**CLST 320 (Greek and Roman Slavery) Handout**

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**Slave revolts in Greece**

**We know little about revolts of Greek slaves. We are most informed about the Messenian Wars, the wars of the Helots against their Spartan overlords. Most historians are very dubious about the historicity of all these accounts, but they are what we have. In the following, Pausanias recounts the history of Messenia as part of his travel guide to the area. The first section discusses the Second Messenian War (685-688). (The first enslaved the Messenians and took 40 years, and was waged from 764-744 BCE.) This account of the second war begins with some discussion of what happened to the Messenians after they lost the first war.**

 [4.14.4] The Messenians themselves were treated in this way: First they exacted an oath that they would never rebel or attempt any kind of revolution. Secondly, though no fixed tribute was imposed on them, they used to bring the half of all the produce of their fields to Sparta. It was also ordained that for the funerals of the kings and other magistrates men should come from Messenia with their wives in black garments, and a penalty was laid on those who disobeyed. [4.14.5] As to the wanton punishments which they inflicted on the Messenians, this is what is said in Tyrtaeus' poems:–

“Like asses worn by their great burdens, bringing of dire necessity to their masters the half of all the fruits the corn-land bears.”

That they were compelled to share their mourning, he shows by the following:–

“Wailing for their masters, they and their wives alike, whensoever the baneful doom of death came upon any.”

[4.14.6] In this trouble, the Messenians, foreseeing no kindness from the Spartans, and thinking death in battle or a complete migration from Peloponnese preferable to their present lot, resolved at all costs to revolt. They were incited to this mainly by the younger men, who were still without experience of war but were of high spirit and preferred death in a free country, even though slavery might bring happiness in all else.

[4.14.7] Of the young men who had grown up in Messenia the best and most numerous were round Andania, and among them was Aristomenes, who to this day is worshipped as a hero among the Messenians. They think that even the circumstances of his birth were notable, for they assert that a spirit or a god united with his mother, Nicoteleia, in the form of a serpent. I know that the Macedonians tell a similar story about Olympias, and the Sicyonians about Aristodama, but there is this difference: [4.14.8] The Messenians do not make Aristomenes the son of Heracles or of Zeus, as the Macedonians do with Alexander and Ammon, and the Sicyonians with Aratus and Asclepius. Most of the Greeks say that Pyrrhus was the father of Aristomenes, but I myself know that in their libations the Messenians call him Aristomenes son of Nicomedes. He then, being in the full vigor of youth and courage, with others of the nobles incited them to revolt. This was not done openly at first, but they sent secretly to Argos and to the Arcadians, to ask if they were ready to help unhesitatingly and no less energetically than in the former war.[4.15.1] XV. When all their preparations were made for the war, the readiness of their allies exceeding expectation (for now the hatred which the Argives and Arcadians felt for the Spartans had blazed up openly), they revolted in the thirty-ninth year after the capture of Ithome, and in the fourth year of the twenty-third Olympiad when Icarus of Hyreresia won the short footrace. At Athens the archonship was now of annual tenure, and Tlesias held office…

 [4.15.4] In the first year after the revolt the Messenians fought the Spartans at a place called Derae in Messenia, both sides being without their allies. Neither side won a clear victory, but Aristomenes is said to have achieved more than it seemed that one man could, so that, as he was of the race of the Aepytidae, they were for making him king after the battle. As he declined, they appointed him general with absolute power. [4.15.5] It was the view of Aristomenes that any man would be ready to die in battle if he had first done deeds worthy of record, but that it was his own especial task at the very beginning of the war to prove that he had struck terror into the Spartans and that he would be more terrible to them for the future. With this purpose he came by night to Sparta and fixed on the temple of Athena of the Brazen House a shield inscribed “The Gift of Aristomenes to the Goddess, taken from Spartans.”

[4.15.6] The Spartans received an oracle from Delphi that they should procure the Athenian as counsellor. So they sent messengers to Athens to announce the oracle, asking for a man to advise what they must do. The Athenians, who were not anxious either that the Spartans should add to their possessions the best part of Peloponnese without great dangers, or that they themselves should disobey the god, made their plans accordingly. There was a man Tyrtaeus, a teacher of letters, who was considered of poor intellect and was lame in one foot. Him they sent to Sparta. On his arrival he recited his poems in elegiacs and anapaests to the nobles in private and to all whom he could collect.

[4.15.7] A year after the fight at Derae, both sides being joined by their allies, they prepared to join battle at the Boar's Tomb, as it is called. The Messenians had the Eleians and Arcadians and also help from Argos and from Sicyon. They were joined by all the Messenians who had previously been in voluntary exile, together with those from Eleusis, whose hereditary task it was to perform the rites of the Great Goddesses, and the descendants of Androcles. These indeed were their most zealous supporters.

[4.15.8] The Corinthians came to fight on the side of the Spartans, and some of the Lepreans owing to their hatred of the Eleians. But the people of Asine were bound by oaths to both sides. This spot, the Boar's Tomb, lies in Stenyclerus of Messenia, and there, as is said, Heracles exchanged oaths with the sons of Neleus over the pieces of a boar. [4.16.1] Sacrifice was offered by the seers on both sides before the battle; on the Spartaian side by Hecas, descendant and namesake of the Hecas who had come with the sons of Aristodemus to Sparta, on the Messenian side by Theoclus, who was descended from Eumantis, an Eleian of the house of the Iamidae, whom Cresphontes had brought to Messenia. Then in the presence of the seers both sides were spurred by greater ardor for the fight.

[4.16.2] All showed the zeal that befitted their age and strength, but Anaxander, the Spartaian king, and his Spartan guard above all. On the Messenian side the descendants of Androcles, Phintas and Androcles, and their company tried to acquit themselves like brave men. Tyrtaeus and the chief priests of the Great Goddesses took no part in the action, but urged on the hindmost on their own sides.

[4.16.3] As to Aristomenes himself he had with him eighty picked men of the Messenians of the same age as himself, each one of them thinking it the highest honor that he had been thought worthy of a place in the troop with Aristomenes. They were quick to understand each other's movements, especially those of their leader, when he began or contemplated any manoeuvre. They themselves with Aristomenes were at first hard pressed in face of Anaxander and the Spartaian champions, but receiving wounds unflinchingly and slowing every form of desperate courage they repulsed Anaxander and his men by their long endurance and valor. [4.16.4] As they fled, Aristomenes ordered another Messenian troop to undertake the pursuit. He himself attacked the enemies' line where it was firmest, and after breaking it at this point sought a new point of assault. Soon successful here, he was the more ready to attack those who stood their ground, until he threw into confusion the whole line of the Spartans themselves and of their allies. They were now running without shame and without waiting for one another, while he assailed them with a terror that seemed more than one man's fury could inspire.

[4.16.5] There was a wild pear-tree growing in the plain, beyond which Theoclus the seer forbade him to pass, for he said that the Dioscuri were seated on the tree. Aristomenes, in the heat of passion, did not hear all that the seer said, and when he reached the tree, lost his shield, and his disobedience gave to the Spartans an opportunity for some to escape from the rout. For he lost time trying to recover his shield. [4.16.6] The Spartans were thrown into despair after this blow and purposed to put an end to the war. But Tyrtaeus by reciting his poems contrived to dissuade them, and filled their ranks from the Helots to replace the slain. When Aristomenes returned to Andania, the women threw ribbons and flower blossoms over him, singing also a song which is sung to this day:–

“To the middle of Stenyclerus' plain and to the hilltop Aristomenes followed after the Spartans.”

[4.16.7] He recovered his shield also, going to Delphi and descending into the holy shrine of Trophonius at Lebadeia, as the Pythia ordered. Afterwards he took the shield to Lebadeia and dedicated it, and I myself have seen it there among the offerings. The device on it is an eagle with both wings outspread to the rim. Now on his return from Boeotia having learnt of the shield at the shrine of Trophonius and recovered it, he at once engaged in greater deeds.

[4.16.8] Collecting a force of Messenians, together with his own picked troop, he waited for night and went to a city of Laconia whose ancient name in Homer's *Catalogue* is Pharis,[13](http://www.theoi.com/Text/Pausanias4A.html#n13) but is called Pharae by the Spartans and neighboring people. Arriving here he killed those who offered resistance and surrounding the cattle started to drive them off to Messenia. On the way he was attacked by Spartaian troops under king Anaxander, but put them to flight and began to pursue Anaxander; but he stopped the pursuit when wounded in the buttocks with a javelin; he did not, however, lose the booty which he was driving away.

[4.16.9] After waiting only for the wound to heal, he was making an attack by night on Sparta itself, but was deterred by the appearance of Helen and of the Dioscuri. But he lay in wait by day for the maidens who were performing the dances in honor of Artemis at Caryae, and capturing those who were wealthiest and of noblest birth, carried them off to a village in Messenia, entrusting them to men of his troop to guard, while he rested for the night.

[4.16.10] There the young men, intoxicated, I suppose, and without any self-control, attempted to violate the girls. When Aristomenes attempted to deter them from an action contrary to Greek usage, they paid no attention, so that he was compelled to kill the most disorderly. He released the captives for a large ransom, maidens, as when he captured them. [4.17.1] XVII. There is a place Aegila in Laconia, where is a sanctuary sacred to Demeter. Aristomenes and his men knowing that the women were keeping festival there . . . the women were inspired by the goddess to defend themselves, and most of the Messenians were wounded with the knives with which the women sacrificed the victims and the spits on which they pierced and roasted the meat. Aristomenes was struck with the torches and taken alive. Nevertheless he escaped to Messenia during the same night. Archidameia, the priestess of Demeter, was charged with having released him, not for a bribe but because she had been in love with him before; but she maintained that Aristomenes had escaped by burning through his bonds.

[4.17.2] In the third year of the war, when a battle was about to take place at what is called The Great Trench, and the Messenians had been joined by Arcadians from all the cities, the Spartans bribed Aristocrates the son of Hicetas of Trapezus, who was then king and general of the Arcadians. The Spartans were the first of whom we know to give bribes to an enemy, and the first to make victory in war a matter of purchase.

[4.17.3] Before the Spartans committed this crime in the Messenian war in the matter of the treachery of Aristocrates the Arcadian, the decision in battle was reached by valor and the fortune of heaven. Again it is clear that at a later date, when they were lying opposite the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami, the Spartans bought Adeimantus and other Athenian generals.

[4.17.4] However in course of time the punishment of Neoptolemus, as it is called, came upon the Spartans themselves in their turn. Now it was the fate of Neoptolemus the son of Achilles, after killing Priam on the altar of Zeus Herkeios (Of the Courtyard), himself to be slain by the altar of Apollo in Delphi. Thenceforward to suffer what a man has himself done to another is called the Punishment of Neoptolemus.

[4.17.5] So in the case of the Spartans, when they were at the height of their power after the destruction of the Athenian fleet, and Agesilaus had already reduced the greater part of Asia, they were unable to capture the whole empire of the Persians but the barbarian overreached them with their own invention, sending money to Corinth, Argos, Athens and Thebes as the result of this bribery the so-called Corinthian war broke out, compelling Agesilaus to abandon his conquests in Asia.

[4.17.6] Thus it was the purpose of heaven to turn the trick employed by the Spartans against the Messenians to their own destruction. After receiving the money from Sparta, Aristocrates concealed his plot from the Arcadians for the present, but when they were about to come into action, he alarmed them by saying that they were caught in a difficult place and there would be no means of retreat for them, if defeated, also that the offerings had not been satisfactory. He ordered everyone therefore to take to flight when he gave the signal.

[4.17.7] When the Spartans were about to close and the Messenians were occupied on their own front, then Aristocrates withdrew the Arcadians as the battle began, leaving the Messenian left and center without troops. For the Arcadians occupied both positions in the absence of the Eleians from the battle and of the Argives and Sicyonians. To complete his work Aristocrates caused his men to fly through the Messenians.

[4.17.8] They were amazed at the unexpected state of affairs, and moreover were thrown into confusion by the passage of the Arcadians through their ranks, so that they almost forgot what lay before them; for instead of the advance of the Spartans they watched the Arcadian retirement, some begging them to stand by them, others cursing them for traitors and scoundrels.

[4.17.9] It was not difficult for the Spartans to surround the Messenians thus isolated, and they won without trouble the easiest of victories. Aristomenes and his men held together and tried to check the fiercest of the Spartaian assaults but, being few in number, were unable to render much assistance. So great were the numbers of the people of the Messenians slain that in lieu of their former thoughts of becoming the masters instead of the slaves of the Spartans they now despaired of safety itself. Among the chieftains killed were Androcles and Phintas, and Phanas after the most glorious resistance. He had previously been victorious in the long foot race at Olympia.

[4.17.10] Aristomenes collected the Messenian survivors after the battle and persuaded them to desert Andania and most of the other towns that lay in the interior and to settle on Mount Eira. When they had been driven to this spot, the Spartans sat down to besiege them, thinking that they would soon reduce them. Nevertheless the Messenians maintained their resistance for eleven years after the disaster at the Trench.

[4.17.11] The length of the siege is proved by these lines of the poet Rhianus, regarding the Spartans:–

In the folds of the white mountain were they encamped, for two and twenty winters and green herbs. Rhianus, unknown location.

He reckons winters and summers, by “green herbs” meaning the green corn or the time just before harvest.

[4.18.1] XVIII. Settling on Eira and cut off from the rest of Messenia, except in so far as the people of Pylos and Mothone maintained the coastal districts for them, the Messenians plundered both Laconia and their own territory, regarding it now as enemy country. The men taking part in the raids were drawn from all sources, and Aristomenes raised the number of his chosen troop to three hundred.

[4.18.2] They harried and plundered whatever Spartan property they could; when corn, cattle and wine were captured, they were consumed, but movable property and men were sold. The Spartans, as their labours were more profitable to the men at Eira than to themselves, accordingly resolved that Messenia and the neighboring part of Laconia should be left uncultivated during the war. [4.18.3] As a result scarcity arose in Sparta, and with it revolution. For those who had property here could not endure its lying idle. Their differences were being composed by Tyrtaeus, when Aristomenes and his troop, starting in the late evening and by rapid movement reaching Amyclae before sunrise, captured and plundered the town, retiring before a force from Sparta could come to its relief.

[4.18.4] He continued to overrun the country afterwards, until in an engagement with more than half the Spartaian infantry and both the kings he received various wounds while defending himself and was struck on the head by a stone, so that his eyes became dizzy. When he fell a number of the Spartans closed upon him and took him alive with some fifty of his followers. The Spartans resolved to fling them all into the Ceadas, into which they throw men punished for the greatest crimes.

[4.18.5] The rest of the Messenians were killed at once as they fell, but Aristomenes now as on other occasions was preserved by one of the gods. His panegyrists say that, when Aristomenes was thrown into the Ceadas, an eagle flew below him and supported him with its wings, bringing him to the bottom without any damage to his body and without wound. Even from here, as it seems, it was the will of heaven to show him a means of escape…

**I omit here all of Aristomenes’ remarkable adventures, but he, amazingly survives to live another day, gets captured and escapes not once, but twice, thanks to the love and help of a good woman. It’s worth reading if you have the time, though.**

…[4.20.1] XX. But in the eleventh year of the siege it was fated that Eira should be taken and the Messenians dispersed, and the god fulfilled for them an oracle given to Aristomenes and Theoclus. They had come to Delphi after the disaster at the Trench and asked concerning safety, receiving this reply from the Pythia:

“Whensoever a he-goat drinks of Neda's winding stream, no more do I protect Messenia, for destruction is at hand.”

[4.20.2] The springs of the Neda are in Mount Lycaeus. The river flows through the land of the Arcadians and turning again towards Messenia forms the boundary on the coast between Messenia and Elis. Then they were afraid of the he-goats drinking from the Neda, but it appeared that what the god foretold to them was this. Some of the Greeks call the wild fig-tree olynthe, but the Messenians themselves tragos (he-goat). Now at that time a wild fig-tree growing on the bank of the Neda had not grown straight up, but was bending towards the stream and touching the water with the tips of its leaves.

[4.20.3] When the seer Theoclus saw it, he guessed that the goat who drinks of the Neda foretold by the Pythia was this wild fig-tree, and that their fate had already come upon the Messenians. He kept it secret from the rest, but led Aristomenes to the fig-tree and showed him that their time of safety had gone by. Aristomenes believed that it was so and that there was no delaying their fate, and made provision such as circumstances demanded.

[4.20.4] For the Messenians possessed a secret thing. If it were destroyed, Messenia would be overwhelmed and lost for ever, but if it were kept, the oracles of Lycus the son of Pandion said that after lapse of time the Messenians would recover their country. Aristomenes, knowing the oracles, took it towards nightfall, and coming to the most deserted part of Ithome, buried it on the mountain, calling on Zeus who keeps Ithome and the gods who had hitherto protected the Messenians to remain guardians of the pledge, and not to put their only hope of return into the power of the Spartans…

**Due to treachery and a lot of adultery the Spartans gain access to the city while the inhabitants are asleep. The city is captured and the Messenians flee, becoming refugees.**

 [4.22.1] XXII. As soon as the Arcadians heard of the Capture of Eira, they at once ordered Aristocrates to lead them to the rescue of the Messenians or to death with them. But he, being in receipt of bribes from Lacedaemon, refused to lead them, and said that he knew that no Messenian survived for them to help. [4.22.2] When they obtained more certain news, that they survived and had been forced to desert Eira, they themselves proposed to receive them at Mount Lycaeus after preparing clothing and food, and sent some of their leading men to comfort the Messenians and also to be their guides on the way. After their safe arrival at Mount Lycaeus, the Arcadians entertained them and treated them kindly in every way, offering to distribute them among their towns and to make a new distribution of their land on their account.

[4.22.3] But Aristomenes' grief for the sack of Eira and his hatred of the Spartans suggested to him the following plan. He chose from the body of the Messenians five hundred men whom he knew to be the most unsparing of themselves, and asked them in the hearing of Aristocrates and the rest of the Arcadians if they were ready to die with him, avenging their country He did not know that Aristocrates was a traitor, for he thought that he had fled from the battle formerly from lack of courage and through cowardice, not for any knavery; so he asked the five hundred in his presence.

[4.22.4] When they said that they were ready, he revealed the whole plan, that he proposed at all costs to lead them against Sparta during the following evening. For now was the time when the majority of the Spartans was away at Eira, and others were scouring Messenia for booty and plunder. “If we can capture and occupy Sparta,” said Aristomenes, “we can give back to the Spartans what is theirs and receive our own. If we fail, we shall die together, having done a deed for posterity to remember.”

[4.22.5] When he said this, as many as three hundred of the Arcadians were ready to share his enterprise. For the time they delayed their departure, as the victims were unfavorable, but on the following day they learnt that the Spartans had been forewarned of their secret, and that they themselves had been a second time betrayed by Aristocrates. For Aristocrates had at once written the designs of Aristomenes in a letter, and having entrusted it to the slave whom he knew to be most loyal, sent him to Anaxander in Sparta.

[4.22.6] As the slave was returning, he was intercepted by some of the Arcadians, who had formerly been at variance with Aristocrates and regarded him then with some suspicion. Having intercepted the slave they brought him before the Arcadians and made known to the people the answer from Lacedaemon. Anaxander was writing that his retreat from the Great Trench formerly had not gone unrewarded on the part of the Spartans and that he would receive an additional recompense for his information on the present occasion.

[4.22.7] When this was declared to all, the Arcadians themselves stoned Aristocrates and urged the Messenians to join them. They looked to Aristomenes. But he was weeping, with his eyes fixed on the ground. So the Arcadians stoned Aristocrates to death and flung him beyond their borders without burial, and set up a tablet in the precinct of Zeus Lycaeus with the words:–

“Truly time hath declared justice upon an unjust king and with the help of Zeus hath easily declared the betrayer of Messenia. Hard it is for a man forsworn to hide from God. Hail, king Zeus, and keep Arcadia safe.”

[4.23.1] XXIII. All the Messenians, who were captured about Eira or anywhere else in Messenia, were reduced by the Spartans to serfdom. The people of Pylos and Mothone and all who occupied the maritime district retired in ships on the capture of Eira to Cyllene, the port of the Eleians. Thence they sent to the Messenians in Arcadia, proposing to unite their forces and seek a new country to dwell in, enjoining Aristomenes to lead them to a colony.

[4.23.2] But he said that while he lived, he would make war on the Spartans, as he knew well that trouble would always be brewing for Sparta through him, but he gave them Gorgus and Manticlus as leaders. Euergetidas too had retired to Mount Lycaeus with the rest of the Messenians. From there, when he saw that Aristomenes' plan to seize Sparta had failed, he persuaded some fifty of the Messenians to go back with him to Eira and attack the Spartans, [4.23.3] and coming upon them while they were still plundering, he turned their celebrations of victory to grief. He then met his doom there, but Aristomenes ordered all the Messenians who wished to take part in the colony to join the leaders at Cyllene. And all took part except those debarred by age or lack of funds for journeying abroad. These remained here with the Arcadians.

**This more or less ends the war, leaving only discussion of what happened to the various refugee groups (which I have cut) and the fate of the remaining Messenians.**

 [4.24.4] Now the Spartans, gaining possession of Messenia, divided it all among themselves, except the land belonging to the people of Asine; but they gave Mothone to the men of Nauplia, who had recently been driven from their town by the Argives.

[4.24.5] The Messenians who were captured in the country, reduced by force to the position of serfs, were later moved to revolt from the Spartans in the seventy-ninth Olympiad,[16](http://www.theoi.com/Text/Pausanias4B.html#n16) when Xenophon the Corinthian was victorious. Archimedes was archon at Athens. The occasion which they found for the revolt was this. Certain Spartans who had been condemned to death on some charge fled as suppliants to Taenarum but the board of ephors dragged them from the altar there and put them to death.

[4.24.6] As the Spartans paid no heed to their being suppliants, the wrath of Poseidon came upon them, and the god razed all their city to the ground. At this disaster all the serfs who were of Messenian origin seceded to Mount Ithome. Against them the Spartans, amongst other allies, called to their assistance Cimon the son of Miltiades, their patron in Athens, and an Athenian force. But when the Athenians arrived, they seem to have regarded them with suspicion that they were likely to promote revolution, and as a result of this suspicion to have soon dismissed them from Ithome.

**There was a third Messenian war in the 460s BCE which ended again with the defeat of the Helots, with many Messenians exiled as a result. It was not until the Spartans were defeated by the Thebans, under the command of Epaminondas, at Leuctra in 371 BCE, the Messenia regained its freedom.**

[4.26.3] A year before the victory of the Thebans at Leuctra, heaven foretold their return to Peloponnese to the Messenians. It is said that in Messenia on the Straits the priest of Heracles saw a vision in a dream: it seemed that Heracles Manticlus was bidden by Zeus as a guest to Ithome. Also among the Euesperitae Comon dreamt that he lay with his dead mother, but that afterwards she came to life again. He hoped that as the Athenians had recovered their seapower, they would be restored to Naupactus. But the dream really indicated the recovery of Messenia.

[4.26.4] Not long afterwards the Spartans suffered at Leuctra, the disaster that had long been due. For at the end of the oracle given to Aristodemus, who reigned over the Messenians, are the words: “Act as fate wills, destruction comes on this man before that,” signifying that he and the Messenians must suffer evil at the present, but that hereafter destruction would overtake Lacedaemon. [4.26.5] Then after their victory at Leuctra the Thebans sent messengers to Italy, Sicily and to the Euesperitae, and summoned the Messenians to Peloponnese from every other quarter where they might be, and they, with longing for their country and through the hatred which had ever remained with them for the Spartans, assembled quicker than could have been expected.

[4.26.6] To Epaminondas it seemed in no way easy to found a city that could resist the Spartans, nor could he discover where in the land to build it. For the Messenians refused to settle again in Andania and Oechalia, because their disasters had befallen them when they dwelt there. To Epaminondas in his difficulty it is said that an ancient man, closely resembling a priest of Demeter, appeared in the night and said: “My gift to you is that you shall conquer whomsoever you attack; and when you die, Theban, I will cause your name to be remembered and give you glory. But do you restore to the Messenians their fatherland and cities, for now the wrath of the Dioscuri against them hath ceased.”

[4.26.7] This he said to Epaminondas, and revealed this to Epiteles the son of Aeschines, who had been chosen by the Argives to be their general and to refound Messenia. He was bidden by the dream, wherever he found yew and myrtle growing on Ithome, to dig between them and recover the old woman, for, shut in her brazen chamber, she was overcome and well-nigh fainting. When day dawned, Epiteles went to the appointed place, and as he dug, came upon a brazen urn. [4.26.8] He took it at once to Epaminondas, told him the dream and ordered him remove the lid and see what was within. Epaminondas, after sacrifice and prayer to the vision that had appeared, opened the urn and having opened it found some tin foil, very thin, rolled like a book. On it were inscribed the mysteries of the Great Goddesses, and this was the pledge deposited by Aristomenes. They say that the man who appeared to Epiteles and Epaminondas in their sleep was Caucon, who came from Athens to Messenia the daughter of Triopas at Andania.

[4.27.1] XXVII. The wrath of the sons of Tyndareus against the Messenians began before the battle in Stenyclerus, and arose, I think, for the following reason. Panormus and Gonippus of Andania, young men in the bloom of youth, were close friends in all things, and marched together into battle and on raids into Laconia. [4.27.2] The Spartans were keeping a feast of the Dioscuri in camp and had turned to drinking and sports after the midday meal, when Gonippus and Panormus appeared to them, riding on the finest horses and dressed in white tunics and scarlet cloaks, with caps on their heads and spears in their hands. When the Spartans saw them they bowed down and prayed, thinking that the Dioscuri themselves had come to their sacrifice.

[4.27.3] When once they had come among them, the youths rode right through them, striking with their spears, and when many had been killed, returned to Andania, having outraged the sacrifice to the Dioscuri. It was this, in my view, that roused the Dioscuri to their hatred of the Messenians. But now, as the dream declared to Epaminondas, the Dioscuri no longer opposed the return of the Messenians. [4.27.4] Epaminondas was most strongly drawn to the foundation by the oracles of Bacis, who was inspired by the Nymphs and left prophecies regarding others of the Greeks as well as the return of the Messenians: “Then indeed shall the bright bloom of Sparta perish and Messenia again shall be inhabited for all time.” I have discovered that Bacis also told in what manner Eira would be captured, and this too is one of his oracles: “The men of Messenia o'ercome by the thunder's roll and spouting rain.”

[4.27.5] When the mysteries were recovered, all who were of the priestly family set them down in books. As Epaminondas considered the spot where the city of the Messenians now stands most convenient for the foundation, he ordered enquiry to be made by the seers if the favour of the gods would follow him here. When they announced that the offerings were auspicious, he began preparations for the foundation, ordering stone to be brought, and summoning men skilled in laying out streets and in building houses, temples, and ring-walls.

[4.27.6] When all was in readiness, victims being provided by the Arcadians, Epaminondas himself and the Thebans then sacrificed to Dionysus and Apollo Ismenius in the accustomed manner, the Argives to Argive Hera and Nemean Zeus, the Messenians to Zeus of Ithome and the Dioscuri, and their priests to the Great Goddesses and Caucon. And together they summoned heroes to return and dwell with them, first Messenia the daughter of Triopas, after her Eurytus, Aphareus and his children, and of the sons of Heracles Cresphontes and Aepytus. But the loudest summons from all alike was to Aristomenes.

[4.27.7] For that day they were engaged in sacrifice and prayer, but on the following days they raised the circuit of the walls, and within built houses and the temples. They worked to the sound of music, but only from Boeotian and Argive flutes, and the tunes of Sacadas and Pronomus were brought into keen competition. The city itself was given the name Messenia, but they founded other towns. The men of Nauplia were not disturbed at Mothone, [4.27.8] and they allowed the people of Asine to remain in their home, remembering their kindness when they refused to join the Spartans in the war against them. The men of Nauplia on the return of the Messenians to Peloponnese brought them such gifts as they had, and while praying continually to the gods for their return begged the Messenians to grant protection to themselves.

[4.27.9] The Messenians returned to Peloponnese and recovered their own land two hundred and eighty-seven years after the capture of Eira, in the archonship of Dyscinetus at Athens and in the third year of the hundred and second Olympiad, when Damon of Thurii was victorious for the second time. It was no short time for the Plataeans that they were in exile from their country, and for the Delians when they settled in Adramyttium after being expelled from their island by the Athenians.

[4.27.10] The Minyae, driven by the Thebans from Orchomenos after the battle of Leuctra, were restored to Boeotia by Philip the son of Amyntas, as were also the Plataeans. When Alexander had destroyed the city of the Thebans themselves, Cassander the son of Antipater rebuilt it after a few years. The exile of the Plataeans seems to have lasted the longest of those mentioned, but even this was not for more than two generations. [4.27.11] But the wanderings of the Messenians outside the Peloponnese lasted almost three hundred years, during which it is clear that they did not depart in any way from their local customs, and did not lose their Doric dialect, but even to our day they have retained the purest Doric in Peloponnese.

**During the First Slave War in Sicily there were slave revolts elsewhere including in the Greek East. This one occurred after Attalus III of Pergamum died, leaving his kingdom in his will to the Romans in 133 BCE; his half-brother Aristonicus attempted to claim the throne, apparently with the support of slaves. (Though many have argued that this did not involve slaves as much as locals, inspired by nationalist fervour.)**

And the same thing happened in Asia, almost about the same time. For when Aristonicus without any proper rights sought to gain the kingdom of Asia, all the slaves, by reason of the cruelty of their masters, joined with him, and filled many towns and cities with bloodshed and slaughter.

Diodorus Siculus, 34.26