

is also so in the case of the two rare types and of one of the variations of type B. The arched fibula was probably a creation of the early Dark Ages, within the central Sub-Mycenaean area, although an introduction from the north is not excluded. The ring with oval angled bezel reflects the Mycenaean tradition. The ring with double spiral terminals has a northern ancestry.

F) Gold is likely to have come from the east Mediterranean (Nubia was one of the chief sources). There were also sources in Thrace and Macedonia. Silver mines are to be found in in Thrace, Macedonia, the Cyclades and Laurion. In the Mycenaean period, there is no evidence that any of these deposits were known and that the metal was not normally imported from the east Mediterranean or elsewhere. Local sources seem to be equally unknown in the Dark Ages. However, the process of silver extraction was probably known to the metalsmiths of the Argolid and Attica (Thoricos). Bronze was imported, in the form of ingots, from the east Mediterranean, presumably from Cyprus. Until 1200 B.C. iron was a precious metal, because the knowledge of how to work it was confined to the smiths of the region of Kiz-zuwatna, a province of the Hittite empire. Iron-working will have been introduced to the Aegean from the east, the immediate source being Cyprus, where iron objects have been found datable to the early 12th century as well as thereafter.

In Part V Desborough deals with the «Oral Tradition» (p. 321 ff). The art of writing had long been lost and was recovered only during the 8th century, but it is certain that there existed a substantial body of memories of the past, the oral tradition. The earliest collection of this material was the Homeric epic. In the work of Hesiod, Herodotus, and Thucydides we find references to past events. What was known, or believed, can be divided in two categories: a) Movements of peoples, and b) Lists of Kings, the chief of which was the Spartan catalogue. The evidence, however, does not stand up to close analysis and many inconsistencies are exposed. Their dating is also uncertain. Desborough comes to the conclusion (p. 325) that later Greek History can tell us virtually nothing of the conditions prevailing in the Dark Ages; there were kings and movements of people—that is all.

In the last, and very important, Part VI of his book (p. 329 ff), Desborough tries to recapture the atmosphere of the Dark Ages, to see the Greek World as a whole, during a period of over two centuries. However, as he himself says, there is much that still remains to be discovered, and few archaeological judgements can be claimed to be final. All is sheer hypothesis from the archaeological side. «When all has been said, one still seems to be so far from understanding, from recapturing the peculiar flavour of the Greek Dark Ages» (p. 352). But despite «the haze of hesitancy and supposition that characterizes this book» certain truths remain.

Athens

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G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, London, Duckworth, 1972, pp. XII+444.

Ste. Croix wrote *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* in the deliberate hope, as he himself admits in the opening paragraphs of his book, of rejecting certain well-known false suppositions, which historians have maintained about the causes of the Peloponnesian War.

Ste. Croix begins his narrative by staunchly refuting the unjustifiable view predominant among historians: namely that Athens was the real aggressor in the Peloponnesian War, and that her imperialistic actions forced Sparta into a war in which she had no desire to engage.

This theory, maintains Ste. Croix, can be seen to be utterly wrong and unjustified if one is careful in evaluating and interpreting the sources available to us today.

Our most important, complete and reliable authority on the Peloponnesian War, continues Ste. Croix, is without doubt Thucydides. Unfortunately, Ste. Croix claims, because Thucydides' narrative has been misunderstood and misrepresented by historians, we have now wrongly come to believe that Athens was the aggressor in the Peloponnesian War. (Perhaps Ste. Croix is a little too harsh in assuming that at least 30-40 historians have wrongly evaluated Thucydides).

What are some of the characteristics of Thucydides' narrative which have been neglected by historians evaluating the causes of the war, who have thus been responsible for the disastrous misjudgements which now prevail according to Ste. Croix? In order to answer his own question the author proceeds to enumerate the following points:

1. It is difficult to analyse the speeches which Thucydides assigns to his characters because the author often supplies his own arguments.

2. Certain passages in Thucydides' narrative may have been revised or written later than the actual event.

3. Some of the speeches are a little too intellectual for delivery to unsophisticated Spartans. Perhaps they are Thucydides' words and not the speaker's.

4. Thucydides makes moral judgements when dealing with relationships between individuals, thus making it difficult for the reader to discern the real emotions and thoughts of the characters before him.

5. Some of Thucydides' speeches echo standard patterns, thus again making it difficult to distinguish that which belongs to Thucydides and that which is the speaker's.

6. Thucydides' treatment of certain topics depends on the quality of the evidence he was able to obtain. For instance, the first Peloponnesian War, which took place during his infancy and youth is only briefly treated even though it is part of the same war. Thus, often, in Thucydides' narrative important topics are subordinate to minor events.

If the above points are carefully kept in mind when one is evaluating Thucydides' work, concludes Ste. Croix, then it will be clearly evident that Thucydides' narrative does not point to Athens as the aggressor of the Peloponnesian War, as is wrongly supposed.

But if, according to Ste. Croix, Athens is not the aggressor in the Peloponnesian War, then who is responsible? Sparta of course, asserts the author, who then sets out to support and justify his opinion.

Ste. Croix firmly believes that there are two points which one must carefully consider when evaluating the causes of the war: the reason openly given by the Spartans and the real, underlying cause which Thucydides calls «ἀφανεστάτην... λόγον» (1.23.6).

The reason put forward by the Spartans refers to the Athenian clashes with Corinth, first over Corcyra and then over Potidea as the cause of the Peloponnesian War. Ste. Croix, however, carefully dismisses both of Sparta's excuses. Corinth, he claims, was extensively aggressive towards Corcyra and therefore had to bear the whole of the responsibility for the consequences which ensued from her actions. As far as Potidea was concerned, continued Ste. Croix, the Thirty Years Peace had put Potidea on the Athenian side; therefore, the Peloponnesians were not entitled to intervene militarily on its behalf against Athens. Thus, skillfully and meticulously, Ste. Croix eliminates both of the reasons which Sparta used to justify her actions.

The immediate, real, but unpublicized cause which Thucydides tells us, points out the author, was the Spartan resentment and fear of the tremendous growth of Athenian power,

which after the Thirty Years Peace was rapid, combined with Sparta's desire to establish hegemony over the Greek world.

Moreover, Sparta's dangerous position as ruler of the rebellious Messenian helots and her fear of losing her much-needed allies in the Peloponnesian League, forced Sparta to break the existing peace and wage war on Athens in 432/1. It is Sparta therefore, asserts Ste. Croix, who must bear the whole blame in the Peloponnesian War and this, he continues, is proven by Thucydides' narrative in Book I and the first part of Book II. In the years 445-432, says Ste. Croix, Athens did not engage in any action which could have provoked a renewal of the war with Sparta. Neither, protests Ste. Croix, was Pericles, as he has been wrongfully accused, ever connected with the policy of creating a «land empire».

It is not only the careless misinterpretation of Thucydides' narrative, says Ste. Croix, which has caused historians to think that Athens was the aggressor of the Peloponnesian War. It is also that historians have simply taken for granted a whole series of assumptions about Athenian policy during the second half of the fifth century. Thus, the misunderstanding of the series of events narrated by Thucydides (i.e., Athens' help to Corcyra, Phormio's attack, the Megarian Decree) combined with the misinterpretation of Thucydides' narrative, are responsible for attributing the blame to Athens.

It is the misunderstanding of the Megarian Decree in particular which, in a lengthy chapter, Ste. Croix wishes to clarify. The Megarian Decree, believes the author, had no significant economic effect on the Megarians. It was not that important a decree by itself; it became significant only when the Megarians complained to Sparta about it. Consequently Sparta, Ste. Croix maintains, desiring an excuse to break the existing treaty between herself and Athens, put special emphasis on the Megarian Decree and chose it as a test of Athenian willingness to yield. In return for Spartan concessions, Athens, in fact, offered to repeal the decree. Therefore, concludes Ste. Croix, if Athens is to have a share of the blame for the Peloponnesian War, it is to rest only with those who were in power and who, consequently, controlled her foreign policy between the years 461-446.

Undoubtedly, Ste. Croix's radical re-evaluation of the origins of the Peloponnesian War is not intended for the general reader, even though we must admit that his narrative is lucid and concise. It is true, however, that the technical character of Croix's detailed arguments requires the undivided attention of one thoroughly familiar with the writings of Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War. Nevertheless, St. Croix's reconstruction of the origins of the Peloponnesian War is stimulating and provocatively controversial. If I must isolate a significantly weak point in the book, I would have to mention the author's prejudices regarding Thucydides and Sparta. There is a conspicuous overreliance upon Thucydides (pp. 5-34) which is evident throughout the book, and a tendency to justify him even where he is in the wrong (example: at p. 179 Thucydides is excused for accepting a forged document). On the other hand, Ste. Croix accepts the story of Diodorus 11.50 on Sparta, recognized as doubtful, and repeats the tale of helot slaughter in Thucydides 4.80, but disregards the information that follows, according to which the Spartans sent 700 helot hoplites with Brasidas.

No one concerned with this topic should eliminate *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* from his list of essential reading. This is a good book, a remarkable contribution to our knowledge of the Fifth Century.