

## THE ARCHAIC TREATIES BETWEEN THE SPARTANS AND THEIR ALLIES\*

Created in the sixth century B.C.E. and surviving well into the fourth, the so-called Peloponnesian League was one of the most prominent multi-state organizations in Greek history. Many theories have been advanced to explain the League's structure at various stages of its development. Common to these theories is the supposition that Sparta, beginning with the Tegean alliance in 560 or at least by the end of the sixth century, was the head of a recognized organization of states, whose treaty obligations included clauses that required allies to have the same friends and enemies as Sparta and to follow wherever the Spartans led by land or sea.<sup>1</sup> What else the allies may have been obliged to do, or whether these obligations stood solely upon bilateral treaties or were interpreted by means of a formal 'constitution', has fuelled much of the debate. Yet the assumption that the allies were, in fact, bound by such foreign policy obligations has only recently been called into question.<sup>2</sup> I shall argue here that until the conclusion of the Five Years' Truce in 451, the Spartan alliance was bound by no such foreign policy obligations as seen in later treaties, but rather by a series of treaties whose goal was merely the institution and preservation of an influential pro-Spartan faction within allied cities.<sup>3</sup> Such treaties would still allow Sparta to exert a great deal of influence among its allies, but would not oblige them to align their foreign policies with that of Sparta.

To demonstrate that the early Spartan alliance was bound by treaties that focused on the preservation of pro-Spartan factions, it will first be necessary to show that the offensive and defensive foreign policy obligations of the later treaties do not fit the evidence for the early alliance well. These obligations are clearly represented in

\* My thanks to the helpful comments of S. Bolmarcich, J. Gibert, M. Griffin, P. Hunt, J. Lendon, E. Meyer, K. Raaffaub, A. Wolicki, and *CQ*'s anonymous referee. All remaining errors are, of course, my own.

<sup>1</sup> U. Kahrstedt, *Griechisches Staatsrecht 1: Sparta und seine Symmachie* (Gottingen, 1922), 286–7; G. Busolt, and H. Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde 2* (Munich, 1926), 1330–34; J. A. O. Larsen, 'Sparta and the Ionian revolt: a study of Spartan foreign policy and the genesis of the Peloponnesian League', *CP* 27 (1932), 140–1, 'The Constitution of the Peloponnesian League', *CP* 28 (1933), and 'The constitution of the Peloponnesian League II', *CP* 29 (1934); D. Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1969), 11; G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1972), 104–23; P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia* (London, 1979), 147–48, and *Agasilaos and the Crisis of Sparta* (London, 1987), 11–12; J. E. Lendon, 'Thucydides and the "constitution" of the Peloponnesian League', *GRBS* 35 (1994), 159; and E. Baltrusch, *Symmachie und Spondai* (Berlin, 1994), 19–30.

<sup>2</sup> G. Cawkwell 'Sparta and her allies in the sixth century', *CQ* 43 (1993).

<sup>3</sup> De Ste. Croix (n. 1), 102–3 (cf. Cartledge [n. 1] *Agasilaos*, 11–12) created a distinction between the terms 'Peloponnesian League'—Sparta's inner circle of allies, whose obligations to follow Sparta in an offensive campaign were subject to a vote of the League assembly and 'Spartan alliance'—a broader group consisting of states allied to Sparta by *ad hoc* alliances. Because I am here proposing that during the sixth and early fifth centuries the Spartans and their allies were bound neither by a constitution nor even by offensive or defensive treaty obligations, I believe that the term 'Peloponnesian League' would impart a sense of internal cohesion and distinction among the allies not present before 451. I will, therefore, use the term 'Spartan alliance', which Cartledge himself suggests is more apt to the Spartans and their allies prior to the development of a constitution.

Sparta's treaty with Athens in 404 (Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.20). Xenophon states that the Athenians were to τὸν αὐτὸν ἐχθρὸν καὶ φίλον νομίζοντας Λακεδαιμονίοις ἔπεσθαι καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν ὅποι ἂν ἡγῶνται (cf. Xen. *Hell.* 4.6.2, 5.3.26, 6.3.7 and the treaty with the Erxadies).<sup>4</sup>

Cawkwell has already called the existence of an offensive alliance in the sixth century into question, arguing that the Spartan alliance was a defensive alliance prior to the beginning of First Peloponnesian War.<sup>5</sup> The case for the early application of the offensive obligation has often centred on Herodotus' belief that by the mid-sixth century ἡδὴ δέ σφι [the Spartans] καὶ ἡ πολλὴ τῆς Πελοποννήσου ἦν κατεστραμμένη (Hdt. 1.68.6). De Ste. Croix holds that 'the use of the very strong word "subjected" would be fully justified if [the allies] were obliged to follow Sparta into war at her bidding'.<sup>6</sup> Yet the allies seldom followed where Sparta led. Between the settlement with Tegea in c. 560 and the formation of the Hellenic League in 481, the Spartans fought in four known campaigns (Samos, the first and second invasions of Attica, and the battle of Sepeia)<sup>7</sup> and prepared for, but never fought in, two others (a third invasion of Attica and the battle of Marathon).<sup>8</sup> Of these six campaigns only one, the planned third invasion of Attica to restore Isagoras, exhibited a co-ordinated action involving significant allied support (Hdt. 5.74.1). In the attack on Samos, Sparta enlisted the support of only one ally (Corinth: 3.48.1), two participated in the battle of Sepeia (Aegina and Sicyon: 6.92.1). In the three remaining campaigns Sparta fought without the reported aid of its allies. It is difficult to believe that Sparta would call on its allies only once in six major campaigns throughout an eighty-year period if it had had the sanctioned right to do so.

<sup>4</sup> A fragment bearing the remains of a treaty between Sparta and the Erxadies (a tribe of Aetolians) was discovered on the Spartan acropolis. This treaty contains both foreign policy obligations from Sparta's treaty with Athens (Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.20). W. Peek placed the date of this treaty between 500 and 470 B.C.E. (W. Peek, 'Ein neuer Spartanischer Staatsvertrag', *ASAW* 65.3 [Berlin, 1974], 1 15). Later scholars, however, have called such an early date into question. P. Cartledge suggests that a late fifth-century date is more accurate (Cartledge, 'A new 5th-century Spartan treaty', *LCM* 1 [1976], 87 92; cf. id., 'The new 5th-century Spartan treaty again', *LCM* 3 [1978], 189 90). Citing L. H. Jeffery (*Local Scripts of Archaic Greece: A Study of the Origin of the Greek Alphabet and its Development from the Eighth to the Fifth Centuries B.C.* [Oxford, 1961], 187), who stated that much of the epigraphical evidence that would normally indicate an early fifth-century date does not apply so rigidly to Laconian inscriptions, Cartledge believes that 'we are free to lower Peek's dating, although staying in the fifth century' (90). Cartledge proposes that the treaty would best fit a date of 426, when the Aetolians asked the Spartans to send an expedition against Naupactos (Thuc. 3.100), or 425/4, when 'Sparta was thrashing around for allies in all sensitive quarters' because of its loss at Pylos (92). D. H. Kelly ('The new Spartan treaty', *LCM* 3 [1978], 133 41; cf. Baltrusch, [n. 1], 21 3) suggests that the treaty should be dated to 388 because it is a peace treaty (line 2) and consequently requires a war to have preceded its implementation—a condition not present in 426. Such a condition did, however, exist in 388, when Agesilaus marched an army through Aetolia (Xen. *Hell.* 4.6.14), fourteen years after the Aetolians had joined the Eleans in their war against Sparta (Diod. 14.17.9). Of these three possibilities, I find the conclusions of Kelly most convincing. Consequently, the treaty with the Erxadies will not be considered here as evidence for the treaties of the early Spartan alliance.

<sup>5</sup> Cawkwell (n. 2), 374 6.

<sup>6</sup> De Ste. Croix (n. 1), 109.

<sup>7</sup> The semi-legendary battle of Thyrea would have occurred only a few years after the conclusion of the Tegea treaty (c. 550) and, therefore, the absence of allied involvement does little to disprove strong treaty obligations (Hdt. 1.82.1).

<sup>8</sup> This count does not include the proposed fourth invasion of Attica to restore Hippias (Hdt. 5.90 4) because it never moved beyond the early planning stages.

There is, of course, the ever-present possibility that Herodotus simply failed to mention the extent or fact of allied involvement in these or other campaigns. Yet, three of the above-mentioned campaigns do not so easily lend themselves to such an interpretation. That the second invasion of Attica was carried out by the Spartans with no assistance from their allies is corroborated by Thucydides who expressed no little interest in correcting popular misconceptions about the overthrow of the Pisistratids (Thuc. 6.53.3 and 6.59.4). The battle of Sepeia occurred in the wake of the failed expedition against Athens in 506 and it is unlikely that Cleomenes could have gathered the aid of a substantial number of allies beyond Sicyon and Aegina.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, even the support of these two states seems to have been less than enthusiastic.<sup>10</sup> It is also unlikely that an allied contingent accompanied the 2,000 Spartans who arrived in Athens too late for the battle of Marathon (Hdt. 6.120 and Pl. *Leg.* 698E). Even if Herodotus omitted the presence of the allies in the first and second invasions of Attica and greater support for the attack on Samos, it would still leave allied participation inconsistent enough to at least call the existence of an offensive obligation into question. It might be best to conclude that *κατεστραμμένη*, rather than revealing the extent and nature of Sparta's control, is a stretch of the fifth-century imagination, based on incorrect information or perception.<sup>11</sup>

Rare though allied support appears to have been, two noteworthy attempts at co-ordinated action occurred in the above-mentioned period: the abortive third invasion of Attica in 506 (Hdt. 5.74–5.1) and a proposed fourth invasion to restore Hippias perhaps in 505 (5.90–4). Larsen believes that these two events marked the creation of a 'constitution' by which Sparta might call on the resources of its allies. Larsen argues that the 506 campaign broke up because Cleomenes 'did not announce the purpose of the expedition'. In the next year, a meeting of the allies, in which a Spartan proposal to invade Attica was rejected, marked the 'first *regular* meeting of the assembly of the Peloponnesian League'.<sup>12</sup> Larsen and those who subscribe to this school of thought note later occurrences of such meetings, and in this way create a sense of continuity, essential to the idea of an established and understood mechanism for calling on allied aid. Yet, as Kagan points out, these meetings were actually quite rare.<sup>13</sup> Lendon notes that the first evidence of a formal vote in a Peloponnesian assembly is not until 440, and this example is the only one of the five clear cases of voting that took place before the crisis leading up to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.<sup>14</sup> In nine further cases it is unclear whether a vote was taken or the assembly was purely advisory.<sup>15</sup> Here again, only one meeting takes place before the build up to the Peloponnesian War. The apparent dearth of 'League' meetings between 505 and 432 makes it unlikely that the meeting in 505

<sup>9</sup> See also Larsen (n. 1, 1932), 146.

<sup>10</sup> The Aeginetan ships involved in the invasion were seized by force (Hdt. 6.92.1) and the Sicyonians were afterwards sufficiently penitent that they willingly paid a fine imposed on them by Argos (Hdt. 6.92.2).

<sup>11</sup> Cawkwell (n. 2), 373. See also How and Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus* (New York, 1928) on 1.68.6 (p. 91).

<sup>12</sup> Larsen (n. 1, 1932), 141 (my italics).

<sup>13</sup> Kagan (n. 1), 19.

<sup>14</sup> Lendon (n. 1), 160, n. 3. The five attested examples of voting assemblies are 440 (Thuc. 1.40.5; 1.43.1), 432 (1.119–25), 421 (5.17.2; 5.30.1), 404 (Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.19; 3.5.8), and possibly 378 (5.4.37).

<sup>15</sup> This includes 505 (Hdt. 5.91–4), 432 (Thuc. 1.67–72), 428 (3.8–15), 423 (4.118.4), 412 (8.8.2), 396 (Xen. *Hell.* 3.4.2), 382 (5.2.11–23), 376 (5.4.60), and 371 (6.3.3–20).

established a recognized mechanism for co-ordinated action. At best, the attempts of 506 and 505 indicate a high-water mark of Spartan influence among its allies, most likely propelled by the powerful and, up to 506, unchallenged authority of Cleomenes.<sup>16</sup> There is, however, no indication that the alliance became more organized or cohesive as a result of the two *débâcles*.

The possibility that a follow-whenever-the-Spartans-lead clause was not a part of Sparta's early treaties fits the events of 506 equally well. After being driven out of Athens along with Isagoras, Cleomenes assembled an army from the entire Peloponnese (Hdt. 5.74.1). De Ste. Croix cites the willingness of the allies to come at Sparta's call as evidence that the allies were bound by their treaties to follow its lead.<sup>17</sup> This interpretation does not, however, give sufficient weight to the implications of Corinth's withdrawal from the campaign. Herodotus gives no indication that Corinth was defaulting on a treaty obligation when it left the expedition, but merely states that *μελλόντων δὲ συνάμειν τὰ στρατόπεδα ἐς μάχην, Κορίνθιοι μὲν πρότεροι σφίσι αὐτοῖσι δόντες λόγον ὡς οὐ ποιοῖεν τὰ δίκαια μετεβάλλοντό τε καὶ ἀπαλλάσσοντο* (5.75.1). While it is clear that Sparta's allies were willing to follow at that time, it is not necessarily the case that they participated because of a treaty obligation. If anything, Corinth's eventual abandonment of the mission implies that this Spartan ally at least reserved the right to decide whether to aid the Spartans.

Cawkwell, on the other hand, maintains that Cleomenes' attempt to invade Attica in 506 is proof of the existence of a defensive alliance in the sixth century.<sup>18</sup> Positing that Athens was probably an ally of Sparta after the removal of the Pisistratids, he suggests that the institution of the democracy would have given Cleomenes sufficient grounds to assemble the allies in defence of the rightful government of Athens. Yet, here too Corinth's withdrawal presents a problem. Cawkwell addresses this difficulty by proposing that Corinth's refusal to participate further was a 'revolt against Cleomenes, not against Sparta', since king Demaratus, who shared the command of this expedition with Cleomenes, also abandoned the campaign. It is, however, important to note that Herodotus explicitly states that Corinth's desertion occurred prior to Demaratus' abandonment of the campaign (*Κορίνθιοι μὲν πρότεροι . . . μετὰ δὲ Δημάργητος*). Therefore, Corinth's withdrawal would still have initially violated its obligation to Sparta. Because Demaratus' support would have presumably been voiced soon thereafter, the sequence of events does not wholly vitiate Cawkwell's interpretation. Yet, an examination of Sparta's record for aiding allies in distress during the sixth century and even up to the battle of Tanagra in 457 lends no support to the presence of a defensive alliance. There is, in fact, no indication that Sparta otherwise came to the aid of an ally in distress until the Persian Wars, at which time its actions are explicable by a different treaty.<sup>19</sup> The absence of defensive aid before the Persian Wars is, of course, hardly conclusive because of the dearth of evidence during that period, but, even when Athens launched an attack on the Aeginetans in the early 480s,<sup>20</sup> Sparta seems to have done nothing (Hdt. 6.88–93).

<sup>16</sup> Herodotus notes that the break-up of the 506 campaign was the first indication that Demaratus was at variance with Cleomenes (5.75).

<sup>17</sup> De Ste. Croix (n. 1), 109.

<sup>18</sup> Cawkwell (n. 2), 373–4.

<sup>19</sup> P. A. Brunt, 'The Hellenic League against Persia', *Historia* (1953/54), 135–163; repr. in *id. Studies in Greek History and Thought* (Oxford, 1993), 47–83.

<sup>20</sup> The Aeginetans had been Spartan allies, presumably by 494 when they were co-opted into an attack on Argos by Cleomenes (Hdt. 6.92.1), or at least by the time Cleomenes demanded

So desperate were the Aeginetans that they asked the Argives, whom they had betrayed and attacked only a few years before, for support (6.92.1). That an appeal to Argos was even attempted suggests that Spartan assistance had already been requested, and refused.

The actions of the Spartan alliance in the fifth century similarly produce little confidence that the Spartan alliance was governed by strict defensive obligations. In the 460s Argos seized control of Tiryns and Mycenae (Hdt. 6.83 and Diod. 11.65). Both of these states had sent contingents to Plataea (Hdt. 9.28.4, 9.31.3, and *GHI* no. 27),<sup>21</sup> and had, in all likelihood, been Spartan allies since the battle of Sepeia.<sup>22</sup> Yet, there is no indication that Sparta defended these allies when both were overrun. During the First Peloponnesian War, Corinth, Epidaurus, Aegina, and several other Spartan allies were embroiled in a full-scale war with Athens (Thuc. 1.105). It has been argued that the Spartans were involved in this war almost from the beginning.<sup>23</sup> Such a theory holds that when Thucydides twice mentions 'Peloponnesian' involvement in the battle of Cecryphalia (1.105.1) and siege of Aegina (1.105.3), he is actually referring to expeditions led by Sparta. Citing this interpretation, Cawkwell concludes that a full offensive and defensive alliance came into existence between the battles of Haliae and Cecryphalia.<sup>24</sup> Yet, as Holladay notes, the assumption that the Spartans were involved in these early engagements makes their participation overall inexplicably sporadic.<sup>25</sup> For example, if they committed themselves to a naval engagement at Cecryphalia and went so far as to send three hundred hoplites to Aegina, it is unlikely that they would then not support Corinth's subsequent landward invasion of Megara (1.105.3). Such inactivity on the part of Sparta has been explained by their inability to force the Geraneia passes, which Athens then controlled.<sup>26</sup> But the Corinthians and their allies were capable of seizing the passes during this campaign and it seems improbable that 'the Spartans should have refused to lead an expedition which the Corinthians were not frightened to undertake'.<sup>27</sup> That Sparta did not come to the aid of Tiryns and Mycenae and that its

hostages from them in 491 (Hdt. 6.50). See also de Ste. Croix (n. 1), 123 and D. M. Leahy, 'Aegina and the Peloponnesian League', *CP* 49 (1954), 232–43. T. J. Figueira ('Aeginetan membership in the Peloponnesian League', *CP* 76 [1981], 1–24) has argued that Aegina was never a member of the Spartan alliance. Yet many of his objections become moot if the early Spartan alliance was not bound by strict foreign policy obligations.

<sup>21</sup> R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1969).

<sup>22</sup> De Ste. Croix (n. 1), 123, and P. A. Seymour, 'The "servile interregnum" at Argos', *JHS* 42 (1922), 25. In 494 Cleomenes invaded Argive territory by sea near Nauplia and fought the Argive army at Sepeia, both of which are near Tiryns (Hdt. 6.76–77). After the battle, Cleomenes continued to the Heraeum (Hdt. 6.81), which is close to Mycenae. Although Herodotus does not directly state that Cleomenes freed either of these cities from Argive control, their independence would have greatly weakened Argos and would have been necessary steps if Cleomenes had indeed planned to take Argos (Hdt. 6.76.1).

<sup>23</sup> De Ste. Croix (n. 1), 187–8. See also A. W. Gomme, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides I* (Oxford 1966) on 1.105.3 (p. 308).

<sup>24</sup> Cawkwell (n. 2), 375.

<sup>25</sup> A. J. Holladay, 'Sparta's role in the First Peloponnesian War', *JHS* 92 (1977), 57–59. For further support of Spartan non-involvement in the early phases of the First Peloponnesian War, see Kahrstedt (n. 1), 92; D. M. Lewis, 'The origins of the First Peloponnesian War', in G. Shrimpton and D. McCargher (edd.), *Classical Contributions: Studies in Honor of Malcolm Francis McGregor* (New York, 1981), 71–78; and S. Hornblower, *A Commentary of Thucydides* (Oxford, 1997) on 1.105 (pp. 165–6).

<sup>26</sup> See de Ste. Croix (n. 1), 191.

<sup>27</sup> Holladay (n. 25), 58.

participation in the early stages of the First Peloponnesian War is doubtful does not necessarily indicate the absence of a defensive obligation. Since these events would have occurred soon after the battles of Tegea and Dipeia (Hdt. 9.35.2) and the revolt of the Helots,<sup>28</sup> it is equally possible that Sparta was at that time in no position to deliver aid, be it under obligation or simply by request. Yet, when in 457 Sparta's strength was sufficiently restored to lead a campaign, it does not seem to have done so with the intention of fulfilling a defensive obligation to Corinth or their mutual allies, even though the subsequent battle of Tanagra had that very effect. Sparta's stated purpose in central Greece was to relieve the beleaguered states of Doris (Thuc. 1.107.2). It was only after the Spartans realized that the Athenians meant to contest their withdrawal back into the Peloponnese (1.107.3) that any action against the Athenians was considered (1.107.4).<sup>29</sup> Sparta's consistent failure to deliver defensive aid in the sixth and early fifth centuries and its reluctance to do so at Tanagra suggest that Sparta may have been under no obligation to supply such assistance.

It has been put forward that a clause requiring the allies to have the same friends and enemies would have also obliged them to aid Sparta in the case of a slave revolt, as was specified in its treaty with Athens in 421 (ἦν δὲ ἡ δουλεία ἐπανιστήται, ἐπικουρεῖν Ἀθηναίους Λακεδαιμονίους παντὶ σθένει κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν: Thuc. 5.23.3).<sup>30</sup> Thucydides' account of the siege of Ithome could be interpreted as an example of the existence of such an obligation. Yet, Sparta seems to have received the aid of only two of its Peloponnesian allies, Aegina and Mantinea. Although it could be said that broader participation was simply not mentioned, a special dispensation shown to Mantinea some eighty years after the fact suggests otherwise. Agesilaus declined to lead an attack on them in 385, λέγων ὅτι τῷ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ ἡ τῶν Μαντινέων πόλις πολλὰ ὑπηρετήκοι ἐν τοῖς πρὸς Μεσσήνην πολέμοις (Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.3).<sup>31</sup> If the Mantineans, along with all of Sparta's allies, had presented themselves for service during the revolt—as was dictated by a treaty—how could Agesilaus have justified showing Mantinea this special regard? No other ally received similar consideration throughout Xenophon's detailed account of Sparta's fourth-century reprisals. For example, Agesilaus gave the beleaguered state of Phlius no such sympathy when he besieged it four years later (5.3.10–17), nor is our account of the siege so impoverished that we could reasonably expect this detail to have been omitted. Indeed, Xenophon includes reasons why the Phliasians expected Agesilaus not to lead an attack against them (5.3.10), yet the very obligation that had stopped him from attacking Mantinea is not among them.

<sup>28</sup> That Sparta had been weakened, probably by these events, is, in fact, stated by Diodorus to have been a motivating factor for Argos' invasion of Mycenae (Diod. 11.65.3; cf. Thuc. 1.118.2).

<sup>29</sup> D. W. Reece, 'The battle of Tanagra', *JHS* 70 (1950), 75; T. T. B. Ryder, 'Thucydides and Athenian strategy in the early 450s: a consensus of mistranslations', *G&R* 25 (1978), 121–4; and R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1979), 417–8.

<sup>30</sup> De Ste. Croix (n. 1), 113 and Baltrusch (n. 1), 26 and 29. That such a clause may have existed independent of the obligations to have the same friends and enemies and to follow wherever the Spartans led, see Cartledge (n. 1, 1979), 148 and (n. 1, 1987), 13.

<sup>31</sup> It has been argued that this obligation was a pretence used by Agesilaus to avoid this particular campaign (for support of this reading, see C. Tuplin, *The Failings of Empire: A Reading of Xenophon's Hellenica* 2.3.11–7.5.27 [Stuttgart, 1993], 89). Yet, even if he felt no real debt to the Mantineans, the plausibility of such an obligation was essential for the subterfuge to have been even reasonably successful.

That Phlius, and perhaps other allies,<sup>32</sup> may not have participated in the siege of Ithome, casts some doubt upon the existence of any obligation by which the allies were bound to aid Sparta in the case of a helot uprising. Either the Spartan alliance suffered mild to severe disaffection among its allies during the Ithome crisis, for which Sparta exacted no known retribution, or the allies were, at least under the conditions of a slave revolt, under no obligation to give Sparta aid. Sparta's behaviour after the event supports the latter. Sparta never accused recalcitrant allies of having violated sworn obligations by not participating in the Ithome campaign. Yet Aegina and Mantinea, who definitely did participate, each received special dispensations because of their involvement.<sup>33</sup> This fact implies that, rather than fulfilling an obligation that the other allies ignored, the actions of Mantinea and Aegina went above and beyond what their formal treaties to Sparta stipulated.

The apparent dearth of evidence for the allies following where the Spartans led or even for the allies having the same friend and enemies as Sparta changes abruptly after the battle of Tanagra. From that year down to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 431, Sparta and its allies co-ordinated a joint campaign to Eleusis in 446 (Thuc. 1.114.2), concluded two peace accords as a bloc (the Five Years' Truce in 451 [1.112.1] and the Thirty Years' Peace in 446 [1.115.1]), and are reported to have held two meetings to determine whether to attack the Athenians (once in 440 [1.40.5] and again in 432 [1.119–25]). Taken together, this campaign, the treaties, and the meetings show that Sparta and its allies were beginning to act in accordance with offensive and defensive foreign policy obligations. I suggest that at least by the conclusion of the Five Years' Truce in 451 the Spartans had applied foreign policy obligations to their alliance. Although the exact terms of the Truce are unknown, it seems likely that Sparta's allies agreed to the cessation of hostilities as a bloc, an attack on any member of which by the Athenians would presumably result in the resumption of hostilities against Athens. Without a formal obligation within the Spartan alliance to have the same friends and enemies and to follow the Spartans either to defend a beleaguered ally or conduct a punitive campaign against Attica, the Truce could have provided little real security to the Peloponnesians who were party to it.

Demonstrating that the allies often failed to fulfil offensive and defensive obligations is not, of course, a revolutionary step in the study of the Spartan alliance. Scholars have frequently explained this curious fact by noting that treaty obligations—no matter how strict—were open to interpretation, either by means of the clauses and codicils of a formal constitution, or simply because Sparta would not be willing to exhaust its goodwill with its allies by constantly imposing on them. Although such an interpretation might explain the infrequency of allied campaigns before 451, it does so only by assuming that the Spartans were amenable to rather widespread indifference to sworn obligations. Yet the Spartans had little patience for such recalcitrance after foreign policy obligations had definitely been applied. At the end of the Archidamian War, for example, several states attempted to avoid fulfilling their treaty obligations.<sup>34</sup> Elis, Boeotia, Megara, and Corinth hoped to

<sup>32</sup> Note the hostility of some at Corinth to the Athenian expedition to help the Spartans at Ithome (Plut. *Cim.* 17.1). See also Gomme (n. 23) on 1.102.1 (p. 300).

<sup>33</sup> When the Athenians drove the Aeginetans from Aegina in 430, Sparta gave the Aeginetans asylum in Thyrea, not only because they too were at war with the Athenians, but also *ὅτι σφῶν εὐεργέται ἦσαν ὑπὸ τὸν σεισμόν καὶ τῶν Εἰλώτων τὴν ἐπανάστασιν* (Thuc. 2.27.2; cf. 4.56.2).

<sup>34</sup> Among whatever other obligations were binding on the Spartan alliance at the end of the Archidamian War, it had been agreed that in the case of a peace accord *κύριον εἶναι ὅτι ἂν τὸ*

avoid swearing to the Peace of Nicias (Thuc. 5.17.2); Mantinea hoped to retain conquests it had made during the war (5.29.1). The Spartans did not take these acts of defiance lightly, but rather formed a full offensive and defensive alliance with Athens in part so that τὴν ἄλλην Πελοπόννησον μάλιστα' ἀν' ἡσυχάζειν (5.22.2). Sparta also claimed that they would join the Athenians in forcing the allies to accede to their obligations and confirm the treaty (λέγοντες αἰεὶ ὥς μετ' Ἀθηναίων τούτους, ἣν μὴ θέλωσι, κοινῇ ἀναγκάσουσιν: 5.35.3). They sent envoys to Corinth to complain of its violation of treaty obligations, which the Corinthians denied on technical grounds (5.30.2–4). Envoys sent to the Boeotians convinced them to surrender Athenian prisoners and at least to return the land of Panactum if not the fort itself, which they demolished (5.42.1). As Spartan–Athenian relations broke down, swearing to the Peace of Nicias became a moot point and many allies quietly rejoined the Spartan fold (5.48 and 5.58.4), but the Mantineans and their Arcadian allies, who continued to defy Spartan expectations, met with defeat at the battle of Mantinea (5.67–74).

Spartan discontent at allied recalcitrance was not restricted to the Peloponnesian War. It continued to view non-compliance as an unacceptable deviation from treaty obligations. Indeed, Spartan complaints against Thebes on the eve of the Corinthian War in 395 include two instances of not fulfilling offensive obligations (Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.5). Phlius too was later blamed for not satisfying these obligations (5.2.8). Even Mantinea's use of the sanctioned sacred truce (ἐκεχειρία) was among Sparta's justifications for attacking it (5.2.2). That the Spartans became quite keen on enforcing sworn foreign policy obligations only after the Archidamian War does not, of course, exclude the possibility that the exigencies of the Peloponnesian War and subsequent imperialistic ambitions at Sparta compelled them to enforce clauses that had always been present, though frequently ignored. Yet it is equally plausible that Sparta did not enforce offensive and defensive foreign policy obligations until the late fifth century because they did not previously exist.

The supposition that the treaties of the Spartan alliance may not have contained foreign policy obligations raises the possibility that the alliance was not originally conceived of as a means by which Sparta might augment its then formidable hoplite army. Rather, I propose that before 451 Sparta used its primacy over most of the Peloponnese merely to ensure its own domestic stability and promote a political climate favourable to its interests among the allies. That Sparta had an abiding interest in the domestic policies of its allies is demonstrated by Thucydides' assessment of the alliance on the eve of the Peloponnesian War. He states that καὶ οἱ μὲν Λακεδαιμόνιοι οὐχ ὑποτελεῖς ἔχοντες φόρου τοὺς ξυμμάχους ἡγοῦντο, κατ' ὀλιγαρχίαν δὲ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς μόνον ἐπιτηδείως ὅπως πολιτεύουσιν θεραπεύοντες (1.19). It is, in fact, possible to trace this interest in the domestic policies of the allies back to the very beginnings of the Spartan alliance. In Plutarch's *Quaestiones Graecae*<sup>35</sup> and *Quaestiones Romanae*,<sup>36</sup> a fragment of a treaty between Sparta and Tegea is recorded and has

πλήθος τῶν ξυμμάχων ψηφίστηται, ἣν μὴ τι θεῶν ἢ ἡρώων κώλυμα ᾗ (Thuc. 5.30.1) and that ἀ ἔχοντες ἐς τὸν Ἀττικὸν πόλεμον καθίσταντό τινες, ταῦτα ἔχοντας καὶ ἐξελεῖν (5.31.5).

<sup>35</sup> Τίνες οἱ παρ' Ἀρκάσι καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοις χρηστοί; Λακεδαιμόνιοι Τεγεαταῖς διαλλαγένης ἐποίησαντο συνθήκας καὶ στήλην ἐπ' Ἀλφειῷ κοινῇ ἀνέστησαν, ἐν ᾗ μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων γέγραπται Μεσσηνίους ἐκβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆς χώρας, καὶ μὴ ἐξεῖναι χρηστοὺς ποιεῖν. ἐξηγουόμενος οὖν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης τοῦτο φησὶ δύνασθαι τὸ μὴ ἀποκτινύναι βοηθείας χάριν τοῖς λακωνίζουσι τῶν Τεγεατῶν (Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 5).

<sup>36</sup> καὶ γὰρ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν ταῖς Ἀρκάδων πρὸς Λακεδαιμόνιους συνθήκαις γεγράφθαι φησὶ μηδὲνα χρηστὸν (edd.; μηδὲν ἀχρηστον MSS) ποιεῖν βοηθείας χάριν τοῖς λακωνίζουσι τῶν Τεγεατῶν, ὅπερ εἶναι μηδὲνα ἀποκτινύναι (Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 52).



been traditionally associated with the war between those states in the mid-sixth century (Hdt. 1.66–68).<sup>37</sup> The treaty contains two extant clauses:<sup>38</sup> (1) *Μεσσηνίους ἐκβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆς χώρας* and (2) *μὴ ἐξεῖναι χρηστούς ποιεῖν*. The exact meaning of the phrase *χρηστούς ποιεῖν* has been the subject of some debate. According to Aristotle, *χρηστούς ποιεῖν* was a euphemism for the dead. This reading of the second clause would prohibit the Tegeans from executing anyone for aiding (*βοηθείας χάριν*) those pro-Spartans among the Tegeans.

Three interpretations of the second clause have been forwarded. The first accepts Aristotle's explanation, citing the use of *χρηστός* to refer to the dead on gravestones.<sup>39</sup> Latte gives a second, in which *χρηστός* refers to a 'free bird', or the man against whom everyone is allowed to act.<sup>40</sup> Like Aristotle, Latte assumes that those acting for the benefit of the pro-Spartans in Tegea are the object of the second clause. Jacoby opposes the assumption of anything but the Messenians as the object of the second clause and holds that *χρηστούς ποιεῖν* (literally to make employable) refers to the status of a full citizen.<sup>41</sup> This meaning is supported by the use of *ἄκρηστος* in an archaic inscription from Dreros (*GHI* no. 2), in which it refers to a 'citizen of minor rights'.<sup>42</sup> Jacoby's interpretation presents a significantly more pleasing sentence than does that of Aristotle, which forces the reader to understand a group giving aid to the laconizers as the object of the second clause. It also presents a plausible, though substantially different, meaning. Whereas Aristotle interpreted the clause as a ban on the murder of the supporters of Sparta in Tegea, Jacoby's interpretation would construe it in such a way that the Spartans are prohibiting the Tegeans from making the Messenians citizens. The logic behind such a clause, seemingly redundant

<sup>37</sup> The date of this treaty has been challenged by both T. Braun, '*ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥΣ ΠΟΙΕΝ*', *CQ* 44 (1994), 42 and Cawkwell (n. 2), 369. Yet, I still maintain that indications of continuing problems in Messenia in the sixth century (Hdt. 5.49.8; cf J. Ducat, *Les Hilotes*, *BCH* Suppl. 20 [1990], 141–4) provide a sufficient historical context, and that the famous anecdote in Herodotus (1.66–68) about the end of the war between Tegea and Sparta provides the most likely literary context for Plutarch's open reference to a reconciliation (*διαλλαγέντες*) between those states. A recent study by N. Luraghi ('Becoming Messenian', *JHS* 122 [2002], 45–69), which proposes that the term 'Messenians' as applied to those helots and *peri-oikoi* living west of the Taygetus range and south of the Neda river was a construct of the fifth century, could be seen as lending weight generally to Cawkwell's argument that the fragment should be dated to a Messenian revolt in 490 (Pl. *Leg.* 698E). Yet, as Luraghi himself notes ('The imaginary conquest of the helots', in Luraghi and S. E. Alcock (edd.), *Helots and Their Masters in Laconia and Messenia: Histories, Ideologies, Structures* [Cambridge, 2003], 110–15), the term 'Messenian' was also used by Tyrtaeus to describe a group hostile to Sparta that was driven from mount Ithome (Tyr. fr. 5.7–8 W<sup>2</sup>) and it is possible that the Tegea treaty refers to a group associated with these original exiles, to whom the name must have properly applied prior to the fifth century, and not merely to runaway slaves. A possibility made more likely by the fact that one interpretation of the treaty suggests that these 'Messenians' would have been made citizens (*χρηστοί*) in this or perhaps even in other *poleis*.

<sup>38</sup> Plutarch states that these two clauses originally appeared 'among other matters' (*μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων*). That these 'other matters' may have included offensive and defensive obligations, see Kagan (n. 1), 11.

<sup>39</sup> See W.R. Halliday, *The Greek Questions of Plutarch* (New York, 1975), 50–1, and Braun (n. 37), 40–1.

<sup>40</sup> K. Latte, *Heiliges Recht* (1920), 114. Latte supports his interpretation by citing the Law of Gortyn, in which a man caught committing adultery may be treated in any way his captors like if he is not ransomed by his relatives (2.34–6). See also V. Ehrenberg, 'An early source of polis-constitution', *CQ* 37 (1943), 16.

<sup>41</sup> F. Jacoby, '*ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥΣ ΠΟΙΕΙΝ* (Aristotle fr. 592R.)', *CQ* 38 (1944), 15–16; repr. id., *Abhandlungen zur Griechischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Leiden, 1956), 342–3.

<sup>42</sup> Ehrenberg (n. 40), 16.

if all Messenians were to be expelled by order of the first clause,<sup>43</sup> would be to ensure that the Tegeans did not make the Messenians citizens in the hopes of circumventing the first clause.

Whichever of the three interpretations is accepted, the extant clauses of the Tegea treaty indicate that Sparta did not hesitate to interfere in the domestic policies of its allies. Under both Aristotle and Latte's interpretation, the treaty contains a specific clause to protect those acting in the interest of the pro-Spartans. Although Jacoby's interpretation removes any mention of the pro-Spartans from the treaty fragment itself, it still demonstrates that Sparta's interest in the presence of the Messenians in Tegea, as expressed in the surviving clauses at least, focused on how they might affect the Tegean government. Indeed, the first clause simply orders the Messenians to be expelled from Tegea. It does not specify that they were to be returned to Sparta or otherwise neutralized as a threat. Expelled Messenians could easily take to the hills or even to another city. The clause would only be effective in removing them from Tegea, where they might incite anti-Spartan sentiments. The second clause, according to Jacoby, would prohibit the Tegeans from making the Messenians citizens. Here the possible repercussions on Sparta's influence in Tegean affairs are more obvious, since 'the Messenians as citizens would of course have swelled the ranks of the anti-Spartan party'.<sup>44</sup> Taken together with Thucydides' assessment, the two extant clauses of the Tegea treaty suggests that Sparta may have been far less interested in dictating foreign policy to its allies than ensuring that their governments were amenable to Spartan wishes.

Since only a disputed fragment of the treaty with Tegea survives, it is impossible to determine what a complete treaty might have contained, or even if these treaties were uniform throughout the alliance. They may, in fact, have simply had a declaration of friendship in common. Sparta's objective in making such conservative treaties may have originally been little more than to maintain control over its own substantial slave and dependent populations with greater ease and to create a political climate sufficiently favourable within the Peloponnese so as to at least ensure its neutrality in case of a war with Argos. Yet, these same treaties could still be used by Sparta to pursue more active foreign policy goals. Within approximately forty years Sparta had co-opted Corinth into an attack on Samos and in 506 organized a substantial allied invasion of Attica. Even though Sparta's treaties gave it no legal claim to demand allied participation, the favourable political climate, which they were designed to foster, would have strengthened those who could persuade the allies that Spartan and allied interests were one and the same. The alliance would therefore have functioned largely through Sparta's ability to garner support within allied cities. That institutions like *proxenia*, *xenia*, and *philia* were important to Greek interstate politics is not a revolutionary concept,<sup>45</sup> and few would be amazed that they were particularly useful within the Spartan alliance. What is at issue here is whether the early Spartan alliance could have operated exclusively by means of pro-Spartan factions in allied cities and, if so, how these factions were maintained.

Demonstrating that allied support could be solicited by means of a pro-Spartan faction without the benefit of formal treaty obligations is a difficult task. Examples

<sup>43</sup> Braun (n. 37), 41 2.

<sup>44</sup> Jacoby (n. 41), 16.

<sup>45</sup> L. G. Mitchell, *Greeks Bearing Gifts: The Public Use of Private Relationships in the Greek World 435–323* (Cambridge, 1997), 41–72. See also G. Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (New York, 1987), 116 161, and C. Jones, *Kinship Diplomacy in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1999), 6 35.

from within the Spartan alliance would be dubious because we would have to assume the absence of foreign policy obligations, the presence of which has here been challenged. In this case, however, we are singularly fortunate. The most detailed account of laconizers influencing a state's policy to Sparta's advantage comes from Athens, which, if it ever was a member of the alliance, remained outside it at least since the expulsion of Cleomenes. In the mid-460s Sparta, devastated by an earthquake and helot revolt, called on its allies for aid. One such request went to Athens (Plut. *Cim.* 16.7–8). Although Athens was bound to Sparta by the obligations of the ἐπὶ τῷ Μήδῳ ξυμμαχίαν (Thuc. 1.102.4), the existence of a clause in that alliance specifically designed to protect Sparta from its slave population seems unlikely.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, Sparta's request was made without the benefit of any treaty obligation on Athens. Cimon advocated the request and after a heated debate convinced the Athenians to dispatch a substantial force to aid the Spartans (Plut. *Cim.* 16.8; cf. Thuc. 1.102.1).<sup>47</sup> In this case at least, Sparta was able to sway the policy of a state without the aid of a formal treaty obligation.

If requests within the Spartan alliance were also made without the benefit of foreign policy obligations, the Spartans would have employed many of the same methods of persuasion. Sparta presented its request to Athens through Cimon, a powerful and prominent laconizer, to whom it had given several honours in previous years (Plut. *Them.* 20.4 and *Cim.* 16.2–3). Cimon did not act as a mere mouthpiece for Spartan policy, but presented the request for aid as mutually beneficial, urging the Athenians μήτε τὴν Ἑλλάδα χωλὴν μήτε τὴν πόλιν ἑτερόζυγα περιϋδεῖν γεγεννημένην (Plut. *Cim.* 16.10). Athenian acquiescence was not guaranteed. Ephialtes advised the Athenians μὴ βοηθεῖν μηδ' ἀνίστασθαι πόλιν ἀντίπαλον ἐπὶ τὰς Ἀθήνας, ἀλλ' εἰς κείσθαι καὶ πατηθῆναι τὸ φρόνημα τῆς Σπάρτης (16.9). Cimon's arguments, however, eventually won out and an Athenian expedition was dispatched. By strengthening prominent political figures sympathetic to its cause and by filtering requests through laconizers, who could present them as measures beneficial to both parties, Sparta could conceivably exert a great deal of influence within other states. This influence would, however, completely depend on maintaining a favourable political climate within allied cities. Therefore, the means applied by Sparta in Athens could also be extremely unreliable. Political figures could fall from favour or requests, no matter how vigorously supported, could simply be rejected, as was nearly the case in Athens.

Sparta could and often did interfere more directly in the domestic affairs of its allies in an attempt to ensure its influence. Particularly common in the sixth and early fifth centuries was demanding the exclusion or exile of more hostile elements and the overthrow of unfriendly governments. Sparta had by the fifth century become renowned for overthrowing several tyrannies and replacing them with oligarchies (Thuc. 1.18.1),<sup>48</sup> which were, in the opinion of Thucydides, subservient to the will of Sparta (1.19 and 1.144.2). For example, Cleomenes, after overthrowing the Athenian tyranny (Hdt. 5.64–5), tried without success to oust the democracy in favour of a narrow oligarchy (5.72). Perhaps more widespread was Sparta's tendency

<sup>46</sup> Brunt ([n. 19], 153) supports the view that there may have been a general defensive clause in the treaties of the Hellenic League. Yet he does not go so far as to suggest that the Spartans were calling on Athenian aid from a specific clause in their treaty. See also Gomme (n. 23) on 1.102.1 (p. 300).

<sup>47</sup> Aristophanes (*Lys.* 1143–4) gives a figure of four thousand hoplites.

<sup>48</sup> That this renown may have been largely invented, see R. Bernhardt, 'Die Entstehung der Legende von der Tyrannenfeindlichen Aussenpolitik Spartas im Sechsten und Fünften Jahrhundert V. Chr.', *Historia* 36 (1987), 257–89.

to request to exclusion of certain groups or individuals from other states. The treaty with Tegea compelled the Tegeans to expel the Messenians living there and possibly forbade them from making them citizens. Cleomenes demanded and secured the exile of Cleisthenes and seven hundred Athenian families (5.72.1) before failing to overthrow the democracy. On Aegina he and Leotychidas arrested several prominent citizens suspected of Medizing (6.73). Later, Sparta requested that the Athenians hunt down and prosecute Themistocles (Thuc. 1.135).

Although toppling unfriendly governments or simply removing certain hostile elements from foreign states could have a beneficial effect, it could, if applied too bluntly, just as easily weaken Sparta's influence by violating the allies' sense of self-governance, which later became associated with the term *autonomia*.<sup>49</sup> Sparta often alienated its allies by employing such means. Cleomenes' attempt to dissolve the Athenian *βουλή* found little support and resulted not only in the expulsion of Cleomenes (Hdt. 5.72), but also the execution of those Athenians who did support his attempt (5.73.1). Cleomenes' arrest of prominent Aeginetans sympathetic to the Persian cause also enraged many there. The point at which such interference violated a state's sense of self-governance would largely depend on whether a substantial portion of the citizens agreed with Sparta's request or not. The exclusion of the Messenians from citizenship or the prosecution of Themistocles, who had made himself somewhat unpopular in his own state (Plut. *Them.* 22.1), for example, may have found ample support from within and would therefore have not appeared to violate self-governance.

Sparta, by actively maintaining powerful pro-Spartan factions within allied cities, could conceivably exercise a great deal of influence. These factions could be maintained by showing honour to some, requesting the exile of others, and working to maintain a favourable political climate overall. Sympathetic factions could stifle anti-Spartan legislation, while at the same time advocating measures beneficial to Spartan interests. Yet these measures would have to be at least perceived as mutually beneficial because continued intervention might damage the very factions Sparta hoped to strengthen. Sparta's support within the Spartan alliance would therefore be much more mercurial than has previously been assumed.

*Brown University*

DAVID C. YATES  
David\_Yates@Brown.edu

<sup>49</sup> It is, of course, anachronistic to speak of *autonomia* in the context of the late sixth and early fifth centuries inasmuch as the term itself is not attested until the mid-fifth century (M. Ostwald, 'Autonomia: its genesis and early history', *American Classical Studies* 11 [1982], 23 and K. Raafaub, *Die Entdeckung der Freiheit* [Munich, 1985], 203-7). Yet some concept of *autonomia* would surely have existed prior to the coining of the term itself.