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Author(s): H. Awdry

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NOTE ON THE WALLS ON EPIPOLAE.

IN reading again the narrative of the Sicilian Expedition lately, heretical ideas have occurred to me as to the puzzling question of the walls on Epipolae, which I have thought it might be worth while with apologies to throw out for criticism. To show these pictorially, Professor Bury's Plan and my own perhaps crude views are here set side by side. In these latter there are many *details* of position upon which no stress is laid, the general idea only being indicated. I am not going to touch upon any alteration of text, but to deal solely with Thucydides as we have him, and with Thucydides only. The main suggestions I have to make are as follows :

1. That Professor Bury's wall (4) ran, as Grote puts it, north-west, not west, being intended to reach the northern cliff, but never completed to that point.

2. That this wall was made strong up to the point where it crossed the Athenian wall, but was carried a very little distance beyond that point—perhaps even destroyed ; and that the long section of it from that point to Euryelus never existed.

3. That the *ἐγκάρσιον τεῖχος* of this same passage vii. 7. 1 is the *Athenian* wall running from the *κύκλος* northward towards Trogilus.

4. That the *προτειχίσματα* of vii. 43. 4 and 6 were either detached forts ; or more probably forts attached to the wall of the outer city. This would suit the account of Demosthenes' attack even better than detached forts, as giving him more time to penetrate to the rear of the *παρτειχίσμα*.

5. That the *παρτειχίσμα* of vii. 11. 3, vii. 42. 4, vii. 43. 1, and the *τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης παρτειχίσμα τῶν Συρακοσίων* of vii. 43. 5 are one and the same, and are the part of the third Syracusan crosswall (Bury's No. 4) *east of the Athenian wall* which it cut, *i.e.* the wall originally built by Gylippus vii. 4. 1, vii. 5. 1, and vii. 6. 4, and subsequently completed and strengthened up to this point *μεχρὶ τοῦ ἐγκαρσίου τεύχους* with the help of the Corinthians and allies, vii. 7. 1.

6. Further, but quite as minor points on which no strong views are held, that Labdalum stood further east than it has been usual to place it ; and that the Athenian lines took a straighter course from the S. edge of Epipolae to the Great Harbour than Prof. Bury gives. This last point, however, perhaps depends upon the identification of the Herakleion. Has this been identified ? If not, the line of Holm's map looks *prima facie* the most probable, providing also as it does a very clear and definite meaning for the words vi. 101 *ἐτείχιζον οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὸν κρημνὸν τὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔλους*.

Taking these points seriatim, it is plain, as Grote says, that in regard to

1. Gylippus would seek to rest either end of his wall on some natural support. At one end, vii. 4. 1, it adjoined the new town wall; at the other the nearest and most obvious support would be the northern cliff of Epipolae sufficiently far to the westward to cross effectually the Athenian projected lines of circumvallation. To reach such a point it would run north-west not west. It surely cannot be maintained that διὰ τῶν Ἐπιπολῶν must mean 'the whole length of Epipolae.'

2. This wall was hurriedly built in the first instance, but on its passing the end of the Athenian wall Nikias at once ceased his efforts on Epipolae. the way for which had been already paved (1) by the burning of much of the Athenians' plant by Nikias on the occasion of the Syracusan attack on the κύκλος, vi. 102, (2) by the transference of their stores to Plemmyrium vii. 4. It is distinctly stated that after the arrival of Gylippus Nikias was half-hearted and considered the Athenians' chances by land ἀνελπιστότερα even before the Syracusan wall was carried past; and that since that event he 'was standing on the defensive and avoiding all risks voluntarily incurred,' vii. 8. 3. (3) The transference of the stores involved the transference of a part of the army, so that his actual force on the spot was weakened.

When such was Nikias' attitude Gylippus felt confident of his power to resist any attack on Epipolae. On the arrival of the Corinthian and other reinforcements they were employed in the way Thucydides describes in the words vii. 7. 1 συνετείχισαν τὸ λοιπὸν τοῖς Συρακοσίοις μεχρὶ τοῦ ἐγκαρσίου τείχους, which I should propose to translate 'they helped the Syracusans to make good their fortification up to the Athenians' wall which ran at an angle to it.' In the original rapid building of this work there would be much that needed strengthening and completing, and these weak points were made good. To strengthen it beyond this point seemed now unnecessary; but the future defence of Epipolae was organised in the following way: a τεῖχοςμα 'fort' was built at Euryelus, the easiest πρόσβασις, and no doubt at each of the other προσβάσεις also; the supports for these τεῖχοςματα were the 600 men of the special guard of Epipolae; the reserves were the τρία στρατόπεδα ἐν προτειχίσμασιν, 'the three forces in forts projecting from the city wall' or 'in detached forts'; it is in this order that Demosthenes in the night attack meets the enemy; he takes the τεῖχοςμα, then overthrows the 600, then presses on to engage Gylippus and the army from the προτειχίσματα. The meaning of taking the πυρατεῖχοςμα and tearing down its parapets will be discussed below.

We are apt to forget that though Euryelus was the πρόσβασις used on the three most important occasions it was by no means the only one and that each would require a τεῖχοςμα. Thucydides' word in vi. 96. 1 is plural διανοοῦντο τὰς προσβάσεις αὐτῶν [*i.e.* Ἐπιπολῶν] φυλάσσειν.

Surely the bearing of this passage on the general military position has been strangely overlooked. 'Guarding the approaches' is a very different thing from building a wall the whole length of Epipolae to strike the cliff south of Euryelus, with three προτειχίσματα attached to and projecting from it. This would be

a most clumsy and laborious method of defence, and the army and general a long way off if they were wanted for use in, or to the south of, the city, where

PLAN 1.—From Bury's *History of Greece*.
(By Permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co.)

the Athenians lay in strength; and I hope to show below that the strategy of Demosthenes' night attack is inconsistent with such a theory.

To us Epipolae seems to need more defence than above described; it

seems incredible that Thucydides' description of it, vi. 96, as precipitous and accessible only at the *προσβάσεις* can ever have applied to the easy 30. to 40 ft. slope of the southern side, which any body could now climb at any point (Fig. 1). It is ridiculous now to talk of *προσβάσεις*; the whole south side is prosbatic. Yet standing on Epipolae we have probably the key to the difficulty. Dionysius a few years later than this siege covered the whole plateau with his city. That city has utterly disappeared. Where to? it is not on the plateau itself; there is no soil or debris there; the rock is not six inches below the

PLAN 2.—SUGGESTED DISPOSITION OF THE WALLS AND FORTS ON EPIPOLAE.

A : κύκλος.	G : 3rd Syracusan Cross-Wall <i>παρτειχίσμα τῶν</i>
B : Athenian Lines S. (should be continued
down to the sea).	<i>Συρ.</i>
C : Athenian Lines N. (τοῦ ἐγκ. τείχ. vii.
7.1).	H : <i>Τρία στρατόπεδα ἐν προτειχίσμασιν οἱ</i>
D : New outer City Wall, built in Winter of
415-414.	Ha : ,, ,, (if detached forts).
E : 1st Syracusan Cross-Wall (destroyed).	J : Labdalon.
F : 2nd ,, ,, ,,	K : <i>τείχισμα</i> captured by Demosthenes.
	L : Camp of the 600.
	M : <i>τειχίσματα passim</i> at imaginary <i>προσβάσεις</i> .

surface. Nor yet has it gone over the northern cliffs; they are cliffs still, though low ones, with no debris at their foot (Fig. 2). But every tree on Epipolae bends from a more or less northerly direction, and the prevailing

northerly winds that bent those trees must also have carried the debris of Dionysius' city over the *southern* cliffs, transforming those cliffs into slopes. The masonry may have been removed ; but a vast quantity of dust must have remained which can have gone in no other direction.

FIG. 1.—SOUTHERN SLOPES OF EPIPOLAE.

It must be admitted also that the words *συντεείχισαν τὸ λοιπὸν τοῖς Συρακοσίοις μεχρὶ τοῦ ἐγκάρσιου τείχους* (if the *ἐγκάρσιον τείχος* is the Syracusan wall where it cut the Athenian) is a somewhat off-hand way of describing the building of a military wall over two miles in length, and at least four times as long as that of which it was the continuation.

FIG. 2.—NORTHERN CLIFFS OF EPIPOLAE, SHOWING SOME *προσβάσεις*.

It has been objected that in the rendering above (1) *συνεπερκοδόμησαν*, not *συντεείχισαν* which seems rather to apply to *new* work, would have been the correct word, (2) that the pointed mention of the *assistance of the allies* implies that it was a bigger work of fortification than the Syracusans could have accomplished by themselves. If this be so, then I should suggest another rendering, viz. 'they helped the Syracusans in the remaining fortification

that was needed up to, etc.' *Συνετείχισαν* is a very general word for wall- or fortress-building, and the phrase would cover all that was needed near the city for the new system of defence on Epipolae described above, including, *e.g.* the *τρία προτειχίσματα*; but as to their cross-wall (no doubt originally carried a certain distance further) they did nothing to strengthen it beyond the point where the Athenian wall met it at an angle.

3. Gylippus and the Syracusans are said (vii. 4. 1) to have built a *τείχος ἀπλοῦν*,¹ 'a wall facing one way only' from the city *πρὸς τὸ ἐγκάρσιον* 'at an angle' to the Athenian wall which ran northward from the *κύκλος*.

Professor Freeman (*Hist. of Sicily*, vol. iii. note xv.) thus dismisses in a few words all theories which do not make this third Syracusan counterwork the *ἐγκάρσιον τείχος* referred to in this passage. 'It is hardly needful to argue against those (see Grote, vii. 562; Holm, *G.S.* ii. 392) who have fancied that *ἐγκάρσιον τείχος* meant something other than this third Syracusan wall. One might be tempted to fancy that it meant the *Athenian* wall; but this is forbidden by vi. 99. 3 and vii. 7. 1. Thucydides would not apply the words *ἐγκάρσιον τείχος* both to a wall running north and south and to a wall running east and west. But he does apply them to two successive walls running east and west, each alike *ἐγκάρσιον* to the one that ran north and south. The Syracusans first build one *ἐγκάρσιον τείχος* of which we have heard a good deal, and which the Athenians had destroyed (vi. 100. 3 *τὴν δὲ ὑποτείχισιν καθεῖλον κ.τ.λ.*). Now they build another in the same general direction, but much further to the north, on the other side of the Athenian *κύκλος*.'

'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread'; but having consulted scholars far better than myself I propose to succumb to the 'temptation' aforesaid, and taking *μεχρὶ τοῦ ἐγκαρσίου τείχους* as the *Athenian* wall to rush in with the fools. I cannot see why the Athenian wall has not just as much right to be called 'the wall at an angle' as the Syracusan. It is no doubt awkward and ambiguous that Thucydides first says that the Syracusans built their third wall at an angle to the Athenian wall, and subsequently speaks of the Athenian wall as 'the wall which met theirs at an angle,' but it is an ambiguity that might be paralleled a hundred times over in Thucydides—indeed in this very sentence, where the *ships* are said to build a wall.

Coming now to the effect of this interpretation upon the military situation, what is the exact meaning of the words *μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα συνετείχισαν κ.τ.λ.*? Grote has pointed out that the cross-wall must have been meant to have something to rest on at each end, and consequently must have taken a north-westerly direction (as in his Plan) *with the intention* of resting on the

¹ A *τείχος διπλοῦν* might have two varieties
(a) two walls with battlements, etc., on their outer sides, near together, and roofed from wall to wall with a covered space below, like the Lacedaemonian wall in the siege of Plataea;
(b) two walls further apart and enclosing a fair

amount of ground like the Long Walls, or the Athenian walls on Epipolae and in the marsh near the Great Harbour. A *τείχος ἀπλοῦν* would have no second wall and only parapets towards the enemy.

northern cliffs; but on seeing the effect of his success on Nicias (*μετὰ ταῦτα*), who immediately gave up the game, Gylippus did not feel it necessary to carry out that intention, but provided for the defence of Epipolae in the new way above explained; and the *abandonment* of the original intention is what Thucydides means to emphasise in the words *μεχρὶ τοῦ ἐγκαρσίου τείχους*.

I have failed to find the author to whom Professor Freeman refers as taking the *ἐγκάρσιον τείχος* of this passage to be the Athenian wall. Perhaps he is only mentioning an obvious interpretation which must be rejected at sight. May I ask a serious hearing for the view so summarily rejected?

Professor Freeman also, after saying just before the passage above quoted that *πρὸς τὸ ἐγκάρσιον* is to be construed *adverbially*, then goes on without further comment to speak of this third Syracusan cross-wall as *τὸ ἐγκάρσιον τείχος*. Is not this begging the question?

Again, need it be pointed out that the proper place for the army and the commander-in-chief (and Gylippus himself was on the spot at the time of the night attack) is not at an advanced spot from which his access to the point where the enemy lay nearest in force—*viz.* to the south, near the harbour—was by a long route of some miles across Epipolae, round the end of the Athenian lines, and then down through the city; but at the central point from which the two lines of possible attack might both be observed and resisted? And what so central point as the wall near Temenites on the high ground facing the access across Epipolae from the west, and in sight of the Athenian camp on the low ground to the south by the harbour?

4. Coming now to the *προτειχίσματα*, I have above stated that I believe them to have been either forts projecting from the new city-wall built in the winter of 415–414, or detached forts; and that the system of defence on Epipolae was a *τείχισμα* ‘fort’ at each *πρόσβασις* ‘approach’; in support of these the special guard of Epipolae six hundred in number; and in rear of all, the three camps in the *προτειχίσματα*, containing the main army with Gylippus’ own headquarters. Exactly where these lay there is little if any indication; but if they were detached forts one at least and probably more than one must have lain within the angle formed by the Syracusan *τείχος ἀπλοῦν*, or *παρατείχισμα* (see 5 below), and the new city-wall; if they were forts projecting from that wall, they were admirably placed for the defence of the city in either of its two assailable directions. Indeed I would go so far as to say that the theory of their being projecting forts in an advanced position in a wall running the length of Epipolae should be rejected as impossible merely on military grounds.

5. Next comes the *παρατείχισμα τῶν Συρακοσίων*, which I hold to be the third cross-wall of the Syracusans, *eastward* of the Athenian lines. This is mentioned in four passages:

(a) In Nikias’ letter vii. 11. 3 οἱ δὲ παρῳκοδομήκασιν ἡμῖν τείχος ἀπλοῦν, ὥστε μὴ εἶναι ἔτι περιτειχίσαι αὐτούς, ἣν μὴ τις τὸ παρατείχισμα τοῦτο πολλῇ στρατιᾷ ἐπελθὼν ἔλῃ. ‘They have built a wall with one face across our lines and rendered it impossible for us to surround them without

bringing up a large force and taking their fortification.' The *παρτειχισμα* is of course here the third Syracusan cross-wall.

(b) Equally certain is the 'second reference (vii. 42. 4) *ὁ Δημοσθένης ὁρῶν τὸ παρτειχισμα τῶν Συρακοσίων, ᾧ ἐκώλυσαν περιτειχίσαι σφᾶς τοὺς Ἀθηναίους, ἀπλοῦν τε ὃν καὶ εἰ ἐπικρατήσείε τις τῶν τε Ἐπιπολῶν τῆς ἀναβάσεως καὶ αὐθις τοῦ ἐν αὐταῖς στρατοπέδου ῥαδίως ἂν αὐτὸ ληφθέν, οὐδὲ γὰρ ὑπομείναι ἂν σφᾶς οὐδένα, ἡπείγετο ἐπιθέσθαι τῇ πείρᾳ*. 'Demosthenes observing that the fortification by which the Syracusans prevented the Athenians surrounding them faced one way only, and that if they could make their way on to the top of Epipolae and then beat the army there, it could be easily taken, as its defenders would not wait to be attacked, resolved to make the attempt.' The *παρτειχισμα* is the same as in (a). The Athenians must make their way to the north of it and beat the army encamped between it and the town or issuing from the town—as they must issue if they wanted to save the *παρτειχισμα*. Having no northern face it would then be indefensible and would be taken without a blow. It will be shown in (d) below that this is exactly what was happening in the night attack, when victory was suddenly turned into defeat.

(c) vii. 42 fin. 1 *ἔπειτα μηχαναῖς ἔδοξε τῷ Δημοσθένει πρότερον ἀποπειρᾶσαι τοῦ παρτειχίσματος*. 'Demosthenes next determined before doing anything else to make a direct attack on the fortification with engines.' On this being repulsed he made his night attack.

(d) Lastly, in vii. 43. 5 we find that while Demosthenes is pressing forward with the main body *ἄλλοι δὲ τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης παρτειχισμα τῶν Συρακοσίων οὐχ ὑπομενόντων τῶν φυλάκων ἤρουν τε καὶ τὰς ἐπάλξεις ἀπέσυρον*. 'While others were engaged in taking the Syracusans' original defensive wall and tearing down the parapets, for the guards did not await their attack.' Is not this *παρτειχισμα* the same as in the three former passages? The name *τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης παρτειχισμα* is more appropriately applied to this part than to the supposed extension to Euryelus, which if it ever existed was a subsequent addition. The attack of the main body under Demosthenes had been pressed home as far as the ground between the *παρτειχισμα* and the city wall; it had taken the defenders of the *παρτειχισμα* in rear and driven them from their post, and it was aided by a secondary attack (*ἄλλοι*) from the *κύκλος* (the Athenians do not abandon *τὰ τεῖχη τὰ ἄνω* 'their works on Epipolae' till vii. 60, on the eve of the last sea-fight) which was to accomplish the main object of the Athenians, the capture of the *παρτειχισμα* now undefended. This was in course of happening (note the imperfect tenses) when the successful resistance of the Boeotians reversed the situation.

It will be seen that the above explanation makes the early success of the Athenians greater than it is usual to suppose, and implies that their defeat must have taken place quite near the outer city itself; but is not this suggested by the words *βουλομένων διὰ παντὸς τοῦ μήπω μεμαχημένου τῶν ἐναντίων ὡς τάχιστα διελθεῖν, ἵνα μὴ ἀνέντων σφῶν τῆς ἐφόδου αὐθις ξυστραφῶσιν*, which seem to imply that they were approaching the conclusion

of their task? Incidentally too it would prove that some at least of the *τρία στρατόπεδα*, if they were detached forts, were—as we should expect for facility of acting in any direction either towards the Great Harbour or towards Epipolae—close to the city gates.

6. The minor points of the position of Labdalum, and of the Athenian lines from Epipolae to the Great Harbour remain. (α) Labdalum was built (vi. 97. 5) on the edge of the northern cliffs, the Athenian headquarters being then on the bay of Thapsus, as a depôt for their tools weapons and money at a time when their main object was to build lines of circumvallation across Epipolae. It is hardly likely therefore that it would be erected one and a half to two miles from the building operations. It is only necessary to the narrative that it should have stood on the edge of the cliffs close to one of the northern *προσβάσεις*. It is no argument against this view that, in vii. 3. 4, we learn the further fact that Labdalum was out of sight of the *κύκλος* and Athenian wall; for the surface of Epipolae must have been much altered and its irregularities shaved off in the construction of Dionysius' city, and much may have been out of sight then that is in sight now. (β) An additional argument for its more easterly position is supplied by the fact that Gylippus apparently took it on the second day after his arrival; and though he covered the operation by his army, and trusted to secrecy, he would hardly yet have been so confident of his superiority as to venture such a distance into the Athenians' ground.

As to the line from Epipolae to the Great Harbour there seems nothing to fix it; but that shown by Professor Bury does not at all appear to accord with Thucydides' words vi. 101. 1 *ἡ περ αὐτοῖς βραχύτατον ἐγένετο καταβᾶσι διὰ τοῦ ὀμαλοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἔλους ἐς τὸν λιμένα τὸ περιτείχισμα*, with which Holm's line as stated above agrees much better.

H. AWDRY.