



Empire & Collapse

THE FALL OF THE POLIS

The Polis: the Greeks' main political unit

- ▶ The polis is an urbanised community. Its main features are:
 - ▶ small size
 - ▶ political autonomy
 - ▶ social homogeneity
 - ▶ sense of community
 - ▶ respect for the law

What is political autonomy?

- ▶ Autonomy vs. Freedom (autonomia vs eleutheria)
- ▶ Early views of eleutheria:
- ▶ “Yet not so much doth the grief of the Trojans that shall be in the aftertime move me, neither Hecabe's own, nor king Priam's, nor my brethren's, many and brave, who then shall fall in the dust beneath the hands of their foemen, as doth thy grief, when some brazen-coated Achaean [455] shall lead thee away weeping **and rob thee of thy day of freedom.** Hom. Il. 6.452-5”



The first conquest and eleutheria

► Croesus was a Lydian by birth, son of Alyattes, and sovereign of all the nations west of the river Halys, which flows from the south between Syria and Paphlagonia and empties into the sea called Euxine. [2] This Croesus was the first foreigner whom we know who subjugated some Greeks and took tribute from them, and won the friendship of others: the former being the Ionians, the Aeolians, and the Dorians of Asia, and the latter the Lacedaemonians. [3] **Before the reign of Croesus, all Greeks were free**: for the Cimmerian host which invaded Ionia before his time did not subjugate the cities, but raided and robbed them. Hdt. 1.6



Freedom at all costs



- ▶ But the Phocaeans, very indignant at the thought of slavery, said they wanted to deliberate for a day, and then they would answer; but while they were deliberating, Harpagus must withdraw his army from the walls, they said. Harpagus said that he well knew what they intended to do, but that nevertheless he would allow them to deliberate. [3] So when Harpagus withdrew his army from the walls, the Phocaeans launched their fifty-oared ships, embarked their children and women and all their movable goods, besides the statues from the temples and everything dedicated in them except bronze or stonework or painting, and then embarked themselves and set sail for Chios; and the Persians took Phocaea, left thus uninhabited. Hdt. 1.64



Leagues, empires and freedom

- The policy of Lacedaemon was not to exact tribute from her allies, but merely to secure their subservience to her interests by establishing oligarchies among them; Athens, on the contrary, had by degrees deprived hers of their ships, and imposed instead contributions in money on all except Chios and Lesbos. Both found their resources for this war separately to exceed the sum of their strength when the alliance flourished intact. Thuc. 1.19



The freedom of the Greeks

- ▶ The Corinthians to the Peloponnesian League, talking about Athens:
- ▶ We must believe that the tyrant city that has been established in Hellas has been established against all alike, with a programme of universal empire, part fulfilled, part in contemplation; let us then attack and reduce it, and win future security for ourselves and freedom for the Hellenes who are now enslaved.' Thuc. 1.124



From Freedom to Autonomy

- ▶ The Terms of the King's Peace (387 BCE) – the Persian King becomes the arbitrator of peace in the Greek world
- ▶ “King Artaxerxes thinks it just that the cities in Asia should belong to him, as well as Clazomenae and Cyprus among the islands, and that the other Greek cities, both small and great, should be left independent, except Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros; and these should belong, as of old, to the Athenians. But whichever of the two parties does not accept this peace, upon them I will make war, in company with those who desire this arrangement, both by land and by sea, with ships and with money.” Xen. Hell. 5.1.31



In the archonship of Nausinicus [378/7]; Callibius, son of Cephisophon, of Paeania, was secretary; in the seventh prytany, of Hippothontis; resolved by the council and the people; Charinus of Athmonum was chairman. Aristoteles proposed:

- 7 For the good fortune of the Athenians and the allies of the Athenians. So that the Spartans shall allow the Greeks to be free and autonomous, and to live at peace occupying their own territory in security, [and so that the peace and friendship sworn by the Greeks and the King may be in force and endure in accordance with the agreements,]] be it decreed by the people:
- 15 If any of the Greeks or of the barbarians living in Europe or of the islanders, who are not the King's, wishes to be an ally of the Athenians and their allies, he may be — being free and autonomous, being governed under whatever form of government he wishes, neither receiving a garrison nor submitting to a governor nor paying tribute, on the same terms as the Chians and the Thebans and the other allies.

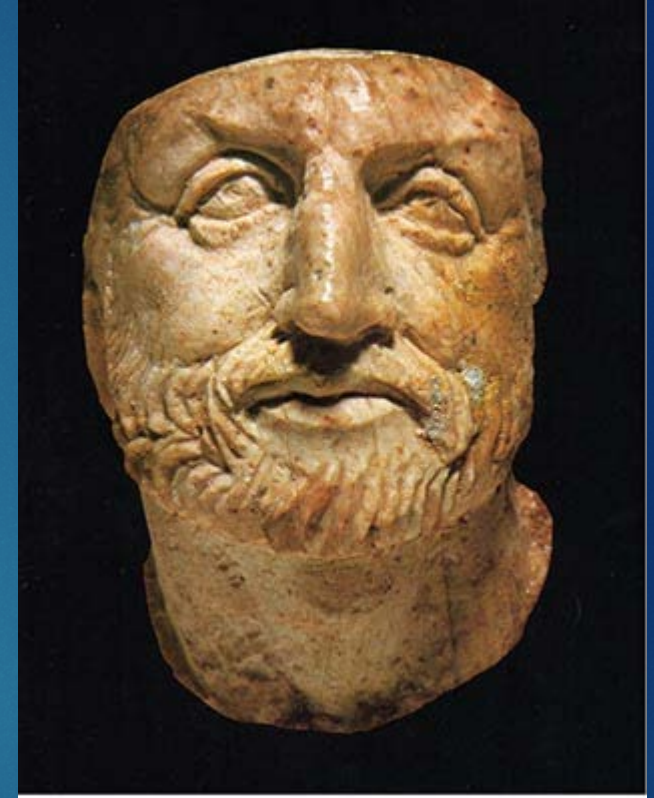
New Leagues – still autonomy

What are the signs of autonomy?

1. The polis chooses its own constitution
2. The polis is not garrisoned
3. The polis is not imposed a governor
4. The polis does not have to pay tribute

The Macedonian Conquest: League of Corinth

- ▶ I shall not overthrow the kingdom of Philip and his descendants, or the constitutions existing in each place when they swore the oaths about the Peace; and I myself will do nothing contrary to this[treaty], nor shall I empower anyone else. IG II2 236



Neither eleutheria nor autonomy

- ▶ Antipater, after he had destroyed the alliance of the Greeks by this device, led all his forces against the Athenians. The people, bereft of the aid of their allies, were in great perplexity. ... 3 When Antipater had heard what they had to say, he made answer that he would end the war against the Athenians on no other condition than that they surrender all their interests to his discretion; ... The people, not being in position to fight, were forced to grant to Antipater such discretion and complete authority over the city. 4 **He dealt humanely with them and permitted them to retain their city and their possessions and everything** else; but he **changed the government from a democracy**, ordering that political power should depend on a census of wealth, and that those possessing more than two thousand drachmas should be in control of the government and of the elections. **He removed from the body of citizens all who possessed less than this** amount on the ground that they were disturbers of the peace and warmongers, offering to those who wished it a place for settlement in Thrace. 5 **These men, more than twelve thousand in number, were removed from their fatherland**; but those who possessed the stated rating, being about nine thousand, p67 were designated as masters of both city and territory and conducted the government according to the constitution of Solon. All were permitted to keep their property uncurtailed. They were, however, **forced to receive a garrison** with Menyllus as its commander, its purpose being **to prevent anyone from undertaking changes in the government**. ... 7 When Antipater had returned to Macedonia, he presented Craterus with suitable honours and gifts, giving him also his eldest daughter Phila in marriage, and helped him to prepare for his return to Asia. 8 **He likewise showed moderation in dealing with the other Greek cities, both reducing their citizen bodies and wisely reforming them, for which he received eulogies and crowns.** 9 Perdikkas, restoring their city and territory to the Samians, brought them back to their fatherland after they had been exiles for forty-three years. D.S. 18.18