

## The Foreign Policies of Sparta in the Second Half of the Sixth Century B.C.

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The Spartan ephor Chilon (ca. 556-6 B. C.) is said to have made the ephors, or statesmen, of equal importance with kings. He is credited with the significant change in Sparta's foreign policy, as evidenced by the war with Tegea (ca. 556). On this occasion Sparta instituted its new policy of extension of influence without attempting outright conquest. He also took the initiative in promoting Sparta's anti-tyrant policy.

After Chilon's death, the Agiad king Anaxandridas was the guiding force behind Sparta's foreign policy, and he seems to have taken great interest in the Aegean region. Indeed, at this time, it would be an error to underestimate the Spartan naval power, for during the years 550-20, Sparta took the initiative in affairs beyond mainland Greece and concentrated on improving its maritime fleet. Persia did not figure in the foreign policy of Sparta as of yet.

King Anaxandridas was succeeded by his eldest son Cleomenes (ca. 519), who continued the development of the Spartan navy. Evidence is found that by 517, Sparta's naval power was a formidable one. In the list of Aegean thalassocracies preserved by Eusebius in his "Chronographia," the source of which he attributes to Diodorus, the Spartans are credited with a two-year rule of the sea from 517-15. Soon after, however, Cleomenes turned his attention from the Aegean back to Greece.

He recognized the great threat Persia held for Greece and attempted to unify the Greeks by means of the Peloponnesian or Hellenic League.

During the reign of King Anaxandridas and thereafter there is no evidence that the Spartans sought to pursue any stringent anti-tyrant policy.