

THE OLIGARCHIC REVOLUTION AT RHODES, 391–89 B.C.

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IN the late fifth and early fourth centuries, Rhodes was the scene of a long and sometimes fierce conflict between oligarchs and democrats. The struggle culminated in a series of revolutions and μεταβολαὶ πολιτειῶν in which foreign powers were often involved. In this paper I will isolate and examine one stage of the conflict, which deserves more attention than it has yet received in the literature: the *stasis* of 391–89.

I. BACKGROUND AND CAUSES

In 411 the oligarchic and philo-Laonian faction at Rhodes, most probably under the leadership of the aristocratic family of the Diagoreans, contacted the Spartans secretly and procured their intervention in Rhodes. The three cities of the island, Ialysus, Lindus, and Camirus, which had hitherto been democracies, defected from the Athenian confederacy, and the Rhodians were ruled by the oligarchy of the Diagoreans until 395.¹ The execution or exile of political opponents is not mentioned by the sources with reference to either the oligarchic revolution of 411 or the ensuing period of oligarchic rule, during which only one episode of active opposition is known: an abortive attempt at a counterrevolution after the Spartan forces had left the island in 411.² The Diagorean oligarchy can be credited with the synoecism of the three ancient cities into one state, having its political center in the newly founded city of Rhodes. This development, for which the foundations had been laid by the establishment of a common assembly of the Rhodians immediately after the arrival of the Spartan forces, was finally accomplished in 408/7.³

1. Thuc. 8. 44. 1–3; see A. Andrewes (A. W. Gomme and K. J. Dover), *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. 5 (Oxford, 1981), pp. 91–92 (ad loc.). On the Diagoreans and their philo-Laonian inclinations, especially with respect to Diagoras, his son Dorieus, and his grandson, Pisirodus, see Thuc. 8. 35. 1; Xen. *Hell.* 1. 5. 19; Diod. 13. 38. 5, 45. 1; and esp. Paus. 6. 7. 1–4. For the role of the Diagoreans in the revolution of 411, see H. van Gelder, *Geschichte der alten Rhodier* (Haag, 1900), pp. 77–81, which is still the basic work on the subject; cf. Ed. Meyer, *Theopomps Hellenika* (Halle, 1909), p. 73; R. M. Berthold, "Fourth-Century Rhodes," *Historia* 29 (1980): 33. For the end of the Diagoreans' rule, see below and n. 9.

2. Thuc. 8. 44. 4, with Andrewes, *HCT* 5: 92–93 (ad loc.) and 147–48 for discussion; Diod. 13. 38. 5, 45. 1.

3. Common assembly: Thuc. 8. 44. 2 with Andrewes, *HCT* 5: 92 (ad loc.). For the transitional period between the oligarchic revolution of 411 and the synoecism, see also Dittenberg. *SIG*³ 110; cf. F. Hiller von Gaertringen, s.v. "Rhodos," *RE Suppl.* 5 (1928): 763; Berthold, "Fourth-Century Rhodes," p. 34 and

During most of the period of the Diagorean oligarchy, Rhodes was a loyal and useful ally of Sparta and contributed to her final victory in the Peloponnesian War.⁴ The famous ΣΥΝ coins, bearing on the obverse the infant Heracles strangling snakes—which have so far come from Byzantium, Cyzicus, Lampsacus, Ephesus, Samos, Iasus, Cnidus, and Rhodes—are most plausibly interpreted as belonging to the period just after Sparta's decisive victory at Aegospotami.⁵ But the methods and arrogance of Sparta's imperialism in the years following this victory gradually alienated many of her former allies. In 396 Rhodes abandoned the Spartan alliance and collaborated with Conon.⁶ The defection of Rhodes was a serious blow for Sparta, the most serious since the end of the Peloponnesian War: it was not only fatal to her efforts to win the war against Persia, but also a crucial development leading to the outbreak of the Corinthian War.⁷

Despite their former philo-Laonian tendencies, the Diagoreans must have been responsible for this change of orientation in Rhodes' foreign policy. Their responsibility is attested not only by the execution of Dorieus, a prominent member of their family, at the hands of the Spartans (despite his former services to their cause),⁸ but also, and mainly, by their survival in power after the defection from Sparta. Only in the summer of 395 were they overthrown by a conspiracy of democratic politicians under the leadership of Dorimachus. This faction enjoyed the support of Conon's troops, even if he preferred—because of his former connections with the oligarchs—to save appearances and dissociate himself personally from the murder of the Diagoreans by leaving the island shortly before the *coup d'état*. He returned, however, immediately after the Diagoreans and eleven of their supporters had been massacred, and was present in Rhodes when the conspirators summoned an assembly to set up a democracy and proclaim the exile of the most dangerous among their surviving enemies.⁹

n. 12; Andrewes, *HCT* 5: 92. For the synoecism, see Diod. 13. 75. 1; Strab. 14. 2. 9–10 (654); Ael. Arist. 43. 816 (Dindorf); Conon, 47 ap. Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 186 (3. 141a Henry). Cf. H. Francotte, *La polis grecque* (Paderborn, 1907), pp. 195–203; Hiller, "Rhodos," coll. 763–65; M. Rostovtzeff, "Rhodes, Delos, and Hellenistic Commerce," *CAH* 8: 621.

4. See, e.g., Xen. *Hell.* 1. 1. 2–8, 5. 1. 6. 3, 2. 1. 15; Diod. 13. 45–46, 69. 5. 70. 1–2. Cf. Xen. *Hell.* 2. 1. 17 and Paus. 10. 9. 9 for Rhodian assistance to Lysander during the campaign of Aegospotami.

5. See S. Karwiese, "Lysander as Herakliskos Drakonopnigon," *NC* n.s. 20 (1980): 1–27, with evidence and copious bibliography.

6. Androt. ap. Paus. 6. 7. 6 (= *FGrH* 324 F 46); Diod. 14. 79. 6; see I. A. F. Bruce, "The Democratic Revolution at Rhodes," *CQ* 11 (1961): 166–67, who wrongly believes that the Diagoreans came to power only after the revolt from Sparta; cf. id., *An Historical Commentary on the "Hellenica Oxyrhynchia"* (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 74, 98. However, see above, n. 1.

7. This was rightly stressed by S. Perlman, "The Causes and the Outbreak of the Corinthian War," *CQ* 14 (1964): 79–81; C. D. Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories: Politics and Diplomacy in the Corinthian War* (Ithaca, 1979), pp. 191–92. For the mission of Timocrates, the Rhodian agent sent by the Persians to bribe influential politicians in several Greek cities in order to provoke a war against Sparta, see Xen. *Hell.* 3. 5. 1; *Hell. Oxy.* 2. 2. 13. 1; Plut. *Artax.* 20, *Mor.* 211C; Paus. 3. 9. 8; cf. Meyer, *Theopomps Hellenika*, pp. viii, 44, 84–85; Bruce, *Hist. Comm.* "Hell. Oxy.," pp. 58–60, 117; Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories*, pp. 179–80, 182–83, 188–92.

8. Androt. ap. Paus. 6. 7. 6 (= *FGrH* 324 F 46). On Dorieus, see also above, n. 1.

9. The single source for this revolution is chap. 10 of *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*. For a detailed treatment, see B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, *POxy.* 5, pp. 222–23; Bruce, "Democratic Revolution," pp. 167–70;

Both this revolution and that of 411 were effected with the assistance of foreign forces, and both of them started as conspiracies. Unlike the revolution of 411, however, this revolution can certainly be said to have achieved its aims through violent methods—bloodshed (under the guise of tyrannicide)¹⁰ and political banishment.

For a few years, the newly founded democracy in Rhodes was protected from the danger of Spartan intervention by several factors: the hostility of Persia toward Sparta; the outbreak of the Corinthian War in Greece; Agesilaus' return from Asia Minor; and especially (in 394) the crushing defeat inflicted on the Spartan fleet off Cnidus by a Persian fleet under Conon and Pharnabazus, a defeat which was tantamount to the destruction of Sparta's maritime power for the time being.¹¹ Moreover, the members of the oligarchic faction in Rhodes must have temporarily severed contacts with Sparta, since they were compromised as a result of their collaboration with Conon in the recent past.

As to the character of the democratic regime dominant in the period 395–91—a matter highly relevant to the analysis of its downfall—our sole evidence consists of a few remarks in Aristotle's discussion of revolutions in the fifth book of the *Politics*.¹² These remarks can most plausibly be taken to refer to the oligarchic revolution of 391, although they have been differently interpreted in the past.

It has been suggested that Aristotle's comments on the turmoil at Rhodes refer to an oligarchic revolution in 397,¹³ but in fact nothing is known of such a revolution. The view relating Aristotle's statements to the foundation of an oligarchy in the mid-fourth century (ca. 355), after Rhodes' defection from the Second Athenian Confederacy,¹⁴ is hardly acceptable, since that μεταβολή πολιτείας was effected through the initiative of Mausolus,¹⁵ whereas Aristotle clearly refers to a revolution carried

Hist. Comm. "Hell. Oxy.," pp. 97–98; Berthold, "Fourth-Century Rhodes," pp. 36–37; E. Ruschenbusch, "Stasis und politischer Umsturz in Rhodos," *Hermes* 110 (1982): 495–98. For the text, cf. V. Bartoletti, *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* (Leipzig, 1959), pp. 21–22, whose reading differs slightly from that of Grenfell and Hunt. It is worth stressing that the Oxyrhynchus historian identifies the regime overthrown by the revolution as the Diageorean oligarchy (10. 1–2). For the date of the revolution (summer 395), see *Hell. Oxy.* 11. 1; cf. Bruce, pp. 167–70. On the basis of *Hell. Oxy.* 10. 2, where mention is made of the summoning of the assembly by the conspirators, P. M. Fraser, "Notes on Two Rhodian Institutions," *BSA* 67 (1972): 122, ascribes to this revolution the foundation of a public assembly; but see above, n. 3.

10. The reference of Dorimachus (*Hell. Oxy.* 10. 2) to the oligarchs as "tyrants" can be interpreted as a political slogan. The historian puts the words directly into the mouth of Dorimachus (the only instance of direct speech in the surviving fragments of the work), perhaps intending to dissociate himself from the viewpoint of the speaker. The Diageorean oligarchy appears to have been moderate: cf. Van Gelder, *Geschichte*, p. 83.

11. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 2. 1–8, 3. 10–14; Diod. 14. 83. 5–7; Nep. *Con.* 4. 2–5; Polyae. 1. 48. 5; cf. *Hell. Oxy.* 14. 1; Andoc. *Pax* 22; Isoc. *Paneg.* 142–43, 154, *Evag.* 56; see Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories*, pp. 228–30, with further references to the literature.

12. 1302b21–25, 27–28, 32–33; 1304b20–25, 27–31.

13. Hiller, "Rhodos," col. 772, followed by G. T. Griffith, s.v. "Rhodes," *OCD*², p. 923; but see A. Momigliano, "Note sulla storia di Rodi," *RFIC* 14 (1936): 53.

14. See A. Schaefer, *Demosthenes und seine Zeit*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1856), p. 427 and n. 4; cf. Van Gelder, *Geschichte*, pp. 89–90; Berthold, "Fourth-Century Rhodes," p. 39, n. 30 and p. 43, n. 46.

15. See Dem. 15. 3, 14, 19; cf. Momigliano, "Note," pp. 53–54; Fraser, "Notes," p. 123, n. 68.

out by domestic forces and stemming from internal conflicts.¹⁶ It is true that the final success of the oligarchic revolution discussed in this paper was secured through Spartan assistance, but it will be shown that at least the outbreak and the initial success were certainly not due to the intervention of a foreign power.¹⁷

Aristotle brings into high relief the wanton license (ἡ ἀσέλγεια) of the demagogues as a cause of revolution in democracies: they compel the owners of property (τοὺς τὰς οὐσίας ἔχοντας) to unite, either by informing against individuals among them (ἰδίᾳ συκοφαντοῦντες) or by setting the people against them as a class (κοινῇ τὸ πλῆθος ἐπάγοντες).¹⁸ To elucidate this view, Aristotle cites several examples, among which one of the most prominent is the *stasis* in Rhodes: "And in Rhodes the demagogues used to provide pay for public service and hinder the payment of the sums owed to the trierarchs; and these, in consequence of the lawsuits that were being brought against them, were compelled to join forces and overthrow the democracy."¹⁹ The system of *misthophoria* introduced by the demagogues was probably devised to pay the citizens for their attendance at the assembly and courts of justice.²⁰ This may explain the urgent need of money, which the demagogues procured by withholding the sums that the state legally owed to the trierarchs.

Regrettably, the details concerning the mechanism of the trierarchy at Rhodes are obscure.²¹ Aristotle's text, however, allows us to assume that the trierarchs, who were among the wealthy citizens, were not responsible

16. W. L. Newman, *The "Politics" of Aristotle*, vol. 4 (Oxford, 1902), pp. 299–300, points out that Aristotle uses the term ἐπανάστασις (1302b33), which clearly refers to a domestic political revolution and which is used also at Diod. 14. 97. 1 concerning the revolution of 391.

17. The oligarchic revolution of 411 has never been considered the subject of Aristotle's references, and rightly so, not only because it was from the very beginning effected through Spartan intervention, but also because Rhodes was not yet one state when that revolution occurred. Aristotle's remarks on the political situation prior to the revolution obviously refer, as we shall see below, to the character and methods of a democratic regime dominant in Rhodes as a state, not in one of the three cities which had been governed by democracies until the revolution of 411 and which were later united politically by the synoecism of 408/7.

18. *Pol.* 1304b20–24; cf. *Pl. Rep.* 565A–B, whose view is adopted by Aristotle in the passage under discussion here.

19. *Pol.* 1304b27–30.

20. See Newman, "*Politics*," 4: 336 (ad loc.); E. Barker, *The "Politics" of Aristotle* (Oxford, 1946), p. 215 (ad loc.); cf. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, "Political Pay outside Athens," *CQ* 25 (1975): 48, 50–52. The *misthos ekklesiastikos* had recently been introduced in Athens through the political initiative of Agyrrius, who consequently strengthened his influence and popularity. See *Arist. Ath. Pol.* 41. 3 with P. J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian "Athenaion Politeia"* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 492–93 (ad loc.); cf. *Ar. Eccl.* 183–88, 205–7, 289–93, 302–10, 392; for the date of its production (393 or 392), see R. G. Ussher, *Aristophanes: "Ecclesiazusae"* (Oxford, 1973), pp. xxi–xxv, with detailed discussion and bibliography.

21. In Strabo's description of Rhodes (14. 2. 5 [653]) mention is made of certain liturgies, including the liturgy for naval purposes, i.e., the trierarchy; but no further details are reported. Newman, "*Politics*," 4: 336–37, believes that a lacuna in Strabo's text obscures the precise nature of the trierarchy at Rhodes. It is worth noting that in the above passage Strabo does not specify a definite historical period, but refers to the liturgies existing at Rhodes under a *non-democratic* regime (οὐ δημοκρατούμενοι) which nevertheless is reported to have been concerned for the people in general and for the multitude of the poor in particular (ibid. 652–53). Any further details provided by the text would therefore have been of only dubious relevance to the situation at Rhodes in 395–91. For the Rhodian system of liturgies in general, see A. Fuks, "The Sharing of Property by the Rich with the Poor in Greek Theory and Practice," *SCIS* (1979/80): 60–63.

for defraying all the expenses connected with the work done under their instructions (e.g., the building and fitting of the triremes), but were entitled to receive a great part of the money from the state treasury. Having failed to receive this money, they had not paid the sums due to the shipbuilders or to the shipfitters, and were consequently prosecuted by their creditors. Since the money had been withheld by the demagogues for the provision of *misthophoria*, the trials before popular courts would have been highly dangerous to the trierarchs.²²

These lawsuits are also mentioned in another passage of the *Politics* with respect to the *stasis* in Rhodes, in order to support the view that fear is a motive of sedition among citizens who are in danger of suffering a wrong and are therefore anxious to prevent it.²³ Aristotle states that "at Rhodes the notables [οἱ γνώριμοι] conspired against the people [ἐπὶ τὸν δῆμον] because of the lawsuits that were being brought against them."²⁴ The discussion immediately following this passage, however, suggests that the causes of the opposition to the democracy in Rhodes were more complex: the contempt felt by the well-to-do (οἱ εὐποροὶ) in certain democracies, including that of Rhodes, for the disorder and anarchy of the state is considered another important source of revolution.²⁵

The Rhodian democracy presented by Aristotle in these passages seems to have been an extreme form of democracy, in which the demagogues tried to win popularity by using unscrupulous methods at the expense of the rich. The question arises, then, why the oligarchs chose to act when they did, probably in the early spring of 391.²⁶ It may well be that, as a result of the demagogues' methods, the aristocracy's situation was becoming insupportable, even desperate. For a proper answer to this question, however, it is also necessary to turn our attention to an external development which the oligarchs could have regarded as providing the opportunity for their action.

Faced with the difficulty of fighting both the coalition of the Greek *poleis* and Persia, the Spartans in 392 came to the conclusion that a new *entente* with Persia was necessary in order to regain their supremacy in Greece. Accordingly, they were once more ready to recognize the Persian

22. Cf. Newman, "Politics," 4: 336–37. On the Rhodian heliastic system, see Fraser, "Notes," pp. 119–24. For the manipulation of the *dikasteria* under radical democracies by demagogues in close cooperation with the masses, see Pl. *Rep.* 556B–C, with J. Adam, *The "Republic" of Plato*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1902), pp. 253–54 (ad loc.). One of the most extreme examples is provided by the *skyrtalismos* at Argos, on which see A. Fuks, "Patterns and Types of Social-Economic Revolution in Greece," *Anc Soc* 5 (1974): 71–72 and n. 24, with evidence.

23. *Pol.* 1302b21–23.

24. *Ibid.* 23–25.

25. *Ibid.* 27–33; cf. Pl. *Rep.* 557B–558C; 562C–564A; Isoc. *Areop.* 20. The terms applied by Aristotle to the financial aristocracy of Rhodes (οἱ εὐποροὶ, οἱ γνώριμοι, etc.) stress its wealth and social distinction; cf. the expressions *δυνατώτατοι ἄνδρες* at Thuc. 8. 44. 1 (with Andrewes, *HCT* 5: 91 [ad loc.]) and *οἱ πλουσιώτεροι* at Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 20 (see below, section II). See also below, n. 45.

26. For the date, see Diod. 14. 97. 1, who opens his account of the revolution immediately after having mentioned the names of the eponymous magistrates of 391–90 in Athens and Rome: Diodorus usually begins the year in early spring (sometimes in mid-winter); cf. G. E. Underhill, *A Commentary with Introduction and Appendix on the "Hellenica" of Xenophon* (Oxford, 1900), p. liv; see also Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 20, with Underhill, p. 159 (ad loc.); cf. Van Gelder, *Geschichte*, p. 88, and below, nn. 30 and 53.

claim to rule over the Greek cities of Asia Minor and sent Antalcidas to Sardis to negotiate the peace terms with Tiribazus, Artaxerxes' satrap. Athens and her allies, being informed of Sparta's plan, decided they would also send their envoys to Sardis.²⁷

The negotiations of 392 for a general peace were not fruitful. Tiribazus, however, strongly sympathized with the Spartans and their proposals and was convinced by their argument that Conon had been acting against Persian interests by fortifying Athens and by trying to rebuild her thalassocracy. Accordingly, he decided to imprison Conon, who was at the head of the Athenian embassy to Sardis. Since, however, he thought that it would not be safe for him, as Artaxerxes' satrap, openly to take the side of the Spartans without the sovereign's approval, he decided to finance them secretly.²⁸

It can safely be assumed that the Rhodian oligarchs were encouraged by Tiribazus' hostility toward Athens, the democrats' protectress, and by the imprisonment of their enemy, Conon, who had been involved in the revolution of 395. They could not have known at the time that Artaxerxes was to repudiate Tiribazus' policy on hearing his report at Susa and that Strouthas was to replace him as satrap with instructions to renew the anti-Spartan and pro-Athenian policy.²⁹

All this, however, need not imply that the revolution broke out before the arrival of Strouthas in his satrapy.³⁰ It is reasonable to assume that the oligarchs needed a certain period of time to assess the significance of the developments noted above, and an even longer period of time to plan their action. Their *coup* was successful, and this could hardly have been possible without adequate preparation, especially in view of the simple fact that they were the *oligoi*. It may well be that the revolution broke out despite the policy pursued by Strouthas and his confrontation with the Spartans; even if the political situation had changed since the conference of Sardis, it would have been difficult and dangerous at this stage for the oligarchs to abandon their plans.³¹

27. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 12–14.

28. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 15–16; Isoc. *Paneg.* 154; Diod. 14. 85. 2–4; Nep. *Con.* 5. 2–4; cf. Pl. *Menex.* 245B–C; for detailed discussion and bibliography, see T. T. B. Ryder, *Koine Eirene: General Peace and Local Independence in Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 27–31, and Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories*, pp. 243–49, whose dating of the negotiations at Sardis to the spring of 392 is convincing only as a *terminus post quem*; cf. R. Seager, "Thrasybulus, Conon, and Athenian Imperialism, 396–386 B.C.," *JHS* 87 (1967): 104, who assumes that the negotiations took place in the spring or summer of 392; see also Underhill, *Commentary*, p. liii (summer 392). A precise dating seems impossible. A *terminus ante quem* is provided by the abortive peace conference at Sparta in the winter of 392/91, for which see Philoch. *FGH* 328 F 149; Andoc. *Pax*, passim; cf. Ryder, *Koine Eirene*, pp. 31–33 and app. 12, pp. 165–69; Seager, "Thrasybulus," p. 105 and n. 94; D. M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia*, Cincinnati Classical Studies, no. 1 (Leyden, 1977), pp. 145–46 and n. 68.

29. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 17–19; cf. Diod. 14. 99. 1.

30. Neither the time of Strouthas' arrival on the coast of Asia Minor nor the length of the interval between his arrival and the departure of his predecessor is made clear by the sources. Tiribazus' departure for Susa appears to have occurred in the autumn of 392; see Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 16. In view of the time that the satraps' journeys would have consumed (approximately six months), it is probable that Strouthas arrived at the coast in the spring of 391. See Underhill, *Commentary*, pp. liii and lxxxviii.

31. Cf. (*mutatis mutandis*) the situation of the Athenian oligarchs on the eve of their revolution in 411, when they decided to go on with their plans even after the hope of an alliance with Persia had been lost; see Thuc. 8. 63. 4, with Andrewes, *HCT* 5: 156 (ad loc.).

II. DYNAMICS AND COURSE OF EVENTS

The main sources are Xenophon *Hellenica* 4. 8. 20-25, 5. 1. 3-6, and Diodorus 14. 97, 14. 99. 4-5 (most probably based on Ephorus).³² According to the current view, there is a flagrant and irreconcilable contradiction between the accounts of Xenophon and Diodorus.³³ A proper examination of the question requires a preliminary exposition of the two narratives.

Xenophon relates that the Rhodians who had been banished by the *demos* appealed to Sparta for assistance, explaining that "it would not be expedient to allow the Athenians to subdue Rhodes and secure so great a power."³⁴ The Spartans decided to interfere, "being aware that if the *demos* gained the mastery all Rhodes would be in the hands of the Athenians, while if the wealthier classes (οἱ πλουσιώτεροι) gained the mastery, it would be their own."³⁵ Accordingly they sent Ecdicus, who had just been appointed nauarch, to Rhodes in command of eight ships (late summer 391). Another Spartan officer, Diphridas, sailed with this flotilla to assume command of the Spartan forces in Asia Minor and make war upon Strouthas, who after his arrival as satrap had defeated and killed Thibron, the former commander.³⁶ On his arrival at Cnidus, Ecdicus was informed that "the *demos* in Rhodes was in possession of everything, prevailing both on land and at sea and having twice as many triremes as he had himself."³⁷ He therefore decided to remain where he was.

In view of this situation, Teleutias, Agesilaus' brother, was ordered to sail to Cnidus with a squadron of twelve ships and take over the command from Ecdicus.³⁸ On his way, Teleutias gathered seven additional

32. For Diodorus' reliance upon Ephorus in Books 11-15 of his history, see, e.g., E. Schwartz, s.n. "Diodoros," *RE* 5.1 (1903): 679; G. L. Barber, *The Historian Ephorus* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. vii-ix, 31-33, 125-26, 156; G. Schepens, "Historiographical Problems in Ephorus," in *Historiographia Antiqua: Commentationes Lovanienses in honorem W. Peremans* (Leuven, 1977), pp. 101-2.

33. See, e.g., Schaefer, *Demosthenes*, 1: 24 and n. 5; Underhill, *Commentary*, p. 160; Van Gelder, *Geschichte*, pp. 88-89 and n. 1 (who is, however, more cautious); Newman, "Politics," 4: 299-300; K. J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*², vol. 3.1 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1922), p. 88 and n. 1; Hiller, "Rhodos," col. 774; Momigliano, "Note," pp. 51-54; Fraser, "Notes," p. 122, n. 65; Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories*, p. 293 and n. 51; Berthold, "Fourth-Century Rhodes," pp. 39-40 and nn. 30, 34.

34. *Hell.* 4. 8. 20.

35. *Ibid.* 22-23. This is not mere speculation: as a close friend of King Agesilaus, Xenophon can be credited with an accurate knowledge of the motives underlying Sparta's foreign policy at this time.

36. *Ibid.* 17-19, 21. Ecdicus' expedition can be dated to late summer 391, since it set out shortly after his appointment as admiral: the newly elected nauarch usually entered upon his annual office about midsummer; see L. Pareti, *Ricerche sulla potenza marittima degli Spartani* (Turin, 1908), pp. 138-41 (= *Studi minori di storia antica*, vol. 2 [Rome, 1961], pp. 100-102); cf. Underhill, *Commentary*, p. 1; Gomme-Andrewes-Dover, *HCT*, vol. 4 (Oxford, 1970), p. 38.

37. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 22.

38. *Ibid.* 22-23. Teleutias had been in command of this squadron in the Gulf of Lechaion: cf. *ibid.* 11. For his career, see P. Poralla, *Prosopographie der Lakedaimonier bis auf die Zeit Alexanders des Grossen* (Ph.D. diss., Breslau, 1913), pp. 116-17, who believes that Teleutias replaced Ecdicus as nauarch; cf. Van Gelder, *Geschichte*, p. 88. However, since Teleutias is explicitly said to have been appointed nauarch later, in 387/86 (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 1. 13), and since Spartan law did not allow the same person to hold this office more than once (*Hell.* 2. 1. 7), it has rightly been inferred by certain scholars that Teleutias was assigned an extraordinary command in 391/90 (cf. his position in 392/91, *Hell.* 4. 4. 19); see, e.g., Pareti, *Ricerche sulla potenza marittima degli Spartani*; cf. Underhill, *Commentary*, pp. liv-lv, 345; H. Michell, *Sparta* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 278 and n. 5, who is inconclusive on this issue. The replacement of Ecdicus by Teleutias could not have been postponed until mid-summer 390, i.e., until

ships from Samos; later, while sailing to Rhodes with a fleet of twenty-seven ships, he captured ten triremes sent by Athens to Evagoras, the ruler of Cyprus, who at this time was at war with Persia.³⁹ After returning briefly to Cnidus to sell the booty, Teleutias finally arrived at Rhodes to assist the oligarchic and pro-Spartan faction.⁴⁰

The Athenians, realizing the dangers implicit in the Spartans' efforts to regain their maritime power, sent Thrasybulus with a fleet of forty ships. The initial object of this expedition had been to gain control over affairs in Rhodes. The situation on the island, however, caused Thrasybulus to postpone his intervention. According to Xenophon, he believed that it would be difficult to defeat the pro-Spartan oligarchs, since they held a fortress and enjoyed the assistance of Teleutias, while the democrats, on the other hand, were not in urgent need of assistance, "since they held the cities, were far more numerous, and had prevailed in battle."⁴¹ Thrasybulus therefore thought it more expedient to sail to the Hellespont. He was subsequently murdered at Aspendus (probably late spring 389) before accomplishing the original object of his mission, the recovery of Rhodes.⁴² Xenophon makes a point of mentioning that at the time of his death he was eager to arrive at Rhodes, but was also concerned to make his army as strong as possible before arriving there and to this end was collecting money from Aspendus.⁴³

Xenophon turns from affairs on Rhodes at Thrasybulus' decision to postpone his intervention. Only later does he report that Hierax, who had been appointed nauarch for 389/88, took over the command from Teleutias—at Aegina, where the latter had recently assisted the Aeginetans against Athens—and finally arrived at Rhodes, which he could now use as a safe base. Teleutias is reported to have returned home "under the happiest circumstances" (late summer or early autumn 389).⁴⁴

According to Diodorus, "the philo-Laonians [οἱ λακωνίζοντες] among the Rhodians rose up against the *demos* and banished the partisans of the

the normal conclusion of his *nauchia* (see above, n. 36), for it is hard to imagine that Ecdicus could have been left inactive at Cnidus for a whole year. Moreover, Xenophon's text (*Hell.* 4. 8. 23) makes it clear that Ecdicus was replaced by Teleutias as soon as the Spartans realized that his forces were inadequate for the mission with which he had been entrusted. All this strengthens the view that Teleutias was assigned an extraordinary command, especially since Ecdicus is nowhere reported to have been deposed, only to have been recalled.

39. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 24 rightly emphasizes the paradox: on the one hand the Athenians, who were allies of Artaxerxes, were on their way to assist the enemy of their ally; on the other hand the Spartans were preventing them from doing this despite the fact that they were at war with Persia; cf. Seager, "Thrasybulus," p. 109, who believes that this episode reveals Athens' readiness to provoke Artaxerxes; see also Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories*, pp. 293–94.

40. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 24.

41. *Ibid.* 25.

42. *Ibid.* 26–30. For a detailed discussion of Thrasybulus' expedition, see, e.g., Seager, "Thrasybulus," pp. 109–10 and nn. 127–135, who advances convincing arguments in favor of the view that the expedition belongs to 390/89, not 389/88, as is often supposed; cf., e.g., W. Schwahn, s.n. "Thrasybulos (3)" *RE* 6A (1937): 568–69; Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories*, pp. 294–96.

43. *Hell.* 4. 8. 30.

44. *Hell.* 5. 1. 2–6; Hierax appears to have been dispatched to take over the command from Teleutias shortly after assuming office as nauarch, which was the usual procedure at Sparta; cf. above, n. 37, and see Underhill, *Commentary*, p. lvi. This brought Teleutias' extraordinary command (see above, n. 38) to an end after more than eighteen months.

Athenians from the city.”⁴⁵ These gathered under arms, and in the civil strife that followed the pro-Spartans were victorious; they killed many of their opponents and banished by proclamation those who escaped during the fighting. Despite their victory, they immediately sent ambassadors to Lacedaemon to ask for assistance, “taking care lest any of the citizens revolt” (εὐλαβούμενοι μή τινες τῶν πολιτῶν νεωτερίσωσιν).⁴⁶ The Spartans decided to send seven triremes and three commanders—Eudocimus, Philodocus, and Diphilas.⁴⁷ These first sailed to Samos and won its allegiance from the Athenians; and on arriving at Rhodes, “they took charge of affairs there.” Since their situation had considerably improved, the Spartans now decided to gain control of the Aegean. They gathered additional ships from Samos, Cnidus, and Rhodes, and equipped twenty-seven triremes.⁴⁸

Later, after mentioning the death of Thrasybulus at Aspendus, Diodorus relates that the Athenian trierarchs in Thrasybulus’ fleet were greatly alarmed and immediately sailed to Rhodes. “Since the city was in revolt, and the exiles had seized a certain fortress, they [viz., the trierarchs] joined them in their war against those who held the city.”⁴⁹

Thus far, the detailed exposition of the two accounts. As I have already noted, many scholars believe that these accounts are incompatible: according to Xenophon (they argue), the democrats had gained the upper hand and banished the leaders of the oligarchs before the Spartans were asked by the latter to interfere, whereas it was the oligarchs, according to Diodorus, who had prevailed but nevertheless appealed to Sparta for help, fearing a counterrevolution. According to Xenophon, the Spartans gave military assistance to the oligarchs when their situation was far inferior to that of the democrats, since the latter held the cities, whereas the oligarchs held only a fortress. In Diodorus, it has been argued, the roles are reversed: the Athenians gave military assistance to the faction whose strategic situation was inferior—the oligarchs held the city, while the democrats had only an outpost. On the basis of these arguments it has been inferred that only one of these two accounts is accurate and that the other must be regarded as imprecise at best, or even be rejected altogether as unreliable.⁵⁰

45. Diod. 14. 97. 1. The term of λακωνίζοντες applied by Diodorus to the Rhodian oligarchs implies not only a pro-Spartan foreign policy, but also admiration for Sparta and imitation of Spartan manners (see, e.g., Pl. *Prt.* 342B–E; Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 18; Plut. *Alc.* 23). The idealization of Sparta had often been adopted by aristocratic and oligarchic circles, at Athens and elsewhere, as an ideological weapon against democracy: see F. Ollier, *Le mirage spartiate*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1933), pp. 164–74; E. N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity*, vol. 1 (Stockholm, 1965), pp. 153–59; on the philo-Laconian inclination of the Rhodian aristocracy, see above, n. 1.

46. Diod. 14. 97. 2.

47. *Ibid.* 3. Eudocimus can be identified with the admiral called Ecdicus in Xenophon’s account; cf. Poralla, *Prosop. der Lak.*, p. 47, s.n. “Ekdikos.” Diphilas can be identified with the Spartan officer who figures as Diphridas in Xenophon; cf. Poralla, p. 49, s.n. “Diphridas.”

48. Diod. 14. 97. 3–4.

49. Diod. 14. 99. 4–5.

50. Schaefer, Beloch, Hamilton, and Berthold accept Xenophon’s account; Van Gelder, Hiller, and Momigliano basically prefer Diodorus’, although they also make use of Xenophon for certain details of the revolution (see locc. cit. above in n. 33).

It seems to me that both accounts deserve to be criticized for grave omissions and for a lack of precision and clarity. A close examination can show, however, that on most points they are less contradictory than is usually supposed. Furthermore, a plausible and coherent reconstruction of the *stasis* in Rhodes between 391–89 seems to be possible only if we use both accounts, as well as additional sources mentioned in section I above.

I begin with Xenophon's account. There is no justification for regarding the appeal of the Rhodian exiles to Sparta for assistance as inconsistent with Diodorus' account of a victory won by the oligarchs without Sparta's aid. Xenophon does not imply that the democrats were in power when the exiles came to Sparta. In fact, he has not hitherto dealt with Rhodian internal affairs, and his statement on the Rhodian exiles' arrival at Sparta seems at first glance inexplicable. This statement can be understood, however, by taking into account the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, whose author tells us explicitly that after the success of the *coup* in 395 and the subsequent foundation of a democracy there were political exiles.⁵¹ It was most probably these exiles who, as Rhodian ambassadors, appealed to Sparta for help in 391.

Diodorus mentions an embassy to Sparta only after the outbreak and initial success of the oligarchic revolution in 391. He also explains that the oligarchs feared a counterrevolution (with, one should add, Athenian assistance). One can reasonably suggest that after their initial success the oligarchs chose to send as ambassadors to Sparta those very exiles who were the bitterest enemies of the previous regime, not only because they themselves had been its victims, but also because they had seen their friends murdered by the democrats with Conon's complicity. There could hardly have been ambassadors more suited to the task of convincing Sparta to intervene against the pro-Athenian democrats.

All this can throw light on Xenophon's account. The arguments of the Rhodian ambassadors at Sparta and the Spartans' motives for intervening in Rhodes, as presented by Xenophon, are not only compatible with Diodorus' account of an initial oligarchic victory but can hardly be understood without that account. For had the Rhodians still been within the Athenian sphere of influence and under the rule of the pro-Athenian democrats, what sense could there have been in the argument that it was not expedient to allow the Athenians to subdue Rhodes? This argument makes sense only if a new political situation had emerged on the island, making Athenian intervention appear imminent. The same is true of Xenophon's report of Sparta's decision to intervene. Speculation about what would happen if one side or the other should prevail in the internal conflict at Rhodes seems at least to indicate that the *stasis* had already broken out and that the democrats had lost control of affairs on the island.

51. *Hell. Oxy.* 10. 3: καὶ τῶν πολιτῶν τινὰς ὀλίγους φυγάδας ἐποίησαν. Cf. Bruce, *Hist. Comm. "Hell. Oxy."*, pp. 101–2 (ad loc.), who prefers to interpret ὀλίγους as "purely numerical, and not as a term with any political significance," but omits to explain his reasons for this interpretation.

Further, Xenophon's account of the initial extent of the Spartan assistance (confirmed by Diodorus)⁵² is hardly intelligible without Diodorus' account of an earlier victory of the oligarchs. In other words, it is difficult to understand why the Spartans sent so small a force under Ecdicus' command unless we assume that they were certain that the oligarchs had at that time gained the upper hand.

Finally, Xenophon himself relates that, on his arrival at Cnidus (late summer or early autumn 391), Ecdicus was surprised by the news of the political and strategic situation at Rhodes and therefore decided not to take action. Ecdicus' surprise indicates that the situation on his arrival contradicted his previous information, which must therefore have postulated the superiority of the oligarchs.

Instead of recounting the outbreak of the revolution in Rhodes and the results of the first clashes between the factions involved, Xenophon was interested in giving a detailed account of the confrontation between Strouthas and the Spartan forces under Thibron. This confrontation appears to have been roughly simultaneous with the first stage of the Rhodian revolution, which (according to Diodorus) ended with the victory of the oligarchs. The view that these events were synchronous is supported by Xenophon's abrupt transition from the front in Asia Minor (Thibron's defeat and death) to Rhodian internal affairs (the appeal of the Rhodian oligarchs to Sparta for assistance). It is hardly mere coincidence that according to Xenophon the Spartans decided to send Diphridas, who was to assume command of the remainder of Thibron's forces, together with Ecdicus, who was to assist the Rhodian oligarchs. In his hurry to go on with his laconizing narrative, Xenophon omits to mention the events at Rhodes which preceded the oligarchic embassy to Sparta; but his account actually presupposes the knowledge of those events. In view of the details provided by Diodorus regarding the first stage of the revolution, it is reasonable to assume that several months elapsed between the outbreak of the revolution and the decision of Sparta to intervene.⁵³ All this strengthens the view that the revolution broke out in the spring of 391, a date which roughly coincides with the probable time of Strouthas' arrival in his province and his subsequent confrontation with the Spartans.⁵⁴

The Spartan intervention at Rhodes is not mentioned in the passages of Aristotle's *Politics* discussed in section I above. However, the use of Aristotle's evidence to demonstrate that Xenophon's account of the revolution is to be rejected in favor of Diodorus' is unjustified,⁵⁵ since an initial victory of the oligarchs before the arrival of assistance from Sparta is not incompatible with Xenophon's account; on the contrary, such a victory must be assumed in order to understand Xenophon. Aristotle was

52. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 8. 20 mentions eight ships; Diod. 14. 97. 3 mentions seven ships.

53. Diod. 14. 97. 1-2; Ecdicus was dispatched in late summer 391 (see above, n. 36).

54. See above, n. 30.

55. This argument was particularly stressed by Momigliano, "Note," pp. 53-54; cf. Newman, "Politics," 4: 300.

interested in the causes and outbreak of the revolution, not in the course of events: hence the focus of his remarks differs from that of Xenophon and Diodorus alike. It should be stressed, however, that Aristotle's references to the character of the Rhodian democracy overthrown in the revolution under discussion help to explain the violence of the oligarchic reaction in 391, as it is described by Diodorus. Even more helpful in this respect is the evidence provided by the Oxyrhynchus historian for the methods of the democratic revolutionaries of 395—the massacre or exile of their chief opponents.

Thus far, the accounts of Xenophon and Diodorus have been found compatible with one another as well as with the other sources. It cannot be denied, however, that the two accounts diverge when they come to report the results of Ecdicus' expedition. In Xenophon's account the admiral never arrives at Rhodes, whereas according to Diodorus his mission was successful. At this point Diodorus (or his source, Ephorus) seems to have been confused and to have merged the expeditions of Ecdicus and Teleutias.⁵⁶ With his philo-Laonian tendencies, however, Xenophon was naturally more interested than Diodorus (Ephorus) in the details of the Spartan expeditions; moreover, he had a particular interest in Teleutias, since he was the brother of Xenophon's friend and hero, King Agesilaus.⁵⁷ Whatever Xenophon's faults as a historian, it is unjust to suspect him of writing fiction. He surely provides us with precious information, not found in Diodorus, regarding the Spartan intervention in Rhodes. As far as Rhodian internal affairs are concerned, Xenophon's work most significantly tells us that the initial success of the oligarchic revolution was short-lived: a counterrevolution (which, Diodorus reports, the Rhodian oligarchs had feared on the eve of their appeal to Sparta) was carried out by the democrats before Ecdicus' arrival in the East; and Teleutias was therefore later obliged to assist the oligarchs when they were at a strategic disadvantage.

Xenophon's account is generally more detailed than Diodorus'. The latter does, however, complement him once more when he recounts that after Thrasybulus' death the Athenian trierarchs under his command decided to sail to Rhodes, where they assisted the democrats, who were at this time in a weaker position.⁵⁸ It must be stressed that this information is complementary to Xenophon, not contradictory: for we can infer from

56. The confusion of Diodorus (Ephorus) at this point is also apparent from the details of his narrative: e.g., 14. 97. 4, where he credits Ecdicus (called by him Eudocimus) and his companions with having collected precisely the same number of triremes (twenty-seven) which according to Xenophon (*Hell.* 4. 8. 24) had been collected by Teleutias. Moreover, Diodorus does not differentiate between the missions of Ecdicus and of Diphridas (called by him Diphilas); and he could not have explained the latter's mission, since in his account Diphridas' arrival in the East precedes Thibron's campaign against Strouthas (see 14. 97. 3 and 99. 1–3). The error in the names of the Spartan commanders may also be symptomatic of Diodorus' neglect of the details of the Spartan intervention.

57. For Xenophon's eulogy of Teleutias, see esp. *Hell.* 5. 1. 3–4; cf. J. K. Anderson, *Xenophon* (London, 1974), pp. 126, 167; and W. E. Higgins, *Xenophon the Athenian* (Albany, N.Y., 1977), pp. 113, 124.

58. See above, n. 49.

this passage in Diodorus that the democratic counterrevolution had suffered a serious setback after Thrasybulus' departure for the Hellespont, and that the oligarchs had once more gained the upper hand, although their victory was not yet complete. On this point, too, Diodorus can elucidate Xenophon's account: the latter's remark that shortly before his death Thrasybulus had been eager to reach Rhodes⁵⁹ becomes clearer if we assume that he had received news about the changing situation on the island.

Because of Thrasybulus' earlier decision to postpone the Athenian intervention at Rhodes, the democrats were left to stand alone too long against the oligarchs and the forces of Teleutias; and the intervention of the Athenian trierarchs after Thrasybulus' death came too late. As I have mentioned, Teleutias is reported by Xenophon to have returned to Sparta "under the happiest circumstances," while Hierax, who had taken over the command, could use Rhodes as a safe base for military operations. In other words, the complete victory of the oligarchic and pro-Spartan faction appears to have been achieved between the arrival of the Athenian trierarchs (probably early summer 389)⁶⁰ and the arrival of Hierax at the island (late summer or early autumn 389).

In summary, the *stasis* of 391–89 at Rhodes can be understood only with reference to the internal conflicts of 411–391 and the role played by foreign powers in those conflicts. The oligarchs' deep hatred of the democrats and the outburst of violence in 391 appear to have been a reaction against the violent revolution of 395 and the methods of the democratic regime.

The timing of the revolution can plausibly be explained by the encouragement that the pro-Spartan oligarchs had derived from recent developments at Sardis: the arrest of their enemy, Conon, by the Persian satrap Tiribazus, and the latter's decision to support the Spartans. If the arrival of Strouthas occurred before the revolution, his anti-Spartan policy did not make the oligarchs give up their plans, when they had prepared their *coup* for so long.

The accounts of our main sources for the *stasis* of 391–89, Xenophon and Diodorus (Ephorus), are for the most part complementary, not contradictory and incompatible. In the light of both accounts, the most plausible order of events is the following:

- (a) A successful *coup* of the oligarchs without foreign assistance (probably early spring 391) followed by their request for Spartan intervention in order to consolidate their rule and prevent the renewal of Athenian control over the island.

59. See above, n. 43.

60. This date is based on the adoption of late spring 389 as the time of Thrasybulus' death, for which see, e.g., Underhill, *Commentary*, p. lv; Van Gelder, *Geschichte*, p. 89; Seager, "Thrasybulus," p. 110. There is no basis in the sources for the suggestion of G. T. Griffith, s.v. "Rhodes," *OCD*,² p. 923, that the final result of the *stasis* was the foundation of a moderate democracy; cf., differently, Berthold, "Fourth-Century Rhodes," p. 40 ("the outcome of the civil war is not clear").

- (b) A successful counterrevolution of the democrats before the arrival of the Spartan forces under the command of Ecdicus in the East (late summer or early autumn 391).
- (c) A long civil war in which the oligarchs, now assisted by Teleutias, gradually recovered. Their final victory (summer 389) was determined by the delay of the Athenian assistance to the democrats.

By risking a Spartan victory in Rhodes, Thrasybulus had committed a grave error. The revolt of Rhodes against Sparta in 396 had been a decisive step toward the outbreak of the Corinthian War. The renewal of the Spartans' control over the island was one of the most significant developments leading to the recovery of their transmarine power and the success of their subsequent negotiations with Persia, which in turn led to the imposition of the King's Peace upon Greece.

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