ABSTRACT

Title of Document: HOW THINGS FALL APART: *PLEONEXIA*, PARASITIC GREED, AND DECLINE IN GREEK THOUGHT FROM THUCYDIDES TO POLYBIUS

William D. Burghart, Doctor of Philosophy, 2015

Directed By: Professor Arthur M. Eckstein, Department of History

This dissertation examines how Greek authors from the fifth to the second century BCE employed the concept of *pleonexia* to explain why cities lost power on the international stage and why they lost internal cohesion. First, it argues that Greek authors understood *pleonexia* to mean “the desire for more at the expense of another” as opposed simply “greed” as most modern authors translate it. Second, it contends that Greeks authors deployed the concept of *pleonexia* to describe situations that modern authors would describe as societal collapse—defined as the reduction of societal complexity, which can be measured through either the loss of material or immaterial means, e.g., land, wealth, political power, influence over others, political stability, or political autonomy. Greek authors used the language of *pleonexia* to characterize the motivation of an entity, either an individual within a community or a city or state, to act in a way that empowered the entity by taking or somehow depriving another similar entity of wealth, land, or power. In a city, *pleonexia* manifested as an individual seeking to gain power through discrediting, prosecuting, or eliminating rivals. In international affairs, it materialized as attempts of a power to gain more territory or influence over others. Acting on such an impulse led to conflict within cities and in the international arena. The inevitable result of such conflict was the pleonexic power losing more than it had had before. The Greeks, thus, had a theory that acting on *pleonexia* led to a reduction in societal complexity. Tracing this paradigm in over two hundred years of Greek writing further demonstrates continuity in Greek thought across the Classical and Hellenistic cultural boundaries imposed by modern writers. The dissertation thus argues that Greek authors used *pleonexia* to construct a psychological model of decline that persisted for over two hundred years.

HOW THINGS FALL APART:
PLEONEXIA, PARASITIC GREED AND DECLINE IN GREEK THOUGHT FROM THUCYDIDES TO POLYBIUS

By

William Devon Burghart

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Advisory Committee:
- Prof. Arthur Eckstein, Chair
- Prof. Eric Adler
- Prof. Janna Bianchini
- Prof. Judith Hallett
- Prof. Kenneth Holum

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Dedication:

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother, June Hess.

I wish you could have seen it finished.

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Transliteration Guide

α = *a*
β = *b*
γ = *g*
δ = *d*
ε = *e*
ζ = *z*
η = *ē*
θ = *th*
ι = *i*
κ = *k*
λ = *l*
μ = *m*
ν = *n*
ξ = x
ο = *o*
π = *p*
ρ = *r*
ς, σ = *s*
τ = *t*
υ = *u*
φ = *ph*
χ = *kh*
ψ = *ps*
ω = *ō*

Chapter 1:

Conceptualizing *Pleonexia*, Decline, and Determining Continuity

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine a concept of decline, centered on *pleonexia*, found in Greek thought from the fifth century BCE to the second century BCE. As early as Hesiod's *Works and Days* in the eighth century BCE, there is evidence that Greek authors understood that civilizations come and go (*WD* 109-201). In the introduction to his *Histories*, Herodotus noted that the fortunes of states rise and fall (1.5). In his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides explained the end of the Athenian Empire and the cause of civil strife (2.65.11; 3.82). Writing in the fourth century, Plato took change of governments for granted (*Rep.* 545d). So did Aristotle (*Pol.* 5.1301a). Writing in the second century, Polybius attributed the change and decline of governments to a natural law (6.57.1). From Thucydides onward, central to these discussions was the phenomenon of individuals or states acting on *pleonexia*.

Though *pleonexia* is ordinarily translated as greed or advantage, I will argue that the best translation of the word group associated with *pleonexia* (*pleonexia*, *pleonektō*, and *pleon ekhein*) is "the desire to gain at the expense of another." Greek authors perceived it as an urge within individuals not just to gain more of something, such as wealth or power, but to do so in a manner that either takes the desired good from another or in some way deprives another individual access to it. Greek authors used the idea of individuals acting on *pleonexia* to explain why cities lost power on the international stage and why cities fell into civil strife. On the international stage, they show how powerful cities acting on *pleonexia* engendered resistance and resentment, and that their efforts to expand their power were continually challenged until their dominions were overthrown.

In domestic affairs, individuals acting on *pleonexia* turned the city, and in particular the political arena, into a zero-sum game, in which for one faction to prosper another had to suffer. This prevail-or-perish mentality pushed people to perform increasingly radical acts to obtain political power, until they resorted to violence. When violence entered into politics, the city had descended from a functioning polity into civil strife, *stasis*. It stopped being a cohesive political entity and entered into anarchy. This devolution into civil discord could ultimately result in the city's movement from a more egalitarian form of government, in which there was at least a limited form of enfranchisement and order was maintained through law, to more authoritarian forms, in which political authority was monopolized by a single individual and order was maintained by violence.

Fifth century writers started this trend of thought. In his *Histories*, Herodotus cited *pleonexia* as one of the causes of Persia's disastrous campaign against Greece in 480/79 BCE (7.18.2). In his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides used *pleonexia* to explain how cities fell into civil strife (*stasis*), and why Athens launched such disastrous expeditions as the Sicilian campaign, (3.82.8; 2.65.11; 6.24.3). Fourth century authors continued this practice. In his *Hellenica*, Xenophon deployed *pleonexia* to explain the downfall of the Thirty, the oligarchic government that took power in Athens after the city lost the Peloponnesian War (2.4.10-38). He also attributed the end of Sparta's fourth century hegemony over Greece to *pleonexia*.[1] In the *Republic*, Plato described how the *pleonektēs*, the individual acting on *pleonexia*, caused *stasis* and brought about the downfall of various governments (563e-67e). Elsewhere, he claimed that *pleonexia* was an illness in society, and he stated that individuals motivated by *pleonexia* caused the end of Atlantis (*Crit.* 121). Similarly, Aristotle in his *Politics* cited

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[1] 3.5.12-15; 5.4.1; 6.3.9, 11.

pleonexia as a reason for change of governments (1301a). In their writing, Isocrates and Demosthenes railed against cities acting on *pleonexia*, and they repeatedly cited it as a reason for the continual strife that plagued Greece in the fourth century. Writing in the second century BCE, Polybius also used acting on *pleonexia* to explain the downfall of powers on the international stage (15.20.4), and the internal collapse of cities (6.8.4-9.5; 15.21). He even cited *pleonexia* as a reason why the Roman Republic would end (6.57.6-9).

Yet modern classical scholars do not take discussions of decline in Greek authors seriously. Charles Fornara and Frank Walbank do not think that Greek authors had systematic understandings of decline that were comparable to the concepts that emerged in Roman thought in the first century BCE.[2] Scholars disparage Greek discussions of decline, such as Polybius' constitutional cycle (*anakyklosis*), as lacking analytical power and presenting decline as part of a biological model of growth and decay that lacked specific drivers of decline.[3] In her Jerome lectures, *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors*, Jacqueline De Romilly argues that individual Greek authors, such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Polybius, had a concept of decline that shared a similar pattern but that there was only a little continuity among these authors. She insists that the similarities between these authors were due to their shared world view, as opposed to conscious efforts by later authors to incorporate the thoughts of their predecessors into their own work.[4]

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[2] Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 84; Frank Walbank, "The Idea of Decline in Polybius," in *Polybius, Rome, and the Hellenistic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 210.

[3] On scholarly criticism of Polybius' biological model: David Hahm, "Kings and Constitutions: Hellenistic Theories," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield, Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 466-67. Hahm also points out that the biological model makes sense because Greek authors believed that human nature, being a constant without factors such as education, would follow the same pattern. Thus, decline was a natural, pre-ordained path as long as human nature remained the same. Ibid., 467.

Nevertheless, discussions by Greek authors about the loss of political power and cohesion due to *pleonexia* fit the definition of what modern scholars consider to be analyses of "societal collapse." Modern scholars define collapse as the rapid reversion of complex socio-political entities into less complex socio-political structures. They determine this reduction in complexity by examining the degree of loss of political centralization and cohesion, the degree of social stratification, the extent of controlled territory, and the degree of economic integration.[5] They refer to the disappearance of these indicators of complexity as collapse rather than decline because they dislike the connotations of decline as somehow moral deterioration, and they seek objective indices of change. The end and collapse of societies also provide more objective material evidence than decline.[6] These scholars view societies as complex systems or machines that break down when they are no longer able to deal with crises that confront them. Some posit that this breakdown occurs because the society has mismanaged or depleted the resources that allowed it to prosper.[7] Others postulate that societal collapse is the result of a political authority concentrating economic resources and political power on itself, which causes internal unrest.[8] This school of thought is similar to Greek discussions of decline, but it is in the minority in regard to modern explanations.

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[4] Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 42.

[5] Joseph Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 198), 4; Norman Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," in *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*, Yoffee and Cowgill eds. (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press), 15; Jim A. Railey and Richard Martin Reycraft, eds., "Introduction," in *Global Perspectives on the Collapse of Complex Systems*, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology Anthropological Papers no. 8 (Albuquerque, NM: Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, 2008), 1.

[6] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 85; Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 14.

[7] Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies*, 194-6; Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987), xvi; Jared Diamond, *Collapse* (London: Penguin, 2005), 6.

While these discussions of collapse may offer the best modern theoretical framework for discussing situations in which a city or state loses power, I retain the word decline in this study. I prefer the term decline over collapse because collapse suggests an end to the socio-political system, whereas decline suggests simply its weakening. In most instances, the power that Greek authors analyzed survived. Thucydides wrote about how Athens lost its empire in the Peloponnesian War, yet the city survived its defeat and rose to power again in the 370s through the formation of the Second Athenian Naval Confederation.[9] Xenophon recorded how Athens survived an oligarchic coup and how Sparta lost its control over the rest of Greece but survived as an independent and powerful city. These cities thus lost indicators of complexity, primarily through external loss of territory or through internal loss of social or political stratification, but they remained functioning communities.

This examination of Greek ideas relating *pleonexia* to the loss of power adds to discussion of "societal collapse." First, it offers a new subject area for scholars who study collapse; most studies do not consider the rise and fall of Greek cities when discussing collapse.[10] Second, the Greek authors' discussion of decline focuses on psychological factors as opposed to material or structural factors. Modern authors prefer explanations based on material depletion or structural shift to explain decline, whereas Greeks looked at attitudes that changed within individuals that caused a society to change for worse. At the least, this difference points to the sharp contrast of approaches between ancient and modern analysis, which in itself is illuminating.

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[8] Robert Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror," *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2002): 128; Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 5.

[9] See e.g., Jack Cargill, *The Second Athenian League* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

[10] Studies of the collapse of Greek city states do not exist in the works of Tainter (1988), Yoffee and Cowgill (1988), Railey and Reycraft (2008), or Yoffee and McAnany (2010).

Showing the continued reliance on *pleonexia* to explain decline in Greek thought from the fifth to the second century BCE also demonstrates a continuity in Greek culture. Polybius' reliance on this paradigm of decline based on *pleonexia,* one that originated in Thucydides indicates a level of continuity in values between Classical and Hellenistic writers that scholarship has debated since the nineteenth century. Beginning with Johann Droysen in the 1870s, scholars wanted to show that Hellenistic culture was a distinct form of Greek culture, not a pale copy of classical civilization. More recent scholarship, however, has begun to examine the parallels between the two ages.[11] By studying *pleonexia* and the fear of individuals acting out of *pleonexia*, I show another important continuity in Greek thought. Greek authors from the Classical age forward feared the individual who sought to gain at the expense of others and the city that did the same.

Outline of the Chapters

The rest of this chapter provides a more in-depth review of how scholars have understood *pleonexia*, decline, and intellectual continuity in Greek authors. Chapter two examines the use of the term *pleonexia* by Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon and how they incorporate it into their histories of the fifth and fourth century Greece. Chapter three focuses on the fourth century philosophical works of Plato and Aristotle, and how the two thinkers incorporated *pleonexia* into their ruminations about the nature of human society and human interaction. Chapter four switches from fourth-century philosophy to rhetoric as it explores how Isocrates, Demosthenes, and other fourth-century Athenian orators deployed *pleonexia* in their speeches. Chapter five centers on Polybius; it shows how he adapted *pleonexia* as an explanation of events in his *Histories* of the Mediterranean world in the third and second centuries BCE and how he incorporated earlier theories of decline in his own prognostication of the end of the Roman Republic.

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[11] Johann-Gustav Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus* (Gotha: Perthes, 1877-78). Since then the applicability of the term has been debated as scholar attempted to discern what defined the Hellenistic Age. Those who have agreed: Michael Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941); W.W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (Cleveland, OH; World Press, 1961); those who see some form of continuity: Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Graham Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander* (New York: Routledge, 2000). For a review on the scholarship of the ancient world, see: Graham Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1-4; Daniel Ogden, "Introduction," in *The Hellenistic World*, ed. Daniel Ogden (London: Duckworth, 2002), ix-xxv.

Pleonexia

Scholars have no definitive translation for *pleonexia*.[12] They provide a host of meanings for the word, though the rough consensus is “the unjust desire for more.” English concepts included under this broad interpretation include: greed, covetousness, avarice, desire for plunder, imperialism, and advantage.[13] Scholars who study Plato and Aristotle recognize that *pleonexia* meant “the desire for more at the expense of another,” but this meaning has not become broadly accepted in the academic world.[14] I argue that the best translation of the concept of *pleonexia* is "the desire to acquire more of something (whether that object is tangible, wealth, or intangible, honor or power) in a manner that either takes that good from another, or prohibits another from accessing or acquiring that good." *Pleonexia*, thus, is a parasitic form of greed. Greed is the selfish desire for more of an object, regardless of the manner by which it is acquired. *Pleonexia* specifies the means of acquisition. The individual acting on *pleonexia*, whom Greek authors labeled the *pleonektēs*, obtains the object of desire by taking it from another person, or in some way depriving other individuals from having access to it. The concept behind *pleonexia* can be found in Athenian thought as early as the writings of Solon from the late sixth or early fifth centuries BCE; in a poem identified by modern scholars as fragment 4, he equates acting on parasitic greed, specifically the enslaving of citizens as a way of collecting on debts, to waging a war against one's own city.[15] The word *pleonexia*, however, first appears in the *Histories* of Herodotus.[16] Since this study focuses on the word more than the concept, it begins with the works of Herodotus.

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[12] Ryan Balot, *Greed and Injustice in Classical Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 4n8.

[13] John Sandys, *Demosthenes* (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1953), 110, 179; Howard Curzer, “Aristotle’s Account of the Virtue of Justice,” *Apeiron* 28, no.3 (1995): 215-16; Kiempe Algra, “Observations on Plato’s Thrasymachus,” in *Polyhistor*, eds. Kiempe Algra, Pieter van der Horst, and David Runia (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 47-48; John Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times* (London: Routledge, 1995), 149; Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 173, 177; *Isocrates I*, trans. David C. Mirhady and Yun Lee Too, vol. 4, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 267-68; Kurt Raaflaub, “Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time,” in *Brill’s Companion to Herodotus*, eds. Egbert Bakker, Irene De Jong, and Hans van Wees (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 175-76; Mario Vegetti, “Antropologie della *Pleonexia*,” in *Enōsis kai Philia,* eds. Maria Barbanti, Giovanna Giardina, and Paolo Manganaro (Catania: CUECM, 2002), 66; István Hajdú, *Kommentar zur 4. Philippischen Rede des Demosthenes* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 405.

I will provide a more in-depth review of the scholarship relevant to specific authors in each chapter, but here I will address the two monographs that focus on *pleonexia*: Heinz-Otto Weber's 1967 dissertation "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung der

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[14] Gregory Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* (Hartford, CN: Princeton University Press, 1973), 116n16; Terence Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 624; Richard Kraut, *Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 138.

[15] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 80-82.

[16] Heinz-Otto Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung der Pleonexie von Homer bis Isokrates," (PhD diss., Bonn, 1967), 5.

Pleonexie von Homer bis Isokrates," and Ryan Balot's 2001 monograph, *Greed and Injustice in Classical Athens*.

In "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung der Pleonexie von Homer bis Isokrates," Heinz-Otto Weber traces the development of the word group associated with *pleonexia* (*pleonexia, pleonektēs*, *pleonekteō*) from the writings of Homer to Isokrates.[17] He translates the word group as "mehrhaben (to have more)," "mehrwollenhaben (the desire to have more)," or "mehrbesizt (owning more)."[18] Through a word study of the *pleonexia* word group, he attempts to determine the nuances in use of these specific words as well as their connotations in the works of Greek authors. He argues that the word group started with a negative connotation in the fifth century and earlier, but that in the fourth century it developed neutral and positive connotations while still retaining its principle meaning. The neutral and positive connotations, however, did not survive past the fourth century.[19]

In *Greed and Injustice in Classical Athens*, Balot investigates Athenian discourses of greed in Athenian authors from Solon, writing in the early fifth century, to Aristotle, writing in the mid-fourth century BCE, in order to trace how the authors conceptualized greed, and how this discourse potentially shaped Athenian social and political culture.[20] He admits that his work is not a word study and cites Weber to show that a study of this kind has already been done.[21] He argues that in order to understand the nuances of

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[17] Ibid., 162-65.

[18] Ibid., 7.

[19] Ibid., 165.

[20] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 234.

[21] Ibid., 4.

Athenian discussions of greed and their impact on Athenian history, he needed to explore the multiple facets of how Athenians understood "greed" by evaluating all "greedy" words, such as *philokhrēmatia*, *aiskhrokerdeia*, or *koros* (desire for money, sordid love of gain, and greed respectively).[22] He defines greed in classical Athenian thought as "an excessive desire for more that went against distributive ideas of justice," and notes that classical authors portrayed greed as a cause of both *stasis* and conflict on the international stage.[23]

My study differs from those by Weber and Balot in two ways. First, I extend the study of *pleonexia* to Polybius. Both Weber and Balot end their works with the fourth century BCE. My chronological extension allows me to gauge whether the meaning of *pleonexia* changed between the fourth century and the second century BCE. I will show that it did not. The continued use of *pleonexia* to mean "the desire to gain at the expense of another" and its inclusion in explanations of the eruption of *stasis* and changes in government demonstrates an intellectual continuity between Polybius and his fourth century predecessors.

Second, I expand on the meaning of *pleonexia*. Weber acknowledges that *pleonexia* was a specific form of greed, but simply translates the idea as "the desire to have more."[24] Balot comes close to my proposed definition when he discusses how the Greeks conceived of greed as acts that violated the principles of fair distribution of communal property, but he argues that this concept was the general idea of greed in

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[22] Ibid., 4-5.

[23] Ibid., 1, 14.

[24] Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung," 11.

Greek thought, not the specific meaning of *pleonexia*.[25] On the difficulties of translating *pleonexia*, Balot quotes Gregory Vlastos "I despair of an adequate English translation (of *pleonexia*)" from Vlastos' 1969 article, "Justice and Happiness in the *Republic*." Balot omits Vlastos' conclusion, however, that "only when self-interest is sought at the expense of others and in contravention of *isotēs* (equity, fairness) would the Greeks speak of *pleonexia*."[26]

Balot's desire to demonstrate that ancient Greeks had one concept of greed that involved violating concepts of distributive justice leads him to argue against the idea that *pleonexia* specifically meant "gain at the expense of another." In his chapter, "Aristotle's Political Thought," Balot argues that in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle fails to differentiate between forms of greed such as *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria* (illiberality), because he had inherited an overall notion of greed from a well-established Athenian intellectual tradition. To prove his argument, Balot argues against previous scholarly attempts to justify Aristotle's distinctions between *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria*. According to these writers, *pleonexia* is the desire to have a disproportionate share of anything, whereas *aneleutheria* is the desire to have more of a specific good. Balot rejects these arguments by saying that if the desire to gain is inherent to both *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria* (which Aristotle claims), then they cannot be so easily demarcated according to Aristotelian logic.[27] He specifically dismisses Terence Irwin's statement in *Aristotle's First Principles* that Aristotle conceptualized greed, specifically *pleonexia*, as a violation of fairness and equality, and involved gain, *kerdos*, that was "the sort of gain that is another's loss."[28] He renounces Irwin's attempt to define *pleonexia* with the following:

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[25] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 4-7.

[26] Ibid., 4n8; Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, 116n16. Vlastos concludes that translations such as 'greed' or covetousness work, even if they are not the precise meaning.

[27] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 28-30.

> Aristotle does not himself characterize *pleonexia* this way. Moreover, the context is insufficient to establish a different sphere for the vice. It would be hard work to show that the vicious individual characterized by illiberality will, unlike the greedy, show proper respect for fair standards of distribution. Certainly Aristotle's thieves and pickpockets, who exemplify illiberality (*aneleutheria*), do not care much for distributive justice. For the purpose of distinguishing *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria* in Aristotelian terms, a different motivation, psychological structure, and object would be required.[29]

For my purposes, it is enough that Aristotle believed that *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria* were different, regardless of whether his logic is sound. In the *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle states:

> when a man displays the other vices – for instance, throws away his shield from Cowardice, or uses abusive language from Bad Temper, or refuses to assist a friend with money from Meanness (*aneleutheria*)-though he acts unjustly, he is not taking more than his share of anything; whereas when a man takes more than his share (*otan de pleonektē*), it is frequently not due to any of these vices, and certainly not to all of them, yet nevertheless the action does display some vice … the vice of Injustice (Aristot. *Nic. Ethics* 1130a).[30]

I agree with Irwin, that Aristotle perceived *pleonexia,* and just *pleonexia,* as "the desire to gain at the expense of another." Aristotle may not use that phrase explicitly, as Balot points out, but it is the logical conclusion from Aristotle' presentation of injustice, which Aristotle associates with *pleonexia*. If injustice is taking more than one's share in a system in which everything is divided equally among all participants, then that excess over the allotted amount must come from another individual.

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[28] Ibid., 29n20.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Aristotle, *Nicomachaen Ethics*, trans. H Rackham, Loeb Classical Series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926); emphasis mine.

Balot makes a false equivalence when he argues that since the motivation of both *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria* is gain, they describe a similar act.[31] The result of both *pleonexia* and *aneleutheria* is gain, but the manner by which that gain is achieved matters. Those who act on *aneleutheria* desire gain by any means. In his list of those who act on *aneleutheria*, Aristotle includes brothel keepers, money-lenders, gamblers, and brigands, and others who seek gain from socially unacceptable sources (1122a). Those who act on *pleonexia* do so because they want to get more than their share. They want to receive an inequitable amount of a something, such as the larger portion of good fortune or a smaller portion of bad luck (1129b). The difference is in intent. The act of robbery may fit the definition of *pleonexia*, but if the robber takes out of desire for money, then he is acting on *aneleutheria*; if he steals because he wants to enrich himself by depriving someone else of money, then he is acting on *pleonexia*. Aristotle makes this distinction clear in 1130a, quoted above.[32] The *Nicomachean Ethics* is not the only work in which Aristotle distinguishes *pleonexia* from *aneleutheria*. In the *Virtues and Vices*, Aristotle's catalogue of virtues and vices, he also places *pleonexia* the category of injustice while *aneleutheria* is its own category (1216a and 1251b respectively).

I arrived at my definition by examining every instance of *pleonexia* and associated words that I could find in the relevant authors, the methodology of Weber and N.R.E. Fisher, who did an intense word study of *hybris* in *Hybris: A Study in the Values*

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[31] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 29-30.

[32] Contra Balot, ibid., 30-1: Balot argues that if the greedy man is not aware that his greed is against equitable distribution, then he can take no pleasure from violating it. True for the greedy man; not true for the pleonexic man.

of Shame and Honor in Ancient Greece.[33] First, I used the search engine of *perseus.tufts.edu* to find every instance of the words *pleonexia*, *pleonekteō*, and *pleonektēs* in the works of Thucydides, and Herodotus, in the *Hellenica* of Xenophon, and in Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Demosthenes, and Polybius. I cross checked these results with findings in other scholars to confirm that I had catalogued each instance of *pleonexia* (for results see appendices 1-8).[34] I also include instances of *pleon ekhein* because it is a phrase that Greek and modern authors associate with *pleonexia*. Second, I examined how the authors deployed *pleonexia.* I analyzed both the immediate sentence in which *pleonexia* was found and the surrounding passage in order to understand what act or action the author was labeling as pleonexic. Often the immediate sentence did not clarify the meaning of *pleonexia*; only reading the entire section elucidated how the author understood *pleonexia*.

In order to demonstrate that I am not simply injecting my own definition of *pleonexia* into the works of the various authors, each chapter includes a section in which I review the various ways in which the authors employ pleonexic language. Through this review, I show that the authors themselves understood *pleonexia* to mean "the desire for more at the expense of others." While not every example of *pleonexia* made it into this review, all are catalogued in the appendices. The majority of the instances of *pleonexia* uphold my point, but there exist a minority of uses that complicate my definition. Xenophon and Plato in particular use *pleonexia* to refer to “gain an advantage” or just “advantage.” My definition of “gain at the expense of another” holds because to gain an advantage over someone means that they are at a disadvantage: one has gained and another has lost. Also, Isocrates tried to present *pleonexia* in the sense of “advantage” in a positive light, where *pleonexia* was the acquisition of advancement, promotion, or good fortune without negative consequences or without hurting others. He recognized, however, that his proposed use went against the way society understood *pleonexia* (Isoc. *Antidosis*. 281-284). These variances should be expected because language is versatile—authors use words within an accepted, albeit broad parameter.

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[33] N.R.E. Fisher, *Hybris: A Study in the Values of Honor and Shame in Ancient Greece* (Warminster, UK: Arts and Philips, 1992).

[34] Perseus.tufts.edu results for:
pleonexia:http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/wordfreq?lang=greek&lookup=pleoneci%2Fa
pleonekteō:http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/wordfreq?lang=greek&lookup=pleonekte%2Fw
pleonektēs: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/wordfreq?lang=greek&lookup=pleone%2Fkths

I only include Xenophon's *Hellenica* because it is his work of history that also follows Thucydides. The book of this dissertation (or a further revision) may include his use of *pleonexia* in the *Cyropedia* since that work includes the most instances of *pleonexia* in any single work. It was not included in this study because it failed easy categorization. Also, having catalogued the instances of *pleonexia* in the *Cyropedia*, I can assert that they follow the pattern that I establish in this dissertation.

In addition to showing how these authors construct *pleonexia,* I study how they present *pleonexia*’s effect on society. This dissertation is not simply a word study; rather, it is the examination of a concept, the values and perceptions around it, and how Greek writers used it. Greek authors’ application of *pleonexia* to social and political analysis informs readers about Greek mindset. They linked operating on *pleonexia* to the outbreak of *stasis* within a city or the end of powers in interstate affairs.[35] In his study, Balot focuses on how authors conceptualized greed, how that concept changed over time, and how it potentially affected political beliefs. I contend that the central idea of *pleonexia* remained basically the same from Herodotus to Polybius and concentrate on how authors tied *pleonexia* to outbreaks of civil unrest, *stasis*, changes in government, and the fall of powers on the international stage. By relying on *pleonexia* in this manner, Greek authors developed and perpetuated a theory of what we would consider decline that lasted over 250 years. The longevity of this theory suggests that elements of the Greek worldview did not change as radically between the fourth and second centuries BCE, the Classical and Hellenistic periods, as some scholars have argued.

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[35] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 14.

Decline

Like *pleonexia*, decline is hard to define. Broadly, it is the process in which a socio-political entity weakens over time, until it either recovers or ceases to exist. The idea of decline is pervasive in western thought,[36] but scholars have a difficult time identifying what exactly decline looks like or why it happens. In *The Idea of Decline in Western History*, Arthur Herman divides writing on decline into two categories: historical pessimism, in which decline is the result of historical processes, and cultural pessimism, in which discussions of decline reflect the authors' own misgivings with contemporary society.[37] In *The Myth of American Decline*, Josef Joffe shows how in the past fifty years American authors cast their pessimism about society as decline in order to call for policy reforms.[38] In the following review of scholarly thought on decline, I eschew discussions of decline that include some form of cultural pessimism, and I will focus on scholarly attempts to explain the end of complex socio-political organizations, identified by scholars as either decline or collapse.

I do not limit my study to discussions of decline found in the scholarship of the ancient Mediterranean world, though it is my field. I find this historiography lacking in conceptual development. The discussions are dominated by how Roman authors dealt with decline, or debates on the end of the Roman Republic or Empire. Outside of Jacqueline de Romilly's *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors*, scholars dismiss Greek analysis of the collapse of societies.[39] Scholarly thought on the end of the Roman Republic or Empire has well-developed historiographical traditions that have wrestled with the concept of decline, but it has been unable to construct an agreed upon definition of decline. For such a definition, I rely on studies of societal collapse in the fields of archaeology and social anthropology, and political science.

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[36] E.g.: Robert Kagan, "Not Fade Away: Against the Myth of American Decline," *Brookings* (2012); Gideon Rachman, "Think Again: American Decline," *Foreign Policy* (Jan/Feb, 2011); the Huffington Post has an entire subsection on "American Decline," http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tag/american-decline accessed June 17, 2014.

[37] Arthur Herman, *The Idea of Decline in Western History* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 7-9.

[38] Josef Joffe, *The Myth of America's Decline* (New York: Liveright, 2014), 43-71.

Scholarship on the end of the Roman Republic and the end of the Roman Empire has debated whether either event can be considered an example of "decline." At the start of the 1970s, both events were considered to be decline. P.A. Brunt's 1971 *Social Conflict in the Roman Republic* takes for granted that the change from Republican Rome to the authoritarian Principate was a decline, since the Principate removed liberties that the Roman people had enjoyed in the Republic.[40] Scholarship had seen the fall of the Western Roman Empire as decline ever since Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. During the 1970s, however, both ideas were challenged. In his 1974 work, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*, Erich Gruen disputed the idea that the Roman Republic was in general "decline" when Caesar crossed the Rubicon; instead he argued that the events and personalities of 50/49 BCE overwhelmed a Republican system that was working.[41] In *The Making of Late Antiquity*, Peter Brown re-cast the narrative of the Mediterranean in the third through ninth centuries CE as a distinct world of its own, not as the end of the Classical Mediterranean World and the beginning of the European Dark Ages.[42]

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[39] Fornara, *The Nature of History*, 84; Walbank, "The Idea of Decline in Polybius," 210.

[40] P.A. Brunt, *Social Conflicts in the Roman Republic* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1971), 155-56.

[41] Erich Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 498-505.

As a result of these challenges, scholars began to talk about transformation rather than decline. In a historiographical survey of discussions of the end of the Roman Republic, Robert Morstein-Marx and Nathan Rosenstein note the contradiction between the idea of the "decline of the Republic," with its unstated connotations that the Roman state weakened, and the reality that the Roman state under Augustus, was arguably stronger than its Republican predecessor.[43] Paying respect to this reality, they choose to label the replacement of a republican system with an autocratic one a "transformation" caused by the gradual loss of social and political cohesion between the political elite and the people of Rome.[44]

In the field of Late Antiquity, Peter Brown's writing turned scholarship away from discussions of the "decline" of the classical Mediterranean world toward investigations of what made Late Antiquity unique.[45] An example of these debates is the debate between J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz and Kenneth Holum. In his work, *The Decline and Fall of the Ancient City*, Liebeschuetz argues that the cities in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire, while remaining materially rich, declined politically because their internal system of governance became more authoritarian. In the time between the establishment of the Principate and the reign of Justinian, the common people in the eastern Roman Empire lost political autonomy, and political power became even more centralized in the hands of elites. He cites as evidence of this change the transition from city business being debated in public meetings to it being discussed in audience halls in the private houses of the political elite.[46] In his chapter "The Classical City in the Sixth Century" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, Kenneth Holum challenges Liebeschuetz, arguing that the local holders of power merely changed form—the *duumviri* and other magistrates of the earlier centuries were replaced by new elite families, identified in documents as *principales* or *proteuontes*. The change in venue for public business did not change the reality that the elites had always had a monopoly on political power and public business; it was not an indication of a new authoritarian trend.[47] Therefore, the decline that Liebeschuetz postulates was simply change.

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[42] Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1978), 2-11.

[43] Robert Morstein-Marx and Nathan Rosenstein, "The Transformation of the Roman Republic," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, ed. Robert Morstein-Marx and Nathan Rosenstein (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 625-26.

[44] Ibid., 634-35.

[45] Brian Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4. For an example of the new treatment of Late Antiquity, read Clifford Ando, "Decline, Fall, and Transformation," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 1 (2008): 31-60.

Scholarship on the end of the Republic and the end of the Western Roman Empire now exist at this crossroads. For some scholars of the Republic, its end was not a predetermined outcome due to the failings of the system; rather, ambitious men killed it by exploiting its flaws for their own glory.[48] In regard to the end of the Western Roman

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[46] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 405-6.

[47] Kenneth Holum, "The Classical City in the Sixth Century," in *The Age of Justinian*, ed. Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 108-9.

[48] Two recent scholarly works that follow this trajectory: Pamela Merin, *Blood in the Forum*: *The Struggle for the Roman Republic* (London: Continuum, 2009), 175; Christopher S. Mackay, *The Breakdown of the Roman Republic: From Oligarchy to Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 8-9.

Empire, scholars such as Brian Ward-Perkins have to argue for the existence of decline.[49] In *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization*, he posits that people's reduced access to luxury goods, such as high quality pottery, or specialized services, such as education, in fifth century CE Italy and Gaul proves that culture had declined after Rome lost political control.[50] In the Empire, even the lower echelons of Roman society could buy fine pottery and expect to receive an education. With the end of the empire, trade networks vanished and more effort went toward survival than cultural production, such as literacy. Therefore, decline.[51]

Neither of these fields of study has developed a comprehensive definition of decline. Scholars, in fact, cite the inability to define decline as a reason for dismissing it. Morstein-Marx and Rosenstein perceive discussions of "fall" and "decline" of the Roman Republic as misleading, since the Roman state continued, and prefer referring to the end of the Roman Republic as a transformation.[52] In his review essay of the scholarship on end of the Roman Empire, Clifford Ando notes that without an objective definition of decline, discussions of decline as opposed to transformation or transition are subjective depending on the author.[53] It is easy to dismiss a concept when people are unable to determine what exactly they are arguing.

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[49] Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome*, 1-10, 138-68 ; Jeanne Rutenburg and Arthur Eckstein, "Return to the Fall of Rome," *The International History Review* 29 (March 2007): 109-11.

[50] Ibid., 167.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Morstein-Marx and Rosenstein, "Transformation of the Roman Republic," 629.

[53] Ando, "Decline, Fall, and Transformation," 37.

In contrast to historians and classicists, archaeologists, social anthropologists, and political scientists have worked towards constructing a viable theoretical framework for determining whether a complex socio-political entity, such as the Roman Empire, has declined. These scholars, however, describe the weakening and end of socio-political entities in terms of "societal collapse," not decline. They define collapse as the rapid disintegration of complex socio-political entities, in which the entity reverts to a less complex socio-political structure.[54] There is no universal reason why these scholars prefer the term "collapse" over that of "decline." In the introduction to his 1988 co-edited volume, *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*, Norman Yoffee opts for the term "collapse" over "decline" merely because he dislikes the connotations of increasing moral or aesthetic inferiority attached to "decline;" he also does not think that the term "decline" implies that a socio-political entity has ended. In contrast, collapse denotes the unquestionable end of a socio-political entity, an end that can be determined through the examination of material evidence.[55] Jared Diamond treats collapse as an extreme form of decline; like Yoffee, he sees decline as being reversible but collapse as final.[56] Other authors, however, do not explain why they use collapse instead of decline.[57] In the following review of scholarship, I will use the scholars' own terms, but in the rest of the text I will retain the word decline while relying on a definition derived from archaeological and social anthropological discussions of "societal collapse."

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[54] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 4; Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 15; Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 1.

[55] Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 14.

[56] Diamond, *Collapse*, 3.

[57] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 1-18, 39-90; Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 1-14.

I retain the word decline because I like its connotation, that the ending of socio-political entities is part of a process. Collapse does not occur overnight; it may seem sudden, taking place over the course of a few years or even months, but it is still a process. I also like the idea that decline exists on a continuum whereas collapse implies finality. All the Greek authors reviewed discuss the loss of power of particular cities, but the cities did not cease to exist. For example, Xenophon attributes the end of Spartan hegemony to *pleonexia*, but Sparta continued to be a factor in the affairs of Greece for the next two hundred years. Decline, thus, better captures the phenomena that the Greek authors describe. In order to understand what exactly decline is, however, I use the framework that archaeologists and social anthropologists designed to gauge collapse.

Early in the twentieth century, studies presented the end of socio-political entities as an organic all-encompassing phenomenon, in which culture was linked to political organization, economy, and society, and "civilizations" followed a biological model of creation, growth, climax, decline, and death.[58] The fundamental works of this kind were Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* and Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History*. For Spengler, a civilization ended when it lost all its creative energy.[59] Toynbee saw decline as part of the progression of civilization, which happened when the ruling class failed to meet the challenges facing their society.[60] Toynbee and Spengler both portrayed the end of a civilization as a form of societal ossification: a society's vibrancy, elasticity, and energy gave way to the inevitable petrification of values, beliefs, and ideas. Eventually, it grew too fragile and collapsed.

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[58] Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies*, 35-41; Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 11-14.

[59] Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, trans. Charles Atkinson, vol. 1 (Knopff: New York, 1944), 31.

[60] Toynbee, *A Study in History*, vol. 5 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), 11-13, 19.

Other scholars perceived societies as growing until they lacked the capacity or resources to continue, at which point they collapsed.[61] Collapse was simply the natural result of the growth of a civilization or society, and it was difficult to determine whether it was happening until it already had. An example of this way of thinking is Kent Flannery's 1972 article, "The Cultural Evolution of States." For Flannery, a society grew by responding to external stimuli—such as wars, population increase, or the desire to control environment—by adding new jobs.[62] These jobs required oversight and regulation, which mandated the creation of management, and soon a pyramid structure of society evolved. The more levels in the pyramid, and the more interconnected the levels were, the more complex a society became. The society collapsed when it was so integrated that a failure in one section destabilized the entire pyramid.[63] Collapse was simply an end result of the growth of society, and it needed little explanation. An innovation of Flannery's was to argue that societies can be differentiated based on their socio-political complexity. Complexity could be determined by examining such factors as job specialization, centralization of government, incorporation of numerous kin groups into a single polity, and the rule of law.[64] As a society developed, it adopted more characteristics associated with complexity.

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[61] Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 7.

[62] Kent V Flannery, "The Cultural Evolution of Civilizations," *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 3 (1972): 409.

[63] Ibid., 409-11.

[64] Ibid., 400-404.

In his 1978 article, “Systems Collapse as Social Transformation,” Colin Renfrew was one of the first to put forward a matrix through which collapse could be ascertained.[65] He relied on concepts of complexity similar to the ones that Flannery suggested. He argued that in the process of collapse a structured, centralized society disappeared from the archaeological record. Sometimes it was replaced immediately with smaller, less centralized societies which maintained the traditions of the previous society, and sometimes it vanished completely.[66] He outlined a series of indicators in order to recognize this reduction in complexity: collapse of central administrative organization of the early state, disappearance of the traditional elite class, collapse of a centralized economy, settlement shift and reduced population size, transition to a lower level of sociopolitical integration, and development of romantic Dark Age myth.[67] Renfrew aided the field of collapse studies by helping introduce a framework for gauging whether or not collapse occurred.[68] Collapse could be determined if it could be shown that society had lost markers of complexity.

In 1988, Joseph Tainter’s *The Collapse of Complex Societies* and Norman Yoffee and George Cowgill’s *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations* further defined the field of collapse studies, but they also came to different conclusions about the viability of universal theories of the cause of collapse. In *The Collapse of Complex Societies*, Tainter defined collapse as “rapid significant loss of an established level of sociopolitical complexity."[69] Like Renfrew, he created a list of criteria to determine if collapse had happened; a society had collapsed if it had less social stratification, less occupation specialization, a reduction in political centralization and organization, fewer social control mechanisms, a decrease in trade and resource availability, less investment in cultural production, and less information sharing between center and periphery.[70] Tainter argued that collapse happened when the cost of maintaining a society became too expensive and it lacked the surplus resources needed to cope with additional problems.[71] He presented societies as problem solving organizations that increased in complexity in order to deal with problems. The additional levels of complexity brought new operating costs. The increasing cost of maintaining the status quo meant that the society had fewer resources with which to handle new crises. Each successive crisis, then, left the society more vulnerable to the next.[72]

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[65] Railey and Reycraft, “Introduction,” 1.

[66] Colin Renfrew, “System Collapse as Social Transformation,” in *Approaches to Social Archaeology*, ed. Colin Renfrew (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984), 366-67.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Railey and Reycraft, “Introduction,” 1.

Yoffee and Cowgill, in contrast, saw such universal theories of collapse as unsatisfactory.[73] Toynbee and Spengler were too deterministic. Theories that tried to explain social evolution through biological evolution were inappropriate because the two processes are fundamentally different. Systems theorists, such as Renfrew, generalized historical processes so much that the theories lost analytical power. The explanations focused too much on fitting civilizations into pre-conceived models that disregarded the distinct institutions and circumstances of individual communities. The only discussion of collapse Cowgill and Yoffee agreed with were sociological models that portrayed collapse as the disintegration of a political center. Such theories, however, focused on how societies persevere through collapse rather than on what happens during collapse.[74] Thus, Cowgill and Yoffee took issue with previous comprehensive theories of collapse, and instead of putting forward their own theory they sought to establish an analytical framework through which collapse could be studied.[75]

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[69] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 4.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 195.

[72] Ibid., 194-96.

[73] Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 4-14.

Despite the differences in opinion on the utility of over-arching paradigms, Tainter's monograph and Yoffee and Cowgill's edited volume made similar assertions about the nature of collapse. They agreed that it was the reversion of complex societies into less complex societies.[76] This change was primarily political. Societies declined when a central authority lost control over territory or people. Other aspects of the community, such as the economy, population, or social hierarchy, could accompany the reduction in political complexity, but the central indicator of collapse was the regression of complex political entities, such as empires, into simpler ones, such as cities or autonomous regions.

Tainter and Yoffee and Cowgill also agreed that collapse was not a cultural phenomenon. First, culture, as defined by the values and beliefs of particular groups of people, could persist after a socio-political entity collapsed and be integrated into the next socio-political entity. As an example, the Catholic Church survived the fall of the Roman Empire. Second, the value of cultural products, such as art and literature, is subjective;

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[74] Ibid., 11-14.

[75] Ibid., 18.

[76] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 4, 198; Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 15.

what is admired by one person might be worthless to another. The quality of the work relies more on the genius of the creator rather than the degree of socio-political complexity of a given system. Students argue whether the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the greatest epics produced in Greek literature, yet Greek literature did not decline after their creation. The loss of societal complexity could affect cultural production, since complexity allows for greater specialization and investment in cultural production, but it does not have to. Thus, culture is not a reliable benchmark for determining collapse.[77]

Finally, both works denied the apocalyptical connotations of collapse. Civilizations do not generally die as a result of "collapse." Within a given civilizations there could be many collapses. In his chapter on Ancient Mesopotamia in *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*, Norman Yoffee outlines the rise and fall of various Mesopotamian polities in the second and first millennia BCE while demonstrating that the core tenets of Mesopotamian culture remained dominant. It was only when Persia conquered the region that the distinct culture of Mesopotamia began to disappear.[78] This desire to reduce the dramatic nature of collapse is similar to the one that occurred in the historiography of the ancient Mediterranean due to the works of Gruen and Brown. Collapse was no longer the death of great civilizations, but a political change that happened as a result of specific stimuli. Tainter's *Collapse of Complex Societies* and Yoffee and Cowgill's *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*, then, helped further focus the field of collapse studies by presenting collapse as the swift socio-political degeneration of complex societies, which did not coincide, generally, with the end of a particular culture.

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[77] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 41; Yoffee, "Orientating Collapse," 14-15.

[78] Norman Yoffee, "The Collapse of Ancient Mesopotamian States and Civilization," in *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*, ed. Norman Yoffee and George Cowgill (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 66-67.

In 2005 Jared Diamond published *Collapse*, in which he presented the cause of collapse as the abuse of natural resources.[79] He defined collapse "as the drastic decrease in human population size and/or political/economic/social complexity over a considerable (geographic) area, for an extended period of time."[80] Collapse occurred when a society grew in population and complexity until it overwhelmed the agricultural production capability of its territory; the lack of a reliable food source led to a reduction in society until a new equilibrium was reached.[81] The work presented collapse as a potentially apocalyptic event. In the introduction, Diamond acknowledged that there could be small declines, and that collapse was an extreme example, but he posited collapse as a possibility regardless.[82]

Academic responses to Diamond reasserted the idea that collapse was not the drastic death of civilizations; it was a reduction in political complexity. In 2006, Patricia McAnany and Norman Yoffee conducted a panel at the American Anthropological Association Meeting that repudiated the assertions Diamond made in *Collapse*, the results of which were later published in 2010 as *Questioning Collapse*. In the collection, the editors and authors assert that the end of societies was rarely as cataclysmic or irreversible as Diamond presented in *Collapse*; more often societies suffered collapse but endured in some form.[83] Also, they found the link between environmental change and political upheaval too tenuous to affirm Diamond's conclusions.[84] While the editors did not put forward their own definition of collapse, Norman Yoffee in his contribution re-asserted the view from his 1988 study on Mesopotamia that collapse was a political phenomenon.[85] In a separate series of articles, Joseph Tainter also challenged Diamond's argument about the connection between environment and societal collapse.[86] He bemoaned the lack of an agreed upon definition of collapse, and he re-asserted the definition he put forward in *The Collapse of Complex Societies*: collapse was the "rapid significant loss of an established level of sociopolitical complexity."[87] In 2008, Jim Railey and Richard Reycraft published an edited collection on collapse studies, in which the editors and authors followed Tainter and Yoffee and Cowgill in presenting decline as the collapse of complex socio-political systems.[88] So, while archaeologists and social anthropologists discuss the nature of decline and, like ancient historians, debate whether decline or societal transformation happens, they are advancing the notion that collapse is the reduction of socio-political complexity.

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[79] Diamond, *Collapse*, 6.

[80] Ibid., 3.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

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[83] Patricia A. McAnany and Norman Yoffee, "Why we Question Collapse and Study Human Resilience, Ecological Vulnerability, and the Aftermath of Empire," in *Questioning Collapse*, ed. Patricia A. McAnany and Norman Yoffee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 7.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Norman Yoffee, "Collapse in Ancient Mesopotamia: What Happened, What Didn't," in *Questioning Collapse*, ed. Patricia A. McAnany and Norman Yoffee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 178-82.

[86] Joseph Tainter, "Archaeology of Overshoot and Collapse," *Annual Review of Archaeology* 35 (2006): 71-2; ibid, "Collapse, Sustainability, and the Environment: How Authors choose to Fail or Succeed," *Reviews in Anthropology* 37 (2008): 361-65.

[87] Tainter, "Archaeology of Overshoot and Collapse," 60.

[88] Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 1.

Outside of the field of anthropology and archaeology, political scientists also measure the weakening of states through the gauge of reductions in socio-political complexity. Robert Rotberg argued that modern states weaken and then collapse due to the greed and corruption of the central government.[89] While he did not discuss this process specifically in terms of socio-political complexity, his framework for evaluating why states weaken and collapse involves similar notions. He characterizes strong states as those able to provide external and internal security to their citizens, protect civil liberties, maintain infrastructure, provide civic goods and services such as hospitals and schools, allow the opportunities of economic growth to all citizens, and have well-maintained infrastructure. For Rotberg, weak states attempt to accomplish all these tasks but are hindered by corrupt governments or factionalism.[90] Collapsed states lack any strong central authority or rule of law. States weaken and decline when they stop being able to provide basic services: security, political liberty, and economic opportunity.[91] Indicators of collapse are: reduced economic growth and development, the monopolization of political power, in which independence or dissent from the central government is curbed, the loss of civil liberties, and an increase in domestic violence and crime.[92] In his 2010 article, "Complexity and Collapse," Niall Ferguson depicts the end of complex socio-political systems as a result of a system encountering a problem it cannot handle.[93]

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[89] Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror," 128; Robert Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators," in *States Failure and States Weakness in Times of Terror*, ed. Robert Rotberg (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 2003), 23.

[90] Ibid., 4-5.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 21-22.

I conceptualize decline as the process during which a socio-political entity loses complexity. This loss can be measured in the loss of control over subordinate cities or territory, a decrease in economic activity, or the loss of internal cohesion and/or political freedom (which underlies complex institutions). All forms of decline discussed by ancient Greek authors fit this definition. They perceived decline either as the loss of territory and power on the international stage or an individual city's loss of internal cohesion. This loss of cohesion could result in the transformation of a democratic form of government into an autocratic form of government. As I will argue later in the chapter, such a transformation should be viewed as decline, though scholars contest such claims.

The next issue is: how does decline happen? Scholarship on this topic, too, divides into various categories. Traditionally, the first divide is internal versus external causes of decline—whether a society falls due to internal troubles or external pressures. Internal weaknesses are stresses caused by actions of/and within that society: corruption, environmental degradation, or resource mismanagement; external pressures are outside the control of a specific society and include war with an external power (barbarian or otherwise), natural disaster, or climate change.

I think this divide is inadequate. Railey and Reycraft comment on its limitations when they attempt to categorize theories of decline due to environmental factors—should such theories be considered an internal cause because it is how the society uses natural resources, or is it external because the environment is outside of a society's control?[94] Instead, I divide the theories between those that claim that decline happens due to factors outside of a society's control and those that argue that collapse occurs due to identifiable and manageable problems that confront a society. Such a partition has the all the merits of differentiating between internal and external causes while including theories that present decline as the result of a society being overwhelmed by circumstances. The pressure does not have to be external to the society, such as barbarians; it could arise from within the society, such as an epidemic. What matters is whether the theory states that society is capable of managing it. The division, then, is based on societal agency. Theories that believe decline is inevitable and that a society has no agency in the process are in one category, while those that postulate that a society can survive through careful management are the other.

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[93] Niall Ferguson, "Complexity and Collapse," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2010).

The theories of Joseph Tainter and Niall Ferguson represent theories in which a society lacks agency. Joseph Tainter proposed that decline occurs when a society no longer profits by investing in complexity. He argued that societies deal with problems, either external or internal, by increasing in complexity—creating more specialized jobs or by increasing in bureaucracy and centralization. This trend continues until the society invests too much of its resources in maintaining the system and lacks the reserve resources necessary to deal with new problems. The inability to marshal additional resources means that a society is no longer able to deal effectively with crises and eventually is overcome by one.[95] In "Complexity and Collapse," Niall Ferguson postulates that a government crashes when it cannot deal with a specific crisis.[96] He views empires and hegemonic powers as complex systems, which by their very nature will have unforeseeable reactions to even small events; collapse happens when the society encounters an event that it cannot process. [97]

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[94] Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 5.

[95] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 194-95.

In scholarship of the ancient world, I place Erich Gruen's *Last Generation of the Roman Republic* and Peter Heather's *The Fall of the Roman Empire* in this category. Both emphasize that collapse happens due to circumstances beyond the control of the society. In the case of Gruen, powerful individuals overwhelmed a functioning Republican system. For Peter Heather, the growing power of the Germanic tribes, and the pressure of the Huns behind them, eventually overcame the Western Roman Empire's ability to hold them back.[98]

The other group of theories argues that decline happens due when societies fail to address adequately problems known to them. These theories split between those that ascribe collapse to material causes, the depletion of resources or material mismanagement, and those that attribute collapse to socio-political factors, faults that emerge from within a society that causes members of that society to turn on each other. The general arc of the former category is that a society grows and prospers as long as it has access to resources that allow it to grow more powerful; it declines when it mismanages these resources. Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* and Jared Diamond's *Collapse* belong in this group of decline theories. In *The Rise and Fall*

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[96] Ferguson, "Complexity and Collapse."

[97] Ibid.

[98] Peter Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 433-35.

of Nations, Paul Kennedy argues that a state loses power when it chooses to invest its resources in non-revenue generating projects, such as military commitments, as opposed to revenue generating projects, such as infrastructure development.[99] The distinction between these theories and the previous ones is that Diamond and Kennedy both believe that a society can choose how to allocate its resources. As long as society makes the good choices, decline is preventable. For Tainter, Ferguson, and others, decline happens as a result of circumstances beyond the society's control.

The category of theories based on socio-political flaws represents decline as a result of corruption. In these models, society falls due to the hijacking of the political system by factions within it. In his 2002 article, "Failed States in a World of Terror," Robert Rotberg articulates how corruption leads to decline when leaders focus economic resources and political power only onto themselves and their supporters.[100] He notes:

> as these two paths converge, the state provides fewer and fewer services. Overall ordinary citizens become poorer as their rulers become visibly wealthier. People feel preyed upon by the regime and its agents. … Citizens … feel that they exist solely to satisfy the power lust and financial greed of those in power. … In the last phase of failure, the state's legitimacy crumbles. Lacking meaningful or realistic democratic means of redress, protestors take to the streets or mobilize along ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines … the potential for violent conflict grows exponentially as the state's power and legitimacy recedes.[101]

Rotberg theorizes that societies decline, then, when the political elite act to enrich themselves in such a way that they deprive others of communal goods and services. Though Rotberg does not include the word *pleonexia* or directly display any classical knowledge (though the pairing of power lust and financial greed echoes Thucydides 3.82.8 nicely), his analysis encapsulates the idea of decline caused by *pleonexia* well.

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[99] Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, xvi.

[100] Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror," 128.

[101] Emphasis mine. Ibid., 129-30.

Decline as a result of corruption is a contested explanation of collapse theory. Railey and Reycraft state that is decline due to corruption is “not commonly cited in explanations of collapse.”[102] They perceive it as applicable to modern societies but problematic when applied to ancient ones because of the inability of archaeological evidence to demonstrate mal-distribution of resources on account of factionalism and the perception of a Marxist bias by citing the exploitation of the masses as a cause of decline. Despite these difficulties, however, Railey and Reycraft accept the viability of such theories.[103] In his discussion of the causes of collapse, in contrast, Tainter dismisses the idea of societal conflict as a cause of collapse. He believes that any elite within a society would know better than to over-exploit the lower classes and risk a revolt. He perceives greed and corruption as by-products of increased social complexity, not causes of it; he stresses that if greed and corruption are inherent in all complex systems, but not all complex systems collapse, then there is a better explanation of collapse than corruption.[104]

Tainter’s complaints are questionable. He dismisses psychological reasons for collapse because he believes in the rationality of individuals. He argues that political elites are rational actors who would never exploit their subordinates to the point of revolution.[105] I think that it is an ideological fault to consider human as rational actors and therefore to dismiss theories that rely on human behavior. I disagree with Tainter’s statement that since greed can be found in all complex societies, and since not all complex societies collapse, then greed cannot cause decline. It is a sweeping generalization. Just because greed has not caused the decline of all societies does not mean that it has not caused the decline of some societies. I agree with Tainter that a certain degree of corruption and mismanagement can be expected in complex societies, but I argue that malicious exploitation and the emergence of systems in which it is common practice can cause decline, as Rotberg and classical Greek authors argue.

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[102] Railey and Reycraft, “Introduction,” 4.

[103] Ibid., 5.

[104] Tainter, *Collapse of Complex Societies*, 72.

[105] Ibid.

In regard to Railey and Reycraft's assertion that it is difficult to find evidence of decline due to corruption, such evidence exists in Greek writing. Greek authors theorized that individuals acting on *pleonexia* brought about decline. *Pleonexia* caused the ruin of powers in the international arena, and it caused communities to fall into civil discord and to change governments. In the individual chapters I discuss in depth how each author links decline to *pleonexia*, but here is a succinct overview.

In regard to decline on the international stage, from the late fifth century forward, Greek authors described how cities acting on *pleonexia* to extend their power lost it instead. Herodotus puts *pleonexia* among Xerxes' reasons for sending the ill-fated expedition against Greece (7.18.2). Thucydides detailed how ambitious politicians persuaded the Athenian people to follow policies of *pleonexia* during the Peloponnesian War, resulting in the disastrous Sicilian expedition (2.65.10-11). Xenophon attributed Sparta's heavy handed treatment of its allies in the fourth century BCE to *pleonexia*, and recounted how these policies engendered resentment, resistance, and the end of Sparta hegemony at the battle of Leuctra in 371 (5.4.1; 6.3.7-9, 11). Isocrates followed Xenophon in tying Spartan *pleonexia* to the downfall of the Spartan Hegemony (*Pan*. 12.55). In his speeches against Philip II, Demosthenes continually claimed that any power that acted on *pleonexia* would only hurt itself.[106] In Polybius' *Histories*, any king or state that acted on *pleonexia* lost power and influence (15.20.4). More, the collective *pleonexia* of third century BCE Greek powers brought about Roman domination of the entire Mediterranean. Thus, from Herodotus to Polybius, Greek authors described how acting on *pleonexia* caused decline in international affairs.

Thucydides himself introduced the concept of internal decline due to *pleonexia* in his Corcyraean *stasis* passage in Book Three of *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. According to his model, a city fell into *stasis* when leaders began to function on *pleonexia* and *philotimia* (the desire for more at the expense of others and the desire for status in a community) (3.82.8). Such actions intensified competition among political factions, which then resorted to any means necessary to empower themselves while simultaneously disenfranchising their rivals (82.2-7). Such machinations continued until violence broke out (82.8). The violence continued until one faction or individual drove other contenders out of the city (3.85). Thucydides' idea centered on the psychological shift that occurs within the city's political elite at the beginning of this process: that *pleonexia* and *philotimia* became an acceptable way to act (3.82.8). In his *Hellenica*, Xenophon appropriated Thucydides' *stasis* model and applied it directly in his narrative of the decline and end of the Thirty Tyrants in Athens (2.3.13-38), the oligarchy that came to power in 404 BC in the wake of Athens losing the Peloponnesian war.

Plato took the core of Thucydides' model, individuals acting on *pleonexia* causing *stasis*, and incorporated it into his own theory in the *Republic* concerning why governments changed. He lays out how individuals, acting on selfish desires to the detriment of the common good, transform governments: his ideal government becomes a timocracy an oligarchy, oligarchy a democracy, and finally democracy a tyranny (*Rep.* 546b-567e). He declares that the *pleonektēs*, the individual acting on *pleonexia*, is the reason for oligarchies becoming democracies, and democracies becoming tyrannies, the worst form of government (563c). In the fifth book of his *Politics*, Aristotle, Plato's student, also declares that *pleonexia* causes *stasis* within cities (1302a). He rejects Plato's idea of cycle of constitutions, but he still accepts that these transitions happen as a result of groups desiring more honor, power, or wealth, and in order to achieve that gain, they take it from others within the community (1301b-1302a).

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[106] Dem. 2.9; 6.20-22; 8.65; 18.65.

Polybius incorporated these ideas into his *Histories*. In his theory of constitutions, the *anakyklosis*, he outlined how governments change from one form to the next, in part due to individuals acting on *pleonexia*. He then foretold the collapse of the Roman Republic due to *pleonexia* and ambitious politicians. He believed that the government of the Roman Republic was an amalgam of all of his good government types and theoretically balanced the desires of all the Roman people. It would decline when the people of Rome, annoyed at the perceived *pleonexia* of the political elite, began to follow power-hungry politicians who pandered to them (6.57.7-8). Rome, then, would descend to mob rule, controlled by whoever fed the whims of the mob (57.9). Thus, for over two hundred years, from Thucydides in the fifth century to Polybius in the second, Greek authors relied on explanations of *pleonexia* to explain civil unrest within cities and the devolution of representative governments into tyrannies.

Scholarship on classical antiquity questions whether or not this transition from one form of government to another, especially the transition from a democratic form of government to an authoritarian form of government, is decline. Specialist studies often engage with this issue when discussing the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the Principate. Ancient authors, such as Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus, certainly saw the last century of the Roman Republic as a decline; modern scholars are less certain. Brunt saw the change as decline due to the loss of freedom and equality under the law, which people enjoyed in the Republic but which was slowly lost in the Principate.[107] More recent scholarship sees the changeover as a transition. Stephen Harrison in "Decline and Nostalgia" discounts the discussion of decline in ancient authors such as Sallust and Livy as a literary trope that reflected the mood of the authors more than any political reality.[108] Morstein-Marx and Rosenstein see the change from Republic to Principate as a process in which the people of Rome became accustomed to the rule of a single individual; they take pains not to label it as a fall or collapse.[109] Railey and Reycraft also call the end of the Roman Republic a transformation because they do not think that Roman society reduced in complexity in the transition from Republic to Principate.[110]

There are good reasons why the change of government, for example the transition from the Roman Republic to the Principate, can be labelled a transformation. First, material prosperity and the availability of high-quality products increased in the first few centuries of the Principate. Second, political organization arguably increased in complexity because the princeps added a new layer of organization onto the pre-existing Republican system. Along with this new layer of organization came greater job specialization; under the emperors a new imperial bureaucracy arose. Third, under Augustus and later emperors, Roman power not only incorporated the entire Mediterranean basin, but also most of Britain, and extended into Germany. All these indicate a greater level of complexity than had existed previously in the Republic.

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[107] Brunt, *Social Conflicts*, 155.

[108] Stephen Harrison, "Decline and Nostalgia," in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, ed. Stephen Harrison (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 298-99.

[109] Ibid., 629.

[110] Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 13.

In addition, it can be argued that labeling the replacement of a democratic system with an autocratic system as "decline" is a culturally biased perspective. Sallust saw the rise of dictators such as Sulla as the decline of the Roman Republic because he had grown up with the belief that a functioning republic, which allowed for free competition among elites, was the ideal (*Cat*. 10-12). Leonardo Bruni, who first used the noun *declinatio* to refer to the change from the Roman Republic to the Principate in the fifteenth century CE, grew up in the Republic of Florence.[111] The post-Enlightenment world of the twenty-first century sees the end of representative government systems as decline because from the Enlightenment onward the west has embraced liberal democracy as the ultimately correct form of governance. Francis Fukyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* predicts the worldwide acceptance of the ideals of liberal democracy over ideologies such as communism or totalitarianism as the inevitable end of human history.[112]

In contrast, there were ancient authors who supported more restrictive systems of government, and who saw democracy as a degenerate form of government. In the

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[111] Pocock, *The First Decline and Fall*, 160-78.

[112] Francis Fukyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 39-51; twenty-five years after the initial essay, Fukyama still argues that the idea of liberal democracy remains strong over other ideologies; Francis Fukyama, "At the 'End of History' Still stands Democracy," *Wall Street Journal*, June 6, 2014, accessed July 20, 2014, http://online.wsj.com/articles/at-the-end-of-history-still-stands-democracy-1402080661; Fukyama's views are contested: Michael Ignatief, "Are the Authoritarians Winning?" *The New York Review of Books*, July 10, 2014, accessed July 20, 2014, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/jul/10/are-authoritarians-winning/

Republic, Plato's ideal form of government is an oligarchy in which philosopher kings rule. More likely, he and other fifth and fourth century Athenian writers, such as Thucydides and Isocrates, favored a form of oligarchy or managed democracy in which the traditional elites of Greek society held most of the power.[113] To these writers, more direct forms of democracy were the second to worst form of government, only just above tyranny. Consequently, the valuing of representative systems can be seen a socially constructed belief; labeling its transformation into an authoritarian system as decline is, similarly, a value statement rather than an objective use of the term decline.

Acknowledging these complexities, I argue that the political change that Greek authors identify, the change from an elective system of governance which chooses the principal holders of political power through some form of selection process giving a portion of the free citizens has a vote, to an authoritarian system, in which the principal holder of political power is obtained through violence or due to a relationship (familial or otherwise) to the previous ruler, is decline. Such a change in political systems is a reduction in sociopolitical complexity, and therefore decline.

Democracies or republics are complex political systems. They require a majority of a population to obey a relatively arbitrary (and at times antiquated) system of laws, which apply to everyone within a society regardless of status or wealth. Leaders of the society are no exception. Decisions that affect the entire community, or determine the holders of political power, are arrived at through some form of group deliberation, e.g. voting. In functioning representative systems, the losers of these processes accept the results as valid and the winners do not persecute their opponents. Political candidates, therefore, must appeal to enough of the population in order to secure at least a plurality if not a majority of the potential votes in order to achieve power.

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[113] Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 23-27, 356-63.

Authoritarian systems, in contrast, are far simpler. The leader, emperor, *basileus*, king, *princeps*, *tyrannos*, chairman, dictator, holds all political power and generally enforces it through a monopoly on violence. Laws exist, but they do so at the whim of the ruler. Effective rulers understand that to keep the people happy, they must maintain the illusion of the rule of law, but they understand that it is an illusion. Peisistratus, the fifth century tyrant of Athens, and Augustus, the first Roman Emperor, are good examples. Both maintained the rule of law and the democratic framework of the pre-existing political regimes, but both led authoritarian systems, which came to power through coups and remained, in part, because of a monopoly on violence. So, I argue that the transition from a representative system, such as a democracy or republic, to an authoritarian system, fits current models of decline because it is a reduction of sociopolitical complexity, even though this transition may lack the material evidence of decline.

Greek authors therefore put forward a theory of decline that identified the cause of the decline as individuals, particular members of the political elite, acting on *pleonexia*. These theories resemble modern theories of decline because they focus on loss of power/societal complexity, but they differ in key areas. First, Greek authors discussed decline on the international stage as a separate process; a city could decline on the international stage without suffering from internal decline. Conversely, though this is not directly stated, a city could suffer from *stasis* in a way that would not affect its control over others. Modern authors combine discussions of internal and external decline, seeing internal decline as the cause of external weakness or external weakness leading to the destruction of the state.[114]

Second, Greek authors identified the cause of decline as human action. Modern theories focus on material or structural explanations for decline. Rotberg does point to corruption and a pleonexic urge on the part of the central government to consolidate all affairs of state, but even he focuses on how the material wealth of a regime is centralized along with political power—he does not look at the attitudes of the leaders that lead to such policies.[115] For modern theorists, a state declines when it runs out of resources or mismanages its resources. The Greek favored psychological explanation—a state decline when its own citizens turned against it for their profit. Greek authors thus emphasized human agency in discussing decline.

In general, then, I argue that both Classical and Hellenistic Greek authors used *pleonexia* to explain why decline occurred. Scholars dismiss discussion of decline in Greek thought, I think, because Greek writing does not include a fear of decline. They were familiar with the notion that powers rose and fell, that empires were overthrown, and that there had been previous civilizations which had long since passed.[116] They lacked, however, the angst about decline: the dread that the current political system in which one lives has passed its prime. This idea can be found in Roman authors of the first century BCE as well as many authors of the nineteenth and twentieth century.[117]

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[114] Railey and Reycraft, "Introduction," 4-6.

[115] Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror," 128-30.

[116] Hdt., 1.5; Polyb., 29.2; Hes., *WD*, 109-201.

[117] Sal. *Cat.*10-12; Livy. 1 *Praef.* 9; Harrison, "Decline and Nostalgia," 298-99; Herman, *The Idea of Decline in Western History*, 7-9.

Such dread is the hegemon's fear or paradise's nightmare: that one day the hegemon will be replaced or that the vibrant and rich civilization will fall to ruin. Such sentiments exist in Polybius, when Perseus quotes Demetrius of Phalerum's musing on the unpredictability of fortune in regard to the rise and fall of states (29.21) or in Scipio's tears for the eventual fall of Rome when he watched Carthage burn (38.21-22). Thus, Greek authors included the angst, but it was less pronounced.

Greek authors did not have an equivalent fear because no Greek author in this study wrote about a time when his particular Greek city was unquestionably dominant. They wrote when their respective home states had already been eclipsed. Herodotus may have had pro-Athenian sympathies, but he was from Halicarnassus. Thucydides witnessed and wrote about the end of the Athenian Empire. Plato, Xenophon, and Isocrates were all Athenians who wrote when Sparta was dominant, supported by Persia; they also witnessed the establishment and fall of the Thirty Tyrants in Athens. Aristotle and Demosthenes wrote during or after the rise of Macedon. Polybius wrote in the shadow of Rome. They did not fear the fall because it was already a fait accompli. Instead, they wrote of change (*metabole*). They understood that fall happens, but that people persist after the fact; in fact, the effects of fall could be mitigated if the correct steps were taken (Polyb. 3.4.5). Thus, decline could be survived.

Continuity

I argue that the concept of decline due to *pleonexia* was passed down in Greek authors from Thucydides to Polybius. Such a transmission demonstrates a greater degree of intellectual continuity in Greek thought than has been previously supposed. Scholars debate whether the classical worldview, specifically a philosophical emphasis on how to be a good member of a community, persisted into the Hellenistic age or was replaced by more individual centered philosophies. Starting with Johann Droysen, scholars have argued that the Hellenistic Age, the period between the death of Alexander and Augustus' conquest of Egypt in 30 BCE, was culturally distinct from the preceding Classical Age.[118] More recently, scholars have begun to accept that while unique, the Hellenistic Age built on the ideas introduced in the Classical period. In *Alexander to Actium*, Peter Green argues that third and second century BCE Greek philosophy concentrated on individual ethics in contrast to fifth and fourth century stress on communal values, though even he concedes that the emphasis on the individual had classical origins.[119] Graham Shipley's overview of the Hellenistic Greek world asserts its continuity with the Classical era; he contends that Hellenistic philosophical schools were understandable evolutions of fourth century developments.[120] He admits, however, that the stress in Hellenistic thought on individualism reflected changes in the status of elites as they, along with the city-state, lost political autonomy to the new Hellenistic kings.[121] Robert Sharples agrees with Shipley that the Hellenistic emphasis on how an individual should live reflects concerns that already existed in fourth century authors such as Plato.[122] I disagree. I think that from the end of the Peloponnesian War forward, writers were interested in shaping the individual in order to protect the community. They achieved this goal, in part, through warning against *pleonexia*.

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[118] Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 4.

[119] Green, *Alexander to Actium*, 58.

[120] Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 190-91.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Robert Sharples, "Philosophy for Life," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. Glenn Bugh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 224-25.

In order to prove the existence of this paradigm and thus continuity in Greek values, I will demonstrate that succeeding authors read their predecessors. There is no formula on how to discern such influence. Some scholars, such as Ernst Barker and George Menanke, can see impact in only A few lines of text; others, such as Walbank and de Romilly, are more skeptical.[123] Polybius cites Plato by name, but scholars demur from acknowledging that Polybius directly drew on him.[124] A general consensus exists that fourth century writers, such as Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates, read and reacted to Thucydides' ideas about *pleonexia*.[125] Another consensus exists that Polybius was at least aware of Thucydides.[126] In *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors*, Jacqueline de Romilly places Polybius' linking of individuals acting on *pleonexia* to the fall of states in a greater intellectual tradition that originated with Thucydides, but even she is not convinced that Polybius drew on earlier authors, such as Thucydides or Plato.[127]

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[123] Ernst Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his Predecessors*, 5th ed. (London: Methuen, 1977), 297; George Menanke, *Three Traditions of Greek Political Thought* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004), 150n111; Frank Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 743-44; De Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States*, 83.

[124] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 743-44.

[125] Vegetti, "Antropologie della *Pleonexia*"; Algra, "Observations on Plato's Thrasymachus," 47-8; Edmond Levy, *Athènes Devant La Dèfaite de 404 Histoire d'une Crise Idèologique* (Athens: Ecole Française d'Athènes, 1976), 154.

[126] Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 40; T.J. Luce, *The Greek Historians* (London: Routledge, 1997), 132; John Marincola, *Greek Historians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 117.

[127] De Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States according to Greek Authors*, 83.

Works that argue for influence, such as Thomas Scanlon's *The Influence of Thucydides on Sallust* or more recent chapters on the influence of Thucydides on Polybius, by Tim Rood and Georgina Langley in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius,* demonstrate such influence by comparing passages with similar language, content, and theme.[128] Thus, in order to determine continuity, I use the following criteria: 1) word choice, 2) word usage, 3) focus of passage, 4) presentation of events. Word choice: are the authors using the same word? In this instance, *pleonexia.* Word usage: are they using it in the same way? The second part of every chapter is a review of how authors use *pleonexia* in order to demonstrate that they all understood the term to mean, "the desire to gain at the expense of another." Focus of the passage: for the purpose of this dissertation, the focus is on the author's connection of *pleonexia* to why cities fall into *stasis*, the change of constitutions, or why states lose power on the international stage. Presentation of events: do the authors present a similar course of events when describing the effects of *pleonexia*? I look at both the content, but also how the authors present the material: do they describe the process of decline due to *pleonexia* in comparable ways? The more passages from different authors match these criteria, the more I believe that the later authors drew on earlier authors.

Such a transmission, I also argue, is not a mere literary topos. A topos indicates direct and uncritical borrowing from previous authors in order to demonstrate one's cleverness or education, as opposed to general and genuine intellectual engagement.[129] Although I show that earlier authors influenced later ones, later authors still introduced their own perspectives and ideas into the discussion of decline caused by *pleonexia*. Polybius in particular generally references other authors in order to disagree with them, e.g., that Ephorus, Xenophon, Callisthenes, and Plato were wrong to compare Crete's constitution to Sparta's or Demosthenes falsely accusing other Greeks leaders of treachery when they sided with Philip II of Macedon (6.45.1; 18.14).[130] Less often he cites them as reference; he states that Plato and other philosophers were the source for his anakyklosis and that Theopompus began his *Histories* where Thucydides left off (6.5.1; 8.11.3). So, while Polybius relied on the ideas present in Thucydides and Plato, he made the analysis his own.

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[128] Thomas Scanlon, *The Influence of Thucydides on Sallust* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1980); Tim Rood, "Polybius, Thucydides, and the First Punic War," in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius*, ed. Christopher Smith and Liv Mariah Yarrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 51; Georgina Langley, "Thucydides, Polybius, and Human Nature," in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius*, ed. Christopher Smith and Liv Yarrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 74-80; Arthur Eckstein, "Review-Discussion: Polybius, the Greek World, and Roman Imperial Expansion," *Histos* 6 (2012): 351.

The continued reliance on *pleonexia* in discussing the abuse of power leading to decline reveals a deep-seated fear in the Greek perception of society and politics. *Pleonexia* was an existential threat to individuals and communities. Individuals with the power and desire could control entire cities, appropriate property, or even kill without restraint. Athens suffered such a fate during the reign of the Thirty Tyrants, when the oligarchs in Athens executed any whom they feared or whom they wanted to rob. Polybius feared pleonexic men when he saw how they played on the *pleonexia* of the masses in order to enact poor policies. He saw the Achaean League brought under the control of Rome because individuals, Diaeus and Critolaus, sought to expand their power through harnessing the mob. Thus, the danger of *pleonexia* was not illusionary. It was palpable and authors saw it over and over in the world around them.

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[129] For an example of treating ideas of decline in Polybius as a topos see: Christel Müller, "Polybius 20.4-7 as a literary Topos," in *Polybius and his World*, ed. Bruce Gibson and Thomas Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 267-78.

[130] Critizing predecessors and contemporaries was a tradition in Greek historiography, as Frank Walbank points out. Frank Walbank, "The Two-Way Shadow: Polybius among the Fragments," in *The Shadow of Polybius*, ed. Guido Schepens and Jan Bollansée (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 1-5.

Chapter 2:

Pleonexia and Decline in Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon

This chapter will discuss the idea of decline due to *pleonexia* in the *Histories* of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon's *Hellenica*. I begin with Herodotus because *pleonexia* first appeared in Greek literature in his *Histories*.[1] Written in the late fifth century BCE, it covered the war between the Persian Empire and a coalition of Greek city-states in 481-0 BCE, as well as the course of events that led up to it. Thucydides was a near contemporary of Herodotus, and his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, which was written at the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the fourth century, records the war between Athens and Sparta in the last decades of the fifth century BCE. Xenophon's *Hellenica*, the history of Greece from 411 BCE to 362 BCE, continues Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, beginning where Thucydides' text ends.[2]

I will first examine how scholars of these authors have understood their use of *pleonexia*, decline in the respective texts, and the connections between the authors. Second, I will survey how each author employs *pleonexia* in his text. Third, I will examine how *pleonexia* functioned as a driver of decline in each. Finally, I will discuss how the authors incorporated earlier discussions of *pleonexia* into their own works.

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[1] Heinz-Otto Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung der Pleonexie von Homer bis Isokrates," (PhD diss., Bonn, 1967), 5.

[2] Thucydides summarizes the life the Macedonian king Archelaus, who died in 399, but makes no mention of an eruption of Etna in 396, so it is assumed that he died between those two dates; Hornblower, *Thucydides* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 143-44, 152. For a discussion of Xenophon as a continuer of Thucydides, see: Tim Rood, "Xenophon and Diodorus: Continuity Thucydides," in *Xenophon and His World*, ed. Christopher Tuplin (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2004).

Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon applied the concept of *pleonexia* in all its forms: the noun *pleonexia*, the verb *pleonekteō*, and the phrase *pleon* plus a verb of desire to situations in which one entity desired more at the expense of another. Herodotus and Thucydides distinguished between *pleonexia* and *pleonekteō* and the phrase *pleon ekhein*.[3] They employed *pleonexia* and *pleonekteō* to refer to the manipulation of situations or legal agreements for the benefit of one party over another. They used the word/substantive *pleon* plus a verb of desire to describe acts of taking something from another, but without the implication of abusing legal agreements. Xenophon did not make a similar distinction, but he did rely on *pleonexia* to describe actions in which one side took advantage of another. In his works, *pleonexia* also took on a more general meaning of "advantage." All the authors showed that functioning on any form of *pleonexia* hurt the entity that acted on it.

Scholarship on *Pleonexia*, Decline, and Continuity in the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon

When discussing the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, scholars translate *pleonexia* simply as greed, note that it causes the downfall of powers, and acknowledge various connections between the three authors. In *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, De Romilly translates *pleonexia* as "the desire for more," and she identifies two forms of *pleonexia* in Thucydides' text. The first form of *pleonexia* is spurred on by *hybris*, a belief in one's innate superiority, and it is an insatiable desire for more based on this arrogance. The second form is what she calls the law of force: the right of the stronger to rule the weaker. She postulates that Thucydides differentiated between the two forms: the first caused decline through arrogance leading to overreach, while the second merely was the way of the world.[4] In *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors*, she retains the idea that *pleonexia* is insatiable desire, but she portrays it as a heightened form of *philotimia*.[5]

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[3] Scholars lump the all three terms together when discussing *pleonexia* in these authors: Kurt Raaflaub, "Philosophy, Science, Politics: Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time," in *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, ed. Egbert Bakker, Irene De Jong, and Hans van Wees (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 175-76; Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 173, 177; Ryan Balot, *Greed and Injustice in Classical Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 16.

In various works on imperialism in the fifth century, Kurt Raaflaub translates *pleonexia* as "a desire for more."[6] In his chapter "Philosophy, Science, Politics: Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time" in *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, he specifies that it is an unjust and insatiable desire for more that ignores the risks, costs, or consequences.[7] In his 1987 work *Thucydides*, Simon Hornblower argues that *pleonexia* is the desire for more and equates it to greed.[8] In his *Commentaries* on Thucydides, he translates the word as: "greed" or "exorbitant ambition."[9] In *Xenophon and the History of his Times*, John Dillery presents *pleonexia* as an attempt "to gain possession or control of what was not rightfully theirs."[10]

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[4] Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, trans. Philip Thody (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), 329-39. For a critique of de Romilly's lumping *hybris* with *pleonexia* see N.R.E. Fisher, *Hybris* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Philips, 1992), 391-93.

[5] Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States according to Greek Authors* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 20-21.

[6] Kurt Raaflaub, "Herodotus, Political Thought, and the Meaning of History," *Arethusa* 20 (1987): 227-29; Kurt Raaflaub, "Democracy, Power, and Imperialism," in *Athenian Political Thought and the Reconstruction of American Democracy*, ed. J. Peter Euben, John R. Wallach, and Josiah Ober (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 107; Kurt Raaflaub, "Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time," 176; Kurt Raaflaub, "Thucydides on Democracy and Oligarchy," in *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, ed. Antonios Rengakos and Antonis Tsakmakis (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 195.

[7] Kurt Raaflaub, "Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time," 176.

[8] Hornblower, *Thucydides*, 173.

[9] Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 173.

[10] John Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times* (London: Routledge, 1995), 149.

Similarly, scholars recognize that Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon associate acting on *pleonexia* as a cause of decline. In "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung der Pleonexie von Homer bis Isokrates," Hanz-Otto Weber notes that Herodotus portrayed acting on *pleonexia* as causing ruin and destruction and that Thucydides presented *pleonexia* as having negative consequences.[11] In *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors*, De Romilly argues that for Thucydides, the desire of post-Periclean leaders to achieve Pericles' position led them to flatter the Athenian *demos*, which resulted in poor policies.[12] This devotion to personal gain led to rigidity in Athenian policy—Athens must always strive to acquire more power, which itself was *pleonexia*—and resulted in the Sicilian expedition and the ruin of Athenian power.[13] Hornblower, Raaflaub, and Balot agree that Thucydides linked Athenian *pleonexia* to the end of Athens' fifth century empire.[14] Dillery argues that Xenophon used *pleonexia* to explain the downfall of the Thirty at Athens and the Spartan Hegemony.[15] Nicholas Sterling contends that Xenophon identified *pleonexia* as the reason why Thebes failed to obtain hegemony over Greece. He argues that for Xenophon *pleonexia* destroys the bonds between allies, and that this lack of faith with Thebes caused other Greek states not to ally with it after the battle of Leuctra.[16]

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[11] Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung," 41, 61.

[12] De Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States*, 46-50.

[13] Ibid., 57-58.

[14] Hornblower, *Thucydides*, 172-75; Raaflaub, "Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time," 177; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 154.

[15] Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times*, 160-63, 244-48.

[16] Nicholas Sterling, "Xenophon's *Hellenica* and the Theban Hegemony," in *Xenophon and His World*, ed. Christopher Tuplin (Stuttgart: Verlag, 2004), 457.

Finally, scholars acknowledge the connections between these three authors. They agree that Thucydides was aware of Herodotus and his writing. A recent essay by Philip Stadter, published in an edited collection which explores the links between these two authors, focuses on Thucydides specifically as a reader of Herodotus.[17] De Romilly contends that Thucydides relied on a political version of Herodotus' *hubris-nemesis* model to explain the decline of Athens in the Peloponnesian War.[18] Raaflaub agrees that Herodotus and Thucydides certainly engaged with the same issues in their respective works, especially in warnings regarding *pleonexia*, but he makes no conclusion about whether one influenced the other.[19]

Scholars also recognize that Xenophon relied on Thucydides in some fashion in the *Hellenica*, but they debate the degree to which he did. Traditionally, scholars assert that Xenophon's *Hellenica* was an inferior continuation of Thucydides, especially the sections up to 2.3.10.[20] There are also discussions of the Herodotean elements of Xenophon going as far back as Dionysius of Halicarnassus.[21] Scholars have also sought to examine the *Hellenica* as a text in its own right. They agree that while Xenophon started the *Hellenica* where Thucydides' work ended, and therefore was aware of him, such reliance does not mean that Xenophon was a second-rate Thucydides. Instead, he was a writer in his own right, who, like other ancient historians, incorporated elements of previous authors as he saw fit.[22]

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[17] Edith Foster and Donald Lateiner, eds., "Introduction" in *Thucydides and Herodotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6; Philip Stadter, "Thucydides as a 'Reader' of Herodotus," in *Thucydides and Herodotus*, ed. Edith Foster and Donald Lateiner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 39-66.

[18] De Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States*, 58-59.

[19] Raaflaub, "Herodotus and the Intellectual Trends of his Time," 185-86.

[20] For discussions of the debates: Vivienne Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 1-2; Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times*, 9-11; Tim Rood, "Xenophon and Diodorus: Continuing Thucydides," 341-46; Simon Hornblower, *Thucydidean Themes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 292-93.

[21] Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica*, 2-6; Rood, 'Xenophon and Diodorus: Continuing Thucydides," 343; Rood refers back to Gray.

***Pleonexia* in Herodotus**

In the text of Herodotus, instances of the noun *pleonexia* and the verb *pleonekteō* refer to the manipulation of a situation by one party in order to gain an advantage at the cost of another. The word *pleon* plus a verb of desire, such as *epithumeō* or *ekhein*, occurs in Herodotus to refer to acts or the desire to conquer territory. Herodotus shows that acting on any form of *pleonexia* has negative effects, but he does not link acting on either the noun *pleonexia* or the verb *pleonekteō* explicitly to decline.

Pleonexia first appears in Greek literature in Book Seven of Herodotus' *Histories* when Herodotus presents three stories explaining why Argos did not join the panhellenic alliance against Persia. In the Argive version of the story, the Argives agree to join the alliance, despite being warned by the Oracle at Delphi not to, on the condition that they share command with the Spartans because it was Argos' ancestral right (7.148). The Spartans made a counter offer, stating that each king could have a vote, but that they could not disenfranchise their kings by giving the Argive king power equal to the two Spartan kings (7.149.2). The Argives refuse, replying that they would rather be ruled by the Persians than deal with Spartan *pleonexia* (7.149.3).[23] *Pleonexia* here refers to the Spartans' attempt to manipulate the agreement between themselves and the Argives so that it would appear that the cities were sharing command of the alliance, when in fact the

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[22] Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica*, 7-9; Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Time*, 9-10; Rood, "Xenophon and Diodorus: Continuing Thucydides," 390-92.

[23] Howe and Wells make no comment on *pleonexia* in these passages. W.W. Howe and J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, vol. 2 (1912; repr., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 188-89, 196-97, 273.

Spartans would retain control.[24] The agreement appeared equal because each king received one vote; however, since there were two Spartan kings to one Argive king, the Spartans would retain ultimate power in the alliance.

Pleonexia next appears in Herodotus in the speech of Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, in Book Seven. In attempts to gain allies against Persia, the Greeks sent envoys to Syracuse, a Greek colony on the island of Sicily, to request aid. When the Greek envoys ask Gelon, the tyrant of Syracuse, to join the alliance, Gelon accuses them of approaching him with a grasping speech (*logon … pleonekten*) (7.158.1). He reminds the envoys that when previously he asked the Greeks for help against the Carthaginians, they rebuffed him (7.158.2). Only now, when they need help, are they willing to talk with him (7.158.2). *Pleonexia* in this instance pertains to the Greek willingness to ask Gelon for aid when it suited their needs and their equal unwillingness to help Gelon against the Carthaginians when it would be a burden to them.[25] Thus, the Greeks wanted something for nothing: they wanted the help of Gelon but had done nothing to earn it.

The final appearance of *pleonexia* in Herodotus' *Histories* describes the motivations of Themistocles when he demands money from Greek islands. In Book Eight, while pursuing the Persians across the Aegean, Themistocles demanded money from the Carystians and Parians to protect them against the Greek fleet on account of *pleonexia* (οὐ γὰρ ἐπαύετο πλεονεκτέων ἐσπέμπων ἐς τὰς ἄλλας νήσους ἀπειλητηρίους λόγους αἴτεε χρήματα διὰ τῶν αὐτων ἀγγέλων … λέγων ὥς εἰ μὴ δώσουσι τὸ αἰτεόμενον, ἐπάξει τὴν στρατιὴν τῶν Ελλήνων καὶ πολιορκέων ἐξαιρήσει (There was no end to Themistocles' avarice; using the same agents … he sent threatening messages to the other islands, demanding money and saying that if they would not give what he asked he would bring the Greek armada upon them and besiege and take their islands) (8.112.1).[26] When he collected this money, Themistocles did not share it with the other Greek admirals (8.112.3). Again, the *pleonexia* describes an act in which one party, Themistocles, exploited a situation, his command of the Greek fleet, for his private benefit, running a protection scheme.[27] Even though later writers recorded the exile of Themistocles after the Persian War, Herodotus records no retribution against Themistocles for his act of unfairness and injustice in regard to the island allies.[28] So, in Herodotus' *Histories*, the historian deployed *pleonexia* to describe situations in which one party attempted to manage circumstances to its advantage in a way that cost another.

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[24] Balot emphasizes three points about this episode: *pleonexia* refers to political power, it applies an idea of distributive justice to the greater international community, and it is not attached to a mention of *hubris*; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 109-11.

[25] Ibid., 111-12.

Herodotus employed the phrase *pleon* plus a verb of desire to designate situations of territorial expansion, imperialism.[29] In his history of Egypt in Book Two, Herodotus declares that when Egypt was divided into twelve kingdoms, the kings of each kingdom agreed to have good relations and that they would not seek to gain against each other (μήτε πλέον τι δίζησθαι ἔχειν τὸν ἕτερον τοῦ ἑτέρου) (2.147.3). In Book Seven, Xerxes' uncle and adviser Artabanus disapproved of the expedition against Greece because he believed it was wrong to teach the heart to desire more than it had at the present (κακὸν εἴη διδάσκειν τὴν ψυχὴν πλέον τι δίζησθαι αἰεὶ ἔχειν τοῦ παρεόντος) (7.16a).[30] Even after Artabanus changes his mind, he reiterates the warning that it was the desire for more (τὸ πολλῶν ἐπιθυμέειν) that led Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius to disaster (7.18.2). Thus, Herodotus applied the noun *pleonexia* and the verb *pleonekteō* to describe situations in which one party tried to take advantage of another party unjustly and the phrase *pleon* plus a verb of desire to refer to imperialism.

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[26] Translation by A.D. Godley. Herodotus, *The Histories*, A.D. Godley trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), accessed November 10, 2014, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Hdt.+8.112&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0126.

[27] Ibid., 119.

[28] Themistocles' story continues in Thucydides; he was implicated in the Spartan king Pausanias' plot to sell the Greeks out to the Persians. Themistocles fled Greece and ended up as a governor in the Persian Empire. Thucydides does not link these misadventures to his greed (Thuc. 1.135-38).

[29] Balot has a more complete review of the multiple words that Herodotus uses to describe imperialism, for example *epithumeō*; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 100-108.

***Pleonexia* in Thucydides**

Thucydides conceptualized *pleonexia* as a natural urge within individuals to desire to gain more at another's expense and as something that caused harm to those who acted on it. As with Herodotus, in Thucydides the noun *pleonexia* or the verb *pleonekteō* denote that one party is taking advantage of an existing power imbalance for gain, while the word *pleon* and a verb of desire signify the taking of more at the expense of another. Most of the instances of *pleonexia* occur in Thucydides' speeches, and therefore it is debatable whether they are Thucydides' own thoughts, or the thought of the speakers themselves.[31] I agree with Hornblower that the speeches may not reveal Thucydides' own opinions, but the main point is that the inclusion of *pleonexia* still reveals how fifth-century Greeks employed the term.[32] Therefore the speeches allow us to examine its use in a late fifth century context order to gauge its meaning.

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[30] Balot, Fisher, and Raaflaub note the connection between *hybris* and *pleonexia* in the passage; all of them, however, note that the two were distinct ideas in classical Greek thought. Raaflaub, "Herodotus, Political Thought, and the Meaning of History," 229; Fisher, *Hybris*, 371-72; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 102-3.

[31] For a review of the scholarship on the speeches from 1970 and earlier: William C. West III, "A Bibliography of Scholarship in the Speeches in Thucydides 1873-1970," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 124-65; more recent discussions: Hornblower, *Thucydides*, Chapter 3; Thomas Garrity, "Thucydides 1.22.1: Content and Form in the Speeches," *AJPh* (1998): 361-84; Leone Porciani, "The Enigma of Discourse: A View of Thucydides," in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, ed. John Marincola (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 328-35.

Thucydides presents the noun *pleonexia* and the verb *pleonekteō* as the manipulation of differentials in power, in which one party abuses its power over another for gain. The most direct enunciation of this occurs in Athenagoras' speech to the Syracusans in Book Six. In the speech, Athenagoras associates *pleonexia* with the tendency of oligarchic governments to take more than their fair share of rewards. According to Athenagoras, in oligarchies the few share the dangers facing the city with the people, but keep most, if not all, the profits for themselves (ὀλιγαρχία δὲ τῶν μὲν κινδύνων τοῖς πολλοῖς μεταδίδωσι, τῶν δ’ ὠφελιμων οὐ πλεονεκτεῖ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ξύμπαντ’ ἀφελομένη ἔχει) (6.39.2). In contrast, all people in democracies, regardless of class, enjoy a form of equality (6.39.1). *Pleonexia* at 6.39.2 refers to the disproportionate distribution of danger and reward found in oligarchies: all share the risk; only a few benefit. This is gain at the expense of others because the few are intentionally reaping the benefit from the work of everyone.

Similarly, *pleonexia* typifies manipulation of power differences in the speech of the Athenian embassy to the Spartan assembly in Book One.[33] In the speech, Athenian ambassadors admit that Athens' allies perceive Athens as pleonexic on account of court settlements or exercises of power. He states that since Athenians and its allies are equal under the law, whenever an Athenian court rules against a citizen of an allied city, or whenever Athens takes action against an allied city, the decision is seen as an act of Athenian *pleonexia* (1.77.3). Since Athens treats its allies as equals, as opposed to its subjects, any act which favors Athens would come at the expense of the allies. Thus, *pleonexia* again is gain at the expense of others through either court rulings or abuse of existing relationships.

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[32] Hornblower, *Thucydides*, 72.

[33] Scholarship on this speech makes little note of the use of *pleonexia*, but does point out that the Athenians take it as a point of pride that they do not assert their dominance over the allies: de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 93; A.E. Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 44-46; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 122-23; Clifford Orwin, "Justifying Empire: The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta and the Problem of Justice in Thucydides," *Journal of Politics* 48 (1986): 78.

Thucydides also depicts *pleonexia* as a natural urge in humans. In his speech against the proposed annihilation of Mytilene in Book Three, Diodotus notes that wealthy people attempt to circumvent the law on account of their desire for more (*tēn pleonexian*) (3.45.4). In Hermocrates' speech to the Sicilians in Book Four, Hermocrates forgives the Athenian's desire for more (*pleonektein*) because it is always man's nature to rule those who submit (πέφυκε γὰρ τὸ ἀνθρώπειον διὰ παντὸς ἄρχειν) (4.61.5).

The gain associated with *pleonexia* is not restricted to material wealth; it could refer to power. In none of the previous examples does Thucydides specify what the pleonexic agent obtains. What matters is that the gain comes from the others' loss. As Alexander Fuks points out in his article on Thucydides' *stasis* narrative, covered later in this chapter, at 3.82.6, Thucydides deploys *pleonexia* to refer to gain of political power within a city.[34]

When referring to acts of territorial acquisition or other forms of violent acquisition of power, Thucydides employs the word *pleon* plus a verb of desire. In Book Four, Thucydides states that the Athenians refused the Spartan peace offer of 424 because they desired more (τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο) (4.21.2). Though what the Athenians offered is not specified, it is implied that the goal is power over others or territorial acquisition. In Book Six the desire is explicitly the conquest of territory, as Thucydides writes that the Athenian people agreed to the Sicilian expedition out of their desire for more (τῶν πλεόνων ἐπιθυμίαν) (6.24.4). Thus, Thucydides associates the motivations for conquest with the phrase *pleon* and a verb of desire and uses the noun *pleonexia* and the verb *pleonekteō* to indicate gain through manipulation.

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[34] Alexander Fuks, "Thucydides and the *Stasis* in Corcyra: Thuc., III 82-3 versus [Thuc.] III 84," *AJPh* 92 (1971): 52-53.

Thucydides' use of *pleonektein* in Hermocrates' speech in Book Four appears to complicate the neat arrangement I have so far suggested. At 4.61.4, Hermocrates declares that Athenian *pleonektein*, in this context the conquest of Sicily, is understandable. The precise connotation of *pleonektein* is unclear. It could refer to the direct annexation of territory: the conquest of Sicily. It could also refer to Athens' manipulation of its alliances with specific Sicilian cities, taking advantage of a situation for gain. If *pleonektein* refers to the conquest of Sicily, then we should not differentiate between forms of *pleonexia* and *pleon ekhein*. If *pleonektein* indicates the manipulation of situations for gain, then we need to separate the meanings of *pleonexia* and *pleon ekhein*. I will now show that *pleonektein* at 4.61.4 refers to Athenian desire to conquer Sicily through manipulation of its existing Sicilian alliances, which demonstrates that we must distinguish between *pleonexia* and the phrase *pleon* plus a verb of desire in the work of Thucydides.

Hermocrates' entire speech is about the need for the Greek cities of Sicily to make peace in order to preempt the Athenians from meddling in Sicilian affairs.[35] The background of the speech was that the Sicilian city of Leontini and its allies had appealed to Athens for help in their conflict with Syracuse and other Sicilian cities allied with Sparta (3.86). Athens had sent ships in 427 BCE to help Leontini, to prevent grain shipments to the Peloponnese, and to explore the possibility of conquering Sicily (3.86). Fighting continued in Sicily until 424 when two of the warring cities, Camarina and Gela, made an armistice (4.58). Thucydides states that the cities of Sicily used this armistice to call a conference and propose a general peace for the island (4.58).

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[35] Thucydides has a generally a positive portrayal of Hermocrates, which demonstrates that Thucydides held him in great esteem: N.G.L Hammond, "The Particular and the Universal in Thucydides," in *The Speeches of Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1973), 49-59; Focke Hinrichs, "Hermokrates bei Thukydides," *Hermes* 109 (1981): 46-59; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 220-22; C.M Farber and C.M. Fauber, "Hermocrates and Thucydides: Rhetoric, Policy, and the Speeches in Thucydides' 'History'," *Illinois Classical Studies* 26 (2001): 39.

At the conference, Hermocrates gave a speech calling for a general peace and Sicilian unity. He noted that the war was not about the interests of individual Sicilian cities, but of Sicily as a whole, and that the true threat to the island was Athens (4.60.1). Athens was the strongest state in Greece and would not hesitate to use its existing alliances on the island as a pretext for conquest (4.60). Weakened by continual wars, no Sicilian city would be safe, not even those allied to Athens (4.61.2). At this point in the speech Hermocrates characterizes Athens desire for power over Sicily with *pleonektein* (4.61.5). In the immediate context of the speech, it seems that the *pleonektein* refers to Athens' use of its existing alliances in Sicily to gain power, which supports the idea that *pleonexia* and *pleonekteō* referred to the manipulation of a situation to benefit one party at the expense of another. The result of Athenian intervention on behalf of its allies would be the Athenian conquest of Sicily, territorial acquisition, but what matters is how Athens acquired that power: the manipulation of allies.

The differences between *pleonexia* and *pleon* plus a verb of desire can be further seen in the speech of the Corinthian envoys to the Athenian Assembly in Book One.[36] In the speech, Thucydides uses both *pleonexia* and *pleon ekhein* to describe Corcyraean actions in the events leading up to the speech. Corcyra was one of the last non-aligned Greek cities in the late fifth century. The island of Corcyra itself is off the western coast of Greece and was on a major shipping line between Greece and Italy and Sicily. The Corcyraeans had come into conflict with Corinth over the city of Epidamnus, which was further north on the Adriatic coast. The Corcyraeans had recently defeated the Corinthians in a naval battle, but they realized that they could not hold out against Corinth and appealed to Athens for aid. The Corinthians sent envoys to Athens to persuade the Athenian assembly not to accept the alliance.

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[36] Balot does not explore the nuances in Thucydides' uses of *pleonexia* in this passage—he understands *pleonexia* as greed and presents it as a general characterization of the Corcyraeans; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 137-38. Scholarship on this speech deals more with the Corinthians' arguments on justice and why the Athenians should not ally with the Corcyraean and less on the nature of the charges

In the opening of their speech, the Corinthians point out that the Corcyraeans exploit their geographic isolation and neutrality to engage in piracy and abuse their court system in order to prey on the trade ships of other Greek cities (1.37.2-4). Corcyra's geographic isolation meant that it received more ships from other Greek cities than it sent out (1.37.2). The Corcyraeans avoided alliances with neighboring cities so they could use their own judges in trade disputes as opposed to impartial arbiters (1.37.2). The lack of restrictions allowed them to gain either through violence or deceit (ἂν κρατῶσι βιάζωνται, οὗ δ' ἂν λάθωσι πλέον ἔχωσιν) (1.37.4). They gained through violence because they could attack whomever they chose; they gained through deceit by using their courts to decide issues between Corcyraeans and other Greeks in favor of the Corcyraeans (1.37.3). Since Corcyra had no formal treaty obligations, and therefore had no agreements to manipulate, they were free to take what they wanted from

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leveled at the Corcyraeans; David Cohen, "Justice, Interest, and Political deliberation in Thucydides," *Quaderni Urbanita di Cultura Classica* 16 (1984): 38; Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 72-79.

others, *pleon ekhosin*.

At the end of the Corinthians' speech, the ambassadors note that the Corcyraeans are grasping (*pleonektai*) in respect to how the Corcyraeans are trying to manipulate legal situations for their benefit. In the conflict over Epidamnus, the Corcyraeans only asked for arbitration after they had besieged Epidamnus, allowing the Corcyraeans to negotiate from a position of strength (1.39.2). The Corcyraeans appealed to Athens only after they started losing the war with Corinth; they never supported Athens before, yet ask the Athenians to be equally culpable for their actions by allying with them (1.39.3). In this way, the Corcyraeans continually manipulate situations to their own advantage, *pleonektai.*

Consequently, the speech of the Corinthian envoys exhibits that, in Thucydides' *Histories*, all forms of *pleonexia* refer to gain at the expense of others and that there is a distinction between the phrase *pleon* and a verb of desire and noun or verb forms of *pleonexia*. In describing how the Corcyraeans used the remoteness of their island to avoid alliances in order to take what they want either through violence or the courts, Thucydides uses *pleon ekhosin*. In characterizing how the Corcyraeans exploited recent events for their own benefit, calling for arbitration after they sieged Epidamnus and asking Athens for an alliance after the war with Corinth escalated, he uses *pleonektai*, a form of *pleonekteō*.

Throughout Thucydides' *Histories*, speakers warn against acting on *pleonexia* and encourage people to avoid it. The Corinthians end their appeal to the Athenians by saying that it is better to build trust rather than go for the immediate advantage of having more (τὸ γὰρ μὴ ἀδικεῖν τοὺς ὁμοίους ἐχυρωτέρα δύναμις ἢ τῷ αὐτίκα φανερῷ ἐπαρθέντας διὰ κινδύνων τὸ πλέον ἔχειν) (1.42.4). In the Athenian ambassador's speech to the Spartan congress in Book One, the ambassador admits that men are more indignant when they feel that they are being taken advantage of (*pleonekteistha*) by an equal (*isou*) as opposed to being beaten by a superior (1.77.4). Hermocrates ends his speech calling for Sicilian unity by commenting that those who go to war for gain end with less (τοὺς δ᾽ ἀντὶ τοῦ πλέον ἔχειν προσκαταλιπεῖν τὰ αὑτῶν ξυνέβη) (4.62.3). In his speech to the Acanthians in Book Four, Brasidas declares that it is more disgraceful to gain one's ends through deceit rather than strength because people acknowledge superior strength but despise gains made through deceit (4.86.6). So, Thucydides asserted that *pleonexia* was the desire for more against others, and that it hurt its victims but also those acting upon it. He also differentiated between the forms of *pleonexia*: the noun *pleonexia* and the verb *pleonekteō* referred to gain achieved by the manipulation of laws or situations, whereas the word *pleon* plus a verb of desire meant taking from another, generally in terms of imperialism.

Pleonexia in Xenophon

Xenophon uses *pleonexia* in the *Hellenica* to refer to the manipulation of situations and to having an advantage over others.[37] He deploys *pleonexia* to describe how the Thirty Tyrants of Athens abused their authority to secure the regime's control over Athens.[38] According to Xenophon, after coming to power the Thirty killed those who had informed against aristocrats when Athens was a democracy (2.3.11-12). They soon expanded the executions to anyone whom they perceived could be a threat to their government (2.3.14). One of the Thirty, Theramenes, objected to this practice of killing men simply because they had been popular when Athens was a democracy (2.3.15). Another member of the Thirty, Critias, argued that those who want to gain more, τοῖς πλεονεκτεῖν βουλομένοις, must remove potential opposition (2.3.16). *Pleonektein* refers to the Thirty's desire to maintain their political dominance of Athens by killing any whom they regarded as dangerous.

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[37] I rely on the *Hellenica* as it is a work of history. Included in the index is a catalogue of Xenophon's use of *pleonexia* in the *Cyropedia*; his uses of *pleonexia* follow the general definition I have presented. The *Hellenica* as a work of history: Christopher Tuplin, *The Failings of Empire* (Stuttgart: Verlag, 1993), 40-41. Balot focuses his analysis of Xenophon on Xenophon's treatment of the Thirty, how they were motivated by greed, and how Xenophon's account was typical of other Athenian authors who discussed the Thirty; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 225-33.

Xenophon next uses *pleonexia* in Critias' speech against Theramenes, in which Critias disparages Theramenes as a man who consistently acts in ways beneficial to himself and harmful to others (2.3.33).[39] After failing to convince Theramenes that the actions of the Thirty were justified, Critias put Theramenes on trial. In his prosecution speech, Critias accuses Theramenes of being instrumental in overthrowing the democracy in order to put himself and other members of the Thirty in power; he then turned around and roused the democrats against the Thirty so as to retain power (2.3.28). He continually switched sides, wavering between supporting the oligarchs or the democrats during the Peloponnesian War, depending on which side seemed to be dominant (2.3.30).

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[38] Scholarship on the Thirty Tyrants of Athens: Peter Krentz, *The Thirty at Athens* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982); Andrew Wolpert, *Remembering Defeat: Civil War and Civic Memory in Ancient Athens* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

[39] Scholarship on Critias' speech: Stephen Usher, "Xenophon, Callicles, and Theramenes," *JHS* 88 (1968). Vivienne Gray sees the speech as being about friendship and treachery: Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica*, 94-96. Dillery notes the existence of *pleonexia* in the speech, but translates it as greed. Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times*, 152-54. Scholarship on the historical Theramenes: Philip Harding, "The Theramenes Myth," *Phoenix* 28 (1974); G.E. Pesely, *Theramenes and Athenian Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Robert Buck, "The Character of Theramenes," *AHB* 9 (1995); W.J. McCoy, "The Political Debut of Theramenes," in *Polis and Polemos*, ed. Charles D. Hamilton and Peter Krentz (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1997).

Theramenes helped accuse the generals in command of the fleet at Arginusae, even though he had been responsible for not recovering the disabled ships (2.3.32).[40] Critias summarizes his accusations by stating that Theramenes was an individual who continually acted on *pleonexia* (ὅστις γε μὴν φανερός ἐστι τοῦ μὲν πλεονεκτεῖν ἀεὶ ἐπιμελόμενος) (33). Theramenes' *pleonexia* was his ability to navigate situations so that he profited while others suffered.

Xenophon notes that the Thirty's intimidation tactics pleased those who were pleonexic (2.4.10). After Critias succeeded in condemning Theramenes to death, the Thirty became more bloodthirsty (2.4.1). This abuse of power created numerous exiles, one group of which seized a fortress in Attica and began active resistance against the Thirty (2.4.2-7). In order to have a refuge in case they needed to retreat from Athens, the Thirty emptied out the precinct of Eleusis under false pretense (2.4.8). The Thirty then arrested all the men of Eleusis and condemned them to death (2.4.9). When arranging the vote, the Thirty filled half of the Odeum (where voting happened) with armed Spartan soldiers and required people to vote publicly (2.4.10). Xenophon notes that this act of voter intimidation pleased those who thought only about their advantage (τὸ πλεονεκτεῖν μόνον ἔμελεν) (2.410). By half filling the Odeum with armed Spartan soldiers loyal to the Thirty, the Thirty engineered a situation in which the vote for death could only have one outcome. Thus, Xenophon continually used a form of *pleonekteō* to refer to situations when the Thirty, or members of the Thirty, manipulated events for their advantage. In all of these situations, those who were disadvantaged generally died, demonstrating a rather violent form of gain at the expense of others.

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[40] The battle of Arginusae was a naval victory for Athens in 406 BCE which reinvigorated Athens near the end of the Peloponnesian War. Though Athens won the battle, the Athenians lost a number of their ships due to a storm that occurred after the battle. The generals in charge were tried and executed when they returned to Athens.

Xenophon also applied *pleonexia* to characterize Sparta's abuse of its allies. These accusations first occur in the Theban ambassador's speech to Athens at the beginning of the Corinthian War, the war that erupted ten years after the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and its former allies Corinth and Thebes as well as Athens and Argos.[41] When trying to convince the Athenians to go to war against Sparta, the Theban ambassador explains how Sparta manipulated its relationship with allies, former Athenian subjects, and even Persia in such a manner as to benefit Sparta.[42] The Theban ambassador accuses the Spartans of sharing the dangers of war with its allies, but denying them a share of the resulting power, prestige, or wealth and treating them like slaves (3.5.12). In the case of former Athenian subjects, the Spartans offered them independence, but in reality forced oligarchic governments on them (3.5.12). Finally, the Spartans now snub the Persians, who helped the Spartans defeat Athens (3.5.13). The Thebans end the speech by labeling all these actions as examples of Spartan *pleonexia* (3.5.12-15).

In Book Six, Xenophon uses *pleonexia* to characterize Sparta abusing its relationships with in the Athenian speeches to the Spartan assembly.[43] In the episode, three Athenians speak at the Spartan assembly to push for a Spartan/Athenian alliance. The last two speakers characterize Spartan foreign policy as pleonexic. The second speaker, Autocles, points out the central contradiction of Spartan foreign policy: the Spartans claim that they desire independence for Greek cities, but they want the same cities to obey Sparta (6.3.7). He points out that Sparta makes decisions about foreign policy without consulting the allies but requires the allies to support Sparta even to their own detriment (6.3.8). Sparta imposes pro-Spartan oligarchies in allied cities, which then ignore existing laws, and rule for the advantage of Sparta; such actions contradict the idea of the allies' independence (6.3.8). The Spartans in fact are hypocrites because they seized the Cadmea, the Theban citadel, and installed their own puppet government over Thebes in order to preempt Theban domination of Boeotia (6.3.9). Autocles warns the Spartans that if they want friends, they should not try to get both full rights from other cities as well as try to get as much power for themselves (*pleonektountas*) (6.3.9). The final speaker, Callistratus, repeats Autocles' advice when he states that since the Thebans are now waging a war against Sparta, as a result of Spartan *pleonexia*, he hopes the Spartans have learned not to seek power at the expense of its allies (*pleonektein*) (6.3.11). Xenophon, then, continually relies on *pleonexia* to refer to situations in which Sparta abused its hegemony in order to gain more power over its allies.

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[41] On Xenophon and the start of the Corinthian War: Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica*, 107; Earlier scholarship, such as Perlman, rejected Xenophon's assertion that the Persians paid the Greek cities to start the war, but more recently Buckler has agreed with this assessment: S. Perlman, "The Causes and the Outbreak of the Corinthian War," *CQ* 14 (1964); John Buckler, "The Incident at Mount Parnassus, 395 BCE," in *Xenophon and His World*, ed. Christopher Tuplin (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2004), 397-411. Scholarship on the Corinthian War: Charles Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories: Politics and Diplomacy in the Corinthian War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979).

[42] Gray treats the speech as a forecast of Theban hypocrisy—they are justifying the war against Sparta by depicting it as grasping, which is what the Thebans will be in the next war; Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica*, 107-12. Buckler treats the speech as an invention of Xenophon to justify Athenian involvement in the war; Buckler, "The Incident at Mount Parnassus, 395 BCE," 409-10. Neither explicitly mentions Xenophon's use of *pleonexia*.

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[43] Treatment of these speeches: Vivienne Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica*, 123-31; Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times*, 243-45. Gray notes the thematic parallels between the Theban speech in Book Three and Autocles' speech in Book Six, but she makes no mention of the use of *pleonexia*. Nicholas Sterling acknowledges Xenophon's repetition of the charge of Spartan *pleonexia*; Sterling, "Xenophon's *Hellenica* and the Theban Hegemony," 457.

Xenophon also utilizes *pleonexia* in a more neutral sense to mean advantage.[44] In Book Seven, he notes that the Thebans negotiated with the Persians in order to gain an advantage (*pleonektesai*) in Greece (7.1.33). When negotiating with the Persians, he records that Pelopidas had a great advantage (*polu epleonektei*) over other Greeks because Thebes had sided with Persia during the Persian War of 481-80 BCE and thus had a history of collaborating with the Persians (7.1.34). Thebes allied with Persia, but other Greek cities refused to join the alliance (7.1.40). Nicholas Sterling argues that these two instances of *pleonexia* indicate that Xenophon ascribed Thebes' failure to establish hegemony over Greece in the wake of Leuctra to its *pleonexia*.[45] Xenophon does not elaborate on the ruinous nature of Theban *pleonexia* in the way he does Spartan *pleonexia*, but his narration of Thebes acting on *pleonexia* leading to failure follows the general idea of the negative consequences of *pleonexia*.

Finally, when discussing the battle of Mantinea, Xenophon twice uses a participial form of *pleonekteō* to refer to Epaminondas' disposition of his troops in order to gain advantage over his opponents (7.5.8, 11). Thus, Xenophon makes use of *pleonexia* to refer to abusing existing unequal power relationships and also modified the term to refer to having or gaining an advantage over another.

***Pleonexia* and Decline in Herodotus**

In his *Histories*, Herodotus has a negative view of those who act according to *pleonexia*, but he only explicitly warns against acting on *pleon ekhein*. He depicts *pleonexia* as a cause of friction between groups, but *pleonexia* does not cause ruin to those who act on it. Neither the Argives nor the Syracusans join the Panhellenic alliance due to supposed acts of *pleonexia*, but the Greeks still defeat the Persians. Themistocles acted on *pleonexia* after the defeat of Persia at Salamis, but nothing bad happens to him in the text of Herodotus on account of it. Herodotus does, however, warn against operating on *pleon ekhein* (imperialism), and notes that the desire for more caused the ruin of various Persian kings (7.16a, 18.2).[46]

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[44] Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung," 67.

[45] Sterling, "Xenophon's *Hellenica* and the Theban Hegemony," 457.

***Pleonexia* and Decline in Thucydides**

Thucydides utilizes *pleonexia* to explain the decline of powers. In internal matters, Thucydides presents *pleonexia* as fueling *stasis* in Greek cities. In external affairs, he portrays *pleonexia*, in the form of manipulating agreements, as a cause of tension between Athens and its allies, but he does not present it as the reason why Athens lost the war. Instead, he states that ambitious politicians endorsed imperialistic policies, which are described with *pleon ekhein*, and caused Athens to pursue an over-aggressive foreign policy, which led to disaster (2.65.10-11). Eventually such ambitious politicians, e.g., Pisander, Antiphon, and Theramenes, in their drive for power in Athens, overturned Athens' democratic government (8.68).[47]

Thucydides applied the noun *pleonexia* in describing the internal decline of a city in the Corcyraean *stasis* narrative in Book Three, sections 82-4.[48] He focuses on the city of Corcyra when outlining the process, but he notes that similar disturbances erupted throughout the Greek world over the course of the war (3.82.2).[49] He also notes that there was a typical process every city went through in the course of *stasis* (3.82.3). During *stasis*, a city suffered from political factions plotting and counter-plotting against each other for power (3.82.3-7). This struggle for dominance led to a general radicalization of politics and society, where actions and rhetoric became extreme (3.82.3), and party loyalty mattered more than the general good of the city (3.82.6). What drove this *stasis* was the desire for power, fueled by *pleonexia* and *philotimia* (3.82.8).[50] The consequence of *stasis* was the general destruction of society (3.84.3). At the beginning of the section, Corcyra is a functioning city in which all elements of society live in relatively good order. By the end of the narrative, the city is divided into two warring factions intent on annihilating the other (3.85.2).

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[46] Herodotus' warning against imperialism: Raaflaub, "Herodotus, Political Thought, and the Meaning of History," 243-44; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 102-3. Raaflaub notes that Herodotus' warnings against imperialism were directed at late fifth century Athens; Raaflaub, "Herodotus, Political Thought, and the Meaning of History," 229. Though Herodotus warns against *pleon ekhein*, his treatment of Xerxes' motivation for the invasion is more nuanced. As Emily Baragwanath discusses, Herodotus frames the debate on whether or not to invade Greece in terms of following Persian *nomos* (law). Xerxes then is caught: on the one hand it is wrong to seek to conquer unjustly, on the other it would delegitimize him if he was not militarily active; Emily Baragwanath, *Motivation and Narrative in Herodotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 242-53.

[47] On the establishment of the Four Hundred in 411 which briefly replaced Athens' democracy with an oligarchy; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 3, 944-66; McCoy, "The Political Debut of Theramenes," 171-91.

Though Thucydides declares that *philotimia* and *pleonexia* drove the *stasis*, he employs *pleonexia* more than *philotimia* to describe the motivations behind *stasis.* At

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[48] Many commentators on this section note the centrality of *pleonexia*: Felix Wasserman, “Thucydides and the Disintegration of Polis,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 85 (1954); Colin Macleod, “Thucydides on Faction,” *Collected Essays of Colin Macleod* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); Connor, *Thucydides*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 97-105; Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. 1, 477-91; Clifford Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 175-82. Hornblower in his commentary notes that *pleonexia* is a keyword for the entire work; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 485. In *Thucydides and Internal War*, Jonathon Price has a lengthy examination of the *stasis* narrative, but never mentions *pleonexia*; Jonathon Price, *Thucydides and Internal War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6-72.

[49] Due to the universalizing nature of the message, Thucydides makes it clear that it is not the innate *pleonexia* of the Corcyraeans that caused their *stasis*, as Balot argues, but rather Corcyra was the first to suffer from a general phenomenon that affected most of the Greek world, and which was caused by human nature (3.82.1-2); contra Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 138-41. On the intended universality of the passage: Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 479.

[50] The literal translation of *philotimia* is “love of honor.” At 3.82.8, Thucydides relies on it to mean “desire for political office/desire for political power.”

3.82.6, he says that people joined factions for selfish gain (*pleonexia*) by ignoring law as opposed to joining groups in order to help society as a whole. At 3.82.8, he identifies *pleonexia* and *philotimia* as the drivers of *stasis*.[51] At 84.2, he notes that in *stasis*, people attack others either to gain or, if not out of a desire for gain (*pleonexia*), then to satisfy their own violent instincts. He only uses *philotimia* at 3.82.8. Scholars debate whether 3.84 is part of the original Thucydidean text or an addition by a later author(s); Dionysius of Halicarnassus' silence on the section adds weight to those who believe it is a later addition.[52] I agree with Balot that, regardless of whether 3.84 is by Thucydides or not, the thought within it mirrors Thucydides.[53] Even without the *pleonexia* at 3.84, Thucydides still uses *pleonexia* twice as many times in the passage as he does *philotimia*, which reinforces *pleonexia*'s association with *stasis*.

Thucydides' treatment of Corcyra outside the *stasis* narrative cements the idea that acting on *pleonexia* causes decline. At the start of Thucydides' narrative, Corcyra was one of the most powerful cities in Greece; it had the second largest fleet next to Athens. At the end of his *stasis* narrative in Book Three, Thucydides leaves Corcyra in a perpetual state of civil conflict—the democratic faction held the city, but the oligarchic party was in the countryside planning to attack the city (3.85). In Book Four, Thucydides describes how the democratic faction finished off the oligarchs, ending the civil war

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[51] Macleod notes the echo between the *pleonexia* at 3.82.6 and 3.82.8; Macleod, "Thucydides on Faction," 58.

[52] Scholars for: Connor, *Thucydides*, 102; scholars against: Alexander Fuks, "Thucydides and the *Stasis* in Corcyra;" Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 488-89.

[53] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 138; Balot disagrees with Alexander Fuks' argument that the emphasis on the economic aspect of *pleonexia* in 3.84, in contrast to the political implications of *pleonexia* in 3.82.6 and 8, suggest that the author of 3.84 was from the fourth century or later; Fuks, "Thucydides and the *Stasis* in Corcyra," 52-55.

(4.46-8), but leaving Corcyra a shell of its former power. Due to *pleonexia*, then, Corcyra went from being one of the wealthiest and most powerful cities in Greece at the start of the War to being a footnote.

Thucydides employs both *pleon ekhein* and *pleonexia* to describe Athenian actions on the international stage, but he attributes Athens' dangerous, and ultimately damaging, imperialistic desires to *pleon ekhein*.[54] As noted in the previous Thucydides section, Thucydides used *pleonexia* in Book One to describe one aspect of the perceived power imbalance between Athens and its allies (1.77). The allies were annoyed because they thought that Athens acted on *pleonexia* and used the court system to gain favorable rulings for Athenian defendants (1.77.4). They felt cheated because instead of being beaten outright, the Athenians manipulated events in order to gain at their expense.

In Book Three, in their address to the Spartans and their allies, the Mytilenian envoys echo the idea that the power imbalance between Athens and its allies created tension that ultimately led to the Mytilenian revolt. In the speech, the envoys state that the alliance was fine as long as Athens remained equal in power to other Greek cities (3.10.4). Once Athens became stronger than its allies, the risk of Athens abusing its power increased, and the inability of cities to resist became a concern to the Mytilenians (3.10.10-12). Eventually, the Mytilenians revolted in order to preempt Athens conquering them (3.12.3). Admittedly, *pleonexia* does not appear in the Mytilenians' speech because the Athenians never abused their power with the Mytilenians; the Mytilenians only feared that such abuse would happen (3.10.12). The Mytilenians' fear of Athenian *pleonexia* was one of their stated causes for the revolt. As in the Athenian ambassador' speech in Book One, the Mytilenians' speech to the Spartans in Book Three demonstrates that *pleonexia* and the fear of *pleonexia* created tension between Athens and its allies, but Thucydides does not associate that tension to the decline of Athens on the international stage.

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[54] Hornblower in his commentaries notes that Thucydides uses *pleon ekhein*, but he treats the phrase as synonymous with *pleonexia*, which it will become, but not yet; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol.2, 173.

Athens declined, according to Thucydides, because Athenian politicians, pursuing political power within Athens, persuaded the Athenian people to pursue imperialistic policies, which he designated with *pleon ekhein* or similar phrases, that endangered the city and the empire (2.65.7).[55] Thucydides uses *pleon ekhein* to describe the motivations for Athenian policy: in the rejection of the Spartan peace offer in Book Four, and in his description of the motivations behind the Sicilian expedition (4.17.4, 21-22; 6.24.3).

The first time Thucydides introduces this idea that the desire for more causes decline is in Book Four in his treatment of the Athenian rejection of peace in 424. Not only does Thucydides trace how Athens lost power on the international stage because it pursued policies of imperialism, *pleon ekhein*, but he juxtaposes the Athenian narrative with one in which the Sicilians avoid acting on *pleon ekhein* and enjoy peace and prosperity. Scholars have for a long time noted the unity of Book Four and the early part of Book Five.[56] They comment on the arc of the narrative: Athenian success at Pylos (see below) leads to overconfidence and the rejection of Sparta's peace offer; then the Athenians fare poorly in the war and they return to the peace negotiations in 421. N.G.L.

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[55] In general scholars agree that this is Thucydides' reason for the decline of Athens: de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 322-43; de Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States*, 50; Hornblower, *Thucydides*, 172-75; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 159-72.

[56] Connor, *Thucydides*, 119-26; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 107-22; Tim Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), Chapter 3.

Hammond points out an additional level of analysis in the text: Thucydides' contrast between the fate of Athens and Sicily; both are warned against acting on policies of imperialism. Athens ignores these warnings and suffers; Sicily heeds them and prospers.[57] In both his discussion of Athens' rejection of peace and in Hermocrates' speech, Thucydides incorporates the language of *pleonexia*.

In 424, Athens won a major victory over the Spartans at Pylos, on the coast of the Peloponnesus. As a result of the battle, the Athenians isolated a force of Spartan hoplites on the neighboring island of Sphacteria. The Spartans desired the return of these soldiers and offered favorable terms to Athens to end the war. The ambassadors advise the Athenians to accept the peace offer and not to act on the desire for more (4.17.4).[58] According to Thucydides, the Athenians rejected the Spartan offer because Cleon, a leading Athenian politician, whetted the people's desire for more (τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο) (4.21-22). Thucydides records only one vote to dismiss the Spartan proposal, but fragments of Philochorus suggest that a vote on whether or not to accept the Spartan peace offer was held three times (Philochorus F128). Thucydides glosses over events in order to make a point: the Athenians, spurred on by Cleon, rejected the peace offer due to the peoples' desire for to extend their power in Greece at the expense of Sparta and its allies (4.21.2).[59]

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[57] N.G.L. Hammond, "The Particular and the Universal in the Speeches in Thucydides," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 54-55. He does not, however, engage with the language of *pleonexia*.

[58] De Romilly believes that the Spartans are speaking with Thucydides' voice; Hornblower in his commentary disagrees. Through my analysis I hope to show that De Romilly is right. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 175; Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 170.

[59] Hornblower, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 177. Harriet Flower argues for the existence of an entire debate left out by Thucydides; Harriet Flower, "Thucydides and the Pylos Debate," *Historia* 41 (1992): 40-57.

In Thucydides' narrative, the war goes poorly for Athens after it rejects the Spartan peace offer of 424. It fails to support the democratic revolt at Megara effectively, loses the battle of Delium, and loses many of their allies in northern Greece due to the campaign of Brasidas. By 423, the Athenians agree to an armistice, and they swear to a treaty with Sparta in 421 on worse terms than if they had accepted the offer of 424.

In contrast, the cities of Sicily avoid *pleonexia*, being influenced by Hermocrates, and they prosper. In Books Three and Four, Thucydides presents Sicily as being racked by war, while Athens waited for a chance to intervene and conquer the island (3.86). After the cities of Gela and Camarina agree to an armistice, all the cities of Sicily convene to discuss the possibility of a general peace (4.58). At this juncture in Book Four, Thucydides inserts a speech by Hermocrates in which he calls for the Sicilian cities to end their quarrels and come to a common peace in order to prevent Athenian intervention.[60] He begins the speech by noting that individuals go to war in order to gain more (*pleon skhesein*) (4.59.2). The problem with this strategy is that during the course of a war, another side may gain the advantage—in this instance, Athens (4.60.1). The outcome of war is uncertain; neither strength nor the desire for revenge guarantees success (4.62.3-4). In fact, those who act out of a desire for more (*pleon ekhein*) will end up with less (4.62.3). Since the outcome of war is uncertain, cities should be cautious entering into it (4.62.4). Therefore, the best course of action would be for all of Sicily to make peace in order to prevent an Athenian intervention (4.63.1).

Thus Hermocrates associates acting on *pleon ekhein* with the potential decline of

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[60] For a thorough analysis of this speech, see N.G.L. Hammond, "The Particular and the Universal in the Speeches in Thucydides." Hammond argues that the theme of the speech is "war is a double edged sword." Ibid., 52-56.

Sicily. Cities acting on *pleon ekhein* would perpetuate the war in Sicily, allow for further Athenian involvement, and could result in Athenian domination of the island. As a result of Athenian intervention, the Sicilians would have gone from a state of freedom and independence to a state of subjugation. The Sicilians heed Hermocrates' warning and adopt his plan, forestalling the Athenian intervention (4.65). In antithesis to Athens, which suffered due to its *pleon ekhein* of 424, Thucydides recounts how the island of Sicily remained free of general conflict until 416. Thucydides does record a *stasis* in Leontini in 422 at 5.4.3-6, which an Athenian fleet tries to use as a pretext for a war against Syracuse, but nothing happens.[61] In juxtaposing the fortunes of the Sicilian and Athens in Book Four, then, Thucydides demonstrated that acting on desiring more (*pleon ekhein*) leads to decline and the advantages of avoiding it.[62]

The most famous example of Athenian *pleon ekhein* is the Sicilian expedition of 416 BCE, in which Athens sent a large armed force in an attempt to conquer the island. Thucydides notes that the expedition was launched due to the Athenian's desire for more (*tōn pleonōn epithumian*), inspired by Alcibiades, who promoted the expedition in order to increase his political standing (6.24.3).[63] The result of the Sicilian expedition was the destruction of most of Athens' fleet and army. In the years after the Sicilian expedition, which Thucydides narrates in Book Eight, many of Athens' allies revolted, Sparta allied with Persia in order to obtain the resources to continue the war, and by the end of the book, Athens suffered its own *stasis*, when politicians within Athens fought each other for power within the city. Thus, Athens suffered severe setbacks internationally, as well as internal conflicts due to ambition politicians who pushed policies of *pleon ekhein*.[64]

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[61] Connor, *Thucydides*, 121.

[62] Hammond and Connor agree that the theme and placement of Hermocrates' speech indicates a message of the benefits of avoiding war for gain; Hammond, "The Particular and the Universal in the Speeches in Thucydides," 55; Connor, *Thucydides*, 126.

[63] Hornblower, *Thucydides*, 173; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 164-72. It is interesting that Thucydides does not ascribe any form of *pleonexia* to Athenian motivations for the conquest of Melos, considered to be the precursor to the Sicilian expedition. For more on the role of desire in regard to the Sicilian campaign: Lisa Kallet-Marx, *Money and the Corrosion of Power in Thucydides* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 35-42. Although her book is about the corrosive power of material desire, Kallet does not have any reference to *pleonexia* or greed; ibid., General Index.

In his narrative, then, Thucydides tied acting on *pleonexia* to decline. In his Corcyraean *stasis* narrative, Thucydides delineates a process by which individuals impelled by *pleonexia* and *philotimia* transformed a functioning city into a war-zone. In regard to Athens, he highlighted how ambitious politicians acting on the desire for political power, *philotimia*, fed the desires of the people, *pleon ekhein*, and pushed bad policies, such as the Sicilian Expedition, on Athens. In Book Four, he compared policies of *pleon ekhein* with those that avoided *pleon ekhein* revealing the importance of not acting according to *pleon ekhein*. Thus, Thucydides shows that operating on motives of *pleonexia* both is dangerous in international and domestic affairs and praises policies that shun such behaviors.

***Pleonexia* and Decline in Xenophon**

In the *Hellenica,* Xenophon illustrates how *pleonexia* led to the collapse of the Thirty Tyrants at Athens and the Spartan Hegemony. As shown earlier, Xenophon characterized the motivation behind the Thirty's violent removal of potential political rivals as *pleonexia* (2.3.13-14). These executions led to anger and opposition to the Thirty among the Athenian people (2.3.17). After the execution of Theramenes, the Thirty continued their purges, and more people fled from Athens (2.4.1). These exiles created resistance movements, and the one from Thebes, led by Thrasybulus, seized Phyle, a deme north west of Athens (2.3.2). This group repelled all attempts to dislodge them and took over the Piraeus and the port of Athens, and they eventually overthrew the Thirty (2.4.10-38). Thus, it was the *pleonexia* of the Thirty that caused resistance, *stasis*, and the eventual end of their regime.

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[64] Connor, *Thucydides*, 211-14.

Not only did Xenophon use *pleonexia* to explain the downfall of the Thirty in Athens, but he also used it to explain the end of the Spartan hegemony. Current scholarship on the end of the Spartan hegemony prefers other explanations over Xenophon's emphasis on Spartan *pleonexia*. George Cawkwell argues that Sparta lost the battle of Leuctra because of the genius of Epapimondas, not through a particular failing of Spartan policy. Paul Cartledge stresses internal weaknesses within the Spartan state leading to a lack of the necessary resources needed to maintain its hegemony. Charles Hamilton points to the arrogance and failed policies of Agesilaus (without ascribing the actions to *pleonexia*) as the reason for Theban hostility and the defeat of Sparta at Leuctra. Valerie French and Alvin Bertein in their respective articles in *Polis and Polemos* contend that Spartan society simply could not deal with the new stresses put on it as a result of Sparta winning the Peloponnesian War in 404.[65]

As already discussed, Xenophon deployed *pleonexia* to characterize how Sparta alienated its allies by abusing its authority and power in such a way that hurt its allies. According to speakers in the *Hellenica*, while Sparta claimed to desire the independence of Greece, it attempted to manage the affairs of other Greek cities and Persia in such a way as to benefit Sparta (3.5.12-15; 6.3.9, 11). It installed oligarchies in certain cities to keep them compliant with the Spartan desires (3.5.12; 6.3.8). It demanded full co-operation of its allies, but denied them a voice in making policy (3.5.12; 6.3.8). In all these ways, Sparta sought to expand or retain its power in Greece by limiting or reducing the autonomy of other cities.

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[65] George Cawkwell, "The Decline of Sparta," *CQ* 33 (1983); Paul Cartledge, *Agesilaos* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 407-9; Charles Hamilton, *Agesilaus and the Failure of Spartan Hegemony* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 182; Valerie French, "The Spartan Family and the Spartan Decline: Changes in Child-Rearing Practices and Failure to Reform," in *Polis and Polemos: Essays on Politics, War, and History in Ancient Greece in Honor of Donald Kagan*, ed. Charles D. Hamilton and Peter Krentz (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1997), 241-74; Alvin Bernstein, "Imperialism, Ethnicity, and Strategy: the Collapse of Spartan (and Soviet) Hegemony" in *Polis and Polemos: Essays on Politics, War, and History in Ancient Greece in Honor of Donald Kagan*, ed. Charles D. Hamilton and Peter Krentz (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1997), 275-301.

For Xenophon, the ultimate act of Spartan *pleonexia* was the Spartan capture of the Cadmea, the citadel of Thebes. This move was meant to allow Sparta to control the affairs of Thebes in a manner that suited Sparta. The seizure of the Cadmea, and the installation of a pro-Spartan oligarchy in Thebes, outraged the Thebans and caused them to revolt in 378. Thebes relied upon the discontent of other allies of Sparta to construct a coalition, which it used successfully against Sparta at the battle of Leuctra in 371 BC. The Spartan defeat at Leuctra broke the mirage of Spartan military invincibility as well as Sparta's hegemony over Greece.

Xenophon made the connection clear between Sparta's seizure of the Theban citadel and the end of its hegemony over Greece at 5.4.1:

> Many examples could be given both from Greek and foreign history to show that the gods are not indifferent to irreligion or to evil doing. Here I shall mention only the case which occurs at this point in my narrative. The Spartans had sworn to leave the cities independent, and then they had seized the Acropolis of Thebes. Now they were punished by the action of these men, and these men alone, whom they had wronged, although before that time they had never been conquered by any nation on earth.[66]

Xenophon does not employ a form of *pleonexia* at 5.4.1, but elsewhere, in the speeches of Autocles and Callistratus in Book Six, the speakers characterize Spartan policy, specifically the seizure of Thebes's acropolis, as pleonexic.[67]

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[66] Trans. Rex Warner (London: Penguin, 1979).

Thus Xenophon continued the model of decline caused by *pleonexia*. He continually portrayed the actions of the Thirty as being driven by *pleonexia*. These actions alienated the people of Athens and caused them to revolt and expel the Thirty. Second, he applied the idea of *pleonexia* alienating dominant powers from lesser powers when describing what caused tensions between Sparta and its allies. The ultimate act of Spartan *pleonexia* was its seizure of the Theban fortress, which caused the Thebans to rally the discontented allies of Sparta together and defeat Sparta at Leuctra. So, in his *Hellenica,* Xenophon cast *pleonexia* as the force that destroyed both the Thirty in Athens and Sparta's hegemony over Greece.

Continuity

As has been discussed, scholars in general agree that Thucydides was aware of Herodotus, and that Xenophon drew on Thucydides. In particular, Xenophon adapted Thucydides' Corcyraean *stasis* narrative in his own account of the Thirty Tyrants in Athens. In the Corcyraean *stasis* narrative, Thucydides introduces a number of factors that characterize a city in *stasis*. A city suffered from an intensification of action and rhetoric, during which language changed to reflect new hyper-partisan values: reckless daring for party was considered courage, and prudence and good counsel was considered cowardice (3.82.4). Factions within the city valued the audacious and distrusted reasonable men (3.82.5). They engaged in plots and counter-plots for the good of the party while they distrusted anyone who argued for the good of the state as a whole (3.82.5). Shared crimes united a faction more than loyalty, and a faction worked more for its own gain than to preserve the laws of the state (3.82.6). It was better to remove potential threats than to suffer from them (3.82.7). The faction in power used any means necessary, force or subversion of the court system, to remain in power (3.82.8). *Pleonexia* and *philotimia* drove all these actions.

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[67] For Dillery Xenophon's purpose in the *Hellenica* is to warn against imperial ambition, "desiring more than your due." Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of His Times*, 245.

Xenophon's description of the rule of the Thirty at Athens follows Thucydides' outline.[68] Upon achieving power, the Thirty plotted against known enemies and potential threats to the new regime (Thuc. 3.82.5) when they arrested those who had informed against aristocrats during the democracy and those who were most likely to resist the new regime (Xen. *Hel.* 2.3.12-14). They embraced the brash and violent ideas of Critias, who wanted to expand their power, and dismissed the cautious Theramenes, who advised prudence (Thuc. 3.82.5; Xen. *Hel.* 2.3.15-16, 23). Fearing that Theramenes would become a focal point for resistance to their regime, they ordered him to name a resident alien whom the Thirty would arrest and whose property they would confiscate (Xen. *Hel.* 2.3.18-21), an attempt to attach him to their cause by having him share in their crimes (Thuc. 3.82.6). Theramenes replied that it was odd to him that those who considered themselves "the good" were acting in a manner that equaled "the worst" (2.3.22), showing that he perceived a disconnect between words and deeds, a subversion of language (Thuc. 3.82.4). Eventually, the Thirty desired to rid themselves of Theramenes by vote of the three thousand before he could become a threat. During Theramenes' trial, Critias accused him of being willing to plot against the Thirty (Xen. *Hel.* 2.3.33). After the speech of Theramenes, when it seemed that the council would acquit him, the Thirty changed the laws so that he would be found guilty (2.3.5), a subversion of the law and courts (Thuc. 3.82.8). Thus, Xenophon's account of the Thirty followed the pattern of actions that Thucydides outlined for factions in the Corcyraean *stasis* narrative. Like the factions at Corcyra, the Thirty too lost power because of their *pleonexia*.

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[68] Contra Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of his Times*, 147.

Conclusion

Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon understood all forms of *pleonexia* to be "the desire to gain at the expense of another." They used the noun *pleonexia* and the verb *pleonekteō* to refer to the manipulation of situations for an individual's advantage. Examples include the manipulation of agreements, as was the case between the Argives and the Spartans in Herodotus in Book Seven, the manipulation of unequal power relationships, such as Athens' alleged abuses of courts in Book One of Thucydides, or Sparta's abuse of its allies in Xenophon's *Hellenica*. Herodotus and Thucydides used *pleon* plus a verb of desire to describe situations where one entity wanted to expand its control. For Herodotus, Persia's desire to conquer Greece was *pleon ekhein* (7.16a). In Thucydides, *pleon ekhein* inspired Athens' to try and conquer Sicily (6.24.3). Xenophon did not use *pleon* plus a verb of desire in this manner.

Thucydides and Xenophon, however, did attach the idea of acting on *pleonexia* to a concept of decline. In regard to the decline within a society, Thucydides delineated a progression of steps in which a city went from being a functioning polity to being violently torn apart by competing factions in his Corcyraean *stasis* narrative; he identified the drivers of this process as *pleonexia* and *philotimia* (3.82.8). In regard to decline on the international stage, Thucydides showed how acting on *pleon ekhein* caused Athens to over-extend itself in the form of the Sicilian expedition, which led to a loss of power. Xenophon applied Thucydides' model of *stasis* in a community for his own narrative about the rise and downfall of the Thirty Tyrants at Athens (*Hel*. 2.4.10-38), and he used *pleonexia* on the interstate level to explain the end of the Spartan Hegemony (5.4.1, 6.3.9, 11).

The existence of these patterns demonstrates first that late fifth century authors conceptualized *pleonexia* in a similar manner and warned against it. Second, Xenophon's application of Thucydides' Corcyraean *stasis* narrative to his treatment of the Thirty reveals that Thucydides' ideas on the internal deterioration of a community were already being adapted by fourth century writers. In the late fifth century, authors cautioned against cities or individuals acting in a toxically selfish manner. The seeking of excess power or wealth was bad enough, but it was made worse when that power or wealth came from another. Such a parasitic attitude, if allowed to continue in a community, created an ever increasing cycle of violence and retribution, ending only with some form of atrocity—seen in Thucydides' treatment of the fate of the Corcyraean oligarchs (3.85; 4.46-8) or Xenophon's narrative of the reign of the Thirty Tyrants (2.4.10-38). Thus, in the late fifth century, authors understood *pleonexia* as "the desire to gain at the expense of another," attached it to ideas of losing power on the international stage and internal cohesion, and were passing those ideas between each other.

Chapter 3:

Pleonexia and Decline in Plato and Aristotle

This chapter will review the appearances of *pleonexia* in the works of Plato and Aristotle. Plato and Aristotle were renowned philosophers of fourth-century Athens, and their works are canonical writings in western philosophy. Plato grew up during the Peloponnesian War and was active as a philosopher for the first half of the fourth century. Aristotle was one of Plato's best known students, and he tutored Alexander the Great.

This chapter will first look at how scholarship has dealt with the issues of *pleonexia*, decline, and the influence of Thucydides in the works of Plato and Aristotle. Second, it will discuss how Plato and Aristotle used pleonexic vocabulary in their various works.[1] Then, it will focus on how the authors employed *pleonexia* to explain why cities fell into *stasis*. Finally, the chapter will look at the links between Plato, Aristotle, and Thucydides in order to suggest that the philosophers of the fourth century drew upon Thucydides when discussing *pleonexia* and *stasis*.

In their studies of government and ethics, Plato and Aristotle present *pleonexia* as injustice, and they use the language of *pleonexia* to indicate when an individual either seeks or has more power in a society than other members of that same community. In the *Gorgias* and *Republic*, Plato refers to the man who functions on *pleonexia* as *adikos* (unjust), and seeks to demonstrate that such an individual was the cause of societal discontent. Also in the *Gorgias,* as well as in the *Symposium* and *Critias*, Plato presents *pleonexia* as an imbalance and a disease of the affairs of cities. In the *Nicomachean*

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[1] Unlike the last chapter, where I saw a distinct difference in how Thucydides used *pleonexia* versus *pleon ekhein,* I see Plato and Aristotle using the words *pleonexia*, *pleon ekhein*, and *pleonekteō* interchangeably.

Ethics, Aristotle identifies *pleonexia* as part of the particular injustice, which is when a person tries to gain more, of honor, money, or security. In the *Politics*, the companion piece to the *Nicomachean Ethics*,[2] Aristotle uses *pleonexia* to explain how states fall into civil conflict (*stasis*). Factions within cities vie with each other for more power or honor and try to gain at the expense of the other factions (*Pol*. 1302a). In other works, Plato and Aristotle rely on *pleonexia* to designate having an advantage in a specific area, such as military, rhetoric, or music.

Plato and Aristotle present *pleonexia* as a driver of why governments change or fall into disorder. In the *Republic*, Plato ties ideas of decline to *pleonexia*; cities transition into inferior forms of government when society falls out of balance. A society falls out of balance when the political elites within it desire more of something at the expense of other individuals within that society; hence *pleonexia* drives the transition of governments. Plato makes this connection explicit when he notes that the unjust man, whom he identifies as the cause for oligarchy changing into democracy and democracy to tyranny, is impelled by *pleonexia* (564b-574a). In his *Politics*, Aristotle specifies that factions operating on *pleonexia* cause civil conflict within cities (1302a).

By emphasizing *pleonexia* as a factor in why governments change, Plato and Aristotle continue the paradigm from Thucydides that was discussed last chapter. Both authors use the same definition of *pleonexia* as Thucydides; both show that acting on

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[2] Recent scholarship has started to promote treating these two texts as a unified work; Stephen Salkever, "Reading Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* as a Single Course of Lecture," in *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Political Thought*, ed. Stephen Salkever (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 209-42; Malcolm Schofield, "Aristotle: An Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield, Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 310-20. Schofield even notes that there is thematic continuity between the two as in the ninth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle promises to discuss the fall of governments, and proceeds to do so in Book Five of the *Politics*; Schofield, "Aristotle," 313-14.

pleonexia causes unrest and social disharmony in the *polis*, resulting possibly in *stasis*. The two authors even use word pairings similar to those found in Thucydides. Thucydides in the Corcyraean *stasis* narrative labels *pleonexia* and *philotimia* as the causes of *stasis*; in the *Critias*, Plato notes that *pleonexia adikos* and *dunamis* (power) caused Atlantis' fall (121b). Aristotle pairs *kerdos* (gain) with *timē* (honor) when talking about the causes of revolution in the *Politics*. These are not exact parallels in language, but they demonstrate that the three authors had similar ideas, expressed with similar vocabulary, in order to explain the same event. When individuals within a city begin to operate on zero-sum principles (*pleonexia*), the community goes from functioning to tearing itself apart. The specific desire of the individuals may vary (money, gain, power), but as soon as they desire it at the expense of others, *pleonexia*, and civil strife (*stasis*) erupt.

Scholarship on *Pleonexia*, Decline, and Continuity in the works of Plato and Aristotle

Scholars recognize the importance of *pleonexia* in the works of Plato and Aristotle, but they have no consensus on its meaning. Scholars have long accepted that *pleonexia* was the antithesis of Plato's concept of justice, which was central to the *Republic*.[3] Most of the time, however, they have accepted some form of greed, or "the desire for more than one's share" or "an insatiable desire for more" as the definition.[4]

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[3] Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, 5th ed. (London: Methuen and Co, 1977), 168-77; Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 11-12; G.J. Boter, "Thrasymachus and *PLEONEXIA*," *Mnemosyne* 39 (1986): 261; C.D.C Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 3-42; Keimpe Algra, "Observations on Plato's Thrasymachus," in *Polyhistor*, ed. Kiempe Algra, Pieter van der Horst, and David Runia (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 47-48, 51; Mario Vegetti, "Antropologie della *Pleonexia*," in *Enōsis kai Philia,* ed. Maria Barbanti, Giovanna Giardina, and Paolo Manganaro (Catania: CUECM, 2002), 66.

[4] Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, 176—he translates it as "selfishness" in which one trespasses into another's sphere of interest; Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, 11; Reeve, *Philosopher-*

Gregory Vlastos noted that it was gain at the expense of another in his article, "Justice and Happiness" but he accepted greed as alternative, if mismatching, definition.[5] Few have followed his insight. Recently, in her chapter "Socrates' Refutation of Thrasymachus" in *Blackwell's Companion to Plato's Republic*, Rachel Barney states that *pleonexia* is gain at the expense of another.[6]

Most scholars acknowledge that *pleonexia* in Aristotle's works means gain at the expense of another. David Keyt supports this meaning in "Injustice and Pleonexia in Aristotle: A Reply to Charles Young."[7] In his study, *Aristotle's First Principles* Terence Irwin states that Aristotle's concept of *pleonexia* involved gain at the expense of another.[8] In *Aristotle*, Richard Kraut argues that Aristotle understood *pleonexia* as the desire to have more at the expense of another.[9] Balot discusses the centrality of *pleonexia*, which he lumps into his greater category of greed, to both authors.[10] In his chapter on Aristotle's conception of Justice in the *Nichomachaen Ethics* in *Blackwell's Guide to Aristotle's Nichomachaen Ethics*, Charles Young states that there is no good translation

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Kings, 15; Algra, "Observations on Plato's Thrasymachus," 47-48; Vegetti, "Antropologie della *Pleonexia*," 66.

[5] Gregory Vlastos, "Justice and Happiness in the *Republic*," in *Platonic Studies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 116n16.

[6] Rachel Barney, "Socrates' Refutation of Thrasymachus," in *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, ed. Gerasimos Santas (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 53.

[7] David Keyt, "Injustice and Pleonexia in Aristotle: A Reply to Charles Young," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27 (1988): 251.

[8] David Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 624n4.

[9] Richard Kraut, *Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 138.

[10] Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, Chapter 2 and 7; on my thoughts on Balot's treatment of *pleonexia*, see chapter 1.

for *pleonexia* but that it could be conceptualized as a boundless desire for gain, which included taking from others.[11]

In terms of the concept of decline, scholars of Plato debate whether references to decline in the *Republic* are sincere, and scholars of Aristotle do not consider his explanations of why cities descend into *stasis* as examinations of decline. Earlier scholarship accepted that Plato was both a moral and political philosopher and that in the *Republic* he included a theory of decline based on natural decay.[12] Julia Annas, Dorothy Frede, and Norbert Blössner see Plato's discussion of decline in the *Republic* as an analogy for the soul and not political theory.[13] C.D.C. Reeve, Malcolm Schofield, and Zena Hitz acknowledge Plato's sincerity in his discussion of decline.[14] They return to the notion that Plato was a moral and political theorist; his moral theories were intricately attached to his discussions of politics—the psychological of the individual influenced the nature of the state in which the person lived.

Scholars investigate Aristotle's discussion of the causes of *stasis* in the *Politics*, but refrain from labeling a city's descent into *stasis* as decline. They accept that Aristotle presents the cause of *stasis* as individuals seeking to rectify perceived injustice within a political system.[15] As stated in chapter one, I think that anytime a government falls into violent civil unrest, *stasis*, can be labeled decline. This definition may seem a little broad, but it fits when discussing the devolution of a society from peaceful cohabitation under the rule of law to potentially open and armed conflict.

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[11] Charles Young, "Aristotle's' Justice," in *Blackwell's Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Richard Kraut (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 192.

[12] A.E. Taylor, "The Decline and Fall of the State in Republic, VIII," *Mind* 48, no. 189 (1939): 25-26; Ernst Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, 284-285; W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 528.

[13] Dorothy Frede, "Plato, Popper, and Historicism," in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 12 (1996): 250-56; Julia Annas, *Platonic Ethics, Old and New* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), Chapter 4; Blössner, "The City-Soul Analogy," 346.

[14] Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic*, 115; Malcolm Schofield, *Plato* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 106; Zena Hitz, "Degenerate Regimes in Plato's *Republic*," in *Plato's Republic: A Critical Guide*, ed. Mark McPherran (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 105.

On the issue of intellectual continuity, scholars acknowledge the many potential connections between Plato and Thucydides.[16] Barker and Menanke point out the parallels in thought between Plato's description of the radicalization of language caused by democracy in Book Eight of the *Republic* (560d-561b) and Thucydides' description of how *stasis* inflated language in 3.82.3.[17] Paul Shorey in his Introduction to the *Loeb* edition of Plato's *Republic* notes that Plato's writings respond to the political philosophy of "might makes right" presented in Thucydides' speeches in the *Peloponnesian War*.[18] Harvey Yunis sees Plato's critique of Periclean rhetoric in the *Gorgias* as a direct response to Thucydides' treatment of Pericles in the *Histories*.[19] Mario Vegetti asserts that the idea of *pleonexia* emerged from the fifth century and Athenian imperialism, and that Thucydides was the first to acknowledge it, but that other authors, such as Plato, reused the idea into the fourth century.[20] In *Plato*, Malcolm Schofield accepts that Plato responded to ideas found in Thucydides in several of his works.[21]

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[15] Ronald Polansky, "Aristotle on Political Change," in *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, ed. David Keyt and Fred Miller Jr. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991), 328; Steven Skultety, "Delimiting Aristotle's Conception of *Stasis* in the Politics," *Phronesis* 54 (2009): 350-53.

[16] There remains resistance to the idea of Plato being in dialogue with other intellectuals of his time; Annas, *Platonic Ethics, Old and New*.

[17] Ernst Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, 297; George Menanke, *Three Traditions of Greek Political Thought* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004), 150n111.

[18] Paul Shorey, "Introduction to Plato's *Republic*," Loeb Classical Series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963) xxxvii-xxxix.

[19] Harvey Yunis, *Taming Democracy*: *Models of Political Rhetoric in Classical Athens* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 136-53.

The ties between Plato and Aristotle need no elaboration, though scholars debate how much Aristotle agreed with his teacher's ideas. Ryan Balot treats Aristotle's ideas on greed as the end of a long intellectual tradition, which included Plato.[22] Ronald Weed sees Aristotle adopting Plato's conception that moral flaws within individuals caused *stasis* in a community.[23] In *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, Kostas Kalimtzis regards Aristotle's discussions of *stasis* as part of a larger intellectual tradition on *stasis* that included Thucydides and Plato.[24] Steven Skultety contends that Aristotle rejected Plato's ideas that *stasis* was any form of conflict in a community and instead considered *stasis* only to be violent conflicts between groups aiming to change the constitution.[25] Overall, then, scholars recognize the role of *pleonexia* in Plato and Aristotle, but they debate the importance of decline and the nature of *stasis* in the two authors, and see Thucydidean influences in Plato.

***Pleonexia* in Plato**

In his treatises on government and ethics, Plato presents the *pleonektēs*, the person who acts according to *pleonexia*, as an unjust person, *adikous*, who seeks to enrich himself at the cost of others, but ends up hurting himself. In the *Gorgias* and *Republic*,

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Schofield, *Plato*, 72-73, 106, 283.

[22] Ryan Balot, *Greed and Injustice,* Chapter 2.

[23] Ronald Weed, *Aristotle on Stasis* (Berlin: Logos Verlag, 2007), 99.

[24] Kostas Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 1-13.

[25] Steven Skultety, "Delimiting Aristotle's Conception of *stasis* in the *Politics*," 366-67.

Plato's interlocutors treat *pleonexia* as a natural, innate desire within individuals to gain as much as possible.[26] In responding to these arguments, Plato portrays *pleonexia* as a negative characteristic that it is harmful both to the individual who acts on it and to society as a whole. In the *Timaeus*, and *Laws*, which continue the *Republic*'s theme about the importance of virtue and what is a "good" society, Plato describes *pleonexia* as a disease, and he presents it as hateful to the gods (*Tim.* 82a; *Laws* 10.906c). In other works, such as the *Laches*, Plato uses pleonexic language in a more neutral manner to denote either seeking or having an advantage.

The *Gorgias* is the first work of Plato's that introduces the idea that self-control is better than the boundless pursuit of desire. The dialogue between Plato's teacher Socrates, Gorgias, a well-known teacher of rhetoric in the late fifth century, and other Athenians, including Polus and Callicles, begins with a discussion of what is rhetoric, but turns to the topic of the power of rhetoric, and whether rhetoricians and teachers of rhetoric should be good men and teach their pupils to be good as well.[27] The work then moves to the theme of what is needed for happiness: either pursuit of one's pleasures or pursuit of virtue.[28] *Pleonexia* appears in this section of the dialogue when Socrates debates with Callicles whether it is better to suffer or wrong others.

Callicles is the third person in the dialogue to debate Socrates, and injects himself into the discussion after Socrates proves that it is better to suffer a punishment than to commit a crime.[29] He contends that according to nature, suffering a wrong is worse than committing one (483a). In nature, the stronger have the advantage over the weaker (φύσις αὐτὴ ἀποφαίνει αὐτὸ, ὅτι δίκαιόν ἐστι τὸν ἀμείνω τοῦ χείρονος πλέον ἔχιν καὶ τὸν δυνατώτερον τοῦ ἀδυνατωτέρου) (483d). This rule is seen in animals (*zōois*) and interstate relations (ἐν ὅλαις ταῖς πόλεσι); Xerxes' decision to invade Greece and Darius' invasion of Scythia prove this law (483d-e).[30] Thus, it is better to commit a wrong because it proves one is stronger and more powerful, whereas to suffer would demonstrate a person's weakness.

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[26] The works that I am dealing with, the *Gorgias*, *Republic*, *Laws* are all recognized as Plato using Socrates to give voice to Plato's thought, as opposed to earlier dialogues, which may be more Plato recording Socrates; Richard Kraut, "Introduction to the Study of Plato," in *Cambridge Companion to Plato*, ed. Richard Kraut (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 5.

[27] W.R.M. Lamb, Introduction to Plato's *Gorgias*, Loeb Classical Edition (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1953), 250-51.

[28] Ibid., 252-53.

Committing wrongs is perceived as unjust, Callicles continues, because weaker men created laws and prohibitions as a control mechanism against the stronger doing what they wanted (483c). In order to protect themselves, the weak tell the strong that acting on *pleonexia* is shameful and unjust (λέγουσιν ὥς αἰσχρὸν καὶ ἄδικον τὸ πλεονεκτεῖν) and that the act of taking more from others is an act of injustice (483c). The weak espouse doctrines of equality to hide their inferiority. From infancy, the strong are indoctrinated with the ideas that having the equal share is good (483e-484a). If a person is strong enough, Callicles believes, then as he grows up he will recognize and remove the artificial constraints enforced on him, and, as opposed to being a slave to society, he will becomes its master (484a). Callicles' argument shows that he believes that *pleonexia* is the act of the strong taking what they want from the weak.

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[29] Callicles is introduced at the beginning of the work as a friend of both Socrates and Gorgias (447), and represents a typical Athenian; ibid., 252.

[30] I think by relying on this example, Plato undermines Callicles' point, as any Athenian reading it would have known that Xerxes and Darius lost.

Through Socrates' reply, Plato demonstrates that he also understands *pleonexia* to mean having more at the expense of others. After a prolonged discussion of the benefits of philosophy, Socrates returns to the question of whether the strong should have more than the weak. He first attempts to get Callicles to define further what it means to be "the strongest" (489c-491d).[31] Socrates starts by asking that if a group had stockpiled food, should a doctor, who is wiser than the others, be considered superior (490b)? Callicles says he should. Socrates then asks whether the doctor should get more of the food than the rest (τούτων τῶν σιτίων πλέον ἡμῶν ἑκτέον αὐτῷ) (490c), or should the doctor seek to divide the food equally? Should he get the smallest quantity of food if he were physically the weakest despite being the wisest (490c)? Callicles dismisses these comments (490d). Then, Socrates asks if the best weaver should get the largest and finest cloths (490d), the best shoemaker the biggest shoes or the best farmer more of the seed (δεῖ πλεονεκτεῖν τῶν σπερμάτων) (490e). These questions demonstrate that Plato understands *pleonexia* as gain at another's expense. In order for the best person to get more, others will get less. If the doctor received more food, others would have less; if the farmer took more seeds, others would have fewer.[32] Callicles dismisses these ideas, but they still showcase that Plato understood *pleonexia* as having more at the expense of others.

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[31] Dodd's Commentary on the *Gorgias* makes no mention of *pleonexia* until his discussion of 491, and there he makes a note on the grammar. Only later does he notes that *pleonexia* is the "law of grab." E.R. Dodds, *Gorgias* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 266-92, 340.

[32] This seems to me to be a logical fallacy. The better farmer will get more seeds, even starting from a point of equality, because he will grow more crops and therefore produce more goods/seeds for the next crop. This is, then, the problem with doctrines of equality (as shown in the Soviet Union); better workers should and will receive more for their work than those who are less effective. This does not translate into politics, at least not in democratic/representative systems.

The only instances where this definition does not seem to work are the examples of the weaver and shoemaker. Plato includes these examples as jokes: they are Callicles' philosophy that the best should have more taken to the logical, if ridiculous, extreme in order to discredit it. By examining them, especially the shoemaker, nevertheless we can learn more about how Plato conceptualized *pleonexia*. Socrates notes that the best shoemaker should have more (δεῖ πλεονεκτεῖν), and that he should have the biggest and largest collection of shoes (490e). This inequality of access indicates that for Plato, as in Thucydides, *pleonexia* was not bound to the desire for material items; rather, it can refer to power. The shoemaker will have an unfair advantage over others because he controls the shoe supply and can limit others' ability to get either quality shoes or many shoes; the same argument can be made for the weaver and cloth. In both, by acting on *pleonexia*, an individual gains material goods and perhaps power (control over the shoe or cloth supply), while others lose access to material goods or the power to get shoes or cloth: gain at the expense, or exclusion, of others.

Plato concludes the *Gorgias* with Socrates' discussion of the importance of temperance (507-527e). In the section, Socrates notes that *pleonexia* goes against geometry (508a). Gods and humans live in balance, and seeking self-advantage ignores this balance (508a). This statement reinforces the idea that *pleonexia* is gain at others' expense because it presents *pleonexia* as an act that would imbalance a system. The idea of balance portrays the world as a zero-sum game in which there is a finite amount of goods that are equitably distributed. If one person seeks to have more of anything, then the entire system is disrupted. Thus, not only is *pleonexia* gain at the expense of others, it is dangerous because it upsets the balance of the cosmos.

In the *Republic,* Plato returned to and built upon the ideas regarding *pleonexia* presented in the *Gorgias*.[33] It focuses on the questions of whether individuals should pursue self-aggrandizement or virtue, and what kind of state can bring this about? In the work, Plato revisits the themes of justice versus injustice and why it is better for society for the individual to be ruled by moderation as opposed to the individual being controlled by his passion. He opens the work with a discussion of who is happier: the unjust person who functions on *pleonexia*, or the just person who does not, and toward the end of the work, he demonstrates that those who operate on *pleonexia* hurt themselves and society. In this way, the *Republic* continues the themes presented in the *Gorgias*.

The end of the first book of the *Republic* introduces the question that the rest of the work answers: who is happier, the just or the unjust person?[34] Thrasymachus raises this question at 343a, and Glaucon picks it up at the start of Book Two.[35] As in the *Gorgias,* speakers in the *Republic* use the language of *pleonexia* to characterize the unjust and just individual. In the discussion between Thrasymachus and Socrates at the end of Book One, Plato first presents *pleonexia* as actions taken by the unjust man to obtain an advantage over others. When debating who has the advantage when holding public office, the just or unjust man, Thrasymachus argues that the unjust man will have the advantage because he would be able to abuse his office for personal profit on a massive scale (τὸν μεγάλα δυνάμενον πλεονεκτεῖν) (343e). The just man will not abuse his office, and therefore his private affairs will suffer (1.343c-e). The unjust man differs from other criminals—specifically temple robbers, kidnappers, burglars, swindlers, and thieves, who commit lesser forms of injustice—because he not only takes the property of other people, but he also takes control of them as well (1.344b). Despite this abuse of power, the community will consider the unjust man to be happy and blessed (εὐδαίμονες καὶ μακάριοι) (1.344b). Thus, in his definition, Thrasymachus elevates the unjust man beyond the realm of material desire and establishes him as a tyrant who enslaves his fellow citizens.

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[33] The ties to the *Gorgias* are recognized by scholars; e.g. Malcolm Schofield, "Approaching the *Republic*," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield, Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 203-5.

[34] Shorey, "Introduction to Plato's *Republic*," xii. On the unity of Book One and the rest of the *Republic*: Algra, "Observations on Plato's Thrasymachus," 42. On the centrality of *pleonexia* to Thrasymachus' discussion: Boter, "Thrasymachus and *PLEONEXIA*," 268-69; Algra, "Observations on Plato's Thrasymachus," 51; Barney, "Socrates' Refutation of Thrasymachus," 53-54.

[35] As in other Platonic dialogues, Thrasymachus and Glaucon are historic characters—Thrasymachus was a known sophist and rhetorician of the fifth century, and Glaucon is none other than Plato's brother. In the *Republic* they serve as foils for Socrates; Shorey, "Introduction to Plato's *Republic*," ix-x.

In response, Socrates refutes the idea that rulers rule only for their own advantage and not the advantage of the people (1.344d-347e). He dismisses as slander the idea that people serve in public office out of a desire for either honor or money (1.347b). For Socrates, good people hold office in order that worse people do not (1.347d). In Socrates' discussion of how rulers rule for the good of all, Plato uses forms of *ōpheleian* and *sumpheron* to refer to advantage for the community, as opposed to *pleonexia*,[36] which he had used when discussing who had the advantage between the unjust man and the just man. This change in language is significant. When discussing positive benefits, Plato uses non-pleonexic language. When using language implying gain at another's expense, however, Plato employs the vocabulary of *pleonexia*. This change indicates that pleonexic language had a negative connotation for Plato and that he depended on it when discussing situations in which a person took advantage of others.

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[36] *Ōpheleia*: 345e, 346a, 346c, 346d, 347d; *sumpheron*: 346b, 346e, 347e. My purpose is not to do an extended word study of either term here; however, I will note that *ōpheleia* and *sumpheron* seem to be used when referring to advantage of an individual without that advantage being detrimental to others. Thrasymachus' last thought at 344c is that justice is the rule of the strong, and that injustice is what profits a man and is to his advantage. In what I have laid out, one would expect *pleonexia*, but here Plato uses *sumpheron*. I think he does so because the advantage does not come from another. *Pleonexia* is binary—someone must lose something. In the passage, Thrasymachus is talking about the advantage of an individual alone.

Plato returns to forms of *pleonexia w*hen Socrates returns to the discussion of who has the advantage: the just man or the unjust person (1.348b). Socrates asks, “Would the just man want to get more from another just person?” (ὁ δίκαιος τοῦ δικαίου δοκεῖ τί σοι ἂν ἐθέλειν πλέον ἔχειν) (1.349b).[37] Thrasymachus denies this. Then Socrates asks, “Would the just man think it proper to get more at the expense of the unjust man?” (τοῦ δὲ ἀδίκου πότερον ἀξιοῖ ἂν πλεονεκτεῖν καὶ ἡγοῖτο) (1.349b). Thrasymachus agrees that the just man would think it proper to outdo the unjust man, but posits that he would be unable to do so (1.349b). Socrates finally asks, “Would the unjust person seek to get the better of both the just and unjust?” (ἀξιοῖ τοῦ διακαίου πλεονεκτεῖν … ὅς [αδικος] γε πάντων πλέον ἔχειν ἀξιοῖ … ὁ ἄδικος πλεονεκτήσει καὶ ἁμιλλήσεται ὡς ἁπάντων πλεῖστον αὐτὸς λάβη) (1.349c). Thrasymachus agrees. Plato, through Socrates, summarizes the exchange, “The just man does not seek to take advantage of his like but of his unlike, but the unjust man of both.” (ὁ δίκαιος τοῦ μὲν ὁμοίου οὐ πλεονεκτεῖ, τοῦ δὲ ἀνομοίου, ὁ δὲ ἄδικος τοῦ τε ὁμοίου καὶ τοῦ ἀνομοίου) (1.349c). In the passage, Plato continually associates acting according to *pleonexia* with trying to gain not merely an advantage, but an advantage over another. Although both the just and unjust man can operate on *pleonexia*, the just man will only do so against one who deserves it. The unjust man acts in this manner towards all people.

Once Thrasymachus agrees to this condition, Socrates destroys the idea that the unjust man is more intelligent and wiser than the just man by showing that only fools try to outdo all kinds of people.[38] In doing so, Plato continues to rely on *pleonexia*. In the beginning of this exchange, Thrasymachus asserts that the just man is foolish, and the unjust man is intelligent (1.349d). Socrates then asks, “Is the musician and the physician intelligent or unintelligent?” “Intelligent,” replies Thrasymachus (1.349d). “And the non-musician and non-physician, intelligent or unintelligent?” “Unintelligent” (1.349d). Socrates then turns, “Would the musician in tuning of a lyre want to overreach another musician in tightening and relaxing of the strings, or would claim and think fit (it) to exceed or outdo him (the other musician)?” (μουσικὸς ἀνὴρ ἁρμοττόμενος λύραν ἐθέλειν μουσικοῦ ἀνδρος ἐν τῇ ἐπιτάσει καὶ ἀνέσει τῶν χορδῶν πλεονεκτεῖν ἢ ἀξιοῦν πλέον ἔχειν) (1.349e). Thrasymachus replies that the musician would not, but that the unmusical man would (1.349e). Socrates then asks, “Would a doctor outdo the medical man or the medical procedure?” (τί δὲ ἰατρικός; ἐν τῇ ἐδωδῇ ἢ πόσει ἐθέλειν ἄν τι ἰατρικοῦ πλεονεκτεῖν ἢ ἀνδρὸς ἢ πράγματος) (1.350a). Thrasymachus states that the doctor would not try to outdo others, but that the non-medical man would (1.350a). Socrates then broadens the comparison, asking in regard to all forms of knowledge would the wise man try to take advantage of all (1.350a)? Thrasymachus replies he would not (1.350a). The ignorant man, however, would (1.350b). Thus, Socrates establishes that the good and the wise only work on *pleonexia* when dealing with the unjust (ὁ ἄρα ἀγαθός τε καὶ σοφὸς τοῦ μὲν ὁμοίου οὐκ ἐθελήσει πλεονεκτεῖν, τοῦ δὲ ἀνομοίου τε καὶ ἐναντίου) (1.350b). He determines that the foolish and ignorant act on *pleonexia* toward all (1.350b). Thus, the just man, who works according to *pleonexia* only when dealing with the unjust, is good and wise, and the unjust man, who tries to take from all, is foolish and ignorant (1.350b-c).

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[37] All translations are from Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey, vol. 1, Loeb Classical Library (Cambirdge, MA: Harvard Universtiy Press, 1963).

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[38] For a similar breakdown of this section see Barney, “Socrates’ Refutation of Thrasymachus,” 52-54.

Socrates then applies this logic to cities. He asks Thrasymachus which is better: the city that tries to enslave others or the one that does not (1.351a-b)? Thrasymachus affirms that the best city is the one that enslaves others (1.351b). Socrates then asks if a city, or any group that tried to work together, could get anything done if the members of the group acted unjustly toward each other (1.351c). Thrasymachus accepts that such a group could not accomplish anything (1.351c). The reason for this is that factions originate from injustice (στάσεις γάρ που … ἥ γε ἀδικία καὶ μίση καὶ μάχας ἐν ἀλλήλοις παρέχει) (1.351d). Socrates then asserts that if this statement is true for cities, it would be true for individuals; if a person suffered from internal divisions, he would not accomplish anything (1.352a). Thus, in the first book of the *Republic*, Plato presents injustice as working according to *pleonexia*, and *pleonexia* as working to gain an advantage over others. Plato ends the book by having Socrates prove that the person who acts on *pleonexia* is foolish and ignorant and incapable of great accomplishments, an idea that he applies to cities as well.

In Book Two, through the story of Gyges, Plato further connects the idea of *pleonexia* to injustice and gain at another's expense. At the beginning of the Book Two, Glaucon picks up Thrasymachus' argument and presents *pleonexia* as gain at the expense of others. At the start of the book, Glaucon proposes to continue the argument of Thrasymachus because he remains unconvinced (2.357). He brings up the point that nature compels all to work on *pleonexia* and that it is law that restricts men (2.359c). Law, for Glaucon, originates as a compromise between those with the power to do as they desire and everyone else (2.359a).[39] His argument parallels one of the topics of the *Gorgias*: is it worse to suffer wrong, or to do wrong? In defense of the principle that it is better to commit wrong (and therefore be unjust), Glaucon brings up the story of Gyges, who supposedly owned a ring that allowed him to become invisible (2.359d-e). With this ring, Gyges could act with impunity, and eventually he slept with the king's wife, slew the king, and became king himself (2.360b). Glaucon's contention is that all men, if they had Gyges' power, would act in this fashion. If there were two such rings, and an unjust and just man put them on, then both would act the same way because the just man could not resist the temptation to act as he desired (2.360b-c).

The story of Gyges demonstrates that the unjust man (who acts on *pleonexia*) gains at another's expense.[40] Gyges gains by exploiting others: the queen, the king; in this way, injustice is not just acquisition or advantage, but an individual manipulating a situation in a way to enrich himself to the detriment of others. The story also sets up the problem for the rest of the book: is it better to be just or unjust? To answer this question, Socrates states that he will construct an ideal city, explain how it would work, and through it explain the source of justice and injustice to prove that justice is better (2.368a-369b).

Plato reincorporates the language of *pleonexia* into the text in books Eight and Nine, in which he demonstrates again that it is gain from others and that it hurts those who act on it. Books Eight and Nine describe the tyrannical man, or the man who follows his desires without control, just as Glaucon, and even Callicles from the *Gorgias*, wanted.[41] In *Plato*, Schofield argues this desire is not limited to money, as he interprets Balot, but to any and all aspects of life, especially where it trespasses upon social and cultural *mores.*[42] According to Socrates, the tyrannical man is never satisfied (9.573a-d). His desire for more is unquenchable and his passions control him; as a result, he spends all his money and then his parents' fortune as well (ὢν πατρός τε καὶ μητρὸς πλέον ἔχειν) (9.574a). Socrates discloses that the young man inflamed by his passions will beat his own parents to get the resources to feed his passions (9.574b-c). After burning through these resources, the tyrant will turn to all sorts of crimes to feed his desires (9.575a). If enough of these men exist in a city, then they will enslave the city itself to feed their desires (9.575a-e). In this way, Plato presents the unjust and *pleonektēs* man as gaining at the expense of others. To have more, he takes from his parents, from others, and even deprives his own city of liberty. Later, Socrates compares people operating on base desire to cattle, and he remarks that in their desire for more (ἕνεκα τῆς τούτων πλεονεξίας) they fight and kill one another to gratify urges that cannot be satiated (9.586b). Thus, Plato in the *Republic* reiterated his thoughts in the *Gorgias* that *pleonexia* is a natural urge in men to gain at the expense of others, and adds that such an urge ends up hurting the individual who acts according to it.

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[39] This is a problem with might makes right arguments: if the strong rule absolutely, why do they need to compromise with weaker individuals to form a society? Shouldn't the stronger just beat the weak into submission since they are stronger? If for some reason the stronger are compelled to compromise, then obviously they are not as strong as their proponents believe, and see some benefit to the compromise. Therefore, society is formed when the strong acknowledge the necessity of compromise.

[40] Vlastos, "Justice and Happiness in the *Republic*," 116n16.

The idea that *pleonexia* hurts those who act upon it occurs in other works of Plato.[43] In the *Symposium*, *pleonexia* is an imbalance in nature which causes disease and pestilence (188b). In the *Timaeus*, *pleonexia* is an imbalance in nature, and when it or deficiency (*endeia*) occurs, there is disorder and disease (*stasis* and *nosos*) (*Tim*. 82a).[44] In Book Nine of the *Laws*, he says that man has a natural instinct that urges him toward *pleonexia* and pursuit of private interests to the detriment of himself and the state (9.875b-c). In Book Ten, he labels the sin (*amartēma*) of *pleonexia* as a disease (*nosēma*) of the body, a pestilence (*loimos*) to seasons, and finally injustice (*adikia*) to states and polities (10.906c).

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[41] Algra, "Observations on Plato's Thrasymachus," 48; Schofield, *Plato*, 266-67.

[42] Schofield, however, does not mention the parasitic connotations that I have followed; Schofield, *Plato*, 266-67.

[43] Kraut, "Introduction to the Study of Plato," 5-9.

Outside the context of society and virtue, Plato employs *pleonexia* to refer to gaining an advantage over other people, thus putting them at a disadvantage. This usage maintains the idea that *pleonexia* is gain at other's expense, but in a more neutral manner. Plato uses pleonexic words in the *Laches* to discuss the idea of gaining an advantage over an enemy. In the first instance of pleonexic language, Nicias notes that wearing armor could give a fighter an advantage in battle (ἀλλὰ πανταξῇ ἂν ταύτῃ πλεονεκτοῖ) (182b). In the second instance, Laches notes that the Spartans seek out everything to gain an advantage in war (πλεονεκτοῖεν τῶν ἄλλων περὶ τὸν πόλεμον) (183a). In both cases the person operating on *pleonexia* would gain something in relation to someone else (in this case someone who is an enemy on the battlefield).

In the *Symposium*, *pleonexia* also refers to getting advantage over another in such a way that the other person loses. Responding to Alcibiades' declaration of love for him, Socrates asks if Alcibiades is trying to gain an advantage over him (*pleonexia*) by trying to switching bronze for gold (218e). The switching bronze for gold is a reference to the

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[44] In her chapter "The Atlantis Story: The *Republic* and the *Timaeus*," Annas argues that the *Laws*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias* present the argument of the *Republic* through the Atlantis myth. Julia Annas, "The Atlantis Story," in *Plato's Republic: A Critical Guide*, ed. McPherran (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 56-59.

Iliad story in which Glaucus and Diomedes switch armor of unequal value. After realizing that there were formal ties between them, Glaucus gives Diomedes his gold armor in exchange for Diomedes' bronze armor (*Il.* 6.215-36). In the deal, Diomedes gained more because the gold was worth more than the bronze. By using this analogy, Socrates equates *pleonexia* with the idea of unequal exchange and reinforces the idea that it is unjust gain at the expense of another.

There are a few instances where Plato uses *pleonexia* in a neutral fashion. In Book Three of the *Laws*, one of the speakers notes that in the course of the conversation, the group has gained (*pleonektoumen*) such knowledge (683a). This is a rare instance where a form of *pleonexia* just means gain. The speakers are not competing with anyone else; the line refers to what they had learned in earlier books (683a). In Book Seven of the *Laws*, Plato notes that neither regulated music nor unregulated music has an advantage (*pepleonektein*) over the other (7.802d).[45] Here, his meaning is that neither form of music is better than the other when it comes to hearing it, though Plato states that regulated music is better because it teaches structure and discipline to children (7.802d).

***Pleonexia* in Aristotle**

Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics* parallels Plato in presenting *pleonexia* as an act of in injustice in which individuals take more than their share to the detriment of others. Aristotle presents this definition in the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and he contrasts *pleonexia* and injustice with the equitable distribution found in justness. Aristotle does not, however, demonstrate that *pleonexia* hurts those who act upon it. In the *Politics* and *Virtues and Vices*, he reiterates the idea that *pleonexia* is gain at the expense of others. Like Plato, Aristotle occasionally employs the term *pleonexia* to refer, neutrally, to gaining advantage.

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[45] A description of regulated versus unregulated can be found in 3.700 when Plato discusses the problems of excess in society. Regulated music is music that follows specific rules and has specific characteristics, for example hymns, dirges, and paeans (3.700a-b); unregulated music is when these various forms and styles become mixed (3.700d). Plato, thus, would probably not have been a fan of free form jazz.

The *Nicomachean Ethics* is one of Aristotle's three complete works on ethics.[46] The aim of the work is the study of human happiness. To do so, Aristotle reviews both virtues and vices. Book Five defines the virtue of the particular justice and the vice of the particular injustice. Aristotle relies on forms of *pleonexia* when defining the vice of particular injustice. At the start of the book, Aristotle declares that the unjust man is one who breaks laws (*paranomos*) and who is *pleonektēs* and unfair (*anisos*) (1129a). He clarifies his meaning of unfair to indicate an act in which a person takes more than an equitable share of something (1129b). This means that the person either takes a greater share of rewards, or conversely takes a smaller share of punishments. Aristotle notes, "taking the lesser share of evil seems to be good, and taking more than one's due means taking more of something good," (τὸ μεῖον κακὸν ἀγαθόν πως εἶναι, τοῦ δ᾽ ἀγαθοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ πλεονεξία, διὰ τοῦτο δοκεῖ πλεονέκτης εἶναι) (1129b). Thus, in the introduction of the discussion of injustice, Aristotle presents *pleonexia* as an act of unfair gain, in which a person takes more than his share. Though Aristotle is not explicit that this hurts another person, it is implied. If equitable shares of goods exist, then the amount of goods must be limited; if the amount of any good is limited, by taking more than one's allotted amount, a person is taking goods from another.[47] Thus, for Aristotle, the *pleonektēs* (the individual acting on *pleonexia*) gains at another's expense.[48]

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[46] H. Rackham, "Introduction," *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, Loeb Classical Series (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1962), xiii.

Aristotle goes on to distinguish injustice in the particular sense (of which *pleonexia* is a part) from other vices. He states that when a man throws away his shield, uses abusive language, or refrains from giving money to a friend, he is acting unjustly but not "taking more than his share of anything," (πλεονεκτεῖ δ᾽ οὐδέν) (1130a). To further his point, Aristotle compares reasons for adultery. If the purpose of adultery is to sleep with a particular woman, then it is an act of profligacy (1130a). If the person profits from the adultery, then it is an act of particular injustice (1130a). He then defines injustice in the particular sense as an act that 1) deals with man's relations with others 2) concerns honor, money, or security, and 3) involves the pleasure of gain (1130b). Aristotle reinforces the idea that the particular injustice is having more than one's share by defining the particular justice in part as the distribution of honor, wealth, and other assets of a community on either an equal or unequal basis (1130b). Unequal distribution does not constitute *pleonexia*, however, because *pleonexia* is not disproportionate distribution, but rather the desire or act of gaining more than one's allotted amount.

Also, according to Aristotle, particular injustice must be a conscious act. Later in Book Five he notes that judges should only be censured if they knowingly decide a case in a manner that is unfair (1137a). The same is true in the case of the person who gives too much, whom Aristotle labels a profligate. If a person over gives, then the person who receives the inappropriate amount of gifts has done no wrong, since it was not the desire of the receiver to gain more than a fair share (1136b). In his discussion of "lovers of self," Aristotle declares that the common definition of this class of people is, "those who take the greater share of something" (οἱ δὴ περὶ ταῦτα πλεονέκται) (1168b). For all three of these instances, individuals must knowingly act in a way to gain unfair shares in order for the act to be described as *pleonexia*.[49]

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[47] This is only false if the equitable shares are infinite, but if each share is infinite, then no one can have more than his or her share (or perhaps they can, I do not know, I will let the philosophers figure that out).

[48] While Balot disagrees, others accept this definition. Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 29; Richard Kraut, *Aristotle*, 138; Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles*, 426-27, 624n4.

Aristotle's use of *pleonexia* in the *Politics* and *Virtues and Vices* reinforces the idea that it is the desire for more at the expense of others. In the opening of Book Five of the *Politics*, Aristotle notes that *stasis* occurs when groups want to gain at another's expense: either through equalizing an unequal society, or disrupting an equal society (1302a).[50] In Book Seven, Aristotle relies on *pleonexia* to describe "barbarian" territorial expansion: barbarians are honored when they expand their power at the expense of others (ἔτι δ᾽ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι πᾶσι τοῖς δυναμένοις πλεονεκτεῖν ἡ τοιαύτη τετίμηται δύναμις) (1324b). In his *Virtues and Vices,* he groups *pleonexia* with impiety (*asebeia*), and pride (*hubris*) under the category of injustice (*adikia*), and defines it as getting more than what is fair in contracts (1216a). Thus, in works outside of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle retains the idea that *pleonexia* is gain at the expense of another.

Like Plato, Aristotle uses *pleonexia* to refer, more neutrally, to gaining advantage. In the *Art of Rhetoric,* Aristotle continually uses *pleonexia* to refer to having the upper hand in situations. In regard to waging war, he prompts speakers to know whether the enemy has military forces similar or dissimilar to the speakers’ own, as whichever side has the most has the advantage (καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις, πότερον ὅμοιαι ἢ ἀνόμοιαι; ἔστι γὰρ καὶ ταύτῃ πλεονεκτεῖν ἢ ἐλαττοῦσθαι) (1.4.9). Good fortune gives advantages to people in terms of children and material goods (τὰ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἀγαθὰ παρασκευάζει ἡ εὐτεχία πλεονεκτεῖν) (2.17.5). Defendants have the advantage over prosecutors when using the logical fallacy of whether an argument is necessary (διὸ καὶ ἀεὶ ἔστι πλεονεκτεῖν ἀπολογούμενον μᾶλλον ἢ κατηγοροῦντα διὰ τοῦτον τὸν παραλογισμόν) (2.25.10). In the *Politics*, Aristotle also uses forms of *pleonexia* to refer, neutrally, to gaining an advantage. Builders of city walls should ensure that the city wall is good for defense, because an attacker will study the walls to see how he might gain an advantage (ὥσπερ γὰρ τοῖς ἐπιτιθεμένοις ἐπιμελές ἐστι δι᾽ ὧν τρόπων πλεονεκτήσουσιν) (1331a). He declares that cities that do not want to gain (*pleonexia*) through trade should not build a port (1327a). In this instance *pleonexia* refers to the advantage of having a port, but this gain does not occur at others’ expense. So the possibility for neutral instances of *pleonexia* exists, but it is by no means the most common use of the idea.

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[49] Contra Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 30-31.

[50] Richard Kraut argues that this section of the *Politics* has thematic ties, out of control individuals leading to *stasis*, to Plato's *Gorgias* and *Symposium*. Kraut, *Aristotle,* 446.

Like Thucydides, Herodotus, and Xenophon, discussed in the last chapter, both Plato and Aristotle understand *pleonexia* in a communal context to be an act of injustice, in which one person gains at the expense of others. Plato goes further than Aristotle in demonstrating that not only is *pleonexia* gain at another’s expense, but also that it will hurt the person acting upon it.

Decline in Plato

In the *Republic*, *Laws*, and *Critias*, Plato demonstrates that when groups within a city begin to try to enrich or empower themselves at the expense of others within a city (*pleonexia*), then *stasis* and decline ensue. In the *Republic* and *Laws*, constitutions decline due to an imbalance of desires among the elite of a city, which is caused in part by *pleonexia*. Plato makes this link more explicit in the *Critias* when he explains that the gods struck Atlantis down because its population had become corrupted with *pleonexia*.

Plato shows that within a city the government changes for the worse when the political elite follow their desires at the expense of the city as a whole in the *Republic* and *Laws*.[51] In Book Eight of the *Republic*, Plato declares his intent for the rest of the book to be about "how faction fell upon them (the population of his ideal city)" (545d). Scholars debate Plato's sincerity in discussing the degeneration of constitutions in this section. Aristotle critiqued the section as ahistorical and unrealistic (*Pol.* 1316a). Blössner treats the section as an extended metaphor that allowed Plato to discuss the destructive appetites of the soul.[52] Others argue that this section can be viewed as a discussion of political and moral philosophy. Plato is not outlining a definitive cycle of constitutions; rather he is presenting a logical pattern that allows him to discuss both governments and psychological urges neatly.[53] I agree with the latter. Plato begins with the decline of his ideal city, Kallipolis, which he had established in the preceding books. Kallipolis will fall when the city's leaders, the guardians, fail to time the births of the next generation precisely, and as a result inferior babies are born into the leadership caste (8.546b-d). The new, inferior, leaders will ignore important facets of Kallipolis' education, such as music and gymnastics (8.546d-e). They will instead focus on the acquisition of land and money, whereas older leaders will focus on virtue (8.547b). The conflicting goals will create division among the leadership, and eventually strife (8.547a).[54] This strife will be settled by a compromise among the elite of the city, but this compromise will change the city's government, and it will transition from being an aristocracy (rule of the best) to a timocracy (rule of those focused on gaining honor). Thus, for Plato, the transition of government happened when a faction within the elite began to follow its own desires at the expense of the city as a whole, which creates an imbalance in society.

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[51] Plato casts the entire discussion in the context of the degeneration of his ideal city. He even borrows ideas from Hesiod when describing how the elites in the city stop being of the golden and silver races and become members of the bronze and iron class by moving away from virtue and toward earthly pleasures/goals (547a).

[52] Blössner, "The City Soul Analogy," 368-69.

[53] Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, 284-85; Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, 538; Schofield, *Plato*, 106-7; Hitz, "Degenerate Regimes in Plato's *Republic*," 105.

This idea of imbalance causing a change in government implicitly demonstrates that Plato thought *pleonexia* caused decline. As demonstrated earlier in the chapter, in the *Gorgias*, Plato presented *pleonexia* as a disease and an imbalance. In the *Republic*, he links the idea of imbalance in society to changes in government. Timocracy changes into an oligarchy when the elites prefer the acquisition of wealth to the acquisition of honors (8.551a-b). Oligarchy becomes democracy when oligarchs become too obsessed with the acquisition of money, and the people revolt out of a desire for an equal share in government (8.555b-556e). In each instance, it is the imbalance of personal desire against the good of the state that foments a change among the political elite of the city, which in turn transforms the government. *Pleonexia* is implicit in this transition, since

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[54] I do not think Plato is genuine in ascribing the collapse of his ideal city to ill-timed births. I think he proposes the idea of decline as a way to destroy the ideal city which he has just spent books creating. His theory about improperly timed births, while in keeping with Platonic thought, is more a device through which Plato can discuss decline, as opposed to being a deeply held belief; Guthrie makes a similar note and states "Plato is amusing himself with a pedantic theory." Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, 528. Taylor takes the idea more seriously, but he comes to same conclusion that is more of a literary device than actual thought. Taylor, "The Decline and Fall of the State," 24-25.

Plato linked *pleonexia* to acting as one desires in Books One and Two, which is what the corrupt leaders do in Book Eight, and because in other works he presented the idea of imbalance in the language of *pleonexia*.

Scholars, in general, acknowledge that in Plato the degeneration of regimes happens as a result of out-of-control desires, though only some mention *pleonexia*. [55] In "Degenerate Regime's in Plato's Republic," Zena Hitz argues that it is the loss of reason that causes regime change in the *Republic*; for her, reason controls a person's desires, so that the loss of reason would result in the loss of control and decline. What she and others miss, however, and what I and Balot emphasize, is the parasitic nature of these appetites.[56] Even the scholars who dismiss the notion that this section is about the decline of governments agree that it is out-of-control appetites which corrupt the youth.[57] I agree with Frede that in this section Plato is showing a decline in the morality of youth, but again, such a decline would coincide with the decline of the political system.

Plato moves to using *pleonexia* explicitly as a cause for why cities decline when explaining how the tyrannical man subverts both oligarchies and democracies. After explaining how an oligarchy becomes a democracy, Socrates stops to discuss the similarity of the shifts of oligarchy into democracy, and of democracy into tyranny. At 8.563e, Socrates declares:

> The same malady that, arising in oligarchy, destroyed it, this more widely diffused and more violent as a result of this license (desire for liberty) enslaves democracy. And in truth, any excess is wont to bring

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[55] Barker, *Greek Political Thought*, 288-301; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 246-48; Schofield, *Plato*, 106-7.

[56] Hitz, "Degenerate Regimes in Plato's *Republic*," 117.

[57] Frede, "Plato, Popper, and Historicism," 269-74.

> about a corresponding reaction to the opposite in the seasons, in plants, in animal bodies, and most especially in political societies.[58]

The excess in oligarchies is the pursuit of wealth to the detriment of others, leading to revolt and democracy. In a democracy, the people seek for liberty until their quest for it causes them to fall into tyranny (8.562a-d). Socrates describes that in pursuit of liberty people in a democracy will eventually allow for no master over them at all, not even law (8.563d). The source of this excess is the class of "idle and spendthrift men" (τὸ τῶν ἀργῶν τε καὶ δαπανηρῶν ἀνδρῶν γένος) (8.564b). From this class of men there arises a leader who plays upon the populace's fear of oligarchs to gain power over the mob, and then uses that power to exile other prominent citizens and seize their property (8.565e-566a). With his popularity, the tyrant persuades the people to grant him a bodyguard; he then eliminates all other political competition, and assumes sole rule of the city (8.566b-d). The nature of this man is to have no boundaries on his desires, to take from his father's estates, to control his fellow citizens, to take from shrines (8.568d); he will surround himself with like-minded people and use them to control the city (8.567d-e). Thus, democracy is transformed into tyranny. Plato's outline of the tyrannical man's consolidation of political power at the end of Book Eight is a little too elaborate to be just an analogy of the soul. The discussion of how desires warp the soul occurs, but his discussion of how an individual proceeds to concentrate political power on himself demonstrates that Plato was also concerned with political analysis.

Plato opens Book Nine with an investigation into the character of the tyrannical man. He notes that such a man has no control over his passions, whether they are for money, women, or whatever else, and cannot satiate them (9.572e-573b). His desires control and even torment him (9.573). In an attempt to gratify his passions, he will burn through his own wealth and then turn to taking the wealth of his father and mother (9.574a). When describing how the tyrant uses his parents' wealth, Plato notes that in the same way in which the passions take over the tyrannical man (ἡδοναὶ ἐπιγιγνόμεναι τῶν ἀρχαίων πλέον εἶχον), so does the tyrannical man take over his parents' estates for money in order to satiate his desires (αὐτὸς ἀξιώσει νεώτερος ὢν πατρός τε καὶ μητρὸς πλέον ἔχειν καὶ ἀφαιρεῖσθαι ...ἀπονειμάμενος τῶν πατρῴων) (9.574a). Thus, Plato portrays the description of the tyrannical man as one who operates on *pleonexia* (and who is, in fact, driven to it by his passions). Therefore, there are not only thematic links between the idea of decline and *pleonexia* in the *Republic*, but through the tyrannical man, Plato links individuals acting on *pleonexia* with changes in government, in particular democracy to tyranny. The *Republic*, then, presents decline and change in government as a result of citizens desiring more at the expense of others within the city, *pleonexia*.

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[58] This same language that excess brings about opposite reactions is found in Plato's *Symposium* at 188a-b, in which Plato uses *pleonexia* to refer to excess (the idea also appears in the *Laws* as I will show shortly); for the parallel between the *Republic* and the *Symposium* see Shorey, *Plato's Republic*, 313nb.

In the *Laws*, Plato connects acting on *pleonexia* to the destruction of the bonds that hold society together and the decline of the power of states.[59] The early kings of Argos and Messene brought destruction (*diephtheiren*) into the Greek world when they tried to get more than what is allotted to them by law (τὸ πλεονεκτεῖν τῶν τεθέντων νόμων) (3.691a). Persian society declined after Cyrus because the constitution of Persia gave disproportionate power to the rulers and made the ruled slaves. In the reign of

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[59] In his article on Democratic Freedom, Mogens Herman Hansen notes that the loss of freedom and the excess of freedom caused the Persian and Athenian constitutions to decay; Mogens Herman Hansen, "Democratic Freedom and the Concept of Freedom in Aristotle and Plato," *GRBS* 50 (2010): 25. He does not consider the issue of *pleonexia*, but he asserts that it is the imbalance of power in the two systems that causes decline; ibid.

Cyrus, the Persians balanced freedom with control and all enjoyed a degree of equality (3.694a). As a result, soldiers fought more readily for their commanders and men gave better counsel without fear (3.694b). Thus, the state prospered because all felt included.

Persia suffered when Cambyses abused his power and position and alienated the people (3.695c). Darius reinvigorated Persian society because he enforced legal equality (3.695d). This legal equality earned Darius the loyalty of Persian soldiers and allowed him to conquer as much land as Cyrus (3.695d). Persia deteriorated under Xerxes and successive kings because the kings preferred to indulge in their authority as opposed to maintaining forms of equality. The reason for these reversals was education—Cambyses and Xerxes were brought up in royal households, and they were accustomed to being indulged (3.695). Cyrus and Darius, in contrast, were born outside of the royal household and valued forms of equality (3.694a; 3.695d).

Persian society declined after Darius because their laws gave more power to the rulers at the expense of the ruled. The monopoly of power in the hands of the few in the Persian government destroyed (*apōlesan*) the bonds between the rulers, the ruled, and the state itself (3.697c). Rulers acted on their whims, with no care how their actions would affect others or the state as a whole (3.697d). Their subjects became alienated from the state, making them poor soldiers (3.697d-e). The kings then had to rely on mercenaries, who were not as effective solders. Persia lost internal cohesion and power, then, because the Persian kings monopolized the power of the state at the expense of their subjects—*pleonexia*.

Athens suffered the opposite problem—its citizens enjoyed an excess of freedom which makes them unwilling to listen or obey higher authorities. In the time of the

Persian Wars, out of fear of Persia and out of reverence for the bonds of the state, Athenian society was united (3.699b-d). After the Persian Wars, however, and on account of their excess of freedom, the citizens of Athens lost their respect for all authority, including religious precepts and laws (3.701a-c). The result was that the citizens had no respect for laws, oaths, or religion, and reverted to a more anarchic condition of society (3.701c). Plato does not continue his account of Athens, but it is implied that due to their excess of freedom, which resulted in irreverence in the population, the Athenians could not act with the same community spirit that helped them survive the Persian Wars. Plato's point in this section is that the excess of either despotism or liberty in constitutions causes individuals to value no longer the state but rather to seek their own gain at the expense of the state and community. This weakens the state. Thus, in the *Laws*, Plato follows the ideas he established in the *Republic*: societies decline when individuals begin to try to gain more of something at the expense of others within that society.

In the *Critias* this imbalance and resulting *pleonexia* caused the downfall of Atlantis. Here, Plato notes that as long as the rulers of Atlantis obeyed the laws and retained their virtue, they were good (121a). However, when the rulers of Atlantis began to govern based on lawless ambition and power (πλεονεξίας ἀδίκου καὶ δυνάμεως), Zeus decided to destroy them (121b-c). Though there are no contextual clues to signify the meaning of *pleonexia* in this passage, the similar circumstances of the *pleonexia* in the *Critias* to Plato's previous works, *Republic* and *Laws*, suggests an analogous meaning. So, even in one of his last works, Plato attaches acting on *pleonexia* to the destruction of a city.

Decline in Aristotle

Aristotle more directly than Plato links ideas of *pleonexia* to causes of *stasis* and decline in his *Politics*. In the work, he declares that *stasis* occurs when factions within a city begin to work to gain more for their faction at the expense of other groups within the city. He identifies *pleonexia*, and in particular *pleonexia* for goods and honors, as a fundamental cause of *stasis* in cities. The work also lists various reasons which propel factions toward *stasis*, but most of them include, in some fashion, the faction acting out of a desire to gain more for its side.

At the opening of Book Five, Aristotle declares his intent to examine "the number and the nature of the causes that give rise to revolutions in constitutions, and what are the causes that destroy each form of constitution," (1301a). Aristotle states that *stasis* erupts when citizens within a city are not given their self-perceived fair share in governance, and therefore act in order to gain the share that they think they deserve.[60] For those who believe in democracy, the people believe that all people are equal; in oligarchies, people seek to establish inequality. He notes that "those that desire equality enter on party strife if they think they have too little … those that desire inequality or superiority do so if they suppose that although they are unequal they have not got more but an equal amount or less" (οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἰσότητος ἐφιέμενοι στασιάζουσιν ἂν νομίζωσιν ἔλαττον ἔχειν ὄντες ἴσοι τοῖς πλεονεκτοῦσιν, οἱ δὲ τῆς ἀνισότητος καὶ τῆς ὑπεροχῆς ἂν ὑπολαμβάνωσιν ὄντες ἄνισοι μὴ πλέον ἔχειν ἀλλ᾽ ἴσον ἢ ἔλαττον) (1302a).[61] Thus, at the outset of Book Five, Aristotle establishes *pleonexia* and groups acting on *pleonexia* as the cause of *stasis*.

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[60] Ronald Polansky, "Aristotle on Political Change," 328; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 44-47; Steven Skultety, "Delimiting Aristotle's Conception of *Stasis*," 350; Antony Hatzistavrou, "Faction" in *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, ed. Marguerite Deslauriers and Pierre Destree (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 294-95.

In *Aristotle on Stasis*, Ronald Weed argues that Aristotle implicitly agreed with Plato that *stasis* ultimately derived from flaws within individuals' character.[62] This assertion misinterprets Aristotle. Unlike Plato, Aristotle never directly states that *stasis* occurs due to flaws in character. At the start of the *Politics*, Book Five, he states that *stasis* happens when groups create factions within a city to gain either power or honor or to avoid losing either (1302b). This is not a moral judgment on Aristotle's part; he simply identifies this motivation as the cause of *stasis*. He even admits that virtuous men can create factional strife, though they are least likely to do so (1301b); therefore in Aristotle's view moral flaws are not a cause of *stasis*.[63]

After establishing *pleonexia* as a cause of *stasis*, Aristotle lists the motives for why people enter into *stasis*.[64] First, according to Aristotle, the goal of those entering into *stasis* is gain and honor (κέρδος γὰρ καὶ τιμὴν), or to prevent dishonor and loss (1302a). Second, Aristotle gives seven causes for why people engage in *stasis*: the motive of gain and honor (which he differentiates from the gain and honor he just mentioned), insolence, fear, excessive predominance, contempt, disproportionate growth of power. In his description of these causes, Aristotle reinforces the idea that *pleonexia* drives *stasis* (1302b-1303). Gain and honor cause revolution when people perceive that individuals are either justly or unjustly receiving a larger share in governance (ἑτέρους ὁρῶντες τοὺς μὲν δικαίως τοὺς δ’ ἀδίκως πλεονεκτοῦντας τούτων) (1302b). People rise against the government when someone in office shows *hubris* and *pleonexia* (1302b).[65] Disproportionate distribution of honors (political office) creates *stasis* because people seek to correct the imbalance (1302b). The same with excessive predominance; when an individual gets too powerful in a community, factions arise to oust the individual. Fear motivates *stasis* as factions attempt to either avoid punishment or to pre-empt an attack. Contempt causes *stasis* because factions dislike the government and believe that they are powerful enough to overthrow it. Disproportionate growth fosters *stasis* as factions within a *polis* get too large and desire to redress the difference in power (1303a). In all these examples, *stasis* happens when a group gains, or desires to gain, more at the expense of others within the city; sometimes Aristotle describes these actions as *pleonexia*, as in the case of gain and honor, and other times he does not employ the term, but the circumstances fit the definition. Thus, Aristotle demonstrates that *stasis* happens when individuals either try to expand their stature more at the expense of others or when they wish to hold on to power when others try to remove it.

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[61] David Keyt in his commentary on *Politics* Book 5 makes no mention of Aristotle's use of *pleonexia* in these passage, though he mentions that Aristotle's discussions here refers back to Aristotle's discussion of distributive justice in the *Nicomachean Ethics*; David Keyt, *Aristotle Politics Book V and VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 56-97.

[62] Ronald Weed, *Aristotle on Stasis*, 99.

[63] Steven Skultety, review of *Aristotle on Stasis*, by Ronald Weed. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (August 2008), accessed June 18, 2012, http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2008/2008-08-18.html.
Reed's study does not take into account Aristotle'S use of *pleonexia* in explaining *stasis*.

[64] Scholars examine whether or not Aristotle's discussions of *stasis* follows his "four causes." As stated before, I am less interested in the logical coherence of his arguments and more focused on how his description of why *stasis* happens; Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 106-12.

To this list, Aristotle adds election intrigue, carelessness, pettiness, and dissimilarity. These reasons do not require *pleonexia*, though they retain the idea of gaining at other’s expense. Election intrigue is abusing the election process to win the election (1303a). Carelessness causes revolution because it allows people who abuse their power into office (1303a). Pettiness transforms a constitution as small, gradual changes are made to the constitution that eventually distorts it from its original form (1303a). Finally, ethnic differences foster factionalism as each group seeks to empower itself at the expense of others (1303a). Thus, while some of Aristotle's reasons for groups entering into strife do not involve the term *pleonexia*, they still rely on the idea of groups acting on self-interest to empower themselves at the expense of others.[66] Aristotle focuses his entire discussion of *stasis* on changes between oligarchic and democratic forms of governments. Later in Book Five of the *Politics*, however, he states that monarchies and tyrannies fall for the same reasons as oligarchies and democracies (1311a; 1312b).

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[65] Here Aristotle states that *pleonexia* can feed on both communal and private property alike (*ē de pleonexia ginetai ote men apo tōn idiōn, ote de apo tōn koinōn*) (1302b).

Aristotle's description in Book Five of why cities fall into *stasis* reflects earlier sentiments in the *Politics*. In Book Four, Aristotle states that when in power, groups change the constitution to get more advantage for themselves (1292b). In his discussion in Book Two of how to avoid stasis, he argues that it is best to teach the rich not to desire more (ὥστε μὴ βούλεσθαι πλεονεκτεῖν) and to ensure that the many do not have the power to do so (1267b).

Much like other authors, Aristotle, or a student of Aristotle's, believed that civil harmony could occur by avoiding *pleonexia*. The author of the *Athenian Politeia* praises

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[66] Skultety comes to a similar conclusion that in Aristotle *stasis* happens when a faction wants to change the constitution for its own benefit, though he disagrees with the idea that Plato and Aristotle conceived of the same cause of *stasis*. He dismisses authors such as Balot and Weed who make this claim. For Skultety, regimes change in Plato due to out of control desire, and change in Aristotle due to the desire for political equality or inequality. Skultety, however, does not look at *pleonexia*; as I have shown, while the explanations might be different, the root motivation is the same; Skultety, "Delimiting Aristotle's Conception of *Stasis* in the *Politics*," 367; Balot, *Greed and Injustice*, 47-54.

Athenian law givers who avoided acting on *pleonexia*.[67] He notes that in his poetry, the legendary Athenian law giver Solon exhorted the elite of Athens to avoid acting on *pleonexia* in order to secure social and political stability (5.3). The writer lauds Solon for constructing a constitution that sought to enrich the state as a whole and not his own private wealth (6.3). Peisistratus, the tyrant of Athens, did well when he was the tyrant because he ruled according to the rules of the state and not for his own advantage (*pleonexian*) (16.8). Thus, for Aristotle, *stasis* happened when people wanted to gain more at the expense of others, and the state was strengthened when its rulers avoided acting on *pleonexia*. Overall, then, Plato and Aristotle present the cause of civil strife and decline as groups within a city acting in such a way to empower themselves at the expense of others within the community, leading to a change in government. Both writers, directly and indirectly, acknowledge the role of *pleonexia* in this process.

Continuity

Both circumstantial and textual evidence support the idea that Thucydides' concept of decline through *pleonexia* influenced Plato and Aristotle. The circumstantial evidence includes the fact that Plato overlapped with Thucydides chronologically and was a student of Socrates with Xenophon, an author I have already demonstrated as having been influenced by Thucydides. Plato was born in 427 BCE, lived through the Peloponnesian War, and grew up while Thucydides was writing the *Histories.* He survived the Thirty Tyrants of Athens, a regime that Xenophon characterized as pleonexic. He wrote during the early and middle fourth century BCE, a time when Xenophon and Theopompus wrote works that continued Greek history from the end of

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[67] The authorship of the *Athenian Politeia* is debated; P.J. Rhodes, "Introduction," to Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution*, trans. P.J. Rhodes (London: Penguin Books, 2002), 11.

Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Given the circumstances and his connection through Xenophon, we would expect Plato to have been in contact with Thucydidean thought even without specific textual references.

Textual evidence, however, also supports the notion that Plato was aware of Thucydidean thought on *stasis*. Both writers discuss the radicalization of language. At 560d-561b, Plato notes that when passions take over a person, they inflame his mind and corrupt certain values; reverence becomes folly, temperance want of manliness, and moderation illiberality. This discussion of how language becomes transformed due to passion corresponds to Thucydides' own description of what happens to language in the course of *stasis* (Thuc. 3.82.4).[68] In Plato's *Laws*, the unnamed Athenian notes that serving the public interest binds a state together, but that serving the private interest destroys it (*Laws* 7.875a). In his eulogy to Pericles, Thucydides notes that Pericles served the interest of the state and Athens profited, but Pericles' successors followed his own interests to the detriment of the state (2.65.8-11). Thus, there are verbal and conceptual echoes in thought between Plato and Thucydides.

Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle each portray *stasis* as deriving from individuals within a city acting on personal desires for wealth and political power.[69] In Book One of the *Republic*, Socrates points out to Glaucon that to hold office either out of a desire for honor or money (τὸ φιλότιμόν τε καὶ φιλάργυρον) is perceived to be and is a censure or reproach (*oneidos*) (347b). In the *Critias*, Plato notes that Atlantis fell when its leaders began to seek unjust gain and power (πλεονεξίας ἀδίκου καὶ δυνάμεως) (121b-c). In his *Politics*, Aristotle states that part of the cause of revolution is the desire for gain and honor (κέρδος γὰρ καὶ τιμὴν) (1302a). This idea echoes Thucydides' view in the Corcyraean *stasis* narrative that *stasis* originates from *pleonexia* and *philotimia*.

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[68] Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, 297; Colin Macleod, "Thucydides on Faction," *Collected Essays of Colin Macleod* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 57-58; Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 121; Menanke, *Three Traditions of Greek Political Thought*, 150n111.

[69] Polansky, "Aristotle on Political Change," 344—though he does not mention *pleonexia*.

Overall, then, it can be inferred that Plato and Aristotle were aware of Thucydides' ideas on *pleonexia* and *stasis*. First, Plato grew up in the age of Thucydides and interacted with Xenophon, whom Thucydides influenced. Second, there are Thucydidean echoes in the writings of Plato, including their discussions of *stasis*. Finally, they conceptualized the causes and results of *stasis* in similar ways. Certainly, Thucydides' *Histories*, Xenophon's *Hellenica*, and Plato's philosophical works indicate that Athenian thought in the early fourth century, probably in reaction to the Thirty Tyrants, conceived of *pleonexia* as a destructive impulse, one which destroyed the societies in which it manifested.

Conclusion

Thus, Plato and Aristotle continued the paradigm of decline discussed in the previous chapter. First, both authors understood *pleonexia* to mean gain at another's expense. Second, both used *pleonexia* to describe a cause of *stasis*—when groups within a community fought against each other in order to gain more for a particular side. Third, both point to the desire for gain and honor as reasons for *stasis*, a concept first found in Thucydides. Plato and Aristotle's reliance on Thucydides' ideas and the general concept of *pleonexia* causing *stasis* suggests that such ideas were circulated and perpetuated among Athenian intellectuals in the fourth century. As a result of both the Peloponnesian War and the reign of the Thirty Tyrants, intellectuals understood that individuals acting out of selfish desires threatened the community as a whole.

Chapter 4:

Pleonexia and Decline in Isocrates and Demosthenes

This chapter will examine how fourth-century Athenian speech-writers used *pleonexia*. It focuses on Isocrates and Demosthenes, two of the most famous speech-writers of fourth century BCE Athens, because most of the instances of *pleonexia* in the corpus of Athenian oratory occur in their works or works attributed to them.[1] Isocrates (436-339 BCE) established a school of rhetoric in Athens and taught rhetoric to the Athenian elite for almost the first half of the fourth century BCE.[2] His works span diverse topics such as how to be a good citizen, why the study of rhetoric is beneficial, and why the Greeks should launch a Pan-Hellenic military expedition against Persia. He did not perform many of his speeches to the public but disseminated copies of them to select circles.[3] In contrast, Demosthenes (385/4 or 384/3-322 BCE) was not only a famous writer but also a renowned orator. He demonstrated his skill in both the courts and the Athenian assembly, and he grew to prominence in the 350s and 340s in Athenian politics due to his resistance to Philip II of Macedon.[4]

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[1] Demosthenes was so famous that many fourth century speeches were erroneously attributed to him. Many of the speeches earlier thought to be not Demosthenes have since been accepted as belonging to Demosthenes, but speeches 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, and 59 are now accredited to Apollodorus, a contemporary of Demosthenes. Michael Gagarin, "Introduction to Demosthenes," in *Demosthenes, Speeches 60 and 61, Prologues, Letters*, trans. Ian Worthington, vol. 10, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 5. Latest work on Demosthenes: Ian Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens and the Fall of Classical Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[2] David Mirhady, Terry Papillon, and Yun Lee Too, "Introduction to Isocrates," in *Isocrates I*, trans. David Mirhady, and Yun Lee Too, vol. 4, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 1-2.

[3] Terry Papillon, "Introduction to Isocrates, Volume II," in *Isocrates II*, trans. Terry Papillon, vol. 7, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas, 2004), 16.

[4] Whether his resistance was genuine or an act of political opportunism is debated; opportunism: Ernst Badian, "The Road to Prominence," in *Demosthenes: Statesman and Orator*, ed. Ian Worthington

In this chapter, I will first review how scholars treat *pleonexia* in Isocrates and Demosthenes and the connections they draw between the logographers and authors already studied. Second, I will examine the numerous instances of *pleonexia* in Isocrates and Demosthenes in order to demonstrate that despite variations in use, the meaning behind *pleonexia* remains constant. Finally, I will consider the continuities between Isocrates, Demosthenes, and authors already discussed. Overall, I will show that Isocrates and Demosthenes understood *pleonexia* as the desire or intent to gain at the expense of others, and that acting on *pleonexia* was detrimental to the pleonexic agent, as was the case with Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle.

Isocrates and Demosthenes use *pleonexia* in the same circumstances as the other authors, but they deploy the terms in slightly different ways. In the realm of foreign affairs, Isocrates and Demosthenes used *pleonexia* to refer to acts of imperial expansion. Such uses deviate from Herodotus and Thucydides, who utilized *pleonexia* to discuss when a hegemon took advantage of a pre-existing power relationship and relied upon *pleon ekhein* or *epithumian* to discuss outright territorial annexation of the territory of others. In domestic affairs, Isocrates and Demosthenes characterized the pleonexic person as one who seeks gain regardless of the cost to others, and they recognized that acting according to *pleonexia* threatened the integrity of the community. Isocrates, Demosthenes, and speech-writers who imitated them also parallel Thucydides and Herodotus by casting *pleonexia* as manipulation of contracts and court cases.

(London: Routledge, 2000), 9-44; genuine fear: T.T.B. Ryder, “Demosthenes and Philip II,” in *Demosthenes: Statesman and Orator*, ed. Ian Worthington (London: Routledge, 2000), 45-89; Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens*, 116-17.

The two authors diverge in their use of *pleonexia* in two ways. First, Isocrates attempts to give a positive meaning to *pleonexia*. He acknowledges that the common conception of *pleonexia* is that of illicit gain, but he states that he uses the term to mean having true advantage obtained through virtue as opposed to base advantage acquired through deceit or theft. Second, neither Isocrates nor Demosthenes relies on the paradigm of decline caused by *pleonexia* that I have so far traced. Only in his *Busiris* does Isocrates connect *pleonexia* to *stasis*. Demosthenes never makes such a connection, but he does say that acting on *pleonexia* undermines the stability of a community.

The speeches of the Athenian orators provide a different perspective on *pleonexia*. So far I have reviewed historians and philosophers, people who wrote for fellow aristocrats.[5] An implication of this limited audience is that the writers could have used a specialized vocabulary that would not have been accessible to the larger Athenian population. Speech-writers, however, communicate to a general audience. The Athenian assembly and Athenian juries were composed of a cross-section of citizens, and therefore the language of speeches had to be understandable to most people. Examining the use of *pleonexia* in these speeches of Isocrates, Demosthenes, and their contemporaries, then, reveals how an average fourth century Athenian would have understood *pleonexia* the concept.

Scholarship on *Pleonexia*, Decline, and Continuity in the Speeches of Isocrates and Demosthenes

Scholars of Isocrates and Demosthenes translate *pleonexia* as greed or advantage, and they admit that earlier authors influenced the two rhetors. In regard to Isocrates, scholars understand *pleonexia* to mean greed or advantage, recognize that he reacted to the idea of *pleonexia* presented by fifth-century authors, in particular Thucydides, and observe how he tried to rehabilitate the term. Otto Weber emphasizes Isocrates' positive use of *pleonexia* and argues that it is the end of the evolution of the concept which began with Homer.[6] In *Athènes devant la dèfaite de 404: Histoire d'une crise idèologique*, Edmond Levy translates *pleonexia* as "*de désir d'avoir plus que les autres et plus que sa part légitime*" (the desire for more than others and more than what is allowed), and he notes how Isocrates condemns intra-polis relations based on *pleonexia* and promotes co-operation.[7] In their translations of Isocrates for the Oratory of Classical Greece series, David Mirhardy, Terry Papillon, and Yun Lee Too translate it merely as advantage.[8] In his 2007 article "La πλεονεξία chez Isocrates," Christian Bouchet argues that Isocrates had no set concept of *pleonexia*, and that the meaning of it in his texts relied on context.[9]

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[5] Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 41-48.

Similarly, works on Demosthenes provide no in-depth discussion of *pleonexia*. If commentaries make note of Demosthenes' use of *pleonexia*, they define it as greed, gain, or advantage. Sandy's commentary on *On the Peace*, *the Second Philippic*, *On the Chersonesus*, and *The Third Philippic*, first published in 1900, only comments on pleonexic words twice. In his 2002 commentary on the Fourth *Philippic*, István Hajdú cites Weber for his treatment of *pleonexia*. In all the volumes of the Classical Orator Series on Demosthenes, the editors make reference to *pleonexia* only rarely and in none of them are there citations to *pleonexia* in the index, even though Demosthenes uses *pleonexia* or affiliated terms fifty times in his corpus.[10]

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[6] Heinz-Otto Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung der Pleonexie von Homer bis Isokrates," (PhD diss., Bonn, 1967), 136.

[7] Edmond Levy, *Athènes Devant La Dèfaite de 404 Histoire d'une Crise Idèologique* (Athènes: Ecole Française d'Athènes, 1976), 154.

[8] Mirhady, Papillon, and Yun Lee Too, *Isocrates I*; Papillon, *Isocrates II*.

[9] Christian Bouchet, "La πλεονεξία chez Isocrates," *Revue des etudes Anciennes* 109, vol. 2 (2007): 488-89.

Scholars see many parallels between Thucydides, Isocrates, and Demosthenes. De Romilly claims that Isocrates might have read Thucydides, but she is uncertain.[11] Edmond Levy believes Isocrates—in his rejection of *pleonexia* on the international stage—is reacting to Thucydides' use of the word in the *Histories.*[12] Josiah Ober believes that Thucydides and Plato influenced Isocrates with their criticisms of democracy.[13] Stephen Usher in the introduction to his commentary on Demosthenes' *De Corona* comments that the ancient commentator Dionysius of Halicarnassus believed that Thucydides influenced the style of Demosthenes; Dionysius himself states that Demosthenes followed Thucydides in constructing his work tightly in order to illicit an emotional reaction (D.H. *Th.* 53-4).[14] Both Richard Jebb and Yun Lee Too see a potential parallel between Thucydides 3.82.2 and Isocrates' *Antidosis* 283, a passage where Isocrates notes that people intentionally change the meaning of words.[15] Thus, while an expanded view of the role of *pleonexia* is lacking in the scholarship, scholars acknowledge the ties between Isocrates, Demosthenes, and earlier Athenian writers.

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[10] John Sandys, *Demosthenes* (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1953), 110, 179; István Hajdú, *Kommentar zur 4. Philippischen Rede des Demosthenes* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 405; Michael Gagarin ed., The Oratory of Classical Greece series, volumes 4, 6, 8-10, 12, 13 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000-2011).

[11] Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States according to Greek Authors* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 83.

[12] Levy, *Athènes Devant La Dèfaite de 404 Histoire d'une Crise Idèologique*, 155.

[13] Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens*, 250.

[14] Stephen Usher, *Demosthenes on the Crown* (Warminster, UK: Aris and Phillips, 1993), 23.

[15] Richard Jebb notes on Isocrates' *Antidosis* at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0143%3Aspeech%3D15%3Asection%3D282 accessed September 6, 2012; Yun Lee Too, *Isocrates I*, 256n89.

***Pleonexia* in Isocrates**

Isocrates relies on *pleonexia* and associated words to signify the desire for gain at the expense of another, or to refer to having an advantage. He also shows that acting on *pleonexia* hurts not only the victims but the entity acting on it. While acknowledging the negative connotation of *pleonexia* in popular thought, he puts forward his own definition of *pleonexia* that had no negative aspects or consequences. In the following analysis, Isocrates' works are grouped based on his application of *pleonexia*, not when the works were written. I agree with Bouchet that we cannot tell whether Isocrates' thoughts on *pleonexia* developed over time and there is no evidence to suggest it. Instead, the meaning of *pleonexia* depended on its context.[16] In general it refers to "gain at the expense of others" but how this manifests itself differs. In the *Panegyricus*, *Plataicus*, *On the Peace*, *To Philip*, and *Archidamus*, he applies *pleonexia* to interstate affairs, and he characterizes it as the desire to acquire territory, to have supremacy, or to gain an advantage. In his speeches about the internal affairs of a city, *Against the Sophists*, *Against Callimachus*, *Evagoras*, and *Areopagiticus*, he portrays *pleonexia* as the desire to manipulate the law or circumstances in order to enrich an individual at the expense of others and the general detriment of a community. In *To Demonicus* and *Antidosis*, he advocates for a new definition of *pleonexia*—one which means having or gaining an "advantage" in such a manner that does not harm others.[17] In the *Nicocles* and *Panathenaicus*, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* in all the ways outlined above.

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[16] Bouchet, "La πλεονεξία chez Isocrates," 488-89.

In *Panegyricus*, *Plataicus*, *On the Peace*, *To Philip*, and *Archidamus*, Isocrates presents *pleonexia* as the desire for either direct or indirect control of another's territory, and shows it to be a destructive impulse. Isocrates' *Panegyricus*, considered by scholars as one of his greatest works, utilizes *pleonexia* to mean having a power or advantage over another and the annexation of territory (i.e., imperial expansion). First, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* to refer to situations when one party had power or advantage over another. The *Panegyricus* was published in 380 but was written in response to the Peace of Antalcides, sworn in 387, which secured Spartan hegemony over Greece with the backing of the Persian Empire.[18] Through the peace, Persia gained undisputed dominance over Greek cities in Asia Minor and gained influence in affairs of Europe by supporting Spartan control over mainland Greece.[19] In the opening of the *Panegyricus*, Isocrates calls upon the leading states of Greece, Athens and Sparta, to divide the supremacy of the Greek world between them in order to take away the advantages (*tas pleonexias*) that the Persians desire for themselves over the Greeks (4.17). This *pleonexia* refers to the control that Isocrates believed the Persians wanted over the Greeks. It could apply to Persia's direct control of Asia Minor, granted by the treaty, but Isocrates deploys the word *epithumousin* (desire) to indicate that Persia desired advantage (*pleonexia*) over the Greeks, not that it had already achieved it.

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[17] Isocrates, *Speeches*, trans. George Norlin and Larue Van Hook, vol. 2, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), 25n*d*.

[18] The contents and effect of the Treaty of Antalcides are debated: T.T.B. Ryder, *Koine Eirene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 34-36; R. Seager, "The King's Peace and the Balance of Power in Greece, 386-362 B.C.," *Athenaeum* (1974): 36-63; G.L. Cawkwell, "The King's Peace," *CQ* (1981): 69-83; Ernst Badian, "The King's Peace," in *Georgica: Greek Studies in Honor of George Cawkwell*, ed. Michael Flower and Mark Toher (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1991), 25-48; Sviatoslav Dmitriev, *The Greek Slogan of Freedom and Early Roman Politics in Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 27-28. Badian argues that Isocrates inflates the power Persia had over the Greeks, and most scholars seem to agree that Persia was indifferent to Greek affairs, contrary to Iscorates' assertions. Badian, "The King's Peace," 41.

[19] Charles D. Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories: Politics and Diplomacy in the Corinthian War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), 306-9.

Later, Isocrates notes that thanks to the peace of Antalcides, the Persian king has the advantage over the Greeks (*pleonexia*) because he controls half the known world (4.179). Here, *pleonexia* pertains to Persia's ability to have the Greeks to recognize its power over them by making Greek cities erect copies of the treaty on steles or in temples (4.179). Thus, *pleonexia* denotes the advantage gained by having more power than others and the ability to use that power to settle affairs as one desires regardless of the inclination of the other party. Due to the power differential, the weaker party must obey the stronger, even if no direct control mechanisms, such as territorial governors, exist. It has lost complete freedom of action.

Isocrates also employs *pleonexia* to mean power or advantage over others when he discusses the benefit of reason. In praising Athens, he notes that the city recognized that *logos* distinguished men from animals; men use this advantage (*pleonexia*) to dominate animals (4.48). Through reason, mankind controls animals and nature in general. Thus, *pleonexia* does not have to refer to a specific unfair gain, but the ability to influence and control other beings without the other ability to stop this control.

Second, Isocrates deploys *pleonexia* in the *Panegyricus* to refer to the desire for territory. In defending Athens' conduct before and during the Peloponnesian War, Isocrates claims that the establishment of cleruchies was not *pleonexia*.[20] The section compares Athens' fifth century empire to the Spartan hegemony of the fourth century. According to Isocrates, the Athenians treated their allies with equality and benevolence, whereas the Spartans sponsored chaos and upheaval. Isocrates claims that the Athenian Empire fostered economic growth of both private households and cities (4.103), did not develop factionalism, provided all with the same laws (4.104), and exported to its allies the same form of democracy that Athens enjoyed (4.106).[21] He ends by asserting that cleruchies were meant to add population to depopulated allied cities and were not territory grabs (*pleonexia*) on the part of Athens (4.107). The *pleonexia* in the sentence, then, deals with the charge that Athens took territory from its allies.

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[20] Cleruchies were Athenian colonies in which the Athenians took the land and houses from an allied city and then gave them to Athenian citizens. It was this and several other practices, such as the

Later in the pamphlet, Isocrates calls upon Athens and Sparta to lead an expedition against Persia. He claims that the resulting war would not be a campaign of conquest (*pleonexia*) but rather a just war (4.183), since Persia had previously injured Greece during the Persian Wars and still had designs to conquer it (4.183). The *pleonexia* signifies the advantage gained by being more powerful than others and also the confiscation of territory from another power.

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imposition of tribute, that made the Athenian empire so onerous. That cleruchies were banned in the charter of the Second Athenian Naval Confederation (the fourth century version of Athens' fifth century empire) demonstrates how unpopular the practice was. In the *Panegyricus*, amusingly, Isocrates attempts to defend the practice. Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, ed. and trans. S. Usher (Warminster, UK: Aris & Philips, 1990), 176. On the Second Athenian Naval Confederation, and specifically cleruchies: Jack Cargill, *The Second Athenian League* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 146-60; George Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War* (London: Routledge, 1997), 101-3. On the exploitive nature of cleruchies: Alfonso Moreno, " 'The Attic Neighbor': The Cleruchy in the Athenian Empire," in *Interpreting the Athenian Empire*, ed. John Ma, Nikolaos Papazarkadas, and Robert Parker (London: Duckworth, 2009), 211-21.

[21] As stated in the introduction, Isocrates is an Athenian apologist, and his presentation of the Athenian Empire is too optimistic—it even clashes with his presentation of the Empire in *On the Peace*.

In the *Plataicus*, Isocrates calls for Athenian citizenship for the people of Plataea after Thebes destroyed the city in 373.[22] He uses *pleonexia* to indicate acts of territorial acquisition, of gaining an advantage in war, and to show the detrimental effects of such policies. He begins by attacking the hypocrisy of Theban policy: the Thebans deride the Spartans for seizing the Cadmea, yet they destroy the walls and at times entire allied cities in order to maintain control (14.19). Thebes disliked giving Oropus to Athens (a territory contested between the two cities) yet took the territory of others (14.20). Isocrates attributes such attitudes to Theban *pleonexia* (14.20). Thebes dislikes actions that weakens itself but approves of the same actions when they strengthen Thebes to the detriment of a rival power.

Isocrates then praises cities for acting on *pleonexia* when appropriate, and he censures them for operating on it when inappropriate. He notes that "the wise seek to have advantage in war but in peace to respect covenants and oaths" (ἐν μὲν τῷ πολέμῳ σκοπεῖν ὅπως ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου πλέον ἕξουσι τῶν ἐχθρῶν, ἐπειδὰν δ᾽ εἰρήνη γένηται, μηδὲν περὶ πλείονος ποιεῖσθαι τῶν ὅρκων καὶ τῶν συνθηκῶν) (14.23). He claims that the Thebans do not follow this policy; rather, they mouth words of freedom but seek to advance their own agenda (14.24-5). The Thebans claim that their actions are to the advantage (*sumpheron*) of their allies (14.25), but Isocrates disagrees.[23] He characterizers Theban actions as self-serving, and he argues that it is foolish to act on *pleonexia* when it impedes justice (κακῶς εἰδότες ὡς οὐδ᾽

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[22] Plataea was a longtime ally of Athens, which had stood with the Athens during the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.

[23] Again a contrast between *sumpheron* and *pleonexia*. The Thebans would claim that their actions help all, *sumpheron*, whereas Isocrates labels the Thebans' actions as helpful only to the Thebans and hurtful to Thebes' allies, *pleonexia*.

αὐτοῖς τοῖς παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον πλεονεκτοῦσιν) because people bring great risk to themselves by seeking gain at the expense of others (14.25). Thus, Isocrates utilizes *pleonexia* in the context of international relations to describe acts of imperialism and gaining advantage in war, and he warns against acting on it in times of peace.

Isocrates' *Archidamus*, a speech in defense of Spartan control of Messene, includes *pleonexia* to refer to the desire for territory and to having an advantage. The context of the speech is a peace conference in 366 where the allies of Sparta beseeched Sparta to accept a Theban peace proposal that would end the war in return for Messene's freedom, even though Sparta had controlled Messene for three hundred years.[24] Archidamus, the speaker and son of the ruling king of Sparta, begins the speech by condemning the allies of Sparta for asking the Spartans to give up Messene out of *pleonexia* (6.13). He declares that the allies fear losing their own territory in the war and therefore call upon the Spartans to voluntarily give up Messene, even though the Spartans have gone to war on the allies' behalf in the past (6.13). The meaning of *pleonexia* here is clear: the allies do not want to risk continuing the war against Thebes and wish to retain control of their own territory at the cost of Sparta's control of Messene.

In the rest of the speech, Isocrates employs *pleonexia* to refer to having an advantage in war. Archidamus believes that the Theban demand for Sparta to give up

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[24] The war between Thebes and Sparta began with Sparta's seizure of the Cadmea in 378 and resulted in the battle of Leuctra in 371; though Sparta lost at Leuctra, the fighting continued for another ten years. The dating of the speech remains speculative and Terry Papillion puts it anytime between 366 and 355; Terry Papillon, "Introduction to the *Archidamus*," in *Isocrates II*, trans. Terry Papillion, vol. 7, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 109-10. The period between the battle of Leuctra and Mantinea, 371-62 BCE, is known as the "Theban Hegemony." Thebes was the leading power in Greece, but it never enjoyed the supremacy that Athens or Sparta had had earlier. Buckler's *The Theban Hegemony* remains the text on the subject; John Buckler, *The Theban Hegemony, 371-362* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980). For a broader view of the history of the region in the fourth century see: John Buckler and Hans Beck, *Central Greece and the Politics of Power in the Fourth Century BC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Messene is unprecedented; even when Sparta was forced to conclude peace on unfair terms (conclude a peace under circumstances that made it impossible to have the advantage [*pleonektein*]) with Persia or Athens, it was never forced to give up Messene (6.30). The *pleonexia* in this section denotes the ability of Athens or Persia's to control the fate of Sparta without Sparta being able to respond.

Near the end of the speech, Archidamus employs *pleonexia* to mean having an advantage in war. He proposes that in Sparta the women, children, and infirm would leave Sparta and go to various colonies or friendly cities, whereas Spartan men would form a roving army (6.74-80). This would give the Spartans many advantages (*pleonexias*), since the Spartan government was already organized like an army. The Spartans could terrorize other Greeks as they pleased without fearing the need to defend home territory or dissension in the ranks (6.76). On account of these advantages, they would have power over their enemies (6.77). Though the plan sounds impractical, Terry Papillon points out that in section 46 Isocrates described a similar action carried out successfully by Amyntas of Macedon.[25]

In *On the Peace*, Isocrates' treatise written on how Athens should treat its allies in response to the Social War (357-55),[26] *pleonexia* describes acts of seeking to have power over others in international affairs, and it appears in both a negative and positive manner. In the opening, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* negatively to mean advantage gained through conquest. He says that initially his counsel will appear to be to allow Thebes to continue to control territory it recently took from Athens, which would weaken Athens. He chides those who believe this, noting that "it is folly and madness to think that injustice is advantageous" (ἄνοιαν καὶ μανίαν τῶν τὴν ἀδικίαν πλεονεξίαν εἶναι νομιζόντων) and that those who desire to subjugate other cities have not learned the consequences of such policies (8.17).[27] Here *pleonexia* describes the advantage Thebes gained through control of Athenian territory. Isocrates decries such policies as folly, and he moves on to how to attain true advantage. He states:

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[25] Papillon, *Isocrates II*, 126n45.

[26] Papillon, "Introduction to *On the Peace*," *Isocrates II*, 134. The Social War was the functional end of the Second Athenian Naval Confederation, when several key island cities, Chios, Cos, Rhodes, and the city of Byzantium withdrew from the confederation citing Athenian oppression.

> that all men crave their advantage (*sumpherontos*) and to be better off than the rest (*tou pleon ekhein tōn allōn*), they do not all know the kind of conduct which leads to this end but differ from each other in judgment, some possessing a judgment which is sound and capable of hitting the right course of action, others one which completely misses their true advantage (*sumpherontos*) (28).

Those who act on piety and justice will have an advantage (*pleonektein*) in the true sense of the word as opposed to the base sense (8.33).[28] Those who function on injustice, the base *pleonexia*, operate as animals about to fall for a trap; they perceive that taking the goods of others is the greatest goal, but find out that these actions hurt only themselves (8.34). Like Plato, Isocrates notes that the unjust live under the delusion that a life of injustice is better than a life of justice (8.35).

He reveals the meaning of true advantage by discussing the history of Athenian foreign policy. The city won fame at Marathon and the Persian War not through aggressive expansion, but for protecting Greece from Persia (8.37-42). For this service, the rest of Greece thought Athens was worthy of hegemony (8.42). Since then, however, Athens has ruined its good name by seeking to enslave other Greek cities (8.42). During the Persian War, Athenians abandoned Athens to save Greece; in Isocrates' day, citizens do not risk a fight even for gain (*pleonexia*), though they dream of world domination, but instead use mercenaries (8.43-44). The true advantage Isocrates discusses is the power gained through good will. Earlier, cities followed Athens because it gained a good reputation through its service and sacrifice during the Persian Wars. This authority over others was not obtained by conquest, but was freely given. Thus he differentiates between what he sees as greater and lesser forms of *pleonexia* and chides Athens for adopting policy based on the latter.

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[27] I disagree with Laistner's commentary on this section - he notes that Isocrates uses *pleonexia* in a "good sense" because it refers to advantage, yet Isocrates notes that it is folly and madness (ἄνοιαν καὶ μανίαν) to believe that injustice is advantageous. So, while it could mean advantage in this situation, Isocrates is certainly not giving it a positive connotation. Isocrates, *De Pace and Philippus*, ed. and trans. M.L.W. Laistner (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1967), 84.

[28] As will be discussed later, Isocrates here differentiates between a *pleonexia* in which some gain and others are hurt, *pleonexia* in a base sense, and a form of *pleonexia* where one has an advantage without impinging on others—*pleonexia* in Isocrates' sense. Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 2, 25n*d*.

Later in the speech, Isocrates labels Athens' attempts at territorial expansion during the Peloponnesian War *pleonexia*, and he derides them.[29] He recounts how during the festival of Dionysus, Athens paraded both the tribute of the allies and the orphans created by the war on stage for all to see. The orphans were brought out to show why the allies were paying tribute,[30] but really the Athenians were showing the Greeks "the multitude of orphans and misfortunes which resulted from *pleonexia*" (τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ὀρφανῶν καὶ τὰς συμφορὰς τὰς διὰ τὴν πλεονεξίαν ταύτην γιγνομένας) (8.82). The *pleonexia* in the passage could refer to the imposition of tribute on the allies, but it does not. By repeating the article *tas,* Isocrates links the *sumphoras* (misfortunes) to the *gignomenas* (happening) so that *pleonexia*, which is modifying the

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[29] Which war is unclear in the immediate context, though later Isocrates discusses Athenian policy during the 410s, so my assumption is that the war refers to the Peloponnesian War. Todd notes that the section 40-94 deals with the events of the Peloponnesian War. Papillon, Introduction to *On the Peace, Isocrates II*, 135.

[30] What the allies paid for in coin, the Athenians paid for in blood.

tas gignomenas, describes the source of the misfortunes, the war (8.82). So, in the passage, Isocrates equates Athens' struggle for power in the Peloponnesian War with *pleonexia*. He continues that the policy of desiring the possessions of other states (τῶν δ᾽ ἀλλοτρίων ἐπιθυμίας) led to pointless aggression in the form of the Sicilian campaign and resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands while the Spartans ravaged Athenian territory in Attica (8.84-85). Overall then, *On the Peace* employs *pleonexia* as the seeking power over others, and it underscores how ruinous such policies had been for Athens.

In *To Philip*, an open letter written to Philip II of Macedon after the Peace of Philocrates in 346,[31] Isocrates again relies on *pleonexia* to refer to either one state having power over others or territorial acquisition. The speech urges Philip to lead a panhellenic campaign against Persia in order to remove the advantages (*pleonexias*) that the Persians have over the Greeks (5.9). In this context, *pleonexia* could refer to Persia's control of Greek cities on the Ionian coast of Asia Minor, which had been granted to Persia in 386, or to the power Isocrates believed Persia to have over the Greek states—the Greeks relied upon Persia to guarantee the various peace agreements that had been attempted from 387 to 361. Either way *pleonexia* describes the power Persia held over Greeks, a power Isocrates resented and wanted to remove.

When explaining why Macedon must lead the effort, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* to describe Greece's history of struggles for dominance. He notes that Argos, Sparta, and

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[31] The peace ended a ten year war between Athens and Macedonia. Philip II was the father of Alexander the Great, and in the mid fourth century was the leading figure in Greece. The signing of the peace was contentious. Scholarship on Peace of Philocrates: John Buckler, *Philip II and the Sacred War* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 114-42; Douglas McDowell, *Demosthenes: On the False Embassy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1-13; Ian Worthington, *Philip II of Macedon* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2008), 98-104. For a review of earlier scholarship on the Peace: Buckler, *Philip II*, 121-29.

Thebes cannot be reconciled because they have a long history of seeking to gain (*pleonektein*) against each other (5.39). Argos and Sparta had historically challenged each other for hegemony over the Peloponnesus, and Sparta and Thebes had a more recent history of fighting for control of Greece—a contest that resulted in the battles of Leuctra in 371 and Mantinea in 361. Isocrates hopes that Philip's leadership would compel the competing states to work according to policies of mutual advantage (*ōpheleia*) as opposed to ruinous policies of self-aggrandizement (*pleonexia*) (5.40).[32] Isocrates concludes by using *pleonexia* to describe the Spartan hegemony. He explains that just as no one praised Athens for its empire but for its actions at Salamis, so too people laud Sparta for its defense of Thermopylae, not its later victories over other Greeks (5.148).[33] To Greeks, the monument at Thermopylae is proof of Spartan valor, whereas trophies of Spartan victories over other Greeks are monuments of Spartan *pleonexia* (5.148).[34] The monuments remind the Greeks of the period when Sparta had control over them, and they loath them.

In his speeches regarding foreign affairs, then, Isocrates routinely relies on *pleonexia* to refer to acts of seeking power, either through direct annexation or indirect influence, over others, and he warns against such policies; they can alienate others and thus lead to disadvantages for the more power state. But he also uses the term more neutrally to refer to gaining an advantage in war.

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[32] Similarly to Plato (chapter Three) Isocrates contrast between a form of advantage that supports all, *ōphelias,* and the advantage that only benefits one party at the expense of others, *pleonexia*.

[33] Again what is interesting here is that Isocrates, though he is critiquing Athens and Sparta for similar misconduct, the abuse of power when in position of authority, does not suggest that Athens operated on *pleonexia*.

[34] Norlin and Van Hook translate *pleonexia* here as greed, but I keep it as *pleonexia*, since, hopefully, I have demonstrated by now that translating simply as greed glosses over the nuances; Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 1, 335.

In *Against the Sophists*, *Against Callimachus*, *Evagoras*, and *Areopagiticus*, Isocrates applies *pleonexia* to identify individuals who seek profit for themselves to the detriment of the *polis* community. In *Against the Sophists* and *Against Callimachus*, he deploys *pleonexia* to describe men who manipulate situations for their own advantage. *Against the Sophists*, written around 390, contrasts other teachers of rhetoric with Isocrates.[35] He identifies two kinds of teachers whom he labels sophists.[36] The first kind of sophists treated the teaching of rhetoric as a form of rote memorization and measured success by the number of students they could attract (3.10). The second kind taught rhetoric as a skill that allowed a person to take advantage of others in court (3.19). Isocrates attacks the latter kind of teachers for ignoring the virtues of the study of rhetoric and for instructing students to be meddlesome (*polupragmosunē*) and pleonexic (3.20). He contrasts his own ideas of studying rhetoric as a way of self-improvement to those teachers who see it as a means to win disputes or court cases (3.21). If taught well, as Isocrates does, rhetoric can better an individual, but too many teachers either do not put in the required effort, or treat rhetoric as a way to craft clever arguments that give a person the advantage (*pleonexia*) in court.

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[35] David Mirhady, "Introduction to *Against the Sophists*," in *Isocrates I*, trans. David Mirhady and Yun Lee Too, vol. 4, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 61.

[36] In general, sophists were teachers of rhetoric. They were maligned in Athenian writing as charlatans who taught their students how to trick juries with clever speeches. For a brief overview: Yun Lee Too, *A Commentary on Isocrates' Antidosis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 11-15.

Against Callimachus was written for an unnamed defendant who was trying to protect himself against persecution from an Athenian named Callimachus.[37] In the speech, Isocrates portrays Callimachus as a man who sought, wherever he resided, to live in such a manner as to benefit himself while either not contributing to society or actively seeking to keep others down (ζητεῖ πλέον ἔχειν) (18.50). During the last ten years of the Peloponnesian War, Callimachus avoided military service (18.47). He fled Athens, only to return during the regime of the Thirty. Then he sided with the Thirty against the democrats until it became obvious that the regime had lost (18.48-9). Continually, he sought to use the laws to benefit himself as if he had been unjustly hurt in some capacity, but in reality he avoided more duties than most citizens (18.50). In this manner, he did not seek to be equal to his fellow citizens but to have more than them (18.50).

The *Evagoras*, a eulogy composed sometime between 370-365 for a king of Cyprus, contains one use of *pleonexia* meaning advantage and one in which *pleonexia* is harmful to the community.[38] In the introduction, Isocrates notes that poetry has an advantage (πλεονεκτούσης τῆς ποιήσεως) over prose when it comes to eulogies because of its reliance on meter, but speech writers should see this as a challenge, not an obstacle (9.11). When recounting the history of the city of Salamis, Isocrates states that the city was ruled by the sons of Teucer until a Phoenician fugitive stole the crown and killed the king because of the fugitive's grasping disposition (δεινὸς δὲ πρὸς τὸ πλεονεκτῆσαι) (9.20). Out of his desire to solidify his power, the usurper then sold the city into servitude under the Persians (9.20). Thus, individuals operating on *pleonexia* are detrimental to the autonomy of a city since they are willing to sell the city into servitude in order to gain something for themselves.

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[37] David Mirhady, "Introduction to *Special Plea Against Callimachus*," in *Isocrates I*, trans. David Mirhady and Yun Lee Too, vol. 4, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), 96-97.

[38] Mirhady, Papillon, and Lee Too, "Introduction to Isocrates," 10.

The *Areopagiticus*, in which Isocrates called for the reform of the Areopagus council, presents the Areopagus as an institution that improved Athens in part by curbing *pleonexia.*[39] It associates *pleonexia* with oligarchies and condemns governments that work according to it. In listing the virtues of the Areopagus, he notes that the existence of such a body removed the temptation of *pleonexia* from office holders because there was oversight and punishment (τοὺς δὲ πολιτευομένους τῶν πλεονεξιῶν) (7.55). The body watched out for the interests of the state and guarded against the excesses of the poor, the young, and old, and office holders (7.55).

Isocrates concedes that his defense of the Areopagus makes him sound like an oligarch, but he insists that he has always disparaged oligarchies and *pleonexia* (7.60). He praises well-ordered democracies and Sparta in particular, because policies of equity and equality among citizens strengthen a city in both internal cohesion and external influence (7.61).[40] In contrast, the current Athenian government, which he claims everyone criticizes, is still better than the Thirty Tyrants (7.62-69). Though the current democratic government may not be good, it cannot match the crimes of the Thirty, which allowed public buildings to fall apart, stole temple property, sold public dockyards at a loss, and put Athenian citizens to death without trial (7.66-67).

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[39] The Areopagus Council was a council made up of former office holders that had jurisdiction primarily over homicide cases, but others such as treason as well. Robert Wallace argues that this speech is not a sincere call for aristocratic reform in Athens, rather it reflected Isocrates' own program of leadership and education as a way to reinvigorate Athens power abroad: Robert Wallace, *The Areopagus Council to 307* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), Chapter 6, 207-12. In *Political Dissent*, Ober discusses the speech in the context of Isocrates' ideas on how to reform fourth century Athenian democracy. Ober, *Political Dissent*, 277-86.

[40] Technically the Spartan government, among full Spartan citizens, was a democracy—full citizenship was just limited to few individuals within Spartan society.

The democracy, however, healed the wounds created by the Thirty and restored Athenian power. Isocrates' proof of the magnanimity of the democracy is that the democrats paid back a debt created by the Thirty with public money. When the Thirty were fighting the democrats, they borrowed a vast sum to besiege the democrats holding the Piraeus (7.68). When the democrats overcame the oligarchs, they agreed to pay back the debt with public money as opposed to taking it from the supporters of the Thirty (7.68-69). In this way, the restoration of democracy brought peace and stability to Athens (7.69). This peace and stability allowed Athens to regain the power it had lost at the end of the Peloponnesian War. Athens became so powerful that Sparta had to turn to it for help. Under the Thirty, Sparta gave orders to Athens; under the democracy, Sparta begged Athens for assistance.[41] Isocrates summarizes his analysis with "the oligarchs wanted to rule the citizens and be slaves to the enemy, whereas the populists wanted to rule others and give equality to the citizens." He ends the section by remarking that he brought up the Thirty in order to reinforce the idea that he disapproves of both oligarchy and *pleonexia* (7.70).

The entire section links oligarchies—specifically the Thirty at Athens—with *pleonexia*. The actions of the Thirty—the plundering of temples, selling off dockyards for a loss, killing citizens—can all be associated with individuals acting according to

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[41] There reference here is to Spartan request for aid after the defeat of Leuctra in 371—Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 2, 149n*b*. Isocrates is being disingenuous here. Athenian power revived with the restoration of its democracy, but he overlooks thirty years of history, specifically the calamitous ten year war that Sparta fought with Thebes, which culminated in Leuctra.

pleonexia. Isocrates then contrasts the unfair actions of the oligarchy with the equality and fairness of democracies, even bad democracies. He also shows that working on the basis of *pleonexia* weakens a regime: the Thirty eventually fell, whereas the restoration of the democracy, in Isocrates' thinking, renewed Athenian power itself. So, in the *Areopagiticus*, Isocrates reinforces the idea that functioning on *pleonexia* undermines both internal cohesion and the power of a city.

Isocrates also applies *pleonexia*, more neutrally or even positively, to describe a person having admirable advantages in life. In *To Demonicus* and *Antidosis*, Isocrates presents *pleonexia* as both a negative and positive attribute. In *To Demonicus*, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* to explain how men should not act. Written between 374 and 370 BCE to a young man whose father recently died, it is a treatise on ethics that discusses how a man should act in relation to the gods, other men, and himself.[42] In the section on how to interact with others, Isocrates exhorts Demonicus to act like a king: if he finds himself in a position to take more than others (*pleonektein*), then he should only take his fair share (1.38). Acting in this manner would give the young man a good reputation, which is preferable to living with unjustly acquired wealth (1.38). Isocrates hopes that the young man does not follow those who seek gain by injustice but rather those who follow justice, because the latter have the advantage (*pleonektousin*) (1.38). This section, then, presents three ideas about how Isocrates understood *pleonexia.* First, the idea can be used both in a positive and negative sense in the same passage.[43] Second, the two uses have a similar meaning—acting in such a way as to benefit one's self. The difference is how this action manifests itself. In the negative manifestation, this benefit happens by preying on others. In the positive manifestation, this benefit happens by acting in ways that are laudable within the community. Third, Isocrates associated justice with this positive manifestation of *pleonexia*.

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[42] Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 1, 2-3.

[43] Though Weber does not believe *To Demonicus* is authentic Isocrates, he agrees that the passage presents both a positive and negative form of *pleonexia*; Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung," 146-47. David Mirhady notes that there is dispute about the authorship of *To Demonicus* but argues that the consensus is that the work is by Isocrates; Mirhady, "Introduction to *To Demonicus*," 2.

The *Antidosis*, written sometime in 354-53 as a defense of Isocrates' career and in order to distinguish himself from sophists, incorporates pleonexic language to refer to both manipulation of language for personal benefit and the idea of *pleonexia* providing a positive advantage.[44] Near the beginning of the speech, Isocrates notes that he has been charged with "teaching young men to speak and to gain advantage in courts contrary to justice" (ὥς διαφθείρω τοὺς νεωτέρους λέγειν διδάσκων καὶ παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσι πλεονεκτεῖν) (15.30). Isocrates repeats this charge in section 89 and again at 228 in order to disparage those who make it. The repetition of the charge shows that, as in *Against the Sophists*, Isocrates and others understood *pleonexia* as the act of gaining an unfair advantage in court. It also serves to recall to the audience's mind the charges against Isocrates so that he can introduce new arguments against them.

In the speech, Isocrates derides his detractors for being ignorant or lazy; he believes that they desire to speak well, but they believe that either it is an innate ability that they lack or are unwilling to put in the time and the effort to learn how to speak well (15.247). Therefore, they deride those who try to learn rhetoric and attack those who wish to learn to speak well for seeking their own advantage (ὥς περὶ πλεονεκτεῖν δυναμένων τοὺς λόγους ποιοῦνται) (15.247). Like the charge against which Isocrates is responding, this section presents *pleonexia* as a way of manipulating speech in order to give the speaker an unfair advantage in court.

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[44] Too, *A Commentary on Isocrates' Antidosis*, 1, 6-7.

At 228-29, Isocrates posits that acting on *pleonexia* disrupts the community. He asks if he were teaching his students to act on *pleonexia*, then why do they live peaceful lives and not annoy their neighbors (15.229)? The implication is that if he had taught them to act according to *pleonexia*, then they would be unable to live within a community (or they would be hated). Since his students work well within a community, they do not act on *pleonexia*.

In most of this treatise, Isocrates treats *pleonexia* negatively—it is the desire to manipulate a jury unfairly for one’s own purposes. Toward the end of *Antidosis*, he makes a transition to discussing a positive form of *pleonexia*, though in the course of his discussion, he notes that his use of the term goes against the common understanding:

> People can become better and worthier if they conceive an ambition to speak well; if they become possessed of the desire to be able to persuade their hearers and finally if they set their hearts on seeing their advantage—I do not mean “advantage” (*pleonexias*) in the sense given to that word by the empty-headed, but advantage in the true meaning of that term (15.275).
>
> εἰ πρός τε τὸ λέγειν εὖ φιλοτίμως διατεθεῖεν, καὶ τοῦ πείθειν δύνασθαι τοὺς ἀκούοντας ἐρασθεῖεν, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις τῆς πλεονεξίας ἐπιθυμήσαιεν, μὴ τῆς ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνοήτων νομιζομένης, ἀλλὰ τῆς ὥς ἀληθῶς τὴν δύναμιν ταύτην ἐχούσης

He dismisses the idea that liars and robbers have the advantage over others (εἰ μέν τις ὑπολαμβάνει τοὺς ἀποστεροῦντας ἢ παραλογιζομένους ἢ κακόν τι ποιοῦντας πλεονεκτεῖν, οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἔγνωκεν) (15.281). Then, he presses the idea that righteous and faithful individuals, who handle the affairs of the home and the city the best, have an advantage over others (χρὴ δὲ καὶ νῦν πλέον ἔχειν ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ πλεονεκτήσειν νομίζειν) because the gods will favor them (15.282). People mistakenly believe that robbers and liars have an advantage because people do not understand the true meanings of words (15.283). They label buffoons gifted instead of those who demonstrate true excellence, and those who engage in criminal activity are thought to have the advantage (πλεονεκτεῖν νομίζουσιν) (15.284).[45] In Isocrates' world-view, the righteous and upright have the advantage of good things but not of evil (οἳ περὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀλλ᾽ οὐ τῶν κακῶν πλεονεκτοῦσι) (15.284). The advantage of which Isocrates speaks is the ability to think and reason. He explains that those who study philosophy have the benefit of critical thinking and therefore are less likely to make mistakes (15.292). Thus, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* to refer to advantage, but he presents it as a positive attribute.

Although Isocrates uses *pleonexia* to denote a positive attribute, he still presents it in a binary condition: good people will gain more of the good things in life and will suffer less. To have advantage, in the sense of *pleonexia*, means to have more of good things while having less of something else. Those who enjoy true advantage will gain rewards for leading an exemplary life, for example respect in the community, and through their virtue will suffer less from the ills of life. Thus, though Isocrates attempts to present a new definition of *pleonexia* (which he claims is the true definition of the term), he still understands it in a binary condition—to have more of something means having less of another.

In *Nicocles* and *Panathenaicus*, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* in discussions of both international and domestic affairs to refer to acts where one individual desires to gain by taking from another; he also uses his own positive definition of *pleonexia* as found in other works. One of his earliest works, *Nicocles*, is about how and why the subjects of a king should support a monarchy. Written in the voice of Nicocles, a king of Cyprus, the work relies on both positive and negative meanings of *pleonexia. Nicocles* relies upon a positive *pleonexia* to convey an idea of advantage in regard to philosophy, and a neutral form of *pleonexia* to indicate the benefits a monarchy enjoys during war and the benefits of political associations. *Nicocles* opens with a discussion of the virtues of the study of philosophy. Isocrates starts by asserting that critics of philosophy claim people study it out of a desire for advantage (πλεονεχίας ἕνεκα) and not a desire for virtue (3.1). Those same critics applaud men who strive to act rightly (*orthōs*). The writer then asks what the difference is between seeking advantage through speech or action, since more advantage can be obtained by action (3.1).[46] It is better to seek advantage through virtue (δι᾽ ὧν ἄν τις μετ᾽ ἀρετῆς πλεονεκτήσειεν) than pursue it through deceit and injustice (3.2).[47] The instances of *pleonexia* in the passage refer to seeking an advantage; as in the *Antidosis,* Isocrates distinguishes between a common understanding of *pleonexia,* which is gain at another's expense, and his own. At 3.1, the *pleonexia* indicates taking advantage of others through clever speech, a negative connotation. The *pleonektēseien* at 3.2 identifies actions that would empower an individual. Through the study of philosophy, one learns reason and virtue, giving the individual greater ability to do good things, without taking from another. In contrast, those who gain through deceit and injustice take from others. Thus, *pleonexia* denotes seeking an advantage.

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[45] On the parallels to Thucydides: Ober, *Political Dissent*, 275.

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[46] The Greek is: εἰ γὰρ αἱ πλεονεξίαι λυποῦσιν αὐτούς, πλείους καὶ μείζους ἐκ τῶν ἔργων ἢ τῶν λόγων εὑρήσομεν γιγνομένας (if seeking advantage offends them, we shall find more and greater advantages arising from deeds as opposed to words). Here the idea of *pleonexia* is neutral.

[47] Norlin and Van Hook here note that in this passage Isocrates is discussing true advantage, an advantage which does not put others at a disadvantage; Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 1, 77n*b*.

Later in the text, Isocrates deploys *pleonexia* more neutrally when discussing seeking advantage over others. Monarchies have all the advantages (*pleonexia*) in wartime, because one-man rule is more efficient than having multiple commanders (3.22). Persia, Dionysius of Sicily, Carthage, and Sparta all benefited from having a single commander, as opposed to states that had multiple commanders, such as Athens (3.24). Finally, Isocrates uses the language of *pleonexia* to refer to political associations granting an advantage to people in types of government that are not monarchies. In the section where he entreats the nobles to obey the king and not to plot against him, he notes that political associations might be advantageous (*pleonektousin*) in other forms of governments, but they are dangerous to monarchies (3.54).

Isocrates also relies upon negative uses of *pleonexia.* First, he uses *pleon ekhein* to describe how oligarchs and democrats work to prevent negative *pleonexia*. He notes that oligarchies and democracies strive to guarantee equality among enfranchised citizens to ensure that no one should be able to take more from another (ἢν μηδὲν ἕτερος ἑτέρου δύνηται πλέον ἔχειν) (3.15). In this instance, Isocrates uses *pleon ekhein* to refer explicitly to the act of taking more at another’s expense. Second, Isocrates employs *pleonexia* to refer to imperialism. Isocrates notes that other rulers seek to conquer territory belonging to a weaker neighboring state in order to have more (*pleonektein*) (3.34). In this instance *pleonexia* has a neutral connotation as Isocrates is not judging whether it is right for a king to conquer weaker states, but he notes that it is something they do. So in *Nicocles*, Isocrates employs *pleonexia* in a positive, negative, and neutral manner, but continually in the context of gaining advantage or power over others.

The *Panathenaicus*, Isocrates' last work, was completed in 339 for the Panathenaic festival of 342, warns against acting on *pleonexia* both on the international and intra-polis arena. On international affairs, Isocrates again stresses that functioning according to *pleonexia* only hurts those who follow it. Isocrates claims that although both Sparta and Athens pursued imperial policies in the past, Athens never dominated its allies to the extent that Sparta did. He contends that Athens encouraged allied city-states to become democracies, while Sparta forced pro-Spartan oligarchies on its subject cities (12.54).[48] Isocrates agrees with other authors that the imposition of governments on allies was a mark of Spartan *pleonexia* and that such acts caused resentment and resistance to Spartan leadership (12.55). Later, he claims that the problem with Greece in its current state is that Athens and Sparta seek to gain an advantage (*pleonexias*) over the rest of the Greeks with the support of the Persian king (ἐλπίζοντες … κυρίους τούτους γενήσεσθαι τῆς ἐν τοῖς Ἕλλησι πλεονεξίας) (12.160). Again, as in the *Panegyrics*, *pleonexia* refers to having power over others, but Isocrates casts that those who act on this only hurt themselves. Athens and Sparta do not benefit from acting on *pleonexia* because they weaken themselves and only give power to Persia.

In internal matters, when discussing the best form of government, Isocrates notes that government reflects the nature of those who participate in it. He argues that the form of government—oligarchy, democracy, or monarchy—does not matter; what matters is what kind of individual holds office (12.132). If the office holder is just, then the city will do well in both foreign and domestic affairs (12.132). If they function on *pleonexia*, then the citizens will suffer (133). The *pleonektēs* cares nothing for the affairs of the common good (τῶν μὲν τῇ τόλει συμφερόντων μηδὲν φροντίζουσιν), but strives instead for his own benefit (ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς αὕτῶν πλεονεξίας ἑτοίμοις οὗσιν ὅτιοῦν πάσχειν) (12.133). Those who live in the state ruled by *pleonexia* have to endure their leader's wickedness (τὰς δὲ τούτων πόλεις ὁμοίως οἰκήσεσθαι ταῖς τῶν προεστώτων πονηρίαις) (12.133). Thus, Isocrates distinguishes between governments operating on justice and those driven by *pleonexia*. Those that operate on justice support all; those that operate on *pleonexia* benefit a few at the expense of many.

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[48] This is Isocrates being a bit too optimistic about the past.

At the end of the *Panathenaicus,* an unnamed student of Isocrates enters the work and states that Isocrates is trying to be clever by describing Sparta as pleonexic. He declares that like sophists or people in the law court who are trying to manipulate a contract (περὶ μὲν συμβολαίων καὶ περὶ πλεονεξίας), Isocrates is guilty of using double meaning: appearing to condemn Sparta of *pleonexia* when he is actually celebrating it (12.240). He affirms that it is fine to apply *pleonexia* to the Spartans (he acknowledges the speech describes the Spartans as warlike and grasping [πολεμικοὺς καὶ πλεονέκτας]), but that it is wrong to give *pleonexia* a negative connotation. He states that people who use *pleonexia* to describe contract breakers, cheaters, and those who falsify accounts are wrong (12.243). Such men are thought ill by all, but the Spartans, kings, and despots, who operate on *pleonexia,* are seen to be blessed by heaven (12.243). People might despise the power of Sparta, but all wish they had it, or were associated with someone who had it (12.243-44). It seems a constant that all men regard having an advantage over others as a good thing (φανερόν ἐστιν ὅτι μέγιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἅπαντες εἶναι νομίζομεν τὸ πλέον ἔχειν τῶν ἄλλων) (12.244).[49] Thus, in his last work, Isocrates continues to use *pleonexia* as he had throughout his career—it signified when an entity operated in such a way as to benefit itself at the expense of others, whether on the international or domestic stage. The only difference in the last work is that he allowed an interlocutor to put forward a position found in other writers: that people are jealous of those who act on *pleonexia* on a grand scale. Isocrates has no reply to this accusation.

Thus, when discussing both foreign relations and internal matters, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* to refer to attempts to gain at the expense of others or, more generally, to obtain an advantage. In foreign relations, he characterizes both the Greeks' constant fighting against each other and the abuse that Athens, Sparta, and Thebes inflicted on its respective allies as *pleonexia*. Ultimately, this *pleonexia* only harmed the perpetrators themselves. In domestic affairs, he presents it as actions in which an individual gains either power or advantage over others and shows that it is disruptive to a body politic. When discussing the military or rhetoric, he does allow *pleonexia* a positive meaning; in both instances, it is good to have the advantage (*pleonexia*). In this way, Isocrates uses *pleonexia* in a manner similar to authors already discussed while incorporating his own interpretation.

***Pleonexia* in Demosthenes**

Demosthenes uses *pleonexia* in general to refer to gain at the expense of others in his speeches for the assembly and the courts. When used in relation to foreign affairs, this desire referred to territorial acquisitions or power over other states. Within the context of forensic speeches, the gain described financial transactions or the manipulation of law. Demosthenes presents such actions as dangerous to a city. Like other authors, however, he also applies the term to obtaining an advantage in a neutral sense and once even puts it in a positive context as well. As with Isocrates' speeches, I have organized the speeches of Demosthenes, and those attributed to Demosthenes, based on the use of *pleonexia* as opposed to chronological order.

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[49] These arguments echo the sentiments found in the *Gorgias* and *Republic*—there was a core of individuals who felt that acting in one's own interest was good, however they were countered by authors such as Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates.

In his orations against Philip II of Macedon, Demosthenes uses *pleonexia* to refer to the ambition or acts of gaining control of territory or cities.[50] In the *Second Olynthiac*, one of the speeches that Demosthenes gave against Philip during Macedon's war against Olynthus in 349-48 BCE,[51] he declares that Philip has built a coalition based on *pleonexia* (2.9). Philip promised Amphipolis to Athens and then betrayed Athens by keeping the city; he gave Potidaea to the Olynthians and promised Magnesia to the Thessalians (2.6-7). Philip, thus, gained support from Greek states through the promise of the subjugation of another city, *pleonexia*.

The *Second Philippic*, delivered in 344, repeats the charges that Philip operates according to and feeds on the *pleonexia* of others. Demosthenes adds that such actions can only lead to the ruin of states. In the opening of the speech, he notes that those like Philip who seek self-aggrandizement (ὅτι πάντες . . . τοὺς πλεονεκτεῖν ζητοῦντας) must be stopped by practical measures and not by speeches (6.3). He then attacks Philip for siding with Thebes at the end of the Third Sacred War and accuses Philip of preying upon Theban, Argive, and Messenian *pleonexia* as a way to further his own desires.[52] Philip favored Thebes after the end of the Third Sacred War because he believed the city would aid his *pleonexia* and desire to control everything (6.7). He knew he could count on the *pleonexia* of the Thebans because during the Persian War, 481-79 BCE, Thebes aligned with Persia against the rest of Greece in order to gain power (6.11). Therefore, he was certain that Thebes would forego the common interest of Greece in order to advance its goals (*pleonexias*) (6.12). Demosthenes counters critics' assertion that Philip is acting out of justness, not *pleonexia*, by stating that Thebes had no right to Orchomenus or Coronea, but this did not stop Philip from giving the cities to Thebes (6.13).

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[50] As with all discussions in this dissertation, I am interested only in how the author uses *pleonexia*, not whether the representation is accurate. Philip's actual intentions are debated in scholarship. older scholarship, such as Cawkwell, Ellis, see Philip as wanting to settle affairs in Greece in order that he could attack Persia. More recently Ian Worthington argues that above all Philip desired to make Macedon strong; finally, Robin Lane Fox puts forward that Philip wanted to conquer Persia but to accomplish this goals he felt it necessary to conquer Greece; J.R. Ellis, *Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 92, 125-27; George Cawkwell, *Philip of Macedon* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), 112-13; Ian Worthington, *Philip II of Macedon* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2008), 194-200; Robin Lane Fox, "Philip: Accession, Ambitions, and Self-Presentation" in *Brill's Companion to Ancient Macedon*, ed. Robin Lane Fox (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 354.

[51] The order in which the Olynthiacs were given is debated; Dionysius of Halicarnassus gives the order as 2,3,1, but modern commentators establish the order as 1, 2, 3; Jeremy Trevett, "Introduction to *First Olynthiac*," in *Demosthenes, Speeches 1-17*, trans. Jeremy Trevett, vol. 4, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 29-30.

In the *Third Philippic,* Demosthenes asserts that Philip's ambitions are greater than the Greek or barbarian world (οὔθ᾽ ἡ ῾Ελλὰς οὔθ᾽ ἡ Βάρβαρος τὴν πλεονεξίαν χωρεῖ τἀνθρώπου) (9.27). Before this statement, he listed the numerous cities and territories that Philip conquered, destroyed, or (Demosthenes claims) subverted,[53] setting up the *pleonexia* to refer to Philip's acts of conquest. *On the Crown,* Demosthenes' speech from 330 that defended his career against accusations made by his rival

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[52] The Third Sacred War was a war in central Greece over control of the shrine of Delphi, one of the most sacred areas of classical Greece. The war ended when Philip conquered the *polis* of Phocis, whose actions had precipitated the war. The peace gave Philip access to Greek affairs, whereas before he had been on the periphery: Buckler, *Philip II and the Sacred War*, 145; Ian Worthington, *Philip II,* 103-4.

[53] Trevett, *Demosthenes 1-17*, 164n41-42.

Aeschines, reiterates this characterization of Philip's career as feeding on the *pleonexia* of others. Demosthenes notes that Aeschines would have had Athens follow the path of ambition (ἐπὶ τῇ τῆς ἰδίας πλεονεξίας ἐλπίδι) and support Philip, just as Arcadia, Messene, and Argos did (18.64).[54] The three Peloponnesian powers aligned with Philip for help against Sparta.[55]

When defending Athenian foreign policy, Demosthenes continues to use *pleonexia* to describe acts of imperialism. In the *Second Olynthiac*, he claims that Athens refused self-aggrandizement (πόλλ᾽ ἰδίᾳ πλεονεκτῆσαι πολλάκις ὑμῖν ἐξὸν οὐκ ἠθελήσατε) in the Corinthian War and chose to give both money and men for the common good of Greece against Spartan aggression (2.24). Thus, Athens chose to act in such a way to benefit the common cause as opposed to trying to increase its own power. In the *Second Philippic,* he notes that Philip gave territory to Thebes because Philip knew he could buy Thebes' good will, whereas Athens would never support his goals of power (6.8). As opposed to selfish actions, the Athenians during the Persian War abandoned their own city for the cause of Greece (6.11). In *On the Chersonese,* he alleges that Athenians do not seek advantage or gain (ἐστὲ γὰρ ὑμεῖς οὐκ αὐτοὶ πλεονεκτῆσαι καὶ κατασχεῖν ἀρχὴν εὔ πεφυκότες), but instead seek to prevent others from ruling or to liberate those who are oppressed (8.42), an assertion reiterated in the *Fourth Philippic* (10.14).[56] Athens is anti-pleonexic, in fact, because it wishes to free cities from the control of others instead of trying to increase its own power by subjugating cities. Thus, by contrasting Athenian good will to Philip's actions, Demosthenes reinforces the idea that *pleonexia* on the international stage is evil gain at the expense of other cities' independence.[57]

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[54] Harvey Yunis' commentary translates this *pleonexia* as greed. Harvey Yunis ed., *Demosthenes on the Crown,* Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 147.

[55] Usher, *Demosthenes De Corona*, 193.

[56] Hajdú notes that the line in the *Fourth Philippic* is parallel to *On the Chersonese* and recalls Isocrates; Hajdú, *Kommentar zur 4. Philippischen*, 179.

Throughout these same speeches, Demosthenes states that any policy based on *pleonexia* will ultimately be self-defeating. In the *Second Olynthiac*, he declares that alliances such as Philip's, built on *pleonexia* and crime (*ponēras*), will break apart (2.9). In the *Second Philippic*, he observes that Philip's ultimate goal is power over all, and to accomplish this, he feeds on the *pleonexia* of other cities, in particular Thebes. Those who trust Philip are foolish, however, because he only gives gifts to states in order to subjugate them later. He gave the Olynthians Amphipolis and Potidaea only to conquer Olynthus itself (6.20-21); he ejected despots and added territory to Thessaly only to put it under the control of his tetrarchs (6.22). In *On the Chersonese*, Demosthenes alleges that cities that sided with Philip did so out of desire for power over neighboring cities and consequently suffered domination by Philip. The Olynthians allied with Philip and acquired the city of Potidaea and other territory; the Thebans attained Boeotia; and the Thessalians took Pylaea (8.65). These cities, however, will or have already suffered. Philip enslaved the Thessalians and destroyed Olynthus (8.62). In *On the Crown*, no state profited from siding with Philip, according to Demosthenes. Philip "destroyed the prestige, the authority, the independence, and even the constitution of every city alike (of those who allied with him)" after his victory at Chaeronea in 338 (18.65).[58] Thus, acting on *pleonexia* is dangerous and will only lead to subjugation by another power.

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[57] In *War, Peace, and Alliance in Demosthenes' Athens*, Peter Hunt dismisses Demosthenes calls description of Athenian policy based on good will as "high flown rhetoric." Demosthenes was a politician trying to stir the people up against Philip so his discussions do not necessarily reflect his true intentions. However, Isocrates and Demosthenes both advocated policies based on building good will, *eunoia*; Jacqueline de Romilly, "Eunoia and Isocrates or the Political Importance of Good Will" *JHS* (1958): 94; Peter Hunt, *War, Peace, and Alliance in Demosthenes' Athens* (Cambridge: University Press, 2010), 179-80.

Outside of his speeches against Philip, Demosthenes also presents *pleonexia* as the desire to gain territory at others' expense and argues that policy based on such desire is dangerous. Demosthenes uses *pleonexia* to refer to territorial annexation in *For the Liberty of the Rhodians*.[59] At the outset of the speech, he declares that people go to war more readily to defend their own territory than for conquest (ὑπέρ τε τοῦ πλεονεκτεῖν) (15.10). Men will not fight as hard for territory they conquered compared to territory they feel they must defend (15.10). Demosthenes introduced this point by reminding the assembly how Athens liberated the island of Samos from Persia during a satrap revolt without provoking a war with Persia.[60] Since the king did not feel that Samos was part of the Empire, he did not go to war with Athens to regain it (15.9).

For the Megalopolitans, written as a response to a Spartan peace offer of 353 that endeavored to end the continual fighting in Greece through territorial concessions, depicts Sparta's goal of territorial acquisition as pleonexic.[61] First, Demosthenes contrasts his proposed course of action for Athens against the idea of *pleonexia*. He contends that an alliance with the Arcadians (the people of Megalopolis) is consistent with the Athenian policy of acting according to justice as opposed to *pleonexia* (16.15). Athens is not trying to gain power through the alliance; rather, it is helping an ailing city, like it had helped Sparta, Thebes, and Euboea (16.14). So, Athens would not enter into the alliance with the Arcadians for sake of expanding its influence (*pleonexia*), but rather good will.

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[58] The battle in which Philip destroyed the collective army of Greece including sizeable contingents from Athens and Thebes; Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens*, 248-54; Greek settlement after the battle: *Demosthenes of Athens*, 255-67.

[59] For a summary of scholarship on the speech: Worthington, *Demosthenes*, 124n89.

[60] *Demosthenes*, trans. J.H. Vince, vol. 1, Loeb Classical Series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), 416n*a*. Satrap revolt—revolt of the Persian Satrapies of Asia Minor in the 360s. Those that revolted received aid from Sparta. The revolt was put down by 362, but in the process the island of Samos gained its independence. On whether the Great Satrap revolt is real: Michael Weiskopf, *The So-called 'Great Satraps' Revolt', 366–360 B.C.: Concerning Local Instability in the Achaemenid Far West*, Historia Einzelschriften, 63 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1989).

[61] The date for the speech is debated, but it was given in the late 350s, when the major Greek states were embroiled in the Third Sacred War, though the peace also deals with the repercussions of the Theban/Spartan war which ended in 361, but resolved nothing. Jeremy Trevett, "Introduction to *For the Megalopolitans*," in *Demosthenes*, *Speeches 1-17*, trans. Jeremy Trevett, vol. 4, Classical Orator Series (Austen: University of Austin Press, 2011), 274.

Second, Demosthenes casts Spartan and Theban territorial goals as *pleonexia*. If Sparta gained control of Megalopolis (which would happen through the proposed plan), then it could reconquer Messene and threaten Thebes (16.21). Demosthenes therefore argues that it is better to resist Spartan *pleonexia* (the annexation of Megalopolis and Messene) now, rather than having to come to Theban aid later (16.21). His solution is to restore the independence of Orchomenus, Thespiae, and Plataea, cities which had been destroyed or annexed by Thebes, without disrupting existing cities and without allowing Megalopolis or Messene to fall to Sparta (16.25). The restoration of the cities would check Theban power without empowering Sparta. If the Megapolitans agree with this idea, then they would be siding with justice; otherwise, they would be complicit in Theban *pleonexia* (16.28).

Against Aristocrates asserts that those who act on *pleonexia* are dangerous to Athenian interests and ruinous to the city's reputation. The speech revolves around whether or not Athens should pass a law that would prosecute any potential killer of Charidemus, a mercenary general working for the Thracian king Kersobleptes. Additionally, the law would prohibit Athens from allying with any city that harbored

Charidemus' killer. Demosthenes attacks the suggestion as being unwise policy. He characterizes Charidemus as an adventurer who seeks his own advantage (*pleonexia*). He professes that granting Charidemus such protection would be bad policy for Athens because men who act on the desire for more (*pleonektein*) risk what they already have (23.113). Such men consider the rewards but not the dangers of their actions (23.114); this avarice makes them mercurial. Kotys, a former king of Thrace and father of Kersobleptes, was friendly to Athens when it was to his advantage, but when he had the power, he would attack Athenian holdings near Thrace (23.114). Men like Kotys, Philip II, and Alexander of Pherae served Athenian interests when it suited them but then betrayed the city's trust (23.119-21). In the case of Kotys, though Athens had rewarded him with citizenship and all manner of honors, he was so hated at the time of his death in Athens that the Athenians rewarded his killers (23.119). However, as Demosthenes later points out, even one of Kotys' killers acted on *pleonexia* and hurt Athens. Pytho, after killing Kotys, first fled to Athens, but when it was in his interest, he turned to Philip (23.127). Demosthenes ends the story of Pytho by reminding the jury that they should not trust men who act on *pleonexia* (23.127).

Allying with pleonexic men is not only dangerous but would also hurt Athens' reputation. Demosthenes portrays Charidemus as ready to attack any city which got in the way of his ambition (εἵνεκα τῆς ἑαυτοῦ πλεονεξίας) (23.139). If Athens supports him, then it must be ready to attack cities that only desire to protect their independence. If Athens attacked such cities, then it would lose its reputation as a protector of Greek freedom (23.140). In the speech, then, Demosthenes presents men who act on *pleonexia* as dangerous; they follow their own ambitions at the expense not only of their direct victims, but also of those who would trust them. Overall, in his speeches relating to foreign policy, Demosthenes continually uses *pleonexia* to refer to territorial ambitions and presents such drives as having negative consequences for those who act or support them.

In forensic speeches by Demosthenes or attributed to Demosthenes, the writer presents *pleonexia* as either the seeking of monetary gain from an opposing party or the manipulation of laws for the benefit of one party over others. Generally these actions are portrayed as harmful to society.

First, there are the cases in which *pleonexia* indicates monetary gain at the expense of another. *Against Spudias*, an early speech of Demosthenes, presents a case in which the plaintiff alleges that Spudias, as the inheritor of the estate of the plaintiff's father-in-law, owes the plaintiff the 1,000 drachmas that he had been promised by the late father-in-law.[62] In the speech, the writer notes that "Spudias claims he is being defrauded (*pleonekteisthai*) of 1,000 drachma, but he is lying" (41.25). Here, Spudias makes the claim that the plaintiff is taking advantage of him by taking the money and refusing to pay it back. In that way, the plaintiff would have gained at Spudias' expense.

In *Against Meidias*, delivered in 346 BC, Demosthenes accuses Meidias of striking him (Demosthenes) while he was officiating during the greater Dionysia of 338, one of the great Athenian public religious festivals.[63] Demosthenes claims that he gave up the profit (*pleonexia*) of a private suit to protect the public (21.28). Since Meidias assaulted Demosthenes, Demosthenes could have brought a private injury suit against him; if Demosthenes won, then Meidias would have had to pay Demosthenes. Thus, Demosthenes presents *pleonexia* as profit from a private lawsuit in which he would have gained remuneration from Meidias. It is a neutral use, since Demosthenes would not present himself as pleonexic, but he still utilizes the term to refer to gain at the expense of another.

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[62] Adele C. Scafuro, "Introduction to *Against Spudias*, *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*," trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 87-88, 91.

[63] Edwin M. Harris, "Introduction to *Against Meidias*," in *Demosthenes 20-22*, trans. Edward M. Harris, vol. 12, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 77-79.

Later in the speech, Demosthenes deploys a more negative form of *pleonexia*. He declares that the leniency of Athenian jurors is an advantage (*pleonexia*) for all offenders (21.184). They have an advantage because the good will of juries allows them to get away with crimes. Not just crimes involving money, but also crimes which involve bullying others for personal benefit. Because of the leniency of the juries, then, the offenders continue to prosper from their malicious actions, leaving their victims to pay. Thus, in *Against Meidias*, Demosthenes uses *pleonexia* to refer neutrally to monetary gain derived from another and in a broader sense of taking advantage of others.[64]

For Phormio, a speech in which a son challenged a former slave over part of the inheritance of an estate, was written but not delivered by Demosthenes in either 350 or 349.[65] In the speech, Demosthenes accuses the plaintiff of only recognizing the parts of the father’s will that benefit himself as valid; the rest is not (οὐ γὰρ ἐκεῖνό γ’ ἐρεῖ, ὥς ἃ μὲν πλεονεκτεῖν τόνδ’ ἔγραψεν ὁ πατήρ, κύρι’ ἐστὶν τῆς διαθήκης, τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’ ἄκυρα) (36.34). The claim of *pleonexia* rests on an unfair reading of the will; the plaintiff only acknowledges what benefits himself while dismissing the rest to the detriment of other claimants.

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[64] In his commentary, Douglas MacDowell makes no reference to Demosthenes’ use of *pleonexia*. Douglas MacDowell, ed. and trans., *Demosthenes: Against Meidias* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), (28) 249, (184) 399.

[65] Douglas M. MacDowell, “Introduction to *For Phormio*,” in *Demosthenes Speeches 27-38*, trans. Douglas M. MacDowell, vol. 8, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 151-52.

Against Evergus and Mnesibulus, written sometime in the mid fourth century BCE by Apollodorus, an Athenian speech writer and a contemporary of Demosthenes, deals with the return of naval equipment after Theophemus had equipped a ship for the Athenian navy.[66] Apollodorus notes that Theophemus' *pleonexia* is terrible in matters that concern him (47.31). Theophemus owed naval equipment to the city, but he tried to claim that Apharaeus, the previous owner of the equipment, was responsible for it (47.31). When Apharaeus proved that Theophemus was liable, Theophemus claimed he gave the equipment to Denarchus, who was dead and whose estate was in litigation (47.32). In this convoluted scheme, Theophemus wanted to defraud the city by using the equipment but not paying for it. Later, Apollodorus displays Theophemus' pleonexic nature (ἡ πλεονεξία τοῦ τρόπου) when he claims that Theophemus seized the property of the plaintiff in order to secure a loan payment (47.77-78). When the loan was paid, Theophemus refused to return the property (47.76-77).

Against Timotheus, another speech attributed to Apollodorus, involves whether or not the plaintiff owed Timotheus for a shipment of timber that was supposedly sent from Macedon.[67] Timotheus claims that he entrusted the shipment to the plaintiff, but the plaintiff claims that Timotheus has no proof of this. Timotheus wants to get the plaintiff to pay more for goods already delivered. The plaintiff notes that Timotheus is trying to cheat him in order to gain (οἴει δεῖν ἀποστερήσας ἡμᾶς, ἐὰν δύνῃ πλεονεκτεῖν) (49.41). So the charge against Timotheus is that he misrepresented the facts to profit himself at the expense of plaintiff.

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[66] Adele C. Scafuro, "Introduction to *Against Evergus and Mnesibulus*," in *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 298. The case itself deals with the Athenian system of triarchies, in which rich men of Athens would come together to outfit ships for the Athenian navy. The plaintiff was responsible for outfitting such a ship, and went to Theophamus in order to receive equipment that Theophamus had previously used. Theophamus refused to return the equipment, and a series of events led to the lawsuit.

[67] Adele C. Scafuro, "Introduction to *Against Timotheus*," in *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 213, 354.

Against Callicles, probably by Demosthenes, involves a dispute between two neighbors about who should pay for damages due to a flood that was made worse by a wall that the defendant's father had put up years before. The defendant opens the speech by saying that there is nothing worse than a base and greedy neighbor (οὐκ ἦν ἄρ᾽ … χαλεπώτερον οὐδὲν ἢ γείτονος πονηροῦ καὶ πλεονέκτου τυχεῖν) (55.1). He goes on to describe how the plaintiff keeps trying to get the defendant's property. Callicles first had his cousin file a lawsuit against the plaintiff, then he filed suit for 1,000 drachmas, and finally he had his brother bring a third suit (55.2). In these instances, the *pleonexia* refers to the neighbor's attempt to get the land from the defendant.

In *Against Macartatus*, two Athenians argue over who is the true inheritor of the estate of Hagnias II.[68] In the speech, the writer, probably not Demosthenes, characterizes Macartatus and Theopompus as caring for nothing but profit (ὅτι οὐδὲν αὐτοῖς μέλει πλὴν τοῦ πλεονεκτεῖν) (43.68).[69] To this end, they held onto the property owed to others longer than they were supposed to, and once they controlled the estate, they uprooted and sold off all the olive trees on it for a profit (43.69-70). *Pleonexia* in this speech refers to the act of uprooting and selling the trees. Olive trees require years of cultivation before they can be harvested; therefore, by selling the plants from the estate, Macartatus and Theopompus did not just deny the owners of the profit from one harvest of olive oil, but several years of profits. Thus, for the sake of their immediate gain, the money made by selling the olive trees, they substantially hurt the plaintiff or anyone else who may have had a claim to the estate.

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[68] Adele C. Scafuro, "Introduction to *Against Macartatus*," *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 123-24.

[69] Ibid., 138.

Against Leochares is another case regarding a disputed inheritance, and it is not attributed to Demosthenes.[70] The speech presents Leochares as a man who acts on *pleonexia* in defiance of the law in order to profit at the expense of the proper heirs. He inherited an estate in Eleusis and claims another estate through adoption (the status of which is in question) due to *pleonexia* (44.28). To fund his legal proceedings for the disputed estate, he uses its own resources as a source of revenue, even though he does not own it (44.28). In an appeal to the jury, the plaintiff asks that the jury not aid men who seek advantage (*mē pleonektēsai*) but help those who seek their legal rights (44.28).

Later in the speech, the writer reinforces the message that the jury should protect those who work within the law. According to the speaker, Leochares attempted to enroll himself in the deme of Otrynia on account of *pleonexia* despite being registered in Eleusis (44.35).[71] The goal was to strengthen his claim to the inheritance of the estate and enjoy the benefits of being an Otrynian. These benefits included being paid during the Panathenaic Festival (44.37). Such acts are pleonexic not just because Leochares is acting out of a desire for gain, but also because he is seeking gain at the expense of others. The admission fee was paid for by the city, so by falsely claiming it, he is getting money at the expense of city. Claiming to be Otrynian in order to help with the inheritance case would also give him an advantage over the other claimants. Therefore, the writer continues, the jury should not support those who seek unjust advantage (*adikous pleonexias*) (44.38), but should uphold the laws.

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[70] Adele C. Scafuro, "Introduction to *Against Leochares*," *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 191.

[71] Eleusis and Otrynia are Athenian demes—localities within Attica in which people were registered and from which they could be sent to the Council of 500 as representatives. On the demes of Athens: David Whitehead, *Demes of Attica* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

Against Olympiodorus, not a speech by Demosthenes, also portrays *pleonexia* as an act by which a person gains at the expense of others.[72] In the speech, the plaintiff Callistratus claims that he and Olympiodorus decided to divide an inheritance between the two of them at the expense of other claimants (48.10-11). The two made an agreement and swore oaths that they would not try to take advantage of the other (μηδ’ ὁτιοῦν πλεονεκτήσειν τὸν ἕτερον τοῦ ἑτέρου) (48.9). Callistratus explains how he made certain that the estate was divided evenly between himself and Olympiodorus; he even split the proceeds from when they forced a slave to return stolen funds from the estate (48.15-16). Olympiodorus, however, did not return this favor when he found out that more money had been stolen (48.18-20). Later, Olympiodorus won the entire estate in a counter-suit, but he reneged on his oath with Callistratus to divide the estate evenly (48.31-32). In summarizing these actions, the plaintiff labels Olympiodorus as “covetous and unjust” (ἄδικός ἐστιν καὶ πλεονέκτης) (48.46). Here, *pleonexia* appears distinctly in a context of unjust distribution; the defendant is labeled as pleonexic because he took more than had been agreed upon.

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[72] Adele C. Scafuro, “Introduction to *Against Olympiodorus*,” *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 336.

Against Dionysodorus is about Athenian mercantile practices and is not considered to be written by Demosthenes.[73] In the speech, two men borrowed 3,000 drachmas to transport grain from Egypt to Athens. They ended up delivering the grain to Rhodes and then continued to transport grain from Egypt to Rhodes for several years. The initial lenders sued the defendants to regain the principal plus interest earned on the loan, whereas the defendants were only willing to pay them back for shipping the grain from Egypt to Rhodes. The speaker notes that if this case were being held in Rhodes, then the defendants might be able to get the better of him (οὗτοι ἐπλεονέκτουν ἡμῶν), but because an Athenian court was judging the case, he hoped for better (56.47). Here the *pleonexia* refers to the fact that a Rhodian jury might be more sympathetic to the defendants than an Athenian jury would, since the defendants delivered the grain regularly to Rhodes. Thus, the attempt to have the case tried in Rhodes, thus giving the defendants an advantage, is put in terms of *pleonexia*. Thus, Demosthenes or pseudo-Demosthenes continually used *pleonexia* to refer situations in which one party sought financial gain at the expense of another.

Fourth-century speechwriters also deployed *pleonexia* to describe individuals who tried to manipulate the law for personal gain. These speeches also condemn such actions as being unhealthy for the state. In the second speech *Against Aristogiton*, a case in which the defendant tried to pay his debt to the state by illegally selling land, the writer, probably Demosthenes, uses *pleonexia* to refer to private benefit at public expense and notes that individuals who act on *pleonexia* are detrimental to the city. At the beginning of the speech, the writer notes that the defendant blocked a vote in the wake of Chaeronea that would have enfranchised disenfranchised Athenian citizens. Now the defendant asks the court to re-enfranchise him. The writer describes this action as *pleonexia* “for the previous measure was fair and equal to all in the city, but this (motion) is unfair and brings profit only to you (Aristogiton) of all the people of Athens,” (τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἴσον καὶ κοινὸν ἅπασι τοῖς πολίταις ἦν, τὸ ἄνισον καὶ σοὶ μόνῳ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει τὴν πλεονεξίαν κατασκευάζον) (26.13). This demonstrates the unfairness inherent in the idea of *pleonexia*. The first measure would have profited many, but the second would only profit Aristogiton.

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[73] Victor Bers, "Introduction to *Against Dionysodorous*," in *Demosthenes Speeches 50-59*, trans. Victor Bers, vol. 6, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 92.

At the end of the speech, the writer notes that good laws help all in society, whereas bad laws only service the *pleonexia* of a few. The writer notes that bad laws or lawlessness foster madness (*manias*), intemperance (*akrasia*), and *pleonexia* (26.25). Conversely, laws derived from wisdom engender good thinking and justice (*sōphrosunē*, *dikaiosunē*) (25). He continues that as a physician dispels disease from a patient, so too does a good lawgiver dispel savagery from a city through good laws (26.26). Though the author does not equate *pleonexia* to decline, in a manner similar to Plato he characterizes it as a societal illness that is solved through good law. Thus, in *Against Aristogiton*, the author demonstrates that *pleonexia* both is gain at the expense of others and a poison to society.

In *Against Stephanus*, Apollodorus charges that it is in the interest of the state that the weak should be able to seek redress from the laws rather than those who act on greed and covetousness (*pleonexia, aiskhrokerdeia*) (45.67).[74]

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[74] Adele C. Scafuro, “Introduction to *Against Stephanus*,” in *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 213.

Against Nausimachus and Xenothepos, probably written by Demosthenes in 346, presents the only positive use of *pleonexia* in the entire corpus of Demosthenes. In the speech, the writer notes that those who squander their money in selfish pursuits complain about having to pay for services to the state, whereas those who serve the state and manage their affairs well enjoy an advantage over the previous category (*pleonektoien*) (38.26). Not only do others recognize their service, but they also recognize that the people serve without complaint (38.26). The advantage to which the writer refers is the goodwill that people generate through service to the community. Though the references to *pleonexia* are positively charged, the section retains the idea that people who operate on *pleonexia* have an advantage over others; *pleonexia* is still a binary state where one party gains something over or against another party. In this specific case, it is the good will of the people of the city.[75]

Outside of the speeches, there are three more instances of *pleonexia* in the corpus of Demosthenes. The first example is in his *exordia* (unused openings to speeches). In the twenty-fourth fragment, he asks the jury not to allow the opposing speakers to take advantage (*pleonektousin*) of their simplicity. Thus, *pleonexia* refers to the act of manipulating the jury for the benefit of the speaker.[76] The second occurrence is in Demosthenes' funeral speech, delivered for the dead of the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C. Demosthenes begins the speech by summarizing the deeds of Athens' ancestors (60.6-11). He recalls that the Athenians boldly resisted the Persians and claims that, after the Persian War, the Athenians restrained any impulse for power over other Greek cities (ἔτι τοίνυν τὰς ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς Ἕλλησι πλεονεχίας κωλύοντες) (60.11). This fits with Demosthenes’ general characterization of Athenian foreign policy, distorted as it might be, and his insistence in other speeches that *pleonexia* is the gaining of power over other states.

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[75] Though a positive use of *pleonexia*, it does not necessarily suggest that Isocrates influenced Demosthenes. Weber notes that Demosthenes is not using the explicit definition that he argues Isocrates developed; therefore, he does not think Demosthenes' use demonstrates Isocrates' influence; Weber, "Die Bedeutung und Bewertung," 158.

[76] A neat rhetorical trick since the speaker is warning the jury not to be manipulated by neat rhetorical tricks.

The third usage of *pleonexia* is found in a letter regarding the sons of Lycurgus. In the letter, Demosthenes urges the Assembly not to punish the sons of Lycurgus unless they wanted to give an advantage (*pleonektein*) to those in Athens who were friends with the Macedonian court (3.23). Before this sentence, Demosthenes notes the services that Lycurgus performed for the people of Athens (3.2-3) and how the jailing of his sons dishonors Lycurgus and his service to Athens (3.6-7). Punishing the sons would give the friends of Macedon the advantage because it would win them public opinion (3.23). If the sons of such an honored man as Lycurgus were prosecuted, then people would lose faith in the city (3.27-28). In contrast to the harshness of Athens, Alexander would ask for, and obtain, pardons for the men. He had already done so in the case of Laches and Mnesibulus (3.24). Thus, if Athens punished Lycurgus’ sons, Alexander would be able to show magnanimity, and the people would trust him and his agents in Athens over the Assembly (3.27).

Thus, both in his speeches on foreign policy and in domestic court cases, Demosthenes relies on *pleonexia* to refer to gain at the expense of others. In foreign affairs, *pleonexia* means an attempt to gain power over another territory. In the court cases, *pleonexia* alludes to interpreting a law, will, or situation in one way as to benefit one person at the expense of others. The speeches also indicate that such impulses are contrary to law and justice and are detrimental to society. While such instances are the majority, Demosthenes, like Isocrates, occasionally uses *pleonexia* in a neutral or positive sense.

Continuity

Thus Isocrates and Demosthenes rely on *pleonexia* in a manner similar to that of the previous authors studied. It signified the desire to gain at another's expense and was detrimental to a *polis* in both inter-polis and domestic affairs. Scholars agree that earlier authors from the fifth and fourth centuries influenced Isocrates and Demosthenes, including in their use of *pleonexia*. Isocrates himself admits that other authors influenced how he used the term *pleonexia*. In the *Panathenaeus* he writes:

> Were I a younger man, I might perhaps have found means to characterize all of their (the Spartans) crimes in a few words which would have stirred in my hearers an indignation commensurate with the gravity of the things which these men have done; but as it is, no such words occur to me other than those which are on the lips of all men, namely, that they (the Spartans) so far outdid all those who lived before their time in lawlessness and greed (*anomia kai pleonexia*) that they not only ruined themselves and their friends and their own countries but also brought the Lacedaemonians into evil repute with their allies and plunged them into misfortunes so many and so grave as no one could have dreamed would ever be visited upon them. (12.55)[77]

Isocrates admits that he drew on the analysis of others, especially in choosing the word *pleonexia,* to describe the Spartan hegemony. This passage contains sentiments similar to Autocles' speech to the Spartan assembly in Book Six of Xenophon's *Hellenica,* specifically that Spartan *pleonexia*, in the form of abusing its allies through the imposition of oligarchies, eventually caused the end of the Spartan hegemony.[78] The similarity in explanations between the *Panathenaeus* and Xenophon's *Hellenica* demonstrates at the very least that in fourth-century Athens there was a common understanding among Athenian intellectuals that Spartan *pleonexia* ended the Spartan hegemony.

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[77] Translation by George Norlin, accessed from http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Isoc.+12+55&fromdo;c=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0143 on September 28, 2012.

[78] Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 2, 406-407; Papillon, *Isocrates II*, 182. Relevant passage in Xenophon's *Hellenica* 6.3.7-8

Isocrates and Demosthenes do not, however, connect individuals acting on *pleonexia* to outbreaks of *stasis* in a systematic fashion—as do Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle. Isocrates links *pleonexia* to strife within a *polis* once in his works in the *Busiris*, a eulogy to a mythical king of Egypt written sometime between 390 and 385 BCE as an example of how to write a eulogy.[79] In his praise of Busiris, the mythical Egyptian king, Isocrates notes that the king correctly divided the people of Egypt into three classes: workers, fighters, and priests (11.15). He contrasts this to Sparta, which similarly divided society between these classes, but then allowed its warrior class to prey on the property of the workers (11.19). At the end of this comparison, Isocrates notes, "if all followed the example of the sloth and *pleonexia* of the Spartans, then Athens would perish due to lack of necessities and civil war" (εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἅπαντες μιμησαίμεθα τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων ἀργίαν καὶ πλεονεξίαν, εὐθὺς ἂν ἀπολοίμεθα καὶ διὰ τὴν ἔνδειαν τῶν καθ᾽ ἡμέραν καὶ διὰ τὸν πόλεμον τὸν πρὸς ἡμᾶς αὐτούς) (11.20). In this construction, Isocrates Associates sloth with the idea of perishing from lack of necessities, and *pleonexia* with civil war, creating a causal relationship. Sloth creates a lack of necessities, and *pleonexia* causes civil war, *stasis*.

There are no speeches in the corpus of Demosthenes that link acting on *pleonexia* to *stasis*, but there are speeches that present *pleonexia* as a danger to civil society. In

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[79] Isocrates, *Speeches*, vol. 3, 101.

Against Phaenippus, written in the late fourth century but not by Demosthenes, the author claims that *pleonexia* is a danger to society.[80] He wonders where the poor can go for justice if the rich can buy advantage (*pleonektosin*) in court (42.31). *On the Trierarchic Crown* couples *pleonexia* with *philotimia* and presents both as desires that undermine society. The writer, probably Demosthenes, argues that the jury should find in favor of the speaker, otherwise they will be opening the way for people to buy honor (*philotimian*) and pay the greed (*pleonexia*) of professional pleaders (51.22).[81] This is the only pairing of *philotimia* and *pleonexia* in the corpus of Demosthenes, but it does not connect these ideas to *stasis*. The writer casts the two motivations as a danger to Athens because allowing the defendants to buy the Trierarchic Crown, an award given to individuals who served the state, would devalue the award. In this instance, *pleonexia* might refer to the monetary gain of the professional pleaders (they will be in greater demand), but it also might raise their standing in Athens since they could obtain the honors others sought through good oratory. This increase in prestige would undermine the achievement of those who earned the honors, as opposed to those who simply paid speech writers to win it for them. While not a political decline, acting on *pleonexia* and *philotimia* could create increased competition and devalue the award, consequences that Thucydides identifies in the Corcyraean *stasis*. Thus, the pairing of *philotimia* and *pleonexia* in *On the Crown* is the closest that any Demosthenes or pseudo-Demosthenes speech comes to relying on the *stasis* model created by Thucydides. So, while fourth century Athenian speech writers portrayed *pleonexia* as a danger to society, they did not emphasize the link between *pleonexia* and *stasis* as Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle did.

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[80] Adele C. Scafuro, "Introduction to *Against Phaenippus*," in *Demosthenes Speeches 39-49*, trans. Adele C. Scafuro, vol. 13, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 109-10.

[81] Victor Bers, "Introduction to *On the Trierarchic Crown*," in *Demosthenes, Speeches 50-59*, trans. Victor Bers, vol. 6, Oratory of Classical Greece (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 39-40.

Conclusion

The speech writers of the fourth century, then, understood *pleonexia* to mean "gain at the expense of others," but rarely used it to describe the outbreak of *stasis*. Isocrates used the term to describe acts of imperialism, gaining an advantage in war, manipulation of speech for one's own advantage, general acts of injustice, or having advantages in life, either with or without hurting others. Demosthenes deployed the term to refer to acts of imperialism, seeking financial compensation from another, or manipulations of law for one's own advantage. Both authors warned against acting on *pleonexia* in interstate relations. They did not continue the internal paradigm of decline, started by Thucydides and continued by Aristotle and Plato. Only in the *Busiris* does Isocrates connect *pleonexia* to *stasis*. *On the Trierarchic Crown* notes that individuals acting on *philotimia* and *pleonexia* endanger a city, but it does not attach the two words to *stasis*.

The use of *pleonexia* in Isocrates, Demosthenes, and other Athenian speech writers demonstrate that *pleonexia*, and specifically the dangers of *pleonexia,* was widely understood by the Athenian population. Its inclusion in court speeches with explanation indicates that the charge of individuals acting on *pleonexia* resonated with Athenian juries. Demosthenes' reliance on it to characterize Philip II reveals that members of the assembly understood how awful it was to act on *pleonexia*. The fact that the authors did not tie *pleonexia* to *stasis* further shows the limits of the paradigm of *pleonexia*. Intellectuals such as Plato, Xenophon, Isocrates, and others knew it, but it was either unknown or unnecessary to use it with a general audience. Examining *pleonexia* in the context of Athenian fourth century speech writers corroborates that fourth century writers understood the term to mean “gain at the expense of others,” and was presented as a threat to the external and internal affairs of a city. It also exposes the boundaries of the concept.

Chapter 5:

Pleonexia and Decline in Polybius

This chapter will examine how Polybius understood *pleonexia* and how he applied the concept in his *Histories*. Polybius was an Achaean statesman who turned historian when he was taken to Rome as a detainee at the conclusion of the Third Macedonian War in 167 BCE.[1] There, while living amongst some of the most influential Romans of the time, he began his *Histories*, a work that set out to explain how Rome came to dominate the Mediterranean in only fifty-three years (1.1.5). Polybius followed his classical predecessors in using *pleonexia* to signify the desire to gain at the expense of others and how acting on such an impulse caused the ruin of both individuals and cities.

First, this chapter will briefly discuss the problems of trying to find *pleonexia* in Hellenistic authors other than Polybius. Second, it will assess how scholarship on Polybius has dealt with *pleonexia*, decline, and continuity between Polybius and fifth- and fourth-century Greek authors. Third, it will review the instances of *pleonexia* within Polybius' text to determine how he understood the concept. Fourth, it will look at how Polybius tied *pleonexia* to ideas of *stasis* and decline, and recount how Polybius conceived of *pleonexia* as a driver of international events from the 220s to the 150s BCE. Finally, it will examine the continuity between Polybius and writers of the classical age and the implications of this continuity.

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[1] For more on Polybius' status while in Rome see Andrew Erskine's chapter "Polybius among the Romans: Life in the Cyclops' Cave," in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius*, ed. Christopher Smith and Liv Yarrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17-32.

Overall, I will show that Polybius, like his classical predecessors, understood *pleonexia* to be the desire to gain by taking from others and linked it to the outbreak of *stasis* and decline. While Polybius continued certain conventional aspects of *pleonexia*, he did not associate it with the manipulation of the courts or military advantage. He also paired *pleonexia* with *philarkhian*, desire for power, instead of *philotimia*, to explain why cities fall into civil strife.[2] These differences demonstrate that language changes over time, and they illustrate that the specific pairing of *pleonexia* with a word meaning desire for power as a source of *stasis* remained constant as an analytical concept between fifth and fourth century Greek authors and second century Greek authors. This continuity between authors suggests that the divide between Classical and Hellenistic world-views sometimes is more a construct of modern scholarship than an accurate depiction of a shift in Hellenic culture.

Between the Fourth Century and Polybius

The fragmentary nature of written material from the third and early second century BCE makes it difficult to trace this paradigm of decline caused by *pleonexia* between fourth-century writers and Polybius. Most of the texts of Hellenistic authors come from sections found or hypothesized to exist in subsequent authors, such as Diodorus Siculus, who wrote a history of the Mediterranean world in the first century BCE. *Pleonexia* and ideas of decline caused by it can be found in these texts, especially in Diodorus, but it is difficult to determine whether the *pleonexia* is from the original source or from the later author. For example, Jane Hornblower in *Hieronymus of Cardia* argues that Hieronymus, a general under Alexander the Great who wrote a history that covered the wars following Alexander's death, deployed *pleonexia* to rationalize the struggles of Alexander's marshals after his death.[3] She cites the prominence of *pleonexia* in Books Eighteen through Twenty of Diodorus Siculus' *Bibliotheke*, which she believes were taken directly from the history of Hieronymus of Cardia, as evidence of Hieronymus' reliance on *pleonexia*.[4] Hornblower believes that Diodorus "followed his sources very closely; but it would be wrong to assume that he is a purely mechanical copyist."[5] Thus, she argues that the analysis found in Diodorus belongs to Hieronymus, but allows that Diodorus could have adapted the source material to suit his own purposes.

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[2] Polybius utilizes *philarkhein* instead of *philotimia*, which earlier authors relied on, to mean "desire for political power in a city;" Polybius deploys *philotimia* to refer to struggles or contests, e.g. 1.26.3; 45.9, 11; 52.4.

In contrast to Hornblower, in *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century*, Kenneth Sacks contends that although Diodorus relied on other authors he constructed the *Bibliotheke* in accordance with his own thought.[6] This included inserting *pleonexia* into passages where it had not previously existed. In particular, Sacks points out that Diodorus injects *pleonexia* into a passage derived from Polybius 31.22, which laments the beginning of decline of Roman *mores*.[7] The Polybian material does not contain the word *pleonexia*; Diodorus' version does. For Sacks, this insertion indicates that Diodorus amended his source material to suit his own analysis. Therefore, the work of earlier authors cannot be reliably reconstructed from material found in Diodorus. Sacks in fact directly counters Hornblower's assertion that Diodorus simply appropriated Hieronymus' use of *pleonexia* by pointing out that Diodorus employs *pleonexia* almost fifty times in his text and only seven of those instance could be derived from Hieronymus.[8] Thus, the existence of *pleonexia* in Diodorus' text cannot be used to demonstrate that his Hellenistic sources, such as Hieronymus of Cardia, relied on the term.

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[3] Jane Hornblower, *Hieronymus of Cardia* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1981), 49n104.

[4] Ibid., 3.

[5] Ibid., 49.

[6] Kenneth Sacks, *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century* (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1990), 5.

[7] Ibid., 47.

There is evidence from within the text of Polybius, however, that earlier Hellenistic authors applied the idea of *pleonexia* and a word for the desire of power to explain the cause of strife. At the start of Book Three, Polybius states that the third-century BCE Roman historian Q. Fabius Pictor claimed that Hannibal's attack on Saguntum and Hasdrubal's *pleonexia* and *philarkhein* caused the Second Punic War (3.8.1). Polybius' quotation is more reliable than Diodorus' because Polybius identifies the analysis as belonging to Pictor. Diodorus does not cite Hieronymus as the source of his analysis. He may have relied on Hieronymus for information, but he presents the analysis about the successor kings as his own. Polybius, in contrast, quotes Pictor and cites him as his source of information. As Polybius wanted his audience to know whom he was quoting, it is less likely that he would change Pictor's words. Also, because Pictor wrote in Greek there is less possibility that the *pleonexia* is Polybius' interpretation of Pictor's words. So there is some evidence that Hellenistic writers relied on the notion of operating on *pleonexia* leading to strife in the third century BCE. Given the problematic nature of determining authorship, and the general fragmentary nature of Hellenistic texts, I restrict my analysis to the ties between Polybius and fifth and fourth century authors.

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[8] Ibid., 21.

Scholarship on *Pleonexia*, Decline, and Continuity in the *Histories* of Polybius

Although scholars have debated the influence of earlier Greek authors, such as Thucydides or Plato, on Polybius, they have overlooked the significance of *pleonexia* and decline in Polybius' writings. Weber's and Balot's studies of *pleonexia* do not extend past the end of the fourth century. Scholars who examine Polybius' moral world, such as Arthur Eckstein and Craige Champion, incorporate *pleonexia* in their evaluations of Polybius, but do not focus on it. In *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius*, Eckstein argues that Polybius evaluated historical actors according to a traditional Greek aristocratic moral code, which included a condemnation of *pleonexia*, and not "Machiavellian" standard of success or failure.[9] In his inquiry into Polybius' moral code, Eckstein lumps *pleonexia* together with words such as *aiskhrokerdeian* (shameful gain) in a broader discussion of Polybius' views on greed.[10]

Craige Champion commits similar elisions in *Cultural Politics in Polybius' Histories*. He posits that Polybius in the *Histories* used a matrix of Greek cultural values associated with either "Hellenism" or "Barbarism" in order to criticize Rome's hegemony.[11] When Polybius supported Roman actions, he attributed Greek virtues to them, but he portrays Romans as barbaric when he feels that they acted poorly.[12] Champion follows Balot in defining *pleonexia* as greed or covetousness, and he argues that Polybius associated it with barbarism. Like Eckstein, Champion's analysis does not provide a precise definition of the term *pleonexia*, which leads him to inject the idea of *pleonexia* into parts of the text where it does not belong. Also, his treatment of *pleonexia* mainly as a rhetorical tool weakens its analytical significance.

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[9] Eckstein, *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 16-27.

[10] Ibid., 71-73.

[11] Craige Champion, *Cultural Politics in Polybius' Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 4.

[12] Ibid.

First, Champion's broader interpretation of *pleonexia* as greed causes him to read *pleonexia* into inappropriate parts of the text. He states that the innate *pleonexia* of the Gauls can be seen in 3.51 when Polybius describes Gauls leaving their village unattended in order to attack Hannibal's troops in hopes of loot ([Hannibal] καταλαβὼν δὲ σχεδὸν ἔρημον διὰ τὸ παντας ἐκκληθῆναι πρὸς τὰς ὠφελείας) (11).[13] Neither *pleonexia*, the related form *pleon ekhein*, nor even the more distant *epithumeō* appear in the passage. The word to describe loot in the passage is *ōpheleias*, which as I have discussed in earlier chapters does not have the same connotation as *pleonexia*. In fact Polybius only connects the Gauls to *pleonexia* in Book Two, when he notes that the Gallic war band that raided Etruria in 299 BCE destroyed a greater part of itself when it fell into internal fighting over the spoils due to *pleonexia* (εἰς δὲ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀφικόμενοι καὶ στασιάσαντες περὶ τὴν τῶν εἰλημμένων πλεονεξίαν, τῆς τε λείας καὶ τῆς αὑτῶν δυνάμεως τὸ πλεῖστον μέρος διέφθειραν) (2.19.3). Polybius does not attribute this infighting to any *pleonexia* that was inherent in the Gallic character, but to the Gauls' unrestrained love of drinking (*oinophlugia*) and satiety (*plēsmonē*) (2.19.4).

Second, Champion's insistence that Polybius used loaded language such as *pleonexia* as a rhetorical tool reduces the analytical importance of *pleonexia*. It dismisses the possibility of Polybius using *pleonexia* as a serious causal explanation of events and insists that instances of *pleonexia* are rhetorical attacks. I suggest that Polybius' employment of *pleonexia* is an act of psychological analysis; he deploys the term to refer to a natural impulse in individuals that causes them to act in a certain way. He certainly condemns acting on *pleonexia*, but I think it is as much a causal agent in his *Histories* as a value judgment. Thus, while authors such as Eckstein and Champion have recognized the existence of *pleonexia* in the text of Polybius, their analysis glosses over both the exact meaning of *pleonexia* and its role in Polybius' *Histories*.

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[13] Ibid., 115.

Correspondingly, scholars reduce the importance of Polybius' discussions of decline. In "The Idea of Decline in Polybius" Walbank dismisses the notion that Polybius had a well-thought out concept of decline in his *Histories*. He argues that since Polybius' emphasis was on the rise of Rome, any mention of decline would have been incidental.[14] Walbank recognizes that Polybius had a theory of decline of Platonic origins that was based on a concept of a natural progression of change, but he argues that this political theory did not have any impact on Polybius' presentation of historical events.[15] This dissonance between the theoretical and historical representation disposes Walbank to think that Polybius' idea of decline was underdeveloped and therefore unimportant.[16]

Walbank centers his argument on Polybius' discussion of the cycle of constitutions in Book Six, his prophecy of the fall of Rome at the end of Book Six, and three selections of what Walbank calls "social decline": Polybius' discussion of

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[14] Frank Walbank, "The idea of decline in Polybius," in *Polybius, Rome, and the Hellenistic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 210.

[15] Ibid., 210-11.

[16] Ibid.

Cynaethea, Boeotia, and Greece (4.17-18, 20-21; 20.4-6; 36.17).[17] While these are examples of decline, they are not representative of Polybius' discussion of political decline. Polybius applies the ideas found in Book Six, specifically that individuals acting on *pleonexia* transform democracies into mob rule, in his narrative in the accounts of Malpagoras at Cius (15.21) and Chaeron in Sparta (24.7). He also narrates how in Achaea Critolaus and Diaeus played upon the sympathies of the mob to gain power, which resulted in the Achaean League's destruction, but he does not include *pleonexia* in his analysis (38.10-18). Critolaus implemented debt relief policies similar to those other Polybian demagogues, such as Malpagoras, used when acting according to *pleonexia* (compare 38.11.10 to 15.21). The difference is that Critolaus canceled debts and taxed the rich, but he did not confiscate their property and re-apportion it to the poor. In a broader sense of showing how *pleonexia* breaks down communities, a central point of the *anakyklosis*, Polybius ties *pleonexia* to outbreaks of *stasis* throughout the narrative: the disintegration of Gallic attack on Etruria (2.19.3), Lycurgus protecting Sparta from *stasis* by dispelling *pleonexia* from Spartan life (6.46.7), Cretan *pleonexia* disrupting social harmony (6.46.9), and the breakdown of Carthaginian power in Spain in Book Nine (9.11.3). These are presentations of historical events in Greece that reflect Polybius' theoretical decline model.

In regard to Polybius' prophecy of Roman decline, Walbank claims that Polybius' inability in the last ten books to follow his own prognostication put forward in Book Six proves that Polybius did not have a coherent theory of decline. Walbank admits that Polybius had an increasingly negative view of Rome in the last ten books, but he insists that Polybius was still primarily concerned with the rise of Rome, not its fall.[18] Eckstein and Champion agree that the books demonstrate Polybius' belief in the decline of Roman morals, but neither argues, or tries to demonstrate, that Polybius applied his schema of decline at 6.57 to Roman actions in the last ten books.[19] I think the books are too fragmentary to make a judgment. It is possible that Polybius' narrative in the ten books do not follow Polybius' scheme, but that dissonance means that Polybius' model failed for those particular events, not that it was poorly thought out. As I will argue later in the chapter, the turbulent history of Rome in the first century BCE and the rise of Augustus, vindicate Polybius' analysis at 6.57. Thus, though Walbank downplays the existence of a general theory of decline in Polybius, even he acknowledges that Polybius included concrete ideas of decline, regardless of their flaws, in the text.

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[17] Ibid., 197-200.

Finally, scholars debate the influence of fifth- and fourth-century Greek writers on Polybius. In his article "Socrates Enters Rome," Paul Friedlander argues that Polybius would have been educated in Plato and adapted Platonic material into his *Histories*; Friedlander points to Polybius' emphasis on moral education as evidence of Platonic influence.[20] In *Metabole Politeiōn: Der Wandel Der Staatsverfassungen*, Heinrich Ryffel argues that Polybius derived his *anakyklosis*, the cycle of constitutions, from Plato, but through an unidentified intermediary writer.[21] Walbank in his commentary on Polybius' *Histories* agrees that the roots of Polybius' political theory originated in fifth- and fourth-century Greek thought, but he does not think Plato or other fifth- and fourth-century authors had a direct influence on Polybius; instead, Platonic thought trickled down to Polybius through a third- or second-century BCE philosopher.[22] In regard to the idea of decline, he says that Polybius' connection of *pleonexia* to changes in government and the forecast of the end of the Roman mixed constitution was a "commonplace theme" in Greek writing, found in Plato, Aristotle, and Thucydides.[23] In *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome,* Charles Fornara believes that Polybius' theory on decline had Roman origins.[24] He rejects that idea that any theory of decline could have originated from Greek authors, because he does not believe that Greek authors ever thought of decline in a systematic manner.[25] In *The Rise and Fall of State According to Greek Authors,* Jacqueline de Romilly admits the authors such as Thucydides and Polybius had similar explanations for why states lost power, but she argues that such parallels are due the authors' shared Hellenic world-view and not because Thucydides had a direct influence on Polybius.[26] Walbank, Luce, and Marincola agree that Polybius used Thucydides as an ideological model for pragmatic history—a history focused on military and political events that would be educational to the reader. They reach this conclusion based on the similarities between Thucydides' and Polybius' discussions of historical causation; both distinguish between immediate causes of conflicts, the direct events that lead to war, and the real causes, the sources of tension between two states that simmer for years before boiling over into open conflict (Thuc. 1.23.6; Polyb. 3.6.6).[27]

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[18] Ibid., 207-8.

[19] Eckstein, *Moral Vision*, 229-30; Champion, *Cultural Politics*, 145.

[20] Paul Friedlander, "Socrates Enters Rome," *AJP* (1945): 344-45.

[21] Heinrich Ryffel, *Metabole Politeiōn: Der Wandel Der Staatsverfassungen* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 198.

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[22] Frank Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 643-645, 650.

[23] Ibid., 745.

[24] Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 86.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States According to Greek Authors* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), 72.

Recent scholarship has returned to examining the parallels between Polybius and other ancient historians. An international colloquium in Leuven, Belgium, examined Polybius' relations with other historians of his time, but the conference focused more on how we use Polybius as a source for other fragmentary authors and less on the continuity in thought between Polybius and earlier authors.[28] In their respective chapters in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius,* Tim Rood and Georgina Langley argue that like Thucydides Polybius relied on discussions of human nature to explain historical events. Tim Rood examines the textual and thematic parallels between Polybius' descriptions of the Romans in the First Punic War and the Roman constitution and Thucydides' analysis of the causes of the Peloponnesian War and the Sicilian expedition in his chapter "Polybius, Thucydides, and the First Punic War." He strives to prove that Polybius drew on Thucydides' depiction of Athenian and Spartan characteristics to explain Roman expansion.[29] In "Thucydides, Polybius, and Human Nature," Georgina Longley shows that Polybius, like Thucydides, portrayed human nature as a causal force in history.[30] Eckstein's 2012 review of *Imperialism, Cultural Power, and Polybius* agrees that Thucydides and Polybius emphasized the power of human nature, but argues that Rood and Longley overlooked more obvious parallels. He observes that Polybius' discussion of why the Achaeans went to war with Rome in 146 echoes the language of Thucydides' Melian dialogue. Both declare that it is more disgraceful to fall into misfortune due to bad decisions and delusions about the chance of success than from bad luck.[31]

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[27] Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 40; T.J. Luce, *The Greek Historians* (London: Routledge, 1997), 132; John Marincola, *Greek Historians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 117.

[28] The papers presented at the conference were published as *The Shadow of Polybius: Intertextuality as a Research Tool in Greek Historiography* edited by Peeters Press in Leuven in 2005. On the purpose of the conference—Preface, IX-X.

[29] Tim Rood, "Polybius, Thucydides, and the First Punic War," in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius,* ed. Christopher Smith and Liv Mariah Yarrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 51.

[30] Georgina Langley, "Thucydides, Polybius, and Human Nature," in *Imperialism, Cultural Politics, and Polybius,* ed. Christopher Smith and Liv Yarrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 74-80.

In her chapter "The Rise and Fall of the Boeotians," in *Polybius and his World*, Christel Müller argues that Polybius' treatment of the decline of Thebes and Boeotia in 20.4-7 was derived from a long literary tradition of Theban decadence found in Greek thought.[32] Müller's chapter delves into Polybius' narrative in order to show how Polybius drew on earlier literary tropes, for example characterization of Boeotians as drunk country-bumpkins in Attic comedy, to explain Theban decline in Book Twenty. For Müller, Polybius' treatment of the Boeotians reveals Polybius' model of decline due to moral decadence, specifically drinking and greed, which Polybius applied to other Greeks, such as the Acanthians.[33] Thus, scholars have underappreciated Polybius' use of *pleonexia*, his conceptualization of decline, and the influence that previous Greek authors had on him, but are currently debating previous assumptions.

***Pleonexia* in Polybius**

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[31] Arthur Eckstein, "Review-Discussion: Polybius, the Greek World, and Roman Imperial Expansion," *Histos* 6 (2012): 2-3.

[32] Christel Müller, "Polybius 20.4-7 as a Literary Topos," in *Polybius and his World*, ed. Bruce Gibson and Thomas Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 277-78.

[33] Ibid., 269, 275-77.

Like his predecessors, Polybius utilizes *pleonexia* to characterize situations in which one party seeks to gain at the expense of another. The introduction to Book Four contains his most graphic picture of *pleonexia*. At 4.3.1, he notes that the Aetolians were unhappy with the affairs of Greece in the wake of the Cleomenes War (228-222 BCE) because without the revenues of war they lacked the resources to live as they desired. They lived like animals (θηριώδη ζῶσι βίον) always acting on *pleonexia* (*aei pleonetikon*), treating all as potential prey (4.3.1). Polybius' image of those who act on *pleonexia*, then, is that of a predatory animal: as an animal feeds on its victims, so too does the *pleonektēs* feed on its neighbors.[34]

This image illustrates that *pleonexia* can operate without a stated objective. Scholars translate *pleonexia* as the desire for wealth and assume its object is material, e.g. money, gold. *Pleonexia* is more versatile than that; as with the other authors surveyed, for Polybius its object can be wealth, but it can also be security or power. The object is irrelevant. What matters is that the desired object (whatever it is) is acquired by taking it from another. At 4.3.1, Polybius states that the Aetolians "are accustomed to living off their neighbors" (εἰθισμένοι μὲν ζῆν ἀπὸ τῶν πέλας). *Pleonetikon*, then, could refer to any kind of rapacious activity: the taking of herds, loot, or crops. Until the *arpagē* (booty) at 4.3.3, there is no specified object. The image of *pleonexia* that Polybius invokes, then, is of an animal feeding off another, figuratively eating its opponent in order to gain sustenance, and more broadly of one group gaining at the expense of another.

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[34] Walbank translates the *pleonexia* at 4.3.1 as "love of plunder"; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 451. Champion translates it as greed or covetousness. Champion, *Cultural Politics*, 242.

In terms of intra-community affairs, Polybius employs *pleonexia* to characterize situations where groups or individuals seek to gain wealth, land, or political power at the expense of others, especially fellow citizens. In Book Ten, he uses *pleonexia* to contrast Greek and Roman practices of sacking an enemy camp or city in order to explain why the Romans are superior. When sacking a camp or city, individual Greek soldiers take as much loot as each can get for himself (διὰ τὸ [τοὺς] παρὰ τοῖς πλείστοις πᾶν τὸ ληφθὲν εἶναι τοῦ κυριεύσαντος) (10.17.1). This policy endangers the army as a whole since the commanders lose control of the soldiers and risk allowing victory to become a disaster through an enemy counter attack (10.17.4).

Romans, on the other hand, evenly divide loot among all the soldiers (10.16.5). At the start of a campaign, all soldiers swear an oath that they will not steal parts of the plunder (10.16.7).[35] When sacking a city or camp, half the Roman force remains outside to protect those who are pillaging (10.16.8). The soldiers left behind for guard duty have no incentive to desert their posts since they are secure in their knowledge of obtaining a fair share of the spoils (10.16.9). On account of the oaths to divide the loot evenly, Romans do not risk suffering from *pleonexia* (οὐδέποτε κινδυνεύει Ῥωμαίοις τὰ ὅλα διὰ πλεονεξίαν) (10.16.8). *Pleonexia* in this instance, then, deals with the desire to acquire loot at the expense of others. The Greek soldiers take whatever they can. In doing so, they prohibit their fellow soldiers from obtaining an equitable share, and they put the entire army at risk of an enemy counter-attack. By dividing the spoils, Roman soldiers do not risk being endangered by *pleonexia*. So, at 10.16, Polybius deploys

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[35] Polybius believes that a strength of the Romans during Second Punic War was their fidelity to oaths; Eckstein, *Moral Vision*, 167-68. For Champion, Polybius' juxtaposing of the depiction of the Romans' savage sacking of New Carthage in 10.15 with the commendation of Roman discipline when sacking a city or camp in 10.16 shows how Roman character was in flux between Hellenic virtue and barbaric vice at the time of the Second Punic War. Champion, *Cultural Politics*, 148n15.

pleonexia to refer to desire to take more than an equitable share, and he indicates that acting on such an urge is potentially harmful.

The previous examples have shown that *pleonexia* in Polybius can refer to the acquisition of money or material goods, but it is not synonymous with words that denote the desire for money, such as *philarguria*. When *pleonexia* refers to the acquisition of wealth, there must be a word that indicates that money is its object. In the case of the Aetolians at the start of Book Four, it was booty (*arpagē*) (4.3.3). In the case of the Greek soldiers it was loot (*ōpheleia*) (10.17.3). Polybius' treatment of Scopas in Books Thirteen and Eighteen further demonstrates that when Polybius uses *pleonexia* to describe the desire for wealth, he includes words meaning money. In Book Thirteen, Polybius narrates how Scopas fled to Alexandria after failing to pass wealth redistribution laws in Aetolia in 204 BCE (13.2.1). Scopas' avarice only grew there (13.2.1). Polybius compares him to a patient with dropsy (edema), who continually thirsts for more but cannot be satiated (13.2.2). The court of Ptolemy paid Scopas as a mercenary commander, but his salary was not enough and he demanded more money (13.2.5). Ultimately, Polybius notes, Scopas lost his life due to his desire for money (13.2.5). While the passage discusses greed, Polybius does not use any form of *pleonexia* in it. He does use the phrase *to pleion epithumian*, which in earlier authors was used in a similar fashion as *pleonexia*, but even then he designates the object of Scopas' *to pleion epithumian* as money (*khruseos*) (13.2.5).

Polybius returns to Scopas and his greed in 18.55.1, where he uses both *philarguria* and *pleonexia* to describe Scopas and in doing so differentiates between them. In the section, Polybius discusses Scopas' disgrace and death in Alexandria. He notes that Scopas' *philarguria* was well known during his life, because his *pleonexia* exceeded that of other men (Σκόπα δὲ καὶ ζῶντος μὲν ἐπίσημος ἦν ἡ φιλαργυρία-πολὺ γὰρ δή τι τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους ὑπερέθετο κατὰ τὴν πλεονεξίαν) (18.55.1).[36] The report of Scopas' *philarguria* expanded after Scopas' death when the Egyptians found large amounts of money and valuables that had been taken from the palace in Scopas' house (18.55.1). To obtain these treasures, Scopas had looted the palace like a burglar (ἄρδην ἐξετοιχωρύχησε τὴν Βασιλείαν) (18.55.2). Polybius' inclusion of both *philarguria* and *pleonexia* in the passage indicates that the two terms are not synonymous. The *philarguria* identifies the object of Scopas' *pleonexia*, while *pleonexia* refers to the manner by which he obtained it—i.e., theft. If Polybius thought that *pleonexia* was limited to the desire of money, he would not have needed to specify that Scopas was *philarguria*. Polybius' treatment of Scopas thus demonstrates that *pleonexia* was not limited to the desire for money, but denoted the manner of acquisition—gain at the expense of others—as opposed to the object.

Polybius also used *pleonexia* to characterize how individuals sought to gain power within a political community. In Book Four, when elaborating on the machinations of Apelles, a senior adviser to Philip V, Polybius states that Apelles resorted to flattering Taurion, a rival adviser to Philip V, as opposed to personal attacks in order to delegitimize Taurion and gain more influence in the court of Philip (4.87.4). Polybius then states that such a tactic—the undermining an opponent through flattery—is a form of *pleonexia* that courtiers employ to get more power (4.87.4). Polybius goes on to note that Apelles later came to ruin due to his schemes and *pleonexia* (4.87.10).

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[36] Walbank has no comment. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 626.

In Book Fifteen, Polybius labels Malpagoras of Cius a demagogue and a *pleonektēs* because he played upon the mob to eliminate political rivals for power and eventually gained it.[37] In 15.21.1, Polybius describes how Malpagoras obtained power in Cius "by flattering the populace, by inciting the rabble against men of means, by finally killing some of the latter and banishing others whose property he confiscated and distributed among the people, soon attained by these means supreme power" (15.21.1). The first part of the description clarifies how Malpagoras was a demagogue, while the second explains how he was a *pleonektēs* because he a) implemented policies that took money from the rich and gave it to the poor and b) used these tactics in order gain political power for himself at the expense of his rivals. Polybius then proclaims that humanity is more foolish than animals, because people will fall for the same trap time and again, whereas an animal will avoid repeating a mistake (15.21.5). The trap, for Polybius, is policies of wealth redistribution, taking things from others for free and for one's own benefit, and their use by individuals seeking political power from the mob. He ends the section with the warning that such policies only bring ruin to a city (15.21.8).[38]

In Book Twenty-Four, Polybius attributes *pleonexia* to Chaeron, a Spartan magistrate, on account of his policies of wealth redistribution in order to gain political power. Like Malpagoras, Chaeron gained power by flattering the mob (24.7.2). He sought to cement his power in Sparta first by taking away land from the families of exiles and giving it to the poor without a regulated system of distribution (24.7.3). He then supplemented his income by redirecting public funds for his own purposes without regard to the law (24.7.4). When another magistrate, Apollonidas, threatened to audit Chaeron's accounts and expose his *pleonexia*—the theft of public funds for private purposes and political power—Chaeron had Apollonidas killed (7.6). Chaeron was eventually imprisoned for Apollonidas' murder (24.7.7).[39]

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[37] Paton translates *pleonektēs* here as "greedy for power." Polybius, *The Histories*, trans. W.R. Paton, vol. 4, Loeb Classical Series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[38] There is a lacuna in the text after 21.8, so it is uncertain how Polybius connects Malpagoras' rise to power with the destruction of Cius. The text resumes with Philip as the master of the city (22.1). The rest of the chapter gives the reader a guess as to what transpired. It states that Philip intervened on behalf of his son-in-law, unnamed in the text but who was in fact Prusias of Bithynia, to overthrow the revolutionaries (22.1). Walbank comments that which side Philip intervened on is unknown, but that it should not be assumed that he intervened against Malpagoras; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 475.

In Book Eighteen, Polybius condemns Demosthenes for falsely accusing other Greek statesmen of being traitors because they sided with Philip II (18.14). Polybius declares that the leaders of Greek cities in the time of Philip's reign made the pragmatic choice to save their cities as opposed being destroyed. Treachery, according to Polybius, would have been:

> Had they in acting thus either submitted to have their towns garrisoned by Philip, or abolished their laws and deprived the citizens of action and speech to serve their own ambition (*pleonexias*) and place themselves in power, they would have deserved the name of traitor. (18.14.9)[40]
>
> εἰ μὲν οὖν ταῦτ᾽ ἔπραττον ἢ φρουρὰν παρὰ φιλίππου δεχόμενοι ταῖς πατρίσιν ἢ καταλύοντες τοὺς νόμους ἀφῃροῦντο τὴν ἐλευθερίαν καὶ παρρησίαν τῶν πολιτῶν χάριν τῆς ἰδίας πλεονεξίας ἢ δυναστείας, ἄξιοι τῆς προσηγορίας ἦσαν ταύτης

Pleonexia in this context refers to a politician giving away the independence of his city and the freedom of his fellow citizens in order to establish his own power over the city.

Finally, in Polybius' discussion of Greece during the Third Macedonian War, he narrates how two Acarnanian statesmen, Chremas and Glaucus, proposed to Popilius

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[39] Walbank confines his comments on this passage to the fact that the passage was found in the Suda in the Virtues and Vices section and that the auditor position that Apollonides held was an extra-constitutional office; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 3, 260. Mendels presents Malpagoras and Chaeron among other tyrants, such as Nabis of Sparta, as reformers whom Polybius maligned on account of Polybius' own dislike of policies of wealth redistribution; Doron Mendels, "Polybius and the socio-economic revolution in Greece (227-146 BCE)," *L'Antiquite Classique* 51 (1982): 92-93, 101-2.

[40] Walbank makes no comment on Polybius' use of *pleonexia* in this section. Walbank, *Commentary,* vol. 2, 568.

Laenas, a Roman envoy to Greece, that Rome place garrisons in Acarnanian cities in order to control the region (28.5.1). Diogenes, another statesman, disagreed. He accused Chremas and Glaucus of supporting the garrisons in order to diminish the authority of their rivals and further their own political ambitions (*pleonexiais*) (θέλειν ἐπισπᾶσθαι φρουρὰν τὴν συνεπισχύουσαν ταῖς αὐτῶν πλεονεξίαις) (28.5.5). Thus, in his treatment of power hungry politicians, Polybius applies *pleonexia* to describe actions through which politicians gained power by taking from others. The desire to obtain money is not mentioned in the discussion. It could be an indirect benefit of political power, but Polybius' emphasis is on how pleonexic individuals sought power at the expense of others.

When comparing the Cretan and Spartan constitutions in Book Six (6.45-46), Polybius relies on *pleonexia* to refer to both gaining money and political power at the expense of others. In the following section, I will identify the four instances of *pleonexia* in the text, and then explain how in each instance it makes more sense to translate *pleonexia* as "the desire for more at the expense of another," as opposed to merely "the desire for wealth" as Paton translates it.[41] *Pleonexia* first appears when Polybius notes that in Crete *aiskhrokerdeian* (covetousness) and *pleonexia* prevail so much that no form of financial gain is shameful (6.46.3). The second appearance is at 6.46.7 where Polybius notes that Lycurgus understood that the security of a city depended on withstanding foreign enemies and maintaining internal cohesion, so he banished *pleonexia* through his constitutional reforms to ensure that the Sparta enjoyed internal harmony. The third is at

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[41] Paton translates the *pleonektikous* in 6.47.4 as "covetousness," which works, if still vague. Walbank only mentions that the claim of Cretan *pleonexia* is repeated at 6.47.4 and that *pleonexia* is a common charge against the Cretans. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 732.

6.46.9 where Polybius states that the Cretans are in constant conflict due to their *pleonexia*. The fourth occurs at 6.47.4, when Polybius declares that the laws and customs of a city can be judged as bad if the citizens are pleonexic in their private interactions (κατ᾽ ἰδίαν βίους τινῶν πλεονεκτικοὺς τάς) and unjust in their public ones.

Polybius' first use of *pleonexia* in his discussion of Cretan society in 6.46.3-4 illustrates that *pleonexia* is a specific way of obtaining wealth as opposed to just the desire for money. Polybius begins by saying that the Cretans love money so much that its acquisition (*ktēsis*) is considered honorable (6.46.3). He continues that "so much in fact do *aiskhrokerdeia* and *pleonexia* prevail among them, that the Cretans are the only people in the world in whose eyes no gain is disgraceful" (καθόλου θ᾽ ὁ περὶ τὴν αἰσχροκέρδειαν καὶ πλεονεξίαν τρόπος οὕτως ἐπιχωριάζει παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς ὥστε παρὰ μόνοις Κρηταιεῦσι τῶν ἁπάντων ἀνθρώπων μηδὲν αἰσχρὸν νομίζεσθαι κέρδος) (6.46.3).[42] The emphasis of the sentence is that the Cretans would do anything to obtain money, so it would be redundant for *pleonexia* and *kerdos* to refer to the desire to acquire it. It makes more sense if *aiskhrokerdeia* and *pleonexia* each specified a form of *kerdos* (gain): gain that is shameful and gain that came at the expense of another. In Chapter Three, I showed that Aristotle differentiated between *aiskhrokerdeia* and *pleonexia* while relying on both to describe a form of material acquisition, so it would follow that Polybius could make a similar distinction. The sentence as a whole still refers to the acquisition of money, but *pleonexia* identifies how the money was obtained.

The *pleonexia*s in sections 6.46.7 and 9 also could refer to the acquisition of wealth, but the passages makes more sense if they are translated as "desire for more at the expense of another." At 6.46.7, Polybius notes that Lycurgus knew that the safety of a city relied on internal cohesion and that he secured that cohesion in Sparta by removing *pleonexia*. To show how Lycurgus removed *pleonexia*, Polybius evaluates the Spartan and Cretan constitutions on three points: land acquisition, the value of money, and the stability of the government. The Spartan system evenly distributes land, makes money meaningless, and reduces competition for office by having a hereditary monarchy and electing magistrates for life (6.45.3-4). As Walbank observes, at the time Polybius was writing Sparta had no kings, so his discussion of Sparta's constitution could only be referring to the constitution Sparta had in the fifth and fourth centuries. Therefore, the elected magistrates, whom Polybius specifies, were members of the *Gerousia*, the council of warriors over sixty that were selected for life-long terms by acclamation.[43] In Crete, people could own as much land as they desire, money is valued to such an extent that there is no shameful way to acquire it, and magistrates are elected annually and democratically (6.46.2-5). The result of these two systems is that Sparta enjoys internal peace, whereas the Cretans suffer from constant public and private disputes on account of their *pleonexia* (διὰ τὴν ἔμφυτον σφίσι πλεονεξίαν) (6.46.9). If *pleonexia* was limited to the desire for money in these passages, Polybius would not need to include the acquisition of land and political power when discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the two systems. If *pleonexia* refers to the manner of gain, not the object, as I argue, then it would refer to attempts to obtain land, money, or political power within a city. Translating *pleonexia* as the desire for more at the expense of others, then, illuminates why Polybius compared the Spartan and Cretan constitutions on all three points.

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[42] Translation W.R. Paton; emphasis mine.

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[43] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 731-32.

Polybius ends the section by noting that it is fair to judge a city on its customs and laws and that cities which function on *pleonexia* are paltry or weak (*phaulēn*) (οὕτως ὅταν τούς τε κατ᾽ ἰδίαν βίους τινῶν πλεονεκτικοὺς τάς τε κοινὰς πράξεις ἀδίκους θεωρήσωμεν, δῆλον ὥς εἰκὸς λέγειν καὶ τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰ κατὰ μέρος ἤθη καὶ τὴν ὅλην πολιτείαν αὐτῶν εἶναι φαύλην) (6.47.4). Again, if *pleonexia* was limited to desire for money, this final critique would be less comprehensive; it would still be an indictment of *pleonexia*, and *pleonexia* would still refer to "gain at the expense of others," but it would not engage with all the elements that Polybius discussed in his comparison of Sparta and Crete. If *pleonexia* referred to the desire of the populace to enrich themselves at the expense of their fellow citizens in any aspect of community life, land, political office, wealth, then the sentence summarizes the entire comparison between Crete and Sparta rather well. *Pleonexia* turns communities into free-for-alls, in which citizens fight each other for even the smallest gain. Thus, in his discussion of internal affairs of a city, Polybius relies on *pleonexia* to describe the desire to gain something, money, land, or power, by taking it from another, and decries such actions, especially because they lead to social divisions.

In terms of foreign affairs, Polybius at times follows Demosthenes and Isocrates in depicting *pleonexia* as imperialism. At the start of his discussion of the Cleomenes War in Book Two, Polybius uses *pleonexia* to describe the desire to conquer when he contrasts the territorial ambitions of Cleomenes and the Aetolians. He states that Cleomenes desired only power over the Peloponnesus (αὐτῆς ἐφίεσθαι τῆς Πελοποννησίων ἀρχῆς) so that he could control Greece; Aetolian ambition (*pleonexia*), in contrast, was not limited to control of the Peloponnesus or even Greece (τήν τε γὰρ Αἰτωλῶν πλεονεξίαν οὐχ οἷον τοῖς Πελοποννησίων ὅροις εὐδοκῆσαί ποτ᾽ ἂν περιληφθεῖσαν, ἀλλ᾽ οὐδὲ τοῖς τῆς Ἑλλάδος) (2.49.3-4).[44] By contrasting the territorial ambitions of Cleomenes and the Aetolians, Polybius makes it clear that *pleonexia* in this context refers to annexation of territory. Polybius reuses this meaning when describing the Spartan annexation of Messene in the sixth century BCE. In Book Six, he states that though Lycurgus managed to curb Spartan *pleonexia* in domestic affairs, he did nothing to check their *pleonexia* against other cities (6.48.8). This *pleonexia* led to the Spartan conquest and annexation of Messene (6.49.1). The *pleonexia* at 6.48.8 does not directly refer to money and of course the Messenians were the losers to the direct gain of the Spartans.

Finally, Polybius presents *pleonexia* as a trait inherent in specific groups, specifically the Aetolians, Cretans, and Carthaginians/Phoenicians.[45] Not only might *pleonexia* be inherent in people, but it could also be avoided. Lycurgus dispelled *pleonexia* from the domestic affairs of Sparta by equalizing all aspects of Spartan society (6.46.7). Roman laws and customs forbid *pleonexia*, specifically in regard to wealth. As stated earlier, Roman soldiers took a vow at the beginning of each military campaign to divide any loot evenly; this vow, and the upholding of the vow, keeps Roman soldiers from acting on *pleonexia* (10.16.8). The Romans do not take bribes and avoid acting on *pleonexia* because they dislike shameful acquisition (6.56.2). Roman approval for making money through respectable means is only matched by their disapproval of the desire to gain through forbidden means (6.56.3).

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[44] Paton translates this *pleonexia* as territorial aggrandizement. Walbank has no comment. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 248.

[45] Aetolians: 2.43.9, 45.1, 46.3, 49.3; 4.3.1, 6.12; Cretans: 6.46.3; Phoenicians: 9.11.2. In his explanation for why strife broke out in Spain after the Carthaginian victory over the Romans in 211, Polybius notes that the conflict was due to the innate *pleonexia* of the Carthaginian's Phoenician heritage (*dia tēn emphuton Phoinixi pleonexian*) (9.11.2). Champion, *Cultural Politics*, 243.

Polybius' text at 6.56.2 and 3 present a challenge to my translation of *pleonexia*.[46] According to my literal translation, the sections would read "(Romans despise) the seeking of gain at the expense of others from improper sources" (τοῦ πλεονεκτεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν μὴ καθηκόντων) (6.56.2) and "the desire to gain more at the expense of others from forbidden sources" (τὴν ἐκ τῶν ἀπειρημένων πλεονεξίαν) (6.56.3).[47] These translations seem redundant; if *pleonexia* itself is a form of improper gain, why would Polybius include τοῦ πλεονεκτεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν μὴ καθηκόντων (from improper sources) or ἐκ τῶν ἀπειρημένων (from forbidden sources)? Worse, could *pleonexia* be justified if the gain was from proper sources or from non-forbidden means? I think the translation makes sense if one assumes that *pleonexia* was the worst kind of gain that Polybius could imagine. The entire passage is one of contrasts: Rome versus Carthage, acceptable sources of income versus unacceptable forms of income. To emphasize the disparity, Polybius would want to use language indicating the worst form of gain in order to contrast it with the merits he saw in the Roman system. Therefore, it is not just *pleonexia* that Polybius imagine (itself an unpalatable form of gain), but *pleonexia* deriving from improper sources—in Polybius' world view probably wealth redistribution.[48] Such an emphasis strengthens the contrast: as much as the Romans like making money from proper sources, they hate money obtained from others via forbidden means. I will admit that for translation purposes it would be best here to translate *pleonexia* as the desire to gain or greed, but the reader should keep in mind the kind of gain that *pleonexia* implies.

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[46] Others avoid this problem as they simply translate *pleonexia* as greed. Champion, *Cultural Politics*, 242.

[47] Walbank has no comment on the use of *pleonexia* in these passages. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 741.

[48] Mendels, "Polybius and the Socio-Economic Revolution in Greece," 109.

Polybius in the second century BCE thus employs *pleonexia* in a manner similar to the Greek authors of the fifth and fourth century BCE. He understood it to mean "the desire for more at the expense of another." He applies it when referring to the acquisition of material objects (such as money or land) and also the acquisition of political power within a city. In his text, it alludes to attempts to gain power, plunder, or territory at the expense of others in interstate affairs. As in other authors, Polybius notes that following *pleonexia* often hurts the pleonexic agent, as was the case with Scopas the Aetolian, Chaeron the Spartan, Appelles the courtier, the people of Crete, and, as I will show, the Aetolians, Philip V, and Antiochus III.

Decline in Polybius

Polybius relies on *pleonexia* to explain the transition of governments, to predict the fall of the Roman Republic, and to reveal why states lost power on the international stage. In Book Six, Polybius digresses from his narrative into constitutional theory in order to explain why Rome persevered after the battle of Cannae and won the Second Punic War. According to Polybius, Rome won because its mixed constitution, which granted all groups within Roman society power in the government, ensured that the groups worked together for the good of the state. In order to understand the elements of the mixed constitution, Polybius first discusses his six government types: monarchy, tyranny, aristocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and mob rule (6.3.5-4.6). Polybius deemed three of these governments to be good: monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; and three degenerate: tyranny, oligarchy, and mob rule. Governments transition from one form to another, he declares, as a result of excessive desire either for pleasure or political power on the part of the ruling class.[49] The excessive appetites of the king's children, their willingness to indulge in luxury, pursuit of passions, and abuse of power, transform monarchy into tyranny (6.7.6-8).[50] This lack of restraint annoys the aristocracy, which leads to resistance and the overthrow of the tyranny in favor of an aristocracy (6.7.9). The aristocracy degenerates into an oligarchy when the children of the aristocrats follow their own desires instead of looking out for the state as a whole (6.8.4-5). The children indulge in *pleonexia*, *philarguria*, wine, excess, or sexual desires for women or boys (6.8.5).[51] These outrages alarm the people, and they replace the oligarchy with democracy (6.9.1-2). Democracy remains until the grandchildren of the initial democrats grow tired of egalitarian ideas and instead desire to have more than others (πλέον ἔχειν τῶν πολλῶν) (6.9.5).[52] This desire leads those who want office (*philarkhein*) to burn through their money in attempts to buy the good will of the people (6.9.7). A result of their pandering is that the people develop a desire and expectation for gifts, and are no longer ruled by law, but by violence; society thus descends into savagery as the people are ruled by their passions and seek to live off the property of others (6.9.8). Finally, the mob will unite under a leader who directs them in their desire for plunder, and in this process reestablishes a monarchy (6.9.10).

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[49] Walbank notes that the good governments become corrupted due to human nature; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 655; Ryffel, *Metabolē Politeiōn*, 193—Ryffel includes *pleonexia* explicitly as one of the causes of the decay of constitutions.

[50] Polybius notes that kingship declines because the children of the king are brought up in luxury, an idea that parallels Plato's discussion of why the Persian kings, particularly Cambyses and Xerxes, were ineffective kings. Plato, *Laws*, 3.695.

[51] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 656.

[52] Paton translates the *pleon ekhein* as "to aim at preeminence." This translation demonstrates the flexibility of *pleonexia* as in this situation it refers to political power.

The whole cycle, then, is pushed by out-of-control passions and desires.[53] The boundless desires of the king's children destroy the monarchy. The out-of-control passions of the aristocrats' children subvert the aristocracy. The desire for power at-all-costs transforms democracy into mob rule, and mob rule becomes monarchy when one individual harnesses the collective *pleonexia* of society. Admittedly, neither the word *pleonexia* nor the phrase *pleon ekhein* appear in Polybius' discussion of mob rule (6.9.8-9), but he does say that the mob, having become accustomed to living at the expense of others (τὸ πλῆθος ἐσθίειν τὰ ἀλλότρια καὶ τὰς ἐλπίδας ἔχειν τοῦ ζῆν ἐπὶ τοῖς τῶν πέλας), will find a leader who will help them in these efforts (6.9.8). Thus, to explain the transition from aristocracy to oligarchy, democracy to mob rule, and mob rule to tyranny, Polybius relies on *pleonexia*. Polybius ends the section by saying that he has presented a natural (*phusis*) theory of state change (*metabolē*). Whenever the political elite within a community begins to act on *pleonexia* and seeks to satisfy their desires for luxury or power at the expense of the city as a whole, their actions create resentment among the governed, resistance, and the overthrow and the replacement of the constitution.[54]

At the end of Book Six, Polybius also applies his ideas on decline and *pleonexia* to his discussion of how and why the mixed constitution of Rome will eventually transform into mob rule and tyranny.[55] According to Polybius, the mixed constitution of the Roman Republic will fall when, after a long period of peace and prosperity, competition among the elites for offices or other objects becomes too intense (6.57.5). The drivers of this change will be the desire for office (*philarkhein*), the fear of disgrace (τὸ τῆς ἀδοξίας ὄνειδος), flamboyant displays of wealth (ἥ περὶ τοὺς βίους ἀλαζονεία), and extravagance (*poluteleia*) (6.57.6). In reaction, the people will turn on the aristocrats, and either attack those whom they perceive as pleonexic or support those who pander to the mob for power (μὲν ἀδικεῖσθαι δόξῃ διὰ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, … χαυνωθῇ κολακευόμενος διὰ τὴν φιλαρχίαν) (6.57.7-8).

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[53] Ryffel, *Metabolē Politeiōn*, 192; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 656. Both accept the similarities between this passage and Plato. David Hahm states that for Polybius the non-monarchical constitutional forms decline due to "the ruling power's security." He notes that Polybius' theory is based on psychology, but only spends a cursory paragraph on the rest of the cycle as he believes that Polybius cared about them only as a way to introduce his mixed constitution; David Hahm, "Kings and Constitutions: Hellenistic Theories," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield, Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 469-70.

[54] In his discussion of the *anakyklosis*, Walbank focuses on the cycle and ideas of organic change; he does not look at the drivers of that change; Walbank, "The Idea of Decline in Polybius," 201-6.

Polybius does not identify the form of *pleonexia* in the passage. He does, however, state that aristocrats will seek to expand their own wealth, so the implication is that they will do so in a manner that hurts, or is perceived to hurt, the Roman populace. Feeling that they are injured by certain aristocrats, the mass will turn to those whom they perceive as supporting them; in Polybius' reality, the politicians who pander to the mob are actually just feeding the collective desires of the people as opposed to putting forward good policy. The people will thus allow themselves to be ruled by passion as opposed to reason and seek to control the government (6.57.8). Thus, Rome will degenerate into the worst form of government: mob rule (6.57.9). Though Polybius does not identify *pleonexia* as a cause of the change, it plays an important role in this transition. The people's fear of the *pleonexia* of the elite, in addition to the actual *philarkhein* of aristocrats, will motivate the populace to follow politicians who pander to them. This will lead to poor policy, mob rule, and the end of Rome's mixed constitution. The collapse of the mixed constitution was a decline according to the theory that "decline" involves transition from more complex socio-political systems to simpler systems. Gone was the complex balancing act of divided governance which sought to incorporate as many groups in political decisions as possible (6.11-14). Gone were the ties of dependency based on reciprocity (6.15-17). They were replaced with the direct control of a single individual who held a monopoly on violence.

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[55] Polybius, however, does not name Rome anywhere in his discussion of decline at 6.57; it is heavily implied, but never stated. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 743.

Outside of his general discussions of why governments change, Polybius links *pleonexia* with outbreaks of *stasis* throughout his narrative. In Book Two, Polybius describes how after a successful Gallic raid against Etruria, a greater part of the Gallic host destroyed itself when the Gauls began to fight amongst themselves (*stasiasantes*) for the spoils of the raid on account of *pleonexia* (2.19.3).[56] In Book Six, he declares that Cretan *pleonexia* in private and public affairs leads to murder and *stasis* (6.46.9). In Book Nine, *stasis* broke out between the Carthaginians and Spanish tribes loyal to Carthage after they defeat a Roman army, because the Carthaginians began to act on the *pleonexia* and *philarkhein* inherent in their Phoenician character (9.11.2). The Carthaginian commander, Hasdrubal, wanted a large sum of money from a loyal Spanish leader, Andobales (9.11.3). Andobales refused, Hasdrubal brought false accusations against him, and eventually Andobales gave his daughters up as hostages (9.11.4). The result, while superficially in Hasdrubal's favor, in the long-term bred Spanish hostility to Carthage, of which Scipio would take advantage by military success and by not showing himself pleonexic; he refused to take the girl as a hostage and gave her back to her fiancée.[57]

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[56] Walbank in his commentary states the *pleonexia* here means desire for plunder. As always I find this definition limiting. In this context such a definition works, however. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 187.

Like Plato, Polybius also identifies *pleonexia* as a corrupter of men's souls.[58] When describing the mercenary revolt at the end of the first Punic War, he explains how, like cancer, certain psychological drives eat away at men (1.81.7-8). If left unchecked, these drives will turn men into animals (1.81.10). Polybius identifies several causes: bad manners, bad customs, poor education, and the *hubris* and *pleonexia* of leaders (1.81.10). The *pleonexia* in the passage refers to the plan of Mathos, Spendius, and Autaritus, leaders of the mercenary revolt, to cement their control over the rebel mercenaries by killing the Carthaginian prisoners. The three feared that the Hamilcar's clemency to the prisoners from a recent battle (1.78.11-13) would weaken the resolve of the rest of the mercenaries to continue the war until Carthage was captured (1.79.6). The three therefore fabricated a letter saying that the Carthaginians, who were prisoners of the mercenaries, were plotting an escape (1.79.10). They used the letter as a pretext to suggest to their troops to torture and kill their Carthaginian hostages (1.79.11-80.4). When other leaders came forward to counsel leniency, they were stoned (1.80.9-10). Mathos, Spendius, and Autaritus thus cemented their control over the mercenary army. The *pleonexia* in 1.81, then, refers to the ambition of leaders to gain more power for themselves. In this process, they push men to commit horrendous acts, and hasten the decline of individuals spirits. Thus Polybius identifies *pleonexia* as a drive that dehumanizes those who are characterized by it.

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[57] While he does not mention Polybius' use of *pleonexia*, Andrew Erskine argues that through the narrative of Carthaginian abuses in Spain Polybius creates a paradigm of arrogant actions leading to fall that he later applies to Philip V and, potentially, Rome; Andrew Erskine, "Spanish Lessons," in *Polibio Y La Peninsula Iberica*, ed. Juan Yanguas and Elena Pagola (Vitoria: Universidad del Pais Vasco, 2003), 230-32; Paul Burton, *Friendship and Empire: Roman Diplomacy and Imperialism in the Middle Republic (353-146)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 73-75.

[58] Walbank notes that in Greek thought the idea of souls having diseases goes as far back as Solon; in this instance he traces the idea from the Stoics back to Plato and then Solon; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 145.

Polybius also notes how *pleonexia* corrupts states or causes them trouble.[59] In Book Six, he scolds the Spartans for operating on *pleonexia* when dealing with other cities (6.48.8). He designates the conquest of Messene as their first act of *pleonexia* (6.49.1). As long as they remained within the Peloponnesus, they were secure in their control of other cities (6.49.7). Their lack of currency and a commodities market, however, meant that they did not have the resources to control the rest of Greece sustainably (6.49.8-10). Their desire for power and the lack of resources to obtain it, however, led the Spartans to impose a tribute on Greek cities and islands, and to ask for assistance against Athens and others from Persia, which they had defeated in the Persian War (6.49.3-10). This dependence on outside assistance from Persia in order to maintain control of Greece meant that the Spartans risked their liberty in order to satisfy their *pleonexia* (6.50.5).

My assessment that Polybius disliked states acting on *pleonexia* in foreign affairs coincides with Donald Baronowski's view that Polybius accepted justified acts of imperialism. According to Baronowski, in Greek thought justified acts of imperialism were acts that had acceptable causes or pretexts. An acceptable cause of imperialism was retribution; one state could attack another in retaliation for a previous attack. Acts of imperialism were also justified through citing acceptable pretexts, such as one state being defying another or breaking a treaty. Acts of *pleonexia* were not justified—the power simply acts to take from another without either justification or pretext, so it would fit that Polybius condemned the practice in international affairs.[60]

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[59] Donald Baronowski, *Polybius and Roman Imperialism* (London: Bristol University Press, 2011), 164.

Polybius depicts individuals acting on *pleonexia* with the result that they hurt the relationship of their polity with Rome. He claims that Aetolian *pleonexia* and boasting about their role in defeating Macedon at Cynoscephalae annoyed Flamininus when he was settling the affairs of Greece after the second Macedonian War (18.34.1). This annoyance caused Flamininus to distance himself from the Aetolians and seek stronger relations with Philip (18.34.3-5). This distance between Flamininus and Aetolia, and his refusing them almost all their territorial ambitions (only granting some of them), in turn created resentment and anger (*orgē*) among the Aetolians; Polybius singles out this anger as a cause of the alliance between Aetolia and Antiochus III, and eventually the Roman-Syrian War of 192-188 BCE (3.7.1-2).[61] Rome's victory over Antiochus and the Aetolians in the Roman/Antiochan War in turn resulted in the removal of Aetolia as a factor in Greek affairs.

When recounting how Rome was asked to arbitrate a war between Eumenes, king of Pergamum, and Pharnaces, king of Bithynia, Polybius records that the Roman Senate looked favorably on Eumenes because of his moderation and because the august body was put off by Pharnaces' *pleonexia* and over-bearing character (*uperēphania*) (24.1.3). The Senate decided to send legates to Asia to settle the issue (24.1.3; 5.7-8). Polybius does not elaborate on the form of Pharnaces' *pleonexia*, but in the context of the passage (the war between him and the Attalids of Pergamum), it could refer to his capture of Sinope in 183, which started the war.[62] Due to the fragmentary condition of Book Twenty-Four, the ruling of the legates is unknown, but section 14 begins with the phrase, "In Asia King Pharnaces, again defying the terms of the Roman verdict," so it can be assumed that the legates ruled in favor of the Attalids (24.14.1). The war between the Attalids and Pharnaces continued until 179, and the Attalids continued to enjoy Roman diplomatic support.[63]

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[60] Walbank sees this as a reference to Theban hegemony and the Spartan defeat at the battle of Leuctra; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 735. It could also refer to the fact that Sparta could only control Greece through Persian aid, thus Sparta was not its own master, but rather simply a local proxy for Persian power.

[61] Doron Mendels, "Did Polybius have another view of the Aetolian League: A Note," *AS* 15-17 (1984-1986): 64. Kenneth Sacks argues that for Polybius Roman imperial ambitions caused the war, but he overlooks 18.34.1: "Polybius' Other View of Aetolia," *JHS* 95 (1975): 93. I will emphasize that this is Polybius' presentation of events; modern scholars such as Eckstein see the Roman/Antiochan War as an inevitable conflict between the remaining super powers of the Mediterranean World; Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 306-41. The Aetolians play a role in Eckstein's analysis of the road to war between Rome and Antiochus, but he places within the context of the pre-existing hostility and tensions between Rome and Antiochus. Ibid., 322.

The *pleonexia* of Ptolemy Philometor, when he refused to concede the island of Cyprus to his younger brother, Ptolemy Euergates, annoyed the Roman Senate to the extent that they broke off relations with the elder Ptolemy (31.19.2).[64] This breaking off of relations placed Ptolemy Philometor in a precarious international position.[65] First, upon hearing that his brother was no longer a friend and ally of Rome, Ptolemy Euergates began to recruit mercenaries to invade Cyprus.[66] Second, Rome had recently prevented

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[62] The war between Pontus and Pergamum in 181 over Galatia which happened after Pharnaces took Sinope: Roger McShane, *The Foreign Policy of the Attalids* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1964), 161; Esther Hansen, *The Attalids of Pergamon*. 2nd ed. rev. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), 101-2; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 3, 254.

[63] As Gruen argues, however, Roman support was tepid at best. They aligned themselves with the Attalids, but did not give any material support to the war. Erich Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 553-54.

[64] Ptolemy Philometor had put off ceding the island to his brother, while his brother was otherwise engaged dealing with a revolt in Libya.

[65] Anssi Lampela, *Rome and the Ptolemies of Egypt* (Helsinki, 1998), 163.

[66] Ibid.

Antiochus IV from conquering Alexandria because of its friendship with the house of Ptolemy; the breaking of ties between Ptolemy and Rome meant that Ptolemy was potentially at the mercy of its neighbors.[67] Though Ptolemy Philometor remained active and effective in the affairs of the Eastern Mediterranean without the support of Rome, indeed invading Syria and almost becoming its king, he had to proceed carefully in his foreign policy. He was always aware of the possibility of Roman intervention against him, and at times sought to regain his standing with Rome.[68] In all these instances, a community or individual acting on *pleonexia* annoyed Rome, which hurt that entity's relation with Rome—at least in the eyes of Polybius. Thus, as previous authors, Polybius linked *pleonexia* with the change of governments, with *stasis*, and shows how acting on *pleonexia* hurt powers on the international stage.

Pleonexia* as a driver of events in Polybius' *Histories

According to Polybius, *pleonexia* not only hurt states on the international stage, but Greek powers acting on *pleonexia* helped bring about Roman domination of the Eastern Mediterranean. Polybius identifies Aetolian *pleonexia* as the cause of the Cleomenes War of 228-222, and the Social War of 220-217; these wars resulted in Macedonian domination of the Greece.[69] Macedon's power over Greece whetted Philip V's appetite for conquest, which led him to wage war in the Aegean in the late 200s BCE. These campaigns, propelled in part by *pleonexia*, provoked resistance from other

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., 194.

[69] Sacks and Mendels acknowledge Polybius' repeated association of Aetolians with *pleonexia* in reference to events of the third century. Mendels points out that Polybius associated Aetolia with the start of the Cleomenes War, the Social War, the War Against Nabis, the war against Antiochus, and the Third Macedonian War. Sacks, "Polybius' other View of Aetolia," 92; Mendels, "Did Polybius have another view of the Aetolian League: A Note," 67-68.

Hellenistic powers. Pergamon, Athens, Egypt, and Rhodes appealed to Rome for assistance against Philip V. Rome agreed to intervene and the result was the Second Macedonian War, which led to the Antiochan War, and eventually Roman domination of the Eastern Mediterranean.[70]

In Book Two, when describing the origins of the Cleomenes War, Polybius associates the Aetolians with *pleonexia* three times, two of which occurred in discussion of the start of the war.[71] At 2.43.9, Polybius notes that throughout his career, Aratus provided effective opposition to both the meddlesomeness of Antigonus Gonatus of Macedon and the *pleonexia* of the Aetolians. He next claims that due to their natural *pleonexia* the Aetolians entered into a secret pact with Macedon and Sparta in order to conquer Achaea and divide its cities between the three powers (2.45.1-2).[72] On account of this *pleonexia*, the Aetolians ceded three member cities, Tegea, Orchomenus, and Mantinea, to Sparta in order to strengthen Sparta so that it could challenge Achaea

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[70] Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East*, Chapter 8.

[71] Polybius may have emphasized the *pleonexia* of the Aetolians in order to contrast it with the supposed magnanimity of the Achaeans. At 2.42, Polybius notes that he goes back to the rise of Achaean League (2.42.1) in order to prove that the Achaeans, "always followed one single policy, ever attracting others by the offer of their own equality and liberty and ever making war on and crushing those who either themselves or through the kings attempted to enslave their native cities (42.3)." On account of this philosophy, the Achaeans gave their support to Rome not out of private gain (which would be *pleonexia*) but in order to ensure the freedom of Greece and the unification of the Peloponnesus (42.5-6). Such a framing would make the Achaeans "heroes" for their actions, and for every good "hero" there needs to be an antithetical villain … enter the Aetolians. Polybius' negative judgment of the Aetolians apparently was common in Hellenistic thought; Joseph Scholten, *The Politics of Plunder* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 4-5.

[72] The debate on the treaty goes as far back as 1877. Walbank treats the treaty as a fabrication. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 239. Roger De Laix in "Polybius' Credibility and the Triple Alliance of 230/229 BC" argues that a re-dating of the treaty to 230/229 makes its feasible. Roger De Laix, "Polybius' Credibility and the Triple Alliance of 230/229," *CSCA* 2 (1969): 65-66. Scholten argues that the circumstances of the time—the swearing of a peace treaty between Macedon and Aetolia in 228 and Aetolia's inability to defend its Peloponnesian holdings—could make it appear that the Aetolians were in league with Macedon and Cleomenes, when in fact they were a victim of circumstance; Scholten, *Politics of Plunder*, 181, 184-85. All agree that Polybius' source for the passage is probably Aratus, who was hostile to the Aetolians.

(2.46.3).[73] Thus, Polybius cited Aetolian *pleonexia* as a cause for the Cleomenes War, even though the Aetolians did not participate in the conflict. The war resulted in an alliance between Achaea and Macedon, on account of which the Achaeans ceded the Acro-Corinth to the Macedonians (2.52.4). Control of the Acro-Corinth allowed Macedon to intervene in Peloponnesian affairs and exert control over Greek affairs.

In Book Four, when he returns to Greek affairs after discussing the Hannibalic War in Italy and Spain, Polybius claims that the Aetolians, unhappy with their situation in Greece because of the paucity of their resources, started the Social War in order to satisfy their *pleonexia* (4.3.1).[74] The *casus belli* was Dorimachus, an Aetolian envoy who suffered from the *pleonexia* innate in the Aetolian character, allowing mercenary soldiers in his service to plunder Messene, an Aetolian ally (4.3.5-8). The Messenians complained to Dorimachus about the raid, but when he went to Messene to address their grievances, he derided them (4.3.12). After another attack, in which a Messenian farmer was killed, a Messenian leader insulted and shamed Dorimachus into paying for the damages done by the mercenaries; on leaving the city, Dorimachus swore he would wage war against it (4.4.4). Upon returning to Aetolia, Dorimachus made plans with Scopas, the leader of the Aetolians, to attack Messene (4.4.5). Polybius states that the Aetolians were so excited at the prospect for war that they declared war on Messene, Epirus, Achaea, Acarnania, and Macedon all at once (4.5.10). Thus, Polybius places responsibility for the Social War on the Aetolians because it was their innate *pleonexia* that caused Dorimachus to allow his mercenaries to raid Messene and resulted in the Aetolians declaring war.[75]

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[73] It may be odd to label an act of giving away cities as "*pleonexia*," but the session of the cities was more a price of their *pleonexia*. According to Polybius, the Aetolians gave away the cities in order to get Sparta to initiate the war. It is supposed that Aetolia then would enter the war and take certain cities away from Achaea, *pleonexia*. The session of the three cities, then, was a down payment for the rewards which the Aetolians hoped to gain from the war.

[74] In the first volume of his *Commentary*, Walbank states that Polybius "assigns the responsibility for the war to the Aetolian love of plunder," which is how Walbank defines *pleonexia* on page 237. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 451.

The Cleomenes War and the Social War resulted in Macedonian domination of Greece. That was bad enough for Polybius, who favored the independence of the Greek states,[76] but Polybius portrays Macedonian success in these wars as a cause of Roman intervention in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Cleomenes War brought about Macedonian re-occupation of the Acrocorinth, Corinth's citadel (2.52.4), and an alliance with Achaea. The occupation and alliance allowed Macedon to once again influence Peloponnesian affairs, demonstrated by its involvement in the Social War. Macedon's victories in the Social War, a war started by Aetolian *pleonexia*, made Philip V the most powerful individual in Greece (5.105.5). Polybius breaks into his narrative of the peace conference that resolved the Social War to declare that the conference was the first time that the affairs of the entire Mediterranean were drawn together (5.105.4). As a result of Hannibal's success at the battle of Trasimene, Ptolemy's success at Raphia, and Philip V's successful conclusion of the Social War, powers across the Mediterranean were looking for new allies; Greek cities looked to Rome and Carthage for help against Philip and Attalus and Rome looked to the east to prevent Philip from going west (5.105.7).

Following the conference, the young Macedonian king prepared for a campaign in Illyria, then under Roman influence, and made an alliance with Hannibal as a precursor for an invasion of Italy.[77] Philip's actions resulted in the first war between Rome and Macedon.[78] Philip did not, however, invade Italy; instead he focused his attention on expanding his power in Greece. According to Polybius, it was at this time that Philip began to transform into a tyrant (7.11). Due to the bad counsel of Demetrius of Pharos, Philip began to abuse his power in Greece and alienate the Greek cities, which up to this point had been loyal allies (7.13). Polybius does not ascribe *pleonexia* as a motive of Philip's actions at this point, but later in the narrative he portrays Philip as a man overcome by his desires. In Book Ten, Polybius describes how Philip aggravated the Argives while attending the Nemean games by sleeping with any woman he chose (10.26.3). If the woman refused, he threatened her husband or sons (10.26.4). Thus, Polybius portrayed Philip in the post 217/15 period as a man at the mercy of his passions. Following these passions hurt Philip's relations with subordinate Greek cities.[79] In 201, Philip began conquering Egyptian holdings in the Aegean with a view to invade Egypt proper, and his forces were besieging Athens. Polybius explicitly attributes Philip's desire to conquer Egyptian possessions to *pleonexia* in his narrative (15.20.4).

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[75] In this one instance I agree with Paton and Walbank's translation that *pleonexia* means "the desire for plunder."

[76] Frank Walbank, "Polybius between Greece and Rome," in *Polybe*, ed. Emilio Gabba (Vandœuvres-Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1974), 29; Eckstein, *Moral Vision,* 204-210.

At 15.20, Polybius foretells the defeat of both Philip V and Antiochus III at the hands of Rome. In the section, he notes that the two kings acted like animals when they made a pact to divide Egypt's territory between their two kingdoms by taking it from the new child king of Egypt (15.20.1).[80] Polybius ascribes their actions to *pleonexia* (15.20.4). On account of this *pleonexia,* Fortune informed Rome about the actions of Philip V and Antiochus III, which resulted in Rome entering the conflict like an avenger (15.20.4). This is one of the rare occurrences in Polybius in which Fortune takes an active role in specific events in the text (as opposed to general developments).[81] In the passage, Polybius directly links the kings' *pleonexia* to Roman intervention.[82] If the kings had not been pleonexic, then Fortune would not have punished them with Roman intervention. This link reinforces the idea in Polybius of the danger of acting on *pleonexia* on the international stage. Not only will it cause states to fall, but greater powers might ensure that the pleonexic power fails.

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[77] Historians debate what Philip's intentions were with the Illyrian campaign following the Social War: either it was a preparation for an invasion of Italy, or to protect traditional Macedonian interests in Illyria. A discussion of Philip's motivations in his Illyrian campaign can be found in Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East*, 79-80.

[78] Ibid., 83-8.

[79] Erskine, "Spanish Lessons," 236-37.

Finally, Polybius presents *pleonexia* as the cause of Rome's war with Antiochus III. At the start of Book Three, Polybius notes that the *orgē* (anger) of the Aetolians at the Romans caused the war between Rome and Antiochus because the Aetolians felt that they had not been justly rewarded for their service to Rome in the Second Macedonian War (3.7.1-2). Their anger caused the Aetolians to invite Antiochus III into Greece in 192, which precipitated the Antiochan War. The source of the Aetolians' anger towards

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[80] For a review of the scholarly arguments regarding the pact between the kings, see Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East*, 129-31. I leave the existence of the pact to others. I simply recognize that Polybius believed such an agreement existed and used it in his analysis to explain Roman intervention.

[81] Marincola, *Greek Historians*, 143-44.

[82] In his article, "The Pact between the Kings, Polybius 15.20.6 and Polybius' view of the Outbreak of the Second Macedonian War," Eckstein argues that the correct translation is Fortune made Rome aware of the pact of the kings through the embassies of four Eastern Mediterranean powers, specifically Egypt, Athens, Pergamum, and Rhodes, whereas other scholars see Fortune as having a more direct role (that the pact made the kings act in such a way that drew the attention to Rome, regardless of whether or not it knew of the treaty). My point here is not to argue whether or not Fortune made Rome aware of the treaty rather that Polybius treats *pleonexia* as the impetus for Fortune alerting Rome (one way or another). Arthur Eckstein, "The Pact between the Kings, Polybius 15.20.6 and Polybius' view of the Outbreak of the Second Macedonian War," *CP* 100 (July 2005): 228-29.

Rome was Roman treatment of Aetolia at the end of the Second Macedonian War. At the end of the war, T. Quinctius Flamininus, the Roman commander in charge of peace negotiations, snubbed the Aetolian territorial demands and allowed Macedon to retain some of its power and territory partly in order to prevent the Aetolians from becoming the dominant power in Greece (18.34.1). Flamininus wanted to limit Aetolian gains, according to Polybius, because he did not want to see them replace Macedon as the hegemon of Greece and was put out by their pleonexic conduct following the battle of Cynoscephalae (18.34.1). After Cynoscephalae, Polybius claims, the Aetolians claimed an excessive part of both the loot and credit for winning the battle (18.34.2). They also desired territorial gains that would have made them the dominant power in Greece. Their arrogant attitude and desires annoyed Flamininus, which in turn led him to be more lenient toward Philip and Macedon (18.34.1-5). His leniency towards Philip and his refusal to grant them more territorial concessions angered the Aetolians. In retaliation, the Aetolians began to court Antiochus III, and sought to replace Roman influence over Greece with Seleucid. Antiochus' arrival in Greece in 192 led to war between Syria and Rome, a war which ended with Roman victory and Roman domination of the eastern Mediterranean.

Thus, Polybius presents *pleonexia* as a major cause of the wars that led to Roman domination of the Eastern Mediterranean. The *pleonexia* of the Aetolians initiated both the Cleomenes and Social War. These two wars resulted in Macedon becoming the dominant power in Greece. Due to his success in the Social War, Philip V, king of Macedon, became corrupted, and at the end of the third century BCE, he began to act on *pleonexia* as well. Philip's *pleonexia* drove him to attack Egyptian holdings in the

Aegean. These acts, Polybius writes, caused Fortune to bring the kings' *pleonexia* to Rome's attention, which resulted in the Second Macedonian War. At the successful conclusion of the Second Macedonian War, Aetolian *pleonexia* again caused conflict when it annoyed Flamininus and soured relations between Rome and Aetolia. The Aetolians then sought an alliance with Antiochus III to counterbalance Rome, leading to the war between Rome and Antiochus. With the defeat of Antiochus III, Rome became the power in the Eastern Mediterranean, but Greek powers acting on *pleonexia* had prepared the path.

Continuity and the paradigm of Decline in Greek Thought

Unlike Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, or Isocrates, in which influence by other authors is only inferred through textual comparisons (or where references to others authors are few), Polybius openly acknowledges his fourth century sources. He names Plato, Xenophon, and Demosthenes as some of the authors to whom he is responding (Plato: 6.5.1; Xenophon 6.45.1; Demosthenes: 18.13.1). He even mentions Thucydides, though it is only to note that Theopompus' *Histories* begins where Thucydides' ends (8.11.3).

More than just citing previous writers, however, Polybius relied on Thucydides and Plato and their analysis of how a city falls into *stasis* due to *pleonexia* when he forecasts the degeneration of the Roman mixed constitution into mob rule at 6.57. The parallels in language, theme, and presentation prove that Polybius read and incorporated the thoughts of Thucydides and Plato in his narrative. Scholars have used similar criteria to demonstrate Thucydidean influence on Polybius in other areas of the text. Eduard Meyer finds that Polybius' language and discussion of causality at 3.31.12 "deliberately echoes Thucydides."[83] Scholars accept such ties as proof of Thucydidean influence, but they consider Plato's influence indirect, even though Polybius cites him by name.[84] Walbank admits that at 6.57.5-9 Polybius uses ideas about the decay of constitutions, including the use of *pleonexia*, that are similar to discussions in Plato's *Republic* Book Eight and Thucydides 3.82.8, but he passes the similarities off as simply "commonplace themes."[85] A reason for these themes to be common, however, is if succeeding authors read previous ones! By applying the above criteria to the relevant passages of, Thucydides, Plato, and Polybius, I will demonstrate the influence of both Thucydides and Plato on Polybius.

Polybius draws on both Thucydides' *stasis* model from 3.82 and Thucydides' discussion of how Athens will fall in 2.65.[86] The first half of Polybius 6.57 follows the structure and thought of Thucydides 3.82. First, both start with a universalizing message. Thucydides begins 3.82 noting that the upheaval caused by revolution is terrible, and will remain terrible as long as human nature remains the same (3.82.2). Polybius begins 6.57 by stating the destruction and change (φθορὰ καὶ μεταβολὴ) happens to all things in nature, and that the process of how states collapse internally is a fixed occurrence (δυεῖν δὲ τρόπων ὄντων, καθ' οὓς φθειρεσθαι πέφυκε πᾶν γένος πολιτείασ … τοῦ δ’ ἐν αὐτοῖς φυομένου … τὸν δ’ ἐξ αὐτῶν τεταγμένην) (1-2).[87] Second, the two authors discuss what impels this change. According to Thucydides, the stresses of war strain relations within a city, which led to revolution. According Polybius, success and the absence of strife, after a long series of wars, will intensify struggles within a community, which will lead to decline.

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[83] Eduard Meyer, *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 2 (Halle: Niemeyer, 1924), 343n2, 359.

[84] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 650; *Polybius*, 136-37; Hahm, "Kings and Constitutions," 465. The differences in theories and Polybius' statement that he relied on "Plato and other philosophers" has led scholars to argue that more contemporary philosophers had greater influence than Plato on Polybius. I think it is better to take Polybius at his word—Plato was his first source, and the other philosophers were less important.

[85] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 745.

[86] Walbank in his *Commentary* notes that the idea of the universality of decline is also found in Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle, but states that there are not enough commonalities between the authors to indicate borrowing. Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 743-44.

Polybius continues to follow Thucydides’ thought, but he reverses the structure of the analysis. Thucydides outlines how society becomes radicalized, leading to violence (3.82.2-7). Then he announces that *pleonexia* and *philotimia* drove the chaos (3.82.8). Polybius switches the order. He first announces the four causes of the fall of the state: love of office (*philarkhia*), the disgrace of obscurity (τὸ τῆς ἀδοξίας ὄνειδος), extravagance (*poluteleia*) and proud display (ἡ περὶ τοὺς βίους ἀλαζονεία) (6.57.6), and then outlines the course of events. Polybius’ reversal of a period of peace causing the stresses on society as opposed to war, and his inversion of the order (causes first and then results) demonstrates that Polybius adapted Thucydidean material for his own purposes. The differences in the passage illustrate both that Thucydides was a template for Polybius and that Polybius adapted the template for his own purposes.

At 6.57.7 Polybius begins to parallel Thucydides 2.65. Thucydides’ 2.65 articulates that Athens lost the Peloponnesian War after the death of Pericles because the leaders of Athens spent most of their time fighting with each other for political supremacy and resorted to demagoguery in order to win over the crowd (2.65.10). They pushed policies that enriched themselves at the cost of the state (6.65.7). This led to poor policy decisions, such as the Sicilian expedition (6.65.12). Polybius' presentation of the future fall of Rome at 6.57.7 echoes Thucydides. He declares that intensifying competition among the elites for money and office will empower the mob, which will either be annoyed at the perceived *pleonexia* of the rich, or will fall for the blandishments of those seeking office (6.57.7). The people will then be ruled by their passions, and demand to have sole power in the city (6.57.8). In the end, the Republic will fall to mob rule (6.57.9). For Thucydides and Polybius, thus, it is the competition within the elite, coupled with their desire for wealth or power, that leads politicians to court the mob. Once the mob has power over the state, then policy becomes short sighted and unlikely of making profitable decisions. Such a process leads to the ruin of the city. Thus, Polybius 6.57 appears to be an amalgam of the ideas found in Thucydides' two passages regarding decline.

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[87] Walbank sees Polybius’ comment as an echo of Pericles’ line, “all things decline,” at 2.64.3, but again notes that this was a trope in Greek writing; he sees the line as influence from Ocellus Lucanus; Ibid., 744.

Polybius' *anakyklosis* and the end of 6.57, especially the descent into mob rule, also exhibit Platonic influences. According to Polybius, aristocracy transforms into oligarchy when individuals' unbridled pursuit of various pleasures, including acting on *pleonexia* takes control of them (6.8.5; Plato, *Rep.* 8.551a, 563e). In democracy, individuals grow tired of equality and freedom of speech, and desire for more at the expense of others (*zētousi pleon ekhein tōn pollōn*); this desire leads to mob rule (6.9.5). Polybius even makes the same charge that Plato does in the *Republic* against tyrannical man: that the individual pursuing political power will bankrupt his own estate in order to satisfy their desires (Polyb. 6.9.6; Plato 8.568d).[88]

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[88] For Plato these are desires of the flesh; for Polybius it is the desire for political gain. Walbank cites Ryffel that the three good governments, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, decline for the same reasons in Plato and Polybius; Ryffel includes *pleonexia* among vice that cause decline; Ryffel, *Metabole*, 192; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 656.

At 6.57, Polybius applies the theory in his *anakyklosis* to his discussion of the decline of the Roman Republic. As the republic continues to function, competition among the elite will intensify and the desire of the political elites for power will cause them to pander to the mob (6.57.6-7). This will lead to the mob at Rome demanding all the political power for themselves: mob rule (6.57.8-9). The parallel ends here; Polybius does not predict the emergence of a Roman tyrant. One might infer from his discussion of the cycle at the beginning of Book Six that after mob rule Rome would fall to tyranny, but Polybius himself does not close the cycle. He merely states that Rome will fall to mob rule, and he ends the book by saying that the strength of the Rome in 216 allowed it to survive the disaster of Cannae (6.58). His failure to foretell the rise of a Roman tyrant is puzzling. This omission shows that even though he was willing to scold the Romans when it came to poor conduct, he was still cautious enough about a possible Roman audience not to predict its inevitable (according to his own schema) fall to tyranny. If he had, the rise of Augustus would have proven him right.[89] So, in his discussion of the *anakyklosis* and the end of the Roman state, Polybius parallels Plato setting decline as a series of constitutions that end with mob rule and tyranny.

The similarities in theme, language, and presentation, then, suggest that Polybius read both Thucydides and Plato and incorporated their thought in his discussions of decline due to *pleonexia*. Even if Polybius drew on other writers, such as Aristotle,

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[89] Morstein-Marx and Rosenstein disagree with a straight forward application of Polybius' *anakyklosis* to the Roman Republic, as they think that Rome never had a "democracy" phase; I accept that Rome never had a direct democracy like Athens, but I see Polybius' schema as loose enough where Rome could go from its mixed constitution into mob rule, Rome in the 50s BCE, to the eventual establishment of Augustus as tyrant/monarch; Robert Morstein-Marx and Nathan Rosenstein, "The Transformation of the Roman Republic," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, ed. Robert Morstein-Marx and Nathan Rosenstein (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 635.

Theophrastus, Dikaiarchus, or Panaitios, who themselves read Plato and Thucydides, as Ryffel, Walbank, and others argue, such a reliance still demonstrates a continuity in Greek thought about decline.[90] Thucydides and Plato created a paradigm that was passed down among Greek writers, reaching Polybius, who applied it in his analysis of the fall of Rome. The similarities then are a direct result of author assimilating the ideas of others into their own narrative and not the product of simply having a shared "world-view" as de Romilly argues or of Walbank's "commonplace themes."[91]

Polybius' use of *pleonexia* is not an archaism. He does not simply copy his predecessors. He does not use *pleonexia* to refer to the manipulation of agreements or judgments or to gaining an advantage (in terms of military affairs or otherwise). He pairs it with *philarkhein* as opposed to *philotimia* when discussing the drivers of *stasis.* He changes the conditions under which *stasis* happens. These differences demonstrate that Polybius did not simply imitate his predecessors when using *pleonexia*, but rather that he had his own understanding of the term that he applied critically in his narrative. He read Thucydides and Plato and then wrote what he saw happening in the world being influenced by them. In that way, he is recording, as accurately as possible, the events he covers, while still being influenced by the analysis of others.

Polybius' prediction at 6.57, then, is the final manifestation of the internal paradigm of decline that I have sketched out in the course of this dissertation. The paradigm started with Thucydides who identified the cause of *stasis* as individuals seeking to gain power on account of *pleonexia* and *philotimia*. Plato took from Thucydides the idea of the individual acting on *pleonexia* causing *stasis* and built his scheme of constitutions around it. Polybius drew on both to predict the fall of Rome in 6.57. From Thucydides he took the concept of individuals acting on *pleonexia* and *philarkhein* and that a city falls when those politicians pander to the mob. Then he put those ideas into his *anakyklosis*, of Platonic origin, to show how Rome would cease to be a mixed constitution and would descend into mob rule, and eventually tyranny. In doing so, he applied a Greek theory on the nature of the *polis* to Rome. This Greek theory of decline focused on psychological and cultural factors. What drove decline was changing attitudes within a city, and specifically within individuals.[92] When it became acceptable to act on *pleonexia*, to seek more at the expense of others, then the city started to become a battleground. The harmony, civility, and respect that allowed cities to prosper vanished, replaced with discord, acrimony, and violence.

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[90] Ryffel does not make a case for any; Walbank reviews the arguments and concludes that there was an interlocutor between Polybius and Plato, but there is insufficient evidence to confirm a specific candidate; Ryffel, *Metabole Politeiōn*, 192; Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 645.

[91] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 1, 745; De Romilly, *The Rise and Fall of States*, 71-72.

While Polybius followed previous authors in linking *pleonexia* to the decline of powers on the international stage, the connections are not clear or direct enough to suggest as complex adaptation. Xenophon and Polybius saw that fortune had a role in bringing down pleonexic powers, Sparta and Macedon respectively (Xen. *Hel*. 5.4.1, Polyb. 15.20.4). Polybius also used *pleonexia* in a manner similar to Demosthenes and Isocrates by employing it to describe a state’s desire for territorial acquisition. As an example, Demosthenes and Polybius considered the conquest of Messene to be an act of

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[92] Psychological motivation for individuals and groups within Polybius’ *Histories*: Carl Wunderer, *Die Psychologischen Anschauungen des Historikers Polybius* (1905).

Spartan *pleonexia* (Dem. 61.21; Polyb. 6.49.1).[93] These few parallels are not enough to say anything more than Greek authors decried foreign policy based on *pleonexia*.

Polybius, *Pleonexia*, and Continuity in Greek Thought

The existence and transmission of this paradigm of decline based on *pleonexia* from Thucydides to Polybius demonstrates the artificial nature of the divide between Classical and Hellenistic Greek thought. Scholars argue that the conquests of Alexander ushered in a new age of Greek thought, one in which the individual mattered more than the community.[94] They argue that the Hellenistic Age saw a greater emphasis on the individual, as reflected in the rise of oriental and mystery religions and ethical philosophies, such as hedonism and cynicism. These new cults and philosophies focused on how an individual may find happiness themselves and not through service to the *polis*.[95] Scholars argue that this view is at odds with view of the Classical Age of Greece, which focused on the primacy of the city. I disagree. I argue that my investigation of decline caused by *pleonexia* exhibits that fifth and fourth century Athenian writers were just as concerned with issues of controlling the individual, and how individuals could find happiness for themselves, as later authors were.[96] Conversely, my study of *pleonexia* shows that Polybius was just as concerned with the preservation of the community as earlier authors had been. Polybius understood how destructive it was to allow one's passion free reign. In this respect, de Romilly is right; Thucydides, Plato, Isocrates, and Polybius had a similar concept of decline because of their shared worldview, though they shared this worldview because the earlier authors influenced later ones, in particular Polybius.

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[93] While using the same language, they are referencing different events. Demosthenes was discussing the potential re-conquest of Messene by Sparta, while Polybius was referring to the original conquest.

[94] Peter Garnsey, "Introduction: the Hellenistic and Roman periods," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield, Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 401-3; Robert Sharples "Philosophy for Life," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. Glenn Bugh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 223-40.

[95] Garnsey, "Introduction," 403.

[96] Graham Shipley notes that most Hellenistic philosophic thought had its origins in the Classical period. Graham Shipley, *Greek World After Alexander* (London: Routledge, 2000), 190-91. Garnsey agrees; Garnsey, "Introduction," 403. In "Patterns and types of Social-Economic Revolution in Greece from the Fourth to the Second century BC," Alexander Fuks argues that various Greek authors from the

The tensions between individual desire and the needs of the community existed in both fifth- and fourth-century Athenian authors and in Polybius, as my survey of *pleonexia* shows.[97] Thus, the divide is artificial because all these Greek authors dealt with issues of how to restrain individual desire within the community, at times in the form of warning against *pleonexia*, and such tensions were not a uniquely a classical concern. Hellenistic writers may have come up with new strategies on how to manage individual desire, such as Cynicism or Stoicism, but they were just as aware of the danger of the ambitious individual and concerned with curbing individual ambition as the fourth century Athenian authors had been.

Athenian writers were no strangers to the theme of dangerous desire.[98] Thucydides tied decline to individuals acting on *pleonexia*, both in the Corcyraean *stasis* narrative and in his explanation for why Athens lost the Peloponnesian War. In the fourth century, in the wake of the Thirty Tyrants, writers struggled with how to control

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fourth into the second century BCE commented on the tensions between the rich and the poor in Greek society. Alexander Fuks, "Patterns and types of Social-Economic Revolution in Greece from the Fourth to the Second century BC," *Ancient Society* (1974): 54-55.

[97] Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 190-91.

[98] Victoria Wohl's *Love Among the Ruins* examines how Athenian authors used the vocabulary of love, *eros*, and sexual desire when describing government, politics, or imperialism. It contains no discussion of *pleonexia*; Victoria Wohl, *Love Among the Ruins: the Erotics of Athenian Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

individual desire. Plato centers the *Republic* on the question of why it is good for an individual to control his or her passions, as the person who cannot control will destroy himself or herself and the community as well. Isocrates, Xenophon, and Demosthenes include similar warnings against individuals acting on *pleonexia*. In the *Politics*, Aristotle states that *pleonexia* causes *stasis* and changes of government within cities. Thus, the concern for regulating personal behavior within communities, so that communities were not disrupted, existed in Athenian thought before the "Hellenistic Age."

Polybius relies on these same ideas in his *Histories*. He attributes *pleonexia* to individuals who, in their reckless bids for political power, damaged their communities: Chaeron of Sparta, Scopas the Aetolian, and Dorimachus the Aetolian. In his *anakyklosis*, he recounts how individuals who lose control of their desires turn their community's constitution into the worst form of that constitution, for example individual desire for more transforming democracy into mob rule. All these individuals brought harm to their community and ultimately themselves because they allowed their desires to override their reason.

One difference between how the Athenian authors applied *pleonexia* and how Polybius uses it is scope. Fourth-century Athenian authors such as Plato, Isocrates, Xenophon, warned against *pleonexia* due to the collective experience of Athens and Athenians with the Thirty Tyrants of Athens. They were writing from the perspective of one city, under the impact of one particular event (and it took them almost half a century to get over the shock).[99] They were also focusing on either the affairs of individual cities, as in the writing of Plato and Isocrates, or on the affairs of Greece and Asia Minor, in the case of Xenophon. *Pleonexia* is a more powerful force in Polybius' narrative because his focus was on the entire Mediterranean, as he states at beginning of his *Histories*. Polybius' text portrayed a world in which every city or kingdom could suffer from a Thirty Tyrants, or where every king could dream of universal domination.[100] He saw how acting on *pleonexia* hurt not just individual communities, but how entire groups acting on *pleonexia* resulted in Roman domination of the eastern Mediterranean. While it would be tempting to claim that Polybius' broader view represents a "Hellenistic worldview," such a statement would be over-reaching; he was just one writer. Instead, I argue that Polybius had a larger view because his perspective was broader. He wrote a history of the entire Mediterranean.

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[99] Sara Forsdyke, "The Uses and Abuses of Tyranny," in *The Companion to Greek and Roman Political Theory*, ed. Ryan Balot (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2013), 241.

This change in perspective also explains why Polybius did not use *pleonexia* to refer to the manipulation of contracts, as it had been employed by the Athenian writers. Such manipulation could occur in oligarchies or democracies, in which certain groups were equal through the law. Manipulation of the law for one's own advantage meant taking from another, *pleonexia*. Such manipulation could not occur in monarchies. Polybius recognizes that *pleonexia* undermines the equality guaranteed by democracies (6.9.5), but his focus was less on the technical and legal aspects of *pleonexia* and more on the larger picture of how acting on it hurt undermined communities. The implication that *pleonexia* was the manipulation of laws might have remained in Hellenistic thought but does not exist in Polybius because he rarely discusses matters of law or contracts.[101] If I had looked at court speeches, a third-century Demosthenes or Isocrates, for example, I might have found that *pleonexia* indeed still referred to the manipulation of law for personal gain.

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[100] Frank Walbank, "Ē TŌN OLŌN ELPIS and the Antigonids," in *Polybius, Rome and the Hellenistic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 128-29.

Polybius' use of *pleonexia* reveals a greater Platonic influence on him than earlier scholars have credited. I have shown how Polybius adapted Plato's thoughts on the cycle of constitutions in his *anakyklosis* and in his foretelling of the end of the Roman Republic in 6.57. Polybius also uses the same imagery as Plato when describing what happens to individuals who allow their passions to take control of them. In Book Nine of the *Republic*, Plato compares those who act on *pleonexia* to cattle (9.586c-d) and later describes passions as the animalistic (*thēriōdēs*) part of the soul (589d). In the course of his narrative, Polybius describes how humans who allow their passions to take control turn into animals. The Aetolians are like animals because they act on *pleonexia* in 4.3.1. At 7.13.7, Polybius states that Philip V transformed not into a beast, like the werewolf in Plato (*Rep.* 8.565d-e), but a tyrant because he allowed his passions to take control of him. Walbank sees Polybius' reference as a snide criticism of Plato, since Polybius states directly what Plato describes through imagery: the transformation of man into a beast. I see the inclusion as recognition of Plato's influence, not contempt.[102] Polybius continues to rely on animal imagery when he likens Philip V and Antiochus III to sharks at 15.20.4

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[101] The only instance in which *pleonexia* could refer to the abuse of an agreement is in 15.20.4. The agreement in question, however, is between Philip and Antiochus to divide Ptolemy's realm between themselves. Polybius would be following the older use of *pleonexia* if the agreement was between the house of Ptolemy, Antiochus, and Philip, and somehow Philip and Antiochus manipulated the agreement to their advantage. As it is, the agreement is between Philip and Antiochus to divide the realm of Ptolemy, so the *pleonexia* at 15.20.4 refers to the act of taking territory from the house of Ptolemy, and therefore does not follow the classical model.

[102] Walbank, *Commentary*, vol. 2, 61.

because they plan to divide Ptolemy's realm between themselves on account of their *pleonexia*. Polybius' world, thus, is Plato's nightmare: individuals losing all humanity and becoming animals because they are controlled by unbridled desire.

These warnings against *pleonexia* and the desire to curb individual action prove that Greek authors understood that social or cultural pressure was at times not enough to control an individual—what was needed was an individual's ability to control oneself, explored by Eckstein in *Moral Visions in the History of Polybius*.[103] This explains Polybius' emphasis on morality and moral education, including the study of history. Morality was important for Polybius not just because he was a Greek traditionalist, but because morals, and a strong internal moral compass, could curb the excesses that existed within Greek society.[104.] It provided the final check on an individual from pursuing his or her passions in a manner that would have been destructive both to the individual and the community.

Conclusion

Polybius, while relying on the same core definition of *pleonexia* that fifth- and fourth-century thinkers had, expanded its use in his *Histories* and tied the concept to the eventual decline of the Roman state. He understood *pleonexia* as a specific form of acquisition in which one gained by taking from another. In intra-city affairs this gain could be in the form of wealth, land, or political power. In international affairs this gain came in the form of territory, or sometimes plunder. In both instances, *pleonexia* was detrimental to those one operating on it. Through the over-arching course of his narrative, he showed that the *pleonexia* of certain Greek powers led to Roman involvement in and thus to eventual domination of the Eastern Mediterranean. Polybius' use of *pleonexia* to explain why cities declined was based on his knowledge of Plato and Thucydides. Overall, his reliance on *pleonexia* and insistence that individuals should control their own desires for their own good and the good of the community demonstrates that he was just as concerned with the integrity of a city as earlier Athenian writers had been.

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[103] Eckstein, *Moral Vision*, Chapter 9.

[104] Forsdyke makes a similar conclusion in her discussion of why fourth century theorists, Plato, Xenophon, Isocrates, emphasized the necessity of moral education. Forsdyke, "The Uses and Abuses of Tyranny," 243.

Conclusion

In the course of this dissertation, I have demonstrated that *pleonexia* should be understood as “the desire for more at the expense of another,” and that Greek authors from Thucydides to Polybius used it to explain both how cities lost internal cohesion and how they lost power on the international stage. In addition, I have shown that Polybius relied on Thucydides, Plato, and earlier authors to explain the eventual decline of the Roman Republic. His reliance on earlier ideas demonstrates that Greek authors had a systematic concept of decline; the persistence of this concept suggests a degree of continuity in Greek thought across the supposed Classical and Hellenistic divide than previous thought.

Chapter one reviewed scholarly concepts of *pleonexia*, decline, and continuity in contemporary scholarship. In regard to *pleonexia*, scholars translate it and associated words as “greed,” “excessive covetousness,” or “advantage,” but these translations fail to capture the full nuances of the word group. In regard to decline, ancient historians debate whether the end of socio-political entities, such as the Roman Republic and the Western Roman Empire, is decline or transformation. Archaeologists, social anthropologists, and political scientists seek to understand such events as the rapid loss of socio-political complexity. This loss of complexity manifests itself when as a central political organization loses authority over similar entities or its own citizens. Scholars hypothesize many reasons for this loss of complexity, but most involve the depletion or mismanagement of resources. In terms of establishing continuity between ancient authors, scholars rely on similarities of language, syntax, content, and theme in passages of different authors to determine influence.

Chapter Two examined how Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon used the *pleonexia* word group in their respective histories. All used *pleonexia* to describe situations in which one group sought gain or advantage over another. Herodotus and Thucydides differed in their use of the noun *pleonexia* and verb *pleonekteō* and the phrase *pleon ekhein.* *Pleonexia* and *pleonekteō* referred to the manipulation of agreements, contracts, or power imbalances in such a way as to benefit one party over another. *Pleon ekhein* or *pleon epithumian* denoted acts of aggressive territorial annexation. Herodotus used it to characterize Xerxes' expedition against Greece, and Thucydides employed the term to describe Athenian motivations for its disastrous campaign against Sicily. Xenophon did not make such a distinction; he relied primarily on *pleonexia* or *pleonekteō* to discuss how governments or individuals abused their power for selfish gain. He also used the words more neutrally to denote situations in which one side had a military advantage.

Chapter Three explored how Plato and Aristotle used *pleonexia* in their philosophical writings of the fourth century BCE. Plato characterized it as an urge to gain more in ways that disturbed the balance of the universe and divine law. He also employed it less grandly to refer to gaining advantage. Aristotle defined it as a conscious desire to have more wealth, security, or power in a way that violated distributive justice. The two philosophers tied *pleonexia* to outbreaks of *stasis* and changes in government. Plato described *pleonexia* as a disease of the soul and tied it to outbreaks of *stasis* in several of his writings. Most prominently, Plato showed in the *Republic* how individuals acting on *pleonexia* caused the corruption of governments. Aristotle in his *Laws* stated directly that *pleonexia* caused of *stasis* and was a reason why governments changed from one form to another.

Chapter Four reviewed how *pleonexia* appeared in the writings of Isocrates, Demosthenes, and other fourth century Athenian rhetors. In interstate relations, Isocrates used *pleonexia* to refer to abuse of unequal power relations, and Isocrates and Demosthenes used *pleonexia* to describe acts of aggressive territorial expansion. In their discussions of *pleonexia* within a city, Isocrates and Demosthenes continued to use *pleonexia* to mean the manipulation of speech and law. They portrayed *pleonexia* as dangerous to the community, but only Isocrates connected it to *stasis*. He also presented a positive form of *pleonexia* in his writings, one in which an individual gained without hurting others, but he acknowledged that this was his own revision and that the common understanding of *pleonexia* was gain by taking from another.

Chapter Five analyzed the role of *pleonexia* in the *Histories* of Polybius. He portrayed it as a desire to gain wealth or power at the expense of others, either in community or in international affairs. In terms of domestic affairs, Polybius continually linked it to outbreaks of *stasis*. In regard to the history of the Mediterranean, the *pleonexia* of the various powers in the Eastern Mediterranean set in motion the series of wars that resulted in Roman intervention and supremacy. Finally, Polybius used the concept of *pleonexia* to help foretell the end of the Roman Republic; eventually, he predicted, the people will be annoyed at the perceived *pleonexia* of the political elite and will overthrow Rome’s mixed constitution in favor of mob rule.

Thus, classical Greek authors shared a similar concept of *pleonexia* with the Hellenistic historian Polybius. It meant the desire or act to gain something (political power, material goods, status) in such a manner that it limited another's ability to gain access to that same resource. It was a conscious decision on the part of one actor (an individual, a group, or a city) to operate in such a way that would seek to gain on the one side and impose a loss on another. In terms of politics, it could be one party attempting to dominate the government in such a manner as to disenfranchise another party. In terms of the courts or contracts, it could be one speaker relying on clever speech to persuade the jury in an unfair or unjust manner. In military affairs, it could be the use of tactics or weapons to put the opponent at a disadvantage. In terms of inter-*polis* relations, it could be one city taking the territory of another, or a hegemonic city imposing its will on the internal affairs of a dependent or allied city.

Greek writers deployed pleonexic language to discuss processes that modern scholars would consider decline: an imperial power's loss of influence over its periphery or its subjects, the descent of a political community from political to civil disorder (*stasis*), and the transition from more complex forms of government, the mixed constitution, to more simple forms, individual rule. Authors connected unjust expansion, characterized by some form of *pleonexia*, to the loss of power on the international stage. For Herodotus, the *pleon ekhein* of Xerxes led to the Persian War (7.16a). Athenian *pleon ekhein* inspired the Sicilian expedition in Thucydides' text (6.24.3). Spartan *pleonexia,* in the form of abuse of allies, precipitated the battle of Leuctra and the end of the Spartan hegemony, according to Xenophon and Isocrates (Xen. *Hel.* 5.4.1; Isoc. 12.55). Isocrates and Demosthenes detailed how the *pleonexia* of the Greek states kept them constantly fighting, allowing kings such as Philip II to manipulate and control them. According to Polybius, states acting on *pleonexia* not only brought ruin on themselves, but led to the subordination of the Eastern Mediterranean to Rome.

In his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides linked acting on *pleonexia* to the eventual self-destruction of a political community. Xenophon applied Thucydides' model to his analysis of the Thirty Tyrants, the oligarchy that assumed control of Athens government after the end of the Peloponnesian War, in his *Hellenica*. In the fourth century, Plato adapted Thucydides' idea and in the *Republic* outlined a process by which the *pleonektēs*, the individual operating on *pleonexia*, in unbridled pursuit of desires caused *stasis* and change in government. Aristotle, Plato's student, continued to use the idea that groups functioning on *pleonexia* caused *stasis* and the change of constitutions in his *Politics*.

In his *Histories*, Polybius narrated how pleonexic individuals caused civil unrest in the third and second century Mediterranean world. He also applied Thucydides' and Plato's idea of groups acting on *pleonexia* causing changes in government, and employed the idea to foretell the end of the Rome's mixed constitution and Rome's descent to tyrannical rule. This is decline because in the change, Rome would lose its more complex government, in which all elements of society were given a voice through the popular assemblies, magistracies, the senate, and courts, and revert to a simpler form of organization—the rule of a single individual, the *monarchos*, through a monopoly of violence and political favors.

Such an analysis demonstrates that Greek authors saw individuals as the cause of decline. Modern theories of decline emphasize the role of resource depletion or mismanagement, or structural failings within society.[1] They minimize human agency and the role of human psyche to focus on how societies rise and fall based on their allocation of material wealth. Greek analysis centered on individuals. *Pleonexia* was an innate psychological urge within individuals. Regardless of how much power or money an individual had, it was the desire for more, specifically the desire to obtain these goods by taking it from others or by limiting their access to them, that was dangerous to society and Hellas. Acting on these desires introduced an escalating retribution cycle into city politics, in which political factions sought power by depriving their opponents of it. If and when the rivals returned to power, they introduced their own punitive measures on their enemies.

Greek authors learned that individuals caused decline through personal experience. Having endured the excesses of both democracy and oligarchy, fourth-century Athenian writers, Isocrates, Xenophon, and Plato in particular, warned against acting on it as a way to avoid the chaos that characterized Athens near the end of the Peloponnesian War. In international affairs, *pleonexia* drove Greek cities to constantly fight each other, which allowed for the interference and domination of non-Greek powers, such as Persia or Macedon. Not only did they realize that individuals caused decline, they understood that they could try to prevent decline by changing the individual.[2] For these authors, internal restraint, obtained through an education in philosophy, would inhibit the pleonexic urge and would lead to peace within cities and the subjugation of the barbarian without.

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[1] Joseph Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 198), 194-6; Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987), xvi; Jared Diamond, *Collapse* (London: Penguin, 2005), 6; Niall Ferguson, "Complexity and Collapse," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2010).

[2] Though I think it is clear, scholars debate on whether Plato intended his students to apply his teachings to politics. Malcom Schofield, "Plato and Practical Politics," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, ed. Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield, Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 293-296.

The conquests of Alexander and rise of the successor kingdoms did not stop Greek writers from fearing *pleonexia*. Living in an age where every king or tyrant could (or worse, did) have aspirations to be the next Alexander and having read Athenian authors such as Thucydides, Plato, Demosthenes, and others, Polybius perceived *pleonexia* as a threat to the entire Mediterranean. He recognized that individuals acting without restraint, especially individuals in power, endangered the stability of a city, a league, or even the Mediterranean. His own beloved Achaean League fell to the might of Rome because such men took control of it. The only true restraint on individuals had to come from within. Custom was ineffective. It could restrain the masses (Polyb. 4.20-21; 6.56.6-15), but individuals born to power with outstanding ability could and would ignore it. These were the men who, if allowed to follow their passions without restraint, would burn temples, annihilate cities, incite mobs, attack the wealthy, and in general wreak havoc according to their passions. Polybius, like the Greek writers of the fourth century, understood that the only way to restrain these individuals was to educate them on how and why they should constrain their passions.[3] Morality and ethics mattered to Polybius, then, not only out of a belief that it was better to act for the good of others, but also out of a very real fear of the individual without restraint.

Rome witnessed the destructive effects of individuals acting on *pleonexia* less than fifty years after Polybius' death. Roman civil wars occurred throughout the first century BCE and the greatest of them, between Julius Caesar and the *boni*, was fought around the entire Mediterranean basin. The wars devastated Italy, brought an end to many old senatorial families, and resulted in the establishment of the Principate. Aware of the Greek paradigm of decline, Sallust incorporated elements of it in his *Conspiracy of Catiline* and *Jugurthine War* when describing the fragmentation of Rome's political community (*Cat*.10-11; *Jug*. 41-42).[4] Other Roman aristocrats of the late first century BCE, similarly educated in Greek authors, may have seen Augustus' Principate not as the permanent end of the Republic, but merely as the next step in the constitutional cycle. Augustus was the wise monarch who would restore peace and order to the Roman world; eventually he would be replaced by another Republic when society was ready. The new Republic never materialized. As Tacitus lamented at the beginning of his *Annals*, the ascension of Tiberius and the following Julio-Claudian emperors marked the end of the possibility of a restored Republic (*Ann.* 1.3-5). The cycle laid out by Polybius and others before him was broken.

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[3] Polybius' interest in education is documented in classical texts. According to Cicero in the *De Re Publica*, Polybius' only critique of Rome was its lack of schools for young (4.3).

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[4] Frank Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 745.

Appendix 1
Pleonexia in Herodotus

Section/form	Speaker	Context	Associations
2.147.3 *pleon …ekhein*	Egyptians	Egyptians were divided into twelve kingdoms, and the kingdoms made others not to gain more at the expense of others;	neutral, though generally shown to be a good thing to avoid. It is also interesting that this is not picked up by most commentaries from
7.149.3 *pleonexian*	the Spartans	Argives claim that it would be better to be ruled by foreigners than deal with Spartan *pleonexia*	
7.158.1 *pleonekten*	the Greeks	speech of Gelon—the Greeks ask for help with a *logon* … *pleonekten*—a grasping speech—they did not help him in the past and he is not inclined to help them at the present	
8.112.1 *pleonekteōn*	Themistocles	There was no stopping Themistocles' desire for more—proceeds to extort defense fund from neighboring islands	purely in terms of money

Appendix 2
Pleonexia in Thucydides

Section/form	The pleonexic	Context	Associations
1.37.4 *pleon ekhoisin*	Corcyraeans	speech of the Corinthians talking about the Corcyraeans	violence
1.40.1 *pleonektoi*	The Corcyraeans	speech of the Corinthians talking about the Corcyraeans: explaining why the Athenians should not ally with Corcyra -	*Biaioi* - violence
1.42.4 *pleon ekhein*	the Athenians/general	speech of the Corinthians talking about the Corcyraeans: better to be just toward other powers than to act for one's own advantage	
1.76.2 *tou pleon ekhein*	general	Athenians addressing the Spartans at the Spartan congress - people do not discuss justice when they can take something by might (advantage triumphs justice)	
1.77.3 *epleonektoumen*	The Athenians	Trying to appear equal under the law makes the Athenians more hated than if they acted on *pleonexia*	
1.77.4 *pleonekteisthai*	General rule – people who are *pleonexic*	Speech of the Athenian ambassador: Men are more indignant at legal violence over actual violence – hurts more to be mistreated by an apparent equal rather than a master	*isou*
3.45.4 *pleonexian*	General rule (for states and individuals alike – 3.45.3)	Speech of Diodotus – *pleonexia* instills in people desire to break laws	Associated with ubris
3.82.6 *pleonexia*		General rules of *stasis* Party affiliation caused by the desire for more	Against law, and due to crime

3.82.8 *pleonexia*	Driver of *stasis*	The driver of the Corcyraean *stasis* was the desire for power due to *pleonexia* and *philotimia*	*philitomia*
3.84.1 *pleonexią*	Corcyrans/those who participate in *stasis* in general	End of the *stasis* narrative – those who engage in *stasis* do so either for gain or because they are carried away by passion	violence
4.59.2 *pleon sxesein*	*ti*	Speech of Hermocrates - people go to war to get something	
4.61.5 *pleonektein*	The Athenians	Speech of Hermocrates – describing the Athenians – forgives them for being *pleonexic*	
4.62.3 *pleonektēsein*	indefinite	Speech of Hermocrates those hoping to gain more by power	Force/power, *dunamei*
4.62.3 *pleon ekhein*		Speech of Hermocrates	
4.86.6 *pleonektēsai*	Indefinite – those who act on *pleonexia*	Speech of Brasidas to (?): Manipulation/trickery worse than outside violence	Again compared to violence (and *pleonexia* is worse)
6.39.2 *pleonektei*	Oligarchs	Speech of Athenagoras in Sicily In oligarchies – the leaders take not just the unequal part of the share, but all of it	Contrast to ideas of equality/fair share

Appendix 3
Pleonexia in Xenophon

Hellenica

Section/form	Speaker	Context	Associations
2.3.16 *pleonektein*	Critias	advice to Theramanes - right to act according to one's advantage	
2.3.33 *pleonektein*	Critias	trial of Theramanes - it is right to punish the person who tries to get more at the expense of others or honor	
2.4.10 *to pleonektein*	Critias	Critias gave a speech about how the 30 would act and the spartans and the *pleonektein* listened in agreement	
3.5.15 *pleonexia*	speech of Theban ambassador at Athens	The *pleonexia* of Sparta will be easier to otherthrow than the Athenian Empire	labels the hegemony of Sparta as *pleonexia*
3.5.15 *pleonektousi*	speech of Theban Ambassador at Athens	The Spartans, being few, have grasped over more than they can handle	sin of empire
6.3.9 *pleonektountas*	speech of Autocles at Sparta	the Spartans wanted the Boeotian states to be ruled under their own laws, but imposed its own system on Thebes	interesting - points out the paradox of the Spartan hegemony - Greek states may only be independant under Spartan leadership - and to be under Spartan leadership, they have to follow Spartan ways
6.3.11 *pleonektein*	speech of Callistratus to the Spartans	*pleonexia* is wrong - acting on *pleonexia* is unprofitable	

7.1.33 *pleonektesai*	the Thebans	they wanted the hegemony over Greece and tried to obtain it through the Persians	
7.1.34	Pelopidas	had an advantage with the Persians	
7.5.8 *pleonektountas*	Xenophon	Epamimondas situated his troops in such a way that did not give his enemies an advantage	neutral - having an advantage military
7.5.11 *pleontektein*	Epamimondas	Epamimondas situated his troops in such a way as to give him and them an advantage	military

Cyropedia

1.3.18 *pleonektein*		Cyrus' father will never teach him to desire more (his grandfather has taught the Medes to have less as opposed to more	
1.6.25 *pleonektounta*		in campaigns, generals must show that they can endure more heat than their soldiers, in the winters, more cold	a positive attribute of *pleonexia* - still idea of having more than others, but not at their expense
1.6.27 a) *pleon ekhein* b) *pleonektēn*		a) how in war does one gain and advantage over the enemy, father? b) (reply) one willing and able to overreach his enemy all times possible, but still be law-abiding	contrast in idea of *pleonexia* - in war it is expected, but in peace and in society do not
1.6.28		when learning to hunt animals as a youth, taught	again idea of advantage in battle - dialogue continues,

pleonexias *pleonexiai*		always to have an advantage against them through weapons and traps	however, that Cyrus was taught this was acceptable toward animals, but not people; again presents idea that *pleonexia* is natural, but not acceptable in human society
1.6.29 *pleonektein*	Cyrus	take advantage of your enemies -take advantage of beasts not men so to have an edge in war; taught skills in war to be ready, but not necessarily to use them	again carries the idea of neutral/positive *pleonexia* - advantage in war
1.6.31-33 *pleonektein* appears four times		a teacher used to teach his students to take advantage of enemies and sometimes deceive friends, if for good cause, but led to people taking advantage of friends, therefore the Persians passed an ordinance that no one should take advantage of others (33)	again negative form of *pleonexia*
1.6.35 *pleonexiōn* *pleonektēsō*		Cyrus decides he needs to learn how to take advantage (*pleonexiōn*) of his enemies, and asks his father how (*pleonektēsō)*	
1.6.39 *pleonexias*		use the same tricks you use against small game against your enemies to your advantage	
1.6.41 *pleonexiai*		you will have the advantage in the open field if your troops are well versed in the art of war	
2.2.20 a) *pleonektein*		a) Cyrus put through a motion that the best should receive more honors and gifts	

b) *pleonektein*		b) even the bad will think that the good should have a larger share	
2.2.22 *pleon ekhein*		someone comments on Cyrus' proposal that he has a messmate who always seeks a larger share, but does not do the necessary work; he agrees with the idea of unequal rewards	
2.2.25 a) *pleonektein* b) *pleonektousan*		two kinds of bad people - those who are indolent and lazy, and those who desire more than they should deserve (*pleonektein*); they are truly dangerous to society because they demonstrate that vice has some advantage (*pleonektousan*)	parallels to plato - describe the man who wants a larger share for less work as a drone, and harmful to society
4.2.44 *pleonektēsai*		to secure present advantage (*pleonektēsai*) would gain some profits, but it would be short-lived; getting the source of the wealth would gain long term profit	*pleonexia* short term reward but would not secure long term profit
4.3.21 *pleonektēsō*		If Cyrus learned to ride a horse, then he would have the advantage over a centaur	
5.5.19 *pleonexian*		Cyrus talking with Cyaxares - can you see any selfish gain from me in distributing the loot	again distributive context though these seem to be in the minority ...
6.1.55 *pleonexian*		it seemed safe and happy and just to him to take advantage of the enemy	lot of *pleonexia* being used in a military context … makes sense
7.1.26 *epleonektei*		in an attack, Cyrus managed to envelope the flank and had his opponents at a great	again *pleonexia* good in a military context

		disadvantage	
7.2.6 *pleonektountas*		Cyrus could not bear to see insubordinate men profit over others	
7.2.7 *pleonektousin*		Chaldeans - give your reward to those who remained at their post, so that men see that those who follow orders will be better off	
7.2.11 *pleonektēseian*		Cyrus did not want to give the city over to looters as it would destroy many good things and probably only the worst men would get the larger share	Polybius also uses *pleonexia* in regard to looting - reinforces idea of zero sum - a limited amount of loot
7.5.56 *pleonektein*		Cyrus' men may feel ashamed if they live inside while he lives outside, else they think that they have an advantage (*pleonektein*) over him	
7.5.79 *pleonektein*		in terms of the science of war, the persians do not need to share their superiority with those they control	
7.5.81 *pleonektēsei*		if any will order such results for himself they would enjoy it, so why should we not enjoy the advantages given us over others … (?)	essentially god has given us such advantage over others, why not enjoy it? Someone talking to Cyrus about how he should enjoy the fruits of victory … no idea what the reply is - actually part of the reply - they way to enjoy good fortune is not to revel in it, but maintain the virtues that got you there in the first place

8.4.4 *pleonektōn*		the people will emulate those who receive the most reward; so it is better that the most deserving receive better rewards	
8.5.24 *pleonexią*		Cambyses warning to Cyrus - do not seek to rule the Persians as you do conquered people, nor should they try to gain advantage over you … otherwise bad things happen	acting on *pleonexia* in regard to equals … bad idea

Appendix 4
Pleonexia in Plato

Laws

Section/form	Speaker	Context	Associations	Thoughts
3.677b *pleonexias*	The Athenian	herdsmen and those who escape destruction (?) unfamiliar with the errors of man, such as *pleonexia*	*philonikas* *kakourgemata*	*pleonexia* is always paired with something (suppose should see if in other instances a concept such as *philomatia* is paired with something that is not *pleonexia*
3.683a *pleonektoumen*	the author and those with whom he is speaking	recapping		first time seen in a non-negative sense; verb, not noun form
3.691a *to pleonektein*	Athenaios	discussion of the behavior of kings - first crime (?) of a kimg is to get the better of established law	king, law	
7.802d *peploenekteken*	Athenaios	the benefit of musical instruction - both kinds are good and have no advantage over the other		again no negative association per se - association of inequality, but not negatively
9.875b *pleonexian*	Athenaios	in order to differentiate from animals, man needs to learn (for it is not innate) how to percieve and act for public good and avoid	*therōn* *idiogranian* *phusis*	*pleonexia* and animals

		pleonexia		
10.906c *pleonektousin* *pleonexian*	Athenaios	label *pleonexia* as the *amartano* of over-gaining	*adikian*	read chapter in-depth great sin - trying to get more without paying for it

Republic

1.344a *pleonektein*	speaker: Thrasymachus still men in general	unjust men will always have an advantage over just men - those who act on *pleonexia* ultimate form of *pleonexia* - tyranny - which, according to Thrasymachus best form of governance	*adikia* tyranny	
1.349b *pleonektein*	Socrates	the just man would never abuse another just man - but would abuse an unjust man - according to Thrasymachus	*dikia*	includes a mention of *pleon ekhein*
1.349b8 *pleonektein*	Socrates	Would the just man attempt to overreach (*pleonektein*) the unjust man		
1.349c *pleonektein* *pleonektēsei* *pleonektei*	ditto	unjust man will act the same way toward all; the just man will only be unjust to the unjust		prisoners dilemma
1.349e *pleonektein* *pleon ekhein*		Would the musical or unmusical man attempt to overreach (*pleonektein*) or think to out do (*pleon ekhein*) another musician?		

1.350a *pleonektein*	ditto	re-examine, but in section, Socrates proves the just man is good and wise, and that the unjust man is foolish (in contrast to Thrasymachus)		9 uses of *pleonexia* in section alone, not counting a few *pleon ekheins* - possibly most singular use of *pleonexia* (also sets up rest of work)
1.350b *pleonektēseien* *pleonektein* *pleonektei*	Socrates	Will the wise man overreach others or just the ignorant and foolish?		
1.350c *pleonektēsei*		The just man will only seek to overreach the unjust		Thus he is wise and good and the unjust foolish
2.359c *pleonexian*	Thrasymaches the *pleonexic*: men in general	all men would act according to *pleonexia* if they could - two kinds of men, just and injust (or those who can rule through strength and those who must submit)	*dikia* *adikia* acting according to *pleonexia* is natural - only law prevents it	a defense of *pleonexia*
2.362b *pleonektein*	Glaucon	the unjust man is better adapt at life because he practices injustice, but		discussing passage from

pleonektounta		gives the appearance of justice - thus gets all the benefits, without the sufferings of a just man		Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*
2.365d *pleonektountes*	Glaucon	still the best stratetegy is to be unjust and look out for number one - even if gods exist (sacrifice and all will be good)	violence	
9.574a *pleon eikhon* *pleon ekhein*	Socrates	The tyrannical man will get the better of first his parents, and then their estates in order to satiate his desires		
9.586b *pleonexias*	Socrates the *pleonexic*: men	those who give themsevles over to pleasure fight (literally) to get more		*pleonexia* hurts the soul

Parmenides

149b *epleonektesen* *pleonektei*			

Symposium

182d *pleonexia*	Phaedrus	the despotic seek to destroy love since it threatens their rule	despoticism
188b *pleonexia*	same	love can be destructive when it enroaches on others - like other natural phenomena	
218e	Alcibiades	Alciabiades trying to get the	

pleonektein	relating what Socrates said	better of Socrates by exchanging bronze for gold	

Gorgias:

483c *pleonektein*	men in general, addressed to Socrates	again the argument - power/injustice good - weaker rely on laws and say *pleonexia* bad	*adikion*	a few *pleon ekheins* in passage as well
490d *pleonektein*	Socrates	Should the shoemaker get the most shoes? (*pleonektein*)		
490e *pleonektein*	Socrates	Should the farmer get the most and best seed?		
491a *pleon ekhōn* *pleonektei*	Socrates	Should the best justly having more act to gain more? *pleon ekhōn dikaiōs pleonektei*		in the past three, Socrates goading Callicles - trying to determine who is the best, and what best share they deserve interesting to attempt to translate this literally
508e *pleonexian* acc	Socrates	good order in the universe is geometric, and *pleonexia* ignores this geometry		

Laches

182b *pleonektoi*	Socrates	those having more ability (?) in athletic competition or any competition have an advantage	neutral use
183a *pleonektoien*	Laches	those knowing/pursuing knowledge have advantage in war	nuetral - maybe negative, need to look at whole bit

Critias

121b *pleonexias*		man in the beginning was filled with desire for more and amibition - Zeus strove to punish them for this	creation myth

Timaeus

82a *pleonexia*		body made up of four elements in equality - exceeding these bonds - bad	Nature - *phusin*

Appendix 5
Pleonexia in Aristotle

Politics

Section/form	Context	Associations	thoughts
2.1266b *tou pleonektein*	despite education, part of nature for people to desire more of money and honor or both		stasis caused by inequality of goods and honors
2.1267b *pleonektein*	the starting point of good governance (?) is curbing of natural appetites and the desire for more		
3.1282b two instances	should certain individuals based on ability receive more than their share of offices?		echoing perhaps Plato here?
4.1292b *pleonektountes*	gaining small advantages (*pleonexia*) slowly subvert the constitution		
4.1293a *pleonektein*	discussion of various forms of democracy in subversion to oligarchy - once the oligarchs become strong they change the laws to cement their power		
4.1297a *Ai pleonexiai*	a constitution must be balanced - *pleonexia* of wealth (must be specified - again more specific than simple greed) destroys the state (constitution)	*apolluasi* - destroy general - *pleonexia* destroys the state	closely attached to proceeding four sections
5.1301a *pleonektein*	oligarchs desire a larger, unequal share		among the various forms of government, those that enshrine equality and those that do not, when the parties do not

			have the share they expect, strife ensues
5.1302b *pleonektountas*	in a roundabout way - *philotimia kai pleonexia* cause *stasis* *stasis* - caused by feelings of inequality - which are caused buy the above	*dikias* *adikias*	interesting in this instance one may gain more justly
5.1302b *pleonektountōn*	hubris and *pleonexia* among the powerful causes *stasis*	*stasiazousi*	
5.1302b *pleonexia*	greed prays on private and common property alike		whole section - how *pleonexia* destroys a state
5.1303a *pleonektein*	*pleonexia* caused *stasis* among the Sybarians when some settlers took more than their share		giving an example of what he has been discussing earlier in the passage
5.1307a *pleonektein* three instances	Governments are overthrown when the participants act on *pleonexia*		*pleonexia* and impact on change of constitutions
6.1318b *pleonektein*	essentially weaker parties rely on law in disputes - those who are able to act on *pleonexia* are less willing to obey laws		echoes sentiments of Thucydides 3.84
7.1324b *pleonektein*	laws of cities and nations (?) - eye toward gaining more (*pleonexia*) in war		moving away from discussion of *stasis* toward *pleonexia* in war - though neutral connotation
7.1327a *pleonexias*	cities that do not wish the profits (*pleonexias*) of a sea trade, do not need a port		again neutral - here simply refers to gain through trade

			profit never see these uses in historians
7.1331a *pleonektesousin*	attacks of a city seek an advantage		similar to occurance in Herodotus?

Nicomachaean Ethics

1129a *pleonektes*	the unjust man is the one who breaks the law and takes more than his share - *pleonektes*		from 1129-30 about the unjust man
1129b *pleonekths* *pleonexia*	the unjust man and *pleonexia* - not taking too much, but rather taking/recieving undeserving of one's due (unfair - takes too much of the good, too little of the bad)		
1130a three uses	*pleonexia* is a lesser injustice - there are others, like cowardice, but those do not involve hurting others		more definition of *pleonexia* see if Aristotle discusses greed (the desire to accumulate goods) as a distinct evil
1136b	the man who gives up his share of something else, receives a greater share (*pleonekei*) of something else		nuetral or even good use - gets something better in return for giving up something a *pleon ektein* in the section as well taking of more - originates in the actor - so if someone recieves more of something he is not necessarily unjust himself
1137a	a judge who makes a bad judgement (or an unjust/*pleonexic* judgment) is just as guilty of *pleonexia*		being unjust - state of mind

1167b	the good men are able to live in concord, the base are not because they are always looking for their own advantage (*pleonexia*)		
1168b	a man who takes more than his share to satisfy his own desires can be described as a lover of self - but he is not *pleonexic*		could this be the section to distinguish greed from *pleonexia*? - read carefully

Eudemian Ethics

1216a *pleonexias*	the *politikos* man choses noble actions for their own virtue; the base live according for money and gain		differentiates between desire for money and gain (*pleonexia*)

Ath Pol (pseudo Aristotle)

5.3 *me pleonektein*	Solon in his poetry extorted the rich not to act for their own enrichment		
6.3 *pleonexian*	When re-ordering Athens, Solon acted for the good of the state, not his own aggrandizement (*pleonexia*)		
16.8 *pleonexian*	Peisistratus - administered the state according to the laws, not for his own good (*pleonexian*)		

Virtues and Vices

1251a *pleonexia*	three vices exist - impiety, *pleonexia*, and ubris *pleonexia* - taking more than one's share in contracts		Examine history of *Virtues and Vices* is it Aristotle? still arguably fits the definition of *pleonexia*

Rhetoric

1.4.9 *pleonektein*	an orator should know whether his state has advantage (*pleonektein*) or is weaker in a situation		again neutral use, but in a military context - as Herodotus

2.17.5 *pleonektein*	those who have more luck (*pleonektein* check) better than those with more goods or children		again neutral but still possibly an idea that all things exist in a zero sum game
2.25.10 *esti pleonektein*	by using a logical fallacy the defendant always has advantage over accuser		sense of advantage
3.17.17	the man who is sensible in good fortune has more advantage		again advantage - neutral?

Appendix 6
Pleonexia in Isocrates

Speech, section, form	The pleonexic	context	Associations
Busiris 11.20 *pleonexian*		If the Athenians follow the sloth and greed (*pleonexian*) of the Spartans, then they would perish due to lack of necessities of daily life and civil war	
Panathenaicus 12.55 *pleonexia*		Spartans led themselves to internal and external destruction due to their lawlessness and *pleonexia*	
12.133 *pleonexias*		the government will reflect those men in charge, especially if those men work on *pleonexias*	

12.160 *pleonexias*		the Great states of the Greece seek to gain (*pleonexias*) from the Great King; without realizing that he treats those who suck up to him with contempt	
12.240 *pleonexias*		it is shameful to present arguments that are advantageous, but supposedly it is good to philosophize (though note says this is irony)	
12.241 *pleonektas*		earlier accounts paint the Spartans as warlike and self-seeking	
12.243 *pleonexias* *pleonexias*		the eulogists of Sparta think it good that Sparta acts on *pleonexia* - the same way that men in court seek advantage (*pleonexia*)	
Against the Sophists 13.20 *pleonexias*		sophists became nothing more than instructors in meddlesomeness and greed	
Plataicus 14.20 *pleonexian*		what man would not detest the greedy (*pleonexian*) spirit of the Thebans	
14.25 *pleonektousin*		no advantage ever went to those who sought greedy gain	
Antidosis		(Isocrates' accuser)	

15.30 *pleonektein*		accuses him of teaching too well and teaching young men to gain advantage (*pleonektein*) in the law courts	
15.89 *pleonektēsousi*		indicting Isocrates for teaching people to speak to their advantage (but has given no evidence)	
15.228 *pleonektōsi*		his attackers - kind of people who recognize that people like Isocrates engage in likeable activities, but this does not stop them from attacking him	
15.247 *pleonektein*		accuse men who strive through study of trying to gain a greater advantage for themselves	
15.275 *pleonexias*		those who set their heart on learning may gain true advantage (*pleonexias*)	
15.281 *Pleonexian* *pleonektein*		no one who works on *pleonexia* is happy - in fact they are more miserable	
15.282 *pleonektēsein*		those who gain advantage (*pleonektesein*) are beloved of the gods	
15.284 *pleonektein* *pleonektousi*		the mass call people who take small advantages *pleonektein* but not those who take a greater share of the good things	
To Nicocles 2.24 *pleonektein*		avoid unjust aggression	

Nicocles or the Cyprian 3.1 two instances *pleonexias* *pleonexiai*		people are accused of engaging in philosophy not out of the desire for virtue, but for advantage; second part advantage is gained through doing, not words	
3.2 *pleonektēseien*		we should not attack those who gain advantage (*pleonektēseien*) without giving up virtue	
3.22 *pleonexias*		Monarchies have the advantage (*pleonexias*) in war as well as day to day affairs	
3.34 *pleonektein*		rulers of cities who are stronger than their neighbors seek to take territory and gain advantage (*pleonektein*)	
3.54 *pleonektousin*		political societies or unions maybe have advantages in other constitutions, but not in monarchies	
Panegyricus 4.17 *pleonexias*		the orator needs to convince Athens and Sparta to work together in order to remove the advantage (*pleonexias*) that the Barbarians have over the Greeks	
4.48 *pleonektēsantes*		(I think) philosophy has given men the advantage/ability to excell over others and survive the tides of fortune	
4.107 *pleonexian*		Athens did not send out colonies for its own	

		advantage (right) but to repopulate depopulated areas	
4.109 *pleonektein*		being an Athenian apologist - claimed that if Athens really was seeking advantage (*pleonektein*), it would have taken back Scione	
4.179 *pleonexian*		Through the treaty the persian king has gained more by dividing the world and taking half of it for himself	
4.183 *pleonexias*		rhetorical question - men should wage war not for aggrandizement (*pleonexia*) but in order to seek justice	
To Philip 5.9 *pleonexias*		The great states of *Hellas* need to come together to end their common struggles in order that they wrest the advantages from the Barbarians in Asia Minor	
5.39 *pleonektein*		Spartans and Thebans are used to seeking their advantage (*pleonektein*)	
5.40 *pleonexias*		Athens and Sparta would prefer mutual benefit as opposed to pursuing policies of *pleonexia* which they did in the past	
5.148 *ta pleonexias*		the monument at Thermopylae (a defeat) is reverred as a monument of valor, while others are reviled as reminders of Spartan *pleonexia*	

Archidamus 6.13 *pleonexias*		The Spartans (?) in their selfish greed think the Athenians too weak to attack	
6.33 *pleonexian*		Any of these reasons is enough to prove that we do not seek peace due to *pleonexia*	
6.36 *pleonektein*		Niether the Great king nor Athens accused Sparta of acquiring Messene unjustly	
6.81 *pleonexias*		I would take too much time if I were to list all the advantages (*pleonexias*) that Athens enjoys	
Areopagiticus 7.55 *pleonexiōn*		The Areopagus kept the Athenian state in line and kept greed out of hte public sphere ...	
7.60 *pleonexiais*		(Isocrates) spent his career attacking oligarchies and those who seek special priviledges (*pleonexiais*)	
7.70 *pleonexiōn*		re- affirms that he is against oligarchies and special priviledges (*pleonexiwn*) and that in general democracies are better than oligarchies	
On the Peace 8.7 *pleonexias*		We (the Athenians) are filled with hopes and insatiable desire that even people with great fortunes desire more	
8.17 *pleonexian*		he will show in his speech that is is folly and	

		madness to treat injustice as advantageous (*pleonexian*)	
8.33 *pleonektein*		those who practice piety and justice will have true advantage over others; while those who use the term in the base sense will not	
8.43 *pleonexias*		The Athenians of Isocrates day fall short of their predecessors who sacrificed themselves for the good of the state; now Athenians will not even do so for their advantage	
8.82 *pleonexian*		Athens brought misfortune on itself by taxing its allies and reaping the benefit	
To Demonicus 1.38 *pleonektein*		put yourself in a place where you have the ability to take advantage (*pleonektein*) but refrain out of equality … ;prefer honest poverty to unjust wealth	
1.39 *pleonektousin*		if the just have no advantage (*pleonektousin*) over the unjust, they still surpass them in hope	
Evagoras 9.11 *pleonektousēs*		if poetry has great advantages, we should not shrink from the task, but rise to it	
9.20 *pleonektēsai*		(someone) used to acting according to *pleonexia* killed his benefactor,	

		took control, and gave the island over to the Persian king	
Against Callimachus 18.50 *Zētei pleon ekhein*		Callimachus seeks to have more than you (people living in Athens, in the Piraeus, really anywhere)	

Appendix 7

Pleonexia in Demosthenes

Speech, section, form	The pleonexic	Context	Associations
Fourth Philippic 10.2 *pleonexia*	Philip II	the *aselyeia kai pleonexia*	
10.14 *pleonektēsai*	Athenians	nature has not equipped you to seek aggrandizement and to secure empire	
10.65 *pleonexian*	Philip II	states have earned benefit from him?	
Second Olynthiac 2.9 *pleonexias*	Philip II	whenever a man gains power through *pleonexias* and *ponerias* (crime)	
2.24 *pleonektēsai*	Athenians	You Athenians have had the opportunity of self-aggrandizement, but never took it	
Second Philippic 6.3	general rule	Those who operate on *pleonexia* must be stopped by action not	

pleonektein		words	
6.7 *pleonexian*	Philip II	Philip II acted according to *pleonexia* and the desire for universal dominion	
6.12 *pleonexias*	Philip II	chose to ally with others in order to further his own amibitions	
6.13 *pleonexias*	Philip II	Philip - did not out out of ambition (*pleonexia*) rather because the Thebans provided the more just claims ...	
6.19 *pleonexian*	Philip II	Philip II is playing upon the desires (*pleonexia*) of the Thebans and Spartans in order to further his own goals	
On the Chersonese 8.42 *pleonektēsai*	Athenians	for nature has not equipped you to seek aggrandizement or secure empire	
8.63 *pleonexian*	States allied to Philip II	States allied with Philip gained some advantage (*pleonexia*)	
Third Philippic 9.27	Philip II	The world is not being enough for Philip's ambition (*pleonexia*)	

pleonexian			
11.7 *Reply to Philip* *pleonexias*	Philip II	Philip's alliance is characterized by fraud (*epiboules*) and violence (*pleonexias*)	
11.19 *pepleonektēken* *pleonektēsein*	Philip II	It is no suprrise that he has gain at our expense … but that we still think we are going to defeat one who does everything according to *pleonexia*	
Philip 12.12 *pleonexias*	Philip II		
On the Liberty of the Rhodians 15.10 *pleonektein* *pleonektein*		No one could go to war as readily for *pleonektein* as in order defend their own property; … men go to war for *pleonektein* but do not feel that in being opposed they suffer injustice	*pleonexia* being equated with injustice
For the Megalopolitans 16.15 *pleonektein*	general law	Other cities are inconsistent since they at times operate on *pleonexia* but not Athens	
16.21 *pleonexia*	Sparta	better to ally with the Thebans and resist Spartan *pleonexia*	

16.28 *pleonexian*	Thebeans	If the megapolitans stay with Thebes they prefer the ambition (*pleonexian*) of Thebes	
On the Crown 18.64 *pleonexias*		Which side should Athens have joined - those who caused disaster and dishonor to fall on Greece, or those who allowed the disasters out of ambition (*pleonexia*)	
On the false embassy 19.1 *pleonexion*		(essentially) the claims of my opponents serve private amibtion (*pleonexia*) as opposed to the commonwealth	
19.152	Philip II	(I think) if you acknowledge his perfidious and grasping (*pleonexia*) in taking far and distant places, then you will know the danger when he takes Phocia and Thermopylae	
Against Medias 21.28 *pleonexian*	Demosthenes	If I have given up the profit (*pleonexian*) of a private suite (*epi ton idion dikon*)	

21.184 *pleonexia*		The leniency of Athenian juries is a great asset and advantage to those who abuse the law	
Against Aristocrates 23.113 *pleonektein*		no successful man has ever limited his desire for more; yet that is why many destroy waht they have for more	
23.114 *pleonektein*		those who act on *pleonexia* do not the difficulties of their actions but at the potential rewards	
23.126 *pleonexian*		those who desire Athenian citizenship out of advantage (*pleonexian*) … soon they will act for advantage (*pleonexias*) elsewhere	
23.127 *pleonektein*		Do not trust the men who act on *pleonexia*	
23.128 *pleonexia*		Charidemus sought the decree for his own advantage (*pleonexia*) and therefore is unworthy of Athenian confidence	
23.129 *pleonexias*	the defendant	out of his own ambition (*pleonexias*) runs afoul of everyone he meets, and expels from the alliance those who defend their own independence	
Exordia 24.2		These men have have taken advantage of you and your simplicity	

pleonektousin			
Second Against Aristogiton 26.13 *pleonexian*	Aristogiton	the one was fair and equal for all citizens alike, but this is unfair and brings profit (*pleonexian*) to you alone of all people in Athens	
26.25 *pleonexias*		(second sentence) the fruits of lawlessness are madness, intemperance and greed, but from laws come wisdom, sobriety, and justice	
For Phormio 36.34 *pleonektein*		He will claim that not all the clauses in the will are valid, but that some are invalid	
Against Nausimachus and Xenotheipes 38.26 *pleonektoiein*		Men who have lived good lives will have an advantage over those that do not and will be of more service to the city	
Against Boeotus 2 40.46 *pleonektēsanti*	*Boeotus*	men of the jury do not let this man who gained many advantage to which he had no right now renew old feuds	
Against Spudias 41.25 *pleonekteisthai*	Spudias	Spudias claims to have been taken advantage of to the tune of 1000 drachma - he lies	

Against Phaenippus 42.31 *pleonektōsin*		Where can one go if the rich can buy advantage in court?	
Against Macartatus 43.68 *pleonektein*		What they have done proves them to be lawless, abominable, and care nothing except for gain	
Against Leochares 44.28 *pleonexia* *pleonektēsai*	Leochares	his impudence (*avaideia*) and ambition (*pleonexia*) are such that he thinks he can return to Eleusis and reclaim his ancestral estate … I urge you, men of the jury, not to support men who seek to gain over others, but support those who are content to win our legal rights	
44.35 *pleonexias*	*Leochares*	His greed caused him to claim a share of public benefits before he was eligible	
44.38 *pleonexias*	Leochares	sought his admission fee (while belonging to another deme) and his inheritance illegally due to ambition (*pleonexias*)	
First Against Stephanus 45.67 *pleonexia*	Stephanus	(Stephanus) Acts according to greed (*aiskrokerdia*), covetousness (*pleonexia*) and pride (*ubrei*) and resolve to make their plots stronger than the laws	

Against Evergus and Mnesibulus 47.31 *pleonexia*	Theophemus	(second sentence) The greediness of the man's character in matter where his interest are involved is dreadful	
47.78 *pleonexia*	Alcimachus	(third sentence) mirrors sentiment last time - the graspiness (*pleonexia*) of his disposition, when it is a question of more or less, is dreadful, men of the jury.	
Against Olympiodorus 48.9 *pleonektēsein*		We drew up an agreement and made solemn oaths which stated that we would not try to take advantage of the other in terms of Comon's estate	
48.46 *pleonektēs*	Olympiodorus	Olympiodorus unjust and a grasping individual	
Against Timotheus 49.91 *pleonektein*	Timotheus	You (Timoetheus) did not produce witnesses to testify that the timber was delivered; …. you seek to rob us while enriching yourself (*pleonektein*)	
On the Trierarchi Crown 51.22 *pleonexia*	indefinite	Jury men, do not allow the ambitions of those who are ready to lavish their money to be dependent upon the greed (*pleonexia*) of those who serve as pleaders	

Against Callicles 55.1 *pleonektou*	neighbor	there is no greater nuisance than a greedy (*pleonektou*) neighbor	
Against Dionysodorus 56.47 *epleonektoun*	the Rhodians	they might have the advantage of us if the trial were in Rhodes	
Funeral Speech 60.11 *pleonexias*	the dead	(the dead) checked all acts of *pleonexia* among the Greeks themselves, assigning themselves to each station where justice was arrayed ...	
On the Sons of Lycurgus L.3.23 *pleonektein*		If those that have gained friendship with Macedon should learn this, they would prosper (have more)	

Appendix 8
Pleonexia in Polybius

Book, section, form	The pleonexic	context	Associations
1.81.10 *tas …pleonexias*	mercenaries who rebelled when Carthage could not pay them	hubris and pleonecia of leaders "corrupt" souls of individuals causing them to no longer be human decay	hubris
2.19.3 *tēn… pleonexian*	Gauls who raided Roman lands	*stasis* broke out among the Gauls over the spoils from a successful raid into Roman lands	*stasis* also later attrtibuted to the drunkeness and overindulgence - immoderation (2.19.4)
2.43.9 *tēn pleonexian*	Aetolians	attack on character of Antigonos Gonatas and Aetolians - only Aetolians collectively referred to as *pleonexia* Antigonos is *polypragmosunus*	*polupragmosune*
2.45.1 *tēn pleonexian*	Aetolians	ditto	*adikian, phthonesantes*

2.46.3 *tēn pleonexian*	Aetolians	driven by their *pleonexia* they will attack anyone for any reason - even those who have done them no wrong	*adikountōn*
2.49.3 *tēn pleonexian*	Aetolians	their *pleonexia* drives them to conquer as much as possible - beyond even the limits of Greece	*pleonexia* contrasted to the *philodoxian* of Cleomenes - *philodoxian* bounded, *pleonexia* not
3.8.1 *tēn pleonexian*	Hasdrubal	according to Fabius Pictor, Hasdrubal's *pleonexia* and *philarkhian* caused Second Punic War	*philarkhian*, *adikemati*, *aitian*
4.3.1 *pleonektikon*	Aetolians	because the Aetolians are poor they want stuff, thus lead lives of greed and aggression	*pleonektikon alazoneian* (trans. natural covetousness) associated with beasts - *theriōde* (parallels with use in book 1.81.10)
4.3.5 *pleonexias*	Dorimachus/Aetolians	Dorimachus broke the truce, a youth full of the hatred and *pleonexia* inherent in the Aetolians	*ormes*

4.6.12 *pleonexias*	Aetolians	Aetolians pillage Messene	4.11 - *pleonexia* caused the Aetolians to ignore their long-term treaty with the Messenians - contrary to “law of nations” - *pleonexia* leads to unjust actions
4.87.4 *pleonexias*	Apelles/courtiers	courtiers use praise to damage opponents	
4.87.10 *pleonexias*	Apelles	Apelles soon would face consequences of his folly and *pleonexia*	*aphrosunes*
6.8.5 *pleonexian*	children of aristocrats	because of the wealth they grow up with, kids become corrupted, and aristocracy turns to oligarchy	*ormesantes philargurian* - paired with *pleonexia adikon aplestous, ubreis*
6.46.3 *pleonexian*	Cretans	Cretans are opposite of everyone else - hold acquisition of money and power in high regards - no matter cost pleonexia is not disgraceful	*aiskhrokerdeian* (also idea that everyone else finds such acts shameful)
6.46.7 *pleonexian*	Lycurgus and the Spartan constitution	through his constitution Lycurgus introduced	*pleonexia* linked with *kallōn, stasis, emphulion*

		equality and removed sources of strife	*diaphoran*
6.46.9 *pleonexian*	Cretans	pleonexia causes constant civil disturbances among the Cretans	*stasis*, *polemos*
6.47.4 *pleonektikous*	general (hypothetical)	when people are covetous in private and public actions unjust, then we may say they have a bad state	*adikous*
6.48.8 *pleonektikōtatous*	Spartans	while well behaving toward each other, the Spartans were bastards to the rest of Greece	*philotimotatous*, *philarxotatous*,
6.49.1 *pleonexian*	Spartans	Spartan *pleonexia* caused them to annex Messene	*ecandrapodismō*, *polemon*
6.56.2 *tou pleonektein apo tōn mē kathēkontōn*	Romans	In contrast to Carthage, in Rome to seek gain from improper channels is most disgraceful	*Aiskhion*, *dōrodokeistha*
6.56.3 *pleonexian*	Romans	Romans condemn gain (*pleonexia*) from forbidden sources (*apeiremenōn*)	at beginning of 56
6.57.7 *pleonexian*	general decline (Romans implied)	internal decline in states caused when people attack those they believe to be acting on	*philarkhian* (paired in *pleonexia* through a men de construction); roots of change

		pleonexia	(*metaboles*) *philarkhia* and *adoxias*, *oveidos*
9.11.2 *pleonexian*	Phoenicians/Carthaginians	civil unrest breaks out amongst the Carthaginians due to their innate *pleonexia*	*philarkhian*, *estasiazon*
9.38.6 *to pleonektein*	speech of Lyciscus, envoy of Acarnia to Sparta	Aetolians in contrast to Spartans	*aiskhron*
10.16.8 *pleonexian*	Romans	Romans are safe when sacking camps because those left behind know they will receive a fair share of the loot	*kinduneuei*
15.20.4 *pleonexias*	Antiochus and Philip V	outrage at the treaty between Philip V and Antiochus against Egypt	*Asebeias*, *uperballouses*
15.21.1 *pleonektes*	Molpagoras of Cius	description - good speaker, but greedy of power	demagogue
18.14.9 *pleonexias*	definition of treachery	allowing foreign garrisons into town in order to benefit individual versus the city as a whole	*idias*, *duvasteias*
18.34.1 *pleonexia*	Aetolians	Flamininus displeased with	*laphura*

		the *pleonexia* of the Aetolians	
18.55.1 *pleonexian*	Scopas	Scopas’ desire for more outstretched other men	complimented/ defined by *philarguria*
24.1.3 *pleonexias*	Pharnaces	contrast between Eumenes moderation in all things versus Pharnaces desire for more	contrasted *metriotetos* of Eumenes, coupled with *uperephanias*
24.7.6 *pleonexian*	Chaeron	Chaeron an administrator of Sparta - about to be exposed for his *pleonexia* by Appollonidas	
28.5.5 *pleonexiais*	regarding Glaucus and Chremas	speech of Diogenes who attacks Glaucus and Chremas for their *pleonexia*	linked with *dunasteian* and falsely accusing rivals (idea of unbalancing political situation)
31.19.2 *pleonexias*	Ptolemy the elder	refused to follow agreements determined by Rome	paired with *kataphroneseōs*
38.14.2 *pleonektēs*	Pytheas	lead a wild and reckless life, indebted to Eumenes and Philetaerus	thrasus

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