

### Sparta and the First Peloponnesian War

In *JHS* xcvi (1977) 54–63 I argued against the view that the prevalent Spartan attitude towards Athens throughout the Pentekontaetia was aggressive and that in the First Peloponnesian War Sparta was eager to engage and crush her, being prevented only by the barrier of Mt. Geraneia with its Athenian garrisons. There seemed to me to be four main difficulties in this view:

(a) The Corinthians succeeded in crossing Mt. Geraneia with their local allies early in the war, even though the Athenians were already present: so why not Sparta?

(b) A full Peloponnesian army was able to reach central Greece by sea after the war had been in progress for some three years, and their reluctance on that occasion to cross the northern frontier of Attica even after they had defeated the Athenians seems inexplicable on this view.

(c) It is also impossible to explain why Sparta did not provoke Athens to battle in the Peloponnese by attacking her ally Argos, as she did on other occasions when confronted by the same combination.

(d) Why did Sparta fail to force a battle and exact tough terms of peace after the revolt of Megara had facilitated her invasion of Attica?

In *Wealthy Corinth* (Oxford 1984), especially Appendix ii, J. B. Salmon has made some criticisms of my arguments that seem to call for a reply.

#### I *The invasion of the Megarid*

If the Spartans were so aggressive, why did they fail to invade the Megarid? Salmon suggests that this was due to calculation: 'the Athenians would no doubt have avoided open battle, and it was reasonable for the Spartans to judge that no good would come from an invasion of the Megarid when Athens could hold the long walls' (*sc.* the walls from Nisaea to Megara), *op. cit.* 421. n. 5.

There seem to be two major errors in this argument: first, the assumption that Athens would shirk open combat. There is no shred of evidence to support such an assumption. The Athenians marched out to meet the Corinthians and their allies when they invaded the Megarid; and, if it is suggested that the presence of a Spartan commander and troops would have deterred the Athenians, we must remember that a little later in the war the Athenians deliberately forced a battle on the Spartans and their allies at Tanagra when they were on Boeotian soil and showing marked reluctance to invade Attica. (Even after the victory they marched quietly home, ignoring the golden opportunity to prevent the completion of the Long Walls.) Thucydides (i 107.3) makes it clear that the Athenians were determined from the outset to block the return of the Peloponnesian force both by land and sea. How is this compatible with a desire to avoid open combat? The Athenians were in a very aggressive mood, as is shown by their attacks on the Peloponnesian, and even Lakonian, coast and their expeditions to Boeotia and Delphi. The avoidance of direct conflict by land which was the key of Pericles' strategy in 431 BC is not in evidence in the First

Peloponnesian War and was, surely, only adopted as a consequence of the set-backs in 446 (and clearly was not accepted even in 431 by many Athenians: *cf.* *Historia* xxvii (1978) 426). In contrast to the aggression of the Athenians, the Spartans marched home quietly after Tanagra, ignored the Athenian conquest of Boeotia, the attacks on the coast and the interference at Delphi.

The second fallacy in Salmon's argument concerns the harm the Spartans might have been able to do if they had invaded the Megarid with a force as strong as they used at Tanagra. If the Athenians offered battle it would presumably have been won by Sparta, but even if that did not occur it would have been possible to ravage the crops of the Megarid (a policy used with much effect by Athens in the Archidamian War, as Thucydides iv 66.1 shows) and force Megara to submit. The successful penetration of Mt. Geraneia would also have opened the way to Attica where the Long Walls did not yet exist.

As to the question of the imperviousness of Mt. Geraneia, Salmon has conceded that 'the Geraneia passes were defended by the Athenians (and the Megarians) either ineffectively or not at all'. This belief is presumably due to his need to explain how Corinth succeeded in crossing passes which, according to de Ste. Croix (*Origins of the Peloponnesian War* [London, 1972] 190 ff.) would be impenetrable if garrisoned. Whether that view be correct or not (on which *cf.* *JHS* cii (1982) 98), it is clear that in the first years of the war Sparta could have penetrated Mt Geraneia as easily as Corinth did. And it is precisely in those early years of the war that the pressure on Sparta to act (if she was in fact at war) would have been greatest, both to assert her leadership and to save Aegina. This failure to act seems inexplicable on Salmon's hypothesis.

The question of the Long Walls to Nisaea now arises. Salmon puts great weight on their ability to block Spartan movement towards the eastern Megarid and Attica. Before the walls were completed there was, of course, time for Spartan action, but even when they were finished they cannot have had so decisive an effect. They would naturally have enabled Athens to supply food and reinforcements by sea—but the Megarians had not taken a heroic decision to abandon their land, as the Athenians did in 431 (although with great reluctance and the serious threat of back-sliding, Thuc. ii 16.2 and 20.2), and it seems most unlikely that they would have consented to do so: they had no comparable sea-power to fall back on.

Even in the matter of blocking the passage of Sparta to the eastern Megarid and Attica, the efficacy of the walls is dubious. They only stretched eight stades from the coast to the city of Megara (Thuc. iv 66.3) and, if the garrison refused to march out to fight, the walls could easily be bypassed to the west of the city, either in the strip of lowland and foothills immediately to the west, or in the highlands where there was a passable route (even if exposed to high winds, as a Spartan army found in 379, Xen, *Hell.* v 4.16–18). So even when the Long Walls to Nisaea were complete they could not play a decisive part.

#### II *The failure of Sparta to Attack Argos*

Salmon (421 n. 8) suggests that Argos might only have had a defensive alliance with Athens and that as

Argos was not attacking or making demands on her Sparta had no reason for aggression: this, he argues, explains the Thirty Years Peace of 451 between the two cities. But he has to admit that Thucydides' use of the word 'enemies' (πολεμίοις) in i 102.4 shows that Argos was already at war with Sparta before the Athenian alliance; and she had of course helped Arcadian rebels recently. The argument from the supposed defensive character of the alliance, in itself dubious, is therefore irrelevant. Moreover, Argos' demands on Sparta (the return of Kynouria and concession of the hegemony of the Peloponnese) were perennial and only suspended intermittently by peace treaties when this was appropriate for pragmatic reasons. The Peace of 451 in no way represented a solution of problems between the two states, as was made clear in 421 and in the Corinthian War. The Thirty Years Peace between Sparta and Athens is an equally pragmatic affair, and certainly should not suggest that there were no issues between the two parties. Amongst the Peloponnesians Corinth might have been particularly resentful over Naupactus, and Aegina can hardly have been pleased to be left as tributary.

However, the crucial point here is not Sparta's feelings towards Argos, but her allegedly passionate desire to bring Athens to battle—and Athens would have been bound to succour Argos if the latter was invaded, even if the treaty was only defensive, just as Argos had helped Athens at Tanagra. So Sparta's failure to exploit this possibility remains a problem for Salmon. (He accepts my view that Oenoe cannot be cited in this context.)

### III The invasion of 446/5 and the Thirty Years Peace

Salmon says that, once the Megarid was opened to her, Sparta acted with vigour. He concedes in a footnote (421 n. 11) that Pleistoanax was 'hardly vigorous', and his suggestion that the King's attitude 'was probably exceptional' sounds very hollow in view of the Peace which immediately followed the return of Pleistoanax and his army. It is not possible to make out that the opportunity to enforce a battle, or tougher peace terms, was totally lost when the army withdrew and thus enabled Pericles to subdue Euboea. When the army, or news of its retreat, reached Sparta it could have been ordered back at once (like Agis and his army in 418, Thuc. v 63). Pericles could not have crossed to Euboea and subdued the whole island in the time taken for the Spartans to march back to Attica. In any case if Athens had, most improbably, recovered Euboea, this would not have deterred the Spartans, victorious ten years earlier at Tanagra, from invading an Attica now deprived of Argive help. For their part, the Athenians would have had to fight in defence of their land and property, since the sacrificial decision of 432/1 had not yet been made and there would in any case have been no time to evacuate the countryside. (Thucydides ii 16 records the slowness of this process in 431, even though it had been previously agreed.)

Finally, two points about the attitudes of Corinth and Sparta seem worth making.

First, the suggestion (Salmon 297) that Spartan passivity is an invention of the Corinthian envoys in

432/1 seems unconvincing in view of Archidamus' acceptance and defence of it (Thuc. i 84.1), and Thucydides' own attribution of this as one of the two causes of the growth of the Athenian empire throughout the Pentekontaetia (i 118.2, 'the Spartans were previously known to be slow to go to war unless compelled').

Second, the bellicosity of Corinth in the years preceding the First Peloponnesian War, which explains her willingness to pursue her campaigns without Spartan help, has been well discussed by D. M. Lewis in his recent paper 'The Origins of the First Peloponnesian War', in *Classical Contributions in honour of Malcolm Francis McGregor*, ed. Shrimpton and McCargar (J. J. Augustin, Locust Valley, N.Y. (1981) 71–8, a work presumably not known to Salmon.

A. J. HOLLADAY

Trinity College, Oxford

### The interpretation of the 'Second Preface' in Arrian's *Anabasis*

The so-called Second Preface in Arrian's *Anabasis* is an important statement of both his conception of the work and its place in his intellectual biography. Despite extensive scholarly discussion,<sup>1</sup> interpretative problems remain. Close literary analysis furthers understanding.

#### I. The text

Controversy centres on *An.* i 12.4–5, but the whole context of ch. 12 requires consideration.

I print A. G. Roos' Teubner text, revised by G. Wirth (Leipzig 1968).

12. ἀνιόντα δ' αὐτὸν εἰς Ἴλιον Μενοίτιός τε ὁ κυβερνήτης χρυσῶ στεφάνῳ ἐστεφάνωσε καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ Χάρης ὁ Ἀθηναῖος ἐκ Σιγγείου ἐλθὼν καὶ τινας καὶ ἄλλοι, οἱ μὲν Ἕλληνας, οἱ δὲ ἐπιχώριον . . . οἱ δὲ, ὅτι καὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλεύς ἄρα τάφον ἐστεφάνωσεν· Ἡφαιστίωνα δὲ λέγουσιν ὅτι τοῦ Πατρόκλου τὸν τάφον ἐστεφάνωσε· καὶ εὐδαιμόνισεν ἄρα, ὡς λόγος, Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀχιλλέα, ὅτι Ὀμήρου κήρυκος ἐς τὴν ἔπειτα μνήμην ἔτυχε. (2) καὶ μέντοι καὶ ἦν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ οὐχ ἥκιστα τούτου ἔνεκα εὐδαιμονιστέος Ἀχιλλεύς, ὅτι αὐτῷ γε Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, οὐ κατὰ τὴν

I thank Prof. P. A. Brunt, Mr E. L. Bowie and an anonymous referee for comments on an earlier draft.

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations are as follows:

- Bosworth 1972: A. B. Bosworth, *CQ* xxii (1972) 167 f., 174 f.  
 Bosworth 1980: *id.*, *A historical commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander* (Oxford 1980) 11, 104 ff.  
 Breebaart: A. B. Breebaart, *Enige historiografische aspecten van Arrianus' Anabasis Alexandri* (Leiden 1960) 23–7  
 Brunt 1976: P. A. Brunt, *Loeb Arrian* i (1976) 53  
 Brunt 1983: *id.*, *Loeb Arrian* ii (1983) 534–41  
 Schepens: G. Schepens, *Ancient Society* ii (1971) 254–68  
 Stadter 1980: P. A. Stadter, *Arrian of Nicomedia* (Chapel Hill 1980) 61 ff. (cf. my review in *JHS* cii (1982) 254–5, which anticipates some of the arguments of the present paper)  
 Stadter 1981: *id.*, *Ill. Cl. St.* vi 1 (1981) 157–71  
 Wirth: G. Wirth, *Historia* xiii (1964) 224.

I cannot accept the new idea of Bosworth 1980, 7 f., that *Anabasis* may not even be the work's correct title, though this hardly matters here.