

Demographic Fluctuation and Institutional Response in Sparta

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Abstract

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The Spartiate population declined from 8000 in the early fifth century to less than 1000 in the mid-fourth, and caused Sparta's political fortunes to drop dramatically from being the unofficial hegemon of the Greek-speaking peoples to a strictly local power in the Hellenistic period. This was the most dramatic population change of any ancient Greek city aside from cases of *andrapodismos*, and it drew the attention of contemporaries to the process such as Aristotle and Xenophon. Some modern scholars have seen this phenomenon primarily as a personnel loss due to families being demoted from the Spartiate rank or to deliberate elite fertility restriction due to estate preservation. But these explanations neglect the peculiarities of Spartiate reproductive customs maladaptive to demographic recovery. This dissertation first examines what made the Spartiate population regime unique, how it succeeded at first, and why and how it failed to produce a sufficient number of Spartiates to continue Sparta's hegemony. Second, it argues that Sparta's imperial phase was a response to and a result of this attested decline in Spartiate numbers and the attendant addition of non-Spartiates to the Lakedaimonian army. Finally, it examines why efforts at retrenchment in the Hellenistic period failed.

Chapter One surveys archaeological evidence for population expansion in the Archaic period and provides a new analysis of the reproductive peculiarities of the archaic Lykourgan *kosmos* as a eugenic selection regime.

Chapter Two analyzes the 7th century poet Tyrtaeus' poetry as a unified argument whose purpose was to provide incentives for Spartiate altruism to the community

Chapter Three shows how the unusual reproductive mechanisms of the Spartiates resulted in demographic disaster after the social chaos that followed in the wake of the earthquake of the 460s. By the late fifth century no other alternative existed than to partially enfranchise Helots and other "inferior" groups.

Chapter Four analyzes fifth-century Sparta before the Lysandrean period as a status quo state rather than a revisionist state: that is, it did not seek to expand its rule aggressively

until the late Peloponnesian War and the influx of new soldiers. Its attempts at empire were characterized by incompetence and disinterest.

Chapter Five argues that the Spartan admiral Lysander perceived the Spartiate population contraction, and planned an empire that *required* the aid and enfranchisement of marginal groups, and could not possibly have worked without them. It analyzes the opposition to this program as a last remnant of traditional Spartan ideology, swept away in the fourth century world of mercenaries, money, and Persian subsidies, none of which were traditional to Spartiate customs.

Chapter Six argues that the acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas in contravention to Agesilaos' previous policies as well as to traditional Spartiate ideology represents a sea change in Spartan foreign policy. The change in the composition of the Spartan army altered its culture and the ideology of its personnel, and this is reflected in contemporary perceptions from Xenophon, Aristotle, and Isokrates.

Chapter Seven argues that the efforts of the Hellenistic Spartan reformers Agis, Kleomenes, and Nabis were characterized by a progressive abandonment of the old Spartiate eugenic concerns.

No existing treatment has strongly linked Spartan foreign policy and ideology to the successive swelling and diminishment of the Spartiate caste through reproduction and enfranchisement. The dissertation also contributes to larger questions: how does state policy, in terms of both meanings of the Greek word *nomoi* – laws and customs – affect reproductive behavior and population? How much of a society's 'implicit fertility policy' shows actual physical population results? Perhaps most significantly, to what degree can population affect policy and ideology? Finally, on a theoretical level, the dissertation advances a reasonable acceptance of our limited evidence about Sparta with a series of arguments against the notion that historians are destined to be permanently befuddled by a "Spartan Mirage."

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Introduction

This work examines the ways in which demographic fluctuation induced political change, particularly foreign policy change, in the case of the ancient Greek polis of Sparta, starting in its prehistoric ethnogenesis and finishing in the Hellenistic period. The population of the aristocratic group known as the Spartiates declined from 8,000 in the early fifth century to less than 1,000 in the mid-fourth, which caused the city's political power and cultural status to drop from a position as *de facto* hegemon of the Greek-speaking peoples to a strictly local power in the Hellenistic period. This was the most dramatic population change of any ancient Greek city aside from wholesale enslavement of populations in war, and it drew the attention of contemporaries to the process such as Aristotle and Xenophon. Modern scholarship presently interprets this phenomenon primarily as a personnel loss due to men being demoted from the Spartiate rank.¹ Yet that interpretation attends inadequately to the phenomenon of similar population decline caused by sub-replacement fertility seen among other resource-privileged groups, and to the documented peculiarities of Spartiate reproductive customs which are capable of raising fertility and suppressing mortality in stable conditions but seem maladaptive to demographic recovery after a large population loss.

As unsure as the extant numbers may be, a reasonably clear picture of Spartiate demographic decline emerges. Customary caveats require airing before the surviving data may be outlined.² Herodotus warned that “neither the Ionians nor any of the other Greeks know how to count.”³ This is a healthy caution. Numbers given by Herodotos and other historians of the ancient world are only estimates, and errors have crept into texts during the millenia-long process of copying. We have nothing close to the data set that a demographer desires in order to make solid calculations.

However, the most important figures, and consequently the thrust and shape of the process of Spartiate *oliganthropia*, show a clear trend. For 480 BC, our sources record 8,000 Spartiates altogether.⁴ When Aristotle wrote the *Politics* in (probably) the 330s, he listed under 1,000.⁵ Even if his number should be doubled, and the actual population should be thought of as some 2,000, it would represent a monstrous drop of 75%. If inaccuracies have entered the tradition, they are surprisingly consistent. Thukydides' comment about the difficulty of estimating Spartan army forces at Mantinea in 418 due to Spartan secrecy and the inherent human tendency to brag may be applied *in extenso* to all these figures.⁶ For example, we still do not know the death toll in Spartiates from the terrible earthquake of the mid-460s, only that it was severe enough to occasion a large helot revolt.⁷ Nor are we truly certain what percentage of available Spartiate hoplites

¹ Hodkinson 2000.

² An outline similar to this is given in all works that discuss Spartiate oliganthropia, e.g. Cartledge 1987, Hodkinson 2000, Figueira 2003, Hodkinson 2009.

³ Hdt. 2.16.1.

⁴ Hdt. 7.234.2.

⁵ Aristot. *Pol.* 1270a30ff.

⁶ Thouk. 5.68.2.

⁷ Nel and Righarts 2008 discuss the linkage between natural disasters and social violence.

appear at a given battle, but most levies may constitute about two-thirds of the Spartiates who are of military age. Military age starts at twenty and lasts until perhaps sixty-five, comprising forty-five year-classes. A levy of two-thirds appears to be standard. A two-thirds levy may indicate a levy of the first thirty of the forty-five available year-classes; this is the best we can do to get some idea of the demographic loss.⁸ Finally, the roundness of the ancient authors' numbers raises some readers' suspicions.

In the absence of better figures, we must use what we have as an index. Ancient authors' citizen population numbers generally indicate adult citizen males. Although Aristotle says that at one time the Spartiates numbered 10,000, this is in the distant past, is unspecified as to year, and is unclear.⁹ The stand at Thermopylai in 480 involved, according to Herodotos, 300 Spartiates.¹⁰ This number should not be taken as a measure of population decline: a larger force was intended to be sent after the festival of the Karneia. Leonidas may have meant to conduct a kamikaze-style mission, or Spartiate isolationism may have created reluctance to campaign above the isthmus.¹¹ Later in the year 480, Herodotos gives an unambiguous 8,000 Spartiates in total.¹² This number is trustworthy.

For the battle of Plataia in 479, Herodotos specifies 5,000 Spartiates present.¹³ He also mentions 35,000 light-armed Helots, although the figure is somewhat hard to believe.¹⁴ A two-thirds muster is normal: if it applies to this case, we can assume that *approximately* 7,500 Spartiates existed altogether, fitting extremely well with the approximately 8,000 from two years before. It is highly doubtful that it represents a population loss rather two different estimations of the same total.¹⁵

In the early- or mid-460s one or more earthquakes prevented the Spartiates from sending aid to the besieged Thasos, or at least functioned as a very believable pretext to avoid sending a mission which would have inflamed the Athenians.¹⁶ This earthquake was a serious disaster. Plutarch's report that "the whole city of Sparta was destroyed

⁸ Figueira 1986, 168f.

⁹ Aristotle *Pol.* 1270a36-37.

¹⁰ Hdt. 7.202. Cf. Cartledge 1979 (2002), 175. Herodotos also gives 500 Tegeans, and 500 Mantineians; Diodoros 11.4.2 and Isokrates 4.90 list some 900 or 1,000 perioikoi, their historic first appearance on campaign with Spartiates recorded in the literary sources.

¹¹ Dismissed in Cartledge 1979 (2002), 176: *a.* the Spartan force was in fact adequate to hold a narrow pass, and/or *b.* the Athenians already, if we believe the Themistokles decree, planned on retreating from Attike, and/or *c.* the Spartan policy was necessary, not chosen, and they did the best they could: the Spartans faced trouble from Tegea in the 480s (Hdt. 9.37.4) and Elis in 479, and Mantinea's tardiness at Plataia resulted from their leaders medizing (Hdt. 9.77). Vitruvius 1.1.5 reports the perioikic community of Karyai, near Tegea and on the way to Argos, medizing as well.

¹² Hdt. 7.234.2.

¹³ Hdt. 9.28.2.

¹⁴ Delbrück 1990, 36 – 37: "A ratio of 35,000 noncombatants to 5,000 combatants, considering both movement of the army and its supply, is an absurdity. It probably had its origin in the fact that the Greek thought of the Spartiate as an eminent man, who always went into the field with several servants."

¹⁵ Two-thirds muster: Thouk. 2.10.2, 2.47.2, 3.15.1, 5.57.2; Hornblower 1991, 249 Cartledge 2002, 178.

¹⁶ One earthquake in Thucydides 1.101.2, unknown year in the 460s; in 464 in Paus. 4.24.5-6, one in 469 and another in 464 according to Diodoros 11.63. Plutarch *Kim.* 16.4 has one in 464. Multiple earthquakes may be another example of a "Diodoran doublet" but see Green 2006, 128-9, n. 235 for a good defense of several.

except five houses” (*Kim.* 16) may be an exaggeration, and mud bricks such as those of which Sparta town was likely built withstand stress better than masonry.¹⁷ But even if we should multiply the five houses by an entire factor of ten, it was an extraordinarily devastating earthquake. Even it left five hundred houses standing, it was still a most grievous setback for a town of some 8,000 male citizens and their families. That the earthquake killed many people is supported by the fact that its damage was severe enough to inspire a long-lasting revolt among the Messenian and Lakonian Helots aided by perioikoi, sparking the Third Messenian War. Thoukydides gives no death toll. Diodoros gives 20,000 Lakedaimonian deaths, presumably indicating people of either sex in Lakedaimon in general, both Spartiates and perioikoi, and then states that the rebels, “observing that *the majority* died in the earthquake, had contempt toward the survivors because they were few.”¹⁸ The Messenians and Helots even felt emboldened to advance on Sparta itself, but desisted at the sight of firm resistance. All this evidence indicates that this was no minor disaster.

In May or June of 457 the Spartiates sent an immense army to assist Doris, the eponymous metropolis of the Dorians. Since the Spartiates considered themselves Dorians *par excellence*, and since this mission was closely tied to Spartan honor, the proportion of troops is significant: only 1,500 Lakedaimonian hoplites were sent amidst some 10,000 Peloponnesian allies.¹⁹ Massive deaths from the earthquake and from the subsequent Messenian war are the best imaginable explanation for the smallness of the Lakedaimonian component of the expedition. Even if each of the 1,500 “Lakedaimonians” sent out was a Spartiate, if we assume a 2/3 levy, there were now approximately 2,250 Spartiates at this time *in toto*, a radically low number. If we assume that the Lakedaimonian hoplite force contained perioikoi, then we end up with an even smaller number of Spartiates.

In 425 occurred the famous Spartan disaster at Pylos.²⁰ 120 Spartiate hoplites were captured, evidently representing a sizable enough percentage of the Spartiate force as to seriously compromise the military capacity of the state. The Athenians accordingly refused an exchange of men (D.S. 12.63.2). The lenient treatment of the 120 (Thouk. 5.34.2) despite traditional Spartiate shame appended to capture (e.g. Xen. *L. P.* 9.1 – 2) suggests the severity of the manpower shortage. So does the fact that the Spartiates actually sued for peace.

Brasidas took 700 helots as hoplites to Thrace in 424 (Thouk. 4.80.5). This is the first time this new military usage of helots is mentioned, an extreme policy adjustment. Spartiate losses meant other troops were needed to complement any force sent out. It was even more radical than the inclusion of perioikoi at Thermopylai in 480, for the perioikoi

¹⁷ Paus. 8.8.8. Noted in Spawforth 1990, 346.

¹⁸ D. S. 11.63.4.

¹⁹ For the importance of kinship ties in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, see Hornblower 1991, 168; Jones 1999; Green 2006, 156 n. 318; Low 2009, 35, 49-52, 56-58, 75, 108, 176, 224, 232. cf. D. S. 11.41.4. 11.79.5; for a Hellenistic example of a kinship tie between Athens and Kydonia in Crete, see Papzarkadas and Thonemann 2008. For a convincing interpretation of Spartan war being motivated primarily by “saving face” and the preservation of status and rank, see Lendon 2007. A threatened Doris would certainly stimulate Spartan rank-saving behavior.

²⁰ Thouk. 4.31 - 38.

were at least, in some respects, sharers in the Spartan state. These helots were enfranchised with the title *neodamodeis* or “new citizens,” but not made into Spartiates, as they are specified as *neodamodeis* separately in our sources for the following half-century. It is seldom realized how radical a step it was for the Spartiates to enfranchise helots. A comparandum may still apply, the highly controversial freeing of Athenian slaves in the crisis at Arginousai, an emergency manumission.²¹

For the battle of Mantinea in 418, Thucydides (5.67-8) significantly mentions *neodamodeis*. The conflict over his understanding or ignorance of the Spartan army reform leaves a problem about the accuracy of his numbers, but the end result suggests that either some 2,500 or 5,000 Spartiates remained.²²

Ratios are of import. In 399, the Spartan agora is described. Some forty Spartiates were surrounded by some four thousand non-Spartiates (X.H. 3.3.5). This represents 1%. If it can be thought of as representative, the Spartiates had by this year become a narrow oligarchy indeed. In 396, the navarch Lysander asked for a force against Asia of 30 Spartiates, 2,000 *neodamodeis* and 6,000 allies. The Spartiates represent 1.5% of the *neodamodeis*.

The 381 campaign of King Agesipolis (X. H. 5.3.9) against Polyanthos contained 30 Spartiates, many upper-class Perioikic volunteers, foreigners raised along with the Spartiates in the Spartiate intensive training program, and the “best-looking and most well-formed” of the Spartiates’ *nothoi* or illegitimate sons, a product of the Spartiate reproductive idiosyncrasies analyzed in the next chapters. Spartiates were stretched thin in this period and relied upon an unc customary crew for this campaign.²³

In the battle of Leuktra in 371, Xenophon specifies 700 Spartiates fighting, of whom 400 are killed (X. H. 4.15) leaving 300. Following de Ste. Croix, since four out of six *morai* fought in this battle, only men up to 55 years of age fought (X. H. 4.17), the 300 hippeis were present and mostly killed, and two *morai* remained uninvolved in the battle, each of which probably had 100 Spartiates.²⁴ This left some 500 – 1500 Spartiates under 56 years of age.²⁵

²¹ Cf. schol. Aristophanes *Ran.* 693-4. (Xenophon does not mention freedom, only use: X. H. 1.6.24.)

²² Cf. e.g. Busolt 1905; Michell 1964, chapter 8, esp. 243-247; Toynbee 1969, chapter 5; Gomme *et al. ad loc.* (110-117); Anderson 1970, Appendix; Lazenby 1985; Cartledge 1987, appendix 2; van Wees 2004, 245-249; Hornblower 2008 *ad loc.* (180-182). Hodkinson sensibly declares himself “agnostic” on the matter (2009, 432-3).

²³ For a somewhat different view of the weight of the term “extremely well-formed men and not unaccustomed to fine things in the polis” [μάλα εὖειδεις τε καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει] for the *nothoi*, cf. Hodkinson 1997, 53f: “Xenophon’s description of their position makes it clear that the *nothoi*, without becoming full citizens, were incorporated into many aspects of Spartiate life, probably including the upbringing and the messes as well as the army. The tone of his remarks suggests, moreover, that this body of men was not insignificant in number and that it was regarded as a valued addition to Spartan military resources.” The *nothoi* may well have undergone the *agoge*, and certainly were needed by 381.

²⁴ de Ste. Croix 1972, 332.

²⁵ Hodkinson 2004, 121 sees this differently and envisions the 400 dead at Leuktra as “probably over 25 per cent of the male citizens.” Cartledge 1979, 264, believing that the process of oliganthropia starting earlier, sees only 5,000 Spartiates in 479, 3,500 for 418, 2,500 for 394, and 1,500 for 371.

1,500 is almost certainly too high. For Aristotle wrote in the *Politics* that under one thousand Spartiates remained.²⁶ This presumably describes the situation in the time he was writing, the 330s or 320s. Of all the ancient commentators who might write on the population of the aristocratic stratum of another polis, Aristotle is probably the most trustworthy. His networks of information were extraordinarily extensive, or else he would not have been able to write his 146 polis-constitutions; however, even if he were wrong by a factor of 100%, the population of Spartiates would still have been only 2000 in the 330s-320s. The importance is the huge drop from the five thousand of the fifth century. And in the year 244 the Spartiates numbered a maximum of 700 (Plut. *Agis* 5.6).

Comprehending the decline of numbers necessitates asking how the Spartiate numbers would have been able to increase, which they did not. Two mechanisms increase population: immigration and births. As for the first, in the Spartiate case immigration would be represented by enfranchisement into the Spartiate caste. It does not seem that the neodamodeis ever became full Spartiates, or else Spartiate numbers would be recorded as increasing and Aristotle would not have said what he did. If some persons were in fact added officially to the Spartiate caste, this began too late, and was too slow, to replenish Spartiate numbers before the disaster of 371. Stubbornness about reserving privilege accounted for this. Enfranchisement into the category of neodamodeis began early in the Peloponnesian War and proceeded at least into the fourth century, but this means of increasing the numbers of the Lakedaimonian army of course did not increase the numbers of the Spartiate caste itself. As for the second means of increasing population, natural increase certainly continued during these years, but evidently not at a rate capable of replenishing Spartiate numbers. Normal replacement rates for a pre-industrial population necessitate an average of some six births per woman. This results from childhood diseases endemic to settled pre-industrial societies. This is assumed for societies experiencing bare population homeostasis with no growth.²⁷

Certain conditions will necessitate even more births. Other societies recovered from disaster, notably the Argives after the battle of Sepeia, even after they lost 6,000 men.²⁸ There is also Thespiai, which lost its entire field army in 424, recovered and fought at Nemea – predictably, exactly one generation later.²⁹ The Spartiate population, by contrast, never recovered, and this is despite an unusual array of reproductive alternatives, most of which boosted fertility, that had apparently been in place in Sparta from an early period. And aside from this, vigorous population replacement in the more normal monogamous marriage context has compensated for lost numbers in many societies. Clearly these things did not occur. The belief that the Spartiate decline was due mostly to reduction in kleros size is common.³⁰ But it is hard to imagine that a reform of laws would not have been created once this situation became evident. And even the main popularizer of this explanation has recently stated that fertility within Spartiate families

²⁶ Aristotle *Pol.* 1270a30ff.

²⁷ Livi-Bacci 2007, chapter 1. Sallares 1991, 150; Hansen 2006, 55.

²⁸ Hdt. 6.83. Sallares 1991, 171.

²⁹ Thouk. 4.133.1, X. *H.* 4.2.20.

³⁰ e.g. de Ste. Croix 1972, Cartledge 1987, Hodkinson 2000.

was somehow compromised.³¹ More causes must be sought, or at least more causes to fill the picture.

This dissertation first examines what made the Spartiate population regime different from that of the elites of other Greek poleis, why and how it failed to produce a sufficient number of Spartiates to continue Sparta's hegemony, and how these practices fit into what we know of larger human society-level reproductive practices. Second, it argues that Sparta's imperial phase was a response to and a result of this attested decline in Spartiate numbers and the attendant addition of non-Spartiates to the Lakedaimonian army. Finally, it examines why efforts at retrenchment in the Hellenistic period failed. Methodology from demography, anthropology, evolutionary biology, economics, cultural transmission, and anthropological perspectives on the mechanics of patriarchy and human fertility are used to analyze and explain this process.

The first chapter closely analyzes early Spartan archaeological and literary evidence to trace the contours of the demographic and reproductive *nomoi* of the Spartiates. It offers the argument that early Spartan cultural and military success stemmed from a new demographic and eugenic regime, the Lykourgan *kosmos*, a set of customs that resulted in a consistent system of high population and directed reproduction strongly determining Spartiate culture. In making this argument I rehabilitate the eighth-century installation of this regime and counter the present enthusiasm for downdating it.

The second chapter analyzes the 7th century poet Tyrtaios' elegies as a unified argument incentivizing in the strongest manner possible Spartiate altruism in the form of willingness to die for the community. The ethic expressed by these martial songs existed in a balance with Alkman's sympotic poetry until a series of reforms suppressed luxury and some manifestations of wealth inequities at Sparta, culminating in the archaeologically attested decline of luxury products in the sixth century. Tyrtaios' songs supported the Lykourgan selection regime, offering increased social and reproductive success to brave and physically strong individuals to encourage a specific set of characteristics in the Spartiates, and removing cowards from the reproductive pool.

The third chapter analyzes the means by which *oliganthropia* began, which is traced to Spartiate failure to recover from the great earthquake(s) of the 460s. Normal demographic models predict demographic recovery after population loss occurs, as is visible in Argos in the fifth century, since population loss normally leads to higher real wages, leading to higher nuptiality and more births. Yet the Spartiate population loss was never compensated for by increased births. This is a problem. Thomas Gallant has outlined "the key adaptive mechanisms and survival strategies" employed by ancient Greek families.³² However, the mechanisms utilized by the Spartiates, while having produced fertility in the Archaic period, eventually turned out to be maladaptive, and the strategies, while initially successful, became inimical to the survival of the Spartiates as a caste. By the late fifth century no alternative existed for the continuance of the state than to partially enfranchise Helots and other "inferior" groups.

The fourth chapter examines Spartan state behavior of the fifth century and finds a "status quo" state rather than a "revisionist" state: it argues that Sparta had a strong

³¹ Hodkinson 2009, 432-7.

³² Gallant 1991, ix.

reluctance to engage in aggressive activities extending Spartan rule outside the Peloponnesos. Colonization was minimal and poorly orchestrated. After the acquisition of sufficient land to provide a comfortable lifestyle for the Spartiates, war was usually engaged in for reasons of survival or status preservation, and only reluctantly otherwise. I trace this reluctance and inability to Spartiate isolationism, a conservative distrust of strangers, the everpresent competition for status and consequent censure against acts deemed megalomaniacal, and a conservative, moderate lack of enthusiasm to leave the good life at Sparta, and also to practical factors such as a simple lack of sufficient organizational and administrative structures and population to undertake such activities.

In the fifth chapter, the Spartan admiral Lysander's usage of marginal classes in Spartan society is argued to be a deliberate imperial venture breaking the previous disinclination to extend Spartan rule. The evidence suggests that Lysander perceived the Spartiate population contraction, and planned an empire that *required* the aid and enfranchisement of marginal groups and could not possibly have functioned without them. The opposition to this program constituted a last remnant of traditional Spartan ideology which was gravely eroded in the fourth century world of mercenaries, money, and Persian subsidies, none of which were traditional to Spartiate customs. The acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas in contravention to Agesilaos' previous policies as well as to traditional Spartiate ideology represents a sea change in Spartan foreign policy.

The influx of non-Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian army altered its culture, and this is reflected in contemporary perceptions from Xenophon, Aristotle, and Isokrates on a change in the character of the personnel of Lakedaimon. The sixth chapter analyzes this and argues that the newcomers in the Spartan imperial administration had little reason to empathize with their erstwhile masters' outdated customs, austerity, or panhellenic ideals. It argues that the Peace of Antalkidas of 387, regarded by contemporaries as a betrayal of the Anatolian Greeks, must be traced to a change in the ideology of the personnel in what had become since Lysander a Spartan empire.

The seventh chapter traces the efforts of the Hellenistic Spartan reformers Agis, Kleomenes, and Nabis to regroup the Spartiate population by combinations of resource redistribution, enfranchisement, and society-level, top-down mandated alterations in reproductive practice. These attempts, some conducted under the aegis of a return to the ancestral ways of Lykourgos, were ultimately unsuccessful. Agis was insufficiently ruthless in pursuing the reforms necessary. Kleomenes' combination of compromise with the outside world and faithfulness to the old Lykourgan regime would have proved successful without a stroke of bad luck. Nabis departed the most extremely from Spartiate custom as well as larger Greek *nomoi*, incurring heavy penalties from surrounding communities, penalties that changed Sparta into a state similar to the other Greek poleis.

No existing treatment argues for a robust link between Spartan foreign policy and the successive swelling and diminution of the Spartiate caste and Lakedaimonian army through reproduction and enfranchisement. This dissertation also contributes to larger questions: how does state policy, in terms of both meanings of the Greek word *nomoi* – laws and customs – affect reproductive behavior and population? How much of a society's 'implicit fertility policy,' as one demographer refers to the sum total of factors that encourage, discourage, and channel reproduction, shows actual physical population

results?³³ Perhaps most significantly, to what degree can population affect policy and ideology? This last question has been less studied in the literature on the Spartiates than the questions of how policy may affect population. Finally, on a theoretical level, the dissertation advances a reasonable acceptance of our limited evidence about Sparta with a series of arguments attempting to dismantle the notion that historians are destined to be permanently befuddled by a “Spartan Mirage.”

Theoretical Approaches

Several methodologies and perspectives from the social and biological sciences used here have made only faint inroads into the study of ancient history, but are implicit in some models and works that have recently gained acceptance or have been rehabilitated in the historical discipline. Throughout this work, the means by which culture and ideas are transmitted both horizontally to other societies and vertically into the future have been seen in terms of processes very close to Darwinian natural selection. The greatest influences on this view of cultural transmission have been the evolutionary theorist Richard Dawkins’ ideas of memes and the modernized version of this by the environmental scientist Peter Richerson and his coauthor the anthropologist Robert Boyd. Selectionist views of how cultural forms develop over time, which have dropped out, which have been retained, and the principles of selection have been used in our field at least implicitly. Arthur Eckstein’s explanation of violent multipolar Mediterranean anarchy in his 2006 book implies a selectionist view of the growth of culture. For he explains political forms and state-level culture as forming and developing due to exogenous pressures: societies that did not evolve or adapt aggressive state-level mores perished. This form of thought is not alien to many of us, and was not alien to Herodotos, who anticipated many insights of cultural selection in his work.³⁴

Several other scholars have utilized methodologies moving along somewhat similar lines to those used here, and have inspired it. Robert Sallares’ *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World*³⁵ viewed the entirety of Greek culture through a lens explicitly demographic and biological, but he was not concerned with Darwinian models of cultural transmission. Much along these lines appeared also in Thomas Gallant’s work on family strategies in ancient Greece.³⁶ Walter Burkert’s *Creation of the Sacred* looked at Greek religion in terms borrowed from sociobiology and primate behavior. Walter Scheidel’s prolific work, focused on demography, economics, reproductive behavior, and political theory models of state behavior explicitly aims to unify the social and biological sciences with the study of history and has brought many of these ideas back into the mainstream of ancient history. Jonathan Gottschall’s recent book on the social conditions inspiring the *Iliad* combines research on the evolutionary biology-based psychology of male aggression and female attractiveness with a demographic model of an unequal sex ratio and a Prisoner’s Dilemma analysis of the cycle of Homeric warrior violence. All of these

³³ Johansson 1991.

³⁴ e.g. Hdt. 9.121.3, φιλέειν γὰρ ἐκ τῶν μαλακῶν χώρων μαλακοὺς ἄνδρας γίνεσθαι.

³⁵ Sallares 1991.

³⁶ Gallant 1996.

perspectives are united by an interest in the scientific understanding and modelling of human behavior.³⁷

The ‘Spartan Mirage’ and its Discontents

Works on Sparta obligatorily reference the “Spartan Mirage,” a term descending from Ollier’s work *Mirage Spartiate* which has been used to signify that representations of Sparta are untrustworthy due to idealizations and distortions stemming from several factors.³⁸ First, our literary evidence is late: a portion of it, most notably Plutarch, originated far later than the eras it described. Second, it is non-native: Thucydides and Xenophon were Athenians, Aristotle a Stagiran living in Athens, Plutarch a Boiotioan from Khaironeia: our only substantial work written by a Spartan is the corpus of Tyrtaios. Third, ancient writing about Sparta is altered by our sources’ admiring ideologies: these are presumed to be oligarchic or at least aristocratic. Fourth, our sources may be contaminated by other sources, especially philosophical and constitutional. Fifth, the sources “construct” Sparta as an anti-type of Athens.

It is important to keep these limitations in mind: carefulness in handling our evidence is necessary, and is surely a corrective to uncritical acceptance. However, the dangers of these factors can also be over-weighted.³⁹ Specific cases will be brought up in the following chapters as they arise, and surely all of the ancient sources on Sparta must be evaluated for accuracy on a case-by-case basis, but thinking of our sources as *mostly* unreliable is unwarranted.⁴⁰ As Anton Powell notes, “To dismiss as creative stereotyping anecdotal themes about Sparta may keep us from detecting real patterns of Spartan behavior which set the stereotypes going.”⁴¹ Some objections will be brought up here to act as signposts for what is ahead.

The first charge is that our sources are too late and filled with retrojections. Retrojections occur; yet much late evidence about Sparta is confirmed by earlier evidence.⁴² That it is illegitimate retrojection to use any post-Classical source to understand earlier Spartan practices is too dismissive.⁴³ Late sources give accurate information in many cases: archaeology confirms Asine’s destruction in the eighth century, as Pausanias placed it although he lived a millenium later.⁴⁴ Ancient authors

³⁷ Overviews of a few of these approaches and problems appear in Burkert 1996, 1-33; Zagorin 1999; Gottschall 2008, 1-10; Scheidel 2009.

³⁸ Ollier 1933, 1943.

³⁹ A recent history of Archaic Greece devotes an entire seven-page mini-chapter to this mirage. Hall 2007, 203 – 209.

⁴⁰ Hall, for example, writes “our two fullest sources for Archaic Sparta are so irredeemably affected by later invention that they possess practically no historical value for the early history of Sparta, even if they furnish important testimony for the eventual creation of the Spartan mirage itself” (2007, 206 – 207). This seems to be an exaggeration.

⁴¹ Powell 2000, a review of N. Richer “Les Ephores,” *Classical Review* Vol. 50, No. 2 (2000), 505.

⁴² Figueira 2007; Hansen 2009, 492. For example, it is true that no writer earlier than Plutarch discusses the eugenic exposure of Spartiate neonates, but the practice is generally accepted by modern scholars as pre-Plutarchean (Hoffman 2007, 392).

⁴³ Flower 2002. Bowersock 2000. Lupi 2000. Ducat 2006, particularly chapter 1; Figueira 2006.

⁴⁴ Paus. 2.36.5, 3.7.4, 4.8.2, 4.14.4. Huxley 1962, 21; Kelly 1967; Kowalzig 2007; *IACP* 313 (p. 559) for Messenian Asine, the resettlement from the Asine in the Argolid. Koiv argues that certain social forces act as

apparently often utilized accurate sources, both documentary and oral.⁴⁵ Early Spartan *nomoi* did not float unmoored in a centuries-long ocean of unreliable orality: Plutarch's assertions of Spartan reluctance to write down laws are negated by his claim of researching laws in Spartan archives.⁴⁶ Distrusting those of Plutarch's claims that are inconvenient for a thesis on general grounds of his lateness and bedazzlement by idealistic philolakonism does not happily square with trusting those of his claims more amenable to a given argument.⁴⁷

The second element of the notion of our sources' unreliability argues that non-natives knew little of the true inner workings of Spartan society, only a version offered to, and inevitably misunderstood by, foreigners. Yet several of our sources traveled to Sparta.⁴⁸ And non-natives might analyze a society's customs with more distance and impartiality than a native, particularly those who have traveled to many different places, seen many poleis, researched many documents, and spoken to many persons.⁴⁹

The third element of the "mirage" concerns propaganda and biases. The propagandistic value of a myth that conquerors are actually returning to their old land is clear.⁵⁰ But the fact that it is advantageous for a group to justify its seizure of a piece of land by claiming that it once possessed that piece of land does not always mean that it did not once actually possess that piece of land. A claim should not suffer automatic rejection simply because it is advantageous to someone. More recent aristocratic biases may be present in our written sources. Yet ancient authors' precise ideological bents are unknown.⁵¹ Classical authors construed as racist have been re-analyzed to reveal far more nuanced perspectives.⁵² Guessing ancient writers' ideological predilections cannot reliably refute their accounts.

Fourth, our sources on Sparta are seen to be distorted by contamination from the ideas found in other texts. That Hellenistic redistributions of land created accounts of

pressures to preserve the basic accuracy of historical accounts concerning large groups, against the ideological distortions of individuals and smaller groups with special interests. He distinguishes between *oral history*, concerning "private and personal matters ... deemed to expire with the death of the persons able to recognize the significance of these events" against *oral tradition*, concerning events whose import to an entire community acts as a pressure to conserve relatively intact transmission. The accurate preservation of colonization foundation dates is one such example (Koiv 2003, 28f). Cf. Dominguez 2006, 292. Strabo 6.257; Graham 1964, 17 – 19; Dougherty 1998.

⁴⁵ Koiv 2003, 28 – 29.

⁴⁶ Plut. *Lyk.* 13.1, 3, *Mor.* 227B; *Ag.* 19.10.

⁴⁷ Hansen 2009, 476.

⁴⁸ Thoukydides was exiled from Athens and visited Sparta. Xenophon campaigned with Spartiates in Asia Minor, was close to leading Spartans, lived on an estate in Spartan territory, and may have raised his sons in the Spartan *agoge*.

⁴⁹ Aristotle's 148 polis-constitutions, and his ability to cross-reference different cultural practices, may have stimulated the production of more extensive, useful, and analytical knowledge about Spartan workings than might a Spartiate hoplite's knowledge of his own society.

⁵⁰ I find it extremely dubious, for example, that the Herakleidai "returned" to the Peloponnesos.

⁵¹ Some scholars see Herodotos as pro-Athens and some argue quite persuasively that this is not the case: Dewald and Marincola 2006, 3-4. Similarly, my students have written fine essays arguing that Thoukydides had a pro-Athenian and anti-Spartan bias; other students, fine essays arguing precisely the opposite.

⁵² Gruen 2010.

Archaic redistribution is only a theory: confident assertion seems unwarranted.⁵³ Nor Plato's idealized cities influencing our sources on Sparta: the reverse is more likely. One scholar says that Roman thinkers "liked to imagine parallels" between the Roman and Spartan constitutions to argue that our understanding of Sparta has been distorted by later writers.⁵⁴ Yet parallel developments without a clear or possible common source appear in quite separated parts of the world: similar legends, city-styles, architecture, constitutional forms, inventions.⁵⁵ Even more similarities might be expected from city-states in similar environments, subject to similar influences from the same Mediterranean matrix. And Sparta and Rome stem from a genetically, culturally, linguistically common ethnic stock, the Indo-Europeans.⁵⁶ It would be stranger if Sparta and early Rome possessed no constitutional similarities.

The fifth element of the "Mirage" stems from literary theory, in particular Structuralism's notion that humans tend to think in binary, diametrically opposing pairs, and hence that many ancient writers "constructed" Sparta as an "Other" of Athens.⁵⁷ Some of this is surely visible in Thucydides'. Yet structuralist tendencies in modern scholarly thinking tend to stretch it too far. Thus Aristotle's representations of Spartiate females "are rooted in Athenian representations of the Spartan 'Other,' in this case through the portrayal of an upside-down world in which men are dominated by women."⁵⁸ Structuralism over-schematizes: the expression 'upside-down' exaggerates. A truly upside-down world would differ more than Sparta did from Stagira, Athens, and the many other places Aristotle knew. Little suggests that Aristotle conceived of Spartan society as an 'Other' to Athens or as "an upside-down world."

Similarly, binary opposites, *topoi*, and exoticism are seen as structuring and indeed impairing Herodotus' Sparta descriptions. Though "his acquaintance with Sparta predated the serious distortions produced by Athenian prejudice and idealization," still "diametric oppositions" structure his presentation of Athens and Sparta; and since Sparta is the only Greek polis he describes ethnographically as he does Persia, Egypt, and Scythia, he distorts Sparta by emphasizing its alienness: this "central constituent of the mirage ... [was] ... already a *topos* in Herodotus' day."⁵⁹ But as P. J. Rhodes made clear in an important argument, a *topos* in a passage does not automatically nullify its veracity.⁶⁰ Nor can Herodotus' information be dismissed because of his supposed grouping of Spartans alongside other ethnographically exoticized folk. The basic accuracy of Herodotus' Persian, Scythian, and even Egyptian ethnographies has been

⁵³ Hodkinson 2000, chapter 2.

⁵⁴ Hall 2007, 203.

⁵⁵ Darlington 1969, Johnson and Earle 1987, Brown 1991, Bierlein 1994, Sanderson 1999.

⁵⁶ Mallory 1997, Fortson 2009 chapter 2.

⁵⁷ On this topic in the field of history in general (not specific to Sparta) cf. *eg.* Novick 1988, Windschuttle 1996, Zagorin 1999.

⁵⁸ Hodkinson 2004, 123.

⁵⁹ Hall 2007, 207. "Diametric oppositions": Hdt. 1.56. "Ethnographic": 6.56-60.

⁶⁰ Rhodes 1994, 157 – 158.

largely upheld.⁶¹ His ethnographic portraits were not irreparably distorted by polarization.⁶² Rather, he presented cultural differences fairly reliably.⁶³

A final approach to the information in our accounts is one that brackets what actually happened, to emphasize instead the self-presentation and self-perception of a group through its discourse about itself and others.⁶⁴ Clearly the examination of discourses is productive: this dissertation examines many. The existence of a legend of a Dorian migration certainly helps us understand the self-perception of the Spartans. Discovering whether it actually occurred would help us even more.⁶⁵ An analysis of discourses is much richer when it seeks to understand, and occurs alongside analysis of, their accuracy.

It is prudent to be cautious about sources. Yet there is a tipping point at which caution hampers the ability to say something meaningful. It is sensible to state that “in recent years, scholars have begun to examine more closely the complex relationship between representations of Sparta and Spartan reality.” But to next characterize the information in the sources as stereotypes, prejudice, and bias and say that we must “cut through the Spartan mirage” does not offer a reliable methodology for achieving this.⁶⁶ It seems that the best that can be done is to accept our sources unless better reasons exist to reject them. A too-frequently automatic assumption that our sources are contaminated by a Spartan mirage is not a secure basis for rejection.

A reasonable middle ground is that our sources engaged in moderate schematization: even if a story has been massaged into a familiar motif, its essence may be factually accurate.⁶⁷ Further, many motifs are so basic – such as the creation of new order out of crime and chaos by a lawgiver, or socially marginal figures becoming leaders of political movements – that actual events in the demonstrably real world inevitably resemble them. The subsequent recasting of an actual event into a traditional story-pattern – such as the repeated motif of a plague or similar disaster in a city resulting in a consultation to the Delphic Oracle, who advises the establishment of a colony for the city’s “excess” population – disproves nothing. Sources’ lateness, non-nativity, ideology,

⁶¹ Persian: *e.g.* Pritchett 1993; Briant 2002, esp.18-21. Kuhrt 2002 offers some dissent. Scythian: Pritchett 1993, 191-226. Hyun Jin Kim (2010) persuasively argues that Hartog 1988 and Fehling 1999 privilege Herodotos’ literary art over the historical content of his work unto shoeorning information into an overly rigid schema and that Herodotos’ Scythian portrait was not radically structured by free-floating binary opposites to Athens. West 2002 is slightly more skeptical but positive overall. Cf. Wheeler 2007a, 2007b, 2007c. Egyptian: Lloyd 2002, Lloyd 2007.

⁶² Hartog 1988, xxiii.

⁶³ Mikalson 2003, 197f, Marincola 2007, 23.

⁶⁴ *e.g.* Malkin 1994, 3.

⁶⁵ This would require performing DNA tests on Spartiate bones and comparing these to non-Spartiate bones to determine whether a genetically distinct group from northwest Greece indeed moved south in the tenth century or so. Similar tests prove Etruscans descend from Western Asia Minor as Herodotos reported, and that a group in Africa claiming Jewish origin is, in fact, genetically Jewish. Torroni 2007, Entine 2009.

⁶⁶ Millender 1999, 355. Cf. Bohak 2005, 233, a crucial point deserving wider appreciation: “Ethnic stereotypes, ancient as well as modern, may not provide reliable ‘objective’ information on the characters of different people, as was taken for granted by late-19th century scholars, but they should not be dismissed as revealing nothing about the stereotyped peoples and studied solely within the stereotypes’ cultural framework, as was done by late-20th century scholars.”

⁶⁷ Koiv 2003, “Introduction” (9-68).

contamination, and construction are cause for alertness but not for automatic dismissal. We are not destined to be permanent befuddled by a “Spartan Mirage.”

The Laconia Survey

For many phenomena, the type of independent archaeological evidence allowing confirmation of the destruction of Argive Asine is absent. Only literary evidence remains. The population decline amongst the Spartiates is one such example. The remarkable archaeological survey conducted in Lakonia by the British School in Athens as published in *The Laconia Survey* and *The Laconia Rural Sites Project* provides excellent archaeological information for Spartan territories as a whole. But its shortcomings for understanding Lakonian history, as its authors freely admit, must also be noted. The *Survey* covers not the city of Sparta, but an area east of Sparta-town, limiting its usefulness to understanding the political, social, and prosopographical affairs of a society whose male citizens, at least, were compelled to live in its capital city. It is seldom that archaeological evidence gives information on prosopography or politics. The sites appearing in the *Survey* do include, however, Sellasia, an important Perioikic town appearing in Xenophon and of course in the battle that ended the career of Kleomenes III.

The utterly crucial issue of determining which groups actually occupied the sites discovered by survey is another area in which the *Survey* is less helpful than would be desired. Most scholars believe that the oliganthropia in the Spartan lands was limited to Spartiates, and that it did not extend to helots or perioikoi.⁶⁸ The *Survey* cannot comment on this matter, except to say that "unless the survey data are wholly unrepresentative of Laconia, they suggest that in the hellenistic period neither Spartan *oliganthropia*, nor the population loss alleged by Polybius for other regions of Greece ... and attested in other surveys, was reflected in overall population levels in Sparta's territory."⁶⁹ In fact, the early Hellenistic era witnesses the wide establishment of rural agricultural sites and installations in the survey area.⁷⁰ The phenomenon, richly attested in our literary sources, of Spartiate population decline in the late Classical and Hellenistic eras is invisible to the *Survey* because its insight does not extend to the identity of the users of its sites. This brings us to another issue, that of representativeness. Are the trends visible (that is, of what can be visible) in the portion of Lakonia surveyed to be extended to the rest of Lakonia? The authors honestly question this several times (252, 308). However, Thoukydides' famous statement about the difficulty of judging Sparta's power by its ruins remains an apt warning.⁷¹

Hereditarianism and Modern Intellectual History

The ways in which literary sources and archaeological evidence can be or should be interpreted can be difficult. Another potentially provocative area has to do with human biological reproduction. As will be explained in Chapters 1 and 2, the Spartiate regime

⁶⁸ Figueira 1986 is an exception; Hodkinson has recently argued that *hypomeiones* also underwent population contraction for economic reasons (2009).

⁶⁹ *Laconia Survey*, volume I, 308.

⁷⁰ *Laconia Survey* 312f; cf. Shipley 2000, 31.

⁷¹ Thouk. 1.10.2.

evidences strong concern with directed reproduction for the purposes of reinforcing certain characteristics in the Spartiate *genos*. This requires some comfort with ideas of heredity. Discussion of this has been hampered in the humanities and social sciences: firstly by distaste toward anything resembling eugenics, conditioned by historical developments of the first half of the twentieth century; secondly by an anti-hereditarian emphasis on culture as the sole determining factor of human action; thirdly by the “linguistic turn.”

Modern scholarship’s acute disapproval of human eugenics and hereditarianism is historically contingent. The loudest proclaimers of heredity and eugenics in the twentieth century have been members of the nearly universally reviled regime of Germany of the 1933-1945 period, a regime holding racialized ideas about hereditary human superiority.⁷² Spartan eugenic ideas often invoke this spectre.⁷³ Ideas in American thought that foreshadowed the sociobiology movement of the later twentieth century fell out of grace in the 1940s because of the German misuse of similar ideas.⁷⁴

This provoked a de-emphasis on biological differences between human populations and a corresponding emphasis on cultural differences between groups, coterminous with the rise to dominance of the anthropological school of Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead primarily in the second and third quarters of the twentieth century. Its goal, it seems, was the decrease of Western cultural chauvinism.⁷⁵ Opposition to weighing human heredity was picked up in last third of the twentieth century when a group led by Stephen Jay Gould at Harvard University, ostensibly in the cause of anti-racism, argued against hereditary influence on human traits.⁷⁶

Alongside this occurred the rise of the “linguistic turn,” best described as a philosophical position asserting in its strong form that reality is largely created by language. This position would favor the examination of, for example, the quite explicit eugenic remarks in Xenophon’s *Politeia of the Lakedaimonians* as a discourse about power and superiority, as a binary anti-type to an image of the Athenians, or as part of a larger discourse about (non-genetic) purity. Questions such as whether Xenophon’s instructions would actually (eventually) produce stronger soldiers would be entirely bracketed by adherents to the linguistic turn in favor of examining such texts for the *language* of kinship and procreation as definitions of “the natural.”⁷⁷

The notion that an ethnic group must be considered solely as a socio-cultural-linguistic group, not as a biological group, is consistent with these views. Ethnicity, in

⁷² A distant second mental association with these concepts for some people may be the American birth control movement of the early twentieth century started by Margaret Sanger, which advocated paying very poor Americans of certain descent groups to have themselves voluntarily sterilized Gillette 2007; Savulescu and Bostrom 2009.

⁷³ Rawson 1969, chapter 19; Oliva 1971, 10; Losemann 2007; Hodkinson 2010. Vacano *et al.* 1942.

⁷⁴ Effectively demonstrated in Gillette 2007.

⁷⁵ Tooby and Cosmides 1992, Pinker 2002, Gillette 2007.

⁷⁶ Segerstrale 2000. Certain well-accepted and uncontroversial fields in psychology (e.g. attachment theory) derive directly from evolutionary psychology’s investigation into inherited human instincts.

⁷⁷ On the linguistic turn, see again Zagorin 1999. An example of this sort of thinking appears in Elm 2001, 309 – 310.

this frame of thought, is a social construction.⁷⁸ Thus an ethnic group has come to be defined by many theorists only by a shared discourse of belonging through belief in a common descent with no reference to biological relatedness. Yet biological relatedness over the world is quite coterminous with the boundaries of linguistic groups.⁷⁹ The default position for many decades now among many scholars outside of the biological sciences is that any differences between any two population groups, such as the Spartans and the Athenians, must be produced solely by means of cultural factors. Surely these factors are highly important; but an insistence that culture is the only factor producing differences is unlikely to be accurate.⁸⁰ The question of whether a given ethnic group *actually*, rather than mythologically or putatively, shares in a common biological descent is thus ignored; the notion that hereditary differences may exist between groups is often discouraged.

Older ideas have asserted that certain population groups are “superior” to other groups. However, first, the “superiority” of a group is a peculiar idea: only specific quantitatively measures can be compared, not a total set of abilities. Second, the concept of superiority is highly contingent to environment – both natural and socially created – and to circumstances. A concentration of alleles in one population group may fit its members well for a given environment but be sub-optimal for another.⁸¹ Third and perhaps most important, the immutability, permanence, and duration of whatever advantages may be present in one population group as opposed to other population groups is highly dubious.⁸² As Herodotus explicitly noted, populations (eventually) respond to their environments.⁸³

It is a straightforward, non-political scientific fact that constrained reproduction in any population, given sufficient time, will produce higher representation of genetically-influenced traits present in that population. This is observable in plants and animals, and it is also observable in human beings, most obviously in skin color, eye color, and certain personality propensities and mental abilities, although the last two, like height and weight, will also be highly conditioned by the lifetime experiences of the individual in question.⁸⁴ The notion that the Spartiates were concerned with directed reproduction or “eugenics” will be made clear in the dissertation. The notion that their regime produced

⁷⁸ Note use of the term “ultimately” in Hall 1997, 2.

⁷⁹ Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994, chapters 1, 2, and 8; Cavalli-Sforza and Cavalli-Sforza 1995; Cavalli-Sforza 2000.

⁸⁰ Cochran and Harpending 2009, 2-4, 121-122.

⁸¹ Diamond 1999 (1997), 13 – 22 argues that New Guineans have been subject to pressures making them more intelligent than persons in comfortable Western societies who do not face constant pressures. Needless to say, it is difficult to imagine a researcher today asserting the opposite without being denounced and perhaps having demands made for his dismissal from his post.

⁸² Hall 1997, 1.

⁸³ Herodotos 9.121.3, cited earlier: “For soft places are wont to produce soft men.” In 9.121.4 Herodotos clearly assumes that populations will change over time if the challenges that the population faces change. Herodotos also clearly asserts that altered *nomoi* can change a population’s abilities (7.102.1). Through, appropriately, the voice of the deposed Spartiate king Demaratos, Herodotos states that “excellence [in some unspecified ability, probably martial or general] is an import, acquired through intelligence and through strict law.”

⁸⁴ Baker 1984.

actual differences from other groups is necessarily harder to prove. But the evidence requires sober evaluation. An assessment of the character of populations requires considerations of heredity, not only of socially constructed elements, just as an assessment of the literary evidence describing a population requires a consideration that the group actually was (more or less) that way, and that this description possesses descriptive value, rather than holding that the description has more to do with the writer and the anti-types that he is constructing. These two considerations are linked. The unifying argument is that the scholarly trend toward social constructionism has perhaps gone too far.

Population Regimes

Sparta's military dominance in the classical and at least a portion of the archaic period resulted from its unique reproductive and economic systems which had distinct demographic effects. These customs produced great short-term gain, but after the Battle of Leuktra in 371, Sparta as a state no longer campaigned north of the Peloponnesos and, as titles like Piper's *Spartan Twilight* and Oliva's *Sparta and her Social Problems* suggest, sank as an international power. Clearly factors aside from population contributed to Sparta's political decline, such as the withdrawal of Persian monetary aid in the early fourth century after a period of subsidies; but the long-term tradeoffs of its population regime were unsustainable and this is a vital factor in understanding its fate. Much of Sparta's military and cultural history was strongly influenced by the causes and effects of this population regime and its attendant cultural by-products. This dissertation attempts to clarify exactly this, for the archaic, classical, and hellenistic periods.

What may be termed a society's "population regime" is the combination of three elements:

a.) The first is biological. It consists of a society's customs and/or laws that affect mate choice and sexual reproduction, and add up to a coherent program (intentional or otherwise) to encourage certain types of births and certain types of people: in other words, its eugenic system. Some practices that were thought by various societies to have eugenic effects such as sexual positions in the Talmud probably have none. Others, such as the supposed Talmudic practice of having the wealthiest girl in a village marry the most intelligent and literate boy may have been plausibly argued to result in considerable eugenic effects.⁸⁵

b.) The second is cultural. It is the collection of its practices of raising and training its citizens. This is its system of *paideia* and it includes how much education, what form this is in, how much physical education given and at what time, what military training, and so on. All these practices presumably affect physical health and military ability, and encourage or discourage certain forms of mental ability.

c.) The third is its birthing system: age at marriage, maternal nutrition, birth spacing, and lactation practice. A mother's age at childbirth is the greatest determinant of total lifetime fertility. Another determinant of total lifetime fertility is lactation practice, which varies from individual to individual within a culture and from culture to culture. Lengthy

⁸⁵ Reichler 1916, Entine 2007.

lactation has been proven to provide immunity against certain ailments for children; the trade-off is that since lactation suppresses fertility, societies which depend upon, or encourage, long lactation periods will experience increased intervals between births, which of course limit the number of children that a woman can have, given the normal window of fertility during a woman's life.

These three elements combine with external constraints affecting and in some cases strongly determining the society's demography such as available foodstuffs, disease, climate, and so on, to produce concrete differences in population groups in terms of numbers, size, health, disposition, and other qualities of offspring.

Culture must not be gainsaid. Richerson and Boyd 2005 define culture as "information capable of affecting individuals' behavior that they acquire from other members of their species through teaching, imitation, and other forms of social transmission."⁸⁶ External events will encourage certain cultural forms to flourish and enjoy increased transmission, and others to wane, in a manner not dissimilar to Darwinian natural selection, except much faster, and in this case the selectors are often human. "Vertical" cultural transmission (that is, the transmission of culture through time) is thus a vastly speeded up version of the biological transmission of genes through time. It is analogous to natural selection and to social selection.

Culture acts as a selecting force to more things than only cultural forms: Culturally-created environments affect human reproduction: these environments strongly affect which genes will be favored by natural selection. In the long run, culture has thus affected human innate psychology. Human inborn propensities will be weeded out in certain localities because of these localities' cultural regimes, and encouraged in others, insofar as different cultural regimes provide more opportunities for reproductive success to different personality types. The culture of a population will affect not only what traits flourish in a given population, but who survives and who reproduces.

These models of cultural transmission and the effect that culture eventually has on biology require caution. Clearly a culturally-enforced selection regime would need to last for hundreds of generations to produce in two populations the differences seen between the bulldog and the schnauzer, and selection pressures would need to be severe. It is the efforts that some populations have made toward speeding up these differences that structure significant elements of their culture, and the example of the Spartiate attempts in this direction constitute a substantial portion of the following chapters.

⁸⁶ p. 3.

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Chapter 1

Archaic Sparta as a Selection Regime: The Rise of the Lykourgan *Kosmos*

Introduction

If Peloponnesian polities in the Archaic era should be considered ultimately in competition with each other over resources and status, then the Spartan state's success requires explanation. This success, measured in land, in allies of several degrees of subordination, and in cultural status during the Archaic era, can be traced to several factors. Significant among these is the Spartiates' base located in a large land area with a population density low enough to present ineffective opposition to the population of Sparta after the Spartans put into practice a highly successful cultural formula. This formula consisted of a set of *nomoi* or institutions which structured biological reproduction and encouraged a martial, altruistic culture. Together these functioned as a system of selective pressures which created a Spartiate *genos* – a Greek word meaning a combination of family, race, and lineage, so a consanguineous group – encouraging the production of specific characteristics particularly appropriate to, and successful in, the competitive political milieu of the Archaic Peloponnesos.¹

Recent theoretical work on the influence of culture on biology has explained the ways in which human-constructed cultural systems apply selection pressures to reward certain types of persons and facilitate their reproduction, just as certain natural environments favor specific variations in animals, fostering differences between population groups. The primary theorists in this field are Peter Richerson and Robert Boyd. They have shown us the ways in which “culture affects the success and survival of individuals and groups” molding the spread, strengthening, and diminution of different cultural variants in larger populations. In turn, “these culturally evolved environments then affect which genes are favored by natural selection.”²

This is uncontroversial on a theoretical level, and in this chapter I show how it helps to make sense of the ancient evidence for the Spartiate *kosmos* and its attendant demographic regime, a regime which was both explicit – that is, state-planned, eugenic, and deliberate – as well as implicit. The result of this system, for at least two hundred years, was the military dominance in the Greek-speaking world of an oligarchical city without walls or state-issued coinage, until shortly before the middle of the fourth century BC. At that point weaknesses inherent in the system, combined with sufficient external pressures began a process resulting in the Spartiates sinking from their previous prominence.³ I will argue later that this decline primarily occurred when the trade-offs in the Spartiate reproductive regime ceased to function adaptively; in this chapter I will

¹ Precisely Plutarch's point in *Lyk.* 7.2-3. *Genos*: cf. Sallares 1991, 198.

² Richerson and Boyd 2005, 4. Application of these ideas: Gottschall 2008, Chapter 5. A highly accessible overview of these ideas occurs in Wade 2006, chapter 12; Cochran and Harpending 2009, *passim*. Household-level version of this process from Ethiopia today: Ayelew 2005.

³ D. S. 7.12.8, Plut. *Lys.* 14.6.

discuss how this system functioned to produce a flourishing population of Spartiates and gave them decisive military advantages for much of the archaic period.

This chapter is divided into three parts. Each one contributes to an understanding of the Lykourgan regime. I have begun by asking why Sparta was so successful so early. First, recognizing the difficulty of trusting literary texts on what is in some respect an almost prehistoric era, archaeological evidence about artistic production in Archaic Sparta is probed to provide basic ideas of what can be ruled out regarding the inception of the Lykourgan regime. Second, literary evidence concerning the features of the Lykourgan regime is evaluated. A picture of this regime, as plausible as possible concerning the vexed nature of the evidence, is presented, involving both an unusual military reorganization and a population increase caused by reproductive reforms that result in a rise in fertility and a suppression of mortality. Third, the eugenic effects of the reforms are extrapolated.

The early history of the people whose descendants would be known in the historical period as the Spartiates is vexed in modern scholarship.⁴ Nothing is certain; written evidence is minimal, mostly foreign, and possibly confused; archaeological evidence is multiply interpretable; and comparative evidence suggests much but proves nothing. It is difficult to be properly wary of the evidence while not falling into a trap of either blanket negativism or epistemological nihilism. However, where multiple lines of evidence point in a direction, Occam's razor makes certain reconstructions more plausible than others, and permits the careful acceptance of some literary evidence describing Sparta's past unless good arguments exist for the implausibility or falsified nature of these traditions.

At the end of the twelfth century, major Mycenaean settlements experienced destruction and debilitation, including sites in Lakonia. It was once orthodox to attribute the end of Mycenaean civilization to a migration of the Greek sub-ethnic group known as the Dorians; this explanation has been supplemented over the past decades with more causal factors.⁵ In the middle to late 10th century BC, the previously unoccupied site of the hill of Sparta was settled.⁶ A tradition found in Plutarch states that the Spartans had lived in Sparta for six hundred years before the Thebans invaded in 369: this places their arrival at Sparta in the tenth century BC, a highly accurate coincidence for his informants if we judge it a coincidence.⁷ Tradition asserting that the Spartiates were members of the Dorian ethnic group is supported by their dialect of Greek. Archaeological evidence confirms that many sites in Lakonia occupied in the late Bronze Age had become deserted in the early Iron Age and that Sparta itself was a new settlement in the tenth century BC.⁸ The earliest Spartan literary tradition, the seventh-century poems of Tyrtaios, references a migration

⁴ E.g. Flower 2002, *contra* Figueira 2006.

⁵ These include earthquakes, climate change causing social breakdown, the Sea Peoples, the discovery of ironworking, class war, crop overspecialization, overtaxation, and combinations of factors. Osborne 1996, 52-37; Cartledge 2002, chapter six; Hall 2007, 43-53.

⁶ The administrative capital of Lakonia in the Bronze Age, likely Menelaos' "Lakedaimon," seems to have been Pellana/Pellene, located between Sparta and Megalopolis: Spyropoulos 1995; Catling 1995 in the same volume thinks that the Menelaion very near Sparta was the regional capital instead.

⁷ Plut. *Lys.* 31.1-2.

⁸ Cartledge 2002, 81.

from “windy Erineos” into the Peloponnesos.⁹ In the mid-fifth century Sparta sent a huge army to aid Doris, the area they asserted to be the Dorian homeland, quite close to Erineos; and in the 420s Sparta set up a colony called Herakleia in Trakhis, very close to Erineos and Doris.¹⁰ These pieces of information suggest a migration from somewhere else, this “somewhere else” including the closely contiguous area of Doris-Erineos-Trakhis; whatever the ultimate origin of this Greek-speaking group, that area may be one in which they attained a somewhat stable group identity alongside the ethnonym “Dorian.”¹¹ The fact that the products of mixed marriages between Spartiates and non-Spartiates are mentioned very little until after the population crisis of the 460s may also support a migration: identity and coherence of an incoming group is presumably preserved through endogamy. This collection of evidence cannot confirm, but suggests an arrival at and creation of the settlement of Sparta around the mid-tenth century. That the name Sparta was given, an adjective meaning “sown” and presumably applying to the city or the land around it, may conceivably support the notion that the newcomers were not farmers, and the agricultural lifestyle they encountered or picked up was novel enough to give the new settlement a name.¹²

Of late there has flourished an enthusiasm for the down-dating of both the ethnogenesis of the Spartans and the installation of the Lykourgan regime, the system that is associated with giving Sparta its unique culture.¹³ Thucydides wrote that Sparta had possessed the same *politeia* for over four hundred years before his time, the late fifth century.¹⁴ However, several scholars today see this culture forming only in the sixth century with the widening of Spartan power in the Peloponnesos and the Ephorship of Kheilon,¹⁵ or even as late as the 460s in reaction to the helot revolt. This is a highly significant issue for the analysis of Archaic Sparta as a selection regime.

The Picture of the Archaic Period from Artistic Production

Obtaining traction on this issue requires examination of the material record in order to step out of the web of words that may not accurately describe developments in Spartan

⁹ Site desertion and settlement: Cavanagh et al. 2002, 153. Erineos: Tyrtaios 2.12-16 West; Hall 2007, 50f.

¹⁰ Thucydides calls Doris the metropolis of the Spartans in 1.107.2 and 3.92.3. Hall 2002, 85.

¹¹ On the ethnonym “Dorian”: the bold suggestion “gift-folk” appears in Hall 2006, 87-88. “Spear-folk” is another option requiring a vowel grade-change, a lengthening process like the Sanskrit “vrddhi” formation common in denominal adjectives.

¹² Cartledge 2002, 80-82 suggests that the newcomers were pastoralists.

¹³ Downdating of Spartan history: Hornblower 1992, 52f. This trend climaxed in Michael Flower’s (2002) insistence that we should not attribute *anything* to any earlier period than is attested in literary sources of said earlier period, concluding that “any synthetic history of Spartan institutions is impossible” (192) and in Pamela Shaw’s downdating of Tyrtaios and the Messenian Wars to the fifth century (2003, 125ff). Flower’s ideas follow the essays in Hobsbawm and Ranger 2003 which describe the false attribution of e.g. Scottish kilts to a distant past whereas the evidence indicates a late modern genesis of these items and thus the modern creation of an allegedly ancient tradition. Yet a far longer book could be written about customs thought to be ancient which demonstrably *are* ancient. A holdout to many aspects of downdating is Figueira 2006.

¹⁴ 1.18.1. See Hornblower 1992 *ad loc.* (53f) for an argument for 350 years instead.

¹⁵ e.g. Förtsch 1995.

culture and constitutional history of this early period. Regrettably the archaeological record tells us much less than we would like, but at least provides a foundation for assessments of the literary record and the chance to rule out some hypotheses.

Artistic evidence may reasonably be seen to support some aristocratic, sympotic culture in the seventh century, contemporary with and reflected by the Spartan poet Alkman late in the century. Excavations at the Temple of Artemis Ortheia downhill from the Spartan Acropolis near the river Taygetos confirmed that seventh-century BC Sparta was a center for carved ivory production and produced kraters. In the third quarter of the seventh century appeared nine new styles of art including symposion items such as kantharoi, two separate new styles of lakainai-cups, and new relief-kraters, as well as bronze statuettes and four categories of ivory production: female protomes, kouroi, combs, and daedalic figures. The last quarter of the seventh century alone featured eleven more new artistic styles including black figure cups, two new kantharoi, elaborate bronze hydriai, bone reliefs imitating ivory, and more.¹⁶ Non-material cultural artifacts from this century are significantly martial: the hoplite phalanx likely dates to the seventh century, as do Tyrtaios' elegies and the Second Messenian War; the constitutional document known as the Great Rhetra is usually thought to date to this century as well. If these datings are correct, this increase in artistic production corresponds to an increase in consumption made possible by a transfer of wealth from an extraordinarily narrow group of aristocrats to an only moderately narrow group of persons. This latter group became, in the seventh century, hoplite *homoioi* or "similar" and now possessed sufficient wealth from land acquisition in Messenia to purchase these items, and a sufficient sense of identity to want to see them in their homes.¹⁷

The art of Lakonia in the sixth century, despite a vibrant start, slowly declined in terms of the production of new art forms, and this decline never stopped. Fourteen new art forms appeared in the first quarter of the sixth century, and thirty art forms in total were produced in this quarter. Black figure cups, including black-glazed lakainai, appeared in two new forms. Many high-quality bronze items were produced including kraters with and without volutes, tripods, kouroi, animals, and female figures either naked supporting mirrors or shown running in short chitons.¹⁸

A Herodotos passage reflects this material evidence: the Lakedaimonians in the mid-sixth century fashioned and sent an immense krater as a gift to Kroisos of Lydia.¹⁹ New types of bronze statuettes, bronze hydriai, and kantharoi appear in the sixth century's second quarter while two black figure cup types begin to suffer in quality and numerically dwindle. The numbers of forms begin to decline dramatically from 650 to 575. This has been linked both to the war with Tegea in the sixth century, to the Spartan official Kheilon, to Athenian artistic competition, and to a cultural increase in austerity.

A few new forms appear in Lakonia through the rest of the sixth century: Lakonia's final akroteria in terracotta and then marble; more types of black figure cups; the

¹⁶ Förtsch 1995.

¹⁷ Förtsch 1995.

¹⁸ Mirrors: Stewart 1997.

¹⁹ Hdt. 1.70; cf. Stibbe 1996, 128. Förtsch (1995, 51) dates this to the last quarter of the sixth century stylistically, but Kroisos died in 546.

penultimate Lakonian bronze figurines (which are hoplites); and stone reliefs of Kastor, Polydeukes, and heroes. However, the decrease in new forms is real: in the last quarter of the sixth century only eighteen types are produced alongside each other *in toto*.

Importantly, several of the few new forms found in and after the middle of the sixth century have an especially militaristic ethic, and important, presumably state-funded works continue such as the relief-encrusted temple complex at Amyklai and the Khalkioikos temple for Athena.²⁰ What appears to be the case is that later sixth century Lakonian artistic effort became channelled into military expression and state-organized architecture serving the purpose of a religiously based social unification in the form of temples.²¹

A probe into the fifth century concludes the story with the exception of a few high-profile dedications by individual Spartans.²² No new forms are seen in Lakonian art of the first half of the fifth century, and by the midway point of the century, the continuing production of art dwindled from the over thirty forms existent in the sixth century to only five forms in production at all: stirrup kraters, which had begun around 675; hero-reliefs; reliefs of Kastor and Polydeukes; akroteria, and large sculpture. By the third quarter of the fifth century, Herodotos says that of all the Hellenes, it is the Lakedaimonians who most dislike craftsmen.²³ At the very least, what is apparent is that there has occurred a decline of consumers of art in Lakonia, not only a decline of artisans: if the latter had been the problem, then more art or artisans would presumably have been imported from elsewhere.²⁴ This would be the case unless Spartan *xenelasiai* or expulsions of strangers kept foreigners away. But apparently it was not so much (or not only) that the craftsmen were disliked by the potential consumers of the art: art itself had become suspect or disliked, and/or the consumers had run out of money or had shrunk as a class. The earthquake of the 460s probably explains the shrinking of this class of consumers if, as Diodoros writes, it killed 20,000 people in Sparta. However, the decline in new forms had already begun: thus, the death of Spartiate consumers must only have intensified, not originated, the decline of art.

Yet art production may tell us rather little about the Spartiates since much Lakonian art was produced for export, not for internal consumption. Another way to gauge the consumption of art in Lakonia is to measure the quantities of dedications made at sanctuaries in or near Sparta itself in the Archaic and Classical eras, and to presume that these dedications were made by Spartiates rather than by perioikoi – a not entirely secure assumption, admittedly. This measurement has been conducted for bronze items deposited

²⁰ Amyklai: Paus. 3.6. Cf. e.g. Pipili 1987, 81f. Athena: Pipili 1987, 80f.

²¹ Förtsch 1995, 51.

²² Pausanias in the early fifth century dedicated at Delphi the huge golden tripod and bowl dedicated in 478, two statues of himself at the temple of Athena Khalkioikos, and two statues of the goddess Nike at the Athena Ergane sanctuary at Sparta. Lysander at the end of the fifth century dedicated superb statues of himself and his companions at Delphi, created by non-Lakonian craftsmen. Noted by Förtsch 1995, 54.

²³ Hdt. 2.167.2. Confer Plutarch *Lykourgos* 4 in which Lykourgos removes *kheirotekhnai* or craftsmen from participation in the politeuma under inspiration from Egyptian practice, one of many instances in which Plutarch's testimony is confirmed by radically earlier authors: see Hdt. 6.60 for the connection between Egyptian and Spartan customs.

²⁴ Förtsch 1995, 54.

in the most important Spartan sanctuaries: Artemis Orthia, the Menelaion, Apollo at Amyklai, and the sanctuaries on the Spartan Akropolis.²⁵

Although there are problems in this kind of count (first, survival: bronze corrodes and people often melt it down; second, published reports of these finds are lacunose) and although the results are multiply interpretable, overall a decline in bronze dedications occurred after 550 except on the Akropolis and the Amyklaion, whose trend is indistinct due to the great proportion of bronze objects whose dates are uncertain. The great number of bronze bells found on the Spartan Akropolis is undated and can tip the equation of art investment at Spartan shrines either way. The Menelaion and Orthia shrine see a decided decline in bronze dedications in the period 650 – 350; however, inexpensive statuettes of lead were profuse and enjoyed a huge heyday in the sixth century, followed by a sharp decline.²⁶

When bronze dedications are broken down into smaller categories, the statistics are again, due to undated items, indistinct for bronze vessels, jewelry, and statuettes or figurines. This is true for all four shrines. All in all, no extremely clear trend is visible due to the undated nature of a great many dedications. The record of bronze items deposited at sanctuaries “offers little material support for an overall growth of a uniquely austere society.”²⁷ But it does not support a countertrend of a society refulgent in luxury, either. The evidence from these bronze items simply does not tell us much. Enough of the bronze items are undateable to make any gauge difficult, and we are back at square one, reliant on other evidence.

The comparison to dedications at other Greek shrines sheds light on the question of whether Spartan dedications were unique. A decline in the number of bronze dedications in shrines throughout Greece is indicated for the late Archaic and early Classical period, rendering any decline we might see at Sparta quite typical.²⁸ An absence of life-size bronze figures in Lakonian shrines is noted until the fourth century, which may indicate suppression related to the ideology of the Spartiates, but comparative dedications elsewhere are insecure, as survival of bronze statuary of this size is also rare elsewhere.

Another category of art to chart is sixth-century Lakonian iconography: although well-studied, its sociological significance disappoints. The preponderance of Herakles as mythical figure on vases of this century may or may not reflect the fact that the Spartan kings were conceived of as descendants of Herakles; Lakonian vases depicting him mostly echo Korinthian and Attic iconography.²⁹ Mythical scenes on Lakonian vases avoid Trojan war themes and Helen of Sparta, and favor the Argonauts, the Seven against Thebes story, and a few other myths from Thessalian and Boiotian sources, suggesting a link of cult and culture with these places.³⁰ They also favor Zeus, Poseidon, Atlas, and Prometheus, rather vaguely suggesting an enthusiasm for order and power, both strong cultural themes at

²⁵ References in Hodkinson 1998.

²⁶ Illustrated in e.g. Fitzhardinge 1980, 118, no. 150.

²⁷ Hodkinson 1995, 58.

²⁸ Hodkinson 1998, 60.

²⁹ Pipili 1987, 83.

³⁰ Pipili 1987, 83.

Sparta.³¹ Winged demons, an epichoric specialty, are impossible to interpret either artistically or culturally. Korinthian art influences many art forms, and Attic in the sixth century's second half.

This efflorescence of Archaic Lakonian artwork, as multiply interpretable as it may be, has been used to support a down-dating of the installation of the Lykourgan regime to the sixth or even fifth century. Yet the study of archaic Lakonian art unfortunately helps us understand little about Spartan culture beyond the period's artistic production: as thorough as it can be, attempting to use the art for socio-historical data can be worse than useless, indeed misleading, and can degenerate into stylistic interpretation which, while useful for formalist interpretation, is sociologically and historically unclear.³²

And other, non-artistic evidence contradicts a late genesis for the Lykourgan regime if we conceive of this regime as including the *agoge*. If the reorganization of the Spartan state connected with Lykourgos was an important causal factor in expansion, we must date this reorganization to the eighth or at latest seventh century considering the suppression of Messenian urbanization archaeologically datable from that period. The introduction of hard physical training amongst the Spartiates, which in the literary tradition is associated with the Lykourgan *agoge* or upbringing, must predate 600. In fact, it must predate 700: the series of Spartan victories at the games at Olympia covers the entirety of the seventh century BC, not just its end.³³ This series of victories stops for about 75 years at around 580 BC.³⁴ It is quite difficult to imagine that the peculiar Spartiate form of education or *paideia* which later became known as the *agoge* would contain physical exercises which ended up *preventing* victories in athletic contests, yet this is precisely what we must imagine if the *agoge* is thought to have begun around 600 rather than around 700 or earlier.

The implausibility that one day in the Archaic period Sparta became as austere as later sources seem to reflect for the Classical period should be stressed.³⁵ On the other hand, the notion that Sparta enjoyed a highly luxurious culture until very late, and differed not at all from other poleis in the Archaic period, as supposedly attested by art and by the sympotic songs of the Spartan poet Alkman, is suspect as well.³⁶ The Spartan state very profoundly differed from other Greek states quite early. It had no walls; it kept a dual kingship long after monarchies had elsewhere been abolished in Greece; it never had a tyrant; it controlled an immense amount of land (8000 square kilometers as compared to

³¹ Pipili 1987, 83.

³² Pipili 1987, Herfort-Koch 1986; cf. the review of these works in Cartledge 1988.

³³ Chrimes 311. Hall 2002, Appendix B (241 – 246) gives a general discussion of the problems of the Olympionikai list but concludes “it is, nevertheless, difficult to believe that Hippias invented a slate of entirely fictitious athletes out of thin air ... it is hard to believe that the gatherings that took place in the sanctuary from much earlier times [than the early sixth century] completely lacked any agonistic component or that *kudos* resulting from victory in one of these earlier contests could not have been preserved, however hazily, in local memory.” (243-4).

³⁴ And the fifth-century Olympic victories are prominently horse-races, which Hodkinson 2000, chapter 10 attributes to wealth polarization.

³⁵ Nafissi 2009, 132 believes in a slow, possibly deliberate change in preference for “cruder” artistic forms reaching its height in the sixth century.

³⁶ Podlecki 1984, chapter 4

Attica at 2500 square kilometers) from at least the seventh century and probably the eighth; it held in subjection a huge labor force very early; it featured an unusually high status for females, surely linked to the availability of subject labor; its monetary practices were unusual; and its population underwent great fluctuations. Sparta was an unusual polis well before the Classical period, indeed well before the sixth century.

The most economical compromise will be to date the beginnings of an austere military tradition hundreds of years before the fifth century, possibly as early as the arrival or ethnogenesis in the ninth century of the group whose descendants were later called Spartiates, and to assume that it existed alongside the development of a somewhat more luxurious sympotic tradition which gradually in the Archaic period dwindled, became secretive, or was suppressed. That this occurred in conjunction with the social project of enhancing group solidarity with the less wealthy Spartiates will shortly become evident.

A still plausible theory sees the people who first settled Sparta hill as pastoral nomads.³⁷ In this case, the austere tradition's origins may be rooted in, or be exaggerated forms of, elements of ancient pastoral nomadism; that these origins are lost does not vitiate the notion that they are survivals. In tandem with the enthusiasm for downdating has run a similar argument against viewing Spartiate customs as very old traditions.³⁸ Yet an apparently very ancient tripartite social structure to Spartan society supports the opposite notion.³⁹ And much evidence suggests that a general tendency of Spartiate cultural conservatism was to preserve very ancient lifeways. From Archaic inscriptions we see great conservatism in script.⁴⁰ Many literary attestations describe Spartan conservatism.⁴¹ Rather than the austere tradition being a late Archaic novelty, it is plausible that contrasting traditions of austerity and opulence existed together either in uneasy tension or harmony: a military austerity during campaigns can exist alongside a more luxurious sympotic culture during periods of peace. Literary attestations of an austere tradition begin early.⁴² However, even before a more luxurious and sympotic culture was more thoroughly

³⁷ Cartledge 2002, 81f.

³⁸ Cartledge argues that unless strong evidence exists for anteriority of a custom, it must be traced to present circumstances (2001, 122). However, customs do not always originate in present circumstances, but often in previous ones. Ducat 1999 does not see Spartan customs as Bronze Age survivals but as Geometric Age civic programs. Hammond 1950 notes that the date of Lykourgan reform was thought to be 9th century until the early twentieth century, when the date of the reform was lowered by everyone. Early dates in Hammond 1950 and Chrimes 305–47 are rejected by de Ste. Croix 1972, 91 note 4, and by Forrest 1969, 55–8. De Ste. Croix thinks that the eunomia/Lykourgan reforms occurred shortly after the Second Messenian War, agreeing with Wade-Gery, 1958 37–85 and Toynbee 1969, 221–6, 250–60, 413–16.

³⁹ Herototos 9.85: after the Battle of Plataia, the Lakedaimonians bury three groups of people: the priests, the “other Spartiates,” and the helots. Kennell 1995, 15 argues that the classic Indo-European triad of priests, warriors, and herder-cultivators is present in this passage, strengthening this instance with notices about the (traditionally Indo-European) Spartiate long hair, red cloaks, and divine twins, the Dioskouroi.

⁴⁰ Jeffrey *LSAG* 183–202, esp. 187, 198.

⁴¹ e.g. D. S. 12.52.8, Endios' speech in 410: “We hold fast to the custom of our fathers.”

⁴² The regent Pausanias orders a Persian banquet to show how it differs from Spartan fare (Hdt. 9.82). King Agesilaos has plain garments, unlike Pharnabazos' exotic and luxurious ones (X. H. 4.1.30). Lykourgos brought contempt for pleasures to Sparta, according to Agesilaos (Plut. *Mor.* 210A). Agesilaos associated the mode of life that entailed plainness of clothing and food, both for him and the other Lakedaimonians, with *eleutheria* (Plut. *Mor.* 210A). Agesilaos did not believe in relaxing nor wearing an

suppressed, Sparta possessed unusual social, political, and economic systems. This cannot be denied.⁴³

It is appropriate to step back now and see what, if anything, this artistic pattern might indicate with respect to larger cultural trends at Sparta in the Archaic period. The increase in artistic production in the early mid-sixth century combined with the richly attested explosion of settlements suggests a population increase. This archaeological evidence is supported by literary evidence in the tradition that Spartans in the sixth century attacked neighbors to acquire more land.⁴⁴ This complex of changes has caused some to think of a sixth-century revolution or set of deep cultural changes that produced the austere and military Sparta familiar from popular histories: to support this, some date the birth of the *agoge* to this century, seeing the decline in art in the later sixth century as a product of the vast cultural transformation, and pinning this supposed sixth century reform to the ephor Kheilon. This neatly fits with other sixth-century changes attested in Greece such as those of Solon and Kleisthenes in Athens.⁴⁵ This complex of events have made a downdating of the Spartiate reforms to the sixth century quite popular.⁴⁶

However, the creation of the overseas colony at Taras supports the notion of a phase of land hunger and overpopulation two hundred years earlier. It could only represent factional strife; but the contemporary First Messenian War may well result from land hunger, again supporting a larger population. And Tyrtaios' seventh-century lyrics attest to a precociously intense and early martial tradition before the mid-sixth century. This martial tradition may be connected to a larger cultural program that produced the high population that the archaeologically attested habitation increase may represent, if it took a century to do help precipitate it, which would be precisely the length of time necessary to double a population if the population was increasing at 0.7%. Tyrtaios' ideas may have been novel or may have formalized an already present sentiment in Sparta; if the latter, his ethos may be extended backwards in time, and this period becomes longer.

The robust link between population and the power of early states is clear.⁴⁷ High population normally requires either efficient resource extraction or large territory. The former is unlikely for Sparta, but the latter is unquestionable and led to very high status for Sparta amongst Greek states both within and outside of the Peloponnesos. Much evidence supports this. By about 600, Sparta had enough international clout to arbitrate a disagreement between Athens and Salamis.⁴⁸ Fifty years later in the mid-sixth century, Sparta had, according to Herodotos, subjugated (κατεστραμμένη) the majority of the

undergarment even in cold weather in order to inspire younger men to also brave the cold (Plut. *Mor.* 210B / 22, 23). When Agesilaos is in Thasos, the Thasians try to give him delicacies of various sorts. He only accepts flour for himself and his men, then he gives the delicacies to the helots, saying that *andragathia* is not compatible with gourmet food, and “things that entice slaves (*andrapodeis*) are alien to *eleutheroi*” (210B/24).

⁴³ Cf. the debate in Hodkinson, ed. 2009 between Hodkinson and Hansen.

⁴⁴ Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 233-8. Hdt. 1.66; Paus. 8.47.2.

⁴⁵ And Kyrene: Hdt. 4.161; Korinth: Salmon 1964, appendix 1.

⁴⁶ Dickins 1912; Andrewes 1956, chapter 6; Huxley 1962, chapter 3; Forrest 1963; Toynbee 1969, 225f; Finley 1975, chapter 10; Hornblower 1991, 52-3 (essential); Whitby 2002, 23; Asheri 2007, 126-7.

⁴⁷ *e.g.* Eckstein 2006, Longman 2006, Scheidel 2007.

⁴⁸ Plut. *Solon* 10.

Peloponnesos.⁴⁹ Since the first six historic military expeditions that Herodotos lists for the Spartans feature three with no allies: thus κατεστραμμένη has been thought of as an exaggeration or inaccuracy.⁵⁰

But the large Archaic population of Spartiates surely required less assistance from allies in military expeditions than was the case after 465.⁵¹ Herodotos' expression meant that the Spartiates had unequal treaties with many of the poleis in the Peloponnesos, and had helotized or perioikized many of the rest. A few powerful poleis such as Korinth existed on a second tier of Sparta's allies, and with these Sparta probably had fairly equal treaties, but still received a measure of deference and was treated as a *de facto* war leader.⁵² Lakedaimonians headed the panhellenic force of Greek states opposing the Persians noted in the Serpent Column inscription.⁵³ Sparta's treaty with the Erxadieis, probably from around 426-5, is likely representative of their unequal treaties with many states, and includes the stipulation that the Erxadieis are "to follow whithersoever the Lakedaimonians should lead."⁵⁴ Such a treaty implies great power on the part of the Spartiates.

The Lykourgan Regime

The shift that changed Spartan society into the powerful state it was in the Archaic period, and the unusual form seen in Classical sources, is normally connected with Lykourgos. On the existence of a fleshly, breathing Lykourgos it is safest to remain agnostic.⁵⁵ The "magnet function" of figures who perform important foundational functions for societies cause subsequent generations to attach later customs to them.⁵⁶ And the Greeks were fond of inventing aetiologies for their constitutions; this may have been no exception.⁵⁷ The argument has been made that Lykourgos' absence from Tyrtaios' 7th

⁴⁹ Hdt. 1.65.1, 1.68.6. On Sparta's sixth century allies: generally, Cawkwell 1993; Bolmarcich 2005 is essential.

⁵⁰ Yates 2006.

⁵¹ Cavanagh *et al.* 2002.

⁵² De Ste. Croix 1972, 109; Bolmarcich 2005: her two-tiered alliance system fits the evidence better than the assumption of a unitary set of obligations for all allies; although an even larger number of tiers cannot be ruled out, this basic distinction is probably useful as at least a heuristic device.

⁵³ Serpent Column: ML 27. Cf. Herodotos 9.81.1

⁵⁴ Peek 1974; ML *Addendum* 67; Pikoulas 2000; SEG 26 461; 51, 449; Bolmarcich 2005, 22; cf. X. *H.* 2.2.20, 5.3.26.

⁵⁵ Firm disbelievers in the existence of this person include *e.g.* Finley 1975, 161, Sallares 1991, 165, Thommen 1996. Cf. Oliva 1971, chapter 8 for a good review. He believes (p. 65) that "there can be no doubt that the Spartan regime was not the work of one lawgiver but the result of a long development influenced by many factors." Koiv 2003 and Asheri 2007, 127 posit an actual historical individual.

⁵⁶ Dickins 1912, 3 not quite correctly asserts Herodotos was the first to link constitutional change at Sparta with Lykourgos and did so "boldly." The fact that Herodotos is the first *extant* source to link these does not mean that he made the original connection. "Magnet function": Raaflaub 2009b, 77.

⁵⁷ Szegedy-Maszak 1978. Lykourgos' name suggests a divine or allegorical figure ("Wolf-Worker") which may support a mythological rather than historical figure. On the other hand, that argument could be made about the name of many Greeks whose historical existence is not in doubt, such as Aristoteles whose philosophy includes a "final cause" reminiscent of his name. One can compare the debate over the historicity of the Athenian lawgiver Drakon, "snake." Again, Asheri 2007, 127.

century elegiac poetry indicates that “the Lycurgan myth was not yet current.”⁵⁸ But surely not every poet needs to mention every statesman, and elegiac poetry seldom mentions individuals’ names. It is more useful to bracket the project of deciding on whether a Lykourgos existed, and concentrate instead on the reformatting of Spartiate society that went under his name.⁵⁹

The earliest mention of Lykourgos occurs in the late archaic poet Simonides, who asserts Lykourgos’ membership (as son of King Prytanis) in the royal Spartiate Eurypontid family (F 628 Page); the earliest mention of a Lykourgan reform occurs in Herodotos 1.65-6.⁶⁰ Xenophon described many aspects of his reforms in the early fourth century. Plutarch wrote a biography of Lykourgos in the late first or early second century AD; its lateness requires care.⁶¹ Our concern here is whether the reforms attributed to him had adaptive, maladaptive, eugenic, and/or dysgenic effects and what they were, as well as can be calculated.

Herodotos states that the sixth-century Lydian ruler Kroisos, seeking Hellenic allies, learned that the Spartiates were waging war successfully against the Tegeans after a period of failure. Herodotos then contrasts that period of failure to an *earlier* period of even worse failure, in the deeper Spartan past when the Spartiates lived in isolation from others.⁶² Lykourgos, “a well-known man of the Spartiates,” visited Delphi for advice, then enacted a set of social reforms at Sparta replacing older Spartan institutions which had left the inhabitants of Sparta with the distinction of being *κακονομώτατοι σχεδὸν Ἑλλήνων*, “the persons with the worst *nomoi*, almost, of the Hellenes.”⁶³ *Nomoi* indicates both customs and laws: evidently pre-Lykourgan Spartan culture featured institutions

⁵⁸ Finley 1975, 161. Cf. Hodkinson, *OCD* sub “Lycurgus,” 897, Nafissi 2009, 128. Lyric poetry, in contrast, often mentions individuals. The only personage mentioned by Tyrtaios is King Theopompos. Forrest 1963, 175 discusses more as to why Tyrtaios’ failure to mention Lykourgos cannot be taken to invalidate Lykourgos’ existence.

⁵⁹ Cf. Sallares 1991, 165: “The word ‘Lykourgos’ is used here as a form of shorthand for the earliest institutional complex of Sparta.” Moore 1986 (1975), 73: “The use of his name is merely convenient shorthand.”

⁶⁰ Cf. Koiv 2000, 5. On Herodotos’ accuracy in Spartan matters, Van Wees 1999, 15. Van Wees cites specifically Herodotos’ visit to Pitana, a village in Sparta (Hdt. 3.55, 9.53); his clearly Spartan source and Spartan version of problems with Samos in 3.47; and his careful discussion of the tale told amongst the Spartiates of double kingship in 6.52. But see Starr, 33 in Whitby (ed.) 2002. Cf. Kim 2009 and forthcoming on Herodotos’ Scythians which shows Herodotos’ surprising accuracy against Hartog 1988.

⁶¹ At least Plutarch is honest about the variations in the sources in the very first sentence of the *Life*, and hence (implicitly) the unverifiable nature of these stories.

⁶² Great cultural isolation of Sparta is attested archaeologically for the ninth and eighth centuries, less so for the previous Middle and Late Bronze Age and subsequent seventh and sixth centuries. Only one piece of imported pottery is attested in the Laconia Survey for the entire Archaic and Classical periods, in contradistinction with much of the rest of Greece. Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 197, 226, 434-5. Alkman’s late seventh-century songs’ interest in exotic places may suggest some opening of isolationism, or not.

⁶³ Hdt. 1.65.2. Thukydides 1.18.1 states that Lakadaimon was “faction-plagued” (*stasiasasa*) after the arrival of the Dorians, but then became *eunomethe*, attained good *nomoi*, in a still very early period, and kept good government for over 400 years, up to the time Thukydides was writing in the late 5th century. Xenophon in the fourth century claims no stasis but does not discuss a period of poor *nomoi*. Cf. Andrewes 1938, Hornblower 1991, 51-3; on 52, Hornblower rightly critiques Toynbee 1969, 225 no. 1.

maladaptive or dysfunctional in the environment. I shall argue shortly that they were unsuited to population growth.⁶⁴ Here is the Herodotos passage with my translation.

[2] τὸ δὲ ἔτι πρότερον τούτων καὶ κακονομώτατοι ἦσαν σχεδὸν πάντων Ἑλλήνων κατὰ τε σφέας αὐτοὺς καὶ ξείνοισι ἀπρόσμικτοι: μετέβαλον δὲ ὦδε ἐς εὐνομίην. Λυκούργου τῶν Σπαρτιητέων δοκίμου ἀνδρὸς ἐλθόντος ἐς Δελφοὺς ἐπὶ τὸ χρηστήριον, ὡς ἐσήιε ἐς τὸ μέγαρον, εὐθὺς ἡ Πυθίη λέγει τάδε.

[3] “ἦκεις ὦ Λυκόοργε ἐμὸν ποτὶ πύονα νηὸν
Ζηνὶ φίλος καὶ πᾶσιν Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχουσι.
δίξω ἢ σε θεὸν μαντεύσομαι ἢ ἄνθρωπον.
ἀλλ’ ἔτι καὶ μᾶλλον θεὸν ἔλπομαι, ὦ Λυκόοργε.”

” [4] οἱ μὲν δὴ τινες πρὸς τούτοις λέγουσι καὶ φράσαι αὐτῷ τὴν Πυθίην τὸν νῦν κατεστεῶτα κόσμον Σπαρτιήτησι. ὡς δ’ αὐτοὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι λέγουσι, Λυκούργον ἐπιτροπεύσαντα Λεωβῳάτῳ, ἀδελφιδέου μὲν ἐωυτοῦ βασιλεύοντος δὲ Σπαρτιητέων, ἐκ Κρήτης ἀγαγέσθαι ταῦτα. [5] ὡς γὰρ ἐπετρόπευσε τάχιστα, μετέστησε τὰ νόμιμα πάντα, καὶ ἐφύλαξε ταῦτα μὴ παραβαίνειν: μετὰ δὲ τὰ ἐς πόλεμον ἔχοντα, ἐνωμοτίας καὶ τριηκάδας καὶ συσσίτια, πρὸς τε τούτοις τοὺς ἐφόρους καὶ γέροντας ἔστησε Λυκούργος. οὕτω μὲν μεταβαλόντες εὐνομήθησαν, τῷ δὲ Λυκούργῳ τελευτήσαντι ἰδὸν εἰσάμενοι σέβονται μεγάλως. οἷα δὲ ἐν τε χώρῃ ἀγαθῇ καὶ πλήθει οὐκ ὀλίγων ἀνδρῶν, ἀνά τε ἔδραμον αὐτίκα καὶ εὐθηνήθησαν.

[2] And still earlier than these events, they [the Spartiates] also had the poorest *nomoi* of nearly all the Greeks, concerning both domestic and foreign policies, and did not mix with strangers. But they changed to a state of *eunomia* in the following way. When Lykourgos, a well-known man of the Spartiates, went to the Oracle at Delphi and entered the inner shrine, immediately the Pythia said the following things.

“You have come, O Lykourgos, to my wealthy temple,
As a friend to Zeus and to all those who possess the Olympian halls.
I am at a loss whether I prophesy to a god or a human being.
Yet, I rather think to a god, O Lykourgos.”

Some say that in addition to these things also the Pythia gave the *kosmos* that is presently established for the Spartiates to him. But the Lakedaimonians themselves say that Lykourgos, when he had become the regent for the [underage] Leobotes King of the Spartiates, received these things [the *kosmos*] from Krete. For as soon as he became regent, he altered all of the *nomima*, and guarded them lest they be transgressed: and after this, Lykourgos established the [laws] pertaining to war, the *enomotiai*, the *triakadai*, and the *syssitia*, and in addition to these, the ephorate and the gerousia. Having made these changes in this way, [the Spartiates] achieved a state of *eunomia*, and when Lykourgos died, having erected a shrine, they revered him greatly. And since they were in good land and with a multitude of plentiful men, they shot up immediately and flourished.

⁶⁴ Adaptivity and maladaptivity in social customs: importantly, Richerson and Boyd 2005, *passim*; Boyd and Richerson 2005, *passim*. On maladaptivity in particular, Edgerton 1991.

The new order is contrasted with the status of being *κακονομώτατοι*. This indicates that the new order was considered an effective set of *nomoi* or customs/laws that met human needs well. It brought about the *νῦν κατεστέωτα κόσμον Σπαρτιήτησι*, *kosmos* (order or regime) of the Spartiates of Herodotos' own day, with which Herodotos assumed his readers were familiar (1.65.4). *All* the customs or conventions in use were altered, an improbable claim if taken strictly literally, but likely indicating heavy change in Spartiate *nomoi*. After these reforms, the military reforms established the *enomotiai*, or bands of oath-bound citizens, the *triekadas* or companies of thirty, and the *sussitia* or communal male dining-groups.⁶⁵ The college of *Ephors* or "overseers" was also established, a yearly joint magistracy of five supervisors of public behavioral norms, one of whose functions was to act as a check on the powers of the kings, and the *gerousia*, a permanent 28-person senate of men over 60 years of age. Lykourgos did not change the already existent dual kingship.

Herodotos next lists the results enjoyed by the inhabitants of Sparta. After making these changes, the inhabitants of Sparta *eunomethesan*, that is, enjoyed *eunomia*, and established a shrine for Lykourgos where they revered him greatly. The end result of the reforms: the Spartiates "immediately shot up and flourished." This seems to indicate a population increase. In this case "immediately" (*αὐτίκα*) can only mean something like "unusually soon, relatively speaking" here.⁶⁶ The southern-central Peloponnesos' carrying capacity was huge relative to the archaic human population, so scarcity of resources cannot have been an obstacle.⁶⁷ It is a reform in *nomoi* that is said to have caused the flourishing. Herodotos' other uses of *eutheneo* and *anatrekho* suggest this interpretation.⁶⁸ As for *anedramon*, "to shoot upwards," Herodotos uses it (or any form of *anatrekho*) four other times. Thrice it means "jumped to one's feet"; however, a city's population is surely meant in the other usage: in ~491, Gelon took control of Syrakousai and *αἱ δὲ παραυτίκα ἀνά τ' ἔδραμον καὶ ἔβλαστον*, "at once it shot up and budded" (7.156).⁶⁹ It is a fact that Syrakousai's population was immense in the fifth century, largely because Gelon gave Syrakousan citizenship to a huge number of persons.⁷⁰ In Sparta's case, this was probably a natural increase rather than an expansion caused by immigration and naturalization: no immigrants are mentioned, very few ties with the outside world are attested archaeologically, and no industry this early would have attracted many people.⁷¹

⁶⁵ The *enomotiai* are military bodies of ~40 soldiers. Van Wees 2006.

⁶⁶ For example, at a 1% population growth rate, a population requires about 70 years to double; a 2% growth rate, 35 years; even at a 3% growth rate, 23 years. Chamberlain 2006, 21f.

⁶⁷ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a30; Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 207; cf. Figueira 2003, 196-7; Scheidel 2003, 245. Carrying capacity of course depends on farming technology and transport.

⁶⁸ When Perseus appears to the Egyptians at Khemmis, all Egypt *eutheneein* (2.91.3), and when Rhampsinitos was king, Egypt was *eunomie*, "in enjoyment of good customs," and greatly *eutheneein* (2.124).

⁶⁹ "Jumped to one's feet": Hdt. 3.78.1, 7.15.1, 7.218.

⁷⁰ *IACP sub* "Syrakousai" (225-6) discusses population, with ancient sources given: the enfranchisement numbers are in the tens of thousands.

⁷¹ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a35 does vaguely mention a tradition that sharing in the Lakedaimonian citizenship "during the reigns of earlier kings" staved off oliganthropia.

As mentioned slightly earlier, some evidence may support an increase in the Spartiate population in the eighth century. Archaeological evidence does not specify it; however, this was an era in Greece of “extreme settlement nucleation.” In areas controlled by Sparta, population would have been concentrated in Sparta and Amyklai, so we would not expect to see signs of such an increase through survey archaeology, which has only covered an area east of Sparta.⁷² First, a similar increase is visible in this period elsewhere in many places in Greece: a general doubling over the course of the eighth century has been detected.⁷³ Second, Aristotle claims the Spartiates once numbered 10,000, a number considerably higher than fifth century totals.⁷⁴ The First Messenian War of the late eighth century presumably occurred due to resource competition: land hunger caused by a high population would explain this well. Finally, as I briefly discussed above, the fact that Sparta sent a colony to Taras in southern Italy in the eighth century may evince overpopulation. The stories surrounding its genesis will be discussed shortly.

If Sparta’s population increased in the eighth century, “Lykourgos” may be considered shorthand for a reasonably accurate memory of cultural shifts that created in Sparta a set of new conditions conducive to population increase which was similar to whatever technological or other developments increased population in many places elsewhere in Greece. Morris, with some lack of precision, postulates that the latter overall Greek growth rate was “dramatic” and involved

aggregate economic performance improving, living standards declining, new resources being discovered, technology improving, and redistribution of resources.

Social stresses must have been strong.⁷⁵

His last sentence points to the rise of tyrannies, accounts of land redistribution around this period, and the emergence of the hoplite as a political and military force, all of which are part of the typical Greek communities’ array of responses to what he calls “the eighth-century crisis.”⁷⁶ That Sparta experienced no tyrannies in the archaic or classical period, unlike many of the Greek states, supports the development of an unusual sociopolitical culture.⁷⁷ The Lykourgan reform of *nomoi* is the only known historical contender for this.

Morris’ list of probable correlations for the apparent population increase in the Greek world, as well as a few other possible causal factors, can be examined to see if they apply to Sparta. Nothing can be proven considering our poor evidence: we work only with informed conjecture. Improvements in economic performance for archaic Sparta can be causally linked to the tradition that Lykourgos divided land into equal lots, presumably increasing productivity as ownership of land was given to more people, thus creating the

⁷² Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 154. Bintliff 1997, 8-10. Scheidel 2007, 124 for the difficulty of asserting the connection between sites and population. In fact, the Laconia Survey reports no settlement increase even in the seventh century after Spartan isolation was broken, so an eighth-century absence of such evidence tells us little: Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 156.

⁷³ Morris 2007.

⁷⁴ Aristotle *Pol.* 1270a35. The combined area of Lakonia and Messenia is estimated in excess of 200,000 individuals in the early fifth century. Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 209.

⁷⁵ Morris 2007, 219.

⁷⁶ Morris 2007, 240.

⁷⁷ Andrewes 1956 thinks of the dyarchy as an alternative to tyranny. Hornblower 1992, 53. If the dyarchy be considered a tyranny, it was an unusually long-lasting one.

homoioi. Their membership in the *syssitia*, whose existence Herodotos attributes to Lykourgos, depended upon produce contributions. A few other poleis conducted, or were initially planned with, regular land division in the archaic period, Metapontion being the best attested archaeologically of the former category.⁷⁸ A Spartan land division is unmentioned by Herodotos, but the *syssitia* are, and their contribution requirements necessitated considerable land owned by each Spartiate.⁷⁹

As to new resources, there is Sparta's land acquisition. A society's acquisition of new land typically increases population: more resources provoke increases in nuptiality rates and then a fertility increase. In conjunction with the Spartiate population increase Herodotos mentions their fertile land; he does not directly state that their military reforms aided them by helping them acquire new land, but it is in the late eighth century that Messenia was initially conquered, as is attested by the lack of polis development in Messenia between this time and its reacquisition of independence in the mid-fourth century and as is confirmed in the literary record.⁸⁰ According to Herodotos, even after their population increase the Spartiates still lost against the Tegeans, and the invasion of Tegea may well have been caused by land hunger resulting from population increase coming from whatever social reorganization had been conducted. The goal after helotizing Messenia was to helotize Arkadia, starting with Tegea.⁸¹ But this failure, occurring even after the immense gains attendant upon conquering Messenia, perversely does not suggest that military success and the attendant acquisition of land was the key factor increasing the population: it was a necessary but not sufficient cause.

We are left in an *aporia* as to which of Morris' ideas to apply to Sparta. Herodotos states that after their period of thriving and attempting and failing to enslave the Tegeans, many Spartiates were enslaved. Whether a single battle (1.66.3) or several (1.67.1) or a war, their loss prompted them to ask the Pythia how to defeat the Tegeans. It told them to retrieve the skeletal remains of the famous Peloponnesian hero Orestes, son of Agamemnon, leader of the fleet that sailed against Troy in the mythic past.⁸² Perhaps this proved effective, presumably by means of a religiously inspired increase in social solidarity, although no description of such a sociological process survives in any of our

⁷⁸ Osborne 2007, 287: this occurs in the second half of the sixth century. "Regular land division on this massive scale implies strong state institutions and a conception of inhabitants as having equal stakes, presumably by virtue of some notion of citizenship." Other Archaic and Classical cities with land division include Herakleia in Italy, which was a fifth century colony of the Spartan colony Taras and was very influenced by Spartan customs (the chief official was an Ephor and the laws were *rhetai*); and, in the Adriatic, Issa, Melaina Korkyra, and Pharos. The Herodotean mention of *syssitia* requirements suggest but do not prove an archaic division of land.

⁷⁹ The bibliography on Lykourgan land division or the absence thereof is huge. Hodkinson in his many works, *e.g.* 2000, does not believe it ever happened, Figueira 2004 the contrary. Hodkinson believes that post-classical writers confused the land-division of the Hellenistic reformers Agis and Kleomenes with a putative division in the Classical period. However, Aristotle *Pol.* 5.1307a2-3 surely appears to be a pre-Hellenistic reference to Spartan land reform.

⁸⁰ Davis *et al.* 1997, 455-7, Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 315.

⁸¹ Cartledge 1979 (2002) 118.

⁸² Hooker 1988, 131 argues that while Herodotos may have some details incorrect, it is highly plausible that some bones were in fact paraded at Sparta and thought of as, or advertised as, Orestes' in order to lay claim to an Akhaian heroic past.

accounts. But by the mid-6th century, the Spartiates had begun winning all their wars (1.67.1) particularly against the Tegeans, and it is now that Herodotos plainly states that the Spartans had “subjugated” much of the Peloponnesos.⁸³ Spartiate power at this time was sufficient for the Lydian king Kroisos to desire an alliance between Lydia and Sparta.

The military reforms mentioned by Herodotos are surely significant in Sparta’s rise to power. Military reform could result in the acquisition of land; yet some rearrangement of or re-constraint of Spartiate customs had *already* produced the effect of increased population in this account, before the acquisition of land. A large-scale reproductive reform would help both to explain Sparta’s rise and, after it would become incapable of responding to the earthquake deaths in the fifth century, its fall. Herodotos says little about reproduction, which may relate to his chariness about sex.⁸⁴ We must look to other authors. Xenophon, writing only a few decades after Herodotos, plainly states that reforming the mechanisms of human biological reproduction were of great concern to Lykourgos (*Lak. Pol.* 1.3). So does Plutarch in the late first/early second century AD (*Life of Lykourgos* 14.1). And Aristotle asserts that Lykourgos wished to make the Spartiates as numerous as possible (*Pol.* 1270b3-4).

The plausibility of an effective reproductive reform of this type requires comment. Reproduction in many modern societies including the United States has been laissez-faire for much of the twentieth century. This blinds many of us to the fact that this has certainly not been the case in other societies both ancient and modern.⁸⁵ Institutions affect outcomes. Albania tripled its population between 1944 and 1972 through top-down government action, in that case by setting targets for the production of children and mandating capital punishment for contraception.⁸⁶ China’s modern restrictions on birth are well-known and spectacularly successful. A baby boom was effected in the previously fertility-challenged former Soviet republic of Georgia when a religious leader promised to personally baptize all children born in 2009.⁸⁷

There are many other examples from the period 1920 – 1945. France in 1920 enacted pronatalist policies in response to immigration and deaths from the Great War and the subsequent plague: neo-Malthusian arguments were made illegal, laws against abortion strengthened.⁸⁸ Mussolini in 1927 gave his Ascension Day speech invoking the necessity of population competition against Germans, Slavs, Britons, and French nationals; contraceptives were outlawed in Italy in 1926, a tax introduced for bachelors in 1927, and then a deduction for large families and awards for successfully reproducing families. Germany soon enacted similar programs after 1933.⁸⁹ The Catholic Church “outlawed” birth control in 1930 in Pius XI’s papal encyclical *Casti Connubii*.⁹⁰ In the Soviet Union, pronatal policies replaced laissez-faire standards in the period 1934-1944, announced in

⁸³ Hdt. 1.68.6.

⁸⁴ E.g. Hdt. 1.61.1 *fin* in which Peisistratos has intercourse with Megakles’ daughter *ou kata nomon*, “not according to custom”; Herodotos refuses to specify what this means.

⁸⁵ Cf. Johansson 1991 on states’ abilities to influence reproduction; also Winter 2003.

⁸⁶ Hammond and Wallbank 1988.

⁸⁷ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7964302.stm> accessed 9/8/2010.

⁸⁸ Livi-Bacci 1999, 176.

⁸⁹ Livi-Bacci 1999, 175-6.

⁹⁰ Livi-Bacci 1999, 176.

Stalin's 1935 speech "Man, the Most Precious Resource": these were put into place to restore the population after the decline brought about by the forced starvation of the Ukrainians and the deaths caused by the kulakization of the peasants ending in 1932.⁹¹ So it is clear that governments as well as religious authorities have enacted pronatalist policies which have at times been successful.

Although numbers are naturally difficult to acquire for pre-census populations, legally mandated changes in reproductive behavior are not unheard of in Greece of the archaic period, and an excellent comparandum emerges in the Solonian reform of marriage, "a broad package of family laws" apparently including state requirements of such specificity and intrusiveness as that requiring an Athenian husband to have intercourse with his *epikleros* thrice monthly.⁹² And although it is not a reproductive reform, we may also consider in this context the massive reorganization of the tribes by Kleisthenes in the later Archaic period in Attike, which broke very old ties of geography and therefore of consanguinity. Given the earliness of Sparta's governmental reforms, an early reproductive reform would not be out of place. The organization of *lokhoi* in the later Archaic Spartan army may have been very similarly designed, "to create loyalties which cut across all local and kinship ties."⁹³ Finally, in Athens of the mid-Classical period, a "bigamy concession" may have been enacted after the demographically debilitating Sicilian Expedition by which, for the sake of replenishing population, men were permitted to have two wives.⁹⁴

Directed reproduction has not been confined to modern societies with access to excellent censuses and computational methods to calculate demography. In the Classical period, Plato and Aristotle evidently possessed strikingly advanced understandings of human population manipulation. It is probable that they relied upon previously acquired knowledge, and that this knowledge was spread more widely than Athens and Stagira. Aristotle possessed high-quality data concerning the practices of many poleis, as the existence of his school's 158 polis- and ethnos-constitutions indicates.⁹⁵ And specific

⁹¹ Livi-Bacci 1999, 176 – 7.

⁹² Lape 2002-2003, 118, who argues that Solon's attachment of disabilities to Athenian bastardy (through strict definition of how children could be legitimate and under what circumstances a woman was a *damar* or lawfully wedded wife, rather than a concubine, or a woman in some other sort of cohabitation) both provided for the reproduction of the newly-defined citizen body and curbed aristocratic power, as aristocrats otherwise have enough resources to produce many offspring outside of wedlock (see also Scheidel forthcoming). Regardless of its cause, Solon's laws affecting reproduction and inheritance – which caused Athenian bastards to become non-inheritors of property -- certainly attest to the possibility of legally-created (that is, top-down) reproductive reforms in a nearby society. Plutarch *Solon* 20.2-3. Cf. Boring 1979, 24: "Doubtless, early lawgivers and reformers were capable of exerting a much more direct influence on their own societies than their modern counterparts, and the deeds of Solon and Cleisthenes provide ample proof of this fact."

⁹³ van Wees 2006, 157, who tentatively dates this reorganization to the sixth century, "or at any rate after the seventh century, since the army of Tyrtaeus' day was organised in three units based on the Dorian tribes" (161, footnote 105).

⁹⁴ All references to the "bigamy concession" plus discussion are in Ogden 1996, 72ff.

⁹⁵ Note that Aristotle, for example, unsurprisingly understood that lactation acts as a fertility suppressant: Preuss 1975. Both thinkers (Plato primarily in *Republic* and *Laws*; Aristotle in *Politics* and in various animal treatises) display a great concern with population and how it influences state action. Plato's very

manipulations of human reproductive practices are attested in the Hellenistic period for the Spartiates as well, as will be discussed in Chapter 7. An archaic reform of some sort is thus consistent with Archaic reforms elsewhere (in Athens) and in Sparta later on. It also fits in with the other reforms in archaic Sparta that Hodkinson characterizes as deliberate.⁹⁶

Demographic models provide hints about what the reproductive elements of the reformed *kosmos* or regime *may* have been. First, post-Herodotean sources let us guess what new practices could have increased Spartiate population in the archaic period, but certainly did not increase it in the mid-classical period nor halt its terrible decline. Second, we can cross-reference these against very similar practices which are thought to be responsible for high fertility in better-attested human societies possessing key characteristics similar to archaic Sparta. First, there is an array of possible candidates included in the reproductive reforms listed by later authors. Two practices attributed to the Lykourgan reform are alloparenting, the practice in which individuals other than biological parents perform parental investment, and the exposure of unfit male infants. The first may seem neutral in terms of population increase; the second, detrimental to it. Yet the first and, paradoxically, the second can increase fertility.

Alloparenting was practiced by the Hutterites, whose society represents the highest fertility regime known. This Anabaptist group originated in sixteenth-century central Europe, and under an organizing figure named Jacob Hutter developed an unusual religiously-bolstered population regime including collectivist communal living in which group pressure was exerted to promote unselfish community service, prosocial behavior, and religiously-mandated fertility rules.⁹⁷ Their communal life included high degrees of in-group cooperation and altruism and a strong measure of alloparenting. This formula is very effective in a low population density environment: a Hutterite cell of about 400 individuals moved to the United States in 1874 and in only a century attained a population of 20,000 persons without conversion – solely by natural reproduction.⁹⁸ This represents an average of slightly over ten children per woman. The precise relation between the alloparenting and the high fertility can only be theorized. It appears to consist of a combination of the following elements:

keen interest in eugenics (e.g. *Republic* 5.458-461) and animal breeding (*Republic* 5.459a – b) is probably linked with his keen interest in the Spartiate governmental system, as are the oligarchical strains in much aristocratic thought in classical Athens. References in Preuss 1975. Cf. Golding 1975. Cf. Aristotle *Pol.* 1335a19 – 23 for a reproductive reform at Troizen. Kritias also thought in somewhat eugenic terms, particularly Fragment 35, in which he advises parents to exercise in order to have a strong child; although the efficacy of this is dubious, at least the interest is present.

⁹⁶ “Each element, moreover was the product of conscious design.” Hodkinson 1997b, 88.

⁹⁷ Key study: Eaton and Mayer 1953. Cf. MacDonald 2002, xxviii – xxxvii; Livi-Bacci 2007, 13; but cf. Le Bras, 2008, 37: “yet ... it is legitimate to think that throughout human history every population has employed means for controlling fertility, and ... consequently there has never been a population whose fertility was, if not actually controlled by couples, at least codified by customs and social practices.” Religiously-mandated fertility rules are generally discussed in Reynolds and Tanner 1995.

⁹⁸ Although endogamy is supposed to have been extremely high for the Hutterites, it is hard to imagine that no conversion occurred. We should imagine a statistically insignificant level of “secondary conversions,” i.e. outsiders who joined by marriage.

1.) the communal rearing (light alloparenting) of children by the entire community, reducing individual couples' childbearing and childrearing costs, which are transferred to the society

2.) glued to a highly patriarchal system of male-led family units in which the flourishing of a man's children had considerable effects upon his status and honor in the community,⁹⁹

3.) within a system of high conformity and community vigilance over behavior so that other community members can be trusted to look after one's own offspring benevolently

4.) combined with homogeneity of the community and contiguity of its territory extended over a large enough extent of physical space so that parents do not need to worry that children can easily walk away from the community and strangers cannot easily walk into the community – an extensiveness that is common in agricultural communities and combined with #3 drastically reduces risks common to more heterogeneous societies.

Indeed, archaic Sparta had in common with the Hutterites all four of the factors listed above, as well as an unusual number of the more general characteristics of Hutterite society in my descriptive sketch above the list, ranging from an organizational reform with a religious mandate (from Delphi, in Lykourgos' case; whether a Lykourgos actually ever went to Delphi, the imprimatur was surely surely highly impressive) to collectivist living and high levels of prosocial altruism, the last of which is discussed in the next chapter. Xenophon attests to the practice of alloparenting in his *Politeia of the Lakedaimonians*, stating:

Quite the opposite also were these [*nomoi*] from most. In the other poleis each man is the lord over his own children, slaves, and possessions. But Lykourgos desired to arrange it so that the citizens would have the benefit of some advantages of each other without causing any harm. He made it so that each man could have authority over his own children and others' children equally ... Thus, they trust each other to do no wrong to their children. (X. L. P. 6.1-2)

Even allowing for some exaggeration (such as the word *equally*), this is clearly a fairly straightforward example of the practice of alloparenting.

The Lykourgan reform is said also to have organized the *paideia* of children into age class groups with specific duties and communal rearing. Logically and most straightforwardly, the advantage of this is that should a child's parent be unable to perform normal parental investment duties through death, injury, absence, or some other means, particularly when the child is young enough to strongly require such investment, the child will receive parental investment from other individuals. The communistic general tenor attested for Spartiate society will have been completely essential to this, as several passages in Xenophon's *Politeia of the Lakedaimonians* affirm: for example, the *nomos* that any citizen may instruct or punish boys if the *paidonomos* is absent presumably fostered deference to all adults. Grown men attracted to boys are permitted form relationships with them as long as these are not primarily motivated by sexual desire: this thus increases the amount of parental investment the child receives, albeit not from the parent, and the anti-erotic safeguard in place is intended to (and may in fact) result in more

⁹⁹ Longman 2006.

benefit (in terms of alloparental investment) than cost (in psychological or physical damage from asymmetrical physical sexual acts¹⁰⁰). Xenophon ends the second chapter by asking rhetorically whether the persons brought up at Sparta are more disciplined, respectful, and self-controlled than persons brought up in other social systems. The answer is presumably that they are.

Alloparenting presumably possesses mortality-dampening effects. It decreases child deaths due to neglect and several other preventable means. The high infant and child mortality rate in pre-industrial societies and absence of advanced medical care presumably make close supervision of children for injuries and illnesses crucial to child survival.¹⁰¹ Less directly, high levels of alloparenting presumably prevent under-socialization by providing role models when they would otherwise be absent due, again, to parental death from disease or war, parental absence, or psychological illness.

Similar in some respects to alloparenting, Xenophon also attests to allo-insemination. Older male Spartiates are encouraged to introduce into their houses a younger Spartiate man in order to beget children.¹⁰² The eugenic intentions and effects of this practice will be discussed more later, but as it concerns fertility, Xenophon lists the satisfactory elements of the arrangement to several parties: it enables the biological mother of the child to participate in and have authority and status in a second household. The husband and his wife's joint biological children will now have loyal half-siblings who will not compete for inheritance since they will inherit from their biological father, the man who has been brought in to inseminate the wife. The children will have loyal playmates who are closer, and more closely related to them, than other Spartiate children are (*L. P.* 1.9). Presumably the primary caregiver for the children when they are small will be the biological mother, not the wife of the biological father. This practice offers wives more conception opportunities if her legal husband is infertile or unattractive. It gives children, in essence, a *de facto* father and a *de iure* father: similar arrangements have been proven to suppress child mortality.¹⁰³

The stories surrounding the foundation of the Spartan colony Taras in Italy in the late eighth century attest to allo-insemination that, if we can penetrate the fog of references, raised fertility in a period of dangerous *oliganthropia*. Aristotle and, through Strabo the fifth-century historian Antiokhos, and Ephoros are our sources for it. The Spartiates had been warring in Messenia for many years. In Antiokhos' version, the Lakedaimonians who remained in Lakedaimon rather than going to war were condemned to the status of helots and their children were inexplicably called Partheniai, "virgin-born." In Ephoros' version, this did not happen; instead, the Spartiates' absence from their wives during the long war led to subreplacement fertility; as the Messenians were reproducing well, a threat to the Spartan state loomed. The youngest Spartiates in the war, who unlike the older ones had not taken an oath to fight until Messenia was destroyed, were sent to Sparta to inseminate the Spartiate women whose husbands were still at the battlefield. The

¹⁰⁰ Calame 2001, 245-6.

¹⁰¹ Hrdy 1999 provides ethnographic information and theoretical insights.

¹⁰² X. *L.P.* 1.7, Plut. *Lyk.* 15.6-10.

¹⁰³ Hrdy 1999.

children of this *ad hoc* cohabitation were called Partheniai.¹⁰⁴ Twenty years were required to conquer Messenia. Upon returning to Sparta, the Spartiates did not honor the Partheniai equally with other citizens, on the grounds that they had not been born within normal marriages. The Partheniai teamed up with the helots in a plot against the “Lakedaimonians”; the tension was relieved only when a colony was established in Italy for the Partheniai.¹⁰⁵

The story’s significance in terms of reproductive reforms and fertility is difficult to assess and may be sequentially topsy-turvy, but suggests a tradition that eighth-century Archaic Spartiates practiced modifications to normal Greek practices of monogamy which boosted fertility to the point of requiring a colony overseas to dispose of it. Despite what seem to be layers of myth, Taras was a real city with close, archaeologically-attested cultural connections to Sparta, established in the late eighth century, shortly after the period in which the First Messenian War is dated. The story of Taras, then, is evidence from at least the fourth century of both an eighth century population increase and of an ancient tradition of Spartiate allo-insemination.¹⁰⁶

The association of alloparenting with high fertility is fairly straightforward. However, the Spartiate practice of the exposure of infants considered unfit seems counterproductive to increased fertility. In fact, provided that the parents are determined to have more children, the opposite is true. Exposure was restricted to infant males who were judged unfit for rearing. It appears only in Plutarch’s *Lykourgos*, a late source.¹⁰⁷ Xenophon’s neglect of this topic was probably due not to its late appearance in Spartan history but to his own *lakonophilia*: for his entire *Politeia of the Lakedaimonians* lauds that society until the disillusioned fourteenth chapter.¹⁰⁸ Thus it is difficult to imagine that child-exposure was regarded as sufficiently admirable to suit his often hagiographic portrait of the Spartiate system.¹⁰⁹ Plutarch’s lateness need not entertain suspicions of

¹⁰⁴ An interestingly similar story concerns the Scythians in Herodotos 4.1-4; when the Scythian men are gone from home for 28 years destroying the Median empire, their wives have children with their blind slaves. The Argive oliganthropia in Herodotos 6.83 pressures them to allow slaves to take over offices of government, after which they rise up against their masters; no children are listed as produced, though.

¹⁰⁵ Aristotle *Pol.* 1306b29, Strabo 6.3.2-3. (Cf. Paus. 10.10, 3.12.) The colony was settled on an old Iapygian site. See Coldstream 2003, 239 for pottery evidence.

¹⁰⁶ More on this colony is provided in e.g. Jeffery 1961, 279-84; Dunbabin 1968, 28-32; Graham 1982, 112f; Nafissi 1999; Malkin 2002; Coldstream 2003, 239.

¹⁰⁷ Plut. *Lyk.* 16.1-2. Reliability of this passage in Plutarch is usually not doubted (Hoffmann 392); Huys connects it to a utopian philosophical tradition but believes it was real (1997, 57-8). A representative statement is found in Schmidt 1983/1984, 134: “Auch wenn sonst kein überlieferter Autor dergleichen über Sparta berichtet, und auch wenn der Text des Plutarch nicht ohne Probleme ist, kann doch ein historischer Kern des Berichts prinzipiell nicht angezweifelt werden.” At most, claims have been made by moderns that the practice cannot be retrojected into the deep Spartan past when the attestation is so late, and that it more likely comes from the Hellenistic period. Yet it is most unlikely that this practice comes from either the Hellenistic or the Classical period, as both periods saw dangerously low population for the Spartiates, seeming much more likely to have inspired a thrust to keep as many infants alive as possible than a selection from the total (low) number. Generally, Reynolds and Tanner 1995 ch. 5; Schalk and Hansen 2000, a sociobiological look; Liston and Papadopoulos 2004; Lewis 2006, 87 – 96.

¹⁰⁸ But see Humble 2004.

¹⁰⁹ The social mechanics of exposure in general – in any society that conducts the decision publicly -- are difficult to imagine, as Schmidt (1983/1984, 135) notes: “Nun ist es zwar nicht vorstellbar, dass

broad fictiveness. His citations in *Lykourgos* indicate that he consulted a huge number of sources, including early ones. Mythical elements need not invalidate the whole.

When considering exposure's demographic effects, we must remember that deformed or even weak males, and those considered by their society to be unfit in some other serious fashion, are unlikely to reproduce for several reasons. Low birth weight indicates generally poor health. Certain weaknesses, such as respiratory ailments which are not very difficult to remedy today, may in preindustrial societies lead to an inability to fight infection, and thus to premature death. Certain deformities in a society wherein all males must serve in the military will for obvious reasons reduce status and obstruct reproductive success. In the first half of the classical period, the prince Agesilaos was not exposed, although he was lame in one leg and was unusually short; but this was probably due either to his royalty, to his lameness being acquired rather than a birth defect, or to the fact he was born only some 20 years after the great earthquake(s) of the mid-460s when population was very low.¹¹⁰

Early exposure of such infants ensures that an infant who is unlikely to reproduce will not monopolize an important percentage of its parents' and alloparents' resources, attention, energy, and time (that is, their parental investment). Its immediate death allows the mother to become pregnant again much sooner than she would if she tried to raise the child, considering, at the very least, the fertility suppression that accompanies lactation: two or more years of lowered fertility in a demographic regime in which each woman's reproductive years are ticking away rapidly and six children per woman are required to maintain population homeostasis. Even in a society in which child-rearing tasks are largely communal, a good portion of a mother's time and effort will be monopolized for several more years until the child dies, or for twenty years until the child grows up. Gross family fertility and consequently gross societal fertility are in fact enhanced by the expedient exposure of children unlikely to reproduce. Exposure will begin to become a problem when population declines to a certain level. In the Archaic period, the Spartiate population had not declined yet. One practice cited might assist in the goal of frequent conception: Spartiate men and their wives are not to grow tired of each other through over-familiarity but are to see each other more rarely, presumably resulting in high levels of sexual excitement and vigorous copulation upon their rare meetings.¹¹¹

Verwandte und Freunde zu einem Fest geladen werden, dessen Höhepunkt der Beschluss wäre, ein Kind nicht aufzuziehen."

¹¹⁰ In other words, that population shortage had relaxed the rules somewhat. Schmidt 1983/4, 134 completely ignores this possibility, proffering only two options to how the normal rule of exposure of crippled infants could be avoided for Agesilaos: "Entweder galt also das von Plutarch überlieferte Gesetz nicht für Mitgleider der spartanischen Königsfamilien, oder es galt damals überhaupt nicht." The omission is strange. Nigel Kennell in a conversation with me in Athens in May 2010 used the fact that Agesilaos was not exposed to argue that exposure of deformed infants did not occur before the Hellenistic period; this cannot be sustained for the reasons I have here given, and X. H. 3.3.3 supports an injury acquired, perhaps in childhood, rather than a birth defect: *prosptaisas tis kholeusai* means "someone who, after having had an accident, should become lame."

¹¹¹ X. L. P. 1.5.

The Spartiate emphasis on martial virtues also necessitated the exposure of merely weak-looking infants.¹¹² We of course must confront the question of whether it is possible to estimate future general health and strength at birth. High birth weight is the closest proxy for this. If this practice is adhered to for a sufficient amount of time, certain hereditary illnesses (as opposed to deformities caused by a mishap in one or more of the iterations during fetal development) will become less frequent within a population. Conversely, characteristics considered desirable by the breeders will become more frequent in the breeding pool. Clearly this takes a great deal of time to effect anything. Plutarch says that the whim of individual parents was not the deciding factor for the decision to expose the infant, but decisions were relegated to the *presbutatoi ton phuleton* or elders of the tribes, probably ensuring more long-term consistency, objectivity, and “professionalism” in the decisions for exposure.¹¹³ If only offspring possessing particular characteristics (and not possessing others) are given sufficient parental investment up until they themselves are able to produce children, whatever hereditary material is conducive to these characteristics will proliferate given a closed or nearly closed breeding pool, and the Greeks in general were quite endogamous. However, this discussion has shifted from population to eugenics, and eugenics is properly the theme of the next section.

Eugenic mechanisms in Spartiate society

Xenophon’s *Politeia of the Lakedaimonians* tells us much about the system of inducements characterizing the Spartiate demographic regime. Several objections may be raised against reliance upon this account. First, it can be argued that Xenophon’s account, because later than Herodotos, is thus more susceptible to anachronistically including later changes to the Spartiate constitution. Yet if Herodotos wrote around 425, as most scholars think, then Xenophon’s work may well have been written only a generation or so after Herodotos’ history.¹¹⁴ While Xenophon’s account of the Lykourgan reforms is a more detailed description, this probably has less to do with an inclusion of new Spartiate customs nonexistent during and before Herodotos’ time than with his superior position as to informants: he, unlike Herodotos, campaigned with Spartiates in Asia Minor, was close friends with various royal personages who probably had excellent access to information, and was something of an honorary citizen at Sparta. Xenophon also had set about writing a description of the lifeways of the Lakedaimonians, rather than dispersing notes on Spartan

¹¹² Plut. *Lyk.* 16.2.

¹¹³ If I understand him correctly, Huys oddly concludes that since parents make exposure decisions in most anthropologically studied “primitive tribes” practicing infanticide, therefore Plutarch must be incorrect to say that Sparta’s infanticides were community-controlled; he ignores the fact that Sparta was a state, and the tribes he discusses are pre-state (1997, 58).

¹¹⁴ Moore 1986 (1975), 71 - 72 not unreasonably tightens the date to 396 – 383 for the composition of this treatise: for only some time after 396 did Xenophon settle in Sparta, and in 383 the Spartiates censured Phoibidas treacherously taking the Kadmeia in Thebes, but they kept hold of it anyway, which Moore argues would have gone against Xenophon’s conception of Spartiate honor. Likely the disillusioned chapter of the treatise was written later, after 371, which I discuss a few chapters hence. The entire discussion of the dating of this document in Moore 71 – 73 is well-reasoned and seems highly plausible to me.

history throughout longer treatises on larger subjects as Herodotos, Thoukydides, Plato, and Aristotle had. Finally, his residence and connections would have been more likely to give him access to whatever state documents the Spartans possessed, and both Boring and Millender have separately and convincingly argued that these would have been considerable, particularly in terms of treaties, king lists, and victor lists, stored in the houses of the Pythioi, in the kings' houses, and in the temple at Amyklai.¹¹⁵

It could also be argued that Xenophon's account may be less trustworthy because of his over-readiness to believe that Lykourgos completed all these reforms in one fell swoop. It is true that there seems to be a general human tendency to aetiologize a society's customs and attribute them to a single reformer. Yet having looked at other reformers of societies such as Calvin and Hutter, and even the vast and far-reaching ethnic reform of Kleisthenes, and that probable for Solon, if there is one thing we *can* be sure about, it is that we *cannot* be certain that many of the Lykourgan reforms were *not* instituted in one period. We cannot be sure that a given practice is indeed recent. Again, in attributing everything to Lykourgos, Xenophon may err too much in attributing *intentionality* to every aspect of this demographic regime. Nevertheless, what matters is their *functionality* and how they impacted Sparta's population history.¹¹⁶

A last charge brought up against Xenophon is his alleged *general inferiority* to Thoukydides, and hence his consequent unreliability. Whitby, for example, suggests that perhaps Thoukydides "as an intelligent observer and determined investigator ... might have discovered aspects of Sparta that escaped the notice of visitors like Herodotus or Xenophon," implicitly suggesting as an option for review that Xenophon was not so intelligent or determined.¹¹⁷ While Xenophon's writing may forever be denigrated in comparison to Thoukydides,' it is dubious that Thoukydides' tenacious perceptiveness allowed him to penetrate Sparta's *arcana imperii* better than Xenophon did.¹¹⁸ Xenophon's perhaps simpler bent as an educated military cavalry officer and gentleman farmer evidently assisted him in seeing a most important aspect of the Spartiate system.

As one might expect from a soldier who bred and raised horses, Xenophon notices and analyzes the Lykourgan *kosmos* precisely as a eugenic breeding program, a structure of selective pressures, creating a demographic regime very different from those of surrounding states. Xenophon begins (1.1) in words that clearly echo the r – K spectrum from biology which describes the "particular strategies of survival and reproduction which translate to potential and effective growth rates of varying velocity."¹¹⁹ The strategies are conceptualized in simplified fashion as a spectrum going from r to K. On the r end of the spectrum are "vital strategies" identified by biologists of organisms such as, most notably, insects, and also fish and some mammals, primarily small rodents, who "generally live in unstable environments and take advantage of favorable periods (annually or seasonally) to

¹¹⁵ Boring 1979, Millender 2001. These essential works on Spartan literacy collect and reasonably interpret all the available evidence to argue for broadly literate Spartiates.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Finley 1975, 163: "It was not a system that somehow just evolved."

¹¹⁷ Whitby 1994, 108.

¹¹⁸ Whitby 1994, 109.

¹¹⁹ Quotes in the "r-K" section are from Livi-Bacci 2008, 2f. Reznick *et al.* 2002, 1510 gives a comparable table of correlates from r – K selection.

reproduce prolifically, even though the probability of offspring survival is small”: for these animals, “life is a lottery and it makes sense to buy many tickets.” The K end of the spectrum consists of the strategies of mammals, mostly larger ones, and some birds who live in habitats which, though stable, are

populated with competitors, predators, and parasites. K-strategy organisms are forced by selective and environmental pressure to compete for survival, which in turn requires considerable investment of time and energy for the raising of offspring. This investment is only possible if the number of offspring is small.¹²⁰

All humans are on the K end of the spectrum compared to other animals. However, different human cultures lie between (as it were) low K and high K. Xenophon assigns the Spartiates presumably to the high K end of the spectrum: they have become the most powerful and famous state in Greece, because although by the early fourth century they come to have one of the lowest populations amongst the Greeks (1.1), their customs of life (*epitedeumata*) involve close, intense training, *i.e.* high levels of parental (and societal) investment.

Fittingly, Xenophon starts his account with *teknopoiia*, the production of offspring (1.3), a foregrounding likely resulting from the Spartiates’ population problems in Xenophon’s time.¹²¹ The importance of mothers is emphasized first. Whereas in other cities females are relegated to the quiet spinning of wool, in Sparta the garments are produced by slaves so that Spartan girls can undergo athletic training and receive more food than in other Greek states, particularly when pregnant. The Lykourgan regime thus trains females for physical strength and ensures nutrition to developing fetuses.¹²² The young women also competed against each other in athletic contests. It seems plausible that the winners of the contests gained respect and thus the best reproductive opportunities. This results in a system of selective reproduction for females: if this is correct, then the Lykourgan regime not only trained females for physical strength, but bred them for it as well. Female figurines running and supporting mirrors starting in the sixth century show a particular body type which may celebrate this physical ideal, as may the dances associated with the seventh-century Spartan poet Alkman’s choral maiden-songs, wedding-songs, hymns, and erotic works.¹²³

Some rules are intended to be eugenic but, strictly speaking, only benefit the *paideia* of the offspring in non-eugenic ways. A male must marry before he gets old. Some “eugenic” folk-wisdom presumably lies behind this rule, but reproductive effects are inevitable if it is followed, and the Spartan reputation for obedience is of course great. Males thus are less likely to die before their children are fully raised and will have more opportunity to invest in their offspring than if they marry around age 50 and die when their offspring are still children. They can thus be present for the active care of their grandchildren, further increasing their reproductive success by suppressing mortality.¹²⁴ This of course applies not only to their own children and grandchildren but to the other

¹²⁰ For application of the r – K spectrum to analyze human societies, see also MacDonald 2002, Rushton 1997; Reznick *et al.* 2002 give a sober overview of the rehabilitation of this theory from its detractors.

¹²¹ Cartledge 2001, 117.

¹²² X. H. 1.3; cf. Garnsey 1999, 104.

¹²³ Mirrors: Stewart 1997. Alkman: Calame 2001, Ferrari 2008.

¹²⁴ Hrdy 1999’s “grandmother hypothesis” has analogical relevance.

Spartiate children upon whom they perform alloparenting, and the offspring of those children.

Other practices attested by Xenophon have at least a highly eugenic intention and perhaps a eugenic effect. A husband may introduce to his wife, for reproductive purposes, any man whose *soma* (body) and *psykhe* he admires.¹²⁵ This was discussed earlier, but only as it related to alloparenting, not in a eugenic context. The inclusion of *soma* could not be more clear: these are physically strong and attractive men.¹²⁶ The *psykhe* here surely means “courage.”¹²⁷ It is the martial virtues that are being emphasized in this regime. Similarly, any good man could have children by another man’s wife if her husband approved, provided the first man was *gennaios*, “well-bred,” certainly a eugenic term in this context.¹²⁸ The fact that children produced outside of normal marriage may make no inheritance claims on the parents means that a Spartiate husband will be less disinclined to allow this breeding experiment to take place than otherwise.¹²⁹ Although, Xenophon concludes on the subject, Lykourgan reproductive customs are the opposite of other cities’ customs, “anyone can decide for himself whether men in Sparta differ from others in terms of size (*megethos*) and strength (*iskhus*).” It is unimaginable that Xenophon would have asked a rhetorical question whose answer was intended to be negative in the overwhelmingly encomiastic portion of this treatise. Estimating the number of generations required for the mechanisms described in his text to take effect, is difficult: we cannot know what percentage of Spartiate males fathered what number of children.

The subject of Spartiate “wife sharing” has endured curious interpretations by modern scholars. Its strictly eugenic grounds have been largely ignored.¹³⁰ Some have plausibly seen the sexual variation thus offered to women as a manifestation of high female status.¹³¹ Some, an arrangement primarily motivated by love and romance.¹³² Sallares in a moment of uncharacteristic implausibility considers Spartiate polygamic reproduction a relic of a primitive, pristine period in which all males and females of the same age group enjoyed free sexual intercourse with each other, and takes this speculation as a base upon which further to posit a low number of sexually transmitted diseases in

¹²⁵ X. L. P. 1.7; horse- and dog-breeding comparanda in Plut. *Lyk.* 15.8-9.

¹²⁶ The emphasis on the importance of citizens being fine physical specimens will continue into the Hellenistic period, discussed in detail a few chapters hence.

¹²⁷ Cf. its usage in Xenophon *Kyropaideia* 6.2.33, *Oikonomos* 21.3. If someone insists it means something more like “spirit,” we would have to ask what sort of spirit a Spartiate husband would admire: if we trust our texts, it would be a good Spartiate spirit, which is, again, foremostly courageous, and secondarily obedient, loyal to the state, and enduring.

¹²⁸ I consider this definition far more likely, given the context of biological reproduction that Xenophon discusses here, than anything like “high-minded.” Xenophon also uses it to mean well-bred in *Kyropaideia* 1.4.15 in a discussion of animals.

¹²⁹ Presumably Spartiate obedience would help to overcome natural jealousy; this complex of issues will be discussed in Chapter 3.

¹³⁰ A reasonable introduction to the distaste for eugenic thinking in the twentieth-century West is given by Gillette 2007, also arguing plausibly that this distaste directly caused the public and academic reaction to postwar sociobiological thought.

¹³¹ Blundell 1995, 154.

¹³² Kunstler 1987.

antiquity.¹³³ Hodkinson, very typically in his concentration on inheritance and wealth maintenance as the motor behind many social arrangements, plausibly sees it as a “common endeavour by the two men and the woman to increase both their individual influence and that of the kin group without creating additional drains on household resources” and points out that uterine half-sibling marriage may then occur between the offspring of these unions, linking the inheritance of both houses.¹³⁴ However, he ignores the clear emphasis on the eugenic nature of the selection of the persons who are to reproduce. Pomeroy, invoking primatologist and sociobiologist Sarah Hrdy, emphasizes the practice’s indubitable ultimate adaptive goal, viewing it most credibly from the perspective of the genetic interests of the female Spartiate and noting that the wife benefits genetically from producing able offspring.¹³⁵ The benefit is clear: the woman’s genes will be more likely to continue than they will if her offspring are weak, of quality poor enough to be unlikely to reproduce, incapable of attracting a mate, or nonexistent.¹³⁶

A very deliberate, elaborate system of *paideia* for Spartiate boys is described next by Xenophon.¹³⁷ Boys are trained by a *paidonomos* who furnishes physical punishments for improper behavior, “as a result of which, deference and obedience are found to a high degree there.” The boys are physically and emotionally hardened, including their feet, prepared for both cold and heat, given such rations as to become accustomed to working hard without needing to eat, given the sorts of food to make them tall and muscular.¹³⁸ “Lean rations” cannot mean a poor diet. Rather, it must be meant to contrast with the fatty and unhealthy foods that other aristocratic children received, otherwise it would not have made Spartiates tall and muscular. It must be a good diet free from unhealthy foods and one intended to promote, again, obedience and restraint.¹³⁹ It will accustom them to eating

¹³³ Sallares 1991, 169.

¹³⁴ Hodkinson 2004, 120. Such a practice should be seen as part of an array of household inheritance-retention strategies such as the half-sibling marriage described in Huebner 2007. Hodkinson’s belief that all Spartiate females inherited property has the ramification that the woman may have been wealthier than the men, and her wealth may have been necessary for their *sussita*-contributions. He sees a growing number of polyandrous arrangements occurring over time (2004, 120 – 121). But we would expect to hear of more of these.

¹³⁵ Pomeroy 2002, 39. Cf chapters 2 and 3 in general. Cf. Gottschall 2008, Chapter 6, esp. 108 – 114.

¹³⁶ Other references to careful marriages for eugenic purposes: Plut. *Lys.* 30.5: “for there was, as it seems, in Sparta a penalty for being unmarried, for marrying late, and also for *kakogamiou*, and to this they attached especially persons who, instead of seeking alliance with the good (*agathoi*) people and their own *oikeioi*, with instead the rich.”

¹³⁷ X. *L.P.* 2 and 5. Sallares 1991, 165 plausibly translates the word *paideia* as “socialization” but it usually slightly more narrowly means education or training.

¹³⁸ Xenophon is very sensitive to how training actually works, and what its effects are. Cf. Xenophon *Hipparkhikos* 1.4: “And it is necessary to oversee their feet, in order that they can be ridden on rough terrain, knowing that should they suffer when they are driven, they are useless.” More advice on hooves in 1.16. The plainness of the Spartiate diet is no obstacle to height or nutrition, as Steckel 2009, 9 notes regarding Irish diets.

¹³⁹ It is inconceivable that the 8,000 square kilometers of land in Lakonia and Messenia filled with helot farmers would have resulted in poor nutrition for the aristocrats in control of this land. The Spartan black broth was clearly boring but highly nutritious. Cf. Xen. *Hipparkhikos* 1.3 concerning feeding horses the right food to be able to tolerate hard work, and the necessity of seeing to it that the horses are obedient, “for disobedient ones assist [our] enemies more than [our] friends.”

on campaign: long marches through terrain whose inhabitants vary widely in terms of their friendliness to foreign armies undoubtedly produce conditions of gustatory privation. The diet may weed out persons who are genetically prone to obesity as well, and/or those whose metabolic systems are inefficient.¹⁴⁰ At the end of 5, echoing again 1 and 2, Xenophon states once more that all this restraint and pruning has made the Spartiates different from other peoples: “for to me, [Lykourgos] again seems to not have erred in this matter. For someone could not find – easily, at least – persons healthier nor more capable with their bodies than the Spartiates” (5.9). Theoretically speaking, at least, the individuals who flourish will be the ones who are best able to tolerate this, and metabolic efficiency will remain in the breeding pool.

Success at the *paideia* will depend upon an individual’s physical capacities, skills, and attitude, all of which possess a hereditary component. Xenophon’s plain statement that Spartiates are bigger, stronger, more disciplined, more respectful, and more self-controlled than other Greeks, points to training and probably to directed reproduction. As with horses, directed breeding and training surely overlap in terms of effects. Although the greatest determinant upon height is net diet, nevertheless size, muscularity, and especially reaction time clearly have hereditary roots, the first two in terms of inherited capacity as fulfilled by (for size) nutrition and (for strength) training.¹⁴¹ And it is safe to assume that some elements of self-control are hereditary.¹⁴² The Spartiate displaying this trait will be prized more highly, and social success will presumably lead him to reproduce more. If self-control possesses hereditary elements, it will eventually become more frequent in a relatively closed population given sufficient time. Xenophon is here making a genetic observation.¹⁴³

Moore complains that Xenophon praises the systems of competition he describes “without considering that there must have been losers as well as winners.”¹⁴⁴ But the sifting of losers from winners was the *point* of the Lykourgan system. Its end result was the enforcement of differential reproduction. The mechanisms work as follows. Xenophon says that Lykourgos ἐνόμιζεν, εἰ καὶ τοὺς ἡβώντας συμβάλλοι εἰς ἕρην περὶ ἀρετῆς, οὕτως ἂν καὶ τοὺς ἐπὶ πλείστον ἀφικνεῖσθαι ἀνδραγαθίας: he “believed that if he could match the young men together in competition for excellence, in this way they would come to the the peak of noble masculinity” (4.2). ἐπὶ πλείστον can mean simply “to the peak,” and the *toutous* preceding it could logically mean that the youths themselves will be brought “to the greatest extent” of ἀνδραγαθία or valor.

But ἐπὶ πλείστον may also mean “to the greatest extent in time,” and this may mean something larger, with τοὺς instead meaning not these youths in particular, but, as it is used arguably throughout the text, the Spartiates in general. Under this

¹⁴⁰ On selection for metabolic efficiency, see Harpending and Cochran 2009, 103. Training in survival skills makes Spartiates able to live off the land by stealing if necessary, a militarily useful skill. Boys are punished only if caught.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Steckel 2009 on the importance of nutrition for height and on height as a measure of general health.

¹⁴² The relevant research is on “time preference.” Some of this is discussed in Clark 2007.

¹⁴³ Horses are selected for reproduction if they display obedience in very analogous section of Xenophon’s *Hippiarchikos* 1.4. Vicious horses are rejected in 1.14 – 1.15.

¹⁴⁴ Moore 1986 (1975), 70. Cf. Stewart 1997, 114.

interpretation, “Lykourgos” realizes that by instituting this rivalry, by causing youths to compete for valor, he will bring the Spartiates to a state of ἀνδραγαθία “over the greatest extent of time.” This would look forward to the future Spartiates being brought to this state: the competitions, repeated continuously, will act to mold generation after generation of Spartiates to bring them into ἀνδραγαθία over the greatest extent of time. This interpretation is by no means indisputable, but considering the other concerns for directed reproduction that are quite clearly present in the archaic Spartiate *kosmos*, it is plausible. The logic is that the winners of the contests will enjoy social success and pass on whatever is hereditary in their abilities to their offspring in Sparta.

Conformity to these principles occurs in the selection of the *hippeis*, who despite their name are an elite infantry group in Sparta. The Ephors pick out three men in their prime (*akmazontai*), known as the Hippagretai. These three pick out a hundred men, rejecting those outside the hundred and giving reasons for the acceptance and the rejection, a tight system of criticism and social control. The rejected men keep watch on the selected men in order to be able to “out” them for any lapses of honor. This creates *eris* or strife, says Xenophon in a mode highly reminiscent of Hesiod’s description of the two kinds of Strife in the city, a harmful one and one that encourages men to better themselves through competition.¹⁴⁵ Hesiod says that this second strife is most loved by the gods and most beneficial to the polis, for both the winners and the losers vie to protect the polis as well as they can.

The winners reproduce more, for in this culture of extreme focus on honor and rank, they presumably receive the best marriage options and they are the ones selected for their *soma* and *psykhē* by other males to inseminate their wives. Even if Xenophon is wrong or has lied or exaggerated about allo-insemination, the general picture still stands. Status in most societies correlates with wealth, and as is generally true in pre-industrial demographic regimes, the wealthy reproduce more, and when they do not reproduce more, they have more resources to invest in the offspring that they do have. They are also most able to indulge in what Scheidel calls “marginal reproductive success” in monogamous societies: that is, reproduction with prostitutes, concubines, slaves, impoverished women, and in the case of the Spartiates, certainly perioikoi, helots, and of course, most importantly with the wives of their comrades who ask them to – without chipping away at any inheritance.¹⁴⁶

On the converse, the penalties attached to failure are immense. Small-scale failure at living up to the Spartiate ideals incurs moderate humiliation producing the desire to succeed.¹⁴⁷ The penalties for repeated or severe failure are worse. They include social death, humiliation, physical harm, and worse. Anyone showing cowardice in war is

¹⁴⁵ *Works and Days* 11 – 24. Spartan competitiveness is also discussed well in Plut. *Ag.* 5.3-4.

¹⁴⁶ Scheidel 2009a; Hodkinson 1997a is essential, although I am dubious about some of his conclusions on e.g. the positive, cooperative emotional tenor of the Spartiate household wherein several females dwelling there, of various social statuses, including the lawful wife, coexist as mothers of children by the male head of the household: cf. evolutionary-theoretic, resource-theoretic, and anthropological comparanda in Hrdy 2009, 251-9.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Plut. *Lys.* 2.2: “for they desire straightaway from the get-go that their boys be sensitive to their reputation, be distressed by recriminations, and be exalted when they are praised, and the one who does not care and is unmoved by these matters is scorned as idle and unambitious for *arete*.”

disrespected, shunned, must step out of the way of young men in the street, and “he must suffer a wifeless hearth, and simultaneously pay the penalty for being a bachelor” (9.5). Tyrtaios’ poetry confirms this strikingly, as we will see below; this fact supports the antiquity of this system. It stretches back at least to Tyrtaios’ time, the seventh century and if Tyrtaios did not create this cultural system but only elaborated it, then we have no other choice but to assume that it is older than him. Such ostracism debar a man like this from magistracies, which Millender argues were occupied by a wide range of Spartiates.¹⁴⁸ The man is even beaten by his betters, another harsh penalty for not living up to the requirements of the society.¹⁴⁹

It is reasonable to assume that the undesirables largely drop out of the breeding pool by no longer becoming actively involved in reproduction, at least not with Spartiate wives.¹⁵⁰ Theoretically speaking, if this process continued for sufficient generations, it would contribute to the reduction of certain hereditary characteristics from the Spartiate *genos*. The process would theoretically work along with exposure. If the cowards remained in Sparta, they became what are referred to by Xenophon in his *Hellenika* as the “inferiors” or *hypomeiones*: they are “no longer reckoned among the *homoioi*” in *Politeia of the Lakedaemonians* 10.7. Plutarch claims that they must walk around in dirty garments with half their beards shaved.¹⁵¹ This contrasts with the Spartiate practice of keeping one’s hair long and lustrous.¹⁵² And in 9.6, Xenophon hints at something even more severe among the Spartiates who fall out this way: they commit suicide, a permanent removal from the breeding pool.¹⁵³ If this is true, and again, if it lasted long enough, then the efficiency of Spartiate social shame in pursuit of eugenic effects without state murder is remarkable.

Conclusions

Clearly some Spartiate customs did change even in the period we know of. For example, there is the new law that Spartan kings could not campaign together, attested in Herodotos as occurring in 506 BC.¹⁵⁴ This fact, however, does not tell us that the Spartiate *kosmos* was an ever-changing thing. Rather, it tells us that Sparta was a real society which, as real societies do, changed its laws from time to time, and that Herodotos, at least, was aware of this. Further, it tell us both that not all Spartan customs were invisible to interested ancient scholars, and that not all ancient scholars were rendered blind by a “mirage” of an immutable system.

¹⁴⁸ Millender 2001. Plutarch *Agesilaos* 30 states that cowards were prevented from holding any magistracy.

¹⁴⁹ Picked up by Plutarch in *Agesilaos* 30.3: anyone may strike a coward any time.

¹⁵⁰ Plutarch *Agesilaos* 30.3 states this explicitly.

¹⁵¹ *Agesilaos* 30.3.

¹⁵² Xenophon *Lak. Pol.* 11.3. Cf. Aristotle *Rhet.* 1367a30-2. This is clearly a sociobiological analogue to the peacock tail. Van Wees 2006, 130 gives a different view.

¹⁵³ Cf. Hdt. 1.82.8 for suicide by shame of the Spartiate Othryades, left alive after the “Battle of the Champions” against Argos; Thouk. 2.92 for the Spartiate Timokrates, killing himself presumably to avoid shame when his ship is destroyed by the Athenians.

¹⁵⁴ Bearzot 2004, Carlier 2004.

This chapter began with the question of how Sparta attained its notable and long-lasting success amidst many Peloponnesian states. Data evaluation is difficult, but cultural factors, meaning the unusual set of *nomoi* including not only military but also reproductive practices installed under the name of Lykourgos, have been taken seriously as one determinant for this success. Archaeological evidence supports a level of Archaic-era luxury which does not necessarily conflict with many notions of Spartan culture, and which tapers into artistic austerity in the late Archaic period. The notion that Sparta was not particularly different from other Greek states is rejected. The flourishing of early Sparta after a period of turmoil has been rehabilitated, and evidence considered for the plausibility of an early rather than late installation of the Lykourgan regime, thus marking Sparta as a precocious example of state organization in Greece, which is supported by its attainment of great power early. Comparative evidence from a historical society has been used to postulate the conceivable effects of reproductive practices attested for the Spartiates. The theoretical aspects of Sparta's reproductive practices have been examined in terms of eugenic effects.

The next chapter continues the examination of Archaic Sparta by considering the poet Tyrtaios, whose exhortative songs strongly bolstered the Lykourgan system of incentives and disincentives for behavior and reproduction.

Chapter 2

Tyrtaios, altruism, and eugenic effects

Tyrtaios

The Tyrtaian poetic corpus with its exhortations to altruistic behavior toward the state formed one of the pillars of the Spartiate system alongside several of the elements of what is called the Lykourgan regime.¹ Tyrtaios did not invent the altruistic modality audible in his songs but emphasized and systematized it in an extraordinarily clear way. His martial elegies formed a unified argument praising and demanding altruistic behavior of Spartiate hoplites by describing the strongest imaginable incentives for it and disincentives against it. This argument's strength reflected and pushed an ethic of social solidarity and willingness to risk death for the polis on an individual and collective level. Only later do we see other poleis, such as Athens in works such as Perikles' Funeral Oration, utilizing similar incentives to motivate their citizens to risk their lives for the polis. It seems that Sparta was precocious in this ability to motivate its citizen soldiers, and this precociousness probably helps to explain its quite unique acquisition of land and ability to dominate a group of subjects of a numerical size unparalleled in the Archaic Greek world.²

In this chapter these themes in many of his poems are explained, with particular attention to Fragment 10 in which they are represented and developed especially fully. I argue that Tyrtaios' ideological system of incentives and disincentives worked hand in hand with the Lykourgan eugenic system. I finish by looking at another endogamous group, the Ashkenazi Jews, and the evidence for a somewhat analogous, although measurable, alteration in their *genos* as evidently aimed for by the intertwined complex of Lykourgos and Tyrtaios. This supports, although it does not prove, the raising of the date of the installation of eugenic elements of the Lykourgan regime from the currently popular sixth century.

Modern scholarship generally concurs that Tyrtaios is more likely to have lived as a human being than Lykourgos, and the extant fragments of his work are now generally all regarded as genuine.³ The traditions surrounding him are unverifiable; one does not list them because one believes them, but in order to report them duly.⁴ Some sources accord him an Athenian birth, but the lateness of the sources stating this, as well as the absence in Tyrtaios' poetry of any reference whatsoever to a non-Spartan origin, render it dubious.⁵

¹ Evidence for Tyrtaios' pervasive influence will be discussed below.

² Numerical size: Lakonia and Messenia are estimated by survey archaeologists to have held some 200,000 – 250,000 inhabitants in total of all sexes and ages in the early fifth century, of which only 8,000 were adult Spartiate males: although different grades of subjection must of course be recognized between helots and perioikoi, the Spartiates were still a dominant force over both. Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 209.

³ Fuqua 1981, 215.

⁴ Bowra 1938. Podlecki 1984, chapter 4. Lefkowitz 1981.

⁵ Tyrtaios as Athenian originally who came to Sparta: all testimonia are somewhat late and may exhibit a pro-Athenian bias. Plato *Laws* 1.629a-b including scholiast on the passage. Bowra writes that Plato "may well have invented [this story] in his deep desire to find an ancient connection between Athens and Sparta and so secure a historical justification for his belief that the ideal state would be a mixture of the two" (1938, 41).

Ancient testimonia state that he lived during the Second Messenian War, which is thought to have taken place at some point in the seventh century.⁶ The Suda gives him a *floruit* of the 35th Olympiad (640 – 637).⁷ His poetry references a present war, and a previous war against the Messenians thought to have occurred in the late eighth century. Messenians of the previous war are indeed mentioned in fragment 5; and in fragment 23.6, Messenians are mentioned again in a war context, but it is unknown whether the poem references a previous or a present war.⁸

According to Spartan tradition, victory in these conflicts allowed the Spartiates to subjugate the Messenians and force them to be their helots or serfs, expanding Spartan territory and allowing for Spartiates to never need to spin wool, farm, produce any goods, or do any work outside of fighting and hunting again.⁹ Spartan tradition is confirmed in this case. The Messenians disappear from the Olympic victor list after 736.¹⁰ Archaeological evidence supports Messenian suppression: Messenia's population seems to have frozen and then decreased in size in the eighth century.¹¹ Its economically underdeveloped status during the Archaic period contrasts both with its great fertility and population in the Bronze Age as well as after its liberation in 369, and with Archaic age population growth elsewhere in Greece. This fits well with a lack of political organization and is consistent with domination from elsewhere. The domination was not only military and economically exploitative, but apparently cultural: Messenian cult forms bear great Spartan influence.¹²

The Suda, admittedly a late source, says that Tyrtaios wrote a *politeia* for the Lakedaimonians.¹³ How *politeia* should be taken in this context is uncertain, but the term

Lykourgos *In Leocratem* 106. Philodemos *de musica* 17 (p. 28 Kemke). Diodoros 8.27.1-2m 15.66.3. Pausanias 4.15.6. Strabo 8.4.10. All listed in Gerber 1999, who gives a few more testimonia as well. Fränkel probably is right to discard the story: "Apparently it could not be admitted that the Spartans had produced a poet" (1973, 153). Thales and Terpander are also poets thought to come from elsewhere to Sparta, the former from Crete (Gortyn) and the latter, Lesbos. In Plutarch *Lykourgos* 4.2-3, Thales also is brought to quell civil strife with his songs. Forrest plausibly argues that the entire idea that Spartan poets came from Athens was Athenian propaganda (1963, 162 – 165).

⁶ Tyrtaios as connected to the Second Messenian War, or to some war with the Messenians: all in Gerber 1999. Suda 4.610.5 Adler. Aristotle *Pol.* 5.6.1306b36 says only that Tyrtaios' poem *Eunomia* says that aristocratic factions arose during the Messenian War. Diodoros 8.27.1-2 says that after the Spartiates were defeated by the Messenians, they received a *hegemon* from the Athenians at Delphic behest. Strabo 6.3.3, 8.4.10. Pausanias 4.14.4-5. Athenaios 14.630f, citing Philokhoros. Suda says that the Spartiates razed Messene and put its inhabitants among the Helots. Scholiast on Plato *Laws* 629a. Eustratios on Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.8.5.1116a36 (*Comm. in Arist. Graeca* xx.165.1).

⁷ But see Shaw 2003, 144f arguing a late 6th/early 5th century date for Tyrtaios on grounds of radically downdating the Olympic chronicle. She is alone in her dating.

⁸ Luginbill 2002. Cartledge 1979, 101 believes Tyrtaios meant Messenia's central valley specifically, rather than all of Messenia.

⁹ Tyrtaios 7 refers to the subjugation of a population, usually assumed to be the Messenians. Perhaps two wars were needed to fully subjugate this group. I have seen no convincing reason why Tyrtaios' connection with a Second Messenian War should be doubted, but again, see Shaw 2003.

¹⁰ Admittedly this may support, but does not "confirm": cf. Parker 1991; *contra*, Dillon 1995.

¹¹ Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 359.

¹² Luraghi 2008, esp. 132ff.

¹³ Suda iv.610.5 Adler.

politeia strongly suggests that the Suda's sources believed that what Tyrtaios accomplished was a radical adjustment of Spartiate *nomoi*. Earlier sources support a role for him along these lines. Aristotle wrote that Tyrtaios' songs served to unify the Spartiate polis for the war and to quell social conflict or *stasis* amongst the Spartiates themselves during it.¹⁴ While Pollux wrote that Tyrtaios established choruses, some testimonia call him a general.¹⁵ Considering our paucity of evidence, it is safe to consider him a person influential in administration in a government who did not necessarily hold a magistracy, and an advisory role to the Spartiate state is assumed for him.¹⁶

Tyrtaios deliberately pushed the socialization and education of Spartiate boys and men in the most efficient manner imaginable outside of making laws: through elegiac military songs of an innovatorily hortatory nature. He was not the only Spartan poet of the seventh century to have used song to unite Sparta. The Spartan poet Alkman's surviving songs of the same century form part of an elaborate and somewhat analogous system of socialization and education for girls, involving dance and ritualized singing in choruses.¹⁷ It has recently even been argued that Alkman used choral lyric in his *Partheneion* to link the order of the polis, as expressed through the girls' dancing, to the orderly progression of the stars, a playful exhortation to match the harmony of the spheres with the harmony of the state.¹⁸

Modern scholars have argued rather blandly that Tyrtaios's songs advocated concern for the "common good."¹⁹ But the ethic of his poetry is more remarkable than this. Surprisingly, no one has yet made the connection that Walter Benjamin made about Ernst Jünger's writings: that Tyrtaios is not only serving a particular war nor only commemorating a war.²⁰ Tyrtaios is glorifying war itself as a beautiful thing. He aestheticizes it.²¹ Homer's presentation of war is highly aestheticized as well, so that is not the thing that makes Tyrtaios' songs original. Tyrtaios aestheticized war in order to redefine in the starkest imaginable terms the attachment that the good man, the *agathos*, must have toward his community, including death, and this ethos is repeated constantly.

Tyrtaios' advocacy of patriotism in contrast to Homer and the contemporary poets has, according to one scholar, been simplistically overstated in modern scholarship.²² A quantum of truth lies in this; yet Tyrtaios after all is quite different. His songs advocate an extreme ethos of willingness to sacrifice oneself for the polis, the community, the land, and

¹⁴ Aristotle *Pol.* 5.6.1306b36.

¹⁵ Pollux 4.107. Tyrtaios is a *hegemon* in Diodoros 8.27.1-2 and Plutarch *Apophthegmata Lakedaimonion* 230d. He possessed a *strategia* in Athenaios 14.630. Irwin 2005, 21 describes as risible Bowra's notion (138, 70) that Tyrtaios was an officer (although this is not precisely what Bowra states); Irwin does not, however, hazard a positive guess as to Tyrtaios' role.

¹⁶ Advisory role: Scholiast on Plato *Laws* 1.629a-b: "Apollo ordered [the Spartiates] to use [Tyrtaios] as a *symbolos*."

¹⁷ Calame 2001.

¹⁸ Ferrari 2008.

¹⁹ Meier 1998, notably. Also Hodkinson 1997b, 88 who states "the poetry of Tyrtaios also attests to an explicit attempt to propound a new ethic which ... relates excellence in the phalanx to the life of the community and its common good."

²⁰ Nor does Benjamin mention Tyrtaios in this article. Benjamin 1979.

²¹ Cf. Snell 1953, 173f for a different view on the beauty of death in war.

²² Irwin 2005, esp. 28.

for the *genos* and the generations to come. Nowhere else in Greek poetry does so concerted a thrust for this sort of self-sacrifice appear. It is certainly not prominent in Homer, wherein half of the *Iliad* concerns the difficulties of motivating proud Greek kinglets such as Akhilleus to follow the temporary king in chief, Agamemnon.²³ The other “Spartan” poets (also, traditionally immigrants to Sparta) Terpander, Thales, and Alkman barely mention anything martial at all, and did not write elegiacs.²⁴ Kallinos of Ephesos also contemporaneously advocated fighting on behalf of land, children, and wife, but, as is never recognized sufficiently in scholarship, he did not do this in nearly so concentrated a fashion as Tyrtaios did.²⁵ Tyrtaios invented or at least developed and broadcasted, this intensified form of martial exhortation in favor of the community.²⁶

Much evidence indicates the effectiveness of his project.²⁷ He was paid great attention for many generations. The many non-Spartan writers who mention him evidence an influence that swelled beyond the borders of Lakonia: his influence is visible in Xenophanes, Solon of Athens, the Theognidea, certainly Simonides, and echoed in Perikles’ Funeral Oration; later figures whose testimony speaks highly of him include Gorgias, Lysias, Isokrates, Plato, Hypereides, the fourth-century Athenian orator Lykourgos, and later the Romans Horace and Quintilian. Many of Xenophon’s reports of Spartiate customs harmonize closely with Tyrtaios’ ideals. Tyrtaios is mentioned on at least one tombstone all the way in the third century.²⁸ The fifth century Spartiate king Leonidas called Tyrtaios ἀγαθὸς νέων ψυχὰς κακκανῆν, “a good man to inspire the souls of young men.”²⁹ Of later sources, Plutarch shows the high opinion these songs

²³ Homer’s Hektor (written perhaps a generation earlier than Tyrtaios; perhaps, although this opinion is still in the minority, later than Tyrtaios: cf. Irwin 2005, 23, footnote 13) is the exception: tellingly, he is not Greek. *Iliad* 15.494-7; cf. Irwin 2005, 17ff, 26-7; also Greenhalgh 1972. Irwin 2005, 26 gives some instances of “the collective good” in the *Iliad* trumping “the competitive ethos.”

²⁴ Naturally we would expect martial elegies to contain more military references than lyric; nevertheless, some reference to military matters might be expected in lyric. Terpander Fragment 7 is a two-line quotation mentioning a spear. Plutarch *Lyk.* 4 does vaguely say that Thales unified the Spartiates with song and created favorable conditions for Lykourgos’ work, but nothing martial nor anything advocating risking one’s life for one’s community is mentioned. The scholiast to Hephaestion’s *Handbook on Meters* 8.4 states that Alkman wrote a song with the line ἄγετ’ ὦ Σπάρτας ἔνοπλοι κοῦροι ποτὶ τὰν Ἄρεως κίνασιν, “Come, O young men of Sparta in arms to the movement of Ares.” This is clearly martial, but completely undeveloped, and may refer to a ritual dance in a *choros*.

²⁵ e.g. Kallinos 1.6-7. Adkins 1977, containing a fine metrical and structural analysis of Tyrtaios 10, argues that Tyrtaios and Kallinos write “effective poetry of a very different kind.” Irwin 2005, 31 stresses the need to examine exhortative martial elegy outside of Tyrtaios’ immediate Messenian context.

²⁶ This interpretation of the Tyrtaian sentiment as highly pro-social and altruistic toward the community (as opposed to only toward one’s family) opposes Nafissi 1991.

²⁷ Other investigations into the poetry of Tyrtaios expend much ingenuity and effort into explaining the ideals present in his songs (e.g. Jaeger 1943-1945, vol. I, esp. 87 - 98) but do not discuss these songs as mechanisms that were designed to have an effect. Irwin (2005, 21) is quite off the mark to argue that a scholar looking at the effect Tyrtaios seems to have had on later Spartan generations is being “teleological”; her discussion following this claim asserts forcefully (although proffering a *recusatio* to the contrary on 22) that archaic exhortative elegy cannot have had the sort of civic rallying effect that seems present in the evidence I list.

²⁸ In Gerber 1999, *Testimonium* 9, p. 33

²⁹ Plut. *Kleomenes* 2.3; cf. *de sollert. anim.* 1.959a, *apophthegmata Lac.* 235e.

enjoyed in Sparta.³⁰ Nor were his martial elegies restricted to dining occasions: Athenaios reports that the Lakones recite Tyrtaios' songs from memory while they march in time on campaign, and public festivals appear also to be occasions for elegy performance.³¹

The other measure of Tyrtaios' success is the particularly martial ethos of Spartan society amply reported in Herodotos, Thukydides, Xenophon, and all our other sources, and an ideal that accepts death for the sake of the community.³² Tyrtaian sentiments burgeon in the Spartan mindset. Whilst pursuing a treaty with Athens in 410 the Spartiate former ephor Endios says that "a Spartiate foot-soldier does not know the meaning of fleeing."³³ Herodotos never mentions Tyrtaios, but his Demaratos states in 7.104.4-5 that the Spartiates are ruled by *Nomos*, their law/custom, that they have strongly internalized this fear psychologically and obey it in all ways, and that it is eternally the same: it forbids them from fleeing a battle and makes them remain in their ranks and win or die.³⁴ The speech may have been invented by Herodotos, but attests to an ethos believable in his time. If this ethos was not the responsibility of Tyrtaios, it could have only been one older than Tyrtaios, one which Tyrtaios refined. At most, a counterargument would be that we do not know enough to attribute specific agency; or that Tyrtaios reflected, rather than invented, the martial ethic at Sparta. But to reflect is also to constitute. And if Tyrtaios did not make this ethic newly and very significantly vigorous and important in the Archaic period, then history does not record who did. Herodotos' poignant description of the deeply ingrained willingness of the Spartiates to fight to the death at Thermopylai, when, outnumbered with weapons broken, they fought with their hands and teeth, concurs with this Tyrtaian willingness to die for one's cause.³⁵ The Spartiate harmost Anaxibios is recorded by Xenophon to have uttered as his final words a very Tyrtaian sentiment.³⁶ Death for the community is exalted in Tyrtaios and in subsequent Spartan culture. Even after the disastrous battle at Leuktra in 371, the ephors ordered the slain Spartiates' female relatives, spouses, and friends

not to wail, but to bear their *pathos* in silence. And on the next day it was possible to see those whose relatives had been killed going about in the open with bright

³⁰ Plut. *Agis* 10.3, *Lyk.* 28.10.

³¹ *pace* Irwin 2005, 32 and 57. Cf. Philokhoros FGH 328 F 216, who describes elegies of Tyrtaios sung by Spartans on campaign in the tent of the Spartan king. Bowie 1990 argues the unlikelihood of this practice based upon the supposed equivalence between these tent-songs and *sussitia*, which he links to symposia, which supposedly did not emerge historically until after Tyrtaios; the equivalence of tent-songs = *sussition* = symposium is unsure at best. (For the equivalence of the latter two of the three terms, there is Rabinowitz 2009; this has nothing to do with Tyrtaios.) Bowie 1990 lists evidence for elegy performance at public festivals. Nobili 2011, esp. at 42 develops this.

³² Cp. Hodkinson 2006.

³³ Diodoros 13.52.6.

³⁴ Cf. Ehrenberg 1973, 99, who, speaking in 1934 in a radio broadcast in German from Prague, emphasized that "we should never forget that their heroism [at Thermopylai] was not based on free decision, but was dictated by obedience, tradition – and fear."

³⁵ Hdt. 7.225 – 232. Van Wees 2006 argues that the Oath of Plataia descends from a Spartiate oath of the late Archaic period.

³⁶ 4.8.38.

and beaming faces, whereas those whose relatives had been reported as living were scarcely seen, and these few walking about sullen and humiliated.³⁷

Tyrtaios' ethos is nothing less than a cultural adaptation promoting in the strongest possible way an extreme ethic of altruism, here meaning service up to and including death for the sake of the community, and should be analyzed as such. A digression on altruism is appropriate. Altruism is a much-explored topic in evolutionary theory.³⁸ At first, it seemed a sticking point for sociobiology: why would altruism evolve if the individual animal's evolved propensities and instincts have evolved to sustain its life? Naive explanations had been given in which individual insects "sacrifice their lives for the collective."³⁹ The problem cleared somewhat when the theory of gene-level selection won over that of selection at the level of the individual organism. In Richard Dawkins' view, individual biological organisms are but hosts for genes. Genes promote behavior that leads to the replication of copies of those genes.⁴⁰

Thus altruism is quite understandable for one's own direct offspring: each child possesses half of its genes from each parent. Altruism is also understandable for one's sibling's children, who possess a portion of one's own genes. It is understandable for one's relatives, who possess by definition some portion of one's genes. The immensely long evolution of animals cannot have done otherwise than to favor some instincts and propensities that are agreeable to altruism, and this is why we see it amongst animals, particularly social animals.⁴¹ Normally in the case of humans, abstract philosophical and religious systems have been required to convince an individual to perform altruistic acts on behalf of others who are not related to him, and these abstractions are concretely enacted through ritualized communal activities. But these are advanced and progressive systems of thought; altruism for persons who are seen as related to oneself is presumably much easier to promote. The practice of endogamy combined with alloparenting, allo-insemination, and special loyalty to age-classes characteristic of the Spartiate system must have helped to root altruism for the community.⁴² In this way we would expect that in a multipolar, violent environment, a society that was notably successful and highly-functioning would have come up with cultural products that help to explain that success. A product emphasizing a giver's relatedness to other individuals in the society has clear functional value. Tyrtaios' repeated emphasis on terms like *paides*, *pateres*, and *genos* in connection with, rather than in separation from, the *polis*, the *astu*, and the *ge* does precisely this.

³⁷ X.H. 6.4.16; cf. Plut. Ag. 29.2 – 5. Similarly after Lekhaion in 390: X. H. 4.5.10.

³⁸ A sample of the most important discussions of altruism in biocultural literature would include the following: Hamilton 1963, Hamilton 1966, Wilson 2000 (1975) 3 – 4, 117, 106 – 129, 121 – 129, 114, *passim*, 1978 chapter 7, 1998 163f ("altruism was the central problem of sociobiology in both animals and humans"), Alcock 1998 561 – 568, 595 – 599 which includes the mathematical formula for estimating it, Hardy 1999 62-65 and *passim*, 604 – 605, Laland and Brown 2002, 75 – 79, 83 – 85, Richerson and Boyd 2005, 198, 216 – 218, 238, Katz (ed.) 2006 *passim*, Walsh 2006, 229 – 230.

³⁹ Dawkins 1999, chapter 1.

⁴⁰ Dawkins 1989.

⁴¹ "No gene or set of genes, or even any one mechanism influencing people to favor kin, has been identified. We do not know even a fraction of the ways that kin selection works. Yet wherever biologists or anthropologists have looked, animals, including people, behave *as if* there were such genes." Hrdy 1999, 63.

⁴² Greek age-classes: Sallares 1991, Davidson 2006, but see Osborne 1996, 180.

These are cultural forms of altruism, and they appear in different societies as well, and develop independently in different societies. From society to society, varying forms of altruism become bolstered by institutions at varying times. When we see and can date the invigoration and elaboration of a drive like this, the investigation of it becomes more the project of the historian than the evolutionary biologist, and in our Spartan case study it is with Tyrtaios that we see a pronounced example of one society's adaptive elaboration of altruism.

Tyrtaios' poetic corpus stimulated and indeed glamorized risking one's life for the community. For his poems demand and exalt it, providing the strongest imaginable incentives for it, and discouraging -- also as strongly as imaginable -- actions that run contrary to it. All societies feature implicit and explicit structures that reward and punish certain means of production and of reproduction, and certain forms of behavior: this is part of their economy and culture. When assessing the demographic regime of a community, not only specific state policy must be looked at. What may be termed implicit policy must also be examined: how reproduction and other forms of behavior are rewarded or punished. In order to apply this to minimal state societies that we see in the pre-industrial world, overall social structures must be examined to determine their effect on fertility and behavior, whether originally created by constitutional mechanisms or no.⁴³

Whether charged to do so by the state or not, Tyrtaios explicitly encouraged certain forms of behavior through his exhortative poetry.⁴⁴ This behavior combined with the Lykourgan regime to create or strengthen a set of constraining *nomoi* for the Spartiates that were very different from the previous maladaptive set of customs which, according to Herodotos, they seem to have used. The argument contained in the Tyrtaian corpus runs as follows. Its unity is consistent, tight, indeed repetitive.

1.) Our lives are best lived for the *patris* (fatherland) and, if necessary, sacrificed for it: the *patris* lives longer than we do.⁴⁵ It lives through our *paides* (descendants) and *pateres* (ancestors) and through our *genos* (race/gene line/family/clan/lineage), and in our *ge* (land) and *polis* or *astu* (city or town).⁴⁶

2.) *Kleos* (glory, renown) is won by the man who willingly risks his life in battle, not in other ways. If risking his life leads to death, then he dies for his *genos* and *polis* and these things are worth more than his own life, or should be considered as such.⁴⁷

3.) (Implicitly:) The names of individual warriors who have died for the Spartiate whole do not need to be given in the songs, although they will be remembered by their peers, their children, and their fathers. They are not given in the songs because they do not matter. What matters is the continuation of the *polis*, the *genos*, and the *paides* and the protection of the *ge* and the *pateres*. (That they are not given in the songs surely has much to do with elegy's customary lack of names: but the effect is what matters.)

⁴³ Cf. Johansson 1991.

⁴⁴ Cf. Luginbill 2002, 409: "The entire thrust of Tyrtaeus' appeal is motivational," referring to Fragment 12 specifically, but applicable more widely in the corpus. My view is generally compatible with Irwin's statement (2005, 58) that Tyrtaios' poetry "strives to assert a validity external to the group" of its audience.

⁴⁵ On the *patris* as an idea, see *IACP* 49-53.

⁴⁶ Tyrtaios 5, 10, 11, 12.

⁴⁷ Tyrtaios 5, 10, 12.

The significance of these claims is as follows. First, as has been touched on earlier and as will be exemplified several times below, the fatherland and polis replace, to some degree, the immediate family in the system of loyalty felt by the individual Spartiate. Moore's observation about how the Spartiate system "broke down family life at the age of seven" is accurate: moreover, the fatherland and polis take the place of this object of affection to some extent. Second, the repeated emphasis on the *genos*, which will be illustrated in examples below, affirms the genetic and biological nature of the Spartiate reforms, both of Tyrtaios and of Lykourgos. The Spartiates are a close-knit, biologically related, endogamous group. The "particular strategies for survival and reproduction" that the Spartiates developed for success in the archaic world are, in a large sense, biological strategies that animal groups and human kin groups typically develop.⁴⁸ Third, the emphasis on the *genos* is also important because the eugenic improvements that Xenophon lists and describes (whether the Spartiates achieved any of them or only intended them) require a relatively closed population group to accumulate. The Spartiate is able to fight for persons less related to him; but his loyalty will be most sharply triggered on behalf of his own genetic group – for the other Spartiates. They have gone through the same *paideia* as he and they are his relatives and are similar to him; and they are different (as notes Xenophon) from other persons.

The emphasis on *kleos* in the poems is closely tied with the conglomerate of *genos/patris/paides/ge/polis/astu*, above, and with the namelessness of the Spartiate warriors who sacrifice their lives. In Tyrtaios' universe, a man's existence does not start and end with his own birth and death, but he only happens to be the present inhabitant of his *genos* or lineage, and is connected to other Spartiates. His *kleos* thus redounds upon the entire collective. And his *kleos* is worth more than his own life. He is but a cell in a larger organism. This is nothing other than a poetic description of, subscription to, and exhortation for altruism *avant la lettre*.

Here are the supporting features of the Tyrtaian argument. First, Tyrtaios upholds and never challenges the kingship in Sparta.⁴⁹ However, Tyrtaios also upholds the importance of the *polis*, remarkably early for this sentiment.⁵⁰ He sees the *polis* or *astu* as a superpersonal entity that deserves loyalty and respect.⁵¹ He sidesteps the conflict that could occur between

a.) personal loyalty to flesh-and-blood royal persons
and

b.) loyalty to the polis as a superpersonal construct

by making them both fit harmoniously together, paying more than lip service to royalty but affirming the importance of the (probably quite newly) superpersonally conceived community. Tyrtaios upholds kingship because kingship represents order in the society.

⁴⁸ Livi-Bacci 2008, 3.

⁴⁹ Cf. Van Wees 1999, Thommen 1996.

⁵⁰ Tyrtaios' Sparta along with Arkhilokhos' Thasos and Dreros inscription are the earliest attestations of a *polis* as a city-state, both a political community of *citizens* and an urban center: *IACP* 17. All date from the mid-seventh century. Homer is excluded: *IACP* 18.

⁵¹ Hansen 1996 on the very important concept of the "superpersonal" existence of the polis here. This separates the *state* from an *estate*.

Indeed, fragment 1 of Tyrtaios is given the title *eunomia* by Aristotle in *Politics* 5.6.1307a1: a well-ordered *politeia* was the ultimate function of these poems and their argument. But many political philosophies seek a well-ordered society: it is the means to this end that makes the Tyrtaian corpus interesting.

This argument is pressed in Fragment 2.⁵² The most reasonable interpretation of this fragment is that an *astu* requires obedience to the kings, who have been given it by Zeus, are of the race of the Herakleidai, and are closer to the race of the gods (than we are). This song thus upholds the basic order of the state by associating its rulers with the demigod Herakles. If, as several testimonia assert, Tyrtaios arrived at Sparta while it was in stasis, perhaps this stasis was a feud between two kings, and this poem argued that they both must be obeyed, thus relieving the problem. Similarly, Fragment 19, a tattered and incomplete song describing war, performs some of the same work, by associating leaders with gods again: it presses again the insistence that we *πεισώμεθα ἡγεμόν*, that we keep trust in our leaders, and that “to the immortal gods all things we should (entrust?).”⁵³

The powerful argument that the (new) harmonious order of the Spartiate society is divinely mandated and blessed continues in Fragment 4, combined from Plutarch and Diodoros.⁵⁴ It gives more information as to the institutions of the Spartiate state. In it, Tyrtaios states that Phoibos Apollo has declared through the oracle at Delphi that kings are divinely honored (*theotimētos*) and “the *polis* of lovely Sparta is a care to them.” Archaic kings or *basileis* are connected with gods, as passages from somewhat contemporaneous Homer and Hesiod support.⁵⁵ The “aged elders” (*gerontas*, perhaps referring to the *gerousia*) initiate counsel. Whether the Tyrtaian argument was intended to fortify the leaders’ credibility in order to stabilize the nascent state or to serve the best interests of these leaders by consolidating their power, by relating them to the gods in three poems the argument attaches social order to the gods and leaders. The *demotas andras* or demotic men, the People, are to respond to their *gerontas*’ counsel with “straight utterances” and to speak fair words. If these steps are taken, “victory and power are to accompany the mass of the people.” These declarative statements exhort the *demos* or people to live in blessed obedient order under existing institutions, represented by the demotic men and *gerontes* living harmoniously with a common purpose under the kings. Elegantly Tyrtaios elevates the kings and insulates them, and their families, from political strife.⁵⁶ The ambitions of the aristocrats will presumably be channeled into entering the *gerousia*. As non-democratic as this constitution may have been, it apparently spared the people of Sparta from the civil wars and tyrannies that harmed many contemporary Greek poleis.

The casting of the royally-ruled Spartan state as benevolent and harmonious is only the foundation of the edifice Tyrtaios created. In the fourth century BC, the Athenian statesman Lykourgos argued that Tyrtaios’ poems made the Spartiates *μάλιστα πρὸ τῆς*

⁵² Gerber 1999, 37 – 39.

⁵³ δ’ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖς ἐπὶ πάντ[α τρέποντες]

⁵⁴ A great amount of scholarship exists on this fragment. As other specialized works discuss it thoroughly, I shall only point out some recent representative works and keep to my own focus. See Thommen 1996, van Wees 1999, Lipka 2002. Hall 2007, 182-7 gives a sensible interpretation.

⁵⁵ Morris 2007, 234. *Odyssey* 8.166 – 177. Hesiod *Theogony* 79 – 93.

⁵⁶ Thommen 1996.

πατρίδος ἐθέλιν ἀποθνήσκειν, “particularly willing to perish for their fatherland.” Lykourgos then recited an apparently well-known song of Tyrtaios, fragment 10. This song stands as a most striking example of Tyrtaios’ promotion of valor on behalf of the community: a push for nothing less than personal altruism for a greater good, a good which has been defined as the polis of the Spartiates. The poem’s argument is crucial for mine, and as it is these words that were used to create a value system for the Spartiates, a different and much closer kind of analysis is called for: so I print it in full with my own very close, literal translation beneath.

τεθνάμεναι γὰρ καλὸν ἐνὶ προμάχοισι πεσόντα ἄνδρ' ἀγαθὸν περὶ ἧ πατρίδι μαρνάμενον· τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ προλιπόντα πόλιν καὶ πῖονας ἀγροὺς πτωχεύειν πάντων ἔστ' ἀνιηρότατον, πλαζόμενον σὺν μητρὶ φίλῃ καὶ πατρὶ γέροντι	5
παισὶ τε σὺν μικροῖς κουριδίῃ τ' ἀλόχῳ. ἐχθρὸς μὲν γὰρ τοῖσι μετέσσεται, οὓς κεν ἴκηται, χρημοσύνη τ' εἰκὼν καὶ στυγερὴ πενίη, αἰσχύνει τε γένος, κατὰ δ' ἀγλαὸν εἶδος ἐλέγχει, πᾶσα δ' ἀτιμία καὶ κακότης ἔπεται.	10
εἰ δ' οὕτως ἀνδρὸς τοι ἀλωμένου οὐδεμί' ὥρῃ γίνεται οὔτ' αἰδῶς οὔτ' ὀπίσω γένεος. θυμῷ γῆς πέρι τῆσδε μαχώμεθα καὶ περὶ παίδων θνήσκωμεν ψυχέων μηκέτι φειδόμενοι. ὦ νέοι, ἀλλὰ μάχεσθε παρ' ἀλλήλοισι μένοντες,	15
μηδὲ φυγῆς αἰσχροῆς ἄρχετε μηδὲ φόβου, ἀλλὰ μέγαν ποιείσθε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἐν φρεσὶ θυμόν, μὴ δὲ φιλοψυχεῖτ' ἀνδράσι μαρνάμενοι· τοὺς δὲ παλαιότερους, ὧν οὐκέτι γούνατ' ἐλαφρά, μὴ καταλείποντες φεύγετε, τοὺς γεραιούς.	20
αἰσχρὸν γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο, μετὰ προμάχοισι πεσόντα κεῖσθαι πρόσθε νέων ἄνδρα παλαιότερον, ἤδη λευκὸν ἔχοντα κάρη πολὺν τε γένειον, θυμὸν ἀποπνεῖοντ' ἄλκιμον ἐν κονίῃ, αἱματόεντ' αἰδοῖα φίλαισ' ἐν χερσὶν ἔχοντα -	25
αἰσχροῖά τά γ' ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ νεμεσητὸν ἰδεῖν, καὶ χρόα γυμνωθέντα· νέοισι δὲ πάντ' ἐπέοικεν, ὄφρ' ἐρατῆς ἥβης ἀγλαὸν ἄνθος ἔχῃ. ἀνδράσι μὲν θηητὸς ἰδεῖν, ἐρατὸς δὲ γυναιξὶ ζωὸς ἑὼν, καλὸς δ' ἐν προμάχοισι πεσών.	30
ἀλλὰ τις εὖ διαβάς μενέτω ποσὶν ἀμφοτέροισι στηριχθεὶς ἐπὶ γῆς, χεῖλος ὁδοῦσι δακῶν.	

Dying is a beautiful (<i>kalon</i>) thing in the frontlines, if one has fallen as an <i>agathos</i> man, fighting for the fatherland, but the man who leaves his own city and his lush fields to beg is of all men the most wretched, wandering with his dear mother and aged father and with small children and his wife.	5
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For he is an enemy to those he meets, to whomever he supplicates,
giving way to toil and hateful penury,
and he disgraces his *genos*, and he belies the expectations of his splendid form,
and absolute shame and absolute cowardice accompany him. 10
And thus if (*addresses audience*), for this banished man, there comes about
neither any sort of respect nor deference, and none for his *genos* after him,
then let us fight spiritedly for this land, and for our children
let us die, no longer holding our own lives in consideration.
O *neoi*, just fight, remaining at each others' side,⁵⁷ 15
do not flee shamefully, do not flee panic-stricken,
but make the spirit in your chests great and brave,
nor consider your life to be excessively valuable when you are fighting against
men:
And as for the older men, whose knees are no longer light,
do not abandon them and flee them, the elders. 20
For this is indeed an awful thing, when, after having fallen in the front lines,
there lies -- in front of the young men -- an older man,
already having a white head and gray in cheek,
breathing out his stout spirit into the dust,
holding in his beloved hands his bloody private parts -- 25
these things are awful indeed for the eyes, and worthy of indignation to see.
And his flesh is naked. But for young men, all things are seemly,
as long as he possesses the shining flower of his lovely youth,
-- for men he is admirable to see, and for women he is an object of desire
while he is alive, and he is even beautiful after falling in the front lines. 30
But he who stands well firm, let him remain there, with both feet
fixed upon the ground, biting his lip with his teeth.

The song's first word is *tethnamenai*, meaning "to die," and its third is the word *kalon*, one of the strongest words in the Greek language denoting what is worthwhile, but also what is beautiful: it is usually translated in English somewhat reservedly as "fine." Tyrtaios argues that dying is an aesthetically beautiful and supremely worthwhile act in the first three words of the song, then specifies in the rest of the first line under which precise circumstances it is a fine thing to die: *eni promakhoisi pesonta*, after having fallen in the front lines of a hoplite battle.⁵⁸ Who dies? An *anēr agathos*. Along with *kalos*, the adjective *agathos* is one of the strongest words in Greek to denote all that is positive and worthwhile, and is often translated as "brave" and "capable" although the latter term is slightly weak for the strength that *agathos* implies. Falling in the front lines for what? Immediately this information is given: *peri hei patriidi marnomenon*, fighting for the

⁵⁷ "just": "Tyrtaios in the first part of the poem has developed the arguments for action and now proceeds to a direct call for action." Verdenius 1969, 346. Some modern scholars regard this line as the beginning of a new poem, since a new exhortation in the second person plural occurs here. There is no reason to believe this. Lykourgos of Athens (*in Leocratem* 107) and Plato (*Laws* 630b) believed this to be one single poem. And poets shift addressees all the time within one poem: there is even a special word dedicated to this practice ("apostrophe"), and the "direct call to action" is part of this shift. The address to the *neoi* is highly relevant: the term *neoi* refers to young men aged 20-29 in Greek age-class terms. Davidson 2006, esp. 48.

⁵⁸ Verdenius 1969, 338 argues that the *pro* in *promakhoisi* "seems to have a local as well as a modal sense: 'before' and 'in defence of others' and cites two Homeric comparanda.

fatherland. Tyrtaios in the first two lines of this song has with supreme concision defined what an *agathos* man is, and has already performed the act this song is designed to perform, the promotion of willing self-sacrifice for the fatherland, by calling such sacrifice *kalos* and calling the man who performs it an *aner agathos*. Tyrtaios has praised dying in battle more highly than Homer, Kallinos, or Alkaaios ever did.⁵⁹ These lines, derided as “simple” by Irwin, map out the incentive system of archaic Sparta.⁶⁰

Prudently and practically, Tyrtaios does not trust his listeners with only a carrot, but continues with a stick: for the song next argues that painful and hateful is the lot of the man who flees, deserts, or does not risk his life in battle for the fatherland.⁶¹ The listeners’ souls are thus permanently marked with fear with Tyrtaios as tattooist.⁶² Whether this deserter is best construed as a refugee from war or a noncombatant, he will be treated with hostility by whomever he meets, and *all* indignity and evil will follow him wherever he wanders – a very severe punishment. Moreover, this treatment will not only strike him, but his entire *genos* will be disgraced. *Genos*, as I have noted earlier, indicates the cluster of objects and concepts described by the English words family, race, kin, lineage, offspring, caste, tribe, age, generation.⁶³ Disgrace will fall on more than the man’s immediate family: the usage of *genos* also implies that he will be a disgrace to everyone related to him, even distantly: to his ethnic group, to his race – to the Spartiates. This is a heavy burden that Tyrtaios has constructed for the man unwilling to risk his own life for the community, and he offers it as one of precisely two options. It is the other option that is admirable.

It is for the community that the citizen must risk his life. His family is a part of the community, but the community is larger than and perhaps more important than the family. It includes, and gives a special place for, the old men. If the alloparenting and allo-insemination described by Xenophon indeed predates Tyrtaios, then the community includes the citizen’s alloparents and allochildren and the females with whom he has been in a “shared husband” relationship. It includes the children in general. It includes his age-

⁵⁹ Cf. Homer *Il.* 12.322 – 328, 15.496 – 497. Kallinos 1.6 – 9. Alkaaios 400. Snell 1953, 172-173. Another analysis is in Luginbill 2002, 410. Cf. van Wees 2006, 129.

⁶⁰ Irwin 2005, 17.

⁶¹ *proliponta* may mean a deserter, a refugee, or one who flees. *polin kai pionas agrous* may favor the latter two: cf. Verdenius 1969, 339. However, Verdenius does not think that the person described is one who has refrained from fighting, nor that the most important contrast that Tyrtaios draws is between the man who risks his life and the man who is a noncombatant. Verdenius argues that the *proliponta* is fleeing because enemy troops have occupied his *polis* and fields, and that the contrast is between the occupiers, who have presumably fought bravely and now possess the fields and polis, versus refugees, for whom life is perforce very hard. This is not mutually exclusive with my emphasis; however, Verdenius then argues that another commentator “is obviously wrong in supposing the wanderer to receive no αἰδώς because he has withdrawn from his military duties.” This is exactly why he receives no deference or respect, and the contrast between the combatant and the coward is the point of this long song, and of the other two long songs that have survived, poem 11 (especially at line 14) and poem 12.

⁶² Cf. Plutarch *Kleomenes* 9 which states that fear is the chief support of the Spartan *politeia*, for bravery is not fearlessness but a fear of censure and of disgrace, and those most dreading of the law are bravest before the enemy, and those who are most fearful of *kakōs akousai* (ill fame) are the ones who are the least fearful of suffering.

⁶³ *LSJ* s.v. γένος. Its Indo-European root has been used over its long history to denote “varying degrees of kinship” (Buck 1949, 1316). The word is polyvalent, perhaps chosen intentionally for this purpose. No significance for *genos* is given by e.g. Luginbill 2002.

mates in his age-classes, whether these be thought a strong influence on Archaic Spartiate social life or a weak one.⁶⁴ It includes the beautiful young women who will sexually desire the young man if he is brave. Their lust constitutes a powerful incentive, especially for the testosterone-saturated young men (*neoi*) whom the poem addresses in line 15.

On the other hand, for the man who flees his polis, which is the only alternative to fighting that Tyrtaios allows, there is shame, disgrace, the prospect of being *anierotaton* (the most wretched) knotted together with haeful poverty, and there is the prospect of bringing shame upon one's *genos*, along with "absolute disgrace and cowardice." Significantly, the term I have chosen to translate as "cowardice," *kakotes*, also means simply "badness" in Greek. He will have to toil, rather than have others toil for him as an aristocrat should (8). The very expectations that are held about the splendor of his form (for if his form is splendid, then the Greek mind assumes that he is a good and fortunate and deserving person) will be belied by his misfortune.⁶⁵ He will receive no respect and no consideration, neither himself nor his *genos*.⁶⁶

A system of social disincentives has been created here. Tyrtaios provides for men an analogue to the system of role-limitations for women which settled preindustrial societies must develop to encourage them to devote their energies to biological reproduction against an everpresent population shortage brought about by disease and by the wars endemic to the period and place.⁶⁷ Tyrtaios' arrangement for men is clear. By portraying men who do not risk their lives for their polis as pariahs, he subtly engages in a speech act which turns cowardly living men into pariahs, into men rejected by their peers: description becomes prescription. Living men will avoid that route, which is useless to the state anyway. This structure works closely with the eugenic structures discussed earlier constraining male behavior in Xenophon (*Lak. Pol.* 9.5) wherein unfit men are encouraged to drop out of the breeding pool. And men who are capable of bravery but to whom bravery is not extremely easy will try harder to be brave out of fear of the penalties for failure.

These evils exist in a circuit alongside the contrasting prospect of being regarded as *kalos*, *agathos*. The good soldier is also *theetos idein*, admirable to see, as well as *eratos*, erotically arousing, or desirable. On the one hand this is an aesthetization of war similar to what Jeffrey Herf and Walter Benjamin perceive in the writings of the conservative

⁶⁴ Strong: *e.g.* Davidson 2006. Weak: *e.g.* Osborne 1996, 180. Cf. Sallares 1991, 160-192.

⁶⁵ Verdenius 1969, 342-343 argues convincingly, with many comparanda, that *elengkhei* here should be taken as "belies (the expectations of) his splendid body" and provides a short discursus on Greek beauty equalling general admirability, with a discussion of dissentience from this position such as Arkhilokhos 60 and Theognis 933. Oddly he omits Tyrtaios 12.5 which prefers valor to handsomeness.

⁶⁶ Cf. the fate of the Spartiate Aristodemos who missed the Battle of Thermopylai in 480 due to ophthalmia and was unwilling to fight blindly as another Spartiate, Eurytos, was. His disgrace was immense: no Spartiate spoke to him or lent him fire. Hdt. 7.231.

⁶⁷ Richerson and Boyd 2005, 177. Longman 2006, discussed in the next chapter in detail. The population-maintenance function to women's role limitation in the pre-industrial settled communities is quite ignored in the otherwise excellent Saller 2007 as well as by the earlier school of feminist scholars seeing women's oppression in ancient Greece as an arbitrary male power-grab such as Zeitlin 1978, Cantarella 1987 (1981), and Keuls 1985. Constant wars and the social mechanisms perforce developed, adopted, or adapted by societies to deal with these: Eckstein 2006.

revolution in Germany between the world wars.⁶⁸ On the other hand, as mentioned, the desirability of the soldier's form has a more visceral promissory function: he is an object of desire for women. Finally, he is *kalos* even when he is dead, *if* he fall young in the front lines but not if he has not. He might as well be willing to die young and leave a beautiful corpse: for it is with a pungent yet poignant repugnance that Tyrtaios describes the horrific sight of the old man who has fallen, cradling his gory penis in his hands. This particularly disgusting image has been puzzled over by scholars for centuries without a satisfactory consensus or a convincing explanation.⁶⁹ However, its repellence is comprehensible in light of the stark schema of reward and punishment that characterizes so much of this poem, of Tyrtaios' poetic corpus, and of the tightly controlled Spartan system of the carrot versus the stick. It is *carefully calculated* to shock and provoke, and gives an additional reason to avoid cowardice and to fight hard. The young man will wish to avoid living long enough to become this hideous spectacle. The image functions, again, in the schema structuring the Tyrtaian incentive system.⁷⁰

All this is a powerful and well-elaborated exhortation, and given the newness and undeveloped nature of Greek affiliation with and loyalty to the polis in the seventh century, it was an ideologically revolutionary one. Fränkel stated that "Tyrtaeus appeals to the self-consciousness of the Spartan nation," but it may be more correct to think of Tyrtaios as helping to *construct* a Spartan "nation" at this early point.⁷¹ Line 14's *meketi*, "no longer," attests to the novelty of this fiercer martial ethos.⁷² Men are told now not only to risk their lives for their own farm or family but for the polis: for the man who comprises the negative example is described as having left his *polis*. In a single poem, Tyrtaios has elevated the polis and bravery in its defense and utterly disgraced any man who flees it.⁷³

The argument continues in Tyrtaios' other poems, replete with martial exhortations and references to the *genos*, combined with the divine relation to Herakles. In fragment 11,

⁶⁸ Benjamin 1979; Herf 1984, 33: on the conservative German writings of the 1920s: "The beautiful form of the soldier emerging purged and intact from the hell of the trenches turned mass destruction into a redemptive experience. War is the crucible from which a new collective subject of history develops. To make war the subject of aesthetic considerations obscured the political and social interest and purposes that had brought the war about." In Tyrtaios' case, the purpose was the subjugation of the Messenians.

⁶⁹ e.g. Fränkel 1973, 156 notices that "the picture of the old man dying is painted with brutal realism" but offers little explanation except "his thought works with concrete, sensual images, which are either desirable or repulsive," also on 156.

⁷⁰ No other commentator to my knowledge has argued this. Verdenius 1969, 351-2, is quite baffled by the bloody genitalia, and reports confusion from other commentators. Similarly Luginbill 2002, 413 offers only that "[t]he picture of the slaughtered elder in 10.19-27 lying in the dust clutching at his bloody genitals is hardly one to recommend to a youth the glories of battle." Goldschmidt 1940, an article specifically about this line, notes only that dying men's hands quake unless they clutch something and the *membrum virile* is a good candidate; he discusses nothing as to the larger significance of the line in Tyrtaios' argument.

⁷¹ Fränkel 1973, 157.

⁷² Verdenius 1969, 345 disagrees, saying "it has purely rhetorical, emphatic force." Given the clearly revolutionary nature of Tyrtaios' program, Verdenius' assertion is dubious. Snell 1953, 171: "His call to arms pronounces the Spartan ideal: perhaps he was the one to formulate that ideal for the first time."

⁷³ Shey 1969, 18 more or less notices this, but is somewhat dismissive: "the values of Tyrtaeus' world are not far removed from those of Homer's, the only difference being that the Spartan warrior must see his *time* as inextricably bound up with the fortunes of the polis." This "only difference" whose importance Shey fails to see is in fact an immense difference for the seventh century.

Tyrtaios urges the young soldiers to take courage (*tharseite*, 2) since their *genos* descends from Herakles the unconquered (1), and Zeus does not turn away from them (2). The use of *genos* here again is necessarily wider than the English word “family” gives and indicates the broader Spartiate consanguineous group, since it consists of all persons descended from Herakles, and it evidences a very early interest in hereditary matters on the part of the planners of the Spartiate system, or upon those who influenced its structure.⁷⁴ The demand for valor reaches a yet higher level: in this song, soldiers must scorn their own lives, and feel equal affection for the spirits of black Death as they do for “the sun’s beloved rays” (5-6).⁷⁵ Yet Tyrtaios includes, as a sop to those of the soldiers who wish to preserve their own lives, the assertion that those who dare to fight hard will die in fewer numbers, a radical break from the anti-martial notion found, for example, in Anakreon, who stated that “Ares does not spare the brave but the cowards.”⁷⁶

This sop is immediately paired with a more normal Tyrtaian reward: the ones who fight hard also save the *laos opisso* (13). This term is translatable in two ways: one is “the army that is (locationally) behind them,” which makes sense if they are the *promakhoi* or frontline fighters. The other is “the populace of the future,” since for the Greeks, the future was considered behind them, because it was unviewable, rather than in front of them.⁷⁷ Intentional polyvalence is appropriate here. The immediate battle context makes the more natural reading to be the locational, military one, but the Tyrtaian concern elsewhere such as fragment 10.12 for the semantically similarly *genos opiso*, the *paides* in 10.13 and *exopiso* in 12.30 supports an interpretation of the future populace. We would expect to see this level of altruism in a state as successful as that of the Spartiates, and we do, right here. The disgrace that a man undergoes when he is not valiant is again described in this fragment.⁷⁸

Fragment 12 unsurprisingly praises valor in war, but this time in preference to other arenas of human competition such as wrestling, handsomeness, kingliness, oratory, or reputation for other things.⁷⁹ The poem describes the trade-off that the Spartiates made culturally, socially, and (presumably eventually) eugenically. Tyrtaios argues that the Spartiates should value this trait at the expense of the other traits that humans find

⁷⁴ Athenian autochthony and Theban “Spartoi” myth also evidence this interest; but these societies are not attested as developing anything like Sparta’s reproductive *nomoi* so early.

⁷⁵ Van Wees 2006, 129 links this contempt to the Oath of the *Enomotiai*.

⁷⁶ 101D, Palatine Anthology. Although Anakreon is thought to have lived in the sixth century, I doubt his sentiment was novel.

⁷⁷ cf. Homer *Iliad* 6.357, in which *opisso* indicates the men of the future for whom Helen states that she and Hector shall be made into “things of song.”

⁷⁸ Lines 14 – 19, taking in line 17 the mss. *argaleon* rather than Ahrens’ *harpaleon*. Irwin 2005 argues that the *gymnetes* in lines 35-38 are lesser-ranked soldiers who are described negatively (*ptossontes*, “cowering”): “these last four lines ... demonstrate stratification within exhortation elegy and thus challenge traditional narratives that depict elegy as conveying a unified picture of the polis and its citizenry” (291). If they are lesser soldiers, then the mention of them merely shows what a Spartiate may become if he is not brave.

⁷⁹ Commented on by Plato in *Laws* 1.629a-b. Cf. Sinclair 1967 (1951), 22: “those other virtues, so much prized by the aristocracy had no patriotic value.” A few (unconvincing) arguments have arisen over the authenticity of this fragment, most notably Fränkel 1973, 337-9; arguments surveyed in Luginbill 2002. Cf. Jaeger 1945, 91f, contrasting athletic and martial abilities; Fuqua 1981, 217.

valuable. The correlate for a society following this injunction is to concentrate resources (both material and human) into a cultural and eugenic focus upon success at war. No man is an *agathos aner* unless he can endure bloody war. *This* is how Tyrtaios defines excellence (*arete*) itself.⁸⁰ And again in contrast to the Homeric Greek warrior usually fighting for personal honor, the Tyrtaian soldier fights for his polis.⁸¹ “This thing is the best prize among human beings and the finest for a young man to win. This thing is a *common benefit for the polis* and for the *entirety of the people*” (lines 13 - 15), which is about as stirring and extreme an identification as can be imagined. If he should die amongst those Tyrtaian *promakhoisi* or front lines, pierced repeatedly through his breast, shield, and corselet *from the front* (of course this is specified, for being pierced from behind implies flight and thus cowardice), then like the bee who has left his stinger in a dangerous opponent he will lose his own life but protect his community: he will bring glory to his town, his people, and his father (line 24). All the polis will be distressed, both young and elderly people will mourn him. The elderly, *gerontes*, may refer to the Spartiate *gerousia* here: if so, Tyrtaios is making an unusually specific promise of an official, state-level incentive for risking one’s life.⁸²

In case these encouragements be insufficient, his tomb and the children of his children and his *genos* of the future will be pointed out amongst human beings (29-30). Again the use of a variant of *opisso/opiso* occurs, a Tyrtaian term and a Tyrtaian concern. Not only will the soldier himself thus gain glory or *kleos*, but even the tombs of his children will, a very attractive goal fitting with notions of parental investment and evolved human propensities to care for their offspring. The term *genos* surely here denotes the soldier’s descendants here and the undoubtedly highly extensive circle of all who are related to him. He will win glory for a great number of people, and this good glory will never perish (31); for although buried, he will be immortal (32), as long he has fought for *ge* and *paides*, land and children (34).⁸³ If he somehow escape death, all will honor him, both the young and the ancient, and he experiences many joys before going to Hades: among them, very important in this status-conscious society, “all men, young and old, yield their place to him on the benches” (41 – 42).⁸⁴ Song 12 contains much that is positive, more so than the other songs.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Generally, there is Luginbill 2002, esp. 409, a useful analysis but missing many points I make and not looking at the poetry in terms of biological and cultural selection.

⁸¹ Shey 1976, 8: “Tyrtaios replaces the Homeric ideal of the single hero fighting for his own glory by that of the patriotic warrior – a significant step forward in the development of Greek civilization.” Sinclair 1967 (1951), 22: “The old ideals must be made to subserve the interests of the πόλις.” Cf. Luginbill 2002, 407.

⁸² Shey 1976, 15 - 16, who also takes the word *polis* at the end of the next line to state honors given to the warrior.

⁸³ “The sentiment of the pentameter is without parallel in the epic tradition and, as Jaeger observed with particular elegance, what the poet is proposing is the paradox that it is the warrior who dies fighting on behalf of the state who gains a form of immortality” – Fuqua 1981, 216; Jaeger 1959, 138. Fuqua takes this further and argues that an actual hero cult is what Tyrtaios is describing, an intriguing notion but hard to prove.

⁸⁴ Shey 1976, 8-9 is right to say: “Tyrtaios’ main task is ... to win his audience’s emotional acceptance of something which is naturally repugnant, i.e. the willingness of the individual to endanger his life so that the community may survive.” However, immediately after this, Shey continues: “More precisely, Tyrtaios’ task is to make his audience feel that the rejected *aretai* are less desirable than they really are or may seem to be” and supports this with several less-than-convincing negative attributes for each of the figures who embodies

The thrust of this corpus is clear. Tyrtaios created a new (for the seventh century) ethic which elevated the *polis* into a superpersonal entity for which it was now worthwhile for a man to risk his life. Using the strongest possible terms, he encouraged this risk and discouraged cowardice. The common lot of fighting for their polis united the Spartiates, aiding the feeling of internal egalitarianism and a most specifically ethnic and genetically separate cohesion. This cohesion was based on ties of, and repeated references to, the *genos*. The references to Messenia, both explicit and putative, present the Messenians as a foe whom it is acceptable to defeat and enslave. Moreover, he asserted that the brave survive longer than the cowards. The risking of individual lives may seem as perversely counterproductive to societal survival as infant exposure does: but if Sparta was enjoying the population boom that Herodotos avers after the reforms of Lykourgos, then there were enough Spartiates to replace the fallen, and Tyrtaian willingness to die suggests a high population for the period: they are mutually supportive. Moreover, it is possible that the brave do, indeed, survive premodern infantry phalanx combat longer than those who flee.⁸⁶ Many of these themes were picked up later, and appear in Athenian thought, such as in Perikles' Funeral Oration: but they appear in Tyrtaios first. That the Spartan state was the first, or one of the first, states in post-Mycenean Greece to attain great power is clear from its early territorial gains and deposits at the Orthia shrine.⁸⁷ If Tyrtaian lyrics were instrumental in bringing about the social consolidation that made this power grow, we can identify the Tyrtaian ethic as a cultural adaptation that first flourished in Sparta and, presumably because of its evident success, was picked up by Athens in the fifth century where it proved very useful for the Athenian state during its period of expansion. Sparta, thus, should be considered precocious. The ethic propounded by Tyrtaios is thus an excellent model of cultural transmission. This brings us to the question of Lykourgos' reforms and Tyrtaios' exhortation and how the nature of their connection may be conceptualized.

Chronology, Reproductive Time, and the Relation of Tyrtaios to the Lykourgan Reforms

The chronological relation between Tyrtaios and the Lykourgan reforms is less clear than historians desire.⁸⁸ Tyrtaios' seventh-century dating is reasonably secure from several sources listed earlier, but Starr warned in 1965 that "virtually every twelve months a new article solidly and irrefutably assigns Lycurgus to a different date than that proved in

the forms of excellence that Tyrtaios rejects. But in my view, Tyrtaios does not cut down the other forms of excellence: he instead describes, in the most glowing detail possible, the attractions of the form of excellence – namely, altruism -- that he himself wishes to champion.

⁸⁵ Luginbill 2002, 409 suggests that the differences in 12 from the other songs of the Tyrtaian corpus suggest that 12 is a recruiting song aimed at callow youths whereas many of the others are more realistic and aimed at veterans, and responds to a manpower crisis about which, Luginbill confesses, we know nothing and can know nothing.

⁸⁶ Snell 1953, 174; van Wees 1999.

⁸⁷ Cartledge 2002, 102f.

⁸⁸ e.g. Sinclair 1967 (1951), 22; Parker 1993; Hall 2007, 182-7. Koiv in 2003 and 2005 provides an up-to-date and sensible synthesis favoring an early Archaic date for the reforms associated with Lykourgos.

last year's study."⁸⁹ Thoukydides' late fifth-century assertion that Sparta had held the same laws for four hundred years up to and including the era he was writing puts the reforms in the late ninth century, although his basis for this calculation is obscure.⁹⁰ Aristotle gave a date for Lykourgos' *floruit* of the first Olympiad in 776 BC based on a throwing-discus bearing Lykourgos' name; as alphabetic writing begins to be found in this period, it is just possible, and this is not inconsistent with activity in the late ninth century.⁹¹ Tyrtaios' poetry and all ancient writers, including Alkman and Terpander, place the establishment of *eunomia* considerably earlier than their own (seventh-century) lives, most earlier than the conquest of Messenia.⁹²

Data limitations on an actual Lykourgos or "Wolf-worker" push historical scholarship to focus instead on the inception of the Spartan *eunomia*, which was presumably created by reforms. Hodkinson argued that the reforms were probably enacted in stages, as responses to concrete challenges and with great intentionality; however, this is of limited help in dating.⁹³ Scholars' desire to date the reform to the mid-sixth century, fitting other sixth-century reforms such as those of Kleisthenes at Athens and also fitting what was once perceived as a sharp break in the sixth-century material record.⁹⁴ Yet as we have seen, it is a gradual decline of material goods that we now perceive, not a sharp break; and as for the Kleisthenic comparison, it is clear that Sparta was precocious in several respects and unusual in the size of its territorial acquisition earlier than the sixth century, suggesting an early organization or reorganization of the state that was sufficient to accomplish this: surely some organizational reforms may be endogenous or at least influenced by different factors than those that later spurred Athens and other states to reform their social and political systems in the sixth century.⁹⁵ And this returns us to a high population, which if it predated the Messenian conquest was probably bound with reproductive reforms of some nature.

Another argument may support a very early beginning at least for specialized reproductive practices of the group who was known as (or whose descendants were known as) the Spartiates. This depends upon two things:

⁸⁹ Starr 1965 in Whitby (ed.) 2002, 26.

⁹⁰ Thoukydides 1.18. Andrewes 1938, 93 – 95; Gomme 1959, 128 – 131; Starr 1965 in Whitby 2002, 32; Hornblower 1991 *ad loc* (51ff).

⁹¹ *pace* Huxley 1962, 42. cf. Phlegon of Tralles *FGH* 257 F1; Pausanias 5.20.1; Plut. *Lyk.* 1.1 = Aristotle F 533. Starr 1965 in Whitby (ed.) 2002, 34 declares the discus a forgery on alphabetic grounds. Yet alphabetic writing first appears amongst Greek speakers precisely in this period. Forrest does not see a conclusion of forgery as necessary (1963, 168), although Starr cites the Forrest article to support his own argument for forgery. Starr's argument about hoplites holds no water. Parker 1993.

⁹² Alkman fr. 64 Page; Terpander in Plut. *Lyk.* 21.3 refers to the rule of "justice who treads a wide road," Koiv 2003, 192. Cf. Koiv 2003, 205; Hall 2007, 185f. A ninth-century date was advocated by Hammond 1950, 50-62 and Chrimes 1952, 340-7. Writers taking an eighth-century date include Drews 1979, 45-58; 1983, 85; Sakellariou 1989, 401-2; Den Boer 1954, 154 no. 1; Oliva 1971, 97; Koiv 2003, 205ff is excellent, thorough, and up-to-date.

⁹³ Hodkinson 1997b.

⁹⁴ Andrewes 1938 supports the Kleisthenic comparison; Oliva 1971, 97 against.

⁹⁵ Cf. Koiv 2003's argument for a reorganization of Lakonia in the eighth century enshrined in the Lykourgan tradition.

1.) That the early “Lykourgan” reforms involved the eugenic elements Xenophon described (i.e. Xenophon was not describing something much later or nonexistent) and included the child-exposure Plutarch describes in his *Life of Lykourgos*;

and

2.) that Spartiates of the fourth century actually possessed differences from other population groups not caused solely by training (Xenophon *Lak. Pol.* 1, 2, and 5). This framework for supporting anteriority would apply if the ancestors of the Spartiates descended from the same population as the ancestors of the other Dorian Greeks, but by Xenophon’s time had come to differ from them. It would apply even more so if they had been different for a very long time, a relatively endogamous sub-ethnic group of the Dorians.

A program of directed reproduction would take many, many generations to effect detectable changes within a specified population. The number of generations is variously reconstructible and will depend upon how much selection pressure was present and how constant it was, as expressed by the number of individuals passing genes on to the next generation of the group. The well-known example of silver foxes bred to become tame in a half-century of breeding in a Soviet fur farm in the second half of the twentieth century is applicable only as an unrealistic comparandum.⁹⁶ The farm fox experiment, which resulted in foxes whose behavior and morphology were highly distinct from wild foxes, required some forty generations: in human time, this would involve some 640-1200 years.⁹⁷ Such a length of time is (just barely) within the realm of possibility; but impossibility enters the picture when we examine the intensity of selection pressures that were necessary for this change.

These pressures were far more extreme than is imaginable for a human society.⁹⁸ Only 20% of female foxes were allowed to reproduce and 4-5% of males. This is a far smaller percentage than that of the Spartiates who presumably reproduced. A sample infanticide rate from a fairly high-infanticide society, the Netsilik Eskimos, gives an infanticide total of only 27% of those born, mainly girls.⁹⁹ Even though Spartiate males were subject to further rungs of selection on the eugenic ladder of their regime, it is inconceivable that 95-96% of Spartiate males would have suffered exposure, died in war, or been otherwise kicked out of the reproductive pool, and even more so for 80% of Spartiate females, whose population is not on record as having experienced post-birth “culling.”

Precise size differences are not given in Xenophon’s passages describing Spartiates’ differences from other people; size is better explained by nutrition than by heredity anyway; and Xenophon’s term *megethos* may apply to mass or to height or both. Nor is it presently possible to estimate how many generations it takes to raise the average

⁹⁶ Trut 1999.

⁹⁷ 640 years assumes an average generation of only 16 years. 1200 years assumes an average generation of 30 years.

⁹⁸ A government stable enough, and whose elite or decision-making groups possessing sufficiently lengthy (multi-generational) willpower to continue such a selection regime for 640-1,200 years is difficult to imagine.

⁹⁹ A chart is given in Reynolds and Tanner 1995, 81, evidence collected *ca.* 1920.

height of a group of humans by a certain amount, but again, net nutrition is the largest determinant of both height and weight.¹⁰⁰ It is also may be that Xenophon associated with higher-ranking Spartiates from nobler (more *gennaios*) families. This can mean two things: first, they had better nutrition than other Spartiates, although the system of contributions to *syssitia* render it unlikely that any Spartiate was poorly fed. Second, if, like the Kohanim amongst the Jews, the higher-ranking Spartiates bore more relation to each other than to other Spartiates, they may have possessed a higher concentration of selected features than the surrounding Spartiates had.¹⁰¹

For a concentration of hereditary features to remain within a population, a high degree of endogamy is required.¹⁰² All known historical human population groups have practiced a relatively high degree of endogamy.¹⁰³ The Greeks are no exception, and have been described by one social scientist of antiquity as a “primarily endogamous biological community.”¹⁰⁴ This does not mean a level of 100%, and small amounts of exogamy are even seen among traditionally and historically highly endogamous Jewish populations.¹⁰⁵ In human societies authoritative powers have applied ideological or other forms of coercion to enforce endogamy, but geographical distance from other populations is clearly the most significant contributor to endogamy. If humans had not practiced a high degree of endogamy, all of them would presently be the same color of beige, and human biodiversity would not be as richly and quantifiably measurable as it is. But variations in *degree* of endogamy occur from society to society: Greeks are considered to have been more endogamous *in general* than, for example, the Romans.

Positive evidence exists for Spartiate endogamy. Firstly and most generally, the Spartiates thought of themselves as an insular group, supporting a cultural fixation resulting in high levels of endogamy. Herodotos asserts that the Spartiates were accustomed to interchange the terms *xenoi* and *barbaroi*.¹⁰⁶ Cartledge is correct to write on this topic

it speaks worlds that the Spartans were the only Greeks who elided the crucial distinction between non-Spartans who were Greek and non-Spartans who were not (elsewhere called *barbaroi*), by calling both groups indiscriminately *xenoi* (1987, 244).

¹⁰⁰ Steckel 2009.

¹⁰¹ Entine 2007, 64 – 96 on the Kohanim.

¹⁰² Although of course a concentration of hereditary features may be preserved in a population if the population is exogamous but a few families remain endogamous.

¹⁰³ Salter 2007.

¹⁰⁴ Bintliff 1997, 22; 1999, 135, wherein he links endogamy with polis land-retention. Cultural effects of this tendency among the Greeks are visible in dramatic productions (one strong message in Euripides’ tragedy *Medea* concerns the dangers of marrying a non-Greek; the protagonist of his *Ion* worries that a non-Greek is his father and wants to be 100% Athenian; the tragedy *Suppliant Maidens* clearly evidences tensions over out-group marriage) and in laws in the historic period (Perikles’ citizenship law of 451 withholding Athenian citizenship from persons whose parents are not *both* Athenian citizens). See Gruen 2011 for an optimistic look at Greek perceptions of non-Greeks which nevertheless affirms that differences were considered real and elicited frequent comment.

¹⁰⁵ Entine 2007 on Jewish populations practicing low levels of exogamy.

¹⁰⁶ Hdt. 9. 11.2; 9.55.2 supports this.

Plutarch mentions in his *Life of Agis* “an ancient *nomos*, which forbade a descendant of Herakles from producing children from an alien woman (*ek gunaikos allodapes*), and ordered that anyone leaving Sparta in order to settle amongst other people should be put to death.”¹⁰⁷ Nor has the law a narrow range of application.¹⁰⁸ The “descendants of Herakles” comprises many families in Sparta, including but not limited to the kings and the family of Lysander. It is probable that a great many well-born Spartiates considered themselves descendants of Herakles, and perhaps even were descended from the same Spartiate sub-group that produced the royal families.¹⁰⁹

Tyrtaios seems to address all Spartiates in a passage calling them children of unconquered Herakles.¹¹⁰ Marriages of Spartiates with non-Spartiates are rare in the sources.

Considering Xenophon’s and Plutarch’s evidence that directed reproduction occurred amongst the Spartiates, and considering the evidence for high levels of behavior-correction by other Spartiates and coercive, intrusive state power over the lives of individual Spartiates, it is probable that a broadly enforced – by government and by public opinion – custom of endogamy amongst the Spartiates.

Moreover, Plutarch in his *Life of Lykourgos* tells of another *nomos* among the ancient reforms associated with Lykourgos that would limit exogamy: along with the *nomos* against moving abroad is a mention of expulsions of foreigners from Sparta:

This was the reason why he [Lykourgos] did not grant it to them [his people, the Spartiates] to live abroad as they wished, taking up foreign ways and imitating the lives of persons without training and of different forms of government, but drove out those who had streamed into the city and gathered there for no purpose, not, as Thoukydides says, because he feared that they might turn into imitators of his *politeia* and learn something useful in respect to [Spartan] excellence, but rather lest they become instructors of something bad. [4] For, necessarily, along with foreign bodies there follow foreign doctrines, and novel ideas accompany novel decisions. And from these things, necessarily grow many feelings and opinions destructive of the harmony of the existing *politeia*. Because of this he thought it more necessary to guard the city so that it would not be filled with bad customs than to keep diseases of the body from outside creeping in.¹¹¹

Tellingly Xenophon stated five hundred years earlier that it was illegal for Lakedaimonians (presumably Spartiates) to leave Sparta.¹¹² He also reported a law about expulsions of foreigners, writing that in older days, some form of “alien exclusion acts” or the ejection of

¹⁰⁷ Plutarch, *Agis* 11.2.

¹⁰⁸ *pace* Ogden 1996, 226.

¹⁰⁹ Cartledge 2001, 117.

¹¹⁰ Tyrtaios 11.1. Hall 1997, 59f is essential.

¹¹¹ *Lyk.* 27.3-4: ὅθεν οὐδ’ ἀποδημεῖν ἔδωκε τοῖς βουλομένοις καὶ πλανᾶσθαι, ξενικὰ συνάγοντας ἥθη καὶ μιμήματα βίων ἀπαιδεύτων καὶ πολιτευμάτων διαφόρων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἀθροιζομένους ἐπ’ οὐδενὶ χρησίμῳ καὶ παρεισρέοντας εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἀπῆλυνεν, οὐχ, ὡς Θουκυδίδης φησί, δεδιὼς μὴ τῆς πολιτείας μιμηταὶ γένωνται καὶ πρὸς ἀρετὴν τι χρήσιμον ἐκμάθωσιν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὅπως μὴ διδάσκαλοι κακοῦ τινος ὑπάρξωσιν. [4] ἅμα γὰρ ξένοις σώμασιν ἀνάγκη λόγους ἐπεισιεῖναι ξένους: λόγοι δὲ καινοὶ κρίσεις καινὰς ἐπιφέρουσιν. ἐξ ὧν ἀνάγκη πάθη πολλὰ φύεσθαι καὶ προαιρέσεις ἀπαρδούσας πρὸς τὴν καθεστῶσαν πολιτείαν, ὥσπερ ἀρμονίαν. διὸ μᾶλλον ὥρετο χρῆναι φυλάττειν τὴν πόλιν ὅπως ἡθῶν οὐκ ἀναπλησθήσεται πονηρῶν ἢ σωμάτων νοσερῶν ἔξωθεν ἐπεισιόντων.

¹¹² Xen. *L.P.* 14, referring to an older law. Figueira 2003.

aliens (*xenelasiai*) occurred at Sparta: καὶ καὶ πρόσθεν τούτου ἔνεκα ξενηλασίας γεγνομένης.¹¹³

The most plausible reconstruction reads Plutarch's *ek gunaikos allodapes* custom or law as a Spartan "anti-miscegenation" act going hand-in-hand with the *nomos* concerning Spartiates settling elsewhere and the alien expulsions. These were clearly designed to keep the Spartiates pure of foreign cultural influence and, as is the case in many ancient societies such as the ancient Hebrews, free of foreign genetic influence.¹¹⁴ The term *allodapes* probably does not only mean a "barbarian" (i.e. non-Greek) woman but "non-Spartiate" here. Secondly, the expression "descendants of Herakles" likely more broadly to Spartiates in general. Thirdly, the fact that the reproduction *nomos* was listed or packaged in the passage along with the one concerning settling abroad suggests that a single concern animated them both, and had a more general application. The one concerning settling abroad presumably applied to anyone from Sparta leaving Sparta. Plutarch's anti-relocation *nomos* concerns anyone who left Sparta to live *pros heterous*, that is, "among other people": so, the threat is simply "other people." The point of this double law is then, to use an anachronistic term, the prevention "race-mixing" in general, not "degradation" of the royal bloodline in specific.

An "anti-miscegenation" law like this both harmonizes with the tone of directed reproduction amongst the Spartiates and also possesses similarities (admittedly stricter) to the Periklean citizenship law of 451 in Athens, and should not be dismissed. Even if it had been in disuse during the period described by Plutarch in *Agis*, this would not show that it did not enjoy vigorous enforcement prior to the third century BC.

We must consider a robust although not total degree of endogamy as a baseline or default position for most ancient human population groups, brought on by geography, by the apparently universal preference that human beings exhibit for those whom they define as their own kind, and a common distrust toward strangers.¹¹⁵ The *xenelasiai* or ejection of foreigners attested in the sources could conceivably be conducted solely to protect the Spartan order and life-style, rather than the purity of the descent group; I would assume these to occur together. That such a distinction existed amongst the Spartiates, or among very many ancient societies, is hard to imagine. And the concerns with heredity and the *genos* that we have seen in the Spartan eugenic system and in Tyrtaios, along with the well-attested Spartan interest in the directed reproduction of animals make a monocausal explanation of only social contamination quite unlikely.

Finally, a pattern of Spartan exogamy appears nonexistent. The first-century BC writer Nikolaos of Damaskos states that "the [Spartiates] encouraged their women to become impregnated by the finest-formed of both the citizens and of the *xenoi*."¹¹⁶ But this

¹¹³ Xen. *L.P.* 14 again. Cf. Thuk. 2.39.1, Plut. *Lyk.* 27 and 9.

¹¹⁴ Reichler 1916, Entine 2007, Cochran and Harpending 2009.

¹¹⁵ Salter 2007. Ogden states "there is nothing else that really indicates that the Spartans had a restricted marriage group," but he offers no information as to what level of endogamy or exogamy he considers as a human (or Greek) *baseline*; his promise to survey evidence for endogamy only lists secondary sources who argue for or against endogamy among the gerousia and ephorate (1996, 227 no. 55).

¹¹⁶ FGH 90 F1032. ταῖς δὲ αὐτῶν γυναῖξι παρακελεύονται ἐκ τῶν εὐειδεστάτων κύεσθαι καὶ ἀστῶν καὶ ξένων.

attests less to an enthusiasm for intermarriage than to a selection criterion for the sorts of intermarriages permissible: namely, that the citizen or guest/stranger be of fine physical form, a tight confirmation of the eugenic nature of Spartiate reproduction. Looking at the word order, the “encouraged” applies to the phrase “of the finest-formed,” εὐειδεστάτων, not “aliens/strangers/guests.” It is the well-formedness, not the alienness, for which encouragement is applied to a Spartiate’s sister, daughter, wife, or mother. Alienness was not desirable. In fact, alienness had, on one historical occasion, trumped an extremely high degree of overall fitness for the potential fathering of children with Spartan women, as we see in the example of Alkibiades: although regarded as among the very fittest, handsomest, healthiest, and most intelligent individuals imaginable, and descending from a highly respected family, his alien Athenianness was sufficient to disqualify his Spartan son for kingship.¹¹⁷ We are left with the conclusion that exogamy was probably not a normal Spartiate practice.

What looks like a fairly strong selection regime in effect for centuries at Sparta makes it unlikely that Xenophon was inventing the differences he claims between Spartiates and other peoples. Most of these differences could have been formed by training, but then the well-attested cultural practices of directed reproduction would have been without function. We do not know how many individual Spartiates were pulled out of the reproductive pool, so we cannot apply comparanda from animal breeds in which relatively tiny percentages of a given generation are allowed to reproduce, as in the silver fox program.¹¹⁸ In any case, if the differences that Xenophon saw were partially hereditary, this would require many centuries. Such a process supports considerable anteriority for the commencement of at least many eugenic elements of the systems attributed to Lykourgos, and may support a commencement of these practices considerably longer than the minimalist down-daters’ one or two hundred years before Xenophon’s observation in the early or middle fourth century.

Research into human population genetics supports the notion that moderately analogous pressures to those that seem to have existed for the Spartiates have been effective on relatively endogamous human population groups. Ashkenazi Jews possess the highest recorded average IQ of any human population group ever recorded: their average group IQ is around 115, a full standard deviation above the average for non-Jewish Americans of European descent.¹¹⁹ The causes of this anomaly are debated. One theory is that it is due to a set of selection pressures favoring intelligence that has been in place since Hebrew ethnogenesis, and which is described in the Hebrew Bible and the Talmud: thus, some two thousand five hundred to three thousand years of selection pressures. These selection pressures began, the theory goes, with an unusually strong cultural focus on learning and reading.¹²⁰

However, Jews who are not of Ashkenazi extraction do not have an average IQ so unusually high. The causes of the IQ boost are reasoned by some scholars to be more

¹¹⁷ Plut. *Lys.* 22.

¹¹⁸ Trut 1999.

¹¹⁹ Reported in Entine 2007, Wade 2007, Cochran and Harpending 2009, who give full listings of measurements.

¹²⁰ MacDonald 1996. Reichler 1916.

specific to the Ashkenazi, whose existence as a distinct group began in the ninth century AD, and thus a much more recent development.¹²¹ A plausible candidate for selection pressures for high cognitive ability is the great Jewish participation in high-literacy and financial trades as the “middleman minority” in many European countries during the medieval and early modern periods in Europe, partially due to restrictions against Jewish participation in several other trades.¹²² High-literacy and financial trades necessitate, and thus select for, high levels of cognitive ability. They also produce a high level of wealth. Family size generally correlates with wealth in pre-industrial populations. Thus, the argument runs, those Jews pushed into trades requiring these varieties of cognitive ability would have created and financed their offspring better than those who were less capable at these professions; endogamy’s prevalence among the Ashkenazi resulted in the genes responsible for high intelligence inevitably spreading through their group.¹²³

No evidence exists amongst the Ashkenazi for either heavy selection pressures through high levels of infanticide nor through high levels of socially-imposed restriction from reproduction. If this is the case, we may be looking at an astonishingly fast period of selection pressure lasting only several hundred years rather than three thousand, back in the ballpark of the putative length of eugenic practice amongst the Spartiates, and a set of rather gentle pressures quite dissimilar from the silver fox experiment: in this case, it is simply that individuals possessing traits highly advantageous to, or desired by, the community reproduced more than individuals with fewer of these traits.

An increase in intelligence that is measured by an entire standard deviation in IQ scoring is not a trifling thing if it has evolved through selection pressures. If it has not resulted from selection pressures, it is difficult to imagine the origin of this increase. Discussion of cognitive ability has been fraught by political implications in learned circles, particularly in the past thirty years, but few will argue that IQ is a proxy for nothing at all, and support for some hereditary basis for intellectual traits has been gaining increasing support.¹²⁴ The idea that the increase is solely due to socialization and education is enjoying fewer and fewer adherents today due to increasing evidence for the heritability of mental, physical, and personality traits, evidence collected by biochemists and psychologists.¹²⁵ And the main opposition to research which generally argues for considerable heritability of human traits, including intellectual traits, rather than such traits being 90 -100% a result of training and socialization, has been markedly political rather than scientific.¹²⁶

¹²¹ Cochran and Harpending 2007.

¹²² The “middleman minority” as a phenomenon is discussed in Sowell 2005.

¹²³ High levels of endogamy among the Ashkenazi are attested through genetic evidence. Cochran 2005; Cochran and Harpending 2009, 108f, chapter 7.

¹²⁴ A sample of thinkers can be found in Sternberg 2004; cf. Gottfredson 2009 with references.

¹²⁵ Twin studies show that IQ is 70% heritable, meaning that 70% of the difference between IQ scores in the population examined in one important study was inherited: references in Alcock 2001, 57.

¹²⁶ Jensen 1982, a review of Stephen J. Gould’s *The Mismeasure of Man*, refutes Gould’s popular claim that intelligence findings in science are generated by the scientists’ social views about different groups’ “innate worth” rather than by the evidence. Gould’s claim rests on a view of scientific endeavor and on the notion that reality is *at root* socially constructed, a view made popular in academic circles by the rise of postmodernism.

Conclusion

Archaic Sparta, according to the evidence I have discussed in these two chapters, possessed social *nomoi* producing a specific kind of citizen. These *nomoi* are visible in the reproductive practices described by Xenophon which are consistent with the seventh-century poet Tyrtaios. The system seems to have had positive results. It resulted in a set of customs, institutions, and according to Xenophon, a *genos* of people different from surrounding populations. This society proved able to conquer a large portion of the Peloponnesos, enact unequal treaties with another large portion of it, and to retain *de facto* military leadership of Greece through at least part of the archaic period and more than the first half of the classical period. It developed as a cultural adaptation a new martial ethos of self-sacrifice for the community and, according to our historical authors, this ethos was active among the Spartiates. The social system it produced was highly effective, then, for centuries of its existence as a regional power in an archaic world of small-scale networks and local struggles; but as Finley noted in his seminal essay, it could not survive indefinitely, as it did not live in a vacuum.¹²⁷

¹²⁷ Finley 1975, 177.

Chapter 3

Oliganthropia amongst the Spartiates: the breakdown of the Lykourgan regime

Introduction

It is clear that several important Spartiate reproductive customs are correlated with very high population. If these customs indeed developed in the Archaic period, then the population decline from the 460s onward, whose outline has already been sketched in the introduction to this work, is very puzzling. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the mechanisms causing the decline. That the Spartiate population proved unable to recover from the earthquake or earthquakes of the 460s is quite clear. There is no solid evidence of low population before this.¹ This seismic disaster must then be taken as the external spur for the decline, but as Aristotle noticed long ago, an internal systemic and structural problem must have existed that allowed that allowed the decline to happen in the first place, and more importantly, that prohibited recovery.² Peculiarities of Spartiate reproductive practice constitute the main reason for their inability to sustain their numbers.

To begin with, however, the ways by which the Spartiate population dropped can be initially divided into two: first, demotion and second, sub-replacement fertility. They are not mutually exclusive.

Demotion means that oliganthropia results when males who had been born and raised Spartiate but fell out of the Spartiate class, that is, out of the class of *homoioi* or “equals,” primarily because they could not pay the contributions required for their *syssitia* or common dining-societies.³ This brought them into the ranks of the *hypomeiones* or “inferiors,” another class that seems to have included the *tresantes* (“tremblers” or cowards), the *agamoi* (unmarried men), and several other categories of person. This process of demotion from the Spartiates has been isolated since the 1980s as the prime cause of oliganthropia, and Aristotle’s analysis of the decline can be taken to support this as well. This analysis has in fact become the *communis opinio*.⁴

Very recently, however, it has been argued that demotion cannot have been responsible for a great percentage of the decrease in Spartiates: low fertility must comprise

¹ *pace* Cartledge 2002, 264-5, Toynbee 1969, 314.

² Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a29-39 combined with 7.1333b22-26 shows that he understood that the constitution of Sparta was structurally unsound and inevitably unsustainable.

³ These are often referred to as “mess-halls.” Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1272a.14-16 writes ἐν μὲν γὰρ Λακεδαιμόνι κατὰ κεφαλὴν ἕκαστος εἰσφέρει τὸ τεταγμένον, [15] εἰ δὲ μή, μετέχειν νόμος κωλύει τῆς πολιτείας, “for in Lakedaimon each [citizen] brings a fixed amount per head, and if he does not, *nomos* prevents him from sharing in the *politeia*.” The “fixed amount” (τὸ τεταγμένον) is specified by Plutarch: each person (there are approximately 15 per *syssition*) contributes each month a medimnos of ground barley, 8 choes of wine, five mnas of cheese, five half-mnas of figs, “and on top of these, a small amount of money (*nomisma*) indeed for delicacies” (Plut. *Lyk.* 12.2). The amounts are significant: 8 choes of wine equals 6 gallons; a medimnos equals 48 khoinikes. A single khoinix was a day’s grain ration for a man in Athens (Hdt. 7.187, D.L. 8.18, Thouk. 4.16): despite the boring nature of their diet, the Spartiates ate a lot, as one would expect for a group constantly engaging in exercise, hunting, and warfare: there was also probably a surplus. Hodkinson 2000, 190-199 speculates on the uses of this surplus.

⁴ *e.g.* Hodkinson 1983, 1989, 1992, 2000.

most of the problem.⁵ In this argument, oliganthropia is thus primarily population loss, not just personnel demotion. Spartiate families, in addition to some demotions whose quantities may have been overestimated in the “personnel-demotion model,” were simply not producing enough children to cope with the mortality rate. Uncontroversially, this has been explained by the deliberate preservation of property and status: too many offspring will split property into unusably or unfashionably small amounts.⁶ However, we would then expect to see oliganthropia due to estate preservation amongst other populations in the Classical Greek world. But no Greek sub-population underwent any process of dramatic diminution similar to that found amongst the Spartiates.

Thus factors peculiar to Sparta or especially prevalent in it must be sought. Assuming broadly similar economic constraints in many Greek poleis, an analysis for the radical demographic decline in Sparta must focus more on cultural and anthropological peculiarities in Sparta than on economic constraints, conclusions about demotion, or the notion that fertility was restricted deliberately to preserve status or property. Indeed, a recent trend in demography has emphasized cultural explanations rather than strictly “rational actor” economic explanations for fertility behavior, for at least short-term fluctuations in population size.⁷ It will be argued here that the patriarchal reproduction system that was active in other settled societies, and that normally ensures a steady replacement of persons, was absent or deformed in Sparta. This argument will require extensive discussion of Spartiate female status, which was very high compared to many other Greek and non-Greek cities, and of males’ interest in and personal, paternal connection to their individual offspring.

This situation resulted in a lack of personnel which threatened the functioning and eventually the existence of the Spartan state. The outbreak of the Peloponnesian War made the population loss particularly inconvenient and obvious. To replenish its military ranks Sparta began to award many helots the status of *neodamodeis* or “newly-minted citizens” in the 420s, shortly after the beginning of the conflict. Members of several other marginal groups were elevated as well, and some became influential in the Spartan state, the most notable being Lysander, a non-Spartiate who became *navarch* or admiral of the Spartan fleet.

Sparta’s mechanisms of enfranchisement and inclusion were overlooked by Runciman who asserted that “there were no innovations in constitutional theory, no extension of the criteria of citizenship” by Greek poleis.⁸ While the bestowal of Spartiate citizenship *sensu stricto* for non-Spartiates is only attested for Lysander, citizenship into a rank similar to the *perioikoi* was almost certainly the status of the *neodamodeis*. Not only did Sparta enact an innovation in its “constitution,” but it was this innovation that created the possibility of a

⁵ Hansen 2009, 393-6. Hodkinson 2009, 432-441 tries to defend his theory unconvincingly: this will be discussed *infra*.

⁶ Estate preservation appears in almost all modern scholarly works as either a total or (in Hodkinson’s case) partial explanation for the population shortage. Status preservation can be assumed as a phenomenon existing hand-in-hand with estate preservation, but its distinction from it in privileged populations is importantly illuminated in Johansson 1987, although she does not deal with Sparta.

⁷ e.g. Hirschman 1994, Kirk 1996, Van de Kaa 1996: noted in Scheidel 2007, 71 no. 155. Cf. also Gillian *et al.* 1993.

⁸ Runciman 1990, 354.

true empire outside the Peloponnesos after Lysander defeated Athens in the Peloponnesian War. Thirty years of growing enfranchisements after this point led to Sparta overextending itself, ceasing from its ostensible role as liberator of Greece, and becoming permanently crippled shortly after its defeat at Leuktra in 371. In this we will see a clear example of demographic change affecting state policy and state behavior.

Mechanisms of Population Shortage and Replacement

Recent work has clarified the mechanisms behind, and the history of, population expansion in the Greek world.⁹ Understanding population contraction can be more difficult. Often sub-replacement fertility is thought of as an exclusively modern phenomenon attached to industrialization and the modern Demographic Transition accompanying industrialization. However, this is not the case, and several examples of population shrinkage exist in the early modern period, particularly in the examples of privileged sub-populations.¹⁰ In the historical period, there are several explanations for *oliganthropia*, a term that literally means “fewness of people” but, some have argued, should be construed as “fewness of personnel.” Demotion is thought to have been caused by wealth concentration through time causing fewer and fewer men to inherit sufficient land to pay their requirements into their *syssitia*, which were a *sine qua non* for Spartiate citizenship. The concentration of *kleroi* or ancestral lots of arable land into increasingly fewer hands has been advanced. A computer simulation modeling of the Spartan land inheritance crisis has been used to argue that Sparta practiced universal female land-inheritance, producing a gradual increase of family impoverishment in Sparta.¹¹

Aristotle’s testimony from the *Politics* can be used to support this analysis, but confidence in his analysis’ accuracy is not secure: Aristotle believed that a large but limited amount of land in the Spartiate domains meant that if females inherited land, there was less to go around for males, and thus fewer males could remain in the Spartiate ranks, as being a Spartiate required land and its produce.¹² Aristotle also made a connection between female status and *oliganthropia*, but Hodkinson partially de-emphasized the latter to argue for a more general process of the gradual concentration of wealth in fewer and

⁹ e.g. Scheidel 2003a, Scheidel 2007, Morris 2007. Also see Hansen 2006, Sallares 1991; on human population dynamics generally, Livi-Bacci 2007 is a superb, readable introduction to demography.

¹⁰ Johansson 1987.

¹¹ Hodkinson 1992. Hodkinson’s initial assumption is that private land inheritance, and thus private ownership, existed. “Universal” means all females inherit land; “residual” by contrast means that females inherit land only if they have no living brothers. Aristotle *Pol.* 1270a23-4 is the key passage; a comparandum exists for classical Gortyn in which all daughters were entitled to half a son’s inheritance. If Spartan girls received universally the Gortynian measure, this would produce female land ownership approximating 40% in Sparta as Aristotle avers. Hodkinson adds, as support for Aristotle’s percentage, that “by the time of the late fifth and early fourth centuries many poorer Spartans had come to own so little land as to forfeit their own citizen status, thus causing a disastrous decline in Spartiate manpower ... in assessing the relative claims of the alternative systems of residual and universal female inheritance ... the more plausible candidate will be the system whose inherent effects were a steady but not too rapid increase in landed inequalities.” Hodkinson’s assumption of private, rather than public, land inheritance amongst the Spartiates may not be correct to begin with; further, the notion that a Spartiate could not use the produce from his wife’s, mother’s, sister’s, or aunt’s land may be unwarranted.

¹² Aristotle *Politics* 2.1270a.

fewer hands. Yet widows inheriting land would presumably support sons or brothers with this land, and often remarry, and so the processes of wealth concentration should not be disastrous for Spartiate males. And fully partible inheritance would likely reduce wealth concentration rather than exacerbate it. Further, other portions of Aristotle's analysis of Spartiate oliganthropia could also be used to support the second variety of oliganthropia, and it is to this that we turn next.

This second variety of oliganthropia consists of the actual gross numbers of the group being smaller, rather than the diminution of a privileged class through disenfranchisement: it means population shortage, rather than personnel shortage. This can be broken up into, first, increased mortality, which is simpler to account for, and, second, decreased fertility, which can be more difficult to explain. Increased mortality is often caused by natural disasters such as geological incidents, plague, and war deaths, and can be recovered within a generation or two under normal circumstances. Decreased fertility is more complex. It entails a population or subpopulation's failure to attain replacement fertility. This can result from conscious family limitation. Deliberate sub-replacement fertility for the preservation of wealth and status appears in several historical times and places, particularly among elite groups.¹³ It can also result from some malfunction of those social arrangements which normally ensure a continuous supply of people such as (in all human societies known) marriage.

Trying to understand what portion of Spartiate oliganthropia consisted of a shortage of personnel, and what portion consisted of a shortage of population, is important. The prevailing explanation extant today that Spartiate oliganthropia primarily resulted from wealth concentration through time, and hence demotion of poor Spartiates from the Spartiate ranks out of inability to pay syssition-dues has recently run into a serious problem outlined by Mogens Herman Hansen.¹⁴ If demotion had been the cause, then the drop in Spartiate population from some 8,000 Spartiates in 480 to some 1,000 in about 330 would mean that these persons would have entered into the numbers of disenfranchised ex-Spartiates or "inferiors," *hypomeiones* in Greek. This inferior class would have then grown accordingly, so that in the fourth century we would expect over six thousand *hypomeiones*.

But no evidence for such a quantity of *hypomeiones* exists, and no scholar has postulated a group of this size. Considerable war-deaths would still give us some four or five thousand *hypomeiones*. No doubt such men would be useful on Spartan military campaigns, since they had gone through the Spartiate *agoge*. But it is neodamodeis, helots, and perioikoi who are recorded as being brought on campaign in increasingly large numbers, not *hypomeiones*.¹⁵ (And if *hypomeiones* had been listed in our ancient sources instead as Spartiates, they do not cause a rise in the Spartiate numbers at all.) At the end of the fourth century, the number of *hypomeiones* may conceivably have been equal to the number of Spartiates: perhaps some 2,000-3,000 "Spartans" (that is, *hypomeiones* plus Spartiates) were alive. They still number considerably less than the 8,000 Spartiates of 480.

¹³ Johansson 1987.

¹⁴ Hansen 2009.

¹⁵ The frequency of mentions of *neodamodeis* is discussed later in this chapter.

Sub-replacement fertility is the only conceivable mechanism to explain this drop in numbers.¹⁶ Hodkinson's very recent argument that emigration to Spartan colonies reduced the number of *hypomeiones* in Lakedaimon in the 420s and around 400-398 rests on no evidence; even if we entertain it, there is still a huge decline.¹⁷ His second offer relies more on sub-replacement fertility. It is that reproduction in the marital context among the *hypomeiones* was limited by economic difficulties, and so deliberate under-reproduction must have occurred for the sake of patriline wealth maintenance.¹⁸ This may have happened, but we see no reflection of it in any sources whatsoever.

Before this set of issues is further addressed, an important question must be broached as to why the Spartiates did not fully enfranchise others, that is, why they did not turn other persons into full Spartiates in a similar way that Romans gave citizenship to manumitted slaves and to foreigners. While it is true that the *neodamodeis* had vastly more privileges than the helots did, and while it will be argued that they may well have attended the Lakedaimonian assemblies in Sparta, nevertheless the fact that they are consistently identified as *neodamodeis* in surviving accounts clearly shows that they were seen as a different group.¹⁹ The failure of the Spartiates fully to incorporate persons outside their own biological descent group is best explained by an exclusionary disinclination to share privileges closely consistent with cultural emphasis on the *genos* found in Tyrtaios' lyrics, with the eugenic practices of the Lykourgan regime, and with the expulsions of strangers known as *xenelasiai*.²⁰ This exclusionism also fits with the tenor of the nearly contemporaneous Athenian restriction of citizenship in 451. A well-articulated ancient parallel to this exclusionary ethos appears in a Roman text a half-millennium later.²¹

Exclusion and deliberate elite fertility suppression appear in population records from the past four centuries in Europe, but the important differences that remain make their patterns not entirely applicable to the Spartiate case.²² Similar to the Spartiates, the early modern elites in Europe refused newcomers even while shrinking, although nothing blocked them from increasing their numbers.²³ The early moderns considered illegitimate children separate from their totals, an attitude differing somewhat from the Spartiates, as will be explored shortly in this chapter. Their fertility and reproduction pattern seems rather different from the Spartiate insistence upon marriage and emphasis on *teknopoiia* or reproduction: presumably sanctioned through the anti-natalist and sexually ascetic strands in Christian ideology, 20- 40% of adults in the early modern European elites did not marry, and 10 – 30% of married adults did not have children at any point in their lives.²⁴

¹⁶ Hansen 2009, 394-5.

¹⁷ Hodkinson 2009, 434-5.

¹⁸ Hodkinson 2009, 435-6.

¹⁹ Assemblies: see chapter 6.

²⁰ *Xenelasiai*: Figueira 2003.

²¹ Tacitus preserves a conversation between Claudius and those opposing the right of Roman citizens of Gallia Comata to run for Roman office, *Annales* 11.23-24. The essential accuracy of Tacitus' account is confirmed by an inscription, *CIL* 13.1668 col. 2.

²² Johansson 1987.

²³ Johansson 1987, 439.

²⁴ Johansson 1987; cf. Hirschman 1994, 209.

In contrast, those males born into the Spartiate class who did not marry, the *agamoi*, were ejected out of the Spartiate caste, almost certainly losing their rights to whatever state land they had had owned.²⁵ They were barred from marrying Spartiate females by social pressure and disenfranchisement along with *tresantes* or other categories of persons with severely lessened rights. It is probably unlikely that as many as 40% of Spartiate males did not marry. There is no attestation whatsoever for Spartiate females abstaining from marriage. And there is no record of childless Spartiate couples; the practice of allo-insemination presumably compensated for cases of marital infertility.

These differences suggest that status anxiety and the disinclination to have too many children in order to preserve estates intact are thus unlikely to account for 100% of the phenomenon of sub-replacement fertility amongst the Spartiates. If the decline came about due to property laws being unfavorable to the maintenance of a healthy number of Spartiates, then once the situation of sub-replacement fertility became evident -- as it must have considering the great speed at which the Spartiate population declined -- we would expect a change in the laws governing property. This did not happen, unless we should take the Rhetra of Epitadeus, which permitted property to be given as gifts to persons other than one's descendants, as an attempt to fix the problem.²⁶ In any case, such a law did not improve the situation, and may have worsened it.²⁷ Finally, if the problem were determined primarily by deliberate fertility suppression to avoid estate subdivision, we would expect to see the elites of other Greek states also suffering sub-replacement fertility in the Classical period, and we do not: the only example we see comes from the Hellenistic period, the second century BC.²⁸ A problem specific to Sparta must be sought. It is here that I wish to suggest that Spartiate cultural peculiarities which had previously functioned very well to maintain a flourishing population when the state was intact, failed to function after the earthquake(s) of the 460s. Such a focus falls in line with recent "ideational" interpretations of fertility which emphasize cultural variables rather than rational economic interest as a motivator for fertility behavior.²⁹

Patriarchy and Demography

In this section it will be argued that the practices related to reproduction that had long been part of the Spartiate demographic regime resulted in low fertility after the earthquakes of the 460s, that Spartiate *nomoi* governing reproduction conflicted with the "patriarchal" reproductive practices of other less reproductively unusual settled societies, and that these peculiarities must explain a substantial amount of the population decline. The *nomoi* to be examined involve first the social standing of Spartiate females, who possessed extremely high status for any female population in the pre-industrial world. High female status has been correlated with low fertility in many populations. Second, many reproductive customs of Spartiate males functioned to negate a reproductively crucial direct link between a

²⁵ Derkyllidas is the only exception we know: Plut. *Lyk.* 15.

²⁶ Plut. *Agis* 5.

²⁷ If Aristotle is referring to the Rhetra of Epitadeus in *Pol.* 2.1270a21, it improved nothing.

²⁸ Discussed shortly.

²⁹ A good overview of "ideational" schools of thought on fertility is provided in Hirschman 1994, 216ff, Kirk 1996, 367-81, and van de Kaa 1996, 423-28.

male's status and the flourishing of his children. The Spartan state's communal education for children and approved alloparenting and allo-insemination practices had required or allowed these cultural idiosyncracies: as long as state power over reproductive practices remained intact, the result had been the maintenance of a flourishing population. However, the social chaos following the earthquake of the 460s disrupted the functioning of what we may call the social welfare system of the Spartan state. The link between high female status, low male personal investment in offspring proper, and subreplacement fertility has not been explicitly made in any other study of Sparta.

In order to argue this, it will be necessary to explain the reproductive significance of patriarchy. Patriarchy is defined by the journalist and social theorist Philip Longman as a system whose essential features are reproductive. It is a system which bribes or rewards males to invest in their offspring by offering status to those who do so and punishing those who do not. It requires limitations on female roles in order that females may focus on reproduction and rearing children and on the crafts associated with these acts. Its extraordinary prevalence amongst settled human societies is caused by its unique ability to ensure the largest possible number of legitimate children that can be cared for as well as possible. It thus creates the conditions for reproductive success both in terms of *quantity* and, crucially, *quality* of offspring. The fact that all or nearly all living settled human societies practice patriarchy is evidence of its success as a formula for reproduction.³⁰ Patriarchal societies have quite simply outbred non-patriarchal societies throughout the *longue durée*.³¹

Many fine works on ancient Greek demography exist.³² However, the institution and functions of patriarchy in terms of a demographic system that has particular population mechanics has been little analyzed by classical scholars with any knowledge of demography.³³ In fact, the only classics scholars to discuss patriarchy at any length as a social structure have focused on women's lack of opportunities under such a system, implicitly and inappropriately compared to female opportunities in late twentieth-century wealthy industrialized nations.³⁴

The latter focus ignored the technological constraints and realities of population dynamics that "rewarded," so to speak, restrictions upon female roles in pre-industrial societies. It ignored the relatively constant military and political threats plaguing most Mediterranean cities in which each state sought a high population to defend itself against external dangers.³⁵ The focus also failed to notice similar constraints on female behavior in

³⁰ Here no value-judgment on any aspects of patriarchy will be offered: the focus is its contribution to reproductive success.

³¹ Longman 2006.

³² *e.g.* Figueira 1984, 1986, and 2003, Sallares 1991, a great deal of Stephen Hodkinson's work, Scheidel 2003a and 2007, Hansen 2006, and Morris 2009.

³³ The ultimate roots of patriarchy are biological and lie in anisogamy, "the vastly unequal size (and consequent energetic cost) of gametes contributed by male and female in sexual reproduction": Campbell 2006, 70. Cf. Hrdy 1999, 21f, 25, 205; Hrdy 2000, 421-3; Smuts 1994.

³⁴ Cf. Stone 1976, Zeitlin 1978, Keuls 1985, Cantarella 1987 (1981), Blundell 1995. This pessimistic viewpoint is interestingly revised by Connelly 2007, *passim*, focusing on opportunities rather than restrictions.

³⁵ Eckstein 2007.

pre-industrial societies outside Greece or Rome: noticing this would have suggested the existence of similar constraints existing in many or all ancient Mediterranean civilizations, and in fact in all or almost all pre-industrial settled societies. Rather, this focus treated the Greeks and Romans as uniquely misogynistic, tracing misogyny through literary texts such as Hesiod and claiming it in authors like Aeschylus to conclude that Greek culture possessed a pathology against women.

A fresh analysis of the social origins and reproductive functions of the institution of patriarchy provides a stimulus to reconsider its demographic advantage. Longman, although neither an academic demographer nor a political scientist, synthesized a vast amount of accumulated information to present a novel look at patriarchy for a non-specialist audience.³⁶ Many themes in his work apply to the problem of Spartan oliganthropia, and so his formulations require discussion of some length here. The following analysis is indebted to his 2006 article, but his points have been supported and supplemented with work from evolutionary biologists, demographers such as Massimo Livi-Bacci, and others, as indicated in the footnotes.

A brief look at the means of production and reproduction in *hunter-gatherer societies* casts settled agricultural pre-industrial societies in clearer light. Hunter-gatherer groups keep populations low mainly so that their population will not outstrip the wild game supply and secondarily because persons on the move cannot carry more than one child.³⁷ Their societies evolve and develop customs, in Thomas Malthus' terms "preventive checks," to limit reproduction, such as late marriage, genital mutilation, exposure, and abortion.³⁸ In such societies nothing prevents the rise of alternatives to motherhood for females: these include such high-status roles for unmarried women as priestesses, female oracles, sorceresses, artists, and even female warriors. These roles thereby suppressed fertility to levels that the environment could support; needless to say, hunting and gathering cannot support the population per unit of land that farming can.³⁹ In an environment of no cities, disease vectors were not widespread, and child mortality not so high as settled societies experience. Further, no reason to encourage high fertility existed before the rise of settled farming. Before granaries existed to raid, and before corrals of livestock to steal, the production of many warriors for conquest benefited a society very little. And societies without large-scale building projects or farming could have few uses for captive slaves, except for sexual pleasure; and keeping these slaves probably cost more than it paid, as they needed to be fed and clothed in some fashion.⁴⁰ Hunter-gatherer population growth rate is estimated as being lower than 0.01% on average, with fluctuations occurring in

³⁶ Longman 2004 and 2006, primarily the latter.

³⁷ Demographers, ethologists, economists, biologists, and anthropologists assume a feedback loop: when wild game becomes scarce, a population produces less offspring or has the same number, but their children get hungry and sick. When new, unexploited lands are entered, the population produces more children. A basic equilibrium is maintained for most of the time, and among humans, small, very slow population growth occurs if resource extraction technologies and methods are slowly improved or if more land is annexed. Scheidel 2007; LeBras 2008 chapter 10; but cf. the small caution in Livi-Bacci 2007, 31.

³⁸ Livi-Bacci 2007, 72.

³⁹ Livi-Bacci 2007, 31 – 38 explains this very well, with excellent flow chart on 37.

⁴⁰ On fertility differences between forager and agricultural societies, Gillian *et al* 1993 and Hirschman 1994.

different times and places.⁴¹ 0.01% population growth means that it takes 7,000 years for population size to double.

In *settled pre-industrial agricultural societies*, on the other hand, wild game is no longer such a necessity since agricultural production supports many more persons per unit of land. Biological reproduction comes to be in the best interest of these societies in order to maintain armies lest they be overwhelmed by other settled societies: thus pro-natalist ideologies arise.⁴² Intergenerational wealth runs upward, for children provide work on farms and provide for adults in old age.⁴³ Population growth rate is an order of magnitude higher, at a rate of about 0.1% on average.⁴⁴ 0.1% population growth means that the population doubles in some 700 years. This state of being, coupled with the small improvements in resource extraction technology that more often occur in societies of higher population than otherwise, is reflected in what seems to be a slow but steady population growth starting in the Early Iron Age and continuing to at least the fourth century BC.⁴⁵

High fertility is necessary in any settled high-mortality society that has a similarly high-population group of neighbors who are, may be, or may become, warlike. Such neighbors exist in every single environment known except for a few very isolated places. In each settled human society known to historians and anthropologists a very similar set of institutions has evolved to promote high fertility, through something akin to biology's "convergent evolution" or "parallel evolution" by which different species of different origins living for a long enough time in similar environments or ecological niches often develop similar traits and a similar morphology, even though the species in question may have very different interior structure and very different evolutionary histories. What evolves culturally is a system common to many societies. This cultural system is known to us now as patriarchy. Patriarchy thus spread because it maximized reproductive success, an immense cultural and demographic shift from the previously prevailing hunter-gatherer demographic regime which had evolved institutions to keep reproduction relatively low.

Shortage of population (oliganthropia) has been a potential threat to human societies, particularly before the present era of overpopulation; it is still a threat to sub-populations within larger societies. Aside from war and natural disasters killing off societies, a danger has always existed in the era before the fertility transition: this is the danger of societies not maintaining replacement levels through a combination of high mortality (usually in infancy, childhood and childbirth) coupled with insufficiently high fertility. In the long run, populations of all living things tend to expand to the carrying capacity of their environment; but with humans, there are anomalies. The reasons for this can be economic. But the reasons can be cultural or social as well: for as Richerson and Boyd show and model, humans and human groups can pick up and spread ideologies and "memes" that are

⁴¹ Bentley *et al.* 1993, 269 provides references.

⁴² Mediterranean societies' constant threat of being overwhelmed is argued and illustrated throughout Eckstein 2007.

⁴³ Hirschman 1994, 214 with references.

⁴⁴ Bentley *et al.* 1993, 269.

⁴⁵ Scheidel 2003a and 2007, Morris 2007.

maladaptive or inimical to biological reproduction relatively quickly.⁴⁶ Sometimes oliganthropia will affect a specific class in a society. On occasion, no force is easily visible, and must be figured out: a subgroup or society simply does not reproduce enough, exactly as (though on a larger scale) individual families will often not produce enough and will then become extinct, a process known as patriline discontinuity.⁴⁷

The underproduction of population caused by such ideas is a perpetual threat. For example, present-day birthrates in many industrialized countries are falling below replacement levels. This requires mass immigration into Europe simply to maintain a tax base for the aging native-born population. The insurance that patriarchy, with its high birth rates, represents against oliganthropia has faltered. No law of nature ensures that human beings will produce enough children.

Rather than looking at this situation as a problem that afflicts populations which should naturally reproduce themselves plentifully, one may start from the other end and ask what force makes human populations continue to produce enough children to reproduce their societies, what force has caused populations with modern medicine to produce an average of 2.1 children per couple and caused populations before the advent of modern medicine to produce the required average of 6-7 children per couple – those populations that continued, that is. A relatively benevolent patriarchy has historically been the answer. Patriarchy was not invented in order to oppress women for the pleasure of seeing them submit.⁴⁸ Rather, its “goal” is the production of flourishing children, consequently the continuation of the society.⁴⁹ Longman writes,

Patriarchy does not simply mean that men rule. Indeed, it is a particular value system that not only requires men to marry but to marry a woman of proper station. It competes with many other male visions of the good life, and for that reason alone is prone to come in cycles. Yet before it degenerates, it is a cultural regime that serves to keep birthrate high among the affluent, while also maximizing parents’ investments in their children. No advanced civilization has yet learned how to endure without it.⁵⁰ Through a process of cultural evolution, societies that adopted this particular social system – which involves far more than

⁴⁶ Richerson and Boyd 2005 on maladaptive ideologies.

⁴⁷ Livi-Bacci 2007, 7ff shows the fascinating example of an Italian family whose later generations did not “pay off their demographic debt.” One branch died off completely.

⁴⁸ In the sense of Michel Foucault’s emphasis on Power as a goal unto itself, or O’Brien’s explication to Winston Smith of why the Party seeks increasing levels of power in George Orwell’s *1984*, or the entire tenor of the domination in Pauline Réage’s *Story of O*, or, in Margaret Atwood’s *Handmaid’s Tale*, the commander’s explanation to Offred of why his religious party took over America and forced all women into a bizarre submission. Cf. Hrdy 2000, 150 and 152 for the application of a similar distinction to patriarchy.

⁴⁹ Patriarchy’s “goal” is shorthand for the set of practices that historical human patriarchies have developed over time to produce a population advantage. The practices that were not conducive to this goal usually dropped out of the system, or the populations that practiced them dwindled and often died or were overwhelmed. This sort of process (that is, of culture affecting biological survival) is theorized, explained, modeled, and illustrated throughout Richerson and Boyd 2005.

⁵⁰ I know of no true matriarchies, that is societies in which females have more social, economic, political, and military power than males. According to Longman’s (probably correct) logic, such societies may exist only in very isolated places if they do at all.

simple male domination – maximized their population and therefore their power, whereas those that didn’t were either overrun or absorbed.⁵¹

Societies, or social strata within societies, face dire problems when their families produce an insufficient number of children. They will be less likely to risk their sons in war. They cannot raise an army of occupation, and this restricts their military options severely. They cannot play a vigorous imperial role abroad, cannot maintain imperial possessions without sufficient members unless they bring other people(s) into the imperial caste. The Spartiate example is obvious. Xenophon’s emphasis on high investment in offspring tells us much. Wealthy families who invest a great deal in very few children will find that their children are too rare to risk in war. The risk of under-reproduction is a serious one for populations; the United States presents an example. Only 10% of women born in the 1930s remained childless, in contrast to the women born in the “baby boom” of the 1950s, many of whom entered the countercultural movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, for whom the percentage of childless almost doubled. The baby boom cohort now is at the end of its reproductive years.⁵²

Ideology, then, impacts reproduction and hence demography in crucial ways. Sometimes the ideology will emanate from the state, either explicitly or implicitly.⁵³ And sometimes it will come from a counterculture. The childless portion of the “baby boom” cohort has “members drawn disproportionately from the feminist and countercultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s” and “will leave no genetic legacy.”⁵⁴ Aside from childless families, single-child families also breed themselves into extinction and contribute little to the future population in terms of raw numbers, estate managers, a tax base, or soldiers. Often it is elites with opportunities for high achievement who decide that investment in children is neither advantageous nor attractive in the face of life’s other attractions, such as social advancement and other definitions of happiness: a “cultural framework that promotes individual- or couple-level ‘rationality at the expense of group- or population-level ‘rationality’,” in Johansson’s words.⁵⁵ In these cases, sometimes a government will foster incentives to combat this problem. But we can imagine that many historical governments have lacked either awareness of the problem or the ability to do anything about it.

It can be difficult to decide upon a strictly ideological or strictly economic motive for sub-replacement fertility in many cases. We would expect them often to intertwine. Polybios gives an example of such an intertwining in a famous passage describing oliganthropia in Hellenistic Greece of the second century BC:

ἐπέσχευεν ἐν τοῖς καθ’ ἡμᾶς καιροῖς τὴν Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν ἀπαιδία καὶ
συλλήβδην ὀλιγανθρωπία, δι’ ἣν αἱ τε πόλεις ἐξηρημώθησαν καὶ ἀφορίαν
εἶναι συνέβαινε, καίπερ οὔτε πολέμων συνεχῶν ἐσχηκότων ἡμᾶς οὔτε
λοιμικῶν περιστάσεων... [7] τῶν γὰρ ἀνθρώπων εἰς ἀλαζονείαν καὶ
φιλοχρημοσύνην, ἔτι δὲ ῥαθυμίαν ἐκτετραμμένων καὶ μὴ βουλομένων μήτε
γαμεῖν μήτ’, ἐὰν γήμωσι, τὰ γινόμενα τέκνα τρέφειν, ἀλλὰ μόλις ἐν τῶν

⁵¹ Longman 2006, 58.

⁵² Longman 2006, 59.

⁵³ Johansson 1991 explains the difference between implicit and explicit fertility programmes.

⁵⁴ Longman 2006, 59.

⁵⁵ Johansson 1987, 440.

πλείστων ἢ δύο χάριν τοῦ πλουσίους τούτους καταλιπεῖν καὶ σπαταλῶντας
θρεῖναι, ταχέως ἔλαθε τὸ κακὸν αὐξηθέν.

in our time all Greece was visited by childlessness and a general population
shortage, through which the cities have become deserted and barren, even though
neither continuous wars nor plagues have occurred ... for with human beings
diverted into vanity and money-lust and pastime-loving indolence, and neither
wishing to marry – nor, if they did marry, to raise the children born, but in the
most cases barely raising two in order to leave them wealthy, and bringing them up
to live wastefully – this terrible process eluded notice and swiftly increased.⁵⁶

Taking passages like this at face value can be dangerous.⁵⁷ Yet despite its moralistic tone, Polybios' description of an outbreak of anti-natalist behavior in the Hellenistic period should not be dismissed as merely a literary construct. After the Bronze Age population collapse, starting in the beginning of the Iron Age in the 10th century BC, a long population increase occurred in most of Greece outside Messenia, was notably strong in the eighth century, continued through to the fifth century and then slowed down in the fourth and third centuries BC.⁵⁸ This slowdown may be what Polybios described. Polybios' description closely conforms to Johansson's observations about the root causes of subreplacement fertility in both early modern Europe and more recently. She notes that when individuals or couples are permitted by a society to pursue their own status, it is considered acceptable to balance decisions concerning the birth and rearing of children with decisions concerning the domestic production and consumption of nonhuman entities, such as leisure time, pets, or furniture. Each of these choices has the potential for enhancing the individual's or couple's utility and status as much as or more than children (Johansson 1987, 441).

Johansson came to her conclusions through observing the demographic behavior of early modern elites, quite independently of Polybios. Sallares, on the other hand, attributes the oliganthropia described in Polybios primarily to economic pressures, only at most hinting at ideational, cultural, or ideological causes. Hellenistic Boiotia, whose population as a whole in fact did collapse at this time, saw its upper classes restrict themselves to one or two children per couple to save wealth for consumption during their lifetimes and to prevent estate subdivision under the partible inheritance system. This resulted frequently in patriline discontinuity if one or two children were carried off by disease or war. Other members of the upper class were avoiding marriage and procreation altogether.⁵⁹

But restricting subreplacement fertility behavior primarily to economic pressure and estate subdivision as Sallares does in this passage may not tell the entire story. Sallares states that during the Hellenistic period, the Greek population in many areas overshot the carrying capacity of the land relative to the resource extraction technology then available, and that this is the true process reflected in the Polybios passage. But this is not really, or not wholly, what Polybios describes. Cities with reduced habitations and a love of indolence sound less like overpopulation than like an anti-natalist cultural preference in favor of individual pleasures. The attested Hellenistic-era increase in women's status should also be brought into the picture considering the

⁵⁶ Polybios 36.17.5 and 7.

⁵⁷ Scheidel 2001, 41, footnote 63. He sees Hellenistic depopulation as a function primarily of emigration from Hellas.

⁵⁸ Scheidel 2003a, Morris 2007.

⁵⁹ Sallares 1991, 158-9. Cf. Hansen 2006, 12 n. 43.

correlation of high female status with lowered births in many historical populations.⁶⁰ Yet perhaps the linking idea between Johansson's, Sallares', Hodkinson's, and Polybios' explanations has to do with some populations' deliberate restriction of family size in order to retain status and invest in non-human pastimes rather than in offspring-production.⁶¹ This may inform us of some dimensions of oliganthropia amongst the Spartiates.

However, further anomalies characterized the Spartiate reproductive regime, occurring on a deeper anthropological level. Johansson's European elites and the Hellenistic Greeks exhibited perhaps one of them, and that is attested only in a vague and general way: high female status.⁶² The Spartiate exceptions to normal patriarchal practice are quite different, and quite significant both symbolically and biologically.

For example, there is the case of illegitimate children. Patriarchy when operating normally produces a high citizen population by necessitating certain trade-offs. In normal patriarchies, children born outside of legal marriage must lose status.⁶³ There is a reason for this. Patriarchal systems normally force fathers to invest in their legitimate children, but this has a necessary correlate: it also encourages them to ignore illegitimate children. Just as patriarchy gives an incentive to men to desire children to continue their name, the name of their household, and their genetic legacy, and just as a man's honor is tied to the quality and legitimacy of his offspring, illegitimate children must necessarily be stigmatized. To allow an illegitimate child to take his father's name would denigrate legal marriage, denigrate legal children, and in some respect most importantly, denigrate the status of the legal wife: for obviously, her cooperation in the system is crucial for monogamous patriarchy to function.

This clearly was not the case in Sparta. What seems to have been two entire classes of illegitimate children, the *nothoi* and the *mothakes* or *mothones*, existed. They did not seem to have full Spartiate status, but they were used in military expeditions and seem even to have gone through the elite Spartiate training.⁶⁴ The *nothoi* are complimented by Xenophon in a way fitting with Spartiate eugenic interests as *μᾶλα εὐειδείς* and, at least in the depths of the population shortage in 381, seem to incur very little opprobrium from their illegitimate origin aside from a name and a lack of full status as *homoioi*. Some claims have been advanced as to the good effects of, and positive emotional tenor created by, the presence of illegitimate children in Spartiate households.⁶⁵ But as has been explained above, any substantial group of illegitimate children in a patriarchy necessarily undermines normal patriarchal customs. The rise of *nothoi* as a class – if indeed they are a class – and the rise of other Spartan groups that are probably also illegitimates such as *mothakes* – cannot mean other than a further breakdown in the patriarchal principles that preserve orderly reproduction in standard human settled societies. Either Sparta was not a normal patriarchy in this respect, or deep tensions must have existed surrounding the illegitimates.

Further, the patriarchal system in high-mortality and high-fertility societies necessitates a specific focus for women. With the temptation removed of developing skill in many other realms

⁶⁰ Scheidel 2001, 42, footnote 168; cf. Hirschman 1994, 223; Bentley *et al.* 1993 for India.

⁶¹ Cf. Forrest 1968, 136.

⁶² Blundell 1995, chapter 18.

⁶³ Longman 2006, 60 - 62.

⁶⁴ Military expeditions: X. H. 5.3.9.

⁶⁵ Hodkinson 1997, 54-5.

of life, females in patriarchies normally come to draw their primary satisfaction from and specialize in reproduction and child-rearing as a craft: both in directly pertinent tasks such as feeding as well as tasks like weaving that benefit children slightly less directly. The reproductive consequences of this social arrangement are as follows. Women exert their energies on child-production and child-rearing, and generations of children receive close attention from their mothers who, not drawn away by other means of gaining honor for themselves, learn and fine-tune the complex crafts of ensuring the health and safety of their offspring until these crafts are elaborated and perfected into artistic creations. Maternal investment stays very high. Childhood mortality is presumably reduced due to close attention, and fertility increased due to the desire for children. The social consequences will be a female culture in which motherhood is prized as a *sine qua non*. Unmarried, childless women will have little status amongst other women in such a system. As Longman argues,

without implying any endorsement for the strategy, one must observe that a society that presents a woman with essentially three options – be a nun, be a prostitute, or marry a man and bear children – has stumbled upon a highly effective way to reduce the risk of demographic decline.⁶⁶

In grand terms, the innovations of patriarchy are two: first, a division of labor which encourages parental devotion (to the exclusion of almost all else) to the tasks of childrearing; considering the years of nursing that provide the most efficient nutrition for growing children, this is most logically the female parent. Secondly, a direct connection is created between a man's social status on the one hand and his children's well-being on the other – a connection that biology and anthropology inform us is neither inevitable nor automatic, and one that does not exist in many human societies and certainly not amongst the huge majority of animals. This is patriarchy's *arcanum imperii*, the secret of its immense historic success: males indoctrinated into its value system will expend more resources, time, and attention on their offspring than males will in another system. They will see their children as their own, and they will expect their wives to bear their children and will enact systems aimed at guaranteeing this.

Females indoctrinated into its value system will devote their energy to the maintenance of the young. Human children – and we must remember that it is humans who require the longest childhood training of any animal – will experience closer and more intense parental investment. This system, coupled with other cultural adaptations such as effective resource acquisition, internal conflict resolution systems, and military structures, will effect high population. Settled societies who did not develop these means of maintaining high population have evidently been absorbed long ago into societies that did develop patriarchy. For no settled non-patriarchical societies remain. None even appear in the historical record. This absence fits extremely well with Richerson and Boyd's discussion of culture's effect on reproduction: ideology greatly affects reproduction.

Applications

I have asserted that Sparta's idiosyncratic reproductive *nomoi* did not fit the patriarchal model very well, that a strong state presence in individual Spartiates' lives and a social welfare system of sorts controlled and shaped reproduction, and that when this system was disrupted by earthquake and revolt, demographic consequences resulted. It remains to compare the Spartan

⁶⁶ Longman 2006, 62.

experience against the demographic model of and theory of patriarchy. As Mackil 2004 has illustrated, populations of Greek poleis can decline, can move to other poleis, can be enslaved, can die off through war, malaria, or natural disaster.⁶⁷ Sparta is a different story; the architecturally unimpressive, unwalled city stayed occupied, but it was the Spartiates as a class that declined in the face of a booming surrounding population in the Peloponnesos and in the rest of Greece. The drama of this decline remains impressive: although given deference from all other Greek poleis in the sixth and fifth centuries and the beginning of the fourth, at Leuktra in 371 the Spartiates lost this lofty position forever, and two years later they lost control of the populations and lands that had comprised their economic base and permitted their special way of life.⁶⁸

The Spartiates lost men in war, but many poleis suffered from war deaths; they lost many men in an earthquake, but as mentioned, Argos lost up to 6,000 persons in 494 at the battle of Sepeia and recovered by 460. Normal Malthusian population flow charts assume that after population loss – which does occur from time to time over history as part of the waning and waxing of various factors of military failure, famine, plague, geological disaster, and so on – the lack of demand for food creates a drop in food prices resulting in increase in *real* wages, resulting in increase in nuptiality and fertility and then population increase. Countless historical examples evidence this cycle.⁶⁹

What is remarkable in Sparta is that these deaths occurred over many decades and the Spartiates evidently were unable to replenish them, despite plenty of time to do this, despite inducements given by the lawmakers for Spartiates reproducing successfully, and despite the fact that the Spartan population burgeoned before the earthquake.⁷⁰ Between the earthquake in the 460s and Leuktra, some three generations had been born, even aside from the ones who experienced the earthquake. Their inability to regenerate their population is a mystery.⁷¹ Some modern scholarship has also asserted without precision that Sparta's population losses stemmed from, in addition to earthquake and war loss, "a social structure which was not conducive to the frequent fathering of children."⁷² The implications of the focus on patriarchy clarify this.

Our lack of texts from fifth-century Lakedaimonian eyewitnesses means that we have no native picture of the social chaos that followed the earthquake and subsequent war against the helots. However, we can guess that great disruptions occurred in the social services that normally cared for children through many pieces of evidence. The war lasted ten years. Allies needed to be called in to quell the war, which still could not be won. The helots were allowed to leave on a

⁶⁷ Mackil 2004. Cf. Kulesza 1999.

⁶⁸ Deference: Lendon 2007. Cf. Diodoros 15.50.2 who asserts that in 372 the Spartan *arkhe* had lasted 500 years: although he is not the best witness, it may still be correct to date Sparta's beginning as a "Great Power" well earlier than the early sixth century.

⁶⁹ Livi-Bacci 2007, 73. Scheidel 2007, 54. Cf. Winter 1986, 256ff who explains excellently in concrete detail a specific modern example: the surge in remarriages in England and France after the Great War.

⁷⁰ Aristotle *Pol.* 1270b4.

⁷¹ Hansen 2006 posits 29 years as a generation (defined as the mean age of mothers at the birth of their daughters). Gallant 1991 posits 24 years. But it should be noted that the mother's age at the time of the first child's birth should be younger than either of these estimates in agricultural societies of this type according to normal pre-industrial models. French 1997, 247 estimates 18 – 20 for Spartan girls, who were considered by other Greeks to have married late. This sounds correct. Cf. Plut. *Lyk.* 15.3.

⁷² Rhodes 2007, 206.

truce. Plutarch says that only a few houses in Sparta remained standing.⁷³ Diodoros lists 20,000 deaths.⁷⁴ The Spartiate population numbers lowered after it permanently.

What seems to be the case is that the unusual social arrangements that led to Spartiate success in the Archaic and early classical period were counterproductive or biologically maladaptive in the face of serious population loss and social disruption. That is, the anomalies of Spartiate patriarchy crippled Sparta's ability to regenerate its numbers after the earthquake. Xenophon's statement that Lykourgos made his country pre-eminent in prosperity by devising customs opposite to the majority of other cities rather than by imitating them certainly pertains to many cultural features of the Spartiate regime: the lack of power given to fathers over their own children and the high status of females appear to be two of them.⁷⁵

Spartiate Men and Sub-replacement Fertility

On the one hand, as discussed in Chapter 1, many Spartiate practices possessed eugenic intent or eugenic functions. One feature of the "Lykourgan" regime was severe social ostracism and denial of reproductive opportunities to cowards or *tresantes* and their sisters lest the cowardice be hereditary, or in order to make the disincentive for cowardice more grievous by affecting the whole family, or both.⁷⁶ Children deemed by tribal elders or the Gerousia to be unfit to serve the community underwent exposure.⁷⁷ "The Spartiates were celebrated for their breeding of hounds and racehorses, so it is not surprising to see them transfer these notions to human beings."⁷⁸ These programs may be unusual but did not contravene normal patriarchal principles that have ensured reproductive success for many societies.

On the other hand, Spartiate *nomoi* inserted state control over the aspects of family life that normal patriarchies have traditionally left to private families and to the authority of individual males. These social arrangements must have been quite conducive to reproduction when the population was high enough to sustain them and the state was organized enough to make sure that they functioned, but such arrangements could not stand a shock like the earthquake's death toll, and the state evidently did not change them when they no longer continued to function well. This would be an example of path dependency or the tendency of organizations to cling to modes of behavior that were once functional, whether or not these modes continue to be functional, because of the high cost of reversing course.⁷⁹

Alloparenting may be a good example. Males of the Spartiate class had a remarkable degree of authority over the offspring of other males and as discussed in the last chapters, this should be seen as a form of alloparenting which is associated with high-fertility regimes like the Hutterites.⁸⁰ However, in times of stress and crisis like the earthquake, in times of the breakdown of social services, it is optimal for a strong default caregiver to be present for defenseless persons such as children, a person who has formed close emotional ties with his children and whose status and emotional well-being require these children. This is logically a person performing

⁷³ Plut. *Kim.* 16.

⁷⁴ D. S. 11.63.

⁷⁵ *L.P.* 1.2.

⁷⁶ X. *L.P.* 9.5, Plut *Ag.* 30.

⁷⁷ Plut. *Lyk.* 16.1-2. Sallares argues that children born outside of marriage were probably also exposed. Sallares 1991, 165-6.

⁷⁸ Pomeroy 2002, 36.

⁷⁹ Path dependency: Pierson 2000.

⁸⁰ X. *L.P.* 2.10, 6.1-2, Plut. *Lyk.* 17.1.

closer parental duties than are performed by general village alloparenting. In normal patriarchal societies these are the parents.

That this tie had much strength for Spartiate males is rather dubious. It is well known that Spartiate boys did not live in the family *oikos* from the age of seven until thirty but instead cohabited with others of their age group, and ate not at home but at the *syssitia* or common dining groups. Feeding and caring for male children in this way may work very well, again, when the social group is in order and when sufficient people exist to staff schools and social service structures but less so when it is in disorder. General alloparenting by the group at large combined with the absence of the fathers from their home, and of boys and young men from their home, reduced Spartiate paternal investment considerably.⁸¹ Tyrtaian elegy's repetitive elevation of the polis and the larger *genos* over the individual family cannot have done other than reinforce this syndrome.

Practices functional in times of high population were maladaptive after the demographic shock of the earthquake(s) of the 460s. The harsh rules throwing men convicted of cowardice out of Spartiate caste were originally adaptive and presumably originally came into being for a double benefit. In both the short and in the long term, these practices set an example against behavior considered undesirable and socially destructive: cowardice cannot be tolerated in a militaristic society. And in the much longer term, these customs were intended to remove from the breeding pool persons whose cowardice contained a hereditary element. Similar punishments were enacted on *agamoι*, unmarried men for similar reasons.⁸² As I have argued, these rules went beyond demotion and included physical cruelty and inducements to suicide.

Needless to say, in times of crisis and population shortage, these customs became maladaptive. The eugenic insistence on each male having particular warlike and reproductive tendencies disallows the existence of males without these tendencies who would be otherwise useful to the community in nonmilitary helper roles. The harshness of the regime needed to be loosened for the new situation. Indeed, we see a small loosening, but only amidst truly desperate crises. The reinstatement after a period of *atimia* of the Spartiates who surrendered at Pylos evidences some relaxation of the rule against cowardice.⁸³ So does Agesilaos' suspension of the rules against *tresantes* or cowards after the monstrous Spartan defeat at Leuktra in 371, almost a century after the earthquake.⁸⁴ But we have no notice whatsoever that the rules were done away with altogether in this period. Presumably the remaining Spartiates guarded the old customs as a point of pride, for the adherence to these ideals were, in a highly important respect, the definition of what it meant to be a Spartiate.

Many Spartiate customs seem designed to weaken nuclear family ties in order to foster allegiance to the community instead. Nor can this be attributed to a late "Spartan Mirage." The trend is visible as early as Tyrtaios' novel exhortations to risk one's life for the polis in the seventh century, rather than the more Homeric norm of doing this for one's own personal honor

⁸¹ *pace* Kulesza 2008 arguing evidencelessly for high general male Spartiate parental investment offspring. He ignores the Tyrtaian evidence of replacement of normal family-connection with city-connection. His views are dealt with *infra*.

⁸² Plut. *Lyk.* 15.2 – 3.

⁸³ Thouk. 5.34.2. Richer 2006.

⁸⁴ Plut. *Ag.* 30. Plutarch asserts that it was enacted lest the *tresantes* cause trouble, and it may have been but a token gesture: this would further support Spartiate path-dependency.

or family. These customs inevitably became maladaptive under demographic duress. Bizarre minor customs mentioned by Plutarch exemplify this trend as well. The custom of shaving a new Spartiate bride's hair is an example.⁸⁵ In normal patriarchal (and probably non-patriarchal) societies, a bride is made to look as alluring as possible on her wedding night so that the groom will be greatly attracted to her, surely strengthening the wedding bond, a bond whose ultimate function in human society is to provide as stable as possible an environment for the production and raising of offspring. Yet in a society in which the offspring are taken care of by the society at large, this bond does not need to be so great. Regardless of whether it originated in an ancient female *rite de passage*, the head-shaving is both evidence of this, as well as a deliberate novelty developed in order to weaken the link between women and men of the Spartiate class, to make conjugal intercourse less attractive, the marriage tie accordingly weaker, and family identity weaker *vis-a-vis* identification with the community as a whole.⁸⁶ The entirety of the “strikingly bleak” wedding rituals thus possesses a social logic.⁸⁷

Like nuptial head-shaving, Spartiate allo-insemination reduces emotional loyalty and hence investment to the family unit. A man's wife was no longer exclusively his own. Regardless of our enlightened feelings about the objectionability of regarding one's wife and children as property, or as property-like beings, this sense of power has probably been one of the attractions of marriage for many men in many regimes throughout the history of patriarchy. “Wife-sharing” diminished this.⁸⁸

His children were no longer necessarily his own either. Modern sentiments about the equivalency of adoption with the biological production of one's own hereditary children cannot be applied to societies outside the highly specific and contingent ones that produced these sentiments. An immense array of methods has been evolved by non-human male animals to increase the chances that a female's children descend from him, from sperm competition to mate guarding and so on, and are echoed in the anthropologically huge set of laws and customs in patriarchal human societies including female circumcision, sequestration, and penalties of various sorts for cuckolding. The connection between the willingness of a male to care for children and the belief that the children are his own is not an arbitrary, socially constructed temporary arrangement but clearly has deep evolutionary roots.⁸⁹

Finally, the exposure of infants was conducted on the decision not of male heads of household but *ton phuleton hoi presbutatoi*, the elders of the tribes.⁹⁰ As noted earlier, on a medical and eugenic level it is probably better to have relatively impartial judges make exposure

⁸⁵ Plutarch *Lyk.* 15.3. Cartledge 2001, 122 thinks this “was designed to ease the transition for the groom from his all-male and actively homosexual *agoge* and common mess to full heterosexual intercourse.” But Spartiate males did not shave their heads, as Guy Sanders pointed out to me in a conversation in May 2010 in Corinth.

⁸⁶ For another but similar view, there is Blundell 1995, 153. Pomeroy 2002 gives little functional explanation at all, much less one that fits with her general ideas, and suggests that the head-shaving custom appeared in the Hellenistic era without much explanation why: it “may have been part of a rite of passage that signalled her entrance into a new life ... transvestitism may have been symbolic of the bride's inclusion in the citizen body” (42-43). Other believers in the *rite de passage* include Cartledge 1981, 100-1 (= 2001, 122), Ogden 1996, 226; and Kulesza 2008.

⁸⁷ “strikingly bleak”: Cartledge 2001, 122.

⁸⁸ Cartledge 1981, 103 notes a connection between polyandry and female status.

⁸⁹ Hrdy 2000, 62-5, 205 – 265.

⁹⁰ Plut. *Lyk.* 16.

decisions than parents. And in addition to this, perhaps we can assume that Spartiate males indoctrinated into the eugenic ideals of their society would have mostly agreed with these elders' choices. Nevertheless the decision to expose infants seen as unfit was a traditional Greek male prerogative. Tearing this away from the male head of the household and giving it to tribal elders was a symbolic slight against patriarchal power.⁹¹ Even the term "head of household" is something of a misnomer for the Spartiate male: it is not much of a household for a male who eats dinners in his *syssitia*, whose sons are removed from him at the age of seven, their loyalty to their age-mates encouraged at the inevitable expense of loyalty to their family; the man is encouraged to expend parental investment on other men's children, and his children may not be his own.

Inevitably, practices like this rerouted the sense of affection, duty, attachment, and investment that would normally be directed to a Spartiate's family to the community at large instead. Generally speaking, these trade-offs between altruistic energy spent on the patriarchal family and upon the community functioned well in a system that enjoyed spectacular success for, it seems, centuries and ensured Spartan military dominance in Greece; yet apparently they could not sustain themselves over the long term, and disabled reproduction when interrupted by severe crisis.

This is because they did not ensure necessary male investment in offspring. Lykourgan customs minimizing a father's personal involvement in his own children will have weakened his willingness to perform altruistic acts for the sake of his offspring – including the many tiny, undramatic altruistic acts parents perform daily in the course of basic care of their children.⁹² Rather, the Tyrtaian-Lykourgan incentive system channeled a great deal of altruism into the polis. The fostering of each individual male's interest in reproduction normally encourages males in traditional patriarchies to reproduce their families after population reduction from disaster and war. Spartiate deaths were severe; the *kleros* diminishment problem no doubt exerted a negative effect on reproduction; however, the system remained in place, and a system like this did not sufficiently link male honor with offspring to encourage men to reproduce at rates fast enough to replenish the Spartiate population or to take care of the children that they did father sufficiently well to suppress mortality.

Spartiate Women and Sub-replacement Fertility

Nor did the system ensure necessary female investment in offspring. The mechanisms in Spartiate society that resulted in high status for females were counterproductive to the fertility sufficient to reproduce the Spartiate caste. Before proceeding to this argument, it has become necessary to establish that Spartiate females were indeed a relatively privileged class of persons by the standards of the ancient Mediterranean world. After reviewing the evidence for this claim we will see that high female Spartiate status cannot be dismissed as literary "otherness," "gender

⁹¹ Pomeroy 2002, 38.

⁹² Kulesza 2008 argues against a picture of low parental investment for males in Sparta; however, the single citation he offers to support this view is Xen. Ag. 11.13 which only discusses Agesilaos' attitude toward his own children, not cultural syndromes at large. Kulesza's colleague Jacek Rzepka offered me (pers. comm., May 2010) *Apophthegmata Lakonika* 208B, 216B, 223A, and 241F, none of which offer more than individual instances of support for Kulesza's minority view.

inversion,” “gynecocracy,” “topsy-turvy sexual mores and gender roles” as seen through “an Athenian ideological construct,” “conceptual baggage” of “the Athenian imaginary,” or the like.⁹³

The opposing arguments deserve consideration first.⁹⁴ It is true that much (but not all) of our information on Spartiate women comes from non-Spartan sources.⁹⁵ It is true that Spartiate women may have been regarded by some Athenian writers as nearly the opposite of Athenians. And it is true that a certain amount of the Athenian love of polarities and dichotomies may clot any description of anyone or anything.⁹⁶ Further, it is true that “our non-Spartan sources are primarily interested in the unusual and exotic aspects of the lives of Spartiate women,” and that written sources, unlike archaeology, often privilege the unusual.⁹⁷ Finally, it is true that as a literary *topos* it may not be incorrect that we see the “empowered Spartan female” arising not much earlier than the second half of the fifth century.⁹⁸ But most literary *topoi* in prose, at least, do not appear earlier than this. Nevertheless, the recoverable evidence indicates that Spartiate women enjoyed more power and status than Athenian women did, and probably more than most Greek women did, and in fact, probably more than many pre-industrial women did. This is not only a “stereotype” but is well-supported by the evidence.⁹⁹ Even persons who do not believe that stereotypes and *topoi* usually arise because a kernel of truth is objectively, independently present will see that more evidence than stereotypes is available, including material evidence, discussed below.¹⁰⁰ Spartiate women were a relatively privileged, aristocratic class. As Pomeroy has shown, their health (surely a most objective standard of their status: Steckel 2009), their education, the range of their forms of what Pomeroy calls ‘sexual expression,’ their control over reproduction, their control over property and resources, and their influence on society, according to the sources we possess, were greater than what is evidenced of women in other Greek societies.¹⁰¹

As to their control over resources, reasonable elaborations have been offered on what manifestations this form of power took.¹⁰² It has been argued that Aristotle’s attribution of wealth

⁹³ Most of these terms are used throughout Millender 1999, esp. 377.

⁹⁴ Much of what Millender is arguing against is the “image of the empowered Spartiate female” derived from poetry concerning mythological figures such as Helen; I have used no poetry whatsoever in my survey of the evidence for high female Spartiate status.

⁹⁵ Millender 1999, 355.

⁹⁶ Millender 1999, Hodkinson 2004, 108.

⁹⁷ Hodkinson 2004, 109.

⁹⁸ Millender 1999, 355.

⁹⁹ *Pace* Millender 1999. A crucial argument Millender gives (365) is that Xenophon’s *Lak. Pol.* may not have been written by him and is thus untrustworthy. This is a minority view. Even the remarkable similarities in the discussion of Spartiate boys’ feet to horses’ feet in his *Cavalry Commander* suggest identity of authors. She argues that Xenophon’s “tendency to both moralize and idealize Sparta further undermines his worth as a source on Spartan women and sexual mores in general” (1999, 365). This vague objection is hardly an argument. Besides the fact that Xenophon’s Chapter 14 is hardly encomiastic and shows his capacity to criticize Spartiates, it is difficult to see how his descriptions of Spartiate female sexual mores and practices are encomiastic or “idealized.”

¹⁰⁰ Millender does believe that “tangible differences ... existed between Spartan female roles and privileges and those of contemporary Athenian women” (1999, 377).

¹⁰¹ Pomeroy 2002, especially 136 – 137.

¹⁰² Hodkinson 2000 and particularly 2004 affirms female citizens of Sparta having greater control over resources than their counterparts in e.g. Athens, although the contrast was “by no means so sharp as it might

to Spartiate females applies only to the wealthy ones; the severely unwealthy were demoted from the Spartiate caste and no longer were counted as Spartiates but as *hypomeiones*.¹⁰³ The record on Spartiate women's participation in trade is unclear.¹⁰⁴ However, votive dedications supply us with some evidence of the ability to dispose of valued items. Bronze objects, including fibulae, pins, and jewelry, and lead figurines, more of human women than of hoplites are deposited at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia before the mid-sixth century. Many of these seem to have been dedicated by females, presumably aristocrats and thus presumably Spartiate females.¹⁰⁵ After the mid-sixth century decline in bronze items at the Orthia sanctuary, there are numerous bronze and terracotta bells found at the sanctuaries on the Spartan acropolis that have a good chance of having been dedicated by Spartiate women.

Spartiate women lacked anything resembling the Athenian *kurios* in charge of their property. Aristotle called Spartiate men *γυναικοκρατούμενοι*, "woman-ruled" and stated that they owned two-fifths of the land; in the third century, they owned "most" of the land in Lakeldaimon.¹⁰⁶ Several loosening of the restrictions associated with domesticity appear in the sources. For one, actual education as opposed to training in domestic tasks is attested for Spartiate women.¹⁰⁷ At least for the wealthy Spartiate females, it looks as though the systems of Spartiate concubinage of sorts involving helot women who apparently supplied the illegitimate marginal groups known as *nothoi* and *mothakes*, meant that a Spartiate husband did not need to have a contest of wills with his wife on the subject of more children beyond the wife's wishes: husbands could attain "marginal reproductive success" through Helot channels.¹⁰⁸ Spartiate women married when their bodies were in full bloom, rather than when they were still small and childlike.¹⁰⁹ This reduced the number of women who died or became injured due to having birth too early, but also reduced the total number of fertile years in which they could produce children.¹¹⁰ Alone of Greek women, and probably alone of Greek and Roman women, Spartiate women did not even have to weave.¹¹¹ Spartiates by definition were freed from many tasks by domestic servants, probably helots.¹¹²

appear" (107) because of Sparta not allowing private manumissions and not featuring as much property liquidity as many Greek states.

¹⁰³ Millender 1999, 371.

¹⁰⁴ Hodkinson 2004, 109.

¹⁰⁵ Hodkinson 2004, 109.

¹⁰⁶ Aristotle *Pol.* 1269a29-1271b19. Plut. *Ag.* 7. Ogden 1995.

¹⁰⁷ Citations in Cartledge 2001, 114f, although his notion that "some form or degree of parity between the sexes" (115) was sought in Sparta is as unfounded as his accusation of Aristotle as a "sexist" (125) is anachronistic.

¹⁰⁸ "Marginal reproductive success": Scheidel 2009.

¹⁰⁹ Plut. *Lyk.* 15.3. As Cartledge 2001, 116 notes, Spartiate girls' puberty could have been hastened by their superior diet, or delayed by their vigorous exercise.

¹¹⁰ Livi-Bacci 2007

¹¹¹ X. *L.P.* 1.3-4. cf. Hodkinson 1997, 47: "The evidence of the literary sources, especially Xenophon, assumes that all Spartiate households possessed servile personal attendants who performed work on behalf of both male and female members of citizen families." He also lists X. *L.P.* 6.3 and 7.5 for "generic references" (i.e. not for prominent individuals).

¹¹² *Locus classicus*: Plut *Sayings of Spartan Women* 241.9. Hodkinson 1997, 47f argues that these were likely helots, not chattel slaves, and also notes, "The Spartan *oikos*, consequently, had a greater dependence upon servile labour for its domestic production than did *oikoi* in other *poleis*." This occasioned sharper panic at the prospect of servile revolt.

Lastly, high status for Spartiate women is shown by the fact that they even competed in horse-racing at Olympia. Our earliest evidence for this is Agesilaos' sister Kyniska, who built extraordinary monuments at Olympia. Her career cannot be relegated to a literary trope of "inversion" from Athenian female norms: the base of one of these monuments has been recovered by archaeologists. She was awarded a hero-shrine near the shrines of Helen and Alkman, according to Pausanias, who tells of additional Spartiate females who won horse-races at Olympia.¹¹³ A new venue of display and prestige was now open to Spartiate females. A glass ceiling of sorts had been cracked.

This list of social privileges has a reproductively maladaptive counterpart pertinent to the task at hand, the explanation of sub-replacement fertility amongst the Spartiates. A decrease of crafts relating to the raising of children directly and indirectly (such as weaving) meant a lessened concentration on developing child-rearing as an art.¹¹⁴ Hints to this situation appear in the sources. And as mentioned, outside Greek sources, we see a negative correlation between female status and female fertility elsewhere in many times and many places. This correlation appears, for example, in modern India wherein female autonomy and low fertility are closely correlated. Lower female autonomy and higher fertility prevails in the north, and the opposite in the south.¹¹⁵ Female autonomy in India includes such indices as higher literacy rates, daughters enjoying greater education, survival rates, later marriages, and marriages closer to the homes of their birth, facilitating relations with their parents.¹¹⁶ In World Fertility Survey studies in 1985, female education predicts lower fertility more so than socioeconomic variables do: the correlation is "very robust in the empirical literature" and this correlation is worldwide.¹¹⁷ It stands to reason that this is a human constant, and nothing from demographic or development literature contradicts it.

Aristotle apparently understood this correlation and wrote in *Politics* ἔτι δ' ἡ περὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ἀνεσις καὶ πρὸς τὴν προαίρεσιν τῆς πολιτείας βλαβερά καὶ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν πόλεως.¹¹⁸ With Longman's ideas in mind, this should properly be read, "again, women's freedom is detrimental both in regard to the character of the body of citizens and in regard to the prosperity of the polis." As objectionable as this sounds to us today, nevertheless it possesses a cold logic: just as restriction of women's activities encourages them to spend time on *tekhnopoia*, conversely their *anesis* (loosening, relaxing, relaxation, recreation, indulgence, license) distracts them from this pursuit so vital to the polis' *prosperity* (not happiness).¹¹⁹ This prosperity is

¹¹³ Paus. 3.15.1, 3.8.1, and 3.17.6. Hodkinson 2004, 112.

¹¹⁴ Plut. *Sayings of Spartan Women* 241.9: an Ionian woman shows a very fine tapestry to a Spartiate woman who in contrast has only her four well-behaved sons to display. Pomeroy argues, however, that both the Spartiate girls' singing about bringing "Orthria" a cloak in Alkman's *Partheneion* 1.61, and the discovery there of loom implements (both "toy" votives and usable ones) as well as plaques depicting textiles probably evidence freeborn Spartiate women weaving for ritual purposes (but not domestic purposes). However, Campbell following Sosiphanes the scholiast takes *pharos* as "plough" rather than "cloak."

¹¹⁵ Dyson and Moore 1983.

¹¹⁶ Malhotra *et al.* 1995.

¹¹⁷ Hirschman 1994.

¹¹⁸ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1269b12.

¹¹⁹ Cartledge 1981 needlessly complicates Aristotle's phrase and the issues at stake by offering "licentiousness" as an alternate translation for *anesis*. This work is concerned with population dynamics, not whether Aristotle or other Greeks were moralistic about women's sexuality.

measurable in children.¹²⁰ Women of the Spartiate class (it is assumed that he is speaking specifically of them here) “live with a view to every dissolution, and luxuriously,” ζῶσι γὰρ ἀκολάστως πρὸς ἅπασαν ἀκολασίαν καὶ τρυφερώς.¹²¹ Comparing the restrictions for women upon which Athenian ideology insisted, Aristotle meant that Spartiate women had a vastly wider range of activities available to them than Athenian women did.

Aristotle temporally linked the period of Spartan *arkhe* or empire with the high status of women, with women controlling or managing many things, καὶ πολλὰ διωκεῖτο ὑπὸ τῶν γυναικῶν ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς αὐτῶν.¹²² David M. Lewis aporetically confessed that he was “utterly defeated by his assertion.”¹²³ However, it is precisely “in the period of their empire,” ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς αὐτῶν, the mid-Classical period, that the Spartiate population hit its truly critical decline. As this period lasted over a generation, correlation and even causation are arguable. In his valuable reflections throughout *Politics* 2.6, Aristotle indicts love of money, and women holding money, for Sparta’s fall from international power. It is true that each kleros falling into a woman’s hands meant one less to support a Spartiate warrior if Spartiates were indeed prevented from using their wives’ or mothers’ kleros to pay their syssition requirements, which is by no means certain. Although Aristotle partially missed the Longman factor, his analysis can be used to support Longman’s. Aristotle wrote,

ἐξ ἀρχῆς μὲν [40] οὖν ἔοικε συμβεβηκέναι τοῖς Λάκωσιν εὐλόγως ἢ τῶν γυναικῶν ἄνεσις. [1270] ἔξω γὰρ τῆς οἰκείας διὰ τὰς στρατείας ἀπεξενούντο πολὺν χρόνον, πολεμοῦντες τὸν τε πρὸς Ἀργείους πόλεμον καὶ πάλιν τὸν πρὸς Ἀρκάδας καὶ Μεσσηνίους: σχολάσαντες δὲ αὐτοὺς μὲν παρεῖχον τῷ νομοθέτῃ προωδοπεποιημένους [5] διὰ τὸν στρατιωτικὸν βίον (πολλὰ γὰρ ἔχει μέρη τῆς ἀρετῆς), τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας φασὶ μὲν ἄγειν ἐπιχειρῆσαι τὸν Λυκούργον ὑπὸ τοὺς νόμους, ὥς δ’ ἀντέκρουον, ἀποστήναι πάλιν. αἰτίαι μὲν οὖν εἰσιν αὗται τῶν γενομένων, ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι καὶ ταύτης τῆς ἀμαρτίας:

In the beginning, on the one hand, it did seem that the freedom of the women in Lakonia was reasonable, for the men used to be away from home on campaign much of the time, fighting the war against the Argives and again the one against the Arkadians and the Messenians; but on the other hand, when the men stopped fighting and devoted themselves to non-martial pursuits, they [the men] handed themselves over to the lawgiver, already prepared [to obey] due to their military lifestyle (for that lifestyle does possess many of the constituent parts that make up excellence); but it is said that although Lykourgos tried to bring the women under his regulations, since they continually resisted, he gave up. The women are

¹²⁰ Livi-Bacci 2007, 1 notes that societies have always equated population with prosperity. Cf. Parsons 1998 on population competition: this should be cross-referenced with Eckstein 2006 observing that ancient peoples sought to ensure high populations because of the danger of being overtaken by other peoples with whom they were in competition.

¹²¹ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1269b22.

¹²² Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1269b32.

¹²³ Lewis 1977, 34.

responsible for what happened at that time, and, it is clear, thus, also for *this* [current situation of] error.¹²⁴

Whether or not Lykourgos ever lived or this incident ever happened like this, the idea is clear. The independence of Spartan women is thus underscored: *on the one hand*, (μὲν) from the beginning, it seems that the freedom of the women in Laconia was *eulogos*, reasonable, since the men, because of their campaigns, were away from home for a long time. This circumstance would have presumably been the one wherein the women learned to be independent: and considering the early wars of the Spartiates, it is not unreasonable to think that a kernel, or more, of truth lay in this reconstruction.¹²⁵ A tempting comparandum would be the influx of women into the manufacturing industries in the USA during the Second World War. *But on the other hand* (δὲ), Aristotle states, when the Spartiates were more peaceful, Lykourgos (or the archaic system for which Lykourgos was eponymous or synecdochic) tried to restrict the women legally, but (δ') they resisted until he let up. Whether this actually occurred or is only a "folk-memory" or both is impossible to know and may be less relevant than the Spartiate females' independence during Aristotle's time. Further, the Spartan women are "responsible for the things that went on" then as well as "*this* current state of error."

What we see here through the Stagirar/Athenian lens of Aristotle's viewpoint is something rather different from Hodkinson's notion that Aristotle saw Spartiate women clearly distorted by the influence of negative representations of Spartiate women by male, non-Spartan writers which ... are rooted in Athenocentric representations of the Spartan 'Other', in this case through the portrayal of an 'upside-down' world in which men are dominated by women.¹²⁶

Instead, Aristotle's analysis is better described as a slightly distorted description of the comparative freedom of Spartan women. This freedom, by pulling them away from *teknopoiia*, contributed to *oliganthropia*. Their lives stopped centering around children, and pre-industrial societies in which mortality rates necessitate 6-7 children per woman simply cannot afford to allow their women to do this. Aristotle (perhaps in a manner definable as *somewhat* misogynistically, in whatever way we can evaluate that word in a pre-industrial context and retain our fairness to Aristotle) blames Spartiate women for the general lack of interest in *teknopoiia*, a lack of interest that Johansson, Longman and Polybios describe as commonly afflicting well-off social strata. If he thought of women as the primary child-producers -- and it is reasonable to think that he did -- then it is logical that he blamed them more than the men for underpopulation.

Aristotle's identification of the errors of the polis with a love of money leads to his blaming this greed on the high status of women, which in turn led to the unequal distribution of wealth, the condition of some Spartiates owning much property and some little. This, however, should be read less as a moralistic and misogynistic condemnation of the female species than as a specific analysis of the drawbacks to Sparta's inheritance system. According to Aristotle, Lykourgos made selling land *ou kalon*, best translated here as "dishonorable," but made inheritance or bequest legal, and during Aristotle's time something like (*skhedon*) two-fifths of

¹²⁴ Aristotle *Pol. Politics* 1269b40 – 2.1270a9.

¹²⁵ Cartledge 2001, 111.

¹²⁶ Hodkinson 2004, 123.

the land was owned by women because of women inheriting estates and receiving large dowries.¹²⁷ This unequal spreading of the wealth only supported a thousand hoplites, whereas, Aristotle writes with a sense of the land's carrying capacity, it could theoretically support thirty times this amount of hoplites as well as 1,500 hippeis.¹²⁸ Aristotle means that many parcels are so small that they could not support hoplites or hoplite families sufficiently to allow them to contribute to the *syssitia*. The reasoning is that wealth, in the form of land, that could have gone to the support of soldiers went instead to support women.

As has been discussed earlier, we cannot be certain if Aristotle was precisely correct about this: under his assumption, it must have been illegal for male Spartiates to use this land's produce for their *syssitia* contributions, or else it was not illegal, but these female landowners had no male children, husbands, fathers, brothers, male relatives, or other males whom they wished to support. But Aristotle's wider point is not unfair, namely that Spartiate female independence was higher than the level that he thought necessary or practical for the functioning of a state. In his eyes, Spartiate women's increased status under this system contributed to the fall of the Spartiate polis and their empire. And fewer women engaging in production of children meant fewer hoplites of high quality. A crippled military, more than anything else, led to the defeat of the Spartan state. Here we see the loop in which cultural forms affected demography and demography affected state power. Aristotle's pinpointing of money as the root of the collapse is bound up with, not separate from or preferable to, the phenomenon of independence and options distracting women from *teknopoia*.¹²⁹ These phenomena exist side by side.

What has been argued here should be summarized. An assessment of the causes of oliganthropia cannot be restricted to demotion from the Spartiate ranks nor to deliberate fertility restrictions for the purpose of maintaining downward intergenerational wealth transfers and general status. The peculiarity of Spartiate reproductive practices leading to inadvertent sub-replacement fertility must be assessed as well. These practices disconnected Spartiate men from the interest in their own offspring. They provided sufficient freedom for Spartiate females to release them from the focus on childbearing that has always been a necessary focus of female activity in all pre-industrial settled regimes. These cultural idiosyncracies functioned well to keep population high before the earthquake of the 460s, but provided a cultural detachment from reproduction that proved unable to regenerate Spartiate population after the demographic shock of the earthquake(s) of the 460s.

Marginals in Spartan Society

The reduction of the Spartiates necessitated replacement in the Spartan army with non-Spartiates. The helots, perioikoi, neodamodeis, mothakes, and *nothoi* comprise several groups dependent upon Spartiates as masters and/or benefactors.¹³⁰ The latter three groups appear first in the second half of the fifth century and likely were developed or at least entered the historical

¹²⁷ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a26.

¹²⁸ Cartledge 2001, 112 thinks he meant Lakonia and Messenia.

¹²⁹ For a different view not incompatible with mine, there is Cartledge 2001, 111.

¹³⁰ Generally, see Hodkinson 1997, though my conclusions here differ from many of his; also see most notably Ogden 1996 and Ducat 2006.

record as a group *qua* group due to the population shortage.¹³¹ Each population deserves examination as to its prospects considering the changes in its masters' world and how these changes would affect the group in question. As we have no literature written by any of these groups, some speculation is required. The inscriptions we have of perioikoi are frustratingly unillustrative of their attitudes in these matters. Of the two or three *mothakes* we have heard of, the only one to attain sufficient fame and attention to enjoy thorough description was Lysander. None of these groups became full Spartiates: Sparta never went this far in extending citizenship. This means that none of these groups were given Spartan *kleroi* or land-allotments, none took the name *homoioi* or Spartan, and all retained their identifications as members of subordinate groups.

According to Kinadon, a planner of a coup around 399, the helots, neodamodeis, hypomeiones, and perioikoi were bitter at the Spartiates to the point of wishing to "eat them raw."¹³² In the case of the helots and, in their former helotic lives the neodamodeis, brutal suppression by the Spartiates was the norm. In the case of the hypomeiones, who probably included "tremblers" and other rejects from the Spartan *agoge* ostracism and other forms of humiliation were customary. In the case of the perioikoi, the Spartiates warred against them and used them harshly; simply by existing, the Spartiates reminded them of their political inferiority.¹³³

The perioikoi were the most numerically significant group. They lived in about 80 non-homogeneous settlements in Lakadaimon, probably a few in Messenia, and on a very few islands such as Kythera. Inscriptions attest to their use of city-ethnics.¹³⁴ They were probably brought under Spartan sway in the eighth century.¹³⁵ About 25 of their settlements are attested as poleis in IACP although tiny, five as "unidentified settlements," and 34 as non-polis settlements. They had some local autonomy but deferred to the Spartiates in military, political, judicial, and other matters. They performed crafts, engaged in trade, and supported the Spartiates in wars. Some attained some status in the Lakadaimonian navy, including the attainment of naval commands in the Ionian War.¹³⁶ None are recorded as having been made into Spartiates: Spartan privileges are not recorded alongside their promotions to command.

It has been argued that the perioikoi should not be considered an (oxymoronically large) "oppressed minority" because in many respects they were partners in the Spartan state, as they were permitted to enjoy shares of the war spoils of a usually victorious army and received protection from attack, and that this beneficiary status accounts for their low rate of revolt.¹³⁷

¹³¹ Lotze 1962, 435. Ogden 1996, 223 argues that *mothakes* appear around 446 at the earliest with Gylippos, son of Kleandridas, and thinks Gylippos, Lysander, and Kallikratidas were nearly exact contemporaries, all born in the early 440s.

¹³² X. H. 3.3.6.

¹³³ Brutality toward helots: Most extremely, Thouk. 1.128.1 (460s BC: Spartiates slay helot suppliants), 4.80.2 – 5 (424 BC: massacre, doubted on unconvincing reasons in Paradiso 2004: discussion of doubters in Harvey 2004). Plut. *Lyk.* 28 (krypteia).

¹³⁴ Lists of sites are in Cartledge 2002, Appendix 1 and IACP "Lakedaimon" and "Messenia." City-ethnics: Hall 2000, 83.

¹³⁵ LSAG 199.

¹³⁶ ML 95k, X. H. 3.5.12; cf. Isokrates 4.111; X. H. 7.1.12; FGH 106 F1; Thouk. 8.6.4, 8.22, Paus. 10.9.

¹³⁷ Shipley 2002 (1992). The term "oppressed minority" occurs on p. 187; in fact the perioikoi were, of course, a majority compared to the Spartiates.

Their lack of political decision-making ability has become less of an issue of late, now that we no longer consider autonomy to be a *sine qua non* for the Greek polis to be a polis. Besides Kinadon's attempt, it is thought by some scholars that they only revolted once, in the great earthquake of the 460s, and that their loyalty may suggest general satisfaction.¹³⁸ The fact that their communities were far apart from each other probably contributed to an absence of solidarity or "class consciousness" against the Spartiates.¹³⁹

This optimism goes too far. Evidence suggests perioikic revolts in the fifth century. Vitruvius writes that Karyai, a perioikic community, medized during the Persian Wars.¹⁴⁰ Thoukydides mentions that both Athens and Sparta had to war against their respective revolting allies during the Pentakontaetia.¹⁴¹ Arkhidamos in the late 430s calls himself experienced in many wars.¹⁴² Thoukydides asserts that the Lakedaimonians did not prevent the growth of Athenian power partly because they were hindered by wars at home (*oikeiois polemois*): the term's most logical referent would be within Lakedaimon, hence perioikoi.¹⁴³ Helot revolts in the period in question are only attested for the 460s, so this more likely indicates other war in Lakedaimon.¹⁴⁴ As these wars had little impact on the Peloponnesian War, Thoukydides did not detail them.

Isokrates in his excursus on the perioikoi in depicts their lot very darkly: they are brutally used as slaves by the Spartiates, are used as cannon-fodder (so to speak) in battles, and can be put to death by the ephors.¹⁴⁵ Perioikic loyalty, such as it was, may have been less a product of happiness than of ignorance of the world beyond Lakedaimon at best and beyond their small villages at worst, and of disunity due to the isolated situation of their settlements. A picture of loyalty is hard to square with several aspects of their relationship with Sparta. They had unequal treaties with Sparta, no input in where to fight or when to fight, and an no right to veto a battle or war.¹⁴⁶ If Isokrates is correct, the Spartan Ephors were permitted to execute persons of the perioikic status without trial.¹⁴⁷ He also claims that they were cast out from full citizenship by the Spartiates after a period of strife, "subjecting their souls no less than house-slaves."¹⁴⁸ These may be somewhat dubious but in the same breath, Isokrates says something that is verifiably true, namely that the perioikoi were given only as much autonomy as Attic demes and that the Spartiates took their land, divided it amongst themselves, and only apportioned poor land to the perioikoi.¹⁴⁹ He also asserts that the perioikoi were used as front-line troops and given the most dangerous portion of campaigning.¹⁵⁰

¹³⁸ Thouk. 1.101.

¹³⁹ Shipley 2002.

¹⁴⁰ Vitruvius 1.1.5.

¹⁴¹ 1.18.3, noted in de Ste. Croix 1972, 94.

¹⁴² 1.80.1, noted in de Ste. Croix 1972, 94 – 95.

¹⁴³ Thouk. 1.118.2.

¹⁴⁴ Lewis 1977, 27, footnote 2; cf. de Ste. Croix 1972, 95.

¹⁴⁵ Isokrates *Panathenaikos* 177 – 181.

¹⁴⁶ Shipley 2002 (1992) summarizes the limited evidence. No input in where to fight: illustrated particularly at Thouk. 5.54.1; cf. de Ste. Croix 1972, 345-6.

¹⁴⁷ *Panathenaikos* 181.

¹⁴⁸ *Panathenaikos* 179.

¹⁴⁹ *Panathenaikos* 179.

¹⁵⁰ *Panathenaikos* 180.

Many of them were quite ready to revolt after 371. Sufficient information exists to cast doubt on their recent image as, simply, sharers in the Spartan state.¹⁵¹ The record of their involvement in the Lakedaimonian navy dates only from the period of extreme population shortage and does not seem a normal function of their status.¹⁵² During the earthquake(s) of the 460s, the Thuriiai and Aithaiai, both perioikoi, both revolted alongside the helots; and after Leuktra, various perioikoi offered to help the Thebans near Karyai (X.H. 6.5.25), joined in the Thebans' attack on Gytheion (6.5.32) and "all the helots and many perioikoi" revolted (X. H. 7.2.2). In 365, the Skiritai are listed as having revolted (7.4.21). There is an ambiguous mention of allies in the debacle at Leuktra who may have been perioikoi: "certain of the allies were not even upset at the outcome" of the Battle of Leuktra.¹⁵³

Most specifically, we must ask what about the year 399, the juncture of Kinadon's conspiracy, made certain of them willing to revolt again. The revolt may have been occasioned more by helots than by perioikoi, and occurred in response to the massacre of helots described in Thoukydides 4.80; but this massacre is curiously achronic. What is more solid is that in 399, the dwindling Spartiate population furnished three sources of grievance.

- 1.) First, the population loss amongst the Spartiates meant increased service for the perioikoi in the Spartan military. The perioikoi's experiences in the Peloponnesian War and in Sparta's subsequent imperial phase could well have increased both a sense of perioikic unity and one of competence, leadership, and ability to organize. The increased status mentioned for a tiny number of perioikoi signifies an increase in onerous military service for many, many more. (Increased military service is true for helots as well, and if they revolted despite it, this suggests that they served out of compulsion rather than being proud to do so.)
- 2.) Second, the non-military tasks that the Spartiates imposed upon the perioikoi would likely have increased due to the population shortage and become onerous. (Again, extra work would have affected the helots negatively as well.)
- 3.) Perioikic military service abroad let them see that many, many other poleis and confederacies enjoyed military autonomy and constitutions that represented the interests of their constituents more fully. The importance of this very basic form of independence has been minimized by recent scholars. It should not be completely disregarded. (This point of course fits the helots too.)

The neodamodeis are another very significant group serving in great numbers. Groups of helots who had been enfranchised into neodamodeis are mentioned in several places in Thoukydides and Xenophon.¹⁵⁴ The neodamodeis living in helot villages probably became assimilated to a status similar to that of the perioikoi. But patriotic adherence to the Spartiate system that had violently humiliated and oppressed them and their forefathers is difficult to accept, nor the notion that Spartiate cultural expectations would have inspired the neodamodeis' emulation. Sparta was a society that had enslaved them but now needed them and bestowed upon

¹⁵¹ Hall 2000, 81.

¹⁵² Navy involvement: Sealey 1976, Mackil 2008.

¹⁵³ X. H. 6.4.15.

¹⁵⁴ Thouk. 4.80.5; Thouk. 5.34.1; Thouk. 5.67.1; Thouk. 7.19.3; Thouk. 7.58.3; Thouk. 8.5.1; X. H. 3.1.4; X. H. 3.4.2; X. H. 6.5.28.

them a token elevation, along with higher expectations for risking one's life in hoplite warfare far from home.

To the helots, the neodamodeis must have appeared luckier, but this may not be saying much. Their status may have functioned as a dangling carrot to encourage compliance. Considering the constant Spartan fear of helot uprisings, this was better than nothing.¹⁵⁵ The neodamodeis in Sparta cannot have failed to be cognizant of the manifest Spartiate population decline evident to anyone glancing around the Spartan agora who was not in a state of denial about it, as Xenophon notes in his account of the Kinadon affair. For Sparta to continue as a great power, the favor of the capable members of the marginal classes had to be courted to some degree, as many of them probably understood. It is hard to see an oppressed group like the neodamodeis after the 420s, especially when on campaign with a numerically tiny ratio of Spartiates, sharing the Spartiate attachment to *polis* and austere tradition. Nor can this have been a sufficient bulwark against the normal human desire for personal wealth.

No evidence suggests that this group could enter the ranks of full Spartiates, thus receiving the *agoge* indoctrination. Spartiate exclusionism characteristic of Lykourgan eugenics and the Tyrtaian attachment to the *genos* argue that the Spartiates would have wanted to keep the *agoge* and the rank of Spartiate as a special marker to distinguish themselves from the descendants of helots. This is similar to the way in which the Athenians tightened their citizenship law of 451 a scant three years after the treasury of the Athenian League was moved to Athens, bringing wealth and opportunities for non-Athenians to flock to Athens, and then shortly thereafter elaborated the exclusivist myth of autochthony in response to, and at the exact time when, the flood of non-Athenians settled in Athens during its imperial economic boom.

The helots were involved in Spartiate war efforts many times starting in the late fifth century, and rowed Lakonian ships.¹⁵⁶ Nothing exists to challenge the profuse evidence proving extreme mutual hostility between them and the Spartiates.¹⁵⁷ Their relationship with the Spartiates has been interpreted as a class war.¹⁵⁸ The reasons for hatred against their masters are manifold. Helot suppliants had been torn from a sanctuary and killed, an action that was thought by some persons to have occasioned divine vengeance in the form of the earthquake of the 460s.¹⁵⁹ Thukydides writes of a remarkably brutal massacre of 2,000 helots at some point in the fifth century, and juxtaposes this against the helots who served with Brasidas outside of Lakeldaimon, as though to illustrate two possible responses to the volcanic helot problem.¹⁶⁰ Spartiate youths in the *krypteia* regularly killed the helots they randomly met at night and sometimes working in the fields, presumably at day. This unforgettably violent form of regular oppression cannot be expected to have been easily forgiven regardless of promotions.¹⁶¹ A yearly

¹⁵⁵ Fear of uprisings: notably sharp in *e.g.* the Peace of Nikias (Thouk. 4.23.3).

¹⁵⁶ X. H. 7.1.12. Sealey 1976.

¹⁵⁷ De Ste. Croix 1972, 91.

¹⁵⁸ Cartledge 1987, 166. Cf. de Ste. Croix 1972, 90 - 91: "In Sparta, therefore, more than in any other Greek state, we can see a real and bitter class war, with full Spartiates and Helots at its opposite poles, an intermediate position being occupied by the Perioikoi and those Spartans who lacked full political rights - *hypomeiones* ... In Sparta, the conflict was much more sharply polarised between Spartiates and Helots: it was both more open and more intense and bitter than elsewhere."

¹⁵⁹ Thouk. 1.128.1, Plut. *Lyk.* 28.3.

¹⁶⁰ 4.80.2-5. Doubtful by Paradiso 2004. Cf. Harvey 2004 for discussion.

¹⁶¹ Plut. *Lyk.* 28.

war against the helots declared by the ephors, presumably to make atrocities like this religiously palatable, is reported.¹⁶² Lighter in the spectrum of the way that subservient dependent groups were treated by their masters in the ancient world, but still grievous to bear, was the drunkenness forced upon the helots by their Spartiate masters, accompanied by goading to perform ridiculous dances, in order that Spartiate youths might see the ill effects of wine on the human character: the helots did not even know the nobler songs of Alkman, Terpander, and Spendon and were not permitted to sing these songs.¹⁶³

Plutarch thought these cruelties were not early inventions such as of Lykourgos, but only occurred after the great earthquake(s) of the 460s. This can only tell us that their cruelty did not fit with his image of a beneficial lawgiver – i.e. that they were cruel indeed, and that if they were created after the 460s, even if they stopped shortly thereafter, this means that the helots who were elevated at the end of the fifth century knew about these punishments from their grandparents. Pausanias reports that when Messene was (re)founded as a polis at Ithome after the battle of Leuktra, Messenians came from Italy, Sicily, and the Euhesperides, “still nursing their hatred against Lakonia.”¹⁶⁴ That they still cared, rather than being concerned primarily with advancing their individual fortunes in life, is quite telling. Seeing their brethren elevated into neodamodeis may have given them an incentive to act uprightly; it may also have caused resentment, as it is a human truism that many promotions are seen as arbitrary or unfair to those passed up.

Ducat has outlined with great skill the other modes, adding to a systematic structure, by which the Helots were oppressed in his chapter tellingly titled “Les Moins Qu’Humains”:

L’instrument le plus efficace de la domination des Spartiates sur les Hilotes ne fut pas à mon sens la surveillance policière, ni la répression, ni le brutal rapport de forces, mais un système plus subtil de relations largement codifiés, voire ritualisées, visant à faire de l’infériorité des Inférieurs le fondement d’un code admis par tous les inéressés, et à actualiser cette donnée essentielle dand un certain nombre de “cérémonies”.¹⁶⁵

Ducat finds particularly compelling the drunken dances and songs “viles et risibles” that helots were compelled to display as a warning to Spartiate youths: these remind us of the humiliating dance performed by the cognitively handicapped Indonesian dwarf in the 1982 film *The Year of Living Dangerously* and the song that the drunken woman in the 1948 film noir *Key Largo* is forced to sing in order to receive a drink, the yearly declaration of war upon the helots that the ephors made upon entering office, and murders of helots performed by the krypteia.¹⁶⁶ These ceremonial acts created a relation of “mépris” or contempt between the Spartiates as a social group and the helots as a social group, making the helots seem to belong to the Spartiates.¹⁶⁷

It has been plausibly argued that Messenian helots’ attitudes differed from those of the Lakonian helots.¹⁶⁸ It is probable that the Lakonian helots possessed less antagonistic group

¹⁶² Plut. *Lyk.* 28.4 – 5. Link 2004.

¹⁶³ Plut. *Lyk.* 28.4.

¹⁶⁴ Paus. 4.26.5.

¹⁶⁵ Ducat 1990, 107.

¹⁶⁶ Ducat 1990, 108. Plut. *Lyk.* 28.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Luraghi 2008, esp. 203 – 204.

¹⁶⁸ Cartledge 1987, 176. Cartledge advises against overstating this difference. But he can tend to treat the suppression of the helots by the Spartiates as but a local manifestation of the inevitable worldwide “class

consciousness against the Spartiates, and that domestic servants among them felt more directly attached to their masters' houses and fortunes as dependents of an *oikos*.¹⁶⁹ The settlement patterns of Lakonia in this period are non-nucleated as opposed to those in Messenia, and this probably gave the Lakonian helots less opportunities for group solidarity resulting from village rituals and other group acts.¹⁷⁰ Some evidence suggests that the Messenian helots possessed more consciousness of themselves as a group separate from their masters.¹⁷¹ They lived farther away from Sparta, in larger villages where a group identity could flourish.¹⁷² As a descent-group they possessed a separate and more illustrious past.¹⁷³ It lacked records other than unreadable ones in Linear B at Pylos, and its artistic production, Archaic age cults, and alphabetic forms were dominated by Spartan models; but its older past was visible in its landscape. According to numbers of sites, Bronze Age Messenia had been perhaps the wealthiest part of Greece with the greatest population density, and also had the highest number of monumental tholos tombs anywhere in Greece. These tholoi, after a never-regenerated population loss starting in 1200, still remained sites of votive object deposition as well as secondary burials in the Iron Age.¹⁷⁴

The next group to discuss is tiny in terms of its named members. Only three individuals in it have been identified. Two others are mentioned, though not by name, by Plutarch.¹⁷⁵ We cannot know of how large of a group these men were representative. This is the group known as *mothakes* and/or *mothones*. Disagreement exists as to whether *mothakes* and *mothones* are two terms for the same "mysterious class" or two separate groups.¹⁷⁶ Some believe *mothones* to be simply young Helots, and *mothakes* free children.¹⁷⁷ References are too few to confidently separate them. Plutarch defines *mothakes* as "foster brothers of free boys."¹⁷⁸ The third-century

struggle," a notion that is shaky to begin with and seems unsupported by the realities of "national" group feeling.

¹⁶⁹ Hodkinson 1997.

¹⁷⁰ Cavanagh et al. 1996.

¹⁷¹ Alcock 2002.

¹⁷² Luraghi surmises: "Such a pattern of settlement would of course have important consequences for the social organization of the Helots, and ultimately for their ability to develop and transmit a collective memory and traditions of their own. The village communities could be expected to have developed, or indeed preserved, a sense of their common identity. Furthermore, they would have had to be administered somehow, and the most reasonable assumption would be that the Helots themselves provided the personnel that ran their communities" (2008, 138 – 139).

¹⁷³ Even if many of them were *not* biologically descended from the Messenians the illustriousness of whose past is about to be explicated, they may still well have believed themselves to be such. Nigel Kennell, pers. comm. in May, 2010.

¹⁷⁴ Luraghi 2008, 108 – 111. Messenia's unusual failure to repopulate in the eighth century fits directly with the Messenian conquest.

¹⁷⁵ Plut. *Agis et Kleom.* 8.1, describing events of 227 BC: "and two of the *syntrophoi* of Kleomenes, whom they call *mothakes* ..."

¹⁷⁶ "mysterious class": Jones 1967, 37. Hodkinson 1997 goes through all the evidence. Aside from the unlikelihood of a half-servile Lysander being the erastes of Agesilaos, there does not seem to be enough evidence to distinguish two groups. Even Lysander's half-servile status may have been compensated for by a combination of attractiveness, connections, and high intelligence: there is ample evidence for the latter two, and the first deserves consideration. Cf. Cartledge 2001, 118. These three attributes have often been conducive to upward social mobility in even very caste-bound historical societies. Lysander was also a Heraklid (Plut. *Lys.* 2.1.)

¹⁷⁷ Ducat 1990, 167. Hodkinson 1997.

¹⁷⁸ Plut. *Kleom.* 8.

historian Phylarkhos calls this group the foster brothers (*syntrophoi*) of the Lakedaimonians, and states that every citizen boy of the Lakedaimonians chooses one or more foster brothers for himself.¹⁷⁹ However, he wrote during a time when the Spartiates numbered only 700 persons, so we should not assume that Spartiates of the Classical period all had *mothones* in their houses. These persons are free, but not Lakedaimonians; by this he probably uses Lakedaimonian to mean Spartiates: they were not Spartiates and either foreign or local.

In great contrast to the neodamodeis, the mothakes shared in the *paideia*, which is the term used by Xenophon for the Spartiate *agoge*.¹⁸⁰ This is a crucial distinction from the perioikoi and the neodamodeis, and is surely associated with the high ranks attained by Lysander, Gylippos, and Kallikratidas who, according to Aelian's *Vera Historia*, were *mothakes*.¹⁸¹ Lysander's brother Libys, a navarch, was probably a mothax; they had a Spartiate father, Aristokritos, and were a Heraklid family, presumably through him. They were not full Spartiates presumably either because their father had fallen out of the Spartiate class due to poverty, or because they had a servile mother.¹⁸² The best evidence we have for any of these individuals actually having been non-Spartiates is Lysander, who was brought up in poverty.¹⁸³ That Phylarkhos stated that Lysander was made a citizen (*polites*) for his valor lets us assume that mothakes were not citizens.¹⁸⁴ Since mothakes went through the *agoge*, they seem to have a higher status than the perioikoi, so this seems to support the notion that "citizen" in Phylarkhos means something more like a Spartiate. If some of them could be made Spartiate citizens, then their mothax status must not have been quite the fetter that neodamodeis status must have represented.¹⁸⁵

The mothakes' outlook is harder to guess than that of the neodamodeis. Indeed, it is possible that no unified *Weltanschauung* can be said to exist for this group. With the Spartiates reduced and incapable of replenishing themselves naturally, the services of mothakes would be needed to fill certain roles customarily occupied solely by Spartiates. It is of paramount import to remember that they had gone through the *agoge* and, unlike the other marginal groups who had done this – that is, the "tremblers" and those who were unable to contribute to the *syssitia*, the common "messes" or meal-clubs into which Spartiates were organized – they had done nothing wrong except not being born as full Spartiates.

The *nothoi* or illegitimate children may comprise another marginal group or may be identical to the *mothakes*. It is unknown whether they possessed group solidarity.¹⁸⁶ These also seem to have been illegitimate children of Spartiate men and presumably helot women. Although they fought at Olynthos in 381, this does not mean that they had military training and went through the *agoge*.¹⁸⁷ Plenty of mercenaries and perioikoi fought in Spartan armies without

¹⁷⁹ *apud* Athenaios 6.271e-f.

¹⁸⁰ *Paideia*: Phylarkhos FGH F 43 *apud* Athenaios 271e-f. The "mothos" is a vulgar dance in Eur. *Bacch.* 1060. It may be related to mothos, "battle-din." Mothon is the god of impudence in Ar. *Hippeis* 635, 695. Generally, Ogden 1996, 218 – 224 on *mothakes*.

¹⁸¹ Aelian 12.43.

¹⁸² Paus. 6.3.14.

¹⁸³ Plut. *Lys.* 2.

¹⁸⁴ Quoted in Athenaios *Deipnosophistai* 6.271f.

¹⁸⁵ I am here in agreement with Cartledge 1987, 28.

¹⁸⁶ X. *H.* 5.3.9.

¹⁸⁷ *pace* Hodkinson 1997.

having gone through the *agoge*. However, if they lived in Sparta, then unless given a *kleros*, they were dependent upon a Spartiate household, probably that of their father, and if they were thus members of a Spartiate household, one imagines that they went through the *agoge* as did the mothakes and the foreign foster-brothers resident in Sparta such as Xenophon's children. *Nothoi* in a Spartiate's household may have been desired because they functioned as a sign of wealth.¹⁸⁸ If the practice were accepted it perhaps stood as a sign of virility as well. And in addition to being a social token of virility, *nothoi* extended the father's genetic legacy.¹⁸⁹ If the freedoms accorded to Spartiate women translated to lesser production of children, it is not inconceivable that Spartiate men sought other avenues to continue their *genos*, even in a half-legitimate manner. Hodkinson argues rather optimistically, "the possession of *nothoi* is likely to have been a source of prestige as a contribution of much-needed manpower to the *polis*."¹⁹⁰ However, as we have seen, the extension of too much visible respect to a illegitimate son of a servile mother, however, poses serious problems for the normative functioning of patriarchy.

The attitudes of the Spartiate wives whose husbands had fathered these children is difficult to guess. It may have ranged from shame to pride in the increased prestige of their *oikos*. The last emotion would be quite anomalous in the Greek world which was notable for its monogamy, an unusual feature amongst ancient societies.¹⁹¹ The attitudes of the helot women who gave birth to such relatively privileged children may have been positive: these boys now had better chances and greater prestige than if they had been born of a helot father. We do not know under what conditions they were impregnated, however.

It is difficult to know about the prospects and attitudes of the *nothoi* themselves because of the paucity of evidence. There is less than for mothakes.¹⁹² It may be unrealistic to attribute great gratitude to a young man towards his married free father who impregnated his servile mother; however, this is extremely difficult to assess from a modern, free society with an extremely egalitarian ideology such as ours. Although their being born of a Spartiate father may mean that they went through the *agoge* as mothakes did, a society with a contrastingly non-modern, non-egalitarian ideology such as that dominated by the Spartiates and their kings is unlikely to have provided them with the same sense of Tyrtaian and eugenic pride that their full Spartiate age-mates possessed. Our sources' lack of notable *nothoi* in contrast to our three influential mothakes may indicate that their prospects were fewer, that the class was smaller, or that definitional slippage occurred between the groups.

In the conspiracy of Kinadon in 399 described by Xenophon, along with the helots, neodamodeis, and the *perioikoi* are the "inferiors" or *hypomeiones*. Modern consensus opines that the *hypomeiones* were disenfranchised Spartiates. We know nothing else. In X. H. 3.3.5 Kinadon is οὐ μέντοι τῶν ὁμοίων, "not one of the *homoioi*" or "equals." In 3.3.11, Kinadon as an excuse for his conspiracy says that he wished to be ἥττων to no one in Lakadaimon; although not cognate with the word *hypomeion*, its meaning is very similar. If Kinadon is a *hypomeion* and refers to himself with the word ἥττων, this suggests that the *hypomeiones* might be considered not as a specific class defined by its own peculiar name but rather a default, *de facto* group, the

¹⁸⁸ Hodkinson 1997, an interesting reconstruction but based on little evidence.

¹⁸⁹ Scheidel 2009a's concept of "marginal reproductive success."

¹⁹⁰ Hodkinson 1997, 54f.

¹⁹¹ Scheidel 2009b.

¹⁹² The word *nothos* occurs only once in non-royal contexts in a Spartan association. Ogden 1996, 217.

(general) “lessers” or “inferiors,” those who are lesser than/inferior to the “equals” or *homoioi*. The brutal simplicity of Spartan terminology, “equals” and “inferiors,” is breathtaking.

It is curious that among the general resenters, neither mothakes nor mothones are mentioned by name in Kinadon’s conspiracy, nor “tremblers,” nor nothoi. It is thus reasonable to guess that the hypomeiones also included these groups. If so, “hypomeiones” will mean persons who have gone through the *agoge*, but are inferior to the *homoioi*, which is clearly the term to which *hypomeiones* is meant to contrast. The only four groups that fit this definition would be 1.) the mothakes, 2.) the nothoi 3.) the “tremblers” and other persons suffering a loss of rights or *atimia*, and 4.) those of original Spartiate caste who were no longer able to pay into the *syssitia*. The *agamoi* (unmarried men) would fit into this class as well. The first sub-group under this heading might move up, the second furnished no influential personages, and the last three were moving down; but the lack of specificity of the term suggests that distinctions were not always kept, or that there was little desire to dignify each sub-group with a mention, or perhaps most likely, lack of the view that these specifications were necessary or interesting.

A few members of these marginal classes penetrated important posts and social functions besides the mothax Lysander. However, we should not see the Spartiate caste as being riddled with marginals or as a class whose members had undergone replacement gradually and starting early, in *e.g.* the early Iron Age. Our only sign of substantial enfranchisement occurs in the short sub-period 425 - 369: and as far as we can tell, this was a phenomenon new to this moment, the mid-classical period, and occurring in tandem with the Spartiates’ failure to recover population, which was also (relatively) new. The Spartiate caste was not the Roman Senate, and did not go through the gradual and constant process of provincial enfranchisement described in Keith Hopkins’ work of Roman sociology *Death and Renewal*. Moreover, the city of Sparta was not the city of Rome, a “demographic sink” into which provincials needed constantly to pour themselves to replace citizens killed by disease.¹⁹³ It was a small town without walls or impressive architecture. The penetration of the marginals into important social functions must not be thought of as a significant or constant “immigration” of any sort until the decade or so shortly before the Peace of Antalkidas.

Aside from Lysander, two other members of the mothax class entered significant occupations. Aelian (*V.H.* 12.43) calls Gylippos a mothax; he is son of the Spartiate Kleandridas, so if mothax he had at least a Spartiate father.¹⁹⁴ As mentioned earlier, if the important speech by a Theban envoy to Athens in 395 can be trusted, the ranks of the harmosts also contained helots.¹⁹⁵ While this could be an exaggeration, it is extremely unlikely that he referred to Spartiates: at best he was denigrating neodamodeis. As mentioned, perioikoi acted as naval commanders in the Ionian war.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Scheidel 2003a.

¹⁹⁴ Poralla-Bradford 1985 nos. 196 and 420; Ogden 1996, 222f. The question of Gylippos’ mothax status is a live one. If mothax, with Lysander he is an example of the talent pool that the Spartiates were intelligent or lucky to tap: Westlake 1968 ch. 14. The records of such men may have made it clear to anyone not blinded by tradition that the restriction of high posts to Spartiates was a foolish loss of talent. The refusal of the Syracusans and the Spartans to honor Gylippos despite his excellent work in Sicily (Timaios FGH 566f100c; cf. Westlake 285f, esp. 286 n. 5) may support a non-Spartiate origin. However, to assume that the average Spartiate would *not* have been blinded by tradition is probably rather optimistic.

¹⁹⁵ *X. H.* 3.5.12.

¹⁹⁶ ML 95k, Paus. 10.9., Thouk. 8.22.1.

The existence of only some 500 - 1000 Spartiates in 371, many of whom were probably barely above being hypomeiones themselves, presents a troubling picture for those believing in the continued aristocratic Spartiate exclusion of considerable numbers of competent, experienced mothakes, nothoi, perioikoi, and especially neodamodeis. The continued command-appointments of less experienced Spartiates over highly competent non-Spartiates, of direly impoverished Spartiates in the ephorate over wealthy marginals, is certainly possible, but flies in the face of military logic, and was clearly unsustainable. If strict Spartiate preferences were practiced instead of the inclusion of more qualified marginals, perhaps Sparta's military failures were partially a result of this, although Spartiate military failures may also be attributed to the untrained nature of the largest marginal group, the neodamodeis. Even if the ephorate were closed to the marginal groups, it is hard to imagine their wishes not reflected in some fashion in the Assembly.

And the Assembly has power. Xenophon states clearly that "the polis" decides where the army is to go.¹⁹⁷ The Spartan assembly was capable of disagreeing strenuously with the authorities and sometimes did, as Thoukydides tells us.¹⁹⁸ If "polis" means that the Assembly decides, and if neodamodeis constitute part of the Assembly, and if any of these assumptions are correct about the differential attitude of the neodamodeis, then we have some idea of the influence of demographic change on Spartan policy in the mid-classical period: the militarily cautious, traditional, and conservative Spartiates who view their interest as security and dominance within the Peloponnesos become outnumbered, and Spartan foreign policy becomes influenced by the presence of huge numbers of neodamodeis and small numbers of other semi-enfranchised groups eager for adventure, money, and action and unhampered by Spartiate traditional distaste for money and foreign affairs. Many helots, upon enfranchisement and transformation into neodamodeis, were moved to other population centers outside Sparta, became citizens (as the term *neodamodeis* suggests) and presumably participated in whatever minor local decision-making bodies existed in these poleis or settlements. But many enfranchised helots who had been living within Sparta as house slaves and military attendants and soldiers presumably still lived in Sparta, and no evidence whatsoever exists to contradict this. It does not seem far-fetched to believe that they participated in the assembly in Sparta. This may help to explain the imperial turn of Spartan foreign policy in this period. It will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Conclusions

This chapter has discussed the causes and results of the oliganthropia brought about by the fifth century earthquake. It has argued that oliganthropia of the Spartiates cannot be causally limited to impoverishment removing Spartiates from Spartiate ranks or to decisions to restrict fertility for wealth or status maintenance, but that cultural or ideational factors must have contributed that were not deliberate. This includes, for men, Spartiate society's replacement of the normal patriarchal connection between male status and children with altruism for the state; and for women, the historical connection in many societies between high female status and low fertility. The social chaos following the earthquake of the 460s appears to have disrupted the state mechanisms that had ensured a supply of children, and these mechanisms once disturbed

¹⁹⁷ X. L. P. 15.2.

¹⁹⁸ Spartan assembly strongly resisting direction from above: Thouk. 6.88ff, 7.18.1.

could not ensure it again. Once the Peloponnesian War started in the late 430s, non-Spartiates had to be used and promoted into the Spartan army. Their usage would change the relatively unambitious and isolationist Sparta of the late Archaic and early Classical period (as characterized in Chapter 4) into a highly aggressive, expansionist empire (as argued in Chapter 5) incapable of sustaining itself.

Chapter Four The Reluctant Empire

Introduction

Sparta's state-level behavior previous to the era of Lysander in the late fifth century was characterized by a distaste for overseas adventure and rule outside the Peloponnesos, a rather inefficient and irresolute will to expand its rule, and apparent marked displeasure at cooperation with the Persians. This greatly contrasts with Sparta's "hard" imperial phase of the late fifth and early fourth centuries which was characterized by an extension of its rule outside of the Peloponnesos, a relatively focused will to rule in the decision-making bodies of the Spartan state, and cooperation with Persians culminating in an agreement in 387 that handed Sparta's fellow Greeks over to Persian rule.

This substantial shift still requires explanation beyond the presently prevailing notions that Sparta changed because it became more like Athens, became crueller, or changed due to desperate straits.¹ These explanations carry some weight, but another causal factor has been ignored. An important part of this shift was the demographic decline of the Spartiates outlined in the introduction and explained in the previous chapter, and the necessary subsequent replacement in the Spartan army of persons who did not possess the ideology of the Spartiates with their reluctance for wider extension of rule. The shift permitted the growth of a set of hard imperialist ideas and behavior, which unsurprisingly appeared in the late fifth century's population crisis, and disappeared only perforce in 371.²

This phase differed from Sparta's earlier soft imperial undertakings which had previously been extinguished, or had collapsed due to poor planning, each time anyone introduced them. The disappearance of the set of customs and ideas that had made such imperial ventures fail illustrates a basic principle of the transmission of ideas. An ideology often lives and dies with the persons who hold it.³ It weakens when its believers die or fail to pass it on, such as when it is maladaptive to biological reproduction. It flourishes when

¹ Became more like Athens: Denbar 2001.

² Here true or "hard" imperialism will be definitionally opposed to limited, moderate, or "soft" imperialism/hegemony (although hegemony/*hegemonia* also suffers indistinct usage then as now: see Ephoros F118; in general, Wickersham 1994). The former will be defined as a state system that seeks to *extend* its rule indefinitely, rather than containing it locally (cf. Vergil *Aeneid* 1.279, *imperium sine fine dedi*); this distinguishes imperialism from other forms of rule, and Sparta's hard imperial phase from its limited earlier Peloponnesian phase. OED s.v. "Imperialism" 2: "... the principle or policy ... of seeking, or at least not refusing, an *extension* of the British Empire in directions where trading interests and investments require the protection of the flag ..." [*i.e.* military protection.] Gregory *et al.* states "an unequal human and territorial relationship, usually in the form of an empire, based on ideas of superiority and practices of dominance, and involving the *extension* of authority and control of one state or people over another" (s.v. "imperialism"); problems in this definition include the catchphrase "inequality" and how authority and control are practiced. Scheidel 2006 discusses imperialism definitionally as including heterogeneity of subject peoples, indirect rule, final authority of the central state, tribute payments, and the distinction of imperial *phases* vs. imperial *states*. Cf. also Eckstein 2006; Buckler and Beck 2008, chapter 9. [All italics mine.]

³ Richerson and Boyd 2005. Cf. Clark 2005, 214 – 215, Salter 2007, 284; Dawkins 1976.

its believers transmit it to other people, such as when they produce more offspring than surrounding groups and transmit it to their offspring. The demographic decline of the Spartiates during the fifth and fourth centuries BC offers us a case study of this process.

Speaking very generally, empire is continuous with the behavior of animals, particularly primates; its root cause is probably the acquisition and control of resources and territory for the ultimate (biologically-driven) goal of enhanced reproductive success, which is probably the most general motor for much power-seeking behavior by humans and animals, although this final goal is instinctual, and thus only dimly understood by most of the agents who pursue it.⁴ This argument is consistent with a very wide array of behaviors in the world outside of and within *homo sapiens* and fits well with an immense body of observation and scholarship on the interplay of genes and culture.⁵ It is also compatible with the realist school of political science.⁶

According to tradition, Lykourgos' goal was not to leave his city in *hegemonia* over many others, but to be moderate in all its ways.⁷ This closely fits the category of "status quo" state, as opposed to a "revisionist" state of the Realist School of political science. The former category is one "satisfied with the existing principles and distribution of resources and status within an interstate system" as opposed to revisionist states which "are those that are dissatisfied and seek to redress the situation in their favor."⁸ And until the late fifth century BC, Sparta would surely have qualified as a "status quo" state: content with its own resources and status, the aggressive pursuit of a Spartan empire outside the Peloponnesos was not very amenable to existing Spartan ideology.

This ideology was linked with a lack of institutional structures facilitating larger-scale decision-making, and the elements of this ideology included isolationism, a distrust of strangers, and strong disinclinations to use money, to use helots as soldiers, and to cooperate with Persians.¹⁰ What this ideology permitted, and had as its goal, was a hierarchical state (and state of being) in which the laws were obeyed relatively harmoniously, an *eunomia*.¹² The fragility of Spartan class structure and the everpresent danger of helot insurrection or of separatist identity formation of the perioikoi conditioned both the conservative, reactionary need for state harmony as well as the push to present Sparta as a harmonious society to outsiders and insiders.¹³

Cultural explanations for differential behavior of states, populations, and individuals have somewhat fallen out of favor of late. For example, political theorists of the "Realist School" have tended to explain state-level behavior in terms of situational advantage,

⁴ Scheidel 2009a.

⁵ e.g. Wilson 1975, 2000; Betzig 1986; Alcock 2001; Eckstein 2006. Cf. Brown 1991, Keeley 1996. Barkow (ed.) 2006 provides a good selection of up-to-date essays.

⁶ Applied to Mediterranean warfare and state-level behavior in Eckstein 2006.

⁷ Surviving in Plut. *Lyk.* 31.1.

⁸ Eckstein 2006, 25.

¹⁰ The poverty of Sparta's institutional structures of rule, at least in regards to Sparta's late Archaic- and Classical-era set of alliances known as the Peloponnesian League, was related well by Thukydides (1.141.6-7; 1.19.1). Isolationism: Plut. *Agis* 11.2, *Lyk.* 27.3.

¹² Generally, Ehrenberg 1946, 77ff.

¹³ Giorgini 2004, 197f lists (on 198) Thouk. 4.80, 5.14, 5.34 and Aristotle *Pol.* 2.9 1269a38-39 on the fear of helot uprising constraining Spartan policy.

resources, and military power, eschewing explanations of state behavior based on culture as insensitive to circumstance and as too essentializing of a given population's "permanent national character."¹⁴ Many economists have been prone to explain individual behavior in terms of rational interest.¹⁵ And in the long run, "national culture" does of course change. Further, present-day theorists of ideas emphasize open societies as marketplaces of ideas in which different ideas in memetic fashion compete with others, and it is true that debates occurred at Sparta. We have these recorded in Thucydides and other historians.¹⁶ and the view of the Spartiates as mostly illiterate has been rightly challenged and overturned of late.¹⁷ However, all told, Sparta's educational system and isolationism were as far from an open society encouraging the free exchange of ideas as can be imagined in Greece. It is precisely in such a highly traditional and in many respects slow-to-change society that we would expect to find cultural factors exerting a long historical tug on current events, identified as a set of ideas conditioned by generations of relatively stable historical conditions and passed down to offspring in a highly conservative society.

Before Lysander's development, or rather successful creation, of hard Spartan imperialism in the late fifth century, Sparta held a soft empire of sorts within the Peloponnesos, but any extra-Peloponnesian hard imperial behavior was either the work of highly ambitious individuals who were *not* attempting to reform the entire system to make it into a hard empire, or else was marked by great inefficiency. A true empire required a very different set of cultural expectations than the previous Spartan system possessed or even permitted. As I shall argue, this true empire was only possible through a change in the population of Lakedaimon. Despite Lysander's skill and success, public opinion at Lakedaimon still largely supported traditional Spartan mores and exerted a pressure that did not in the end permit this Spartan empire to exist and flourish. Nor did traditionally-minded Spartiates wish to cooperate with Persia. The "noiseless revolution" amongst the Spartiates had only barely begun to take place.¹⁸

The fact that sufficient public approval amongst the Spartiates existed to accept the Peace of Antalkidas in 387/6, in which the eastern Greeks were "enslaved" to the Persians, is thus a great conundrum. It has been explained only by assuming that this sort of arrangement had always been acceptable to the Spartans; but this cannot be supported by a close examination of either Spartan behavior or (reported) ideologies. The acceptance of the Peace is better explainable by the great demographic change amongst the Lakedaimonian army and the replacement of individuals with one set of ideals with persons possessing a different set of priorities. I shall argue that after Lysander's death, it was only because of the numerical insignificance of traditional Spartiates in both the formal and informal decision-making bodies of Sparta that the Peace of Antalkidas was even possible. It is highly unlikely that this peace would have been accepted without an

¹⁴ Eckstein 2006, 23-26.

¹⁵ A significant outlier among economists is Thomas Sowell, whose work consistently emphasizes the effects of long historical processes in a population upon present-day economic behavior, by which, he argues, differences in economic behavior among *e.g.* overseas Chinese and the sub-Saharan African diaspora can be explained; *e.g.* Sowell 1983, 1999, and 2006.

¹⁶ Marketplace of ideas: Richerson and Boyd 2005.

¹⁷ Spartiate literacy: Millender 2001.

¹⁸ Rahe 1977, 22.

immense turnover in the personnel of the Spartan Empire caused by the reduction of Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian army and their replacement by helots and other marginals.

Previous hegemonic or “soft” imperialism amongst the Spartiates was qualitatively and quantitatively different from the version we see in the late fifth century under Lysander. It had been marked by an isolationist disinclination to leave the Peloponnesos. Spartiate isolationist tradition thus prevented the efflorescence of truly extensive hard imperial ambitions. Only the Peloponnesian War created pressures that forced the Spartiates into creating the structures and organizations that could be used for successful imperialism beyond the Peloponnesos.¹⁹ One way to distinguish between the older Spartan “empire” and the Lysandrean Spartan empire may be to call the first a *hegemonia* and the second an *arkhe*.²⁰ Before this development, Spartan rural-based political, military, and social organization were ill-fitted to manage something as complex as a tribute-paying, financially sustainable, extensive empire. And only when the traditional Spartiate way of life had been seriously attenuated by sub-replacement fertility could extra-Peloponnesian adventures be imagined, and only when Spartiates came to be replaced by non-Spartiates, pursued.

In this chapter I shall first describe the failed attempts at hard imperialism by Sparta, then argue that these did not succeed because they were prevented by traditional mores. The shift to successful hard imperialism will be then described and attributed to the weakening of these traditional mores; this weakening will be demonstrated to be a direct cause of the replacement in the Spartan army of Spartiates by non-Spartiates, permitting the ideological shift that allowed hard imperialism and the acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas. I then will offer a new interpretation of several fourth-century literary sources criticizing Spartan character. These passages heretofore have been taken as transhistorical evidence that the Spartans never possessed “Lykourgan” ideals to begin with and that these ideals were only a mirage. I shall instead argue that they are relatively accurate descriptions of an actual change in the character of the Spartan army that resulted from the attenuation of Spartiates in it. Thus Spartiate oliganthropia will be demonstrated to have produced or at least permitted the shift to hard imperialism and the Peace of Antalkidas at Sparta. In this example, ideologies died with their bearers, and new ideologies were brought in.

Spartan Soft Imperialism before Lysander

In this section I shall argue that previous to the Lysandrean moment, Spartan attempts at extension of rule outside the Peloponnesos was marked by reluctance and poor planning, and that this resulted from cultural disinclinations and from organizational incompetence for larger political structure in respect to expansion.

Andrewes argued in 1978 that “Spartan cultural norms inhibited imperialism.”²¹ However, Scheidel has written that “the only ‘imperial’ power” in Hellas for many generations was Sparta.²² These statements are both true. Sparta held a hegemony in the Peloponnesos that

¹⁹ Parke 1930, 37.

²⁰ Parke 1930, 37.

²¹ Andrewes 1978, 91.

²² Scheidel 2009a, 293.

started, at the latest, in the mid-sixth century.²³ It lasted fairly intact until Lysander's transformation of the system in the late fifth century. It never exacted tribute on its subjects.²⁴ It was, in fact, barely monetized.²⁵ Despite some evidence of Spartan seafaring in the Archaic period, Sparta's culture can be not unfairly characterized by a strong isolationist bias against active or overseas imperialism until the period of Lysander.²⁶ Indeed before Lysander, the Spartan empire was based in the Peloponnesos and was contiguous with Sparta's own territory, not far-flung overseas. This disinclination to travel far is expressed in an anecdote in Herotodos in which the Spartan king Kleomenes I refused to assist Aristagoras of Miletos against the Persians in 499 because Susa was three months' journey away from Sparta.²⁷ In addition to isolationism and a cultural bias against overseas travels and thus against overseas possessions, the intense competitiveness of the Spartiate system encouraged resentment rather than cooperation among leading Spartiates whenever any of their ranks – or their royalty – attained great success abroad.²⁸

Factors in Spartan culture suppressing hard imperialism include brutal punishment against lone leaders growing overly ambitious, such as Kleomenes I, the regent Pausanias, Leotykhidas, and Lysander. These elements in the set of cultural pressures that had evolved, for economic, cultural, political, and demographic reasons, in the population of the aristocracy of urban Lakedaimon, which we might call the Spartan character, also disfavored foreign ways and the accommodations that individual Spartiates or Spartan royals needed to make in order to have social interactions with foreigners.

Spartan cultural constraints overall largely limited imperialistic aims into certain safe channels before the end of the fifth century, and censured any attempts at hard imperialism as examples of personal aggrandizement when Spartans or royals strayed from these evidently deeply-felt traditional lines. Allowable expansion was mostly contained to the Peloponnesos, with very few exceptions. Aggressive foreign policies were attempted by both King Kleomenes I at the end of the sixth century as well as by the Regent Pausanias in the 470s, and by Brasidas in the last quarter of the fifth century. They and Lysander were subject to heavy censure by the Spartiates. None of these men altered the course of Spartan policy as radically as Lysander did, nor had the vision to establish mechanisms that could serve as the foundation for a larger empire. In order to prove that what I argue is a general rule, any

²³ Hdt. 1.68.6.

²⁴ Thouk. 1.19.1. Money is requested from its Italian and Sicilian allies only in 431, Thouk. 2.7.2.

²⁵ As revealed in Arkhidamos' speech in 432/1: Thouk. 1.80.4. Cf. 1.82.2, 1.121.1, 1.140-144, Warren 2003, esp. 319; Kallet 2001, 250-9. Cf. in general Hodkinson 2000 esp. ch. 5 and Figueira 1984, 2002 for classical Sparta's reliance upon agricultural exchange over coinage.

²⁶ Spartan seafaring in the Archaic period: Hdt. 1.152, 3.54. *Iliad* 2.587, all noted in Michell 1952, 15, 274ff. Plut. *Inst. Lak.* 29e states that the Lakedaimonians were forbidden to sail and to engage in naval battles, and that after becoming masters of the sea, they desisted because the ethos of the citizens was deteriorating, surely referencing the Lysandrian period. Michell plausibly argues that Archaic naval activity ceased due to the helot threat (1952, 275). Reluctance to engage in seafaring may explain the failure of our sources to name any navarchs from 477-430 and 426-413 (Michell 1952, 277).

²⁷ Hdt. 5.50.

²⁸ E.g. the failure of the Spartiate administration to send Brasidas more forces after he seduced Amphipolis and the nearby cities to his side in winter 424/3 because of "envy (*phthonos*) on the part of their first-ranking men" (Thouk. 4.108.6).

exceptions that could be conceivably defined as hard imperial behavior appearing before the era of Lysander require review.

The Annexation of Lakonia and Messenia and the Peloponnesian League

By the mid-sixth century, Sparta held by far the most land of any the Greek poleis: over thrice the area of Attike.²⁹ Lakonia's territory had been made politically subject to the inhabitants of Sparta at some point in the (later) Early Iron Age or early Archaic period; the very appellation *perioikoi* or "dwellers-around" for the non-Spartiates in Lakonia attests to the dominance of the city of Sparta in this political system because it implies a center around which they lived. It is unknown whether the formal appellation of "Spartiate" to distinguish the inhabitants of Sparta from everyone else in Lakonia predated this juncture or was a product of it.³⁰ The inhabitants of Sparta next took over Messenia as a result of the First and Second Messenian Wars in the Archaic period, the latter war probably occurring during Tyrtaios' time of the seventh century, the first probably in the eighth. Sparta also, uniquely among other Greek poleis, possessed many other Greeks as serfs, probably numbering some 80,000 to 160,000 of both sexes and all ages in the first half of the fifth century.³¹

Sparta's alliance with Tegea in the mid-sixth century indicates a shift from the annexation of lands to a system of alliances with other states in the Peloponnesos.³² This is what moderns call the Peloponnesian League.³³ By the later fifth century at the latest, there seem to have been two tiers among Sparta's allies. One tier was composed of allies who had been defeated in war by Sparta, and were subordinate to it. The other tier included larger states who were considered almost on a level of equality with Sparta.³⁴ Sparta gave the wealthy in both these tiers their support and protection from demagogues, and the wealthy in return promised to lead their poleis in support of Spartan wars. Personal relations of *xenia* between Spartiates or Spartan royals and the "best men" of these cities assisted in the integration of their communities into a loose structure of regional power probably not dissimilar to the relationship between Roman patrons and their clients.³⁵ Of these alliances, the asymmetrical ones could conceivably be defined as imperialistic, although highly geographically restricted. The alliances with larger cities such as Argos and Korinth are better conceptualized more as pledges of mutual support in which the Spartans would lead in case of war. Those poleis whom Sparta had defeated in war were probably obligated to "follow whithersoever the Spartans may lead" in wartime, a phrase appearing in Xenophon and in the inscription spelling out a treaty between the Lakedaimonians and the Aetolian Erxadieis.³⁶

²⁹ Two-fifths of the Peloponnesos: Thouk. 1.10.2; area of 8,500 square kilometers as opposed to Attike's 2,500. Cartledge 1971, 7.

³⁰ The first usage of the term "Spartiate": Tyrtaios 23a.

³¹ Figueira 2003a, Scheidel 2003c.

³² Plut. *Quaestiones Graecae* 5 (Moralia 292b) (Aristotle F 592 Rose). Cf. Hdt. 1.68.6.

³³ League: Cawkwell 1976, 71ff gives a reasonable account of the operations of this league and includes plausible ideas of its ideological underpinnings, but see Thommen 1996, 59.

³⁴ Bolmarcich 2005.

³⁵ Cawkwell 1976, 74; but Agiads befriended democrats too in the early fourth century (75).

³⁶ The alliance between the Spartiates and the Erxadieis contains this expression: ML 67 *bis*, SEG 26.461, 42.308, LSAG (2e) 447G, 448; Hall 2000, 84 and especially the essential Bolmarcich 2005, 22 with further bibliography on 23. This formula is seen, among other places, in the mid-Classical period as a condition of

Thus, in the case of the annexation of Lakonia and Messenia, and with the Peloponnesian League, an early efflorescence of land seizure preceded a double-tiered alliance system of subordinate and non-subordinate allies. The acquisitions of Lakonia and Messenia were cases of what may be defined as early imperialist expansion, although highly localized. The latter league system comprised a limited, “soft” form of imperialism that, again, stayed within the bounds of the local and stayed contiguous with Spartan territory.

Kleomenes I, Pausanias the Regent, and the abdication of the leadership of the Anti-Persian League

While some acts of Kleomenes I, who reigned circa 520 – 490, may suggest an imperialistic and expansionist Spartan foreign policy, nonetheless the acts of a single individual do not represent state policy.³⁷ This makes it very difficult to see Kleomenes as a manifestation of an earlier Spartan *state-level* policy of hard extensive and external imperialism.³⁸ Such entries in a supposed list of Spartan northern imperialism such as Herodotos 6.108, in which Kleomenes is seen wandering with an army around Boiotia around 520 evidence little, especially his refusal to ally with Plataia which surely if anything would have accomplished a goal of the extension of Spartan rule in the area. Argos, against which Kleomenes campaigned, is within the Peloponnesos, not outside it; it was in his reign that the Peloponnesian League may have been formalized, but this is again part of, rather than in contrast to, the traditional Spartan isolationism in the Peloponnesos. His meddling in Athenian affairs may indicate ambition outside the Peloponnesos, but once the Athenian state reorganized itself militarily at the end of the sixth century Spartan interference became unsustainable, and was accordingly opposed by his fellow king Demaratos. Extra-Peloponnesian ventures evidently were uncongenial to Spartan policy: it was also refused by Sparta’s stronger allies, as we see in Corinth’s reaction to this latter campaign and in the opposition to the restoration of Hippias in 504.

The Spartan idea of relocating the inhabitants of the Greek Anatolian poleis to cities in mainland Greece, rather than fighting for them overseas, illustrates two Spartan traits: a reluctance to engage in transmarine expeditions that would be necessary to actually protect the Greeks of Anatolia, as well as the strong anti-Persian sentiment or ideology that had taken root at Sparta and that would become important over the course of the fifth century: for the cities designated for the displaced Anatolians were “medizers” on mainland Greece. A punishment for the mainland cities was intended.³⁹

The censure of the Regent Pausanias in the 470s further illustrates the reluctance of the Spartans to take on overseas rule and continues to evidence the anti-Persian ideology at

Athens’ surrender in 405 (X. H. 2.2.20), in 389, when the Akhaians describe their constant loyalty to Sparta (X. H. 4.6.2), in 371, when the Olynthians are compelled to ally with Sparta in 379, (X. H. 5.3.26), and in Autokles’ critical speech at Sparta over its treatment of its allies (X. H. 6.3.7). The perioikoi, on the other hand, formed a single political unit with the Spartiatai and the polis of Sparta (IACP 590; cf. Nafissi 2009 on the origins of perioikic cooperation with the Spartiates).

³⁷ *pace* Salmon 1984, 245.

³⁸ Andrewes 1978, 91.

³⁹ Hdt. 9.106, Diodoros 11.37; Giorgini 2004, 187.

Sparta expected in the Persian Wars' aftermath.⁴⁰ Spartan officials' punishment of Pausanias' violations of Spartan *nomoi* tell us a great deal about these *nomoi* and about the attitude of the state toward their violators, and that in the 470s, Sparta was interested in neither any friendly interaction with Persians nor in anything resembling an overseas empire. Pausanias' alleged ambitions garnered him accusations of despotic behavior, of the affectation of Persian dress, extravagance, and luxuries and the attendant rejection of the "Lakonian *agoge*," an alleged betrothal to a Persian princess, and for his dedication of a couplet on the base of the Serpent Column in which he aggrandized himself rather than advertising the selfless subsumption into the community expected of Spartans since at least Tyrtaios.⁴⁴ He was accused of offering Helots freedom and citizenship should they participate in his insurrection,⁴⁵ of secretly returning Persian leaders captured at Byzantion to the Persian general Artabazos, and of allegedly conspiring with Xerxes through a letter exchange, and was relieved of his command.⁴⁶ Eventually he was deliberately starved to death by agents of the Spartan state. His recall and the variety of charges leveled against him indicate that the will of the Spartan public opposed Medism of both the stylistic and the political variety and saw the extension of Spartan power out of the Peloponnesos as dangerous and despotic.⁴⁷

Spartan indifference to an expansion of power manifests clearly again in the next politically important incident of the fifth century. Thoukydides states that the Spartans replaced Pausanias with Dorkis, then withdrew him upon the realization that Spartans were no longer desired as leaders by the other Greeks. They thus relinquished the leadership of the Hellenic League.⁴⁸ Thoukydides, Xenophon, and Plutarch affirm that the handing over of the League leadership was voluntary on the part of the Spartiates.⁴⁹ The *Athenaion*

⁴⁰ Graf 1984, 16 points out that a Greek association of luxury with the Orient appears in Arkhilokhos in the seventh century; Nafissi 2009 notes that even the seemingly fairly pro-sympotic Spartan poet Alkman derides luxurious food. Thus, a Spartan disapproval of luxury and Persianness is likely not just a consequence of the Persian Wars.

⁴⁴ Despotic: Thouk. 1.95.3, Diodoros 11.44.5. Medismos and rejection of *agoge*: Diodoros 11.46.3, cf. Thouk. 1.132.2. This style of life, rather than or in addition to political Medism, may be the *medismos* charge stated by Thouk. 1.95.5. I discuss this further below. Betrothal: Hdt. 5.32, Thouk. 1.28.3, Diodoros 11.44.3. Serpent column: Thouk. 1.132.2 – 3; ML 27. Giorgini (2004, 191 note 35) confusingly sees Pausanias' medism as part of a Spartan plan to form a united rule with Persia, but also as unlikely and hence fabricated slander since "it seems unlikely, or rather preposterous, to believe that the person who led the victorious Greek army at Plataea in 479 in a mortal fight for freedom against the Persians had changed his feelings and attachments less than one year afterwards."

⁴⁵ Thouk. 1.132.4; cf. e.g. Oliva 1971, 150; Giorgini 2004, 194-5.

⁴⁶ Thouk. 1.128.6-7, 129.3.

⁴⁷ Cf. Graf 1984 for Medism in general and for Pausanias' Medism in specific. In Thouk. 77.6, the Athenians "politely" (Gomme 1956, 272) reference the deterioration of Spartan rule abroad. Hornblower's assertion that these charges were baseless slander (1991, 142) is irrelevant: Spartan public disapproval is relevant. I find Giorgini's (2004) imputation of plans for Pausanias's grand Persian-Spartan alliance to have insufficient support in the sources. In general, see bibliography in Cartledge 2006, 556 fn. 24.

⁴⁸ Thouk. 1.95.

⁴⁹ Thoukydides 1.75.2 and 1.95.7; Xenophon's *Hellenika* 6.5.34; Plutarch *Aristides* 23.7. Hornblower 2002, 10 makes too much of Herodotos' rather neutral reference to the event at 8.3.2, saying that Herodotos' use of the term ἀπείλοντο should be translated as "snatched" [the hegemonia from the Spartans]; this term can be quite neutral and usually means "received" (*LSJ* s.v. ἀπολαμβάνω).

Politeia probably does as well.⁵⁰ And it is difficult to imagine what purpose would have been served by authorial suppression of a tradition of Spartan anger and reluctance at handing over the leadership of the league. Diodoros' lonely version details Spartan irritation at relinquishing hegemonia.⁵¹ But even in his account, this irritation was dampened on the grounds that transmarine hegemonia was not sensible or advantageous.⁵²

Other supposedly expansionist ambitions of Sparta until the Peloponnesian War are so poorly attested that reconstructing them requires considerable imaginative effort. They instead evidence extreme reluctance on Sparta's part combined with a failure to reorganize sufficiently for effective expansion.⁵³ Thoukydides' account of the transfer of power ends with the Spartans realizing that if they send someone else out after Dorkis to replace Pausanias, he might deteriorate as well, an outcome undesirable to Sparta.⁵⁴ Censure of corruption also appears in the fate of the Eurypontid king Leotykidas, whom some perceive as a promoter of Spartan imperialism and expansion as well in this period: shortly after the Persian wars, he brought an expedition to Thessaly against the Aleuadai, perhaps for their refusal to support other Greeks against the Persians.⁵⁵ He failed to subjugate Thessaly and was accused of bribe-taking. Whatever actually happened, he was exiled from Sparta for this and

⁵⁰ *Ath. Pol.* 23.2: τὴν τῆς θαλάττης ἡγεμονίαν λαβεῖν ἀκόντων τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων. On a first reading the genitive absolute may be concessive: the Athenians "took over the hegemony *although* the Lakedaimonians were unwilling [for this to happen]"; but the genitive absolute may well be causal: "the Athenians took over the hegemony *since* the Lakedaimonians were unwilling [to retain it]." Gomme 1956, 272 argues the latter; Kagan 1969, 377 accepts his argument, concluding "it is clear in any case that the official Spartan position was one of at least tacit approval." Even Meiggs 1971, 41 accepts it, though he envisions (based upon evidence found only in Diodoros) a group at Sparta who "found Sparta's conservatism too restrictive and wanted a more dynamic foreign policy" versus "those who remained satisfied with predominance in the Peloponnese." Cf. Kagan 1969, 377 - 379; Green 2006, 111, footnote 190; Rhodes 2006, 26-7. Meiggs 1971, 41 argues that imminent troubles with Argos and Arkadia, rather than *solely* a cultural isolationism, shortly prevented the Spartiates from a stronger international interventionist position. But if this group of would-be imperialists existed, its desires were easily suppressed by the appeal of (or an appeal to) Spartiate tradition, which which was unsuitable to further extension of its existing dominion. Hornblower 1991, 143 takes the line in *Ath. Pol.* the other way, with the genitive concessive, and relates this to Diodoros 11.50 (*infra*) as well as to Spartan annoyance at the rebuilding of Athens' walls (Thouk. 1.92); the latter need have no connection whatsoever to a desire to maintain leadership of an overseas project, but rather to Sparta's desire for deference from other Greek states, as Lendon 2007. Hornblower's thesis that this evidence (and the Diodoros passage *infra*) shows an Athenian-Spartan diplomatic rift after the Persian Wars is quite hard to reconcile with the friendly assistance Athens gave to Sparta in the 460s upon the helot revolt. Nor does Sparta's refusal of this assistance indicate annoyance after Athens' takeover of leadership: Thoukydides 1.102 says that Sparta refused Athens' aid on ethnic and political grounds – that is, because of the Athenians' (non-Dorian) alienness (they are ἀλλοφύλοι) and reputation for revolutionary inclinations. The latter cause is also in Plutarch *Kimon* 17. Did news of the reforms of Ephialtes (Kimon's arch-enemy, no doubt performed in Kimon's absence) cause worry over the Athenians' revolutionary inclinations? Perhaps, but Ste. Croix 1972, 179f) believes that the Athenian hoplites, upon seeing Greeks enslaved by other Greeks, might have felt ambivalent about assisting Sparta; thus, news of the Ephialtic reform need not have reached the Spartans for them to have felt uneasy about Athenian sympathies: it might have been simply an accurate reading of Athenian hoplite temper.

⁵¹ Diodoros 11.50.1-3.

⁵² Diodoros 11.50.5 – 7. But see Grote vol. 4, 348, note 1 and Kagan 1962, 378, Hornblower 2002, 9f.

⁵³ Giorgini 2004 offers an imaginative possibility.

⁵⁴ Thouk. 1.95.7. Cf. Grote vol. 4, p. 349.

⁵⁵ Hdt. 6.72, Paus. 3.7.9, Plut. *De malignitate Herodoti* 21. Giorgini 2004, 188-89.

his house demolished, and then he died in exile: hardly the reward an eagerly expansionist Spartan state would bestow upon a king leading an expedition to Thessaly.⁵⁶ Plutarch tells us that the Spartans at the Amphiktyonic Congress moved that states who had not resisted the Persians should suffer revocation of membership from the Amphiktyony, and that Themistokles thought this a power-grab to remove the Thessalians, Argives, and Thebans from the Congress and thus to gain control of the votes.⁵⁷ However, the notion that this was part of a chain of official Spartan involvement in central Greece rests on shaky ground.⁵⁸ If any concerted plan existed to expand Spartan sway in this region, it came to little, which itself suggests incompetence, lack of resolve, or both.

Even if the Spartan state had wholly desired to retain leadership of the anti-Persian league, this may not indicate a hard imperialist undertaking.⁵⁹ Indeed, if they had been capable and desirous of doing this in 478, they might have made this league behave less brutally than Athens did or than Lysander did later when he took over the Athenian empire: the Spartan authorities' restrictive attitude toward such behavior down to and including Lysander suggests this. But evidently the decision-making bodies of the Spartan state possessed neither the ability nor the desire for sustained international seafaring, leadership of a wider set of states, and the complications that this would involve. Even in Diodoros' unique version, their momentary desire for leadership of the Hellenic League was quickly and easily averted. The Spartan state appears to have been content instead with deference from, and a secure *de facto* rank of leadership over, the Hellenes, and it was the refusal of certain other Greek states to display deference toward Sparta that led to the Peloponnesian War almost fifty years later.⁶⁰ Foreign adventure was not perceived as desirable over landowning, horse-racing, and security.⁶¹ A love of seafaring is only attested amongst the Spartans for the fourth century, significantly amid massive reports of a change in Spartan character.⁶² This agrees with the number of overseas *apoikiai* or colonies that the Spartiates sent out, unusually low for a Greek polis of size and power.⁶³

Thoukydides distinguishes between the more active form of imperialism practiced by Athens and the hegemonic leadership practiced by Sparta in the fifth century.⁶⁴ Athens demanded tribute from its subjects; relatively unmonetized and unambitious Sparta only

⁵⁶ Giorgini 2004, 189 sees Leotykhidas as an imperialist but concludes that his plan "had not sufficient consensus at Sparta, where his political enemies succeeded in mounting accusations he was not able to dispel."

⁵⁷ Plut. *Them.* 20.

⁵⁸ Hornblower asserts this, but the evidence he lists is poor: 1991, 143 and 2002, 97 (e.g. "Pindar's bracketing of Sparta and Thessaly is not random, but *may* celebrate a deal between Kleomenes and the Thessalian Aleuads"; "Soon after the Persian Wars ... Plutarch says, there was a Greek *perhaps a Spartan*, fleet at Pagasai"; "then in 462 ... the Thessalians allied with Athens. Kimon called his son Thettalos ..." [italics Doran]).

⁵⁹ Andrewes 1978, 94.

⁶⁰ Convincingly argued in Lendon 2007.

⁶¹ Andrewes 1978, 95.

⁶² X. *L.P.* 14.

⁶³ However, Malkin 1994 sees the Lakedaimonians as more active colonizers, pointing to three colonies perhaps sent out by King Teleklos in the eighth century. Several island communities claimed themselves as *apoikiai* of Sparta: *IACP* 594.

⁶⁴ Thouk. 1.19; Andrewes 1978, 95.

demanding support armies and ensured pro-Spartan oligarchies active in the governments of its subject poleis and a modicum of deference from its larger allies, who had the power to outvote Sparta on war decisions. Finally, Sparta declared at the start of the Peloponnesian War that its goal was to free Greece, as the speeches of Brasidas asserted, as we shall see below. This discourse acted as a brake on overt forms of imperialism.⁶⁵ Naturally, another damper on imperialism was the population decline whose causes have been discussed in the previous chapter. Fielding enough men to reliably protect an extension of Spartan power had become difficult. However, it is crucial to note that Sparta's alliance system still would have provided enough soldiers for this purpose, if the will at Sparta had persisted.

Apparently it had not, and the years from the earthquake and revolt of the 460s until the 420s evidenced no activity definable as "hard" imperialism on Sparta's side. This includes the events that have been taken to comprise the so-called "First" or "Little" Peloponnesian War from approximately 458 until 451. The Korinthian *sphodron misos* against Athens for allying with Megara initiated this war, as Thucydides states, and Sparta was only eventually pulled in for alliance reasons.⁶⁶ Athens' own "hatred" for Sparta after the rebuke against Kimon during the earthquake uprising certainly conditioned Athens against Sparta regardless, and inspired Athens' settlement of the rebel helots at Naupaktos probably in the mid-450s, a most provocative placement for future Peloponnesos coastal raids.⁶⁷

The Peloponnesian campaign in Doris in spring of 457 initially can appear aggressive and expansionist; closer scrutiny damages this interpretation. Thucydides reports that the Phokians campaigned against Doris, the motherland of the Lakedaimonians, namely the towns Boion, Kytinion, and Erineos.⁶⁸ The Lakedaimonians under Nikomedes son of Kleombrotos (Diodoros says son of Kleomenes), acting for the underage King Pleistoanax son of Pausanias, patriotically sent to the aid of the Dorians 1,500 Lakedaimonian hoplites and 10,000 allies, "patriotically" since the ostensible and perhaps an actual primary reason for this war was that Doris was the original *metropolis* of the (Dorian) Peloponnesians. Doris also represented Sparta's wishes on the Amphiktyonic League council; if Sparta's wishes were to be represented there, a response was necessary to Doris' possible engulfment by Phokis. The desire to protect Delphi from Phokian aggression may count in Sparta's motives as well.⁶⁹

Why Sparta brought such a huge force is another question; the easy answer that this was a case of imperialist expansion seems implausible and anachronistic. Considering Athens' own imperial, aggressive military involvements over the past few years, a Peloponnesian force probably felt unsafe so close to Attike.⁷⁰ Thucydides claims that there was a faction of Athenians who tried to persuade them to invade Attike to destroy the

⁶⁵ Andrewes 1978, 96.

⁶⁶ *Sphodron misos*: Thouk. 1.103.4. For the only reluctant and later involvement of Sparta in this conflict, Holladay 1977 and Hornblower 1991, 162.

⁶⁷ Thouk. 1.103.4.

⁶⁸ Thouk. 1.107.2 capturing one such city; Diodoros 11.79.5 states that they overcame them by force and captured "their cities." Erineos is the same "windy Erineos" of Tyrtaios 2.14.

⁶⁹ Hornblower 1992, 2007.

⁷⁰ War against Persia, 200 ships in Cyprus, war supporting Egypt, audacious alliances with Argos and Megara, capture of Naupaktos, war with Korinth; cf. ML 33 and 34.

democracy and the building of the Long Walls.⁷¹ If this faction existed, and we have no reason to doubt Thoukydides, the Spartan-led army did nothing about it.⁷² They forced the Phokians to make terms, then began to go home, indicating no Spartan desire to fight Athens. An Athenian army challenged them; they defeated the Athenian army and left. Surely this would have been a good moment to secure power in central Greece if the Spartans had intended, or even desired, to do this.

Thus, the “First Peloponnesian War” begins with neutral relations between Athens and Sparta but friction between Corinth and Athens dragged Sparta in. Even after Tanagra the Spartans did not seek war against Athens. Even after 454/3 and the depredations by Athens on the Peloponnesos, the Spartans sought a peace. In 446, the Spartans certainly took part in a carefully-calibrated multi-front attack against Athens; this only led to fourteen years of peace.⁷³ The events at hand support Sparta as conservative and largely uninterested in either Athenian war or expansion. And we only need to look at the long and involved speech of the Eurypontid Spartan king Arkhidamos II in 432 at the beginning of the “Great” Peloponnesian War to see that this conservative moderation and cautious reluctance to engage in aggression continued until Athenian provocation forced the Spartan hand.⁷⁴ The Spartan assembly’s response was ambiguous to the point of requiring a second vote.⁷⁵

Herakleia Trakhinia and Brasidas in Thrace

A measure more reasonably definable as imperialistic before Lysander is the Spartan apoikia or colony of the 420s in Trakhis, a project whose clumsy execution evidenced Spartan inability to focus the political will necessary to execute a successful imperial venture outside the Peloponnesos. The missteps of this undertaking contrast dramatically with both the successful “hearts-and-minds” approach of Brasidas in the very same decade and the later efficient imperial machine created by Lysander. The contrasts show that a successful imperialistic project could not be effected if directed from Sparta, and that only a most unusual figure such as Brasidas was capable in the 420s of anything even resembling a venture of this sort. And this again only affirms the view that Sparta in the fifth century was ill-suited and disinclined to adapt its administrative machinery to becoming a larger imperial power.⁷⁶

Thoukydides states that in 426, during the Arkhidamian War, the Lakedaimonians responded to a call for help from the Trakhinioi who occupied Malis, the lower valley of the Sperkheios river.⁷⁷ This is an area located on or near the historically shifting borders of southernmost Thessaly, Akarnania, Aitolia, Boiotia, Doris, and Lokris. It is very close to Euboia and not far from Attike, thus militarily convenient for Sparta. The Trakhinioi were one

⁷¹ Thouk. 1.107.4.

⁷² Nicely discussed in Sommerstein 1989, 29 as part of plots following Ephialtes’ murder.

⁷³ Thouk. 1.114.1.

⁷⁴ Thouk. 1.79 – 1.85.

⁷⁵ Thouk. 1.87.2.

⁷⁶ Hornblower 1992, *ad loc.* (501ff) is very useful, although his contention that Herakleia Trakhinia was a “link in a long chain of Spartan interest in central Greece” (501f) is both vague (“interest” can be construed multiply) and difficult to defend, as I have argued here.

⁷⁷ Thouk. 3.92-3 with Gomme 1956 *ad loc.*

of three ethne of Malis, and had recently suffered badly in a war with the Oitaian, a group that lived south of the Trakhinioi.⁷⁸ They had considered entering into an alliance with the Athenians, but feared that the Athenians would not be sufficiently faithful to them. They instead sent Teisamenos as ambassador to Lakedaimon. Certain individuals from Doris, the *metropolis* of the Lakedaimonians,⁸⁰ joined in on this embassy. They also desired such a relationship with the Lakedaimonians since they “were fearful of the same people, for they also were being killed by the Oitaian.”

Upon hearing their requests, the Spartans took counsel and decided to assist, honor, and/or avenge (*timorein*) both the Trakhinioi and the Dorieis by sending out a colony in their location instead of the immense army they sent the last time the Dorieis asked for their help in 457.⁸² Trakhis was well-positioned for the war against the Athenians and against Euboia and Thrace, and it controlled the Thermopylai pass by which infantry could move from Northern into Southern Greece.⁸³ Thus Thukydides, the master of *Realpolitik*, admits of both a selfless and a selfish reason for the Spartiates’ decision.⁸⁴ However, there is no evidence that the Trakhinioi wanted anything more than assistance.⁸⁵ It was probably now apparent to the Spartiates, particularly Brasidas, that their summer-by-summer invasions of Attika would not win the war.⁸⁶ Morale was also low after several earthquakes in this same year.⁸⁷ Clearly, a new base of operations might allow a newly aggressive strategy to win, and thus end, the war.⁸⁸ After conferring with Delphi, Spartiates with perioikoi and “any other Hellenes who might wish to accompany them, excepting Ionians, Akhaian, and certain other ethne” were then sent off, with three “Lakedaimonians” (certainly Spartiates) named as *oikistai* or founders.⁸⁹ They fortified the city on a new spot and built docks a few miles away, and called the new or re-founded city Herakleia, presumably after the heroic ancestor of the Spartiates who had mythic connections to the place.⁹⁰ And they sent a magistrate regularly from Sparta

⁷⁸ Hdt. 7.217.1.

⁸⁰ *Metropolis* of the Lakedaimonians: Thuk. 3.92.3 and Diodoros 12.59.4.

⁸² The term “colony” has rightly fallen into disfavor of late (Osborne 1998) as it connotes too much control by the sending-city; nevertheless in this specific case, Graham (1964, 207) is quite right that “Heraclea may be added to the very small list of colonies in which officials sent regularly by the mother city are attested.” Immense army: Thuk. 1.107.

⁸³ Cf. Hdt. 7.198 for the area’s relation to Thermopylai. Sophokles *Trakhiniai* 633ff describes the area in general.

⁸⁴ Hornblower 2002, 29 and 158 argues that Herakleia also had a vote on the Delphic Amphiktion and that the prospect of controlling this vote motivated Spartan interest in a colony there. However, Malkin 1992 believes that the settlement was abandoned in 426 (cf. Diodoros 12.59.4). It is difficult to believe that it would have a vote if so. *IACP* p. 710 gives a balanced discussion of whether the site was empty or not.

⁸⁵ Andrewes 1978, 96: “... a venture which shows that policies that had nothing to do with liberation might be adopted by the Spartan state.” Malkin 1994, 221 sees the settlement as an imposition.

⁸⁶ Gomme 1956, 395.

⁸⁷ Gomme 1956, 395.

⁸⁸ Graham 1964, 38f mentions war aims and gives a short but interesting analysis of this apoikia, and on 206 – 209 its failure as a mixed population apoikia; cf. Malkin 1994, 223.

⁸⁹ One’s name was Alkidās, an alternate name for Herakles, perhaps not a coincidence for a colony called Herakleia. Hornblower 1991 (*ad loc.*: 506-7) has much to say on this matter, although his excursus on the myth-historic significances of historical individuals’ names, and on Herodotos’ few and Thukydides’ many instances of neglect of these correspondences, may strike some readers as fanciful.

⁹⁰ The mythic connections are discussed in Malkin 1994, chapter 8: useful, intriguing, but full of supposition.

as governor.⁹¹ This was a significant establishment in political, military, imperial, amphiktionic, geographic, and mytho-religious terms. In response, Athens purified Delos that winter and re-established the Delia.⁹²

This promising foundation failed quickly. The Thessalians, feeling menaced by this new city, warred continuously against and killed the new inhabitants until they “wore [the colonists] down (*exetrukhosan*) despite their being numerous at the beginning.”⁹³ Outside attack presumably could have been warded off by superior interior organization, but the Lakedaimonian archons ruined the city’s prosperity and set it into a state of low population (again, *oliganthropia*) by frightening away the majority and by governing poorly: their neighbors easily overpowered them.⁹⁴ However, several aspects of the colony’s planning seem poor to begin with.⁹⁵ Although outlining its history instead of giving a penetrating analysis of its maladministration, this is nonetheless clear from Thoukydides’ text.⁹⁷ In summer 422, nine hundred hoplites under Spartiate leadership went to Herakleia Trakhinia on the way to Thrace. At Herakleia, they “[re-]organized (*kathistanto*) things that seemed to them to be organized poorly” (5.12). Some sort of institutional response to the poor governance of the Spartiate arkheons at the apoikia seems to be meant; but, as though it were a synecdoche for larger Spartan problems, this ‘reset’ did not work. Thoukydides’ last mention (5.51 – 52) of the apoikia is winter of 420/419. It has been considerably weakened by the *oliganthropia* mentioned in 3.93, and a coalition of some Thessalians and three other bordering ethne, who “had opposed it straightaway from the moment of its establishment, killing [its people] to the best of their ability, now defeated the Herakleiotis in this battle.” The arkheon was killed. In summer 419, the Boiotians occupied it and sent away Agesippidas the Spartiate on the grounds of poor governance.⁹⁸

Diodoros, presumably relying upon Thoukydides and Ephoros, gives us a few supplementary, and mostly plausible, pieces of information. He states that Trakhis had been deserted before the Lakedaimonians renamed it Herakleia and settled it (12.59.3). He calls the Lakedaimonians themselves *apoikoi* or colonists (not colonizers) of Trakhis, thus showing that he identifies Trakhis as a part of Doris, the eponymous region of the Dorians; this identification is not unreasonable, considering local boundaries which, again, shifted

⁹¹ Thouk. 5.52.1; X. H.1.2.18 mentions a harmost for 409 BC, Labotas.

⁹² Hornblower (2002, 159) cannily observes this.

⁹³ Gomme 1956, 398 believes that the other nearby tribes, along with the Thessalians, contributed to attacking the new apoikia. His interpretation relies upon some textual prestidigitation but is not implausible, especially considering the considerations of ethnic conflict imagined by Graham 1962 and Malkin 1994.

⁹⁴ Thouk. 3.93. “Governing poorly”: cf. Hornblower 2002, 159.

⁹⁵ E.g. the docks: It is hard to imagine that the Spartans thought they would be allowed to operate upon the sea with Athens so close by. Andrewes 1978, 96 – 97.

⁹⁷ He carries this portion of his narrative beyond the year in which it sits (426), down to at least 420 and possibly to 413: for later in the summer of 426, he states that 500 allies from Herakleia Trakhinia assisted in an expedition against Naupaktos, the settlement of Helot refugees from the earthquake-war of the 460s and their descendants loyal to the Athenians (3.100). In summer 424 the Spartiate commander Brasidas stopped at Herakleia Trakhinia, on his way to Thrace with 1,700 hoplites clearly a useful station for Spartan campaigns in the region (4.78).

⁹⁸ Thouk. 5.52.1.

frequently.⁹⁹ The Lakedaimonians partly colonized it out of kinship (*syngeneia*) and partly because Herakles had in the mythic past made his home in Trakhis.¹⁰⁰ Diodoros says that the Lakedaimonians and Peloponnesians sent out 4,000 colonists and sent out any other Greeks who wanted to be part of the project, totalling 10,000 settlers – a remarkably high number.¹⁰¹ They apportioned the territory in allotments. These details are reconcilable with Thoukydides. In Diodoros 12.77.4, a coalition of ethne in 420 BC attacked the Herakleiot, who sent for help to Boiotia. Both Xenophon and Diodoros say that Herakleia continued as a settlement. But it seems to have done so in a highly attenuated state.¹⁰² By 395 it was overpowered and handed back to the Trakhinioi.¹⁰³ It probably fell partially back into the Spartans' hands in about 387, but by 371 left their possession.¹⁰⁴

The settlement's promising rise and ugly fall proffers useful insights about Spartan "imperialism" of this period.¹⁰⁵ First, in the 420s it seems that the Spartiates possessed no stable, efficient system of governing detached settlements – that is, settlements that were not contiguous with Lakedaimonian territory. Labotas is called a harmost by Xenophon (1.2.18), and the system of governance used at Herakleia may have roughly modeled the more successful Lysandran imperialism of the 400s and 390s.¹⁰⁶ Regardless, in the 420s, no system of effective imperialist administration of such possessions had yet been developed by Sparta. Again, this is most reasonably explained by the hypothesis that the Spartiates did not, as a whole, wish to create an empire outside of the Peloponnesos sufficiently seriously to create such plans. An intelligent and forward-oriented commander such as Brasidas could use the

⁹⁹ As noted earlier, Tyrtaios' (2.14) "windy Erineos," alleged origin of the Spartiates and their kings, also lies in Doris: Thouk. 1.107.2 calls Erineos one of the three poleis in Doris, and calls Doris the *metropolis* of the Lakedaimonians. Malkin 1994, 222 wishes to de-emphasize the connection between Trakhis and the Dorians on the grounds that Thoukydides does not emphasize it. Malkin can thus make the connection be between Trakhis and the Herakleidai rather than with the Dorians. But Thoukydides' downplaying of the Dorians-Trakhis link may mean that this connection was too obvious to require repetition.

¹⁰⁰ On this practice in general, there is C. P. Jones 1999.

¹⁰¹ Hornblower 1991, 507 accepts this total. Malkin 1992, 224 thinks it plausible if the natives are included; and Thoukydides calls the number of settlers *panu pollous* in 3.93.2. Andrewes argues "there is no classical parallel for a colony of these dimensions on Greek soil, supposed to be friendly" (1978, 96).

¹⁰² E.g. X. H. 1.2.18 when in 409, 700 of its inhabitants and its harmost Labotas are slain by the Oitaioi, now perhaps a more generic than not term for non-Lakedaimonian inhabitants of the region: Malkin 1992. This is the first use of "harmost" for this settlement: Parke 1930, 39 believes that those called arkhons by Thoukydides were the same officers whom Xenophon called harmosts. Herakleia supplies troops before the Battle of Haliartos in 385 (X.H. 3.5.6) but this does not indicate that it is big. Diodoros (14.38.4 - 5) states that stasis arose in Herakleia in 399: Herippidas arrived and put to death some 500 of the people at the Assembly there. The Oitaioi have also made some sort of revolt and he has to make war on them. They leave but are restored by the Boiotians five years later.

¹⁰³ Perhaps at this point it coins silver and bronze: *IACP* p. 712.

¹⁰⁴ Diodoros 14.38.4 - 5. Malkin 1994, 227.

¹⁰⁵ Graham 1964, 207 believes that Herakleia's dissolution was caused by the colonists' differing ethnicities although Thoukydides does not mention this. Graham also reads the events in Diodoros 14.38.4 - 5 as a case of ethnic strife. His reading of Diodoros 14.82.6 - 7 is similar. Graham's argument is reasonable and only points to the Spartiate management's failure to find a way to integrate the ethnically-different apoikoi - another example of poor administration. Malkin 1992 builds on Graham's argument, saying that the Trakhinioi may have become Helotized (226) based on a Hermippos fragment *apud* Athenaios 461e. Cf *IACP* p. 711.

¹⁰⁶ Parke 1930, 38; 76.

city's location on a northward march; but Spartan path-dependence did not easily co-exist with Spartan ability to sustainably utilize a resource, or to modify its means of operation, to respond to adverse pressures such as these.

An unusual Spartiate like Brasidas was the exception who proved the rule.¹⁰⁷ His activities instructively contrast with what went wrong at Herakleia Trakhinia. Brasidas was sent out to strike at Athenian interests in the northwest Aegean in order to weaken their hold on Sphakteria; he was also to relieve the pressure of helot revolt by bringing 700 helot men with him, the first time helots had been entrusted to fight in the Lakedaimonian army. They fought alongside 1000 allies whom he had raised by money, another example of his forward thinking.¹⁰⁸ Brasidas presented Spartan power as a benefice in Northern Greece and Thrace in 424: he cultivated friends as an escort to travel through Thessaly (Thoukydides 4.78.2), presented himself diplomatically upon being challenged (4.78.4), presented Spartan power as an attractive alternative to Athenian power (4.79), displayed just and moderate conduct so that cities would rebel against their Athenian masters (4.81), and left a trail of respect wherever he traveled: "For he was the first [Spartan] who, by going out and showing himself as *agathos* in every way, left in his wake a secure expectation that the other [Spartiates] were similar to him" Thoukydides writes (4.81.3).

At an assembly of the Akanthians in the Khalkidike, Brasidas made an excellent speech (unusually for a Lakedaimonian, Thoukydides famously writes) to convince them that the Lakedaimonians were fighting the Athenians in order to free Hellas.¹⁰⁹ In the speeches that Thoukydides gives him, at least, Brasidas used the catch-phrases "freedom" (*eleutheria* or its derivatives) repeatedly (4.85.1, 4.85.6, 4.87.4, 4.87.6), "slavery" (*douleia*) once (4.87.3), *autonomia* once (4.87.5), assured the factions present in the assembly of his political neutrality in respect to their internal affairs (4.86.4), asserted that it was *only* if they should not heed his (very reasonably phrased) requests that he would be forced to destroy their valuable grape harvest (4.87.2 – 3), assured them that Sparta had no interest in "empire" (*arkhe*) (4.87.5), and stated that, should they assist the Spartans, their reward would be "a fine name" and "a well-sung reputation" (4.87.6).¹¹¹ He then attained his goal: they revolted from Athens.¹¹²

Brasidas' intelligent public-relations sense continued in other cities. At Amphipolis in winter 424/3, he flexibly offered very generous terms to its besieged inhabitants, both its Amphipolitans and even its Athenians: continued full citizenship and enjoyment of their

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Hornblower's essay on the *aristeia* of Brasidas (1996, 38-61; 86-90 discusses Brasidas' speeches). Hornblower's overarching emphasis on Thoukydides' intent to present Brasidas as a "romantic loner" (53-4), however, seems excessive.

¹⁰⁸ Parke 1930, 40.

¹⁰⁹ Thouk. 4.84-87. The compliment is both genuine and generous, especially since Thoukydides had every right to feel highly resentful toward Brasidas who, because Thoukydides failed to save Amphipolis from him in 424, caused Thoukydides to become an exile from Athens for twenty years (5.26.5). A hostile witness's compliment inspires our trust. On the other hand, Thoukydides also could have played up Brasidas' talents in order to make his own failure seem more understandable.

¹¹¹ A "periodically adjusted manifesto." Hornblower 1996, 86.

¹¹² Ostwald 1982, 43 – 46 gives a strong argument in favor of Brasidas' actual devotion to *autonomia* and argues that the term itself had begun to be defined more scrupulously in the period 425 – 400 than in the pre- and early-Peloponnesian War period.

property to all. This won over Amphipolis' inhabitants.¹¹³ He then announced to the region that he was present to "set Hellas free," again using a derivative of the word *eleutheria*.¹¹⁴ The cities in the region subject to the Athenians heard of Brasidas' gentleness and agreed to revolt to the Spartan side.¹¹⁵ In summer of 423, upon calling a meeting with representatives from Skione, he eloquently told them that they "earned the highest commendation since they ... of their own free will, came forth to gain their *eleutheria* and did not [instead] remain timorously until forced to accept what was clearly for their own benefit." If they would cooperate he would reckon them as the truest (*pistotatoi*) friends (*philoï*) of the Lakedaimonians and he would honor them.¹¹⁶ "Elated by his words," they welcome him and give him honors as "liberator (*eleutherounta*) of Hellas."¹¹⁷

None of this "hearts-and-minds" strategy is present in the imperialist or semi-imperialist project at Herakleia Trakhinia, only administrative mismanagement, harsh rule, and the inability to form useful alliances with neighboring ethne. Moreover, the fact that no adjustment was made to address a problem of *oliganthropia* tells us that, in sharp contrast with the intellect visible in Plato, Aristotle, and even Lysander, no one involved in the Herakleia project had either any conception of what was wrong or the power or practical imagination to fix it, except the evidently ineffective administrative tinkering conducted in summer 422. If a pro-expansion party existed at Sparta, they were incapable of ensuring the most basic support and governance that this project required.¹¹⁸

This contrast against Brasidas' effective work shows that the Spartan administrative machinery, unless a very unusual person happened to be in a key place within it, could not manage a larger empire at this period, and this would be the case until Lysander. The political structure did not exist, and the political will to reform the structure to fit new goals outside the Peloponnesos did not exist. Sparta may have had "interests" in central Greece in the fifth century, but a coherent program of extra-Peloponnesian expansion and rule is very difficult to find in the sources.¹¹⁹

Brasidas was the first non-royal to lead a Lakedaimonian army. Brasidas also had relative freedom to campaign in the Thraceward districts. He had to be examined by a board of three Spartiates only once per year, a considerably expanded level of freedom over that which kings leading Lakedaimonian armies normally enjoyed. Finally, Brasidas led an army of Helots, and he was an active employer of neodamodeis. All of these represented a sharp break from the Spartan way of doing things.¹²⁰ The processes that forced the usage of neodamodeis which led to the vast change in the Spartan military system initiated by Brasidas and more fully developed through Lysander (on which see below, chapter 5). Andrewes formulated of this change nicely: largely writ, what had long since been the traditional Spartiate way of life was one of

¹¹³ Thouk. 4.106.

¹¹⁴ Thouk. 4.108.2. Thukydides calls these blandishments "seductive but untrue" in 4.108.5.

¹¹⁵ Thouk. 4.108.

¹¹⁶ Thouk. 4.120.3.

¹¹⁷ Thouk. 4.121.1.

¹¹⁸ Andrewes 1978, 98 – 99.

¹¹⁹ Sparta's poverty of management may also account for its failure to rescue Skione: cf. Bosworth 1993, 37; Hornblower 1996, 50-1.

¹²⁰ Parke 1930, 42.

estates, hunting, a modicum of conventional warfare with their neighbors, and the high standing that their military reputation gave them, [which] were enough for the good life; to reach out further meant a sustained effort in an unfamiliar field, and it seems that there were not enough who were ready to break out of the traditional pattern.¹²¹

But as the numerical decline of Spartiates detailed earlier has shown us, soon there would not be enough Spartiates *within* the traditional pattern to maintain it, not enough of a critical mass of persons living this traditional life and holding these traditional ideals to ensure their continuity. The conservatism of Spartan society did not permit adequate change until that point. Only upon the vast transformation of the composition of the Spartan populace represented by the increasing enfranchisement of helots and the dwindling of traditional Spartiates would Sparta itself change enough for Spartan authorities to cease obstructing ideas that threatened this “traditional Spartan way of life.”

In conclusion, the attempts at an extra-Peloponnesian geographical widening of Spartan rule before Lysander were different in both scale and kind to Lysander’s. Many were the efforts of megalomaniacal individuals such as Kleomenes, Leotykidas, and the regent Pausanias who suffered harsh censure for their individualistic ambitions. The leadership over the Hellenic League, a natural opportunity for a Sparta if it had sought wider rule, was described as relinquished peacefully by all but one source: even in that source, eager hotheads were quelled fairly easily. The Peloponnesian War was entered only with reluctance: Spartans, regardless of their vague interests in northern Greece, seemed to want to stay in Sparta. Where the will existed to establish a colony near Doris, it did not exist to keep the colony running well. Only with an extraordinary commander did the sort of planning necessary to a successful imperial venture occur. The picture we are left with is an isolationist Sparta that sought to stay home with its peculiar conservative culture and enjoy deference from other Greek states, and did not aggressively seek wider rule.

Spartans and Persians

Alongside their traditional isolationist reluctance to expand imperially, an additional Spartan cultural complex carried foreign policy implications. It would change quite radically in the Lysandrean moment of the demographic turnover of the Spartan army. This was Sparta’s collective attitude toward Persia and the Persians. Before Lysander’s friendship with Persian royalty, and continuing tenuously after it, Sparta’s dealings with Persia are marked by reluctance and distrust bordering upon hatred. After the Spartan victory over the Athenians at Tanagra in 457, the Persians sent an envoy to the Lakedaimonians to bribe them to invade Attike and met with no success.¹²² However, reluctance does not mean refusal. This would have been bizarre after the war started and Sparta’s leadership realized that its relatively nonmonetized, extraction-based economy was uncompetitive with the Athenian Empire. King Arkhidamos included *barbaroi* as one group from whom to consider soliciting help in 432/1.¹²³ Slightly later in 431 the Spartans intended to send envoys to the Persian King and

¹²¹ Andrewes 1978, 102.

¹²² Thouk. 1.109.2.

¹²³ Thouk. 1.82.1.

other non-Greeks.¹²⁴ In 430, an embassy was sent to the Persian King but intercepted and murdered on its way.¹²⁵ In 425, the Persian Artaphernes was captured by an Athenian general at Eion carrying a set of letters which the Athenians translated from Aramaic, and one of these stated that the Persians were interested in what the Spartans had been trying to discuss, but could not understand what it was.¹²⁶ Although tantalizing, not much can be built of this, much less an agreement stipulating that Persian financial subsidies required Sparta to refrain from invading Asia Minor.¹²⁷ Occasional failed attempts at communication and confusion are all that can be securely reconstructed.¹²⁸ And one can, rather than taking the letters as a sign of Spartan “medism,” instead see the King’s message as an accusation that Sparta’s previous communications bore “a lack of consistency and clarity.”¹²⁹

A significant shift occurred in the late 410s. By this point, Sparta had been forced to adapt, however clumsily, some of its institutions to a position of overseas leadership and to adjust its administrative structure and aims to the necessities of the war.¹³⁰ Henceforth the Persians became intimately involved in Greek affairs and never ceased this involvement. The timing is important. This occurred a year after Greece received the news of Athens’ disastrous Sicilian Expedition; Athens was damaged, and a golden opportunity was thus present; but it was not defeated, so real resources would be necessary to end the war. This was also about a half-year after Athens’ subject-allies had begun making overtures to the Spartans: the first had been Euboia and Lesbos. Also in this period, King Agis of Sparta had started levying contributions for a fleet from his allies.¹³¹ Finally, this was a half-century after the earthquake: the evidence suggests minimal Spartiate population increase, and it must have been clear to anyone at Sparta paying attention that the Spartiate population was not recovering. The Persian satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazos sent envoys to Lakedaimon in 413/2.

The Three Treaties

Three alliances between the Lakedaimonians and the Persians were crafted in 412. Perhaps these should be thought of as three versions of one alliance; or the first two, as provisional sketches of loose cooperative agreements.¹³² The Persians’ overture to the Spartans was inspired by the difficulty of collecting taxes from the Hellenic cities in Western Anatolia, due to Athenian agitation, and perhaps also because the Athenians had reneged on a previous overture.¹³³ The Persians saw the Spartans as the most powerful available Greek force to assist them in checking the Athenians’ power; the fact that the Spartans had been and

¹²⁴ Thouk. 2.7.1.

¹²⁵ Thouk. 2.67.

¹²⁶ Thouk. 4.50.

¹²⁷ *pace* Hornblower 1996 *ad loc.* (p. 207). Briant 2002, 581 more cautiously only believes in (regular) diplomatic contact between Sparta and Persia.

¹²⁸ Briant 2002, 581; cf. 597 and 690 on how quixotic the Spartans must have seemed to the Persians.

¹²⁹ Cawkwell 2005, 150.

¹³⁰ “however clumsily”: *e.g.* Thouk. 8.44.4, Polybios 6.49.

¹³¹ Thouk. 8.1-3, 8.5.1-2.

¹³² Cf. Cartledge 1987, 187 – 188, Andrewes 1981, 40, Cawkwell 2005, 149.

¹³³ Thouk. 8.19.2, 28.2, 54.3; Andok. 3 *Peace* 29. Rhodes 2006, 143.

were still engaged in a long war with the Athenians was but a happy coincidence from the Persians' perspective.¹³⁴

That even this rather desperate measure on the Spartans' part quickly attracted odium of the severest sort from prominent Spartiates indicates both general disapproval for dealings with Persia as well as a more specific feeling of dishonor over the terms of the treaty. The one-sided nature of the first alliance or first version of the alliance strongly suggests Spartan diplomatic incompetence and/or desperation: it favored Persia highly, asserting "whatever land or cities the King holds, and that the forefathers of the King held, shall be the King's."¹³⁵ This could include the Greek cities of western Anatolia, many of the islands in the Aegean sea, and in fact any place that had ever, at any moment, paid even a single tribute payment to the King, even places on continental Greece temporarily paying this tribute during the Persian Wars narrated by Herodotos.

In winter 412, the Spartans received from Persia a month's pay for each man in the Peloponnesian fleet.¹³⁶ As soon as this occurred, the Spartans renegotiated the contract moderately, without decisively negating the clause most favorable to Persia.¹³⁷ But very soon afterward, in the same winter of 412/411, an eleven-man Lakedaimonian commission came to Knidos to examine the treaty and rejected it. The large size of the commission reflects the importance of the diplomatic matters at hand. The Spartiate Likhas was the severest critic of the previous two treaties.¹³⁸ He called it "a monstrous thing" (*deinon*) that the king should claim whatever land his ancestors had ever ruled as, Likhas said, this would "enslave" (*douleuein*) Thessaly, all the islands, Lokris, and even everything as far south in Greece as Boiotia, "and that in place of freedom, the Lakedaimonians would inflict upon the Hellenes a Median empire."¹³⁹ At this, Tissaphernes departed angrily without concluding anything.¹⁴⁰ The Lakedaimonians next attempted to liberate Rhodes. Significantly, Thoukydides clearly states that they wished to maintain their fleet without Persian subsidies.¹⁴¹ They did not want to continue to deal with the Persians on terms of the "enslavement" of other Greeks.¹⁴² This

¹³⁴ The Persian policy was to play both sides off each other. The strategic logic is clearest in Thouk. 8.46, (esp. 8.46.2 *fin*), 8.87.4, and X. H. 1.5.8 – 9.

¹³⁵ Thouk. 8.18.

¹³⁶ Thouk. 8.29.

¹³⁷ Thouk. 8.37.

¹³⁸ Poralla-Bradford #492. Proxenos of Argos (Thouk. 5.14, 22), horserace-winner whipped at the Olympia in 420 (Thouk. 5.50.4): an influential Spartiate, probably related to the homonymous *agathoergos* who found the bones of Orestes (Hdt. 1.67-8): Hodkinson 2000, 414.

¹³⁹ Thouk. 8.43.3. Cf. Cawkwell 2005, 151.

¹⁴⁰ Although Andrewes 1992, 471 thinks that Tissaphernes' anger was "perhaps simulated" and that "it is unlikely" that the Persians truly intended to press claims as far south as Boiotia, the possibility was surely highly dangerous to Spartan claims of liberation.

¹⁴¹ Thouk. 8.44.1.

¹⁴² I cannot agree here with Cartledge's (1987, 188) argument that this treaty was motivated not by "Sparta's reputation among her old and new allies" but rather by "the regularity and rate of pay being provided for Sparta's growing Aegean fleet." Why Likhas would have made the speech he did would then be quite unexplained; see below. Statements like Derkyllidas' at X. H. 3.2.19 also contradict a pure power-politics interpretation of Spartan state action. Lewis, as Cartledge notes, does write "the liberators have conceded Asia to the King" (Lewis 1977, 107), but Cartledge does not note that Lewis then states (107, fn. 100) that this "bleak conclusion is partly rhetorical, partly making a maximum concession to an opposite view before

strongly suggests a panhellenic ideology (or at least sentiment) at Sparta rather than a brutal *Realpolitik*.¹⁴³

Likhas ventriloquized an important and stubborn point of honor among the few thousand remaining Spartiates in the late 410s; the insistent, repeated manifestations of this feeling show that many Spartiates evidently realized that they did not want Persian assistance at a price that they considered highly dishonorable or immoral – that is, at the price of betraying other Greeks.¹⁴⁴ It evidently contradicted consistent Spartiate traditions.¹⁴⁵ On the one hand, it is almost certainly true that over the *longue durée*, state-level behavior is self-serving rather than being primarily concerned with larger ideals.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless a relentless analysis of all state-level actions in terms of power politics can result in a neglect of nuance, motivations, and actually different values in the behavior of different groups, cultures, societies, and individuals.

It seems that Spartans felt, or certainly exhibited, obligation toward allies and friends and an ideal of the independence of cities.¹⁴⁷ Their refusal to destroy Athens in 404 may partly stem from this.¹⁴⁸ So may their refusal to deal any longer with the Thirty in 403. The Spartan War Fund inscription of the late fifth century is a commemoration of the assistance of, and as continuous with Spartan liberation language toward, former subjects of the Athenian Empire, thus inspiring and promising future mutual loyalty.¹⁴⁹ Spartan liberators presented their campaign as one freeing Greeks from Athenians, in the same way that Greece needed liberation from Persian rule in generations previous.¹⁵⁰ And only *after* Likhas denounced the

the arguments in the next chapter,” which sees (against de Ste. Croix’s view that Spartan liberation was only propaganda) Spartan panhellenism and distaste for giving other Greeks to Persia.

¹⁴³ On panhellenism, Perlman 1976 remains fundamental, if overly cynical: the fact that panhellenism “was never intended to unite Greece or to create a United States of Greece in which all the city-states would be equal” (6) is clearly correct, but this does not in any way preclude a genuine sentiment of friendliness to other Greeks as opposed to foreigners, or a commitment to their autonomy. Perlman sets too high a standard, and when the standard is not reached, assumes the existence of only cynical propaganda. Cf. Mitchell 2007 for a more nuanced and historical, and less cynical, view of panhellenism.

¹⁴⁴ Giorgini 2004 derides any interpretation of moral considerations as merely “moralistic”; this does not seem to conform to the evidence at hand. No plausible theory – or evidence – has arisen (as far as I have seen) as to why Thoukydides or his sources would invent this.

¹⁴⁵ Points of honor motivating Spartans’ actions: e.g. Hdt. 7.104, 7.228, Thouk. 1.81.1, 1.84.2., 1.86.5, X. *H.* 1.6.32, 3.1.9, 3.1.24, 4.1.38, 4.8.20, 4.8.36–38, 5.1.17, 5.4.31, 5.4.33, 7.1.30, 7.2.3; X. *L.P.* 8.1, 8.2, 9.3–6. Cf. Lendon 1997. Link’s (2011) essay on the honorability of seizing in Spartan culture should not be thought to negate Spartan honor but rather to redefine it; and snatching and seizing do not subsume betrayal.

¹⁴⁶ A position most cogently worked out in Eckstein 2006, mildly challenged by Giorgini 2004.

¹⁴⁷ Lewis 1977, especially Chapter 5, resists the simple and occasionally simplistic *Realpolitik* approach found e.g. in Cartledge 1987. Lewis writes “... it is not in the least unlikely that, if the Spartans said they were fighting for Greek liberation, very many Spartans will have believed this account of their own motives and been unwilling to contradict it too blatantly” (66). For obligations toward allies and friends, see Van Wees 2004, 10 – 15; Cf. Cawkwell 1976, 68; 2005, esp. 150–1.

¹⁴⁸ X. *H.* 2.2.20. Lewis 1977, 112. The Athenians remembered this in 371: X. *H.* 6.3.13.

¹⁴⁹ ML 67, IG V(1) 1, Spartan Museum no. 6656. Matthaïou and Pikoulas 1989, Loomis 1992, Piérart 1995, DeVore 2008 (unpublished).

¹⁵⁰ Sparta-as-liberator proclamations and expectations: Thouk. 1.69.1, 1.122.3, and 1.124.3 (Korinthian speech at Sparta in 432/1); 2.8. 4 (431, a feeling present in much of Greece); 3.13.7 (Mytileneans ask the Spartans to be this in 428); 3.32.2 (427, a Samian envoy holds the Spartiate Alkidas to this standard); 3.63.3

treaty did the Persians reduce their pay to the Spartans under Alkibiades' recommendation: it was not, then, a lowering of pay that produced a Spartan desire to cease cooperation with Persia or to renounce the treaty. Tissaphernes and Alkibiades began to favor Athens now because, as Alkibiades stated, the Spartans actually desired to liberate Hellenes from both the Persians and the Athenians. This would not fit with Persian policy.¹⁵¹ It is impossible to ignore the opinion about Sparta's intention from an operator as skilled in diplomacy as Alkibiades; Likhas' reaction to the treaty verifies Alkibiades' claim. Again, overall, the evidence indicates that the Spartans in the 410s did not wish to betray the Eastern Greeks to Persia.¹⁵²

Not only Likhas was offended. The Spartans even wished to ravage the Persian coast.¹⁵³ Fearing this, Tissaphernes next, in early 411 renegotiated the treaty, a third version.¹⁵⁴ This version includes more Persian names, thus probably going higher in the Persian hierarchy: it should be considered official.¹⁵⁵ Unlike the treaties at 8.18 and 8.37, it contains no grandiose claims to all land that the King's ancestors had once possessed. It implies nothing outside of Asia, and most likely in direct response to Likhas' disapproval of the second version, all it states is "the territory of the King, as much as is in Asia, is the King's, and concerning this territory of his, let it be as the King wills."¹⁵⁶ None of the islands are mentioned in the treaty, nor the ambiguity that permitted a claim on Europe or the islands based upon the King's ancestors' previous possessions.

(Theban speech at Plataia in 427); 4.85.1 and 4.86.1 (Brasidas at Akanthos, 424); 4.121.1 (Skionians call Brasidas liberator); X. H. 2.2.23 (taking down of the Long Walls in 403). Lewis 1977, 65; DeVore 2008, 16.

¹⁵¹ Thouk. 8.46, 8.52.

¹⁵² Lewis 1977, 112.

¹⁵³ Thouk. 8.57.1.

¹⁵⁴ Treaty text: Thouk. 8.58: [2] χώραν τὴν βασιλέως, ὅση τῆς Ἀσίας ἐστί, βασιλέως εἶναι: καὶ περὶ τῆς χώρας τῆς ἑαυτοῦ βουλευέτω βασιλεὺς ὅπως βούλεται. [3] Λακεδαιμονίους δὲ καὶ τοὺς ξυμμάχους μὴ ἰέναι ἐπὶ χώραν τὴν βασιλέως ἐπὶ κακῷ μηδενί, μηδὲ βασιλέα ἐπὶ τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων χώραν μηδὲ τῶν ξυμμάχων ἐπὶ κακῷ μηδενί. [4] ἢν δέ τις Λακεδαιμονίων ἢ τῶν ξυμμάχων ἐπὶ κακῷ ἢ ἐπὶ τὴν βασιλέως χώραν, Λακεδαιμονίους καὶ τοὺς ξυμμάχους κωλύειν: καὶ ἢν τις ἐκ τῆς βασιλέως ἢ ἐπὶ κακῷ ἐπὶ Λακεδαιμονίους ἢ τοὺς ξυμμάχους, βασιλεὺς κωλύετω. [5] τροφὴν δὲ ταῖς ναυσὶ ταῖς νῦν παρούσαις Τισσαφέρην παρέχειν κατὰ τὰ ξυγκείμενα μέχρι ἂν αἱ νῆες αἱ βασιλέως ἔλθωσιν: [6] Λακεδαιμονίους δὲ καὶ τοὺς ξυμμάχους, ἐπὶ αἱ βασιλέως νῆες ἀφίκωνται, τὰς ἑαυτῶν ναῦς, ἢν βούλωνται, τρέφειν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς εἶναι. ἢν δὲ παρὰ Τισσαφέρην λαμβάνειν ἐθέλωσι τὴν τροφήν, Τισσαφέρην παρέχειν, Λακεδαιμονίους δὲ καὶ τοὺς ξυμμάχους τελευτώντος τοῦ πολέμου τὰ χρήματα Τισσαφέρην ἀποδοῦναι ὅποσα ἂν λάβωσιν. [7] ἐπὶ αἱ βασιλέως νῆες ἀφίκωνται, αἶ τε Λακεδαιμονίων νῆες καὶ αἱ τῶν ξυμμάχων καὶ αἱ βασιλέως κοινῇ τὸν πόλεμον πολεμοῦντων καθ' ὅτι ἂν Τισσαφέρην δοκῇ καὶ Λακεδαιμονίοις καὶ τοῖς ξυμμάχοις. ἢν δὲ καταλύειν βούλωνται πρὸς Ἀθηναίους, ἐν ὁμοίῳ καταλύεσθαι.' Cf. Hornblower 2001 *ad loc.* for issues of the translation.

¹⁵⁵ Cartledge 1987, 189; Rhodes 2006, 145; Cawkwell 2006, 149-50.

¹⁵⁶ In the initial phrase Χώραν τὴν βασιλέως, ὅση τῆς Ἀσίας ἐστί, βασιλέως εἶναι: καὶ περὶ τῆς χώρας τῆς ἑαυτοῦ βουλευέτω βασιλεὺς ὅπως βούλεται. Hornblower *ad loc.*, (2010, 928) argues that ὅση τῆς Ἀσίας ἐστί can be twisted to be "strictly compatible with the rhetorical existence of territory claimed by the King and not situated in Asia [but in Europe]." This is rather over-clever: it is doubtful that Spartiates swearing to it thought that Persians would actually press this issue, especially if Likhas were present at the oath. If the Spartiates should be thought to actually have noticed this very slender hole, then their awareness of its equivocality suggests their lack of commitment to the treaty – hence testifies to their openness to disobeying it.

A loophole opens one term to possible exploitation by Sparta. It is the usage of the terminology “territory” rather than “cities” in Asia.¹⁵⁷ It is the only improvement to the previous treaties: therefore, it must have constituted the treaty’s acceptability to Spartans of the Likhas mold.¹⁵⁸ As the treaty even contained a disadvantage to Sparta, namely its new stipulation that certain monies the Persians were to furnish for the war effort now needed to be repaid by the Spartans, it is difficult to imagine why the Spartan state agreed to it otherwise. The notion that official Spartan state policy included the permanent sacrifice of the Anatolian Greek cities and their inhabitants is difficult to believe in view of Likhas’ probably not unique reaction to the first and second treaties a very short time before this.¹⁵⁹ This third treaty was likely considered a stop-gap measure which the Spartans never intended to honor after the war: this would explain both their ostensible acceptance of the betrayal of the Anatolian Greeks and their feigned promise to repay Persian monies. These clauses were united by the fact that they could be ignored, and thus “corrected,” after the war.

And a striking utterance of Likhas’ shortly afterward supports this argument. After some Milesians attacked and took a fort that Tissaphernes built on Miletos, Likhas told them “the Milesians and the others in the King’s [territory] must serve moderately [δουλεύειν ... τὰ μέτρια] and pay court to Tissaphernes until they could settle the war well.”¹⁶⁰ It is quite likely that Likhas was one of those who had sworn to the treaty, considering his high status, diplomatic grade, and very recent involvement in this process of diplomacy. The Milesians’ obedience to the treaty, Likhas states, was required only until the war’s end.¹⁶¹ His terms δουλεύειν ... τὰ μέτρια, “to serve moderately” and perhaps even more significantly ἕως ἄν τὸν πόλεμον εὖ θῶνται “until they could settle the war well” cast grave doubts upon the notion that the Spartans intended the treaty in good faith toward Persia: rather, the good faith seems to have been directed toward the Greeks in Anatolia.¹⁶² Sparta’s willingness to contravene its treaty with Persia was evidenced shortly after by its peace delegation to the Athenians after the latter won a naval victory at Kynossema in autumn 411 and regained control of the Hellespontine grain imports. Clearly the Lakedaimonians, just as they had

¹⁵⁷ Rhodes 2006, 145.

¹⁵⁸ De Ste. Croix 1972, 313f and Hornblower 2010 *ad loc.* see a double loophole: Persians could claim that *khora* included cities and Ionians that it did not: a deliberate equivocation.

¹⁵⁹ Pace Parke 1930, 47.

¹⁶⁰ Thouk. 8.84.5, χρῆναι Τισσαφέρνει καὶ δουλεύειν Μιλησίους καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς ἐν τῇ βασιλείῳ τὰ μέτρια καὶ ἐπιθεραπεύειν, ἕως ἄν τὸν πόλεμον εὖ θῶνται. Hornblower renders “and said that the Milesians and the other inhabitants of the King’s land should submit to the necessary humiliation, and manage to keep on good terms with Tissaphernes until the war was well over” (2010, 994). *LSJ* sub δουλεύω (q.v.) denotes not only slavery but “to serve” and even “to accommodate oneself” and “to render a service.”

¹⁶¹ Hornblower 2010, 994 [Gomme,] Andrewes and Dover 1981, 280, who offer, as a contrast Likhas’ angry expression describing Asian Greek servitude, the *doulein* without *ta metria* at Thouk. 8.43.3.

¹⁶² Rhodes 2006, 145. *Contra* Cartledge 1987, 189, who ignores Likhas’ displeasure at the third treaty and argues the Peace of Antalkidas was similarly cynical to the δουλεύειν ... τὰ μέτρια incident in 410. But that was in 387, 23 years later, which was sufficient time for the demographic change amongst the Spartan army to have changed the basis of support, as I argue in this chapter *infra*. Cartledge also fails to explain why Likhas’ stance would have been so different between the third treaty and this incident.

advised the Milesians to do, were exhibiting a modicum of accommodation to the Persians only until the war could be ended in an advantageous fashion – to them, not to the Persians.¹⁶³

An Inefficient Imperial Machine: Thasos, Byzantion, Ships, and Money

The only way for a state to succeed in a complex, lengthy war like this would have been to stably maintain harmosts and garrisons in Greek cities, to secure a reliable influx of income and resources, and to reorganize its military and its policy of resource extraction. This did not happen with Sparta until considerably later.¹⁶⁴ The disorganization that characterized fifth-century Spartan institutional structure overseas, itself a symptom of the pre-Lysandrian lack of purpose and lack of interest in empire, was ever present in these years. After Athens' renewed democratic government had refused overtures from Spartans and Persians, the latter began to support the Lakedaimonian side again.¹⁶⁵ A "Lakonian" named Pasippidas was charged with plotting a revolt with Tissaphernes against the Spartiate governor or harmost of Thasos. That Tissaphernes was plotting *with a Lakonian*, perhaps even a Spartiate, against a Spartiate harmost suggests extremely poor management on the side of the Lakonians if they could not keep their people united with some sense of purpose.¹⁶⁶

Another example of Sparta's failure of imperial willpower appeared in 408, when a revolt against Spartan-occupied Byzantion resulted in it being given to the Athenians. The revolt's instigator, even when tried *at Sparta*, won an acquittal because he said that Klearkhos, the Spartiate harmost, had been using the town's food supply to feed his own troops, allowing the Byzantines to starve.¹⁶⁷ The incident is doubly revealing. First, Spartan mismanagement here was bad enough to lose a controlled city. Second, those who tried the instigator either sincerely believed him or did not. If they believed him, it suggests that the Spartiates at home honestly did not wish the Greek poleis of the Anatolian coast to be mistreated: Spartiates actually cared about the Anatolian Greeks, and this fact should not be taken by us flippantly or cynically. If they did not believe him, then this means that they desired to defame or punish Klearkhos by accepting the instigator's story; this latter interpretation rather robustly supports the argument that the Spartiates could not hold together an imperial network effectively. Either interpretation is supported by other evidence that already discussed.

A path-dependent lack of organization for, and disinclination to reorganize for, projects outside the customary Spartan sphere has been commented on. Between the second and third treaty, after extracting 32 talents from Rhodes, they grounded their ships and did nothing for eighty (or, if some textual revisions are accepted, forty) days.¹⁶⁸ In 412, they had no idea how their ships should be guarded and considered burning them before sitting near them.¹⁶⁹ An ignorance, no doubt fostered by Sparta's relatively nonmonetized economy, of

¹⁶³ Diodoros 13.52.

¹⁶⁴ The institution of a reliable collection of tribute is attested only after Lysander, for 404 (D. S. 14.10.2). A reorganization of military did not happen until 377/6 (D. S. 15.31.1), almost thirty years later: the generational coincidence is telling. Cawkwell 1983, 389, 397.

¹⁶⁵ X. H. 1.1.24 – 25: 410 BC, immediately after Athenians defeated the Spartans at Kyzikos.

¹⁶⁶ X. H. 1.1.32.

¹⁶⁷ X. H. 1.3.15 – 22.

¹⁶⁸ Thouk. 8.44.4. Cf. Hornblower 2010 *ad loc.*, Kallet 2001, 259.

¹⁶⁹ Thouk. 8.11.2; Kallet 2001, 258 no. 98.

how to regularly finance their navy also exemplifies this, as Polybios later analyzed the inadequacy of Peloponnesian resources for wider rule: payment in kind did not suffice for overseas inter-polis finance, nor did iron currency when a universally accepted currency was necessary.¹⁷⁰ Few poleis in the Spartan sphere minted coins appropriate for this purpose in the late fifth century save Sikyon.¹⁷¹ A look at the Spartan War Fund inscription, almost certainly from the Peloponnesian War, strengthens this impression. Its contrasts to the Athenian tribute system are telling: tribute is collected only infrequently; many payments are in kind (such as raisins) rather than in currency; both private persons and states make contributions; and the number of contributors is tiny.¹⁷²

At this point it is appropriate to recapitulate. The Spartans were, over the course of the fifth century, very reluctant to expand their power. Sparta was in political science terms a “status quo” state largely content with its share of resources and status in the international system: indeed, it had only modest interaction with the international system as its economy was relatively autarkic. Early *soi-disant* examples of Spartan hard imperialism such as the alleged plans of Kleomenes I, Leotyxidas, and the regent Pausanias are poorly attested and confused by slander, require great imagination to reconstruct, are the work of individuals and not the state, and were harshly punished or censured in accord with the severe community control and the sharp competitiveness (itself conducive to slander) that strongly characterize Spartan society. And any steps in a hard imperialist direction that Sparta took were characterized by several highly inhibiting *nomoi*. These were a great disinclination to go overseas, or even out of the Peloponnesos, coupled with marine incompetence that must relate closely to the traditional Spartiate landowning ideology and lack of monetization; a rather panhellenic unwillingness to trade other Greeks for victory, particularly non-hostile Greeks who had requested Spartan help; a respect for allies; some respect for the autonomy of non-hostile Greek poleis; a hostility toward Persians and willingness to harshly punish Medizers and violators of other conservative Spartan *nomoi*; a reluctance to engage in large-scale war against other Greeks outside the Peloponnesos; a fear of disrupting the Spartan *Eunomia* thus permitting helot revolt; and an astonishing and unpromising level of incompetence at adapting institutional and economic structures to larger populations that bespeaks a lack of will and drive required for “hard” imperialism.

This set of *nomoi* prevailed over the fifth century, changing only very slowly at its end. Some three thousand Spartiates existed at the end of the fifth century, down from the eight thousand at its beginning. New persons entering the Lakedaimonian army were not trained in the *agoge* and hence did not have the traditional ideals beaten into them, and I shall next argue that this change in personnel is one of the great motors of the Spartan foreign policy change that began with Lysander.

¹⁷⁰ Polybios 6.49; Thouk. 1.10.4; generally on Spartan financial amateurishness, Kallet 2001, 256-9; Warren 2003.

¹⁷¹ Warren 2003.

¹⁷² Adcock 1932 dates it to 427. Dekeleian War is suggested in Fränkel 1902, Bleckmann 1993, and Figueira 1988, Matthaïou and Pikoulas 1989, Loomis 1992, Piérart 1995, DeVore 2008. Cf. *LSAG* 197, ML 67, Smarczyk 1999,

Chapter 5 Lysander and Agesilaos: Population and Imperialism

Introduction

Lysander's accession and rupture of the previous Spartan inability and reluctance at "hard" imperialism were symptomatic of the population shift that this dissertation concerns. Tellingly he utilized non-Spartiates heavily in his imperial system. He exhibited very little of the sympathy for other Greeks, hostility to Persia, and moderation that had been contained within the Spartan ideal: his willingness to collaborate with Kyros, the Persian prince and his installation of dekarchies attests to this. Kyros' death in 401 and Lysander's own death in 395 at the battle of Haliartos put a stop to what could have been a most effective joint imperial control of the Aegean. The reins of Spartan empire were then passed to Agesilaos, who unsurprisingly seems to have possessed more of the traditional Spartan disdain for cooperation with Persia and more of a panhellenic desire to free the Anatolian Greeks than Lysander had possessed.

A fairly consistent anti-Persian line was held by the Spartan state until the inexplicable decision to surrender the Greek cities of the Anatolia to the Persian Empire with the Peace of Antalkidas of 387/6. The influence upon state decisions of the new members of the Spartan army, who had not been inculcated throughout their youth in traditional Spartan ideals, has never been examined as a causal factor for the abrupt about-face that the Peace represented. Fourth century literary evidence describes a great change in the Lakedaimonians and their behavior. Rather than being typical literary topoi of generic moral decline, these texts are highly historically contingent and relatively accurate descriptions of the new sorts of person that had come to outnumber traditional Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian army. However, as the events are very complex, some narrative must be given; I have tried to keep this to the minimum necessary for my readers to understand the significance of the great changes I am describing.

In early 407, the Persian king assigned his fifteen-year old son Kyros as "ruler of all coast-dwellers and to fight alongside the Lakedaimonians."¹ The move was sparked by the King's desire to deal more efficiently with the uprisings of several of his subjects and by palace intrigue against the satrap Tissaphernes.² Additionally, this administrative change appears to have been connected with a Spartan diplomatic delegation led by a certain Boiotios, who upon returning from the Great King reported that "the Lakedaimonians have received everything that they wanted from the King," after which announcement Kyros ordered Pharnabazos to sequester Athenian ambassadors so that Athens would not know of it.³ Clearly these developments represented a major change in Persian policy toward the war. What Boiotios referenced is cryptic, but frustratingly important to how we view Spartan foreign policy of the late fifth century. A reasonable conjecture has been that Athens' recent

¹ X. H. 1.4.3; *Anab.* 1.9.7.

² A siege at Uruk is attested in a Babylonian tablet for November 407. Trouble with Media was attested this year as well (X. H. 1.2.19); Briant 2002, 596.

³ X. H. 1.4.2. A Boiotios is inscribed on a 4th century stone (IG 5.1.715) found at Sparta.

successes, including its reacquisition of the Hellespont shipping-lane, frightened the King into promising the Spartans financial support plus territorial autonomy for the Anatolian Greeks provided they pay him tribute.⁴

The combination of autonomy plus tribute had a quite recent precedent, namely the Peace of Nikias of 421 which stipulated that six Thracian poleis had to pay tribute to Athens but would otherwise be autonomous.⁵ There is also a later, even closer analogue, the arrangement offered by a Persian representative in 395.⁶ Insufficient evidence hinders fuller knowledge of the Treaty of Boiotios; yet it is quite difficult to imagine, considering the evidence of the Spartans' feelings of obligation to honor their allies, that "everything the Lakedaimonians want from the King" would entail handing the Anatolian Greeks over to the King in the manner harshly decried earlier by Likhas. Some kind of compromise, at least, regarding their status seems highly plausible, for Kyros' attested offers – his father's support, five hundred talents for the war effort, back-pay, a month advance pay to the sailors in the Lakedaimonian fleet, a wage increase – illustrate a very accommodating attitude from the upper levels of Persian administration, as does his rejection of Tissaphernes' advice to accept Athenian ambassadors and to allow the Greeks to wear each other out.⁷

The man securing these promises from Kyros was Lysander. Although holding the office of admiral or navarch of the entire Spartan fleet, he was not a Spartiate, but rather a member of the earlier-discussed Spartan marginal group known as the *mothakes*.⁸ Lysander's highly important office despite this handicap of birth is emblematic of Sparta's demographic shift and of its new era of reliance upon non-Spartiates. His energy was immediately notable: in 406 the Athenians prematurely and chaotically attacked Lysander's orderly fleet and lost fifteen ships in the battle of Notion near Ephesos. Lysander thus showed his worth early, and proved his dedication to an aggressive new program that would remain in effect over the next four years.

As will be evident, Lysander comprehended Sparta's demographic shifts and how to harness them to produce an actual empire rather than the struggling mess inhibited by aristocratic and old-fashioned Spartiate *nomoi* that characterized the previous phase of Sparta's foreign policy. The isolationism characteristic of the Spartiates was now ended, and also nearly ended was the Spartiate focus on preserving tradition: the strict relegation of helots to slavelike activity, the sole leadership of armies and navies by Spartan royals or Spartiates, the avoidance of extra-Peloponnesian rule, the panhellenic hostility to Persia, the

⁴ Resources: X. H. 1.5.5. Autonomy plus tribute: Lewis 1977, 124 – 125; accepted as "attractive" by Hornblower 2002, 182; Hornblower again in CAH (2) 69 states that the Treaty of Boiotios "would make Spartan policy ... consistent and intelligible over a longer period." Cf. Ostwald 1982, 7: "... a form of αὐτονομία can be envisaged which does involve the payment of tribute ..."

⁵ Thouk. 5.18.5. Spartan desire to avoid a sacrilegious breaking of oaths may explain its attachment to the autonomy clause in the Peace of Nikias: Hornblower 1996, 50.

⁶ X. H. 4.25.

⁷ Talents: Plut. Lys. 4.2. He also offered to melt and coin his throne: X. H. 1.5.3, Plut. Lys. 9.1.

⁸ Phylarkhos *apud* Athenaios 6.271F; Aelian V.H. 12.43.

sympathy to the Anatolian Greeks as fellow Hellenes, and the preservation of the basic autonomy of other Greek poleis. Previous Spartan leaders had been royals or Spartiates whose first priority was the conservation of these ideals at Sparta. Lysander's priority was to be the leading figure in the Greek-speaking lands.⁹

Kallikratidas: δικαιοτάτος Σπαρτιατῶν

Obviously we cannot expect the traditional Spartiate ideology to have been swept away overnight, and the accession of Kallikratidas illustrates the remaining hold of Spartan tradition. Whatever Lysander's intentions were this early were thwarted in April 406, when his year as navarch ended and Kallikratidas, whom Diodoros called δικαιοτάτος Σπαρτιατῶν, "the most just of the Spartiates," took over the office.¹⁰ The visible sight of the clash of very different ideologies falling into competition now in the Spartan public sphere and consequently in Sparta's foreign policy reveals a great deal. Resentment at Kallikratidas' perfectly legal and normal takeover of power indicates that he disappointed those inclined toward pursuing Lysander's vision. Evidence of friction appears in Lysander's remittance to Sardis of Kyros' remaining monetary benefaction.¹¹ Lysander's friends accused Kallikratidas of comparative incompetence.¹² The appearance of a highly organized commander who understood and was devoted to power politics larger than merely the Greek sphere made a traditional Spartiate like Kallikratidas look overcautious, provincial, hidebound, and myopic.

Kyros did not like him either, making him wait for an audience and delaying pay for his sailors. The sources emphasize Kallikratidas' Spartiate isolationist and provincial dislike of foreigners, and displeasure at the necessary intricacies of financing a fleet, the last no doubt conditioned by Sparta's low level of monetization.¹³ Xenophon writes that "Kallikratidas, disgusted at the delay and driven to anger at having to dance attendance at the [Persians'] gates, asserted that the Hellenes were the most wretched people for fawning on barbarians for the sake of silver."¹⁴ Diodoros describes Kallikratidas as inexperienced in the ways of foreigners; Plutarch writes that Kallikratidas did not get on with the King's generals because he was unslavelike and unwilling to flatter and frequent barbarian courts.¹⁵ He sent to

⁹ Rahe 1977, v.

¹⁰ According to Aelian *V.H.* 12.43, Kallikratidas was also, like Lysander, a mothax; but Aelian is surely less reliable a source than Diodoros, despite the latter's faults in manuscript-editing. In general on Kallikratidas there is Roisman 1987 and Moles 1994. If Kallikratidas was indeed a mothax, it seems that he was one closely wedded to earlier Spartiate ideals: perhaps similar to the upwardly mobile, dutiful minority or immigrant who avidly class-jumps takes on the ideals of the mainstream culture, "more English than a real Englishman," even assuming upper-class prejudices, familiar in twentieth-century novels.

¹¹ Plut. *Lys.* 6.1: Roisman 1987, 23 very reasonably argues that Lysander did this to please Kyros just as much as to hurt Kallikratidas.

¹² *X. H.* 1.6.4.

¹³ Cf. Polybios 2.1271B11.

¹⁴ *X. H.* 1.6.7. In general, see Roisman 1987.

¹⁵ Plut. *Lys.* 6.4, Diodoros 13.76.2.

Lakedaimon for money instead of relying on further Persian aid.¹⁶ Another Spartiate quality was Kallikratidas' apparent fellow-feeling even for enemy Greeks, itself an intimation of the "panhellenic" sentiment: at Sardis he promised to reconcile the Lakedaimonians and Athenians if he returned home safely.¹⁷ At the Milesian assembly he expressed sympathy with the Milesians' suffering at the hands of their Persian overseers and asked them to be *prothumotatoi* with respect to the war, reasserted here his distaste for having to cultivate Kyros, and then told them "with the gods' help, let us show to the barbarians that even without fawning on them, we are capable of punishing our enemies."¹⁸ Upon attacking and taking Methymna on Lesbos, when his allies urged him to sell the Methymnaians into slavery, he sold only the Athenian garrison since they were the enemy, but promised that as long as he was commander, no Hellene would be sold into slavery if he could help it.¹⁹

This is not a case of hero worship by our sources: Kallikratidas is portrayed as arrogant, too. But it is consistent with actions and statements in recent years of other Spartiates such as Astyokhos and Derkyllidas, with a statement of Agesilaos shortly later, with a sentiment admired, indeed exhorted, by the philolakonian Plato and with the Spartiates' imminent refusal to destroy or enslave the Athenians in 405 – 404 despite the Athenians' expectations of being sold into slavery or massacred, and despite pressure from the Corinthians, Thebans, and "many other Greeks" to conduct precisely such an *andrapodismos* upon Athens.²⁰ Older generations of scholarship identified this behavior as pan-hellenic.²¹ As we expect, a typical ideology of unity has as its necessary concomitant a line drawn excluding foreigners; and in this particular case, the pan-hellenic sentiment expressing allegiance to all or almost all other Greeks was conditioned by the experience of the Persian Wars.

This set of character traits was seen by the ancients as particularly Spartan, or particularly Dorian. Plutarch's sources evidently saw Kallikratidas as "the justest and noblest of all men" and his leadership as possessing a "certain simple and honest Dorian quality."²² Diodoros, as mentioned above, calls him the justest of the Spartiates, and repeats a condensed

¹⁶ Cf. the Spartiate Teleutias' later similar feelings at X. *H.* 5.1.17.

¹⁷ Cf. Plut. *Lys.* 6.7. Roisman 1987 bizarrely argues that if Kallikratidas wanted truly to harm the Persians, he would have fought to unite Spartan with Athens against them immediately – a completely implausible program of action at this juncture in the Peloponnesian War.

¹⁸ *Prothumotatoi*: in contrast to an earlier usage of *prothumotatos* to exhort Kyros, X. *H.* 1.5.2.

¹⁹ It is even faintly possible that the garrison of Athenians was even composed of non-Hellenic mercenaries: Henderson 1927, 453. Roisman 1987 argues that the sale of the Athenians contradicted Kallikratidas' stated dislike of selling Greeks; however, pressures upon Kallikratidas may have been great.

²⁰ Astyokhos: Thouk. 8.41.2. Derkyllidas: Thouk. 8.62.2. Agesilaos: Xen. *Agesilaos* 7.6. Plato: *Rep.* 5.869B – C, a passage supporting prosociality within groups. Athens: X. *H.* 2.2.19 – 20.

²¹ Henderson 1927, 452. Grote 1904, volume 6, Chapter 64 is most enthused about Kallikratidas and discusses his refusal to enslave free Greeks on p. 387 – 8.

²² Plut. *Lys.* 5.5.

version of Kallikratidas' refusal to sell the inhabitants of Methymna.²³ This austere, honorable Dorianness also appears in Kallikratidas' Tyrtaian refusal to flee at Arginousai. Xenophon, in his narrative of this battle, writes that "Kallikratidas said that Sparta would be served none the worse with him dead, but he said that to flee would be a disgrace (*aiskhron*)."²⁴ Kallikratidas' willingness to risk his life for his fatherland is again very consistent with Tyrtaios: Diodoros, relying on a different tradition, reports that the omens taken before the battle had been grim, and that Kallikratidas had said "Even if I should perish in the battle it will not make Sparta less glorious."²⁵

Apparently at this point, at least among some groups who mattered, Kallikratidas' Tyrtaian devotion to Sparta and austere sense of pro-sociality toward other Hellenes had become, or was nearly becoming, passé. So had many other traditional Spartan systems and customs. Lysander in his first year of power already had begun to create within the cities under Spartan sway his notorious *hetairika*, cliques personally loyal to him, whose members' social backgrounds differed considerably from the old-money land-owning aristocrats customarily tied to powerful Spartiates and Spartan royals.²⁶ The members of these cliques were among those who did not look kindly upon, much less admire, Kallikratidas' "simple and honest Dorian quality" which seemed insufficient for those in 406 who "yearned for [Lysander's] zeal and needed his support, to the point of being dispirited and crying when he sailed away."²⁷ If we believe in turning points in history, and wish to identify a turning point in the Spartan empire and in Spartan society, this is it: if we trust Plutarch, this is the moment when Kallikratidas, perhaps one of the last remaining persons of influence sticking to the suite of ideologies that had historically formed the traditional Spartiate cast of mind, protested against forces that had become nearly inevitable in the new, larger world.

The Return of Lysander and Freedom for the Hellenes

Kallikratidas was killed at Arginousai, after which representatives from Khios, Aiolis, Ionia and the other Lakedaimonian-aligned island requested Lysander as navarch again, as did Kyros.²⁸ Yet Spartan *nomos* prevented an individual's serial occupancy of a single magistracy, so Arakos came as navarch, Lysander as ostensible vice-admiral. In 405, Lysander arrived at Ephesos, received funds from Kyros, and readied the fleet.²⁹ Money was no longer an object: Kyros now earmarked the tribute from cities in his personal possession to the war effort and promised his friendship to both Sparta and Lysander personally. The Athenians based on Samos harassed the territory of the King, sailing against Khios and Ephesos. Lysander sailed to the Hellespont to try to choke the Athenian grain supply and took Lampsakos.³⁰ Shortly

²³ Diodoros 13.76.2 – 6.

²⁴ X. H. 1.6.32.

²⁵ Diodoros 13.97.5, and similarly at 13.98.1.

²⁶ Cartledge 1987, 152.

²⁷ Plut. Lys. 5.5.

²⁸ Arginousai: Diodoros 13.98.5. Summit (at Ephesos): X. H. 2.1.6, cf. Diodoros 13.100.7.

²⁹ X. H. 2.1.14.

³⁰ X. H. 2.1.20.

after this occurred the famous battle at Aigospotamoi, where Lysander destroyed the Athenian fleet, ending the Peloponnesian War.³¹

His next activities were sufficiently efficient for procuring a *pax Lacedaemonica* throughout an Aegean that had suffered twenty-seven years of war as to sprout rumors of divine intervention.³² He sent Athenian garrisons home in order to hasten inevitable famine in Athens now that his control of the Hellespont choked the grain supply: the sooner they were famished enough to surrender, the war would be over.³³ Relief over his termination of Athens' extortionate rule was great, as expressed through the unprecedented honors that many poleis bestowed publicly upon Lysander: after enduring two generations of direct or indirect rule under the Athenian Empire, being Peloponnesian War pawns, enduring population damage, seeing nearby states destroyed, and fearing being made an example as the Melians or (nearly) the Mytileneans, many may have been rather happy to welcome personnel from their Spartan liberators for assistance in this time of transition.³⁴ And Lysander's net of Spartan harmosts and garrisons throughout the Aegean may even have aided economic recovery.³⁵

Lysander arranged the affairs of Mytilene, brought the Thracian coastal poleis to his side, and announced to King Agis at the fortress at Dekeleia in Attike that he was coming with two hundred ships to force the final surrender of Athens. King Pausanias then brought an immense army north from Sparta, and a blockade of Athens was effected. Lysander restored the parties exiled by the Athenians and by pro-Athenian democrats in Aigina and Melos.³⁶ He waited until the Athenians, famished, surrendered. The Corinthians, Thebans, and "many other Greeks" advocated not making a treaty with Athens, but destroying (*exairein*) it.³⁷

Famously, the Lakedaimonians

said they would not conduct an *andrapodismos* on a Hellenic city that had accomplished an immense good deed in the time of the greatest dangers that ever befell Hellas, but they made peace on the condition that the Long Walls and the Piraeus be torn down, all ships except twelve be handed over, that the exiles return, that the Athenians recognize the same enemies and friends as the Lakedaimonians, and that they follow by both land and sea the Lakedaimonians wherever they should lead.³⁸

³¹ X.H. 2.1.21 – 28 is minimal, Diodoros' account at 13.105.2 – 13.106.7 more informative.

³² Plutarch *Lys.* 11.6 – 12.1.

³³ X. H. 2.1.1 – 2. This is certainly the way the war was actually ended and won.

³⁴ Comparable to Greek relief at Athens' Sicilian defeat in the beginning of Thuk. Book 8.

³⁵ *pace* Parke 1930, 49 – 50.

³⁶ X. H. 2.2.9.

³⁷ X. H. 2.2.11 – 20. A Theban orator later claimed that only one Theban really advocated an *andrapodismos* of Athens. But the orator claimed this while trying to persuade Athens to help Thebes on the brink of the Spartan invasion to Haliartos in 395 (X. H. 3.5.8); further, this orator's skewed view of subsequent events such as the sole responsibility of Sparta for the Thirty makes his historical claims somewhat suspect.

³⁸ X. H. 2.2.20. "to follow wherever [the Lakedaimonians] might lead" is of course the common term in Spartan treaty obligations discussed earlier. Andokides 3.22 quite supports the Spartan moderation and clemency that Xenophon asserts. In Plut. *Lys.* 15.3,

The Assembly agreed to these terms and voted to create a thirty-man leadership council.³⁹ We should include this board of thirty men amongst the dekarchies or boards of ten which Lysander set up in many cities under Spartan sway such as Samos, despite the Athenian example's noncanonical number which was surely justified by Athens' larger size.⁴⁰

He returned to Sparta "master, in a certain manner, of Hellas."⁴¹ His unprecedented collection of rewards included the prows of the ships he had captured, all the Athenian triremes except those twelve the Athenians had been permitted to keep, crowns that had been awarded to him privately from the cities, and an astonishing 470 talents in silver, the balance of the tribute Kyros had given him for war costs.⁴² At Delphi Lysander was able to set up from his spoils the statue group known as the Navarchs' Dedication depicting Poseidon giving him a crown, still present five hundred years later in Pausanias' era.⁴³ At Akanthos was stored a chryselephantine replica of a trireme that Kyros had awarded him.⁴⁴ At Samos, some of his honors were divine in nature, games were named after him, the Hera-festival was renamed the Lysandreia, and the Samian historian Duris wrote that Lysander "was the first Greek to whom the cities set up altars as to a god and burned sacrifices, the first for whom they sang paians," one of which Plutarch preserves.⁴⁵ None other than Plato himself once had to console a singer-composer whose song at the Lysandreia celebrating Lysander's achievements did not win.⁴⁶ He was the first Spartan to receive such honors besides a posthumous hero-cult for Brasidas at Amphipolis.⁴⁷ In all of this, Lysander is a predecessor to Hellenistic ruler cult and Roman emperor-worship.⁴⁸ That people saw him as a savior is unsurprising. However, for Lysander to receive rewards rather than the Lakedaimonian state, and for the rewards to be so excessive, were intrinsically at odds with the still fairly well-enshrined Tyrtaean ethic of selfless and austere self-subsumption to Sparta as a superpersonal entity.

Lysander and "Hard" Spartan Imperialism

The Thirty at Athens considered the Lakedaimonians their saviors, sought to model their government on that at Sparta, and asked Lysander for soldiers to support their rule,

various members of Sparta's allies, after contemplating brutality, agree upon clemency upon remembering Athens' contributions to art and song.

³⁹ X. H. 2.3.2.

⁴⁰ X. H. 2.3.7.

⁴¹ Plut. *Lys.* 16.1: καὶ τρόπον τινὰ κυρίῳ τῆς Ἑλλάδος. Spoils: 18.1.

⁴² This flood of silver into Lakedaimon was thought to ruin Spartiate mores: Plut. *Lys.* 2.4.

⁴³ ML 95. Pausanias 10.9.4. Plut. *Lys.* 18.1.

⁴⁴ Plut. *Lys.* 18.1.

⁴⁵ Plut. *Lys.* 18.3.

⁴⁶ Plut. *Lys.* 18.3 - 5.

⁴⁷ Thouk. 5.11.1; cf. Connor 1987, 139.

⁴⁸ Price 1984 fits ruler-worship into pre-existing structures of dependency and gratitude in communities in the Roman East. Gradel 2002 (non-mutually exclusively) conceptualizes ruler worship as an honorific practice articulating the power differential between community and ruler and argues cogently that divine status was a matter of degree, not an absolute. Both conceptualizations can apply well to the situation of Samos and Lysander.

which he granted.⁴⁹ Again, many of the governments that Sparta had established in this period may well have felt this way. Sparta's sphere of influence now extended outside the Peloponnesos and was supported by soldiers, garrisons, harmosts, and dekharchies. This is a decided break from the pre-Lysandrian system. The number of these governments under Sparta's direct or indirect control – that is, the nature and size of the “hard” Spartan empire – will be discussed shortly; but what is also important, and will be significantly more important when the issues around the treaty of 387 are discussed, is the question of the Spartan program in the Aegean. Three possibilities exist for the intentions of the decision-making organs of Spartan policy at this time. It is worthwhile to present them here clearly.

First, the Spartans may indeed have arranged with Kyros a secretive “Treaty of Boiotios” granting the Anatolian Greeks autonomy (perhaps including tribute to Persia). This is perfectly possible and explains much Spartan foreign policy for the period, but has little evidence behind it.

The second possibility entails that the Spartans had not arranged a “Treaty of Boiotios,” but instead they intended to honor the spirit of the third treaty of 411, and thus did not mind the Persians taking over the Greek cities of Anatolia. In this case, the record of Likhas' complaints did not represent a real goal of Spartan administration, but were entirely idiosyncratic or else fabricated by our sources. This is the most cynical interpretation; but as we have seen, the Spartans were far from taking the most cynical route at all times.

The third option is that Sparta had not arranged a “Treaty of Boiotios,” but was also not committed to the spirit of the 411 treaty either, and was (as Likhas advised the Milesians to do) biding time and courting the Persians until it could either claim a loophole in the third treaty, wait for the Persians to do something that could justify breaking the treaty, or else ignore it on some other grounds (or on no grounds). And then it could achieve a goal more suitable to traditional Spartan honor and ideology, namely arranging (as well as possible) as much autonomy as possible for the Anatolian Greeks, preferably complete freedom from Persia. This option seems the most consistent with the evidence for Spartan ideology and avoids the traps of the first option's lack of evidence and the second option's over-cynicism.

Sparta's formal diplomatic intention toward the Anatolian Greek cities for this juncture remains uncertain. We do know that Lysander, undoubtedly seeing a power vacuum, incorporated the cities that had been part of the Athenian Empire into Sparta's empire. Xenophon's spareness, coupled with his disinterest and/or the hostility to Lysander that we would expect of someone favoring traditional Spartiate mores, gives little institutional description of the new Spartan imperial system.⁵⁰ Plutarch's biography of Lysander, a work incorporating many older sources, must be relied upon more.⁵¹ On one hand, Lysander merely took over the Athenian empire, garnering (according to Diodoros) over a thousand talents per

⁴⁹ Savior: X. H. 2.3.25. Remodel of government: X. H. 2.3.34.

⁵⁰ Xenophon goes easy on Lysander in one respect: he does not detail Lysander's murderousness or massacres as Plutarch and Diodoros do.

⁵¹ Plutarch lists six sources for his *Life of Lysander*: an anonymous history (8.1); Androkles (8.3); Daïmakhos (12.4); Theopompos (13.5 and 17.2); Ephoros (17.2, 20.6); and Duris of Samos (18.3).

year *in toto*.⁵² On the other, he added to that network many other links; no Spartan leader had ever organized anything comparable. One of the most important components of Lysander's new machine was his system of dekarchies. Their extent is well attested despite our sources' lack of city-names in which these ten-man governing bodies ruled.⁵³ Our most detailed information on dekarchies concerns the one Lysander installed on Samos in 404 composed of exiles to whom he gave the entire city and everything in it.⁵⁴ As stated earlier, the Thirty at Athens, despite their noncanonical number, should be included amongst the dekarchies as well, also ruling without limit despite their assurances to the contrary to the Athenians.⁵⁵

Although Athens and Samos are the only named cities, evidence indicates a larger network, perhaps of some two dozen cities or more, although precise counting is impossible. Xenophon uses the plural dekarchies referring to the cities that fell under Lysander's control after Aigospotamoi such as Lampsakos and Sestos.⁵⁶ Xenophon also has the Thebans in their speech to the Athenians refer to the plural dekarchies which Lysander established in each city from among the cities formerly controlled by the Athenians.⁵⁷ In 371, Autokles says that the Spartans "establish dekarchies here, Boards of Thirty there."⁵⁸ Isokrates remembers with great bitterness from his prime years multiple dekarchies under Spartan rule in which he calls these dekarchies "slaves of a helot," presumably a loose term referring to Lysander's mothax status.⁵⁹ Diodoros states that Lysander in 403 established governments in "all the cities under the Lakedaimonians," dekarchies in some cities and oligarchies in others.⁶⁰ Mass summary executions were utilized to enforce the new rule, as in Miletos.⁶¹ Plutarch states that after Aigospotamoi but before conquering Athens, Lysander "disbanded the democracies and the other constitutional forms of governments and left one Lakedaimonian harmost in each and ten arkhons from the *hetaireiai* bound together under him city by city."⁶² Lysander then returned to Asia, overthrew the constitutions of *all* remaining cities as he had done elsewhere,

⁵² 1000 talents: Diodoros 14.10.2.

⁵³ Cf. Rahe 1977, 106 – 177.

⁵⁴ X. H.2.3.7.

⁵⁵ A huge city like Athens presumably required more personnel than ten to administer it.

⁵⁶ X. H. 3.4.2; cf. D.S. 13.106.7-8

⁵⁷ X. H. 3.5.10.

⁵⁸ X. H. 6.3.7.

⁵⁹ Slaves of a helot: 4.110; 5.95 to Philip; 12.54. Lysander was a Heraklid, presumably on his father's side: perhaps his mother was a helot.

⁶⁰ Diodoros 14.13.1. Perhaps the difference between dekarchies and oligarchies is both numerical and that in the case of oligarchies, Lysander utilized families that had already accumulated power organically rather than as an imposition from above.

⁶¹ Violence: Diodoros 13.5 and Plutarch *Lys.* 8 and 19.3, supporting oligarchy in Miletos; 13.7 narrates Lysander in Iasos, Karia. Both of these occurred shortly before the Battle of Aigospotamoi in 405.

⁶² Plut. *Lys.* 13.3-4: καταλύων δὲ τοὺς δήμους καὶ τὰς ἄλλας πολιτείας, ἓνα μὲν ἀρμοστήν ἐκάστην ἐκάστη Λακεδαιμόνιον κατέλιπε, δέκα δὲ ἄρχοντας ἐκ τῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ συγκεκροταμένων κατὰ πόλιν ἐταιρειῶν.

and set up more dekarchies.⁶³ Only then, in 404, did he take possession of Samos and then Sestos; the latter place he gave to the pilots and boatswains of his fleet: these were likely perioikoi, not Spartiates, as the Spartan fleet, like the Athenian fleet, relied heavily on non-elite individuals. This irritated the authorities back home, as will be discussed shortly.

Lysander's imperial network was run by a system of harmosts or military governors with garrisons. Unlike the dekarchies, many of the harmosts had already been put in place during the Peloponnesian War by persons other than Lysander, and harmosts remained in the cities more than twenty years after Lysander's death. This network of poleis became "a new class of client states."⁶⁴ Some citizens of the "client states" were displeased at this, such as the Theban envoys in 395 on the eve of Haliartos relate to the Athenians:

Those who revolted from you have clearly been deceived. For in place of the freedom (*eleutheria*) that the [Spartans] had promised, they imposed a two-fold slavery (*douleia*) upon them: for they are tyrannized by the harmosts and by the dekarchies which Lysander established in each polis.⁶⁵

The harmost network was quite extensive. Thoukydides uses the term only once, but the governor of Herakleia Trakhinia seems to have been a harmost; and they appear frequently throughout Xenophon's *Hellenika*. Their original function of maintaining security probably segued into protection of the pro-Spartan parties.⁶⁶ The first harmost Xenophon names is Eteonikos, harmost of Thasos, driven out in 410 along with his Thasian supporters (X. H. 1.1.32). In 409, Labotas, named as harmost of Herakleia Trakhinia, died in a battle with Akhaians and Oitaians (X. H. 1.2.18). In 408, Kalkhedon's harmost Hippokrates was killed, despite Pharnabazos' help, fighting Alkibiades and Thrasylllos (X. H. 1.3.5). Byzantion had Klearkhos as harmost in 408, supported by Lakonian Perioikoi, neodamodeis and some Megarians and Boiotians; he escaped to win help from Pharnabazos (X. H. 1.3.15). Abydos had Thorax, a Lakedaimonian, probably a harmost, in 405 (X. H. 2.1.19) and Derkyllidas at an unknown time, probably 407 or 405 (X. H. 3.1.9). Lysander set Sthenelaos as harmost of Kalkhedon and Byzantion both in 405 (X. H. 2.2.2). Kallibios was sent by Lysander to Athens as harmost in 404 at the Thirty's request (X. H. 2.3.14).

In 403, Lysander himself was harmost of Athens (X. H. 2.4.28) and Klearkhos of Byzantion and Selymbria (Diodoros 14.12). In 400, Xenophon's army neared Byzantion which had a harmost capable of effectively advising the "other harmosts" to reject the army from their cities, indicating the strength of the network (*Anabasis* 6.6.13). In 399, Thibron was sent as harmost to "the Ionian cities" against the Persians. He was supported by 1,000 neodamodeis and 4,000 other Peloponnesians: neodamodeis thus represented a heavy 20% of the Peloponnesian force (X. H. 3.1.4). In 397, numerous harmosts in Asia are implied whom the Persians wanted removed (X. H. 3.2.20). In 395, the Theban envoys in Athens, mentioned above, referenced helot harmosts (X. H. 3.5.12).

Referring to the situation around 395, when he was about twenty years of age, Demosthenes remembered harmosts and their garrisons on all the frontiers of Attike, Euboia, Tanagra, all Boiotia, Megara, Aigina, Keos, and "the other islands" (*De Corona* 96). After

⁶³ Plut. *Lys.* 14.1.

⁶⁴ Parke 1930, 50.

⁶⁵ X. H. 3.5.13. The entire speech (3.5.8 – 3.5.15) is quite revealing.

⁶⁶ Parke 1930, 50.

Pharnabazos switched sides, he helped Konon depose “Lakonian harmosts” in 394 “at the islands and the cities on the [Anatolian] coast” and was greeted joyfully (X. H. 4.8.1). Plutarch lists three harmosts in Thebes in 379/8, long after Lysander’s death.⁶⁷ In 371, harmosts were present: the Lakedaimonians withdrew them from “all the other cities” besides Phokis after they agreed to make peace with Athens (X. H. 6.4.2). And Plutarch wrote that Sparta’s allies at this same moment, “although unenthusiastic for war and depressed by it, were not yet brave enough to speak against or disobey the Lakedaimonians” strongly implying that Sparta still had a great deal of influence upon its allies in 371.⁶⁸

From this list it seems reasonable to postulate a minimum of two dozen cities with harmosts: clearly Lysander’s imperial network required a great number of personnel. Even two dozen harmosts with only one hundred Spartiate soldiers each would represent 2,424 Spartiates. If the network had been staffed solely by Spartiates, it would have stretched them very thin if they also served in armies on the Greek mainland, fight in ships, and have any kind of normal life in Lakedaimon as well: only some two thousand Spartiates probably lived in the late fifth and early fourth century.⁶⁹ Thus this web of harmosts and garrisons, assuming as we must that the garrisons had enough soldiers to realistically provide security, cannot have been entirely staffed by Spartiates. There were too many harmosts and garrisons, and too few Spartiates.

The garrisons included non-Spartiates amongst their members: allies (including locals), perioikoi, and neodamodeis. The Theban mention of helot harmosts in 395, presumably meaning mothakes or neodamodeis, indicates very high ranking non-Spartiate military governors.⁷⁰ Isokrates’ *Panegyrikos* references helots in authority positions in the Spartan empire as well.⁷¹ Aside from the garrisons, manning the new Spartan navy required personnel. The perioikoi and helots must have sailed the ships.⁷² Helots were likely used as rowers as slaves were used by many other Greek states for this purpose.⁷³ Additionally, some leadership roles in the navy were fulfilled by perioikoi, including at least one attested as

⁶⁷ Plut. *Pelopidas* 13 and *de genio Socratis*. Cf. Parke 1927.

⁶⁸ Plut. *Agesilaos* 28.3.

⁶⁹ Cartledge 2002, 264; 1987, 38 in which he gives some 2000 Spartiate males. 2,500-3000 in 418, “ca. 3,000 in 404” (Hansen 2009, 394, influenced by the notion that Athens’ Thirty Tyrants took 3,000 as their ideal number of citizens from Sparta; cf. Hodkinson 2005). The troops fighting in 418 may be considerably higher than the situation twenty years later: in 413 occurred another earthquake which caused the Spartans to halve the number of ships they had intended to send out (Thouk. 8.6): population loss from this quake may have occurred.

⁷⁰ X. H. 3.5.12.

⁷¹ Isokrates 4.111.

⁷² X. H. 7.1.12. Myron of Priene (*FGH* 106 F1) in the third century mentioned a category of freed helots called the *desposionautai* (“shipmasters”), but the increased use of helots at this period suggests an origin for this group earlier than the third century.

⁷³ Hunt 2007, 139.

commander of a fleet.⁷⁴ Non-Spartiates were an important component of the Lakedaimonian army. This cannot have failed to be quite apparent, particularly to the neodamodeis, perioikoi, and other marginals such as mothakes and hypomeiones themselves.⁷⁵

The architect of this imperial system must have recognized that, if Sparta were to seize the opportunity to fill the power vacuum after the Athenian Empire's collapse and more importantly to continue to administer the Aegean as a Persian-friendly imperial power there, the paucity of Spartiates dictated that Lakedaimon's marginal classes needed to be utilized and promoted to staff Sparta's new empire. Conceivably, the argument could be made that Lysander's comprehension of the problem of oliganthropia at Sparta would have been insufficient for us to fairly state that his policies were intended to address the problem. For it has been argued that historical individuals without advanced demographic information cannot make informed policy decisions.⁷⁶

Yet demographic movements as extreme as the Spartiate population crisis were indeed evidently noticed by persons present at the time, or else Aristotle would not have discussed *oliganthropia* as a problem among the Spartiates.⁷⁷ Reproductive strategies of animals change over time unwittingly either in response to new environmental conditions or to gain a competitive advantage simply by the fact that the normal variation of behaviors in a given generation will represent individual behavioral forms that have differing effects in terms of reproductive competition. Given the advanced ability to observe and reason that humans possess, it is unsurprising that sometimes human strategies can be changed in avoidance of, and response to, dangerous or undesirable events and processes.⁷⁸ Lysander, then, almost certainly saw that Spartiate numbers had been higher in previous generations and did not

⁷⁴ In 413/2, Phrynias, a perioikos, was sent out on a ship to investigate whether or not the Khians have a sizable fleet (Thouk. 8.6.4). In 412, Deiniadas, whom Thoukydides calls a perioikos, unambiguously commanded an entire Spartan fleet (Thouk. 8.22). A perioikos may be attested in Lysander's victory monument at Delphi (ML 95). The Lakonian recipient of a Theban proxeny decree depicting a ship may have been a perioikos (Mackil 2008).

⁷⁵ Cawkwell 1983 discusses these important posts and their non-Spartiate holders, but attributes the lack of more common helot revolts to this safety-valve, rather than treating equally seriously the frequent, efficient, violent repression that certainly scared the helots into submission.

⁷⁶ Scheidel has written, "Serious appraisals of changes in overall fertility must have been well beyond the reach even of well-placed ancient observers: even fairly modest trends would have had implausibly strong repercussions, while absolutely minute and therefore less incredible changes would necessarily have remained invisible." (Scheidel 2001, 41.)

⁷⁷ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a 15-34, 1271b26-37, 1297b26, 3.1278a32. In fact, seemingly reasonably accurate demographic observation is not uncommon at least among the more brilliant of the ancient Greek world. Thucydides 1.11 on Hellene numbers during the Trojan War, 3.93.2 on Herakleia Trakhinia; Aristotle *Ath. Pol.* 26 *fin*; *Pol.* 1270a33. Preus 1975 has more references, particularly from Plato and Aristotle.

⁷⁸ Mechanisms modeled convincingly in Richerson and Boyd 2005; cf. Clark 2005, 217 – 218.

seem to be on a path to recovery: an active imperial role for Sparta in Greece and the Aegean demanded not just the use of non-Spartiates in Lakedaimon, but their promotion to positions of importance.

The Spartans had previously displayed some awareness of the need to give opportunities to the discontented lest they cause trouble.⁷⁹ This awareness had never been sufficient either to ameliorate the conditions of their unhappy subjects nor to replenish the diminishing numbers of Spartiates. Accordingly, Lysander's aims likely included the satisfaction of the ambitions of the pool of persons not born Spartiates who would have been dangerously discontented at not possessing first-class citizenship. This group was now huge while the Spartiates were shrinking.⁸⁰ Its restlessness can be imagined, now that the door had been opened, the precedent set, and the need for bodies made obvious by extreme actions such as the state's helot enfranchisements in 424. This pool would continue to grow in proportion to the Spartiates as long as Spartiate reproductive practices remained conducive to sub-replacement fertility, as long as Spartiate patriarchy remained in its unsustainable state. Lysander had probably lived through what Aristotle described as the failed efforts to increase population by incentivizing reproduction, and seen the failure himself, and thus doubted the Spartan government's ability to stimulate birthrates quickly enough for effective population recovery.⁸¹ That Lysander himself belonged to one of these marginal classes may have had something to do with his toleration or promotion of their advancement.

Lysander's reconstructible motives fit neither an egalitarian nor an aristocratic interpretation. Some seem, at first glance, to fit the former. His program required the use of marginal groups at Sparta: this required widening the power base at Sparta and enfranchisement or promotion of individuals outside the Spartiate caste. But Lysander hardly presented himself as a man of the *demos*. He encouraged divine honors paid to himself by keeping a court poet, Khoirilos, to sing his praises.⁸² He controlled the Aegean through his cleverly-placed local cliques and installed dekarchies drawing on men from these hetaireiai: even if these men were not the landed aristocrats typical of Spartan *xeniai*, oligarchy comports poorly with democracy.⁸³ He closely befriended eminent Persians, wealthy oligarchs and scions of monarchs. He reinforced the importance of lineage and *genos* by claiming descent from Herakles, presumably on his father's side, and by making an issue of the alleged bastardy of the prince Leotykrides: he claimed that an old prophecy predicting ruin if a lame king should rule Sparta actually warned against not his limping former *eromenos* Agesilaos but against the supposedly dysgenic birth of the allegedly half-Athenian Leotykrides.⁸⁴

Contrariwise, his anti-aristocratic traits seem better to harmonize with democratic ideology. He is described as poor.⁸⁵ In his appointment of *harmosts* or governors he is said to

⁷⁹ Thouk. 4.80.2.

⁸⁰ X. H. 3.3.5.

⁸¹ Aristotle *Pol.* 1270b4-5.

⁸² Plut. *Lys.* 18.

⁸³ Plut. *Lys.* 13.3, 19, 21.1.

⁸⁴ Herakles: Plut. *Lys.* 24.4. Leotykrides: Plut. *Lys.* 22. Leotykrides' father, allegedly, was Alkibiades.

⁸⁵ Plut. *Lys.* 2 (his upbringing) and 30 (his adulthood).

have disregarded birth or wealth.⁸⁶ Friendliness to Persians has been characterized as an aristocratic form of friendliness, but people of varying wealth and varying strains of democratic sentiment befriended Persians and sought their financial help. And Lysander backed a radical widening of the method of selecting kingship: namely, that it should be an elected office, not monopolized by the royal Eurypontid and Agiad families but either open to all persons of Heraklid *genos* or else, more radically, to the best citizens of Sparta, judged perhaps by service to the state.⁸⁷ This may only have been a rumor planted for purposes of posthumous defamation. However, it fits his harmost-appointments and his seemingly non-aristocratic background; and it very much fits his grand plan.

These contrasting actions and ideas can be reconciled. His personal ambition could conceivably be thought of as his true motive: in the first century BC, Cornelius Nepos characterized him as *semper factiosus audaxque*.⁸⁸ This is undeniable, but a larger motive exists. Aside from ambition, and far from any principled commitment to a democratic or egalitarian meritocracy, his aims must reflect his perception of the fact that in his lifetime there was no longer a large enough pool of well-born and wealthy Spartiates to select responsible men as soldiers, sailors, navarchs, harmosts and even kings even for a small, local Spartan state confined to the Peloponnesos, and that the old Spartan ways of doing things even more inadequate to the necessities of the new world of “international” ties, non-citizen armies, and the importance of money.⁸⁹ The old Spartiate modes of behavior worked well in the previous, insular world but were crippling, restrictive, and unsuccessful in this one. Lysander’s personality differed markedly from the typically Spartan.⁹⁰ “Anyone less mindlessly obedient, stolid, or content to be a cog in the state machinery would be difficult to find.”⁹¹ Plutarch says that Lysander did not give the Greeks an example of rule by normal Spartans.⁹²

Xenophon reduced the conflict between Lysander’s war aims and the Spartan King Pausanias’ upon the victory over Athens in 403 to personal issues, saying that Pausanias

⁸⁶ Plut. *Lys.* 13.4. as X.H.3.5.12 seems to indicate. Cartledge 1987, 93 does not think helots were appointed as harmosts but certainly formed some of their overseas staff.

⁸⁷ Aristotle *Pol.* 1301b20; Diodoros 14.13.2, 14.13.8; Plut. *Moralia* 212 C-D (*Apophthegmata Lakonika* 52) *Lys.* 26.5, and 30, the latter attributed to the fourth-century writer Ephoros. In Plutarch *Agesilaos* 8.3, Lysander wishes to “take the kingship from the two houses and put it in the *meson* for all Spartiates”; Plutarch does not assert here that Lysander only intended it for himself. Plut. *Comparison Lys. Sull.* 2.2 draws out the democratic implications of the proposed reform. The story is also in Cornelius Nepos *Lys.* 3.1. Cf. D. R. Shipley 1997, 139. Cf. Bommelaer 1981, 180

⁸⁸ Nepos *Lys.* 1.3.

⁸⁹ Clearly the term “international” is anachronistic: I use it here only as shorthand for “not only inter-polis but dealing with entirely different societies and empires such as Karthaginians, Persians, and other groups too numerous and now too well-known for the simple earlier contrast between Greek and *barbaros*.”

⁹⁰ Stated clearly in Plut. *Lys.* 8.4.

⁹¹ Kennell 2010, 125.

⁹² Plut. *Lys.* 13.4.

envied Lysander's growing, almost omnipotent power and worried about his desire to "make Athens his own."⁹³ Limiting this conflict to interpersonal rivalry does not, however, explain much: the conflict more plausibly manifested a contemporary clash of ideals between traditional Spartiate ethos, represented by Pausanias and three ephors, versus Lysander's much wider ambition that was alien to Spartan isolationism, reluctance to extend its rule, dislike of Persia, and genteel soldiery. The majority of ephors and King Pausanias found Lysander's plan too radical. The geographer Pausanias tells us important things about this clash of ideals: he says that King Pausanias was brought to trial in Sparta after his actions in Athens: while fourteen members of the gerousia as well as King Agis found Pausanias guilty, all of the ephors plus the rest of the gerousia did not. A portion of the Spartans did not favor the active Lysandrean imperialism, at least when it came to Athens. There is an actual conflict here.⁹⁴

To Lysander, Athens was but part of an imperial network. The plan behind this network featured elements as far-seeing as (if Karwiese is correct) the issuing, after Athens' collapse in 404, of coinage that fit both into the Persian standard as well as many Greek standards in Asia Minor from Byzantion, Kyzikos, Lampsakos, Ephesos, Samos, Iasos, Knidos, and Rhodes: namely the so-called *Herakliskos drakonopnigon* issues showing young Herakles symbolizing the Heraklid Lysander strangling a snake, symbolizing Kekrops and thus Athens.⁹⁵ Lysander no doubt saw Pausanias as too old-fashioned and limited to envision this empire.⁹⁶

Lysander favored the Thirty whereas Pausanias, whose enmity toward the democrats at the Peiraieus was only feigned, favored reconciliation and the usual Spartan preference for subordinate states, namely a moderate aristocracy.⁹⁷ Nor was this limited to Pausanias: the ephors and assembly at Sparta also supported reconciliation.⁹⁸ Both in 404 and in 403 then, the Lakedaimonians refused to enslave and/or kill the population in Athens, who feared both these outcomes.⁹⁹ It has been argued that the Spartans kept Athens intact both in 404 and in 403 in order to act as a counterweight against Thebes; however, this argument has been demolished.¹⁰⁰ It is the conservative Spartiates and Pausanias who demanded the

⁹³ X. H. 2.4.29.

⁹⁴ Paus. 3.5.2. Smith 1948; Oliva 1972, 182-3.

⁹⁵ Karwiese 1980.

⁹⁶ Bommelaer 223.

⁹⁷ Feigned: X. H. 2.4.31, 2.4.35. Reconciliation: X. H. 2.4.35. If Xenophon had reason to misrepresent the King's preference for a moderate aristocracy, the reason is unclear.

⁹⁸ X. H. 2.4.38.

⁹⁹ X. H. 2.2.3, 2.2.10, 2.2.14 (the last has them afraid to be *andrapodisthesesthai*, normally meaning the women and children enslaved and the men slaughtered). Cf. Powell 2006. In Paus. 3.8.6, it is after Aigospotamoi that Lysander and Agis discuss "cutting Athens out by the roots" (Powell 2006, 290).

¹⁰⁰ Powell 2006, 294f, referencing Cartledge 1987, 275 – 280; Kagan 1987, 405 – 406.

Powell attributes Sparta's refusal to conduct an *andrapodismos* or at least a de-synoikization of Athens in 404 or 403 to the Athenian tradition of *lakonophilia* which

reconciliation between parties at Athens, not the Athenians who came up with the idea; in Xenophon's Greek, the Spartans may even be the ones who set the terms of the reconciliation. This incident tells us very clearly that a powerful faction at Sparta still had little taste for the extremes of Lysandrian imperialism and wanted things to return more or less to the status quo before Athens had attained great power, a status quo in which other Greek states looked to Sparta as a hegemon, either directly in the case of the Peloponnesian League or just through deference in the case of everyone else. The remaining traditional Spartans, apparently still powerful in 403, wanted Sparta to remain a "status quo state," not a "revisionist" state.

Their pleasure over defeating Athens, decisively coupled with Sparta's adherence to path-dependent, conservative Spartan tradition, still in 403 BC blinded Sparta to permanent changes in their own society and the need to address these through policy. They could not see, were in denial about, or were unwilling or felt powerless to address the inevitable population trends as Lysander could. Lysander, on the other hand, probably benefitted from a somewhat distanced perspective, *in* Spartiate society but not completely *of* it. It is clear that Lysander's plan was the direct control of poleis through dekarchies and harmosts with Spartan garrisons. Lysander's willingness to accept divine honors, his para-Brasidean and indeed proto-Alexandrine ambitions,¹⁰¹ and his initial non-citizenship allowed him a measure of independence and immunity to some of the hidebound and path-dependent elements of Spartiate social ideology. His high connections made up for the deficiencies accrued by mothax birth, and we may assume that his mothax status permitted a distanced perspective, but a perspective not as encumbered by the resentment against the Spartiates borne from oppression as would be likely for the helots and neodamodeis. As mentioned earlier, despite originating from what seems to have been a sub-citizen status, he was able to become *erastes* of the future Spartiate king Agesilaos as well as a friend of high-ranking Persians. Spartiate arrogance did not prevent him from the flattery necessary to befriend Kyros. He even befriended the Libyan king.¹⁰² His friendship with Kyros the Younger surely fit in with his vision of the future. Kyros' financial backing could only help him realize a Spartan hegemony. The battle of Notion in 406 solidified his reputation. His complete destruction of the Athenian fleet at Aigospotamoi and his acquisition of divine honors at Samos increased it further, as did his victory over Athens in 404.

That the ephors issued orders to dismantle the dekarchies, or many of them, and to restore the cities' ancestral constitutions verifies state opposition to active overseas imperialism.¹⁰³ A non-mutually exclusive, but probably incomplete, explanation involving a rather typical Plutarchean (and Herodotean) interpersonal rivalry has the Spartans in Lakadaimon oppose Lysander's plans out of displeasure at his cronyism and jealousy at his

flattered Sparta. This works with my views of a certain mutual Greek *philia* between the two, and with general considerations of relatedness.

¹⁰¹ Plutarch claims Lysander wished to conquer Persia. *Lys.* 23.

¹⁰² Lysander's brother's name (Libys) attests to a family connection.

¹⁰³ Hellenika 3.4.2, a temporally ambiguous passage. Two ephors in 403 disliked the idea of Sparta keeping control over Athens and sided with King Pausanias against Lysander: X. *H.* 2.4.36.

success.¹⁰⁴ Again, the will of the Spartan state for imperial rule was hindered by Spartan *nomoi*, in this case the custom of intense competition. The date of the order to abolish the *dekarchies* would tell us more about Spartan opposition to Lysander's regime: unfortunately, it is uncertain. One good candidate is 397: in 398, Spartan officials had come to visit the Spartiate commander Derkyllidas to see how matters were in Asia, and Derkyllidas was "delighted" to see them going off between Lampsakos and Ephesos where the Greek cities under Spartan sway were "in peace and prosperity," presumably under successful *dekarchies*, but in 397 we learn that Derkyllidas agreed with Tissaphernes and Pharnabazos to withdraw Spartan armies from Asia and harmosts from the Greek cities if the King should leave Greek cities independent.¹⁰⁵ This seems a fine time to assume the dismantling of both the harmosts and *dekarchies*; however, the treaty was never finalized, and a withdrawal of the harmosts without ratification might represent an uncharacteristically unilateral action by Sparta.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless in 396 the cities were stirred up, their governments in confusion, "for it was no longer democracy, as in the time of Athenian rule, nor *dekarchy*, as under Lysander."¹⁰⁷ Evidently, a withdrawal did in fact occur, again suggesting, even as late as this, some last tendrils of opposition to imperial rule.

Lysander's revival of his imperial ambitions in 396 tells much about his perception of the demographic situation. He desired to invade the Persian Empire, and in the process of this, to restore the net of *dekarchies* that the ephors had recently abolished.¹⁰⁸ He requested 6000 allies, 2000 *neodamodeis*, and ... 30 Spartiates. Thirty represents 1.5% of the *neodamodeis*; it represents a mere 0.4% of the total force. The requested constitution of this force illustrates vividly the links between Spartiate oliganthropia, Lysander's appreciation of it, and his vision for a Spartan empire. His ambition, increased by the divine honors received on Samos and evidenced by the statues he dedicated at Delphi is clear.¹⁰⁹ While conclusive proof of how closely his plans were driven by a direct apprehension of the demographic change is not available, a glance around the Spartan agora in the year of Kinadon's conspiracy would have told an observer all he needed to know.

The War to Free the Anatolian Greeks

The fourth century begins with something that looks very much like the Spartan administration responding to a request for help by ordering a panhellenic force against the Persian empire to force the autonomy of the Anatolian Greeks.¹¹⁰ While this is not the first

¹⁰⁴ Plut. *Lys.* 14.2, 19.1. More jealousy against Lysander: e.g. Plut. *Mor.* 805F (Agesilaos).

¹⁰⁵ "Peace and prosperity": X. *H.* 3.2.9. Withdrawal: X. *H.* 3.2.19-20; cf. 3.4.2 *fin.*

¹⁰⁶ Andrewes 1971, 207.

¹⁰⁷ X. *H.* 3.4.7.

¹⁰⁸ X. *H.* 3.4.2; Plut. *Lys.* 23.

¹⁰⁹ *contra* Welwei, Brill's New Pauly Online, *sub* Lysander: "High-flying imperial plans can hardly be derived from Xenophon (3.4.2)."

¹¹⁰ Request for assistance: X. *H.* 3.1.3. On panhellenism in this period, Cawkwell 1976 is indispensable as is Perlman 1976. That Cawkwell himself calls panhellenism "sentimental folly" twice, on 65 and 66, does not invalidate his arguments. For a biological basis for a

time such a thing was envisioned, and while it is never possible to separate strands of imperialist self-interest from such a complex expedition requiring the consent of many individuals of various motives, the fact that a real attempt was made has not attracted sufficient attention for its rather altruistic as well as panhellenic dimensions.¹¹¹ The expedition of 401 narrated in Xenophon's *Anabasis* had proved to Greece that the Persian Empire was not impenetrable; the allure of defeating Persia and gaining the honor of being able to say that they helped persons requesting assistance, combined with the euphoria at winning the Peloponnesian War and the presence of a visibly ready supply of neodamodeis, perioikoi, and other non-Spartiates, evidently overcame Spartan reluctance to campaign overseas.¹¹² Sparta sent Thibron in winter 400/399 to campaign against Persia, and then Derkyllidas who attempted a truce in 397 stipulating that the king should allow the Hellenic cities to be *autonomoi*.¹¹³ Tissaphernes and Pharnabazos requested that "the Hellenic army should go away from the land and the harmosts of the Lakedaimonians should leave the cities."¹¹⁴ A temporary truce was concluded so that these proposals could be brought to Sparta and to the Great King. Derkyllidas' action could support the existence of the "Treaty of Boiotios" conjectured earlier; it certainly attests to the apparently supreme importance of the objective in Spartan foreign policy of keeping the Anatolian Greek poleis free.

Fortunately for such grand ambitions as war against Persia, the reign of the popularly-chosen Eurypontid King Agesilaos of Sparta had commenced in 400, an intimate of Lysander far more open to farther-flung commitments than his immediate predecessor. His accession was fraught, and that Xenophon wrote that Agesilaos was chosen by "the polis" rather than "the ephors" or "the gerousia" indicates that Agesilaos became king based upon his appeal to large groups of people at Sparta.¹¹⁵ This theme will become more prominent throughout the rest of this chapter. In 396, Lysander persuaded Agesilaos to invade Asia, a highly "panhellenist" campaign.¹¹⁶ The sober Oxyrhynchos Historian even refers to Agesilaos'

wider concentric circle of affinity than the more immediate tribe, the application of Salter 2007, 37 – 57 to panhellenism is a desideratum.

¹¹¹ According to Herodotos, Aristagoras, tyrant of Miletos, called on Sparta a century earlier in 499 to invade Persia in order to rescue the Ionians from "slavery" on the basis of blood-kinship: Hdt. 5.49.3. (A somewhat similar appeal from the Skythians, though not as ambitious, appears at Hdt. 6.84.2.)

¹¹² Xenophon has Tissaphernes soberly realize this at *H.* 3.2.18 and Lysander at *H.* 3.3.2.

¹¹³ *X. H.* 3.2.19.

¹¹⁴ *X. H.* 3.2.20. D.S. 14.39.6.

¹¹⁵ *X. H.* 3.3.1 – 3.

¹¹⁶ Cartledge 1987, 150. Cf. *X. Agesilaos* 7.4 calling Agesilaos a philhellene. Isokrates *Epistle* 7.11 is called "worthless" by de Ste. Croix (1972, 162 fn. 192). Regardless of its encomiastic qualities, it is precisely *not* worthless, because it gives an independent testimony outside of Xenophon that Agesilaos was at least regarded by some as possessing panhellenist ideals. De Ste. Croix's thesis statement is plainly given on 161: "Sparta ... had nothing good to offer the Greek states." This is expected from de Ste. Croix's known ideological perspective, which would presumably hold that the Spartan ideal of cities ruled by an oligarchy of aristocrats would indeed be detrimental to the weal of the commons.

troops as “the Hellenes.” This implies strongly that this expedition was, or was considered, panhellenic rather than narrowly Spartan.¹¹⁷ This massive war effort suffered no opposition in Sparta of which we have knowledge.¹¹⁸

Agesilaos’ panhellenism indicated a measure of loyalty to his group, construed as the Greeks, above other groups.¹¹⁹ But it was neither much of a “humanist” ideal, nor a democratic one. On the other hand, it is also not right to assume that no ideal but the pursuit of power lay behind his invasion. One key to his panhellenism appears in a telling anecdote preserved by Plutarch, that Agesilaos wished “to put a stop to the King’s leisure and his corruption of the demagogues of the Hellenes.”¹²⁰ The Persian King was no democrat, but his monetary support of democrats and democratizers in the Greek-speaking lands rankled Agesilaos whose ideal was the Greek state controlled by a land-owning elite (preferably friendly and/or deferential to the Spartans) following nominal ancestral customs that had been in place in the aristocratic era that predated the spread of democracies. The Persian interference in this ideal was what Agesilaos wished to break. This, it seems, would be his goal in invading Persia. It was useful that a ready army, primarily composed of non-Spartiates, existed to assist him, and that apparently the naysayers at Sparta were now sinking to an insufficient number. A sacrifice at Aulis imitating Agamemnon certainly suggests the effort to represent his expedition as panhellenist and opposing the barbarians of Anatolia. He took his army across the Aegean to Ephesos in 396, and announced to Tissaphernes that he had come “in order that the cities in Asia might be autonomous, just as they are in our part of Hellas.”¹²¹ Tissaphernes, after assembling an army, demanded that Agesilaos leave Anatolia.¹²²

Agesilaos’ plan in Asia was flexible to fit changing circumstances, and seems to have evolved into splintering provinces from the King rather than taking over the empire whole. His matchmaking with the Paphlagonian king Otys’ daughter and friendship with the Persian nobleman Sphiridates portended well if his plan had evolved to include breaking off portions of the Persian King’s empire and encouraging revolt and fragmentation – a far more feasible plan than attempting to take over the Empire as a whole.¹²³ He advised Pharnabazos to revolt against the King by “conquering those who are your fellow slaves (*homodouloi*) and making them your subjects” and this also supports this goal of breaking the Persian Empire into pieces.¹²⁴ His seizure of spoils at Sardis shows another form of flexibility, namely the

¹¹⁷ Thomas xxxviii-xxxix in Strassler’s Landmark edition of *X. H.* (2009).

¹¹⁸ Cawkwell 1976, 66.

¹¹⁹ Rushton’s “genetic similarity theory” (Rushton 1998) proposes biological bases for this sort of loyalty but see Silverman and Case 1998 for a different view.

¹²⁰ Plut. *Apophthegmata Lakonika* 38/ *Moralia* 211.

¹²¹ *X. H.* 3.4.6. Cf. *X. Agesilaos* 2.29: at 80 years of age, Xenophon says, Agesilaos undertook to set free the Greeks in Anatolia.

¹²² *X. Agesilaos* 1.10 – 13. Plut. *Agesilaos* 9.1. An excellent narrative occurs in Briant 2002, 637,

¹²³ *X. H.* 4.1.1 – 26.

¹²⁴ *X. H.* 4.1.36.

development of a realization that money, not Spartiate martial prowess, would decide conflicts in the new world of mercenaries.¹²⁵

Tithraustes, Tissaphernes' replacement, told Agesilaos that if withdrew his forces from Anatolia, the King would make the poleis in Asia *autonomoi*, although paying "the ancient tribute."¹²⁶ Agesilaos' reply, that the authorities in Sparta needed to review this offer, suggests that the fate of the Anatolian Greeks was an actual consideration at Sparta, not that their plight was only an excuse to go to war.¹²⁷ Sparta's bestowal upon Agesilaos of the right to appoint a navarch supports this.¹²⁸ Agesilaos then marched directly inland in order to "deprive the King of all those nations he would leave behind him as he advanced on his way toward the King."¹²⁹ Vengeance against the Persians for attacking Greece a century before partially motivates him, a consistent theme in fourth-century panhellenic writing.¹³⁰ Plutarch says that Agesilaos decided to campaign more deeply than the coastal areas and campaign against the King himself and to fight for the wealth of Sousa and Ekbatana and to take away Artaxerxes' ability to sit as referee over Hellenic wars by bribing Hellene leaders.¹³¹ If we can trust that Agesilaos indeed intended these, we can guess that at this point he realized that minor battles with western satraps would not achieve his goal of freeing the Anatolian Greeks. These efforts were largely successful if Xenophon is correct or nearly correct that "all" the ethne of the Persian empire began sending him embassies seeking friendship, that many Greeks and *barbaroi* revolted to him.¹³² There is little reason for us to dismiss Xenophon's account.

This promising expedition was withdrawn by Spartan authorities when they realized that Persia was funding Athenians, Thebans, Corinthians, and Argives to war against Sparta. They recalled Agesilaos; he promised his allies in Asia Minor that he would one day return to finish his task.¹³³ Battles at the Nemea River and at Narthakion in Thessaly were fought, then Koroneia.¹³⁴ On August 14, 394, news arrived that at Knidos, the Spartan navy was defeated by combined Athenian and Persian forces under Konon and Pharnabazos: they expelled harmosts in the coastal cities and islands but they left the cities *autonomoi*, perhaps as a ploy:

¹²⁵ Briant 2002, 638.

¹²⁶ X. H. 3.4.25.

¹²⁷ X. H. 3.4.20 – 25, D.S. 14.80.8, Plut. *Agesilaos* 10.6-8.

¹²⁸ X. *Ages.* 36. Cawkwell 1976, 67.

¹²⁹ X. H. 4.1.41.

¹³⁰ X. *Ages.* 36: ἐπινοῶν καὶ ἐλπίζων καταλύσειν τὴν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα στρατεύσασαν πρότερον ἀρχήν.

¹³¹ X. H. 4.1.41. X. *Ages.* 36: *Hell. Oxy.* 22.4 Bartoletti, giving an immense southward march; Plut. *Agesilaos* 15.1. Cf. Diodoros 15.31.3. References noted in Cawkwell 1976, 67.

¹³² X. *Ages.* 35.

¹³³ X. H. 4.2.3; cf. 4.3.3.

¹³⁴ Narthakion: X. H. 4.3.3 – 4.3.9. X. H. 4.3.16. Koroneia: X. H. 4.3.16-21, *Agesilaos* 2.9-16, Diodoros 14.84.1-2, Nepos *Agesilaos* 4.5, Frontinus 2.6.6. Pritchett 1969, 85 – 95.

the issue of tribute to Persia or anyone else was not brought up now.¹³⁵ Athens and Pharnabazos next persuaded Kos, Nisyros, Teos, Khios, Mitylene, Ephesos, and Erythrai to secede from Spartan sway, most “expelling Lakedaimonian garrisons and maintaining their freedom” (*eleutheria*).¹³⁶ Yet Abydos, under Derkyllidas as harmost, remained loyal to Sparta even after the destruction of the Lakedaimonian fleet, and its citizens enthusiastically admitted the harmosts expelled from the other cities by Konon and Pharnabazos’ fleet.¹³⁷ The Spartans’ Aegean rule was for the present destroyed.¹³⁸

Antalkidas

The worsening situation on the Greek mainland contributed to push Sparta toward Persian help. In spring 393, Konon and Pharnabazos left Anatolia and the islands to raid Lakonia’s coast, occupying its perioikic island of Kythera and financing the rebuilding of Athens’ walls, acts destructive both physically and symbolically to Sparta’s standing.¹³⁹ In 392 at Korinth occurred a slaughter of pro-Lakedaimonians (Xenophon merely calls those massacred an aristocratic pro-peace party), and an innovative mutual citizenship arrangement was effected between Korinth and Argos, weakening Sparta’s Peloponnesian hold tremendously. Persians represented the only assistance available at this point: the Lakedaimonians decided to ask assistance from Tiribazos, satrap of Western Armenia, whom they knew from the Kyros expedition of 401, and who probably had succeeded Tithraustes as satrap over western Anatolia. They thought that he would either end the Persian subsidies to Konon’s fleet, or else assist the Lakedaimonians directly.¹⁴⁰ The Athenians also sent ambassadors east, and invited their allies to do the same.

At Tiribazos’ court, the Spartiate Antalkidas offered that Sparta would put no claim against the King on the Greek poleis in Anatolia if the King made the other islands and the rest of the Greek poleis *autonomoi*.¹⁴¹ Antalkidas said that the fact that he was charged by Spartan authorities to offer these terms meant that the King had no reason to war against Sparta, and that Athens would not be able to war against the King either, for without Sparta’s help and without the coerced assistance of other Greek cities, this would be impossible.¹⁴² Athens’s opposition to an enforced autonomization of Imbros, Skyros, and Lemnos, their stepping-stones to their grain on the Black Sea shores, and Thebes’ to that of the Boiotian cities, and Argos to that of Korinth nullified the agreement. But Antalkidas’ offer

¹³⁵ The date is known from a solar eclipse. Knidos: Diodoros 14.83.4 – 14.83.7, X. H. 4.8.1. *Autonomia* as ploy: implied in X. H. 4.8.2-3.

¹³⁶ Diodoros 14.84.3.

¹³⁷ X. H. 4.8.4-5.

¹³⁸ Diodoros 14.84.4.

¹³⁹ X. H. 4.8.7-12.

¹⁴⁰ X. H. 4.8.12.

¹⁴¹ X. H. 4.8.14: τῶν τε γὰρ ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ Ἑλλενίδων πόλεων Λακεδαιμονίου Βασιλεῖ οὐκ ἀντιποιεῖσθαι, τὰς τε νήσους ἀπάσας καὶ τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις ἀρκεῖν σφίσιν αὐτονόμους εἶναι.

¹⁴² X. H. 4.8.14.

itself is highly significant. Xenophon clearly states that the Lakedaimonians “sent” Antalkidas with this offer.¹⁴³

This is a major turning point in Spartan foreign relations. Much evidence has shown us past Spartan interest in maintaining the freedom of, and resistance to a betrayal of, the Anatolian Greeks.¹⁴⁴ One reason why the betrayal happened now is not hard to guess: after Knidos, the Lakedaimonians had lost control of the sea and, despite some successes by Agesilaos in the vicinity of Argos and Korinth, were being sapped by the alliance of Athens, Thebes, Korinth and Argos in the Korinthian War.¹⁴⁵ A charitable interpretation is that this offer was a ploy, like Likhas’ advice to the Milesians: thus the Anatolian Greeks would be expected to be subjects *ta metria*, to a reasonable extent, only until Sparta was in a position to free them, and Agesilaos’ parting words to the Greeks of Asia come to mind. However, unlike the case with Likhas and the Milesians, Sparta was now not in much of a position to free anyone: its fleet no longer had free run of the Aegean, and its most capable general, who was also one of its two kings, was back in mainland Greece defending Sparta from attacks by a coalition of the biggest states in the area. This is a very different situation than the one that had prevailed when Likhas had used the term “reasonable submission” at Miletos. Little can support a claim that the offer was not serious and, according to our sources, backed by the Spartan government.

However, the explanation that the offer monocausally stemmed from poor Lakedaimonian war-fortunes is difficult to accept. In 391 Tiribazos went to the King to discuss the Lakedaimonians’ terms. He apparently did not convince him, and the King instead sent the pro-Athenian Strouthas to oversee Persian affairs on the coastal cities. But despite the Lakedaimonians supposedly losing their power over the Aegean, they were able to send Thibron to Anatolia where he conducted raids using Ephesus and three other cities on the Maiander plain as bases. After Strouthas attacked and killed Thibron and many of his soldiers, Diphradas was sent to replace Thibron and to maintain control over the pro-Spartan cities on the coast. He gathered sufficient money to hire mercenaries, a somewhat innovative tactic for a Spartiate. In 391 Rhodes, surely a powerful and important center in the coming years, went over to Sparta after expelling the pro-Athenian party: Samos and Knidos were also secured for Sparta in that same year, and twenty-seven triremes were fitted out lavishly.¹⁴⁶ The great Athenian general Thrasyboulos died. The Spartiate Anaxibios was sent to govern Abydos and given three triremes and money to hire a thousand mercenaries to help Sparta regain Hellespont, although he came to a poor end.

Sparta performed even more successfully in land warfare in the period immediately preceding the Peace. In 390, Agesilaos laid waste a great area between Korinth and Argos, and continued the Isthmian Games when the Argives, who had been celebrating them, fled at his advance. He captured the temple of Hera, including many spoils, near Peiraion. The Lakedaimonians still were able to hold on to Lekhaion despite a setback.¹⁴⁷ Agesilaos

¹⁴³ πέμπουσιν, X. H. 4.8.12.

¹⁴⁴ e.g. X. H. 3.2.19-20 (Derkyllidas), etc.

¹⁴⁵ X. H. 4.4.12 – 4.5.6.

¹⁴⁶ D. S. 14.97.1-4.

¹⁴⁷ X. H. 4.5.11 – 19. D.S. 14.97.5.

campaign in 389 north of the Isthmus in Akarnania on behalf of the Akhaians so successfully that they sued for peace in the following year.¹⁴⁸ 388 also saw Agesilaos' young royal colleague of the Agiad house Agesipolis lead his first campaign, a successful one against the Argives.¹⁴⁹ The Spartans do not seem to have been in poor enough shape to be helpless.¹⁵⁰

Andokides and the Peace Conference at Sparta

Nor did their contemporaries see them as helpless, as we learn from another conference which occurred at Sparta itself for which Andokides was Athenian ambassador plenipotentiary.¹⁵¹ The surviving speech urges the Athenians to accept the conference's provisions. Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros were to explicitly remain Athenian property; Boiotia offered Orkhomenos *autonomia*. Andokides urged the Athenians to not attempt reacquisition of the Khersonese, their *apoikiai*, and their other possessions abroad, as this would acquire Persian assistance, and the strings attached to that assistance would be unknown and potentially dangerous. Sparta, "in spite of all she has suffered at our hands, is conceding the same things as our allies are, and grants us our walls, our ships, and our islands."¹⁵² Korinth and Argos received no mentioned benefits, and Andokides was dubious about the value of defending Argos if Sparta were to attack it.¹⁵³ The Anatolian Greeks went altogether unmentioned in any way. Forty days were allowed for consideration of the peace.

Andokides said that the proposed peace would leave Sparta master of neither land nor sea, and the whole of Greece would be independent because of this, yet Sparta, he stated, was still very formidable, for it had won the battles of Nemea and Koroneia (394) and Lekhaion (390): Andokides considered the last battle a success for Sparta in contrast to Xenophon's grim narrative of it.¹⁵⁴ Despite these successes, he stated, the victors were willing to a peace whose terms left them only their own land. The proposed peace stipulated that Sparta recognize the other Greek cities as *autonomoi* and allow their defeated opponents freedom of the seas. That an official ambassador with plenipotentiary powers after the battle of Knidos and the subsequent banishment of harmosts from much of the Aegean, would phrase the situation this way is striking: Sparta apparently still possessed the power to bestow or withhold freedom of the seas.

The Peace of Antalkidas

In 387 the Spartiate navarch Antalkidas engineered an alliance with Tiribazos, now Persian satrap of Sardis. Probably spurred by a desire to have peace in the Aegean in order to

¹⁴⁸ X. H. 4.6.1 – 14.

¹⁴⁹ X. H. 3.7.2 – 4.7.7.

¹⁵⁰ *pace* Tuplin 1993, 83.

¹⁵¹ Andokides 3; cf. Philokhoros 328 F 149 who identifies this event as occurring in the arkhonship of Philokles of Anaphlystos, which is 392/1, identifies Andokides as one of the ambassadors, and said he went into exile. Sealey 1956, 181-4.

¹⁵² Andok. 3.23.

¹⁵³ Andok. 3.26.

¹⁵⁴ Andok. 3.18; X. H. 4.5.7-8, 11-18.

concentrate on reconquering Cyprus and other rebelling ethne, the King promised to become an ally of the Lakedaimonians if the Athenians and their allies would not agree to the peace on the terms that the King was announcing.¹⁵⁵ With Tiribazos' help, Antalkidas assembled an 80-ship fleet and took the Hellespont, the real prize in the bloody tug of war of the past many decades. At this point his control seemed strong enough that the members of the quadruple alliance opposing him finally were ready to take a treaty seriously unlike the two attempts of very recent years. All combatants were exhausted by constant war.¹⁵⁶ All states concerned sent delegates. A treaty resulted. Xenophon does not give us its text.¹⁵⁷ We have only this announcement:

Artaxerxes the King believes it is just that the cities in Asia be his own as well as the islands Klazomenai and Cyprus, and that the other Hellenic poleis both small and large should be left *autonomoi* except Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros: these should be, as of old, property of the Athenians. Against whichever of the two does not accept this peace, I – alongside whoever prefers these arrangements – shall go to war, both by infantry and on sea, with warships and with money.¹⁵⁸

The actual treaty, probably with a list of signatory poleis, was inscribed and set up on pillars in temples in Greek cities.¹⁵⁹ It must have been more precise than the royal rescript Xenophon gave us.¹⁶⁰ Informally or formally, the Spartans were to police this arrangement and gained much power thus.¹⁶¹ For the Persians were too busy with multiple rebellions to enforce the arrangement in Greece.¹⁶² Athens only agreed reluctantly according to almost all our sources; Sparta, it seems, had medized.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁵ X. H. 5.1.25.

¹⁵⁶ X. H. 5.1.28-30, emphasized in Briant 2002, 649.

¹⁵⁷ *pace* Hornblower 2002, 225.

¹⁵⁸ X. H. 5.1.31. Ἀρταξέρξης βασιλεὺς νομίζει δίκαιον τὰς μὲν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ πόλεις ἑαυτοῦ εἶναι καὶ τῶν νήσων Κλαζομενὰς καὶ Κύπρον, τὰς δὲ ἄλλας Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις καὶ μικρὰς καὶ μεγάλας αὐτονόμους ἀφεῖναι πλὴν Λήμνου καὶ Ἴμβρου καὶ Σκύρου: ταύτας δὲ ὥσπερ τὸ ἀρχαῖον εἶναι Ἀθηναίων. ὁπότεροι δὲ ταύτην τὴν εἰρήνην μὴ δέχονται, τούτοις ἐγὼ πολεμήσω μετὰ τῶν ταῦτα βουλομένων καὶ πεζῇ καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν καὶ ναυσὶ καὶ χρήμασιν. Briant 2002, 649f.

¹⁵⁹ D. S. 4.176, 180.

¹⁶⁰ Cawkwell 1981 reasonably suggests that the treaty specified territorial rights, the disbanding of garrisons (see D. S. 15.5.1) and of armies and navies (see X. H. 5.1.35), and perhaps an exiles' return clause. However, his comparison with Athens only being allowed 12 ships in 403 (76) is inapposite: the Peace of Antalkidas did not occur on the tail-end of a total defeat for Athens.

¹⁶¹ X. H. 5.1.36. Cawkwell 1981 notes that the King was never appealed to during the Peace: plausibly, the Spartans were *de facto* or perhaps *de iure* policemen of the Peace.

¹⁶² Briant 2002, 650 provides an essential list.

¹⁶³ Reluctant agreement from Athens: D. S. 14.110.4. Hamilton believes that Philokhoros 149 is apropos to this agreement, not to the Andokides agreement (1979, 318-9). The strange man out is Demosthenes 20.60 which asserts that Athens forced Sparta into the peace. See Tuplin 1993, 85.

How the non-*autonomia* of the Greeks in Asia was viewed by contemporaries weighs crucially in our analysis of the involvement in this treaty of the Lakedaimonians, who damaged their reputation severely amongst the many individuals throughout many Greek poleis who valued the autonomy of their brethren.¹⁶⁴ We would expect particular displeasure at Ionian “servitude” from Ionian Athens, and we see Isokrates express this vehemently in his *Panegyrikos*.¹⁶⁵ But we do not know how the Persians treated the Anatolian Hellenic cities, nor in what precise ways this transfer of authority was harmful other than symbolically. Xenophon’s silence provokes.¹⁶⁶ An important inscription found at Miletos from these years bears directly upon the question, but ambiguously.¹⁶⁷ It describes the Persian satrap Strouthas arbitrating a dispute between Miletos and Myous. On the one hand, it signals that directives from Sardis could be imposed upon Greek poleis in the Persian Empire: this is clear. On the other, the pains that the satrap took to be fair garner insufficient appreciation: although Strouthas makes the final decision in favor of the Miletans, this is only after the Myesians have abandoned the lawsuit. Greek institutions are used and respected: there is a jury of fifty Ionians, each named along with patronymic and city, who hear the lawsuit carefully and question witnesses. Persian bias is invisible.

Diodoros specifies Lakedaimonian shame and regret as Xenophon does not, a shame which goaded Sparta to war against Persia. After the Cyprus war’s in 380, Glos, the commander of the Persian fleet, decided to revolt from the King, and made an alliance with Akoris the Egyptian king and promised the Lakedaimonians to work with them throughout Greece to assist them to regain the *hegemonia* of their fathers, but

The Spartiates even beforehand had decided to recover their *hegemonia*, and at that moment they were already throwing the cities into utter disturbance and, as was clear to all men, enslaving (*katadouloumenoi*) them. And on top of these things, since they were being held in poor esteem because it appeared that in the agreement they had made with the King they had surrendered (*ekdotous*) the Hellenes throughout Asia, they regretted what they had done and sought a reasonable-sounding pretext (*prophasis eulogos*) for war against Artaxerxes.¹⁶⁸

A tradition therefore existed in Diodoros’ time indicating Spartan regret for betraying fellow Greeks, discomfort at the negative attention the betrayal had brought to their state, and a renewed will to invade Persia, presumably at least partially to erase this stain on their honor.¹⁶⁹ But this tradition did not originate in the first century BC. According to Theopompos, Evagoras of Salamis also contacted the Spartans for help to revolt against Persia in this same period: these two incidents suggest that Sparta was thought, by at least Evagoras and Glos, to be worth a genuine approach for assistance against Persia.¹⁷⁰ Agesilaos, according to Xenophon, still desired to liberate the Anatolian Greeks when he was in

¹⁶⁴ e.g. Isok. 4.175; D.S. 15.9; 15.19.

¹⁶⁵ Esp. 120-1, 123-4.

¹⁶⁶ Cawkwell 1981 says X’s silence hides disapproval at Spartan medism; Hamilton 1991, 112ff.

¹⁶⁷ Rhodes and Osborne 16.

¹⁶⁸ Diodoros 15.9.4-5. Discussion in Stylianou 1998 *ad loc.* (p. 185f).

¹⁶⁹ Stylianou 1998, 186.

¹⁷⁰ Theopompos F 103. Cf. Cawkwell 1976, 70.

mercenary service to Egypt in his eighties, and was only obstructed in this goal because he was not given full strategic power over the Egyptian king's war effort.¹⁷¹ If this is true, it tells us that Agesilaos felt uncomfortable about having betrayed the Greeks in Asia; if it is not true, it suggests that Xenophon, a contemporary to all of this, felt that this betrayal was a raw sore of some sort. The handing over of the Anatolian Greeks to the Persian Empire was not "business as usual" or a morally unambiguous act in terms of Spartan ideals.

Sparta's heavy-handedness in subsequent years neither contradicts Spartan idealism toward the Anatolian Greeks, nor exceeds what we would expect of Thebes, Athens, or any other state acquiring massive Persian support in this period. Agesilaos prevented Thebes from re-uniting its federation in Boiotia in 386.¹⁷² The union of Argos and Korinth was forcibly dissolved, the exiled Korinthians returned.¹⁷³ Sparta dissolved the Mantineian synoikism again in 384; the Mantineians appealed to the Athenians who refused to break the peace.¹⁷⁴ Sparta's perioikoi were not made autonomous, but neither was Salamis. Sparta intervened in Phlious, then broke up an Olynthian federation, doing this only after a democratic vote from its allies in the Peloponnesian League.¹⁷⁵ On the way north, the Spartans began their ill-considered occupation of the Kadmeia at Thebes in 382. Sparta also set up oligarchic governments in other Boiotian cities.¹⁷⁶ By 379/8 Sparta possessed a *hegemonia* by land and sea over all Greece; harmosts and garrisons had been re-instituted by this point.¹⁷⁷ Yet all of this was more complex than Sparta simply throwing its weight around. Some of these blatantly imperial acts were opposed not only by other Greeks, but by Spartans.¹⁷⁸ And in this period, a panhellenic Persia invasion was in the air: in 380, Isokrates' *Panegyrikos*, delivered to several Greek cities, admonishes the Lakedaimonians against their oppressive behavior, but calls the Lakedaimonians powerful enough now to defeat the Persians, and says support exists for a unified campaign against Persia.

Thebes' resurgence curtailed this possibility. In 378, some Thebans persuaded the Spartiate Sphodrias to attack Athens' Peiraeus, inciting Athens to form a defensive alliance against Sparta's bullying and for the purpose of maintaining the King's Peace and permitting

¹⁷¹ X. *Agesilaos* 2.28 – 31.

¹⁷² X. *H.* 5.1.33.

¹⁷³ X. *H.* 5.1.34.

¹⁷⁴ X. *H.* 5.2.1-7. Diodoros 15.5.5; Paus. 8.8.9.

¹⁷⁵ X. *H.* 5.2.11-22. Funke 2004.

¹⁷⁶ X. *H.* 5.4.46.

¹⁷⁷ Diodoros 15.23; cf. X. *H.* 5.3.27 has the "follow whithersoever they shall lead" clause common in documents of the Lakedaimonian symmakhoi. Stylianou 1998 *ad loc* p. 228 thinks Diodoros used Xenophon.

¹⁷⁸ X. *H.* 5.4.1, clear evidence of his ability to censure Sparta. Diodoros 15.1.2 – 15.1.5, a lengthy criticism; Isok. 4.122. Diodoros 28.2 generally censures, not specifically the occupation of the Kadmeia. Xenophon reports great cooperation from the Leontiadas circle at Thebes: 5.2.37 *fin*. Sparta was disturbed by Phoibidas' seizure of the Kadmeia in Thebes in X. *H.* 5.2.32 and over Sphodrias invading the Peiraeus (5.4.23-24). Cf. Wickersham 1994, 103f. Prothous the "Lakon" opposed the campaign to Leuktra (Plut. *Agesilaos* 28.4).

freedom and autonomy for the Greeks.¹⁷⁹ Many cities joined it.¹⁸⁰ In reaction to these events, Sparta began treating its allies more kindly to secure better cooperation and reorganized its army.¹⁸¹ A mercenary force under the Spartiate Phoibidas was destroyed in 378 by Thebans.¹⁸² Agesilaos invaded Thebes. In 376, the Athenian alliance won a victory against the Lakedaimonians, allowing the Thebans to become independent from Sparta and organize a new federal state. In 375, Sparta's loss of a naval and a land battle against Athens and Boiotia respectively made it desire a renewal of the common peace.¹⁸³ The Persians also supported a renewal.¹⁸⁴ The Athenians desired this too, particularly upon seeing that Thebes was prosperous due to their support but was disinclined to contribute to the Athenian fleet.¹⁸⁵ Many Athenians saw Thebes now as a greater threat than Sparta: although Athens and Sparta continued battling in the west, Thebes was systematically strengthening its federation, involving Plataia's destruction in 373, threats against Thespiiai, and a campaign against Phokis.¹⁸⁶ In 371, the Athenians and Spartans held peace talks.¹⁸⁷ Phoibidas' seizure of Thebes was condemned. Peace was concluded on the basis that both sides withdrew harmosts, garrisons, left cities autonomous, and demobilized armies, and should anyone violate these terms, no one was compelled to assist against the violator. Autonomy, it was spelled out here, included the agreement that allies could not be forced to go on campaign.¹⁸⁸ The Athenians withdrew their garrisons and recalled their general.¹⁸⁹ The Lakedaimonians withdrew their harmosts and garrisons from all their cities except Phokis since it was threatened by Thebes.¹⁹⁰ Thebes insisted on signing on behalf of all the Boiotians, thus irritating the Spartans and making the Athenians hope that the Thebans would be punished for this.¹⁹¹ Theban desire for the unification of Boiotia, like other inter-Greek conflicts, prevented any unification of Greeks against Persia in the decade in which Sparta had sufficient power and will to do so.¹⁹²

¹⁷⁹ Sphodrias: X. H. 5.4.20-33. Cf. e.g. Cawkwell 1972, 259.

¹⁸⁰ Its prospectus is RO 22. Diodoros 15.29.7 – 15.30.2 describes it; Xenophon does not.

¹⁸¹ D. S. 15.31.1. Cf. Cawkwell 1983, 389, 397. The ten parts are Lakedaimonians; two regiments of Arkadians; Eleians; Akhaians; Korinthians and Megarians; Sikyonians; Phliasians and inhabitants of Argolid Akte; Akarnanians; Phokians and Lokrians; Olynthians and allies in Thrace.

¹⁸² Cawkwell 1972, 259.

¹⁸³ Defeats: Alyzeia: X. H. 3.4.65-66. Tegyra: Plut *Pel.* 16 and 17, cf. DS 15.37 and 15.81. Desire for renewal: Plut. *Agesilaos* 27.3.

¹⁸⁴ Persia “particularly hoped that the Greeks, once freed from internecine wars, would be more ready for mercenary work” (D. S. 15.38).

¹⁸⁵ X. H. 6.2.1.

¹⁸⁶ X. H. 6.3.1.

¹⁸⁷ X. H. 6.3ff.

¹⁸⁸ Wickersham 1994, 103.

¹⁸⁹ X. H. 6.3.18 (promise), 6.4.1 (action).

¹⁹⁰ X. H. 6.3.19, 6.4.2.

¹⁹¹ 6.3.20. The word I translate as “be punished” is *dekateuthenai*, literally meaning “to tithe.”

¹⁹² Cawkwell 1972, 263 underscores the Theban decision to fight for unification.

Leuktra

The Battle of Leuktra illustrates the twin processes significant for this chapter. First is the change in character of the Spartan army and its replenishment with persons who had not acquired the benefit of Spartiate *agoge* training. Second, and this theme will be explained more, is the change in priorities of the Lakedaimonian state due to the loss of persons without the Spartiate ideals as with the acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas. It is a case study in the decline of Spartiate manpower and the way in which demographic change can affect a historical society's foreign policy options.

The Assembly at Lakedaimon pushed for a disciplinary war if the Thebans did not leave the Boiotian poleis autonomous. They voted this despite the cautious urging of a certain Prothoos to disband the Lakedaimonian army in accordance with the peace treaty: this army was presently protecting Phokis under King Kleombrotos, Agesilaos' colleague of the Agiad house.¹⁹³ King Kleombrotos had been thought undesirous of attacking Thebes and needed special goading to fight.¹⁹⁴ The eagerness of the Lakedaimonian assembly to discard the traditional Spartan cautiousness of Prothoos and Kleombrotos matched the lack of skill in the actual fighting that the Lakedaimonian army showed at Leuktra: both were uncharacteristic of Spartan mores, and have much to do with the demographic change at Sparta. The composition of the Assembly may be significant. Nothing tells us certainly that the assembly was confined to Spartiates and closed from neodamodeis or the "inferiors" who now bulked large in the Lakedaimonian army. If only Spartiates were allowed, it was a small assembly indeed, as seven hundred of the state's dwindling total of some 1200-1500 Spartiates were on campaign with King Kleombrotos.¹⁹⁵ Diodoros tells us that the Spartan allies were also eager for the war.¹⁹⁶ The assembly's desire to war in a way opposite to the traditional Spartiate reserve against going to war unless compelled, its happiness for an aggressive intervention, and its opposition to Prothoos shows us how strong an assembly could be in this period.

The causes of the Theban victory in this battle are controversial.¹⁹⁷ On the one hand, the Theban leaders' morale was very high, they were defending their own land, they knew

¹⁹³ X. H.6. 4.2-3. Prothoos is considered by Poralla-Bradford an ephor.

¹⁹⁴ Punishment for failure was threatened: X. H. 6.4.5.

¹⁹⁵ The Assembly is not listed as an *ekklesia* of the Spartiates, only an *ekklesia*. 1500: Cartledge 1987, 38.

¹⁹⁶ D. S. 15.51.4.

¹⁹⁷ The battle of Leuktra is discussed in e.g. Grote 1888, Book 8, Chapter 78; Busolt 1905; Pritchett 1965, 49 – 58; Anderson 1970, 192 – 220; Cawkwell 1972 and 1980; Buckler 1980; Tuplin 1987; Hanson 1988; Buckler 2003, 288 – 295, Buckler and Beck 2008, Chapter 8. Hanson 1988 argues convincingly that Xenophon's account of this battle is accurate and preferable to those of Diodoros and Plutarch, *contra* Cawkwell 1983. Cawkwell 1972 argues that Xenophon attributed the loss to the gods but quite ignores Xenophon's description of the handicaps under which the Spartan army fought, and believes (with Buckler 1980) that Xenophon deliberately suppressed Epaminondas' story throughout *Hellenika* out of bias (esp. 256, "Plainly Xenophon hated the Thebans"). Anderson believes that Xenophon simply did not recognize Epameinondas' genius.

that a failure could spell the end of a united Boiotia, and their religious portents were excellent.¹⁹⁸ However, many authors have argued that innovative Theban tactics were responsible for the victory, but no war innovations are described in our earliest description of the battle, which emphasizes, rather, poor performance by the Lakedaimonian army due to certain handicaps. These deserve closer scrutiny than they have heretofore been afforded: most scholars have focussed instead on the Theban side of things. The handicaps tell us much of the bad state of the Spartiate fighting population and thus the demographic problem at hand. Early (and thus, symbolically, importantly and programmatically) in his narration of the battle itself, Xenophon describes the cavalry of both sides. The Theban cavalry is excellent, the Lakedaimonians terrible. Advanced Theban tactics were unnecessary with a cavalry difference like this:

[10] ... ἦν δὲ τὸ μὲν τῶν Θηβαίων ἱππικὸν μεμελετηκὸς διὰ τε τὸν πρὸς Ὀρχομενίους πόλεμον καὶ διὰ τὸν πρὸς Θεσπιάς, τοῖς δὲ Λακεδαιμονίοις κατ' ἐκείνον τὸν χρόνον πονηρότατον ἦν τὸ ἱππικόν. [11] ἔτρεφον μὲν γὰρ τοὺς ἵππους οἱ πλουσιώτατοι· ἐπεὶ δὲ φρουρὰ φανθείη, τότε ἦκεν ὁ συντεταγμένος· λαβὼν δ' ἂν τὸν ἵππον καὶ ὅπλα ὅποια δοθείη αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ παραχρῆμα ἂν ἐστρατεύετο· τῶν δ' αὖ στρατιωτῶν οἱ τοῖς σώμασιν ἀδυνατώτατοι καὶ ἥκιστα φιλότιμοι ἐπὶ τῶν ἵππων ἦσαν.

The cavalry of the Thebans was well-trained because of wars against the Orkhomenians and Thespians, while the cavalry of the Lakedaimonians at this particular time was utterly wretched. For on the one hand (μὲν), the richest men raised the horses; but on the other hand (δ'), only at the moment when the troop-call occurred did the man who was drawn up arrive. And taking the horse and whatever weapons he was given, he would serve as a soldier on the spot. And of the soldiers, those who were the physically feeblest and the least in love with honor were on the horses.¹⁹⁹

This motley cavalry cannot, by definition, be Spartiates.²⁰⁰ If they are, they are some sort of newly enfranchised ones, a category that we do not know about, who have never gone through the *agoge*. No Spartiate could possibly be physically feeble like this: had he gone through the *agoge*, he could not possibly be other than extremely fit. This is especially true

Hanson 1988 argues that IG 7.2462 (= RO 30) indicates that several Theban leaders were responsible for the Theban success, not solely Epameinondas, and that no new tactics were pioneered by the Thebans. He cites a wide range of evidence including Polybios 12.25f3-4 against the accuracy of non-Xenophontic accounts of Leuktra and the subsequent growth of an Epameinondas-tradition similar to the Aristomenes tradition. I believe that the bad condition of Spartan soldiery at this battle explains the Theban success adequately.

¹⁹⁸ X. H. 6.4.6-8. Kallisthenes *FGH* 124 F 22a *apud*. Cicero *Div.* 1.74; Diodoros 15.53.4; Polyainos 2.3.8; Pausanias 4.32.5-6.

¹⁹⁹ X. H. 6.4.11.

²⁰⁰ If I have understood the Greek correctly in terms of the μὲν ... δὲ clause, the rich men are not the riders. The riders are the men who only ride the horse at call-up time. However, this point is not necessary to my argument.

for this period, in which the practice of hard physical military training was finally spreading to military groups outside of Sparta, and physical weakness could not be tolerated especially at this juncture, as Polydamas of Pharsalos had pointed out to the Spartan Assembly while discussing the danger of Iason of Pherai's highly-trained mercenary soldiers four years earlier.²⁰¹ Nor could a Spartiate, by definition, not be *philotimos*, that is, possessed of an ambitious and competitive love of winning positive recognition. For the Spartiate system of honor, as Xenophon told us a moment earlier in his description of the incentives and disincentives pushing King Kleombrotos to fight, was precisely designed to make a Spartiate as *philotimos* as humanly possible. These are allied troops, neodamodeis, helots, or members of the other marginal groups such as trophimoi, mothakes, perhaps even "tremblers" although these categories are mentioned in Xenophon's text. The existence of such poor horsemen in the Spartan cavalry is testament to the population loss of Spartiates. For Spartiates were traditionally great breeders of horses, superb winners in horse-races, and great horsemen. Only 700 Spartiates were present at this battle. The slow replacement of Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian army has produced, again, not only a change in character but a change in ability. Militarily speaking, this force is "clearly inferior."²⁰²

Not only was the Lakedaimonian cavalry of the least skilled and worst sort, but the Lakedaimonians had been drinking (X. H. 6.4.8), their overall morale was poor, and their allies were indifferent. The cavalry's low quality ensured that it quickly was routed and even fell upon Lakedaimonian hoplites.²⁰³ The formidably-named Spartan polemarch Deinon died, then the Spartiate Sphodrias famous for his raid on the Peiraieus in 378, and Sphodrias' son Kleonymos were killed. Next were routed either the horses, the cavalry, or the elite infantry unit paradoxically known as the *hippeis*, bodyguards to the King,²⁰⁴ as well as the aides-de-camp (*symphoreis*) of the polemarch. The Thebans later set up a commemorative inscription or tombstone that has survived.²⁰⁵ Xenophon gives us great insight into the differing characters of the soldiers present when he writes "some of the Lakedaimonians who reckoned the outcome unendurable said that they had to prevent their enemies from erecting a *tropaion* and not to recover the dead under a truce, but through fighting." In the customs of Greek war, the side asking for a truce has capitulated. Those who felt this way had been successfully inculcated with the Tyrtaian ideal. However,

the polemarchs perceived that of the total number of soldiers, a thousand non-Spartiate Lakedaimonians died at Leuktra, and of the approximately seven hundred Spartiates present, four hundred died, and, perceiving that all the allies lacked enthusiasm for fighting and it was the case that certain of them were not even unhappy about the battle's outcome, deliberated and sent a herald to arrange to recover the corpses under a truce. The Thebans set up a trophy and returned the Lakedaimonians' corpses.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ X. H. 6.1.4, 6.5.23.

²⁰² Hanson 1988, 196: he does not see the demographic implications that I am here arguing.

²⁰³ X. H. 6.4.13.

²⁰⁴ A textual problem exists at 6.4.14 with *hippeis* or *hippoi*. MSS read *hippoi*, Stephanos reads *hippeis*. If *hippeis*, we still must decide whether this means "cavalry" or "elite royal bodyguard of 300" is meant; the latter is preferable as the cavalry was already discussed.

²⁰⁵ IG 7.2462 = RO 30.

²⁰⁶ X.H. 6.4.15.

Xenophon's "*all* the allies [who] lacked enthusiasm for fighting and were not even unhappy about the battle's outcome" were markedly different from those who could not bear the prospect of defeat. The former group -- presumably the mercenaries commanded by the Spartiate Hieron as well as Phokian peltasts, Phleiasian cavalry, and cavalry from Herakleia Trakhinia -- had no interest in the battle. Their presence had been compelled because there were not enough Spartiates remaining to fill out their own ranks for their military actions.²⁰⁷ The Spartiate manpower loss resulted, as has been discussed earlier, from practices that were not conducive to maintaining replacement fertility. Here we see quite clearly one of the foreign policy results, in this case more specifically a military result, of Spartiate oliganthropia.

Leuktra's Demographic Effect on the Spartiates

Spartiate manpower loss was now at its most grievous. Immediately after the battle, the last reserve of Spartiates, men 55 to 60 years of age, was called into service, magistrates were ordered to leave office and enter active military roles, and Agesilaos actually suspended the disenfranchisement law against *tresantes*, "tremblers" or cowards, viz. any Spartiate who survived a defeat in battle.²⁰⁸ The ailing Agesilaos could not fight and so his son Arkhidamos was ordered by the city to go out. Considering the weak enthusiasm of the allies at Leuktra, it is surprising how many allies were now eager to join the Lakedaimonians. The Tegeans, under the influence of a pro-Spartan politician, enthusiastically joined Sparta, as did the Mantineians, Korinthians, Sikyonians, Phliasians, Akhaians "with all zeal," and other states. The Lakedaimonians and Korinthians manned triremes and requested that the Sikyonians do the same and cross the Gulf.

Although the Thebans were eager for more fighting, the Athenians were not. Jason of Pherai, the tyrant, mercenary leader, proxenos of Sparta, and Thessalian *tagos* set himself up as a truce-maker, dissuading both the Thebans and the Lakedaimonians camped in Boiotia from war. The morose scene of Spartans being consoled for a military loss contains a demographically relevant piece of advice: "I advise going into battle against unconquered men only after you have recovered, rested, and become *more numerous*."²⁰⁹ For clearly "more numerous," not "stronger" or the like, is precisely the translation appropriate for *meizous* in a context in which the Spartiate numbers had just dropped to five to seven hundred, and even by

²⁰⁷ All mentioned in X. H. 6.4.9. Plut. *Agesilaos* 28.3, before the battle, states: "and the ephors sent for and gathered the allies, who although unenthusiastic and dreading the war, were not yet bold enough to speak against it nor to disobey the Lakedaimonians."

²⁰⁸ X. H. 6.4.17. Plut. *Agesilaos* 30.4, *Comp. Ag. Pomp.* 2.2, *Mor.* 191C, 214B, Polyainos *Strat.* 2.1.13.

²⁰⁹ X. H. 6.4.24: συμβολεὺν ἀναπνεῦσαντας καὶ ἀναπαυσάμενους καὶ μείζους γεγεννημένους τοῖς ἀηττήτοις οὕτως εἰς μάχην ἰέναι.

any other calculations to less than a thousand.²¹⁰ The Lakedaimonians withdrew from Boiotia secretly “in night and in fear.”²¹¹

The intensification of Spartiate oliganthropia caused by Leuktra was clearly severe since it was noticed and acted upon by everyone, including some perioikoi. The Athenians approached the Peloponnesians whose subordination to Sparta had contravened the King’s Peace and had given the Spartans an advantage over Athens, whose subordinate allies had been made autonomous. The Athenians invited them to a congress at Athens to swear an oath of mutual aid. This oath stipulated “I shall maintain the peace which the king sent down and the decrees (*psephismata*) of the Athenians and their allies. And should anyone campaign against any city that has sworn this oath, I shall come aid him with all my strength.”²¹² The mention of obedience to “the decrees of the Athenians and their allies” would not have been risked before Leuktra. It was a blow against Spartan power almost at its core: “almost” because the even more basic fundament of Spartan power, the farmlands of Messenia and Lakonia that afforded the Spartiates and their kings their peculiar luxury to train themselves militarily to maintain their dominance, would not be threatened for another few years. The Athenians’ diplomatic strategy was well-timed. Mantinea now decided to reunite.²¹³ Agesilaos campaigned against it with some allies, momentarily raising Spartan morale but withdrawing by midwinter 370.²¹⁴ Several groups invited the Thebans to invade, including the Argives, Eleians, Lakonian perioikoi, Arkadians and Karyeis, the latter two explicitly citing Lakedaimon’s *eremia* or abandoned appearance.²¹⁵ The Thebans now counted as allies the Euboians, Lokrians, Akarnanians, Malians, Thessalians, and even the inhabitants of Herakleia Trakhinia; the Phokians had become their subjects.

The Thebans and Arkadians attacked Lakonia, an unprecedented event which shattered Sparta’s *eunomia*; although seeing how few Spartiates were guarding the city, they did not enter Sparta town itself.²¹⁶ Sparta’s inhabitants panicked: some two hundred “wretches” occupied the Issorion stronghold.²¹⁷ Many were dispersed, fifteen were executed. That they were not Spartiates is confirmed by Plutarch’s next sentence: “another, greater

²¹⁰ X. H. 6.4.24. This passage’s demographic significance has gone unnoticed by others. Brownson 1921 translates “become stronger.” Warner 1966 gives “regained strength.” Marincola 2009 renders “recovered your strength.”

²¹¹ X. H. 6.4.26.

²¹² X. H. 6.5.2.

²¹³ Mantinea had been disunited by Sparta in 385 (X. H. 5.2.7).

²¹⁴ X. H. 6.5.11, X. H. 6.5.21.

²¹⁵ D.S. 15.62.3. X. H. 6.5.23 (training), 25 (emptiness); Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 214C: ὀλίγων ὄντων τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει.

²¹⁶ Plutarch (*Lys.* 31.1-2) informs us that this was the first time that Sparta had been invaded in its six hundred year occupancy of the site, a estimate whose astonishingly precise correctness is archaeologically verifiable. X. H. 6.5.28, Plut. *Agesilaos* 32, D.S. 15.65.2. Mackil 2008 discusses the Theban/Arkadian invasion in detail.

²¹⁷ cf. Flower 1991, 86.

(*meizon*) conspiracy of male Spartiates met together secretly in a house to plan revolution.”²¹⁸ The information led to the death of the conspirators, whose number, Plutarch states, was *meizon* than either the two hundred “wretches” or the fifteen wretches executed, adding either *ca.* 225 deaths or *ca.* 20 deaths to the 400 Spartiates who had died at Leuktra.²¹⁹ The only Spartiates remaining were the 300 who had gone to Leuktra but not died there, and whichever Spartiates had not gone to Leuktra: perhaps some four hundred, or, generously, seven hundred more. There was, then, probably a total of not more than 1,000 living Spartiates, squaring with Aristotle’s 1,000 a generation later.²²⁰ Many perioikoi and helots also joined the Thebans. Sparta’s *eunomia* had clearly been held together more by Spartiate manpower than by ideology: without that manpower, it ruptured not only for some perioikoi, helots, and “wretches,” but even for a considerable number of Spartiates themselves.

The magistrates at Sparta promised freedom to any helot willing to take up arms and be assigned to the ranks. More than 6,000 helots enrolled immediately.²²¹ Their numerousness frightened the Spartiates until assistance arrived from Orkhomenian mercenaries, Phliasians, Corinthians, Epidaurians, Pelleneans, and soldiers from other states: Sparta was still capable of motivating some of its allies. In the several-day campaign following, the Lakedaimonian *hippeis* were very few in number, but a clever ambush resulted in the invading army refraining from attacking Sparta itself, but instead going south to Gytheion and Helos. The decision not to go home before attacking Sparta itself is curious: Plutarch and Xenophon both state that winter storms began, the Arkadian allies started going home, and that ravaging the country was implicitly sufficient.²²² Theopompos mentions bribery.²²³

On this campaign the Theban leader Epameinondas performed two acts that maimed Spartiate power forever.²²⁴ First, he freed Messenia and its inhabitants from subordination to the Spartiates and established or re-established the heavily fortified city of Messene, situated

²¹⁸ Panic: X. H. 6.5.28 (women), Plut. *Agesilaos* 31.4 (old men). Issarion shrine: Plut. *Agesilaos* 32.3; D. R. Shipley *ad loc.* (1997, 345) writes that this “demonstrates, as Kinadon had done thirty years earlier, the fragile social harmony of the Spartan community.” Plut. *Agesilaos* 32.6.

²¹⁹ *Meizon* may mean either larger or more serious: cf. Flower 1991, 87 and note 46.

²²⁰ Aristotle *Pol.* 1270a31: this work was composed in the 330s and/or 320s, as Philip’s death (336) is the last event mentioned in it, and Aristotle died in 322, leaving it unfinished.

²²¹ X. H. 6.5.28-29.

²²² X. H. 6.5.50; Plut. *Agesilaos* 32.8.

²²³ Plut. *Agesilaos* 32.8 – 33.1.

²²⁴ Xenophon mentions Messenia’s independence and Megalopolis’ existence in Book 7 (7.1.29, 7.4.9, 7.4.27, 7.5.5). His silence in Book 6 is attributed *ad loc.* (6.5.32) to philolakonism in Marincola 2009 and Marchant 1921 and by Cawkwell 1972. Yet Tuplin 1993, 163f warns against imputing to Xenophon an uncritical love of Sparta. And the centrality of Epameinondas’ influence in all of them perhaps should not be assumed, as Funke 2009, 5 (citing Grote 1888 volume 8, 194 – 196) argues: he sees a rising ethnic “nationalism” of sorts at work in this period, and believes that Leuktra was “necessary, but not sufficient” (6-7).

at the foot of the same Mount Ithome where the helots had fled during the earthquake-revolt in the 460s, separated from Lakedaïmon by mountains very difficult for the Spartiates, or anyone, to cross.²²⁵ *Soi-disant* Messenians scattered around the Mediterranean were then invited to return to it.²²⁶ Second, it is probably he who established Megalopolis by synoikism as a sort of capital city for Arkadia combined from many municipalities, which lay near enough to annoy Sparta, was big enough to withstand it, and would become a major power player in the Peloponnesos into Roman times.²²⁷ In 369, the Thebans went home. Razing Lakedaïmonian territory, burning towns such as Gytheion, demonstrating Theban military superiority, and freeing Megalopolis and Messenia were sufficient.

Oligarchic pro-Spartan governments and institutions in many Peloponnesian poleis over the next years gave way to violent *stasis* and then to a general rise of wider franchises.²²⁸ Various cities in northern Greece found Thebes a more sensible ally than Sparta. Sparta's weakness in the face of Mantineaian reunification in 370 led to an Arkadian federal organization.²²⁹ A welter of confusing alliances and the murders of the influential politicians Euphron and Lykomedes marked this period. Weakened Sparta exerted nothing like its previous influence on political and military affairs: Thebes secured Persian trust and received the King's support for Messenia's *autonomia*.²³⁰ An almost touching final display of deference occurred in 365 when Korinth tried to make an alliance with Thebes and asked Sparta's opinion on the matter. The upshot of this was another renewal of the King's Peace involving Sparta's Peloponnesian allies but not Sparta, spelling the end of what remained of Sparta's Peloponnesian League.²³¹ Kleomenes II and Agesilaos were the Spartan kings now; Kleomenes was too weak to do anything about it and Agesilaos was pursuing military employment in the Satrap's Revolt.

Agesilaos returned to Lakedaïmon in 362, over eighty years old now. Epameinondas had led a Theban army south to deal with a complex situation involving the Arkadians, Elis, and Akhaia, who had appealed to Sparta and Athens. At Mantinea, Agesilaos and his forces fought a battle against Epameinondas and his forces. Epameinondas was killed, but the outcome of the battle was unclear. Xenophon ends his history at this point saying that neither side was any better off in terms of territory, city, or *arkhe*, and throws his hands into the air,

²²⁵ D. S. 15.66, Paus. 9.4.15. David 1981, 88ff.

²²⁶ D. S. 15.66, Paus. 4.26, Plut. *Agesilaos* 34.1, *Pel.* 24.5. Davis 1997, 483 mentions archaeological evidence for a higher population in Messenia after its liberation. Figueira 2003, 227 mentions increase in olive cultivation only after the refoundation; Luraghi 2008, 222-4.

²²⁷ D. S. (15.72.4) gives 368 for the year; Pausanias (9.14) 371/0 and in 8.27.1 – 8 gives an account of its foundation. The Parian Marble gives 370/369 or 369/368. Hornblower 1990 gives a full discussion.

²²⁸ D. S. 15.40.

²²⁹ X. *H.* 6.5.6.

²³⁰ X. *H.* 7.1.36.

²³¹ The essays in Funke and Luraghi (eds.) 2009 attribute the dissolution of the Peloponnesian League to an increase in ethnic nationalism in the fourth century.

stating that “after the battle there was yet more confusion and disorder than before.”²³² This disorder resulted partly from Sparta’s absence as regional hegemon.²³³

The independence of Messenia halved Sparta’s agricultural land, and Megalopolis’ establishment reduced Sparta’s total of potential allies. These losses helped to transform Sparta from an international to a local player, and considerably reduced the Spartiate aristocratic lifestyle by removing much of the basis of the luxury that had given Sparta its peculiar privileges and attitudes. But these losses resulted from the demographically unsustainable set of reproductive customs that the Spartiates had developed and which prevented their population from recovering after the earthquake of the 460s. We cannot expect Spartan society, conservative as its official customs were, to have remained the same after these multiple blows. We have seen what began the process of oliganthropia. What remains is to put together this process and the result, to see how one caused the other.

²³² X. H. 7.5.27.

²³³ Theban hegemony was rejected by Arkadia, Korinth, and “other cities,” X. H. 7.1.39 – 40.

Chapter 6

The Transformation of the Spartan Imperial Administration in the Fourth Century

Introduction

As has been explained, the acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas was an anomalous event in Spartan history. It was not “business as usual.” It contradicted Spartan concern about the welfare of allies. It contradicted a Spartan anti-medizing ideology developed in the Persian Wars. This ideology, though softened by tentative exposure to the Persians during the Peloponnesian War and by Lysander’s quite atypical friendship with Kyros, lasted into the fourth century. Cooperation with Persian rule produced strong reactions from traditional Spartans until the Peace of Antalkidas, against which little Spartan negative reaction is recorded. This is nothing less than a profound transformation in Spartan mores. It has not been recognized as such. When it has been seen as worthy of explanation, it has been explained solely by vague assertions that desperation changed what the Spartans were willing to do, with whom they were willing to cooperate, and at what price. Yet two more phenomena evidenced in Spartan history elucidate this transformation. One is the Spartiate population decline from the 460s onward, and the replacement of Spartiates by non-Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian army. The second is the grand shift in fourth century Lakedaimonian culture explicitly attested in contemporary literary evidence. Scholarship has failed to connect these texts with the population shortage or the Peace, preferring to see these texts ahistorically rather than historically highly contingent upon the population shift and the empire.

Descriptions of Change

Our first passage occurs in Xenophon’s *Lakedaimonion Politeia*. Late in this otherwise highly encomiastic text, criticism suddenly erupts through the rather hagiographic ethnography:

If someone should ask me whether the laws of Lykourgos seem to me to have remained unchanged, at this point in time in particular, then, by god, I could no longer confidently claim this. [2] I know that formerly the Lakedaimonians chose to live at home with only moderate possessions, dwelling with each other, rather than as harmosts in cities, corrupted by flattery. [3] I know that formerly they feared being seen owning gold, but now even boast about owning it. [4] I know that formerly alien expulsion acts thus occurred and living abroad was illegal, in order that citizens would not fill up with foreigners’ laziness. But now I know that that those considered their top men have become eager to never cease to be harmosts over foreign land. [5] There was a time when they cared to be worthy of leadership; but now they strive to rule, rather than to be truly worthy of it. [6] Consequently, although previously, Hellenes used to go to Lakedaimon and ask her to lead them against those who had supposedly mistreated them, now, instead, many call upon each other to prevent [the Lakedaimonians] from becoming rulers

again. [7] It is unnecessary, then, to be confused about the blame that has come to be levelled against them, since they clearly are obedient neither to the god nor to Lykourgos' laws.¹

The meaning of this chapter of Xenophon's treatise has puzzled many.² Xenophon's use of present-tense verb forms in the fourteenth chapter contrasts with the past-tense verbs of certain earlier passages that described archaic Spartiates much more positively.³ At present, the traditional Lykourgan regime has weakened, the Lakedaimonian character worsened. Injustice, greed, and materialism have surfaced and become strong. An enthusiasm for rule has appeared, rather than for staying at home, overseeing one's *kleros*, and raising horses. Obedience and religious piety have diminished.

Some tend to think of such descriptions more as elements in series of moralistic comparisons of present failures to past golden ages of virtuous forefathers than as descriptions with definitive external referents.⁴ If this were the case, we would expect to read similar generalizations of fifth century Lakedaimonians. We do not. This passage is in fact highly historically contingent and points not to nostalgia for an imagined past, but to an actual change in the behavior of the Lakedaimonian persons with whom non-Lakedaimonians had

¹ εἰ δὲ τίς με ἔροίτο εἰ καὶ νῦν ἔτι μοι δοκοῦσιν οἱ Λυκούργου νόμοι ἀκίνητοι διαμένειν, τοῦτο μὰ Δία οὐκ ἂν ἔτι θρασέως εἴποιμι. [2] οἶδα γὰρ πρότερον μὲν Λακεδαιμονίους αἰρουμένους οἴκοι τὰ μέτρια ἔχοντας ἀλλήλοις συνεῖναι μᾶλλον ἢ ἀρμόζοντας ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι καὶ κολακευόμενους διαφθείρεσθαι. [3] καὶ πρόσθεν μὲν οἶδα αὐτοὺς φοβουμένους χρυσίον ἔχοντας φαίνεσθαι: νῦν δ' ἔστιν οὐς καὶ καλλωπιζομένους ἐπὶ τῷ κεκτῆσθαι. [4] ἐπίσταμαι δὲ καὶ πρόσθεν τούτου ἔνεκα ξηνηλασίας γιγνομένας καὶ ἀποδημεῖν οὐκ ἔξόν, ὅπως μὴ ῥαδιουργίας οἱ πολῖται ἀπὸ τῶν ξένων ἐμπίμπλαιντο: νῦν δ' ἐπίσταμαι τοὺς δοκοῦντας πρώτους εἶναι ἐσπουδακότας ὥς μηδέποτε παύωνται ἀρμόζοντες ἐπὶ ξένης. [5] καὶ ἦν μὲν ὅτε ἐπεμελοῦντο ὅπως ἄξιοι εἶεν ἡγεῖσθαι: νῦν δὲ πολὺ μᾶλλον πραγματεύονται ὅπως ἄρξουσιν ἢ ὅπως ἄξιοι τούτων ἔσονται. [6] τοιγαρὺν οἱ Ἕλληνες πρότερον μὲν ἰόντες εἰς Λακεδαίμονα ἐδέοντο αὐτῶν ἡγεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τοὺς δοκοῦντας ἀδικεῖν: νῦν δὲ πολλοὶ παρακαλοῦσιν ἀλλήλους ἐπὶ τὸ διακωλύειν ἄρξαι πάλιν αὐτούς. [7] οὐδὲν μέντοι δεῖ θαυμάζειν τούτων τῶν ἐπιπόρων αὐτοῖς γιγνομένων, ἐπειδὴ φανεροὶ εἰσιν οὔτε τῷ θεῷ πειθόμενοι οὔτε τοῖς Λυκούργου νόμοις. (Xenophon, *Lakedaimonion Politeia* 14)

² The chapter has unnecessarily confused commentators as to both its placement and its nature and is abrupt enough to have seemed to some a later insertion: e.g. Marchant 1925, xxii – xxiii, calling the chapter “strange and bewildering it is written in a spirit of disillusion.” He dates it to the period of 378-371 before Leuktra, perhaps occasioned by Phoibidas' 381 seizure of the Kadmeia in Thebes. Lipka (2002, 29-31) has convincingly explained the chapter's position and the fact that it does, in fact, properly belong to the treatise. Cf. also Harman 2009, Humble 2004.

³ e.g. the aorist ἠυδαιμόνησαν, 1.2. The present tense of chapter 14's verbs make it extremely unlikely that the text was written in any period other than Sparta's late imperial period, ca. 380.

⁴ Gruen 1975, 499 discusses this topos in regard to the Roman Republic. Indeed, similar descriptions of moral decline have appeared in descriptions of societies as diverse as Rome, early twentieth century France, and twenty-first century America; but in each case, actual social forces have been at work, and these must be investigated, not simply dismissed.

frequently come into contact: Lakedaimon's representatives during Sparta's imperial phase, who were far likelier, given the percentages that we have seen in the armies Sparta sent out, to not be Spartiates than otherwise. As I have explained, the percentage of actual Spartiates in the Spartan-led force invading the Persian Empire in 396 was 0.4%, one example of many. During Sparta's imperial decades, the wide array of non-Spartiates such as neodamodeis and perioikoi filled out the *circa* two thousand Spartiates who remained in the late fifth and early fourth century. These marginals were necessary for running the administration, and their backgrounds were very different from those of the Spartiates.

Some may find the passage to suggest a highly personal statement of disappointment internal to Xenophon's own experiences and life. However, the causes of this are difficult to assess outside of Xenophon's disappointed expectations of better Spartiate behavior, which points again to a source external to Xenophon for his change of opinion. He fought alongside Spartiates in the expedition described in his *Anabasis*, so had points of comparison. He was able to interview many Spartiates on the Kyros expedition, in his stay in Skillous in the Peloponnesos, and through his friendship with very high-ranking Spartan leaders such as Agesilaos. Over the course of his long life, it is not possible for him to have been blind to the gradual waning of Spartiates and waxing of non-Spartiates in the imperial administration.

Aside from seeing the passage as a literary topos or as a personal disappointment peculiar to Xenophon, another interpretation is too specific. The expression *those who are considered their top men* has been thought to describe one particular man who attained the position of harmost through patronage rather than through admirable leadership: a "concealed hit against Lysander."⁵ More likely, the phrase is a not-very-concealed "hit" against all those allowed into the Lakedaimonian military and administrative structure who were not of old aristocratic Spartiate *genos*, and in fact were not Spartiates at all – again, a rather large percentage of the administrative structure and army, as we have seen: helot harmosts, perioikic fleet-commanders, mothakes as admirals.⁶

Some may acknowledge a real change in Lakedaimonian behavior or ideals in the imperial period, but not connect it to the population decline or to the rise of the marginal groups into the Spartan army and administration. And many of the ancients saw a moral decline amongst the Lakedaimonians involving luxury, laziness, and cowardice; Xenophon can be read this way himself.⁷ That it is a commonplace trope does not mean that it is false, although the precise dynamics of such a shift require analysis. Davies, in trying to guess at the social forces responsible for a general change in Spartiate behavior and psychology, argued that Spartiate competitiveness "conflicted lethally with traditional solidarity" during Sparta's period of overseas dominance, presumably producing effects like those Xenophon described.⁸ Cartledge similarly argued that both wealthy and impoverished Spartiates now favored Lysander's hard imperialism for the spoils it brought: the poor to pay their *syssition* dues and thus avoid becoming *hypomeiones*, and the rich because it was enjoyable to have money.⁹ An

⁵ Lipka 2002, 232.

⁶ X. H. 3.5.12; cf. Isokrates 4.111; X. H. 7.1.12; FGH 106 F1; Thouk. 8.6.4, 8.22.

⁷ Cf. Isok. *de pace* 95-6; Flower 1991, 93.

⁸ Davies 1993, 145.

⁹ Cartledge 1987, 408.

improvement on these hypotheses in terms of specificity of influence is the notion that the changes listed by observers such as Xenophon were epiphenomena of growth of wealth at Sparta, whether due to an influx of Lysander's spoils or to a more gradual wealth polarization starting earlier than the fourth century.¹⁰ But this explanation is economically reductive and ignores the rise of the marginal groups.

In the period from about 405 – 371, a mass of Spartiates barely, if at all, existed that was large enough to exert much influence upon non-Spartiates in the army and imperial structure and to get them to adopt the elements of Spartiate ideology that had lately become inconvenient. It cannot even be stated certainly that the Spartiates desired to do this. Numerically, the mass did not exist. Undoubtedly the tiny percentage of Spartiates sent out on military expeditions often acted as leaders and advisors, but as we saw in Xenophon's account of Leuktra, the ideological influence of even a very large percentage of Spartiates (there were 700 Spartiates and 1000 non-Spartiates on the Lakedaimonian side) was not even sufficient to keep the allies' morale sufficiently high. Moreover, when wealthy perioikic men of standing were present in an army unit, particularly perioikoi who had been charged with important military tasks or who commanded a fleet, it is unlikely that the many poor Spartiates mentioned in Classical texts functioned as unchallenged leaders. In the case of neodamodeis, the notion that they would have adopted their masters' ideologies is very poor. The case is a little stronger for perioikoi fighting in the Lakedaimonian army, who may have looked up to the Spartiates; but perioikic conspiracy and the revolt of entire perioikic poleis, in addition to individual perioikoi, around the time of Epameinondas' invasion evidence an attitude toward the Spartiates that is far from loyal.¹¹

Xenophon's observations should be seen not as an illusion comparing a real present to an idealized past but as a reasonably accurate account of a real sea-change in the ideals of the persons occupying roles in the Lakedaimonian imperial administration.¹² Nor does he call any of the Lakedaimonians whose behavior disappoints him in chapter 14 a Spartiate. While Greek authors are not always strict in their ethnic and city-ethnic usages, it cannot be ignored that the majority of persons fighting Sparta's wars and staffing its empire in the imperial period were not Spartiates in the first place, and had thus never had Spartan mores beaten into them from age seven onwards as the Spartiates had.¹³ The army that these non-Spartiates aided provided spoils, personal power, travel, connections, and probably enhanced sexual opportunities. There was little reason for these men to admire Spartiate ideals of asceticism and the obedient adherence to an ancient *Nomos*, indeed to an almost deified *Nomos* obeyed

¹⁰ Hodkinson *e.g.* 2000; Flower 1991.

¹¹ X. *Agesilaos* 2.24 (entire poleis), *H.* 6.5.25, 6.5.32 (Karyai), 7.2.2; cf. Plut. *Agesilaos* 32.7, *Mor.* 346b., *Pelopidas* 24.1. David 1981, 86-7; Luraghi 2008, 224-5. Thouk. 1.118.2 references internal wars that would most likely consist of perioikic revolts.

¹² Finley 1975, 161.

¹³ X. *L.P.* 2, Plut. *Lyk.* 16-18: the *agoge* from seven until nineteen; at twenty, the *syssition* and under control of the *paidonomos*; released at thirty but still compelled to attend his *syssition* for meals; army service until 60. Hodkinson 1983 (reprinted in Hodkinson 2002, 106-7).

as a *despotes*, which probably seemed somewhat bizarre to a person not inculcated into it from childhood.¹⁴

Xenophon's description of the battle of Leuktra is worth revisitation. Although I have already discussed the marginals' inferior military skills, I wish now to point out evidence for their very different ideology or ideals. First, it is the Assembly that has voted for disciplinary war against the Thebans over Prothoos' cautionings.¹⁵ Spartiates are justly characterized as excellent in war but slow to go to war.¹⁶ The eagerness of the Assembly for war, then, considering this character trait and the paucity of Spartiates remaining, is quite interesting. I wish to suggest that, considering the population shortage and the increasingly heavy importance of neodamodeis, it may be the case that neodamodeis in good standing were permitted to attend Assembly meetings, and desired to go to war, not because they were excellent craftsmen of war as Spartiates were, but because war had been the quickest path to riches over the past thirty years.

The allies and marginals did not, of course, attend the *agoge*, and the effect of this appears in Xenophon's description of the soldiers on the Lakedaimonian side: they are simply militarily inferior. The men riding the horses in the Lakedaimonian cavalry at Leuktra, "physically feeblest and least *philotimos*," cannot have been Spartiates, as I have argued, *agoge*-graduates cannot have been in anything but excellent physical shape. The charge of "least *philotimos*" apparently applies to more than the cavalry: after the cavalry disaster, the allies wished to surrender. The soldiers on the Lakedaimonian side who asked for a truce were a quite different group from the stalwarts who wanted to continue fighting: the difference certainly sounds ideological. The poor military performance at Leuktra would have been hard to imagine before the demographic drop reduced the number of Spartiates, with their distinctive training and traditional sympathies, ideologies, and mentalities, only to be replaced by soldiers without these military and cultural advantages, who had not been saturated in the Tyrtanian ideology from childhood on.

Isokrates' description of the Lakedaimonians as filled with sloth and greed in his *Busiris* of about 390, the precise period of the Peace of Antalkidas of 387, complements Xenophon's observations on the change in character. It probably describes the new members of the Lakedaimonian army, not the Spartiates. "If all of us should mimic the Lakedaimonians' laziness and greed, immediately we would die off through want of requirements for day-to-day living and through civil war against each other."¹⁷ Isokrates' contrast says much: the Lakedaimonian system is unsustainable and on the verge of dying off. Spartan *eunomia* has passed away. This may reference the Conspiracy of Kinadon a decade or so earlier, which easily could have erupted into civil war. Lest this be dismissed as mere

¹⁴ *Nomos* as *despotes*: Hdt. 7.104.4.

¹⁵ X. H. 6. 4.2-3.

¹⁶ Slowness to go to war: *e.g.* Thouk. 1.70, 1.80, 1.118.2, Isok. *de pace* 96-7.

¹⁷ Isok. 11.20. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἅπαντες μιμησάμεθα τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων ἀγροίαν καὶ πλεονεξίαν, εὐθύς ἂν ἀπολοίμεθα καὶ διὰ τὴν ἔνδειαν τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν καὶ διὰ τὸν πόλεμον τὸν πρὸς ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς.

In general, Livingstone 2001 *ad loc.*, esp. 143 on Spartan *pleonexia*.

rhetoric, the collection of similar observations by many thinkers of the period suggest that it is relatively accurate and attests to an actual change.

For example, there is Isokrates' *Panathenaikos* of the 350s or 340s. Here the Lakedaimonians have given up their previously admirable ways to the point of betraying the Greeks and no longer even learning letters. Isokrates says that the Lakedaimonians have committed outrages against their own kin and other Hellenes (12.207), referencing the Peace of Antalkidas. It is noteworthy only in that Isokrates, and public opinion, evidently expected better from Sparta, thus suggesting that the Peace was, as I have stated, far from "business as usual" for Sparta. Isokrates then says something quite intriguing: the Lakedaimonians have lost their culture and learning, and do not even learn to read anymore (12.209). Reading was an aristocratic art spread fairly widely through the body of Spartiates.¹⁸ A decline in literacy is difficult to explain by anything other than the prevalence of non-Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian administration: the Lakedaimonians who most typically interacted with foreigners like Isokrates in the first half of the fourth century would probably not have been well-educated Spartiates but perioikoi and neodamodeis who were unlikely to have attained an education.

Isokrates' *On the Peace* of about 355 criticizes the Lakedaimonians for ruining their long-lasting excellence by an empire that created injustice, indolence, *anomia* or lawlessness, love of silver, contempt for allies, love of others' property, and indifference to oaths and agreements (8.95-96). His criticism of the Lakedaimonians' outrages against the islands and their subversion of governments in Italy and Sicily (97-99) clearly alludes to their imperial phase, exactly the period of the Peace of Antalkidas. These crimes caused the Leuktra disaster (8.100). Isokrates' causation for Leuktra as divine nemesis will persuade few today; what we can do, however, is link the failure at Leuktra with precisely the change in behavior and administration that Isokrates describes.

Aristotle's *Politics*, probably written between 336 and 322 and thus from a longer vantage point than Isokrates' works, analyzes some effects of the Spartiate population decline. Lakonia's land area, he states, could support 1,500 cavalry and 30,000 hoplites, but has less than a thousand.¹⁹ As a result of its system, "the polis could not endure a single blow, but perished due to *oliganthropia*." Although the single blow is usually assumed to be Leuktra, nothing confirms this, and Aristotle may have been talking about the earthquake. In any case, he does not explicitly list the loss of Messenia here as a primary factor in the oliganthropia. This is presumably because the land in Lakonia was sufficient to support the thousand or so Spartiates, and the loss of life at Leuktra freed up much Spartiate land.²⁰ Aristotle also offers more observations of recent Spartan behavior which do not echo Isokrates' criticisms, but complement them.

in [recent writers'] praise of the *politeia* of the Lakedaimonians, they write admiringly of the aim of the [Lakedaimonians'] creator of nomoi because he created the nomoi entirely with a view to conquest and war, but this is easily refuted through logic, and also *has* been refuted by recent events ... Thibron shows admiration for the Lakonians'

¹⁸ Millender 2001.

¹⁹ Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a34. Presumably Lakonia without Messenia is meant; together they could support far more than 30,000 hoplites and 1,500 cavalry.

²⁰ David 1981, 91-4.

creator of nomoi, as does each of the other persons who have written on their [the Lakedaimonians'] constitution, on the grounds that through their physical training, which was designed to deal with dangers, they held an empire over many. Yet it is apparent that since now, in particular, it is no longer possible for the Lakonians to have an empire, they therefore are neither fortunate, nor was the maker of their nomoi all that good. It is ridiculous that, even if they remain living under his nomoi and nothing hinder them making use of these nomoi, they have nonetheless lost the ability to live aristocratically.²¹

Several processes in the Spartan system are identified in this passage and critiqued concisely. First and most plainly, it points out the essential fact that the Lakedaimonians no longer have an empire. Because of their decline in population, it is impossible now for them to rule over many. For Aristotle, this casts doubt on the notion that Lykourgos was an efficacious law-giver, for his very system – in other words, the ancestral *kosmos* or regime of customs and laws – was inherently flawed: the regime led to the underpopulation of the Spartiate infantry, which required mass promotions and enfranchisements of persons without a Lykourgan modesty which, in turn, allowed something as dangerous as an immoderately large overseas empire to come into existence. The mention of training for war means that Aristotle meant those who have taken the *agoge* training, i.e. the Spartiates, who cannot “live aristocratically” (τὸ ζῆν καλῶς). Although much has been written in recent years of the wealth differences amongst the Spartiates, they and the Spartan royals had always been Lakedaimon's aristocrats, in terms of the possession both of cultural capital and of wealth.²² But many Spartiates alive during the writing of this text are incapable of living the Spartiate aristocratic lifestyle any longer, even if they stick to the ancient austere customs of Lykourgos, because the Messenians whose labors provided the Spartiates this way of life have been freed. Having lost Messenia, many of them will farm their own estates and raise their own horses in Lakonia. Both the loss of empire and the loss of Messenia, then, are traced by Aristotle to Sparta's ancient customs and laws.

A later reference supports this picture. In his comparison of Lykourgos and Numa, Plutarch states that “the Lakedaimonians, at just the time that they stepped away from the *diataxis* of Lykourgos, shrank from the highest position, discarded their hegemony over the Hellenes, and came into danger of complete destruction.” Plutarch does not infer or declare causality in the grammar of this sentence, only simultaneity. He is correct. It was exactly at the time that the Lakedaimonian-Spartiate ratio truly changed that the Spartans created an overseas empire and then lost their hegemony.

²¹ Aristotle *Pol.* 7.1333b12 - 26): ἐπαινοῦντες γὰρ τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων πολιτείαν ἄγανται τοῦ νομοθέτου τὸν σκοπὸν, ὅτι πάντα πρὸς τὸ κρατεῖν καὶ πρὸς πόλεμον ἐνομοθέτησεν. [15] καὶ κατὰ τὸν λόγον ἐστὶν εὐέλεγκτα καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις ἐξελέλεγκται νῦν ... Θίβρων ἀγάμενος φαίνεται τὸν τῶν Λακώνων νομοθέτην, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστος τῶν [20] γραφόντων περὶ τῆς πολιτείας αὐτῶν, ὅτι διὰ τὸ γεγυμνάσθαι πρὸς τοὺς κινδύνους πολλῶν ἦρχον· καίτοι δὴλον ὡς ἐπειδὴ νῦν γε οὐκέτι ὑπάρχει τοῖς Λάκωσι τὸ ἄρχειν, οὐκ εὐδαίμονες, οὐδ' ὁ νομοθέτης ἀγαθός. ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο γελοῖον, εἰ μένοντες ἐν τοῖς νόμοις αὐτοῦ, καὶ μηδενὸς ἐμποδίζοντος [25] πρὸς τὸ χρῆσθαι τοῖς νόμοις, ἀποβεβλήκασι τὸ ζῆν καλῶς.

²² Differences in wealth: Hodkinson 2000; already, Aristotle *Pol.* 2.1270a17.

Analysis

These passages, too many and too temporally specific to dismiss as a single author using an ancient trope contrasting present vice with bygone virtue, allow a new interpretation of the Peace of Antalkidas. As we know, in the treaty, all Greeks in Anatolia as well as Klazomenai and Cyprus were to belong to the King of Persia; Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros were to belong to Athens; and all other cities of Greeks were to enjoy *autonomia*. Naturally, if islands possessed dependencies on the mainland, these now belonged to the Great King. The acceptance of the Peace by Sparta is quite paradoxical without a better explanation than has yet been given.

Plutarch paints the Peace as the disgrace and betrayal of Greece.²³ The Peace surely ran counter to any traditional Spartiate attitude of hostility against Persians “enslaving” Greeks and to the panhellenism displayed by Spartiates and their royalty like Likhas, Kallikratidas, and Agesilaos.²⁴ Even aside from the taxes Persia received, the agreement was very much in Persia’s favor. It created a “balance of weakness” for the Greeks so that they would be less powerful if they molested Persian domains.²⁵ And a state of peace for Greeks meant that a supply of Greek mercenaries would be available for Persia when its subjects went into revolt, as they frequently did over the fourth century. This is a huge shift in Spartan foreign policy which has been hard to explain in terms other than a brutal *Realpolitik* that tends to ignore the sorts of considerations, including promises of loyalty, that actually enter treaties.²⁶

Nor should Aegean racial politics be neglected in analyzing Lakedaimonian acceptance of a peace that surrendered Greeks into Persian hands. On the one hand, we do not need to believe that all the Greeks always (or at least after the Persian Wars) saw all the Persians as implacable, eternal enemies, as an “other” to be pushed away at all costs, nor as targets for pure contempt.²⁷ Yet since at least the Persian Wars some notion of the Greeks as a single common group seems to have existed, a degree of fellow-feeling for other Greek-speaking communities, a widening of the conceptual circle of the “in-group” amongst Greeks to include Greeks beyond one’s own polis, and a hardening of the perceptual boundary against the Persians as an “out-group.” A century after the Persian Wars it may have been considered

²³ Plut. *Artax.* 22.2; in *Agesilaos* 23 it is “most shameful and lawless.”

²⁴ Agesilaos’ assertion that Asiatics (i.e. subjects of the Persian King) make good slaves should be included in the list of evidences that he and others thought of membership in the Persian empire as a form of slavery – unless he was asserting that the Asiatics were “natural slaves,” which is also possible (and not mutually exclusive). *Moralia* 190F, 213C.

²⁵ “Balance of weakness”: Rhodes 2006.

²⁶ Van Wees 2004, esp. 19 – 33. Bosworth 1993 and Hornblower 1996, 51 play up incidents in which Sparta betrayed its allies (e.g. Skione, the plight of which is not necessarily as much Spartan fault as they make it out to be) but neither compare incidents in which Sparta did, in fact, keep its promises, nor compare Sparta’s failures with Athens’ or anyone else’s. This risks the fallacy of a “unit-level” rather than “systems-level” analysis (Eckstein 2006).

²⁷ Note in Aiskhylos’ *Persai* 180ff, Persia and Greece are siblings. Gruen 2011, chapter 1.

a traditional element of Spartiate honor. Nor can we dismiss recent research on kinship loyalty which reinforces the notion that human beings prefer those who are biologically related to themselves at the expense of those who are not.²⁸ And the greatest proponent of this political sentiment, Isokrates, probably addressed an early version of a speech urging a panhellenic invasion to, specifically, Agesilaos in the mid-370s, whom Xenophon describes as a “Persian-hater.”²⁹

Three interrelated arguments have been used to explain why the Peace of Antalkidas was accepted by Sparta.

The first argues that the peace was accepted in 387/6 because of Sparta’s dire straits in the war and its need to stop Pharnabazos from funding its enemies. Often scholars argue that Sparta had backed into this Peace because of the naval loss at Knidos, the Korinth situation, and the fact that Athens had again been able to rebuild its defenses.³⁰ But Knidos had occurred back in 394, and after that defeat Derkyllidas enjoyed much support from Abydos and Sestos.³¹ The campaign by Konon and Pharnabazos to attack coastal Lakonia had accomplished very little.³² In 393, the Korinthians even with Persian funds had been unable to secure control of the Gulf.³³ Strouthas was a formidable foe in 391, but Diphradas had been able to kidnap Strouthas’ daughter to raise funds.³⁴ In 390, Teleutias had been able to recapture Rhodos for Sparta and capture Athenian ships.³⁵ The Lekhaion disaster of 390, despite Xenophon’s grim portrait of it, killed only 250 men, and we have no information that many of them were Spartiates.³⁶ The Athenians had lost their excellent general Thrasyboulos in 389.³⁷ Agesilaos in 389 had been able to run rampant in Akarnania and in the same year the Spartans had been able to seize Aigina from Athens.³⁸ In 388 Agesipolis had ravaged the Argolid with an army.³⁹ Although the Athenians recovered Aigina in 388, only eight Spartiates had died; Teleutias retook it for Sparta in 387, and garnered enough resources to give each of his soldiers a month of pay.⁴⁰ The situation was really not quite so dire for the Lakedaimonians, and so this is not more than a contributing factor to this change in policy.

²⁸ Salter 2007. Cf. Hdt. 5.49.3: Aristagoras’ appeal to free the Ionian Greeks rests on blood-kinship. Cf. Hornblower 1996, 61-80. A “genetic interests” analysis of such appeals *via* Frank Salter, Pierre van den Berghe, Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, and J. Philippe Rushton is a desideratum.

²⁹ Cawkwell 1976, 69-70. “Persian-hater”: X. *Agesilaos* 7.7.

³⁰ E.g. Buckler 2003, 139, 166.

³¹ Knidos: X. *H.* 4.8.1-3. Abydos and Sestos: 4.8.5-6.

³² X. *H.* 4.8.7.

³³ X. *H.* 4.8.11.

³⁴ X. *H.* 4.8.21.

³⁵ X. *H.* 4.8.23-24.

³⁶ X. *H.* 4.5.14-18.

³⁷ X. *H.* 4.8.30-31.

³⁸ X. *H.* 4.6.3-13.

³⁹ X. *H.* 4.7.2-6.

⁴⁰ 388: X. *H.* 5.1.10-12. 387: 5.1.13-22.

The second argument, advanced by Ste. Croix, is that the Peace was accepted by the Lakedaimonians because it “gave Sparta everything she really wanted”: dismantling resurgent Athenian power, the Theban koinon, and the restoration of Korinth.⁴¹ This is not unreasonable, except for the question of whether everything Sparta truly desired was these things alone. For at least some persons in Sparta, at one time fairly recently, had certainly seemed to favor a military expedition whose goal was to free the Anatolian Greeks. This goal was embraced by a considerable number of persons, and then abandoned, and de Ste. Croix can only explain its abandonment by asserting that it had never indeed been a goal. This does not fit well with the evidence we have.

A third argument, advanced by Cawkwell, is that since the Peace required the dismantling of federations, and since this stipulation of course would be used against Thebes, Agesilaos’ peculiar hatred of the Thebans was the prime motive for Spartan acceptance of the Peace.⁴² This too is difficult to defend under further scrutiny, even if Agesilaos was a Thebes-hater. First, Cawkwell believes that Agesilaos’ hatred of the Thebans arose from their obstruction of his attack on Persia.⁴³ It is difficult then to imagine why Agesilaos would give up on his stated goal of liberating the Anatolian Greeks.⁴⁴ Second, as Cawkwell himself admits, Agesilaos’ presiding over the swearing of the oaths of the Peace had more to do with his official role as king than because of a heartfelt support of the Peace on his part.⁴⁵ Third, Xenophon *Agesilaos* 2.21 gives a hint that Agesilaos was not altogether a supporter of the Peace and Plutarch *Mor.* 213B states it outright. Finally, more Spartan support than Agesilaos’ proclivities would have been necessary for the Peace to have been accepted. For as we know, Spartan kings’ duties were highly circumscribed: they were primarily war-leaders and priests, and Agesilaos is a king characterized by our sources as always cooperating with and seeking the approval of the ephors and Spartiates.⁴⁶ He took pains to not seem domineering, but to appear as a public servant. Further, a cynical attitude toward the Peace and a willingness to be friends with Persians is hard to square with his refusal to accept the Persian King’s friendship after the Peace was concluded.⁴⁷ A broader base of approval of the Peace must be sought.

There is, I think, a better explanation in the demographic decline experienced by the Spartiates in this period, the corresponding rise of the marginal classes such as neodamodeis and mothakes, the increased usage of perioikoi in the Lakedaimonian army, and the presence of only very few Spartiates remaining to enforce Spartiate traditions or ideas upon them. It is not difficult to see why the arrangement of 387 might have appealed to persons not inculcated in the Spartiate “virtues,” or rather why this arrangement might not have horrified anyone enough to speak effectively against it as it did in previous decades.

⁴¹ de Ste. Croix 1962, 161.

⁴² Cawkwell 1976. Thebes-hatred of Agesilaos: X. *H.* 5.1.33, Plut. *Ag.* 26.3.

⁴³ X. *H.* 3.4.3-4.

⁴⁴ Cawkwell 1976, 79.

⁴⁵ Cawkwell 1976, 68.

⁴⁶ Ephors: Plut. *Agesilaos* 4.3. Spartiates: Plut. *Agesilaos* 1.1, 1.2. Cartledge rather typically believes Agesilaos’ obedience to the authorities was purely cynical: 1987, 408.

⁴⁷ Plut. *Agesilaos* 23.6, *Mor.* 213E.

On many campaigns Spartiates were outnumbered, sometimes quite dramatically, by helots and neodamodeis from 424 onward. Brasidas' initial campaign in 424 consisted of 700 Helots and an unknown number of Peloponnesian mercenaries: no Spartiates are specified, although we would presume some came as well.⁴⁸ They join a community of pre-existing neodamodeis in Lepreon in 421.⁴⁹ In 418 at Mantinea, the Lakedaimonian army seems about 5,000 strong, and perhaps half of these are Spartiates: both neodamodeis as well as Brasideioi (who are also helots or neodamodeis) are present too, along with perioikoi.⁵⁰ In 413, six hundred helots and neodamodeis are mustered in the Peloponnesos alongside some thousand allied troops; only one Spartiate is mentioned.⁵¹ The defenders of Syrakousai commanded by a Spartan in 413 are a force of neodamodeis, helots, Corinthians, and a few more. No Spartiate mass is mentioned.⁵² An army mustered by Agis in 413/2 contains 300 neodamodeis led by precisely two Spartiates.⁵³ Thibron takes to Asia in 400/399 a thousand neodamodeis with "four thousand of the rest of the Peloponnesians."⁵⁴ Although more soldiers were added in Asia, 25% of the initial force is significant. In 399, the time of Kinadon's conspiracy, the famous ratio of forty Spartiates to four thousand angry and hostile neodamodeis, hypomeiones, and perioikoi is given; although it is not an expedition, this is the situation in downtown Sparta itself, surely relevant.⁵⁵ Lysander's proposed force to invade Asia in 396 consists of two thousand neodamodeis, six thousand allies, and thirty Spartiates: this seems to have been his ideal force.⁵⁶ At Koroneia in 394, neodamodeis are mentioned with Agesilaos and several others; no numbers are given, as is the case in 370.⁵⁷ These neodamodeis and helots had clearly become a significant force, probably a deciding force, in Spartan foreign policy, and it would be foolish to assume that they were unaware of this. The same is probably true of the perioikoi.

Spartiates used violence to control these groups. The varied forms of discipline performed on the helots have been catalogued in many places.⁵⁸ The neodamodeis cannot have been subject to the same discipline the helots were, or else their promotion would have had little meaning: it is more likely that they gained the status and protections similar to those of the perioikoi. However, in 342 Isokrates in describing the Spartiates' heavy military use of the perioikoi also claimed that perioikoi were subject to summary execution by ephors.⁵⁹ This makes it unlikely that neodamodeis had a tension-free relationship with Spartiates. This is

⁴⁸ Thouk. 4.80.5.

⁴⁹ Thouk. 5.34.1.

⁵⁰ Thouk. 5.67.1.

⁵¹ Thouk. 7.19.3.

⁵² Thouk. 7.58.3.

⁵³ Thouk. 8.5.1.

⁵⁴ X. H. 3.1.4.

⁵⁵ X. H. 3.3.5.

⁵⁶ X. H. 3.4.2.

⁵⁷ X. H. 4.3.15; 3.5.24.

⁵⁸ Cartledge 2002, Appendix 4; Ducat 1990, 108-127.

⁵⁹ Isokrates 12.181.

clined by Kinadon's lumping of them with other groups in Lakedaimon murderously, cannibalistically hostile to the Spartiates.

These three groups were indeed quite different from the Spartiates. They did not have Spartiate intensive training, *kleroi*, rights, privileges, or status. Without these privileges, there is no reason to think they would have felt the compulsion of Spartiate responsibilities, no reason why they would also have developed Spartiate ideals. This is significant when explaining the Lakedaimonian state's acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas. To many traditional Spartiates and to many free Greek citizens of free cities, the Peace was, as we have seen, an abomination: the surrender of fellow Greeks to be subjects of Persia.⁶⁰ This was true particularly after Sparta had entered the war to free the Hellenes.⁶¹ But this distaste is one that is characteristic of free and autonomous people, and these three groups would have had little reason to feel this way. While one might argue that *perioikoi* and *neodamodeis* may have valued their enfranchisement so greatly as to be *especially* horrified at the "enslavement" of the Ionians, it is also true that they these groups had never experienced the generations of personal and municipal autonomy in the absence of which a freeborn Greek, such as a Spartiate, would feel deprivation and horror.

Nothing existed to convince the three groups that there was much reason to risk their lives for the eastern Greeks, only a distant panhellenic ideal. The inscription discussed earlier describing the legal arrangements of a polis under Persian control paints no despotic picture.⁶² And a helot, recently enfranchised or not, or a *perioikos* from a village that supplied the Spartiates with food and goods would likely have disagreed with the idea that paying taxes to someone, fighting in someone else's armies, and exhibiting deference to them, was such a horror and disgrace as to justify risking one's life to fight for the freedom of these far-off people. The Anatolian Greeks and the inhabitants Krete had to pay taxes to Persia now. We have no record of atrocities performed upon them.⁶³ Rather than horrific, this would have been considered amongst helots, *neodamodeis*, and *perioikoi* a rather otiose and abstract point.

Amongst the helots, *neodamodeis*, and *perioikoi* that comprised the vast bulk of the Spartan army, an idealism about independence and civic autonomy could never have developed, in contrast to the idealism that had formed a cornerstone of Spartiate ideology over the past centuries. In the eyes of the helots, paying taxes to Persia and fighting in Persian armies was nothing compared to being a serf, subject to being forced to get drunk as an example for Spartiate boys not to emulate, or to being given a declaration of war yearly, or to having your friends hunted and slain by bands of young Spartiates in the *krypteia*.⁶⁴ Being subject in some way to Persia was probably quite comparable to the municipal arrangements of the *perioikoi*, even in some respects more preferable to their status. Deprivation is relative. *Autonomia* as an idea originated as weaker state's attempt to impose guidelines or principles

⁶⁰ Isok. 4.175; D.S. 15.9; 15.19.

⁶¹ Isok. 4.122, 125.

⁶² RO 16.

⁶³ Isok. 4.123-4 states that Hellenes are compelled to fight in Persian armies, and that barbarians inflict crueller punishments than anyone else; this is all we have.

⁶⁴ The array of humiliations is discussed as a *careful system* in Ducat 1990, 108 – 127.

to restrict stronger states from uninhibited power over them.⁶⁵ The term's looseness can permit even its proponents to relent on an overly strict interpretation of it, let alone persons who are not inspired into enforcing it on idealistic grounds: "a form of *autonomia* can be envisaged which does involve the payment of tribute."⁶⁶ *Autonomia* is a relative term, not an absolute one. Had these groups been able to exert any influence upon Spartan foreign policy, their feelings may well have been made clear.

Lakedaimonian Assemblies at Sparta

It is hard to believe that they had not. Assemblies of Sparta's allies at which policy is decided appear frequently in our sources. Since these included representatives from allies, it is difficult to imagine that careful identity-checking occurred at the entrance to the Assembly meeting place, an entrance which was not physically defined and did not possess a singular threshold over which the entrants walked or were vetted by authorities for their legality of entry. There are also many mentions of *ekklesiai* of the Lakedaimonians alone, without allies.⁶⁷ Assemblies of the Lakedaimonians seem to have been the most important decision-making bodies in the Lakedaimonian state and to have decided on whether to go to war.⁶⁸ Xenophon tells us that as a rule the polis decides where the army is to go, the king being only its commander.⁶⁹ Thucydides records an incident in which the assembly both disagreed with the Spartan officials and decided upon a major military action without their approval.⁷⁰ It is

⁶⁵ Ostwald 1982, 1.

⁶⁶ Ostwald 1982, 7.

⁶⁷ The scholiast on Thouk. 1.67.3 claims that the Assembly met once per full moon. Forrest 1968, 47; de Ste. Croix 1972, 347.

⁶⁸ Argued convincingly in Andrewes 1966 (2002); Kelly 1981. Hamilton 1991, 111 – 113 discusses the decision of the ephors, Assembly, and Agesilaos to accept the betrayal of the Anatolian Greeks, but comes to no conclusions.

⁶⁹ X. *L.P.* 15.2. This seems to be contradicted by Hdt. 6.56 who states that the Spartan kings' prerogatives are "to lead a war against whichever land they should wish, and no one of the Spartiates may block this; if he does, he undergoes a curse" (πόλεμόν γ' ἐκφέρειν ἐπ' ἣν ἂν βούλωνται χώραν, τούτου δὲ μηδένα εἶναι Σπαρτητέων διακωλυτήν, εἰ δὲ μή, αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἄγῃ ἐνέχεσθαι). However, while a single Spartiate perhaps cannot, but the Assembly making its decision *en masse* surely could. Even if some sort of formal power were given to the kings *de jure*, they would *de facto* take the Assemblies' wishes into consideration, including the general wishes of the allies and everyone else who composed the army. Xenophon in a far better position to observe Spartan military practices than Herodotos. Lipka *ad loc.* concludes that "it is most likely that Herodotus here – as in other passages, e.g. 7.206.1 – chose his words sloppily. In fact, the civic assembly declared war and thus formally sanctioned the dispatch of the army, but after the call-up by the ephors (cf. [X. *L.P.*] 11.2[1]) the king was in charge of all military details, including the time, duration, and execution of the campaign." (Lipka 237-238.)

⁷⁰ Thouk. 6.88.10: in 415/4, the Corinthians, Syrakousians, and Alkibiades at the *ekklesia* "of the Lakedaimonians" strove to convince the Lakedaimonians to send aid to Syrakousai even though the ephors and "those in office" (τῶν ἐν τέλει ὄντων) did not wish to send

the assembly of the Lakedaimonians that makes decisions – eleven in the period 431 – 371, the majority of them highly significant, often after extensive presentation of views by proponents of opposing views plus argumentation.⁷¹ The *gerousia* in contrast is recorded in the historians as deciding on very little: in fact, it is never mentioned in Thoukydides at all, and only once in Xenophon, at the Kinadon conspiracy.⁷²

In general, we would expect that citizens in good standing were allowed in the Assemblies of most Greek poleis. However, *neodamodeis* literally means “newly-minted citizens,” and the *perioikoi* were citizens of the Lakedaimonian state. At no point does Thoukydides state that even the Lakedaimonian Assembly (that is, the one without allies) only contained Spartiates and barred *perioikoi* or *neodamodeis*, although it surely did not include helots.⁷³ Nothing tells us that the identification of entrants was checked. When it comes to assemblies with allies present, even fewer restrictions can be asserted. Plutarch’s statement that only persons thirty years of age or over could go into the *agora* refers to the *agora* in its marketplace function, not its political assembly function.⁷⁴ The Lakedaimonians practiced voting by acclamation.⁷⁵ This fact vitiates any notion that tight controls existed over voting in Sparta. As in the Roman Forum, crowd reaction surely determined public policy significantly.⁷⁶

Xenophon also fails to limit the Lakedaimonian *ekklesia* to Spartiates.⁷⁷ And in one passage he specifies the existence of a smaller, special *ekklesia* whose existence would cast

more than envoys to Syrakousai; in 6.93.1, the “Lakedaimonians” were persuaded by Alkibiades to send actual military help. In Thouk. 7.18.1, the expedition was sent, and no mention of the ephors changing their mind to agree with the “Lakedaimonians” is given.

⁷¹ Andrewes 1966 (2002, 55).

⁷² Andrewes 1966 (2002, 52 - 54).

⁷³ 432: an assembly of allies at Sparta (1.67 – 1.71). The Athenians address the assembly of *Lakedaimonians* at 1.72. At 1.79 the *Lakedaimonians*, at the assembly of allies plus Lakedaimonians, have listened to the Athenians, then cause the allies withdraw and discuss by themselves their options. 1.80-85: Arkhidamos and the *Gerousia* cannot convince the assembly to oppose war against Athens. 1.85.3 and 1.87.1: an ἐκκλησία τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων. 1.119.1: a meeting of allies is called at Sparta. 431: Sparta and Peloponnesian allies assemble at Isthmus (2.10.1-3). 418/417 when the *ekklesia* of the Lakedaimonians resolve to arrange a peace treaty plus defensive alliance with the Argives (5.77). 412: Peloponnesian allies assemble at Korinth in 412 and set Peloponnesian League policy (8.82). 415 when Alkibiades, the Korinthians, and the Syrakousans speak at Sparta ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων (6.88 – 92).

⁷⁴ Plut. *Lyk.* 25. De Ste. Croix 1972, 347.

⁷⁵ Thouk. 1.87.1-2.

⁷⁶ Morstein-Marx 2004, 119ff discusses the dependency of orators at the Roman Forum upon the reactions of the crowd.

⁷⁷ Xenophon speaks of an *ekklesia* at Sparta in 404 (*H.* 2.2.19f) at which “Lakedaimonians” resist allied demands. In 403, there is no specified limitation to Spartiates (2.4.38), nor in 399 BC when the ephors and the *ekklesia* argue that the Eleians’ *perioikic* towns should be *autonomoi* (3.2.23). In 389, the ephors and the *ekklesia* resolve to wage war alongside the

into better relief the function of the normal assembly. This is only mentioned in one place in all of Greek or Roman literature; and it is here, in the work of a bicultural foreigner like Xenophon with close knowledge of, and access to, Lakedaimonian institutions where we would expect to find it. When the ephors take urgent steps to quash the Kinadon conspiracy, they “do not even bother to summon what is called the Little Assembly.”⁷⁸ The contrast between this *μικρὰ ἐκκλησία* and the normal assembly of the Lakedaimonians has never been explained by any author ancient or modern. I wish to suggest here that the Little Assembly was an assembly consisting solely of Spartiates, perhaps convened only in emergencies. By contrast, the larger Lakedaimonian Assembly would have included persons outside the aristocracy, that is, citizens of the Lakedaimonian state in good standing who were not Spartiates: *neodamodeis* and *perioikoi*.

A last consideration supports the notion that some *neodamodeis*, at least, were permitted to attend the “Assembly of the Lakedaimonians.” It is the question of where the *neodamodeis* lived who had not been settled outside of Sparta town. When a helot became a *neodamodes* we generally assume he was treated like a *perioikos*. The *perioikoi* had their own assemblies and magistrates in their own towns. The settlement of *neodamodeis* at Lepreon probably resembled this arrangement.⁷⁹ But there were also emancipated helots who had been used in domestic service in Sparta. These did not have other towns in which to live. It is probably fair to assume that they remained in Sparta. If so, it is fair to assume that they attended the “Assembly of the Lakedaimonians.” The word “Spartans” is improperly and imprecisely used in most English translations for *Lakedaimonioi*; but the latter word of course also includes non-Spartiates. While it is hard to imagine that the holders of a tradition as exclusive as the Spartiates had always warmly welcomed those they had thought of as their lessers, it is also hard to imagine that these assemblies, even the ones at which allies were not present, would in the fourth century be restricted to the miserable number of 1000-1500 or so Spartiates minus the many abroad in garrisons, doing harmost duty, manning ships, and fighting in Anatolia, Greece, and elsewhere. We have little idea of the agora in Sparta being a sacred or private space from which non-Spartiates were banned – or, even if they were banned, if the ban was enforceable.

Finally, another consideration is very important even if one does not agree with these arguments, and even if there were absolutely no non-Spartiates voting or present in the

Akhaians against the Akarnanians (4.6.3): as the Akhaians and other allies are specified as going out, this seems a fine time for allies to be present in the decision-making process, regardless of whether their votes were weighed as 100% equal to a Spartiate vote. In 382 envoys from Akanthos and Apollonia discuss Olynthos’ aims to enlarge its scope (5.2.11 and 5.2.20). In 383 Leontiades in 383 tells the “Lakedaimonians” that they should take over Thebes (5.2.33). In 375 Polydamas of Pharsalos comes *πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων* (6.1.2). In 371 before Leuktra, three Athenian orators expressing fear of Thebes speak *ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐκκλήτους τε τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ τοὺς συμμάχους* (6.3.3). In 371 immediately before Leuktra, the “assembly” (members unspecified) rejects Prothous’ advice and order King Kleombrotos to attack the Thebans (6.4.3).

⁷⁸ X. H. 3.3.8.

⁷⁹ Thouk. 5.34.1.

“Assemblies of the Lakedaimonians” at which allies were not present. During a period of heavy population shortage, it is hard to imagine that the leaders in Spartiate society would not realize that at this point non-Spartiates’ wishes needed to be taken into account simply in order to at least secure a reasonable amount of cooperation from persons in the Lakedaimonian armies. We see easing and modifications conducted by Agesilaos twice: once, he relaxed the normal punishment for one marginal group, the *tresantes* or tremblers after Leuktra in 371.⁸⁰ In another instance, he oversaw the change in Sparta’s treatment of its allies, making this treatment more kindly or φιλανθρωπῶς.⁸¹ The Spartiates were accustomed to taking the allies’ opinions into consideration in war decisions, and seem to have given their allies very formal and substantial voting privileges. It is implausible that perioikoi and neodamodeis would have no input at all, especially when their assistance was so important. A willingness to fight for a state often comes only when accompanied by some political stake in that fight: it is unlikely that even second-class forms of citizenship would come without some mechanism for their holders’ input into large policy decisions, particularly those that directly endanger or enrich them.

This brings us back to the acceptance of the Peace and the lack of objections to it. No analogue to Kallikratidas’ forceful outburst against Lysander’s philopersianism in 406, which he had probably seen as medism, nor one to Likhas’ words about the treaties of the 412 period similarly castigated the Peace of Antalkidas.⁸² This absence, and indeed, the fact that the Peace was named after a Spartiate tells us two things: first, how few Spartiates keeping to traditional Kallikratidean ideals remained alive in 387; and second, how little the remaining non-Spartiate Lakedaimonians possessed a panhellenic opposition to Persian rule over other Greeks. Without a Lysander willing to invade Persia, and as long as Agesilaos could not invade Persia, the Peace (rather sensibly, one could argue) split the Aegean world into a Spartan half and a Persian half. This cannot have failed to be visible to the neodamodeis and perioikoi who would have never had much reason to share in the Spartiate ideals of panhellenic obligation to fight Persia for distant Greeks.

When Lakedaimonian forces moved north through the Peloponnesos to Thebes and up to Olynthos in the 380s, this attracted Diodoros’ comment that “the Lakedaimonians had given their constant attention to securing a large population and practice in the use of arms, and so became an object of terror to all because of the strength of its hegemony,” Οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τῆς τε πολυανθρωπίας καὶ τῆς ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις μελέτης πολλὴν πρόνοιαν ἐπεποίηοντο, καὶ φοβεροὶ πᾶσιν ὑπῆρχον διὰ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἡγεμονίας.⁸³ In this sentence he used the term “Lakedaimonian” to mean not the Spartiates, but the perioikoi, neodamodeis, military helots, and perhaps the other marginal classes. For as we have seen his use of the term *polyanthropia*, meaning “large population,” cannot have meant the Spartiates. The numbers of the marginal classes were great, unlike the Spartiates, and it is only due to their great numbers that the Lakedaimonian empire was possible. But as we have seen at Leuktra, their assimilation was not complete enough to continue Sparta’s success; nor, as we

⁸⁰ Plut. *Agesilaos* 30.4.

⁸¹ Diodoros 15.31.1.

⁸² de Ste. Croix 1972, 161.

⁸³ D. S. 15.23.4.

have seen in their failure to stand against the Peace of Antalkidas, to save Sparta's reputation as a defender of Hellene freedom.

Conclusions

The set of institutions, customs, and attitudes that had developed into what can be thought of fairly accurately as a relatively stable, "traditional" Spartiate culture was not conducive to larger-scale empire. It was suitable to a set of power relations comprised of unequal alliances in the Peloponnesos, deference from other states in Greece, and a base of subordinate and dependent populations whose labor and obedience allowed the aristocratic Spartiate way of life to continue. The portion of these institutions that regulated home life was capable of increasing Spartiate population in the Archaic period but incapable of weathering the deaths due to the earthquake of the 460s. And the changes to the institutions were forced into existence in order to compete effectively in the Peloponnesian War. But the peculiar system was already endangered because the ratio of traditional Spartiates in the decision-making populace had diminished after the 460s.

This change permitted more freedom of action to ambitious persons in the Spartan power structure, most notably Lysander, simply because the number of traditional Spartiates left to object to the ways in which his administration contradicted Spartiate mores kept diminishing: the critical mass necessary to stop him was almost absent. Empire was thus a response to Spartiate population decline. Lysander expanded the new Peloponnesian War- created administrative structures, staffed his armies and administrative structure with a large number of non-Spartiates, and attempted a real empire – an *arkhe* rather than a *hegemonia*. Although this process could have worked, considering the change in population, some last threads of the older Spartiate ideology stopped Lysander. The persons inculcated in Sparta's peculiar traditional values continued to decline, and with a few exceptions such as Likhas and Kallikratidas, there were not many left to engage in an effective "culture war" at Sparta against persons advocating a cooperation with Persia that, contrary to Spartiate norms, involved the betrayal of the Anatolian Greeks. The final evidence for the decline of the traditional Spartiates is the battle of Leuktra which removed Sparta from international power forever.

The promotion of people into the ranks of Lakedaimonians who had not undergone inculcation into Spartiate values and ideals is most clearly visible in fourth century literary sources which attest to a great change in the character of the Lakedaimonians. These literary sources must be taken more seriously than as discourses comprised of arbitrary topoi; we should assume that often what their writers described was, with some allowance for personal ideology, what they saw. Even if they contain topoi, this does not mean that the topoi are not accurate. P. J. Rhodes already in 1994 demolished what he called "the 'only a topos' fallacy," a fallacy stating that a statement's truth value need not be judged against other evidence once a reader decides that it is a conventional remark. The fact that a remark about a group has entered the halls of convention, such as "this group has changed," does not mean that it is not reasonably accurate.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Rhodes 1994, 157 – 158.

We should not blithely take our sources at face value, but neither should we indulge in the over-cynicism about mirages, images, ideologies, and self-presentation that has become popular of late. The "Spartan mirage" should be thought of not as a Spartan hallucination, but as a Spartan ideal that was taken seriously and that produced strong reactions when violated, as we see in the persons of Likhias, Kallikratidas, and at times Agesilaos. When Xenophon and other writers of the period asserted that they saw a change in the culture of the Lakedaimonians, we should take it to mean that some actual change occurred that was visible to him over their lifetime.

Whether the Spartiates continued as a powerful political group or not is of zero *moral* interest, and so we need not consider this change philosophically as a "moral decline" as Xenophon may have it. But what Xenophon was grasping at and what he described in rather moralistic terms was his interpretation of a change. His interpretation may have been moralistic; but just because it was, and just because it is in some circles ideologically suspect to think that an incoming group of people may be different than those whom they replaced, or more generally, that two population groups may differ from each other in non-trivial respects, does not mean that no change occurred. It is difficult to imagine why a discourse of decline would have arisen in the first place at the precise moment when we see an immense shift in the demographics of the Spartiates, yet have nothing to do with this shift. It is much more plausible that his description of this change in mores was linked to a proven demographic shift than that it was not.

Another story could equally be told about the Lakedaimonian population change and its accompanying change in culture, an optimistic story about new opportunities afforded to individuals in Lakedaimon outside of the old Spartiate families. Their failure to protest the arrangement of 387 should be seen then as a reasonable and realistic appreciation of the changing political dynamics of the era, rather than as a moral decline. Their enfranchisement spelled the end of the system of humiliations chronicled in Ducat's work on the helots. These new families' fortunes may have risen rather than experiencing slow patriline extinction as had many Spartiate families, and their men experienced a degree of autonomy heretofore unknown to their families.

However, the fact remains that after the dissolution of the Peloponnesian League, Sparta as a state was no longer capable of stable power despite a few brief efflorescences and rather desperate attempts to use enfranchisement and population-manipulation to increase the base of human capital and raise Sparta to greatness again. Narratives and analyses of these efforts are given in the next chapter.

Chapter 7
ὥσπερ ὁρμονίαν ἐκλελυμένην
Hellenistic Attempts to Reform the Lykourgan Regime

Introduction

The decline of the Spartiate population and its failure to recover determined the foreign policy options of the Spartan state from the late fifth century onward. In addition to cultural constraints producing sub-replacement fertility, the liberation of Messenia in the 360s freed a majority of Helots, reducing Sparta's economy, subject population, and consequently the size of Sparta's aristocratic caste, the Spartiates.¹ The foundation of a power center at Megalopolis and the rise of what may be termed ethnic consciousness in the Peloponnesos during the fourth century also hampered Spartan efforts to annex and to lead other Peloponnesian populations.² The Hellenistic period (323 – 31 BC) saw three reformers attempt to regenerate Sparta's population and hence state power by replenishing its citizen body and reorganizing important aspects of its economy. These were Agis (244–241), Kleomenes (235–222), and Nabis (207–192). Each had to balance present-day needs dictated by the political and military context external to Sparta with deference to the ideals of the caste-bound and eugenically-minded Lykourgan regime that still structured Spartiate group identity. The pertinent events begin where the last chapter left off, in the late 360s, and continue to the early second century BC.

This chapter differs from other analyses of the period by focusing on the eugenic aspects of each reformer's program. Agis' reform efforts, for which he crafted a convincing oracular and Lykourgan imprimatur, clung closely to ancient Spartan eugenic obsessions. Kleomenes achieved a potentially very successful formula: a reasonable compromise between certain prevailing Hellenistic Greek population practices outside Sparta and the preservation of the cultural system that had, despite its flaws, kept Spartan society intact. He accomplished this through an economic reform and by naturalization of non-Spartiates selected on a eugenic basis. His formula succeeded dramatically and was only stopped by an unfortunate military coincidence involving a slightly early message to return to Makedon. Nabis' reforms broke free of Spartiate eugenic *nomoi*, but also of other prevailing Greek *nomoi* to such an extent as to horrify his contemporaries and later writers and to dismantle the aristocratic regime of the Spartiates, and in his reign the Spartiate system was altered until it lost most of its uniqueness and came to resemble that of other Greek states.

After Mantinea

The miserable number of Spartiates remaining after Leuktra and their inability to regenerate their numbers ensured that Sparta as a state remained relatively quiescent in the

¹ Messenia had more Helots than Lakonia did: Thouk. 1.101.2.

² Generally, the essays in Funke and Luraghi (eds.) 2009.

fourth century after the depredations of the Thebans. Its reputation rather than its manpower defended it from foreign attack, and that only fitfully, after this point. Its aged Eurypontid king Agesilaos II (445 – 359 BC) and his son Arkhidamos engaged in mercenary work abroad. It has been argued that Sparta only seems positively weak in comparison with its power in the Archaic and Classical periods.³ Yet the Spartan refusal to join the Athenian-Boiotian alliance against Philip of Makedon was surely conditioned by its lack of political influence and manpower, as was Sparta's failure to resist Philip after 338 when, probably after negotiation, Philip ravaged Lakonia and gave away its border regions to his allies.⁴

In this same year, Agesilaos' son Arkhidamos, the king from the Eurypontid house, had died on a mercenary expedition in Italy. Sparta offended Philip by failing to welcome him, and Philip desired to preserve a balance of power in the Peloponnesos by hampering Sparta and aiding smaller states, particularly those who had aided him or expressed agreement with him. This led to a further reduction to Sparta's territory. Philip gave Kynouria, which had been fought over by Sparta and Argos for generations, to Argos, Skiritis to Arkadia, and Dentheliatis to Messenia.⁵ This expropriation of property further crippled the Spartan state and hampered Sparta's ability to support more hoplites.⁶ A vicious circle had been created: lack of population prevented Sparta from defending itself from people like Philip, who took Spartan land, making it even less capable of supporting hoplites.

Some five years later in 333, while the Makedonians and their Greek allies attacked Persia in a panhellenic alliance that Sparta had refrained from entering, the Eurypontid king Agis III (grandson of the great Agesilaos II) began parleying with Dareios III.⁷ Agis led 8,000 mercenaries who had escaped the Battle of Issos, received money from the

³ Shipley 2007.

⁴ Negotiations: Roebuck 1948, Worthington 2008. IG IV (2) 1, 128, ll. 57 - 79 the Isyllos inscription from the 280s, gives an alternate account: Philip tried to dismantle the Spartan politeia and destroy the kingship and was repelled by the god Asklepios. Marasco 1980, 58. Philip II's invasion of Lakodaimon: Polyb. 18.14; 9.28, 9.33; Plutarch, *Apophthegmata Lakonika* 218E (Arkhidamos 1), 233E (28), 235B (53), Pausanias 5.4.9. Also see Roebuck 1948, 86 for Isyllos' poetry mentioning this invasion, *ibid* 84 note 87; 87 note 106 for more sources. Border regions: Polybios 9.28.

⁵ Plasticity of Kynouria's putative ethnicity: Hdt. 8.73.3, Paus. 3.2.2; cf. Hall 1997, 34, 40, 67; 2007, 171. Given to Argos: Roebuck 1948, 84f with references. Dentheliatis is earliest mentioned in Spartan literature as a grape-growing region in Alkman frag. 92. Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 317.

⁶ Some of this territory was perioikic, some farmed by helots, and precisely who farmed what is unknowable. Either way, its removal lowered the number of hoplites that Sparta could field: the perioikic parts supported perioikoi who served in Spartan military expeditions, and the parts farmed by helots were owned by Spartiates, who used the produce to support themselves. Kynouria, a somewhat ambiguously defined area, contained the perioikic poleis Anthana (*IACP* #324), Prasiai (*IACP* #342) and Thyrea (*IACP* #346). Skiritis possessed only one known settlement, the village Oion or Oios (*IACP* #339; attested as a polis after the fourth century) but no presently known polis; however, it seems to have been a regional ethnic, and the name's possessors held the privileged left wing of the Lakodaimonian army (the Spartiates, of course, held the right). Its loss would have been especially painful militarily (*IACP* p. 577f). Dentheliatis probably included the perioikic polis of Kardamyle (*IACP* #315).

⁷ Sparta's abstention from accepting Philip's supremacy: Rhodes and Osborne 76; Arrian 1.16.7, Justin 9.5.3, Plutarch *Alexander* 16.18; D.S. 17.3.4-5 confused Arkadians and Lakodaimonians, as has long been known.

Persian King or from Pharnabazos, and took over most of Crete for Persia.⁸ According to Arrian, Alexander the Great himself complained in a letter of these years to Dareios III that the Lakedaimonians alone of all Greeks had accepted money from the Persians.⁹ Agis's brother Agesilaos received thirty talents and ten warships in the anti-Makedonian struggle, and significantly used as a base Tainaron, a mercenary hiring market: we can imagine the hypomeiones, the perioikoi, and neodamodeis coming here to find mercenary work alongside the escaped helots who had traditionally found refuge at the sanctuary of Poseidon.¹⁰

Sparta's citizen numbers, probably only a thousand at this point, meant that Sparta needed an alliance more than ever before. This helps explain the Eurypontid royal brothers' arrangement with Dareios, which was an exception to what has been characterized in Chapter 4 as a general Spartan philhellenic and anti-medizing sentiment normal for the classical period. But this should not be thought to negate the reality of an earlier distaste for medizing. More importantly perhaps, the Persians had by this time, through increased familiarity with Sparta, become less strange and less threatening than the newly powerful enemy of Makedon. Surely useful contacts had come about through the associations both hostile and friendly that the brothers' grandfather Agesilaos II had made with Persians of various sorts in his invasion of Anatolia in the very early fourth century and in the mercenary work he had undertaken in his old age after Leuktra.

Further demographic loss followed, both general and elite. First, 5,300 "Lakedaimonians and their allies" died in 331 or 330, after Agis III had recruited a huge, mostly Peloponnesian army against Antipater's larger army and fought it outside Megalopolis. Second, Agis himself died in this battle. Sparta devolved from mediocre to insignificant.¹¹ Third, Antipater took fifty Spartiates hostage to ensure Sparta's goodwill and compliance toward his regime. In gross Spartiate numbers, assuming a Spartiate total population of 700 – 1000 men,¹² the percentage of Spartiates held hostage by Antipater was only 5% - 7% -- a rather insignificant number. However, these were "fifty of the most eminent Spartiates."¹³ If something similar to the demographic situation described in Plutarch's *Agis* 5.3-4 was in existence this early, then only some 100 Spartiates *in toto* held land and a kleros. Antipater would then have taken as hostage a staggering 50% of these men and presumably their families, a crippling drop in the reproductive potential of Sparta's bloodlines wherein the highest human, social, and economic capital had been concentrated for centuries.

The loss of Agis and these "fifty of the most eminent Spartiates" must be reckoned in more than numbers and in more than money and cultural capital, though. If the Spartiate

⁸ D.S. 17.48.1-2 (Dareios III); Arrian 2.13.4-5 (Pharnabazos); Briant 2002, 832.

⁹ Arrian 2.14.6. Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 20 – 21 date this plausibly to the moment after Alexander's victory in the battle of Issos in Kilikia in autumn/early winter 333.

¹⁰ Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 21. On Agis III's revolt against Alexander the Great, cf. Burn 1952, Badian 1967, Cawkwell 1969, Ste. Croix 1972, Bosworth 1975, McQueen 1978, David 1981, 106-116, Potter 1984. Aiskhines 3.165, Deinarkhos 1.34, D. S. 17.48, 17.62f.

¹¹ D. S. 17.63.3.

¹² Aristotle *Pol.* 1278a31.

¹³ τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν πεντήκοντα, D.S. 17.73.5.

program of directed reproduction had resulted in heritable effects – or in what were seen as heritable effects – in these very high-ranking families who had certainly had the best reproductive partners for many generations, we would expect this group to be thought of as particularly, visibly valuable. Even if the dire social polarization described in Plutarch's *Life of Agis* had not yet occurred, we probably must still assume that the total number of *epiphanestatoi* in Sparta was only a relatively small percentage of the total Spartiates. Indeed, the use of the superlative naturally suggests this. Lastly, not only did Spartiate losses put limits on the possibilities for Spartan foreign policy, but losses of perioikoi and available allies did, as well. That the law disenfranchising cowards from Spartiate status had to be relaxed again after the battle against Antipater, as it had after Leuktra, indicates that the Spartiate population was again dangerously low.¹⁴

The period of the Lamian war (323 – 322) demonstrated once again how Sparta's population greatly influenced if not decisively determined its foreign policy. Again, Sparta's neutrality in the face of Makedon during this period was necessitated not only by Sparta's necessary posture of conciliation toward Makedon, but also by its missing aristocrats and dead allies from Megalopolis. Another measure of its reduced capacity occurred in 317: in response to a proposed invasion by the Makedonian monarch Kassandros, a palisade and ditch was built around Sparta, the first fortifications ever built by a city that had prided itself in the Classical period for not needing these.¹⁵

Sparta remained relatively quiescent until the reign of Areus, king of Sparta's Agiad house, the first effective person of vision to rule Sparta since the 360s.¹⁶ Although reigning from 309 – 265, Areus only became truly powerful starting in 281 upon a war to liberate Delphi from Aitolian and Makedonian control and thus stabilize Spartan influence there.¹⁷ An invasion into Makedon by Kelts in 280 provided an opportunity to create and lead a Peloponnesian coalition. Lakedaimonian casualties were severe, as a polyandreion at Delphi shows.¹⁸ It is probable that only the Keltic invasion distracted Makedon from reprisals against Lakonia.¹⁹

Areus' action or inaction intensified the breakdown of the ancestral Spartiate cultural system, in Phylarkhos' words, the "ancestral ethos," πάτριον ἦθος. Phylarkhos perhaps exaggeratedly states that Areus and his son Akrotatos, zealous to mimic life in Persian courts, introduced sweets, exotic delicacies, wines, sauces, foreign perfumes, other luxuries, and large soft pillows to the mess-halls, attendance to which was no longer enforced to begin with.²⁰ Diodoros states something similar for Akrotatos at Akragas, who

¹⁴ D.S. 19.70.5. Cf. Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 317.

¹⁵ Justin 14.5.5-7 describes the issues well; Shipley 2007, 56 argues that it may be "a sign of collective determination," not "an abandonment of traditional values."

¹⁶ Marasco 1980; cf. Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, chapter 3; Thommen 2003, ch. 14.

¹⁷ Justin 24.1. Marasco 1980, 71; David 1981, 125; Piper 1986, 15 quite exaggerates the size of Areus' coalition; Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 32.

¹⁸ Polyandreion: *Syll.*(3) 36, lines 23 and following; *Syll.*(3) 826E, col. 3, line 32; Marasco 1980, 72 note 28; Bradford 1977 *s.v.* Aristokleidas, Kleosimenes, Phabennas, Kerkidas, Pratonikos. Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 32.

¹⁹ Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 32.

²⁰ Phylarkhos *apud* Athenaios *Deipnosophistai* 4.141F – 142C.

had “abandoned his native manner of living and devoted himself so unrestrainedly to pleasure that he seemed to be a Persian and not a Spartan.”²¹ This is dismissed by some scholars as a rhetorical topos on the basis of Phylarkhos’ approval of Kleomenes III which would have strengthened his criticism of Kleomenes’ predecessors.²² Its basic thrust should not be, for it illustrates an important theme in Hellenistic Sparta for which much corroborating evidence exists: namely, the tension between preserving (or reviving) an austere, isolationist Lykourgan *kosmos* and acting in ways that would win the respect and camaraderie of Hellenistic kings in the new, cosmopolitan world.

This tension is visible in Areus’ minting of coins, Sparta’s first state-issued denomination, around 280, showing Areus’ head.²³ The coins were not primarily intended for use within Sparta, but as a mass media advertisement of Areus’ royal power for outside consumption.²⁴ The tension appears in Sparta’s first theater, probably built under Areus with Ptolemaic funds, and in the Areus statue portraits at Delphi.²⁵ The period’s numismatic and artistic elevation of Herakles instead of the Dioskouroi has been argued to suggest monarchy over traditional Spartiate dyarchy; this includes Areus’ silver tetradrachms issued in 267-265 to pay mercenaries which ignored his colleague Eudamidas II.²⁶ This notion is strengthened in the term “King Areus and the Spartans” appearing in Maccabees I, a phrasal construction typical of Hellenistic kings and announcing their personal power. Suspicions of fictitiousness of this nomenclature are weakened by the inscribed Athenian decree of 268/7 proposed by Khremonides, enemy of Makedon: it declares Athens’ alliance with Ptolemy and Sparta but significantly utilizes the term “The Lakedaimonians and Areus.”²⁷ The alliance with Ptolemy led to the Khremonidian War in 265, in which Areus was killed; five years later Megalopolitans killed his son Akrotatos.

The Breakdown of the Lykourgan Eunomia

Evidence is poor for the chronology of the period between Akrotatos’ death and the rise of the next Eurypontid king Agis IV in 244 and will not be dwelt upon here. Our most complete source for the economic background to Agis’ reforms is Plutarch’s *Life of Agis*. The work has inspired some severe skepticism which seems unwarranted. It is probable that the basic outline of the story, apart from novelistic details, is reasonably accurate, because Plutarch relied on Phylarkhos, the third-century historian and continuator of Hieronymos of Kardia and Duris of Samos.²⁸ Although Phylarkhos was criticized severely

²¹ D.S. 19.71.3.

²² Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 35. Polybios 2.56.

²³ Forrest 1968, 142 rightly contrasts the personal hubris of such acts with the censure Pausanias suffered upon declaring his personal responsibility for the victory at Plataia in Thouk. 1.132. Clearly Areus’ freedom from censure indicates changing times.

²⁴ Nicely argued in Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 35 in semiotic terms.

²⁵ Palagia 2006.

²⁶ Palagia 2006.

²⁷ *Staatsverträge* 476.

²⁸ Criticism: notably Schütrumpf 1987. For a less extreme stance, Jones 2008, 40: “Rather than throw the baby out with the bathwater, the present writer’s policy is to accept the gist of these ancient traditions but to remain agnostic concerning specific details.”

by Polybios, his knowledge of Agis' and Kleomenes' attempts to reconstitute the Spartan *kosmos* is of great importance and is the most detailed that we possess.²⁹ As a background to the Eurypontid king's plan to regenerate the Spartiate population and his motives for doing so, Plutarch compactly assesses the onset of the breakdown of the Spartiate regime.

Ἀρχὴν μὲν οὖν διαφθορᾶς καὶ τοῦ νοσεῖν ἔσχε τὰ πράγματα τῶν
Λακεδαιμονίων σχεδὸν ἀφ' οὗ τὴν Ἀθηναίων καταλύσαντες ἡγεμονίαν
χρυσίου τε καὶ ἀργυρίου κατέπλησαν ἑαυτούς. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν
οἴκων ὃν ὁ Λυκοῦργος ὥρισε φυλλαπτόντων ἀριθμὸν ἐν ταῖς διαδοχαῖς,
καὶ πατρὸς παιδὶ τὸν κλῆρον ἀπολείποντος, ἀμῶς γέ πως ἡ τάξις αὕτη
καὶ ισότης διαμένονσα τὴν πόλιν ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνέφερεν
ἀμαρτημάτων.³⁰

The affairs of the Lakedaimonians indeed first took on a quality of ruin and sickness hard upon the moment from which, after having destroyed the hegemony of the Athenians, they glutted themselves upon gold and silver. Nevertheless, as long as the households of which Lykourgos had assigned a specific number remained safe in the hands of their inheritors, and as long as father passed on his *kleros* to son, in some way or other as long as this same regime and equality both persisted, they kept the *polis* away from other failings.

Critiques against the essential accuracy of this passage are possible. First, one may see the notion that money brings disaster as too much of a commonplace or cliché to carry much truth. Yet Lysander's ferrying of loot to Sparta late in the Peloponnesian War surely coincided chronologically with the worst population downfall that Sparta experienced, even if the precise relation of causality remains debatable; and in the passage, Plutarch does not even claim causality, only correlation. Second, the notion that a father passed his *kleros* to his son can be questioned: it may sound as though Plutarch is here asserting that one son (presumably the firstborn) would inherit the *kleros* that his father previously had possessed, so Plutarch can be criticized for not mentioning female inheritance of property, whereas Aristotle asserted that two-fifths of Lakedaimonian land was owned by females. But Aristotle's remark does not prove that daughters automatically, by law, inherited land as Hodkinson believes.³¹ However, Plutarch does not say "firstborn" in the passage, and besides this, he surely deserves some leeway for poetic or literary expression of social

²⁹ Polybios 2.56; Africa 1961, 27; Plut. *Aratos* 38.8.

³⁰ Plut. *Agis* 5.1.

³¹ Aristotle 2.1270a24. Hodkinson 1986, 2000.

processes. And it is probable that generally a *kleros* ended up in the hands of a firstborn son, whether or not it was publicly owned.³²

Plutarch next tells us that the ephor Epitadeus enacted a *rhētra* legalizing the alienation of property. This *rhētra* has become vexed in Spartan scholarship.³³ According to Plutarch, through this *rhētra* a living man now was legally permitted to give his house and his *kleros* away to whomever he wished, or to assign them to someone else in his will. In the narrative, this act seems shortly to follow Sparta's victory over Athens, although its effects are not recorded as having occurred until the Hellenistic period: presumably this amount of time was required for the damage to be noticeable.³⁴ If it reflects an actual law, it must have accompanied a weakening of the traditional Spartiate disapproval of selling property.³⁵ And the juncture for this weakening should most plausibly be placed immediately after the Peloponnesian War, when unaccustomed wealth flowed into Sparta, and presumably more buying and selling of various goods and services, including property, accompanied it.

The social inequity related by Plutarch is best explained by an influx of money in the late fifth/early fourth century accompanied by, as Plutarch thinks, a new law permitting free disposal of *kleroi* in this period. By the third century, presumably some Spartiates would end up with collections of *kleroi* and large estates, and some with few or none:

³² Hodkinson's family composition distribution table (1986, 29) reveals that 31.53% of a putative Spartiate group had only one surviving son anyway; another 34% had only two. It is thus entirely plausible that Plutarch was broadly accurate. The debate on *kleros* ownership, with all references, is in Hodkinson 2000, Chapter 3. The *communis opinio* has been on Hodkinson's side for almost a generation, that an original distribution of land to the Spartiates, making them equal (*homoioi*) never happened. Hodkinson believes that the existence of very rich and very poor Spartiates attested from the Classical period onward indicates that no equality ever occurred and that the Spartiates practiced universal female inheritance based upon a reference in Aristotle (*Pol.* 2.1270a24). Figueira, a holdout, thinks a land-division probably occurred. The issue is presently a *non liquet*.

³³ Plut. *Agis* 5.2. There is great debate on the authenticity of the *rhētra* of Epitadeus. It seems best to fit an early fourth-century context for reasons I discuss in the text, below. Figueira 1986, 194-5 and MacDowell 1986, 105 see Epitadeus' *rhētra* as occurring in the 430s or 420s in order (it seems) to identify Epitadeus with Epitadas son of Molobros, who died at Sphakteria in 425 (Thuc. 4.8.9); but as Schütrumpf 1987, 451 note 48 observes, Plutarch's account surely seems to place this *rhētra* after 404. MacDowell even after stating that the sequence is clear, argues that the date is not clear (104f). Michell 1952, 215 - 219 supports the *rhētra*'s authenticity. Oliva 1971, 189 - 191 gives a historiographical survey of scholarly thought on the identities of these individuals before 1971, and Schütrumpf 1987, 445f does so for the period up to 1987. Also see Poralla-Bradford 1985, 52 and MacDowell 1986, 99 - 110. Schütrumpf 1987 thinks it "a mere fiction in a Platonic spirit and is therefore historically useless" (447). This notion is hard to reconcile with Aristotle *Pol.* 1270B19-21 which seems to reference it (Marasco 1983, 212), but Schütrumpf thinks Plutarch's discussion of it is modeled on the Aristotle passage. Some scholars think that Aristotle attributes the law to Lykourgos, rather than to a later legislator, but MacDowell 1986 argues fairly convincingly against this interpretation on 103; it is also highly possible that Aristotle did mean that Lykourgos had made this law, and Epitadeus, a real person, used this ancient legend about Lykourgos to be able to claim that he was reviving a Lykourgan law. Cartledge 2002, 144 - 147 gives a compromise position; Hodkinson 2000, 90 - 94 argues against its authenticity. Cf. also Toynbee 1969, 337- 342.

³⁴ This is why discussion of it is included here rather than in previous chapters.

³⁵ Spartiate *nomoi* against selling: in Aristotle *Pol.* 1279a19-20 it is οὐ καλὸν to sell one's estate, but giving it away is acceptable in 21-22 immediately following. Cf. Plut. *Moralia* 238F (*Instituta Laconica* 22).

either their ascendants sold their *kleroi* and estates, or they did this on their own. This timing makes sense: for if we instead imagined these sales occurring before the Peloponnesian War, when the private use of money was (probably) forbidden in Sparta, then the pressures causing these sales would be rather unclear.³⁶

Conversely, if we see Sparta of the fourth and third centuries as a relatively non-monetized place, then the mechanisms causing vast social unrest would also be hard to explain: a freer flow of money shortly after the Peloponnesian War would allow Spartiates to be active in those short-term and more “disembedded” transactions that are facilitated by the mobility of wealth that coinage allows.³⁷ One imagines a Spartiate selling off a portion of his *kleros* if, for example, a second Spartiate has helped him with his *syssition*-requirements in a bad season and the first Spartiate could not repay him. The fourth-century loss of major tracts of land and third-century poverty likely pushed members of the Spartiate class into forms of resource acquisition other than absentee landlording and mercenary work. Gambling, business ventures, and other pursuits would sometimes turn out poorly. Plutarch’s description then makes considerable sense. By Agis’ time at the latest, class war was imminent, and Sparta’s famous *eunomia* had gone:

πενία τὴν πόλιν κατέσχευεν, ἀσχολίαν τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἀνελευθερίαν
ἐπιφέρειουσα μετὰ φθόνου καὶ δυσμενείας πρὸς τοὺς ἔχοντας.
ἀπελείφθησαν οὖν ἑπτακοσίων οὐ πλείονες Σπαρτιάται, καὶ τοῦτων ἴσως
ἑκατὸν ἦσαν οἱ γῆν κεκτημένοι καὶ κλήρον· ὁ δ’ ἄλλος ὄχλος ἄπορος καὶ
ἄτιμος ἐν τῇ πόλει παρεκάθητο, τοὺς μὲν ἔξωθεν πολέμους ἀργῶς καὶ
ἀπροθύμως ἀμυνόμενος, αἰεὶ δέ τινα καιρὸν ἐπιτηρῶν μεταβολῆς καὶ
μεταστάσεως τῶν παρόντων.

poverty held the *polis* down, carrying upon it both a lack of the leisure necessary for aristocratic pursuits and an illiberal stinginess unseemly for free persons, alongside an envious resentfulness and an inimical ill-will towards ‘The Haves.’ Less than seven hundred Spartiates [“adult male Spartiates with their families,” or else “Spartiate families” is meant] remained, and of these there were only about one hundred who held land and their *kleros*; but the remaining crowd, incomeless and without rights/honor in the city sat there, not working, defending

³⁶ It is impossible that no money whatsoever was used by Spartiates before 404 (Hodkinson 2000, ch. 5); but the Spartiate economy before 404 appears undeveloped in terms of coins (which should not be conflated with economy as a whole), in terms of public sales of land (for it is unlikely that a tradition would have arisen that this was forbidden without any foundation), or in terms of businesses (Spartiates were at least mostly forbidden from crafts and business ownership, as these distracted from martial training: no Spartiate businessman is known in the period before 400). An extraction economy in which all Spartiates owned land with an official dogma of austerity do not incentivize money-making ventures. A suppression of coinage makes “disembedded” transactions (see next footnote) difficult.

³⁷ A “disembedded” economic transaction is one that “privileges the short-term transactional order” (Kurke 1999, 32) associated with merchants, the selling of goods to make a living, petty trading which actually produces nothing, and other things antithetical to aristocratic self-conception and actual activity, whereas the “embedded” economy relates to long-term transactions, actual production, and the aristocratic lifestyle and self-image. Kurke stresses that money is “neutral in itself” (Kurke 1999, 32) but surely a mobile form of recognized, stamped precious metal in specific denominations facilitates “disembedded” transactions; see von Reden 1997; cf. Seaford 2004, particularly 13f for long-term vs. short-term transactional orders.

the city from outside enemies only dispiritedly, and constantly watching out for an opportune moment for subversion and for a revolution in the present order of things. (*Agis* 5.3-4)

It is reasonable to assume that his basic outlines of the situation are accurate. Residential buildings started to fill the spaces between Sparta-town's four villages in this very period; this increase in urbanization suggests persons moving from country to town, supporting Plutarch's picture of a landless urban mob.³⁸ And processes similar to that described in the passage occurred elsewhere in the period. Redistribution of land was explicitly outlawed in the third-century loyalty oath of Itanos on Crete, indicating specific fear of this demand.³⁹ Oaths against factional strife and conspiracy are sworn on Dreros, Crete around 220.⁴⁰ The third-century Megalopolitan Cynic statesman-intellectual Kerkidas attests great concerns about the danger of poverty, and Polybios describes a similar situation in Kynaitha, Arkadia leading to great bloodshed.⁴¹ The passage's descriptive sequence is a weak argument for declaring it worthless.⁴²

The most plausible interpretation of the passage is that the *okhlos* or crowd with no rights or income is not a description of the 600 non-wealthy Spartiates, but of a group of non-Spartiates. In this interpretation there are about seven hundred Spartiate males remaining, most of whom (presumably) have families. One hundred of these possess both the kleros and other land and are well-off. The remaining six hundred possess only a kleros without other land, and are not very well-off, but are still Spartiates; this group was not described by Plutarch in the passage. The six hundred probably remained in the Spartiate caste but floated on the edge of the *hypomeion* social status.

The rest of the human beings sitting around Sparta are the non-Spartiate unruly mob described by Plutarch.⁴³ That the majority of the populace was sufficiently dispirited and alienated from the Spartiate identity and the Spartiate state to be unreliable for defending the city in case of external attack is sufficiently plausible. Their precise

³⁸ Kourinou 2000, 89-95, 279-80. Shipley 2009, 58.

³⁹ *Syll.* (3) 526.

⁴⁰ *Syll.* (3) 527.

⁴¹ Kerkidas' virulent *Meliambi* fr. 2 and 4: cf. Fuks 1984, 66f; Green 1990, 258, 387 (arguing that Kerkidas' complaints echo Hesiod and concern Kerkidas' own poverty, and are thus neither specific to the period nor revolutionary), 615f (arguing it a bit too far); Walbank 1992, 167- 175; Shipley 2000, 184. Polybios 4.17-21. Walbank 1992, 169.

⁴² Schütrumpf 1987 concludes that the passage is a fiction based upon Plato *Republic* 8.555D-E, accepted by Hodkinson 2000, 44 - 45. Plutarch or his source may have been influenced by Plato's words, but the sequence of events in both Plato and Plutarch is entirely plausible as predictive of the way that Greek oligarchies might reasonably lead to such a state of indigent semi-citizens camping in a city, reluctant to fight off enemies. We are more accustomed to see empirically-based predictions in Aristotle than in Plato, but Plato possessed information about social conflict in other Greek states at his disposal from which to draw inductive and deductive conclusions about social behavior. Cf. Aristotle *Politics* 1278a27 - 35, discussed elsewhere here. Schütrumpf's observations such as "the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few leads to the impoverishment of others in Plutarch, as in *Resp.* 552B2. Clearly Plutarch's account of the history of Sparta follows the model of Plato's political philosophy" (444 - 445), do not inspire confidence in his thesis that Plutarch's *Agis* is a fiction since the events it describes "follows" Plato's ideas of how societies often tend to function, which may be based on empirically accurate information.

⁴³ Oliva 1971, 212; Fuks 1984, 246 - 249.

identification is tricky but the ambiguity of it furnishes a clue. One might guess them to be marginals, such as helots, but then one wonders why they were encamped in the city rather than working on Spartiate farms. They could be neodamodeis: but again, the reason why they would camp in Sparta rather than living and working in perioikic cities or going out on campaign becomes problematic. They could be miscellaneous disenfranchised persons of the *hypomeion* class, that is (if I am correct in my idea of what the *hypomeiones* were), persons who had received the *agoge* training but were not possessed of a *kleros* because of demotion from Spartiate status, usually through cowardice or poverty, or because of being a bastard or foreigner who had gone through the *agoge* but was not a Spartiate. What is probable is that the definitions between subordinate classes in Sparta during this wretched state of affairs had become blurred. Perhaps the property system had fallen into disarray, hence the farms were worked only intermittently. That a huge mob sat around in the city like this suggests that the state's institutions had lost the ability to guide or coerce persons to do what they were supposed to do. This is a far cry from the disciplined city described in Xenophon.

The undisciplined mob cannot have been the same as the 600 non-rich citizen Spartiates. For a group of only one hundred full Spartiate citizen *homoioi* is inconceivable considering personnel usages of this period listed elsewhere in Plutarch and in Polybios. If the Spartiates numbered only one hundred, then an army of Spartiate citizens would have numbered only some 66, a total that, even if accompanied by mercenaries, perioikoi, and allies, would invite invasion from any number of nearby poleis; a *gerousia* could not be staffed; and Agis' partisans fleeing Sparta after his failed revolution would have reduced the number of Spartiates further; and if fourteen, including four ephors, lost their lives in Kleomenes' coup, the total number of Spartiates becomes completely incapable of maintaining the Spartiate system.⁴⁴

Agis' Institutional, Eugenic Response

Agis presumably realized that a state of any sort was unsustainable in this condition, and next made inquiries of the people (ἄνθρώπων) as to who would be willing to make sacrifices for the weal of the community.⁴⁵ Plutarch's use here of the term ἄνθρώπων for the people that he questioned rather than the relevant form of δῆμος may be significant. δῆμος is used shortly after, in 7.5: Agis' older royal colleague Leonidas desires to help the rich, but fears the δῆμος. This is either the same as ὁ δ' ἄλλος ὄχλος in 5.4, who are "eager for revolution" (δῆμον ἐπιθυμοῦντα τῆς μεταβολῆς), or else it is the six hundred non-wealthy Spartiates; or if Plutarch is focalizing Leonidas and Leonidas considers both Spartiates and non-Spartiates as a single unruly, dangerous mass, perhaps both: if this is Plutarch's dramatic intent, then his effort is to portray Leonidas as shockingly uncaring of Spartiate status. Or else the social distinctions in Sparta were,

⁴⁴ Fuks 1984, 232 - 236 gives all references.

⁴⁵ Διὰ ταῦτα δὴ καλὸν ὁ Ἄγισ, ὥσπερ ἦν, ποιούμενος ἐξισῶσαι καὶ ἀναπληρῶσαι τὴν πόλιν, ἐπειρᾶτο τῶν ἀνθρώπων. [Therefore, Agis, reckoning that it was indeed a fine thing to equalize and fill up the city, questioned the people (sc. 'as to this plan').]

again, ignobly fluid. ἀνθρώπων indicates that it is not only impoverished persons whose support Agis requests and receives, as δῆμος would imply. Wealthier individuals must have been canvassed. Agis was not so much a rabble-rouser as Nabis would be fifty years later: this will become significant. Plutarch writes that the young men became enthused but the old men, already far gone in their corruption, did not.

Agis' plan consisted of bringing a rhetra for the gerousia to approve involving relief of debtors, the redivision of land, and the replenishment of the Spartiate population. The relief of debtors could be abused by wealthy persons with inside knowledge. The land redivision was a most ambitious operation. The land between the Pellene creek, the Taygetos mountains, Malea, and Sellasia would be divided into 4,500 lots or *kleroi* and given to Spartiates; and the rest of the land in Lakonia, into 15,000 lots and given out to select perioikoi.⁴⁶ The Spartiates, whose number had fallen far below 4,500, were to be supplemented by select perioikoi and foreigners. Already in the fourth century Aristotle had predicted such actions as the way that normal states inevitably behave when requiring citizens.⁴⁷ As we should expect from Sparta, eugenic principles underlay this aspect of Agis' program.⁴⁸ Plutarch writes,

καὶ ταύτην μὲν τοῖς ὅπλα φέρειν δυναμένοις τῶν περιοίκων μερισθῆναι, τὴν δὲ ἐντὸς αὐτοῖς Σπαρτιάταις · ἀναπληρωθῆναι δὲ τούτους ἔκ τε περιοίκων καὶ ξένων, ὅσοι τροφῆς μετεσχηκότες ἐλευθερίου καὶ χαρίεντες ἄλλως τοῖς σώμασι καὶ καθ' ἡλικίαν ἀκμάζοντες εἶεν · σύνταξιν δὲ τούτων εἰς πεντεκαίδεκα γενέσθαι φιδιτία κατὰ τετρακοσίους καὶ διακοσίους, καὶ δίαίταν ἣν εἶχον οἱ πρόγονοι διαιτᾶσθαι.

[the provisions included] that the former [collection of 15,000 *kleroi*] was to be apportioned to those of the perioikoi capable of bearing weapons, and the inside

⁴⁶ A similar division had been conducted at Megara Hyblaia in Sicily in the eighth century and one, probably in the sixth century, in Metapontion. It is a huge task requiring either resurveying all of the existing land, or else (far easier) reassigning pre-divided lots to new owners, which requires accurate written records and an atmosphere of reliability upon those records, which we would not expect if Spartan society were only semi-literate or had no reliable records: on Spartan literacy, Cf. Millender 2003. Perioikic land also must now have gone under closer Spartan control than previously.

⁴⁷ Aristotle *Politics* 1278a27 - 35: ἐν πολλαῖς δὲ πολιτείαις προσεφέλκεται καὶ τῶν ξένων ὁ νόμος · ὁ γὰρ ἐκ πολιτίδος ἐν τισι δημοκρατίαις πολίτης ἐστίν, τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον ἔχει καὶ τὰ περὶ τοὺς νόθους παρὰ πολλοῖς. οὐ μὲν ἄλλ' ἐπεὶ δι' ἔνδειαν τῶν γνησίων πολιτῶν ποιοῦνται πολίτας τοὺς τοιούτους (διὰ γὰρ ὀλιγανθρωπίαν οὕτω χρώνται τοῖς νόμοις), εὐποροῦντες δὴ ὄχλου κατὰ μικρὸν παραιροῦνται τοὺς ἐκ δούλου πρῶτον ἢ δούλης, εἶτα τοὺς ἀπὸ γυναικῶν · τέλος δὲ μόνον τοὺς ἐκ ἀμφοῖν ἀστῶν πολίτας ποιοῦσιν.

"in many politeiai, the law draws [for the replenishing of the citizen-body] even from foreigners: for the son of a citizen-woman in some democracies is regarded a citizen, and the same way holds also concerning bastards in many places. Nevertheless, whenever, because of a lack of legitimate citizens, they make such persons into citizens (for it is because of *oliganthropia* that they resort to such customs/laws), when they are wealthy in terms of numbers, they slowly detach themselves from those persons born from a male or a female slave, and then those whose mothers only are citizens; and finally makes into citizens only those from citizens on both sides."

⁴⁸ Agis' program seems influenced by the tradition of Lykourgos' Archaic land-division preserved (or, according to Hodkinson 2000, invented) in Plut. *Lyk.* 8.

[collection of the 4,500 kleroi] to the Spartiates; and that they [the Spartan citizen-body] were to be filled up from the perioikoi and xenoï, however so many as had shared in the upbringing characteristic of free men, **were especially** [καὶ] **appealing** [χαρίεντες] **in terms of their physical form** [τοῖς σώμασι], and were at the peak of condition in their age-set; and that the arrangement of these men should be in fifteen public mess-groups arranged into groups of four hundred and two hundred, and that they should practice the mode of life which the ancestors [of the Spartiates, not of these perioikoi] had possessed. (*Agis* 8.2)

The term καὶ χαρίεντες ἄλλως τοῖς σώμασι unambiguously describes not simply people who are χαρίεντες (literally, “graceful”); that lone usage could have been used to mean “elegant” and thus, by a small stretch, “sophisticated” and hence consequently “wealthy.”⁴⁹ Plutarch’s usage rather, indicates a *bodily* gracefulness, a gracefulness of *form*. It describes persons who are quite specifically *physically* well-formed. It is consistent with the μεγαλεῖον (“splendid”) children desired in Xenophon’s treatise on the Spartan Constitution, and with Spartan men’s choice of biological allo-fathers for their wives’ offspring based upon the candidates’ fine σώματα and with the prescription that Spartan bachelors must select married women who are γενναῖα for reproduction, resulting in “men in Sparta different from others both in respect to size and strength.”⁵⁰

Nor are the rest of the selection criteria exempt from this concern. καὶ καθ’ ἡλικίαν ἀκμάζοντες, “and at the peak of condition in their age-set” may mean nothing more than “fit,” but disqualifies persons who have inherited dysgenic material likely to make them weak, those who are deformed, have hereditary diseases, and so on (as well as, perhaps, those who have sustained injuries). A selection for physical fitness is sensible as a military requirement; but this set of selection criteria are given as Agis’ plan, not as Kleomenes’ plan. If Kleomenes had created this criterion, it would be possible to argue that only military necessity had inspired it. But we know little of Agis’ military ambitions.⁵¹ Hence καὶ καθ’ ἡλικίαν ἀκμάζοντες was likely not solely inspired by requirements of military fitness.

And καὶ χαρίεντες ἄλλως τοῖς σώμασι may have very little to do with military matters at all. Ugly men may make good soldiers.⁵² This is a group that Agis intended to become part of the Spartiates, to intermarry and reproduce with them. They needed to be physically impressive, attractive, finely-formed. The perioikoi from this group may have possessed some Spartan heredity from Spartan-perioikic liaisons of generations past; the xenoï may have been able to boast this if they were foreigners who had resided at Sparta for generations like the *metoikoi* in Athens did.⁵³ This is suggested by the Megarian Cynic Teles who wrote *ca.* 229 that in Sparta, *metoikoi* and *xenoï* were capable of sharing in the

⁴⁹ *LSJ* s.v. χαρίεις II.

⁵⁰ Xen. *L.P.* 1.3, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9.

⁵¹ Plut. *Agis* 15.2 even preserves an accusation of unwillingness to fight on Agis’ part.

⁵² As argued ably in Arkhilokhos fr. 60, Tyrtaios 12.5.

⁵³ Liaisons: Scheidel 2009. *Metoikoi* colonies in Sparta: Figueira 2003.

politeia if they underwent the *agoge*.⁵⁴ In any case, the persons allowed into the Spartiate caste will have been the finest physical specimens in the land, chosen carefully and subsequently forced through the sieve of the *agoge* which, if it were still in existence, presumably would have removed the unfit and insufficiently dedicated from the pool: in this way, Agis' plan continued older Spartiate reproductive practice.

Eugenic principles also underlay the elimination of Agis' opponent. Although Plutarch's Agis occasionally squirms around these principles, and although they run along somewhat different lines than the last ones considered, they are nevertheless still quite visible. Since Leonidas son of Akrotatos, the Spartan king of the Agiad family, opposed Agis' radical plan, Agis needed to depose Leonidas in an acceptable way. Agis attempted this on the grounds of Leonidas' marriage to a foreign wife and his fathering of half-foreign children. The implied offense Leonidas committed was that this marriage and the production of these children contradicted the important Spartan biological/cultural principle of the preservation of the royal *genos*, which was supposed to be composed of Spartan Heraklid royalty plus, by necessity, Spartiate stock.⁵⁵ The issues raised in the debate recorded by Plutarch conform to Spartan eugenic ideas of previous centuries and are consistent with, for example, the debate about the true father of Agesilaos' rival Leotykhidas for the Eurypontid throne in 400.⁵⁶

However, Plutarch's reconstruction of the debate includes what appear to be some painstaking attempts to render the ancient Spartan practices as non-biological as possible. It is not clear whether this effort was exerted by himself, by his sources, or by Agis. In the end, despite these efforts, the choice of words that has leaked through -- as well as the main point or very substance of the debate itself -- render it very difficult to see the actual controversy, regardless of how it was finally refracted in Plutarch, as bereft of contemporary biological and eugenic concerns.⁵⁷

Plutarch reports that after the *gerousia* remained undecided regarding Agis' program, a (seemingly staged) scenario transpired in which Agis' partisans "begged" (ἐδέοντο) the citizens to listen to the content of oracles brought from the temple of Pasiphae at Thalamai.⁵⁸ Agis' plan was doubly supported: it was not only divinely sanctioned by Pasiphae but was declared consistent with the egalitarian practice of Lykourgos, who in addition to being the original lawmaker of the Spartiate regime was also regarded as divine.⁵⁹ No better way to present and sanctify the social changes

⁵⁴ *Teletis Reliquiae*, ed. Hense 1909, 23. Dudley 1937, 85-7 and *passim* gives information on this figure. Fuks 1962, 119. Figueira 2003 also discusses the possibility and the evidence for settlements of this nature.

⁵⁵ Royalty: Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.3.

⁵⁶ Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.3, Plut. *Agesilaos* 3.

⁵⁷ Cf. Marasco 1981 *ad loc.* (p. 269): "... cio conferma ancora che il dibattito qui riportato non costituisce un'astratta divagazione antiquaria, ma riproduce la sostanza della lotta propagandistica e politica tra i partiti."

⁵⁸ Plut. *Agis* 9.1-2. Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 44. Thalamai (*IACP* 321) was a Perioikic town located on the border of Lakonia and Messenia. Its choice may confirm interest in elevating perioikoi, or perhaps in regaining Messenia.

⁵⁹ Plut. *Agis* 9.3.

necessary for the survival of Spartiate society can be imagined.⁶⁰ Agis offered up his own estate, as did his mother and grandfather and other relatives and friends, plus a most impressive six hundred talents for the common fund. King Leonidas scoffingly asked if Lykourgos had ever granted debt relief or allowed foreigners into the citizen body. Agis' answer masks what cannot be other than a eugenic concern under a philosophical veneer.

ὁ δὲ Ἄγης ἀπεκρίνατο μὴ θαυμάζειν τὸν Λεωνίδα, εἰ τεθραμμένος ἐν ξένη καὶ πεπαιδοποιημένος ἐκ γάμων σατραπικῶν ἀγνοεῖ τὸν Λυκοῦργον, ὅτι τὸ μὲν ὀφείλειν καὶ δανεῖζειν ἅμα τῷ νομίσματι συνεξέβαλεν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, τῶν δ' ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι ξένων τοὺς τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ ταῖς διαίταις ἀσυμφύλους μᾶλλον ἐδυσχέραινε· καὶ γὰρ ἐκείνους ἤλαυνεν οὐ τοῖς σώμασι πολεμῶν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς βίους αὐτῶν καὶ τοὺς τρόπους δεδιώς, μὴ συναναχρῶνόμενοι τοῖς πολίταις τρυφῆς καὶ μαλακίας καὶ πλεονεξίας ἐντέκωσι ζῆλον.⁶¹

Agis retorted that it was no wonder if Leonidas, having been raised in a foreign land and having children from a satrapic marriage, was unaware that Lykourgos had driven out of the polis the practices of debts and borrowing along with coined money,⁶² and also had disliked persons unsuited (ἀσυμφύλους) to [Spartan] practices and lifestyles more than he had disliked foreigners. For he had driven them out not because he was hostile to their physical bodies (σώμασι), but because he feared their lifestyles and ways, lest they should, by jointly polluting the citizens, breed in them an envious desire for luxury, effeminate softness, and greed.

It is very likely that *xenelasiai* or expulsions of foreigners were indeed conducted in previous centuries in Sparta, as has been argued.⁶³ The use of the term σώμασι (literally "bodies") opposite βίους (lives, lifestyles) and τρόπους (ways, also lifestyles) seemingly references the philosophical distinction between body and spirit and is a distinction we would expect from later thinkers reflecting on an action taken by a lawmaker of the distant past, of the "cultural pluperfect."

Besides being what we should expect to see refracted in the writings of a philosopher such as Plutarch, it also makes sense of Agis' original defense of enfranchisement.⁶⁴ For Agis needed to ward off the opposition's expected outrage and resistance at sharing economic goods and at "polluting the citizens" with non-Spartiate and non-Herakleid blood. Naturally Agis would expect the opposition to emphasize the latter

⁶⁰ Generally on religion as social sanction for political regimes encouraging particular reproductive or demographic behavior, Reynolds and Tanner 1995.

⁶¹ Plut. *Agis* 2.

⁶² Coins only appear *circa* 550: the Plutarch reference is surely muddled. If Lykourgos existed, Plutarch is simply incorrect to think that he existed in the sixth century. But Hodkinson 2000, 44 is probably on the wrong track in assuming that this passage suggests (inaccurately) that Lykourgos had enacted a debt-relief similar to Solon's *seisakhtheia*. The argument that Plutarch's Agis makes is that Lykourgos eliminated (most) money from Sparta, which *necessarily* cut down or eliminated (most) borrowing or lending, not that Lykourgos enacted a program of debt relief. The difficulty of borrowing or lending money before coinage existed makes the reference dubious.

⁶³ Thouk. 1.144.2 and see ΣThuc *ad loc.*; Xen. *L.P.* 14.4; perhaps Hdt. 3.148. Figueira 2003, 48 discards the notion of a tighter-controlled Classical Sparta versus a receptive Archaic Sparta. Cf. Marasco 1981, 270f.

⁶⁴ Cf. also Plut. *Lykourgos* 27.3-4.

objection rather than the former: underscoring a disgust at miscegenation would be more understandable to, and more apt to receive sympathy and agreement from, a broader array of Spartiates than emphasizing their reluctance to give away their property into a common fund, which would probably only be seen as greed.

But Agis-Plutarch's "anti-essentialist" or "anti-racist" characterization of Lykourgos' aims rings a suspect tone. First, the discussion of *xenelasiai* follows directly upon the mention of Leonidas' miscegenation with a Persian woman, a mention surely intended to raise discomfort. Second, the term συναναχρωννύμενοι, which I have rendered as "jointly polluting," also means staining, defiling, and infecting, and is relevant for its root, χρώς or χρώμα which, like the similar χροιά, means skin and skin color. This mention of pollution or infection that foreigners bring is here fastened to a mention of miscegenation with foreigners and a word whose root contains the word used for skin color.⁶⁵ The ancient practices of *xenelasiai* are probably intimately connected with notions of the necessity of Spartan purity, thus with the reluctance to allow Spartiates and Spartan royals to produce foreign children lest the population dilute the hereditary qualities ostensibly gained through elimination of individuals with purportedly hereditary defects from the reproductive pool and through the granting of additional reproductive opportunities to Spartiates with purportedly valuable hereditary contributions.⁶⁶

This set of concerns appears in several other word choices. Individually they would not attract notice; but the sum total of them is more than suggestive of eugenic concerns. First, Plutarch's Agis uses the term ἀσυμφύλους, which I have rendered with the neutral term "unsuited," but whose root, φύω, "to grow," is a highly biological term. Next, σώμασι, which I have remarked upon briefly *supra*, requires additional scrutiny in this context. Again, the term means "bodies" in its root usage and thus would feasibly be intended to contrast to the foreigners' spiritual qualities such as their lifestyles or ways of living.

However, the word also can mean "civic rights" and would not be out of place in a discussion of precisely what Lykourgos opposed.⁶⁷ If σώμασι is taken this way, the passage does not contrast body versus soul; the meaning is, instead, that Lykourgos objected less to the idea that foreigners should possess in Sparta certain civic rights than to their sexually mixing with Spartiates and spreading their suspect heritable qualities amongst them, thereby spreading heritable weaknesses favoring softness, "luxury," and "effeminacy."⁶⁸ Lastly, the phrase "breed in them an envious desire for luxury, effeminate softness, and greed" contains ἐντέκωσι, a form coming from the unusual word ἐντεκνώνω, which literally means "to breed in" from the base word τεκνώνω, to bear children.

⁶⁵ On Greek association of skin color with racial types, see Hippokrates *Airs, Waters, Places* chapter 24, Pseudo-Aristotle *Physiognomonika* 812.a-b; Isaac 2004, 65 and 151.

⁶⁶ And perhaps factually: see Chapter 2.

⁶⁷ *LSJ* s.v. σώμα a.5 indicates citizen rights or citizen status, citing Lysias 23.23, Andokides 1.74, and Demosthenes 51.12.

⁶⁸ For a very different interpretation of the significance of σώμασι, see Figueira 2003, 71 who believes that the term defensively responds to Athenian beliefs that *xenelasiai* involved the ritual, scapegoat-like physical abuse of *xenoi*.

This terminology's highly reproductive and biological cast allows the passage to be read differently: "for he had driven those men out not because he was hostile to their possession of civic rights [that is, whatever rights foreigners or *metoikoi* might have claimed in Archaic Sparta], but because he feared their lifestyles and ways, lest they should, by jointly staining the citizens, breed (biologically) in them [*sc.* and in their joint offspring] an envious desire for luxury, effeminate softness, and greed." Despite Agis' intent to argue against Leonidas' accusation that the reforms would pollute the Spartan *genos*, Spartan eugenic concerns show through even his description when it is deconstructed. His lexicon, if Plutarch and his sources conveyed it with basic accuracy, albeit painfully carefully, betrays his attempt to whitewash the potentially dysgenic effects of enfranchisement.

Plutarch's representation of this exchange of ideas offers us a dramatic if somewhat novelistic recapitulation of the reproductive issues at stake. In the event, Leonidas did indeed need to be removed, for the *gerousia*, presumably staffed by men of high standing and thus high property, voted to refrain from offering (through their probouleutic function) Agis' proposed *rhētra* for ratification by the Lakedaimonian assembly. The fact that what we may term "the Leonidas faction" prevailed by only one vote confirms the direness of the economic situation and demographic collapse of the Spartan state.⁶⁹ Nearly half of them evidently saw the need to sacrifice their property for the health of the community. The other half (plus one) apparently coalesced around Leonidas, necessitating his removal.

This removal was carried out by an appeal to ancient Spartan reproductive logic, or reproductive folk-logic, as well.⁷⁰ Agis' supporter the ephor Lysandros "rushed off to prosecute Leonidas according to an ancient *nomos* which prohibited a descendant of Herakles from having children by a foreign woman, and which ordered that anyone leaving Sparta to settle among foreigners be put to death."⁷¹ This may be a combination of two old *nomoi*, but appears early enough, in Xenophon, to resist any charge that it is a late Hellenistic confection.⁷² After an astrological confirmation, witnesses were found who declared that two children had been borne to Leonidas by a woman who was not only non-Herakleid, but non-Spartan: and in fact, not only non-Spartan, but non-Greek. The ephors deposed him; the (non-foreign) husband of one of his daughters was made Agiad king instead.

What is important here is that even if I am wrong, and Agis' distinction between *somasi* and "ways of life" was meant to show that Lykourgos' *xenelasiai* or expulsion of foreigners was indeed conducted for reasons of cultural purity rather than eugenics, the fact that a Spartan king had reproduced biologically with a foreigner was sufficiently

⁶⁹ By only one vote: Plut. *Agis* 11.1. Refusal to "proboul" the *rhētra*: discussed in de Ste. Croix 1972, 127.

⁷⁰ A separation of these is a desideratum, although the current horror at all things eugenic will hamper it for the time being. Generally, Betzig, Mulder, Turke (eds.) 1988 gives case studies of sexual selection criteria in various cultures; Dixson 2009 is up-to-date and excellent, although very general and focusing on the evolution of mate selection in primates.

⁷¹ ὁ δὲ Λύσανδρος ἔτι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχων ὥρμησε τὸν Λεωνίδα διώκειν κατὰ δὴ τινα νόμον παλαιόν, ὃς οὐκ ἔα τὸν Ἡρακλεΐδην ἐκ γυναικὸς ἀλλοδαπῆς τεκνοῦσθαι, τὸν δὲ ἀπελθόντα τῆς Σπάρτης ἐπὶ μετοικισμῷ πρὸς ἑτέρους ἀποθνήσκειν κελεύει. Plut. *Agis* 11.2.

⁷² Xen. *L.P.* 14.2, 14.4; cf. Plut. *Lykourgos* 27.3-4.

bothersome to the public to become the grounds for the extreme measure of removing him from office. This would not have been possible unless the majority of the public cared about these ideals.

Agis did not live to carry out the *anaplerosis* of the Spartiate citizen body: Leonidas was reinstated as Agiad king, and Plutarch reports in a rather melodramatic set-piece description replete with treasonous ephors, crying mothers, and doleful last words, that Agis was executed in 241 at the hands of reluctant mercenaries.⁷³

The Kleomenic Compromise

Leonidas forced Agis' young, land-rich, and highly physically attractive widow to marry his young son Kleomenes, who perceived that the *hoi polloi* among the citizens, "who had become decadent/degenerate" (ἐκλελυμένους), had lost their "ambition for the *agoge*," that the ephorate had assumed a great deal of political power, and that only 5,000 Lakedaemonians remained as a fighting force.⁷⁴ Although aided by Tarentines, Kretans, and mercenaries, Kleomenes' ambitious military campaigns from 229 – 227 -- against Aratos' Akhaian League, in support of the Eleians, and in a highly symbolic occupation of Leuktra, site of Sparta's greatest defeat -- now made an *anaplerosis* a necessity.⁷⁵ A tyrannical attack on the ephors, the installation of a new board of magistrates called *patronomoi*, and the forced exile of eighty citizen families removed opposition, consolidated his rule, and lowered the Spartiate count.⁷⁶ In winter 227/6 BC, Kleomenes conducted an *anaplerosis* of the citizen body.

Eugenic principles underlay Kleomenes' act as much as they had Agis' plan, and guided the selection of persons of non-Spartiate *genos* into the Spartiate caste. It is notable that Kleomenes, although no stranger to violence in pursuit of power, set aside a *kleros* for each of the 80 men whom he had exiled and promised to return them when he had settled affairs; this suggests that he recognized that the enmity of his political opponents was less important than their reproductive contribution to the Spartiate genetic commonwealth.⁷⁷ Plutarch passes down to us that the foreigners to be enfranchised were selected according to "power": Kleomenes advised the assembly to allow him to make the entire land into common property, to free debtors from their debts, "and to conduct an examination and *dokimasia* in order that the most powerful of the foreigners might be made Spartiates" (καὶ τῶν ξένων κρίσιν ποιεῖν καὶ δοκιμασίαν, ὅπως οἱ κράτιστοι γενόμενοι Σπαρτιάται⁷⁸). This selection principle as stated is unremarkable, although one wonders if the "most powerful" foreigners were forced to give up their wealth into the general pool.

However, a textual question intervenes. Considering the selection principles by which Agis had planned the *anaplerosis* discussed above, and considering Kleomenes' selection principles for the *perioikoi*, discussed in a moment below, it is possible that if

⁷³ Plut. *Agis* 19. Cf. Powell 1999, 394f.

⁷⁴ Plut. *Kleom.* 3.1, 4.5.

⁷⁵ Tarentines and Kretans: Plut. *Kleom.* 6.3. Mercenaries: 7.4.

⁷⁶ On the *patronomoi*, see Pausanias 2.9.1, Cartledge and Spawforth 1989; Kennell 1995.

⁷⁷ Plut. *Kleom.* 11.1. Oliva 1971, 244.

⁷⁸ Plut. *Kleom.* 10.6.

κράτιστοι were a word Plutarch had chosen instead of, or in paraphrase for, a similar word in his source that also had an additional potential meaning. κράτιστοι does not normally mean “physically powerful,” but rather socially or politically powerful; however, Phylarkhos or whatever other source Plutarch used may have employed a term that could mean either economically/socially/politically powerful *or* physically strong, and intended more of the latter, such as δυνατός or ισχυρός. In this case, the eugenic principle would remain.

More immediately relevant to our concerns is the set of principles by which the perioikoi were selected to enter the citizen-body of Spartiates. On this subject, Plutarch uses a familiar word when he reports that “by filling up the citizen-body with the χαριεστάτοι of the perioikoi, he created four thousand hoplites.”⁷⁹ Again, χαριεστάτοι is used as it was in the description of Agis’ reforms, and again, this term indicates not the wealthiest or most powerful of the perioikoi, but their most elegant and good-looking members. This is not a detail we would expect if Kleomenes were creating reforms solely in pursuit of personal power.⁸⁰

Thus Kleomenes kept to the Agis-reforms which themselves followed the Lykourgan model known to us from Xenophon. And even if *kratistoi* were the very word his source used, thus not indicating a eugenic selection in that respect, we must remember that Kleomenes’ *anaplerosis* was conducted in view of further military operations: an immediate invasion of Megalopolis and projected further hostilities with Aratos. An enfranchisement of persons solely based on the principle of χαριεστάτοι could not be afforded and indeed would have been a strategically foolish policy. Men of means, κράτιστοι, were necessary to recruit; their resources would either go into the general pool, thus enriching it, or if some exception were made, would still be attached to them. If this is the case, then this enfranchisement was a compromise: it represented as much as Spartiate ethnic pride and eugenic exclusivity could allow to the realities of third century military necessities.

Running in tandem with Kleomenes’ sensible compromise with the realities of the day, the Spartan dual kingship continued the shift that it seems to have begun with Areus, to what amounted to a more typical Hellenistic model of monarchy. The ephorate and gerousia were altered so as to obstruct the Spartan king’s power less. The *anaplerosis*, coupled with intensive training and a revived *agoge*, proved successful as a military and social system allowing a level of Spartan military activity that had not been possible in well over a hundred years: Kleomenes was criticized by Plutarch’s sources for seizing Argos and besieging Korinth. In 226 he successfully campaigned in Arkadia as well, and was positioned to become head of the Akhaian League. This was accomplished with help from persons hoping for revolution or reform outside Lakonia: again, Sparta was not alone

⁷⁹ ἀναπληρώσας δὲ τὸ πολίτευμα τοῖς χαριεστάτοις τῶν περιοίκων ὀπίστας τετρασχιλίους ἐποίησε. Plut. *Kleom.* 11.2. The social impact of the proportions of the new citizen body compared to the old one is unknowable. That it did not cause more friction may imply a relatively well-running social system in place.

⁸⁰ Africa 1961, 14.

in its socio-economic strife, but the root connections between its problems and those elsewhere remains obscure.⁸¹

With this constitutional formula and with the effective political sense and military skill he had displayed, Kleomenes could have created a power-bloc out of most of the Peloponnesos in the 220s. However, at the behest of Aratos, statesman of the Akhaian koinon, Antigonos Doson of Makedon entered the Peloponnesos in 224 with an immense army, and with much labor regained Argos and many poleis in Arkadia.⁸² In response, Kleomenes freed six thousand helots who were able to come up with a price of 5 minae: this generated revenue and increased his hoplite force, and he was able to take Megalopolis.⁸³ That no notice of selection principles for this enfranchisement is given may attest to the desperation of the hour.

In summer of 221, a mere two days before being called away to defend Makedon from an Illyrian attack, Antigonos defeated Kleomenes at the battle near the Perioikic Lakonian village of Sellasia at which “all the Lakedaimonians died, 6,000, except 200.”⁸⁴ The term “Lakedaimonians” here may well mean Spartiates, since the number 6,000 is the number to which we would expect to have seen the Spartiate total filled, considering the 4,000 perioikoi he admitted and trained, the seven hundred or so persons who had been Spartiates already, and whatever foreigners had entered the class.⁸⁵ The term “Lakedaimonians” may have been used to indicate that not all these persons were considered Spartiates quite yet by everyone *de facto*, although they had *de iure* officially entered the ranks. But it is probably more likely that it included some of the 6,000 helots given freedom.

This defeat was a terrible coincidence. Plutarch notes that had Antigonos departed to handle the Kelts, the Akhaian League would have remained on its own at Sellasia.⁸⁶ Kleomenes might well have defeated them. Further, the subsidy that Ptolemy had been paying Kleomenes seems to have been retracted shortly before the battle.⁸⁷ Kleomenes’ formula may have been extremely successful except for these two factors. For Kleomenes fulfilled Agis’ projected reconstitution of the Spartan state and enjoyed enormous successes in the Peloponnesos. He was stopped only by chance. If warning about the Kelts had reached the Makedonian king only slightly earlier than it did, the Makedonians would have withdrawn from the Peloponnesos before the battle at Sellasia, affording Kleomenes

⁸¹ Sallares’ *longue durée* answer seems to be that a population peak was reached by much of continental Greece in the fourth century, a “K” phase as opposed to the “r” phase of the previous centuries (1991, 91, 101, and *passim*).

⁸² The composition of Antigonos’ army for Sellasia is listed piece by piece in Polybios 2.65, totalling an immense 28,000 infantry and 1,200 cavalry. Kleomenes had 20,000.

⁸³ Plut. *Kleom.* 23.1. Some scholars doubt that 500 drachmae could have been collected by 6,000 helots; however, surely helots sold their excess produce (Oliva 1971, 260) and this was high but not out of the range of slave manumission fees elsewhere (Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 56).

⁸⁴ Plut. *Kleom.* 28. Pritchett 1965, chapter 4.

⁸⁵ Foreigners: Plut. *Kleom.* 10.6. Perioikoi: 11.2.

⁸⁶ Plut. *Kleom.* 27.3.

⁸⁷ This subsidy may have been arranged through Sphairos, the Stoic philosopher, who was active both in Kleomenes’ court and that of the Ptolemies. Figueira 2006, 145.

more opportunity to consolidate his rule and, whether Kleomenes had any intention to do this or not, to spread revolution.⁸⁸

The neo-Lykourgan reform including land ownership, debt cancellation, and *anaplerosis* of the Spartiates was a wildly successful formula. A constitutional reform along these lines, *mutatis mutandis*, had been even more successful in the Archaic period: Sparta's broad power in the archaic Peloponnesos is the clearest evidence for this that we could desire. The massive influx of wealth that existed in the Hellenistic age after the liberation of Persian coffers rendered these reforms ultimately futile by permitting the existence of armies of a size and mobility previously impossible in the Greek military world, which previously featured armies constrained temporally by the necessity of campaigning according to the agricultural calendar, economically by the available sum of wealth in Greek temples, and numerically by citizen numbers. When these restraints had been in place all over the Greek world, a state that could field an army like that created or recreated by Kleomenes III was nearly invincible; without these broad restraints, Kleomenes' creation was limited.

Kleomenes to Nabis

The period between the flight and abdication of Kleomenes III in Egypt in 221 and the reign of Nabis in 207 was bookended by foreign intervention and Spartan defeat. For it, we rely above all on Polybios.⁸⁹ After Sellasia, Antigonos Doson, before returning north to deal with an Illyrian invasion in Makedon, treated Sparta moderately and reestablished what Polybios calls τό τε πολίτευμα τὸ πάτριον and what Plutarch calls πολιτείαν τὴν πάτριον.⁹⁰ The phrase is ambiguous, but probably means the pre-revolutionary regime.⁹¹ A Boiotian commander was brought in as its overseer.⁹² No evidence states that the Spartiates were brought back down to their pre-reform numbers, although this would be consistent with Antigonos' presumed goal of keeping Sparta weak. The kingship, in great contrast to any claim of the reinstitution of an ancestral polity, was not restored.⁹³

Sparta was brought into alliance with Makedon and the Akhaian koinon, and became a member of the pro-Makedonian Hellenic League. Presumably private ownership

⁸⁸ It is doubtful that Kleomenes either intended or pretended to encourage a Peloponnesos-wide social revolution of the Have-nots against the Haves, as Shimron 1972, 46 sees. Africa 1961, 26 is probably correct that "the impression that the Spartan Revolution made abroad" caused fear of economic leveling. Some modern scholarship has, however, gone too far in the other direction in calling his reform "conservative," a word whose modern connotations and political valence are inappropriate to the project envisioned by Agis and carried out by Agiatis and Kleomenes: Green 1990, 250. Cf. also Mendels 1978, Bernini 1982.

⁸⁹ Perhaps, a pro-Lykourgan eugenicist to the end, Kleomenes killed himself because he was now by definition one of the *tresantes*, but this is unlikely.

⁹⁰ Polybios 2.70.1.

⁹¹ An important dissenter is Shimron 1972, who believes that "Antigonos did not abolish Kleomenes' main reforms" (61). Cf. Piper 1986, 72-3.

⁹² Polybios 20.5.2. Cartledge (1989, 57) probably overemphasizes the allegedly humiliating nature of this appointment: it is not necessarily all Sparta who hated Thebes, but Agesilaos II, and that had been a century and a half earlier.

⁹³ Polybios 4.22.4. Piper 1986, 72.

of land and property were reinstituted along with the ephorate and the return of the gerousia's normal powers; if only two hundred Spartiates remained, or even if this figure is 100% wrong and four hundred remained, restitution of property would have been relatively easy.⁹⁴ We can assume that the eighty families Kleomenes had exiled were returned. If Antigonos put them in positions of power, this guaranteed that wealthy Spartiates would keep his best interests in mind; and much land was freed up by its owners' deaths in the Kleomenic Army at Sellasia.⁹⁵

All of this happened in about a year. The kingship was restored in 220 by a capable Kleomenic group that was also pro-Aitolian.⁹⁶ This party first slew the ephors, killed one member of the gerousia and exiled the rest, and then appointed new ephors.⁹⁷ Only at this point did they learn that Kleomenes had committed suicide while in exile in Egypt, and accordingly appointed new kings. The Spartans invaded Akhaia along with the Aitolians, which brought Philip V of Makedon down to the Peloponnesos. In 218 there occurred a failed revolt headed by Kheilon who aimed for kingship, killed the new ephors (the third killing of an ephor-board) and promised another Kleomenean land-redistribution, the last promise fair evidence that Antigonos did, in fact, abolish Kleomenes' reforms.⁹⁸ His lack of following caused him to flee to Akhaia. The remaining Spartan king, haply named Lykourgos, came back to power and attempted an attack on Messenia with the Aitolians, but in 217 the Peace of Naupaktos imposed a calm. Lykourgos' successor, Makhanidas, was called a tyrant by Polybios and employed both mercenaries and Lakedaimonians; Philopoimen defeated him at the battle of Mantinea in 207, wherein he along with four thousand "Lakedaimonians" died.⁹⁹ Livy's mention of tyrants who had set

⁹⁴ Oliva 1971, 264 with references to modern scholarship.

⁹⁵ Argued by Oliva 1971, 265f. Shimron 1972. Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 57f vaguely dismiss this possibility without argument.

⁹⁶ The backdrop of this is the Second Social War (220-217): Sparta, Elis, and the Aitolian koinon opposed the Akhaian koinon allied with Messenia, Philip V of Makedon, and his Hellenic League. Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 61ff; Green 1990, 286-288; Thommen 2003, 192-4.

⁹⁷ Polybios 4.34f. Shimron 1972, 63 – 78 is essential on the "interregnum" and the identity and objectives of the Kleomenic Party. Shimron sees the group as composed of enfranchised hypomeiones, perioikoi, foreigners, the heirs of the Sellasia casualties, and the neoi, and believes that this group made up the majority of the Spartiates (70).

⁹⁸ Polybios 4.81 (the passage ends with a learned excursus on Spartan history of the *longue durée*). Antigonos must have done away with Kleomenes' main reforms, or else the land would not need to be redistributed again by Kheilon. Shimron 1972, 61 argues that the small size of Kheilon's following indicates that "if the great majority of old and new Spartiates had been deprived of their land, there would certainly have been a greater response to Chilon's call" than the miserable group in Polybios. Yet the remaining number of Spartiates was tiny, the number of kleroi huge. Moreover, if Antigonos had returned the eighty Spartiates exiled by Kleomenes to Sparta, this wealthy group presumably acted as a damper on revolution. Oliva believes that if Kleomenes' reforms remained after Sellasia, Kheilon could not present any reforms (Oliva 1971, 270). It is possible, however, that Kheilon's reforms aimed for those passed over by Kleomenes: that is, persons not inducted into the Spartiate caste, not having possessed the prerequisites for induction: a liberal education, power, and graceful appearance: a revolution of the ugly, weak, and ill-educated. Cf. generally Kennell 1995, ch. 1.

⁹⁹ Polybios 11.18. Pritchett 1969, 37- 72.

slaves free may include Makhanidas.¹⁰⁰ If so, he may be considered a precursor of Nabis, but the evidence is fragmentary and thin.¹⁰¹

Nabis and the Abandonment of Aristocratic Eugenic Selection (207-196)

Nabis was the last important reformer in Hellenistic Sparta, and it is during his rule (207 – 192) that we see a final, decidedly non-aristocratic attempt to regenerate the Spartiate population. We must assume that social tensions between wealthy and poor continued up to his reign, or else it would have been difficult to gain support for revolution. These tensions can only be guessed at: the evidence for social conditions is slender for this juncture, and for Nabis' objectives the sources are notoriously hostile.¹⁰² We must also assume that the Spartan institutional structure was not sufficiently strong to resist unlimited monarchic power, another sign of the confusion into which the state had been thrown, as is indicated by the repeated murders of ephors over the last decades.

Much of Nabis' program was regarded as abominable to the writers of our sources and this is one reason why they are so hostile. However, Nabis may in fairness be regarded as the first modernizer, so to speak, of Sparta: his modernization of the Spartan state had many elements that normalized it and brought it more up to date with contemporary state practice. His reforms included Sparta's first organized form of taxation; the creation of a Spartan navy allowing for maritime activities such as normal trade and (presumably) regular income therefrom;¹⁰³ the completion of city-walls; the creation or revival of ties with Crete; and finally, the abolition of overt, state-sponsored enhancement of and protection for the eugenic, aristocratic Spartiate bloodline selection regime.¹⁰⁴

Nabis became king after Makhanidas died at the battle of Mantinea in 218. Between 207 and 205, he began his reforms in Sparta and then made a series of attempts on Arkadia, now part of the Akhaian koinon. In 198, Philip V allied with Nabis, marrying his daughters to Nabis' sons. With Philip's blessing, Nabis took Argos in 197: there he cancelled debts, distributed land, and seized the property of the wealthy.¹⁰⁵ At some point in these years Nabis became master of several cities in Crete, and of perioikic towns, especially on the Lakonian coast, such as Gytheion.¹⁰⁶ On Delos he was revered as a benefactor and savior.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Livy 38.34.2.

¹⁰¹ Oliva 1971, 272 – 273 lists all the evidence, but may be over-reading.

¹⁰² Oliva 1971, 274 and Shimron 1972, 80 – 81 speculate plausibly on Polybios' unpleasant childhood memories of the eruptions caused by Nabis and his partisans.

¹⁰³ Ditt. Syll. 584 (Delos), Chrimes 1949, 35; Livy 35.12.7. Livy 34.32 has Flamininus accuse Nabis of piracy. By 189, Sparta would wrench itself away from its previous autarky to the point that it needed a coastal market for foreign trade and imported goods: Livy 38.30.

¹⁰⁴ Texier 1975, 36 thinks more in terms of compromise than "modernization."

¹⁰⁵ Livy 32.38.

¹⁰⁶ Crete: Livy 34.35.9. Gytheion: Livy 43.29.2-3.

¹⁰⁷ Delos: IG 11.4.716, a proxeny and euergetes decree. *SIG* (3) 584. Homolle 1896.

Narratives of Nabis' reign have been reconstructed in several works.¹⁰⁸ My concern is with Nabis' efforts at population manipulation, by enfranchisement and other means. Polybios' special venom against Nabis as a tyrant flows not only from Nabis' attack on Megalopolis, Polybios' *patris*, but because of these efforts.¹⁰⁹ Diodoros and Pausanias accused Nabis of tyranny as well. Diodoros described Nabis' followers, who became enfranchised, as a decidedly disreputable set: temple-robbers, thieves, raiders, and men under the death sentence.¹¹⁰ According to Livy, Nabis even defended his freeing of slaves; this was of course an abomination to the class of persons who wrote history.¹¹¹ However, this horror is of incidental import to the focus here. What is more important is the longer temporal context: by freeing slaves, Nabis' acts were a variation of the earlier enfranchisement of helots after loyal military service that had been tried several times before in Sparta in the face of oliganthropia.

This description is probably not groundless hyperbole, and careful examination of the texts yields significant details of Nabis' program. Diodoros says that these men *ἐκ παντὸς τόπου συνέρρεον*, "streamed in together from every place."¹¹² These men were not from Sparta, nor were they resident aliens who had been living in Lakonia for several generations (as we may think of some of Kleomenes' carefully-selected *xenoi*) if they had only in Nabis' era "streamed in together." Polybios expands on this, using very strong words to describe Nabis' band of followers:

καθόλου γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ γένος ἡθροίζετο πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπιμελῶς ἐκ τῆς οἰκουμένης, οἷς ἄβατος ἦν ἡ θρέψασα δι' ἀσέβειαν καὶ παρανομίαν.¹¹³

For this *genos* was carefully collected from all over the inhabited world for this [purpose], men to whom the land that had nurtured them was forbidden because of their impiousness and habitual criminality.¹¹⁴

If we assume that regardless of possible exaggeration of expression Polybios was relating something mostly true, then many of Nabis' followers, whom he enfranchised at Sparta, were foreigners. This fact widened his reform movement, and helps account for its contagious extra-Lakonian nature, a feature not found in the revolution created by Agis and continued by Kleomenes. This feature of the reform also pitted Nabis against the Lakedaimonians: in the passage, Polybios opposes Nabis' men to actual Spartiates, or at least to actual Lakedaimonians, saying that Nabis "destroyed the remaining men from

¹⁰⁸ E.g. Chrimes 1949, Oliva 1971 III.6, Shimron 1972 chapter 4, Texier 1975, Piper 1986 chapter 6, Cartledge and Spawforth 1989 chapter 5, Thommen 2003 chapter 16.

¹⁰⁹ Polyb 13.6.1 – 5; 13.6.6 – 10, 17; 13.8.2, 13, all given in Oliva 274 note 2. 13.6.1 - 3 gives a flavor of the tone: Ὁ δὲ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων τύραννος Νάβις ... καταβολὴν δ' ἐποιεῖτο καὶ θεμέλιον ὑπεβάλλετο πολυχρονίου καὶ βαρείας τυραννίδος.

¹¹⁰ He is personally a temple-robber in Pausanias 4.19.12 as well. D. S. 27.1, Paus. 4.29.10, 11. Cp. Polybios 13.6.4: οὗτοι δ' ἦσαν ἀνδροφόνου καὶ παρασχίσται, λωποδύται, τοιχωρῆχοι.

¹¹¹ In Livy 34.31.14 – 18, defended his freeing of slaves by recalling ancient Spartan customs of equalization, to be contrasted with Roman rule of the few.

¹¹² D. S. 27.1.

¹¹³ Polybios 13.6.4.

¹¹⁴ I am assuming that καθόλου and ἐκ τῆς οἰκουμένης go together here.

Sparta” (διέφθειρε γὰρ τοὺς λοιποὺς ἄρδην ἐκ τῆς Σπάρτης) and shortly after, that the exiled “Lakedaimonians” were harried by Nabis’ men.¹¹⁵

The last charges, namely the usage of suspect foreigners and the freeing of slaves, draw a sharp contrast between Nabis’ objectives and those of Kleomenes, who enjoyed excellent press from Plutarch and (relative to Nabis’ treatment) only moderately negative press from other sources. If our sources are fundamentally accurate underneath the vitriol, then Nabis’ efforts at regenerating the Spartiate population, although creative, failed to garner sympathy because he broke too far with the ancient *nomoi* both of the Spartiates and of the surrounding Greek aristocratic world, a cultural system of which the Spartan regime was only a (rather extreme) mutation or variation. A slower approach of enfranchisement of persons outside of old Spartiate families coupled with a greater reluctance to break respected *nomoi* could conceivably have turned Sparta into a more normal Greek state without the severe political and literary opposition that Nabis suffered.

Livy has Nabis compare himself to Lykourgos.¹¹⁶ In some respect, Nabis’ project may seem antithetical to the Lykourgan reforms.¹¹⁷ To some, the freeing of helots was an irredeemably anti-Lykourgan move.¹¹⁸ The Lykourgan regime, after all, depended upon helot labor for the special lifestyle the Spartiates enjoyed. But the social and economic conditions in which Nabis operated were very different from Archaic (or Iron Age) Sparta, and the chief object of the Lykourgan *kosmos* was certainly the continuation and flourishing -- that is, the pursuit of the genetic interests -- of a select group by whatever means were possible and seemed reasonable.¹¹⁹ The subjugation of Helots was vital, and normal, for the slave period at which the ancient Spartiate domination of the helots was devised and effected.¹²⁰ But it is the continuation and flourishing of the select (citizen) group that was Lykourgos’ objective, not the subjugation-for-the-sake-of-subjugation of another group. Nabis’ project was Lykourgan in spirit in respect to his equalization of property in Argos; the poverty of sources do not tell us explicitly that he conducted this at Sparta, but he may have. And unless we believe wholeheartedly that no moment existed in the Archaic era in which some outside persons were allowed to become Spartiates, we cannot call Nabis’ efforts completely un-Lykourgan, only promiscuous.

As we have seen, Kleomenes had only allowed the *χαριεστάτοι* into his citizen body. Diodoros tells us that Nabis did quite the opposite: *ἐπιλεγόμενος* (“carefully selecting them”), Nabis did away with the *χαριεστάτοι* of the Lakedaimonians.¹²¹ This may only indicate “the most elegant” in the sense of “the smart set,” that is, the wealthy and fashionable, as no *tois somasi* is appended. However, Polybios more specifically wrote that Nabis διέφθειρε γὰρ τοὺς λοιποὺς ἄρδην ἐκ τῆς Σπάρτης, ἐφυγάδευσεν δὲ τοὺς κατὰ πλεον πλούτῳ διαφέροντας ἢ δόξῃ προγονικῇ, “for he utterly destroyed the

¹¹⁵ Polybios 13.6.3, 13.6.9.

¹¹⁶ Livy 34.31.18.

¹¹⁷ Shimron 1972, Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 70.

¹¹⁸ Shimron 1972, 96: “the chief object [of the Lykourgan regime] was the perpetual subjugation of the Helots.”

¹¹⁹ Genetic interests: generally, Salter 2007.

¹²⁰ Cartledge 2002, 83f sees the helots subjected before chattel slavery existed in Greece.

¹²¹ D.S. 27.1.

remaining men of Sparta, and drove into exile those who were greatly superior in terms of wealth or *splendor of descent*.¹²² By doing this, Nabis broke the Spartan state free of the notion that it, as a corporate entity or identity, must be attached to a particular descent group, or to any descent group. The Spartan state, Nabis seems to have seen, was a population occupying an expanse of land, and this population did not need to have a long record of freedom to be citizens, nor any specific bloodline. This is a radical move.

The horrific freeing of slaves is described by Livy, in a fine speech he gives Nabis for 197 BC: *servos ad libertatem voco ... in agros inopem plebem deduco*: “I have called slaves to freedom ... I have led into the farms the destitute plebeians.”¹²³ These latter may be hypomeiones, but with the barriers of the castes sanded down, the system had run sufficiently amok by this point to make the class distinctions murky, the rights of each class indistinct. Very shortly afterward, Livy has Nabis connect the freeing of slaves with population manipulation showing evident conscious thought about the population crisis and its solutions: *ad multitudinem servis liberatis auctam et egentibus divisum agrum attinet*: Nabis states that he “increased population with freed slaves, and farmland, apportioned, belongs to poor men.”¹²⁴

The most radical of Nabis’ actions, in terms of equalization of goods, the flattening of caste-borders, and population manipulation, was perhaps the most objectionable: the forced marriages between his opponents’ wives and daughters and those whom he wished to favor, mostly non-Spartiates. On the one hand, we cannot ignore that Sparta’s *nomos* of female inheritance provided a non-sexual incentive for these marriages: slaves, mercenaries, and other supporters of Nabis received concrete property through marriages to these women.¹²⁵ On the other hand, the phenomenon reminds us most directly of sociobiological arguments about the ultimate fruits of empire and power: reproductive success and its proxy, sexual opportunities with females.¹²⁶ And finally, we cannot get away from one theme that has been prevalent in much of this study: the methods for attainment of Spartan population. In Nabis’ case, very different methods seem to have come into play than those used earlier.

Polybios writes that Nabis τὰς δὲ τούτων οὐσίας καὶ γυναῖκας διεδίδου τῶν ἄλλων τοῖς ἐπιφανεστάτοις καὶ τοῖς μισθοφόροις, “gave the property and wives [of the men of Sparta just mentioned] to the most eminent of those who remained and to his mercenaries.”¹²⁷ These women will be the female versions or wives of the above-mentioned men who were greatly superior in terms of wealth or splendor of descent (κατὰ πλεον πλούτῳ διαφέροντας ἢ δόξῃ προγονικῇ) since in human affairs, status often marries status. This is the common practice of homogamy, analogous to and continuous with assortative mating practices in the nonhuman world. Another passage in Polybios tells a similar story: “having expelled the citizens, he set free the slaves and married them to the

¹²² Polybios 13.6.3.

¹²³ Livy 41.31.11.

¹²⁴ Livy 41.31.14. There is no evidence that Nabis freed all the slaves or ended slavery. Strabo says (8.5) that helotry lasted until the supremacy of the Romans.

¹²⁵ Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, 70.

¹²⁶ Scheidel 2009.

¹²⁷ Polybios 13.6.3.

wives and daughters of their masters.” (ἐκβαλὼν τοὺς πολίτας ἡλευθέρωσε τοὺς δούλους καὶ συνώκισε ταῖς τῶν δεσποτῶν γυναῖξιν καὶ θυγατέρας).¹²⁸ Here the slaves, presumably helots and house slaves, are elevated.

The expulsions of husbands and forced marriages of wives have many parallels from the ancient world. There is the brief mention of marriage by *harpage* or snatching amongst the Spartiates in Plutarch.¹²⁹ Herodotos’ history begins with abductions of women and these acts are threaded throughout his history.¹³⁰ There is the bizarre story of the abduction of and marriage with the Sabine girls in Livy.¹³¹ There are the slaughters of captured cities’ citizens and the enslavement of their wives and children in the cruel and ubiquitous custom of *andrapodismos*. In the animal world, there are primates’ attacks against other primate groups, killing the males and children but taking the females in estrus to mate and reproduce with them.

Another parallel may be Alexander’s imposed marriages between some 80 – 100 of his elite Makedonian officers and Persian women at Sousa. In both the Alexander and the Nabis cases, previous origins of *patris* and bloodline were weakened. Although Badian’s characterization of Alexander’s intention as the creation of “a new ruling class of mixed blood, which would be free of all national allegiance or tradition” may be exaggerated, nevertheless Plutarch had said something along similar lines, namely that Alexander, “by mixing into a loving *krater* their lives and ways and the marriages and customs, ordained that all should reckon the inhabited world as their fatherland.”¹³² It is possible that Nabis’ efforts would have been similarly regarded centuries later if he had not suffered such bad press early on and if his attempts at rule had been more successful.

Regardless of Nabis’ intentions or lack thereof *vis-à-vis* the wearing down of barriers of *patris*, and despite this arrangement’s objectionably depredatory nature toward Spartiate females, the marriages possess a reproductive logic far deeper than simply rewarding and fostering loyalty amongst the men who he had brought in and elevated. New children would be created from these unions. The exiles, executions, and war-deaths of Spartiate males meant that the supply of eligible males of eminent stock (κατὰ πλεόν πλούτῳ διαφέροντας ἢ δόξῃ προγονικῇ) would have been low in Sparta, although the lacunose and impressionistic nature of our sources prevent quantification. A gender imbalance among the Spartiates is likely to have occurred at this juncture.

It is quite likely that many Spartiate women and girls of bloodlines eugenically and aristocratically eminent enough to be reluctant to marry persons without similar credentials

¹²⁸ Polybios 16.13.1.

¹²⁹ Plut. *Lyk.* 15; cf. Hdt. 6.65.

¹³⁰ Hdt. 1.1-4, 1.2, 1.3.1, 1.4, 2.114, 3.2, 6.16.2, 6.32, 6.138.

¹³¹ Cicero *de rep.* 2.12-14, Livy 1.9-13, Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 2.30-47, Ovid *Fasti* 3.167-258, *Ars Am.* 1.101-34, Plut. *Rom.* 14-20. Although possessing similar elements such as concerns about population, the Sabine abduction legend is early enough to have accreted its own constellation of aetiological importances, and features such issues as blood-ties with the Sabines and other nearby towns formed after the abduction. Brown 1995; Frascchetti 2002, 44-6.

¹³² Badian 1964, 201, quoted in Green 1991, 448. Plut. *de Alex. Fort.* i: ὥσπερ ἐν κρατῆρι φιλοτησίῳ μίξας τοὺς βίους καὶ τὰ ἦθη καὶ τοὺς γάμους καὶ τὰς διαίτας, πατρίδα μὲν τὴν οἰκουμένην προσέταξεν ἡγεῖσθαι πάντας.

might have never married, refrained from remarriage, or married late, thus lowering their total fertility without Nabis' importation and elevation of other males and encouragement or coercion of Spartiate females to marry them. Nabis' action was nothing less than an attempt to regenerate the Spartiate population biologically. The children of the unions with foreigners would be half-Spartiate, thus partially redeeming Nabis' admixture of foreignness into Sparta. The ex-wives of those he destroyed and exiled would be not the playthings of Nabis' eminent remaining men, elevated slaves, and mercenaries, but their wives. It is in this action that Nabis' program seems the most pathological in terms of sexuality while simultaneously reproductively logical in terms of citizenry.

The strange legends of the Partheniai from eighth-century Spartan myth-history finally offer a sort of mirror image to Nabis' act. As we have seen in Chapter 1, the Partheniai were the children of either cowardly Spartiates who had not fought in the First Messenian War (hence, tainted by hereditary cowardice), or else were the children of younger Spartiates who had been sent back to Sparta to impregnate Spartiate wives who had complained about Sparta's lower birth rate in contrast to Messenia, and how the Messenian population would eventually ensure military defeat for Sparta if nothing were done to alleviate the problem. The Partheniai had been deprived of rights and accused of conspiring with helots, kicked out of mainland Greece, and finally established the polis of Taras, modern Tarentino in Italy, whose architecture dates precisely to the putative time of the First Messenian War.

In the case of the Partheniai, the children of these unions were exiled. A mark of Nabis' reversal of Spartiate traditional eugenic mores may be found in the fact that it is the children of these unions between Spartiate women and elevated helots, foreigners chosen without any recorded concern for physical form, or remaining Spartiate supporters of the man who would do this, who would form the bulk of the next generations of society at Sparta and provide the hereditary material for Sparta's citizens of the future, Tyrtaios' *laos opisso*. It may be fair to see this as the penultimate fall of the Spartiate Lykourgan eugenic ideal.

Flamininus and Philopoimen

An ultimate fall thus still awaits. After Flamininus's declaration of Greek freedom at the Isthmian Games in 196, the Romans defeated Nabis and his forces, and Flamininus set conditions on Sparta that considerably hampered Sparta from following either its traditional ways, or Nabis' ways, or some combination of the two.¹³³ Nabis was allowed to possess only two ships. His collection of Argive slaves from his time of domination over Argos had to be returned to their owners. Any Messenian property he had seized had to be returned. All refugees and prisoners from any city allied with Rome had to be returned. Spartan exiles were to have their children returned, and Spartan wives who wished to go to their exiled husbands were permitted to do so; fascinatingly, women who did not wish to do this were not compelled, presumably in case affection had arisen in these strange unions, or the new husbands were in some other way preferable to the old. All mercenaries who had defected from Nabis were to receive their property back.

¹³³ Livy 34.35.

Nabis' Cretan possessions, about which we know little but which are reminiscent of the Spartiate imperium of the late fifth and early fourth century, went to the Romans. All cities he had taken in his military career were now to go ungarrisoned. He could build no fortified settlement, neither in others' territory, nor in his own. He had to give five hostages to the Roman general, including his own son, and pay an immediate 100-talent indemnity and a 50-talent annual indemnity for eight years. On top of all of this, Livy says that alternate sources (presumably the annalists, rather than lost sections of Polybios) report that 14,000 of Nabis' men were killed, and 4,000 captured. Finally, perioikoi were made to enter the Akhaian League, and Sparta never recovered twenty-four of their cities, which became a League of Lakedaimonians, and then an "Eleuthero-Lakonian League" in Augustus' time. This group of cities may have gained independence from the Akhaian League considerably earlier, while Nabis was still alive.¹³⁴

The Roman treatment was harsh, and has been compared to Leuktra.¹³⁵ Yet it was relatively merciful compared to what the Spartan community faced seven years later. Philopoimen's final extermination, in 188, of not only a way of life but of (the remnants of) a genetic group is well-known. Sparta would never annoy him again.¹³⁶ First and least objectionably in terms of what could be expected in the interstate milieu, he attacked Sparta after Nabis' execution by the Aitolians, and "partly by force, partly by persuasion" made it a member of the Akhaian koinon.¹³⁷ The cooperation of leading Lakedaimonians bought him some legitimacy.¹³⁸ The Spartan assembly continued to meet and protested this act.¹³⁹ And the Lakedaimonians began what Diodoros' source describes as νεωτερίζειν, causing Diophanes, general of the Akhaian koinon, to invade Lakonia with Titus Flamininus.¹⁴⁰ Philopoimen managed to turn them away from attacking Sparta,¹⁴¹ but his attempt to quell the problem in 189 entailed returning its exiles and killing either eighty or 350 Spartiates, tearing down its walls, annexing much of its territory to Megalopolis, and very significantly for our purposes, displacing into Akhaia "all those who had been made into citizens of Sparta by the tyrants" excepting 3,000 disobedient ones whom he sold into slavery.¹⁴² He did not allow them to return even when importuned by Flamininus and the Roman consul Manius Acilius Glabro.¹⁴³ He dismantled the Lykourgan *agoge* and forced boys into the Akhaian system of discipline instead, "on the grounds that they would never be humble while under the Lykourgan nomoi."¹⁴⁴ Inscriptions after 188 confirm a different

¹³⁴ Strabo 8.5.5, Paus. 3.21.6-7. Pausanias lists all. Cf. Kennell 1999, esp. 192f, entertaining the earlier date.

¹³⁵ Kennell 1999, 190.

¹³⁶ "Philopoimen was determined to settle the 'Spartan question' once and for all ... Philopoimen ... wanted to make sure Sparta could never rebel again." – Oliva 1971, 300f. Oliva's ominous echo of the term "the Jewish question" is notable.

¹³⁷ Plut. *Philopoimen* 15.2.

¹³⁸ Plut. *Philopoimen* 15.3.

¹³⁹ Plut. *Philopoimen* 15.6.

¹⁴⁰ Plut. *Philopoimen* 16.1.

¹⁴¹ Paus. 8.51.

¹⁴² Plut. *Philopoimen* 16.4, Livy 38.34, Paus. 8.51.3. The number 350 comes from Aristokrates the Spartiate, one of Plutarch's sources.

¹⁴³ Plut. *Philopoimen* 17.4.

¹⁴⁴ Plut. *Philopoimen* 16.5; cf. Livy 38.34; particularly Oliva 1971, 298.

set of offices than the traditional ones and in conformity, rather, with Akhaian magistracies.¹⁴⁵ Although Ducat casts doubt on the possibility of the *agoge* being truly discontinued, the description that has come down to us seems to have eradicated as much as is conceivable.¹⁴⁶

Livy did not mince words in describing these acts as highly destructive to the Spartan state, writing:

Per haec velut enervata civitas Lacedaemoniorum diu Achaeis obnoxia fuit; nulla tamen res tanto erat damno quam disciplina Lycurgi, cui per octingentos annos adsuerant, sublata.¹⁴⁷

Unmanned, as it were, through these measures, the state of the Lakedaimonians was for a long time submissive to the Akhaians; moreover, nothing did greater damage than the abolition of the discipline of Lykourgos, to which they had been accustomed for eight hundred years.¹⁴⁸

Only in 146 did the Spartiates leave the Akhaian *politeia* and re-establish their *patrion*, although Plutarch admits that this only occurred “as much as was possible after their misfortunes and after so much damage.”¹⁴⁹ The fact that Plutarch, whose treatment of Philopoimen is mostly positive, concedes that Philopoimen’s damage to the state was permanent and serious is striking. For Philopoimen to enslave 3,000 Spartiates, kill 80 or 350, and send many to Akhaia was nearly to extirpate the caste, thus the genetic or biological group, and also their culture, an act not much different from genocide. An educated man like Philopoimen must have known that the Spartiates had long been disinclined to augment their numbers through full Spartiate enfranchisement, and that this disinclination had spelled trouble for the Spartan state since the fifth century. Countless examples have shown us this: we see it by their failure, even in the face of subreplacement fertility, to regenerate their numbers through adoption or a real, lasting program of true enfranchisement, whether through manumission or the welcoming of free non-Spartiates into the citizen body. Only when the population situation was truly dire were truly substantive measures taken, and the first set, those of Agis, met resistance fierce to the point of assassination. Philopoimen’s final measure of forcing the tiny number of remaining Spartiates to adhere to the Akhaian discipline was a particularly severe blow, one that, whether intended for strategic purposes or out of irritation at Sparta, did as much as could be done to destroy much of whatever was left that made this population Spartiate.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ IG V. 1. 4 and 5. Kennell 1995, 9.

¹⁴⁶ Ducat 2006, 10.

¹⁴⁷ Livy 38.34.9. On “enervata,” cf. Plutarch’s similar Greek figure τότε μὲν οὖν ὑπὸ συμφορῶν μεγάλων ὥσπερ νεύρα τῆς πόλεως ἐκτεμεῖν τῷ Φιλοποίμεινι παρασχόντες, Plut. *Philopoimen* 16.6.

¹⁴⁸ The figure of 800 years is probably rather exaggerated, but as we have seen in Chapter Two, an argument can be made for considerable anteriority for at least some aspects of the Spartiate regime.

¹⁴⁹ Plut. *Philopoimen* 16.6: ὡς ἦν ἀνυστὸν ἐκ κακῶν καὶ φθορᾶς τηλικαύτης. Cf. Paus. 8.51.3, Kennell 1995, 10.

¹⁵⁰ Kennell 1995, 9-10 argues convincingly that the change in the Spartan constitution was most serious and not reconstituted at the visit of Aemilius Paullus in 168 despite how Livy 45.28.4 might be interpreted. Texier 1975, 102: “il détruisit tout ce qui pouvait contribuer à l’originalité et à la force de caractère des Spartiates.”

Philopoimen cannot be solely blamed for the end of the Spartiate system. A great deal of what had made Sparta distinct was its militaristic culture. This was now unnecessary since many helots were enfranchised, thus making perpetual vigilance over helots unimportant. It was also impossible, since the life of military leisure had required helots to exist. In their absence relatively normal trade was by necessity engaged in. Livy tells us of the Spartiates petitioning in 187 BC for coastal access for the purposes of trade.¹⁵¹ This conformity appears in material culture: Roman Sparta's burial customs are indistinct from other provincial *civitates*.¹⁵² Moreover, some elements of the Spartiate *kosmos* lingered. The Spartan state continued to exist, but as a normal Greek polis different from others neither in terms of reproductive regime nor in terms of the continuation of its original bloodlines nor in many of its customs except as a museum.¹⁵³

Conclusions

This chapter has surveyed the attempts at population manipulation by Spartan kings in the Hellenistic period in the light of Spartiate eugenic thinking. As we have seen in all the previous chapters, from the foundation of the "Lykourgan" regime through the libel against Agesilaos II's competitor for the Eurypontid throne, eugenic ideas animated much Spartiate efforts toward population maintenance and enhancement. The slow waning of eugenic concerns in reformers' efforts throughout the Hellenistic period may be seen to respond to the exogenous pressures to "modernize" and normalize Sparta, that is, to make it become more similar to surrounding Greek states in the Hellenistic period.

The demographic manipulations enacted by the three figures of Agis, Kleomenes, and Nabis represent a gradual decline in eugenic concerns. Agis' plans were highly concerned with replenishing the citizen body with those of the perioikoi and xenoï who were "especially appealing in terms of their physical form," "in the peak condition of their age set." His party's ouster of Agis' royal colleague relied upon an appeal to highly eugenic concerns. We would expect that such an appeal would still have much force so shortly after the Classical period.

Kleomenes, while retaining much of Agis' eugenic focus, made some concessions to exogenous conditions and expectations, and his moderate stance toward purity, by which he enrolled the "most powerful" of the foreigners into the Spartiate caste along with the expected "most appealing" of the perioikoi, resulted in a citizen body large enough to reasonably attract Ptolemaic backing and an efflorescence of Spartan power. The mishap of a late messenger to Antigonos Doson announcing the invasion of the Kelts was the primary problem preventing what could have been a very strong regional power status.

Nabis' modernization of Sparta to Hellenistic norms by such acts as the building of walls, continued issuing of coins, and enhancement of maritime trade was matched by what appears to be his abandonment of the state-protected set of nomoi that had previously acted as a eugenic sieve for the Spartiates. No eugenic principles are recorded for his acts

¹⁵¹ Livy 38.30.7.

¹⁵² Raftopoulou 1998, 136.

¹⁵³ The "museum" aspect of Spartan society in the Roman period is well described in Kennell 1995.

of enfranchisement, and his only act of directed reproduction was one that contradicted and negated Lykourgan eugenic nomoi. The waning of traditional Spartiate bloodline-protection also seemingly ran parallel to a blurring or downright erasure of caste distinctions in the Spartan state, from the *okhlos* and caste-unspecified *demos* in the Spartan agora in Plutarch's description of the socio-economic turmoil in Agis' day to the breakdown of divisions between hypomeion and Spartiate and perioikos and slave or helot in Nabis'. The final destruction of the *agoge* only caps the process.

Conclusion

Throughout the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods, the waxing and waning of the population of the elite caste at Sparta and the enfranchisement of outsiders into the Lakedaimonian army determined Sparta's power in the larger Greek world. A high population in the eighth and seventh centuries allowed the control of Lakonia and probably furnished an incentive to seize land outside Lakonia and to send off colonists to the apoikia known as Taras. Archaeology attests to population expansion in the sixth century as well. Only after the earthquake in the fifth century did the Spartiate population enter an irrecoverable numerical decline. Demotion from the Spartiate caste represents an insufficient explanation for this process, and a factor peculiar to Sparta has instead been identified, namely a combination of cultural features for both male and female Spartiates that did not create sufficient incentives for reproduction. The fourth century saw an unsustainable imperial boom inflated by military enfranchisement. This was followed by an implosion of population and power. A recovery was effected in the late third century through the vigorous but highly selective enfranchisements of Kleomenes, whose success was only halted by the Makedonian military.

This study began by asking why Sparta prevailed over its close neighbors and over other Greek states, even large and developed ones, to become the *de facto* Greek hegemon by the late Archaic period. Some competitive edge requires identification. What may be evidence of this advantage appears in the Archaic period with the highly focused martial exhortations of the Spartan poet Tyrtaios and in the historical record of the Classical period, wherein Archaic traditions of unusual and historically precocious forms of social, military, and political state organization at Sparta repeatedly surface, linked in many sources with the name Lykourgos the lawgiver and traditionally producing a period of *eunomia* after a period of disorganization. Despite variations the tradition is reasonably consistent. Aside from military reorganization of the Spartan proto-state, many of the sources attest to a set of unusual reproductive customs, including alloparenting, selective infanticide, and allo-insemination. Whether effective or not, a consistently eugenic focus clearly lay behind many of these customs and behind the socialization and training process of Spartiate males known later as the *agoge*, here analyzed as a eugenic sieve designed to flush out the "unfit" from the Spartiate reproductive pool.

More directly measurably, these customs accompanied the rise of a large and flourishing population of Spartiates. Demographers link alloparenting with high population growth when other favorable factors exist, as with the Hutterites. Infanticide of children unlikely to reproduce anyway decreases birth spacing, permitting higher total fertility. Allo-insemination permits monogamous couples who are childless due to the infertility of one partner or lack of mutual sexual attraction to produce children by the introduction of another person for the purposes of conceiving offspring. The Spartiate population attained sufficient size to gain and maintain control of Lakonia as well as Messenia, and to enjoy domination over its neighbors, acquiring and directly controlling some 8000 square kilometers of land by the seventh century.

The strong military ethos that was necessary for this level of success is evidenced in the seventh-century poet Tyrtaios. He may have created the exhortations to altruism that

appear in his songs, or may have elaborated and systematized an already existent martial ethos. In either case, his lyrics constitute a remarkable cultural adaptation that appeared in Sparta, flourished there, and spread elsewhere in the Classical period. Tyrtaios' ethos was interlaced through Spartan culture for centuries as attested in many subsequent literary and historical sources, his songs sung on campaign centuries later by Spartiates. Tyrtaios' project gave strong incentives to Spartiate males to risk their lives not for their families, but for the Spartan state by aestheticizing violence and death, by elevating the importance of the state as a superpersonal entity, and by representing the state as a benevolent, orderly society composed of persons related genetically to the individual warrior, persons for whom it is not only right to risk dying but for whom it is even fine and beautiful (*kalon*) to die. The individual's importance is dwarfed in comparison to the community. He is but a cell in the larger organism of the polis. This is an extreme community ethos to appear so early in the history of state formation in Greece; Tyrtaios is one of the earliest recorded users of the term "polis." Despite Tyrtaios' failure to mention Lykourgos, the Lykourgan reforms may well predate him. For a new argument for an early installation of these reforms explains Xenophon's assertion that the Spartiates appear different from other Greeks by eugenic pruning and assortative mating, which would have taken centuries to produce effects in more than a few families.

Yet this set of unique reproductive customs ceased to be functional after the deadly earthquake of the 460s in Sparta, and instead produced or permitted the population decline recorded by our sources afterward. Understanding the failure of the Spartiate population to recover requires not only historical and demographic analysis but an anthropological look at the probable results of Spartiate state control over reproduction and an argument about the probable unintended effects of Sparta's unusual reproductive customs. Previous solutions to the mystery of Spartiate population decline emphasized two processes. One was deliberate family restriction for the purpose of transgenerational estate preservation. The other was the demotion of men from the Spartiate caste due to universal female inheritance resulting in males inheriting less land and their supposed inability to use land owned by females for their produce-requirements. There are problems with these explanations. In the case of deliberate family restriction, we would expect more elites to practice it elsewhere in the Classical Greek world, but no other Greek aristocratic caste bred itself almost into extinction. And demotion cannot explain most of the reduction of Spartiates without producing a similar increase in the "inferiors" which does not appear in the sources.

What instead seems to be the case is that the social mechanisms that normally ensure high fertility in less unusual patriarchal societies had been rerouted for a long time in Sparta. The reroutings of these mechanisms are complex, but can be broken down into two: the crucial link between male status and offspring had become attenuated in Sparta due precisely to the communitarian ethic; and female status, which in many historical societies is linked with low fertility, was unusually high in Sparta. In the Archaic period, the population had nonetheless remained high because the demographic regime had been maintained by state control and by constraining *nomoi*. This system broke in the social chaos of the earthquake of the 460s and could no longer function to keep a high population. All of the attestations of heavy state involvement in individual and family life

at Sparta, which some scholars have seen as idealizations, make more sense as actual practices under this explanation. The low population resulting after the earthquake necessitated the increasing usage of marginal groups of non-Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian military.

This enfranchisement of non-Spartiates would change the character of the Lakedaimonian army and take Sparta into a newly aggressive, imperialistic direction in the late fifth century starting with Lysander. This is a great departure from state policy of the earlier fifth century, close examination of which shows rather low Spartan interest or ability in sustaining larger imperial projects. Just as there were ideational roots behind the population decline, cultural reasons also lay behind Sparta's earlier reluctance to spread direct rule outside of the Peloponnesos. This reluctance was expressed in inefficiency and a lack of desire to consolidate rule in the abortive imperial projects seen in the actions of Kleomenes I, Leotykidas, the regent Pausanias, the apoikia established at Herakleia Trakhinia, the campaigns in the Khalkidike, the very late imposition of tribute on controlled territories, and in the poor management of Thasos and Byzantion. Path-dependent disinclination to reorganize for projects outside the customary Spartan sphere of influence leads us to see Sparta before Lysander as a state content with its share of resources and status in the Greek world, autarkic in terms of its resource base and correspondingly simple in terms of its economy. Individuals attempting expansion of Spartan power were invariably censured by slander and indignation at home, an expression of the extreme Spartan competitive ethos that also surfaced in the sieve of the *agoge* to produce the best warriors. But this system could not produce the best imperialists.

Given this picture, the hard imperial turn begun under Lysander requires an explanation. It could be solely attributed to the military structures, such as dekarchies, that had been created during the Peloponnesian War. However, the population decline of the Spartiates necessitated an influx of persons to staff the Lakedaimonian army. These men were unconstrained by the rather particular norms and ideals that the *agoge* indoctrinated into the young Spartiates. And unlike the Spartiates, they were not issued by the state a *kleros* or land-allotment to provide a basic income. These facts furnish an explanation of at least some of the newly aggressive and expansionist Spartan foreign policy after the massive influx of non-Spartiates into the Lakedaimonian army began in the late fifth century. The rise to power of Lysander, not a Spartiate but a member of the marginal group known as the *mothakes*, exemplifies a new energy in Sparta leading to fourth-century imperialism and expansion that was only possible through the usage of these new non-Spartiate personnel. Sparta suddenly practiced a harder form of imperialism than it had before. Lysander in some respects resembled the Athenian Kleon, a person from outside the aristocratic elite who oversaw a large military force consisting of many individuals from the marginal classes.

This leads to a reconsideration of the acceptance of the Peace of Antalkidas of 387. It contradicted Spartan practice and ideals related to panhellenism, to a distrust of Persians, and to the castigation of "medizers." The notion that the Peace was accepted solely due to Sparta's dire straits in the early 380s is not convincing, as an analysis of their performance in the war during those years shows. The fact that the Spartiates, many of whom were inculcated with a panhellenic *noblesse oblige* toward other free Greeks and an ideology

opposed to medism, were utterly outnumbered by non-Spartiates in the Lakedaimonian army provides an explanation of the Spartan state's acceptance of this treaty. The alternative to accepting the Peace of Antalkidas would have been another invasion of Persia to free the Greeks of Anatolia from Persian control, as had been undertaken at the outset of the fourth century by King Agesilaos II. However, such a war would require support. A panhellenic ideal may have been held by many Spartiates, but Spartiates now often comprised only some 1% of Lakedaimonian military forces on a given campaign. Individuals serving in the Lakedaimonian army who had been recently released from brutal oppression as helot farmers cannot be expected to have been willing to indulge in an idealistic and dangerous campaign for Greeks in Asia; nor can they be expected to always have been reliably obedient, considering the paucity of Spartiates and their own numerousness. And the perioikoi, despite the promotions of a few of them particularly in the Lakedaimonian navy, were an unreliable subordinate group at best. As the example of Leuktra in 371 and the defections amongst the perioikoi and helots upon the Theban invasion indicate, the willingness of the rank and file to fight in a given action was essential, and without it, all could be lost.

Various sources attest to an extreme change in the character of the Lakedaimonian army and administration in the fourth century, including the fourteenth chapter of Xenophon's work on the Lakedaimonian constitution, passages from Isokrates' *Busiris*, *Panathenaikos*, and *de Pace*, and Aristotle's *Politics*, along with references preserved in Plutarch. These descriptions have been explained by some scholars as moralistic rhetoric with little substance, but they paint a consistent picture that supports an argument of an actual change in behavior and attitudes, a picture that is well explained by the population shift. This change in the ideals of the persons serving in the Lakedaimonian forces partly resulted from the failure of the Spartiates to fully incorporate their marginal groups, which would have included a full share in Spartiate rights and privileges and the Spartiate identity, including the *agoge* and the land allotments. But cultural exclusivity amongst the Spartiates prevented such a step.

Full inclusion would also have involved years of military training in the *agoge*. This did not occur, and evidence of it is available in the Spartan defeat at Leuktra and the failure of the Lakedaimonian army to ward off the Theban invasion of 369. This invasion crippled the Spartan state and removed Messenia from it, cutting in half the Spartan economy. After this moment, Sparta fell into a period of political decline. The retention of reproductive customs unsuited to recovering the Spartiate population evidently continued in the late Classical and Hellenistic period. Sparta became only a local player in Peloponnesian politics, and did little to challenge the rise of Makedonian power. Two Hellenistic reformers at Sparta, Agis and Kleomenes, saw clearly that Sparta's state of disarray could be alleviated only by radical structural changes in the organization of the state. They respectively planned and carried out enfranchisements into the Spartiate caste of selected foreigners and perioikoi. These efforts successfully effected a military revival and a Spartan renaissance which could have secured a position of considerable power among the Greek leagues and Hellenistic kingdoms of the period. Kleomenes was halted in his progress by a massive Makedonian army, and Sparta fell into disarray again. Little about population can be inferred from his disaster; this was only an example of misfortune.

The third Spartan reformer, Nabis, embarked on a program of “modernizing” Sparta to fit many of the prevailing standards of Hellenistic states. He abandoned the unique array of reproductive and eugenic customs characteristic of the Spartan state, including the eugenic protection of Spartiate bloodlines that had loomed so large in the concerns of the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods up to Agis and Kleomenes, and seemingly accelerated the process of erasure of caste distinctions visible in the earlier Hellenistic period. He enfranchised a wide and miscellaneous assortment of persons including foreigners and helots and created in this way an aggressive army that allowed a wider sort of empire, including Argos and some cities on Crete. He expelled Spartiates insufficiently loyal to him and forced their wives to marry mercenaries and slaves; this action seems to have been intended to reconstitute the Spartiate class. However, his rule proved unsustainable and ran into the opposition of the Akhaians and Rome, opposition which finally crippled a good deal of what remained of the Spartiate system by killing, enslaving, and ejecting many Spartiates and by extirpating the *agoge*. Under Roman domination, Sparta, although retaining some museum-like displays of its former ferocity and culture, came to resemble in many respects other Hellenistic and Roman cities in terms of its funerary customs, its lack of a distinctive military ethos, its magistracies, and its citizens’ involvement in commerce.

Unsurprisingly, Nabis’ enfranchisements were coextensive temporally with Sparta’s expansion into something resembling a small empire. His rule over Argos and cities in Crete could not have occurred without a force far larger than old-bloodline Spartiates. And this is true for all of Sparta’s expansionist ventures. Sparta’s efflorescence of power under Nabis runs parallel to what had occurred in Brasidas’ and Lysander’s time, and in some respect to Kleomenes’ reign and even to Agesilaos’ invasion of Asia. It is to be contrasted with Sparta’s existence as a “status quo” state before the Peloponnesian War, when Spartan soft imperialism in the sixth and much of the fifth century had been constrained by an isolationist ideology and an idealistic ethic beaten into Spartiates through the *agoge*. It is no surprise that in all periods of aggressive Spartan “revisionist state”-type imperial expansion, demographic enhancement through enfranchisement of various sorts had occurred.

This is not essentially dissimilar to the aggressiveness and willingness of the Athenians to act as a large imperial player and to go to war when their fleet was rowed by *thetes* eager for personal advancement, whereas conservative, aristocratic politicians were often reluctant to go to war. Foreign policy in all of these cases was effected by a large, eager, underprivileged group being brought into the army. However, unlike the Athenian case, the old-family Spartiates were overwhelmingly outnumbered. The 1.5% of Spartiates in the agora in the afternoon described by Kinadon is an obvious example; but so are the 3,500 promotions envisioned by Agis and the 4,000 carried out by Kleomenes. The older elite on these occasions – that is, whatever group of living persons had been raised to value its eugenically-maintained bloodline and inculcated in the ideals of Lykourgos and Tyrtaios – was swamped in numbers.

The purpose here has not been to cast censure upon the marginal groups at Sparta for an aggressive pursuit of imperial power or for a failure to act upon panhellenic ideals. It is clearly unrealistic to expect members of a group excluded for centuries and then elevated

into a second-class citizen status to suddenly adopt the lofty ideals with which the first-class citizens were indoctrinated. Spartiate exclusiveness did not allow neodamodeis, perioikoi, or helots into the *agoge* where they might have received such an education, nor did it give them a *kleros*. A full enfranchisement, including the bestowing of the name Spartiate, the gift of land-allotments, and the equivalent right of Roman *connubium* or intermarriage with Spartiates as Kleomenes granted, might have produced a class who were more interested in cultivating the Spartiate gentleman-soldier ideals rather than being focused on the material gain that the fourth century sources describe. It does not seem that the neodamodeis of the Classical period were given these things, and there may have been few means to better themselves economically than by serving in the expanded army. Such service probably provided them with sufficient war-booty to be able to settle down in a village in Lakedaemon and begin a life similar to a perioikic farmer. But the perils of repeated military service must have been clear. After an initial venture to secure resources for settling down, risking their lives in Asia for an idealistic crusade against Persia understandably may not have appealed to them.

Spartan literature has burgeoned over the past several years. It has also shifted its weight from an attempt to find out the actual events and processes of the Spartan past to a look at ideologies in our texts about Sparta. This shift is notably visible in the Swansea publications of the Classical Press of Wales which has averaged a book every one to two years. A typical article in this series on Xenophon's writings, for example, is just as likely to concern Xenophon's representations and structures of rhetoric as it is to try to determine what realities lay behind them. In some respects this process has mirrored a similar development in the field of ancient history and classical studies. Surely close examinations of rhetorical structures and socially-constructed realities are important. However, this dissertation has taken a different approach from this shift. It has tried to examine the actual events and processes that lie underneath textual descriptions and that presumably inspired them. In making all of the arguments contained here, I have advocated that the surviving testimonia about Sparta – which constitute more information than we have about any ancient Greek state except Athens – need not be dismissed as little more than elements of an idealistic mirage held by admiring foreigners. Admittedly this requires some faith. But what I have tried to do is explain the social processes that would have been in effect if the literary sources are not essentially distorted; and I hope to have shown that these processes are not as implausible or inconceivable as they have seemed to many.

The study of the demography of the ancient world has also enjoyed an upswing in past years. Practitioners such as Keith Hopkins, Roger Bagnall, Walter Scheidel, Richard Saller, Robert Sallares, Ian Morris, and Sabine Huebner have published works clarifying many events and processes known to us dimly through literary sources, site surveys, and coin hoards. Life expectancy, fertility, disease, population size, some aspects of population regulation, migration, living standards, and studies of population variation have been made. Population size is regarded as one of the determinants of a society's economic performance, along with climate, geography, technology, economic institutions, and ideology. The paucity of evidence for millenia-dead civilizations has been partially made up for by comparative evidence from other agrarian societies to produce convincing

explanations of a variety of population phenomena and social behavior. These advances in ancient demography suggested to me that a population history of an ancient state would be apposite at this time, a work using demographic approaches to understand and explain changes in state-level behavior. Sparta's fascinating demographic qualities nominated it for such study. These result not only from the population decline of its aristocracy but from the number and sheer variety of other populations kept legally and socially separate from the Spartiates: the helots, perioikoi, neodamodeis, hypomeiones, mothones and mothakes, and nothoi.

What this study of Spartan population history has attempted is an analysis of ideology's impact on demography and demography's corresponding impact on political and military ideology and performance. It has engaged with several demographic themes. It has argued that institutions, whether formal or informal (and the word *nomoi* nicely captures the ambiguity of this distinction, as it means both "customs" and "laws") can and do affect reproductive behavior and produce different demographic effects from societies with different reproductive customs. It has emphasized that sociocultural practices, ideas and customs thus affect demographic outcomes, and are not incidental. Culture is an adaptation to events, and when events change, cultural forms can become dysfunctional for the reproductive success of a group.

This study also argues that demographic change can strongly affect and even, to some extent, determine the actions of a society – in this case, a state's foreign policy. Expansion and imperialism are impossible when a society's military base shrinks, unless some means of enhancing this base occurs. An expansive military policy is predicted when a group of persons are taken from subservient farming and brought into a military which gives them their means of sustenance. And it is unlikely that the Spartan state would have accepted the Peace of Antalkidas, with its inherent dishonor and contradictions to Spartan claims of liberation, if the decision-makers of that state had not observed a distinct paucity of aristocratic Spartiates willing to obediently risk their lives in a communal effort for far-off fellow Greeks.

The reconstruction that I have made of the reluctance of marginals to fight a panhellenic crusade to free the Anatolian Greeks suggests another implication about panhellenism. The Spartiate acceptance of panhellenism may not have been entirely forged in the Persian Wars. Surely this conflict with the Persians produced the anti-Persian element of panhellenism. However, the element of panhellenism that sees a commonality between Greeks is in some respects analogous, although on a larger scale, to the emphasis on the community that is found amongst the Spartiates as early as Tyrtaios. The Spartiates' acceptance of a panhellenic ideal is likely related to their acceptance of the Tyrtaian altruistic ideal of being willing to die for one's community. By this logic, would be worthwhile to risk death for the free Greeks of Asia because they were now considered in some respect a part of that community, related by blood. The Tyrtaian lyrics' constant emphasis upon the *genos* suggests this modality of thought. In addition to not having the tradition of their ancestors having fought alongside other Greeks against the Persians in the Persian Wars, the helots are attested as prohibited from singing noble songs such as those of Tyrtaios, and were permitted to sing only ribald ones. Those serving in the Lakedaimonian army cannot have had much reason to subscribe to a panhellenic ideal of

risking one's life idealistically for a community whose basis had been forbidden to them. A more complete examination of the connection between Tyrtaian altruism, Greek identity, and the roots of panhellenism is, however, beyond the reach of this study.

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