

Foreign Powers and Coercive Trade in Antiquity:

A Review of the Megarian Decree

A Thesis submitted to the faculty of

AS San Francisco State University

36 In partial fulfillment of

2019 the requirements for

CLAS the Degree

.B63

Master of Arts

In

Classics

by

Mark Christian Bodenchak

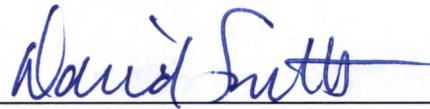
San Francisco, California

August 2019

Copyright by
Mark Christian Bodenchak
2019

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I certify that I have read *Foreign Powers and Coercive Trade in Antiquity: A Review of the Megarian Decree* by Mark Christian Bodenchak, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree Master of Arts in Classics at San Francisco State University.



David Smith, Ph.D.
Professor



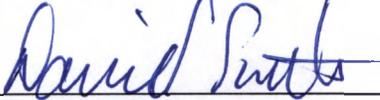
David Leitao, Ph.D.
Professor

Foreign Powers and Coercive Trade in Antiquity:
A Review of the Megarian Decree

Mark Christian Bodenchak
San Francisco, California
2019

Studies surrounding the Megarian decree and the role it played in the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War often claim that the decree was an economically focused law, with some form of geopolitical impact. Few scholars go further in detail to explain the inner workings of the decree as an economic sanction and how it might have brought about any result with Megara. This thesis examines the economy of both Megara and Athens in a framework provided by modern economic sanction theory. Through comparisons of their production, reliance on foreign trade and the level of their economic interdependence on each other, it posits the means through which the Megarian decree would have been an effective geoeconomic and geopolitical tool.

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this thesis.



Chair, Thesis Committee

5/16/19

Date

PREFACE AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey of writing this thesis has been a long one. What I initially began with determination and confidence faded at times in uncertainty and frustration. Throughout this process, and particularly at these times when I struggled to finish and distractions, I had my friends and family to support me and remind me to get back to it. I want to thank my mother and father, who listened often and provided constant advice, and my good friend Seth, who was a constant source of support and ideas. The faculty at SFSU provided constant advice and guidance whenever I needed it, and through them I have learned an enormous amount. I'm incredibly indebted to them. Finally, I want to say a special thank you to Professor Smith and Professor Leitao, without whom I would be completely lost in this process, and I cannot begin to express in words how thankful I am to them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. LIST OF TABLES..... | VII |
| 2. INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| THUCYDIDES, AMERICA, AND THE MEGARIAN DECREE | 1 |
| 3. CHAPTER I: INTERPRETATION AND COMPLICATIONS OF PRIMARY SOURCES..... | 12 |
| THUCYDIDES | 12 |
| ARISTOPHANES | 15 |
| PLUTARCH | 22 |
| DIODORUS SICULUS | 26 |
| MODERN INTERPRETATIONS OF THE DECREE..... | 28 |
| 4. CHAPTER II: DEFINING SANCTIONS AND MIYAGAWA'S METHODOLOGY FOR ANALYSIS | 46 |
| 5. CHAPTER III: THE GEOECONOMIC EFFECT: MIYAGAWA'S FIRST AND SECOND CRITERIA..... | 53 |
| PURPOSE AND METHOD FOR APPLYING MIYAGAWA'S FIRST AND SECOND CRITERIA..... | 53 |
| POPULATION AND PRODUCTION OF MEGARA..... | 55 |
| POPULATION AND PRODUCTION OF ATHENS | 58 |
| 6. CHAPTER IV: GEOPOLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS: MIYAGAWA'S THIRD AND FOURTH CRITERIA..... | 68 |
| THE EXTENT OF THE TRADE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEGARA AND ATHENS | 68 |
| POTENTIAL IMPACT OF LOSING TRADE FROM THE SANCTIONS | 71 |
| SANCTION BUSTERS..... | 75 |
| 7. CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION | 83 |
| 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY | 86 |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table | Page |
|--|------|
| 1. Grain Production in Attika and Its External Possessions: Gross..... | 63 |
| 2. Grain Production in Attika and Its External Possessions: Percentage..... | 63 |
| 3. Ancient and Modern Grain Production in Attica..... | 63 |
| 4. Estimate of Sources of Grain of Athens in the mid-fourth century BCE..... | 66 |

INTRODUCTION

Thucydides, America, and The Megarian Decree

When writing on the origins of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides claimed that “it was the growing power of Athenians and the fear this caused in Spartans that made it necessary to go to war.” (Thuc 1.23.6)¹ This is the historian's attempt to express the truest cause (ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν, ἀφανεστάτην δὲ λόγῳ), which implicitly separated his reason from apparent causes or explanations that others suggested at his time.²

In making this claim, Thucydides' thesis rejects the causes of the Peloponnesian League for the onset of the war. The Peloponnesian league made several requests throughout negotiations, including that the Athenians expel the curse of the goddess (Thuc. 1.126, 1.139),³ that they withdraw their siege from Potidaea, they give Aegina its independence, and finally, that they repeal the decree against the Megarians.⁴ The most

¹ Provided here in the original Greek: τὴν μὲν γὰρ ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν, ἀφανεστάτην δὲ λόγῳ, τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἡγοῦμαι μεγάλους γιγνομένους καὶ φόβον παρέχοντας τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις ἀναγκάσαι ἐς τὸ πολεμεῖν. All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

² Much has been written on the distinction between Thucydides' terms in this passage. For a recent and brief overview of the scholarship, see Zagorin, pp. 42-44. For individually expressed arguments, see Gomme, HCT, vol. 1, p. 153, and Lionel Pearson, “*Prophasis and Aitia*,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, vol. 83 (1952), pp. 205-23. Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 360-366, discusses these terms and the meaning of Thucydides' statement in light of the question of whether the war was inevitable; Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides*, pp. 33-39, deals with them in relation to the question of who Thucydides believed was to blame for the war. F.M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, 1907 repr., 1971, pp. 53, 57-9, argues that Thucydides had no concept or understanding of causation. Hornblower, *Thucydides*, p. 191, argues that Thucydides developed a distinction between superficial and profound causes. De Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 52-58, argues that Thucydides is making a distinction between truest cause and pretexts.

³ ἐκέλευον τοὺς Ἀθηναίους τὸ ἄγος ἐλαύνειν τῆς θεοῦ (1.126). Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς πρώτης πρεσβείας τοιαῦτα ἐπέταξάν τε καὶ ἀντεκελεύσθησαν περὶ τῶν ἐναγῶν τῆς ἐλάσεως (1.139)

⁴ ὕστερον δὲ φοιτῶντες παρ’ Ἀθηναίους Ποτειδαίας τε ἀπανίστασθαι ἐκέλευον καὶ Αἴγινα αὐτόνομον ἀφιέναι, καὶ μάλιστα γὰρ πάντων καὶ ἐνδηλότατα προύλεγον τὸ περὶ Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα καθελούσι μὴ ἂν

important request according to the Spartans was the Megarian Decree. Thucydides tells us that at one point in the negotiations leading to the breakdown of peace, the Spartans claimed that war could be averted if the Athenians only revoked the legislation.

The Megarian Decree is one of our oldest, if not the oldest extant example in the ancient world of what might be considered an embargo employed in peacetime.⁵ It was enforced by Athens against Megara, a nearby city state, before the upcoming conflict known as the Peloponnesian War. It was part of Periclean foreign diplomacy⁶—and little is known concretely about the decree except for what we receive in passing in primary sources which deliver conflicting details. There are three main literary sources for the Megarian Decree. Thucydides, the historian, lists sparse details concerning the diplomacy of the decree. However, supplementary information comes down through two other works. Aristophanes lampoons it in several of his plays, casting the overall effect of the decree in what might be comedic hyperbole. Finally, centuries later, Plutarch weighs in on the decree and provides some extra details, although due to how much later he is writing the events, it is necessary to consider his sources, or lack of them.

Thucydides describes the decree when he relates that the Megarians, who were embittered from the treatment they were receiving at the hands of the Athenians, came forward in a formal complaint to the Spartan assembly: “There were many who came forward and made their several accusations; among them the Megarians, in a long list of

γίνεσθαι πόλεμον, ἐν ᾧ εἶρητο αὐτοὺς μὴ χρῆσθαι τοῖς λιμέσι τοῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀθηναίων ἀρχῇ μηδὲ τῇ Ἀττικῇ ἀγορᾷ. (Thuc. 1.139).

⁵ Kagan (2003), 39.

⁶ By which I mean that it happened during Pericles' time in power and he was a crucial supporter of it.

grievances, called special attention to the fact of their exclusion from the ports of the Athenians empire and the market of Athens” (Thuc. 1.67.4).⁷

The Spartans, after deciding that the Athenians had broken the peace after the siege of Potidaea, conveyed the importance of revoking the Megarian decree to the Athenians in a series of embassies. These were purportedly a Spartan attempt to avoid a war: “Above all, it [the second embassy] made very clear to the Athenians that war might be prevented if they revoked the Megarian decree, excluding the Megarians from the use of Athenian harbors and the market of Athens” (Thuc., 1.139.1-2).⁸

Aristophanes, our other contemporary source for the decree, suggests in two of his plays, *The Peace* and *Acharnians*, that Pericles and his Megarian decree are the primary reason for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (Ar. *Ach.* 535-539):

But then the Megarians, who were slowly
beginning to starve, begged the Lacedaemonians
to get the whole whore-caused decree repealed;
Even though they begged many times, we refused;
and it is from that very thing we now hear the
horrible clatter of shields.⁹

Aristophanes also tells us that some men, not even citizens in good standing, accused the Megarians of introducing contraband, and no goods can pass by without

⁷ καὶ ἄλλοι τε παριόντες ἐγκλήματα ἐποιούοντο ὡς ἕκαστοι καὶ Μεγαρήs, δηλοῦντες μὲν καὶ ἕτερα οὐκ ὀλίγα διάφορα, μάλιστα δὲ λιμένων τε εἶργεσθαι τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀθηναίων ἀρχῇ καὶ τῆs Ἀττικῆs ἀγορῆs παρὰ τὰς σπονδάs. (Thuc. 1.167.4)

⁸ καὶ μάλιστα γὰρ πάντων καὶ ἐνδηλότατα προύλεγον τὸ περὶ Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα καθελούσι μὴ ἂν γίνεσθαι πόλεμον, ἐν ᾧ εἶρητο αὐτοὺs μὴ χρῆσθαι τοῖs λιμέσι τοῖs ἐν τῇ Ἀθηναίων ἀρχῇ μηδὲ τῇ Ἀττικῇ ἀγορᾷ. (Thuc. 1.139.1-2)

⁹ ἐντεῦθεν οἱ Μεγαρήs, ὅτε δὴ 'πείνων βάδην, Λακεδαιμονίων ἐδέοντο τὸ ψήφισμ' ὅπως μεταστραφείη τὸ διὰ τὰς λαικαστρίας; κοῦκ ἠθέλομεν ἡμεῖs δεομένων πολλάκιs. κἀντεῦθεν ἤδη πάταγοs ἦν τῶν ἀσπίδων (Ar. *Ach.* 535-539).

someone confiscating them. The Megarians, banned from the market by the decree, and dying of hunger, appeal to the Spartans. After the failed negotiations between the Spartans and the Athenians, war broke out. According to Aristophanes, Pericles is at fault for this.

Several centuries later, in his biography of Pericles, Plutarch also discusses the Megarian decree and relates it as a calculated move meant to distract from a scandal in Pericles' personal life. These selections from Thucydides, Aristophanes, Plutarch, as well as several other minor sources relevant to the decree are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

With the notable exception of de Ste. Croix, scholars have generally interpreted the Megarian decree as some form of an economic decree, yet they have suggested several possible objectives.¹⁰ It is difficult however to arrive at a clear consensus on whether the Spartans were truthfully saying war was avoidable if the decree was revoked. Pericles claimed in his speech to his countrymen that the issue was not a small one, and in fact the Spartans were only testing Athenian resolve. To give into that request would have led to further demands (Thuc. 1.140.4-5):

But let none of you believe it is something insignificant we go to war over if we refuse to revoke the Megaraian decree, which they allege is the biggest dispute, and if it should be removed, there

¹⁰ Donald Kagan states that to his knowledge, no one other than de Ste. Croix believes the Megarian Decree was not an economic affair (see Kagan 2003). For de Ste. Croix's opposing viewpoint in which he critiques the economic interpretation, see: *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, chapter 7. De Ste. Croix also supplies a list of over 40 modern opinions on the Megarian Decree in *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, appendix xxxv. W.R. Cornford suggests that decree was a policy of the Athenian mercantile class and associated with the commercial rivalry between Athens and Corinth. G. B. Grundy, *Thucydides and the History of His Age*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1948) vol. 1, chap. 15, sees the decree as an act of economic warfare. See Lewis, "The Causes of War", CAH, pp. 376-78, and Brunt, "The Megarian Decree" in *Studies in Greek History and Thought*. I explore the previous scholarship in more detail in Chapter 1.

would be no cause for war. And do not allow any concern in your mind that you go to war over nothing. [5] For this tiny little thing concerns the confirmation and test of your resolve. If you cower now, obeying in fear, you will instantly have to meet another, greater demand; But if you deny them clearly, you will make a point that they must treat you as equals.¹¹

I believe that the Megarian decree is a crucial component to our understanding of the Peloponnesian War, and that the Peloponnesians had strong reason to list it as a grievance. To demonstrate this, I turn towards modern analyses of tensions between rival hegemonies. These modern analyses show that measurements of economic strength are an important indicator of the likelihood of the outbreak of war between nations during times of such tensions. By analyzing the economic impact of the Megarian Decree, the reasons for and honesty of the Peloponnesian demands become clear.

Recently, in the book *Destined For War: Can American and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?*, Graham Allison uses Thucydides' thesis as a model through which to examine current tensions between the United States and China. He argues that those who wish to analyze tensions between rival powers can use what he terms Thucydides's Trap: "the severe structural stress caused when a rising power threatens to upend a ruling one. In such conditions, not just extraordinary, unexpected events, but ordinary flashpoints of

¹¹ ὁμῶν δὲ μηδεὶς νομίση περὶ βραχέος ἂν πολεμεῖν, εἰ τὸ Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα μὴ καθέλοιμεν, ὅπερ μάλιστα προύχονται, εἰ καθαιρεθείη, μὴ ἂν γίνεσθαι τὸν πόλεμον, μηδὲ ἐν ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς αἰτίαν ὑπολίτησθε ὡς διὰ μικρὸν ἐπολεμήσατε. τὸ γὰρ βραχὺ τι τοῦτο πάσαν ὁμῶν ἔχει τὴν βεβαίωσιν καὶ πείραν τῆς γνώμης, οἷς εἰ ξυγχωρήσετε, καὶ ἄλλο τι μείζον εὐθύς ἐπιταχθήσεσθε ὡς φόβῳ καὶ τοῦτο ὑπακούσαντες: ἀπισχυρισάμενοι δὲ σαφὲς ἂν καταστήσασθε αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἴσου ὑμῖν μᾶλλον προσφέρεσθαι. (Thuc. 1.140.4-5)

foreign affairs, can trigger large-scale conflict."¹² Allison oversees the Harvard *Thucydides's Trap Project*, which has identified sixteen cases in which a rising power has challenged an established power. Of these, twelve resulted in war, providing a basis through which to analyze the United States and China.¹³

When it comes to the matters of balance of power between China and the United States for example, Allison does more than simply discuss the military might of each country. He acknowledges the traditional role of military might, writing, "Like its economic progress, China's military advances are rapidly undercutting America's status as a global hegemon and are forcing US leaders to confront ugly truths about the limits of American power." However, he also in particular examines the economic strength of each country. For Allison, China's expansive economic growth is an indicator of China's rising power and comparing it to the United States is a means to demonstrate rapid hegemonic displacement. He states that "In 1980, China's gross domestic product (GDP) was less than \$300 billion; by 2015, it was \$11 trillion—making it the world's second-largest economy by market exchange rates."¹⁴ He continues with an observation of the Chinese worker, stating, "Today workers in China are one quarter as productive as their American counterparts. If over the next decade or two they become just half as productive as Americans, China's economy will be twice the size of the US economy."¹⁵ Alongside this

¹² Allison (2017), 29.

¹³ Idem, 41. The full Thucydides's Trap Case File is provided by Allison in appendix 1 of his book, pages 244-286.

¹⁴ Idem, 6.

¹⁵ Idem, 7.

economic growth, China has become accustomed to forging its own path outside of U.S. leadership. When the United States refused China's request for more votes in the World Bank, China established its own competitive institution, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Allison writes that "despite an intense campaign by Washington to pressure nations not to join China's bank, fifty-seven signed up before it launched in 2015—including some of America's key allies, with the UK in the lead."¹⁶ Likewise, in 2008 after the Great Recession, China created BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), as a group of large economies that could make decisions without the supervision of the United States or the G7.¹⁷ When Vladimir Putin was banned from the G8 meeting after annexing Crimea, China welcomed him into BRICS.¹⁸

Clearly, an economic analysis is an important consideration in the *Thucydides's Trap Project*. Allison explains that he follows Lee Kuan Yew's belief in the balance of power between nations. In an interview with Alison, Yew stated, "In the old concept, balance of power meant largely military power. In today's terms, it is the combination of economic and military, and I think the economic outweighs the military."¹⁹ The message is clear. The primary reason to beware of China is its *economic* growth, not its *military* growth. Likewise, a comparison can be made for the Spartan's fears about Athens' *economic* power, not its *military* power on the cusp of the Peloponnesian War.

¹⁶ *Idem*, 22.

¹⁷ *Idem*, 23.

¹⁸ *Ibid*

¹⁹ *Idem*, 20.

This balance of power that relies on economic leverage is termed “geoeconomics”, which Robert Blackwill and Jennifer Harris examine in *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft* (2016). They define geoeconomics as “the use of economic instruments to promote and defend national interests, and to produce beneficial geopolitical results; and the effects of other nations’ economic actions on a country’s geopolitical goals.”²⁰ They identify seven leading instruments of geoeconomics in today’s world: trade policy, investment policy, economic sanctions, what they call the cybersphere, aid, monetary policy, and energy and commodity policies, each with a geopolitical, instead of purely economic, aim.²¹ They state that evidence is not always clear for geoeconomics, and that:

“Evidence of geoeconomic behavior is more circumstantial in nature—especially where it is coercive. Take, for example, China’s decisions to quarantine bananas from the Philippines amid escalations of tensions over competing island claims in the South China Sea, or Moscow’s ban on Moldovan wine in the run-up to Moldova’s deadline for signing a cooperation agreement with the EU.”²²

This is to say that geoeconomic factors are not always so straightforward the cause and effect are readily seen. In fact, tracing the relationship between the geoeconomic move and the desired geopolitical result is not always possible. Take for instance how Russian invested in Greece, Cyprus, and Hungary after it was sanctioned in 2015. According to Blackwell and Harris, these overtures “scored important geopolitical victories, raising the

²⁰ Blackwill (2016), 20.

²¹ *Idem*, 10.

²² *Idem*, 131.

costs to U.S. and EU leaders of maintaining the sanctions, puncturing the hopes of imposing even tougher sanctions on Moscow, and ultimately making the daunting task of keeping the eurozone together even tougher, ensuring that Europe's attention stayed focused and inward."²³

Blackwill and Harris claim China is America's most important foreign policy challenge. They believe that as China continues to develop in economic independence from the United States, it will hesitate less in utilizing stronger geoeconomic challenges to U.S. power and influence.²⁴ China opts to use geoeconomic tools rather than geopolitical or outright military ones for simple reasons, despite China's growing military capabilities. As Blackwill and Harris write, "The logic of challenging the United States in a large-scale war is growing more remote (especially for state actors and especially in any land-war scenario). One need only observe the way that other countries are looking at their respective military equations—none is even attempting to challenge American military primacy in a comprehensive way."²⁵

The parallels found in the tensions between China and the United States today and those between Athens and Sparta in antiquity are readily apparent. Like China, Athens was a rising power, both economically and militarily. In addition to its already substantial wealth due to the mines at Laurion and its competitive port for trade, Athenian wealth increased dramatically when it became an imperial power after the Persian Wars and began

²³ *Idem*, 132.

²⁴ *Idem*, 179.

²⁵ *Idem*, 35.

taking tribute. Despite its rising power, Athens did not want to break peace, especially not if it meant fighting on land. The Spartans were far stronger in that theater. Instead, Athens enacted an economic sanction on Megara to exercise its strength, much as China is currently using its economic strength to conduct its foreign policy.²⁶

Both Allison's *Thucydides's Trap Project* and Blackwill and Harris' exploration of the power of geoeconomics in modern international relations provide a paradigm through which to view the effects of the Megarian Decree. In this thesis, I argue that the decree was in fact a geoeconomic tool employed by Athens in the form of a trade sanction which I show by analyzing through modern economic sanction theory, I show was both economically effective, and achieved geopolitical goals by creating pressure on the hegemony of Sparta.

The goal of this research is to scrutinize the Megarian decree through a framework set out by modern scholars and economists for understanding the efficacy of economic sanctions, and the means through which they sometimes fail. Perhaps, if "antiquity and modernity...are always implicated in each other, always in dialogue," as Martindale writes,²⁷ then this analysis will provide a fresh look not only on the ancient sources discussing the Peloponnesian War, but also on our modern obsession with coercive economics. Ideally, this examination will further serve as a model to examine and illuminate other circumstances in history where a state manipulated trade to achieve a diplomatic end.

²⁶ Allison (2017), 21.

²⁷ Martindale (2006), 5.

The first chapter of this thesis is a source criticism which explains the principle ways in which the primary sources fail to give a complete picture of the workings of the Megarian Decree, and how each author of the primary sources, particularly Thucydides, have obscured our ability to understand it through their biases. The ambiguity created by these sources allows for them to be used for a multitude of inconclusive interpretations, much as Thucydides has been used to support various, and often opposing, modern schools of foreign policy theory. The second chapter examines how scholars examine the ancient economy and how various methods for understanding the ancient economy lead to different conclusions about the effectiveness of the Megarian decree. Since the different models debate the identity of who was involved in trade in the ancient world, each model predicts that the Megarian decree hindered, or didn't hinder, different sections of society. The third chapter explains some misconceptions in how sanctions have been understood and provides a modern framework for examining them with seven explicit criteria. The subsequent chapters examine the Megarian Decree as an economic sanction within that framework.

CHAPTER I: INTERPRETATION AND COMPLICATIONS OF PRIMARY SOURCES

The Megarian decree is not extant, and even the exact number of Megarian decrees is uncertain. As stated before, there are three crucial sources for the Megarian decree from antiquity, comprised of Thucydides, Aristophanes, and Plutarch. Some further information comes down to us from Ephorus, whose contribution, since it is largely fragmentary, we must receive primarily through Diodorus Siculus. The purpose of this chapter is to review these sources and examine any information they provide about the impact of the Megarian decree. Afterwards, based on this examination, I present the various schools of thought concerning the Megarian decree found in modern scholarship.

Thucydides

Thucydides, a contemporary of the Peloponnesian War, provides some of the most important details about the decree. The historian references it several times throughout the first book in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, but only two of these references provide details concerning the decree's function. The first time Thucydides writes about it is during the assembly of Sparta and her allies in 432 discussing Athens' recent behavior. The Megarians list the decree as their main cause for grievance against Athens. Thucydides tells us (*emphasis my own*):

Thuc. 1.67.4

καὶ ἄλλοι τε παριόντες ἐγκλήματα
ἐποιοῦντο ὡς ἕκαστοι καὶ Μεγαρήϊς,
δηλοῦντες μὲν καὶ ἕτερα οὐκ ὀλίγα
διάφορα, μάλιστα δὲ λιμένων τε εἶργεσθαι

There were others present who each made
accusations; and among them were the
Megarians, who in a long list of
complaints, *were most upset at their*

τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀθηναίων ἀρχῇ καὶ τῆς Ἀττικῆς ἀγορᾶς παρὰ τὰς σπονδάς. *exclusion from the ports of the Athenian empire and the market of Athens, in violation of the treaty.*

The Spartans and their allies decided that the Athenians had broken the peace, and so they sent embassies to Athens. Thucydides tells us that their goal was to find “as good a pretext as possible for making war” (Thuc., 1.126.1). In the second embassy, Thucydides provides the only other description of the decree’s function (*emphasis my own*):

Thuc. 1.139.1

...μάλιστα γὰρ πάντων καὶ ἐνδηλότατα προύλεγον τὸ περὶ Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα καθελούσι μὴ ἂν γίνεσθαι πόλεμον, ἐν ᾧ εἶρητο αὐτοὺς μὴ χρῆσθαι τοῖς λιμέσι τοῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀθηναίων ἀρχῇ μηδὲ τῇ Ἀττικῇ ἀγορᾷ.

Above all, they were stating as clearly as possible that the war might be prevented, if they revoked the Megara decree in which it was stated that they were *not allowed to use harbors under Athenian rule or the market of Athens.*

This is all Thucydides tells about the function of the decree, and it is this description and its lack of specificity that exposes the Megarian decree to debate. This is not to say that these are the only mentions of the decree found in Thucydides. Rather, these other mentions serve to emphasize the importance of the decree in negotiations between Athens and Sparta, or the fact that the Megarian decree served as a *casus belli*.

For example, Thucydides tells us that the Spartans sent a third embassy, in which they delivered an ultimatum demanding that the Athenians allow Greeks to be independent.²⁸ The Athenians held an assembly afterward, in which the topic of the decree

²⁸ “Λακεδαιμόνιοι βούλονται τὴν εἰρήνην εἶναι, εἴη δ’ ἂν εἰ τοὺς Ἕλληνας αὐτονόμους ἀφεῖτε,” (Thuc. 1.139.3)

was a primary focus of the debate, as Thucydides tells us in 1.139.4. In the following sections, 1.140-144, the Athenian statesman, Pericles, addresses the assembly and urges that they reject Spartan demands. These passages serve to emphasize the importance of the decree in negotiations (Thuc. 1.139.4, 1.140.3-5, 1.144.2):

Thuc. 1.139.4

καὶ παριόντες ἄλλοι τε πολλοὶ ἔλεγον ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα γιγνόμενοι ταῖς γνώμαις καὶ ὡς χρὴ πολεμεῖν καὶ ὡς μὴ ἐμπόδιον εἶναι τὸ ψήφισμα εἰρήνης

There were many speakers present who spoke to both sides of the argument, some saying it was necessary to go to war, or others to not allow the decree to remain as an impediment to peace.

Thuc. 1.140.3-5

Ποτειδαίας τε γὰρ ἀπανίστασθαι κελεύουσι καὶ Αἴγιναν αὐτόνομον ἀφιέναι καὶ τὸ Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα καθαιρεῖν: οἱ δὲ τελευταῖοι οἶδε ἤκοντες καὶ τοὺς Ἑλληνας προαγορεύουσιν αὐτόνομους ἀφιέναι. ὑμῶν δὲ μηδεὶς νομίση περὶ βραχέος ἂν πολεμεῖν, εἰ τὸ Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα μὴ καθέλομεν, ὅπερ μάλιστα προύχονται, εἰ καθαιρεθείη, μὴ ἂν γίνεσθαι τὸν πόλεμον, μηδὲ ἐν ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς αἰτίαν ὑπολίπησθε ὡς διὰ μικρὸν ἐπολεμήσατε. τὸ γὰρ βραχὺ τι τοῦτο πᾶσαν ὑμῶν ἔχει τὴν βεβαίωσιν καὶ πείραν τῆς γνώμης. οἷς εἰ ξυγγωρήσετε, καὶ ἄλλο τι μεῖζον εὐθὺς ἐπιταχθήσεσθε ὡς φόβῳ καὶ τοῦτο ὑπακούσαντες: ἀπισχυρισάμενοι δὲ σαφὲς ἂν καταστήσαιτε αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἴσου ὑμῖν μᾶλλον προσφέρεσθαι.

They command us to leave Potidaea, to allow Aegina to be autonomous, to revoke the Megarian decree; and at last they come to this point and order us to leave the Greeks independent. But let none of you believe it is something insignificant we go to war over if we refuse to revoke the Megara decree, which they allege is the biggest dispute, and if it should be removed, there would be no cause for war. And do not allow any concern in your mind that you go to war over nothing. For this tiny little thing concerns the confirmation and test of your resolve. If you cower now, obeying in fear, you will instantly have to meet another, greater demand; But if you deny them clearly, you will make a point that they must treat you as equals.

Thuc. 1.144.2

ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνα μὲν καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ λόγῳ ἅμα τοῖς ἔργοις δηλωθήσεται: νῦν δὲ τούτοις ἀποκρινάμενοι ἀποπέμψωμεν, Μεγαρέας μὲν ὅτι ἐάσομεν ἀγορᾶ καὶ λιμέσι χρῆσθαι, ἣν καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι

But these matters will be made clear in another speech, in keeping pace with events; But for now after giving an answer to these men let us send them away, saying that we allow Megara the

ξενηλασίας μὴ ποιῶσι μήτε ἡμῶν μήτε τῶν ἡμετέρων ξυμμάχων (οὔτε γὰρ ἐκεῖνο κωλύει ἐν ταῖς σπονδαῖς οὔτε τόδε, τὰς δὲ πόλεις ὅτι αὐτονόμους ἀφήσομεν, εἰ καὶ αὐτονόμους ἔχοντες ἐσπεισάμεθα, καὶ ὅταν κἀκεῖνοι ταῖς ἑαυτῶν ἀποδῶσι πόλεσι μὴ σφίσι [τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις] ἐπιτηδείως αὐτονομεῖσθαι, ἀλλ' αὐτοῖς ἐκάστοις ὡς βούλονται: δίκας τε ὅτι ἐθέλομεν δοῦναι κατὰ τὰς ξυνηθείας, πολέμου δὲ οὐκ ἄρξομεν, ἀρχομένους δὲ ἀμυνόμεθα. ταῦτα γὰρ δίκαια καὶ πρέποντα ἅμα τῆδε τῆ πόλει ἀποκρίνασθαι.

use of our market and harbors, and when the Lacedaemonians no longer practice expelling foreigners, neither us nor our allies, since there is nothing that prevents either thing in the treaty, then we will leave the other cities to rule themselves, if they were independent when we first concluded a treaty, and whenever they grant independence to each of their cities not out of Lacedaemonian interest, but to each as they may wish: then we are willing to give into arbitration according to the agreement, and we shall not start a war, but shall defend against those who do. For this is judged at once both fair and fitting by the city.

To review the important details of the above information: In 1.67.4, 1.139.1-2, and 1.144.2, Thucydides provides us with some small details concerning the nature of the decree. In each of them, the historian writes that the decree obstructed the Megarians' access to the Attic agora and the Athenian harbors. This is all he tells us about the decree itself. The other passages, 139.4 and 1.140.3-5, are primarily concerned with discussion of its repeal and demonstrate the important role that the decree played in negotiations.

Aristophanes

Aristophanes is the next source for the decree. He mentions it in two of his plays, *Acharnians* (425) and *The Peace* (421). They are several years after the decree would have been put in place, after the onset of the war. In each of these plays, Aristophanes is critical of the decree, but the focus of his criticism is Pericles, and the politician's policies

which Aristophanes presents as the cause of a war. In *Acharnians*, the protagonist, Dicaeopolis, addresses the chorus with a speech in which he describes the state of affairs immediately before the war broke out. Dicaeopolis says:

Ar., *Ach*, 510-534

καὺτοῖς ὁ Ποσειδῶν οὐπὶ Ταινάρῳ θεὸς
σεισας ἅπασιν ἐμβάλοι τὰς οἰκίας:
κάμοι γὰρ ἔστ' ἀμπέλια διακεκομμένα.
ἀτὰρ φίλοι γὰρ οἱ παρόντες ἐν λόγῳ,
τί ταῦτα τοὺς Λάκωνας αἰτιώμεθα;
ἡμῶν γὰρ ἄνδρες, κοῦχί τὴν πόλιν λέγω,
μέμνησθε τοῦθ' ὅτι οὐχὶ τὴν πόλιν λέγω,
ἀλλ' ἀνδράρια μοχθηρά, αρακεκομμένα,
ἄτιμα καὶ παράσημα καὶ παράξενα,
ἐσυκοφάντει Μεγαρέων τὰ χλανίσκια:
κεῖ που σίκυον ἴδιοιεν ἢ λαγῶδιον
ἢ χοιρίδιον ἢ σκόροδον ἢ χόνδρους ἄλας,
ταῦτ' ἦν Μεγαρικὰ κάπέπρατ' αὐθημερόν.
καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ σμικρὰ κάπιχώρια,
πόρνην δὲ Σιμαίθαν ἰόντες Μεγαράδε
νεανίαὶ κλέπτουσι μεθυσσοκότταβοι:
κᾶθ' οἱ Μεγαρῆς ὀδύνας ἐφουσιγγωμένοι
ἀντεξέκλεψαν Ἀσπασίας πόρνα δύο:
κάντεῦθεν ἀρχὴ τοῦ πολέμου κατερράγη
Ἑλλησι πᾶσιν ἐκ τριῶν λαικαστριῶν.
ἐντεῦθεν ὄργῃ Περικλέης οὐλύμπιος
ἤστραπτ' ἐβρόντα ξυνεκύκα τὴν Ἑλλάδα,
ἐτίθει νόμους ὅσπερ σκόλια γεγραμμένους,
ὡς χρὴ Μεγαρέας μήτε γῆ μήτ' ἐν ἀγορᾷ
μήτ' ἐν θαλάττῃ μήτ' ἐν οὐρανῷ μένειν.
ἐντεῦθεν οἱ Μεγαρῆς, ὅτε δὴ πείνων
βάδην, Λακεδαιμονίων ἐδέοντο τὸ ψήφισμ'
ὅπως μεταστραφεῖη τὸ διὰ τὰς λαικαστριάς:
κοῦκ ἠθέλομεν ἡμεῖς δεομένων πολλάκις.
κάντεῦθεν ἤδη πάταγος ἦν τῶν ἀσπίδων.

I hate the Lacedaemonians
immensely, and may Poseidon, the
god of Taenarus, shake everything
and ruin their homes; all because my
vines have been cut down. But
seriously, speaking just with friends
now, why accuse the Laconians of all
this? Some people here, not our city,
mind you, not our city, but some men
just hellbent, shady people, hardly
noteworthy and hardly even citizens,
have started to denounce Megarian
goods. And not a cucumber could be
seen, or a hare, a suckling pig, a clove
of garlic, or even a lump of salt,
without someone saying, "These are
Megarian!" and straightaway they're
taken away. But that's just the little
thing against us.

But then some young drunk idiots go
to Megara and steal their whore
Simaetha; And the Megarians, hurting
like they'd ate too much garlic, ran off
with two whores from the house of
Aspasia; and so, for just three women
all of Greece is set ablaze.

Then Olympian Pericles, raging,
threw down thunder and lightning and
threw all of Greece into turmoil with
laws that sounded like drinking songs,
"Not on the earth, not in the market,
not in the sea, not in heaven itself
could they allow Megarians to stay."

But then the Megarians, who were slowly beginning to starve, begged the Lacedaemonians to get the whole whore-caused decree repealed; Even though they begged many times, we refused; and it is from that very thing we now hear the horrible clatter of shields.

Through the lines of *Dicaeopolis*, Aristophanes presents his summary of the Megarian decree in this passage. Aristophanes' description of the decree does little to differentiate itself from Thucydides. He writes that the Megarians remain in neither the land nor the agora nor the sea nor in the heavens. The language is clearly more bombastic, stating that the Megarians were banned even from the heavens, and this fits well with the epithet of 'Olympian' for Pericles, but the word choice also suggests the very wide scope that the decree must have taken against the Megarians, or at least its ambition. Aristophanes also describes Megarian goods being confiscated by dishonest men in the city, telling us that there were officials, or at the very least sycophants, on the lookout for Megarian goods coming from Megara. Since they would have reached the market, and not simply been confiscated right on the ships, we can also assume from this depiction that there were attempts in the ancient world to smuggle goods, and that there were also means to identify goods after the fact, perhaps beyond simple matters such as stampings on amphorae. Aristophanes also introduces the Megarian decree as if it was a personal matter of Pericles, because the Megarians stole his mistress, Aspasia. This reflects contemporary public opinion at the time, as I discuss below. This happens again

in *Peace*, although Aristophanes provides a different rumor about Pericles' motives for introducing the decree:

Ag., Pax, 603-614

Ἑρμῆς:

ὦ σοφώτατοι γεωργοί, τὰ μὰ δὴ ξυνίετε
ρήματ', εἰ βούλεσθ' ἀκούσαι τήνδ' ὄπωπ'
ἀπώλετο.

πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ †αὐτῆς ἤρξεν† Φειδίας
πράξας κακῶς: εἶτα Περικλέης φοβηθεὶς
μὴ μετὰ σχοι τῆς τύχης, τὰς φύσεις ὑμῶν
δεδοικῶς καὶ τὸν αὐτοδὰξ τρόπον, πρὶν
παθεῖν τι δεινὸν αὐτός, ἐξέφλεξε τὴν
πόλιν.

ἐμβαλὼν σπινθῆρα μικρὸν Μεγαρικοῦ
ψηφίσματος, ἐξεφύσησεν τοσοῦτον
πόλεμον ὥστε τῷ καπνῷ πάντα
Ἑλληνας δακρῦσαι, τοὺς τ' ἐκεῖ τοὺς τ'
ἐνθάδε.

Hermes:

Listen to me, wise farmers, if you want
to know why she was lost to you. It all
started with Phidias for his deeds.

Pericles was afraid he might get mixed
up in the scandal, he feared your
disposition and biting temper, and to not
suffer something terrible himself, he set
this city ablaze. He threw out that little
spark of the Megarian decree and blew
up such a war that the smoke made all of
Greece cry, both here and over there.

Aristophanes also describes the impact of the decree on the Megarians:

Ag., Ach, 729-734

Μεγαρεὺς:

ἀγορὰ ν' Ἀθῆναις χαῖρε Μεγαρεῦσιν
φίλα. ἐπόθουν τυ ναὶ τὸν φίλιον ἄπερ
ματέρα. ἀλλ' ὦ πόνηρα κῶρι' ἀθλίω
πατρός, ἄμβατε ποττὰν μᾶδδαν, αἶ χ'
εἵρητέ πᾶ.

ἀκούετε δὴ, ποτέχετ' ἐμὶν τὰν γαστέρα:
πότερα πεπραῖσθαι χρήδδεν' ἢ πεινῆν
κακῶς;

A Megarian:

Hello, market of Athens, dear to all of
Megarians! Truly, I've missed you like a
son for his mother. Come, good for
nothing daughters of a struggling father,
see if you can find something to eat.

Listen to me while you hold your empty
bellies. Which would you prefer? To be
sold or to starve?

Here Aristophanes has characters from Megara enter the scene. They are described as starving and desperately in need of food. They have nothing to sell, and in fact the father decides to sell his two daughters to get some food and stave off starvation. This depiction of the starving Megarians is a strong piece of evidence from Aristophanes

for the idea that the Megarian decree was economically impactful. Aristophanes depicts the Megarians as starving in *Peace* as well:

Ar., *Pax*, 481-483

Ἑρμῆς:

οὐδ' οἱ Μεγαρήϊς δρῶσ' οὐδέν· ἔλκουσιν
δ' ὄμως γλισχροτάτα σαρκάζοντες
ὥσπερ κυνίδια, ὑπὸ τοῦ γε λιμοῦ νῆ Δί'
ἐξολωλότες.

Hermes:

Nor do the Megarians do anything. They pull, straining away, tearing with their teeth like dogs—they've been starving so long!

Yet the conundrum with Aristophanes' evidence is this: are the Megarians here are starving due to the ongoing war, or to the ongoing effects of the Megarian decree? After all, the Athenians ravaged Megarian land twice a year, as Thucydides informs us (Thuc. 2.31.3, 4.66.1). I believe that the depictions are meant to bring the decree to the mind of the audience. In *Acharnians* Aristophanes juxtaposes the mention of the difficulty for the Megarians to trade in Athens with the appearance of the Megarian trader. Also, given the fact that this scene with the starving Megarian trader and his daughters is explicitly set out after Dicaeopolis allows a "safe zone" for trade, it is evident that the audience is meant to have the Megarian decree and its effects in mind. This shows that the commentary is meant to be more associated with the effects of the decree.

As for the scene in *Peace*, matters are less clear. This play is clearly bringing the war front and center to the minds of the audience throughout, and in fact, in the scene quoted above, the Megarians are working to help free the goddess Peace so that War

might be stopped. The war certainly had a large impact, particularly due to the Athenians routinely destroying Megarian land. Despite this I believe that the descriptions of starving Megarians is still meant to bring the decree to mind for the audience, especially since Hermes explicitly mentions the decree in lines 603-614 as one of the initial causes for all of the Megarians' suffering. Hermes' words are, "He threw out that little spark of the Megarian decree", not "he invaded your lands" or some similar imagery of hoplites marching.

Even with these scenes from his plays as evidence, Aristophanes presents some difficulties as a reliable source. De Ste. Croix argues that due to the comedic nature of his writings, Aristophanes cannot be taken at face value. When reading Aristophanes and utilizing him as evidence, one must confront the question of whether Aristophanes statements are truthful, or, as de Ste. Croix calls them, comedic exaggerations and comedic inventions.²⁹ Furthermore, if the statements are exaggerated for the sake of comedy, is the evidence provided by them still pertinent?

This concern relies on the idea that there is a sole historical truth, and that this truth is discernible in the sources given to us. It implies that some sources, because they are written with the telling of history in mind, such as Thucydides, have more intrinsic accuracy than Aristophanes' comedic writings. Yet Aristophanes' comedy did not appear in a vacuum. Aristophanes' humor is playing with the audiences' beliefs, and thus the larger Athenian society's beliefs, concerning the Megarian decree. The humor is built

²⁹ See de Ste. Croix 231-236 for a lengthy discussion on his views on Comedy as a historical source.

upon the expectations and assumptions of the audience, which are built upon their common experiences. As McLeish writes, “Unless what he sees is to seem merely chaotic, the spectator of a play must be aware... of some sort of unifying structure... Usually this structure is bound up with the main philosophical theme of the play, and the events of the plot serve as a particular demonstration of that theme applied to human affairs... Underlying all the hilarious incident of each plot is a unifying philosophical idea, as didactic as that of tragedy...”³⁰ For Aristophanes to have made a joke about a complete fabrication would not have made any sense to the audience and not had an element of subverting an expectation which is the foundation of comedy. Instead, Aristophanes is clearly playing upon the public’s, and thus, the majority’s understanding of the Megarian decree in antiquity. On this idea, Heath states, “one would not have expected a comic dramatist to have achieved before such an audience the acclaim that Aristophanes achieved if he were articulating views distinctive of a very restricted section of Athenian society, as de Ste Croix’s analysis would imply”.³¹ This is to say, that among Aristophanes’ verses, must lie a glimmer of relatable truth. Simply because something is comedic, does not mean it has any historical veracity or value. As Heath summarizes, “a serious point can be conveyed by means of a comic vehicle [without invalidating the point]. How often does one have to state the obvious?”³²

³⁰ Heath, citing McLeish

³¹ Heath

³² Heath - 29

Plutarch

Plutarch (46-120 C.E.) is the final main source for the decree. The first complication for using Plutarch as a source is that he writes several centuries after the Peloponnesian War. Plutarch used both Aristophanes and Thucydides as sources, and so his telling shares some similarities with them. Plutarch writes from a biographical standpoint, and so his focus is on Pericles, and specifically the important acts that Pericles took as a great Athenian statesman. Plutarch's telling also provides new information: He suggests that there were multiple decrees, and that the decree had a much larger scope and impact. It is these deviations which then further complicate our understanding of the decree today. The first discrepancy is when Plutarch details the Megarians' complaint at the Spartan assembly (emphasis my own):

Plut., *Per*, 29.4

χαλεπαίνουσι δὲ τοῖς Κορινθίοις καὶ κατηγοροῦσι τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἐν Αἰακεδαίμονι προσεγένοντο Μεγαρεῖς, αἰτιώμενοι πάσης μὲν ἀγορᾶς, πάντων δὲ λιμένων, ὧν Ἀθηναῖοι κρατοῦσιν, εἶργεσθαι καὶ ἀπελαύνεσθαι παρὰ τὰ κοινὰ δίκαια καὶ τοὺς γεγενημένους ὄρκους τοῖς Ἑλλησιν:

The Corinthians were furious, and accused the Athenians at Sparta, and they were joined by the Megarians, who alleged that from *every market-place and from all harbors over which the Athenians ruled, they were excluded and driven away*, contrary to the common law and the oaths sworn upon by the Greeks.

Whereas Thucydides and Aristophanes both wrote that the Megarians were expelled from the agora, and wrote about it in the singular, Plutarch writes, “*πάσης μὲν ἀγορᾶς, πάντων δὲ λιμένων, ὧν Ἀθηναῖοι κρατοῦσιν*”. This could be taken to mean “every marketplace”, or perhaps more likely “the entire marketplace”. This former translation

creates a discrepancy that immediately calls into question the exact scope of the decree and furthermore has enormous implications for the decree's effect. Plutarch also provides several of the ongoing ancient theories about the passing of the decree and the important place it took in negotiations (emphasis my own):

Plut., *Per*, 29.5

οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ πρεσβειῶν τε πεμπομένων Ἀθήναζε, καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων Ἀρχιδάμου τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἐγκλημάτων εἰς διαλύσεις ἄγοντος καὶ τοὺς συμμάχους πραΰνοντος, οὐκ ἂν δοκεῖ συμπεσεῖν ὑπὸ γε τῶν ἄλλων αἰτιῶν ὁ πόλεμος τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, εἰ τὸ ψήφισμα καθελεῖν τὸ Μεγαρικὸν ἐπέισθησαν καὶ διαλλαγῆναι πρὸς αὐτούς. διὸ καὶ μάλιστα πρὸς τοῦτο Περικλῆς ἐναντιωθείς, καὶ παροξύνας τὸν δῆμον ἐμμεῖναι τῇ πρὸς τοὺς Μεγαρεῖς φιλονεικία, μόνος ἔσχε τοῦ πολέμου τὴν αἰτίαν.

But even so, Archidamus, the king of the Lacedaemonians, sent embassies to Athens in an attempt to negotiate a settlement to many of the complains and to soften the allies' anger, so that it seemed like war would not have fallen upon the Athenians for any of the other problems, *if only they could have been persuaded to revoke the decree against the Megarians and to make up with them.* And therefore, since Pericles was most against this, and he kept urging the people to stay the course in their dispute with the Megarians, he alone held responsibility for the war.

In the above quoted section, Plutarch clearly mirrors Thucydides' telling of the decree by emphasizing just how important the decree was in negotiations. Yet he also tells of the common public perception that Pericles was the primary cause of the war.

This echoes Aristophanes' telling of the public opinion about the decree:

Plut., *Per*, 30.2

ὑπῆν μὲν οὖν τις, ὡς ἔοικεν, αὐτῷ καὶ ἰδία πρὸς τοὺς Μεγαρεῖς ἀπέχθεια: κοινήν δὲ καὶ φανεράν ποιησάμενος αἰτίαν κατ' αὐτῶν ἀποτέμενεσθαι τὴν ἱερὰν ὀργάδα, γράφει ψήφισμα κήρυκα πεμφθῆναι πρὸς αὐτούς καὶ πρὸς

Some private hatred against the Megarians held sway over him [Pericles], it seems; But he produced a public and obvious charge against them: that they were cutting away the sacred fields, and he

Λακεδαιμονίους τὸν αὐτὸν
κατηγοροῦντα τῶν Μεγαρέων.

wrote a decree that a herald be sent to
them and to the Lacedaemonians
denouncing the Megarians.

Plutarch explains several ideas behind the conflict of the Megarian decree. He acknowledges the perception that Pericles was to blame, yet he also adds on that the Athenians accused the Megarians also of murdering a herald, Anthemocritus. The Megarians, of course, denied this, and stated that they believed it was originally over the theft of women. Plutarch states that they referenced the same incident that Aristophanes describes in *Acharnians*:

Plut., Per, 30.4

Μεγαρεῖς δὲ τὸν Ἀνθεμοκρίτου φόνον
ἀπαρνούμενοι τὰς αἰτίας εἰς Ἀσπασίαν
καὶ Περικλέα τρέπουσι, χρώμενοι τοῖς
περιβοήτοις καὶ δημώδεσι τούτοις ἐκ τῶν
Ἀχαρνέων στιχιδίοις:

πόρνην δὲ Σιμαίθαν ἰόντες Μεγάραδε
νεανία κλέπτουσι μεθυσκοκότταβοι:
κάθ' οἱ Μεγαρεῖς ὀδύναις
πεφυσιγγωμένοι
ἀντεξέκλεψαν Ἀσπασίας πόρνας δύο.

But the Megarians denied the murder of
Anthemocritus, and turned the blame on
Aspasia and Pericles, using those famous
and popular lines of the 'Acharnians':

But then some young drunk idiots go to
Megara and steal their whore Simaetha;
And the Megarians, hurting like they'd
ate too much garlic, ran off with two
whores from the house of Aspasia;

Ultimately, Plutarch admits the difficulty in ascertaining the original causes for the decree in chapter thirty. He does, however, stress that it was generally agreed that Pericles was the primary drive behind the decree. Whether Pericles pressed for the decree out of the best interests of the city, or through personal reasons, was obviously up for debate:

Plut., *Per*, 30.5

τὴν μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴν ὅπως ἔσχεν οὐ ῥάδιον γνῶναι, τοῦ δὲ μὴ λυθῆναι τὸ ψήφισμα πάντες ὡσαύτως τὴν αἰτίαν ἐπιφέρουσι τῷ Περικλεῖ. πλὴν οἱ μὲν ἐκ φρονήματος μεγάλου μετὰ γνώμης κατὰ τὸ βέλτιστον ἀπισχυρίσασθαί φασιν αὐτόν, πείραν ἐνδόσεως τὸ πρόσταγμα καὶ τὴν συγχώρησιν ἐξομολόγησιν ἀσθενείας ἡγουμένον: οἱ δὲ μᾶλλον αὐθαδεῖα τι καὶ φιλονεικία πρὸς ἔνδειξιν ἰσχύος περιφρονῆσαι Λακεδαιμονίων.

How to consider the origin of such a matter is not easy to determine, but that the decree was not removed, all men alike lay the blame at Pericles' feet. Except some maintain that it was out of his high principle and that he felt he knew what was best, considering the matter of yielding as a test and any agreement as an admission of weakness. Others hold it was rather with arrogance and stubbornness in displaying power, that he despised the Lacedaemonians.

Ultimately, Plutarch simply reports much of the same evidence from Thucydides and Aristophanes – the idea that the decree played a role in negotiations, that the public had their own theories about why the decree was passed, and why Pericles supported it so much. Yet Plutarch's telling provides new information that is found nowhere else, such as the death of the herald Anthemocritus, multiple decrees, and that the decree had a much larger scope and impact.³³ These discrepancies, of course, could possibly be clarifications made by Plutarch, who may have had the advantage of now nonexistent sources, or perhaps the proof of the matter was solidified over time and by Plutarch's time considered a matter of public knowledge and record. Fortunately, since the death of Anthemocritus, does not factor into the analysis of the decree economic effectiveness, this thesis is able to pass by this particular discrepancy. As for the other discrepancies which Plutarch introduces, these only complicate matters.

³³ For a good discussion on the debate surrounding Anthemocritus and how he factors into our broader understanding of the Megarian decree, see McDonald (1994).

These comprise our main sources of the decree. A fourth source who was contemporary with the decree, Andocides, has an allusion to Megara and the decree in a section explaining why the peace with Sparta was broken (Andoc., 3.8). However, I agree with de Ste. Croix who states that the reference is vague and provides no new reliable information.³⁴

Diodorus Siculus

The next written reference I discuss is Diodorus Siculus, who wrote his world history under the regimes of Julius Caesar and Augustus. Diodorus presents the Megarian decree as part of Pericles' plan to shift public attention onto an outside threat rather than personal scandal. In his work, Diodorus subsumed in successive order the works of several authors, such as the fourth century writer Ephorus, whom Diodorus admits to using as his main source for the Peloponnesian war, and Ephorus himself in turn used Thucydides. In Diodorus' version of the affairs which led to war the war between Athens and Sparta, the discussion revolves around Pericles, and his apparent effort to embroil the Athenians in war, echoing previously mentioned sources:

Diod. Sic, 12.39

ὁ δὲ Περικλῆς, εἰδὼς τὸν δῆμον ἐν μὲν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς ἔργοις θαυμάζοντα τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας διὰ τὰς κατεπειγούσας χρείας, κατὰ δὲ τὴν εἰρήνην τοὺς αὐτοὺς συκοφαντοῦντα διὰ τὴν σχολὴν καὶ φθόνον, ἔκρινε συμφέρειν αὐτῷ τὴν

But Pericles, knowing that during times of war the people respect noble men because of their urgent need, and that in times of peace they bring accusations because of their free time and ill-will, he judged it best for himself to throw the

³⁴ Andocides writes: πάλιν δὲ διὰ Μεγαρέας πολεμήσαντες καὶ τὴν χώραν τμηθῆναι προέμενοι, πολλῶν ἀγαθῶν στέρηθέντες αὐθις τὴν εἰρήνην ἐποίησάμεθα, ἦν ἡμῖν Νικίας ὁ Νικηράτου κατηργάσατο (Andoc. 3, 8). See also De Ste. Croix's discussion, pp. 245-256.

πόλιν ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς μέγαν πόλεμον, ὅπως
 χρεῖαν ἔχουσα τῆς Περικλέους ἀρετῆς
 καὶ στρατηγίας μὴ προσδέχεται τὰς κατ'
 αὐτοῦ διαβολάς, μηδ' ἔχη σχολὴν καὶ
 χρόνον ἐξετάζειν ἀκριβῶς τὸν περὶ τῶν
 χρημάτων λόγον. ὄντος δὲ ψηφίσματος
 παρὰ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις Μεγαρέας
 εἶργεσθαι τῆς τε ἀγορᾶς καὶ τῶν
 λιμένων, οἱ Μεγαρεῖς κατέφυγον ἐπὶ
 τοὺς Σπαρτιάτας. οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι
 πεισθέντες τοῖς Μεγαρεῦσιν ἀπέστειλαν
 πρέσβεις ἐκ τοῦ προφανεστάτου ἀπὸ τῆς
 τοῦ κοινοῦ συνεδρίου γνώμης
 προστάττοντες τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις ἀνελεῖν τὸ
 κατὰ τῶν Μεγαρέων ψήφισμα, μὴ
 πειθομένων δὲ αὐτῶν ἀπειλοῦντες
 πολεμήσειν αὐτοῖς μετὰ τῶν συμμάχων.
 συναχθείσης οὖν περὶ τούτων ἐκκλησίας,
 ὁ Περικλῆς, δεινότητι λόγου πολὺν
 διαφέρων ἀπάντων τῶν πολιτῶν, ἔπεισε
 τοὺς Ἀθηναίους μὴ ἀναιρεῖν τὸ
 ψήφισμα, λέγων ἀρχὴν δουλείας εἶναι τὸ
 πείθεσθαι παρὰ τὸ συμφέρον τοῖς
 Λακεδαιμονίων προστάγμασι.

city into a great war, so that, while
 needing the virtue and leadership of
 Pericles, they would not entertain slander
 against him, nor would they have the
 leisure and time to really examine the
 story concerning the funds.

After it had been decreed by the
 Athenians to exclude the Megarians from
 both their market and harbors, the
 Megarians appealed to the Spartans. And
 the Lacedaemonians, persuaded by the
 Megarians, in accordance with the
 judgment of the common council, openly
 sent ambassadors who ordered the
 Athenians to lift the decree against the
 Megarians and threatening, if they did
 not obey, to wage war upon them
 together with their allies.

After the Assembly had been convened
 concerning the matter, Pericles, who
 stood far above his fellow citizens in
 skill in oratory, persuaded the Athenians
 not to lift the decree, saying it would be
 the beginning of slavery for them to be
 persuaded, against their own interests, by
 the command of the Lacedaemonians.

Diodorus shares information that has already been given by Thucydides, and
 Aristophanes, as well as later by Plutarch. He echoes the beliefs about the Megarian
 decree in public perception in antiquity. His twelfth book demonstrates how widely
 accepted Aristophanes' portrayal of Pericles was. Diodorus' telling of the Peloponnesian
 War reinforces Pericles' and the decree's responsibility for its outbreak, not the
 Corcyrean, or Potidaean affairs.

Despite the abundance of references to the decree in antiquity, some of the most
 important information is still a puzzle. Ancient authors felt it most important to list the

decree in terms of its geopolitical impact—how it served, or did not serve, as an important piece in the grand scheme of things in the outbreak of the war. Yet none of them, aside from Aristophanes, present it as a geoeconomic tool. Aristophanes suggests a geoeconomic impact through the juxtaposition of mentioning the decree and the subsequent lack of trade between Athens and Megara with the appearance of a starving Megarian. The only other evidence Aristophanes provides on how the decree might have been enforced and geoeconomically effective is in his comments about sycophants seizing Megarian goods. This lack of information about the mechanics of the decree, coupled with the various discrepancies between ancient authors and the information they provide, has created room for a lively debate about its economic effectiveness among modern scholars who study the Megarian decree.

Modern interpretations of the decree

Modern scholars have synthesized the clues provided to us by these ancient sources and arrived at a variety of conclusions regarding the decree. These conclusions are often based on several factors, including both the scholar's confidence in each source from antiquity, such as whether Aristophanes' comedy negates the reliability of his information,³⁵ or their understanding of the functioning of the ancient economy.³⁶ But

³⁵ e.g., de Ste. Croix (1972), 232-244, especially 236 onwards.

³⁶ For an overview of the various conceptions of how the ancient economy functioned, I recommend Ian Morris' introduction of M.I. Finley's *The Ancient Economy* as well as the exhaustive introduction to the topic in Darel Tai Engen's *Honor and Profit*.

few scholars, as I shall explain, have gone into any depth examining exactly *how* the decree might have been effective. Rather, the majority acknowledge it as an economic sanction, provide the briefest of assumptions about the decree's scope, and following the lead of the ancient sources, turn quickly to examining its political impact.

For the purpose of this thesis, the most important disagreement concerning the decree is whether it was economic in purpose. For the camp which identifies it as an economic undertaking, the logical next question is whether the decree was an effective or ineffective sanction. Of these schools of thought, the main current of thought in the scholarship shares the belief that the Megarian decree was both *economically impactful* and *effective*, but after this agreement they differ in their definition of the *scope* and *purpose* of the decree, leading to further fragmentation in the scholarship. For example, there is often failure to clarify whether the decree effected Megara as a territory, or the Megarians as *citizens*. Sometimes the scholarship uses large generalizations of zones that were affected such as "Athenian territory", and other times the arguments denote more specific locales, limiting it specifically to the single, specific Athenian agora and no other land in Athenian controlled territory. Despite this healthy amount of writing on the Megarian decree, no scholar to my knowledge has clearly outlined an explanation of the Megarian decree that explains how it would have been enforced and been economically impactful in the fifth century B.C.E Greek world in accordance with current theories on economic sanctions.

The debate in modern scholarship has persisted since at least F.W. Ullrich published his work on the decree in 1838, which acknowledged the decree as an economic effort by Athens against Megara. However, Ullrich never lays out the precise nature in which the decree would be enacted and managed.³⁷ After Ullrich, scholars continued to discuss the decree in terms of the role it played in the outbreak of the war.

For example, in 1886, Bockh wrote that Pericles excluded the Megarians from Athenian trade in Attica, “of all traffic with Attica... to press them”.³⁸ A couple years later, in 1888, Grote expanded the scope, and wrote that the decree was “prohibiting the Megarians, on *pain of death*, from *all trade or intercourse* as well with *Athens* as with *all ports within the Athenian empire*” (emphases my own).³⁹ Already at this point, the disagreements within two years of publications on the topic create vastly different understandings of exactly what sort of situation the decree had caused in antiquity. Was the decree being enforced on pain of death? And in what exact geographic locations was the decree being enforced? Furthermore, what was the desired outcome? Grote’s scope of the decree is widely different than Bockh’s, and it is simple wordings like this that have had enormous repercussions in the scholarship.

In 1893, in the economic camp, Busolt treated the decree as a third incident that directly led to the outbreak of the war, alongside the Corcyrean and Potidaean affairs.⁴⁰ He treated the decree in nature as a general ban on Megarian trade that would deprive

³⁷ Ullrich (1838).

³⁸ Bockh (1886), 69 - von allem Verkehr mit Attika..., um sie zu drücken

³⁹ Grote (1888), 102

⁴⁰ Busolt (1893), 815-17.

them of their grain supply and Pontic sea trade, “this 'Megarian Decree' destroyed all the trade of the Megarians in the area of Attic rule and made it more difficult for them to supply grain, since they were excluded not only from the market of Athens, but also from Byzantium, the main stockpile of the Pontic cereals”.⁴¹ Despite this, Busolt names no market forces, or laws, or policies which would have enforced this at the time. Instead, Busolt leaves it to be assumed that these measures would naturally have had an effect.

Busolts' line of thought continued into Cornford's publication in 1907, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, where he wrote that “the decree meant flat ruin to Megara; for she was shut out of Byzantium”.⁴² Cornford's emphasis on access to Byzantium returns to the importance of the Pontic grain trade which Busolt had mentioned nearly two decades before. Note also the difference between Cornford and Busolt in how they speak of who was affected. Busolt uses “Megarians”, while Cornford refers to the entirety of “Megara”, as a political entity. This has larger implications, as it suggests a difference in the people which the decree effects. In one, it may refer only to Megarian citizens, perhaps including people from a Megarian colony⁴³, yet in the other interpretation, it could presumably be any entity trading on behalf of Megara.

⁴¹ Idem, 816 – “durch dieses ‘megarische Psephisma’ wurde der ganze Handel der Megarer im Bereiche der attischen Herrschaft vernichtet und ihnen namentlich die Versorgung mit Getreide erschwert, da sie nicht bloss vom Markte Athens sondern auch von Byzantion, dem Hauptstapelplatze des pontischen Getreides, ausgeschlossen waren”

⁴² Cornford (1907), 27-28.

⁴³ To my knowledge, mention of Megara Hyblaia is not mentioned in the scholarship. Most likely due to the fact that it is absent from the historical record, and likely was no longer a Megarian colony by the time of the decree. Thuc. 6.4 informs us that Megara Hyblaia's existence as a Megarian colony ended sometime around 483.

In that same year, Bury wrote on the Megarian ‘decrees’, perhaps following Plutarch, and combined the idea of multiple markets, while also speaking of Megara as a state: “the decrees excluding Megara from the markets of Athens and her empire.”⁴⁴ He refers to it elsewhere as “the action which Athens had taken in regard to Megara by excluding her from the markets of the Athenian empire, and thereby threatening her with economic ruin”.⁴⁵

Already in the discussion there is room for a lot of confusion, and in 1911, Grundy couldn’t seem to make up his mind over the number of decrees. He decided that the decree was a blanket ban on all Athenian territories and was about Megarian food supply. He wrote, “the real significance of the decrees was that they excluded Megara from participation in the Pontus corn trade”.⁴⁶ Over a decade later, he reiterated this opinion. However, he elaborated on what depriving the Megarians of the Pontic region meant to the Polis. According to him, “the decree excluded Megara from all ports and markets of the Athenian empire... To Megara the decree meant *something like* starvation...” (emphases my own).⁴⁷

Finally, in 1927, Adcock diverged from the arguments focused on Megarian food supply and offered a new suggestion: That the decree was an expression of Athens’ imperial aspirations, and in fact an outright hostile act, writing, “[The decree] was not a cause of war, it was an operation of war, the first blow at the courage and will of

⁴⁴ Bury (1909), 87 n. 1

⁴⁵ Bury (1951), 394.

⁴⁶ Grundy (1911), 326.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Athens' adversaries".⁴⁸ Glotz shared this same view,⁴⁹ writing that the decree's purpose was also, in effect, "to produce throughout Greece a deep and enduring impression, by showing in a terrible example that she [Athens] was not to be defied with impunity, that the empire of the sea permitted her to starve out any city that incurred her resentment."⁵⁰

Also in 1927, Henderson focused on the political implications of Athens' move, and wrote that the decree was "a trade boycott of Megara. No Megarian goods could enter any port or city of the Athenian empire Megarian trade was ruined in a single blow."⁵¹ Simultaneously however, Highbarger chose to reasserted the starvation argument, saying "the decree closed the Athenian markets to Megara and meant starvation."⁵² While these scholars acknowledged the potential for a food crisis in Megara, it did not seem to be the focus as much as the geopolitical message that accompanied such an effort.

Only a few years later, in 1931, Gomme steps into the fray with his commentaries on Thucydides. He expresses an acute awareness of uncertainty in the decree's scope and purpose. To him, the decree included "measures against Megara which culminated in her exclusion from all ports of the empire".⁵³ The decree's purpose was "excluding Megara from the markets of the empire",⁵⁴ and "forbidding Megara access to the harbours and

⁴⁸ Adcock, (1927), 186.

⁴⁹ Glotz (1926), 299.

⁵⁰ Idem, 314

⁵¹ Henderson (1927), 5.

⁵² Highbarger (1927), 163.

⁵³ Gomme, (1945), 175.

⁵⁴ Idem, 450.

markets of the League”.⁵⁵ Gomme expresses his doubts about the decree when he writes, “I suppose, they could neither buy nor sell in Attica, and they could not send their own ships into the harbours of the empire, though they might buy and sell there.”⁵⁶

In the same year, Zimmern wrote that “a decree of boycott was issued closing all the harbors of the Empire and all the markets of Attica to Megarian ships and Megarian goods. Thus, at a single blow Megara was practically isolated from the world”.⁵⁷

Zimmern felt much more certain in the Megarian decree’s scope than Gomme, and ascribed to it the most power yet – implying that the decree separated Megara from everything, not simply Athens. His inclusion of both Megarian ships and goods creates a blanket statement that it is not only Megarian traders who cannot sell in Attica, but anyone trading in their goods are unable to do so. Yet he, like other scholars, never elaborate on these ideas with any model that explains how they arrive at their views and how Athens would have enforced these measures, nor does he elaborate on what being ‘practically isolated’ would truly mean for Megara, nor identify the market functions which would have allowed the decree to have an economic impact.

A little over a decade later M. Cary wrote while editing the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* in 1949 that the decree was “an attempt by Pericles to starve it into surrender by the Megarian Decree, which laid an embargo upon its Aegean and Pontic trade”.⁵⁸ The argument that the decree was focused on the Pontic grain trade is pervasive in the

⁵⁵ Idem, 466.

⁵⁶ Idem, 227.

⁵⁷ Zimmern (1931), 427.

⁵⁸ Cary et al. (1949), 553.

scholarship, yet again, there are scant details on how or why the decree affected this grain trade. In 1957, H. Michell focused less on the grain while writing on the economics of ancient Greece and expanded the scope to include more on the overall wealth flowing into the city. Regarding the Megarian decree, he felt there were several decrees, and wrote that “the decrees forbade the merchants of Megara to use the ports of the allies of Athens and the markets of Piraeus, a death blow to the prosperity of the offending city.”⁵⁹ This set a trend, as now the scholarship concerned more than only the food, but also the exotic goods and trade items flowing into and out of the *poleis*. Donald Kagan, one of the larger names in Peloponnesian War scholarship, followed the same theme and a couple years later and wrote of the decree as “the decree barring Megarian commerce from Athens and her empire”,⁶⁰ and described it in the terms of a “commercial embargo”.⁶¹

There is a general acceptance of the decree as a geopolitical move by Athens. Yet the scholarship is slippery when one tries to pin down (1) exactly whether someone is speaking about *the Megarians* or *Megara*, (2) whom it encompasses, and (3) how it accomplishes its goal. In 1972, G.E.M. de Ste. Croix argued against this pattern of general acceptance of the Megarian decree as an economic embargo in *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*. To date, it is the most extensive analysis of the arguments on the Megarian decree and the only one which attempts to extensively examine the functions

⁵⁹ Michell (1957), 253.

⁶⁰ Kagan (1969), 256.

⁶¹ *Idem*, 261.

which would have made the Megarian decree effective. Ultimately, G.E.M. de Ste. Croix argues that the decree would not have been an effective economic sanction, and in fact, he says the goal of the decree was not economic at all but was meant to punish and humiliate the Megarians for the cultivation of the sacred fields – exactly what the Athenians claimed to the Spartans in negotiations. Subscribing to a primitivist interpretation of the ancient economy, G.E.M. de Ste. Croix believed that an economic interpretation was not possible.⁶²

G.E.M. de Ste. Croix correctly noticed the problems in how the Megarian decree was also being discussed, commenting that “the way modern historians have treated the Megarian decree is inexcusable, for two different reasons.”⁶³ His first complaint is that scholars make no attempt at divining the words of the decree, noting that one finds “statements about an exclusion from ‘all markets and harbours of Athens and her empire’”⁶⁴ or similar some phrasing. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix goes on to lament, “...I can find not a single scholar who has even tried to do this [define exactly what the decree said and meant]—a sad indication of the general slovenliness of modern scholarship in this field.”⁶⁵

De Ste. Croix’s second main complaint, and the true crux of his argument, concerns whom the decree would have impacted. He argues that all the original sources which mention the decree state that it named “the Megarians” and not “Megara”. He uses

⁶² De Ste. Croix (1972), 252-254.

⁶³ *Idem*, 225.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

this as evidence for the fact that the decree only restricted Megarian citizens, not metics, or people from other *poleis* conducting trade with Megara. De Ste. Croix believed trade was conducted in antiquity mostly by foreigners and metics. Because of this, he felt that the decree would not have had any noticeable impact on Megara or Megarians, and therefore the decree must have had an alternative goal.⁶⁶

On this point, de Ste. Croix summarizes that “the exclusion decree had three aspects: it applied to *the Megarians*, and it excluded them, not (as it might in principle have done) from the whole of the Athenian empire or even the whole of Attica, but specifically from the *Athenian agora* and from the *harbours of the empire*.”⁶⁷ This was due to the Athenian claim that the Megarians had encroached upon sacred lands near Eleusis, and so the decree was an effort to humiliate Megarians by equating them with other criminals who were banned from the civic area of the agora, such as those who had committed homicide or other heinous crimes.

He states that if the decree only excluded Megarians, or, if perhaps this included a still wider category such as “Megarians and those living in Megara”, it would not have made any impact on Megarian trade, as this trade would have immediately passed into the hands of non-Megarians such as Corinthians or even Athenians themselves.⁶⁸

Despite de Ste. Croix’s massive effort to argue against the prevailing interpretation of the Megarian decree, his argument did not find much support in the

⁶⁶ Idem, 226.

⁶⁷ Idem, 252.

⁶⁸ Idem, 252-253.

mainstream scholarship. Though in the years immediately following *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* many responded to de Ste. Croix's reinterpretation of the decree. The main belief, however, became that the decree was economic in impact and may have had an ulterior, and more important, geopolitical goal.

For instance, only one year later, Ronald Legon produced an argument that sought to explain how the Megarian decree would have been effective economically, while achieving a geopolitical goal. At this point in the history of the scholarship on the Megarian decree, Legon is the only pro-economic interpretation scholar who explains how the decree would have been impactful rather than simply stating it as if it were obvious. He acknowledges this trend in the scholarship stating, "To the extent to which historians have concerned themselves with the material and mercantile effects of the decree, they have concentrated on Megara alone, paying little notice to the larger role of Megarian commerce".⁶⁹ He writes of J.B. Bury, "Bury's comment that the decree 'spelt economic ruin to Megara' is typical." Legon compares similar mentions from G. Glotz, R. Cohen, and G. Busolt, and then asks to examine how Thucydides himself "warns against this narrow approach", quoting the Corinthian speech in the second Spartan assembly in 432, "Those who dwell more in the interior and away from any trade-route should be warned that, if they do not aid those who are on the seaboards, they will find it more difficult to bring the products of the land down to the sea and to get in return what the sea gives to the mainland."⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Legon (1973), 166.

⁷⁰ Thuc. (1.120.2), quoted from Legon (1973), 166.

Legon believed that the Megarian decree was an indirect attempt to damage not Megara, but to deprive Corinth of useful ship building supplies from the Aegean. Legon argues that after the naval defeat to Corcyra, “She [Corinth] could not rely upon her traditional sources of naval supplies in the northwest, because the hostile Corcyreans controlled the Ionian Sea. She had to turn to Aegean sources and employ the services of Megara.”⁷¹ Legon further argues that the decree would have deprived Megara not only from Athenian League members, but also from its own colonies, “For, even assuming that the Megarian traders could gain entrance to a few friendly ports, the long sea voyage out and back, without assurance of frequent portage to obtain water and other essentials, was very risky.”⁷² Legon ties in how the decree would have been effective – that even if it was not starving Megara, it deprived them of the means to safely and easily transport goods from the Aegean to supply their Corinthian allies, and he also explains how this would be geopolitically effective, since by depriving Corinth of the ship-building supplies, this would allow Athens to maintain their naval superiority.

Legon admits however, that there is an issue with the lack of attention which Thucydides gives to the decree. He states that, in regard to Thucydides’ theory that the war was due to the threat of Athens’ rising naval power, the Megarian decree was “an extremely inconvenient episode for this theory.”⁷³ Legon’s surmises the potential ulterior motives of the Megarian decree well, and I find them particularly convincing. However,

⁷¹ Legon, (1973) 166.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Idem, 171

while his analysis provides much insight into the possible geopolitical effects of the decree, he does little to explain the economic impact.

In 1977, T.E. Wick explicitly argued against de Ste. Croix's reinterpretation of the significance of the decree and its provisions. Wick considers de Ste. Croix's reinterpretation using "strictly terms stated by Thucydides" and delves into the problem of Thucydides' perceived neglect of the Megarian decree. He proceeds to analyze the provisions of the Megarian decree through a close examination of Thucydides and arrives at a conclusion opposite of de Ste. Croix's.⁷⁴ Wick's narratological analysis of Thucydides' account leads him to argue that the historian deliberately misleads on the matter of Megara, exactly because it did not neatly fit the historian's thesis of naval superiority and fear.⁷⁵

Wick concludes that "Beyond doubt, too, is that the Megarian decree was commercial in nature to an extent far greater than de Ste. Croix believes, and was of broader application than he thinks."⁷⁶ Wick feels that Thucydides' narrative—in its deliberate attempt to mislead the reader on the matter of the decree—reveals the importance of the decree in negotiations, and thus also in its implied geopolitical significance and economic impact.

In that same year, French wrote a piece acknowledging G.E.M. de Ste. Croix's revisionist view. French wrote, "Perhaps few historians are nowadays likely to defend

⁷⁴ Wick (1977), 91-99.

⁷⁵ *Idem*, 75.

⁷⁶ *Idem*, 94.

what de Ste. Croix believes to be still the ‘standard’ view of the decree’s purpose and scope, namely to damage Megara’s trade by an empire wide-embargo, and by such economic pressure to force Megara to change sides and ally herself to Athens, as she had done in 461.”⁷⁷ Yet French explained his logic with the sources, stating that, “Aristophanes’ famous scene in the *Acharnians* (524-39) cannot be taken seriously as a comment on the effects of the decree.”⁷⁸ French discounts it entirely because of its comedic nature. Instead, French argued that if the decree truly were economic in goal, one would hear of a Corinthian decree, not a Megarian one.⁷⁹ However, this once again ignores the golden rule of comedy – there must be a hint of truth in it. I would counter that if the play focused on a Corinthian decree, it would only confuse the audience, and instead perhaps cause consternation as to why a Corinthian decree was being discussed.

As for Plutarch, French states that “we have no idea where Plutarch got his version of the decree, and consequently what value can be attached to his variation. If in fact his version is more exact, (or rather less vague) than what we read in Thucydides, it must tell against de Ste. Croix’s own interpretation”.⁸⁰ French ultimately summarizes his opinion on de Ste. Croix: “De Ste Croix has gone to great trouble to seek the meaning of the decree by scrutinizing all the references. But the scrutiny seems to establish not the meaning, but the vagueness and ambiguity of the snippets; the close logic of his

⁷⁷ French (1977), 245.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Idem, 247

arguments contrasts with the flimsy foundation on which they are based.”⁸¹ Ultimately, French suggests that even if the full words of the decree remained for us, it would still require quite a bit of guesswork to arrive at a conclusion, as treaties can be symbolically worded, such as the infamous Persian request for “Earth and Water”.⁸² Instead, French argues that the decree can only be considered a psychologically impactful measure, since it suggests that the Athenians can submit a person to the judgment of Athenian law for no offense other than being Megarian in place(s) that Athens deemed they were not allowed.⁸³ This line of thought recalls Adcock’s argument in 1927 that the decree was representative of Athenian imperial aspirations, yet it does little to settle the matter in the way of what the decree’s scope was.

The conversation that de Ste. Croix started continued on into the 1980’s and found a defender in the form of Brian R. Macdonald, who published an article largely siding with de Ste. Croix. Macdonald writes that the decree “should probably be seen as a political document but one without economic consequences.”⁸⁴ Macdonald follows de Ste. Croix’s logic that Megarian citizens were largely not involved in trade, and even the ones who were involved did not play a large role in the welfare of the Megarian state.⁸⁵ He admits that Megarians may have required access to the Athenian agora for certain goods, particularly exotic goods, but argues that this would have no economic impact on

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Idem, 248.

⁸⁴ Macdonald (1982), 385.

⁸⁵ Idem, 386.

Megara.⁸⁶ However, he fails to consider that restrictions of exotic goods would almost certainly have impacted the so-called wealthy class that did not participate in trade. This includes simple luxury items but perhaps also specialty foods that were not imported to Megara directly, but through the larger Athenian ports.⁸⁷ Macdonald also concedes that Megara may have been reliant on grain imports from Athens, but then brushes it aside on the possibility that grain purchases were closely guarded by Athens and so an additional ban would not have impacted Megara.⁸⁸ He arrives at the possibility that Megara was self-sufficient, arriving at a total population of 15,000, with enough grain output to feed 10,000. The remaining amount, Macdonald states, would be achieved by interspersing fruit and vegetable plants among the grain.⁸⁹ I believe that this is an unlikely if not entirely implausible planting pattern due to the level of micromanaging it would require.⁹⁰

Arguments concerning the Megarian decree largely dwindled in the nineties, and discussion of them is primarily found in passing in works with other tangential focuses. In a new work entitled *The Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace*, Donald Kagan wrote briefly on several conflicts and the causes of their outbreaks. On the Megarian decree, he took care to avoid the generalizations which de Ste. Croix had pointed out in scholarship from decades previous, writing, "They [The Athenians] passed a decree

⁸⁶ *Idem*, 388.

⁸⁷ I discuss this in more detail in Chapter IV.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Idem*, 395.

⁹⁰ I offer my own analysis of the self-sufficiency of Megara in Chapter III.

barring the Megarians from the harbors of the Athenian Empire and from the Athenian agora, its marketplace and civic center.”⁹¹ Kagan acknowledges previous scholarship, but states that “The modern theories do not bear close scrutiny,” while citing de Ste. Croix’s rogues gallery.⁹² Instead, Kagan states, the Megarian decree “should be understood to have been a moderate intensification of diplomatic pressure to help prevent the spread of the war to Corinth’s allies.”⁹³ Much like Legon had previously, Kagan focuses on the idea that Corinth was the true target of the Megarian Decree. Kagan felt that the decree was a middle path in diplomacy. It would not have brought Megara down or done terrible damage, but cause discomfort and do significant harm to men who prospered from trade, perhaps some of whom were members of the oligarchic council in Megara. In effect, it was also a warning shot to Megara and other city states to stay out of Athenian affairs with Corinth, or suffer retaliation, even in peacetime.⁹⁴ Kagan clearly took pains to be specific in how he understood the Megarian decree, and perhaps this was a reaction to de Ste. Croix’s complaints two decades earlier. However, Kagan still failed to go into detail about exactly how the decree would have been effective economically or by what mechanisms would it have been enforced. Perhaps he did not feel the need, as, in his opinion on de Ste. Croix’s objections, he wrote that, “to accept [de Ste. Croix’s] view, it

⁹¹ Kagan (1996), 49

⁹² Kagan (1996) 50

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Idem, 50-51

is necessary to believe that the Megarian decree had no political or economic purpose, which no one, to my knowledge, is willing to do.”⁹⁵

While Donald Kagan seems to have missed Macdonald’s support for de Ste. Croix’s theory, he is accurate in the sense that very little of the scholarship agrees with de Ste. Croix. The primary view that the decree was economic is so established today that often it is glossed over as simply an economic embargo, and little discussion goes into its inner workings. In 2006, Victor Davis Hanson wrote simply on the decree, “The key city-state of Megara was strategically located about half-way between Corinth and Athens on the main route from the Peloponnese, and subject to a trade embargo of sorts by Athens aimed at discouraging its pro-Spartan sympathies.”⁹⁶

Yet there are valid concerns in de Ste. Croix’s reevaluation of the decree. In the entire scholarship of the Megarian decree, there is not one scholar who analyzes it as an economic sanction using modern methods to explain *how* it would have been effective. Rather, this is taken at face value. This has bled over into modern works on trade sanctions, of which many describe the Megarian Decree as “the first economic sanction”, but they never devote time to examine it as such.⁹⁷ In the following chapters, I set out to examine the Megarian decree as an economic sanction, using a framework applied to modern sanctions, and determine the means through which the Megarian decree was an effective economic sanction.

⁹⁵ See Kagan, (1995), 78, n. 42.

⁹⁶ Hanson (2006), 13.

⁹⁷ See for example, Hufbaugher (1990), 4; Simmons (1999), 14-16.

CHAPTER II: DEFINING SANCTIONS AND MIYAGAWA'S METHODOLOGY FOR ANALYSIS

Before analyzing the Megarian decree as an economic sanction, the first objective is to arrive at concrete definitions of what constitutes a sanction, why a sanction is used, and how they are judged in terms of effectiveness. Sanctions are used often in modern times, with a variety of focuses and goals. In recent years alone, the United States has targeted specific individuals within Russia for their sanctions, conducted negotiations over nationwide sanctions with Iran, and enacted severe sanctions against rogue states such as North Korea. In his work, *Do Economic Sanctions Work?*, Japanese Ambassador Makio Miyagawa provides a concise definition of sanctions: "The use of economic capacity by one international actor, be it a state or international organization, or by a group of such actors, against another international actor, or group of actors, with the intention of (a) punishing the latter for its breach of a certain rule or (b) preventing it from infringing a rule which the party applying the sanctions deems important."⁹⁸

Miyagawa further elaborates on the phrase, "the use of economic capacity", which he states can be described as "coercive economic action which is intended to deny a certain economic advantage to the target by, for instance, denying the target access to valuable markets, preventing the target's purchase of goods or hampering investment in the target."⁹⁹ The ultimate goal, he states, is "the attainment of a given political goal by

⁹⁸ Miyagawa (1992), 7

⁹⁹ Ibid.

forcing the target to alter its policy or behavior, whether in the long or short term”.¹⁰⁰ In Miyagawa’s understanding, the geopolitical goal and the geoeconomic goal are clearly coexistent. In other words, a geoeconomic move such as a sanction must, by its very nature, also be a geopolitical one.

For this thesis, the focus is on sanctions that are between nations, which are enacted to punish a foreign nation or to compel a change in that state’s behavior. In this regard, sanctions may be retaliatory, in the case where the target state is hostile to the enforcing state, as well as preventative, in which case action is taken to prevent the target state from breaking a perceived rule in society (whether a universal rule or simply a rule in the enforcing state’s mind), or to prevent it from enjoying the benefits of their misbehavior in the eyes of the enforcing state.

William H. Kaempfer, an economist at University of Colorado, and Anton D. Lowenberg, an economist at CSU Northridge, lay out three typical situations in which sanctions are used in modern times. Firstly, they are often applied either by a group of countries or by a single nation, against an offending country whose policies threaten the wealth or security of the sanctioner or allies, such as is the case with Iraq after their invasion of Kuwait.¹⁰¹ The second instance is when a sanction is meant to achieve ideological or moral goals and create a change in policy within the sanctioned state, such as when South Africa was sanctioned for their apartheid practices. Third, sanctions are used as part of routine trade policy. As Kaempfer states, “If country A believes that

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Kaempfer (1992), 1.

country B is preventing A's access to B's domestic markets, perhaps through explicit protectionist trade policies such as trade tariffs or quotas or via more subtle restrictions such as quality standards, A might retaliate by imposing trade sanctions on B."¹⁰²

Sanctions are usually related to the size of the countries and their economies.

Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer M. Harris write in *War by Other Means* that the effectiveness of sanctions turns on two basic variables: domestic market size, and global market share of a given good. That is to say, it would be more hurtful to lose America as a potential export market than Lichtenstein. Likewise, a sanction threatening the loss of trade with a country that has a monopoly on any good would be quite the deterrent.¹⁰³

Makio Miyagawa outlines the general criteria by which the efficacy of various economic sanctions is measured. According to him, there are seven primary conditions that determine the conduciveness of sanctions. They are (1) the importance of foreign trade in the economy of the target nation. A completely self-sufficient economy would not be affected by the lack of foreign goods, while one that is reliant on trade would stand to lose more from facing a sanction. (2) The total size of the economy. This plays an important role because the smaller economy a country has, the more likely it is to be hurt by a sanction. Miyagawa explains that a larger economy is more likely to have surplus to redirect at aiding the deficit created by a sanction. (3) The extent of the relationship between the two countries. The more interwoven the target economy is with the sanctioning economy, the more likely the target is to be hurt, as a sanction would deprive

¹⁰² *Idem*, 2.

¹⁰³ Blackwill (2016), 58.

it of a proportionally larger portion of its access to goods. (4) Whether the target country has access to substitutes, such as other foreign trade powers not involved in the sanction. Such is the case when after the United States imposed sanctions against the Russian Federation in 2014, the latter country sought to strengthen trade relations with China. Foreign exchange reserves also play a part, in that the larger reserves a nation has, the more capability it has to resist an economic sanction. (5) The ability to monitor the target nation's trade relations to ensure that the embargo is enforced. This is most easily done through land or sea-blockade, whether in war, as the Royal Navy did against Germany in World War I, or in peacetime, as the British did while intercepting ships bound for Beira to prevent oil going to Rhodesia.¹⁰⁴ Depending on the terrain, such as whether the target nation is an island, or surrounded by impenetrable mountains or desert, the sanctioning country can monitor the target nation's trade with ease. Thus, when the Arab nations embargoed the Israelites in 1946, the latter would have suffered more if the Arabs had been able to enforce the embargo by naval blockade.¹⁰⁵ (6) The size of the nation's foreign exchange reserves. This circumstance complicates the matter when analyzing the Megarian decree because antiquity, as it is difficult to come to exact figures of a foreign national reserve in antiquity. However, Thucydides does provide some information regarding Athens' reserve in book two, which I review later, and this information can be used to help satisfy Miyagawa's sixth criteria. (7) The economic system which governs the target country. As Miyagawa states, "As far as institutional factors with the target are

¹⁰⁴ Miyagawa (1992), 26.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

concerned, state-trading countries are less vulnerable to economic sanctions than those in which foreign trade is carried on by the private sector.” In state-trading countries, the impact of the sanction is felt by the government, not the general population.

The question remains however, what about when a sanction isn't effective? When it fails to meet Miyagawa's criteria, what is the fallout? In *Busted Sanctions: Explaining Why Economic Sanctions Fail*, Bryan R. Early examines the important role that third parties play in the efficacy of sanctions, or, in Miyagawa's framework, criteria number four – access to substitute markets and goods. In the scenario of the Megarian decree, this could refer to Corinth, or Sparta, or even a Megarian colony, if any of them replaced the trade Megara lost with Athens after the enactment of the decree. Early's measurement of sanction success is summarized simply: Sanctioning efforts succeed when the target country capitulates to the sender's demands. They fail whenever the sending country give up on their effort.¹⁰⁶ Third parties such as Corinth however have an interesting choice in the outcome. They can either support the sender country in its efforts, or they can decide to lend aid to the target country. The former might be costly, while the latter could potentially be lucrative. Third party states offering trade to the target country of a sanction can take advantage of the situation and charge more to sell necessary goods that have been denied to the target country due to the loss of their primary market from the sanction. They can also potentially negotiate to buy commodities from the target country

¹⁰⁶ Early (2015), 18.

for a lesser cost. They could also choose to act as a middleman between the countries – buying goods from one and moving it on to sell it to the other, at a mark-up.¹⁰⁷

Gary Hufbauer described such third-party states as "Black Knights", and stated, predictably, that sanctions imposed against target states that receive significant assistance from a third party should be less effective.¹⁰⁸ There are two types of these sanction busters that are effective, notes Early. One is a third party which gives aid to keep the target country stable, either for political gain or self-interest, as we see between China and North Korea. The second is one which takes advantage of the profitability of market exchange with the target country without over exploiting the country. The aid-based route, as one can guess, can be quite an imposition on the third-party country's economy in the long term, particularly if they do not themselves have the surplus to supply the target country indefinitely, but are doing it in the hopes of immediate geopolitical or geoeconomic gain in the short term.

Clearly, sanctions are a complicated topic. Their goals are multifaceted, oftentimes obscure or concealed, their effectiveness is constantly questioned, and the determination of their success is difficult; A country might enforce a sanction with one announced intention, but in fact be hoping for another. Such is the case, I believe, with the Megarian decree. While outwardly Sparta and Athens were discussing one thing in negotiations, inwardly they were each hoping for another outcome. Likewise, understanding how sanctions are discussed allows us to discern that there is a

¹⁰⁷ *Idem*, 19.

¹⁰⁸ Hufbauer et al. (1990), 96-97

goeconomic motive behind sanctions, such as crippling Megara's economy and what mechanisms achieve that end, as well as a geopolitical one, such as starving Megara as a state, or forcing Megara to adjust their allegiance or to capitulate to further demands. Both goeconomic and geopolitical ends can and should be discussed separately. Until now, the scholarship has not focused sufficiently on the goeconomic move made by Athens in the Peloponnesian War. The upcoming chapter focuses on the goeconomic facets of the Megarian decree. Following that, Chapter IV discusses some of the geopolitical effects.

CHAPTER III: THE GEOECONOMIC EFFECT: MIYAGAWA'S FIRST AND SECOND CRITERIA

Purpose and Method for Applying Miyagawa's First and Second Criteria

The object of this and the following chapter is to collate all material and literary evidence we have about Megara's economy and analyze it as the target country within the framework provided by Miyagawa's criteria, to show that the Megarian decree was capable of impacting Megara economically, and that Athens intended this geoeconomic effect. This chapter focuses on Miyagawa's first and second criteria, which involve analyzing the importance of foreign trade within the target economy; analyzing both the imposing and target countries' economies; and gauging their size relative to one another. The more dependent upon foreign trade a country is, and the smaller the economy it has, the more likely it is to be hurt by the sanction. In order to achieve this analysis, this chapter puts forward relative populations and food supplies of both Megara and Athens. The upcoming examination of the evidence concerning both Megara and Athens demonstrates that while both were reliant on trade, the former had a demonstrably smaller economy and was thus more at risk. Megara, for instance, had a smaller landmass and consequently had less arable land, a smaller population, and less exportation of both exotic and consumer goods.

In modern times, it is a relatively simple task to research the economic strength of a country. However, this concept, at least in the way that we discuss and understand it in

modernity, that is to say: GDP, stocks, the rise and fall of the market, etc., did not exist in antiquity, and so a method involving proxy data must be devised for antiquity. Much of what follows is hypothetical; yet applying the same metrics to both Megara and Athens allows an adequate comparison. To measure their relative economic strength, there are several factors that should be considered. The first factor is the production capabilities of the polis. Through a solid examination of its production capabilities, it is possible to approximate the general size of a polis' economy and its dependency on foreign trade in relation to another polis. After that, any material evidence, or lack thereof, that demonstrates ongoing trade with the polis needs to be considered. For the purposes of this paper, production is defined by not only any goods a polis creates for export, but also goods and foodstuffs that it creates for its own sustainability. As Alain Bresson states in his examination of the ancient economy, agriculture constituted the majority of production in the ancient world, but other factors need to be considered as well, such as fishing, salt production, and mining. Artisanal crafts need to be considered also, since they "were themselves made feasible by the level of productivity in other sectors".¹⁰⁹ Thus, it can be assumed that a high production of luxury and artisanal goods indicate sufficient if not high levels of production or acquisition of goods and market activity elsewhere. In fact, the production of marketable goods and the self-sufficiency of small farms were intrinsically linked.¹¹⁰ With this in mind, this chapter conducts a comparison of both Megara and Athens' production capabilities by both examining the total

¹⁰⁹ Bresson (2016b), 175.

¹¹⁰ Idem, 201-203, for a more in-depth discussion

population and the estimated agricultural output based on landmass of both poleis, respectively.

Population and Production of Megara

Megara does not have a large amount of land for agricultural production. Situated above the narrow Isthmus of Corinth, Megara's territory is largely bounded by mountains to the east, effectively serving as its borders with Attica and the Eleusinian plains, and the Geranian mountain range to the west, which served as a natural boundary with Corinth. In his discussion of this land, Ronald Legon calculates an estimate of the total possible agricultural output of Megara. The Megarian territory likely only comprised of about 470 square kilometers, making it one of the smallest mainland poleis. Of these 470 square kilometers, the Megarians had roughly 80 square kilometers of good farmland. If they use 80 square kilometers but let half of it lay fallow each year as was common practice, then the Megarians only had 40 square kilometers of land for agricultural exploitation. Legon suggests that if Megara grew only barley due to its higher crop yield, then the polis could have harvested 1,800 hectoliters per square kilometer, totaling 72,000 hectoliters. Since each person requires 2.6 hectoliters on average, then the Megarid could have fed 27,700 people.¹¹¹ Legon admits that this is an unrealistic maximum, and states that they likely used a mix of barley and wheat, making roughly 25,000 people the maximum population the Megarid could sustain on its own. For comparison, MacDonald suggested that

¹¹¹ Legon (1981), 22-23.

Megara could only field a population of 15,000, and only produce enough grain to feed 10,000 people, as explained earlier in Chapter II.¹¹²

Legon's estimate of Megarian crop yield and thus total population sustainable without the need for importing goods still does not describe the whole picture. Megara would not have used their entire arable farmland for wheat and barley alone. The need for importing surplus grain becomes clearer when examining the details Herodotus supplies concerning the Megarians during the Persian Wars, which facilitate the extrapolation of a figure for the city-state's population. Herodotus tells us that the Megarians provided twenty ships,¹¹³ which most likely each had a crew of about two hundred.¹¹⁴ Additionally, they sent 3,000 hoplites, giving a total of 7,000 men, then double that to include a rough estimate for women. Legon suggests that the total slave population would have been about 4 times the size of the citizen body, adding an additional 25,000-28,000, and that we should place the estimated total population of Megara at 480 BCE at 39,000 to 42,000. This in turn is a little over Beloch's estimate.¹¹⁵ Even if Megara was farming all its available arable land for grains, then the polis would have already stretched beyond their annual harvest. Megara would have needed to import extra grain for survival, since it is entirely unrealistic that the polis would employ the entirety of its fields for grain production.

¹¹² Macdonald (1982), 395

¹¹³ Herodotus 8.1

¹¹⁴ See Thuc. 6.8, 8.29.2, and Xen., *Hell.*, 1.5.3-7, which discuss the payrates of crews in antiquity, and the money needed to pay for ships. The amounts discussed are enough to afford a crew of about 200 men.

¹¹⁵ Beloch (1926), 273-86. Beloch uses hoplite numbers provided by Herodotus and Thucydides to extrapolate population figures.

Given Legon's estimate of Megara's total population at 30,000 to 40,000 at the onset of the Peloponnesian War, and their maximum food production to feed 25,000 (although it is probably quite lower), Megara needs to import at least another source of food for the remaining 5,000 if their population is in the lower end of the estimate, or, if they have a higher population, it needs to import another 15,000; almost its entire maximum domestic yield. If we then place the estimate at importing grain to feed 30,000 people, which may have been the case with the supplementation of fish, dairy and other alternative products, that still means that merchant trade would have had to supply 78,000 hectoliters of grain. This all underscores Megara's heavy reliance on trade for sustainability.

This extra surplus may have been funded by the money which merchants made from the exports of Megarian goods. For this reason, it was imperative that they produced enough surplus of goods to sell because Megara could not sustain itself. Aristotle confirms this possibility when writing about foreign trade in the ancient world, and states that city-states funded this importation through the selling of surplus production.¹¹⁶

As for what Megara might have produced to export, sources relate that Megara exported several crops. Aristophanes, one of few literary sources for the Megarian decree, characterizes Megarians as exporters of cucumbers, salt, and garlic.¹¹⁷ If the joke in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* at the Athenian agora is taken at face value, then perhaps

¹¹⁶ Arist. *Rh.* 1359b19-1360a17

¹¹⁷ Ar. *Ach.* 521; 761.

the Megarians also raised animals such as pigs for exportation.¹¹⁸ We know from Xenophon that the Megarians were also noted for trading in wool, either unrefined to be later turned into clothing, or as cheap *exomides* for which Megara was known.¹¹⁹ Both plain wool and also premade fabric were exported and sold, and the textile industry was robust in antiquity.¹²⁰ For example, an exchange in Theocritus's *Idyll 15* between two women who complain about the quality of the cloth that they received from the market demonstrates the idea that premade clothes could be bought. Hieron II's Syracusan ship was said to be loaded with 20,000 talents, or 520 metric tons of wool.¹²¹ Exactly how much wool they produced and how much they sold is impossible to calculate. Textiles are not a common material to survive until modern times to serve as material evidence, and when it does it is a difficult task to source its provenance.

To recap, Megara was reliant on trade for survival, as it was not self-sufficient in its production of food. Its exports, aside from simple vegetables and surplus of non-vital farm produce, seems to have primarily been wool and associated products.

Population and Production of Athens

The Athenians in comparison had a much larger potential total population, given their land availability. K. J. Beloch provides a comparison with Attica at a total of 2,350

¹¹⁸ *Ar. Ach.* 521.

¹¹⁹ *Xen. Mem.*, 2.7.6, *Ar., Ach.* 519, Legon (1981), 280-82, and Smith (2006), 78.

¹²⁰ Bresson (2016)b, 190-194.

¹²¹ *Idem.*, 193.

square kilometers, and a total population of 200,000.¹²² These calculations vary, and Beloch was very much on the low end of the estimates for the population of Attica, as A. W. Gomme estimated in 1933 the minimum population to be 315,000.¹²³ Alain Bresson follows Mogens H. Hansen's estimate of a population of 250,000 inhabitants after 350 BCE, and concedes that the population may have reached as high as 330,000 inhabitants in the fifth century, but says it is a very generous estimate. However, Bresson points to the data from 1911, when Greece had not yet received a flood of refugees from Asia, and the population of Attika was 338,000.¹²⁴ While Bresson admits that assuming the modern population reflects the population of the ancient world should be treated with caution, he points out that it is a striking note of comparison.¹²⁵

For an alternative, Takeshi Amemiya uses information from a tribute list concerning the first fruits. Amemiya posits that barley was contributed at 1/600th and wheat at 1/1200th.¹²⁶ An average household possesses about 3 hectares of land in modern Greece.¹²⁷ Amemiya then uses 5 hectares per family for her analysis, arriving at 240,000 hectares of arable land, which thus suggests a number of 48,000 land owning citizens. Allowing for an additional 5,000 non-landowning citizens, the total population of citizens is 53,000. Once again, after providing for slave population at a ratio of four slaves to one citizen, the number remains quite high, although at a more realistic number. At this point,

¹²² Beloch (1924), 273-86.

¹²³ Gomme (1933).

¹²⁴ *Recensement* (1914), p. VII.

¹²⁵ Bresson (2016b), 409.

¹²⁶ Amemiya, 74-75.

¹²⁷ Gallant (1991), 42.

it is safe to say that Athens had more land and more people than Megara, and it is reasonable to expect that this also led to a correspondingly larger production of goods.

A rough estimate of Athens' total grain production is possible to arrive at through some of the same measurements and estimations Beloch used for Megara. By following the same proportion that Megara had in Legon's estimations, which was estimating that one fifth of the total land mass arable and then, by dividing that in half to compensate for half of the land lying fallow for a year, the total arable landmass arrives at 235 square kilometers. If Legon's estimate of higher yield barley at 1,800 hectoliters per square kilometer is used, Athens could have yielded 423,000 hectoliters of grain. With the requirement of 2.6 hectoliters per person annually in mind, this would have been capable of feeding roughly 162,700 people. Obviously, these estimates provide extremes and figures with which to compare each polis, not the reality. Clearly Athenians would not have devoted all their land to farm grain. Land would have been used for other crops, pasturing, or perhaps simply left unexploited. Estimating this is unachievable but we assume the same thing for both Megara and Athens.

Alternatively, and more convincingly, Alain Bresson suggests it is possible to reconstitute the gross production and corresponding percentages in Attika based on an inscription from 329/8 BCE (IG II² 1672). By using this inscription, he arrives at a much lower number of people that Athens could feed. The inscription identifies the offerings of first fruits (*aparchai*) made by the Athenian tribes at the sanctuary of Eleusis, in honor of Demeter and Kore. This inscription can paint a picture of Athens' fourth century

production. It also lists the offerings by territories under Athenian control, such as Drymos, Oropos, Salamis, Skyros, Lemnos, and Imbros. While it is a full century away from the Megarian decree, farming techniques would not have adapted so much that the yield of each area would be so drastically different that a useful comparison would be unattainable. First is to consider to what percentage the first fruits represent the total gross production. Bresson follows Garnsey, suggestion that the offerings of the first fruits of barley were probably at a rate of 1/600th, and wheat at a rate of 1/1,200th.¹²⁸

Since the figures given in the inscription are a sole data point, Bresson uses data retrieved from a national agricultural inventory of the 1911 crops in Greece, which was completed 1914 and conducted by The Office of Statistics in the Minister of the National Economy of the Kingdom of Greece.¹²⁹ According to the inventory, the total area cultivated in Attica was 49,500 hectares, which is almost 500 square kilometers, or about 1/5 of the total available territory. The grain production in that year was 124,000 quintals, 91,975 of wheat, and 32,154 of barley.¹³⁰ This is based on a distribution of 13,000 hectares for wheat, and 3,000 for barley, giving a yield of 7.75 quintals per hectare. According to Bresson, the proportions for wheat and barley should be swapped when considering the farming techniques in antiquity, and that additionally the weight of wheat has changed since antiquity due to advanced farming techniques and selective breeding.¹³¹ Today a hectoliter of wheat is 80-85 kilos, whereas in the fourth century it

¹²⁸ Garnsey (1988), 98-106, and 201-13.

¹²⁹ Bresson (2016b), 406.

¹³⁰ *Recensement* (1914), table IV, p. 372

¹³¹ Bresson (2016b), 407.

was 63 kilos.¹³² According to this data, Bresson claims that the 329/8 harvest is comparable to that of 1911.¹³³ He provides the tables below, after Garnsey, which reconstitute the possible gross production and corresponding figures of 4th century Athens.

TABLE 1: Grain Production in Ancient Attika and Its External Possessions: Gross¹³⁴

| <i>ZONE</i> | <i>BARLEY PRODUCTION IN MEDIMNOI</i> | <i>WHEAT PRODUCTION IN MEDIMNOI</i> | <i>TOTAL GRAIN IN MEDIMNOI</i> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>TOTAL ATTIKA</i> | 339,925 | 27,062.5 | 366,978.5 |
| <i>TOTAL EXTERNAL</i> | 340,475 | 120,375 | 460,850 |
| <i>TOTAL GENERAL</i> | 680,400 | 147,437.5 | 827,837.5 |

TABLE 2: Grain Production in Ancient Attika and Its External Possessions: Percentage¹³⁵

| <i>ZONE</i> | <i>BARLEY</i> | <i>WHEAT</i> | <i>BARLEY + WHEAT</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| <i>TOTAL ATTIKA</i> | 50 | 18 | 44 |
| <i>TOTAL EXTERNAL</i> | 50 | 82 | 56 |
| <i>TOTAL GENERAL</i> | 100 | 100 | 100 |

TABLE 3: Ancient and Modern Grain Production in Attika¹³⁶

| <i>ATTIKA</i> | <i>BARLEY PRODUCTION IN QUINTALS</i> | <i>WHEAT PRODUCTION IN QUINTALS</i> | <i>TOTAL GRAIN IN QUINTALS</i> |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>329/8 BCE</i> | 91,779 | 8,389 | 100,169 |
| <i>1911 CE</i> | 32,154 | 91,975 | 124,129 |

As you can see in Table 1, Athens produced approximately 340,000 medimnoi of grain in 329/8 BCE. For comparison to the earlier estimate using arable land above, this

¹³² 1 medimnos = 52.53 liters, 1 hectoliter = 100 liters, 1 hectoliter = 1.9 medimnos. 1 medimnos of barley = 27 kilograms, 1 medimnos of wheat = 31 kilograms. 1 quintal = approx. 3.6 medimnoi. See Stroud (1998), 55.

¹³³ Bresson (2016b), 407.

¹³⁴ Idem, 406. Bresson follows Garnsey, 1988, 98, table 5.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

corresponds to roughly 179,000 hectoliters. This amount of grain could only feed about 69,000 people. By looking at Table 3, one sees that grain production in ancient and modern Attika has remained at roughly the same amount, suggesting a useful comparison. According to Bresson's data, Athens could only feed about 27-30 percent of its population in the years 340-320, and, if Athens had close to 300,000 inhabitants during the fifth century, it could only feed about 20 percent of its total population.

While obviously these figures are from the fourth century B.C.E., they provide a useful data point to understand the potential of fifth century B.C.E. Athens. More importantly, by reviewing the total grain production capacity of Attica from all these estimates reveals their dependency on foreign trade, or more specifically, on imported grain, and thus satisfies Miyagawa's first and second criteria, which demand an examination of a country's dependency on foreign trade, and the overall size of their economy. According to this data, Athens clearly needed to import grain. The textual evidence supports this. According to Pseudo-Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, at the first assembly of every *prytany* it was proposed to put to the agenda of the meeting "the questions of grain and of the defense of the territory."¹³⁷ Obviously Athens' own production was not sufficient to feed itself at its maximum population.¹³⁸ This is clear not just from these estimates, but also through numerous references in historical sources that discuss the importation of grain, and the receipt of gifts of grain to the Athenians from

¹³⁷ Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 43.4 - "προγράφουσι δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐκκλησίας οὗτοι: μίαν μὲν κυρίαν, ἐν ἣ δεῖ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἐπιχειροτονεῖν εἰ δοκοῦσι καλῶς ἄρχειν, καὶ περὶ σίτου καὶ περὶ φυλακῆς τῆς χώρας χρηματίζειν,"

¹³⁸ Bresson (2016b), 402

foreign powers.¹³⁹ Solon's reforms in 594/3 BCE also suggest the awareness of the importance of maintaining a proper food supply in Athens.¹⁴⁰ Solon's reforms possibly included prohibitions against the exportation of all food, save for olive oil.

Plut., Sol, 24. i.

τῶν δὲ γινομένων διάθεσιν πρὸς ξένους
ἐλαίου μόνον ἔδωκεν, ἄλλα δ' ἐξάγειν
ἐκώλυσε: καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἐξαγόντων ἀρὰς τὸν
ἄρχοντα ποιῆσθαι προσέταξεν, ἢ ἐκτίνειν
αὐτὸν ἑκατὸν δραχμὰς εἰς τὸ δημόσιον. καὶ
πρῶτος ἄξων ἐστὶν ὁ τοῦτον περιέχων τὸν
νόμον.

Of anything grown, he allowed only oil to be sold abroad, but prohibited the sale of the rest; and upon any who did export some, the archon was compelled to place curses upon them, or the transgressor had to pay a hundred drachmas into the public treasury. His first table is the one which contains this law.

Athens had an acute awareness of the food it needed for its livelihood and thus guarded its grain supply closely. Athens' intricate understanding of and concern for the supply of grain is demonstrated in several decrees relating to Methone (IG I³ 61), circa 430/29-424/3 BCE. One decree discusses the proper amount of tribute that the Methonians owe and whether they should be given allowances regarding the amount. It also states that the Methonians should not be harassed by Perdiccas while traveling through his territory for trade. Another decree, probably 426/5 BCE, gave allowances to the Methonians on the exportation of grain from Byzantium, allowing them a limit of up to one thousand medimnoi of grain a year, as well as complete right of safe passage

¹³⁹ For sovereign powers gifting grain to Athens, see Bresson (2006b), 208-210. Oliver (2007), 228-59 and table pp. 285-89 has complete table of gifts received by the Athenians.

¹⁴⁰ Foxhall (1997), 127

through the Hellespont.¹⁴¹ It is likely that the Athenians would only grant permission to the Methonians to export grain from Byzantium after their own needs were met.¹⁴²

Athenian concerns for the grain trade are echoed in later fourth century sources such as Demosthenes, who discusses laws forbidding Athenians from bringing grain to anywhere other than Athens, or for lending money for expeditions to ship grain to cities other than Athens. As Terry Buckley observes, since this was a perennial concern for the Athenians, it is reasonable to assume that similar laws were in place in the fifth-century BCE.¹⁴³ All of this supports the idea of Athenian anxiety about their food source, and reliance on trade from outside of Attica to support the needs of the population.

The Periclean war policy of abandoning the farms and countryside also suggests the heavy reliance Athens already had upon its importation, not on local production, and that the polis received so little from its own countryside that it could rely entirely on imports or storage. In fact, Bresson supplies an estimate of Athenian sources for grain imports along with amounts in *medimnoi*:

TABLE 4: Estimate of Sources of Grain of Athens in the mid-fourth century BCE¹⁴⁴

| <i>SOURCE OF GRAIN</i> | <i>AMOUNT IN MEDIMNOI</i> | <i>PERCENTAGE</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>ATTICA</i> | 340,000 | 27.2 |
| <i>LEMNOS AND IMBROS</i> | 150,000 | 12.0 |
| <i>PONTOS</i> | 400,000 | 32.0 |
| <i>CYRENE</i> | 90,000 | 7.2 |
| <i>EGYPT</i> | 90,000 | 7.2 |
| <i>WEST</i> | 90,000 | 7.2 |
| <i>VARIOUS OTHERS</i> | 90,000 | 7.2 |
| <i>TOTAL</i> | 1,250,000 | 100 |

¹⁴¹ IG I³ 174

¹⁴² Buckley, 296

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Bresson (2016b), 411.

Considering this analysis, it is safe to say that according to Miyagawa's two criteria, Athens had a much larger economy than Megara, and this allowed it to weather any difficulties presented by imposing a sanction more easily. This is without even considering the other products that Athens was known for exporting, as it produced many more goods, such as Attic pottery, which was exported widely and likely received profitable sums abroad,¹⁴⁵ and silver at Laurion. In fact, from the sixth century onwards the silver at Laurion was Athens' chief export by far, and when it wasn't used for preparing for and funding a war, it would have been useful for the importation of grain.¹⁴⁶ Additionally, Athens had other valuable products to export such as "marble, textiles, honey, and probably weapons and other luxury items".¹⁴⁷ Whether they had an enormous surplus of these items from local production is harder to prove, however, given how popular Athens was as a trading port, it is not hard to imagine that goods were bought there *en masse* and later resold for a profit.

It follows, then, that because of this great port for exporting valuable goods, as well as its much larger agricultural output, Athens had an appreciably larger economy than Megara. Miyagawa's first and second criteria necessitate an examination of the importance of foreign trade in the economy of the target nation and a comparison of the total size of the economies involved. According to these criteria, Athens was better suited than Megara to weather any adverse effects created by the sanction. The next criteria are

¹⁴⁵ *Idem*, 374.

¹⁴⁶ Gill (1991), 35-37 (see also Bresson (2006b), ch13, n. 165).

¹⁴⁷ Bresson (2016b), 373.

concerned with exactly what these adverse effects were for either polis; namely, the extent to which the Megarian economy was interwoven with the Athenian economy, as well as the availability of substitutes for each.

CHAPTER IV: GEOPOLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS: MIYAGAWA'S THIRD AND FOURTH CRITERIA

The Extent of the Trade Relationship between Megara and Athens

As Miyagawa's third criterion states, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the two countries involved in a sanction. The more interwoven the target economy is with the sanctioning economy, the more likely the target is to be hurt, as the sanction would deprive it of a proportionally larger share of its access to goods. The fourth criterion asks us to identify whether the target country has access to substitutes, or access to trade or help from any foreign powers not involved in the sanction. The immediately following section of this chapter discusses how Megara was reliant on its trade with Athens more so than Athens was reliant on it, and this demonstrates how Megara would have been the losing partner in the event of a sanction. Subsequently, I examine the potential impact of losing trade with Athens which Megara suffered due to the sanction. In the third section of this chapter, I focus on potential sanction busters, or third-party states that Megara might use as substitutes for Athenian trade, such as Corinth, or a colony.

Comparing the evidence of trade between Athens and Megara during the period of the decree is complicated, because the duration of the decree is short, and our archaeological dating methods are not so precise to narrow objects such as potsherds down to only one or two years. It can be assumed that Megara, as the smaller economy with a port that was generally overlooked by merchants in favor of its larger neighbors,

both Corinth to the west, and Athens to the east, was necessarily more dependent on trading with Athens than vice versa.

Aristophanes provides us some contemporary literary evidence with regards to the extent of trade between Megara and Athens in *Acharnians* (520-522):

Ag., Ach, 520-522

ἐσυκοφάντει Μεγαρέων τὰ χλανίσκια:
κεῖ που σίκυον ἴδοιεν ἢ λαγῶδιον
ἢ χοιρίδιον ἢ σκόροδον ἢ χόνδρους ἄλας,
ταῦτ' ἦν Μεγαρικὰ κάπεπρατ' ἀθημερόν.

They call out the little cloaks of the Megarians: And not a cucumber could be seen, or a hare, a suckling pig, a clove of garlic, or even a lump of salt, without someone saying, "These are Megarian!"

There is another bit of evidence later in the same play. It is a brief exchange between Dicaeopolis, the main Athenian character of the play who has set up a fake market-place to do business, and a Megarian who arrives to make a desperate trade:

Ag., Ach, 759-769

Δικαιόπολις: τί δ' ἄλλο Μεγαροῖ; πῶς ὁ
σίτος ὄνιος;
Μεγαρεύς: παρ' ἀμὶ πολυτίματος ἄπερ τοὶ
θεοί.
Δικαιόπολις: ἄλας οὖν φέρεις;
Μεγαρεύς: οὐχ ὑμῆς αὐτῶν ἄρχετε;
Δικαιόπολις: οὐδὲ σκόροδα;
Μεγαρεύς: ποῖα σκόροδ'; ὑμῆς τῶν ἀεί,
ὄκκ' ἐσβάλητε, τῶς ἀρωραῖοι μύες
πάσσακι τὰς ἀγλιθας ἐξορύσσετε.
Δικαιόπολις: τί δαὶ φέρεις;
Μεγαρεύς: χοίρωσ ἐγώνγα μυστικάς.
Δικαιόπολις: καλῶς λέγεις: ἐπίδειξον.

Dicaeopolis: What else from Megara?
What is grain selling for?
Megarian: For us it is as valued as the
very gods!
Dicaeopolis: So, you are bringing salt
then?
Megarian: But don't you rule the
seas?
Dicaeopolis: Then garlic?
Megarian: How can it be garlic? You
always come in during your raids and
rip up the cloves.
Dicaeopolis: Then what do you bring?
Megarian: Little piggies for the
mysteries.
Dicaeopolis: Fantastic! Show me.

There are many goods listed between the two passages. Among the items mentioned are 'little Megarian cloaks', referencing the cheap Megarian textiles, pigs, rabbits, cucumbers, garlic, salt, and finally grain. This includes goods Dikaeopolis mentions which are typically confiscated and that he assumes the Megarian may have brought to sell, or he inquires about in Megara.

It is interesting to note that in the exchange between the Megarian and Dikaeopolis in lines 759 -769, that Dikaeopolis does not inquire whether the Megarian has come to sell “cloaks”, or wool. Instead, he asks after simple food items like garlic, or salt. The Megarian complains that the Athenians destroyed the Megarian supply of garlic, and that the Athenians also control the supply of salt. This may be a double entendre with the word *αλας*, in that the Athenians rule the sea, but it might also imply that Attica had better methods for producing salt, or at least had enough of a supply, and that the Megarian did not believe it was worthwhile to sell it. However, I believe that the Athenians would have bought salt from the Megarian traders. Salt was, in fact, a large industry, as Cristina Carusi notes in '*Vita Humanior Sine Sale Non Quit Degere*'. Athens, at a population of about 300,000 in the 5th century BCE, would have consumed 50,000 *medimnoi* of salt. At the same time, Megara, with a population of about 30,000 by Carusi's estimate, would have consumed 5,000 *medimnoi* of salt. She arrives at this rate of consumption through a ration of salt provided to slaves by the much later source Cato the Elder, which is 1 *modius* per capita per annum, which is equal to 8.7 liters (ca. 1/6 of

an Attic *medimnos*).¹⁴⁸ Carusi's estimate considers dietary consumption to include all culinary uses of salt, such as flavoring, cooking, and preserving food, regardless of the amount of salt actually consumed.¹⁴⁹ All of this is to note that Athens had a very large intake of salt compared to Megara. As Carusi mentions, "in a large region like Attica, for example, where many households were probably located inland, only a small part of the population was able to engage directly in the collection of salt. The rest surely had to engage in market exchange and buy their household supply from producers or retailers."¹⁵⁰ For coastal cities, the household demand could certainly be met by harvesting salt spontaneously formed along the coast or by using seawater, and any surplus could be sold on the market.¹⁵¹ This suggests that Athenians, with a larger population, and a significant portion living too far from the shore to harvest for themselves, would have valued the opportunity to purchase salt at market, and it is not a leap to consider that Megarians merchants may have provided an easy source, especially as salt was one resource which Megara could certainly produce in quantities for itself.¹⁵²

Potential Impact of Losing Trade from the Sanctions

Understanding that trade occurred between two city-states is not enough. More important is to what extent each city-state is hurt by the loss of trade due to a sanction.

¹⁴⁸ Carusi (2016), 339.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Olson, 268.

The easiest way to do this is quantify the goods traded as much as possible and see if there were possible alternatives. To review what type of trade was occurring, Megara was an exporter of wool, but it also produced garlic, salt, and livestock, according to evidence from Aristophanes. There is a distinct lack of evidence of any trade items such as luxury pottery on the scale of that of Corinth or Athens,¹⁵³ and as far as olive oil goes, Athens already produced some of the best, which was awarded for Panathenaic victories.¹⁵⁴ The next item to consider then, is wool. There is evidence that Athens also had a booming textile industry.¹⁵⁵ Some of its wool was doubtlessly sourced from Attica and local shepherds. However, if Athens had any need of excess wool, the next closest spot would have been Megara. Of course, Athens would surely have been able to supplement any loss of the Megarian trade with trade from the empire. The Piraeus remained an attractive port into which people brought goods to sell from all over the Mediterranean, as

Xen., Ways, 3.1-2

πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ δῆπου ναυσὶ καλλίστας
καὶ ἀσφαλεστάτας ὑποδοχὰς ἔχει, ὅπου
γ' ἔστιν εἰσορμισθέντας ἀδεῶς ἔνεκα
χειμῶνος ἀναπαύεσθαι. ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ
τοῖς ἐμπόροις ἐν μὲν ταῖς πλείσταις τῶν
πόλεων ἀντιφορτίζεσθαι τι ἀνάγκη:
νομίσμασι γὰρ οὐ χρησίμοις ἔξω
χρῶνται: ἐν δὲ ταῖς Ἀθήναις πλείστα μὲν
ἔστιν ἀντεξάγειν ὧν ἂν δέωνται
ἄνθρωποι, ἣν δὲ μὴ βούλωνται
ἀντιφορτίζεσθαι, καὶ οἱ ἀργύριον
ἐξάγοντες καλὴν ἐμπορίαν ἐξάγουσιν.

"In the first place, she doubtless has the finest and safest harbouring for ships, since vessels can come to port and anchor themselves here fearless of bad weather. Moreover, at many ports of other cities they are compelled to ship a return cargo, because their money is not useful elsewhere; but in Athens there are many goods they can exchange which men want, or, if they do not want to ship a return cargo of goods, they can also lead good business exporting silver;

¹⁵³ For mentions of Megarian pottery industry, see Legon (1981), chapter 3

¹⁵⁴ Meijer and Nijf (1992), 46.

¹⁵⁵ Bresson (2016b), 193.

ὅπου γὰρ ἂν πωλῶσιν αὐτό, πανταχοῦ
πλέον τοῦ ἀρχαίου λαμβάνουσιν.

since wherever they sell it, they will
make a profit."

Xen., Ways, 5.3-4

τίνες γὰρ ἤσυχίαν ἀγούσης τῆς πόλεως
οὐ προσδέονται ἂν αὐτῆς ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ
ναυκλήρων καὶ ἐμπόρων; οὐχ οἱ
πολύσιτοι, οὐχ οἱ πολύοινοι οὐχ οἱ
ἠδύοινοι; τί δὲ οἱ πολυέλαιοι, τί δὲ οἱ
πολυπρόβατοι, οἱ δὲ γνάμη καὶ ἀργυρίῳ
δυνάμενοι χρηματίζεσθαι; καὶ μὴν
χειροτέχνη τε καὶ σοφισταὶ καὶ
φιλόσοφοι, οἱ δὲ ποιηταί, οἱ δὲ τὰ
τούτων μεταχειριζόμενοι, οἱ δὲ
ἀξιοθεάτων ἢ ἀξιακούστων ἱερῶν ἢ
ὀσίων ἐπιθυμοῦντες; ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ οἱ
δεόμενοι πολλὰ ταχὺ ἀποδίδοσθαι ἢ
πρίασθαι ποῦ τούτων μᾶλλον ἂν τύχοιεν
ἢ Ἀθήνησιν;

For who, if the city is in peace, will not
seek her? Of these men sailors and
merchants will be first. Then there will
be those rich in grain and wine, and
dealers of sweet wine. Some of them rich
in olives, others in sheep. And the men
capable in knowledge, and others with
money to invest; and craftsmen and
artisans, philosophers and poets, and
those who take interest in their works;
and those who set their hearts upon
anything sacred or holy worth hearing or
seeing. On top of this, where will those
who wish to sell or buy very many things
quickly hit upon better luck than in
Athens?

Xenophon here of course refers to the abundance of silver which Athens was able to mine, particularly at Laurium. Silver would have always been a desirable commodity, and thus provided an attractive reason to trade at Athens. While the enactment of the Megarian decree meant that Athens had also lost a market that was ideal for both exporting goods and for purchasing foreign goods, the size of their port and the wealth of goods available there served as an attraction from merchants all over, and the Athenians had a guaranteed source of revenue. This suggests, according to Miyagawa, that Athens would not have suffered as much in the event of a sanction.

Megara on the other hand would have suffered a loss from the Megarian Decree. Megara's ports by this point had lost their luster. In terms of importing grain, it did not

have the ability to compete with Athens in terms of desirability as a harbor. While Megara had two ports through which it could import foreign goods, the Pagae, and Nissae, the area of the isthmus with the greatest strategic and commercial value was firmly Corinthian, where the isthmus was thinnest.¹⁵⁶ The Corinthian section of the isthmus has two gulfs servicing both western and eastern Greece, respectively, at only seven kilometers apart. Compare this to the twenty kilometers between Megara's ports of Nisaea and Pagae, and the Corinthian advantage becomes clear. The Corinthians even built the *diolchos*, which is still visible in some capacity today, and was meant to facilitate the transfer of goods from one side of the isthmus to the other. This allowed Corinth to supersede Megara as a commercial center, and likely attract more merchants selling important goods such as grain than their eastward neighbor. Ultimately for merchants looking to sell goods, Megara's ports did not compare to the abundance of trade available in Athens to the east, nor to the convenience of Corinth to the west. However, in the event of the Megarian decree and the sudden loss of access to the Athenian market to buy goods, the Megarians could have turned to their close Corinthian neighbors for alternatives.

¹⁵⁶ Legon (1981), 39.

Sanction Busters

It is now clear that each polis was particularly reliant on trade rather than self-sufficient farmers, and there is also evidence of trade between the two *poleis*. This confirms that the Megarian decree, by impinging on trading habits at all, would have had a noticeable effect, so long as there were no trade alternatives. However, Miyagawa's fourth criteria demands that one examine whether the target country has access to substitutes such as other foreign trade powers not involved in the sanction. As stated earlier, the presence of "sanction busters" or what Gary Hufbauer calls "Black Knights" are key to understanding whether a sanction has any true effectiveness or power.

Due to the loss of Athens as a location to potentially buy extra grain, if doing so was allowed by Athenian law, and for a location to sell their excess textiles, Megara would have needed to turn to alternative markets. The immediate obvious choice is Corinth. It is nearby, almost as close as Athens, and had a large harbor that attracted a lot of trade. With its easy access to both east and west, and especially the access to Sicilian grain, Corinth would have perhaps been the optimal choice after Athens. However, Megara again runs into the problem of selling its stock of textiles. Alain Bresson states that wool must have come chiefly from western Greece,¹⁵⁷ providing one reason why Corinth protected their western trade routes. It is questionable on whether Corinth would have found Megarian wool preferable over nearby options. In fact, Corinth exported wool

¹⁵⁷ Bresson (2016b), 276.

itself, as well as bedclothes, and textiles, as well as other goods, such as roof-tiles, and architectural terracottas.¹⁵⁸ In addition, it supplied olive oil, wine, and apples from Sidous.¹⁵⁹ Most importantly, Corinth used grain acquired from Sicily for local consumption, but also for export to its neighbors.¹⁶⁰

This final bit is most important. If Corinth had grain to supply to the Megarians, why would there be an issue of hunger at all due to the Megarian decree? Shouldn't the Megarians simply have gone to Corinth for their grain after Athens cut them off from their Pontic supply?

On the surface, this is true. However, this supposes that Corinthian merchants were buying in such excess that they could supply the sudden and rapidly opening new market of Megara. Corinth likely followed a similar grain policy as Athens in that they closely guarded their supply. They surely imported more than they needed, kept some surplus stored away in the event of a disaster, and any small excess after that would be available for export.¹⁶¹ Let us suppose this small excess for export likely already had regular consumers. Let us further suppose that in the year that the Megarian decree was enacted, merchants would have already had an idea of where to go based on routes taken during previous trade expeditions. Some went to Athens to buy grain, others went to Corinth, some went directly to the larger sources, depending on where they began their journeys. This would have, in effect, caused Corinth's excess grain to have already been

¹⁵⁸ Psoma (2016), 100

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Salmon (1984), 129 and Psoma (2016), 100.

sold off to other buyers or been set aside for other purposes before Megarian merchants turned to them. In other words, Megarian merchants, after finding that the Athenians would no longer sell to them, would have to double back and then go that distance again to get to Corinth, only to find out that Corinth did not have any grain for them. Since it has been established earlier that Megara was reliant upon imported grain, they surely would have quickly felt the impact of being cut off from their supply so quickly. Perhaps they would have had reserves to get through the first season, but even if they did, the Megarian decree would have surely caused anxiety because of this. Of course, it is possible that Corinthians realized the prime opportunity for making a profit at the outset of the Megarian decree, and so I cannot completely rule out the idea that Megarians did turn to Corinth for what grain they could obtain there. Athens must have realized that Corinth was a possible sanction buster however, and this is perhaps ultimately the reason for the Sicilian expedition. According to Thucydides, the first expedition in 427 BCE was meant to disrupt the transport of grain to the Peloponnese.¹⁶² Had this been successful, Athens would have effectively monopolized the grain supply routes to the majority of Greece.

An additional question of course, is whether the Megarians would have typically gone to Athens in the first place? What evidence is there that the Megarians did not default to Corinth for their trade? One suggestive piece of evidence is that the character of Dikaeopolis does imply that the Megarians sold their goods at Athens. Yet this does

¹⁶² Thuc. 3.86.4. Psoma, 100

not mean that it was the Megarians' only market, or that it was the primary one upon which they relied.

In order to measure which locations were preferred for trade, it is easiest to examine each port in terms of profitability. For each port, there are factors involved in deciding where to sail will still involve some of the same considerations: distance traveled, ease of the journey, and the risks involved. A merchant's primary goal would be to deliver their goods successfully and have options to continue more trades while weather permitted. This meant expediency was still factored into the process. In modern times, the objective is to expend less fuel moving product, while still moving as much product as possible.

To answer this, let us turn to the modes of transport. There were two ways to ship goods. Either by sea, or by land. Sea was the preferred method. Sailing could be much faster if the wind and currents were favorable, but if it wasn't, then rowing was significantly slower. Transport over land required men for loading the goods, protection, and animals such as oxen to pull the wagons. Evidence for this can be seen in the much later Price Edict from Diocletian, which added a 50 percent cost to a load of grain transported a hundred miles over land, while it only added a two percent increase to a similar trek over sea.¹⁶³ While this decree has its failings, it is a useful benchmark for perceived prices in the ancient world. Pliny provides some idea on the speed of traveling by sea when discussing flax:

¹⁶³ Morley (2007), 26.

Plin. Nat., 19.1

sed in qua non occurrit vitae parte quodve miraculum maius, herbam esse quae admoveat aegyptum italiae in tantum, ut galerius a freto siciliae alexandriam septimo die pervenerit, balbillus sexto, ambo praefecti, aestate vero post xv annos valerius marianus ex praetoriis senatoribus a puteolis nono die lenissimo flatu herbam esse quae gadis ab herculis columnis septimo die ostiam adferat et citeriorem hispaniam quarto, provinciam narbonensem tertio, africanam altero, quod etiam mollissimo flatu contigit c. flavio legato vibi crispi procos.?

But in what part of life does the plant not occur, or what greater miracle is there than the plant that can move Egypt so close to Italy, so that Galerius reached Alexandria on the seventh day from the strait of Sicily, Balbillus on the sixth, both prefects, and that in the summer fifteen years after, Valerius Marianus of the praetorian senators went from the Puteoli to Alexandria in nine days with a very gentle breeze? That a plant exists which brings Cadiz from the Pillars of Hercules to Ostia in seven days, and back to Spain within four days and the Narbonne province in three, and Africa within two, the last of which was made with a very light breeze by Gaius Flavius, as a legate of proconsul Vibius Crispus?

In short, the price would have increased due to the distance. For sea transport, this was minimal. However, for any merchant that could not hire a ship, they would have had to rely on land transport, which was considerably slower. Land transport was also not without its expenses. A merchant had to hire a team of pack animals, have wagons to load, protection against bandits, as well as provide food and water for the animals. This slower speed of transport as well as the additional costs would have increased the cost of their goods. All of these factors likely would have meant that, for the Megarians, their wool would lose out to other cheaper options locally.

Megara happens to be nearly in the middle between Athens and Corinth, meaning that the price would have been relatively the same between both poleis. Corinth,

however, was well known for its own premium quality cloth rather than Megara's inexpensive wool tunics,¹⁶⁴ so it had less of a demand for cheaper Megarian wool. Athens however, due to the large population, and the even larger slave population, combined with fewer locally produced options for cheap wool, would have been a better market for Megarians. While distance may not have come into consideration, the likelihood of selling their wares would have made Megarian wool merchants prefer Athens over Corinth.

In the first year of the enactment of the decree, merchants who were accustomed to doing business in Athens would immediately have had to make alterations to their routes. If they arrived at Athens, they would have had to turn back, potentially having their goods confiscated. If they did not lose their goods, they would have at least had the extra expenses added for the transportation back and to find a new market. Considering that textile production was supplemented and perhaps even predominantly a domestic industry, it is easy to see how these would have impacted the smaller, less wealthy merchant.¹⁶⁵ Within the first season of enactment, then, smaller merchants would have felt the effect of losing a crucial source of income for that season. This would in turn have impact down the road on wealthier citizens and the polis itself. Bresson provides some insight into why any harm for the smaller merchant or farmer was problematic for the polis overall in terms of a grain farmer:

"Let us describe the model in detail and assume that a farm surviving on its own products and growing grain needed to sell on average 30 percent of

¹⁶⁴ Bresson (2016b), 193.

¹⁶⁵ Bresson (2016b), 190-191.

what it produced and was able to provide completely for the subsistence of the family with the 70 percent that remained. In the event that prices collapse—for example, as a result of a political catastrophe—the large city next door would not be able to absorb his products or if it could, only at very low prices".¹⁶⁶

If one were to apply this scenario to the poor Megarian who subsisted primarily on the cheap clothing he sold at the Athenian market, it is easy to see how this could create a crisis for both him and his family. His costs at home do not decrease just because he is unable to sell his wares abroad. He still needs to pay for slaves, oxen to transport the goods, wagons, tools used, and any other extraneous expenses.¹⁶⁷ These hidden costs in trading reveal how even one season of missed trade can have a deleterious effect on the merchants, who in turn would have had an impact on the city. If they could not come home with extra grain to the market, much of the city is immediately rationing their food and scrambling to find resources elsewhere.

This chapter accomplished three tasks. It discussed the extent to which Megara and Athens were reliant on trade with each other, the potential impact of losing said trade, and an analysis of potential sanction busters. In the analysis of which goods each polis traded, it became clear that Megara had more to lose through the sanction than Athens. An examination of the potential impact of losing trade found that while Athens would have lost a convenient trade partner, the size and attractiveness of their port to merchants from all over more than compensated for this loss. Megara, on the other hand,

¹⁶⁶ *Idem*, 201.

¹⁶⁷ Bresson also discounts the idea of the self-sufficient farmstead here due to the costs and the typical method in which farmers sold surpluses.

could not compete with the Corinthian or the Athenian ports. After this, the chapter turned to possible sanction busters and discussed their viability. Although Corinth would have perhaps had surplus grain to trade, the polis would equally as likely have been unprepared to accommodate the sudden influx of demand from Megara.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to appropriately examine possible sanction busters from Sicily in this chapter. Megara Hyblaia, which is perhaps the most known Megarian colony in Sicily, was no longer a Megarian colony at the time of the decree, according to Thucydides.¹⁶⁸ So while Megara Hyblaia would perhaps have been an effective sanction buster, Megarians did not have that option.¹⁶⁹ Instead, they likely would have to conduct business with Syracuse, who, looking to profit, may have entertained the idea, and thus spurred the Athenians into sending the fateful Sicilian expedition. Of course, there are many places Megarians could have perhaps turned to for help: Phoenicians, Egyptians, fellow Greeks, the list goes on. However, these alternatives may not have provided aid in as altruistic a manner as a colony such as Megara Hyblaia might have.

¹⁶⁸ Thuc. 6.4.2

¹⁶⁹ DeVoto, 92

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The final three criteria of Miyagawa's approach to the efficacy of economic sanctions are not discussed in this thesis. The fifth criteria dealt with national reserves – and while there is data for Athens from Thucydides, there is no easy way to make a comparison with Megara. In place of doing this, it can be stated with some confidence that Athens, sitting at the head of an empire which demanded tribute and was at the center of a larger port, had a larger, more easily replenished treasury than Megara. This is to say that, even without building a schema with which to compare Megarian reserves with Athenian, I am confident that Athens had a larger reserve. This satisfies Miyagawa's fifth criteria. I do not believe a larger undertaking into considering the national reserves is necessary.

The sixth criteria, which discusses monitoring and enforcement, is unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis. However, there are some pieces of evidence which should be noted are in support of the idea that Athens could enforce their decree. One might look to the evidence from Aristophanes, which discusses sycophants enforcing the decree in the marketplace. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix also lists some evidence referring to the practice of *κατάγειν*, bringing goods to shore from nearby ships in times of need, which evidently, according to G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, could be performed during times of peace.¹⁷⁰ There were also a variety of methods which Athens used, such as magistrates, laws prohibiting

¹⁷⁰ See de Ste. Croix, Appendix VIII for a list of evidence he gathered of τὸ κατάγειν which includes examples of the practice in times of both peace and war.

re-exportation of goods, grain in particular, and fines. There were also *sitonai*, or grain buyers, specifically sent out by poleis in the search of securing enough foodstuffs for the city.¹⁷¹ While some evidence for enforcements only exist in the fourth-century BCE or in the later Roman imperial era, this still demonstrates that the idea of enforcement was a concern. It seems unlikely that the fifth-century Greeks did not also share these concerns and use the same or similar methods.

Miyagawa's final criteria, the question of the organization of the government of the states involved, has mattered to scholars such as de Ste. Croix and Finley. Given the evidence examined earlier, the decree could have posed a real threat to the livelihood of the poorer Megarians. This in turn posed a threat to the wealthier, ruling class in Megara. Increasing unhappiness at home could have been a threat to their continued control of the polis. During the fifth century, many poleis changed leadership, and Megara was an example of one that had flipped from an Athenian alliance to a Spartan. If the decree did in fact exert enough pressure, it is reasonable to see why some scholars believe the end goal of the sanctions were to force the Megarians to rejoin the Athenian Empire.¹⁷²

I do not believe that the decree was meant, as Legon suggests, to cut off ship building materials from the Megarians. Instead, I feel the decree posed its largest threat by cutting off the Megarians from their best market for grain in exchange for their largest export, wool. In viewing the decree through this analysis, details such as whether the decree cut Megarians off from all harbors of the empire or not is superfluous, as the

¹⁷¹ Bresson (2016b), 384-398 for a full discussion on grain buyers and enforcements for trade supplies.

¹⁷² See Kagan (1996) for further discussion.

Athenian agora itself was the most important. If the decree did in fact cut the Megarians off from the entire empire, then the effects would have been even more disastrous. This economic pressure in turn would have created political pressure at Megara, and demonstrates how the Megarian decree was a well-crafted, political maneuver by fifth-century Athens. Yet despite this, war inevitably broke out due to poor negotiations between the Spartans and the Athenians. A third-party satellite state and the difficulties it presented between two large powers created the conditions by which one of the powers fell. The obvious remaining question is how much help Corinth could have provided Megara; although this thesis has examined the possibility, a complete, in-depth examination could provide a more concrete answer. Regardless, this thesis has shown that, outside of the presence of capable sanction busters, the Megarian decree had a very real possibility of creating an economic threat to Megarian wellbeing.

In the modern world where we have multiple examples of America pitted against other rising powers, and the contentions between them over third-party satellite states, perhaps it is time that international relation theorists, politicians, and military intellectuals take a break from the philosophy of the Melian dialogue and *realpolitik* to revisit the real-world geopolitical and geoeconomic applications of the Megarian decree. Perhaps doing so might provide insight into the current political situations between the USA, Russia, and China over North Korea, Ukraine, Syria, and Iran.

Bibliography

- (1914). *Recensement. 1914. Recensement agricole de 1911. Superficie, rendement agricole et valeur du rendement.* . Athens: Ministere de L'economie nationale.
- Adcock, F. E. (1927). In *The Cambridge Ancient History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allison, G. (2017). *Destined For War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.
- Amemiya, T. (2007). *Economy and Economics of Ancient Greece*. London: Routledge.
- Badian, E. (1993). *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentecontaetia*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Beloch, J. (1924). *Griechische Geschichte*. Berlin.
- Blackwill, R. D., & Harris, J. M. (2016). *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Böckh, A. (1886). *Die Staatshaushaltung der Athener*. Berlin.
- Boucher, D. (1988). *Political Theories of International Relations: from Thucydides to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bresson, A. (2016a). Aristotle and Foreign Trade. In M. Woolmer, D. M. Lewis, & E. M. Harris (Eds.), *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, Households and City-States* (pp. 41-65). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bresson, A. (2016b). *The Making of the Ancient Greek Economy: Institutions, Markets, and Growth in the City-States*. (S. Rendall, Trans.) Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Brunt, P. A. (1993). *Studies in Greek History and Thought* . Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Buckley, T. (2010). *Aspects of Greek History*. London: Routledge.
- Bury, J. B. (1909). *The Ancient Greek Historians*. London.
- Bury, J. B. (1951). *History of Greece*. London.

- Busolt, G. (1893). *Griechische Geschichte*. Gotha.
- Carusi, C. (2016). 'Vita Humanior Sine Sale Non Quit Degere': Demand for Salt and Salt Trade Patterns in the Ancient Greek World. In E. M. Harris, D. M. Lewis, & M. Woolmer (Eds.), *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, Households and City-States* (pp. 337-354). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cary, M., Nock, A. D., Denniston, J. D., Ross, W. D., Duff, J. W., & Scullard, H. H. (Eds.). (1949). *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Cornford, F. M. (1907). *Thucydides Mythistoricus*. London: Edward Arnold.
- De Angelis, F. (2002). Trade and Agriculture at Megara Hyblaia. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 21(3), 299-310.
- De Angelis, F. (2003). *Franco De Angelis, Megara Hyblaia and Selinous. The Development of Two Greek City-States in Archaic Sicily*. Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology.
- DeVoto, James G. (2005). Two Megarian colonies in Sicily. *The Ancient World*, 36(1), 90-106.
- De Ste. Croix, G. (1972). *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*. London: Duckworth.
- Dover, K. J. (1988). *The Greeks and their Legacy: Collected Papers Volume II: Prose Literature, History, Society, Transmission, Influence* (Vol. II). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Duff, T. (1999). *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Early, B. R. (2015). *Busted Sanctions: Explaining why Economic Sanctions Fails*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Engen, D. T. (2010). *Honor and Profit: Athenian Trade Policy and the Economy and Society of Greece, 415-307 B.C.E.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Finley, M. I. (1973). *The Ancient Economy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fornara, C. W. (1983). *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Foxhall, L. (1997). A view from the Top: Evaluation the Solonian Property Classes. In L. G. Mitchell, & P. J. Rhodes (Eds.), *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece* (pp. 113-36). New York: Routledge.
- French, A. (1976). The Megarian Decree. *Historia*, Vol. 25, 245-249.
- Gallant, T. W. (1991). *Risk and Survival in Ancient Greece*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Garnsey, P. (1988). *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gill, D. (1991). Pots and Trade: Spacefillers or Objets d'Art? *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 111, 29-47.
- Glötz, G., & Cohen, R. (1926). Histoire Grecque: La Grèce au Ve siècle. In *Histoire Ancienne*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.
- Gomme, A. W. (1945). *A Historical Commentary of Thucydides: Introduction and Commentary on Book I* (Vol. I). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Gomme, A. W. (1956). *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides: The Ten Years' War* (Vol. II). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Gomme, A. W. (1956). *A Historical Commentary On Thucydides: The Ten Years' War* (Vol. III). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Green, P. (2006). *Diodorus Siculus, Books 11-12.37.1: Greek History 480-431 B.C. - The Alternative Version*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Grote, G. (1888). *History of Greece* (Vol. 6). London: Cambridge University Press.
- Grundy, G. B. (1911). *Thucydides and the History of His Age*. London: Blackwell.
- Grundy, G. B. (1913). The True Cause of the Peloponnesian War. *Classical Quarterly*, Vol. 2, 59-62.
- Hammond, N. G. (1959). *A History of Greece to 322 B.C.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hanson, V. (2002). *An Autumn of War: What America Learned from September 11 and the War on Terrorism*. New York.

- Hanson, V. D. (2004). *Between War and Peace: Lessons from Afghanistan to Iraq*. New York.
- Hanson, V. D. (2006). *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*. New York: Random House.
- Harris, E. M., Lewis, D. M., & Woolmer, M. (Eds.). (2016). *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, Households, and City-States*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Heath, M. (1987). *Political Comedy in Aristophanes*. Hypomnemata, 87 . Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht , Göttingen.
- Henderson, B. W. (1927). *The Great War between Athens and Sparta: A Companion to the Military History of Thucydides*. London: Macmillan and Co.
- Highbarger, E. L. (1927). *The History and Civilization of Ancient Megara*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.
- Hornblower, S. (1994). *A Commentary on Thucydides*. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press.
- Hufbauer, G. C., Schott, J. J., & Kimberly, E. A. (1990). *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: History and Current Policy*. Washington: Institute for International Economics.
- Humphrey, J. W., Oleson, J. P., & Sherwood, A. N. (1998). *Greek and Roman Technology: A Sourcebook*. London: Routledge.
- Jameson, M. H., Runnels, C. N., & van Andel, T. H. (1994). *A Greek Countryside: The southern Argolid from Prehistory to the Present Day*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kaempfer, W. H., & Lowenberg, A. D. (1992). *International Economic Sanctions: A Public Choice Perspective*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Kagan, D. (1969). *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kagan, D. (1995). *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace*. New York: Random House.
- Kagan, D. (2003). *The Peloponnesian War*. New York: Penguin Books.

- Kristol, I. (2003). The Neoconservative Persuasion. *Weekly Standard*.
- Kron, G. (2016). Classical Greek Trade in Comparative Perspective. In D. M. Lewis, E. M. Harris, & M. Woolmer (Eds.), *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, Households, and City-States* (pp. 356-380). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Legon, R. P. (1973). The Megarian Decree and the Balance of Greek Naval Power. *Classical Philology*, 68(3), 161-171.
- Legon, R. P. (1981). *Megara: The Political History of a Greek City-State to 336 B.C.* New York: Cornell University Press.
- Lendon, J. E. (2010). *Song of Wrath: The Peloponnesian War Begins*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lewis, D. M., Boardman, J., Davies, J. K., & Ostwald, M. (Eds.). (1992). *The Cambridge Ancient History*. Vol 5. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ma, J., Papazarkadas, N., & Parker, R. (2009). *Interpreting the Athenian Empire*. London: Duckworth.
- Macdonald, B. R. (1983). The Megarian Decree. *Historia*, 32, 385-410.
- Marchant, E. C. (1958). *Thucydides: Book 1*. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Martindale, C. (2006). Thinking through Reception. In C. Martindale, & R. F. Thomas (Eds.), *Classics and the Uses of Reception*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mattingly, D. J., & John, S. (Eds.). (2001). *Economies Beyond Agriculture in the Classical World*. New York: Routledge.
- McDonald, J. (1994). Supplementing Thucydides' Account of the Megarian Decree. *Electronic Antiquity*, 2 (3).
- Meiggs, R. (1972). *The Athenian Empire*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Meijer, F., & Nijf, O. (1992). *Trade, Transport and Society in the Ancient World*. London: Routledge.
- Michell, H. (1957). *The Economics of Ancient Greece*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Migeotte, L. (2002). *L'économie des cités grecques*. London: Ellipses.
- Miyagawa, M. (1992). *Do Economic Sanctions Work?* New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Möller, A. (2007). Classical Greece: Distribution. In W. Scheidel, I. Morris, & R. P. Saller (Eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (pp. 362-384). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Monten, J. (n.d.). Thucydides and Modern Realism. *International Studies Quarterly*, 50, 3-25.
- Morley, N. (2007). *Trade in Classical Antiquity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ober, J. (1989). *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ober, J. (1991). From Athens to Star Wars. In R. Lebow, & B. Strauss (Eds.), *Hegemonic Rivalry: From Thucydides to the Nuclear Age* (pp. 251-269). Oxford: Westview Press.
- Oliver, G. J. (2007). *War, Food and Politics in Early Hellenistic Athens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Olson, S. D. (1998). *Aristophanes Peace*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Olson, S. D. (2002). *Aristophanes Acharnians*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Orwin, C. (1994). *The Humanity of Thucydides*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Pearson, L. (1952). Prophasis and Aitia. *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 83, 205-23.
- Podlecki, A. J. (1998). *Perikles and His Circle*. London: Routledge.
- Pritchard, D. M. (2015). *Public Spending and Democracy in Classical Athens*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Psoma, S. E. (2016). Choosing and Changing Monetary Standards in the Greek World During the Archaic and the Classical Worlds. In M. Woolmer, D. M. Lewis, & E. M. Harris (Eds.), *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, households and City-States* (pp. 90-115). Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

- Rhodes, P. J. (1987). Thucydides on the Causes of the Peloponnesian War. *Hermes*, Vol. 115, 154-165.
- Robert, J. T. (2017). *The Plague of War: Athens, Sparta, and the Struggle for Ancient Greece*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Romilly, J. (1963). *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*. Oxford.
- Rood, T. (1998). *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Scheidel, W., Morris, I., & Saller, R. P. (Eds.). (2007). *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Silk, M. (2000). *Aristophanes and the Definition of Comedy*. Oxford.
- Simmons, G. (1999). *Imposing Economic Sanctions: Legal Remedy or Genocidal Tool?* London: Pluto Press.
- Smith, P. J. (2006). Megara and Her Colonies: What Could the Metropolis Have Exported to Her Colonies? *Ancient World*, Vol. 36, 54-59.
- Stroud, R. S. (1998). *The Athenian Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 B. C.* Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Tandy, D. W. (1997). *Warriors into Traders: The Power of the Market in Early Greece*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tracy, S. V. (2009). *Pericles: A Sourcebook and Reader*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tritle, L. A. (2006). Thucydides and the Cold War. In M. Meckler (Ed.), *Classical Antiquity and the Politics of America: From George Washington to George W. Bush* (pp. 127-140). Waco: Baylor University Press.
- Tritle, L. A. (2010). *A New History of The Peloponnesian War*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Tsakirgas, B. (2016). Whole Cloth: Exploring the Question of Self-Sufficiency Through the Evidence for Textile Manufacture and Purchase in Greek Houses. In E. M. Harris, D. M. Lewis, & M. Woolmer (Eds.), *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, Households, and City-States* (pp. 166-186). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Ullrich, F. W. (1838). *Das Megarische Psephisma*. Hamburg: Kessinger Publishing
- Wardman, A. E. (1974). *Plutarch's Lives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wees, H. (2011). *Greek Warfare: Myths and Realities*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Wick, T. E. (1977). Thucydides and the Megarian Decree . *L'antiquité classique*, Vol. 46, 74-99.
- Wood, E. M. (1998). *Peasant, Citizen, Slave: The Foundations of Athenian Democracy*. London: Verso.
- Woodruff, P. (1993). *Thucydides: On Justice Power and Human Nature*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Woolmer, M. (2016). Foreign Links Between Regions: Trade Policy in Classical Athens. In E. M. Harris, M. Woolmer, & D. M. Lewis (Eds.), *The Ancient Greek Economy: Markets, Households, and City-States* (pp. 66-89). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zagorin, P. (2005). *Thucydides: An Introduction for the Common Reader*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Zimmern, A. (1931). *The Greek Commonwealth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.