his countrymen, that none of them should come by their deaths through any act of his. Observing that Tolmides, the son of Tolmaeus, elated by previous successes and by the credit which he had gained as a general, was about to invade Boeotia in a reckless manner, and had persuaded a thousand young men to follow him without any support whatever, he endeavoured to stop him, and made that memorable saying in the public assembly, that if Tolmides would not take the advice of Perikles, he would at any rate do well to consult that best of advisers, Time. This speech had but little success at the time; but when, a few days afterwards, the news came that Tolmides had fallen in action at Koronea, and many noble citizens with him, Perikles was greatly respected and admired as a wise and patriotic man.

2 His most successful campaign was that in the Chersonesus, which proved the salvation of the Greeks residing there: for he not only settled a thousand colonists there, and thus increased the available force of the cities, but built a continuous line of fortifications reaching across the isthmus from one sea to the other, by which he shut off the Thracians, who had previously ravaged the peninsula, and put an end to a constant and harassing border warfare to which the settlers were exposed, as they had for neighbours tribes of wild plundering barbarians.

3 But that by which he obtained most glory and renown was when he started from Pegae, in the Megarian territory, and sailed round the Peloponnesus with a fleet of a hundred triremes; for he not only laid waste much of the country near the coast, as Tolmides had previously done, but he proceeded far inland, away from his ships, leading the troops who were on board, and terrified the inhabitants so much that they shut themselves up in their strongholds. The men of Sikyon alone ventured to meet him at Nemea, and them he overthrew in a pitched battle, and erected a trophy. Next he took on board troops from the friendly district of Achaia, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the Corinthian Gulf,

coasted along past the mouth of the river Achelous, overran Akarnania, drove the people of Oeneadae to the shelter of their city walls, and after ravaging the country returned home, having made himself a terror to his enemies, and done good service to Athens; for not the least casualty, even by accident, befel the troops under his command.

4 When he sailed into the Black Sea with a great and splendidly equipped fleet, he assisted the Greek cities there, and treated them with consideration; and showed the neighbouring savage tribes and their chiefs the greatness of his force, and his confidence in his power, by sailing where he pleased, and taking complete control over that sea. He left at Sinope thirteen ships, and a land force under the command of Lamachus, to act against Timesileon, who had made himself despot of that city. When he and his party were driven out, Perikles passed a decree that six hundred Athenian volunteers should sail to Sinope, and become citizens there, receiving the houses and lands which had formerly been in the possession of the despot and his party. But in other cases he would not agree to the impulsive proposals of the Athenians, and he opposed them when, elated by their power and good fortune, they talked of recovering Egypt and attacking the seaboard of the Persian empire. Many, too, were inflamed with that ill-starred notion of an attempt on Sicily, which was afterwards blown into a flame by Alkibiades and other orators. Some even dreamed of the conquest of Etruria and Carthage, in consequence of the greatness which the Athenian empire had already reached, and the full tide of success which seemed to attend it.

5 Perikles, however, restrained these outbursts, and would not allow the people to meddle with foreign states, but used the power of Athens chiefly to preserve and guard her already existing empire, thinking it to be of paramount importance to oppose the Lacedaemonians, a task to which he bent all his energies, as is proved by many of his acts, especially in connection with the Sacred War. In this war the Lacedaemonians sent a force to Delphi, and made the Phokaeans, who held it, give it up to the people of Delphi: but as soon as they were gone Perikles made an expedi-

tion into the country, and restored the temple to the Phokaeans; and as the Lacedaemonians had scratched the oracle which the Delphians had given them, on the forehead of the brazen wolf there, Perikles got a response from the oracle for the Athenians, and carved it on the right side of the same wolf.

6 Events proved that Perikles was right in confining the Athenian empire to Greece. First of all Euboea revolted, and he was obliged to lead an army to subdue that island. Shortly after this, news came that the Megarians had become hostile, and that an army, under the command of Pleistoanax, king of the Lacedaemonians, was menacing the frontier of Attica. Perikles now in all haste withdrew his troops from Euboea, to meet the invader. He did not venture on an engagement with the numerous and warlike forces of the enemy, although repeatedly invited by them to fight: but, observing that Pleistoanax was a very young man, and entirely under the influence of Kleandrides, whom the Ephors had sent to act as his tutor and counsellor because of his tender years, he opened secret negotiations with the latter, who at once, for a bribe, agreed to withdraw the Peloponnesians from Attica. When their army returned and dispersed, the Lacedaemonians were so incensed that they imposed a fine on their king, and condemned Kleandrides, who fled the country, to be put to death. This Kleandrides was the father of Gylippus, who caused the ruin of the Athenian expedition in Sicily. Avarice seems to have been hereditary in the family, for Gylippus himself, after brilliant exploits in war, was convicted of taking bribes, and banished from Sparta in disgrace. This is more fully set forth in the Life of Lysander.

7 When Perikles submitted the accounts of the campaign to the people, there was an item of ten talents, "for a necessary purpose," which the people passed without any questioning, or any curiosity to learn the secret. Some historians, amongst whom is Theophrastus the philosopher, say that Perikles sent ten talents annually to Sparta, by means of which he bribed the chief magistrates to defer the war, thus not buying peace, but time to make preparations for a better defence. He immediately turned

his attention to the insurgents in Euboea, and proceeding thither with a fleet of fifty sail, and five thousand heavy armed troops, he reduced their cities to submission. He banished from Chalkis the "equestrian order," as it was called, consisting of men of wealth and station; and he drove all the inhabitants of Hestiaea out of their country, replacing them by Athenian settlers.

8 He treated these people with this pitiless severity, because they had captured an Athenian ship, and put its crew to the sword.

Debrief

1. Pericles told the assembly that if Tolmides would not take his advice, he should at least consult "that best of advisers, Time" (6.1). The speech "had but little success at the time." What makes a warning persuasive before the event rather than after it?
2. Plutarch admires Pericles because "not the least casualty, even by accident, befel the troops under his command" (6.3). Should a leader's success be measured partly by what he did not lose?
3. Pericles restrained the Athenians when they "talked of recovering Egypt and attacking the seaboard of the Persian empire" (6.4). How does a leader say no to a people's ambitions without losing their trust?
4. The ten talents spent "for a necessary purpose" passed without question (6.7). Some said the money bought from Sparta "not buying peace, but time." When, if ever, should a free people let a leader spend in secret?
5. Plutarch calls the treatment of Hestiaea "pitiless severity" and then gives the reason (6.8). Does the reason change your judgment?

Case 5: The Samian War

After the Thirty Years' Peace with Sparta, made in the winter of 446 to 445 BC, Athens turned on one of its own allies. In 440 Samos, a powerful island state with its own fleet, went to war with Miletus over the town of Priene. The Athenians ordered Samos to lay down its arms and let Athens settle the quarrel, and Samos refused.

Reading 7 begins with the charge that Pericles went to war to please Aspasia, a woman of Miletus who lived with him. Plutarch uses the charge as an excuse to tell what he knows about her, gossip included, and he says so frankly. Then he follows the war: Pericles' first expedition, the bribes offered to him, the revolt that followed and his victory at sea. Reading 8 follows the siege of Samos, a defeat while Pericles was away, the long blockade and the funeral speech at Athens, where Cimon's sister had a sharp word for him.

Decision point: Pericles had beaten the Samian commander Melissus and shut the Samians inside their city. He could storm the walls or starve the city out. A siege would be slow, and "As time went on the Athenians became impatient and eager to fight, and it was hard to restrain their ardour" (8.5). He had to choose a method of taking the city and a way of keeping a restless army in hand.

Reading 7. *Aspasia and the quarrel with Samos. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 24–25), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 After this, as the Athenians and Lacedaemonians made a truce for thirty years, Perikles decreed the expedition against Samos, on the pretext that

they had disregarded the commands of the Athenians, to cease from their war with the Milesians. It was thought that he began this war with the Samians to please Aspasia, and this is, therefore, a good opportunity to discuss that person's character, and how she possessed so great influence and ability that the leading politicians of the day were at her feet, while philosophers discussed and admired her discourse. It is agreed that she was of Milesian origin, and that her father's name was Axiochus; and she is said to have reserved her favours for the most powerful personages in Greece, in imitation of Thargelia, an Ionian lady of ancient times, of great beauty, ability, and attractions, who had many lovers among the Greeks, and brought them all over to the Persian interest, by which means the seeds of the Persian faction were sown in many cities of Greece, as they were all men of great influence and position.

2 Now some writers say that Perikles valued Aspasia only for her wisdom and political ability. Indeed Sokrates and his friends used to frequent her society; and those who listened to her discourse used to bring their wives with them, that they too might profit by it, although her profession was far from being honourable or decent, for she kept courtesans in her house. Aeschines says that Lysikles, the sheep dealer, a low-born and low-minded man, became one of the first men in Athens, because he lived with Aspasia after Perikles's death. In Plato's dialogue too, called 'Menexenus,' though the first part is written in a humorous style, yet there is in it thus much of serious truth, that she was thought to discuss questions of rhetoric with many Athenians. But Perikles seems to have been more enamoured of Aspasia's person than her intellect. He was married to a woman who was nearly related to him, who had previously been the wife of Hipponikus, by whom she became the mother of Kallias the rich. By her Perikles had two sons, Xanthippus and Paralus; but afterwards, as they could not live comfortably together, he, at his wife's wish, handed her over to another husband, and himself lived with Aspasia, of whom he was passionately fond. It is said that he never went in or out of his house during the day without kissing her. In the comedies of the time, she is

spoken of as the new Omphale and as Deianeira, and sometimes as Hera (Juno). Kratinus plainly speaks of her as a harlot in the following lines:

3 "To him Vice bore a Juno new, Aspasia, shameless harlot."

4 He is thought to have had a bastard son by her, who is mentioned by Eupolis in his play of 'The Townships,' where Perikles is introduced, asking, "Lives then my son?" to which Myronides answers:

5 "He lives, and long had claimed a manly name, But that he feared his harlot mother's shame."

6 It is said that Aspasia became so illustrious and well known that the Cyrus who fought with his brother for the empire of Persia, called his favourite concubine Aspasia, though she had before been named Milto. She was a Phokaean by birth, the daughter of Hermotimus. After the death of Cyrus in battle, she was taken into the king's harem, and acquired great influence with him. These particulars about Aspasia occurred to my memory, and I thought that perhaps I might please my readers by relating them.

7 Perikles is accused of going to war with Samos to save the Milesians, at the request of Aspasia. These States were at war about the possession of the city of Priene, and the Samians, who were victorious, would not lay down their arms and allow the Athenians to settle the matter by arbitration, as they ordered them to do. For this reason Perikles proceeded to Samos, put an end to the oligarchical form of government there, and sent fifty hostages and as many children to Lemnos, to ensure the good behaviour of the leading men. It is said that each of these hostages offered him a talent for his own freedom, and that much more was offered by that party which was loth to see a democracy established in the city. Besides all this, Pissuthnes the Persian, who had a liking for the Samians, sent and offered him ten thousand pieces of gold if he would spare the city. Perikles, however, took none of these bribes, but dealt with Samos as he had previously determined, and returned to Athens. The Samians now at once revolted, as Pissuthnes managed to get them back their hostages,

and furnished them with the means of carrying on the war. Perikles now made a second expedition against them, and found them in no mind to submit quietly, but determined to dispute the empire of the seas with the Athenians. Perikles gained a signal victory over them in a sea-fight off the Goats' Island, beating a fleet of seventy ships with only forty-four, twenty of which were transports.

Reading 8. *The siege of Samos. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 26–28), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Simultaneously with his victory and the flight of the enemy he obtained command of the harbour of Samos, and besieged the Samians in their city. They, in spite of their defeat, still possessed courage enough to sally out and fight a battle under the walls; but soon a larger force arrived from Athens, and the Samians were completely blockaded.

2 Perikles now with sixty ships sailed out of the Archipelago into the Mediterranean, according to the most current report intending to meet the Phoenician fleet which was coming to help the Samians, but, according to Stesimbrotus, with the intention of attacking Cyprus, which seems improbable. Whatever his intention may have been, his expedition was a failure, for Melissus, the son of Ithagenes, a man of culture, who was then in command of the Samian forces, conceiving a contempt for the small force of the Athenians and the want of experience of their leaders after Perikles's departure, persuaded his countrymen to attack them. In the battle the Samians proved victorious, taking many Athenians prisoners, and destroying many of their ships. By this victory they obtained command of the sea, and were able to supply themselves with more warlike stores than they had possessed before. Aristotle even says that Perikles himself was before this beaten by Melissus in a sea-fight. The Samians branded the figure of an owl on the foreheads of their Athenian prisoners, to revenge themselves for the branding of their own prisoners

by the Athenians with the figure of a *samaina*. This is a ship having a beak turned up like a swine's snout, but with a roomy hull, so as both to carry a large cargo and sail fast. This class of vessel is called *samaina* because it was first built at Samos by Polykrates, the despot of that island. It is said that the verse of Aristophanes,

3 "The Samians are a deeply lettered race,"

4 alludes to this branding.

5 When Perikles heard of the disaster which had befallen his army, he returned in all haste to assist them. He beat Melissus, who came out to meet him, and, after putting the enemy to rout, at once built a wall round their city, preferring to reduce it by blockade to risking the lives of his countrymen in an assault. As time went on the Athenians became impatient and eager to fight, and it was hard to restrain their ardour. Perikles divided the whole force into eight divisions, and made them all draw lots. The division which drew the white bean he permitted to feast and take their ease, while the rest did their duty. For this reason those who are enjoying themselves call it a "white day," in allusion to the white bean. Ephorus tells us that Perikles made use of battering engines in this siege, being attracted by their novelty, and that Artemon the mechanician was present, who was surnamed Periphoretus because he was lame, and carried in a litter to see such of the works as required his superintendence. This story is proved to be false by Herakleides of Pontus, he quoting Anakreon's poems, in which Artemon Periphoretus is mentioned many generations before the revolt and siege of Samos. He tells us that Artemon was an effeminate coward who spent most of his time indoors, with two slaves holding a brazen shield over his head for fear that anything should fall upon it, and if he was obliged to go out, used to be carried in a hammock slung so low as almost to touch the ground, from which he received the name of Periphoretus.

6 In the ninth month of the siege the Samians surrendered. Perikles demolished their walls, confiscated their fleet, and imposed a heavy fine upon

them, some part of which was paid at once by the Samians, who gave hostages for the payment of the remainder at fixed periods. Douris, of Samos, makes a lamentable story of this, accusing Perikles and the Athenians of great cruelty, no mention of which is to be found in Thucydides, Ephorus, or Aristotle. He obviously does not tell the truth when he says that Perikles took the captains and marine soldiers of each ship to the market-place at Miletus, bound them to planks, and after they had been so for ten days and were in a miserable state, knocked them on the head with clubs and cast out their bodies without burial. But Douris, even in cases where he has no personal bias, prefers writing an exciting story to keeping to the exact truth, and in this instance probably exaggerated the sufferings of his countrymen in order to gratify his dislike of the Athenians.

7 Perikles, after the reduction of Samos, returned to Athens, where he buried those who had fallen in the war in a magnificent manner, and was much admired for the funeral oration which, as is customary, was spoken by him over the graves of his countrymen. When he descended from the rostrum the women greeted him, crowning him with garlands and ribbons like a victorious athlete, and Elpinike drawing near to him said, "A fine exploit, truly, Perikles, and well worthy of a crown, to lose many of our brave fellow-citizens, not fighting with Persians or Phoenicians, as my brother Kimon did, but in ruining a city of men of our own blood and our own allies." At these words of Elpinike, Perikles merely smiled and repeated the verse of Archilochus--

8 "Too old thou art for rich perfumes."

9 Ion says that his victory over the Samians wonderfully flattered his vanity. Agamemnon, he was wont to say, took ten years to take a barbarian city, but he in nine months had made himself master of the first and most powerful city in Ionia. And the comparison was not an unjust one, for truly the war was a very great undertaking, and its issue quite uncertain,

since, as Thucydides tells us, the Samians came very near to wresting the empire of the sea from the Athenians.

Debrief

1. Plutarch reports the hostages' offer of a talent each and the Persian offer of "ten thousand pieces of gold," and says Pericles "took none of these bribes, but dealt with Samos as he had previously determined" (7.7). Why does Plutarch think incorruptibility matters so much in this Life?
2. Pericles built a wall round the city, "preferring to reduce it by blockade to risking the lives of his countrymen in an assault" (8.5). How did the white bean help him hold the army to that choice? What does it suggest about managing impatience?
3. Plutarch rejects Duris's story of the Samian captives (8.6). What reasons does he give? Are they reasons of evidence or of sympathy?
4. Elpinice told Pericles it was a poor exploit to lose fellow citizens "in ruining a city of men of our own blood and our own allies" (8.7). He answered with a line of verse. Was her charge fair? Was his answer?
5. Plutarch spends a whole chapter on Aspasia and admits he told the stories because they "occurred to my memory" (7.6). What does this digression add to the case, and what does it tell you about Plutarch's way of writing?

Case 6: Refusing to Yield

By the late 430s BC the peace between Athens and Sparta was failing. Corcyra, an island with a strong fleet, was at war with Corinth and asked Athens for help. Potidaea, a city subject to Athens but a colony of Corinth, revolted. Megara complained that an Athenian decree shut its traders out of every market and harbor that Athens controlled. Corinth, Megara and Aegina all carried their grievances to Sparta.

This reading covers the slide toward war, the quarrel over the Megarian decree and a series of prosecutions at home that struck at Pericles through the people closest to him: the sculptor Phidias, Aspasia and the philosopher Anaxagoras. Plutarch sets out several explanations for Pericles' conduct, from wise calculation to private spite, and declines to choose with certainty.

Decision point: Archidamus, king of Sparta, sent ambassadors to Athens. He "was willing to submit all disputed points to arbitration, and endeavoured to moderate the excitement of his allies," so that, Plutarch thinks, war "probably would not have broken out if the Athenians could have been persuaded to rescind their decree of exclusion against the Megarians" (9.3). Some argued that the demand was only a test, and that any concession would be read as weakness. Pericles had to decide what to advise the Athenians: keep the decree and risk war, or give way on Megara to keep the peace.

Reading 9. *Corcyra, Megara and the prosecutions. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 29–32), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 After these events, as the clouds were gathering for the Peloponnesian war, Perikles persuaded the Athenians to send assistance to the people of Korkyra, who were at war with the Corinthians, and thus to attach to their own side an island with a powerful naval force, at a moment when the Peloponnesians had all but declared war against them.

2 When the people passed this decree, Perikles sent only ten ships under the command of Lacedaemonius, the son of Kimon, as if he designed a deliberate insult; for the house of Kimon was on peculiarly friendly terms with the Lacedaemonians. His design in sending Lacedaemonius out, against his will, and with so few ships, was that if he performed nothing brilliant he might be accused, even more than he was already, of leaning to the side of the Spartans. Indeed, by all means in his power, he always threw obstacles in the way of the advancement of Kimon's family, representing that by their very names they were aliens, one son being named Lacedaemonius, another Thessalus, another Eleius. Moreover, the mother of all three was an Arcadian.

3 Now Perikles was much reproached for sending these ten ships, which were of little value to the Korkyreans, and gave a great handle to his enemies to use against him, and in consequence sent a larger force after them to Korkyra, which arrived there after the battle. The Corinthians, enraged at this, complained in the congress of Sparta of the conduct of the Athenians, as did also the Megarians, who said that they were excluded from every market and every harbour which was in Athenian hands, contrary to the ancient rights and common privileges of the Hellenic race. The people of Aegina also considered themselves to be oppressed and ill-treated, and secretly bemoaned their grievances in the ears of the Spartans, for they dared not openly bring any charges against the Athenians. At this time, too, Potidaea, a city subject to Athens, but a colony of Corinth, revolted, and its siege materially hastened the outbreak of the war. Archidamus, indeed, the king of the Lacedaemonians, sent ambassadors to Athens, was willing to submit all disputed points to arbitration, and endeavoured to moderate the excitement of his allies, so

that war probably would not have broken out if the Athenians could have been persuaded to rescind their decree of exclusion against the Megarians, and to come to terms with them. And, for this reason, Perikles, who was particularly opposed to this, and urged the people not to give way to the Megarians, alone bore the blame of having begun the war.

4 It is said, that when an embassy arrived at Athens from Lacedaemon to treat upon these matters, Perikles argued that there was a law which forbade the tablet, on which the decree against the Megarians was written, to be taken down. "Then," said Polyalkes, one of the ambassadors, "do not take it down, but turn it with its face to the wall; for there is no law against that!"

5 Clever as this retort was, it had no effect on Perikles. He had, it seems, some private spite at the Megarians, though the ground of quarrel which he put publicly forward was that the Megarians had applied to their own use some of the sacred ground; and he passed a decree for a herald to be sent to the Megarians, and then to go on to the Lacedaemonians to complain of their conduct. This decree of Perikles is worded in a candid and reasonable manner; but the herald, Anthemokritus, was thought to have met his death at the hands of the Megarians, and Charinus passed a decree to the effect that Athens should wage war against them to the death, without truce or armistice; that any Megarian found in Attica should be punished with death, and that the generals, when taking the usual oath for each year, should swear in addition that they would invade the Megarian territory twice every year; and that Anthemokritus should be buried near the city gate leading into the Thriasian plain, which is now called the Double Gate.

6 Now, the Megarians say that they were not to blame for the murder of Anthemokritus, and lay it upon Perikles and Aspasia, quoting the hackneyed rhymes from the 'Acharnians,' of Aristophanes:

7 "Some young Athenians in their drunken play, From Megara Simaetha stole away, The men of Megara next, with angered soul, Two of Aspasia's choicest harlots stole."

8 How the dispute originated it is hard to say, but all writers agree in throwing on Perikles the blame of refusing to reverse the decree. Some attribute his firmness to a wise calculation, saying that the demand was merely made in order to try him, and that any concessions would have been regarded as a sign of weakness; while others say that he treated the Lacedaemonians so cavalierly through pride and a desire to show his own strength. But the worst motive of all, and that to which most men attribute his conduct, was as follows: Pheidias, the sculptor, was, as we have related, entrusted with the task of producing the statue of the tutelary goddess of Athens. His intimacy with Perikles, with whom he had great influence, gained for him many enemies, who, wishing to experiment on the temper of the people towards Perikles himself, bribed Menon, one of Pheidias's fellow-workmen, to seat himself in the market-place as a suppliant who begged that he might receive protection while he denounced and prosecuted Pheidias. The people took this man under its protection, and Pheidias was prosecuted before the Senate. The alleged charges of theft were not proved, for Pheidias, by the advice of Perikles, had originally fashioned the golden part of the statue in such a manner that it could all be taken off and weighed, and this Perikles bade the prosecutor do on this occasion. But the glory which Pheidias obtained by the reality of his work made him an object of envy and hatred, especially when in his sculpture of the battle with the Amazons on the shield of the goddess he introduced his own portrait as a bald-headed old man lifting a great stone with both hands, and also a very fine representation of Perikles, fighting with an Amazon. The position of the hand, which was holding a spear before the face of Perikles, was ingeniously devised as if to conceal the portrait, which, nevertheless, could plainly be seen on either side of it. For this, Pheidias was imprisoned, and there fell sick and died, though some say that his enemies poisoned him in order to cast suspicion upon

Perikles. At the instance of Glykon, the people voted to Menon, the informer, an immunity from public burdens, and ordered the generals of the State to provide for the wretch's safety.

9 About the same time Aspasia was prosecuted for impiety, at the suit of Hermippus, the comic playwright, who moreover accused her of harbouring free-born Athenian ladies, with whom Perikles carried on intrigues. Also Diopeithes proposed a decree, that prosecutions should be instituted against all persons who disbelieved in religion, and held theories of their own about heavenly phenomena. This was aimed at Perikles through the philosopher Anaxagoras. As the people adopted this decree, and eagerly listened to these slanderous accusations, another decree was carried by Drakontides, that Perikles should lay the accounts of his dealings with the public revenue before the Prytanes, and that the judges should carry their suffrage from the altar in the Acropolis, and go and determine the cause in the city. At the motion of Hagnon this part of the decree was reversed, but he succeeded in having the action conducted before fifteen hundred judges, in a form of trial which one might call either one for theft, or taking of bribes, or for public wrong-doing. Aspasia was acquitted, quite contrary to justice, according to Aeschines, because Perikles shed tears and made a personal appeal to the judges on her behalf. He feared that Anaxagoras would be convicted, and sent him out of the city before his trial commenced. And now, as he had become unpopular by means of Pheidias, he at once blew the war into a flame, hoping to put an end to these prosecutions, and to restore his own personal ascendancy by involving the State in important and dangerous crises, in which it would have to rely for guidance upon himself alone.

10 These are the causes which are assigned for his refusal to permit the Athenians to make any concession to the Lacedaemonians, but the real history of the transaction will never be known.

Debrief

1. Pericles sent only ten ships to Corcyra under Cimon's son, "as if he designed a deliberate insult" (9.2), and then had to send more. What does this episode show about mixing party feuds with foreign policy?
2. When Pericles said a law forbade taking down the tablet, a Spartan envoy said, "turn it with its face to the wall; for there is no law against that!" (9.4). What does the joke reveal about the use of legal rules to avoid a political choice?
3. Plutarch lists three motives for the refusal: "wise calculation," "pride and a desire to show his own strength," and the prosecutions at home (9.8–9.9). Which seems most likely to you, and why? Can a leader's motives be mixed and his decision still be right?
4. Phidias was cleared of theft because Pericles had advised him to make the gold removable so that it "could all be taken off and weighed" (9.8). What does this say about building accountability into a project before anyone asks for it?
5. Plutarch ends: "the real history of the transaction will never be known" (9.10). How should we judge a decision whose motives we cannot know?

Case 7: Holding the Walls

War came in 431 BC. The first years of the Peloponnesian War are known as the Archidamian War, after the Spartan king who led the invasions of Attica. Pericles' plan was to avoid a land battle with the larger and better trained Spartan army, bring the country people within the walls, and use the fleet to strike at the enemy's coasts. In 430 plague broke out in the crowded city.

Reading 10 covers the first invasion, the plague and the anger of the Athenians against Pericles. Reading 11 covers his private losses, his last request of the people and his death in 429, with Plutarch's closing judgment.

Decision point: The Spartans and their allies, under King Archidamus, invaded Attica, ravaged the country and camped at Acharnae, close to Athens, "imagining that the Athenians would never endure to see them there, but would be driven by pride and shame to come out and fight them" (10.2). The enemy had sixty thousand heavy-armed infantry. Many of Pericles' friends begged him to attack; his enemies called him a coward and a traitor, and Cleon used the city's anger to build his own following. As general, Pericles had to decide whether to fight, and whether to call the people together to debate it.

Reading 10. *The invasion and the plague. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 33–35), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Now, as the Lacedaemonians knew that if he could be removed from power they would find the Athenians much more easy to deal with, they bade them, "drive forth the accursed thing," alluding to Perikles's descent

from the Alkmaeonidae by his mother's side, as we are told by Thucydides the historian. But this attempt had just the contrary effect to that which they intended; for, instead of suspicion and dislike, Perikles met with much greater honour and respect from his countrymen than before, because they saw that he was an object of especial dislike to the enemy. For this reason, before the Peloponnesians, under Archidamus, invaded Attica, he warned the Athenians that if Archidamus, when he laid waste everything else, spared his own private estate because of the friendly private relations existing between them, or in order to give his personal enemies a ground for impeaching him, that he should give both the land and the farm buildings upon it to the State.

2 The Lacedaemonians invaded Attica with a great host of their own troops and those of their allies, led by Archidamus, their king. They proceeded, ravaging the country as they went, as far as Acharnae (close to Athens), where they encamped, imagining that the Athenians would never endure to see them there, but would be driven by pride and shame to come out and fight them. However, Perikles thought that it would be a very serious matter to fight for the very existence of Athens against sixty thousand Peloponnesian and Boeotian heavy-armed troops, and so he pacified those who were dissatisfied at his inactivity by pointing out that trees when cut down quickly grow again, but that when the men of a State are lost, it is hard to raise up others to take their place. He would not call an assembly of the people, because he feared that they would force him to act against his better judgment, but, just as the captain of a ship, when a storm comes on at sea, places everything in the best trim to meet it, and trusting to his own skill and seamanship, disregarding the tears and entreaties of the sea-sick and terrified passengers; so did Perikles shut the gates of Athens, place sufficient forces to ensure the safety of the city at all points, and calmly carry out his own policy, taking little heed of the noisy grumblings of the discontented. Many of his friends besought him to attack, many of his enemies threatened him and abused him, and many songs and offensive jests were written about him, speaking of him

as a coward, and one who was betraying the city to its enemies. Kleon too attacked him, using the anger which the citizens felt against him to advance his own personal popularity, as we see from the following lines of Hermippus:

3 "King of Satyrs, wherefore fear you Spear to wield, and only dare to Talk in swelling phrase, while yet you Cower, Teles like, And when goaded on, past bearing, By our Kleon's tongue so daring, Only gnash your teeth despairing, Still afraid to strike."

4 Perikles was unmoved by any of these attacks, but quietly endured all this storm of obloquy. He sent a fleet of a hundred ships to attack Peloponnesus, but did not sail with it himself, remaining at home to keep a tight hand over Athens until the Peloponnesians drew off their forces. He regained his popularity with the common people, who suffered much from the war, by giving them allowances of money from the public revenue, and grants of land; for he drove out the entire population of the island of Aegina, and divided the land by lot among the Athenians. A certain amount of relief also was experienced by reflecting upon the injuries which they were inflicting on the enemy; for the fleet as it sailed round Peloponnesus destroyed many small villages and cities, and ravaged a great extent of country, while Perikles himself led an expedition into the territory of Megara and laid it all waste. By this it is clear that the allies, although they did much damage to the Athenians, yet suffered equally themselves, and never could have protracted the war for such a length of time as it really lasted, but, as Perikles foretold, must soon have desisted had not Providence interfered and confounded human counsels. For now the pestilence fell among the Athenians, and cut off the flower of their youth. Suffering both in body and mind they raved against Perikles, just as people when delirious with disease attack their fathers or their physicians. They endeavoured to ruin him, urged on by his personal enemies, who assured them that he was the author of the plague, because he had brought all the country people into the city, where they were compelled to live during the heat of summer, crowded together in small

rooms and stifling tents, living an idle life too, and breathing foul air instead of the pure country breezes to which they were accustomed. The cause of this, they said, was the man who, when the war began, admitted the masses of the country people into the city, and then made no use of them, but allowed them to be penned up together like cattle, and transmit the contagion from one to another, without devising any remedy or alleviation of their sufferings.

5 Hoping to relieve them somewhat, and also to annoy the enemy, Perikles manned a hundred and fifty ships, placed on board, besides the sailors, many brave infantry and cavalry soldiers, and was about to put to sea. The Athenians conceived great hopes, and the enemy no less terror from so large an armament. When all was ready, and Perikles himself had just embarked in his own trireme, an eclipse of the sun took place, producing total darkness, and all men were terrified at so great a portent. Perikles, observing that his helmsman was alarmed and knew not what to do, held his cloak over the man's eyes and asked him if he thought that a terrible portent. As he answered that he did not, Perikles said: "What is the difference, then, between it and an eclipse of the sun, except that the eclipse is caused by something larger than my cloak?" This subject is discussed by the philosophers in their schools.

6 Perikles sailed with the fleet, but did nothing worthy of so great a force. He besieged the sacred city of Epidaurus, but, although he had great hopes of taking it, he failed on account of the plague, which destroyed not only his own men, but every one who came in contact with them. After this he again endeavoured to encourage the Athenians, to whom he had become an object of dislike. However, he did not succeed in pacifying them, but they condemned him by a public vote to be general no more, and to pay a fine which is stated at the lowest estimate to have been fifteen talents, and at the highest fifty. This was carried, according to Idomeneus, by Kleon, but according to Theophrastus by Simmias; whilst Herakleides of Pontus says that it was effected by Lakrateides.

Reading 11. *Grief, recall and death. Plutarch, Life of Pericles (chapters 36–39), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

❧

1 He soon regained his public position, for the people's outburst of anger was quenched by the blow they had dealt him, just as a bee leaves its sting in the wound; but his private affairs were in great distress and disorder, as he had lost many of his relatives during the plague, while others were estranged from him on political grounds. Xanthippus too, the eldest of his legitimate sons, who was a spendthrift by nature and married to a woman of expensive habits, a daughter of Tisander, the son of Epilykus, could not bear with his father's stingy ways and the small amount of money which he allowed him. He consequently sent to one of his friends and borrowed money from him as if Perikles had authorised him to do so. When the friend asked for his money back again, Perikles prosecuted him, at which proceeding young Xanthippus was enraged and abused his father, sneering at his way of life and his discussions with the sophists. When some athlete accidentally killed Epitimus of Pharsalus with a javelin, he said that Perikles spent the whole day arguing with Protagoras whether in strict accuracy the javelin, or the man who threw it, or the stewards of the games, ought to be considered the authors of the mishap. And, besides this, Stesimbrotus tells us that Xanthippus put about that scandal about his father and his own wife, so that the father and son remained irreconcilable enemies until Xanthippus's death, which happened during the plague, by an attack of that disorder. At the same time Perikles lost his sister and most of his relations, especially those who supported his policy. Yet he would not yield, nor abate his firmness and constancy of spirit because of these afflictions, but was not observed to weep or mourn, or attend the funeral of any of his relations, until he lost Paralus, the last of his legitimate offspring. Crushed by this blow, he tried in vain to keep up his grand air of indifference, and when carrying a garland to lay upon the corpse he was overpowered by his feelings, so as to

burst into a passion of tears and sobs, which he had never done before in his whole life.

2 Athens made trial of her other generals and public men to conduct her affairs, but none appeared to be of sufficient weight or reputation to have such a charge entrusted to him. The city longed for Perikles, and invited him again to lead its counsels and direct its armies; and he, although dejected in spirits and living in seclusion in his own house, was yet persuaded by Alkibiades and his other friends to resume the direction of affairs. The people apologised for their ungrateful treatment of him, and when he was again in office and elected as general, he begged of them to be released from the operations of the law of bastardy, which he himself had originally introduced, in order that his name and race might not altogether become extinct for want of an heir. The provisions of the law were as follows:—Perikles many years before, when he was at the height of his power and had children born to him, as we have related, of legitimate birth, proposed a law that only those born of an Athenian father and mother should be reckoned Athenian citizens. But when the king of Egypt sent a present of forty thousand *medimni* of wheat to be divided among the citizens, many lawsuits arose about the citizenship of men whose birth had never been questioned before that law came into force, and many vexatious informations were laid. Nearly five thousand men were convicted of illegitimacy of birth and sold for slaves, while those who retained their citizenship and proved themselves to be genuine Athenians amounted to fourteen thousand and forty. It was indeed an unreasonable request that a law which had been enforced in so many instances should now be broken in the person of its own author, but Perikles's domestic misfortunes, in which he seemed to have paid the penalty for his former haughtiness and pride, touched the hearts of the Athenians so much that they thought his sorrows deserving of their pity, and his request such as he was entitled to make and they to grant in common charity, and they consented to his illegitimate son being enrolled in his own tribe and bearing his own name. This man was subsequently put

to death by the people, together with all his colleagues, for their conduct after the sea-fight at Arginusae.

3 After this it appears that Perikles was attacked by the plague, not acutely or continuously, as in most cases, but in a slow wasting fashion, exhibiting many varieties of symptoms, and gradually undermining his strength. Theophrastus, in his treatise on Ethics, discusses whether a man's character can be changed by disease, and whether virtue depends upon bodily health. As an example, he quotes a story that Perikles, when one of his friends came to visit him during his sickness, showed him a charm hung round his neck, as a proof that he must be indeed ill to submit to such a piece of folly. As he was now on his deathbed, the most distinguished of the citizens and his surviving friends collected round him and spoke admiringly of his nobleness and immense power, enumerating also the number of his exploits, and the trophies which he had set up for victories gained; for while in chief command he had won no less than nine victories for Athens. They were talking thus to one another in his presence, imagining that he could no longer understand them, but had lost his power of attending to them. He, however, was following all that they said, and suddenly broke silence, saying that he was surprised at their remembering and praising him for the exploits which depended entirely upon fortune for their success, and which many other generals had done as well as himself, while they did not mention his greatest and most glorious title to fame. "No Athenian," said he, "ever wore black because of me."

4 Perikles was to be admired, not only for his gentleness and mildness of spirit, which he preserved through the most violent political crises and outbreaks of personal hatred to himself, but also for his lofty disposition. He himself accounted it his greatest virtue that he never gave way to feelings of envy or hatred, but from his own exalted pinnacle of greatness never regarded any man as so much his enemy that he could never be his friend. This alone, in my opinion, justifies that outrageous nickname of his, and gives it a certain propriety; for so serene and impartial a man, ut-

terly uncorrupt though possessed of great power, might naturally be called Olympian. Thus it is that we believe that the gods, who are the authors of all good and of no evil to men, rule over us and over all created things, not as the poets describe them in their bewildering fashion, which their own poems prove to be untrue. The poets describe the abode of the gods as a safe and untroubled place where no wind or clouds are, always enjoying a mild air and clear light, thinking such a place to be fittest for a life of immortal blessedness; while they represent the gods themselves as full of disorder and anger and spite and other passions, which are not becoming even to mortal men of common sense. Those reflections, however, perhaps belong to another subject.

5 Events soon made the loss of Perikles felt and regretted by the Athenians. Those who during his lifetime had complained that his power completely threw them into the shade, when after his death they had made trial of other orators and statesmen, were obliged to confess that with all his arrogance no man ever was really more moderate, and that his real mildness in dealing with men was as remarkable as his apparent pride and assumption. His power, which had been so grudged and envied, and called monarchy and despotism, now was proved to have been the saving of the State; such an amount of corrupt dealing and wickedness suddenly broke out in public affairs, which he before had crushed and forced to hide itself, and so prevented its becoming incurable through impunity and licence.

Debrief

1. Pericles told the discontented that "trees when cut down quickly grow again, but that when the men of a State are lost, it is hard to raise up others to take their place" (10.2). Is that an argument any frightened citizen could accept? What would it have cost the farmers of Acharnae to accept it?

2. He refused to call an assembly "because he feared that they would force him to act against his better judgment" (10.2). Plutarch compares him to a ship's captain ignoring the passengers. Is the comparison fair to the citizens of a democracy?
3. With the eclipse, Pericles calmed a frightened helmsman with his cloak (10.5). What does this small scene show about how a leader handles fear in others?
4. The Athenians fined him and then, finding no one better, begged him to return; he asked them to set aside his own citizenship law for his son (11.2). Plutarch calls the request "unreasonable" yet thinks they were right to grant it. What do you think?
5. On his deathbed he named his greatest title to fame: "No Athenian ... ever wore black because of me" (11.3). Is that true of the man in these readings? What would you name as his greatest achievement?

Case 8: The Delayer Takes Command

Plutarch now turns to Rome. Quintus Fabius Maximus came from one of the city's great families. As a boy he was called Ovicula, the sheep, for his slow and gentle ways, and Verrucosus, for a wart on his lip. He was consul for the first time in 233 BC and won a triumph over the Ligurians.

In 218 BC Hannibal led a Carthaginian army over the Alps into Italy. He beat the Romans at the Trebia that year and in 217 destroyed a consular army at Lake Trasimene. Reading 12 tells of Fabius's character, the omens before Trasimene, the rashness of the consul Flaminius, the battle and the plain speech of the praetor who told Rome the news. Reading 13 follows Fabius's appointment as dictator, the religious steps he took to steady the city, and the strategy he chose against Hannibal.

Decision point: After Trasimene the Romans made Fabius dictator, with Marcus Minucius as his master of the horse. He knew Hannibal's army was small, short of money and supplies, and trained by many battles "to a rare pitch of perfection" (12.5). The city was shaken. His own soldiers wanted action, and Minucius harangued them, mocking the general who camped on mountain-tops to watch "the burning and plundering of Italy" (13.2). His friends begged him to "wipe away this disgrace by risking a battle." Fabius had to decide whether to fight Hannibal, and how to bear the scorn if he did not.

Reading 12. *The making of Fabius and the disaster at Trasimene. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 1–3), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Such a man did Perikles show himself to be in his most memorable acts, as far as they are extant.

2 Let us now turn our attention to Fabius.

3 The first of the family is said to descend from one of the nymphs, according to some writers, according to others from an Italian lady who became the mother of Fabius by Hercules near the river Tiber. From him descended the family of the Fabii, one of the largest and most renowned in Rome. Some say that the men of this race were the first to use pitfalls in hunting, and were anciently named Fodii in consequence; for up to the present day ditches are called *fossae*, and to dig is called *fodere* in Latin: and thus in time the two sounds became confused, and they obtained the name of Fabii. The family produced many distinguished men, the greatest of whom was Rullus, who was for that reason named Maximus by the Romans. From him Fabius Maximus, of whom I am now writing, was fourth in descent. His own personal nickname was Verrucosus, because he had a little wart growing on his upper lip. The name of Ovicula, signifying sheep, was also given him while yet a child, because of his slow and gentle disposition. He was quiet and silent, very cautious in taking part in children's games, and learned his lessons slowly and with difficulty, which, combined with his easy obliging ways with his comrades, made those who did not know him think that he was dull and stupid. Few there were who could discern, hidden in the depths of his soul, his glorious and lion-like character. Soon, however, as time went on, and he began to take part in public affairs, he proved that his apparent want of energy was really due to serenity of intellect, that he was cautious because he weighed matters well beforehand, and that while he was never eager or easily moved, yet he was always steady and trustworthy. Observing the immense extent of the empire, and the numerous wars in which it was engaged, he exercised his body in warlike exercises, regarding it as his natural means of defence, while he also studied oratory as the means by which to influence the people, in a style suited to his own life and character. In his speeches there were no flowery passages, no empty graces of

style, but there was a plain common sense peculiar to himself, and a depth of sententious maxims which is said to have resembled Thucydides. One of his speeches is extant, a funeral oration which he made in public over his son who died after he had been consul.

4 He was consul five times, and in his first consulship obtained a triumph over the Ligurians. They were defeated by him and driven with great loss to take refuge in the Alps, and thus were prevented from ravaging the neighbouring parts of Italy as they had been wont to do. When Hannibal invaded Italy, won his first battle at the Trebia, and marched through Etruria, laying everything waste as he went, the Romans were terribly disheartened and cast down, and terrible prodigies took place, some of the usual kind, that is, by lightning, and others of an entirely new and strange character. It was said that shields of their own accord became drenched with blood: that at Antium standing corn bled when it was cut by the reapers; that red-hot stones fell from heaven, and that the sky above Falerii was seen to open and tablets to fall, on one of which was written the words "Mars is shaking his arms."

5 None of these omens had any effect upon Caius Flaminius, the consul, for, besides his naturally spirited and ambitious nature, he was excited by the successes which he had previously won, contrary to all reasonable probability. Once, against the express command of the Senate, and in spite of the opposition of his colleague, he engaged with the Gauls and won a victory over them. Fabius also was but little disturbed by the omens, because of their strange and unintelligible character, though many were alarmed at them. Knowing how few the enemy were in numbers, and their great want of money and supplies, he advised the Romans not to offer battle to a man who had at his disposal an army trained by many previous encounters to a rare pitch of perfection, but rather to send reinforcements to their allies, keep a tight hand over their subject cities, and allow Hannibal's brilliant little force to die away like a lamp which flares up brightly with but little oil to sustain it.

6 This reasoning had no effect upon Flaminius, who said that he would not endure to see an enemy marching upon Rome, and would not, like Camillus of old, fight in the streets of Rome herself. He ordered the military tribunes to put the army in motion, and himself leaped upon his horse's back. The horse for no visible reason shied in violent terror, and Flaminius was thrown headlong to the ground. He did not, however, alter his determination, but marched to meet Hannibal, and drew up his forces for battle near the lake Thrasymenus, in Etruria. When the armies met, an earthquake took place which destroyed cities, changed the courses of rivers, and cast down the crests of precipices; but in spite of its violence, no one of the combatants perceived it. Flaminius himself, after many feats of strength and courage, fell dead, and around him lay the bravest Romans. The rest fled, and the slaughter was so great that fifteen thousand were killed, and as many more taken prisoners. Hannibal generously desired to bury the body of Flaminius with military honours, to show his esteem for the consul's bravery; but it could not be found among the slain, and no one knew how it disappeared.

7 The defeat at the Trebia had not been clearly explained either by the general who wrote the despatch, or by the messenger who carried it, as they falsely represented it to have been a drawn battle; but as soon as the praetor Pomponius heard the news of this second misfortune, he assembled the people in the Forum, and said, without any roundabout apologies whatever, "Romans, we have lost a great battle, the army is destroyed, and the consul Flaminius has fallen. Now, therefore, take counsel for your own safety." These words produced the same impression on the people that a gust of wind does upon the sea. No one could calmly reflect after such a sudden downfall of their hopes. All, however, agreed that the State required one irresponsible ruler, which the Romans call a dictatorship, and a man who would fulfil this office with fearless energy. Such a man, they felt, was Fabius Maximus, who was sufficiently qualified for the office by his abilities and the respect which his countrymen bore him, and was moreover at that time of life when the strength of the body is

fully capable of carrying out the ideas of the mind, but when courage is somewhat tempered by discretion.

Reading 13. *The dictator and his strategy. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 4–5), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

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1 As soon as the people had passed their decree, Fabius was appointed dictator, and appointed Marcus Minucius his master of the horse. First, however, he begged of the Senate to allow him the use of a horse during his campaigns. There was an ancient law forbidding this practice, either because the main strength of the army was thought to lie in the columns of infantry, and for that reason the dictator ought to remain always with them, or else because, while in all other respects the dictator's power is equal to that of a king, it was thought well that in this one point he should have to ask leave of the people. Next, however, Fabius, wishing at once to show the greatness and splendour of his office, and so make the citizens more ready to obey him, appeared in public with all his twenty-four lictors at once; and when the surviving consul met him, he sent an officer to bid him dismiss his lictors, lay aside his insignia of office, and come before him as a mere private citizen. After this he began in the best possible way, that is, by a religious ceremony, and assured the people that it was in consequence of the impiety and carelessness of their late general, not by any fault of the army, that they had been defeated. Thus he encouraged them not to fear their enemies, but to respect the gods and render them propitious, not that he implanted any superstitious observances among them, but he confirmed their valour by piety, and took away from them all fear of the enemy by the hopes which he held out to them of divine protection. At this time many of the holy and mysterious books, which contain secrets of great value to the State, were inspected. These are called the Sibylline books. One of the sentences preserved in these was said to have an evident bearing on contemporary events; what

it was can only be guessed at by what was done. The dictator appeared before the people and publicly vowed to the gods a *ver sacrum*, that is, all the young which the next spring should produce, from the goats, the sheep, and the kine on every mountain, and plain, and river, and pasture within the bounds of Italy. All these he swore that he would sacrifice, and moreover that he would exhibit musical and dramatic shows, and expend upon them the sum of three hundred and thirty-three *sestertia*, and three hundred and thirty-three *denarii*, and one-third of a *denarius*. The sum total of this in our Greek money is eighty-three thousand five hundred and eighty-three drachmas and two obols. What the particular virtue of this exact number may be it is hard to determine, unless it be on account of the value of the number three, which is by nature perfect, and the first of odd numbers, the first also of plurals, and containing within itself all the elements of the qualities of number.

2 Fabius, by teaching the people to rest their hopes on religion, made them view the future with a more cheerful heart. For his own part, he trusted entirely to himself to win the victory, believing that Heaven grants men success according to the valour and conduct which they display. He marched against Hannibal, not with any design of fighting him, but of wearing out his army by long delays, until he could, by his superior numbers and resources, deal with him easily. With this object in view he always took care to secure himself from Hannibal's cavalry, by occupying the mountains overhanging the Carthaginian camp, where he remained quiet as long as the enemy did, but when they moved he used to accompany them, showing himself at intervals upon the heights at such a distance as not to be forced to fight against his will, and yet, from the very slowness of his movements, making the enemy fear that at every moment he was about to attack. By these dilatory manoeuvres he incurred general contempt, and was looked upon with disgust by his own soldiers, while the enemy, with the exception of one man, thought him utterly without warlike enterprise. That man was Hannibal himself. He alone perceived Fabius's true generalship and thorough comprehension of the war, and

saw that either he must by some means be brought to fight a battle, or else the Carthaginians were lost, if they could not make use of their superiority in arms, but were to be worn away and reduced in number and resources, in which they were already deficient. He put in force every conceivable military stratagem and device, like a skilful wrestler when he tries to lay hold of his antagonist, and kept attacking Fabius, skirmishing round him, and drawing him from place to place, in his endeavours to make him quit his policy of caution. But Fabius was convinced that he was right, and steadily declined battle. His master of the horse, Minucius, who longed for action, gave him much trouble. This man made unseemly boasts, and harangued the army, filling it with wild excitement and self-confidence. The soldiers in derision used to call Fabius Hannibal's lacquey, because he followed him wherever he went, and thought Minucius a really great general, and worthy of the name of Roman. Minucius, encouraged in his arrogant vauntings, began to ridicule the habit of encamping on the mountain-tops, saying that the dictator always took care to provide them with good seats from which to behold the spectacle of the burning and plundering of Italy, and used to ask the friends of Fabius whether he took his army up so near the sky because he had ceased to take any interest in what went on on the earth below, or whether it was in order to conceal it from the enemy among the clouds and mists. When Fabius was informed of these insults by his friends, who begged him to wipe away this disgrace by risking a battle, he answered, "If I did so, I should be more cowardly than I am now thought to be, in abandoning the policy which I have determined on because of men's slanders and sneers. It is no shame to fear for one's country, but to regard the opinions and spiteful criticisms of the people would be unworthy of the high office which I hold, and would show me the slave of those whom I ought to govern and restrain when they would fain do wrong."

Debrief

1. Plutarch says the boy everyone thought dull proved that "his apparent want of energy was really due to serenity of intellect" (12.3). What qualities in yourself or others are most often misread in this way?
2. The praetor Pomponius told the people: "Romans, we have lost a great battle, the army is destroyed, and the consul Flaminius has fallen" (12.7). Compare this with the earlier dispatch that called the Trebia a drawn battle. What does bad news delivered plainly do for a people?
3. Fabius made the surviving consul dismiss his lictors and come before him "as a mere private citizen," and he began with religious ceremonies (13.1). Why might a leader in a crisis start with symbols before strategy?
4. He meant to wear Hannibal out "by long delays" and only Hannibal, Plutarch says, understood him (13.2). What does it cost a leader when the strategy is visible to the enemy and invisible to his own side?
5. "It is no shame to fear for one's country," Fabius answered, but to bend to slander would make him "the slave of those whom I ought to govern and restrain" (13.2). When is it right for a leader in a free state to defy public opinion?

Case 9: Minucius

Fabius's strategy had a bad season. A blunder by Hannibal's guides led the Carthaginian army into a valley near Casilinum, and Fabius closed the exit. Hannibal escaped by a famous trick. Rumors spread at Rome that Fabius was soft on the enemy; Hannibal spared Fabius's own estates to feed them. Fabius also made an agreement with Hannibal to exchange prisoners, which the Senate refused to honor, and he paid the ransom himself.

Called back to Rome for religious duties, Fabius left the army with Minucius and ordered him not to fight. Minucius fought anyway, won a small success and became the hero of the city. The tribune Metilius demanded Fabius's removal. The people did not remove him, but did something never before done in Rome. Reading 14 covers these events. Reading 15 covers what followed in the field.

Decision point: The people decreed that Minucius "should conduct the war, having equal powers with the dictator" (14.5). Fabius returned to camp and found Minucius "insolent and overbearing, and demanding to have the sole command every other day" (15.1). Fabius believed that Minucius, given his chance, would soon do "some irreparable mischief." He could agree to alternate days of command, try to divide the army, or seek some other arrangement. What should he do, and how should he deal with a colleague who has publicly humiliated him?

Reading 14. *The trap at Casilinum and the rise of Minucius. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 6–9), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 After this, Hannibal made a blunder. Wishing to move his army further from that of Fabius, and to gain an open part of the country where he could obtain forage, he ordered his guides one night after supper to lead the way at once to Casinatum. They, misunderstanding him because of his foreign pronunciation, led his forces to the borders of Campania, near the city of Casilinum, through the midst of which flows the river Lothronus, which the Romans call Vulturnus. This country is full of mountains, except one valley that runs towards the sea-coast, where the river at the end of its course overflows into extensive marshes, with deep beds of sand. The beach itself is rough and impracticable for shipping.

2 When Hannibal was marching down this valley, Fabius, by his superior knowledge of the country, came up with him, placed four thousand men to guard the narrow outlet, established the main body in a safe position in the mountains, and with the light-armed troops fell upon and harassed the rear of Hannibal's army, throwing it all into disorder, and killing about eight hundred men. Upon this, Hannibal determined to retrace his steps. Perceiving the mistake which he had made, and the danger he was in, he crucified his guides, but still could not tell how to force his way out through the Roman army which was in possession of the mountain passes. While all were terrified and disheartened, believing themselves to be beset on all sides by dangers from which there was no escape, Hannibal decided on extricating himself by stratagem. Taking about two thousand captured oxen, he ordered his soldiers to bind a torch or faggot of dry wood to their horns, and at night at a given signal to set them on fire, and drive the animals towards the narrow outlet near the enemy's camp. While this was being done, he got the remainder of the troops under arms and led them slowly forward. The cattle, while the flame was moderate, and burned only the wood, walked steadily forward towards the mountain side, astonishing the shepherds on the mountain, who thought that it must be an army, marching in one great column, carrying torches. But when their horns were burned to the quick, causing them considerable pain, the beasts, now scorched by the fire from one another

as they shook their heads, set off in wild career over the mountains, with their foreheads and tails blazing, setting fire to a great part of the wood through which they passed. The Romans watching the pass were terribly scared at the sight; for the flames looked like torches carried by men running, and they fell into great confusion and alarm, thinking that they were surrounded, and about to be attacked on all sides by the enemy. They dared not remain at their post, but abandoned the pass, and made for the main body. At that moment Hannibal's light troops took possession of the heights commanding the outlet, and the main army marched safely through, loaded with plunder.

3 It happened that while it was yet night Fabius perceived the trick; for some of the oxen in their flight had fallen into the hands of the Romans; but, fearing to fall into an ambuscade in the darkness, he kept his men quiet under arms. When day broke he pursued and attacked the rear-guard, which led to many confused skirmishes in the rough ground, and produced great confusion, till Hannibal sent back his practised Spanish mountaineers from the head of his column. These men, being light and active, attacked the heavily-armed Roman infantry and beat off Fabius' attack with very considerable loss. Now Fabius's unpopularity reached its highest pitch, and he was regarded with scorn and contempt. He had, they said, determined to refrain from a pitched battle, meaning to overcome Hannibal by superior generalship, and he had been defeated in that too. And Hannibal himself, wishing to increase the dislike which the Romans felt for him, though he burned and ravaged every other part of Italy, forbade his men to touch Fabius's own estates, and even placed a guard to see that no damage was done to them. This was reported at Rome, greatly to his discredit; and the tribunes of the people brought all kinds of false accusations against him in public harangues, instigated chiefly by Metilius, who was not Fabius's personal enemy, but being a relative of Minucius, the Master of the Horse, thought that he was pressing the interests of the latter by giving currency to all these scandalous reports about Fabius. He was also disliked by the Senate because of the

terms which he had arranged with Hannibal about the exchange of prisoners. The two commanders agreed that the prisoners should be exchanged man for man, and that if either party had more than the other, he should redeem for two hundred and fifty drachmas per man. When, then, this exchange took place, two hundred and forty Romans were found remaining in Hannibal's hands. The Senate determined not to send these men's ransom, and blamed Fabius for having acted improperly and against the interests of the State in taking back men whose cowardice had made them fall into the hands of the enemy. Fabius, on hearing this, was not moved at the discontent of the citizens, but having no money, as he could not bear to deceive Hannibal and give up his countrymen, sent his son to Rome with orders to sell part of his estate, and bring him the money at once to the camp. The young man soon sold the land, and quickly returned. Fabius now sent the ransom to Hannibal and recovered the prisoners, many of whom afterwards offered to repay him; but he would take nothing, and forgave their debt to them all.

4 After this the priests recalled him to Rome to perform certain sacrifices. He now transferred the command to Minucius, and not merely ordered him as dictator not to fight or entangle himself with the enemy, but even gave him much advice and besought him not to do so, all of which Minucius set at nought, and at once attacked the enemy. Once he observed that Hannibal had sent the greater part of his army out to forage for provisions, and, attacking the remaining troops, he drove them into their intrenched camp, slew many, and terrified the rest, who feared that he might carry the camp by assault. When Hannibal's forces collected again, Minucius effected his retreat with safety, having excited both himself and the army with his success, and filled them with a spirit of reckless daring. Soon an inflated report of the action reached Rome. Fabius, when he heard of it, said that with Minucius he feared success more than failure; but the populace were delighted, and joyfully collected in the Forum, where Metilius the tribune ascended the rostra, and made a speech glorifying Minucius, and accusing Fabius not merely of remissness or cow-

ardice, but of actual treachery, accusing also the other leading men of the city of having brought on the war from the very beginning in order to destroy the constitution; and he also charged them with having placed the city in the hands of one man as dictator, who by his dilatory proceedings would give Hannibal time to establish himself firmly and to obtain reinforcements from Africa to enable him to conquer Italy.

5 When Fabius addressed the people, he did not deign to make any defence against the accusations of the tribune, but said that he should accomplish his sacrifices and sacred duties as quickly as possible, in order to return to the army and punish Minucius for having fought a battle against his orders. At this a great clamour was raised by the people, who feared for their favourite Minucius, for a dictator has power to imprison any man, and even to put him to death; and they thought that Fabius, a mild-tempered man now at last stirred up to wrath, would be harsh and inexorable. All refrained from speaking, but Metilius, having nothing to fear because of the privileges of his office of tribune (for that is the only office which does not lose its prerogatives on the election of a dictator, but remains untouched though all the rest are annulled), made a violent appeal to the people, begging them not to give up Minucius, nor allow him to be treated as Manlius Torquatus treated his son, who had him beheaded, although he had fought most bravely and gained a crown of laurel for his victory. He asked them to remove Fabius from his dictatorship, and to bestow it upon one who was able and willing to save the country. Excited as they were by these words, they yet did not venture upon removing Fabius from his post, in spite of their feeling against him, but they decreed that Minucius should conduct the war, having equal powers with the dictator, a thing never before done in Rome, but which occurred shortly afterwards, after the disaster at Cannae, when Marcus Junius was dictator in the camp, and, as many members of the Senate had perished in the battle, they chose another dictator, Fabius Buteo. However, he, after enrolling the new senators, on the same day dismissed his lictors,

got rid of the crowd which escorted him, and mixed with the people in the Forum, transacting some business of his own as a private man.

Reading 15. *Divided command and the rescue of Minucius. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 10–13), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

❧

1 Now the people, by placing Minucius on the same footing with the dictator, thought to humble Fabius, but they formed a very false estimate of his character. He did not reckon their ignorance to be his misfortune, but as Diogenes the philosopher, when some one said "They are deriding you," answered "But I am not derided," thinking that those alone are derided who are affected and disturbed by it, so Fabius quietly and unconcernedly endured all that was done, hereby affording an example of the truth of that philosophic maxim that a good and honest man can suffer no disgrace. Yet he grieved over the folly of the people on public grounds, because they had given a man of reckless ambition an opportunity for indulging his desire for battle; and, fearing that Minucius would be altogether beside himself with pride and vain glory, and would soon do some irreparable mischief, he left Rome unperceived by any one. On reaching the camp, he found Minucius no longer endurable, but insolent and overbearing, and demanding to have the sole command every other day. To this Fabius would not agree, but divided his forces with him, thinking it better to command a part than partly to command the whole of the army. He took the first and fourth legion, and left the second and third to Minucius, dividing the auxiliary troops equally with him.

2 As Minucius gave himself great airs, and was gratified at the thought that the greatest officer in the State had been humbled and brought low by his means, Fabius reminded him that if he judged aright, he would regard Hannibal, not Fabius, as his enemy; but that if he persisted in his rivalry with his colleagues, he must beware lest he, the honoured victor, should

appear more careless of the safety and success of his countrymen, than he who had been overcome and ill-treated by them.

3 Minucius thought all this to be merely the expression of the old man's jealousy. He took his allotted troops, and encamped apart from him. Hannibal was not ignorant of what was passing, and watched all their movements narrowly.

4 There was a hill between the two armies, which it was not difficult to take, which when taken would afford an army a safe position, and one well supplied with necessaries. The plain by which it was surrounded appeared to be perfectly smooth, but was nevertheless intersected with ditches and other hollow depressions. On this account Hannibal would not take the hill, although he could easily have done so, but preferred to leave it untouched, in order to draw the enemy into fighting for its possession. But as soon as he saw Fabius separated from Minucius, he placed during the night some troops in the depressions and hollows which we have mentioned, and at daybreak sent a few men to take the hill, in order to draw Minucius into fighting for it, in which he succeeded. Minucius first sent out his light troops, then his cavalry, and finally, seeing that Hannibal was reinforcing the troops on the hill, he came down with his entire force. He fought stoutly, and held his own against the soldiers on the hill, who shot their missiles at him; when Hannibal, seeing him thoroughly deceived, and offering an unprotected flank to the troops in the ambush, gave them the signal to charge. Upon this they attacked the Romans from all sides, rushing upon them with loud shouts, cutting off the rearmost men, and throwing the whole army into confusion and panic. Minucius himself lost heart and kept glancing first at one and then at another of his officers, none of whom ventured to stand their ground, but betook themselves in a confused mass to running away, a proceeding which brought them no safety, for the Numidian horsemen, as the day was now theirs, scoured the plain, encompassing the fugitives, and cut off all stragglers.

5 Fabius had carefully watched the Romans, and saw in what danger they were. Conscious, it would seem, of what was going to happen, he had kept his troops under arms, and gained his information of what was going on, not from the reports of scouts, but from his own eyesight, from a convenient height outside of his camp. As soon as he saw the army surrounded and panic-stricken, and heard the cries of the Romans, who no longer fought, but were overcome by terror, and betaking themselves to flight, he smote his thigh and with a deep sigh, said to his friends, "By Hercules, now Minucius has ruined himself, quicker than I expected, and yet slower than his manoeuvres warranted." Having given orders to carry out the standards as quickly as possible, and for the whole army to follow, he said aloud, "My men, hurry on your march: think of Marcus Minucius; he is a brave man and loves his country. If he has made any mistake in his haste to drive out the enemy, we will blame him for that at another time." The appearance of Fabius scared and drove back the Numidians, who were slaughtering the fugitives in the plain; next he bore against those who were attacking the Roman rear, slaying all he met, though most of them, before they were cut off and treated as they had treated the Romans, betook themselves to flight. Hannibal seeing that the fortune of the battle was changed, and how Fabius himself, with a strength beyond his years, was forcing his way through the thickest battle up the hill to reach Minucius, withdrew his troops, and, sounding a retreat, led them back into his entrenched camp, affording a most seasonable relief to the Romans. It is said that Hannibal as he retired, spoke jokingly about Fabius to his friends in the words, "Did I not often warn you that the dark cloud which has so long brooded on the mountain tops, would at last break upon us with blasts of hail and storm?"

6 After the battle Fabius collected the spoils of such of the enemy as were slain, and drew off his forces without letting fall a single boastful or offensive expression about his colleague. But Minucius assembled his own troops, and thus addressed them, "My fellow-soldiers, it is beyond human skill to make no mistakes in matters of importance, but it is the part

of a man of courage and sense to use his mistakes as warnings for the future. I myself confess that I have little fault to find with Fortune, and great reason to thank her; for in the space of one day I have learned what I never knew in all my previous life: that is, that I am not able to command others, but myself require a commander, and I have no ambition to conquer a man by whom it is more glorious to be defeated. The dictator is your leader in everything except in this, that I will lead you to express your thankfulness to him, by being the first to offer myself to him as an example of obedience and willingness to carry out his orders." After these words he ordered the eagles to be raised aloft and all the soldiers to follow them to the camp of Fabius. On entering it, he proceeded to the General's tent, to the surprise and wonderment of all. When Fabius was come out, he placed his standards in the ground before him, and himself addressed him as father in a loud voice, while his soldiers greeted those of Fabius by the name of their Patrons, which is the name by which freed men address those who have set them free. Silence being enforced, Minucius said: "Dictator, you have won two victories to-day, for you have conquered Hannibal by your bravery, and your colleague by your kindness and your generalship. By the one you have saved our lives, and by the other you have taught us our duty, for we have been disgracefully defeated by Hannibal, but beneficially and honourably by you. I call you my excellent father, having no more honourable appellation to bestow, since I owe a greater debt of gratitude to you than to him who begot me. To him I merely owe my single life, but to you I owe not only that but the lives of all my men." After these words he embraced Fabius, and the soldiers followed his example, embracing and kissing one another, so that the camp was full of joy and of most blessed tears.

Debrief

1. Fabius sold part of his own land to pay the ransom, because “he could not bear to deceive Hannibal and give up his country-

men" (14.3). Why does keeping faith with an enemy matter in this Life? What did it gain him at home?

2. Hearing of Minucius's first success, Fabius said that "with Minucius he feared success more than failure" (14.4). What did he mean? Have you seen a small success do more harm than a failure?
3. He chose to divide the army, "thinking it better to command a part than partly to command the whole of the army" (15.1). Weigh that choice against alternating command. What does it protect, and what does it give up?
4. Riding to the rescue, Fabius told his men that if Minucius "has made any mistake in his haste to drive out the enemy, we will blame him for that at another time" (15.5). What does that sentence teach about rescuing a rival?
5. Minucius told his troops: "I am not able to command others, but myself require a commander" (15.6). What makes such an admission possible? Is it a strength or a weakness in a leader?

Case 10: Cannae and After

When his term as dictator ended, Fabius laid down his office, and consuls were elected again. The first consuls kept to his defensive policy. Then the people elected Terentius Varro, who promised to beat Hannibal the first day he saw him, and enrolled an army of eighty-eight thousand men. His colleague was Paulus Aemilius, an experienced soldier who feared the people because they had once fined him.

The battle was fought in 216 BC near the village of Cannae, on the river Aufidus. Reading 16 covers the run-up and the battle. Reading 17 covers what Hannibal and Rome did after the battle, the partnership of Fabius and Marcellus, and Fabius's way of handling allies and soldiers whose loyalty was in doubt.

Decision point: Fabius held no command. Varro was consul, popular and in a hurry, and "many of the youth of Rome" were with him (16.1). Fabius feared that if they were lost "the city would never recover from the blow." The only person in a position to check Varro was the other consul, Paulus, who had once been condemned by the people and dreaded it. Fabius, a private citizen, had to decide what to say to Paulus and how much he could ask of him.

Reading 16. *Varro, Paulus and Cannae. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 14–16), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 After this, Fabius laid down his office, and consuls were again elected. Those who were first elected followed the defensive policy of Fabius, avoiding pitched battles with Hannibal, but reinforcing the allies and

preventing defections. But when Terentius Varro was made consul, a man of low birth, but notorious for his rash temper and his popularity with the people, he made no secret, in his inexperience and self-confidence, of his intention of risking everything on one cast. He was always reiterating in his public speeches that under such generals as Fabius the war made no progress, whereas he would conquer the enemy the first day he saw him. By means of these boastful speeches he enrolled as soldiers such a multitude as the Romans had never before had at their disposal in any war, for there collected for the battle eighty-eight thousand men. This caused great disquietude to Fabius and other sensible Romans, who feared that if so many of the youth of Rome were cut off, the city would never recover from the blow. They addressed themselves therefore to the other consul, Paulus Aemilius, a man of great experience in war, but disagreeable to the people and afraid of them because he had once been fined by them. Fabius encouraged him to attempt to hold the other consul's rashness in check, pointing out that he would have to fight for his country's safety with Terentius Varro no less than with Hannibal. Varro, he said, will hasten to engage because he does not know his own strength, and Hannibal will do so because he knows his own weakness. "I myself, Paulus," said he, "am more to be believed than Varro as to the condition of Hannibal's affairs, and I am sure that if no battle takes place with him for a year, he will either perish in this country or be compelled to quit it; because even now, when he seems to be victorious and carrying all before him, not one of his enemies have come over to his side, while scarcely a third of the force which he brought from home is now surviving." It is said that Paulus answered as follows: "For my own part, Fabius, it is better for me to fall by the spears of the enemy than be again condemned by the votes of my own countrymen; but if public affairs are indeed in this critical situation, I will endeavour rather to approve myself a good general to you than to all those who are urging me to the opposite course." With this determination Paulus began the campaign.

2 Varro induced his colleague to adopt the system of each consul holding the chief command on alternate days. He proceeded to encamp near Hannibal on the banks of the river Aufidus, close to the village of Cannae. At daybreak he showed the signal of battle (a red tunic displayed over the General's tent), so that the Carthaginians were at first disheartened at the daring of the consul and the great number of his troops, more than twice that of their own army. Hannibal ordered his soldiers to get under arms, and himself rode with a few others to a rising ground, from which he viewed the enemy, who were already forming their ranks. When one Gisco, a man of his own rank, said to him that the numbers of the enemy were wonderful, Hannibal with a serious air replied, "Another circumstance much more wonderful than this has escaped your notice, Gisco." When Gisco asked what it might be, Hannibal answered, "It is, that among all those men before you there is not one named Gisco." At this unexpected answer they all began to laugh, and as they came down the hill they kept telling this joke to all whom they met, so that the laugh became universal, and Hannibal's staff was quite overpowered with merriment. The Carthaginian soldiers seeing this took courage, thinking that their General must be in a position to despise his enemy if he could thus laugh and jest in the presence of danger.

3 In the battle Hannibal employed several stratagems: first, in securing the advantage of position, by getting the wind at his back, for it blew a hurricane, raising a harsh dust from the sandy plains, which rose over the Carthaginians and blew in the faces of the Romans, throwing them into confusion. Secondly, in his disposition of his forces he showed great skill. The best troops were placed on the wings, and the centre, which was composed of the worst, was made to project far beyond the rest of the line. The troops on each wing were told that when the Romans had driven in this part of the line and were so become partly enclosed, that each wing must turn inwards, and attack them in the flank and rear and endeavour to surround them. This was the cause of the greatest slaughter; for when the centre gave way, and made room for the pursuing Romans,

Hannibal's line assumed a crescent form, and the commanders of the select battalions charging from the right and left of the Romans attacked them in flank, destroying every man except such as escaped being surrounded. It is related that a similar disaster befel the Roman cavalry. The horse of Paulus was wounded, and threw its rider, upon which man after man of his staff dismounted and came to help the consul on foot. The cavalry, seeing this, took it for a general order to dismount, and at once attacked the enemy on foot. Hannibal, seeing this, said, "I am better pleased at this than if he had handed them over to me bound hand and foot." This anecdote is found in those writers who have described the incidents of the battle in detail. Of the consuls, Varro escaped with a few followers to Venusia. Paulus, in the whirling eddies of the rout, covered with darts which still stuck in his wounds, and overwhelmed with sorrow at the defeat, sat down on a stone to await his death at the hands of the enemy. The blood with which his face and head were covered made it hard for any one to recognise him; but even his own friends and servants passed him by, taking no heed of him. Only Cornelius Lentulus, a young patrician, saw and recognised him. Dismounting from his horse and leading it up to him he begged him to take it and preserve his life, at a time when the State especially needed a wise ruler. But he refused, and forced the youth, in spite of his tears, to remount his horse. He then took him by the hand, saying, "Lentulus, tell Fabius Maximus, and bear witness yourself, that Paulus Aemilius followed his instructions to the last, and departed from nothing of what was agreed upon between us; but he was vanquished first by Varro, and secondly by Hannibal." Having given Lentulus these instructions he sent him away, and flinging himself on to the enemy's swords perished. In that battle it is reckoned that fifty thousand Romans fell, and four thousand were taken prisoners, besides not less than ten thousand who were taken after the battle in the camps of the two consuls.

Reading 17. *After Cannae: the shield of Rome. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 17–20), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

❧

1 After this immense success, Hannibal was urged by his friends to follow up his victory and enter Rome with the fugitives, promising that five days thereafter he should sup in the Capitol. It is not easy to say what reasons could have deterred him from doing so, and it seems rather as if some divinity prevented his march, and inspired him with the dilatory and timid policy which he followed. It is said that the Carthaginian, Barca, said to him, "You know how to win a victory, but do not know how to use one." Yet so great a change was effected by this victory that he, who before it had not possessed a single city, market, or harbour in Italy, and had to obtain his provisions with the utmost difficulty by plunder, having no regular base of operations, but merely wandering about with his army as though carrying on brigandage on a large scale, now saw nearly the whole of Italy at his feet. Some of the largest and most powerful States came over to him of their own accord, and he attacked and took Capua, the most important city next to Rome itself.

2 It would appear that the saying of Euripides, that "adversity tries our friends," applies also to good generals. That which before this battle was called Fabius's cowardice and remissness, was now regarded as more than human sagacity, and a foresight so wonderful as to be beyond belief. Rome at once centred her last hopes upon Fabius, taking refuge in his wisdom as men take sanctuary at an altar, believing his discretion to be the chief cause of her surviving this present crisis, even as in the old Gaulish troubles. For though he had been so cautious and backward at a time when there seemed to be no imminent danger, yet now when every one was giving way to useless grief and lamentation, he alone walked through the streets at a calm pace, with a composed countenance and kindly voice, stopped all womanish wailings and assemblies in public to lament their losses, persuaded the Senate to meet, and gave fresh courage to the

magistrates, being really himself the moving spirit and strength of the State, which looked to him alone to command it.

3 He placed guards at the gates to prevent the mob from quitting the city, and regulated the period of mourning, bidding every man mourn for thirty days in his own house, after which all signs of mourning were to be put away. As the feast of Ceres fell during those days, it was thought better to omit both the sacrifices and the processions than to have them marred by the consciousness of their misfortune, which would be painfully evident in the small number of worshippers and their downcast looks. However, everything that the soothsayers commanded to appease the anger of the gods and to expiate prodigies was carried out. Fabius Pictor, a relative of the great Fabius, was sent to Delphi, and of two of the Vestal virgins who were found to have been seduced, one was buried alive, as is the usual custom, while the other died by her own hand. Especially admirable was the spirit and the calm composure of the city when the consul Varro returned after his flight. He came humbled to the dust, as a man would who had been the cause of a terrible disaster, but at the gate the Senate and all the people went out to greet him. The chief men and the magistrates, amongst whom was Fabius, having obtained silence, spoke in praise of him "because he had not despaired of the State after such a calamity, but had come back to undertake the conduct of affairs and do what he could for his countrymen as one who thought they might yet be saved."

4 When they learned that Hannibal after the battle had turned away from Rome to other parts of Italy, the Romans again took courage and sent out armies and generals. Of those the most remarkable were Fabius Maximus and Claudius Marcellus, both equally admirable, but from an entirely different point of view. Marcellus, as has been related in his Life, was a man of activity and high spirit, rejoicing in a hand-to-hand fight, and just like the lordly warriors of Homer. With a truly venturesome audacity, he in his first battles outdid in boldness even the bold Hannibal himself; while Fabius, on the other hand, was convinced that his former

reasoning was true, and believed that without any one fighting or even meddling with Hannibal, his army would wear itself out and consume away, just as the body of an athlete when overstrained and exerted soon loses its fine condition. For this reason Poseidonius calls Fabius the shield, and Marcellus the sword of Rome, because the steadiness of Fabius, combined with the warlike ardour of Marcellus, proved the saving of the state. Hannibal, frequently meeting Marcellus, who was like a raging torrent, had his forces shaken and weakened; while Fabius, like a deep quiet river kept constantly undermining them and wasting them away unperceived. Hannibal was at length reduced to such extremities that he was weary of fighting Marcellus, and feared Fabius even though he did not fight: for these were the persons whom he generally had to deal with, as praetors, consuls, or pro-consuls, for each of them was five times consul. He drew Marcellus, when consul for the fifth time, into an ambuscade; but although he tried every art and stratagem upon Fabius he could effect nothing, except once, when he very nearly succeeded in ruining him. He forged letters from the leading citizens of Metapontum, and then sent them to Fabius. These letters were to the effect that the city would surrender if he appeared before it, and that the conspirators were only waiting for his approach. Fabius was so much moved by these letters as to take a part of his army and commence a night march thither; but meeting with unfavourable omens on the way he turned back, and soon afterwards learned that the letters were a stratagem of Hannibal's, who was waiting for him under the city walls. This escape one may attribute to the favour of Heaven.

5 In the case of revolts and insurrections among the subject cities and allies, Fabius thought it best to restrain them and discountenance their proceedings in a gentle manner, not treating every suspected person with harshness, or inquiring too strictly into every case of suspected disloyalty. It is said that a Marsian soldier, one of the chief men of the allies for bravery and nobility of birth, was discovered by Fabius to be engaged in organizing a revolt. Fabius showed no sign of anger, but admitted that he

had not been treated with the distinction he deserved, and said that in the present instance he should blame his officers for distributing rewards more by favour than by merit; but that in future he should be vexed with him if he did not apply directly to himself when he had any request to make. Saying this, he presented him with a war horse and other marks of honour, so that thenceforth the man always served him with the utmost zeal and fidelity. He thought it a shame that trainers of horses and dogs should be able to tame the savage spirit of those animals by careful attention and education rather than by whips and clogs, and yet that a commander of men should not rely chiefly on mild and conciliatory measures, but treat them more harshly than gardeners treat the wild fig-trees, wild pears, and wild olives, which they by careful cultivation turn into trees bearing good fruit. His captains informed him that a certain soldier, a Lucanian by birth, was irregular and often absent from his duty. He made inquiries as to what his general conduct was. All agreed that it would be difficult to find a better soldier, and related some of his exploits. Fabius at length discovered that the cause of his absence was that he was in love with a certain girl, and that he continually ran the risk of making long journeys from the camp to meet her. Without the knowledge of the soldier, he sent and apprehended this girl, whom he concealed in his own tent. Then he invited the Lucanian to a private interview, and addressed him as follows:—"You have been observed frequently to pass the night outside of the camp, contrary to the ancient practice and discipline of the Roman army: but also, you have been observed to be a brave man. Your crime is atoned for by your valiant deeds, but for the future I shall commit you to the custody of another person." Then, to the astonishment of the soldier, he led the girl forward, joined their hands, and said: "This lady pledges her word that you will remain in the camp with us. You must prove by your conduct that it was not from any unworthy motive, for which she was the pretext, but solely through love for her that you used to desert your post." This is the story which is related about him.

Debrief

1. Fabius told Paulus that Varro would hasten to fight "because he does not know his own strength, and Hannibal will do so because he knows his own weakness" (16.1). Unpack the sentence. Is it a sound rule?
2. Paulus answered that he would rather "fall by the spears of the enemy than be again condemned by the votes of my own countrymen" (16.1). What did he promise Fabius, and what could he actually deliver while command alternated day by day (16.2)?
3. After Cannae, Fabius "alone walked through the streets at a calm pace" (17.2), limited the mourning and kept people from fleeing. Which of his measures seem wise to you, and which harsh?
4. Rome went out to greet Varro, the defeated consul, "because he had not despaired of the State" (17.3). Why might that welcome have been wiser than punishment?
5. Fabius thought it a shame that trainers of horses and dogs used patience while commanders of men relied on harshness (17.5). Look at his two stories of the Marsian and the Lucanian. What do they say about handling people whose loyalty is in doubt?

Case 11: Tarentum, Scipio and the End

In 212 BC Hannibal had taken Tarentum, a city in the south of Italy, though a Roman garrison held out in its citadel. In 209, in his fifth consulship, Fabius retook it. Reading 18 tells how: through a soldier from Tarentum, his sister and her lover, an officer of Hannibal's garrison, and a diversion that drew Hannibal away. It also tells what Fabius did after the city fell, which Plutarch thinks unworthy of him.

Reading 19 follows his last years: a scene with his son, who was consul, the son's death, and Fabius's long struggle against Publius Cornelius Scipio, the young general who had driven the Carthaginians out of Spain. It ends with Fabius's death and funeral. He died in 203 BC, about the time Hannibal was recalled from Italy.

Decision point: Scipio came home from Spain in triumph. He decided that fighting Hannibal in Italy was "too tame a proceeding," and planned instead to "pour troops into Africa, attack Carthage, and transfer the theatre of war from Italy to that country" (19.3). Hannibal and his army were still in Italy. Fabius, the most honored man in Rome, had spent years arguing that Hannibal should be worn down where he stood. He now had to decide whether to support the young man's plan, oppose it, or seek some middle course, and how far to carry his opposition if he chose it.

Reading 18. *The taking of Tarentum. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 21–23), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Fabius obtained possession of Tarentum by treachery in the following manner. In his army was a young man of Tarentum whose sister was devotedly attached to him. Her lover was a Bruttian, and one of the officers of Hannibal's garrison there. This gave the Tarentine hopes of effecting his purpose, and with the consent of Fabius he went into the city, being commonly supposed to have run away to see his sister. For the first few days the Bruttian remained in his quarters, as she wished her amour with him not to be known to her brother. He then, however, said: "There was a rumour in the army that you were intimate with one of the chiefs of the garrison. Who is he? for if he is as they say, a man of courage and distinction—war, which throws everything into confusion, will care little what countryman he may be. Nothing is disgraceful which we cannot avoid; but it is a blessing, at a time when justice has no power, that we should yield to a not disagreeable necessity." Upon this the lady sent for her Bruttian admirer and introduced him to her brother. He, by encouraging the stranger in his passion, and assuring him that he would induce his sister to look favourably on it, had no difficulty in inducing the man, who was a mercenary soldier, to break his faith in expectation of the great rewards which he was promised by Fabius. This is the account given of the transaction by most writers, though some say that the lady by whose means the Bruttian was seduced from his allegiance was not a Tarentine, but a Bruttian by race, who was on intimate terms with Fabius; and that as soon as she discovered that a fellow-countryman and acquaintance of hers was in command of the Bruttian garrison, told Fabius of it, and by interviews which she had with the officer outside the walls gradually won him over to the Roman interests.

2 While these negotiations were in progress, Fabius, wishing to contrive something to draw Hannibal away, sent orders to the troops at Rhegium to ravage the Bruttian country and take Caulonia by storm. The troops at Rhegium were a body of eight thousand men, mostly deserters: and the most worthless of those disgraced soldiers whom Marcellus brought from Sicily, so that their loss would not cause any sorrow or harm to

Rome; while he hoped that by throwing them out as a bait to Hannibal he might draw him away from Tarentum, as indeed he did. Hannibal at once started with his army to attack them, and meanwhile, on the sixth day after Fabius arrived before Tarentum, the young man having previously concerted measures with the Bruttian and his sister, came to him by night and told him that all was ready; knowing accurately and having well inspected the place where the Bruttian would be ready to open the gate and let in the besiegers. Fabius would not depend entirely upon the chance of treachery; but though he himself went quietly to the appointed place, the rest of the army attacked the town both by sea and land, with great clamour and disturbance, until, when most of the Tarentines had run to repel the assault, the Bruttian gave the word to Fabius, and, mounting his scaling ladders, he took the place. On this occasion Fabius seems to have acted unworthily of his reputation, for he ordered the chief Bruttian officers to be put to the sword, that it might not be said that he gained the place by treachery. However, he did not obtain this glory, and gained a reputation for faithlessness and cruelty. Many of the Tarentines were put to death, thirty thousand were sold for slaves, and the city was sacked by the soldiers. Three thousand talents were brought into the public treasury.

3 While everything else was being carried off, it is said that the clerk who was taking the inventory asked Fabius what his pleasure was with regard to the gods, meaning the statues and pictures. Fabius replied, "Let us leave the Tarentines their angry gods." However, he took the statue of Hercules from Tarentum and placed it in the Capitol, and near to it he placed a brazen statue of himself on horseback, acting in this respect much worse than Marcellus, or rather proving that Marcellus was a man of extraordinary mildness and generosity of temper, as is shown in his Life.

4 Hannibal is said to have been hastening to relieve Tarentum, and to have been within five miles of it when it was taken. He said aloud: "So then, the Romans also have a Hannibal; we have lost Tarentum just as we

gained it." Moreover in private he acknowledged to his friends that he had long seen that it was very difficult, and now thought it impossible for them to conquer Italy under existing circumstances.

5 Fabius enjoyed a second triumph for this success, which was more glorious than his first. He had contended with Hannibal and easily baffled all his attempts just as a good wrestler disengages himself with ease from the clutches of an antagonist whose strength is beginning to fail him; for Hannibal's army was no longer what it had been, being partly corrupted by luxury and plunder, and partly also worn out by unremitting toils and battles.

6 One Marcus Livius had been in command of Tarentum when Hannibal obtained possession of it. In spite of this, he held the citadel, from which he could not be dislodged, until Tarentum was recaptured by the Romans. This man was vexed at the honours paid to Fabius, and once, in a transport of envy and vain glory, he said before the Senate that he, not Fabius, was the real author of the recapture of the town. Fabius with a smile answered: "Very true; for if you had not lost the place, I could never have recaptured it."

Reading 19. *A father, a son, and Scipio. Plutarch, Life of Fabius Maximus (chapters 24–27), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 The Romans, among many other marks of respect for Fabius, elected his son consul. When he had entered on this office and was making some arrangements for the conduct of the war, his father, either because of his age and infirmities or else intending to try his son, mounted on horseback and rode towards him through the crowd of bystanders. The young man seeing him at a distance would not endure this slight, but sent a lictor to bid his father dismount and come on foot, if he wanted anything of the consul. Those present were vexed at this order, and looked on

Fabius in silence, as if they thought that he was unworthily treated, considering his great reputation: but he himself instantly alighted, ran to his son, and embracing him, said: "You both think and act rightly, my son; for you know whom you command, and how great an office you hold. Thus it was that we and our ancestors made Rome great, by thinking less of our parents and of our children than of the glory of our country." It is even said to be true that the great grandfather of Fabius, although he had been consul five times, had finished several campaigns with splendid triumphs, and was one of the most illustrious men in Rome, yet acted as lieutenant to his son when consul in the field, and that in the subsequent triumph the son drove into Rome in a chariot and four, while he with the other officers followed him on horseback, glorying in the fact that although he was his son's master, and although he was and was accounted the first citizen in Rome, yet he submitted himself to the laws and the chief magistrate. Nor did he deserve admiration for this alone.

2 Fabius had the misfortune to lose his son, and this he bore with fortitude, as became a man of sense and an excellent parent. He himself pronounced the funeral oration which is always spoken by some relative on the deaths of illustrious men, and afterwards he wrote a copy of his speech and distributed it to his friends.

3 Cornelius Scipio meanwhile had been sent to Spain, where he had defeated the Carthaginians in many battles and driven them out of the country, and had also overcome many tribes, taken many cities, and done glorious deeds for Rome. On his return he was received with great honour and respect, and, feeling that the people expected some extraordinary exploit from him, he decided that it was too tame a proceeding to fight Hannibal in Italy, and determined to pour troops into Africa, attack Carthage, and transfer the theatre of war from Italy to that country. He bent all his energies to persuade the people to approve of this project, but was violently opposed by Fabius, who spread great alarm through the city, pointing out that it was being exposed to great danger by a reckless young man, and endeavouring by every means in his power to prevent

the Romans from adopting Scipio's plan. He carried his point with the Senate, but the people believed that he was envious of Scipio's prosperity and desired to check him, because he feared that if he did gain some signal success, and either put an end to the war altogether or remove it from Italy, he himself might be thought a feeble and dilatory general for not having finished the war in so many campaigns.

4 It appears that at first Fabius opposed him on grounds of prudence and caution, really fearing the dangers of his project, but that the contest gradually became a personal one, and he was moved by feelings of jealousy to hinder the rise of Scipio; for he tried to induce Crassus, Scipio's colleague, not to give up the province of Africa to Scipio, but if the expedition were determined on, to go thither himself, and he prevented his being supplied with funds for the campaign. Scipio being thus compelled to raise funds himself, obtained them from the cities in Etruria which were devoted to his interests. Crassus likewise was not inclined to quarrel with him, and was also obliged to remain in Italy by his office of Pontifex Maximus.

5 Fabius now tried another method to oppose Scipio. He dissuaded the youth of the city from taking service with him by continually vociferating in all public meetings that Scipio not only was himself running away from Hannibal, but also was about to take all the remaining forces of Italy out of the country with him, deluding the young men with vain hopes, and so persuading them to leave their parents and wives, and their city too, while a victorious and invincible enemy was at its very gates. By these representations he alarmed the Romans, who decreed that Scipio should only use the troops in Sicily, and three hundred of the best men of his Spanish army. In this transaction Fabius seems to have acted according to the dictates of his own cautious disposition.

6 However, when Scipio crossed over into Africa, news came to Rome at once of great and glorious exploits performed and great battles won. As substantial proof of these there came many trophies of war, and the king

of Numidia as a captive. Two camps were burned and destroyed, with great slaughter of men, and loss of horses and war material in the flames. Embassies also were sent to Hannibal from Carthage, begging him in piteous terms to abandon his fruitless hopes in Italy and come home to help them, while in Rome the name of Scipio was in every man's mouth because of his successes. At this period Fabius proposed that a successor to Scipio should be sent out, without having any reason to allege for it except the old proverb that it is dangerous to entrust such important operations to the luck of one man, because it is hard for the same man always to be lucky. This proposal of his offended most of his countrymen, who thought him a peevish and malignant old man, or else that he was timid and spiritless from old age, and excessively terrified at Hannibal; for, even when Hannibal quitted Italy and withdrew his forces, Fabius would not permit the joy of his countrymen to be unmixed with alarm, as he informed them that now the fortunes of Rome were in a more critical situation than ever, because Hannibal would be much more to be dreaded in Africa under the walls of Carthage itself, where he would lead an army, yet reeking with the blood of many Roman dictators, consuls and generals, to attack Scipio. By these words the city was again filled with terror, and although the war had been removed to Africa yet its alarms seemed to have come nearer to Rome.

7 However Scipio, after no long time, defeated Hannibal in a pitched battle and crushed the pride of Carthage under foot. He gave the Romans the enjoyment of a success beyond their hopes, and truly

8 "Restored the city, shaken by the storm."

9 Fabius Maximus did not survive till the end of the war, nor did he live to hear of Hannibal's defeat, or see the glorious and lasting prosperity of his country, for about the time when Hannibal left Italy he fell sick and died.

10 The Thebans, we are told, buried Epameinondas at the public expense, because he died so poor that they say nothing was found in his house except an iron spit. Fabius was not honoured by the Romans with a funeral

at the public expense, yet every citizen contributed the smallest Roman coin towards the expenses, not that he needed the money, but because they buried him as the father of the people, so that in his death he received the honourable respect which he had deserved in his life.

Debrief

1. Fabius had the Bruttian officers killed "that it might not be said that he gained the place by treachery" (18.2), and Plutarch says he won instead "a reputation for faithlessness and cruelty." Why does an attempt to hide a method so often make the method look worse?
2. "Let us leave the Tarentines their angry gods," he said, but he took the statue of Hercules (18.3). What do the two halves of that story tell you about him?
3. His son, as consul, made him dismount and come on foot, and Fabius praised him: "you know whom you command, and how great an office you hold" (19.1). Compare this with Fabius's treatment of the surviving consul in 13.1. What principle connects them?
4. Plutarch says Fabius first opposed Scipio from prudence, but "the contest gradually became a personal one" (19.4). How can a leader tell when an honest disagreement has turned into jealousy?
5. Fabius urged that Scipio be replaced because "it is dangerous to entrust such important operations to the luck of one man" (19.6). In what situations is that a wise rule, and when does it become an excuse?

Case 12: Plutarch's Verdict

Plutarch ends the pair with a short formal comparison. He weighs the two men first as generals and then as statesmen, setting deed against deed: Samos against Tarentum, Euboea against the Campanian cities, Pericles' nine trophies against Fabius's one pitched battle, the rescue of Minucius against the escape of Hannibal's cattle.

This is the only case in the book in which the leader is not the one who decides. The decision is Plutarch's, and yours. Read the decision point and make your own judgment before you read his. Then compare your reasons with his, point by point.

Decision point: Pericles came to power when Athens was "at the height of their power and prosperity," while Fabius served Rome "when it was in the last extremity of danger" (20.1). One man had to restrain a people made arrogant by success; the other had to hold together a people crushed by defeat. Each was proved right about some things and wrong about others, and each had his own flaws of temper and conduct. Using everything you have read in Cases 1 to 11, decide which man was the greater leader, or whether the question can be answered at all. What standard will you use: results, foresight, character, or the difficulty of the task?

Reading 20. *Plutarch's comparison. Plutarch, Comparison of Pericles and Fabius Maximus (chapters 1–3), translated by Aubrey Stewart.*

1 Such is the story of these men's lives. As they both gave many proofs of ability in war and politics, let us first turn our attention to their warlike

exploits. And here we must notice that Perikles found the Athenian people at the height of their power and prosperity, so that from the flourishing condition of the State it could scarcely meet with any great disaster, whereas Fabius performed his great services to Rome when it was in the last extremity of danger, and did not merely, like Perikles, confirm the prosperity of his country, but greatly improved it, having found it in a lamentable condition. Moreover, the successes of Kimon, the victories of Myronides and Leokrates, and the many achievements of Tolmides rather gave Perikles when in chief command an occasion for public rejoicing and festivity, than any opportunity for either conquests abroad or defensive wars at home. Fabius, on the other hand, had before his eyes the spectacle of many defeats and routs of Roman armies, of many consuls and generals fallen in battle, of lakes, plains and forests filled with the bodies of the slain, and of rivers running with blood. Yet with his mature and unbending intellect he undertook to extricate Rome from these dangers, and as it were by his own strength alone supported the State, so that it was not utterly overwhelmed by these terrible disasters. Nevertheless it would appear not to be so hard a task to manage a State in adversity, when it is humble and is compelled by its misfortunes to obey wise counsellors, as it is to check and bridle a people excited and arrogant with good fortune, which was especially the case with Perikles and the Athenians. On the other hand, considering the terrible nature of the blows which had fallen on the Romans, Fabius must have been a great and strong-minded man not to be disconcerted by them, but still to be able to carry out the policy upon which he had determined.

2 We may set the capture of Samos by Perikles against the retaking of Tarentum by Fabius, and also the conquest of Euboea by the one against that of the Campanian cities by the other, though Capua itself was recovered by the consuls, Fulvius and Appius. Fabius seems never to have fought a pitched battle, except that one which gained him his first triumph, while Perikles set up nine trophies for victories by sea and land. But again, there is no action of Perikles which can be compared to that of

Fabius when he snatched away Minucius from the grasp of Hannibal, and saved an entire Roman army from destruction. That was an exploit glorious for the courage, generalship, and kindness of heart displayed by Fabius; but, on the other hand Perikles, made no such blunder as did Fabius, when out-generalled by Hannibal with the cattle. Here, although Fabius caught his enemy in a defile which he had entered by chance, yet he let him escape by night, and next day found his tardy movements outstripped, and himself defeated by the man whom he had just before so completely cut off. If it be the part of a good general, not merely to deal with the present, but to make conjectures about the future, we may remark that the Peloponnesian war ended just as Perikles had foretold, for the Athenians frittered away their strength; whereas the Romans, contrary to the expectation of Fabius, by sending Scipio to attack Carthage gained a complete victory, not by chance, but by the skill of their general and the courage of their troops, who overthrew the enemy in a pitched battle. Thus the one was proved to be right by the misfortunes of his country, and the other proved to be wrong by its success, indeed it is just as much a fault in a general to receive a check from want of foresight as to let slip an opportunity through diffidence; and both these failings, excess of confidence and want of confidence, are common to all except the most consummate generals. Thus much for their military talents.

3 In political matters, the Peloponnesian war is a great blot upon the fame of Perikles; for it is said to have been caused by his refusal to yield the least point to the Lacedaemonians. I do not imagine, however, that Fabius Maximus would have yielded anything to the Carthaginians, but would have bravely risked any danger in defence of the Roman Empire. The kind treatment of Minucius by Fabius and his mildness of character contrast very favourably with the bitter party feud of Perikles with Kimon and Thucydides, who were men of good birth, and belonging to the conservative party, and whom Perikles drove into exile by the ostracism. Then, too, the power of Perikles was much greater than that of Fabius. Perikles would not permit the State to suffer disaster because of the bad

management of her generals. One of them alone, Tolmides, succeeded in having his own way, against the wishes of Perikles, and perished in an attack on the Boeotians, while all the rest, because of his immense influence and power, submitted themselves to his authority and regulated their proceedings by his ideas. Whereas Fabius, although he could avoid any error in managing his own army, was thwarted by his being powerless to control the movements of other generals.

4 For the Romans would not have suffered so many defeats if Fabius had enjoyed the same power that Perikles did in Athens. As to their generosity with regard to money, the one was remarkable for never receiving bribes, while the other spent much on ransoming prisoners at his own expense; although this was not much above six talents, while it is hard for any one to tell the amount of money which Perikles might have taken from foreign princes and Greek allied states, all of which he refused and kept his hands clean. As to the great public works, the construction of the temples, and of the public buildings with which Perikles adorned Athens, the whole of the edifices in Rome together, before the time of the emperors, are not worthy to be compared to them, for they far surpassed them both in largeness of scale and in beauty of design.

Debrief

1. Plutarch first says Fabius had the harder task, then that "it would appear not to be so hard a task to manage a State in adversity" as to bridle a people "excited and arrogant with good fortune" (20.1). Which view do you hold, and why?
2. "Thus the one was proved to be right by the misfortunes of his country, and the other proved to be wrong by its success" (20.2). Is foresight the right test of a leader? Would you rather be right or have your country win?

3. Plutarch names two failings, "excess of confidence and want of confidence," common to all but the best generals (20.2). Where in these Lives do you see each in Pericles and in Fabius?
4. He contrasts Fabius's "kind treatment of Minucius" with Pericles' "bitter party feud" with Cimon and Thucydides (20.3). How much should treatment of rivals count in judging a leader?
5. Plutarch's last words praise Pericles' buildings (20.4). Why do you think he ends there? Would you end the comparison in the same place?

Seminar Guide

Keeping the Decision Points Fresh. A decision point loses its force once someone knows the answer. Many readers will have heard of Hannibal and Cannae, and some will know how the Peloponnesian War ended, so a leader should aim not to hide history but to keep attention on the choice. Three habits help.

First, hand out headnotes separately from the readings, or ask participants to read only the headnote before a session. If you are using printed copies, a sheet of paper laid over the reading does the job. Second, ask for a written answer before any talk. Two or three sentences each, on a card or in a notebook, prevent the loudest voice from setting the group's view. Third, if someone knows the outcome, ask that person to argue the side the leader did not take. Knowing the result makes the losing argument harder to see, and that is exactly the skill a seminar should practice.

After the reading, return to the cards. Ask who changed their mind, and what in the text changed it. The best discussions often turn on a detail the decision point could not give away: the white bean at Samos (8.5), the forged letters from Metapontum (17.4), the prayer before speaking (2.20).

A Two-Hour Session. For a single meeting, choose a pair of cases that mirror each other. Case 7 (Pericles at the walls) and Case 8 (Fabius's strategy of delay) work well together, as do Case 2 (Cimon) and Case 9 (Minucius). Ask participants to read the two headnotes in advance, and only the headnotes.

- **First 10 minutes.** Introduce Plutarch and his purpose, using 1.4.

- **Next 25 minutes.** The first decision point. Five minutes of silent writing, then discussion in groups of three or four, then a short report from each group.
- **Next 25 minutes.** Read aloud a key part of the first reading (for Case 7, paragraph 10.2; for Case 2, paragraph 3.2), then the debrief questions. Choose two or three; there is not time for all.
- **10-minute break.**
- **Next 35 minutes.** The second decision point and reading in the same way.
- **Last 15 minutes.** Bring in Plutarch's Comparison, reading 20.1 and 20.2 aloud. Ask the group to rank the two leaders on one standard of their choosing and say why.

A Four-Session Course. Ask participants to read the headnotes for each session ahead of time and the readings during the week after.

- **Session 1: Making a leader.** Cases 1 and 8. How each man formed a public character, and how each was misread. Close with a question for the week: what does it cost to be seen accurately?
- **Session 2: Power and money.** Cases 2, 3 and 4. Rivals, public money, the building program, secret spending and caution in war. Ask each participant to bring one sentence from the readings they would put on a leader's wall, and one they would not.
- **Session 3: The long war.** Cases 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10. This is the heaviest session. Divide the group: half take Pericles' cases, half Fabius's, and each half presents its leader's choices to the other. Use the decision points as the spine of each presentation.
- **Session 4: The end and the verdict.** Cases 11 and 12. Begin with Fabius's opposition to Scipio, the case in which the cautious man was wrong. End with Plutarch's Comparison and a written verdict from each participant, compared against the cards they wrote in Session 1.

Tips for Leaders. Read the passages aloud often. Stewart's sentences are long but carry well, and a paragraph read aloud slows a discussion down in a good way. Keep questions tied to paragraph numbers so that claims can be checked. Resist the urge to settle every question; Plutarch himself leaves many open. And remind the group, when the talk drifts to the present, that these are ancient cases. Any modern parallel is the group's own, to be tested as carefully as the text.

Notes on the Texts

1.1 Antisthenes and Ismenias appear only for the joke; Plutarch's point is that great skill in a minor art can suggest a man has neglected greater things.

1.4 Plutarch calls this pair his "tenth book." "Judge for themself" is as printed in the electronic text and is left unchanged.

2.1 The Alcmaeonid family of Pericles' mother, Agariste, was powerful and controversial. The Spartans later used an old curse on the family against him (10.1).

2.2 Kratinus, Telekleides and Eupolis are Cratinus, Telecleides and Eupolis, writers of Athenian comedy, which mocked public men by name. Plutarch quotes them throughout, and much of the gossip in this Life comes from them.

2.9 Damon was banished by ostracism, the vote that sent a citizen into exile for ten years. Modern lists place his ostracism in the 440s BC, with less certainty than most.

2.13 Anaxagoras of Klazomenae (Clazomenae, in Ionia) lived from about 500 to about 428 BC. "Nous" is the Greek for mind; he taught that mind first set the universe in order.

2.15 The Thucydides here is the politician, the son of Melesias, not the historian. Both appear in this Life, and Plutarch usually says which he means.

2.17 Peisistratus is the ruler whose sons, Plutarch says, Cleisthenes drove from Athens (2.1); a Spartan army expelled them in 510 BC; Stewart's "despot" means tyrant. Aristides was ostracized in 482 BC and Themistocles before 471.

2.17 Ephialtes stripped the council of the Areopagus of nearly all its powers in 462 or 461 BC and was murdered in 461. Stewart's text

gives the "full and unmixed draught of liberty" to Plato the comic poet; modern editors usually trace the image to the philosopher's *Republic* (562c).

2.19 Stewart's footnote, left out here, identifies the "divine Plato" passage as the *Phaedrus*.

3.1 Archon, Thesmothete, King Archon and Polemarch are offices of the archonship, Athens' chief annual magistracies. From 487 BC they were filled by lot, and former archons sat for life on the Areopagus.

3.1 Cimon was ostracized in 461 BC.

3.2 The Spartan invasion and the battle at Tanagra are dated to 457 BC; one modern account gives 458. Plutarch has Cimon recalled soon afterward; modern accounts put his return around 451.

3.2 Cimon died in Cyprus during or soon after the siege of Citium in 450 BC.

3.3 Thucydides son of Melesias was ostracized in 443 or 442 BC; sources give both years. His defeat is told at 4.9.

4.1 The treasury was moved from Delos to Athens in 454 or 453 BC. A talent was a weight of about 26 kilograms of silver, or six thousand drachmas.

4.3 Kallikrates and Iktinus are Callicrates and Ictinus. The Parthenon was begun in 447 BC and completed in 438, with work on its sculpture continuing to 432.

4.5 The Odeum, a roofed hall for music at the foot of the Acropolis, was built in 435 BC. Its roof was likened to the tent of the Persian king Xerxes.

4.6 The "oyster-shell" is the potsherd on which Athenians wrote a name to vote for an ostracism. The joke is that Pericles no longer fears exile.

4.8 The Propylaea, the monumental gateway of the Acropolis, was built by Mnesikles (Mnesicles) from about 437 BC.

4.8 The "golden statue of the goddess" is the gold and ivory Athena Parthenos, dedicated in 439 or 438 BC.

5.1 The Thucydides cited here for the secret of Pericles' power is the historian, as 5.2 makes plain.

5.4 Stewart writes that Pericles held all offices for "five-and-twenty years" after Thucydides' ostracism. Bernadotte Perrin's later translation of the same sentence gives fifteen years, which fits the dates better. The figure is left as printed. Perrin's note reckons the "forty years" roughly from 469 to 429 BC.

6.1 Tolmides was defeated and killed at Coronea in Boeotia in 447 BC; Athens then lost control of Boeotia.

6.4 The "ill-starred notion of an attempt on Sicily" became the Sicilian Expedition of 415 to 413 BC, which ended in defeat for Athens. Gylippus (6.6) is the man who, Plutarch says, caused the ruin of that expedition.

7.1 The truce "for thirty years" is the Thirty Years' Peace of the winter of 446 to 445 BC. The war with Samos began in 440.

7.1 Aspasia came from Miletus; she was probably born no earlier than about 470 BC.

7.4 The son mentioned by Eupolis is Pericles the Younger, whose story ends at 11.2.

8.6 Plutarch dates the surrender to the ninth month of the siege; one modern account gives eight months.

8.7 Elpinike (Elpinice) was Cimon's sister; she appears earlier pleading for him (3.2).

9.1 Korkyra is Corcyra, an island with a strong navy; it was Corcyra that sought the alliance with Athens.

9.3 The decree excluding the Megarians from Athenian markets and harbors, the Megarian decree, is dated 433 or 432 BC. Potidaea's revolt was encouraged by Corinth.

9.4 Archidamus was the Spartan king whose name was later given to the first ten years of the war, the Archidamian War (431 to 421 BC).

9.8 Phidias was accused of stealing gold meant for the statue and of impiety for portraying himself and Pericles on its shield; the embezzlement charge seems to have been politically motivated. Plutarch's account of his death in prison is one of two ancient versions; another says the people of Elis put him to death.

9.9 Many scholars doubt that Aspasia was ever tried; the story may come from a comic play by Hermippus. Anaxagoras went into exile at Lampsacus, where he died.

10.1 "Drive forth the accursed thing" refers to an old curse on Pericles' mother's family, the Alcmaeonidae (2.1).

10.2 The invasion of Attica came in 431 BC. "Heavy-armed troops" are hoplites, citizen-soldiers armed with spear and shield. Stewart's footnote here, left out, says the Dorian infantry of Boeotia and the Peloponnese were reckoned the best in Greece.

10.3 Kleon is Cleon. Hermippus, quoted here, also brought the charge against Aspasia (9.9).

10.4 The pestilence is the plague of 430 BC.

10.5 Pericles' teacher Anaxagoras (2.13) had explained eclipses correctly.

10.6 Modern accounts give the same range for the fine, between 15 and 50 talents.

11.2 The "law of bastardy" was a law of 451 BC limiting citizenship to those with Athenian parents on both sides. Pericles' son by Aspasia was one of six generals tried together and executed after the naval victory at Arginusae in 406 BC.

11.3 Pericles died of the plague in 429 BC.

12.3 Verrucosus means warty. The name by which Fabius is best known, Cunctator, the Delayer, does not appear in this translation; it was a nickname, not his official name.

12.4 Fabius was consul in 233, 228, 215, 214 and 209 BC. The Ligurian triumph belongs to the first consulship, in 233. Hannibal crossed the Alps and won at the Trebia in 218 BC.

12.6 The lake Thrasymenus is Lake Trasimene, where Flaminius was defeated and killed in 217 BC.

12.7 "Irresponsible ruler" here means a ruler answerable to no one, which is how Plutarch describes the dictatorship.

13.1 A dictator was attended by twenty-four lictors, twice a consul's twelve, and could not ride a horse without the people's leave.

13.1 The Sibylline books were a collection of Greek oracles kept at Rome and consulted in crises for the rites that would avert disaster. The *ver sacrum*, "sacred spring," vowed the young of the coming spring to the gods.

13.1 Sestertia and denarii are Roman money; the denarius was the standard silver coin and the sestertius a quarter of it. Plutarch converts the sum into "our Greek money."

14.5 A tribune of the people kept his powers under a dictator and could not lawfully be harmed. The second dictatorship mentioned, after Cannae, is that of Marcus Junius, with Fabius Buteo named to fill the Senate.

15.6 Freedmen called the master who freed them their patron; Minucius's soldiers use the word to show their debt.

16.2 When both consuls served with one army, each held the command for a day at a time.

16.3 Plutarch reckons fifty thousand Romans killed; Livy's figures come to about 67,500 killed or captured, and Polybius gives seventy thousand killed.

17.1 Capua went over to Hannibal after Cannae and was retaken by Rome in 211 BC (see 20.2).

17.3 Livy names the two Vestals as Floronia and Opimia. A Vestal convicted of breaking her vow of chastity was buried alive.

17.4 Marcellus was killed in an ambush in 208 BC. Fabius is still called the Shield of Rome, after Poseidonius's phrase.

18.1 Hannibal had taken Tarentum in 212 BC; Fabius retook it in 209, in his fifth consulship.

18.5 The second triumph was for Tarentum; the first, after the Ligurian campaign (12.4).

19.3 Scipio had beaten the Carthaginians at Ilipa in Spain in 206 BC and was consul in 205.

19.6 Scipio crossed to Africa in 204 BC.

19.7 The pitched battle is Zama, fought in 202 BC.

19.9 Fabius died in 203 BC, the year Hannibal was recalled to Africa.

20.2 Plutarch's "nine trophies" match the "nine victories" of 11.3.

Glossary

Archon: One of the chief annual magistrates of Athens. From 487 BC archons were chosen by lot, and former archons sat for life on the Areopagus.

Areopagus: The old council of Athens, probably made up of former archons. After the reforms of 462 or 461 BC it kept little but the trial of homicide.

Comparison: The short formal essay with which Plutarch usually closes a pair of Lives, weighing the two men against each other.

Consul: One of the two chief magistrates of the Roman Republic, elected each year, who commanded the armies. Each could veto the other.

Delian League: The alliance of Greek states led by Athens, founded in 478 BC to continue the war against Persia. Its treasury was first kept on Delos.

Denarius: The standard Roman silver coin from about 211 BC.

Dictator: At Rome, an extraordinary magistrate given full authority to deal with one crisis, after which he laid his power down.

Drachma: A Greek silver coin; six thousand made a talent.

General (strategos): At Athens, one of a board of ten military commanders elected each year, one from each tribe.

Hoplite: A Greek citizen-soldier armed mainly with spear and shield, fighting in close formation. Stewart's "heavy-armed troops."

Lacedaemonians: The Spartans. Sparta, in Laconia in the Peloponnese, was known in antiquity as Lacedaemon.

Lictor: An attendant who walked before a Roman magistrate as a sign of his office and as a bodyguard. A consul had twelve, a dictator twenty-four.

Master of the horse: The lieutenant chosen by a Roman dictator, subordinate to him.

Nous: Greek for mind. Anaxagoras taught that mind set the universe in order.

Obol: A small Greek coin, one sixth of a drachma.

Odeum: The roofed hall for music that Pericles built at Athens, used for the musical contests of the Panathenaic festival.

Ostracism: An Athenian vote, cast on potsherds, by which a citizen could be sent into exile for ten years without losing his property.

Parallel Lives: Plutarch's paired biographies of famous Greeks and Romans. Twenty-two pairs survive.

Princeps senatus: The senator who spoke first in debates in the Roman Senate. Fabius was given the title.

Propylaea: The monumental gateway of the Athenian Acropolis.

Sestertius: A Roman coin worth a quarter of a denarius.

Sibylline books: A collection of Greek oracles in verse kept at Rome and consulted, on the Senate's order, for the rites needed to avert disaster.

Talent: A Greek weight of about 26 kilograms, and that weight in silver as a sum of money: six thousand drachmas.

Tribune of the people: A Roman officer who could block the acts of magistrates and the Senate and whose person was sacrosanct.

Trireme: A Greek warship rowed by about 170 men in three rows of oars, armed with a ram at the bow.

Triumph: A procession through Rome to the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, granted by the Senate to a victorious commander.

Ver sacrum: "Sacred spring," a vow of all the young born in the coming spring, made at Rome during the war with Hannibal.

Vestal virgins: Priestesses of Vesta who kept the sacred fire of Rome and were bound to chastity.

Chronology

c. 495 BC · Pericles born at Athens.

462 or 461 BC · Ephialtes curbs the Areopagus; Ephialtes murdered and Cimon ostracized in 461.

454 or 453 BC · The Delian League's treasury moved from Delos to Athens.

447 BC · Work begins on the Parthenon; Tolmides defeated at Coronea.

446–445 BC · The Thirty Years' Peace between Athens and Sparta.

443 or 442 BC · Thucydides son of Melesias ostracized.

440 BC · War between Samos and Miletus; Athens intervenes.

431 BC · The Peloponnesian War begins; Archidamus invades Attica.

430 BC · Plague at Athens; Pericles removed as general and fined.

429 BC · Pericles re-elected, then dies of the plague.

c. 280 BC · Fabius Maximus born at Rome.

218 BC · Hannibal crosses the Alps; Roman defeat at the Trebia.

217 BC · Roman defeat at Lake Trasimene; Fabius named dictator.

216 BC · Roman defeat at Cannae.

212 BC · Hannibal takes Tarentum.

209 BC · Fabius, consul for the fifth time, retakes Tarentum.

204 BC · Scipio crosses to Africa.

203 BC · Hannibal recalled from Italy; Fabius dies.

202 BC · Scipio defeats Hannibal at Zama.

AD 46 · Plutarch born at Chaeronea.

Further Reading

Plutarch, *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek Lives*, 1960. Ian Scott-Kilvert's modern translation, including Pericles and Cimon.

Plutarch, *Makers of Rome*, 1965. Ian Scott-Kilvert's companion volume, including Fabius Maximus and Marcellus.

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Tim Duff, *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*, 1999. How Plutarch uses paired lives to explore moral questions.

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Vincent Azoulay, *Pericles of Athens*, 2014. A critical biography that weighs the ancient and modern images of the man.

Robert B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides*, 1996. Richard Crawley's translation of Thucydides, edited as a comprehensive guide to the war.

Livy, *The War with Hannibal*, 1965. Books 21 to 30 of Livy's history of Rome, covering the war with Hannibal.

Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, 1979. A Penguin selection from Polybius's history of Rome's rise.

Adrian Goldsworthy, *The Fall of Carthage: The Punic Wars 265–146 BC*, Cassell paperback, 2003. A clear modern history of the wars, with Hannibal, Fabius and Scipio.

Sources of the Texts

- **Aubrey Stewart (1844–1918):** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, *Life of Fabius Maximus* and *Comparison of Pericles and Fabius Maximus*, in *Plutarch's Lives*, translated by Aubrey Stewart and George Long (1800–1879), volume I (George Bell & Sons, London; first issued 1880–82, this text from the 1894 printing, following the Greek text of C. Sintenis, 1873); Readings 1–20. These three pieces are Stewart's; Long's Lives are in later volumes. This edition leaves out the translator's three footnotes and their markers, the chapter numerals printed at the start of paragraphs, and the two headings that open the Life of Fabius and the Comparison, whose place is taken by this book's case headings.

Edition Notes

The readings: The readings are reproduced word for word from public domain translations. Each translator, edition and date is listed under Sources of the Texts, with what this edition leaves out.

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