NOTES ON THE ἀπιστεία OF THEBES

I. THE SPARTAN FORCES AT LEUCTRA

ACCORDING to the calculations of Busolt, whose elaborate essay on the Spartan army may be regarded as the standard work on this subject, the forces which King Cleombrotus took into action at Leuctra consisted of four out of the six *μόραι*, each containing 35 out of the 40 service classes, and 300 *ἰππεῖς*, or Guards.¹

That 35 classes were mobilised for the campaign of Leuctra is directly attested by Xenophon² and cannot be called into question. That four out of the six *μόραι* took part in the battle is an inference from another passage in Xenophon, which states that *three years previously* Cleombrotus was despatched to Central Greece with four *μόραι*.³

This inference is only valid if we may assume that the Spartan forces in Phocis were maintained at undiminished strength from 374 to 371 B.C. But such an assumption is hardly justified. A priori it is unlikely that a force representing some 60 per cent. of the entire military establishment of Sparta should have been marooned in Central Greece for three years on end. The Spartan government was of necessity most economical in the use of its citizen troops.⁴ As a general rule it reserved them for the critical operations of a field campaign and recalled them home at the close of each fighting season. For the routine duties of garrison service it relied almost entirely on mercenaries. But the emergency which had necessitated the sending of a large field force to Phocis in 374 B.C. had passed away long before the campaign of Leuctra. In 374, no doubt, a strong Theban force was concentrated for the invasion of Phocis. In 373 and 372, however, the Thebans were preoccupied with the coercion of Thespieae and the occupation of Plataea;⁵ and in view of the ill-concealed hostility of Athens⁶ and the presence of an Attic force on the Boeotian border at Oropus,⁷ we may fairly assume that a considerable portion of the Theban field forces had during these years to be called away from the Phocian frontier. In the spring of 371 B.C. Thebans and Spartans alike were more

¹ *Hermes*, 1905, pp. 387–449. Professor Toynbee (*J.H.S.* 1913, p. 271) reaches similar conclusions.

² *Hellenica*, vi. 4. 17.

³ *Ibid.* vi. 1. 1.

⁴ In 374 B.C. the Spartans had to refuse an urgent request from Polydamas of Pharsalus for assistance against Jason of

Pherae, because they could not beat up an army of any sort for this purpose (*Hellen.* vi. 1. 17).

⁵ *Hellen.* vi. 3. 1. For the date see Grote, *History of Greece* (1903 ed.), vol. viii. p. 150 sqq.

⁶ *Vide* the *Plataicus* of Isocrates.

⁷ *Ibid.* 20.

taken up with diplomatic negotiations than with military operations.⁸ Under these circumstances we may well doubt whether the Phocians continued to be in such danger as to require the continued presence of four strong μόραι.

A further doubt is suggested by the smallness in numbers of the Spartan contingent actually engaged at Leuctra. This force, according to Xenophon,⁹ was only 700 strong. Accepting these figures, Busolt has reckoned out that by 371 B.C. Sparta's total military establishment had sunk to some 1000 men.¹⁰ This conclusion does little credit to the premiss from which it proceeds. In 418 B.C., as Busolt has shown, Sparta's military population numbered about 2200.¹¹ This leaves us with a depopulation of more than 50 per cent. to explain away. But neither the wastage of previous wars nor the social and economic changes which befell Sparta in the early years of the fourth century¹² will account for such a catastrophic reduction in numbers. We are therefore driven to infer that the 700 Spartans at Leuctra constituted a smaller portion of the Spartan citizen levy than Busolt assumes.

Another difficulty in the way of Busolt's estimate is this. About 380 B.C. the Spartans introduced a 'formula togatorum' for their allies, by which each dependent community was bound to contribute a fixed quota of soldiers to each joint expedition.¹³ In 374 B.C. Xenophon expressly mentions that the allies of Sparta contributed their allotted share to Cleombrotus' force, and there is no reason for supposing that in 371 B.C. the Peloponnesian contingent in this force had been reduced below the normal. Now the normal ratio of other Peloponnesians to Spartans and Perioeci was 6:1. But if the Laconian contingent at Leuctra was over 2000 strong, as on Busolt's showing it must have been,¹⁴ it follows that the other Peloponnesian contingents exceeded 12,000, and that the entire Peloponnesian corps numbered some 15,000 combatants. If to these be added the Phocian and Heracleote divisions which accompanied Cleombrotus,¹⁵ the grand total of his force cannot have fallen far short of 16,000–17,000 men. But this total considerably exceeds the estimate of 11,000 men given by Plutarch,¹⁶ and it is quite out of keeping with

⁸ This consideration seems decisive against Beloch's theory that Cleombrotus' force was not sent to Phocis until 371 B.C. (*Griechische Geschichte*, 1st ed., vol. ii. p. 251, n. 3).

⁹ *Hellen.* vi. 4. 15.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.* p. 425. Busolt further concludes that at Leuctra the proportion of Spartan citizens to Perioeci in the μόραι had sunk to 1:5. Professor Toynbee (*loc. cit.*) establishes a ratio of 1:10. Neither of these estimates is inconceivable, for in Spartan field tactics the rear-rank men were trained merely to follow No. 1 in each file (Xenophon, *Resp. Lac.* ch. 11), and one Spartan as πρωτοστάτης to each file would at a pinch be sufficient. But we should feel happier if we could assume a less complete dilution of the μόραι with περίοικοι.

¹¹ *Op. cit.* p. 417.

¹² The βήρυα of Epitadas, which permitted the concentration of the Spartan land in a few hands, probably belongs to the middle rather than to the beginning of the fourth century (Toynbee, p. 273). In any case, its effects by 371 B.C. could not have been devastating.

The severe depopulation upon which Aristotle comments (*Politics*, ii. 5) was the result of the disasters which befell Sparta after Leuctra.

¹³ Diodorus, xv. 31.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.* p. 422. Professor Toynbee raises the Laconian contingent to 4,480 hoplites.

¹⁵ *Hellen.* vi. 4. 9.

¹⁶ *Pelopidas*, ch. 20.

the conclusions of the most recent historians, who argue with considerable force that the disparity of numbers between Cleombrotus' and Epaminondas' armies cannot have been great, and are therefore inclined to regard Plutarch's allowance as rather generous.¹⁷

We must therefore relinquish the view that the Spartans had four *μόραι* engaged at Leuctra: their contingent must have been considerably smaller. Any more exact estimate can only be guess-work. But if we accept Plutarch's figures for Cleombrotus' force as being approximately correct, we may assume that his Peloponnesian contingent represented τὸ εἰς τοὺς μυρίους σύνταγμα,¹⁸ and that the Laconian quota consisted of 1400-1500 men. If we deduct from these the 300 Guards, there remains a force sufficient to make up two strong *μόραι*.¹⁹ This estimate fits in well with Xenophon's figure of 700 for the Spartan citizen troops. As the 300 Guards formed a special corps, we have 400 Spartan soldiers of the line left over, *i. e.* 200 men to each *μόρα*. On this reckoning the proportion of Spartans to Perioeci in each *μόρα* was roughly 2:3, which was also the relative strength of their respective contingents at First Mantinea,²⁰ and the ratio of their casualties at Leuctra itself.²¹ We may therefore conclude tentatively that the Laconian contingent in this battle was two *μόραι* strong.

II. WHERE WAS ARCHIDAMUS?

In telling the story of Leuctra modern historians since Grote have invariably given preference to the account of Xenophon over that of Diodorus. But Professor Bury, instead of rejecting Diodorus' version *in toto*, has discerned a substratum of truth in his assertion that the army of Prince Archidamus joined hands with King Cleombrotus' force in time to participate in the battle. While he shares the accepted view that Archidamus was not actually on the field at Leuctra, Professor Bury suggests that Archidamus marched out from Sparta *before* the battle and fell in with the remnants of Cleombrotus' army on the second or third day after the fighting.²² On this hypothesis, as he points out, a further reason is supplied for Cleombrotus' devious line of march via Creusis, for this harbour was obviously suited to serve as a joint base for two co-operating forces from Phocis and Peloponnesus; and the delay in the retreat of the defeated Spartan forces from their camp at Leuctra can be reduced from a

¹⁷ Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, v. p. 412; Delbrück, *Geschichte der Kriegskunst*, i. p. 156, n. 2.

¹⁸ This was the strength of the corps levied for service against the Chalcidians in 382 B.C. (*Hellen.* v. 2. 20).

¹⁹ The strength of the *μόρα* varied according to the number of service classes mobilised. According to Busolt's careful calculations, the *μόραι* engaged at Leuctra numbered at most 576 men each.

²⁰ Busolt, p. 433.

²¹ Professor Toynbee assumes that the

Guards' corps was practically annihilated, and that the total losses of the Spartan citizen troops were relatively far heavier (*op. cit.* p. 271). But according to Xenophon the battle at first went in favour of the Spartans at the point where King Cleombrotus stood (*Hellen.* vi. 4. 13). The impact of the Theban phalanx therefore fell upon the *μόραι* rather than upon the Guards, in which case the Perioeci probably suffered their full share of casualties.

²² *History of Greece* (1913 ed.), p. 596.

week or more ²³ to a matter of one or two days. To these arguments it may be added that in the light of Professor Bury's theory the strictures which Isocrates makes Archidamus pass on Cleombrotus' leadership ²⁴ gain a good deal of point. In Xenophon's version of events it is hard to see where the bad leadership comes in: Cleombrotus here appears as a good general who has the misfortune to meet a great general. But if Cleombrotus precipitated an action a few days before the arrival of reinforcements which would have made the issue safe for Sparta, Archidamus had good reason for saying that Leuctra had been thrown away by bad strategy.

On the other hand, Professor Bury's reconstruction involves the rejection of Xenophon's detailed and explicit statement that Archidamus' force was mobilised *after and in consequence of* Leuctra. ²⁵ Although a slip in Xenophon's memory on this point was possible, it should not be assumed without further investigation.

It will be agreed that the arguments drawn from Cleombrotus' route of march and from Isocrates' aspersions on him are in any case but a make-weight. While these incidents fit in excellently with Professor Bury's version of events, they are not out of harmony with Xenophon's account. Whether Cleombrotus expected reinforcements from Peloponnesus or no, it was worth his while to make a detour via the Boeotian seaboard and so to turn the strong defensive positions in north-western Boeotia. Whether Isocrates' comments on Cleombrotus were just or not, they were in any case appropriate to Isocrates' purpose, for in the passage in question it was his cue to explain away the disaster of Leuctra as the result of mere bad leadership.

The main point at issue is whether the beaten Spartan army spent a week or so in contemplating the scene of its defeat. On Xenophon's showing, it could not have heard of Archidamus' expedition, and therefore could not have been waiting for him to come up and retrieve the previous disaster. Again, though the first day or two of its stay at Leuctra may have been taken up with the burying of the dead, for which purpose the Thebans had granted it a truce, these burial operations will not account for a delay of a week or more in its retreat.

But there remains one simple explanation which if true is all-sufficient, that the Spartans remained *in situ* because their retreat was cut off or at all events endangered. Professor Bury, it is true, assumes that the Spartans had an open road, and on his behalf it might be pointed out that a resolute hoplite force could not be stopped except by being engaged at close quarters, as Agesilaus proved on his march through Thessaly in 394 B.C. ²⁶ But the army of Leuctra was demoralised as well as defeated, ²⁷ and the furtiveness with which it eventually withdrew to Creusis, and that too under a convention which secured it from attack, ²⁸ indicates that it expected to be waylaid and did not

²³ In assuming that the delay did not exceed a week in duration, Professor Bury states the case as unfavourably as possible for himself. A detailed calculation will show that seven days represents the *minimum* lapse of time.

²⁴ *Archidamus*, § 9: δεδυστυχημένοι δοκοῦμεν . . . διὰ τὸν οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἡγησάμενον.

²⁵ *Hellen.* vi. 4. 16-17.

²⁶ *Ibid.* iv. 3. 3-9.

²⁷ *Ibid.* vi. 4. 15, 24.

²⁸ *Ibid.* vi. 4. 25-6.

feel equal to cutting a path for itself. The haste with which Archidamus' force was moved forward also suggests that its task was not so much to beat the Thebans in a return match²⁹ as to extricate a beleaguered force.

Thus it appears that the Spartans had an adequate, not to say a compelling reason for staying on at Leuctra. In that case there is no need to overthrow Xenophon by antedating Archidamus' advance.

III. THE 'PHYLARCHUS' INSCRIPTION

Our chief source of information about the federal council of the Arcadian League is an inscription recording a grant of *προξενία* to one Phylarchus of Athens by the Council and Assembly of the Arcadians, and setting forth the names of fifty deputies, drawn from ten of the Arcadian communities, who evidently constituted the federal council at the time in question.³⁰ Unfortunately the date of this inscription has long remained a matter of dispute among scholars, some of whom would assign it to the fourth century B.C., others to the third.

A definite *terminus ante quem* has recently been provided for our document by Hiller v. Gärtringen, who has pointed out that some of the communities which figure in it as independent constituents of the Arcadian League were absorbed in 361 B.C. in the borough of Megalopolis, and thereby lost the right of separate representation on the federal council.³¹ This may be taken as proof conclusive that the decree was issued not later than 361 B.C.

By this discovery the margin of doubt as to the date has been enormously reduced, for since the Arcadian League only came into existence in 370 B.C., it is evident that the Phylarchus decree must belong to the ensuing decade.

Is it possible to fix the date still more precisely? On the strength of the words *πρόξενον καὶ εὐεργέτην εἶναι Ἀρκάδων πάντων* Hiller v. Gärtringen has further inferred that the decree was not drawn up until after the battle of Mantinea, because then, and then only, did the Arcadian federal state comprise the entire territory of Arcadia. Our document, therefore, must fall within the limits of the Athenian archon year 362/1 B.C.

This argument has at least the merit of enabling us to assign the decree to a very definite occasion, viz. the negotiations for a new Arcadian-Athenian alliance which ensued after Mantinea, and resulted in a treaty of which we still have a record in the 'Molon' inscription.³² But two objections can be urged against it.

(1) It is by no means certain that the 'Ἀρκάδες' of the Molon inscription really stood for all Arcadia. Before the battle of Mantinea the Arcadian

²⁹ Else Archidamus would have waited for his Peloponnesian allies to fall in, instead of hastening on ahead of them (*Hellen.* vi. 4. 26).

(3rd ed.), No. 183; Niese, *Hermes*, 1899, pp. 542-548.

³¹ *Athenische Mitteilungen*, 1911, pp. 349-360.

³⁰ Hicks, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, No. 171; Michel, *Recueil d'Inscriptions Grecques*, No. 193; Dittenberger, *Sylloge*

³² Hicks and Hill, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, No. 119.

League had notoriously been sundered into two hostile sections, and as we are nowhere explicitly told that the rift was subsequently mended, we cannot be sure that the party which entered into alliance with Athens was not a sub-group (presumably the Mantineian group) which pretended to speak on behalf of the Arcadians in general.

(2) Whatever the precise extent of the Arcadian League may have been in 362/1 B.C., it is clear that the federal Arcadian council, as detailed in the Phylarchus inscription, was not properly representative of Arcadia as a whole, for on this council *the deputies of the North Arcadian communities* of Alea, Caphyae, Cynaetha, Pheneus, Psophis and Stymphalus *are conspicuous by their absence*.

So far, then, 362/1 B.C. remains a possible date, but ceases to be the only conceivable date for Phylarchus' decree.

This brings us to the crux of the problem, which is to reconcile the expression 'πρόξενον Ἀρκάδων πάντων' with the *de facto* non-representative character of those who conferred this pan-Arcadian title.

The difficulty cannot be evaded by assuming that the absence of the deputies from northern Arcadia was accidental. Though one or two councillors might have been ill in bed or otherwise engaged, it is inconceivable that all the twenty or thirty representatives of six district communities should simultaneously have been prevented from attending.

Again, we cannot suppose that the North Arcadian communities were deprived of seats on the federal council on the score of their insignificance. True enough, none of them was as important as Mantinea or Tegea; but none of them was more Lilliputian than Lepreum, which furnished two deputies, or Thelpusa, which provided five.

A more plausible suggestion is that only the larger Arcadian cities enjoyed permanent representation on the Arcadian council, and that the lesser communities took it in turn to provide the remaining deputies. A parallel for this might be found in the constitution of the League of Nations, which provides permanent seats on the League Council for the 'Big Five' only, and allots a beggarly representation of four members to the remaining signatories of the Covenant. But under such a system we should expect to find a better distribution of the available seats among the minor communities. Whether these seats were filled by annual election or on some fixed principle of rotation, it is incomprehensible that in any given year the entire northern zone of Arcadia should have been excluded from the council, while all the tiny communities of the south sent their full quota of delegates.

There seems no escape from the conclusion that, *in spite of its claim to speak on behalf of Ἀρκάδες πάντες*, the council of the Phylarchus inscription was only representative of southern and central Arcadia, and that the inscription itself belongs to a period at which northern Arcadia had not yet joined the League.

The council's profession was therefore a hopeful anticipation of the future rather than an accurate description of the present.

Once we admit that the League was incomplete at the time of the decree in honour of Phylarchus, we win a new *terminus ante quem* for this document.

In 366 B.C. the town of Stymphalus, which does not figure in our inscription, had become a member of the League, for in that year it provided the federal *στρατηγός*.³³ The decree was therefore issued at some earlier date than 366 B.C.

On the other hand, the inscription contains the names of several councillors from Megalopolis, and therefore must be subsequent to the foundation of that city. The year in which Megalopolis was founded is a matter of dispute, but 369 B.C. is the earliest possible date.³⁴

Our conclusion, therefore, is that the Phylarchus decree belongs to 369, 368 or 367 B.C.

The precise occasion on which Phylarchus was appointed *πρόξενος* cannot be ascertained. But the commonest service for which this title was conferred was the rendering of assistance to travellers, and especially to official emissaries. It therefore appears not unlikely that Phylarchus befriended some Arcadian embassy on the occasion of the peace negotiations of Delphi (368 or 367) or Susa (late 367).

IV. I.G. VII. 2408

This inscription, which records a grant of *προξενία* by the Boeotian federation to a citizen of Byzantium, has been used as a means of dating Epaminondas' naval campaign and the punitive expedition which the Thebans sent to Thessaly to avenge the death of Pelopidas. The list of eponymous Boeotarchs at the foot of this document contains the names of the two generals, Malecidas and Diogeiton, who took command of the punitive expedition to Thessaly,³⁵ but it omits the names of Pelopidas and Epaminondas. Since it is practically certain that Epaminondas was a Boeotarch in the year of his naval campaign, and Pelopidas in the year of his death,³⁶ it has been argued that the year of Malecidas and Diogeiton's Boeotarchy must be a different one.³⁷ Now Pelopidas died in 364 B.C.³⁸ Therefore the expedition of the two generals must be dated forward to 363. Epaminondas' naval campaign can be assigned on general grounds to either 364 or 363. *Ex hypothesi* it does not belong to 363; therefore its date is 364.³⁹

³³ *Hellen.* vii. 3. 1.

³⁴ See Niese, *Hermes*, 1899, pp. 527-542. The date selected by Niese, 367 B.C., is rather too late, as Meyer (*Geschichte des Altertums*, v. p. 433) has pointed out. The foundation of Megalopolis probably stands in connexion with the second Peloponnesian expedition of Epaminondas, which befell in 369 according to the common dating, or in 368, according to the more credible reckoning of Clinton and Niese (*Hermes*, 1904, pp. 84-108).

³⁵ Plutarch, *Pelopidas*, ch. 35. The 'Malecitus' of Plutarch's text can safely be identified with the 'Malecidas' of the inscription.

³⁶ Pelopidas was Boeotarch every year (so Diodorus, xv. 81), or thirteen times (so Plutarch, ch. 34) since 378 B.C. Since Epaminondas' fleet must have been a federal Boeotian armament, and not merely a Theban affair, it may be taken for granted that its admiral was a Boeotarch (*pace* Meyer, *op. cit.* v. p. 462).

³⁷ Köhler, *Hermes*, 1892, p. 638.

³⁸ The eclipse which preceded his death took place on July 13, 364. (Ginzel, *Spezieller Kanon der Sonnen- und Mondfinsternisse*, pp. 24-5, 182.)

³⁹ Beloch, *op. cit.* ii. p. 281, n. 3.

This conclusion stands in conflict with Plutarch's account, which declares that Malecidas' and Diogeiton's army went out hot-foot to avenge Pelopidas. On the face of it this version is more credible than a theory which interposes a long delay between Pelopidas' death and the avenging expedition, and a further investigation will show that there is after all no reason to reject it.

The evidence of the inscription would be conclusive if it could be proved that Malecidas and Diogeiton were Boeotarchs *once only*. But there is no ground whatever for asserting that these two generals did not hold office repeatedly, as the Boeotian constitution undoubtedly allowed them to do. The date of our inscription, therefore, remains indeterminate. For all that we can prove to the contrary, it remains quite possible that Malecidas and Diogeiton were Pelopidas' colleagues in 364 and avenged his death in the selfsame year. It is equally possible that Epaminondas was their colleague in 364 or in 363, or in both these years, and our inscription leaves it an open question to which year his naval campaign belongs.

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