Lecture 17  Spartan Hegemony and the Persian Hydra

The Aftermath of the Peloponnesian War

- **General** – Greece in a state of economic and demographic devastation; proliferation of mercenaries.
- **Athens** - starved into submission:
  - Demolish the Long Walls
  - Surrender all ships except 12
  - Accept the lead of Sparta
  - An oligarchic government by 30 men is put in place by Lysander
  - Democracy is abolished
    - Rule of the Thirty Tyrants
- **Ionian Greeks** – Under Persian control.
- **Sparta** – hegemon of Greece;
  - imposes harmosts & garrisons on defeated cities
  - allied to the Persians.

4th century Greece

**Period of continuous warfare**

- The Corinthian War (394-386 BCE).
- Thebes and Sparta (377-362 BCE).
- The Social War (357-355 BCE).
- The hegemony of Macedon.
Spartan general Lysander

- Probably of noble descent but impoverished
- Lover of prince Agesilaos
- Ambitious and Un-Spartan in some ways:
  - understood way to defeat Athens was to create a navy
  - He created a bond with the Persian prince Cyrus, son of king Darius II
    - funded the Spartan fleet
- Power-hungry
  - not enough to stage open revolt against the Spartan constitution

Agesilaos II (401-360)

- A towering figure in Spartan history
- Eurypontid king when Sparta ruled Greek world
  - Half-brother of king Agis II
- Very popular among the men in the army, very influential
  - He had undergone the *agoge* despite his lame leg
  - hated Thebes
- influenced many wrong decisions
  - largely responsible for the decline of Spartan power
  - impoverish the Spartan treasury
- He died in Egypt, aged 84 as a mercenary

The Persians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daruis II (423-405 BCE)</th>
<th>Prince Cyrus</th>
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<tr>
<td>changed Persian policy towards Greek affairs</td>
<td>2nd son of Darius II</td>
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<td>fund the weaker side and keep them fighting</td>
<td>funded Lysander to defeat Athens</td>
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<td>served Persian interests</td>
<td>revolted against his brother Artaxerxes</td>
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<td>Artaxerxes II (404-359 BCE)</td>
<td>with help from Sparta and other Greek mercenaries</td>
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<td>- successfully continued this policy</td>
<td>wins Battle of Cunaxa (401)</td>
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<td>- oldest son of Daruis II</td>
<td>- but is killed</td>
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Xenophon, *Anabasis*

Xenophon (430–354 BCE)
- was an Athenian
- friend and admirer of Socrates
- exiled from Athens for having fought with Spartans
- *Anabasis* relates how 10,000 Greeks soldier force fought their way back from Babylon to the Black Sea.
  - He wrote several other works including didactic manuals on farming and horsemanship

Spartan now Leader of the Greeks

Sparta inherited the Athenian Empire
- very quickly proved to be highly unsuitable for imperial leadership
  - Instead of the promised freedom:
    - Sparta established oligarchic regimes (boards of 10: decarchies).
    - Greek cities were tightly controlled by Spartan garrisons (harmosts)
  - Instead of the rule of law under the Athenian empire:
    - rule of ill-suited Spartan officials, excessively prone to bribery
  - Instead of fair commerce and free trade:
    - 1000 talents from excessive taxation were sent to Sparta only in the first year
  - Soon Athenian rule seen with nostalgia
    - resentment arose against Sparta
  - Former allies like Thebes and Corinth created an alliance with Athens
Sparta Invades Persia

After the return of the 10,000 against Persia Spring 396 BCE Agesilaos invades Asia Minor
- small force
- recruits Ionian Greeks
- defeats Satrap of Sardis
- Persian diplomacy seized the initiative before he could inflict serious damage to the empire.
  - funds Athens and her allies to start war on Sparta.

Corinthian war (395-387)
- indecisive conflict which damaged the Greek world as a whole.

Corinthian War (395-387)

- Sparta
- Spartan fleet decisively defeated by a Persian fleet early in the war
- Coalition of four states:
  - Thebes
  - Athens
  - Corinth
  - Argos
- initially backed by Persia

War ends with “King’s Peace” (387 BCE)

Thebes Ascends

- Coalition of four states:
  - Thebes
  - Athens
  - Corinth
  - Argos
- initially backed by Persia

War ends with “King’s Peace” (387 BCE)
Theban Band

- Column 50 man deep (8-12 usual)
- Troop of picked soldiers, numbering 150 age-structured pairs
- “never separated or scattered them, but would stand [them with himself in] the brunt of battle, using them as one body.” - Plutarch
- “Crack” force of Greek soldiery, and the forty years of their known existence (378–338 BC) marked the pre-eminence of Thebes as a military and political power in late-classical Greece.
- Battle of Leuctra (378): Thebes defeats Sparta

Epimondas: Echelon formation

Battle of Leuctra (378)
The King’s Peace (386 BCE)

“King Artaxerxes thinks it right for the poleis in Asia to be his and of the islands Klazomenai and Cyprus, but for the other poleis small and large to be autonomous, except for Lemnos and Imbros and Skyros, these to belong to the Athenians as of old. Whoever does not accept these peace terms, I will make war on him by land and sea, providing ships and money, alongside whoever is willing to accept them.”

– Xenophon, Hellenika V. 1.31

The Consequences of the King’s Peace

• Persia acting as guarantor of peace in Greece; really playing off poleis against each other; Persia as hegemon (?)
• Sparta the principal beneficiary; Sparta’s policy = to maintain hegemony by preventing leagues and confederacies.

386-5 BCE - Sparta forces Mantinea to pull down its walls; partitioned into five; Sparta forces the dissolution of the Boeotian League (Thebes)
382 BCE - Sparta marches north through Boeotia to break up the Chalcidian League; Spartans occupy the Kadmeia (i.e. Acropolis of Thebes); installs a pro-Spartan government; Theban nobles tried by Spartans for medism; democratic elements flee to Athens
381-379 BCE - Spartans (with Macedonian allies) continue campaigns against the Chalcidian League (Olynthus); eventually break up the confederacy and give the coastal cities to Macedon
379/8 BCE – Spartan garrison ejected from Kadmeia with Athenian assistance (volunteers); democracy restored; war with Sparta
378 BCE – The Second Athenian Confederacy (to 355 BCE)

Second Athenian Federation
A New Athenian Hegemony

League members comprised primarily of former members of the Delian League.
• No compulsory tribute (phoros);
• voluntary contributions (syntaxeis).
• Autonomy of member states; can assume any form of government desired.
• Two decision making bodies of equal weight:
  – 1. The Athenian Ekklesia
  – 2. Assembly of allies (Synedrion).

Another Round of Wars

• Theban ejection of Spartan governors (378 BCE) and revival of Athenian hegemony (377 BCE) provoked Sparta to war.
378-371 BCE – General stalemate; a generally defensive war; repeated (unsuccessful) Spartan invasions into Boeotia; Thebans drive out Spartan garrisons and pro-Spartan elements from Boeotian cities; Athenians pursue naval operations against Spartan interests.
376 BCE – Athenians (Chabrias) defeat the Spartan fleet at b. of Naes (49 of 60 ships destroyed); 17 new cities added to the Athenian Confederacy; additional members gained in Western Greece (i.e. Corcyra and Acarnania).
374-373 BCE – Athens suffering despite successes; short of funds; refused by Thebes; failed attempt at peace with Sparta; Sparta (unsuccessfully) besieges Corcyra; Athenian help requested but is late in coming (Athens running out of money).
373-372 BCE – Spartans summon help from Syracuse (60 ships sent); Athenians (Iphicrates) ambush the Syracusan fleet while beached; come away with 60 talents; Earthquakes in Sparta.
371 BCE – Athens and Sparta exhausted; in the mood for peace
  – Peace of Callias between Athens and Sparta (Thebes refused to sign).

Consequences of Sparta’s Defeat

After 362 BCE members of Athenian confederacy saw no need for the alliance
• Athens refused to give up the alliance
• Chios, Byzantium, Cos, and Rhodes overthrow their democracies

The Social War (357-355 BCE).
The Social War (357-355 BCE)

- Athenian fleet commanded by Chares and Chabrias.

357 BCE – Chabrias sent against Chios; Chares attacked Byzantium.

356 BCE – Allies ravage Imbros and Lemnos; Macedon takes advantage of Athenian preoccupation and seizes Amphipolis.

355 BCE – Chares’ mercenary troops revolt over arrears in pay; Athens seeks funds from Persia but is rejected; threatened into abandoning operations against their allies.

Conditions in Greece Post 362 BCE

Theban hegemony (377-362 BCE) similar to Athenian and Spartan hegemony

- function of Athenian weakness rather than Theban strength.

- Greece divided as ever.
- Persia as strong as ever.
- Macedon the rising power.

- Economic exhaustion.
- Demographic problems (esp. in Sparta).
- Militarism an attractive way of life.

- Formation of federations of poleis prefigures Hellenistic developments.