

SPARTA AND HER ALLIES IN THE SIXTH CENTURY

In the first book of his *History* Thucydides shows 'the Spartans and the Allies', to give the Peloponnesian League¹ its formal title, making the decision that Athens had broken the Thirty Years Peace. After receiving the complaints of various allies, the Spartans discussed in the assembly the conduct of Athens and what should be done about it (ch. 67ff.) and ended by voting that the treaty had been broken and that the Athenians were in the wrong (ch. 87). This decision they communicated to the allies who had come complaining, and declared that they wished to summon all the allies and submit it to the vote, 'in order that after general consultation (κοινῇ βουλευσάμενοι) they might make war, should it so seem good' (87.3 & 4). Then, after the Excursus on the Pentekontaetia, Thucydides records the congress of the League in which the Spartans put to the vote whether it was necessary to go to war and the majority voted for war (119–125). Thus Sparta proposed and the allies disposed.

This bicameral procedure is plain also in the case of the appeal of the Mytileneans in 428.² Elsewhere it is to be presumed (despite the confusing accounts in Xenophon of the Acanthian appeal in 382 and of the making of peace in 372/1).³ In any case it would seem that whenever Sparta embarked on a war outside the Peloponnese which was not occasioned by the need to defend one of her allies,⁴ or whenever she brought such a war to an end, the allies shared both in decisions and in operations. The Peace

¹ U. Kahrstedt, *Griechisches Staatsrecht* I (1922) 81–118, 267–72, and G. Busolt and H. Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde* II (1926) 1320–37 are the principal standard accounts. H. Schaefer, *Staatsform und Politik* (1932) 200–11 is of especial importance. K. Wickert, *Der Peloponnesische Bund von seiner Entstehung bis zum Ende des archidamischen Krieges* (1961) surveys the history of the League to 421. J. A. O. Larsen, *Class. Phil.* 28 (1933) 257–76, and 29 (1934) 1–19 gives the evidence for and discusses the League in the age of Thucydides. G. E. M. de Ste Croix, *The origins of the Peloponnesian War* (1972) 101–24 and 333–46 is the most notable modern account.

² Thuc. 3.4.5f., 15.1. The Mytilenean envoys address their speech to 'Spartans and allies' (9.1) but since it was delivered at Olympia (8.1) the Spartans addressed must be representatives at the League assembly. Thucydides does not say explicitly that the Spartan assembly voted for alliance and therefore war, but it must have done so and indeed one would suppose that some warning would have been given to the allies as to what their representatives should expect; presumably such major business was not normal at the Olympic Festival.

³ Xenophon makes it seem that the envoys from Acanthus and Apollonia to Sparta in 382 were made by the Ephors to address the Spartan assembly and their allies at the same time (*Hell.* 5.ii.11f.) and at the end of their speech the Spartans threw the matter open for discussion by the allies; 'those who wished to please the Spartans' were most pressing for war (§20). How did they know what Sparta wanted if a decision had not previously been taken? One suspects a somewhat careless compression on Xenophon's part. When he comes to the Peace of 372/1, he has the Athenians speak before 'the ἐκκληῖται of the Spartans and the allies' (6.iii.3) but they address themselves simply to the Spartans (§§4.7, 10) and at the end of the debate the Spartans 'voted to accept the peace' (§18); the peace is then sworn to seemingly without the allies having a say. Again one suspects that Xenophon has not taken the pains that Thucydides would have taken. Busolt-Swoboda G. S. 1332 and n. 3 postulate a change of procedure. Perhaps they are right to adhere strictly to Xenophon, but he certainly is unmethodical. At 3.iv.2, where the expedition to Asia in 396 is under discussion, the allies are summoned to Sparta, and that is all we are told of their part.

⁴ For the Phocian appeal of 395 and the Achean appeal of 389, *v.i.* p. 366.

of Nicias is the obvious example.⁵ The truce of 423 would seem to be another,⁶ as is the peace with Athens in 404 and the war in Asia begun in 396 and the renewal of the King's Peace in 372/1.⁷ Where the allied share is not attested, it may none the less have happened. When Sparta resumed the war against Athens in 413, Thucydides makes little of the formalities of the resumption of the war, but since it involved the allies both in invasion of Attica and in preparations for the fortification of Decelea there may well have been a formal decision of the League Assembly.⁸ Only in Sparta's appeal for peace in 425 is it clear that Sparta's allies had no part, but that is readily understood; Sparta was going behind her allies' backs and betraying the cause she had professed to serve (cf. Thuc. 4.22.3), a measure of the disaster that would result if two hundred or so Spartiates were to be lost. For the rest consultation with the allies over the beginning and the ending of 'external' wars was, it may be posited, regular.⁹

This was an essential part of 'thinking the same people friends and enemies', which was the customary Greek term for full alliance (συμμαχία) as opposed to defensive alliance (ἐπιμαχία), a distinction explicit in Thucydides' account of the outcome of the Corcyra debate (1.44.1),¹⁰ and the term is used in Xenophon for accession to the Peloponnesian League (2.ii.20, 5.iii.26). It is also to be found in the (mysterious) Spartan treaty with the Aetolian Erxadieis, the date of which is probably enough to be set after the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 431 B.C.¹¹ But there is, for the present discussion, an important further point to be remarked. Not only does there seem regularly to have been this common deciding by Sparta and her allies, before the allies were involved in 'external' wars, but also Sparta never engaged on such wars in this period without the participation of the allies.

This latter point is obvious, but it may not be entirely otiose to spell it out. Leaving aside the Peloponnesian War, where no words need be wasted, one notes that there were Peloponnesians in the force that went with Thibron in 399 to Asia to defend the Greek cities (Xen. *Hell.* 3.i.3f.), as too in the army of Agesilaus in 396 (ibid. 3.iv.2) which set out with the larger purpose of campaigning against the Persian Empire (cf. *στρατεύεσθαι εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν*). Likewise the Peloponnesian allies were involved at the outset in the Corinthian War (ibid. 4.ii.9).¹² In the period of the full-blown League, Sparta did not fight alone.

⁵ Thuc. 5.17.2, 18.1, though the allies did not share in the exchange of oaths (19.2); cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6.iii.19.

⁶ Thuc. 4.118 is a curious document indeed, but at §9 it is declared to be a decree of 'the Spartans and the allies'. ⁷ Xen. *Hell.* 2.ii.19, 3.v.5-7, 6.iii.19.

⁸ 7.18.4, 19.1. The Spartan aid for Syracuse in 414 was very small, consisting of one Spartiate and a body of Neodamodeis and Helots (Thuc. 6.93.2f., 7.2.5, and 58.3); there was no alliance or declaration of war. So the allies apart from Corinth (6.88.10) had no interest in the affair. It is unclear how or why Sicyonians were compelled to join in (7.19.4, 58.3).

⁹ Although Thucydides said that 'the embassies from the Peloponnese' had been summoned for 'the fifty-year peace and afterwards the alliance' (5.27.1), there is no trace of the allies in the text of the Athenian-Spartan alliance as we have it (5.23.1). Perhaps the decision of the League authorising the peace embraced alliance too. ¹⁰ Cf. Thuc. 5.48.2.

¹¹ A text, somewhat different from that of F. Gschnitzer, *Ein neuerspartanischer Staatsvertrag* (1978), is to be found in the supplement to the second edition of Meiggs-Lewis *Greek Historical Inscriptions* (1989) p. 213. The first editor, W. Peek 'Ein neuerspartanischer Staatsvertrag' *Abhandlungen der Sächs Akad. der Wissenschaft zu Leipzig* LXV 3 (1974) suggested a date early in the fifth century, but P. A. Cartledge ('A new fifth century Spartan treaty' *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 1 [1976] 87-92) argued more credibly for a date in the 420s, and D. H. Kelly ('The new Spartan treaty' *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 3 [1978] 133-41), even more credibly perhaps, for a date in the early fourth century.

¹² The Corinthian War began as a mere defensive action on behalf of Phocis which culminated in the battle of Haliartus. After the formation of the Grand Alliance opposed to Sparta, the war proper began. Cf. Diod. 14.82.

One other feature is worth remarking. When a member of her alliance was attacked by an outside state, Sparta did not call a meeting of the assembly to consider the rights and wrongs of the case. If she herself thought action was necessary, she proceeded without delay and summoned the allies to join in the campaign, as can be seen in the way Sparta acted in support of Phocis in 395 (Xen. *Hell.* 3.v.5–7). Similarly when in 389 the Achaeans called on Sparta to defend them against the Acarnanians, the Spartans were at first (and understandably) reluctant, but when the Achaeans threatened to break off their alliance, Sparta accepted that a campaign was inevitable and Agesilaus marched out at the head of a League army; the allies do not seem to have had a chance to discuss the rightness of the Spartan decision (Xen. *Hell.* 4.vi.1–3). In the case of Spartan help for Epidaurus in 419, the significance of Thucydides' account (5.54.1f.) has been disputed;¹³ the Spartan army did not move outside Spartan territory and it is unclear whether 'the cities from which the army was sent out' were the Spartan Perioecic towns or the allied states, but if they were, oddly, the Perioecic towns, the army might well have been joined outside Spartan territory by allied contingents as it was to be when the sacred Karneian month had passed;¹⁴ there was no question of allied debate; an ally was under attack, and Sparta without delay was sending an army to help. So much for attack from outside, but it must be added that Sparta acted promptly to deal with revolution within cities, to judge at any rate by what happened with Athens in 403. Accepting the flimsy claim that the Athenian people (ὁ δῆμος) had revolted from the Spartans, they proceeded with a League army to deal with the situation (Xen. *Hell.* 2.iv.28–30). There was no debate among the allies about the matter. The Corinthians and the Boeotians showed what they thought of it by refusing to join in the campaign, but the rest sheepishly took part. When the Spartans found fault with the Boeotians, it was for their having persuaded the Corinthians in 403 (Xen. *Hell.* 3.v.5) but there was no suggestion that this was in a congress. In such cases the *hegemon* acted and the allies followed without debate.

Much about the Peloponnesian League in the period of the Peloponnesian War is odd, much obscure. One may be at fault in generalising from so little evidence, but it is clear enough that there was an established system. We know of one decree of the Assembly that came into force in 382 (Xen. *Hell.* 5.ii.21), and of a reorganisation of the army in 378 (Diod. 15.31), and plainly the system developed. But equally plainly there was a system, as Thucydides' account of the confusion in the Peloponnese after the refusal of four of the allied states to accept and observe the Peace of Nicias shows. There is reference to 'the old oaths' (οἱ παλαιοὶ ὅρκου) which contained a clause making decisions of a majority of the allies binding on all unless there was some matter of religion preventing (5.30). Furthermore it is to be suspected that the oaths were enshrined in a document. Quite apart from the general consideration that the only way to avoid contentious disagreement over what had been long ago sworn was to have it all in writing, it is to be noted that Thucydides in citing the clause just mentioned says 'it is stated' (εἰρημένον), the word he uses to cite clauses of the Thirty Years Peace between Athens and Sparta.¹⁵ But no matter whether there was a document. There was in some form a constitution. When and how did it arise?

¹³ De Ste Croix, op. cit. 345f. and Andrewes, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides ad. loc.* represent the conflicting views.

¹⁴ In 386 Agesilaus did not send out call-up officers (ξεναγοί) until the army was in Tegea (Xen. *Hell.* 5.i.33). The message sent to the allies in 419 after the Spartans had been forced by unfavourable omens to return home may have been to make up for time lost (Thuc. 5.54.2).

¹⁵ Cf. Andrewes op. cit. ad 5.31.5.

The view is fashionable that it arose in the late sixth century.¹⁶ In 506 King Cleomenes 'collected an army from the Peloponnese without declaring what his purpose was' but when he reached the plain of Eleusis the Corinthians refused to go on as then did the rest (Hdt. 5.74f.); when, shortly after, Sparta wanted to have Hippias restored to Athens, there was an assembly of the allies at which the Spartan proposal was rejected (ibid. 5.91, 93.2); the settling of the constitution of the Peloponnesian League is therefore posited in the interim, the occasion of 'the old oaths' spoken of by Thucydides.

This hypothesis is weak. When Herodotus stated that Cleomenes did not declare what his purpose was (*οὐ φράζων ἐς τὸ συλλέγει*), he went on to say what his secret intention really was, viz. to take vengeance on the *demos* of the Athenians and to establish Isagoras as tyrant (5.74.1). Such is unlikely to have been his actual intention.¹⁷ Presumably he intervened in Athens to quell what was deemed disorder and to restore the order he had established in 510, and of that those who marched under his command will have been well aware. It is absurd to treat a statement of Herodotus that reflected the hostile bias of his informants against Cleomenes as proof that the Spartans were simply ordering Peloponnesians hither and yon in a quite irresponsible fashion. Indeed when the Corinthians make their protest (ch. 75.1) words are used which are consistent with there being a recognised system of some sort. They do not reason amongst themselves that they are not acting justly, but rather that they are not doing 'the just things' (*τὰ δίκαια*) and that definite article is consistent with there being acts that could justly be required of them. So the proof of a great change of direction in Sparta's relations with her allies in the late sixth century is hollow.

In any case, whatever is said of Sparta and her allies before the Persian invasion of 480, there is one striking difference from the League we meet in Thucydides and Xenophon. Sparta always fights 'external' wars without the support of her allies, and this is true both before and after 506. Sparta allied with Croesus of Lydia (Hdt. 1.69) and prepared to answer the call for help (ch. 83), but the allies did not come into it just as they did not at the Battle of the Champions against Argos at much the same moment (ch. 82). It is true that the Corinthians transported the Spartan force that went to deal with Polycrates of Samos, but according to Herodotus they had special and private reasons for doing so¹⁸ and it was Spartans and only Spartans who did the fighting (Hdt. 3.48.1, 54ff.). Only Spartans took part in the two expeditions to expel Hippias (ibid. 5.63f., cf. 76). The attack on Argos in the Sepeia campaign involved Spartans only (ibid. 6.76ff.). Again, they were transported by sea, this time by the Aeginetans, but only because they were compelled, not because they were allies (ibid. 6.92). Finally, it was Spartans without allies who went to Marathon in 490 (ibid. 6.120). The one exception is that of 506, when Cleomenes 'brought the Peloponnesians' (ibid. 5.76) but if it is true as seems to me very likely, that Athens became an ally of Sparta when Hippias was expelled, this was an internal affair.¹⁹

¹⁶ It originated with J. A. O. Larsen, 'Sparta and the Ionian Revolt' *Class. Phil.* 27 (1932) 139–43, and has been accepted by many, e.g. by Andrewes op. cit. p. 26 and de Ste Croix op. cit. 117f. (but not wholeheartedly).

¹⁷ Was he to return to Sparta and announce that he had done such a thing? Or did he presume the wild act could pass unnoticed? He was not immune from prosecution (cf. Hdt. 6.82). Such things are more easily uttered in slander than seriously entertained and carried through (cf. L. A. Tritle, *Historia* 87 [1988] 459).

¹⁸ Opinion has divided on the significance of the Corinthian part in the Spartan campaign against Samos. Cf. Wickert op. cit. 16f. I follow Schaefer op. cit. 201. ¹⁹ v.i. p. 373.

There is no trace of full symmarchy in the relations of Sparta and the states of the Peloponnese before the Persian invasion. If there is alliance, it is no more than epimachy, mutual defence.

It is a false presumption that the League as it is seen in Thucydides existed in the sixth century. The assembly that debated the restoration of Hippias is similar to that in the first book of Thucydides, but whether it is an instance of what happened frequently enough though evidence is lacking or whether it is a freak and unique occurrence in the early period which became the model for the League in the fifth century needs to be discussed, but only after we have returned to the start of Sparta's policy of alliance rather than conquest.

When Croesus in search of allies in the coming struggle with Persia enquired which was the most powerful state in Greece, he was told Sparta; the Athenians were kept in subjection and division by Pisistratus who had just begun on his third period of tyranny, but Sparta was already in a strong state 'being already superior to the Tegeates in the war' (έόντας ἤδη τῷ πολέμῳ κατυπερτέρους Τεγεατέων – Hdt. 1.65.1); previously Sparta had repeatedly failed (προσέπταιον 1.65.1, αἰεὶ κακῶς ἀέθλεον 67.1) against the Tegeates, though she had clearly intended to treat Tegea as she had treated Messenia, fettering the inhabitants and making allotments of the land for themselves (1.66.4), but in the time of Croesus and in the reigns of Ariston and Anaxandridas the Spartans brought home the Bones of Orestes, and 'from then on whenever they tried each other the Spartans were much superior in the war (κατυπέρτεροι τῷ πολέμῳ 1.68.6) and already the majority of the Peloponnese had been subjected by them (ἡ πολλὴ τῆς Πελοποννήσου ἦν κατεστραμμένη)'.

The period is clear, the 550s.²⁰ The significance of the Bones is debatable. The fact of subjection is plain. In some way many of the states of the Peloponnese are within Sparta's power. It is also clear that Tegea has not yet settled with Sparta; there had been the earlier war (τὸν πρότερον πόλεμον 1.67.1) in which Sparta had fared badly and the Bones were taken in a period of peaceful relations (ἐπιμειξίη 1.68.1), but the war went on. Whenever they tried each other the Spartans were much superior in the war, but despite the continuing conflict with Tegea Sparta had greatly extended her power and influence. Such at any rate is the account of Herodotus.²¹

Historians have reversed the order of events somewhat. A treaty of Sparta with Tegea has been held to prelude the extension of Spartan power, presumably because of Tegea's geographical position. But the road through Tegean territory was not the only route northwards,²² and such a reason for reordering Herodotus is not strong. The war against Tegea went on, but there were periods of truce when Sparta could pursue other affairs, and by a different route.

What ought never to have been dragged into the discussion is the treaty between Sparta and Tegea, one clause of which is cited in Plutarch's *Greek Questions* (no. 5 = *Mor.* 292b).

"Who were the 'good' (χρηστοί) among the Arcadians and the Spartans? The Spartans, on settling with the Tegeans, made a treaty and set up a pillar for both parties on the Alpheus river, in which was included the clause:

Let them expel Messenians from the land and let it not be permitted to treat them as 'good'."

²⁰ The dates of the two Spartan kings are not exactly known. ('We have no other means than calculation by generations' – Beloch *Griechische Geschichte* I², 190.)

²¹ Cf. e.g. Kahrstedt op. cit. 81 and N. G. L. Hammond *CAH* III², 335.

²² Thuc. 5.54.1 (for the site of Leuctrum, P. W. XII.2 Col 2308). Cf. W. Loring, 'Some ancient routes in the Peloponnese', *JHS* 15 (1985) 36 ff. (and see Plate 1).

(Plutarch adds Aristotle's explanation of the term, which has generally been rejected as erroneous).²³ This treaty has often been dated 'around 550' but while certainty is impossible, one can say with confidence that such a date has nothing to commend it.²⁴ It is commonly thought that 'Spartan policy throughout the sixth century was dominated by the fear of a Messenian or Helot revolt being instigated by one or more of her neighbours'.²⁵ The only precise evidence for this is this treaty. For the rest, every action of Sparta suggests that she had not yet become taken up with the Helot problem. She actually prepared to send a force to Asia to help Croesus in his need (Hdt. 1.83); there is no suggestion of reluctance to leave Sparta unprotected against the Helot menace as is constantly seen in the fifth century and later. Similarly a Spartan army was sent to Samos, large enough to attempt a siege of the city (Hdt. 3.56.1); no mention is made of Helots but even if there had been on this expedition seven for every Spartiate, as Herodotus asserts there were at Plataea in 479 (9.28.2), it is still remarkable that the city was left so long exposed. The truth may well be that after the savage repression of the Messenian Revolt in the seventh century, in the sixth the Helots were quiescent, and it was not until 490 and the first invasion by the Persians that thoughts of revolt took hold but that from that mysterious and abortive uprising onwards they were a constant check on Sparta's freedom of military action. When Thucydides remarked that 'the majority of Spartan institutions with regard to the Helots have always been concerned principally with defence' (4.80),²⁶ that 'always' may not be an exaggeration, but it can hardly be denied that the Helots were a problem after 490 as they had not been before and there is no specific evidence that Sparta was much concerned in the sixth century. The institutions Thucydides had in mind²⁷ may well have been ancient, but in the sixth century the miserable oppressed Helots did not raise their heads or even perhaps nourish hopes. When Croesus inquired about the power of Sparta he was not told that there was a fatal weakness, the danger of a Helot uprising. Maiandrios of Samos and Aristagoras of Miletus seem unaware of it (Hdt. 3.148, 5.49ff.). Perhaps it is Herodotus who was ignorant, but until other evidence emerges, the sixth century is a very unlikely context for the Spartan Tegean treaty.

The treaty is much more likely to belong after the Messenian Revolt in 490²⁸ and before the mid 460s, when Micythos, the slave of the tyrant Anaxilas, and himself later regent of Rhegium, returned to the Peloponnese. He resided in Tegea and made his famous offerings at Olympia, on which he described himself as a 'Messenian living in Tegea', a boast which flaunted his flouting of the clause of the Spartan Tegean treaty.²⁹ Within these limits there are two reconciliations between Sparta and Tegea,

²³ Cf. F. Jacoby *CQ* 38 (1944) 15f. (= *Abhandlungen* 342f.).

²⁴ Cf. H. Bengtson, *Die Verträge der griechisch-römischen Welt* no. 112. The reason for choosing a fifth-century or a sixth-century date is rarely discussed. Cf. Kahrstedt op. cit. 109 and Schaefer op. cit. 230.

²⁵ P. A. Cartledge, *Agésilas* (1987) 13.

²⁶ This was the way of translating the sentence preferred by Gomme *ad. loc.*

²⁷ Such, perhaps, as the annual declaration of war by the Ephors against the Helots and the secret police (Plut. *Lycurgus* 28).

²⁸ Scholars have sharply differed over Plato's mention of a Messenian war which prevented the Spartans from supporting Athens in time in 490 (*Laws* 698 ED). The diverse evidence is reviewed by Cartledge (*Sparta and Lakonia* 153f.) who keeps 'an open mind'. I side with those who believe that on balance Plato's statement is to be credited.

²⁹ Hdt. 7.170.4, Diod. 11.66.1–3, Paus. 5.26.4–5, on the basis of which last passage the fragmentary inscriptions on three bases of statues at Olympia have been restored (*Inscriptionen von Olympia* 267–9; cf. Meiggs–Andrewes, *Sources* b107).

one after the battle of Tegea in the early Pentekontaetia and one in the 480s. Either would be a satisfactory occasion for our treaty.³⁰

The date of 'around 550' should be abandoned. It is both unlikely and muddling. We simply do not know when first Tegea allied with Sparta. The claim the Tegeans are represented by Herodotus (9.26.2) as making before the battle of Plataea, viz. that 'in all general expeditions made by the Peloponnesians both in ancient and in modern times' the Tegeans have been deemed worthy of the position on the left wing of the army, might suggest that Tegea was allied by 506, the date of the only 'general expedition' we know of in the sixth century. But that hardly tells us much.³¹ Nor is it sound to argue that Tegea must have been dealt with for Sparta to fight the Battle of the Champions (Hdt. 1.82) and take over Thyreatis; there was another route from Sparta to that area (viz. by way of Ayios Petros to Astros). All we can assert is that though the war with Tegea remained unsettled, 'the major part of the Peloponnese was already subjected' (ibid. 1.68.6).

If then in the sixth century there was no full alliance (*συμμαχία*) of the sort we meet in the pages of Thucydides, and if there is no real case for supposing an important development in 506 in the relations of Sparta and other Peloponnesian states, but if by the time of Croesus' inquiry the major part of the Peloponnese was already subjected to Sparta, of what kind was this subjection? Herodotus makes clear that when Sparta brought home the Bones of Orestes, she abandoned her policy of conquest. The days of trying to get Arcadia in general and Tegea in particular into the same conditions as Messenia were past. What then was the new order?

The bringing home of the Bones of Orestes is a pleasing story in Herodotus (1.67f.). What is behind it historically speaking is somewhat uncertain. No doubt some change of policy is symbolised, just as it was in Sicyon where Clisthenes, to express hostility to Argos, sought to discredit the cult of the Argive hero Adrastus; when he was forbidden by the Delphic oracle to 'expel Adrastus' (whatever that was thought to involve), he 'imported' from Thebes Adrastus' bitter foe, Melanippus, and transferred to him cult previously paid to Adrastus (Hdt. 5.67).³² In the case of Sparta the last line of the oracle telling where the Bones of Orestes were to be found (1.67.4) shows that the transfer of the Bones had a political significance: 'when you have brought him back you will be protector (*ἐπιτάρροθος*) of Tegea'.³² Nor was the change of policy confined to Tegea. The Bones of Tisamenus, the son of Orestes, also were at some point transferred from Helice in Achaëa to Sparta and placed in a tomb there

³⁰ For the battle of Tegea, Hdt. 9.35.2 and Andrewes, *Phoenix* 6 (1952) 1–5, and for the troubles of the 480s, Hdt. 9.37, from which chapter one may not be wrong to extract from the barely credible story of the escape of the seer Hegesistratus to Tegea the statement that Tegea was 'not on good terms with Sparta at that moment'. When exactly that was, one can only guess. By 479 Tegea was again on good terms (Hdt. 9.26), and 'the many dreadful things' the Spartans had suffered through him were probably the troubles of 490.

³¹ Herodotus (9.26.4) has the Tegeans assert that the right for ever to be stationed on the left wing had been accorded in ancient times. There would therefore be no reason to use their place in the battle as an argument for Tegea being the first state to enter into the new relationship with Sparta. It has nonetheless been the almost universal opinion that the Tegean treaty was the start of the Peloponnesian League (cf. the firm assertion of Kahrstedt op. cit. 81f.).

³² A parallel is often found in the story of Plutarch (*Cimon* 8.5f.) of Cimon searching in Scyros for the Bones of Theseus, and bringing them back to Athens. As in the case of the Bones of Orestes, this was in obedience to an oracle. If it was understood to symbolise the foundation of the Delian League, Plutarch does not say as much.

³³ The word *ἐπιτάρροθος* is used in Homer to describe a god who helps and protects (e.g. *Od.* 24.182).

(Paus. 7.1.8). There is no indication of date, but it is reasonable to regard the two cases as related, manifestations of the same wide-ranging policy. After all, in Herodotus' account the effect of the bringing home of the Bones concerned the major part of the Peloponnese.

But what exactly was the change? Sparta could affect friendship for the pre-Dorian peoples of the Peloponnese, claiming Agamemnon as a Spartan (Hdt. 7.159), their king Cleomenes, admittedly not at a loss for a pert reply, declaring himself 'Achaean' (Hdt. 5.72.3).³⁴ So in some sense Spartan policy was now Philachaeian. But Herodotus' word for the condition of these new friends was 'subjected' (*κατ-εστραμμένη*), and this has perhaps contributed to the view that before the Spartans were forced in 506 to establish a regular constitution for the Peloponnesian League her allies were simply obliged to 'follow wherever the Spartans led'.³⁵ There is, as already argued, no warrant whatsoever for this view of what happened in 506, but Herodotus' word 'subjected' must be explained and the nature of the new friendships elucidated.

That elucidation is provided by Sparta's suppression of tyrannies. Whether Sparta ever had a policy of suppressing tyrannies has often been doubted.³⁶ The list of places where she is said to have intervened is hardly impressive. Most of them are too remote from Sparta to be acceptable, and those cases we know of from Herodotus may be explained as due to special reasons.³⁷ On the other hand, both our main sources are clear. Where Thucydides in his discussion of early Greek history asserted that the majority (*οἱ πλείστοι*) of the tyrants were put down by the Spartans (1.18.1), he knew, we may presume, what he was talking about. So there must have been a good many more cases of Spartan intervention than we are informed of. Herodotus is even more striking. When he composed a speech for the Corinthian representative at the assembly called to decide on the restoration of Hippias, he made him begin (5.92a1) 'Heaven is beneath the earth, and the earth is high above the heaven, and men have their habitation in the sea and fishes where formerly men, when you, O Spartans, put down peerages (*ἰσοκρατίας*) and prepare to restore tyrannies to the cities' (*τυραννίδας ἐς τὰς πόλεις κατάγειν*). The presumption is that Sparta regularly put down tyrannies and restored peerages, by which one supposes he means aristocracies like the Spartan 'Equals' (*ὅμοιοι*). Of course, Herodotus may be wrong. Thucydides may not have as accurately informed himself as one thinks he regularly did. But what is there to be put against this concord of our two main, and our two earliest sources? It need not

³⁴ Cf. Schol. Euripides *Orestes* 46 *φανερὸν ὅτι ἐν Ἀργεὶ ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ δράματος ὑποκεῖται· Ὅμηρος δὲ ἐν Μυκῆναις φησὶν εἶναι τὰ βασιλῆα τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος, Στήσιχορος δὲ καὶ Σιμωνίδης ἐν Λακεδαίμονι*. The name Philachaeus, which is often called into play, is probably not sixth century and possibly not Spartan (cf. L. H. Jeffery, *Archaic Greece* 131 n. 6).

³⁵ According to D. M. Lewis, *Supplement to Greek Historical Inscriptions*² (1989) n. 67 p. 213, 'the surest result [of the discovery of the Aetolian Treaty – v.s. n. 11] seems to be the confirmation of the view of de Ste Croix, *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (108.110) that the alliance formula of lines 4–10 was the primitive formula of Spartan alliances'. This is, I believe, the inverse of the truth. Lines 16–23 are the primitive formula of the sixth century. One can only regret that we do not have whatever followed.

³⁶ Cf. P. A. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia* (1979) 148: the proposal to reinstate Hippias as tyrant of Athens 'destroys the myth of Sparta's principled opposition to tyranny'.

³⁷ Of the list in Plutarch, *de Malignitate Herodoti* 859D, only Corinth and Sicyon are within the range of the conceivable for the sixth century. Of these Sicyon is perhaps rendered more respectable by the Rylands Papyrus n. 18 (= *FGH* 105.1); Corinth has been perhaps too contemptuously dismissed, for the Cypselid family may have lingered on after the murder of the last tyrant (*FGH* 90 F60), just as there were Pisistratids at Athens after the expulsion of Hippias. The scholiast on Aeschines 2.77 has only three of the names on Plutarch's list to offer. The cases in Herodotus are Athens and Polycrates of Samos.

surprise us that later writers should name so few and such unlikely names at that. The history of most cities in the Archaic period was probably never written down,³⁸ and the sort of disorders occasioned by Clisthenes at Athens which Sparta moved promptly to prevent, may well have gone totally unheeded by history in smaller states.³⁹ Herodotus and Thucydides knew about Spartan actions, but since it was not their business to record them, they were forgotten. But the two fifth-century historians knew what they were talking about, and it would be wrong to dismiss them. Their testimony suffices to show that Sparta had a policy of suppressing tyrants. The great exception, viz. the proposal to restore Hippias, was due to Sparta's discovery that her whole unhappy attempt to control Athens had proceeded from corrupted oracles (or at least that was what was said to have been discovered).⁴⁰ For the rest their practice and perhaps principle was to expel tyrants and restore exiled aristocrats.

It would follow naturally on such actions that the new order was sealed with an exchange of oaths, guaranteeing support, and it may be posited that the sixth-century form of the Peloponnesian League was essentially a series of defensive alliances (*ἐπιμαχίαι* as they were later called), not a by-product of or an extra to treaties of friendship but the core of friendship. Thus the pattern was set.⁴¹ At least it is conceded that the suppression of tyrants fell in the very period when, according to Herodotus, by bringing home the Bones of Orestes Sparta had extended her power and influence over much of the Peloponnese; it was during the reigns of Ariston and Anaxandridas, who cannot be precisely dated, but who seem each to have acceded not long before 550, and if we may trust the connection made by the Rylands Papyrus 18, it was in the Ephorate of Chilon in 556/5⁴² that he and Anaxandridas set about the expulsion of tyrants, thus putting Sparta in the strong position in which Croesus learned that she was.

But if the origin of the Peloponnesian League was no more than a set of defensive alliances between friends, how could Herodotus, it will be asked, have described such

³⁸ Perhaps the source of Aristotle's general statement (*Pol.* 1312b7) was Ephorus, and it is instructive to note how few Peloponnesian states are mentioned in the *Politics*; there is no mention, for example, of Tegea, Orchomenus, Epidaurus, Achaea (save for sharing in the colonisation of Sybaris). No wonder that the large number of lesser places like Cleonae or Nemea or Pallantion or Lepreum do not come into it. Mantinea is mentioned twice (1318b25, 27), once for its fourth-century constitution, once for its fifth (one presumes). There is no need to go on. It may be that he just happened not to think of Peloponnesian examples for his well-stocked book, but one cannot help concluding that he lacked the precise detailed histories of Peloponnesian states that would have informed him, at least when he was writing the *Politics*. When he took to writing up his 158 *Constitutions*, he may have done a lot of precious research, but it would be wrong to presume that they were necessarily all as full or of the same nature as the *Constitution of the Athenians*. We have fragments of 64. It is to be hoped that they are no index of the quality of the whole, but, quite apart from their value as history (which, fortunately, is not here relevant), many of these *Constitutions* may have been no more than a survey of the institutions in Aristotle's own time and experience. It is not surprising that we know of so few tyrannies, *pace* E. Ruschenbusch, *Untersuchungen zu Staat und Politik in Griechenland* (1978); probably few were dealt with by historians.

³⁹ Herodotus wrote of Clisthenes, only because he needed to explain how it was that Athens took part in the Ionian Revolt. Apart from that and the *Ath. Pol.*, we would be pretty much in the dark about him. Yet Athens was news. Elsewhere, full many a short-lived flower may have blushed unseen.

⁴⁰ Adopting Schweighäuser's change of *Ἀθηναῖοι* at Hdt. 5.63 to *Λακεδαιμόνιοι*. Cf. W. G. Forrest *GRBS* 10 (1969) 281.

⁴¹ A number of tyrants may have been suppressed in the 550s and exiled aristocrats restored. Elsewhere the threat of tyranny may have been removed and the aristocracy reassured by the new sort of oaths exchanged.

⁴² Eusebius *Chron.* (ed. Schoene) II 96/97, Diog. Laert. 1.68.

amiable relations as subjection?⁴³ Indeed it has been held that the original condition of the member states was a one-sided obligation 'to follow wherever the Lacedaemonians lead', though the reason why states should put themselves in such a condition is unstated.⁴⁴ So Herodotus' view here needs explanation.

The nature of the Peloponnesian League is well illuminated by what Xenophon has to say about the settlement of Mantinea in 385 (*Hell.* 5.ii.7). This has been discussed at some length elsewhere,⁴⁵ and a brief summary will here suffice. In one sense the later Peloponnesian League was an ugly bargain. In return for military service Sparta guaranteed landed aristocracies against the social changes inevitable with large urban populations led by demagogues. In preventing urbanisation Sparta held down the mass of people in the Peloponnese, and that is why Thucydides (1.19) spoke of the Spartans 'maintaining the hegemony by seeing to it that their allies under oligarchy follow policies that suit only the Spartans'. Elsewhere (1.144.2) he makes Pericles speak of the hollowness of Spartan professions of according their allies autonomy, and Herodotus reflects a similar Athenian view when he speaks of much of the Peloponnese being 'subjected'. That was not literally so, even in the fully fledged League.⁴⁶ In the sixth century obligations were minimal, and the prevention of social development probably little felt, and the cities in that period could only be termed 'subject' by a stretch of the fifth-century imagination.

If it is correct that in the sixth century the League was no more than a set of defensive alliances, it is necessary to explain both how in 506 Sparta called up 'an army from the whole Peloponnese', and also how an Assembly of allies came about not long afterwards (*Hdt.* 5.74, 91.2). There is no evidence which one can deploy in such discussions. One can only suggest answers.

There is no reason to suppose that when Hippias was expelled and those aristocrats who had been exiled returned to share in the restored ancestral constitution, the constitution of Solon, there was not an exchange of the oaths made in other similar situations.⁴⁷ Now if those oaths contained a clause similar to that which is found in the Argive-Spartan treaty of 418/17, stipulating 'autonomy according to ancestral right' (*αὐτόνομως κατὰ πάτρια* 5.77.5; cf. 5.79.1), the actions of Clisthenes would have been deemed a threat to Athenian aristocracy. That would be why a herald was sent to Athens ordering Clisthenes and his supporters to withdraw (*Hdt.* 5.70.2), and Cleomenes followed up in person with a small band to see that Isagoras and his supporters were restored to power (*ibid.* 5.72.1). The expedition which followed (*ibid.* 5.74), the real aim of which was, it may be presumed, to restore Isagoras to what he had been expelled from,⁴⁸ was just to secure by military means what Sparta had failed to secure by political pressure.

But why did 'the army from the whole Peloponnese' (*ibid.* 5.74.1) obey the call-up? The common view is that the Peloponnesians simply did what they were ordered and that the Corinthian refusal to engage in battle on the plain of Eleusis (*ibid.* 5.75) was the first check to arbitrary despotism.⁴⁹ It is, however, to be noted that King Demaratus, who shared the command with Cleomenes and had been up till that

⁴³ With 1.68.6 (*κατεστραμμένη*), cf. 5.91.1 (*ἐτόιμους ἑόντας πείθεσθαι σφίσι*).

⁴⁴ *V.s.* n. 35.

⁴⁵ *CQ* 26 (1976) 71ff.

⁴⁶ Curiously, members could conduct wars against each other (cf. *Thuc.* 4.134, 5.65.4, *Xen. Hell.* 5.iv.37), though not when a League expedition had been called, and they could also make private alliances (*Thuc.* 5.30.2).

⁴⁷ For Ehrenberg, *PW* IIIA col. 1384, this is 'sehr wahrscheinlich', for Schaefer, *op. cit.* 204 'es fehlt auch jede innere Wahrscheinlichkeit', that handy criterion.

⁴⁸ *V.s.* n. 17.

⁴⁹ Cf. n. 35.

moment in concord with him, sided with the Corinthians. The revolt was against Cleomenes, not against Sparta. Indeed, as already remarked, the grounds of the Corinthian objection suggest that there were things that they could be legally obliged to do.

In the full-blown Peloponnesian League, in the case of military action within the League, as already remarked, there was no debate.⁵⁰ Without further ado Sparta called up the members of the League and proceeded to do what was necessary. That is precisely what was happening in 506, and the explanation I would propose is that this sort of situation was provided for in the oaths of the sixth-century League as well as in the oath of the fifth. That is, there was not only a guarantee of autonomy within the ancestral constitution, but also an undertaking to defend it in all the states that were 'friends' of Sparta.⁵¹ Proof is not possible. Nor is disproof. The hypothesis does however explain why the allies were involved in 506 but not in 510 (*ibid.* 5.64).

Such an exchange of oaths guaranteeing mutual defence was sufficient. There was neither need nor room for a synod. What then is to be made of the meeting recorded in Herodotus (5.91–3) at which the Spartan plan to restore Hippias to Athens was debated and rejected? If it is right to suppose that the sixth-century oaths contained a clause whereby 'friends' of Sparta were guaranteed 'autonomy under their ancestral constitution', the restoration of Hippias was a monstrous inconsistency. On the plain of Eleusis the Corinthians had jibbed at the mere slanderous suggestion of Isagoras being reinstalled at Athens as tyrant. Now the Spartan state was formally proposing to put the clock back to the period before 510, and saw that special means had to be found to achieve their purpose. So the assembly was called, unique in the history of the early League. But when the Peloponnesian League we meet in Thucydides was organised, a League based no longer on mere defensive alliances, and so requiring a method of deciding whom to attack and when to make peace, this solitary occasion provided the precedent.

When then was the full Peloponnesian League organised? When were 'the old oaths' sworn to which the Corinthians made appeal in 421 (Thuc. 5.30)?

'Old' (παλαιοί) inclines one to think of a date as far back as the sixth century, and it is worth remarking that the word had a somewhat different flavour for Thucydides. He used it for Athens' alliance with Thessaly of the late 460s when he was recording the events of 431 (2.22, 1.102.4), as also for Athens' alliance with Leontini when that city appealed for help in 427 (3.86.3), an alliance commonly supposed to belong to the mid 440s. He can even, when speaking of the events of 418/17, refer to Sparta's 'old oaths' (παλαιοὶ ὅρκοι) with the Chalcidians of Thrace (5.80.2); the Chalcidian state did not exist until 432. So when he has the Corinthians appeal to 'the old oaths', he may not be thinking of events of more than thirty to forty years past.

It is indeed in the early years of the First Peloponnesian War that I suggest the creation of the full symmachic league which we meet in Thucydides should be set. The proper title of the Peloponnesian League, 'the Spartans and their allies', is not met in Thucydides' account of the Pentekontaetia until he records the result of the battle of Tanagra (1.108.1), and the ten thousand hoplites of the allies (1.107.2) that were engaged were clearly League forces. After that the next mention of the title is in reference to the making of the Thirty Years Peace (1.115.1). Of course Thucydides

⁵⁰ *V.s.* p. 366.

⁵¹ Although the Aetolian treaty (cf. n. 11) belongs to the Peloponnesian War or later, one would dearly like to know how it continued. If it is right to see in lines 16ff. the sixth-century substratum (cf. n. 35), it might have gone on to provide for the situation of Hdt. 5.74f.

commonly used 'the Peloponnesians' when he refers to the League, but again that word does not occur in his account of the Pentekontaetia until he describes the operations at the start of the First Peloponnesian War (1.105.1, 3), save in a reference to the whole period (1.97.1). Thereafter it is common. The Great King hoped, it is said (1.109.2), to persuade 'the Peloponnesians' to invade Attica. The five years truce of 451 was made between 'the Peloponnesians' and the Athenians (1.112.1), and so on.

On the other hand, neither term occurs at points in the narrative where one would expect it, if the later full-blown symmarchy was in existence in 478 B.C. The Spartan decision to withdraw from the war against the Persians (1.95.7) appears to have concerned the allies not at all. When the Thasians called on the Spartans to invade Attica and so distract the Athenians from crushing the revolt, Sparta promised and intended to do so (1.101.1,2); there is no mention of consulting the allies. The First Peloponnesian War began with a battle against the Corinthians and Epidaurians (1.105.1); there is no mention of how it began or who began it, although if there had been the later symmarchy one would have expected something like the events of 432/1. But after this battle (how much after, Thucydides' manner does not allow us to know) there was a sea-battle between the Athenians and 'ships of the Peloponnesians' (1.105.1), and thereafter the League would seem to be engaged.⁵² I posit therefore that 'the old oaths' were sworn, that the fully symmachic League was born, between the land and the sea battle.

It may be objected that the thesis is vitiated by the fact that before the First Peloponnesian War began the Megarians 'revolted from the Spartans' and went over to Athens (1.103.4). They may, however, like the Athenians shortly before (1.102.4), have been abandoning the Hellenic League against Persia; equally, it may have been the sixth-century defensive alliance they were leaving; their reason for doing so was that they were at war with Corinth over boundaries; perhaps they considered Sparta had failed them when they needed defending.

It is a more serious question whether the symmachic version of the League appears during the Persian invasion. The term 'Peloponnesians' occurs nearly thirty times in Herodotus and, like Thucydides, he twice uses it to refer to Athens' opponents in the Peloponnesian War (7.137.1, 9.73.3). Likewise the term, 'the Spartans and the allies', is found once (8.142.4).⁵³ So one may well ask whether the full symmachic League was already in existence.

An answer is likely to be to some degree indecisive. Sparta was head of the Hellenic League against Persia formed in 481, and Spartans commanded both Hellenic fleets and armies, and the presence of Peloponnesians in fleet or army may be variously explained. At moments when Herodotus uses the term, one has to wonder whether he is referring to the Peloponnesian League, but caution is advisable. When, for example, he records the debate after the battle of Mycale concerning the future of Ionia, he speaks of the Peloponnesians opposing the idea of leaving the Ionians in

⁵² As Wickert, *op. cit.* 62, points out, the phrase *Κορίνθιοι μετὰ τῶν ἐυμάχων* in 105.3 can hardly be supposed to include the Spartans and the first full League expedition with Sparta leading is the Tanagra campaign. Their absence from the Corinthian incursion into the Megarid might be variously explained. One notes that in 429 the operations in the Corinthian Gulf involved *οἱ Κορίνθιοι καὶ οἱ ἐϋμᾶχοι* (Thuc. 2.83.3), just as one sees the Corinthians acting seemingly independently in 426/5 (3.114.4), and the fact that the Spartans were not involved in operations before Tanagra does not prove that the foundation of the full symmachic league must come after the operations of Thuc. 1.105.3. A different account of Sparta's role in the First Peloponnesian War is given by A. J. Holladay, *JHS* 97 (1957) 54ff.

⁵³ At 7.157.1 *Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ τοῦτων σύμμαχοι* (if that is the right text) seems to stand for the Hellenic League.

Ionia, as if that was their corporate opinion (9.106.3) and later he speaks of 'the Peloponnesians with Leutychidas' (οἱ ἀμφὶ Λευτυχίδην Πελοποννήσιοι) deciding to sail back to Greece from the Hellespont (9.114.2). Quite apart from the improbability of a debate amongst the generals where the generals of contingents from Peloponnesian states expressed a corporate view, the manner in which Thucydides records the departure of Leutychidas 'with the allies from the Peloponnese' (ἔχων τοὺς ἀπὸ Πελοποννήσου ξυμμάχους) leaving 'the Athenians and the allies from Ionia and the Hellespont' strongly suggests a division of the Hellenic alliance, not the withdrawal of the Peloponnesian League (1.89.2). Herodotus seems to have been at pains to emphasise the fixation of Peloponnesian minds with the security of the Peloponnese and their unadventurous notions about how and where to fight the war; Peloponnesians were reluctant to fight at Salamis (8.75.1, 79.4), were obsessed with the wall across the Isthmus (9.8.1), and displayed great reluctance to fight north of it (8.40.2). But he is speaking of a geographical area, not of a League, as is shown by his account of which Peloponnesian peoples 'lent military aid and feared for Greece in its hour of danger' (8.72). 'The rest of the Peloponnesians', he adds, 'cared not at all'. Clearly this is not the Peloponnesian League, and his account of the Peloponnesians coming north in 479 makes it even plainer. 'The Spartans', he says (9.19.1), 'came to the Isthmus... and the rest of the Peloponnesians who chose the better side, learning this and seeing the Spartiates going forth, did not see fit to stay behind from the expedition'. Herodotus may mislead us, but as it stands his account is utterly remote from what we hear in Thucydides and Xenophon of the Peloponnesian League going on campaign. There is only one passage that gives one pause. At 8.142.4 in the speech of the Spartan embassy seeking to dissuade Athens from coming to terms with the Persians a promise to look after Athenian womenfolk and those who could not fight is delivered in the name of 'both the Spartans and the allies' (Λακεδαιμόνιοί τε καὶ οἱ σύμμαχοι) which but for the intrusive particle would be the official title of the League in Herodotus' day; it would nonetheless suit perfectly as a description of the other members of the Hellenic League.⁵⁴

I conclude therefore that there is no reason to think that the sort of League we encounter in Thucydides was in existence during the Persian Wars or indeed before the early part of the First Peloponnesian War. The sixth-century defensive alliance had been adequate in a world dominated by petty border disputes⁵⁵ and trivial 'local difficulties' caused by petty political strife. The Persian invasion changed all that: Sparta, the Peloponnesians both allied and not allied, and the Greeks generally had to face the possibility of war far away from their home bases. The Hellenic League was the result, an instrument that served Sparta's purposes well enough and enabled her to call on Athenians as well as Aeginetans (and possibly others of whom we happen not to be informed) to help quell the Messenian Revolt of the late 460s (Thuc. 1.102.4, 4.56.2).⁵⁶ When Athens abandoned the League, allied with Argos, and began to talk peace with Persia, and Megara went over to Athens (ibid. 1.102.4–103.4), Sparta needed a new instrument of power, a need shortly underlined by the opening hostilities of what we term the First Peloponnesian War. The full symmachic League of the age of Thucydides was the result. τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

University College, Oxford

G. L. CAWKWELL

⁵⁴ It is to be noted that one manuscript read οἱ λοιποὶ σύμμαχοι. The authors of *The Athenian Tribute Lists* (III 97) regard Herodotus 7.157.1 and this passage as the formal designation of the Hellenic League. Οἱ Ἕλληνες is a much stronger candidate (cf. their n. 12 on p. 97).

⁵⁵ Cf. Thuc. 1.15.2.

⁵⁶ I take the allies of Thuc. 1.90.1 to be members of the Hellenic League.