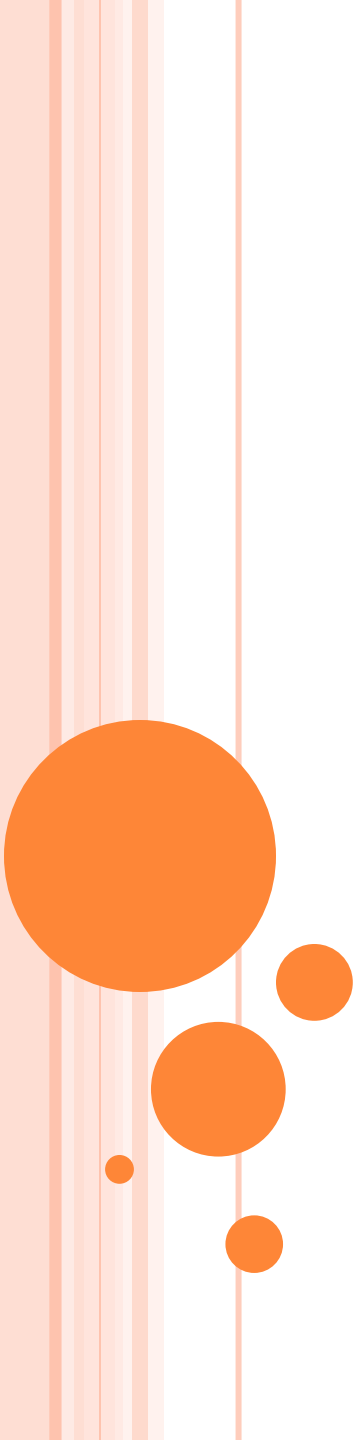




SPARTA: AN EXTRAORDINARY CITY

Lecture 17: Leuktra

ANTI-SPARTAN ALLIANCE AND PERSIAN MONEY

- The Spartan aggression against Thebes was immediately answered by an anti-Spartan alliance between Thebes, Athens and a number of other central Greek poleis.
- The alliance was probably financed by the Persian king in an effort to make the Spartan offensive in Asia Minor stop.



THE BATTLE OF KNIDOS, 394

- The Persian fleet led by Konon the Athenian defeated the Spartan and allied fleet at Knidos.
- This was the first major blow to Sparta, since the battle of Arginoussai in the Peloponnesian War.
- Due to the anti-Spartan alliance in Greece, Agesilaos was forced to return to the mainland and Spartan interests in the Aegean and Asia Minor were safeguarded only by the fleet.
- With the defeat at Knidos, Sparta loses a great part of its power.



THE BATTLE OF CORONEA, 394

- In the Greek front, Sparta won the hoplite battle of Coronea in Boiotia against the anti-Spartan alliance but the victory was not conclusive.
- With Corinth in alliance with Argos, a defeat in the east and problems at home (the Kinadon affair) and no decisive victory in Greece, Sparta had to sue for Peace.



THE TRUCE TERMS

When they had reached their destination, Antalcidas said to Tiribazus that he had come desiring peace between his state and the King, and, furthermore, just such a peace as the King had wished for. For the Lacedaemonians, he said, **urged no claim against the King to the Greek cities in Asia and they were content that all the islands and the Greek cities in general should be independent.** “And yet,” he said, “if we are ready to agree to such conditions, why should the King be at war with us or be spending money? Indeed, if such terms were made, **we could not take the field against the King, either; the Athenians could not unless we assumed the leadership, and we could not if the cities were independent.**”

Xenophon *Hellenika* 3.8.14



PERSIA, ATHENS AND THE FAILED PEACE

- The Persian King, Artaxerxes, refused to agree to the Spartan peace proposal after almost a year of negotiation. The main reason for Artaxerxes' refusal was his suspicion of Sparta.
- At the same time, the Athenians, nominally at the time allies of Persia, supported the revolt of Cyprus from Persia. Thus, the Persians now had reason to distrust both major Greek powers in Asia Minor.



PERSIA AGAINST ATHENS

- With Athenian support to Evagoras in Cyprus and a series of anti-Persian raids by Thrasybulus in Asia Minor, the Persian king decided to take the offensive against Athens.
- With Athens as the enemy, the logical ally for Persia was Sparta.
- Thus Persia supported the Spartan fleet in the Aegean, which eventually took control of the Hellespont and thus the Athenian grain supply.



THE KING'S PEACE, 387/6

“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 autonomous, 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.”

Xenophon *Hellenika* 5.1.31



SPARTA AND THE KING'S PEACE

Now while in the war the Lacedaemonians were no more than holding their own with their antagonists, yet as a result of the so-called Peace of Antalcidas **they gained a far more distinguished position. For by having become champions of the treaty proposed by the King and by establishing the independence of the cities they gained an additional ally in Corinth, made the Boeotian cities independent** of the Thebans, a thing which they had long desired, and also put a stop to the doings of the **Argives** in appropriating Corinth as their own, by threatening to call out the ban against them if they did not depart from Corinth.

Xenophon *Hellenika* 5.1.36



SPARTA AND THE KING'S PEACE

But is it not well, you may perhaps ask, on account of the Treaty, to curb ourselves and not be over-hasty or make the expedition too soon, **seeing that the states which have gained their freedom through the Treaty feel grateful toward the King**, because they believe that it was through him that they gained their independence, **while those states which have been delivered over to the barbarians complain very bitterly of the Lacedaemonians and only less bitterly of the other Hellenes who entered into the peace**, because, in their view, they were forced by them into slavery? But, I reply, is it not our duty to annul this agreement, which has given birth to such a sentiment—the sentiment that the barbarian cares tenderly for Hellas, and stands guard over her peace, while among ourselves are to be found those who outrage and evilly entreat her?

Isokrates 4.175



SPARTA AND THE KING'S PEACE

- Sparta won in the King's Peace.
- The Autonomy clause of the Peace meant that no empire or hegemony could be created by Athens or any other polis.
- Further, Sparta now, as effective representative of the King in Greece, had a free rein to discipline its recalcitrant allies (Corinth, Thebes).



SPARTA AND THE NORTH

After the death of Glos and Tachos the Lacedaemonians **renounced their undertakings in Asia, but they went on organizing affairs in Greece for their own** interest, winning over some of the cities by persuasion and getting others into their hands by force through the return of the exiles. From this point they began openly to bring into their own hands the supremacy of Greece, contrary to the common agreements adopted in the time of Antalcidas after intervention by the King of the Persians. ... At first the people of the Olynthians enjoyed the revenues from the land given them, and when later the king unexpectedly recovered strength and got back his entire kingdom, the Olynthians were not inclined to return the land when he asked for it. Consequently Amyntas gathered an army from his own people, and forming an alliance with the Lacedaemonians persuaded them to send out a general and a strong force against the Olynthians. **The Lacedaemonians, having decided to extend their control to the regions about Thrace, enrolled soldiers both from their citizens and from their allies, more than ten thousand in all; the army they** turned over to Phoebidas the Spartan with orders to join forces with Amyntas and to make war together with him upon the Olynthians. **They also sent out another army against the people of Phlius, defeated them in battle, and compelled them to accept the rule of the Lacedaemonians.**



SPARTA AND THE NORTH

- The expedition against Olynthos and the Chalcidian League was another of Sparta's efforts after the King's Peace to stop the creation of federal states.
- Also Sparta clearly tries to get control of northern Greece with main target the Greek poleis of the Chalcidice and the Thracian coast.



SPARTA AND ASIA MINOR

At this time the kings of the Lacedaemonians were at variance with each other on matters of policy.

Agesipolis, who was a peaceful and just man and, furthermore, excelled in wisdom, declared that they should abide by their oaths and not enslave the Greeks contrary to the common agreements. **He pointed out that Sparta was in ill repute for having surrendered the Greeks of Asia to the Persians and for organizing the cities of Greece in her own interest,** although she had sworn in the common agreement that she would preserve their autonomy. **But Agesilaus, who was by nature a man of action, was fond of war and yearned for dominance over the Greeks.**

Diodoros 15.19.4



SPARTA AND PERSIA

Glos, who had been in command of the fleet and was married to the daughter of Tiribazus, fearful that it might be thought that he had co-operated with Tiribazus in his plan and that he would be punished by the King, resolved to safeguard his position by a new project of action. Since he was well supplied with money and soldiers and had furthermore won the commanders of the triremes to himself by acts of kindness, he resolved to revolt from the King. At once, then, he sent ambassadors to Acoris, the king of the Egyptians, and concluded an alliance with him against the King. He also wrote the Lacedaemonians and incited them against the King, promising to give them a large sum of money and offering other great inducements. He pledged himself to full co-operation with them in Greece and to work with them in restoring the supremacy their fathers had exercised. Even before this the Spartans had made up their minds to recover their supremacy, and at the time were already throwing the cities into confusion and enslaving them, as was clear to all men. Moreover, they were in bad repute because it was generally believed that in the agreement they had made with the King they had betrayed the Greeks of Asia, and so they repented of what they had done and sought a plausible excuse for a war against Artaxerxes. Consequently they were glad to enter the alliance with Glos.

Diodoros 15.9



SPARTA AND PERSIA

- The support provided to Glos' failed revolt was the only action of Sparta against the Persian king after the King's Peace and until the 360s.
- The King did not take an anti-Spartan position, as far as our sources tell us, because of Sparta's actions.
- However, this is a sign that Sparta had not abandoned its imperialistic ambitions for Asia Minor .



THE ISSUE OF MANTINEIA

Since in all this matters had proceeded as they desired, the Lacedaemonians resolved, in the case of all among their allies who had been hostile during the war and more favourably inclined toward the enemy than toward Lacedaemon, to chastise them and put them in such a situation that they could not be disloyal. Firstly, therefore, they sent to the Mantineans and ordered them to tear down their wall, saying that they could not trust them in any other way not to take sides with their enemies. ...When, accordingly, they now refused to tear down their walls, the Lacedaemonians called out the ban against them. ...The Lacedaemonians, however, said that they would not make peace with them except on condition that they should also dwell apart in villages. And they for their part, coming to the conclusion that it was necessary, agreed that they would do this also. Now the partisans of Argos and the leaders of the popular party expected that they would be put to death, but the father of Agesipolis obtained from him the promise that safety should be granted them as they departed from the city, being sixty in number...

Xenophon *Hellenika* 5.2.1-6



THE ISSUE OF MANTINEIA

After this the wall was torn down and Mantinea was divided into four separate villages, just as the people had dwelt in ancient times. And at first they were displeased, because they were compelled to tear down the houses which they had and to build others; but the owners of the landed property, since they not only dwelt nearer to their estates, which were round about the villages, but also enjoyed an aristocratic government and were rid of the troublesome demagogues, were pleased with what had been done. And the Lacedaemonians sent mustering officers to them, not singly, but one for each village. Moreover, they came from their villages for service in the Lacedaemonian army far more zealously than when they were under a democratic government. Thus ended the affair of the Mantineans, whereby men were made wiser in this point at least -- not to let a river run through city walls.

Xenophon *Hellenika* 5.2.6-7



THE ISSUE OF MANTINEIA

- The Mantineian campaign is the most powerful example of how Sparta used the King's Peace and particularly the autonomy clause to further and strengthen its position as imperial power in the Greek world.



THE SEIZURE OF THE KADMEIA (382)

Now one could mention many other incidents, both among Greeks and barbarians, to prove that the gods do not fail to take heed of the wicked or of those who do unrighteous things; but at present I will speak of the case which is before me. The Lacedaemonians, namely, who had sworn that they would leave the states independent, after seizing possession of the Acropolis of Thebes were punished by the very men, unaided, who had been thus wronged, although before that time they had not been conquered by any single one of all the peoples that ever existed; while as for those among the Theban citizens who had led them into the Acropolis and had wanted the state to be in subjection to the Lacedaemonians in order that they might rule despotically themselves, just seven of the exiles were enough to destroy the government of these men. How all this came to pass I will proceed to relate.

Xenophon *Hellenika* 5.4.1



THE SEIZURE OF THE KADMEIA

- The seizure of the Kadmeia was a deadly insult to Thebes and created a powerfully pro-Theban climate in Boiotia.
- Even pro-Spartan parties and individuals, like Xenophon, considered the seizure of the Kadmeia a bad move and, in the case of Xenophon, an impiety.
- In general, seizing and holding the centre of a polis was a very rare event in Greek warfare, especially when done under truce.



THE JUDGEMENT OF PHOEBIDAS

For this act the Lacedaemonians, being now discredited in the eyes of the Greeks, punished Phoebidas with a fine but would not remove the garrison from Thebes.

Diodoros 15.20

When these things had been accomplished, they chose another polemarch in place of Ismenias, but Leontiades proceeded at once to Lacedaemon. There he found the ephors and the majority of the citizens angry with Phoebidas because he had acted in this matter without authorization by the state. Agesilaus, however, said that if what he had done was harmful to Lacedaemon, he deserved to be punished, but if advantageous, it was a time-honoured custom that a commander, in such cases, had the right to act on his own initiative. “It is precisely this point, therefore,” he said, “which should be considered, whether what has been done is good or bad for the state.”

Xenophon *Hellenika* 5.2.32



PHOEBIDAS AND SPARTAN POLICY

- The lack of punishment to Phoebidas for an unwarranted act of aggression made Sparta extremely unpopular not only in Boiotia but all over Greece.
- Like in the siege of Plataia in the Peloponnesian War, the Spartans are seen as caring only for the good of Sparta.
- But this time it is not at a time of war and Sparta is clearly the aggressor (in the case of Plataia, the aggressor was Thebes).



THE HEIGHT OF SPARTAN POWER

- With the enrolment of the Olynthians in the Spartan alliance many other states likewise were eager to enlist under the Lacedaemonian standard. As a result the Lacedaemonians at this particular juncture reached their greatest power and won the overlordship of Greece on both land and sea. For the Thebans were secured by a garrison; the Corinthians and the Argives were safely humbled as a result of the previous wars; the Athenians, because of their policy of occupying with colonists the lands of those whom they subdued, had a bad reputation with the Greeks; the Lacedaemonians, however, had given their constant attention to securing a large population and practice in the use of arms, and so were become an object of terror to all because of the strength of their following. Consequently the greatest rulers of that time, the Persian King and Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily, paid court to the Spartan overlordship and sought alliance with them.

Diodoros 15.23.3-5



THE HEIGHT OF SPARTAN POWER

- The year 380 was the nominal height of Spartan power.
- All of Sparta's enemies were defeated and under Spartan power.
- Athens, Corinth, Thebes and Olynthos were no longer in a position to threaten Sparta's supremacy.



THE BEGINNING OF THE END

- Sparta will lose its power quite quickly.
- The 370s is a time of major changes in the Greek world.
- Thebes and Athens will gain considerable power in this decade and will individually, and together, challenge Sparta's power.



THE LIBERATION OF THE KADMEIA

During their term of office what is known as the Boeotian War broke out between the Lacedaemonians and the Boeotians for the following reasons. When the Lacedaemonians maintained a garrison unjustly in the Cadmeia and had exiled many important citizens, the exiles gathered together, secured the support of the Athenians, and returned by night to their native city. Having first slain in their own houses those who favoured the Lacedaemonian cause, whom they surprised while still asleep, they next rallied the citizens to the cause of freedom and obtained the co-operation of all the Thebans. When the populace had quickly assembled under arms, at daybreak they attempted to assault the Cadmeia. The Lacedaemonians who formed the garrison of the citadel, numbering with their allies not less than fifteen hundred, sent men to Sparta to announce the insurrection of the Thebans and to urge them to send help as soon as possible. Favoured by their position, they slew many of the attackers and wounded severely no small number. The Thebans, anticipating the arrival of a large army from Greece to aid the Lacedaemonians, dispatched envoys to Athens to remind them that they too once aided in restoring the democracy of the Athenians at the time when the Athenians had been enslaved by the Thirty Tyrants, and to request the Athenians to come with all their forces and assist them in reducing the Cadmeia before the arrival of the Lacedaemonians.

Diodoros 15.25



THE SECOND ATHENIAN CONFEDERACY

The Athenians sent their most respected citizens as ambassadors to the cities which were subject to the Lacedaemonians, urging them to adhere to the common cause of liberty. For the Lacedaemonians, relying on the size of the force at their disposal, ruled their subject peoples inconsiderately and severely, and consequently many of those who belonged to the Spartan sphere of influence fell away to the Athenians. The first to respond to the plea to secede were the peoples of Chios and Byzantium; they were followed by the peoples of Rhodes and Mytilene and certain others of the islanders; and as the movement steadily gathered force throughout Greece, many cities attached themselves to the Athenians. The democracy, elated by the loyalty of the cities, established a common council of all the allies and appointed representatives of each state. It was agreed by common consent that, while the council should hold its sessions in Athens, every city great and small should be on an equal basis and enjoy but one vote, and that all should continue independent, accepting the Athenians as leaders. The Lacedaemonians, aware that the movement of their cities to secede could not be checked, nevertheless strove earnestly by means of diplomatic missions, friendly words and promises of benefits to win back the peoples who had become estranged. Likewise they devoted themselves assiduously to their preparations for war, for they expected the Boeotian War to be a hard and tedious affair for them, since the Athenians and the rest of the Greeks who participated in the council were allied with the Thebans.



THE NEW ALLIANCE

- With Thebes rebelling against Sparta with Athenian help and the support of the poleis of Boiotia, Sparta is facing a long and difficult war in central Greece.
- With the 2nd Athenian Confederacy, Sparta loses its influence over the islands and Thrace, as well as whatever influence it still had in Asia Minor.
- The Athenians and the Thebans are very careful not to break the King's Peace.
- With Thebes and Athens allied, Sparta has to face an enemy that has both a strong army and a strong navy.



THE SPARTAN CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THEBES

- The Spartans campaigned annually against Thebes after 379 for the rest of the decade.
- These annual invasions are the main reason why later Agesilaos was considered the architect of the Spartan downfall, since he pressed the Thebans too much into becoming an effective military force.



THE FIRST CLUE: THE BATTLE OF TEGYRA (375)

While these things were going on, the Thebans made an expedition against Orchomenus with five hundred picked men and performed a memorable action. For as the Lacedaemonians maintained a garrison of many soldiers in Orchomenus and had drawn up their forces against the Thebans, a stiff battle took place **in which the Thebans, attacking twice their number, defeated the Lacedaemonians. Never indeed had such a thing occurred before; it had seemed enough if they won with many against few. The result was that the** Thebans swelled with pride, became more and more renowned for their valour, and had manifestly put themselves in a position to compete for the supremacy of Greece.

Diodoros 15.37



THE DEFEAT AT NAXOS (376)

- The Spartans were also defeated, this time by the Athenians, in the naval battle of Naxos.
- By 375, the Spartans had suffered defeats on both land and sea by the anti-Spartan alliance.



THE PEACE OF 375

- In 375 Sparta and Athens concluded a short-lived treaty.
- Both Sparta and Athens were greatly alarmed at the power that Thebes was gaining in leaps and bounds.
- Sparta was now on the defensive against Thebes.



THEBES AND BOIOTIA, 375-371

- Thebes was not idle after the truce of 375.
- It had managed to achieve its main and basic aim of unifying Boiotia under its leadership.
- Now the Thebans did not fight alone but had the power of the other Boiotian poleis behind them, giving them support and numbers.



THE PEACE CONFERENCE OF 371

- In the Peace Conference of 371 was an effort by Sparta and Athens to curtail Theban power.
- The unification of Boiotia had alarmed greatly both Sparta and Athens.
- The Spartans tried to convince the Thebans to sign as an individual polis, not as representatives and hegemon of Boiotia.
- The Thebans refused, which prompted another invasion of Boiotia by Sparta.



LEUKTRA, 371

- The Battle of Leuktra was the great moment of defeat for Sparta.
- Of the 700 homoioi present in the Spartan army at Leuktra, 400 died.
- The Thebans won the battle due to their better formation of the deepened left phalanx.
- Sparta was defeated in its own game, the hoplite battle.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOgX-iRvqIk>



FOLLOW-UP READING

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