

STOICS, CYNICS,
AND THE SPARTAN REVOLUTION

In one of the supreme ironies of history, the austere Lycurgan system at Sparta failed in its primary aim – the fossilization of martial virtue – and succeeded in military victories, the heady profits of which undermined the precarious communism of the bivouac state. Conditioned to repress fear, the Spartan compensated by indulging greed – bribery, not cowardice, was his fatal weakness. After the collapse of the Spartan Empire at the Battle of Leuctra in 371, mercenary service became the principal Spartan occupation, even for Xenophon’s model officer and gentleman, King Agesilaus. With landed estates encroaching on the traditional lots and great fortunes swollen by the gains of empire and mercenary adventure, the common Spartan found himself reduced to an equality of obligation only. The inflation and economic stress of the Hellenistic era intensified the imbalance between wealth and poverty in Lacedaemon. In a brief reign (244–241), the idealistic young King Agis IV tried to revive Sparta’s military glory by restoring „Lycurgan ways” and did effect the abolition of debts but failed to redistribute land lots – his agent, Agesilaus, avoided the issue until a counter-revolutionary *coup* led by the deposed King Leonidas overthrew the reformers and lynched Agis. In 227, Leonidas’ son, Cleomenes III, seized power and completed the aborted reforms of Agis – his subsequent success forced his rival for leadership of the Peloponnese, Aratus of Sicyon, into an alliance with Macedon, and Cleomenes was defeated at Sellasia in 222 to die shortly after in exile in Egypt.

The slogans of the Spartan Revolution – to abolish debts and divide the land¹ – found a ready response in the discontented urban masses of the Third Century Peloponnese.² The Argives became so disenchant-

¹ Plutarch, Agis 8.1. According to the account of the contemporary historian, Phylarchus of Athens, the Spartan citizenry was reduced to not more than seven hundred and six hundred of them were destitute. Plutarch, Agis 5.4.

² Plutarch, Agis 14.3; Cleomenes 16.5; 17.3; 18.2; Aratus 38.5; 39.4–40.2. Polybius II 52.1; 55.8.

ed with the failure of their Spartan liberators to effect the promised reforms that they revolted and rejoined the Achaean League.¹ However, the revolutionary program was essentially a vehicle for the imperial ambitions of Cleomenes and its appeal abroad was limited to free citizens whose aim was restitution not socialization or emancipation – the poor wished to level the rich, not to free slaves or share goods.² Appropriately the defenders of the proletariat were the Spartans whose revived military communism was predicated on Helot labor and who were in effect an absolute leisure class whose forced hobby was war. Agis fell, not because Agesilaus procrastinated in dividing land,³ but because land division meant expanding the citizenry to include deserving aliens,⁴ which the old Spartans realized would reduce themselves to equality whereas previously they had the “poor white’s” consolation of being Spartans though destitute. Accordingly, they welcomed back the reactionary King Leonidas⁵ and allowed his clique to lynch Agis, his mother, and his grandmother. Cleomenes divided the land and expanded the citizenry only after murdering the ephors, exiling the opposition, and assuming quasi-dictatorial powers.⁶

Cleomenes’ propagandist, the dramatic historian Phylarchus of Athens, provided the Revolution with an impressive hagiology⁷ but more recent scholars have insisted on interjecting a philosophic motive – Stoicism. Bidez believes that Sparta was to be a Stoic City of the Sun⁸; Ollier feels that Cleomenes was converted to Stoicism by his tutor Sphaerus;⁹ and Tarn insists that “the Stoic insistence on equality and brotherhood sank into men’s souls and inspired visions of something better than the existing order.”¹⁰ Toynbee too believes that Stoicism

¹ Plutarch, Cleomenes 20.3-4.

² Friedrich Oertel, *Die soziale Frage im Altertum*, in: *Forschungen und Fortschritte* (1927) 3 : 257. M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Oxford, 1941, Vol. III, p. 1367 n. 34.

³ Plutarch, Agis 13.4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.2.

⁶ Plutarch, Cleomenes 8 ; 10.1 ; 11.1-2.

⁷ No. 81 in Jacoby’s *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Phylarchus is paraphrased in almost all of Plutarch’s Agis and Cleomenes. He has recently been treated by J. Kroymann, Phylarchos, in: *RE* (1956) Suppl. Bd. VIII: 471-489, and E. Gabba, *Studi su Filarco*, in: *Athenaeum* (1957) 35: 3-55, 193-239.

⁸ J. Bidez, *La Cité du Monde et la Cité du Soleil chez les Stoïciens*, in: *Académie royale de Belgique, Bulletin de la classe des Lettres, Ser. 5* (1932) 18 : 244-294.

⁹ François Ollier, *Le Philosophe Stoïcien Sphaïros et l’oeuvre réformatrice des rois de Sparte Agis IV et Cléomène III*, in: *Revue des Études grecques* (1936) 49 : 536-570.

¹⁰ W. W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization*, (3d Ed. rev. with G. T. Griffith) London, (Arnold), 1952, pp. 122-125.

was a militant humanitarianism and virtually a Hellenistic precursor of socialism and seriously writes of "Marx's Hellenic prototype, Blossius of Cumae, the Stoic prophet of revolution who was not only Zeno's disciple but also the master of Tiberius Gracchus and Aristonicus."¹ The principal source of these learned fancies is a passage from Eratosthenes on Alexander's policy toward subject peoples, garbled by Plutarch in an early flight of rhetoric² on the basis of which even Alexander the Great has been adopted into the Stoic Internationale.³ The same essay paraphrased the Stoic Zeno to the effect that "men ought not to live in separate states and peoples with parochial ideas of justice, but rather ought to feel that all men belong to the same city and people with one life and one order as a grazing herd shares the same pasture."⁴ Obviously the final phrase is a pun on *nómos* (law) and *nomós* (pasture) and in no sense a relic of an early radical tract by Zeno.⁵ His herd are not Stoic communists but similes of humanity's subjection to a common Natural Law which was the essence of Stoicism and scientifically reinforced by astral determinism. Though at times Zeno may have written more radically than he acted,⁶ the Stoa was the most conservative of the philosophic schools, partly because of its patronage by the well-to-do and partly because natural law concepts easily justified the established order.⁷ Stoics were found in the courts of kings and the tents of Roman commanders, enlightening the hearts and enjoying the bounty of the great of the earth. Of the two Stoics associated with radical or popular movements, Blossius escaped the fall of Tiberius Gracchus to perish with Aristonicus at Pergamum, while Sphaerus ended as a courtier of the voluptuary Ptolemy IV Philopator. More typical was the Stoic Persaeus who was Antigonos' governor of occupied Corinth; Chrysippus, Diogenes, and Hecaton were committed to the sanctity of private property, while

¹ Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Oxford, 1939, Vol. V, pp. 179-180.

² Plutarch, *de Alex. fort.* 329AB = Strabo I 4.9. See E. Badian, *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind*, in: *Historia* (1958) 7 : 432-440. Plutarch suggests that Alexander's conquests effected the unity of mankind of which Zeno spoke. However, Zeno's "common pasture" was not political, and Strabo (= Eratosthenes) presents Alexander's cosmopolitanism as inherently pragmatic.

³ W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind*, in: *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1933) 19 : 123-166. Cf. Philip Merlan, *Alexander the Great or Antiphon the Sophist*, in: *Classical Philology* (1950) 45 : 161-166.

⁴ Plutarch, *de Alex. fort.* 329A.

⁵ W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great*, Cambridge, 1948, Vol. II, pp. 420-421, has been corrected by Badian, *op. cit.*, p. 433 n. 34.

⁶ Diogenes Laertius VII 33; 16.

⁷ Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1130.

Panaetius was the confidant of Scipio Aemilianus and Posidonius of Pompey the Great.¹

The legend of Stoic socialism lends itself to imaginative flights. Bidez divined that Baal at Emesa was Cleanthes' Helios Cosmocrator and consequently that Sphaerus sought to establish "la cosmopolis hélique" at Sparta.² Though Tarn eventually recanted on Sphaerus,³ Max Pohlenz insists that "Kleomenes... erteilte Sphairos den Auftrag, die Jugenderziehung wie die gesamte Lebensordnung der Erwachsenen zu organisieren und den Geist des Lykurgischen Sparta auf Grund der stoischen Weltanschauung zu neuem Leben zu erwecken."⁴

Sphaerus is the key-stone of the myth of Sparta as a Stoic military academy. Ollier asserts: "Sans le Stoïcisme de Sphairos, n'en doutons pas, une révolution plus ou moins violente aurait fatalement éclaté à Lacédémone. Mais elle n'aurait pas eu la même allure."⁵ He even claims that Phylarchus' account of the Spartan Revolution was simply copied from Sphaerus⁶ and that Phylarchus himself was "sans aucun doute un adepte du stoïcisme."⁷ According to Diogenes Laertius, Sphaerus of Bosporus studied under Zeno and Cleanthes, and when King Ptolemy asked the latter to send him a philosopher, he sent Sphaerus to Egypt after Chrysippus declined the honor.⁸ Since Cleanthes did not likely live beyond 228,⁹ Sphaerus' host was Ptolemy III Euergetes whose foreign policy supported Cleomenes against the Achaean League. Appropriately Sphaerus' works include books on Monarchy, Spartan Institution, and Socrates and Lycurgus.¹⁰ He appears at the court of Ptolemy IV Philopator in two famous anecdotes – he justified sampling wax fruit on the basis of probability and skillfully remarked that Ptolemy was a true king, kings being the likes of Ptolemy.¹¹ Though Diogenes Laertius was familiar with Plutarch and did record the connection of the Stoic Persaeus with Antigonus Go-

¹ An approach to the subject has been made by Margaret Reesor, *The Political Theory of the Old and Middle Stoa*, New York, (Priv. printed), 1951.

² Bidez, *op. cit.*, pp. 274 n. 3 and 279.

³ W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great*, Vol. II, p. 425.

⁴ Max Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, Göttingen, 1948, Vol. I, pp. 26 and 170; Vol. II, p. 15.

⁵ Ollier, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 553-554. Jacoby, *FrGrH* Vol. III B1, p. 624, rejects this fancy.

⁷ Ollier, *op. cit.*, pp. 541-542. Ollier's ignorance of the fragments of Phylarchus is impressive. While rejecting his extreme position, Gabba (*op. cit.*, pp. 52-53) gives more weight to Ollier's Stoic Phylarchus than the data necessarily warrant.

⁸ Diogenes Laertius VII 37.

⁹ Cleanthes was Zeno's pupil for nineteen years and died at the age of seventy-two as did Zeno, according to his disciple Persaeus – Diogenes Laertius VII 28; 176. For Zeno's death in 261, see W. W. Tarn, *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. VII, p. 220.

¹⁰ Diogenes Laertius VII 177. Athenaeus VIII 345E. Cf. Cicero *Tusc. Disp.* IV 53.

¹¹ Diogenes Laertius VII 178.

natas,¹ he makes no mention of the picturesque episode of Sphaerus at Sparta which Plutarch interjected into Phylarchus' narrative.² Plutarch cites another source (λέγεται δὲ καὶ - "it is also said") for Sphaerus as Cleomenes' mentor and adds a worried comment on the ill effects of Stoic doctrines on already imperious personalities.³ Later he refers to Sphaerus as taking a leading role in providing details of the Lycurgan discipline for the revolutionary regime.⁴ The source of both passages was probably Sphaerus enlivening his Spartan books (which Plutarch used in the *Lycurgus* 5.3) with grandiose reminiscences of his sojourn in Sparta. Sphaerus could have done some research for Cleomenes in the days when the Revolution and military successes were at high tide, but it is unlikely that King Leonidas, who had lynched Agis and two queens, would tolerate a subversive instructor for his son. Plutarch amended Phylarchus' account by adding the dubious figure of Sphaerus in order to provide a pendant for the Stoic Blossius of Cumae who had influenced the political thought and behavior of Tiberius Gracchus.⁵

If the historian of ideas feels compelled to seek a philosophic source for the ideology of the Spartan Revolution – apart from the constitutional folklore of Lycurgus – it is not to be found in the imaginary humanitarianism of the respectable Stoa but in the leveling austerity of the genuinely radical Cynic school. Far more than the Stoics, the Cynics admired in Sparta “la cité de la virilité et de l'effort, où ils croient encore retrouver les restes de la vie conforme à la nature.”⁶ According to Plutarch, both Diogenes and Zeno modeled their Politeiai on Sparta⁷ as they fancied it, and there is an undeniable similarity in the radical attitudes attributed to them,⁸ though Zeno's

¹ Diogenes VII 36 (Persaeus). Diogenes Laertius used Plutarch's Alexander (IX 60) and Lysander et Sylla (IV 4). He also read Phylarchus (IX 115).

² Plutarch, Cleomenes 1-2; 3 includes a romantic interlude (Agiatis), a prolonged tirade on luxury and corruption after Agis, and the episode of Cleomenes and Xenares; all show the hand of Phylarchus.

³ Ibid., 2.2-3. On Plutarch's anti-Stoicism, see Max Pohlenz, *Plutarchs Schriften gegen die Stoiker*, in: *Hermes* (1939) 74 : 1-33, and F. H. Sanbach, *Plutarch on the Stoics*, in: *Classical Quarterly* (1940) 34 : 20-25.

⁴ Plutarch, Cleomenes 11.2. If a Stoic at court makes the patron an “Ur-Sozialist”, Antigonus Gonatas was farther left than Cleomenes since he employed Persaeus, the Stoic author of Spartan studies, as governor of Corinth. Plutarch, Aratus 18.1; 23.5. Athenaeus IV 140 B, E-F; 162B, D; XIII 607B-F.

⁵ Plutarch, Tiberius Gracchus 8.4-5; 17.4; 20.3-4. Cicero de amic. 11.37.

⁶ François Ollier, *Le mirage spartiate, Etude sur l'idéalisation de Sparta dans l'antiquité grecque du début de l'école cynique jusqu'à la fin de la cité*, *Annales de l'Université de Lyon*, 1943, No. 13, p. 77.

⁷ Plutarch, Lycurgus 31.2.

⁸ Diogenes Laertius VI 72; VII 33.

dour personality inhibited him from some of the more eccentric behavior of “Socrates gone mad.”¹ Von Fritz accepts the authenticity of Diogenes’ *Politeia* which, according to Philodemus, was the source of Zeno’s extreme positions.² Radical social thought wore better on the Cynics than the Stoics whose conservatism was preserved by property and position. The Garden of Epicurus required a private income while the Cynic frequently started life with little and rationalized his poverty into a virtue. Cynicism was a way of life, applied ethics, not a bundle of dogmas or exercises in logic.³ Diogenes’ kennel, like Lycurgus’ bivouac, was a short cut to virtue,⁴ and the Cynic dog and the Spartan wolf both agreed that austerity and gymnastics brought health to the body and virtue to the heart. They had unbounded faith in education laid on with a heavy hand and celebrated the strenuous life whereby Heracles, patron saint of Cynic and Spartan, won the only true freedom, obeying no law but that of nature.⁵ Diogenes had no objection to wine when someone else was paying, but Crates was a teetotaler and unafraid to denounce the military as donkey-drivers.⁶ The Cynics seemed to embody the natural virtues – “they believe in the simple life, eating only to live, and wearing one garment. They disdain wealth, glory, and position. Some are vegetarians and drink only water, happy with any shelter like Diogenes who said that the gods needed nothing and godly men but little.”⁷ Appropriately, the apologist for the Spartan Revolution, Phylarchus of Athens, was a man of Cynic tastes who detested luxury, drunkenness, and government regulation and admired the natural virtues of noble animals and well-behaved barbarians.⁸

Not all Cynics were itinerant intellectuals or street-corner preachers – Onesicritus was a courtier of Alexander the Great and Cercidas of Megalopolis was a politician in the harness of the conservative Achaean League. On Aratus’ behalf he negotiated the Achaean betrayal to Macedon and later commanded his city’s contingent against Cleo-

¹ *Ibid.*, VI 54.

² Kurt von Fritz, *Quellen-Untersuchungen zu Leben und Philosophie des Diogenes von Sinope*, in: *Philologus* (1926) Suppl. XVIII-2, p. 55, and W. Crönert, *Kolotes und Menedemos*, in: *Studien zur Palaeographie und Papyrskunde* von C.E. Wessely, Leipzig, 1906, Vol. VI, pp. 58-65.

³ *Diogenes Laertius* VI 103.

⁴ *Ibid.*, VI 104.

⁵ *Ibid.*, VI 70-71; cf. 38.

⁶ *Ibid.*, VI 54; 90; 92.

⁷ *Ibid.*, VI 104.

⁸ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* X 208. Athenaeus III 73B-D; IV 150 D-F; X 438C; 442C; XII 521CD; 526A-C; XIII 606E-607A. (*J 81 FF* 2; 6; 7; 26; 28; 36; 45; 50; 65; 66).

menes at Sellasia.¹ Yet he also wrote poems of vehement social protest, causing Bickerman to question the class warfare aspect of Spartan Imperialism and reduce the struggle to simple rivalry between Aratus and Cleomenes, since the party of property was backed by Cercidas, the voice of social conscience.² His famous *Second Meliamb* denounces the inequalities of wealth and even doubts the existence of Father Zeus “who is a real father to some but only a step-father to others.”³ Tarn feels that Cercidas was sounding the tocsin for the upper-classes to “give to the poor while they had time, otherwise the social revolution might be upon them and their wealth be taken away.”⁴ Rostovtzeff is more cautious: “A sentence in it sounds like a warning, addressed to the wealthy, of the coming revolution, when they will be forced to ‘disgorge’... the wealth which they have appropriated.”⁵ Michell suggests that the denunciation of wealth reflects a radical period before Spartan expansion made a Megalopolitan patriot of the Cynic Cercidas,⁶ while Barber rattles the family skeleton, the Fourth Century Cercidas who had betrayed Megalopolis to Philip of Macedon, noting the similar behavior of the Cynic: “Cercidas’ class-consciousness seems to have prevailed over his sympathies for the poor... No doubt the philo-Macedonian policy of his city and family caused him to be selected for the task” of negotiating with Antigonos Doso.⁷ With more discernment, Dudley suggests that the *Second Meliamb* was composed in the distressed period after the sack of Megalopolis by Cleomenes when one faction proposed limiting the size of the city and providing landless citizens with one third of the property of the great estate holders.⁸ Polybius testifies that the settlement of affairs by Prytanis, a Peripatetic appointee of Antigonos, was unsatisfactory and that Aratus aided in the eventual compromise of factions.⁹ If Aratus paid his military and diplomatic debts to Cercidas at this time, the Cynic’s successful service as Lawgiver was probably in 217,¹⁰ and his militant social views would date from the conditions after the war against Cleomenes, when the desperate plight of the Megalopolitan poor would recommend strong measures to previously safe conser-

¹ Polybius II 48.4; 50.2; 65.3.

² Elias Bickerman, Notes sur Polybe, in: *Revue des Études grecques* (1943) 56 : 299-300.

³ D. R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism from Diogenes to the Sixth Century A. D.*, London, 1937, p. 79, provides an impressive English translation of the *Second Meliamb*.

⁴ W. W. Tarn, *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. VII, p. 755.

⁵ Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 207.

⁶ H. Michell, *Sparta*, Cambridge, 1952, pp. 325-326.

⁷ E. A. Barber, *New Chapters in the History of Greek Literature*, Oxford, 1921, p. 4.

⁸ Dudley, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Cf. Polybius V 93.2-7.

⁹ Polybius V 93.8-9.

¹⁰ Dudley, *op. cit.*, pp. 80 and 92-93.

vatives who had opposed the slogans of the Spartan Revolution until they were faced with a situation which demanded drastic reforms. Cercidas, who had helped to bring in the Brygians (Macedonians)¹ denounced in the *Meliamb*, had good reason to be disenchanted with the outcome of his efforts.² Other fragments of Cercidas allude enigmatically to Sphaerus and to „Zeno’s love”, which Dudley feels was a jibe at the erotic tastes of the Stoic,³ but there is no textual connection or even intelligibility in the scraps from Oxyrhynchus.⁴ If Cercidas attacked Sphaerus, he did so not as a Cynic but as an adherent of Aratus.

The concept of a Cynic king seems incongruous but has been well argued by Ragnar Hoistad.⁵ Cyrus and especially Heracles were Cynic ideals of rulers heroically toiling on behalf of humanity.⁶ Prodicus’ parable of the Choice of Heracles became in Cynic hands an image of Heracles choosing between the mountain of responsible monarchy and the crag of tyranny.⁷ Much Cynic thought and more Cynic behavior verged on anarchy but the Cynic defied the laws of society to obey the laws of nature which precluded obeisance to men whose sole authority was spear-won – yet the true king, king by nature, compels obedience through respect. When envoys met Cleomenes, “who was really a king and not just called king,” and saw his simple life and devotion to duty, “they could not resist him and said that he alone was of the seed of Heracles.”⁸

¹ See A. D. Knox, *Herodes, Cercidas, and the Greek Choliambic Poets*, Harvard (Loeb), 1929, p. 197 n. 2. Cf. Herodotus VI 45; VII 73; 185.

² Knox, *op. cit.* pp. 231-239, presents but rejects as spurious „Cercidea” which lament that wealthy boors are preferred over impoverished aristocrats, a situation that likely encouraged Cercidas’ Cynicism.

³ Dudley, *op. cit.*, p. 82. However, few Greeks and no Cynic objected to homosexuals only to effeminacy.

⁴ Arthur Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Vol. VIII (1911) No. 1802, pp. 20-59, gives the original and restored texts of the papyrus. Part of Fragment 4 (with Zeno reference) is reproduced in Plate II.

⁵ Ragnar Hoistad, *Cynic Hero and Cynic King*, Uppsala, 1948, especially pp. 22-49; 103-149. But see T. A. Sinclair, *A History of Greek Political Thought*, London (Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1951, pp. 140-142 and 264.

⁶ Diogenes Laertius VI 2; 13.

⁷ Dio Chrysostom, *On Kingship* I 65. Xenophon *Memorabilia* II 1.21.

⁸ Plutarch, *Cleomenes* 13.2. Cf. Athenaeus IV 142 C-F (J 81 F 44). Gabba (*op. cit.*, pp. 51-52) suggests that the emphasis on Heracles was to counter Antigonid claims of Heraclid descent, on which see Diodorus VII 15 and Charles F. Edson, *The Antigonids, Heracles, and Beroea*, in: *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* (1934) 42 : 213-246. If such claims were seriously advanced, Phylarchus countered them through Therycion’s caustic quip on the incongruity of the seed of Heracles surrendering to the spawn of Philip and Alexander, Plutarch *Cleomenes* 31.2.

The kings of Sparta were descended from Heracles the Cynic saint¹ whose portrayal by Euripides embodied both the Cynic and Laconic ideals: "Plain, simple, good for great things – all his wisdom pruned for action, not used for jabbering."² Since he toiled for humanity not gain, only Heracles or a king like him was entitled to the epithet Benefactor: "To mortals a great friend and benefactor."³ Heracles appears on Cleomenes' coins⁴ and both are somewhat unbelievable benefactors who rely readily on violence. The Cynic Onesicritus had described the ideal king as a philosopher in arms "who had the power to persuade the amenable to practice self-control and to force the recalcitrant to do so."⁵ Plutarch or Phylarchus observed that Cleomenes enjoyed voluntary submission but was just as ready to force his subjects into virtue.⁶ His epitaph by his enemy Polybius concedes the effect of Phylarchus' portrait of the Spartan king as a Cynic hero: „Thus Cleomenes ended his life, having been a man able in his relations with others and accomplished in statecraft, in a word, a born leader and king by nature."⁷

Though Stoic connections with the Spartan Revolution are extremely tenuous and the movement has somewhat of a Cynic tone at least in the literary remains of Phylarchus of Athens, the labels of the philosophic schools should not be given too much weight in evaluating events and personalities other than professional philosophers. At most, "Cynic" or "Stoic" signified a general tendency to certain attitudes, not subscription to a fixed body of belief. In the modern world, Mill, Marx, and Lenin all sincerely considered themselves socialists, a term as loosely inclusive and still specific as the school labels of antiquity. Then as now, practical action stemmed from interest and necessity, not intellectual commitment – Stoic Brutus and Epicurean Cassius cut Caesar down, and Cleomenes was an ambitious prince long before he was a revolutionist.

¹ Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 1.3. Polybius IV 35.14 dryly observes that a later king of Sparta became a descendant of Heracles by presenting each ephor with one talent.

² Quoted by Diogenes Laertius III 63 from a lost play.

³ Euripides, *Heracles* 1252.

⁴ B.V. Head, *Historia Numorum, A Manual of Greek Numismatics*, Oxford, 1911, p. 435.

⁵ Strabo XV 1.64 (J 134 F 17a), translation by T. S. Brown, *Onesicritus*, Berkeley Calif., 1949, p. 39. J. Kaerst, *Geschichte des hellenistischen Zeitalters*, Leipzig, 1909, Vol. II-1, p. 123, felt that this passage embodied the ideal Cynic king. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 50, is more cautious.

⁶ Plutarch, *Cleomenes* 1.3.

⁷ Polybius V 39.6. Polybius considered Cleomenes legally a tyrant after he had deposed the ephors.