

Cornelius Nepos

Miltiades 4-5

The Battle of Marathon.

The Persians have already disembarked. Athenians ask Sparta for help and start taking decisions:

Domi autem creant decem praetores, qui exercitui praeessent, in eis Miltiadem. Inter quos magna fuit contentio, utrum moenibus se defenderent an obviam irent hostibus acieque decernerent. Unus Miltiades maxime nitebatur, ut primo quoque tempore castra fierent: id si factum esset, et civibus animum accessurum, cum viderent de eorum uirtute non desperari, et hostes eadem re fore tardiores, si animadverterent auderi adversus se tam exiguis copiis dimicari. (5)

The Athenians move towards the Persians under Miltiades' command:

Hoc in tempore nulla civitas Atheniensibus auxilio fuit praeter Plataeenses. Ea mille misit militum. Itaque horum adventu decem milia armatorum completa sunt, quae manus mirabili flagrabat pugnandi cupiditate. Quo factum est ut plus quam collegae Miltiades valeret. Eius ergo auctoritate impulsu Athenienses copias ex urbe eduxerunt locoque idoneo castra fecerunt.

The Athenians prepare a curious strategy with tree timbers:

Dein postero die sub montis radicibus acie regione instructa non apertissima (namque arbores multis locis erant raras) proelium commiserunt hoc consilio, ut et montium altitudine tegerentur et arborum tractu equitatus hostium impediretur ne multitudine clauderentur. Datis etsi non aequum locum videbat suis, tamen fretus numero copiarum suarum configere cupiebat, eoque magis, quod, priusquam Lacedaemonii subsidio venirent, dimicare utile arbitrabatur. (10)

And the battle takes place:

Itaque in aciem peditum centum, equitum decem milia produxit proeliumque commisit. In quo tanto plus virtute valuerunt Athenienses, ut decemplicem numerum hostium profligarint, adeoque eos perterruerunt, ut Persae non castra, sed naves petierint. Qua pugna nihil adhuc exstitit nobilius: nulla enim umquam tam exigua manus tantas opes prostravit. (15)

Vocabulary

contentio, -onis	DISPUTE	rarus, -a, -um	SCATTERED
decerno, -ere	TO DECIDE	tego, -ere	TO COVER
nitor, -i	TO STRIVE	tractus, -us	TRAILING
accendo, -ere	TO KINDLE	fretus, -a, -um	TRUSTING
tardus, -a, -um	DUBITATIVE	decemplex, -icis	TENFOLD
dimico, -are	TO FIGHT	profligo, -are	TO OVERTHROW
compleo, -ere	TO FILL UP	existo, -ere	TO EMERGE
flagro, -are	TO BLAZE	prosterno, -ere	TO PROSTRATE

□ Language points on the first paragraph

✧ An indirect question on line 2. // After **fierent**, there are a couple of examples of Oratio Obliqua, so do not look for the introductory verb. // Each one of these two examples has a conditional clause in it. // Line 5 is difficult because of those infinitives in passive voice.

1/ In which case is **domi**? // Why is **exercitui** in dative? // Why is **praessent** in subjunctive?

3/ What is the meaning of **et** here?

4/ What word must be supplied with **accessurum**? // How is this **cum** called? // What form is **fore**?

4-5/ The infinitives **desperari**, **auderi** and **dimicari** are all in the passive voice for the same reason: which one?

□ Language points on the second paragraph

✧ Maybe the most difficult bit is the function of the ablative **quo**. // In the relative sentence on line 7, there is a case of antecedent embedded into the relative clause. // The **ut** on the same line introduces a result clause.

6/ Why is **auxilio** in dative?

6-7/ What is the difference between **mille** and **milia**?

7/ In what case is **mirabili**? // Is **pugnandi** a gerund or a gerundive?

8/ From what verb is **factum est**? // In which case is **collegae**? // Why is **valeret** in subjunctive?

□ Language points on the third paragraph

✧ The **ut** on line 11 introduces a result clause.

10/ With what word does **apertissima** go?

11/ What kind of subordinate does **ut** introduce?

12/ What is the agent object of **impediretur**? // What kind of subordinate does **ne** introduce? // What other word could have been used instead of **etsi** keeping the same meaning? // Why is **suis** in dative?

13/ What kind of subordinate does **quod** introduce?

14/ Why is **venirent** in subjunctive?

□ Language points on the fourth paragraph

✧ On line 17, again a case of antecedent embedded into the relative clause.

15/ What does **quo** refer to? // What is the function of the ablative **tanto**?

16/ Why is **profligarint** in subjunctive?

17/ In what other way could **petierint** have been written? // In what case is **pugna**?

18/ What is the meaning of **opes** in singular?