

History essays - sparta foreign policy



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Sparta Foreign Policy

The beginning of Sparta was a city-state which began with the Dorian migration giving rise to the mighty polis. During this time there were endless military actions and invasions and Sparta fortified its locality through military might but also through the development of its agriculture, trade and crafts which transformed it into a self-sufficient and quite well-provided nation.

Sparta became one of the strongest Greek city-states during the Hellenic era because of its order and organization.

During the first few years the foreign policy of Sparta had two goals which were to succeed Athens as the leader of an Aegean-based naval empire, and to strengthen Sparta's hold on the hegemony (leadership) of Greece (Buckley, *Aspects of Greek History 750-323 BC*, pg. 424). Get help with your essay from our expert essay writers...

Sparta, like most cities during that time seemed to have an aggressive policy toward their neighbors. Spartan foreign policies were biased many of the people did not like the way the states had been set up so they usually supported by a Spartan garrison. Sparta had an essentially a foreign policy that was cautious which kept Sparta out of the military involvements near the Aegean. With the expansion of Persia you saw a number of Greek colonies being captured and turned into dependent states belong to the Persian Empire. Many cities did try revolting against Persia. During this time they requested help from Sparta but they refused to help these cities which many felt was very wrong but this seemed to reflect how Sparta was during that time frame along with the fact that Sparta had no resources or

equipment to help support a war that was being fought on the other side of the Aegean.

Part of the policy of Sparta was once they taken control of one of their neighbors and had them under there influence they would not pursue them any further. They felt that they did not need to expand any further into that country. Also part of the policy of Sparta was not to unify Greece. They felt they did not need to have one rule but they had a policy in place to that it would prevent other states from trying to take total control of Sparta. Do we believe this policy to be successful? I believe it was successful for many years but eventually failed when Sparta lost control to the Macedonian's.

Eventually we would see Sparta depart from they cautious polices to that they could preserve their democracy. In the second half of the 6th century, Sparta won a reputation as the bulwark of democracy against tyranny by repeatedly coming to the assistance of democratic elements in other cities and helping them to depose their tyrants. Plutarch claims, for example, that Sparta was instrumental in deposing the tyrants in Corinth, Naxon, Athens (Hippias) and Sikyon (Sparta Reconsidered Diplomacy). Many people today have a problem with this but knowing how the people of Sparta believed that there might be some truth to this. Why was this statement even questioned by people? They believed that the Spartan foreign policy of intervention in the internal affairs of other cities can be seen as preventive self-defense. Another explanation, of course, is that the tyrants tended to be populist leaders who catered to the mob. As such, they were viewed as more dangerous to the conservative Spartans than democracies dominated by aristocratic elites. (Sparta Reconsidered Diplomacy).

<https://assignbuster.com/history-essays-sparta-foreign-policy/>

Many historians believe that the Spartan Kings were able to influence the foreign policy by trying to influence the officials. Since the kings were not able to make the foreign policy of Sparta they felt that if they were able to influence those in control they would be able to get what they wanted. On a formal level, foreign policy seems to have been in the hands of the ephors (Mitchell, *Greeks Bearing Gifts*, pg. 64). Part of the problem was the many did not think that the ephors had as much power as the kings believed they did.

We do have to be careful when we consider the effect that the foreign policy of Sparta had on foreign policy. It did seem that the main policy of Sparta was: the main objectives of Spartan policy from 600 to 400 B. C. were to prevent any state in Greece from becoming dangerous and to bar any outsider from entering the Aegean world (Starr, *The Ancient Greeks*, pg 115)

From my readings I found that during the 6th and 5th centuries it was believed that Last but not least, the conservatism of Sparta's 6th and 5th century foreign policy is reflected in the fact that Sparta was extremely reluctant to move against Athens despite rising pressure for support from the city-states chafing under Athens' increasingly oppressive and arrogant hegemony. (Sparta Reconsidered Diplomacy)

Did Spartan Foreign Policy have an impact on the world today? Yes I do think that we can see common factors between ancient Greece and the contemporary world. This impact has had an impact on many nations spanning over twenty-four centuries. Has it always had a positive impact,

probably not but we do see that these policies had a great impact on the course of human events

References

Buckley, Terry. *Aspects Of Greek History 750-323 BC: A Source-Based Approach*. New York: Routledge, 1996. 424 [online] books. google. New York: Routledge, 1996., 424. Available from: [http://www. questia. com/library/book/aspects-of-greek-history-750-323-bc-a-source-based-approach-by-terry-buckley. jsp](http://www.questia.com/library/book/aspects-of-greek-history-750-323-bc-a-source-based-approach-by-terry-buckley.jsp) Accessed August 30, 2008

Mitchell, Lynette G.. *Greeks Bearing Gifts: The Public Use of Private Relationships in the Greek World, 435-323 BC*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 64 Available from: [http://books. google. com/books?hl= en&id= FbVPFJQtoZgC&dq= Mitchell,+Lynette+G.. +Greeks+Bearing+Gifts: +The+Public+Use+of+Private+Relationships+in+the+Greek+World,+435-323+BC.&printsec= frontcover&source= web&ots= oL_hF8Vwo7&sig= B8C9j7rGsRYYTaA_CK96Jmze6oM&sa= X&oi= book_result&resnum= 1&ct= result](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=FbVPFJQtoZgC&dq=Mitchell,+Lynette+G..+Greeks+Bearing+Gifts:+The+Public+Use+of+Private+Relationships+in+the+Greek+World,+435-323+BC.&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=oL_hF8Vwo7&sig=B8C9j7rGsRYYTaA_CK96Jmze6oM&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result) Accessed August 30, 2008

Sparta Reconsidered - Spartan Diplomacy." Elysium Gates Web Hosting. [http://elysiumgates. com/~helena/Diplomacy. html](http://elysiumgates.com/~helena/Diplomacy.html) (accessed August 30, 2008).

Starr, Chester. *The Ancient Greeks*. Library of Congress: Oxford University Press, 1971.