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POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUGGLES DURING THE PERSIAN AND THE PELOPONNESIAN WARS

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.— CHAPTER I : The Nature of the Political and Social Struggles in Early Athens.—CHAPTER II : Greek Domestic Strife and the Origin of the Persian Wars.—CHAPTER III : Foreign Policy of Athens and Sparta and Domestic Greek Strife in the Peloponnesian War.

INTRODUCTION

Only rarely is the existence of organized territorial communities characterized by continuous party strife and class struggles over relatively long periods of time. Greek antiquity offers an outstanding instance of great intrinsic interest to the social scientist namely, the picture of communities rent by political and social conflict over a period of several centuries. The impact of these struggles on the general history of ancient Greece was of great importance.

The two most eminent historians of Greek antiquity, Herodotus and Thucydides left us a record of these domestic developments. We propose to use their works as a source for this essential aspect of the history of ancient Athens which, we feel, has been neglected by modern historians. More so in the case of modern Greece where the intellectual climate of «Megali Idea» is not at all conducive for such a kind of research.

The Athenian city state was originally founded by a tribal type of society composed of herdsmen and warriors, who settled over as a comparatively small territorial community. The decay of the so-called Homeric society began when the new and disturbing element of wealth—very frequently separate from birth—came to the fore, along with the «ΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ» Δ. Ε. Καλιτσούνακη, Τόμος 35ος (1955) Τεύχος Β'.

manorial type of family, an institution unknown to seminomadic tribal society. This was a distinct development from the former small family and arose when the communal forms of cattle holding and pasture broke up, in the course of migrations, of raiding and of piracy. Such changes were the root of (the later) oligarchy—since pasture lands and even tillage that had been under the communal control of the clan, came under the control of a separate large family, organized around its own private wealth.

From the beginning of its political existence to its end the Athenian City State passed through the following successive stages:

Monarchy. The absolute rule of one individual, the King. The monarchy was gradually replaced by a loose federation of chieftainships holding executive power in turn.

Oligarchy. which meant such constitutional forms as would permit the wealthy landowners to rule and make others to serve.

Tyrannis. The tyrannis was a non—traditional monarchy mostly of an aristocratic house. It represented the popular interests as opposed to the traditional rule of the aristocratic families.

Democracy, which meant such constitutional forms that would permit all citizens to govern, to administer and to judge in turn, some offices remaining elective, but the great majority distributed by lot.

These different governmental forms were the outcome of social and political struggles.

The Solonic reforms (594 B.C.) weakened economically and politically the dominant position of the landowning oligarchy. However, it was under the Tyrannis of the Peisistratidae (560 to 510 B.C.) that the «residents of the plain» were banished and lost much of their power in the politico-economic life of Athens.

Under the Athenian constitutional democracy (Cleisthenian constitution) (510 B.C.) the old territorial and tribal divisions disappear as a basis of political power and the farmers together with newly shaping social groups such as the public workers, seamen, skippers, shopkeepers, craftsmen etc., participate in the governmental affairs of the city state. Slaves do not play any role in the political scene.

During the democracy the popular party was the undisputed ruler of the city state, although the oligarchic opposition never ceased to exist and to criticize severely the democratic rule. Moreover, the oligarchs continued to monopolize such unpopular offices as that the strategi.

On the Greek national level, since the end of the VI century the two

poles of antagonism were Athens and Sparta, more and more representing rival powers with conflicting interests and different governmental systems.

Already the history of the Persian invasions was strongly influenced by their rivalry. Indeed, the very origin of these wars can hardly be appraised correctly if this fact is disregarded. And even at that early time their antagonism was intimately connected with the party struggles in Athens, with the contention between democracy and oligarchy in the Ionian city states, and with the role played by the tyrannis both in domestic and foreign affairs. As to the Peloponnesian war, it was continually accompanied by accute struggles of rich and poor that were fought within and among city states in many parts of the Greek peninsula. Let us consider these important historical developments in greater detail.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUGGLES IN EARLY ATHENS

I

To approach realistically the subject of political and social struggles in early Athens, some permanent factors that dominated the history of Attica must be set out. There was, firstly, her geographical position; secondly, the barrenness of her soil; and thirdly, the pressure on her population caused by the scarcity of the means of their subsistence and the low technological development. These factors more or less determined the environment within which the development of the Athenian city state took place and also made the exploitation of the first ruling class, the landowning oligarchy, unbearable by the people.

The peninsula of Attica runs out eastward to the sea. She is separated from Beotia and central Greece by fairly high mountains, which however, can be easily crossed. The Isthmus of Corinth practically cuts off Attica from the South West, so that she has no direct access by sea to the Gulf of Corinth. To the South, in the Saronic Gulf, the island of Aegina lies as a stepping stone between the Dorian Peloponnesus and the Ionian Attica and the islands of the Aegean Archipelagos. These islands, of variable sizes, form connecting rings that chain Attica's harbours with the East, South East and North East, stretching as far as the coasts of Ionia and Caria, in Asia Minor. Having free access to the Aegean Archipelagos, Attica was favoured by nature to become the trading center of the Aegean, at least as long as the Black Sea retained its importance as the main source of corn supply.

The greater part of Attica consists of rugged mountain ranges with sides whose steepness make cultivation of the soil difficult. Moreover, «the soil was poor and thin»⁽¹⁾ and the land was not suitable for cultivation, especially for raising grain.

Notwithstanding the sterility of its soil the City State of Athens, ever since its establishment, was densely populated and it became fur-

1. Thucydides : History of the Peloponnesian War Bk. 1. Par. 2.

ther congested by the influx of displaced persons from other parts of Greece proper as well as from Asia Minor.

Thucydides says :

«And a striking confirmation of my argument is afforded by the fact that Attica, through immigration, increased in population more than any other region. For, the leading men of Hellas, when driven out of their own country by war or revolution sought an escape in Athens; and being admitted to the rights of citizenship from the very earliest time, they so greatly increased the number of inhabitants that Attica became incapable of containing them.»⁽¹⁾

Plutarch repeats this contention. «Attica», he writes, «was filled with persons who assembled from all parts on account of the great security in which people lived in Attica.»⁽²⁾

The city state tried to meet the challenge of over-population and food shortage through systematic emigration and through a system of treaties and zones of influence designed to secure the importation of grain. These methods being applied at different periods of time, largely crystallised the requirements of foreign policy and eventually resulted in making Attica a naval power so as to counter the threat of blockade. In turn, they gave ascendancy to the landless classes who manned in the majority, the fleet and were ready to fall in with the policy of maritime empire. These classes by origin, by disposition and by interest, tended towards democracy and their reactions affected the political and social developments throughout the continual struggles manifested in Athens of antiquity.

II

Dracon was the first archon to introduce and impose the codification of state laws (621–620 B.C.), ⁽³⁾ whereby the commoners could at least understand what the laws implied. The law (thesmos or unwritten law) previously was known to and interpreted by the nobles alone. This codification represented an advance for the people. Dracon, furthermore instituted the «Boule» (or Council), which consisted of 401 members.

Dracon's archonship marks the start of acute crisis, which was iten-

1. Ibid Bk. 1. Page 3.

2. Plutarch : The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans p. 14 (Translated by John Dryden and revised by Arthur Hugh Clough).

3. Elefteroudakis : Epitomon Encyclopedikon Lexicon p. 932.

sified because of the two factors mentioned at the beginning; that is, the relative barrenness of Attican soil and the scarcity of the means of subsistence due to the low development of productive factors. The landowners were exporting grain in exchange for treasure and luxuries, thus intensifying the scarcity which resulted in famine conditions.⁽¹⁾ Dracon's reforms proved insufficient to counteract these factors. This is how Aristotle described what the situation was after Kylon's unsuccessful attempt at tyrannis, in 612 B.C:

After this event there was contention for a long time between the upper classes and the populace. Not only was the constitution of this time oligarchical in every respect, but the poorer classes, men, women and children, were in absolute slavery to the rich. They were known as *Pelatae* and as *Hectemoroi*, because they cultivated the lands of the rich for a sixth part of the produce. The whole country was in the hands of a few persons and, if the tenants failed to pay their rent they were liable to be hauled into slavery, and their children with them. Their persons were mortgaged to their creditors, a custom which prevailed until the time of Solon, who was the first to appear as a leader of the people. But the hardest and bitterest part of the condition of the masses was the fact that they had no share in the offices then existing under the constitution. At the same time, they were discontented with every other feature of their lot; for, to speak generally, they had no part, no share in anything.⁽²⁾

At the beginning of the sixth century the classes referred to by Aristotle, that is on the one hand the oligarchs (the wealthy landowners, the «few») and on the other hand the poor as well as the landless peasants, had taken shape. The heads of the «houses» controlled the whole territory socially, politically, and economically and were performing many «exactions». Most of the fields of Attica were dotted with columns bearing inscriptions stating that the land in which they stood was incumbered. The Attican peasant, who was working as a tenant, being faced by the prerogative of an overpowering landowning class often defaulted on his rent or contracted debts to avoid doing so. If he did not meet his creditor's claims, he fell into bondage or may have even been sold as slave abroad.

There were two alternative ways to ease that disquieting contrast, viz :—either through the aristocratic tradition of «freely chosen leaders

1. Plutarch : *Lives*, Solon p. 110.

2. Aristotle: «*Constitution of Athens*» par. 2,

of the people and following their lead», or through Spartan system of helotage and perioiks, with a rigid equalitarianism in all communal affairs among a small body of free citizens. The city state of Athens chose the first of these alternatives along the line of tribal tradition. By common consent of both factions Solon, an aristocrat by descent but belonging, from the point of view of wealth, to the group which was regarded as 'middle class' usurers) became their arbitrator.

«Then, the wisest of the Athenians, perceiving that Solon was of all men the only one not implicated in the troubles, that he had not joined in the exactions of the rich and was not involved in the necessities of the poor, pressed him to succour the commonwealth and allay the differences.»⁽¹⁾

Solon undertook the task of revising the constitution (594 B. C.) His main constitutional reforms may be summarized as follows :

1. The Council of the Elders was transformed to what essentially was again a tribal council, that is the «Boule», consisting of four hundred members, one hundred from each of the four tribes into which Attica was subdivided. This was the only part of the new constitution where tribal subdivision reappeared. Important elements of tribal equalitarianism remained in it. The duties of the Boule were to discuss and prepare matters for the Assembly (Ecclesia),. Essentially, the Boule remained under the control of the aristocratic families, whose members were elected to it.

A distinctly democratic part of the new constitution was the formation of the «Ecclesia», in which Solon gave to every citizen the right to vote, no matter how poor. Thus, legislation initiated by the Boule, had to be approved or disapproved in a mass meeting of the Ecclesia. This gave a voice, in the political affairs of the city state, to the peasantry, the demiourgoi, and generally to all Athenian citizens. Of his legislation Solon wrote :

«I gave the mass of the people such rank as befitted their need

«I took not away their honour and I granted naught to their greed;

«But those who were rich in power, who in wealth were glorious and great

«I bethought that naught should befall them unworthy of their splendor and state;»⁽²⁾

1. Plutarch : Lives, «Solon» p. 104.

2. Aristotle : Constitution of Athens, par. 12. (Kenyon tran.)

2. Solon tried to restore the power of the people to use their constitutional rights by the «seisachteia» (removal of the burden). Plots of land which had been mortgaged to the rich, were freed from the mortgage and the debts were cancelled.

Freedom was restored to those who had lost it for non-payment of debt and so the only source of falling into domestic slavery was finally destroyed. Solon's account of the «seisachteia» is as follows :

«The mortgage stones that covered her, by me removed the land that was a slave is free :

«that some who had been seized for their debts he had brought back from countries where—so far their lot to roam;

«They had forgot the language of their home; and some he had set at liberty—who here in shameful servitude were held.»⁽¹⁾

3. Solon forbade by legislation the exportation of corn, permitting only oil to be exported and those who had exported any other fruit, were to be solemnly cursed by the archon, or in default he was to pay a hundred drachmas himself.»⁽²⁾ Thus, he tried to relieve Attica from the corn crisis and encourage the cultivation of olive trees whose product became one of the main export items from the Athenian city state.

Amongst several other economic measures Solon encouraged the development of handicrafts; seeing that the city was becoming filled with people who were continually resorting to Attica from all parts for security's sake, and that the major portion of land was unproductive and poor, and that the sea traders were not accustomed to import commodities among people who had nothing to give in return turned the attention of the people towards handicrafts (technas) and made a law that it should not be incumbent on a son to support his father unless the latter had him taught some craft.⁽³⁾

Thus, the government of the City State was democratised to the extent that the whole body of the Athenian citizens could have a voice in the Assembly. On the other hand, the «seisachteia» alone proved insufficient to undermine the social and economic predominance of the big landowners. Although the «master and serf» relationship and the only domestic source of slavery ceased to exist, the aristocratic families still remained a powerful and influential class. As Grundy points out, Solon, «turned a deaf ear to the cry that the land was held by few

1. Plutarch : Lives, «Solon» p. 106.

2. Ibid : Lives, «Solon», p. 106

3. Plutarch : Lives, «Solon», p. 106

owners, and listened not to any demand for its redistribution.» It was later, under Peisistratus that the big landowners lost most of their power. As Aristotle implies, Solonic conditions bear a most striking contradiction between formal constitutional democracy and the actual economic situation of the Athenian populace. This contrast, which if continued, would make the constitutional rights of the Athenian popular forces ineffective, explains the cause of the strong popular resistance that continued after Solon's archonship.

III

The political situation, right after Solon's archonship, is given by Aristotle as follows :

«The parties at this time were three in number. First there was the party of the shore, whose leader was Megacles the son of Alceon, which was considered to aim at a moderate form of government : secondly were the men of the plain, who desired an oligarchy and were led by Lycourgous : and thirdly, there were the men of the highlands at the head of whom was Peisistratus, who was looked on as an extreme democrat⁽¹⁾. To this latter party were attached those who had been deprived of the debts due to them, from motives of poverty, and those who were not of pure descent, for motives of personal apprehension.»⁽²⁾

Let us take a look at these groups—that Herodotus, Aristotle and Plutarch speak about—which show the earliest political alignments in Attica along territorial lines. In the «Constitution of Athens» we find the *Paralii* (residents of the coast) described as persons having moderate political views ; the *Pediakoi* (residents of the plain) backing the big landowners; and the *Diakrii* (uplanders) favoring the leadership of the popular rule. *Pediaki* in other words, fell to the landowning aristocracy, the big landed proprietors of the plain favoring oligarchic policies. The *Diakrii* were cultivators of the hillslopes and of the more mountainous and unfertile regions of Attica.

1. The word 'democritoty' literally should be translated cvery well known to demos' or cvery well known to the public'. By implication it means a very well known democrat. Obviously, the two translations do not coincide absolutely. We feel that the term extreme democrat, which is modern in its nature as far as politics are concerned, and unknown for that purpose to ancient Greeks, cannot precisely determine political divisions and alignments of antiquity.

2. Aristotle : Constitution of Athens p. 13.

The Paralii, on the whole, were small landowners. As a group they were favoured by the Solonic legislation and would not benefit from any politico-economic domination of Attica by the Pediaki, the big landowners. On the other hand the Paralii were not as poor and suppressed as the Diakrii and this might be the reason that made them to pursue «the mid path» in politics.

The most oppressed, weak financially, and discontented politically were the Diakrii, of the poorer soil. It was on the Diakrii that Peisistratus of the House of Philaide, a relative of Solon, based his power and established his tyrannis lasting, with interruptions, from 560 to 510 B.C. This was a period of great national advance; the age in which the foundations of Athenian democratic power were laid. It is therefore, essential, that a few words about the nature of the tyrannis as a governmental system should be said.

From the standpoint of the common people the tyrannis was a desirable form of government. The tyrant was a self made monarch. His rule was the monarchy of a wealthy household, usually of aristocratic extraction. The early tyrants, or the country group were aristocrats. They were popular leaders and as such, military men. They stood for «efficient government» and «justice» and were supporting the people against the abuses of the rich.

The tyrannis was of short duration. The longest lived tyrannis was that of Sicyon, with Orthagoras and his sons, which lasted for a hundred years. The second longest was the tyrannis of Corinth, which lasted seventy three and a half years. Later tyrants such as the Sicilians and some Ionians, were only political upstarts and military adventurers and they represent degenerative forms of tyrannis.

The tyrannis in Attica offered a more drastic solution to the land problem than Solon had attempted. Many aristocratic families were banished and their land distributed among the landless citizens. Pisis-tratus advanced also capital to the peasants, enabling them to establish themselves by planting olive trees and vine :

«He advanced capital to the poor cultivators, enabling them to devote themselves unintermittently to rural occupation. Herein his motive was twofold : to disseminate the population about the country, away from the metropolis and, by moderate well being and absorption in agriculture, to extinguish in them the wish and leisure to influence public affairs.»⁽¹⁾

1. Aristotle : Constitution of Athens p. 14.

In effect, since the first period of the tyrannis, there is no record of distress or oppression among the agrarian populace of the city state except, of course, the devastation caused by the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars. The Hectemoroi and pelatai of the Solonic crisis disappear, independent cultivators and tenants are created, whose economic relations with the land proprietor were much more satisfactory than had been those of the rural poor at Solon's time. Thus, while land was never redistributed on a large scale in Athens, as it was quite frequently done in some other poleis, there is hardly any evidence of the existence of huge estates of cultivable land after the period of the tyrannis.⁽¹⁾ It is safe to conclude, accordingly, that under the tyrannis of the Peististratidae (sons of Peisistratus) the social, political and economic power of the oligarchs was much reduced.

However, it was not only through its land reforms that the tyrannis prepared the city state for democracy. The first great projects of public works began during the rule of the Peisistratidae thereby giving employment to the demiourgoi (the artisans of the city) and stabilizing the economic position of this rapidly developing class. The fair spring (Kalliroe), the best source of the Athenian water supply was improved during the tyrannis into the nine fountains (Enneakrounos)⁽²⁾. The group of Athena slaying a giant, excavated on the Acropolis in the eighties of the last century, probably belongs to the temple of Athena that was during the tyrannis. So was the temple of the Olympian Zeus, which however, was not completed until much later, at the time of Hadrian.⁽³⁾ Aristophanes, writing just one century after the fall of the tyrannis, saw the Athens of Hippias, the youngest son of Peisistratus, as «a city of labourers».⁽⁴⁾

The tyrannis is also responsible for the beginnings of the «empire» movement. As we already pointed out, the ruling class gave the solution of cleruchies and other colonies in order to relieve Attica from the popular pressure caused by the low plane of living and secondly for in-

1. «According to one reckoning at the end of the fifth century the average farm in Attica could not have contained more than ten acres of land capable of cultivation. A working farmer (autourgos) could probably live fairly well on such a holding, especially if it were well planted with olives, figs and vine. A farm of seventy acres, such as wealthy Alcibiades possessed, was considered a large estate. «From : Michell : The Economics of Ancient Greece» p. 142.

2. Ure : The Origin of Tyranny. p. 62.

3. Ure : The Origin of Tyranny p. 62.

4. Ure : The Origin of Tyranny p. 62.

surrounding and protecting the routes necessary for its grain supply. Such colonies were planted where grain supply was abundant and the Athenian navy was adequate to cope with the task. «The statesmen who first sent Athenian soldiers to the shores of the Hellespont had, in truth, opened up a new path for Athenian policy and Peisistratus pursued that path». (1) «Peisistratus had attempted, not without success, to force the primacy of Athens on the Ionians of the islands.»(2)

In Herodotus we find evidence that, during the tyrannis, settlements were established abroad :

«He (Peisistratus) demanded hostages from many of the Athenians who had remained at home and had not left Athens at his approach; and these he sent to Naxos, which had conquered by force of arms, and given over into the charge of Lygdamis.»(3)

We have seen that the tyrannis advanced many public work projects and, in addition to that, it maintained its Scythian police, which protected the Peisistratidae from the threat of the Eupatridae. All these measures implied a considerable increase in the financial commitments of the city state and precipitated a demand upon its resources at a time when elements of the city market hardly existed. The power of the money institution was, accordingly realised by Peisistratus and money was used by him mainly for political purposes.

When Peisistratus first became tyrant he opened a new mint outside the city, where he produced his «Laurian owls». The pre-Solonic mint must have been in the city and after Solon's reforms it continued to function as a civic Eupatrid mint down to 546 B.C., at which time Peisistratus finally closed it and issued coins bearing badges of a national rather than of family character. On how Peisistratus used money in order to succeed in his political aims and to strengthen the tyrannis regime, Seltman writes this :

«It is characteristic of a man's farsightedness that, when the odds were for a time overwhelming, he should withdraw from the country and bide his time rather than risk all on a single throw. With his family and a body of followers he left the city in 556 B.C. and after visiting Eretria, he sailed for the gulf of Therma. Here, at Chaeceus, he settled for a brief period only and moved thence to the

1. Botsford and Sihler : *Hellenic Civilization* p. 188.

2. Glotz : *Greek Institutions* p. 34.

3. Herodotus : *History* Bk. 1. par. 64.

Persian district. The silver mines of Mountain Pangaion had probably been his goal from the time that he left Athens; for his power had been founded on these silver mines, and by means of silver dug from mines of greater wealth than those of Laureion, he meant to regain the throne which he had lost.»⁽¹⁾

Herodotus states that the tyrant owed his final restoration to revenues collected partly at home and partly drawn from abroad :

«The first step (to regain the sovereignty) was to obtain advances of money from such states as were under obligation to them. By these means they collected large sums from several countries, especially from the Thebans, who gave them far more than any of the rest. To be brief, time passed and all was at length ready for their return. A band of Argive mercenaries arrived from the Peloponnese and a certain Naxian named Lydgdamis, who volunteered his services, was particularly zealous in the cause, supplying both men and money.»⁽²⁾

Furthermore :

«In Athens, while Peisistratus was obtaining funds and even after he landed at Marathon, no one paid any attention to his proceedings.»⁽³⁾

The institutions through which the aristocrats and the oligarchy could impose their will in the affairs of the city state lost much of their importance under the tyranny of the Peisistratidae. As Rostovtzeff points out : «The power of the aristocratic families was weakened partly because most of them were banished and their land distributed among poor citizens, partly because the aristocratic bodies, the magistracy and the Areopagus, lost their influence entirely and began to die away, thus, clearing the ground for new democratic institutions in the future.»⁽⁴⁾

IV

The tyrannis of the Peisistratidae opened the way for the first time (to our knowledge) in history, to the establishment of democracy. Late in the sixth century Clisthenes the head of the banished eupatridae

1. Seltman : Athens its History and Coinage p. 54.

2. Herodotus : History Bk 161.

3. Herodotus : History Bk 162.

4. Rostovtseff : History of the Ancient World p. 222.

family of the Alcomeonidae, overthrew the Peisistratidae with the help of the Spartans and promulgated a new constitution giving effective power to the «Boule», the «Ecclesia» and the popular jury courts. In the constitutional sense Clisthenes was the founder of the Athenian democracy.⁽¹⁾

The Clisthenian constitution was considered by Aristotle to be an instrument useful for the «extreme form of democracy».⁽²⁾ Under it, political power rested actually in the hands of the Athenian people. The essence of it was the abolition of both tribe and territory as bases for political power and action. Thus, class-party alignments were now formed on a new basis.

The population of Attica was now distributed into ten tribes instead of four. The membership of the Boule was increased from four hundred to five hundred, taking now fifty instead of a hundred from each tribe. Attica was also divided into thirty trittues and political rights were now extended to all residents of this type of early municipality (demos).⁽³⁾ The trittues were essentially a subdivision of the new tribes, each one consisting from about one third of the tribe.⁽⁴⁾

The majority of the magistrates were chosen annually by lot from all the qualified candidates who put in their names, so that every Athenian citizen had a chance to take his turn in the administration. In the fifth century only the military officers, of whom the most important were the ten generals, were elected by the Assembly. The assembly was the sovereign body of the city state, holding forty regular meetings a year and extraordinary sessions as required, and not merely setting ge-

1. «and so (Clisthenes) followed the pattern set him by his namesake of Sicyon. Having brought entirely over to his own side the common people of Athens, who had lacked rights, before, he gave all the tribes new names, and made their number greater than before; instead of the four tribal presidents he established ten; he likewise placed ten demos in each of the tribes; and he was, now that the common people took his part, much more powerful than his adversaries». Herodotus : History Bk. V. 69.

2. «A democracy of this kind will also find useful such institutions as were employed by Clisthenes in Athens, when he wished to increase democracy in Cyrene. Different tribes and brotherhoods must be created outnumbering the old ones and the celebrations of private religious rites must be grouped together into a small number of public celebrations, and every device must be employed to make all the people as much as possible intermingled with one another, and break up the previously existing groups of associates.» Aristotle : Politics VI. 11 & 1112.

3. Aristotle : Constitution of Athens. 32-33.

4. Elefteroudakis: Epitomon Encyclopedikon Lexicon p. 867.

neral questions of policy, but making detailed decisions in every sphere of government, i.e. foreign affairs, military operations, domestic finance etc.⁽¹⁾

The administrative body, as provided by the new constitution was the Ecclesia with five hundred members, chosen annually by lot from all the demos of Attica in proportion to their size, and thus representing the whole people and not only the tribal aristocracy. It had two main functions, viz., to supervise and coordinate the activities of the magistrates, and to prepare the agenda for the assembly. The presidents of the Council and the Assembly were chosen daily by lot from the Council. Thus, everyone of the 30,000 Athenian citizens⁽²⁾ had a chance in his lifetime to become president of the assembly, which amounts to president of the republic, nowadays. All the presidents of the Boule (prytaneis) as well as persons who had offered extraordinary services in the city state, formed a body that was called the prytaneia. Prytaneia slightly resembled in its functions the government of the twentieth century. The Prytaneia in Athens was mostly pre-occupied with the foreign relations of the city state.

The most conservative institution in Athens was the Areopagus for, it was recruited from former archons who were all aristocrats. Due to its political importance, this institution became incompatible with any process of democratization of the city state. Now, Clisthenes introduced a series of laws which deprived this ancient institution of all its political power. Later on, (462-461) Ephialtes continued his attacks upon it, accusing individual Areopagites of corruption and fraudulent practices. The censorial powers which enable the courts to inquire into the lives of private citizens were abolished during Clisthenes's time. Essentially, there was nothing from its power left, except its jurisdiction in homicide cases, the care of the sacred olive trees of Athens, and a voice in the supervision of the Eleusinian deities. The functions which it lost passed to the Assembly and to the popular courts, where all social strata were represented. This was a fatal blow to the political privileges of the aristocracy.

Now, the ultimate guardians of the constitution appeared to be the popular courts. Juries were empanelled by lot for each case from a body of six thousand citizens chosen annually by lot; these juries decided not only private cases but political issues as well. Political trials were fre-

1. A.H. Jones : The Economic Basis of Athenian Democracy.

2. Herodotus : History V97 & V111, 65.

quent in Athens and the indictment for an illegal motion was constantly employed for political purposes. The result was that the popular juries took the position of the Areopagus. Thus, the aristocracy lost much of its great influence on the affairs of the state.

To complete the constitutional picture of democracy three more measures, of which two were taken during the archonship of Pericles, should be cited:

a) Ostracism, or the banishment of a person whose activities were considered detrimental to the state. This measure was introduced by Clisthenes and was aiming against all those elements «who would endanger the democracy».⁽¹⁾

b) The pay for the dicasts introduced by Pericles, in the 440's which made it possible for any Athenian citizen to participate in judicial affairs. The sum paid to each dicast was originally one to two obols. Later on, under Cleon, the pay was raised to three obols and remained at this figure during the whole of the fourth century.⁽²⁾

c) The pay of the Assemblymen. This was given to those participating in the Assembly.⁽³⁾

Upon these popular measures the foundations for a strong democratic city state were laid. The democracy attracted the whole body of citizens to the affairs of state. In fact, political power was entirely resting in the hands of the Athenian people. All the great statesmen who governed Athens during the period of the democracy based their strength on the popular forces, who now constituted the democratic faction and included in its ranks the small farmers, usurers, shopkeepers, artisans, public workers, labourers etc. and it also controlled the army, the navy and the military police. In short, democracy for the ancient Athenian citizens (slaves and metics were considered inferior and were anyhow not citizens) meant no less than such constitutional forms which would enable all equally to govern, administer, judge, vote and fight for its preservation. Its method was the lot; for, the Athenians considered popular elections to be aristocratic rather than democratic, since the ordinary voter would prefer a traditionally known to an Unknown name.

1. Elefteroudakis : Epitomon Encyclopedikon Lexicon p. 1145

2. Andreades : A History of the Greek Public Finance Vol. 1. p. 253.

3. Ibid.

V

As already stated, because of its geographical position Athens was forced into a maritime development. The democratic rulers translated this natural advantage into an expansionist foreign policy. To that end they utilized a great part of the Athenian people, whom they were influencing. This was one of the fundamental contradictions that contributed a lot to the Athenian-Spartan antagonism, the Peloponnesian war, the downfall of the empire, and the downfall and decadence of the ancient Greek civilization as such. Democratic rulers did not unite Greece into a firm confederation—of any form—closely tied up by mutually beneficial political and trade relationships. They had the opportunity of doing so right after the Persian invasions. Had they followed that alternative, had they followed a more liberal path in their policy towards the domestic mercantile element, they would have offered a much greater contribution to the historical evolution of mankind.

The foreign and, more concretely, the naval policy of Athens was determined by two objectives, viz :

1. To secure the necessary corn supplies.
2. To ensure revenue and wealth.

State controls were imposed upon all merchants. Two laws preserved by Demosthenes show what form this imposition took. The first of them reads as follows:

«It shall not be lawful for any Athenian, or any alien residing in Athens, or any person under their control, to lend out money on a ship which is not commissioned to bring corn to Athens.»⁽¹⁾

The second law is still more drastic. It prohibited to all persons resident in the Athenian state to transport grain directly to any other harbour but Piraeus.⁽²⁾ The aim of these laws is of course obvious: No Athenian trader could leave any place of the empire or outside it, e.g., Crimea or Egypt, without grain in his hold, for he was obliged to call at Piraeus.

The Athenians never felt that the development of foreign trade as such would be beneficial to the individual citizen. Aside from the fact that through it they tried to secure the necessary corn supplies, they regarded trade only as a source of revenue for the city state. The traders of ancient Athens in their great majority were foreigners or, at the best,

1. Zimern : The Greek Commonwealth p. 362.

2. Ibid : p. 362.

metics. As the following quotation shows, they were regarded by the rulers of the city state as nothing more than a source of revenue :

«Now, the greater number of people attracted to Athens as visitors or as residents, the clearer and greater the development of imports and exports. More goods will be sent out of the country. there will be more buying and selling, with a consequent influx of money in the shape of rents to individuals and dues and customs to the state exchequer.»⁽¹⁾

«In the first place, by a careful handling of our alien population for my part, I can hardly conceive a more splendid source of revenue, that lies open in this direction. Here you have a self supporting class of residents conferring large benefits upon the state and instead of receiving payments themselves, contributing on the contrary to the gain of the exchequer by the so called journey's tax»⁽¹⁾

Athens, having thus organized its empire and becoming the greatest naval power of ancient Greece, succeeded finally in giving a self-contradictory temporary solution to the vital problems of the people. During the period of the democracy the policy of overseas expansion—«the thalassocracy»—was broadened to such an extent as to include the Aegean Archipelagos, part of the Mediterranean, the Hellespont and the Black Sea. Pericles, for instance, sent a thousand citizens into the Chersonese as settlers to share the land among themselves by lot; five hundred more in the island of Naxos; half that number to Andros and a thousand to Thrace etc. The Athenian colonists had a very privileged position among the populace of those places and retained their Athenian citizenship being legally responsible for their actions only to their Attican homeland.

Not long after the end of the Persian Wars (477) the Delian confederation was transformed into an Athenian Empire. In the language of diplomacy, Athens continued to talk of allies or confederates. but in actuality it was now a question of subjects and tributaries. Strict political and military control was imposed since 469, when Naxos presented the first instance of disloyalty. In 454 it was decided that the treasure, until then administered by Athenian officials (the Hellenotamiai) but deposited in the sanctuary of Delian Apollo, should be transferred to the Acropolis of Athens and be placed under its protection. This was the last act of the Athenian controlled Federal Council; for, henceforth

1. & 4. «Old Oligarch». In Botsford and Sihler p. 230.

nothing more was heard about it. Thus, the tribute that was paid by the allies passed exclusively into Athenian hands :

«It is not theirs that give it, but theirs that receive it; if so be, they performed the conditions upon which they received it.»⁽¹⁾
—the condition being to protect the confederated from the common enemies.

The method by which the Athenians controlled their empire and trade routes was the domination of the sea by their fleet.

«The Athenians are the only nation among the Greeks and barbarians that can secure wealth; for, if any state is rich in timber for shipbuilding, where shall they dispose of it, unless they gain the favour of the rulers of the sea? Or, if any state abounds in iron, bronze or flax, where shall they dispose of it, unless they obtain the consent of the lords of the sea?

The total sum actually needed for the general purposes of the «alliance» was fixed by Aristides, to whom the task had been assigned, at 460 talents. This sum was levied on a system agreed upon between the confederates, probably in most cases on a rough valuation of their lands. There were reassessments every four years; but the main principles of the levy, as established by Aristides, were part of the original arrangement between Athens and the allied cities and could not be unilaterally altered in good faith.

The full fleet of the confederation was to consist of 200 triremes. Each trireme was manned by 170 rowers, 8 officers, and ten marines, a total of 188. The sum a man required to buy food and other necessities in the ports of the Aegean was two obols. Aristides' calculation then was as follows :

«Each sailor costs, for a season of 210 days, $1\frac{1}{3}$ of 210, or 70 (seventy) drachmas. Each trireme of 188 sailors cost 13.160 drachmas. The fleet of two hundred ships cost 2,632,000 drachmas.»⁽²⁾

This works out at $438\frac{2}{3}$ talents so that the annual levy of 460 talents left a sufficient margin for the replacement of ships. The treasurers that received the money were Athenian officials, and the generals to whom it was given for distribution and pay to the seamen, were Athenian executive officers.

1. Plutarch : *Lives*, Pericles p. 191.

2. Zimmern : *The Greek Commonwealth* p. 407.

At this time, the oligarchical party did not play any role in the governmental mechanism, restricting themselves only to open or secret criticism of the activities of the democratic rulers. From the «Old Oligarch» it appears that the oligarchic view was favouring the organization of a strong land power and not a sea power. This, of course, can be easily explained since the big landowners were mainly interested in protecting their estates from war and invasions and opposed to building up a seapower, which would enable democratic rulers to accumulate wealth and thereby find the required means needed to rule the state.

«There is one thing which the Athenians lack. Supposing they were inhabitants of an island and were still, as now, rulers of the sea, they have had it in their power to inflict whatever mischief they liked and to suffer no evil in return (as long as they kept command of the sea), neither the ravaging of their territory, nor the anxiety of an enemy's approach. (not being islanders) the farming population of the community and the wealthy landowners are ready to cringe before the enemy overmuch, whilst the people knowing full well that, come what may, not one stick or stone of their property will suffer, that nothing will be cut down, nothing burnt, live in freedom from alarm, without fawning at the enemy's approach»⁽¹⁾

Naval force, therefore, was the cornerstone upon which the empire was based. Moreover, the democratic rulers of Athens put in authority their own men at the head of their settlements so that they could exercise political control all over the empire and avoid the serious danger of oligarchical insurrections.⁽²⁾

Let us take a look at Plutarch again :

«That which gave most pleasure and ornament to the city of

1. The «Old Oligarch» Botsford and Sihler. p. 230.

2. «To speak next of the allies, and in reference to the point that emissaries from Athens came out and, according to common opinion, calumniate and vent their hatred upon the better sort of people, this is done on the principle that the ruler cannot help being hated by those whom he rules; but that if the wealth and respectability are to wield power in the subject cities, the empire of the Athenian people has but a short time of existence. This explains why the better people are punished with infamy, robbed of their money, driven from their homes and put to death, while the baser sort are promoted to honour. On the other hand, the better Athenians throw their aegis over the better class in the allied cities. And why? Because they recognise that it is in the interests of their own class to protect at all time the best element in the cities.»
The «Old Oligarch». Botsford and Sihler p. 2.

Athens, and the greatest admiration and even astonishment to all foreigners, and that which now is Greece's only evidence that the power she boasts of and her ancient wealth are no romance or idle story, was the construction of public and sacred buildings.»

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«With their variety of workmanship and of opportunity for service, which summon all arts and trades and require all hands to be employed on them, they do actually put the whole city, in a manner, into a state pay;»

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«Thus, to say all in a word, the occasions and services of these public works distributed plenty through every age and condition.»⁽¹⁾

Most of the great public works projects and masterpieces of art were built during the period of democracy (5th and 4th century). Through these public works the city state gave employment to a sizable part of the Athenian people and redistributed the wealth gathered, in large part, from outside sources.

In outlining the political and economic aspect of the Athenian democracy, we saw that the development of democratic institutions (confined of course, to Athenian citizens and always excluding aliens i.e. allies, resident aliens and slaves) and the aggressive policies followed by the democratic party gave supreme power to democratic rulers who had a big following amongst the people that is, the peasants, the artisans, public workers, shipowners, shopkeepers and so on. On the other hand, ever since the Clisthenian constitutional reform the oligarchic opposition became practically ineffectual. Only sporadic criticisms were heard expressing the oligarchic point of view. Most of them were centering to condemning Pericles and the democratic regime for the pay of the assembly men and the dicasts and for the public work projects, which they insisted that were a waste of resources.

This line of oligarchical criticism was not incidental. With the disappearance of the oligarchy as a class of powerful economic masters after the tyrannis, the political struggle in Athens, as in any other city states, centered on the issue as to who shall rule the state? who shall be the msster?

«The people, it must be born in mind, do not demand that the

1. Plutarch : Lives, Pericles pp. 191-19.

city should be well governed and themselves slaves. They desire to be free and be the masters. As to bad legislation, they do not concern themselves about that. In fact, what you believe to be poor legislation is the very source of the people's strength and freedom.»⁽¹⁾

The oligarchical elements maintained that they, themselves were the only ones able to rule. The pay of the dicasts and the public work projects were attacked by the oligarchs not because they actually believed that they were a «waste of resources», but because they constituted the method by which the democratic rulers managed to get the support of the people. Professionalism' became the center of attacks against the democracy in later years.

1. Old Oligarch : Botsford and Sihler p. 224.

CHAPTER II.

GREEK DOMESTIC STRIFE AND THE ORIGIN OF THE PERSIAN WARS

I

Ancient Athens does not, by any means, constitute an isolated case of social and party conflicts. Democracy versus Oligarchy was the main issue in most of the Greek city states. Herodotus, who remains our main source for the history of Greece during the era of the Persian Wars, underlines the close connection between the external conflict and the party strife within the Greek states themselves. He rightly or wrongly appears convinced that the Greeks might have avoided the dangerous clash with the King of Kings but for the selfish and shortsighted policies that they followed at several critical junctures. In this view he may or he may not have been right. However, the consistently maintained viewpoint remains in his presentation of the antecedents of the Ionian revolt and its many outstanding episodes, i.e., the fall of the Peisistratidae in Athens and the policies followed by the Alcmeonidae, the struggle between Athens and Aegina, the permanent rivalry of Sparta and Athens. In each and all of them he stresses the foreign aspects of the domestic strife as two interconnected strands of the story.

* * *

Little is known about social strife in Ionia previous to the Persian Wars. However, when we approach the subject analytically we come to the conclusion that the catastrophic domestic conflicts of the era of the Peloponnesian War were merely a continuation of what had happened beforehand in Ionia. In the Ionian city states there was not, in effect, much hesitation on the part of some political factions to cooperate with the Persians against their own compatriots of the opposite party. Some of the Ionian Kings about the time of Darius (521-485) give us the impression—if Herodotus is to be believed—of being mere instruments of the Persian King.

To appraise the Ionian social struggles we shall have, first of all,

to take a glance into their history and also examine the role and the aims of the Lydian and the Persian Empires in regard both to Ionia and to Greece proper.

Up to the end of the VII century the Ionian cities were free. The first continental ruler to attack Ionia was Alyattes (617-560) King of Lydia. According to Herodotus, however, he did not aim at the destruction and conquest that had been applied by him in other cases, such as in Cimmeria, for instance. On the contrary, while he was the undisputed master of the interior of Western Asia Minor and could occupy militarily the city of Miletus almost at will, he concluded a truce and made peace with Thracybulus, leader of the Milesians.

Croesus, son of Alyattes, became «lord of all nations to the west of river Halys..... So far as our knowledge goes, he was the first of the barbarians who held relations with the Greeks, forcing some of them to become his tributaries and entering into alliance with others. He conquered the Aeolians, the Ionians and the Dorians of Asia..... Up to that time the Greeks had been free.»⁽¹⁾

As soon as the Lydian King gained control of part of the coast, adopting the pattern that was to be followed later on by the Persians, he turned his eyes to Greece proper. So Croesus sent messengers to Sparta to ask them for an alliance :

«Lacedaemonians, the Gods had declared that I should make the Greeks my friends; now, therefore, as I learn that you are the leaders of Hellas. I do so invite you, as the oracle bids :»⁽²⁾

The Spartans swore to become his friends and allies, because with the help and alliance of the wealth of Croesus they thought that they could dominate Greece.

When a herald from Lydia came for assistance on the occasion of Sardis, capital of Lydia, being besieged by the Persians, the Spartans agreed to help. However, while they were preparing their ships there came a second message; it announced that Sardis had fallen and Croesus was taken prisoner. Then the Spartans withdrew «from their enterprise» and forgot all about Lydia and its King.

* * *

Cyrus the Great conquered Lydia and henceforth the Persian Empire began pressing on the Aegean Coast, as the Lydian had done before.

1. Herodotus : Bk. 1. par. 6.

2. Herodotus : Bk. 1. par. 67, 70, 89.

The only obligation that the city states of Ionia had to fulfil since the 520s was the payment of a tribute to the Persian King relatively small.⁽¹⁾ The particular aim of the Persian Empire with regard to the Ionian city states was not to subjugate them, as this might destroy their usefulness as trading centers with foreign peoples, but to neutralize them and thus ensure that they do not serve their enemies, especially in time of war. This was the Persian policy towards Ionia.

After taking Babylon in 539, the Persians turned their forces against the Scythians. Dareus began the Scythian campaign in 512 B.C. The Scythians were a very large kingdom of nomadic peoples. Ptolemeos, the outstanding geographer of Hellenistic times, wrote that the Scythian Kingdom extended from the Danube up to the Northern Sea. He divided it in two parts : «Scythia within Himaeu», that is the part of the kingdom from Himalya mountains to the Aemos peninsula, and «Scythia beyond Himaeu» : that is the part of the Kingdom that was extending from Himalya Northeast to Siberia. Dareus was encircled by the Scythians and, if that encirclement were not broken, his empire could not be secure.

When the Persians succeeded in occupying all Asia Minor and Dareus reached the Territory of Calchedon on the shores of Bosphorus. he took a ship and surveyed the Pontus, the most important corn trade base of Athens. After a while, the Persian forces constructed a bridge that was planned by Mandrocles, a Samian, and for the first time crossed over to European territory. In doing so they were affecting not only the vital interests of the Scythians but of the Athenian democracy as well. Since then, Pontus became a very neuralgic point. As a matter of fact, by then it began to become clear that war between Athens and Persia was inevitable, mainly for the following reasons :

(a) Persia was all the time fearing domination in the Aegean Archipelagos, in Ionia and even in Egypt.

(b) Hellespont was the main corn trade route of Athens. The subsistence of the Athenian population was depending on corn supplies from abroad.

Continuing their campaign, the Persians subdued the Thracians and, advancing further to the North, they bridged the River Danube.

«When Dareus, with his land forces, reached the Ister (Danube)

1. «The Ionians, the Magnasians of Asia, the Aeolians, the Carians, the Lycians, the Milycians and the Pamhylians, paid their tribute in a single sum, which was fixed at 400 talents of silver.» Herodotus : Bk. III 91.

he made his troops cross the stream and, after all of them were gone over, he gave orders to the Ionians to break the bridge and follow him with the whole naval force in his landmarch.»⁽¹⁾

But Dareus changed his orders as soon as Coes, a Mytilenean general, presented for the first time a concrete picture of what a military campaign against the Kingdom of the Scythians would actually mean :

«You are about Sire, to attack a country, no part of which is cultivated, and wherein there is not a single inhabited city. Keep this bridge then as it is and leave those who built it to watch over it. So, if we come up with the Scythians and succeed against them as we would wish, we may return by this route; or, if we fail in finding them, our retreat would still be secure. For I have no fear lest the Scythians defect us in battle, but my dread is lest we be unable to discover them and suffer loss while we wander about their territory ⁽²⁾. «.....you are to guard the bridge with all care, and watch over its safety.»⁽³⁾

was Dareus's new order.

Coes' statement about the outcome of the campaign proved prophetic. Dareus's forces advanced deep in the interior of the vast Kingdom—isolating themselves in the land—in order to confront the enemy; but as Coes predicted it became impossible to find the Scythian army. Most of Dareus' best troops were destroyed. It was after this destruction that the first Scythian division, which remained along the Danube called the Persian troops, consisting mostly of Greeks of Asia-Minor, to give up guarding the bridge and finally to create a common alliance against Dareus. The Scythians said :—

«Men of Ionia, the number of your days is out and you are wrong to remain. Fear, doubtless has kept you here hitherto : now, however, you may safely break the bridge and hasten back to your homes rejoicing that you are free and thanking for it the Gods and the Scythians. Your former lord and master we undertake so to handle, that he will never again make war upon any one.»⁽⁴⁾

Thereupon, the Ionians held a conference. Miltiades, the tyrant of the Chersonites in Hellespont, who was also their general in the Danube

1. Ibid : IV 136.

1. Ibid : IV 36.

2. Ibid : IV 36.

3. Ibid : IV 136.

campaign, advised that the Scythian proposal be accepted by the conferees. The Greek kings of Asia Minor were at first unanimous in their determination to restore freedom to Ionia in accordance with Miltiades' opinion. Nevertheless, Histiaeus the Milesian violently opposed this plan :

«Now», he said, «it is by the help of Dareus that everyone of us is sovereign of his city : if Dareus's power be overthrown, we shall no longer be able to rule, neither I in Miletus nor any of you elsewhere : for all the cities will choose democracy rather than despotism.⁽¹⁾

After this declaration the despots changed their minds and decided to save the Persian army from destruction. The conference was attended by almost all the rulers of Ionia and the Hellespont. Besides Histiaeus, tyrant of the city of Miletus, there were present Daphnis of Abydos, Hippoclus of Lampsakos, Herophantus of Parium, Metrodotus of Proconnessus, Aristagoras of Cyzikus, Ariston of Byzantium, Strattis of Chios, Aeaces of Samos, Laodamas of Phokea and Aristagoras of Cyme.

Histiaeus's statement that «If Dareus's power be overthrown all the cities will choose democracy rather than despotism» was not groundless. The Persians, without having occupied militarily the Ionian city states were careful to keep them as their allies and as instruments of their foreign policy. That was contrary to the interests of Athens. The easiest method to exploit an ally was for a King alone to govern and not an assembly which, at a critical moment, could decide against the volition of the Persian rulers. Persian rulers accordingly, were supporting the monarchs.

The decision of the Ionian tyrants to save the Persian army from destruction, therefore, protected the interests of their houses and probably also the maintenance of the tyrannis as a governmental system of the Ionian city states. Miltiades's proposal, if adopted might have meant the end of the tyrannis in Ionia, the end of Persian influence on the whole coast of Asia Minor and the eventual establishment of democracies under Athenian control. It is highly probable that he was aware of this, since his later career shows that he had identified his personal interests with those of the Athenian power.

Anyhow, the social character of the Ionian tyrannies was far from

1. Ibid : IV. 36.

unambiguous. The tyrannies of the «Country group», such as Peisistratus's, Lygdamis's and others were mostly democratic, basing themselves on the common people; on the other hand, we can say with certainty that fifth century Sicilian tyrants are hardly anything more than military leaders and demagogues. Looking at the development of the Ionian tyrannies, we cannot possibly determine to what category they belonged. From Polycrates until the time of the Ionian revolt, Samos appears to have a tyrannis that more or less reflected those of the country-group'; the same is true for Sicyon, during the period that Clisthenes the elder. was tyrant. On the other hand, as we are about to see, the Parian commission set up a regime of the wealthy in Miletus. The same is true for other parts of Ionia. Therefore, if we are to base our conclusions on Herodotus's information, the only thing that can be said with any degree of certainty about the Ionian tyrannies is that all of them did not follow the same line of development and that their social character remains ambiguous.

* * *

Interest in politics among the citizenry and political manoeuvring among individuals, factions and states, was developed in Ionia to a striking degree for this early time. The case of the «Parian Method» offers an example of such political manoeuvring with modernistic overtones.

At about the end of the VI century there was civil strife in the island of Naxos and in Miletus. The Milesians chose the Parians to become «peace makers» in their case. The island of Paros had in this regard a long record; it was a city state with strong commercial interests.⁽¹⁾ The Parians reconciled the contending factions in the following manner :

«A number of the chief Parians came to Miletus and, when they saw in how ruined a condition the Milesians were, they said that they would like first to go over their country. So they went through all Milesia and, on their way, whenever they saw in the waste and desolate country any land that was «well farmed»⁽²⁾, they took down the names of the owners in their tablets. Having thus gone through the whole region and obtained, after all but few names, they called

1. See Elefteroudakis : Epitomon Encyclopedikon Lexicon.

2. It should be noted that the words «well cultivated» or «well tilled» are in the original εὖ ἐξηργασμένον . The exact translation in English should be «well worked» To our enquiry this is of importance for the term «well cultivated» might imply differences in the system of cultivation which obviously is not the case.

the people together on their return to Miletus and made proclamation that they gave the government into the hands of those persons whose lands they found well farmed; for, they thought it likely (they said) that the same persons who had managed their own affairs well would likewise conduct aright the business of the state. The other Milesians who, in time past, had been at variance were placed under the rule of these men. Thus was the Milesian government set in order by the Parians.»⁽¹⁾

It is noteworthy that the Parian commission, representing a state with strong commercial interests, did not select the persons who were to rule Miletus among the landowners in general, but only among those landowners whose land had been well worked or well cultivated. This type of «business government» indicates that a new group of landowners began to develop; that is, those landowners who were systematically working their farms. It is safe to suppose that they were doing so for economic reasons. Consequently, at the end of VI century B.C. agriculture began to become rationalized in Ionia. The wealthy farmers of Miletus gained control of the government with the assistance of the «Parian Method».

* * *

The uprisings in Naxos and Miletus marked the beginnings of prolonged struggles in Ionia, that ended with the fall of the tyrannies. Naxos, the largest of the Cyclades, was organized into a strong state and a sea power under the tyrannies of Lygdamis, an ally, friend and political follower of Peisistratus. With the fall of the tyrannis, the popular forces supported by Athens succeeded to establish a democracy. During the last decade of the sixth century «certain rich men had been banished» by the commonalty, and «upon their banishment they fled to Miletus». At that time, regent of Miletus was Aristagoras, son in law of Histiaeus, whilst the latter was at the court of the Persian King. Upon their arrival in Miletus, the Naxian oligarchs, as old friends of Histiaeus, asked Aristagoras for assistance in their efforts to go back to Naxos and restore their rule. Aristagoras promised to bring the matter to the attention of Artaphernes, the Persian general who was brother of King Darius, and whose forces were in Asia Minor.

The ambitious Aristagoras, in stating the facts of the Naxos upri-

1. Herodotus : History V. 28.

sings to Artaphernes, proposed to him a broader expedition against the Cyclades and Euboea, thinking that he might become governor of all these territories. Artaphernes agreed with the plan and put two hundred ships at Aristagoras's disposal. He also, after Dareus's approval, prepared for the expedition a large army of Persians and their confederates which, together with two hundred triremes, were put under command of Megabates, a Persian. Megabates in 504 set sail and arriving at Miletus took on board Aristagoras with the Ionian troops and the expelled Naxian oligarchs.

Early in the campaign, Aristagoras and the Persian admiral began to differ on questions of command. Thus, at one point of the expedition Megabates «waited till the night» and then despatched a boat to Naxos «to warn the Naxians of the coming danger».(¹)

The Naxians took immediately measures to defend the island against Aristagoras and his forces, since the occupation of Naxos by them would have meant the restoration of the oligarchy. The quarrel between Aristagoras and Megabates resulted into a break and the Persians, after having exhausted their stores in this fruitless expedition, decided to return to the mainland.

Aristagoras' position accordingly became difficult. He knew well that his break with Megabates and his failure to make good his promises to Artaphernes might cause his ousting from the government of Miletus; so, he began to side with the popular forces and raise the people against the tyrants. But the final decision for the revolt came when, a special messenger, the man with the marked head came from Susa bringing him instructions from Histiaeus «to revolt against the King».

Histiaeus did this, for he was sure that his personal interests and ambitions could no longer be satisfied by continuing to remain detained at Susa. He had obtained from King Dareus, as a reward for keeping the Danube bridge, the town of Mycinus in Thracea. When Megabatis, the Persian general, crossed the Hellespont with the Peonians he noticed that Histiaeus was building walls around his town. He soon informed the King of Histiaeus's doings and so the latter was detained at Susa. Thereupon Histiaeus provoked Aristagoras's revolt, to provide a pretext for his own return to Ionia. «This Histiaeus did because it irked him greatly to be kept at Susa and because he had strong hopes that, if troubles broke out, he would be sent down to the coast to quell them;

1. Herodotus : History Bk. V 35.

whereas, if Miletus made no movement he did not see a chance of his ever again returning thither.»⁽¹⁾

In other words, both Histiaeus and Aristagoras were faithful allies to the Persians as long as their interests were satisfied by them. When they felt that the Persians were opposed to them, they had not the slightest hesitation to ally themselves with the popular and anti-Persian forces and with Dareus's mortal enemies, that is the Greeks of the mainland, in order to bring about the fall of the tyrannies and of the Persian influence, which they had formerly done so much to save.

The first thing Aristagoras did, after Histiaeus's instructions had reached him, was to call up a conference of his political friends in Ionia. In that, Aristagoras spoke and announced his plan to revolt and also Histiaeus's instructions in the matter. All the members of the conference agreed with Aristagoras's plan but one., Hecatus (545-575), who opposed the scheme at the beginning. When he found himself alone in opposition, however, he advised the conferees that a raid be made against Vrancidae, where most of Croesus wealth was held. With this money, thought Hecatus, a strong navy could be built, this being indispensable if the revolt was to succeed.⁽²⁾ Indeed, the leaders took up the matter of naval supremacy into very serious consideration. They knew very well that the Persian infantry could not possibly be defeated by the citizenry alone. Strong naval support, however, could only be forthcoming from the Greek mainland, especially from Athens, whose interests in Hellespont were threatened by Dareus. The uprising continued over a relatively long period of time for, as we are about to see, it gained Athenian naval support. Such support was forthcoming because the very existence of the Athenian city state was threatened by the continuous Persian expansion. Therefore, the international situation at this time was favourable to the Ionian revolt.

Now, Aristagoras «first of all, to induce the Milesians to join heartily the revolt, gave out that he laid down his own lordship over Miletus and in lieu thereof he established a constitutional democracy⁽³⁾ after which, throughout all Ionia he did the like; for

1. Ibid: Bk. V 35.

2. Elefteroudakis : Epitomon Encyclopedikon Lexicon p. 991 «Ecataios».

3. There is a substantial difference between Rawlinson's translation and the author of this essay, as far as the meaning of the word ἐπικράτεια is concerned. While a translation to the letter of the word would be meaningless, we find the term common wealth—a concept entirely unknown in those times—to be not corresponding

from some of the cities he drove out their tyrants whilst to other cities, whose good intentions he hoped thereby to gain, he handed theirs over; thus, gave up all the men whom he had siezed at the Naxian fleet. each to the city where he belonged.»⁽¹⁾

Afterwards, Aristagoras himself left Miletus and went to Sparta to ask for assistance. This was refused to him by king Cleommenes; so he went to Democratic Athens and asked the Athenian people for assistance, which he received.

When King Dareus was informed of these developments he called Histiaeus and arraigned him for the fact that Aristagoras, his viceregent in Miletus, had done to him «strange wrong». Histiaeus pretended complete ignorance of the revolt and suggested to the king that the only solution was his going «down to Ionia», where he could suppress the insurrection. Upon his arrival at Sardis, Histiaeus was asked again by Artapherenes for what reason, he supposed, the Ionians rebelled? Histiaeus did not answer directly, pretending to have no knowledge of the trouble; but Artaphernes said to him;

«I will tell you Histiaeus the truth of this business: it was you that stitched this shoe and Aristagoras that put it on.»⁽²⁾

Meanwhile, the Persians found themselves in a difficult position as besides the Ionian fleet the revolt was now supported by six hundred ships. Being afraid to confront the Greeks at sea, they decided, as a first step towards the restoration of the tyrannies in Ionia, to call a general assembly of the Ionian tyrants, who had been deposed by Aristagoras and who had fled to Persia, similarly to the governments in exile of the modern times. The tyrants were appointed camp followers of the Persian army that was preparing to invade Miletus. The Persians addressed these exiled tyrants in the assembly as follows :

«Men of Ionia, let each one of you show that he has done good service to the King's house; let everyone of you try severally to separate his countrymen from the rest of the allied power. Set this before them, and promise them all that they shall suffer no hurt from their

to ἐπικράτεια. Since constitutional democracy was the progressive substitute to the tyrannies and also the regime that the Ionian popular factions wanted by their many stases, that could also be the style of government that Aristagoras had to promise in order to gain their support. (For the «stases» and the staciastas wanting democracy see the original Bk. V)

1. Herodotus : History Bk. V 37.

2. Ibid : Bk. V. 106, 91.

rebellion, and that neither their temples shall be burnt nor their houses, nor shall they in any regard be more violently treated than before. But if they will not be so guided and nothing will serve them out but fighting, then utter a threat that shall put constraint upon them and tell them that if they are worsted in battle they shall be enslaved; we will make eunuchs of their boys and carry their maidens captive to Bactra and deliver their land to others.»⁽¹⁾

Thus spoke the Persians to the heads of the exiled governments. The tyrants sent messages in this spirit to their own countrymen but the Ionians, knowing that their approval would mean the restoration of the tyrannies, rejected the proposal. The only exception came from the Samian generals, who consented to the messenger of their tyrant Aeaces. The action of the generals was met by popular support at Samos. There is no way of ascertaining the causes of the Samian attitude if we were to base our conclusions on Herodotus. On the face of it they acted on National grounds.

In the rest of Ionia the struggle continued for six years. The Persians with the active assistance of the tyrants achieved some military victories, but the revolt was not suppressed. After this, the Persians changed their method and decided to side with the popular forces. In all probability, by setting up democracies, the Persians hoped that the popular forces of Ionia either will become sympathetic to them or at least will be neutralized. In the face of this fact, the modern notion based on Athenian opinion that the Persians were generally antidemocratic and followed an authoritarian line cannot be upheld.

It had taken three years for Mardonius (495-492) to put down the Ionian revolt and to occupy Thrace and Northern Macedonia. In 490 he began his campaign against Athens.

II

We saw how the appearance of the new Persian power precipitated the clash of domestic parties in Ionia. On the other hand, internal developments in Greece proper, no less definitely influenced the course of the Persian invasions.

Ever since the end of the sixth century, it became clear that the two poles of tension on the national level were Sparta and Athens. Each of these two great powers followed a policy of cooperation with foreign

1. Ibid : Bk. VI. 9.

political parties and powers in order to be able to dominate the whole of the Greek peninsula. As a result of this rivalry the Persians attacked a Greece that was by no means unified, either by a firm confederation of its city states, or by internal cooperation within each of the several states.

The struggle between the Alcmeonidae and the Peisistratidae in Athens, complicated by the conflict of Athens and Sparta, eventually proved an important contributive factor to the outbreak of the Persian wars.

The expulsion of Hippias, son of Peisistratus, who succeeded his father as tyrant of Athens, was the work of the Alcmeonids and their Spartan helpers. When his elder brother Hipparchus was slain by members of the aristocratic families of the Gephyrians «Hippias grew harsh towards the Athenians». This started the sequence of events.

During the tyrannis of the Peisistratidae many aristocratic families, who opposed their rule were banished and sent to exile. Among them were the Alcmeonidae, who were expelled in about the 560's. The Alcmeonidae joined the other exiled Athenians with the purpose of coming back and overthrowing the tyrannies of the Peisistratidae. «During their stay at Delphi they persuaded the priestess by a bribe to tell the Spartans, whenever any of them came to consult the oracle, either on their private affairs or on the business of the state, that they (the Spartans) must free Athens.»⁽¹⁾ Eventually, the Spartans sent Anchimolius with an army to drive Hippias out from Athens.

Anchimolius with his army invaded Phalerum. However, Hippias knowing of the plan, had asked for aid from Thessaly, which he received. With the aid of the Thessalian horsemen Hippias and his troops annihilated the Spartan army and killed Anchimolius. After this, the Spartans decided to send a powerful army to attack Athens under the leadership of King Cleomenes himself. The Lacedaemonians were now able to overcome the resistance of the Thessalian horsemen. They entered Athens and drove out the Peisistratidae.

Yet, the social and political developments in Athens took a turn disappointing to Spartan expectations. There were two leaders in Athens, both of Aristocratic descent, who were struggling for the leadership of the city state; Clisthenes and Isagoras. Despite the fact that Clisthenes was of the Alcmeonid oikos, which played for centuries an important role in

1. Ibid : Bk. V 63.

the political life, he proved not as influential as Isagoras among the oligarchical circles. Eventually, he decided to side with the popular forces:

«These two men strove together for the mastery; and Clisthenes, finding himself the weaker, called to his aid the common people»⁽¹⁾

Isagoras, who remained the chief leader of the oligarchical forces, seeing that his faction alone could not resist the democratic advance, called on Cleomenes for assistance. Cleomenes, with some of his followers, entered the city again and tried to dissolve the ecclesia and to put the government of the city state into the hands of three hundred of Isagoras' partizans. The Council resisted, whereupon Cleomenes, Isagoras, and their followers took possession of the citadel, but there they were attacked and besieged by the Athenian people. On the third day they were forced to accept terms, under which the Lacedaemonians were permitted to leave Athens. Isagoras himself escaped with the Lacedaemonians. Many oligarchs were imprisoned and sentenced to death.

Anyhow, the Spartans had no intention of stopping the fight at this point. Cleomenes formed a Peloponnesian army with the purpose of attacking Athens to overthrow the democratic rule and establish a puppet regime under Isagoras. But the new expedition degenerated in its course, due to the unwillingness of Cleomenes's allies to continue the fight against Athens. Confronted by this difficult situation the Athenians, in all probability under Alcmeonid influence, sent messengers to Sardis offering to make an alliance with the Persians; but nothing came out of that mission.⁽²⁾ Of course, the purpose of this initiative had been to gain protection against the expected Spartan attack.

When the Spartans saw that democracy was advancing in Athens, they realised that the expulsion of Hippias from the city had been a serious mistake from their angle.⁽³⁾ So they sent for Hippias to Sigeum, where he had taken refuge and was planning to establish an anti-democratic alliance against Athens. Upon his arrival, the Spartans called representatives from their allies and held a conference in which they spoke first announcing their plan for creation of an anti-democratic grand

1. Ibid : Bk. V 63.

1. Ibid : Bk. V 72. VI. 121, 124.

2. «So when the Lacedaemonians obtained possession of the citadel and saw that the Athenians were growing in strength, and had no mind to acknowledge any subjection to their control, it occurred to them that, if the people of Attica were free, they would be likely to be as powerful as themselves, but if they were oppressed by a tyranny, they would be weak and submissive» Ibid Bk. V 93.

alliance. Spartan speakers admitted that the expulsion of Hippias from Athens was their mistake and emphasized that one of the immediate objects of the alliance would be the restoration of the tyrannis in Athens under Hippias. The representatives of the allies were not persuaded on the advisability of the Spartan plan. Socicles, the Corinthian exile admonished Spartans «not to revolutionize a Greek city.» ⁽¹⁾ The use of this phrase proves beyond any doubt that the foreign policy of cooperating with factions and parties of other states was known in Greece proper long before the outbreak of the Pelopponesian war.

Hippias himself, for the next twenty years unceasingly urged the Persians to take action against Athens and to reinstate him there as tyrant. As soon as the Lacedaemonian plan was dropped he left Sparta and went to Persia where he tried to persuade Artaphernes to invade Attica. When the Athenians were informed of Hippias's intrigues in Persia they sent messengers to Sardis warning the Persians not to give credit to the banished Athenians. Artaphernes's answer was a warning to receive Hippias back» if they wished to remain safe». When this answer was reported to Athenian leadership they decided for open enmity with the Persians.⁽²⁾ Eventually, the war broke out and Hippias personally conducted the disembarkation of the Persian troops at Marathon, where he had local political influence.

However, even at that critical juncture all the Athenians were not united to resist the Persian invasion. Many aristocratic families, among them the Alcmeonids, and high military officials, fearful of the democratic advance in their city state opposed the resistance to the Persians, which anyway appeared hopeless. Nevertheless, the anti-Persian party of Athens, under Miltiades's leadership, prevailed and eventually the Persians were brilliantly defeated at Marathon in 490 B.C.

Compared with Salamis, Marathon was a victory of minor importance. It was at Salamis, ten years later, that the fate of the powerful democracy was decided. This was mainly due to the fact that the popular leader of the anti-Persian faction in Athens, Themistocles, had realised in time that if the Athenian city state was to survive, it above all needed a strong navy.

«The Athenians», Herodotus says, «having a large sum of money in their treasury, out of the proceeds of the mines of Laureium, were about to share it among the full grown citizens, who would have recei-

1. Ibid: Bk. V. 93.

2. Ibid: Bk. V. 96.

ved ten drachmas apiece». But Themistocles persuaded them «to forbear this distribution» because Athens at that time was at war with Aegina, the strongest Greek maritime power and, with this amount ships should be built «to help them in their war against the Aeginians».(¹)

This was how the Athenian city state began to develop as a maritime power. Obviously, when Themistocles gave his advice he had in mind not only Aegina but mainly the Persian danger.

Plutarch is more clear than Herodotus, as far as Themistocles's outlook is concerned :

«.....and Themistocles, thus was more easily able to persuade them, avoiding all mention of danger of Dareus or the Persians, who were at great distance and their coming very uncertain and, at that time, not much to be feared.»(²)

«.....And henceforward, little by little turning, and drawing the city near the sea, in the belief that, whereas by land it was not very fit for their next neighbours, with their ships they might be able to repel the Persians and command Greece, thus, as Plato says, from steady soldiers he turned them into marines and seamen tossed around the sea and gave occasion for the reproach against him, that he took away from the Athenians the spear and the shield and bound them to the bench and the oar.»(²)

Thus, in Themistocles's mind the need for a strong navy arose out of the politico-military conflict with Aegina and the danger of a Persian invasion.

Let us examine these two reasons in detail. The Aeginetan case was, as Herodotus himself asserts, the first example of party struggle in Greece proper being utilised by a foreign power for its own purposes. During the late 490s the Athenians, says Herodotus, suffered bitterly at the hands of the Aeginetans, to please the city state of Thebae, that had done many wrongs» on the Athenians. The last of these was that «they contrived an ambush and made themselves masters of the embassy vessel, on board of which there were a number of Athenians of the highest rank, whom they took and threw into prison.»(³)

The Athenians, who were seeing in the naval power of Aegina a rival dominating the sea at the time of this outrage, no longer hesita-

1. See Herodotus : History Bk. II 144.

2. & 2 Plutarch : «Lives», «Themistocles» p. 136.

3. Ibid : History Bk. VI 87.

ted, but set to work for a scheme to vindicté themselves against the Aeginitans.⁽¹⁾ They found, accordingly, a certain Nicodromus, a democratic partizan of Aegina, who was against the Aeginetan rulers, for he had been banished by them in the past. Nicodromus agreed with the Athenians to betray the island to them and in consequence, the day was fixed on which he should organize a coup d'état and overthrow the regime of the wealthy. Acting in accordance with the agreement, Nicodromus and his followers took possession of the «old town» of Aegina on the day that was agreed upon. However, the Athenians failed to arrive at the arranged time, for they had not yet sufficient ships at their disposal, with which to fight the Aeginitan fleet. The Corinthians, who were then friendly to the Athenians, sold them twenty ships at a nominal price (their law forbade them to make a gift of their ships to a foreign power). As soon as they took possession of the Corinthian ships and added them to theirs, the Athenians arrived in Aegina; but they were one day too late. By that time, Nicodromus and his followers being in a desperate position had escaped to Cape Sunium, in Athenian territory. «When the wealthier Aeginetans had thus obtained the victory over the common people who had revolted with Nicodromus, they laid hands on a certain number of them, and led them out to death.»⁽²⁾ Seven hundred of Nicodromus partizans were executed. At the end the Athenian people intervened and defeated the Aeginetans, who were isolated from their allies at the time.»⁽³⁾

The policy of fomenting and utilizing domestic strife for the achievement of one's purposes was known to the big powers of ancient Greece long before the Pelopponesian war. It is equally important to realize that Athens tried to exploit for her own purposes the Aeginetan party struggle, for the simple reason that Aegina was a stronger naval power than she was at the time and could not be otherwise confronted. This pointed to the need of the creation of a powerful navy for the city state of Athens.

Another reason, far more important for the life of the city state, and less obvious in the eyes of the citizenry was the Persian danger. Themistocles, foresaw that war with the Persians was inevitable because the vital interests of Athens and the Persians, so much in Hellespont

1. Ibid : History Bk. VI 88.

2. Ibid : V 91.

3. «Megali Helleniki Encyclopedia» dates the Aeginetan event at 492-91 B.C. Vol. II Article on «Aeginæ».

as in the Aegean Archipelagos, were opposed. The only way to confront Persians in such a war was the creation of a large navy.

* * *

At Salamis, Plateae and Mycale, the Persians were finally defeated and thrown out of Greece by the Athenians and their allies, amongst whom were the Spartans. After Salamis, Themistocles firmly advised the allies to pursue the enemy as far as Hellespont and there destroy the bridges connecting Europe and Asia, for he knew that only then would victory be complete for Athens; but Eurybiades, the Spartan admiral and military leader, preoccupied by considerations of the «balance of power», was not willing to leave Athens as the indisputably dominant power in the Aegean. Therefore, according to Herodotus, he argued as follows :

«If the Greeks should break down the bridges, it would be the worst that possibly happen to Greece». The Greeks ought to let the Persian depart because having been cut off from Asia, his army would run the danger of famine and destruction. Confronted by these dangers, Eurybiades argued, the Persian would never stop fighting and eventually Europe would submit to him.⁽¹⁾

Eurybiades's statement reveals the weakness and the temporary character of the anti-Persian coalition, which could function only as long as the very existence of Athens and Sparta was threateted. After the Persian invasion had been repulsed, Athens had to rely on her navy, which thus became the bulwark of the democracy.

Gradually, under the leadership of the democratic faction in Athens, the Delian League against Sparta was transformed into an Athenian hegemony, the character of which we have described in our previous chapter. Nothing, it seemed, could now check the hegemony of Athens over the Aegean Archipelagos under the leadership of Pericles. Her fleets and troops were to be found in every corner of the Aegean and in all lands that bordered that sea.

1. Ibid : Bk. VIII 108.

CHAPTER III.

FOREIGN POLICY OF ATHENS AND SPARTA AND DOMESTIC GREEK STRIFE IN THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

I

After the defeat of Persia, in 490–480 B.C. the Greek World tended to revolve around two city states, Athens and Sparta, in a way that the rivalry between these two powers became acute. Athens was now an empire, whose safety as well as the safeguard of her food supplies required an expansionist policy dominating the Aegean. Sparta on the other hand, which was the most powerful land power and its military efficiency was deemed superlative, felt increasingly threatened by the Athenian expansion and the consequent danger to the food supplies of her allies as well as her own. Given the geographical situation of the two states, a clash between them became inevitable.

The Spartan state, as far as her own citizenry was concerned, had developed in the traditional tribal equalitarianism; but she had organised her primary food supplies in a unique form of enslavement of the non-citizen population. In Aristotle's time (384–322 B.C.), as he remarks in his «Politics» only a thousand Spartan citizens, the «Warriors» were known to exist and their institutions were vigorously equalitarian. There were also the helots however, a body of state slaves which outnumbered the warriors many times over. This non-citizen population were treated by the Spartans with utmost rigor.

The perioiks—the designation for the rest of the free Laudaemonians—were dependant allies of Sparta, second class citizens as it were, living outside the city and having no part in civic life.⁽¹⁾

The Spartan dual kingship was effective only in war. The ephoralty, a kind of tribunate, was Sparta's all powerful magistracy, exercising «absolute control» over her affairs. The Ephors were elected by the entire citizenry and thus both the rich and the poor participated in this office. It was frequently asserted «that due to the participation of the poor, many scandals of corruption took place». The trouble was that

1. «Perioikoi»; Elefteroudakis: *Encyclopedikon Lexicon* p. 986.

though the ephors were elected from among the entire citizenry, they were not paid for their services as were the magistracies of Athens. The Council of Eleders was the highest deliberative body of the state.

Both ephors and members of the Council had not an aristocratic background. Having neither an aristocratic training and education, nor a public revenue to make them independent, they were open to much criticism,⁽¹⁾

In spite of the strict tribal equalitarianism reigning amongst the privileged body of citizenry the constitution itself of the Spartan state was not equalitarian. It cannot be classified either as a monarchy or as an oligarchy and, even less a democracy, of the time. Fundamentally, Sparta was slave-owning authoritarian state.

Amongst the other Greek city states, some were governed by the oligarchs whilst others had adopted democratic regimes. There was, however, much disagreement and struggle between the political parties of each city state.

These social and political struggles resembled to a very great extent, those that took place in Athens since the foundation of that city state. The main issue was as to who should rule the state. The oligarchical party or the popular party. These two parties differed for they represented two different classes—defined by their role as far as the means of production are concerned: The oligarchy, the big landowners, and the people, landless peasants, small farmers, small proprietors, artisans, shopkeepers, merchants, public workers, intellectuals and artists e.t.c. The gentile class did not work for its living. The people did.

The crucial problem of democracy was as to how the popular party in each of the city states, could take the government into its hand and adopt democratic measures which would better the standard of living of the people. The more formal right to vote, serve on the jury or hold office was an empty privilege as long as the people could not find employment and public payroll did not exist.

Popular forces were uniting themselves for the overthrow of the oligarchy and the fight against its external allies, (mainly the Spartans), but beyond that point there was no ideology, no outlook for the future to consolidate them. That helps to explain in an indirect way, the almost unbelievable ruthlessness of the exterminations, the confusion, division, and the mutual suspicion that prevailed during the period of the Peloponnesian War.

1. Aristotle; Politics II vi. 15-18.

The oligarchical side was selfish and cruel. There was common recognition amongst the oligarchs themselves that they were the only persons trained and having the necessary leisure time to rule their state. That was the issue that united them. The democratic leaders, in most of the cases, not of popular origin, were mainly progressive in their outlook, their respective form of government being the tyrannis and later the Clisthenian type of constitution.

II

The Peloponnesian War broke out over high handed Athenian action in 431 B.C. designed the Megarid to her sway. The population of the city state of Megara was far larger that could be supported by the Megarian area, which—given the stage of technological development—was unproductive. For this reason Megara had followed the pattern of colonizing territories in the East and the West ; among them was Byzantium. The exclusion of the Megarians by decree (433) from the markets of Athens and of her whole empire meant their exclusion from all participation in the imports from the Pontus region. «To a state situated as Megara the decree meant starvation; to her colleagues in the Peloponnesian League it meant that Athens aimed at getting control of the Isthmus of Corinth by forcing Megara to submission». ⁽¹⁾

Moreover, if Athens were allowed to take such a measure against Megara she could extend the same policy to other states of the Peloponnesian League. Sparta by herself was self-supporting in corn, thanks to the slave work of the helots; but Peloponnesus, as a whole, at that time was not capable to support her own population from her own soil ⁽²⁾ she was dependent on importation from other sources. In case of war, her territory could be devastated by raids of enemy naval forces and as Grundy points out, the Peloponnese would not be able to repair the losses in her own food supply caused by devastation, because she would have neither control of nor communication with the foreign sources from which such a loss would be recovered whereas Athens, even if repeatedly and totally devastated, could always provision herself by water, as long as she retained control of the sea.

It was natural therefore, for the Spartan state to be hostile to an Athenian empire and consequently to her democracy, which ensured her

1. Grundy : «Thucydides and his Age», p. 82.

2. Grundy : «Thucydides and his Age», p. 82-83.

naval effectiveness. Under these conditions the Spartans saw in war the only solution.

«In arriving at this decision and resolving to go to war, Lacedaemonians were influenced not so much by the speeches of their allies as by the fear of the Athenians and their increasing power.»⁽¹⁾

Of course, the Athenian generals were fully aware of the advantages of naval power in relation to the Pontus corn supply. Right before the opening of the war, Pericles said in his speech:

«If they attack our country by land, we shall attack them by sea; and the devastation even of part of the Peloponnesus, will be quite a different thing from that of the whole of Attica. For they, if they want fresh territory, they must take it by arms, whereas we have abundance of land both in the islands and on the continent; such is the power which the power of the sea gives.»⁽²⁾

Commenting on the timing of the war, Archidamus, the Spartan general, said just before the outbreak of hostilities:

«Confidence might possibly be felt in our superiority in heavy infantry and in population which will enable us to invade and devastate their lands; but the Athenians have plenty of other land in their empire and they can import what they want by sea. Again, if we are to attempt an insurrection of their allies, these will have to be supported with a fleet, most of them being islanders.»⁽³⁾

These quotation is indicative of the Spartan concern about food supplies to themselves and to their allies and of their great anxiety for considerable replenishments and additional stores during expeditions, especially in external wars. It is possible that besides the Sicilian import they had sought similar relief from Egypt and Libya for, when Nicias captured the island of Kythera (424) he found that as Thucydides remarks significantly : «A garrison of heavy infantry was regularly kept there (at Kythera by the Spartans) and great attention was paid to the island as it was the landing place for the merchantmen from Egypt and Libya.»⁽⁴⁾

The events of the war that followed justify fully the Spartan contention. The heroic resistance of the besieged Spartans at Pylos for a

1. Thucydides : History of the Peloponnesian war, Bk. 1. p. 60

2. Thucydides: History of the Peloponnesian war, Bk. 1. p. 143.

3. Thucydides: History of the Peloponnesian war, Bk. 1. p. 80.

4. Grundy—p. 83.

relatively long period could only be achieved by the fact that a way was found to supply the besieged fighters with corn.⁽¹⁾ The Sicilian expedition offers a striking illustration of how naval warfare is particularly dependent upon abundance of stores of food.

At any rate, the exclusion of the Megarians from the Attican markets was a challenge to the Lacedaemonians. Faced with the alternative of a Megarian submission or starvation, the action of the Athenians was considered by the Spartans as indirect threat to their very existence and they could not yield to it. It was in vain that through their envoys they indicated to the Athenians that war might be averted «by the revocation of the Megara decree»; their warnings were ignored and the catastrophic war eventually ensued, ruining the towns, devastating the country, exterminating populations, putting an end to the «Golden Age» and causing the collapse of the brilliant ancient Greek civilisation.

III

The three decades that preceded the Peloponnesian war were years of social conflict and stasis all over the Greek Peninsula, extending to the islands of the Aegean and Ionian seas as far away as Asia Minor and Sicily. As we approach 431 we note more and more the indirect and at times even the direct interference of the two big powers in the struggle between democracy and oligarchy. The Lacedaemonians never lost entirely their contact with the oligarchical elements in Athens.

Sparta favoured the status quo consequently, she had to find her supporters among the oligarchical elements of the various city states of Greece proper. The ally of all democratic factions everywhere was Athens. On many occasions, as we shall see, the great war of Greek antiquity was accompanied by the struggle of democracy versus oligarchy. Aristotle seemed to regard this as the natural course of things.

«And constitutions of all forms are broken up sometimes from movements initiating from within themselves, but at other times from the outside, when there is an opposite form of constitution either nearby or a long way off, yet possessed of power. This used to happen in the days of the Athenians and the Spartans; the Athenians used to put down oligarchies everywhere and the Spartans democracies.»⁽²⁾

1. Ibid : Bk. IV. 16 & 26.

2. Aristotle : Politics V. vi8—viii2

The two rivals had come to grips even before 431. In the early 450's when the Athenians began to build their long walls to the sea, Lacedaemonian forces were in Boeotia which was an enemy of Athens. The Lacedaemonians remained there having been secretly encouraged by a party in Athens who hoped to put an end to the reign of democracy and to the building of the long walls.»⁽¹⁾ Thirteen thousand Athenians with the assistance of one thousand Argives and some cavalry from their Thessalian allies marched against the Lacedaemonians and in 457 B.C. a battle was fought at Tanagra, in Eastern Boeotia. The Athenians decided to enter that fight because they thought (that the Lacedaemonians were at a loss as to how to effect their passage, and also because they were suspicious of a Lacedaemonian attempt to overthrow the democracy»⁽²⁾)

After heavy casualties on both sides, the Lacedaemonians and their allies won the battle and returned home. Sixty two days later the Athenians, marched into Boeotia, overcame Boeotian resistance at Oenophyta, occupied Boeotia and Phiocis, dismantled the Tanagrian walls and «took a hundred of the richest men of the Opuntian Locrians as hostages and finished their own long walls.»⁽³⁾ It took a few years for the Boeotians to regain their independence; Boeotian exiles from Orchomenos, being assisted by some Locrian, Euboean and other exiled oligarchs fought the Athenians at Chaeronea⁽⁴⁾ and forced them to a treaty granting to Boeotia independence and the return of her hostages.⁽⁵⁾

Subsequently, the Athenians subjugated Euboea, which had revolted against them and made a thirty years truce with the Lacedaemonians and their allies. In the sixth year of the truce however, Athens got involved again in a war between the Samians and the Milesians that started on account of Pirene. The Milesians came to Athens for assistance. «In this step they were joined by a number of Samians who wished to overthrow the government. The Athenians accordingly sailed to Samos with forty ships and set up a democracy; they took from the Samians fifty boys and as many men as hostages and lodged them in Lemnos; after leaving a garrison in that island they returned home».⁽⁶⁾

Some of the Samian oligarchs however, fled to Asia Minor and through

1, 2, 3. Ibid: Bk. 1. 106—107.

4. It should have been before 451 because the city of Chaeronea where the battle took place was destroyed by a catastrophic earthquake in 451.

5. Ibid: Bk. 1. 114.

6. & 2.

the intermediary of the most important oligarchic personalities of the city of Sardis they signed an alliance with Pissuthnes, satrap of the city. By these means they got together a force of seven hundred mercenaries and at night time they crossed over to Samos.

«Their first step was to arouse the commons, most of whom they secured, on their side; they next stole the Samian hostages from Lemnos, after which they called a revolution, they delivered the Athenian garrison and its commanders to Pissuthnes, and immediately prepared for an expedition against Miletus.»⁽¹⁾

The city of Epidamnus (Dyrachion, in later periods), located on the northern entrance to the Ionian sea, was a colony of Corcyrea. «The last act there before the war was the expulsion of the nobles by the people.»⁽²⁾ This action had very serious repercussions, as the Epidamnian oligarchs joined the Illyrian oligarchic elements (434 B.C.) «and proceeded to plunder those that remained in the city of Epidamnus by sea and land.» Under this external pressure, the popular leaders asked their mother country to intervene for a compromise between them and the exiled oligarchs so as to avoid war with the neighbouring oligarchical forces which would annihilate them. The Corcyreans however, refused to help. Confronted with this difficult situation, the Epidamnian popular leaders decided to manoeuvre on the already existing Corinth-Corcyrean antagonism and they placed their city under Corinthian control. The Corinthians accepted this task, as the location of Epidamnus was of strategic significance especially in relation to Corcyrea. Thus, they decided to make Epidamnus their stronghold and for this purpose they issued the first «settlers» scheme of the Peloponnesian war period :

«Advertisement was made for volunteer settlers, and a force of Ambraciots, Leucadians and Corinthians was despatched. They marched by land to Apollonia, a Corinthian colony, the route by sea being avoided from fear of Corcyrean interception.»⁽³⁾

The Corcyreans, upon hearing that settlers from Corinth arrived, began full scale naval preparations and ordered the Epidamnian popular leaders to receive back the banished nobles, who had come into contact with them in the meantime, and to dismiss the settlers and the Corinthian garrison. The Epidamnian people refused to do so and the events that followed mark, more or less, the beginning of hostilities. The

1. & 2.

2. Ibid : Bk. 1. 25.

3. Ibid : Bk. 1. 27.

Corcyreans began naval operations against Epidamnus, taking with them the Epidamnian oligarchic exiles «with a view to restore them after securing Illyrian support.» As soon as the Corinthians were informed about these developments they decided to counteract the Corcyrean threat by taking measures both of a political and military nature. They proclaimed Epidamnus to be their own colony and expedited the completion of their settlers' scheme. They «guaranteed» perfect political equality to all those who chose to go to Epidamnus. Those who were not ready to sail at once, by paying down the sum of fifty Corinthian drachmae, could be considered as settlers even without leaving Corinth.»⁽¹⁾

It seems that a considerable number of Corinthians decided to settle in Epidamnus by paying the forfeit. Several cities were asked to lend convoys to the immigrants so that the Corcyreans could not intercept their march to their new home.

The Corinthians secured also naval support from their allies, who were as opposed to the Athenian expansion as they.

Nevertheless the Corcyreans defeated the Corinthians at sea (433) and Epidamnus was compelled to capitulate «the conditions being that the foreigners should be sold, and the Corinthians kept as prisoners of war.»⁽²⁾ After the end of the battle, the Corcyresns executed all the captives near Cape Leukimme.

* * *

The beginning of hostilities did not materially change the picture of the social conflict but gave impetus to it. It became the foreign policy of each of the major powers involved to foment, intensify and exploit the struggles, wherever they started. As the Corinthians put it in the second Congress of Lacedaemon (433);

«We have also other ways of carrying on the war, such as a revolt of their allies, the surest method of depriving them of their revenues which are the source of their strength; also the undertaking of various operations which cannot be foreseen at present.»⁽³⁾

* * *

Potidaea offers an example of what the Corinthians meant. As the Athenian and Lacedaemonian blocks drifted away from each other,

1. Ibid: Bk. 28.

2. Ibid: Bk. 29.

3. Ibid: Bk. 1. 122.

the situation in Potidaea became very uncertain; for, Potidaea, located at the isthmus of Pallene in Macedonia, was a Corinthian colony but a tributary to Athens. The struggle between the two powers for domination of this neuralgic point of Chalcidice began in 432 when the Athenians demanded from their tributary allies to raze the wall looking towards Pallene, to deliver hostages to them, to dismiss the Corinthian magistrates and sever their relations with Corinth. The Athenians took these precautions after the battle of Corcyra, fearing that the Potidaeans might be persuaded by King Perdicas and the Corinthians to revolt against them, in which case their allies of Thrace could easily follow their example and thus the damage to the empire would have been serious.

Under such circumstances, Perdicas, who was an enemy of Athens since his earlier alliance with his brother Philip against them, tried to persuade the Lacedaemonians to declare war against the Athenians. At the same time he was also trying to get Corinthian support and thereby bring about the revolt of Potidaea against Athens. He further tried to persuade the rest of the Chalcidians, the Thracians and the Bottiaeans» to join in the revolt».(¹)

The Athenians, on being informed of Perdicas's intrigues, sent heavy infantry and ships to Potidaea to impose forcefully their demands and forestall the revolutionary movements in the whole area. Yet for some reason or other, they refused to promise their aid to a Potidaean envoy who, after the Athenian refusal, proceeded to Sparta and obtained a promise from the Lacedaemonian government that if the Athenians attacked Potidaea they would invade Attica. Following this promise the Chalcideans and the Bottiaeans revolted, «demolished their towns, moved inland and prepared for war.»(²)

Forty days after the declaration of this revolution the Corinthians sent «volunteers» from Corinth and mercenary troops from the rest of the Peloponnese to assist the revolution. Immediately the Athenians sent more infantry and ships which joined their forces already on the spot and started war operations; they occupied several cities and «concluded a forced alliance with Perdicas», which alliance however, did not take long for Perdicas to break and go back to the Potidaean and Corinthian camp. During the process of this «little war» the Athenians took the initiative and proved successful in their operations. Finally, after

1. Ibid: Bk. 1. 57.

2. Ibid: Bk. 1. 58.

receiving more infantry from Athens under the command of Phormio, who was «ravaging the country as he advanced», the Athenian forces managed to subjugate Potidaea, Chalcidice and Bottica.

The tactics adopted during these «little wars», presaged the degree of cruelty in which the Great War and the political struggles that accompanied it were to be fought. In addition to the massacre in Cape Leykimme that we cited above, Thucydides mentions the following event that occurred during the Corcyro-Corinthian battles :

«...The Corinthians, instead of engaging themselves in lashing fast and hauling after them the hulls of the (Corcyrean) vessels which had been disabled, turned their attention to the men, whom they butchered as they sailed along, not caring so much to make prisoners.»⁽¹⁾

and the historian of the Peloponnesian war goes on to remark that the Corinthians executed even some of their own friends by mistake.

I V

The Peloponnesian War, more clearly and definitely than the Persian Wars, made apparent the direct connection between domestic and foreign policy, between party strife and external conflicts.

As Thucydides puts it clearly :

«Later on, one may say, the whole Hellenic world was in commotion; struggles being everywhere made by the popular chiefs to bring in the Athenians, and by the oligarchs to introduce the Lacedaemonians. In peace there would have been neither the pretext nor the wish to make such an invitation; but in war, with an alliance always at the command of either faction to hurt their adversaries and for their own corresponding advantage, opportunities for bringing in the foreigner were never wanting to the revolutionary parties....».⁽²⁾

And in the same paragraph he states :

«Revolution thus ran its course from city to city, and the places at which it arrived last, from having heard what had been done before, carried to a still greater excess the refinement of their inven-

2. Bk. 1. 51.

1. Thucydides : History of the Peloponnesian War Bk. 3. 82.

«APXEION» Δ. Ε. Καλιτσουνάκη, Τόμος 35ος (1955) Τεύχος Β'.

tions, as manifested in the cunning of their enterprises and the atrocity of their reprisals...»⁽¹⁾

It therefore followed that :

«Never were exile and slaughter more frequent, whether in the war or brought about by civil strife».⁽²⁾

Certainly, this practice was in accordance with the foreign policy of both powers. The ancient Greeks, and especially the Athenians, were highly trained for the practical application of such a policy. Alliance with foreign powers which would support the party to retain or gain power, was a policy used generally and to the utmost. There are not many cases in history in which this policy was followed so openly. Amongst such cases we might mention those in the Italian city states of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries with their factional struggles between the Gwelfs and the Ghiellins.

Thus, the war between Sparta and Athens was not a purely military proposition but a continuous politico-military struggle which had to be fought everywhere. No major expedition or battle was undertaken by either of the two powers without previous consideration and exploitation of the political situation in which the fight was to take place. In fact, the whole war was fought in a politico-military system of which modern generals and politicians may well be zealous.

In these unprecedented struggles, in which the status of whole bodies of the population was decided, the question of «divided loyalties» between country and party, as we know it in modern times, hardly arose. Partizanship in the minds of ancient Hellenes during this period stood as the only criterion.

Thucydides writes :

«The tie of party was stronger than the tie of blood, because a partizan was (expected) to dare more without asking why».⁽³⁾

And the social function of the majority of the political leaders and party men of the period in question is given as follows :

«Either by the help of an unrighteous sentence, or grasping power with the strong hand, they were eager to satiate the impatience of party spirit. Neither faction cared for religion; but any fair pretence which succeeded in effecting some odious purpose was

1. Thucydides : History of the Peloponnesian War, Bk. 3. 82.

2. Thucydides : History of the Peloponnesian War 81.

3. Ibid : Bk. 3. 82.

greatly lauded. And the citizens who were of neither party fell a prey to both; either they were disliked because they held aloof, or men were jealous of their surviving». (1)

The social and party conflicts came to a climax during the war, their importance in determining its course can be better understood by taking a look on certain concrete and dramatic instances with special reference to (a) the policies of the two opposing political groups as evidenced by speeches and slogans, (b) the employment of the «technique of provocation» of creating troubles in enemy states and psychological disaffections, (c) party allegiance as opposed to «patriotic duty».

From our standpoint we consider the events outlined in the following pages of particular significance.

1. Archidamus, the Spartan king, before invading Attica with his troops (431) sent a herald to Athens, in case she should feel more inclined to negotiate on seeing the Peloponnesians actually on the march. The Athenians did not admit the Spartan herald into their Assembly and sent him back. Then, Pericles felt that Archidamus, who happened to be his personal friend, might possibly pass by his estate without ravaging it. «This he might do, either from a personal wish to oblige him. or acting under instructions from Lacedaemon for the purpose of creating prejudice against him, as had been attempted before in the demand of the «accursed family»(2) meaning the Alcmeonidae.

During the tyrannis of Peisistratidae in Athens, Sparta had tried to undermine politically the Alcmeonidae, with whom she co-operated while they were vanished from Athens. So Pericles was cautious lest the Lacedaemonians decided to play a similar false game and spared his estate motivated by :

(a) The creation of suspicion among the Athenian people against their leader and thereby demoralizing and weakening of their fighting spirit.

(b) The provocation of internal strife in Athens with the assistance of the oligarchical elements and thereby reduce the power of the democratic rule.

Pericles took the precaution, accordingly of announcing to the Athenians in the Assembly, that his friendship with Archidamus should not prevail over the interests of the state; therefore, in case the enemy should make his houses and lands an exception to the rest and not ravage them

1. Ibid : Bk. 3. 82.

2. Ibid : Bk. 2. 13.

«he gave them forthwith to be a public property so that they should not bring him into suspicion.»⁽¹⁾

We note many similar examples of psychological warfare and provocation to uprisings as we go along with the history of the war.

2. The case of Lesbos and the nearby territories demonstrates the synchronisation of the class struggle with the general war effort and also shows the policy followed by the imperial city towards its subject states. Ever since the overthrow of the tyrannis on the isle of Lesbos in the sixth century, the struggle of democracy versus oligarchy in the island became perennial. After the creation of the Delian confederation Lesbos became an ally to Athens but, like Chios, it had remained independent; it paid no tribute, maintained its own fleet and managed its own affairs. However, Athens prevented and forbade the unification or federation of the cities of the island Antisso, Pyrrha and Eresus. The oligarchical party made capital of this restriction and «wished to revolt even before the war, but the Lacedaemonians would not receive them».⁽²⁾ Nevertheless, during 429–428 when Athens was weakened by the plague and the heavy cost of the war, the oligarchs of Mytilene decided definitely to revolt from the empire and bring the island over to the Spartan side. Sparta and the Boeotians felt inclined then to encourage the revolt, as it would very well set the signal of revolution all over the Athenian empire. That was exactly what the oligarchical envoys of Mytilene had stressed upon when asking the Spartan block for assistance. Incidentally these repercussions show to what extent the internal strife influenced the course of the war.

The oligarchs of Mytilene had said to the Lacedaemonians :

«It is not in Attica that the war will be decided, as some imagine, but in the countries by which Attica is supported; the Athenian revenue is drawn from the allies and will become still larger if they reduce us; as not only will no other state revolt, but our resources will be added to theirs and we shall be treated worse than those that were enslaved before. But if you will frankly support us, you will add to your side a state that has a large navy, which is your great want.»⁽³⁾

For the very same reasons Attica could not afford to lose Mytilene. In the winter of 429–428 the Mytilenean oligarchs began to improve

1. Ibid : Bk. 2. 13.

2. Ibid : Bk. 3. 2.

3. Ibid : Bk. 3. 13.

the fortification of the town. The Athenians were informed of this and sent envoys to Mytilene demanding an immediate stoppage of the anti-empire activities. The demand was refused and general Cleipides with a fleet of forty triremes, that was under orders to sail against Peloponnese, was sent to Mytilene. Upon the refusal of the Mytileneans to accept his ultimatum, he opened hostilities. His forces succeeded in overcoming the resistance put up by the Mytilenean oligarchs, but he was very hesitant to occupy the island and eventually an armistice was signed.

Meanwhile the Spartans having decided to assist the Mytileneans and possibly the oligarchical elements of the neighbouring cities, sent there forty ships under the command of Alcidas. This force arrived late, however, and in spite of the attempts of the Ionian exiles to persuade Alcidas to seize one of the Ionian cities or the Aeolic town of Cyme and use it as a base from which to assist a general revolt in Ionia, that «chief source of revenue» for Athens, Alcidas returned to the Peloponnese.

On that occasion a big controversy arose in the Athenian assembly—dominated by the democrats—as to what should be done with the Mytileneans. The importance of this controversy lies in the fact, that Mytilenean pressure gave the opportunity to Athenian democratic leaders to define their empire policies.

Cleon, in putting forward his policies, pointed out to Athenian citizens that because they were not suspicious of one another in daily life, it does not mean that the same principle should apply in their dealings with their allies. Cleon said :

«You should remember that your empire is a despotism exercising control over unwilling subjects, who are always conspiring against you; they do not obey in return for kindness which you do to them against injuring you; in so far as you are their masters they have no love of you, but they are held down by force».

Cleon pleaded for a general punishment of all Mytileneans. «Punish them as they deserve, and teach your other allies by a striking example that the penalty of rebellion is death.» ⁽¹⁾

Diodotus, another democratic leader who spoke after Cleon, disagreed with him on whether severe punishment without discrimination against the Mytileneans would have beneficial effects for the empire. He said that at present the popular party are everywhere our friends; either they do not join the oligarchs or, if compelled to do so, they are

1. Ibid : Bk. 3. 40-41.

always to turn against the authors of the revolt.⁽¹⁾ Therefore, it was not correct to create antagonism of the Mytilenean people by punishing them.

«Far more conducive to the maintenance of our empire would it be to suffer wrong willingly than for the sake of justice to put to death those whom we had better spare. Cleon may speak of punishment which is just and also expedient, but You will find that in any proposal like his, the two cannot be combined.»⁽²⁾

Opinion in the assembly was almost equally divided. Finally, the motion of Diodotus identifying what is just with what is beneficial for the empire, was carried by a small majority.

«Thereafter, tribute was not imposed upon the Lesbians; but all their land, except that of the Methymnians, was divided into three thousand allotments, three hundred of which were reserved as sacred for the gods and the rest assigned by lot to Athenian shareholders, who were sent out to the island. With these the Lesbians agreed to pay a rent of two minae a year for each allotment, and cultivated the land themselves.»⁽³⁾

The Athenians occupied also the towns of Asia Minor, belonging to the Mytileneans, and incorporated them in the empire. In that way not only Lesbos remained under Athenian rule, but a considerable number of «poor» i.e. landless Athenian citizens was accommodated by receiving shares of land.

3. Corcyra, whose present name is Corfu, highlights the party strife excesses during the war; it presents a unique example of the ruthlessness, cruelty and spirit of suspicion in which these party struggles were fought. Each of the two opposing parties, the nobles and the commoners, fought uncompromisingly and continually to the end thus, tause, making their tenacity very hard to compare with any other of the same nature in history. It seems that no human being within the state remained unaffected from this strife, including women and the slaves who were used by the commoners to assist them for the final victory of their cause.

In the city state of Corcyra, originally a Corinthian settlement, the most powerful maritime city state of Greece next to Athens, just before the Peloponnesian war—the struggle between the nobles and the commo-

1. Ibid : Bk. 3. 42-49.

2. Ibid : Bk. 3. 42-49.

3. Ibid : Bk. 3. 50.

ners had been going on for a long time. The decisive Corcyrean insurrection exploded in 427, on the return of the oligarchial prisoners taken six years earlier in the sea fights of Epidamnus. «These, the Corinthians had released ostensibly upon receiving a security of eight hundred talents from their Proxenoi, but in reality upon their engagement to bring over Corcyra to Corinth.»⁽¹⁾

Arriving in Corcyra, the oligarchic exiles immediately began their political activities by rallying together the oligarchical elements of the city state. Thereupon, Athenian and Corinthian envoys hastened to island to render their diplomatic support, the first to the popular and the second to the oligarchic parties, respectively. In a conference that was then held amongst Corcyreans, they voted by majority to continue their alliance with Athens, but also «to be friends with the Peloponnesians as they had been before.»⁽²⁾ Apparently this somewhat «neutralistic» on the surface resolution did not satisfy the oligarchic faction and their Corinthian supporters who wanted to exclude entirely democratic influence on the affairs of the state.

The popular leader and proxenus of Athens in Corcyra was a certain Peithias. The Corcyrean oligarchs feared that Peithias as a member of the senate, would use his influence to induce the people to sign a formal alliance with Athens. Encouraged by the Corinthian stand, members of the oligarchic party entered the Chamber, while it was in session, with daggers in their hands and slew Peithias and sixty of his followers, private persons as well as senators. Only a few were saved by taking refuge in an Athenian trireme which was just leaving the port.⁽³⁾

Next, the oligarchs called together the people of Corcyra and told them that the oligarchic party had acted for the best of their interests. «From now on», they declared, «they would not permit either the Peloponnesians or the Athenians to enter the city except peacefully—that is with one ship only.» This proposal they compelled the people to ratify. Moreover, to make them believe that their intention was to follow a «neutral» policy, they decided to send an envoy to Athens.

Indeed, the oligarchs did send envoys to Athens, to avoid any «hostile proceedings» by the Athenians against the Corcyrean refugees which would lead to new unrest at home through disappointment of the popular forces. The Athenians however, doubting their sincerity and fin-

1. Ibid : Bk. 3. 69.

2. Ibid : Bk. 3. 69.

3. Ibid : Bk. 3. 70.

ding it hard to distinguish «who was who» among the Corcyrean elements in Athens, arrested and interned to Aegina not only the envoys but also «all the Corcyreans who had been branded by them as revolutionaries.»⁽¹⁾ In the meantime, the oligarchs on the island, with the support of some Spartan and Corinthian reinforcements, proceeded to a «coup d'état» which brought the agora under their control.

But their success did not last. One day later the popular faction, who were in the majority, attacked and defeated the oligarchs. The struggle was fought with the utmost fanaticism and cruelty. Women of the people «joined vigorously in the fray, hurling tiles from the rooftops and showing amid the uproar, a fortitude beyond their sex.»⁽²⁾ The conflict was decided at night time, when the oligarchs began to retreat. Being afraid that the people might take over immediately and exterminate them, they «set fire to private houses which surrounded the agora as well as to the larger blocks of buildings, sparing neither their own property nor that of anyone else, in their determination to stop them. Much merchandise was burnt and the entire city would have been destroyed if the wind had carried the flame in that direction.»⁽³⁾ After this triumph of the commons, the last Corinthian vessel left the port of Corcyra.

The very next day Nicostratus, an Athenian general, arrived from Naupactus with twelve ships and five hundred Messenian hoplites. The aim of this mission was ostensibly to «reconcile» the two opposing factions and to make Corcyra sign «an offensive and defensive alliance with Athens». Nicostratus succeeded in the second and real purpose of his mission. After that when he was ready to sail, members of the commons of Corcyra tried to persuade him to leave five of his vessels at Corcyra to protect the commoners from new oligarchical uprisings, while they would man five other vessels that would sail under him to Athens in place of those that he would leave in Corcyra. The leaders of the popular faction intended to man Nicostratus's five ships with oligarchical elements and by sending them to Athens, to secure more firmly their hold in the island. The oligarchs on the other hand, fearing to be sent to Athens, refused to join and took refuge in the temple of Here. This move was interpreted by the popular faction as a preparation of these

1. Ibid : Bk. 3. 72 (see original and Eleftherios Venizelos translation into modern Greek)

2. Ibid: Bk. 3. 74.

3. Bk. 3. 74.

men to resort to violence again, so they arrested them and sent them in exile in the islet that is located in front of the temple of Here.⁽¹⁾

On that day the Peloponnesian fleet arrived under the command of Alcidas. This brought the struggle to a new climax. After a prolonged battle within Corcyra between the oligarchs and the commons, who were aided by the Messenian hoplites, the struggle ended with the final victory of the people's forces and the Athenians. Lacedaemonian, Corcyrean and Athenian vessels took part in the battle. Eventually the oligarchs were massacred :

«Meanwhile they (the popular party) killed all their enemies whom they caught in the city. Upon the arrival of the ships, they disembarked those who they had induced to go on board and despatched them; they also went to the temple of Here and persuaded about fifty of the suppliants to stand their trial, as a result of which they condemned them to death. The majority would not come out, but when they saw what was going on they destroyed one another in the enclosure of the temple in which they were, except a few who hanged themselves on trees or put an end to their own lives in any way they could.»⁽²⁾

At this juncture the ferocity, the inhuman cruelty, the mutual mistrust and suspicion reached to the top. No family, religion or any other bond or institution marked out the moral standards or limits within which the party struggle was fought. On the contrary, it appears that personal differences and quarrels penetrated within the party conflict and, everybody tried to exterminate everybody else of the opposite side.

«For seven days...the Corcyreans were engaged in butchering those of their fellow citizens whom they regarded as their enemies; and although the crime imputed was that of attempting to put down the democracy, some were slain also from private hatred, others by their debtors because of the monies owed to them. Death thus raged in every shape and as it usually happens at such times, there was no length to which violence did not go; sons were killed by their fathers and suppliants dragged from the altar or slain upon it; while some were even walled up in the temple of Dionysus and died there.»⁽³⁾

1. Bk. 3. 75.

2. Ibid : Bk. 3. 81.

3. Ibid : Bk. 3. 81.

Yet, even under these conditions, the oligarchs did not give up the fight; therefore the victory of the popular party could not be considered as conclusive and final. A group of oligarchs who escaped from Corcyra during the revolution, returned to the island and established themselves on the Mount of Isthone. From there they conducted operations in a method strongly resembling the modern guerilla warfare. Their strategy was to become masters of the countryside of the island and thereby isolate the cities which were ruled by the popular party, cutting their communications from the local food production centers. That meant the gradual weakening of the popular party's authority, since the cities would be endangered by famine. The oligarchic exiles made considerable success towards that end.

In 425 the Athenians sent forty ships to Sicily. Their commanders «had also instructions, as they sailed by, to look to the Corcyreans in the town, who were being plundered by the exiles on the mountain. To support these exiles sixty Peloponnesian vessels had sailed lately, it being thought that the famine raging in the city would make it easy for them to reduce it.»⁽¹⁾

Upon the arrival of their fleet, the Athenians joined the Corcyrean forces of the cities and in a quick and decisive campaign (424) against the oligarchical stronghold of Mount Isthone they forced them to capitulate and give up their mercenary irregulars, to lay down their arms and commit themselves to the discretion of the Athenian people. The Athenian generals transferred them to the island of Ptychia, to be kept in custody until they could be sent to Athens. Nevertheless, the leaders of the popular party being afraid that the Athenians might spare the lives of the captives, organized the following trick. They sent to Ptychia some of the oligarchs' friends, who in the meantime had been trusted friends of the democrats, to tell them that the best way to save themselves was to escape, because eventually the Athenian generals would hand them over to the popular party. These «friends» promised also to provide them with a boat. It seems that they persuaded quite a number of the interned to follow their advice, for the stratagem succeeded completely. As the boat was ready to sail from Ptychia, the oligarchs were arrested and in accordance with the provisions of their treaty of surrender, they were handed to the Corcyrean democrats who shut them in a large building. Subsequently they were taken out, twenties at a time, «and led past two lines of heavy infantry, one on each side, of the road,

1. Ibid : Bk. 4. 2.

being bound together, and beaten and stabbed by the men in the lines whenever any of them saw a personal enemy passing, while men carrying whips marched by their side and hurried along the road those that walked too slowly,»

It was when more than sixty prisoners had been killed in that way that those remaining inside the building understood that they were not transferred from one prison to another, but were executed. So they refused to get out; they placed themselves in the hands of the Athenians to execute them if they so wished. But the Corcyreans of the popular party «got up on the top of the building and breaking through the roof, threw down the tiles and let fly arrows at the prisoners.» Most of them committed suicide by thrusting into their throats the arrows shot by the democrats, or hanging themselves with strips made from their clothing and cords taken from their beds. Only in that way the democrats achieved final victory «for of one party (the oligarchs) there was practically none left.»⁽¹⁾

4. Brasidas's expedition to Northern Greece offers an outstanding example of intelligent political activity and propaganda co-ordinated to perfection with military effort.

Macedonia, Chalcidice and Thrace—vital areas for Athens because of their monetary tribute and their food resources—were under Athenian control and most of their regimes were directed by popular party leaders despite the opposition of Perdicas, the best known oligarchical leader of Northern Greece. All previous Spartan attempts to occupy the area or put oligarchs in the government had practically failed. In the year 424 Brasidas, king of Sparta, determined to advance as «the liberator; » who would emancipate these areas from the yoke of the Athenian empire. However, there were also some other real reasons for his expedition to Northern Greece at this particular period of the war. These reasons were.

(a) In 426–424, Athenian pressure on the Peloponnesian peninsula, especially on Laconia and the neighbouring islands, most of all on Pylos, had increased to a very dangerous degree. The Spartan leaders felt that they could relieve the peninsula from that pressure by diverting the Athenians to other territories.

(b) During the course of the war, time and again the helots showed that they were not simply ill-disposed towards Sparta, but they were actually prepared to revolt. If such an attempt was made it might cost

1. Ibid : Bk. 4. 47–48.

the Spartans the loss of the war. They accordingly solved this very important problem by «granting liberty» to many helots and sending the most dangerous of them abroad. In 424 the helots were invited to choose those amongst themselves who had been distinguished in the struggle against the common enemy so that «they might receive their freedom.» In that way the Spartans believed «that the first to claim their freedom would be the most high spirited and the most apt to rebel;» they would, therefore, be very pleased to send them with Brasidas, firstly to eliminate the internal danger and secondly to strengthen the forces of such a significant expedition. Thus, helots, were utilized once more by Spartas few citisens.

The oligarchs of Northern Greece, under the leadership of Perdicas never actually ceased their revolutionary struggle against the Athenian empire and the local popular leaders. Therefore, the political situation in Thrace Chalcidice and Macedonia was favourable for such a military expedition.

In the summer of 424 Brasidas set out at the head of seventeen hundred heavy infantrymen, of whom the seven hundred were slaves and the rest mercenaries. On his arrival in Southern Thessaly, at his request his local oligarchical friends came to escort him through the Thessalian area; among them was a certain Niconidas from Larissa, a friend of Perdicas. In all probability he came to acquaint Brasidas with the situation in Northern Greece.

Thessaly, a traditional ally of Athens and a territory where democrats governed most of the time, happened to be under oligarchical rule in 424. This is what made Brasidas's march possible; but he would not be able to march through entirely unopposed if it was not for the skilled and, one may say, the strange for that time political tact with which he handled his opponents, as illustrated in the case mentioned below.

In the course of Brasidas's march through Thessaly, members of the local popular party tried to stop him «arguing that his attempt was against the consent of the country.»⁽¹⁾ Instead of antagonising or using force against them, he simply explained that his arms were not directed against them but against the Athenians, with whom he was at war. In addition, he said to the popular leaders that «he neither would nor could proceed against their wishes; he could only beg them not to stop him.»⁽²⁾

1. Ibid : Bk. 4. 78.

2. Ibid : Bk. 4. 78.

In that way Brasidas cleared his way and marched swiftly and peacefully through Thessaly.

Upon the arrival of Brasidas and his army in Macedonia, a quarrel between him and Perdicas developed in regard to Arrabaeus, King of Lyncestrian Macedonians, which showed the difference of approach between the two men in the fight against the Athenian empire. While the first tried to persuade Arrabaeus to become an ally of Sparta, the second said «that he had not brought him to arbitrate in their quarrel, but to put down the enemies whom he might point out to him.»⁽¹⁾ Brasidas disregarded Perdicas's claim and continued the expedition in his admirable combination of political and military activity.

In the same summer of 424 he marched with the Chalcidians against Acanthus. Before attacking that city militarily he managed to be admitted in it and so he addressed the Acanthian people : «I do not want to gain your alliance by force or fraud but to give you ours, that we may free you from the Athenian yoke.» He tried to persuade the Acanthians not to doubt his intentions but to join him «confidently» in his great mission. As however, the popular party was strong in Acanthus and, for internal political reasons had a big following in opposing Brasidas's occupation, he tried to reassure them about his impartiality in their party differences: «If any one among you» he said, «hangs back because he has a personal fear of anybody else, and is under the impression that I shall hand over the city to a party, him above all I would reassure. For I am not hither to be the tool of a faction; nor do I conceive that the liberty which I bring you is of an ambiguous character. . . I should forget the spirit of my country were I to enslave the many to the few.»⁽²⁾ Finally Brasidas, with his propaganda backed by his military force, persuaded the Acanthians to cast off their allegiance with Athens.

The revolt of Acanthus had far reaching effects upon the situation in Northern Greece. In the same year Stagiaus, another colony revolted against the Athenian rule. In the winter of 424-423 Brasidas attacked the very important Athenian colony of Anmhipolis, which is located on the river of Strymon.

Amphipolis was a source of timber for shipbuilding and of money funds; the Athenians had sent there no less than ten thousand of their citizens as settlers. Again, Brasidas did not attack the city directly. He was helped by the oligarchs of Argilus to cross the bridge of Strymon

1. Ibid : Bk. 4. 82

2. Ibid : Bk. 4. 86

river and find the Amphipolitans completely unprepared to oppose him. Knowing however, the strength of the local popular forces, he did not attempt to occupy the city right away, but issued a proclamation stating «that any of the Amphipolitans and Athenians who chose, might continue to enjoy their property with full rights of citizenship; while those who did not wish to stay had five days to depart, taking their property with them.»⁽¹⁾ By these moderate terms, Brasidas strengthened the position of the local oligarchs, who now openly advocated their policy and weakened correspondingly that of the popular leaders; these had presented to the people an entirely different picture if the colony were to be occupied by Brasidas.

Later that winter Brasidas continued his advance and occupied other cities, notwithstanding that Sparta was unable to send the reinforcements that he asked for. Oligarchic morale had increased all over Chalcidice and the local oligarchs became very active, assisting him in his campaign.

Judging Brasidas's expedition from the strategic necessity that inspired it, it was very successful. Athens was forced to send reinforcements to Northern Greece under the leadership of such men as Cleon and Nicias, who re—organised the local popular forces, through which they managed, as in Mende, to check Brasidas' advance. Anyhow, the result was that the war plans of the Athenians were seriously upset, Sparta was relieved from the dangerous Athenian pressure on Peloponnesus, and Athens was forced to an armistice because of the set backs that she suffered in Northern Greece, in addition to those in Boeotia and other places. The well co—ordinated political propaganda and military activity on the part of Brasidas, no doubt was a major factor for his largely successful expedition. However, we find it hard to agree with the «great historian» that the basic reason for the effectiveness of this admirable co—ordination was Brasidas's personality and conduct alone.⁽²⁾ In fact, we think that it is one of the rare instances in which Thucydides loses his objectivity.

The empire, as it was realistically expressed by Cleon, was a «naked despotism». Brasidas's cleverness lies in the fact, that he presented himself as the «liberator» of the empire's unwilling subjects. It is true that he did not have anything positive to offer to the people of the cheruchies and colonies in Northern Greece, but at least the fact that under him

1. Ibid : Bk. 4 106.

2. Ibid : Bk. 4. 81.

there was no tribute to pay and no settlers to occupy the leading political and economic posts of the colonies and the cheruchies was an inducement for the peoples of Northern Greece to revolt against Athens. Brasidas's policy therefore, hit on the weak point of the empire. This was a major factor for his largely successful expedition.

* * *

5. Party conflict during the war was not restricted to the areas mentioned above. There can hardly be any place of the Greek peninsula that was not affected by it. Megara offers another example. In 425 the Megarians found themselves in a difficult position. On the one hand the Athenians invaded their country twice every year, and on the other the city was «harrassed by incursions» of the local oligarchic exiles, who had established themselves at Pegae.⁽¹⁾ This situation with its catastrophic consequences for Megara, appeared to have no end. The local leaders therefore, began to consider whether it would be advisable to receive back the oligarchic exiles and thereby eliminate their destructives. The leaders of the commons, however, hurried to the Athenian generals and betrayed the scheme asking their assistance to resist it. The Athenians entered Megara, overpowering the resistance of the Peloponnesian guards; the greater part of the Lacedaemonian army being terrorized by the night attack of the Athenians, escaped to the port of Nisae. There Brasidas, the Spartan general, tried to re-organize the Lacedaemonian forces and in this effort he asked the Beotians, who were governed by an oligarchic regime, for troops.

Both the oligarchs and the commons in Megara were afraid to let Brasidas enter the city, the one considering what the Athenians would then do, whilst the other, knowing what an oligarchical rule with Brasidas support would mean for them. Finally, the oligarchs decided to let Brasidas occupy the city. The popular forces did not resist the oligarchic proposal since the Athenians had decided to withdraw from the fight, temporarily. Brasidas entered the city. As a result, power in Megara passed immediately into the hands of the oligarchs, who cruelly and treacherously executed their opponents.

* * *

6. The popular party of Argos was strong; but during the winter of 422-421 its leaders were forced, mainly by Spartan pressure, exercised

1. Ibid : Bk. 4. 66.

through «diplomatic channels», to accept oligarchic rule in their city state. This did not last very long, as in the summer of 421 the commoners, taking advantage of the festival of Gymnopediai in Sparta, attacked the oligarchs and after a battle within the city, they took over the government, «slew some of their opponents and banished others.»⁽¹⁾

The oligarchs called for assistance from their Spartan friends, but, due to the festivities, the Spartans came too late; the only thing they could do was to promise their energetic support to the Argive oligarchs in the future.

The commoners then, fearing an attack by Sparta, began to build long walls to the sea. Certain other Peloponnesian states supported secretly their project:

«and the Argives with all their people, women and slaves not excepted, addressed themselves to the work, while carpenters and masons came to them from Athens.»⁽²⁾

At the beginning of the following summer, while the popular party was ruling the state, Alcibiades sailed to Argos with twenty ships. Under his instructions, three hundred Argives suspected of oligarchic views, were arrested and sent to exile in a neighbouring island which was under Athenian sovereignty. Meanwhile, some other oligarchical elements had exiled themselves in the neighbouring states and from there, continued their struggle against the popular regime. Thus, in 420, when the Argives invaded Phlius, they lost eighty men who were «cut off in an ambush by the Phliasians and Argive exiles.»⁽³⁾

In the winter of 416 Lacedemonians and Corinthians marched into Argive territory, ravaged a small part of it, stole some yokes of oxen, carried away a quantity of corn and settled the Argive exiles at Orneae, a northern neighbour of Argos, leaving some of their soldiers with them. A truce was then signed, under which neither the Orneats nor the Argives were to injure each other's territory. In the same year, with the assistance of thirty Athenian ships and heavy infantry, the Argives attacked Orneae and stopped for some time the oligarchic exiles of Argos from playing any important role.⁽⁴⁾

The Spartan block felt uneasy as long as the popular party ruled in Argos, so much from military considerations because of the city's

1. Ibid : Bk. 5. 81.

2. Ibid : Bk. 5. 82.

3. Ibid : Bk. 5. 115

4. Ibid : Bk. 6. 7.

geographical position as for the bad example that she might set to other cities belonging to their group; so in 421, «seeing the Epedaurians, their allies neighbours of Argos in distress, and the rest of the Peloponnese either in revolt or disaffected they concluded that it was high time for them to interfere if they wished to stop the progress of the evil.»⁽¹⁾ Strangely enough, Argos was not subdued, despite all the efforts of the Spartans.

7. The case of party strife in Boeotia resembles that of Argos. Considering Boeotia's geographical position one should expect democracy to be stronger in that state than it actually was. At one juncture of the war, during 424, the Boeotian popular leaders, with the assistance of a Theban democratic exile, attempted to hand over their state to Hippocrates and Demosthenes of Athens and to establish themselves in the government, but the plot was discovered and Boeotia remained a constant ally of Sparta until the end of the war.

V

During the war the struggle of democracy versus oligarchy spread all over Greece. If we were ignorant of the fact that Athens and Sparta were the chief antagonists, we might justly describe the Peloponnesian war as a series of violent civil commotions that occurred in Greece during that period. The basic cause of these ceaseless party and social struggles was essentially the same that we diagnosed in examining the struggle between the popular forces and the oligarchs in Athens: it was the clash between the leisured class and the common people on the issue as to who should rule the state; but the fate of all this continuous local party strife was to be determined by the outcome of the general war. This fact was realised by all the political leaders, and, for that reason, before they attempted any serious movement in their city states, they tried to secure the support of one of the two great belligerent powers.

The first period of the war ended with catastrophic results for the whole of Greece. Neither side could claim a decisive victory on the other. Sparta in her foreign policy, posed as the power which tried to liberate Hellas from the yoke of the Athenian empire that was enslaving it. This policy proved partly successful during the first period. The Athenians, on the other hand, could not conceal the fact that they had to fight for

1. Ibid.: Bk. 5. 57.

the preservation of their empire. This they frankly admitted and tried to justify in their speeches :

«An empire was offered to us: can you wonder that acting as human nature always will, we accepted it and refused to give it up again, constrained by three all-powerful motives, honour, fear, interest?»⁽¹⁾

While on the national level the Athenian foreign policy had not actually in its hands any political weapon to counteract Sparta's slogans for liberation, the empire policies were the corner stone on which the followers of democracy were based. The non-land owning class were threatened by famine and starvation; also their oppupations were partly connected with the coast and sea and were therefore endangered if Athens was chased from the seas. The colonies and the cleruchies were another inducement to the popular party, since—as we saw in the case of Mytilene—it meant land allotments to them besides securing corn imports. The common people simply had to press for expansion.

On the other hand, the oligarchs' interests as landowners, accorded essentially with the stay-at-home policy. The danger of famine hardly affected them; hence their advocacy for «peace at any time with the Spartans.»

VI

Since its very beginning, the war proved a costly affair to the Athenian city state. The maintenance of an unusually large army and a navy fighting abroad and battling almost continually, constituted a drain on the resources of the city state, however rich they might be.

«.....the financial strain on Athens was so great that there was a general melting down to the temple properties, gold coins were issued for the first time, and bronze coins were plated with silver. The two boards, the treasurers of the other Gods were amalgamated.»⁽²⁾

The Athenian citizens, for the first time were obliged to pay an «eisphora» or «property tax», «which brought in 200 talents. Such a measure pressed heavily on the richer Athenians, who already bore the burden of equipping the triremes and had seen much of their land and property destroyed by invasion.» The uncertainty over the outcome of the war coupled to the depressing economic situation strengthened gradually

1. Ibid : Bk. 1. 43.

2. Botsford & Sihler : Cambridge Ancient History : p. 215.

the oligarchical position in Athens. A small set of oligarchs, of no influence upon the democratic government, had been opposing the war and, since its very beginning, advocating «peace at any price» with the Lacedaemonians. During the course of the war, as the oligarchs saw only damage and destruction, they grew in opposing it, more energetically. More important however, than the oligarchical opposition was that it influenced the small farmers and peasants, who turned against the war policies of the democratic party for two reasons:

(a) The destruction brought about by invasion in their small estates,

(b) The negligence shown by the democratic regime for the countryside because of their dependence mainly on the coast and on foreign imports.

As it is well known, the theater in ancient Greece was its ideological center and served as the principal means for dissemination of political ideas and, occasionally, for mere propaganda. For the anti-war propaganda from the year 427 onwards, Aristophanes is the best source:

«When peace comes
Then will be the time for laughing,
Shouting out in jovial glee.,
Sailing, sleeping, feasting, quaffing,
All the public sights to see.»⁽¹⁾

Aristophanes' pacifism, as it appears, was not an abstract and vague one. A landowner himself, he was able to appeal to the farmers and peasants, for he knew the issues and problems created for them by the war:

«Wise and worthy country people! listen to the words I say;
If you wish to hear of peace or why it was removed away.»⁽²⁾

Aristophanes appealed to the social groups opposing the war, that is the agricultural landowners and small farmers and peasants of the countryside, separately or jointly, whichever was more effective. His comedies and satyra were hard hitting.

The army in many cases, when stationed in rural areas, when asking for food or drafting peasants, was a burden to the population. Aristophanes tried to make capital of this fact and thus to fan opposition of the whole population against the war:

«Ah, but when at home they are,

1. Aristophanes : «When Peace Comes» p. 339.

2. Aristophanes : «The Peace» p. 35.

Stationed, things can be borne they do,
 Making up lists unfairly, striking out and putting down,
 Names at random, tis tomorrow that the soldiers leave the town.»⁽¹⁾

Whenever a battle occurred, the farmers were not able to cultivate their land. Sometimes the area battles meant the destruction of their crops. Aristophanes convinced these small farmers that they were exploited by those who, according to his opinion, were responsible for the nightmare of the war :

«Then your labouring population, flocking in from vale and plain
 Never dreamed that, like others they themselves were sold for gain
 But as having lost their grapestones, and desiring figs toget,
 Everyone his wrapt attention on the public speakers set;
 These beheld your poor famished, lacking all your home supplies.»⁽²⁾

Aristophanes ridiculed the democratic leaders and their policies. Rumours were widely spread on abuses of public funds committed by them. Pheidias, the leading sculptor of Greek antiquity, had been brought to court for stealing of the gold allocated for the decoration of his statues of Athens, the masterpieces of all times. From the measurements of these ornaments he proved mathematically that the weight of the gold used in them was equal to that allocated for the purpose and was accordingly acquitted. Aristophanes however, persisted in his propaganda. This is what he had to say about the great artist and his friend Pericles during whose archonship the war against the Lacedaemonian league was declared :

«Pheidias was the first beginning; his indictment and undoing,
 First alarmed his friend and patron for his own approaching ruin,
 Pericles—incensed with terror (to bewilder, and distract your malignant dangerous humours)) risking an outrageous act,
 Singly set the town on fire, and blew the blaze from sea to sea,
 Kindled from the petty spark of that Megarian decree;
 Overshadowing all the land with smoky clouds and smouldering risk
 Darkening all your cheerful days, and drawing tears from every
 cheek.»⁽³⁾

But the most bitterly attacked of the democratic leaders was Cleon. In the «Knights» he is presented as a demagogue in the modern sense of the term, a corrupt politician acting against the interests of the people.

1. Ibid : «The Country People» p. 314.

2. Op. cit. «The Country People» p. 314.

3. Op. cit. «The Country People». p. 235.

«Even in your tender years,
And your early disposition,
You betrayed an inward sense,
Of the conscious impudence,
Which constitutes a politician

.
.

But now, with eager rapture we behold
A mighty miscreant of baser mould!
A more consummate ruffian!
An energetic ardent ragamuffin!
Behold him there! he stands before your eyes,
To bear you down, with superior frown
A fiercer stare
And more incessant and exhaustless lies.» (1)

* * *

Such was the anti-war propaganda in Athens which influenced more and more the wealthy and the small farmers as the war hardships continued to increase. Nevertheless, during this period the representatives of oligarchical views were not extremists or terrorists. Nicias, the conservative leader, was neither for peace at any price nor for the dissolution of the empire. He was a very wealthy man, deriving his income by leasing from the state concessions in the silver mines of Laurium, which he worked with his own slaves. He spent his money lavishly on public shows and festivals.

In 41, on Nicias's initiative, a treaty was concluded with Sparta, that put an end to the war and it was generally called «peace of Nicias». This was prompted however, just by the exhaustion of the belligerents; its conditions only superficially dealt with their problems and did not provide substantial safeguards for their security. The situation created after that treaty was one of suspense and led irresistably to the following developments:

(a) In spite of the financial drain and the growing opposition at home, the democratic leaders of Athens continued their policy of conquest and expansion by force, as this was for them the only way to rescue the democracy and the empire.

1. Ibid : «Knights» p. 82.

(b) In the years right after the treaty of 421, social unrest and party strife continued in many parts of Greece, including the Peloponnesus and several imperial states.

(c) During the whole period of the war Sparta was steadily transforming herself into a maritime power and she became capable of inflicting decisive blows against the Athenian empire. The need of such transformation was well understood by the Spartan leaders since the earliest engagements. In 431 Sparta «ordered the states that had declared for her, in Italy and Sicily, to build vessels up to a grand total of five hundred, the quota of each city being determined by its size.»⁽¹⁾ The creation of a strong Peloponnesian navy continued until later years at an increased pace. «Cyrus, the son of the Persian king Darius, furnished the funds,»⁽²⁾

The above developments, combined with the weakness of the treaty and its inability to check them, proved Nicias's policy unrealistic and pointed out to the oncoming resumption of the war.

* * *

Thucydides, in a paragraph where he lets himself free to express his opposition to the Athenian democratic regime, summarizes the causes of the second period of the war and the situation in Athens during its course in a magnificent and ingenious manner :

«In short, what was nominally a democracy became in his hands (Pericles') a government by the first citizen. With his successors it was different. More on a level with one another and each grasping at supremacy, they ended by committing even the conduct of state affairs to the whims of the multitude. This, as might have been expected in a great and sovereign state, produced a host of blunders and amongst them the Sicilian expedition; though this failed not so much through miscalculation of the power of those against whom it was sent, as through fault of the senders in not taking afterwards the best measures to assist those who had gone out, yet choosing rather to engage themselves with private cabals for the leadership of the commons, they not only paralyzed the operations in the field, but also first introduced civil discord at home.»⁽³⁾

1. Ibid : Bk. 2. 7.

2. Ibid : Bk. 2. 66.

3. Ibid : Bk. 2. 66.

Let us examine attentively some of the important events of the second period of the war.

The democratic leaders in Athens kept an eye on Sicily long before 416 when they embarked upon their famous expedition. Already in 425 Hermocrates, a Syracusan political leader, urged the representatives of the Sicilian cities to settle their local differences and unite, for there was «also the question whether we have still time to save Sicily, the whole of which in his view was menaced by Athenian ambition.»⁽¹⁾ The Athenians had in that year sent ships there under instructions to «subdue Sicily»⁽²⁾ after calling at Corcyra.

Going back to the causes of the war we can safely conclude that they apply invariably to the Sicilian expedition as if it were a natural symptom to be expected, if the Athenian foreign policy remained unchanged, as it did. Peloponnessus, having been cut from the Pontus corn region, Sparta turned to Sicily and made it her most important source of corn. Its maintenance became a matter of life and death to the Lacedaemonians. On the other hand, the Athenian policy of imposing either submission or starvation to the Peloponnesian block, pre-supposed the severance from them of this source of supply. Furthermore, the capture of that source would provide Athens herself with abundant corn. The refore, despite the unfavourable developments in the empire, in Athens herself and within the democratic faction, its popular leadership adhered to its foreign policy of expansion.

«The Athenians sent their navy to Sicily on the plea of their common descent; but in reality to prevent the exportation of Sicilian corn to Peloponnesians and to test the possibility of bringing Sicily into subjection.»⁽³⁾

* * *

The city of Segesta, an 'ally' of Athens since 653, was suffering under the pressure of Syracuse. The Segestians sent an envoy to Athens to persuade the leadership of the imperial city to assist them against Syracuse, promising to cover the whole expenditure of the campaign. The argument which both the Segestian envoys and the democratic leaders put forward was that if Syracuse was permitted to dominate Sicily, it would sooner or later lead vast armaments to aid the Peloponnesians in

1. Ibid : Bk. 3. 60.

2. Ibid : Bk. 3. 65.

3. Ibid : Bk. 3. 86.

a new effort to destroy the empire. Despite the opposition of Nicias, Alcibiades carried the resolution for the expedition.

Alcibiades rose to the leadership of the democratic party after the death of Cleon (422). He was a descendant from the Eupatridae family, handsome and intelligent; although brought up in the Periclean environment, he should not be regarded historically as a representative of any certain ideology or political system, but merely as an embodiment of ambition. Alcibiades believed that the peace policy of Nicias was a chimerian dream.»⁽¹⁾

An episode that occurred shortly before the departure of the great Athenian armada for Sicily (416) pointed to the growing strength of the oligarchical forces, to the crisis in the leadership of the democratic party, and, to the doubts of more and more Athenians about the direction of the foreign policy followed by the democratic faction.

Shortly before the departure, nearly all the busts of Hermes which carved on square pollars of stone, stood in large numbers in shrines and at the entrances to privates, were houses, shamefully mutilated during a single night.

Alcibiades' enemies tried to link him with the sacrilege connecting it with some previous similar mutilations and the information about them given by some metics and body servants demanded an immediate trial, fearing the campaign of calumny that was to be certainly conducted against him during his absence. However, Peisander, an oligarchic leader and Androcles, a democratic opponent of Alcibiades, prevented the trial. «Merely to be able to have him (Alcibiades) recalled at the right moment was to make them, not him, the master of his military career.»⁽²⁾

The Hermae affair can hardly be considered as anything else but an oligarchic provocation. The schemers were Peisander and Androcles. The first manufactured the whole affair with the co—operation of the oligarchical clubs that he and others had organized. The following paragraph of Thucydides enlightens us about the character of the plot and also the general political climate within which it took place :

«Alcibiades, being implicated in this charge, it was taken hold of by those who could least endure him, because he stood in the way of their obtaining the undisputed direction of the people. These men thought that once he were removed, the leading place would be

1. Plutarch : «Lives», «Alcibiades», p. 241.

2. Thuc. : Vol. 5. p. 286.

theirs. They accordingly, magnified the matter and loudly proclaimed that the affair of the mysteries and the mutilation of the Hermae were part and parcel of a scheme to overthrow the democracy, and that nothing of all this had been done without Alcibiades; as alleged proofs were put forward the general and undemocratic licence of his life and habits.»⁽¹⁾

The plotters, it appears, were the oligarchs in co—operation with Androcles, who wanted to take over the ..democratic leadership. They tried to throw the responsibility of their own action upon Alcibiades, thus condusing the people as to who really were the supporters of democracy. Also, we may safely conclude that the democratic leadership was disunited. The eventual recall of Alcibiades by Androcles serves to prove further that the oligarchs began to carry a greater influence with the people than the leadership of the democratic war parties, which actually was disunited and uncertain of its aims.

About midsummer of 416, the sailing of the greatest armada that the Greek world had yet seen took place from the Piraeus. On that day the whole Athenian population, both citizens and foreigners, went down to the port. This send—off, however, was not a mass demonstration of enthusiasm for the expedition :

«Indeed at this moment, when they were now upon the point of parting from one another, the danger came home to them more than when they voted for the expedition.»⁽²⁾

The lack of enthusiasm and the Hermae episode are eloquent expressions of the feelings of the Athenians.

At Corcyra the armada picked up the sailing vessels that had gone ahead with supplies, and then the whole fleet sailed off for Italy. It comprised 134 triremes and 130 supply boats. Of the triremes 100 were Athenian, 40 of them being used to convey troops; the other triremes were furnished by the allies. The army consisted of 5,100 hoplites, of whom 2,200 were Athenians, of 30 Athenian cavalry, and 1,300 light armed troops (400 being Athenians). The crews of the triremes may be reckoned at 20,000 and the total of all forces at 27,000.⁽³⁾

A combination of circumstances proved disastrous for the proud Athenian navy and army. Nicias the general, himself a leader of the

1. Thucydides : Bk. 6. 28.

2. Thucydides : Bk. 6. 30.

3. C.A.H. Vol. V. 287.

oligarchical party, who had pointed out the military unsoundness of the expedition and yet regarded it as his patriotic duty to accept the command when appointed to it, did not attempt the one strategical manoeuvre which might have held out some hope of success, at least temporarily; that is, the direct attack on Syracuse before the Syracusans had time to prepare. In retrospect, it appears that the great armada lost precious time in futile demonstrations up and down the coast.

Meanwhile, the oligarchs in Athens made Alcibiades their central point of attack. The anti-war propaganda made up a story of Alcibiades conspiring with the Spartans :

«Meanwhile it so happened that, just at the time of this agitation, a small force of Lacedaemonians had advanced as far as the isthmus, in pursuance of some scheme with the Boeotians. It was now thought that this had come by appointment, at his (Alcibiades) instigation, and not on account of the Boeotians. . . . »⁽¹⁾

Under the pressure of these rumours and misrepresentations the democratic regime decided to recall Alcibiades. Knowing, however, that his enemies would in any case condemn him to death, Alcibiades did not return to Athens but fled to Sparta (413). His recall and subsequent desertion brought serious damage to the cause of democracy.

Besides their faults, being seriously handicapped by insufficiency of supplies, the Athenians were hopelessly defeated in Sicily (415), with disastrous effects upon the imperial city and its empire. The destruction of the fleet and of the land force was a fatal blow to the foreign policies of the democratic party. Financially, Athens was exhausted, for the expedition had absorbed all reserves (except 1,000 talents held for a naval crisis).⁽²⁾ In the year 413 the city had already been so short of funds that it was forced to dismiss 1,300 Thracians, who had reached Athens too late to sail with Demosthenes.

But the most fatal blow to the democratic regime was the destruction of the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami in the year 405. Aegospotami (now called Karoecovadere) is a small settlement at the mouth of a small river of the same name flowing into the Hellespont, on the Eastern side of the Thracian peninsula.

Whilst the Athenians were engaged in an attack on Chios, they learned of Lysander's, the Spartan general, presence in the Hellespont. This was a grave threat to their main grain supply; they hurried accor-

1. Thucydides : Bk. 6. 61.

2. C.A.H. Vol. V. p. 313.

dingly, with their entire fleet of 180 ships to protect this vital channel. On arrival, they discovered Lysander's position at Lampsakus, a bay on the Eastern side of Hellespont and they brought their fleet to Aegapotami nearly opposite Lampsakus and about five miles away. For four successive days they crossed the strait and found the Spartans in the harbour, in battle order, but unwilling to engage. Alcibiades, who, in the meantime had left Sparta and rejoined the Athenian forces since 411, had fought against Lysander before and knew from experience his craft and enterprise; so he warned the Athenian generals of the folly of their dispositions at the mouth of Aegapotami, where the anchorage was unsafe and the crews of their fleet became exhausted by keeping in constant watch. The generals, not trusting him, refused to listen to his advice; they probably suspected that there was treachery, as it had been in the previous year at Arginusae, in which case the Athenian generals, although they defeated the united Peloponnesian fleet, yet having been unable to pick up their dead crews on account of stormy weather, they were condemned to death.

At all events, Alcibiades' advice was not taken and at a time that most of the Athenians were dispersed ashore, resting or enjoying themselves, the vigilant Spartans attacked the Athenian fleet and destroyed it. Only nine triremes were saved, having fled under Conan; more than three thousand prisoners were put to death.

When the news reached Athens, «that night no one slept». Aegopotami was a shattering defeat for the democratic party and the government. The prestige in which the army and navy stood was destroyed in the eyes of the Athenian people and confidence in the democratic leadership was annihilated.

Ever since the Athenian debacle in Sicily a great reactionary current spread all over the empire, which was to end with the dissolution of the empire and the destruction of democracy at home. Representatives from Euboea, Lesbos, Chios, Erythrea and other states came to Agis, the king of Sparta declaring the intention of their leaders to revolt and asking for his assistance. ⁽¹⁾ The synchronization of these local revolts is one of the characteristics of that period; another one is the comeback to the fore of the Persian power.

As Chios had a relatively strong navy, the Spartans decided to come first to the assistance of the Chian oligarchs. In their intervention they had the moral support of Persia. King Darius thought that it was high

1. Thucydides : Bk. 8. 5-6.

time to regain the coastal cities of Asia Minor, which were in the «undisputed possession» of the Athenians since 448 B.C. Darius advised accordingly Tissaphernes, the governor of the coastal provinces Lydia, Caria and Ionia and also Pharnabazus, Satrap of Phrygia and Bithynia. As a reason for his decision he offered the tribute that the «rebels» owed him. Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus communicated with Sparta and the two powers, Persia and Sparta made arrangements to assist one another in their respective territories. Tissaphernes supported the Spartans and the revolutionaries in Chios and Erythrae. The Peloponnesian fleet was to sail first to Ionia and thence to Lesbos and the Hellespont to assist the oligarchic revolutions in those states. The Persians, being solicited by Alcibiades, who in 411 had fled from Sparta and went to Tissaphernes, went first to Mytilene and helped the oligarchs of that city to revolt. Right after the successful termination of this revolution Tissaphernes and his Spartan counterpart Chalcideus made a treaty of alliance, promising to help each other in the fight for the subordination to them of the various parts of the Athenian empire.

Chios gained its independence from the empire, and supported the «liberation» of its neighbouring cities and islands. In due course, the Chians manned another squadron which won Levidus and Aerae. They also sent a squadron to Lesbos upon the arrival of which both Mytilene and Methymna on the island, as well as Phoea and Cyme on the mainland, revolted. Thus, between the Iasik gulf and the gulf of Adramuttium, practically all that was left of the empire was Samos. As a matter of fact. Samos being long under tyrannical rule, constituted the only exception to the general oligarchical uprising.

«About this time, the rising of the commons at Samos against the upper classes, took place, in concert with some Athenians, who were there in three vessels. The Samian commons put to death some two hundred in all of the upper classes and banished four hundred more, taking their land and their houses.»⁽¹⁾ Despite the repeated attempts of the oligarchic opposition which, with Alcibiades' assistance (now trying to persuade the oligarchs of Athens that he could gain Tissaphernes' support for them if restored) tried to regain the government, the popular forces ruled Samos for a long time.

In any case, the revolt of the Samian people came too late and was practically of no help to the Athenian democrats.

All through this period «clubs for mutual assistance in dealing with

1. Thucydides : 8. 20.

courts and officials had been characteristic of upper class life in Athens for some time.»⁽¹⁾ The members of these oligarchical clubs were sworn to secrecy. The clubs were openly condemning the democracy and the empire, thus making it known that they were willing to give everything up in return for the transformation of Athens into an oligarchical state. The Spartan state was considered to be their ideal.

Organizationally the clubs seem to have been united under common leadership, the leadership being in the hands of such oligarchs as Peisander and Antiphon. While it can be said that their activities were subversive and terroristic, it cannot be maintained that they were not induced by a political scheme. In the beginning of their lives the clubs, with the co-operation of Androcles, the democratic leader, organized the Hermae mutilation with the intention to discredit Alcibiades and sabotage the Sicilian expedition. Afterwards, for a certain period of time, they restricted themselves to the condemning of democracy and fomenting the anti-war sentiment. As the war lengthened out, their methods became more and more violent. Obviously, this policy could not meet the opposition that it would have met if it was applied at the beginning of the war. Now the majority of the Athenian citizens, especially the small peasants, were demoralized and declared against the policies of the democratic party. This was a great help to the oligarchs, who essentially were working only for their cause, that is, to take over the government of the city state from the hands of the democrats. At the time that the oligarchic movement came into the open, the clubs were well co-ordinated in their activities :

«Thereby a number of groups of workers was won for the cause, and men of different tendencies and purposes were brought into contact with it, giving a semblance of union, and implicated in whatever was undertaken.»⁽²⁾

The revolt broke out while Peisander was coming back from Samos. As it had decided, Peisander and his colleagues on their voyage abolished democracies and instituted oligarchies in the cities that they passed through. The insurrection in Athens began with the assassination of Androcles, who then was the leader of the democratic party. Other assassinations followed. The prevailing atmosphere in Athens was one of complete demoralization and mutual suspicion. The picture is given very clearly by the great historian :

1. C.A.H. Vol. 5. p. 324.

2. C.A.H. Vol. 5. p. 324.

« it was impossible for any one to open his grief to a neighbour and to concert measures to defend himself, as he would have had to speak either to one whom he did not know, or whom he knew but did not trust. Indeed all the popular party approached each other with suspicion, each thinking his neighbour concerned in what was going on, the conspirators having in their ranks persons whom no one could ever have believed capable of joining an oligarchy; and these it was who made the many so suspicious, and so helped to procure impunity for the few, by confirming the commons in their mistrust of one another.»⁽¹⁾

Thus, the people passively accepted the oligarchic order : « they took counsel of their fears and promised themselves some day to change the government again, and gave way. . . . » ⁽²⁾ Naturally, the oligarchic leaders knew that they could not suppress the democratic party and its power only by terrorism. So they soon attacked the institutional foundations of the democratic regime.

« Meanwhile their cry in public was that no pay should be given except to persons serving in the war, and that no more than five thousand should share in the government, and those such as were most able to serve the state in person and in purse. But this was a mere catchword for the multitude, as the authors of the revolution were really to govern.»⁽³⁾

In fact every important decision or even a simple speech was controlled in advance by the oligarchs. Such a curtailment of the public payroll, would have made the popular forces unable to gain the needed leisure to govern.

As soon as Peisander came back, the oligarchic leadership assembled the people and elected ten commissioners with full powers to frame a new constitution and abolish the Clisthenian. When the new constitution was prepared, the oligarchs again assembled the people and announced to them the new political structure of the city state :

« The way thus cleared, it was now plainly declared that all tenure of office and receipt of pay under the existing institutions were at an end.»⁽⁴⁾

1. Ibid : Bk. 8. 66.

2. Ibid : Bk. 8. p. 54.

3. Thucydides : Bk. 8. p. 65.

4. Ibid : Bk. 8. p. 67.

Five men were then elected to be presidents, who in turn had to elect one hundred, and each of the hundred three apiece. These were the four hundred who were to rule the city state and to convene the five thousand citizens who were considered fit to retain their political rights whenever they «pleased». Thus, by abolishing the public pay system and by restricting the political rights of the commons, the oligarchs, were able to take the governmental machine into their hands and destroy the Athenian democracy. The five thousand «constituted the active citizens as 'councillors' thus elevating the privileged and leaving the rest professedly, as they were.

The four hundred proved themselves unable to solve any of the outstanding problems of the Athenian city state. The gradual dissolution of the empire continued, and eventually the conclusion of an 'honourable' peace with the Spartans became an impossibility.

The four hundred, knowing well Sparta's preference for oligarchical regimes, had hoped that they would be able to conclude a peace treaty on the basis of the status quo. However, their efforts were in vain. Certainly Sparta supported the oligarchical regimes in the smaller city smaller city states, which thus became its satellites. But Agis, the king of Sparta, seeing the dissolution of the empire the civil strife and political disunity in Athens itself, was in no hurry to end the war, because it now seemed obvious that he would soon be able to impose an oligarchical regime altogether dependent upon Sparta. In the meantime, while the popular forces did not play any role in the government. they were beginning to oppose passively this state of affairs.

These difficulties broke the unity among the oligarchical leadership, which was now split into two factions; Peisander, Antiphon, Phrynichus, Onomacles, Alexicles, Aristarchus and others insisted on trying to conclude a peace treaty with Sparta at any cost.

«Alarmed at the state of things at Athens as at Samos, they now sent off in haste Antiphon and Phrynichus and ten others with instructions to make peace with Lacedaemon upon any terms, no matter what, that should be tolerable.»⁽¹⁾

Theramenes' oligarchical faction instituted the government of the five thousand. Essentially, this was Alcibiades' proposal Alcibiades himself had not abandoned his old dream to be restored and become the ruler of Athens. Oligarchy or democracy were indifferent to him when

1. Thucydides : 8. p. 90.

his ambitions were at stake. Moving freely between Asia Minor and Samos, he tried on the one hand to gain the support of Tissaphernes for Athens and on the other to persuade the Athenian oligarchs, firstly to continue the war and secondly, that he himself was the only person capable to bring the Persians over to their side. Upon recommending to the Athenians at Samos not to sail against their countrymen, as they intended, but to proceed to Ionia and the Hellespont, as otherwise they would certainly pass into the hands of the enemy, he dismissed the Athenian envoys of the four hundred «who were there at that time with an answer from himself, to the effect that he did not object to the government of the five thousand, but insisted that the four hundred should be deposed and the Council of the five hundred reinstated into power.»⁽¹⁾

Theramenes followed Alcibiades' advice. After a bitter inner-party struggle, the four hundred were deposed and the government of the five thousand was established «of which body all who furnished a suit of armour were to be members, decreeing also that none should receive pay for the discharge of any office, or if he did, he should be held accursed.»⁽²⁾ Alcibiades was then recalled by the Assembly.

The government of the five thousand did not last long. The causes of its failure were the same as those of the four hundred. Sparta insisted upon the surrender of its traditional enemy. Under these conditions Theramenes accompanied by nine moderate oligarchs, was compelled to go to Sparta to conclude a peace treaty. The Spartans insisted on the dismantling of Piraeus as well as the destruction of the long walls, the relinquishment of their cities (including Lemnos, Imbros and Syros) the return of their exiles, and the surrender of all their triremes beyond a number to be determined by Lysander on the spot, this number was subsequently fixed by Lysander at twelve. The moderate oligarchs hesitated to accept these proposals. Eventually, however, Theramenes seeing that any other move was doomed to failure, urged the people to accept the proposals. The Spartan conqueror soon intervened in the political life of Athens, on the pretext that the imperial city failed to demolish its walls within the specified time, that it had broken the peace terms and that therefore a new government should fulfill the task. With the Spartan assistance, in the summer of 404 the rule of the thirty tyrants was established. Lysander planned that the thirty tyrants become but Sparta's mere instrument.

1. Thucydides : 8. p. 86.

2. Thucydides : 8. p. 97.

The oligarchs, supported by a Spartan army, were in control of the city for about eight months. During this time they accomplished nothing worth mentioning in the economic and the political field. They are remembered mostly for their terrorism. Fifteen thousand Athenian democratic citizens were put to death and Athenian citizenship was restricted to only three thousand.

Meanwhile, Thrasybulos, the Athenian general, who had distinguished himself in the battle of Arginouseae (407), was banished by the thirty. He went to Thebes, where he met other democratic exiles and formed an army; with that force he attacked and occupied the Attican citadel of Phyle, then Piraeus and Mounichis and finally entered Athens, where he restored democracy. The relative easiness with which Thrasybulos overthrew «the thirty» proves their unpopularity and, indirectly, Sparta's inability to substitute Athens in its functions as an empire.

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