

EPAMINONDAS AND THEBES

EPAMINONDAS¹ the soldier has been much admired. His two great battles rank as masterpieces of the military art. Epaminondas himself perhaps regarded them as his greatest achievements, to judge by his last words as reported by Diodorus (15. 87). He had been carried from the battlefield of Mantinea with a spear stuck in his chest. The doctors declared that when the spear was removed he would die. After hearing that his own shield was safe and that the Boeotians had won, he ordered that the spear be removed. One of his friends said to him 'But you die without a son.' He answered 'I do, by God, but I leave two daughters, my victory of Leuctra and my victory of Mantinea', and then he died. Nor were his 'daughters' unadmired. By remarkable chance the future Philip II of Macedon was hostage at Thebes at the very time of Epaminondas' pre-eminence and did not fail to learn, as Chaeronea was to show.²

Epaminondas the statesman has received less attention. The elegiacs inscribed beneath his statue at Thebes³ gave the Theban view of his main achievements. 'By my counsels Sparta was shorn of her glory, and holy Messene at long last takes back her sons: by Theban arms has Megale Polis been crowned, and all Hellas rules itself in freedom.' The last words were at least disputable, the rest true enough, but what we need is an elucidation of those 'counsels'. This task is not made easy by our sources, and frequently is in large measure omitted. So a new discussion may not seem otiose.

Epaminondas by no means lacked admirers in antiquity. He was the inspiration of Timoleon, the liberator of Syracuse, as of Philopoemen, the enemy of Sparta.⁴ Plutarch matched his life with that of Scipio Africanus.⁵ To Cicero he was 'princeps, meo iudicio, Graeciae'.⁶ The emperor Hadrian placed a new memorial beside the ancient Boeotian one at the place where he died and himself composed the epigram inscribed on it.⁷ Nor was it only posterity which admired. Timoleon's opportunity to emulate him came sixteen years after his death, but his views must have been formed in Corinth in the 360s when Epaminondas was passing and repassing into the Peloponnese. Another young contemporary who was deeply impressed was Ephorus. When he wrote the obituary notice, he declared that Epaminondas surpassed, 'in fairness and greatness of soul as well as in the intelligence and skill of a general', not just his great contemporaries but also the great Greeks of preceding ages, Solon,

¹ In addition to the general histories of Meyer and of Beloch, the following are the most important for the history of Epaminondas: L. Pomtow, *Das Leben des Epaminondas, sein Charakter und seine Politik*, Berlin 1870; E. von Stern, *Geschichte der spartanischen und thebanischen Hegemonie vom Königsfrieden bis zur Schlacht bei Mantinea*, Dorpat 1884; H. Swoboda, *R.E.* v (1905) col. 2674 f. s.v. Epameinondas; G. M. Bersanetti, 'Pelopida', *Athenaeum* xxvii (1949), 43 ff.; P.

Cloch , *Th bes de B otie*, Namur 1952; M. Fortina, *Epaminonda*, Torino 1958.

² Cf. A. Aymard, *R.E.A.* lvi (1954), 15 ff.

³ Paus. 9. 15. 6.

⁴ Plut. *Tim.* 36, *Philop.* 3.

⁵ Cf. L. Peper, *De Plutarchi 'Epaminonda'* (Jena 1912), 129 ff., and K. Ziegler, *R.E.* xxi col. 896.

⁶ *Tusc.* 1. 2. 4, and cf. *De oratore* 3. 34. 139.

⁷ Paus. 8. 11. 8.

Themistocles, Miltiades, Cimon, Myronides, and Pericles.¹ Even Xenophon was moved tardily to tempered commendation.²

By contrast the evidence on which judgement of his policies is to be based is lamentably slight. Ephorus must have been fairly full on the 360s, and presumably did not neglect to treat of the internal history of Thebes, but the epitome of Diodorus contains very little on the subject. Plutarch's *Life of Epaminondas* is lost and, although what is commonly thought to be an epitome of it is to be found in Pausanias (9. 13. 15),³ much of the revealing detail is lost and Pausanias is particularly brief on the last years of the life. The *Life of Pelopidas* and the *Life of Agesilaus* help in so far as the actions of Epaminondas brought him inextricably into contact with these two men, but Plutarch's method is to avoid duplicating narrative and so these *Lives* are no substitute for what we have lost in the *Life of Epaminondas*. Fortunately Nepos' *Life* is one of the least brief and contains valuable material, and in various other places reflections of the fourth-century tradition can be seen, fortunately indeed, since it is one of the notable things about Xenophon, upon whom the chances of literary survival have forced us so much to depend, that he is astoundingly deficient in information about Epaminondas.

Epaminondas does not appear in the pages of Xenophon until his third invasion of the Peloponnese, in 366, when his treatment of the βέλτιστοι of Achaëa contrasted favourably, in Xenophon's view, with that of opponents in Thebes (*Hell.* 7. 1. 41-3). After this, Xenophon does describe fully enough Epaminondas' part in the campaign of Mantinea and the events leading up to it (*Hell.* 7. 4. 40 and 5. 1 ff.). Even he was not equal to suppressing the name of the Theban commander in that campaign. But for the rest we are faced with a formidable silence. Not only did he omit to name Epaminondas in connection with his masterpiece, the campaign of Leuctra, but also, more remarkably, his full account of the Peace Congress before Leuctra contains no hint of the famous scenes which set first Callistratus of Athens and then Agesilaus in conflict with Epaminondas.⁴ Perhaps Xenophon did not inquire into the Spartan defeat at Leuctra. He believed that the gods willed that disaster (*Hell.* 6. 4. 3, 8, 23). He accepted the Spartan version; Cleombrotus was to blame (*Hell.* 6. 4. 13; cf. Isoc. *Archid.* 9). He may have felt no urge to seek further. But the Peace Congress was a different matter. Xenophon was in all likelihood present at the festival of the Gymnopaedia which shortly followed the Congress and during which the news of the battle of Leuctra reached Sparta.⁵ His intimacy with Agesilaus could not have denied his ears the name and infamy of Epaminondas, and even if Xenophon was not in Sparta so shortly after the battle, it is inconceivable that the altercation of Agesilaus and Epaminondas did not echo through the Peloponnese and reach Xenophon in Scillus. His silence must have been deliberate—a challenging fact.

In general, of course, Xenophon had no taste for recounting Theban achievements. In the whole of his history, which covered the time of Theban greatness, he named only thirteen Thebans, seven of them in connection with the Liberation.

¹ Diod. 15. 88, in contrast with Theopompus, for whom Agesilaus was the greatest man of the age (*F.G.H.* 115 F 321, though of the 390s and so perhaps without comparison with Epaminondas).

² *Hell.* 7. 5. 8 f., 18 f.

³ Cf. L. Peper, *op. cit.* 16 ff.

⁴ 5. 1.

⁵ *Hell.* 6. 4. 16. Xenophon writes as if he had witnessed the scene; note ὁρᾶν and εἶδες, which in Xenophon are significant.

Pelopidas received mention only in connection with the infamous negotiations with Artaxerxes in 367 (7. 1. 33 f.). His name was avoided in the account of the Liberation, his triumph at Tegyra unnoticed, let alone his later share in the successes of Epaminondas.¹ Gorgidas, creator of the Sacred Band, lauded by Ephorus as one of the architects of Theban power, remained unmentioned.² Some of these silences may be explained by the restrictedness of Xenophon's interests. He called his work *Hellenica*, but it would more properly, at any rate after 2. 3. 10, have been entitled *Peloponnesiaca*. It was no part of his intention to talk, or in studied manner not to talk, about Epaminondas' naval plans or his diplomatic interventions in the Aegean. These were beyond his vision as indeed was the main preoccupation of Athenian policy in these years, viz. the recovery of Amphipolis and the Chersonese. Likewise the Theban intervention in Thessaly concerned him not one jot. It appeared merely by allusion in a debate on strategy in Corinth in 368 (7. 1. 28). In his history, as in his life, he preferred the Peloponnese. But there was much that happened within the Peloponnese which he did not recount and on which his silence must have been deliberate. Above all, he has nothing about that pious act, by which 'holy Messene at long last takes back her sons' and by which Epaminondas within a single winter's campaign turned Sparta from a world power into a local wrangler.³ There is nothing to indicate that Messene has ceased to be a mere geographical expression. Likewise with Megalopolis. Megalopolitans appeared, in a single mention, supporting Epaminondas in 362 (7. 5. 5). Of the foundation of the city not a word.⁴ Beside these silences, it is not remarkable that he withheld the name of the man who marched into Laconia, so long inviolate.

Plainly Xenophon hated the Thebans. Unprovoked by Sparta, they had broken up the *pax Laconica* (3. 5. 3). Corrupted by Persian gold, they had ruined the new *anabasis* (3. 5. 1, 5. 2. 35). Theban traffic with the barbarian had in the 390s deprived Greece of the fruits of Spartan hegemony. In the 360s a new compact with Persia threatened the good life of the Peloponnese itself. It was all right for Euthycles of Sparta to journey to the King, but when Pelopidas was sent to counter his influence, it was a mark of Theban greed and ambition (7. 1. 33). 'Those who really cared for the Peloponnese' (7. 5. 1), 'those whose counsels were in the best interests of the Peloponnese' (7. 4. 35) could only revile the Thebes of Epaminondas. The bubble of Theban military pride had to be pricked. There was no need to dwell on Tegyra, or analyse success at Leuctra, let alone record petty, imagined triumphs in defence of Boeotia.⁵ The Thebans whose morale had see-sawed up and down on the battlefield of Haliartus (3. 5. 21) and who became eager for battle at Nemea when it was not their turn to face the Spartans and they could comfort themselves by disregarding what had been agreed about the depth of the line (4. 2. 18 and 13), these Thebans were the fire-eaters who having preened themselves on the defeat of Sparta could not withstand the onslaught of a hundred men under Archidamus (7. 5. 12). Traitorous to Greece, contemptible despite success, the Thebans would gain no celebrity from Xenophon's pen,

¹ Cf. Ephorus' summary of his career in Diod. 15. 81.

² Diod. 15. 39. 2, 50. 6; Plut. *Pel.* 18. The *Hellenica* alludes to the Sacred Band once only (7. 1. 19).

³ 7. 1. 27 is the first mention of Messene, in connection with the mission of Philiscus.

⁴ 6. 5. 6 alludes to the movement to found the Arcadian Federation.

⁵ Cf. Diod. 15. 34. 2.

and the man who led them into the Peloponnese would remain, as much as possible, unnamed. All of which tells us a great deal about Xenophon and very little about Epaminondas. Hence Epaminondas is one of the most illustrious of the Greeks, and one of the most obscure.

To the best of our knowledge Epaminondas did not emerge as a statesman until 371. There is no good reason to deny that he had fought in the Theban contingent with the Spartan army that attacked Mantinea in 385¹ and no doubt despite the lack of evidence he also served with the Theban armies in the defence of Boeotia in the 370s: he had taken an active part in the attack on the Cadmeia at the Liberation and there was no reason why he should have been exempt from regular service;² indeed his military success in 371 strongly suggests such earlier experience. But if he had played a part in the affairs of state before 371, it seems likely that some echo would be found in Pausanias 9. 13 who passes directly from the campaign of Mantinea to what is misleadingly described as the Peace of Antalcidas but is plainly the peace of 372/1.³ The only evidence of earlier activity is the account in Diodorus (15. 38) of the clash of Epaminondas and Callistratus at the Peace of 375, but it is almost universally agreed that Diodorus' account of that peace was drawn from Ephorus' account of the peace of 372/1.⁴

Epaminondas came to the Boeotarchy at a moment most critical for Thebes. There was a double menace. To the north, in Phocis, was Cleombrotus with two-thirds of the Spartan army and proportionate contingents of Sparta's allies.⁵ We do not know when he had returned to this position, from which he had been recalled at the peace of 375,⁶ but it is a reasonable presumption that he had done so at no great interval after the renewal of war in late 373, at some time in the course of 372. The Theban seizure of Plataea and intervention in Thespieae must have made the Phocians fear for themselves and, since it would seem that Sparta made no other move to resume hostilities against Thebes in 372, it is wholly credible that the force that was in position in Phocis in summer 371 had gone out in 372.⁷ The other menace to Thebes

¹ Paus. 9. 13. 1, Plut. *Pel.* 4. Cf. Swoboda *R.E.* v col. 2678, for evidence of Epaminondas before 371.

² Nepos, *Epam.* 10. 3. Other details of this period are more questionable (Swoboda, *op. cit.*, col. 2679). Athen. 602A, in attributing to Epaminondas the formation of the Sacred Band, which was certainly the work of Gorgidas (see p. 256 n. 2), is typical.

³ The likely explanation of Pausanias' phrase in 9. 13. 2 is that the peace of 372/1 was in large measure similar to that of 387/6 (cf. Didymus *ad Dem.* 10. 34, col. 7 ll. 62 ff. on the peace of 375).

⁴ Cf. S. Lauffer, 'Die Diodordublette xv. 38 = 50 über die Friedensschlüsse zu Sparta', *Historia* viii (1959), 315 ff. (from much of which, however, I must dissent).

⁵ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 4. 2; 17 (for the four divisions). Cleombrotus' army must have been much the same as that recalled at the Peace of 375 (6. 1. 1; for τῶν συμμάχων τὸ

μέρος, cf. 4. 6. 3). The four divisions would have produced a Lacedaemonian contingent of perhaps 2,000, and Cleombrotus' army outnumbered the Theban array of about 6,000 (Diod. 15. 52. 2, 53. 2; Plut. *Pel.* 20); so presumably 'the due proportion of the allies' were there.

⁶ Much confusion has been caused by Xenophon's remarkable brevity on the Peace of 375 at 6. 2. 1. Cf. Accame, *La lega*, 91 ff. Plut. *Pel.* 16 shows that there was a Spartan army in Orchomenus and Phocis in 375, and indeed implies that it was four divisions strong. So Xenophon's account at 6. 1. 1 is wholly acceptable. Isocrates 15. 110 shows that they were withdrawn.

⁷ Phocis was menaced in 375 (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 1. 1) but not dealt with until after Leuctra (Diod. 15. 57. 1) and this also suggests that the Spartans were there in 372. Cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6. 3. 2.

was diplomatic—a new appeal to Persia to require submission to Spartan hegemony in Greece.

The question of whether the Great King was represented in the peace of 372/1 has been much discussed.¹ Some² insist that Xenophon's account is so full that it is inconceivable that Persia could have been represented, an argument which should also lead them, one might suppose, to conclude that also the central part played by Epaminondas in the other sources is excluded by Xenophon's silence; but no argument based on Xenophon's silence is worth anything. Some³ would infer from a remark put by Xenophon into the mouth of Callistratus (6. 3. 12) that Antalcidas had gone to the King to appeal for financial aid and that no rescript had come from the King: in truth, if the remark is rightly taken in a literal sense, it would be consistent with Antalcidas remaining at Susa until it was known whether the Greeks had submitted to a rescript or not. The strong argument in favour of Persian participation in the peace of 372/1 is that Dionysius of Halicarnassus⁴ in a notice which appears to derive from Philochorus⁵ asserts as much, and it may be remarked in support that those who are convinced that Xenophon could not have omitted in so full an account to notice a Persian share might well address themselves to one phrase in his narrative. Having given the three Athenian speeches, Xenophon went on: *δοξάντων δὲ τούτων καλῶς εἶπεῖν, ἐψηφίσαντο καὶ οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι δέχεσθαι τὴν εἰρήνην. Δέχεσθαι* would be a curious word to use of the hegemonic power in a peace, but perfectly suited to Xenophon's view of a peace which the Spartans as well as the Athenians (*καὶ*) 'accepted' from Persia. All in all, the case for Persian participation in 372/1 seems valid, and the present article proceeds on that assumption.

Negotiations with Persia took time, and for Antalcidas' embassy to have had effect with the King and resulted in a rescript, Sparta must have appealed to Persia in the course of 372. So when Epaminondas became Boeotarch at the turn of the Theban civil year, in mid winter 372/1, he knew that 371 would either see Thebes tamely submit to Spartan demands in a renewed King's Peace just as she had submitted in 375, or see the Theban hegemony of Boeotia accepted and the way open to a vast extension of Boeotian influence: and if Thebes had to return to the condition imposed by the Peace of 375, not only would Plataea be re-established as a bastion of hostility not to be so easily surprised again, and Thespieae and Tanagra be restored to full independence,⁶

¹ Cf. S. Lauffer, art. cit. 322 ff.

² e.g. T. T. B. Ryder, *Koine Eirene* (1965), 127.

³ For survey of variant views see S. Lauffer, art. cit.

⁴ *Lys.* 12 (μετὰ γὰρ Ἀλκισθένην ἄρχοντα, ἐφ' οὗ τὴν εἰρήνην Ἀθηναῖοι τε καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ βασιλεὺς ὤμοσαν, ἀποδοὺς τὰ στρατεύματα Ἰφικράτης ἰδιώτης γίνεται).

⁵ See Jacoby's *Commentary on Philochorus* F152 and F151 (p. 522 ll. 14 ff. and cf. p. 239 ll. 37 ff.). Philochorus appears to have been Dionysius' sole source for these annalistic notices.

⁶ For the surprise of Plataea, Paus. 9. 1. 5 f. The condition of Thespieae in 372/1 is uncertain. Xenophon *Hell.* 6. 3. 1, 5 treats it as having suffered the same fate as Plataea,

and Diod. 15. 46. 6 (under 374/3) records an assault on the city (. . . οἱ μὲν Θηβαῖοι τὰς Πλαταιὰς κατασκάψαντες καὶ Θεσπιάς ἄλλοτρίως πρὸς αὐτοὺς διακειμένας ἐξεπύρθησαν). Isocrates however in the *Plataicus* § 9 (the dramatic date of which is shortly after the seizure of Plataea in 373) speaks of the Thespians and Tanagrans as being treated less severely than the Plataeans, and merely forced into syntely with Thebes, and Paus. 9. 13. 8 and 14. 2, 4 shows that the city still existed after Leuctra. Cf. Fortina, op. cit. 23 n. 33. Perhaps the true position was that Diodorus' ἐξεπύρθησαν did not fairly reflect Ephorus' account of an attack on the city which ended in the Thespians agreeing *συντελεῖν εἰς Θήβας*, thus making them in Xenophon's phrase (6. 3. 1) ἀπόλιδας, and

but also in all likelihood Theban nerve would fail. Thebes had begun the Corinthian War in the most daring manner. She could not have been confident that Thrasybulus would persuade Athens to join the revolt against Sparta; Lysander was in a position to bring against Thebes the full array of Sparta's allies in Central Greece, and if the planned junction with Pausanias had not miscarried, 395 might have seen Thebes suffer the fate which she had willed for Athens in 404 and which Lysander, perhaps out of suspicions of Thebes, had prevented.¹ Since attaining that peak of self-confidence Thebes had shown some infirmity of purpose. In the abortive peace negotiations of 392/1 she had been willing to come to terms with Sparta, and had remained suppliant for peace until 390, hard pressed by the attention of a single division of the Spartan army based on, and supported by, Thebes' ancient rival Orchomenus.² So much for the confident mood of 395. Nor had her performance since the King's Peace been very satisfactory from the point of view of the Boeotian nationalists. Despite the bold defiance of 382, when the party of Ismenias and Androclidas had not only begun negotiating alliance with Olynthus but also, in defiance of Sparta's decision that Olynthus was acting in breach of the King's Peace, persisted to the point of forbidding any Theban to join the Spartan expedition,³ succeeding years had seen less resolution. Promptly after the Liberation Thebes had prudently sought to reassure Sparta that she had no wish to disrupt the King's Peace,⁴ but it was other than prudence which gave rise to the suspicion that Thebans had prompted Sphodrias to raid the Piraeus.⁵ The purpose of that raid was, as I hope to argue elsewhere, to nip in the bud the newly formed Second Athenian Confederacy, potentially a serious challenge to Spartan domination and therefore much to be desired by Thebans who wished to see an end to the limitation of Theban political influence under the King's Peace. There must have been faint-hearted or complacent Thebans to excite such suspicion. Then again in 375 moderation prevailed. At the end of winter 378/7 Thebes had taken a most important step towards the reunification of Boeotia under her hegemony (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 4. 42-6). The Spartan harmost in Thespieae, Phoebidas, had by his raids into Theban territory provoked a counter-attack on Thespian territory, in the course of which Phoebidas was killed and the Thespians penned up within their walls. 'As a result the Theban business was once again set ablaze and they campaigned against Thespieae and the other surrounding cities. However the people from them withdrew to Thebes . . .' (§ 46). 'The Theban business' (τὰ τῶν Θηβαίων) was, we may guess, the reunification of Boeotia, and it was concerning this that the embassy to Thebes ordered by the decree of Aristotle in March 377 was to go and 'persuade the Thebans of whatever good they can'.⁶

that Callias exaggerated (6. 3. 5) with τῇ Πλαταιῶν καὶ Θεσπιῶν ἀναρέσει.

¹ Xen. *Hell.* 3. 5. 7-25.

² Andoc. 3. 24 f., 28 and Xen. *Hell.* 4. 5. 6, 9 for Boeotian attempts to come to terms between 392 and 390. Xen. *Hell.* 4. 3. 15, 5. 1. 29 for the Spartan division in Orchomenus.

³ Xen. *Hell.* 5. 2. 15, 27.

⁴ Isoc. 14. 29.

⁵ Xen. *Hell.* 5. 4. 20.

⁶ Tod, *G.H.I.* 123 ll. 74, 75. This decree was in the seventh prytany of 378/7, the

attack on Thespieae perhaps in the late autumn of 378 (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 4. 42 καρπὸν). The movement of the Boeotian δῆμος to Thebes was before spring 377 (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 4. 47), and so must have occurred not long before the Decree of Aristotle. So if the Boeotarchy was re-established in early 377, it is understandable that Athens might protest. Her alliance was with Thebes (ll. 24 and 79 of the Decree), not Boeotia; the name was important.—For the date of the restoration of the Boeotarchy, see Appendix I.

With a large number of Boeotians living in and around Thebes the appointment of Bocotarchs was a natural step to take. The bold attacks on the cities of Boeotia and then the attack on Phocis showed which way the Thebans were bent on following.¹ In early 375 came the remarkable success of a Theban force against two divisions of the Spartan army at Tegyra.² Boeotian nationalism must have been riding high. Then came the lame submission of 375,³ a sorry anti-climax that could not be repeated without disaster to all hopes of a re-unified Boeotia. If, after the aggressive acts of 373, Thebes were to submit yet again in 371, it could hardly be expected that Thebes would ever dare to stand by her demands and face the consequences.

Epaminondas knew his countrymen. In the course of 371 he was, as we shall see, going to have to overcome weakness of will at two crucial moments. At the Peace Congress in Sparta the Thebans at first submitted to the Spartan terms and only tardily made their stand,⁴ and in the debates amongst the Bocotarchs twenty days later⁵ no fewer than three of the seven were in favour of retiring to Thebes and suffering siege by the Peloponnesians.⁶ Such faint-heartedness Epaminondas had every reason to expect. It would be his great contribution to Thebes that 375 would not be repeated.

It is necessary briefly to digress and discuss the battle of Leuctra,⁷ which was fought twenty days after the Peace Congress in Sparta but for which the Theban army must have been trained for a much longer period.

There were four features of this battle which were, as far as we know, novel. First, the concentration of force on the Theban left flank.⁸ In itself the concentration of force was not new. The Thebans had been drawn up twenty-five deep at Delium in 424 (Thuc. 4. 93. 4), and at Nemea in 395, not content with the depth agreed on in the debate on strategy which had preceded the

¹ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 1. 1.

² Plut. *Pel.* 16, Diod. 15. 37.

³ If we exempt the notice of Diodorus 15. 38, there is no evidence that Thebes did not readily submit to the Peace of 375 (cf. Lauffer, art. cit. 318f.). B. R. I. Sealey, *Historia* v (1956), 190 ff. sought to interpret Isoc. 14. 37, which speaks of an Athenian decree to make the Thebans *ἐκσπόνδους* for their conduct over Oropus, as support for Diodorus' account. He postulated that when the Peace of 375 was 'presented to the Synedrion of the Athenian League, the Thebans claimed to swear on behalf of the whole Boeotian League; thereby they claimed to control Oropus, which the Athenians had recently won. So the Thebans were declared *ἐκσπόνδοι*.' Thus Sealey argues similarly to W. Judeich, *Rh. Mus.* lxxvi (1927), 182. But Diodorus is plainly not referring to the Athenian synedrion (Lauffer, art. cit. 320), and there is no reason to think that the Peace of 375 was 'presented to the Synedrion of the Athenian League'; it was similar to the Peace of Antalcidas (Philochorus F151), which was sworn in Sparta (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 1. 32 f.), and

probably similar to the peace of 372/1 which was likewise sworn (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 3. 18f.). The troubles over Oropus must relate purely to the internal affairs of the Athenian Confederacy, and not necessarily after the Peace of 375. Nor is the phrase *ἐκσπόνδους ποιῆσαι* appropriate only to the moment when a peace is being made, although it is often so used. Cf. Dem. 23. 91, 17. 16.

⁴ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 3. 19.

⁵ H. Beister, *Untersuchungen zu der Zeit der thebanischen Hegemonie*, Munich 1970, 13 ff., carefully calculated that Plutarch's interval of twenty days between the peace of 372/1 and the battle of Leuctra (*Ages.* 28. 5, *Camillus* 19. 2) is ample for the sequence of events.

⁶ Paus. 9. 13. 6 f.

⁷ For Leuctra, cf. J. Wolter in *Antike Schlachtfelder* iv (Berlin 1926), 290–316, and J. K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon*, ch. x. For the topography, cf. W. K. Pritchett, *Studies in Greek Topography* Part I (University of California 1965), ch. iii, A. R. Burn, 'Helicon in History', *B.S.A.* xlv (1949), 313 ff., and H. Beister, op. cit. 13–59.

⁸ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 4. 12, Plut. *Pel.* 23. 1.

battle, the Thebans had made their line 'really deep' (Xen. *Hell.* 4. 2. 13, 18). Seeing that the agreed depth had been sixteen which was twice the normal depth of the Spartan army in the fifth century,¹ the Thebans had been moving long before Leuctra to the concentration of force. What was new at Leuctra was that the concentration was on the left flank. Given the tendency of the Greek hoplite to edge to the right in the advance (Thuc. 5. 71. 1), there was obvious prudence in posting the strongest and most reliable troops on the right to check this drift to the right as much as possible rather than on the left where they would be most likely to suffer the ill effects of gaps appearing in the line. Epaminondas' reversal at Leuctra is the mark of a revolutionary change in the conception of warfare. In previous battles the most formidable forces on each side had frequently not come into conflict with each other: the whole line engaged at the same moment and only in the rarest circumstances did the troops on the right of each line formally engage each other. That was partly why Xenophon saw the battle of Coronea as unique, at any rate in his own lifetime (*Hell.* 4. 3. 16): after the Spartans had routed the Argives, and the Thebans the Orchomenians, Agesilaus deliberately sought, when he had neither need in doing so nor advantage, to confront the Thebans, making the whole a sort of knock-out contest for the hegemony of Greece. But in 371 the conflict was centred on, and indeed confined to, the main antagonists.

The second innovation closely served the same end. For the first time known to us a Greek general in a hoplite battle kept forces in reserve.² Normally, when battle had been joined, there was nothing more for the general to do. But in 371 Epaminondas drew up part of his forces, according to Xenophon (*Hell.* 6. 4. 12), 'no less than fifty deep'. This can only mean that he was not committing all his forces at the start of the battle. Indeed the celebrated role of Pelopidas and the Sacred Band in the battle argues as much (Plut. *Pel.* 23. 2). Pelopidas was able to prevent the Spartans encircling the Boeotian left flank. Epaminondas must have been able to use them as the battle developed. His work as general did not end when battle began.

Thirdly, both Diodorus (15. 55. 2) and Plutarch (*Pel.* 23. 1) speak of an 'oblique formation', though they do not seem to have the same conception of what this meant.³ Plutarch takes it to mean that Epaminondas did what might be described as a leftward diagonal march. Diodorus indicates that the oblique phalanx was the means whereby only the Boeotian left came into contact with the enemy, while the right flank followed Epaminondas' orders to avoid engaging in the battle. Whatever truth there may be in Plutarch's account, it is evident that the Diodoran picture of the two battle lines being far from parallel as they moved into contact is correct. The Boeotian right did not

¹ Cf. Thuc. 5. 68. 3.

² There had been minor instances prior to this, but not in major encounters. Cf. Anderson, *op. cit.* 179 f., citing Thuc. 5. 9. 8, 6. 67. 1, and Xen. *Anab.* 6. 5. 9-11.

³ Cf. Anderson, *op. cit.* 324 n. 60. Anderson imagines a conflict between Plutarch and Diodorus, the latter meaning that the left wing was thrust forward and so engaged the Spartan right before the Theban right could possibly engage, the former meaning that the whole line did an oblique march to

the left as it advanced, the sort of march suddenly required of the Ten Thousand by Cyrus at Cunaxa. But Plutarch's words (τοῦ Ἐπαμινώνδου τὴν φάλαγγα λοξὴν ἐπὶ τὸ εὐώνυμον ἔλκοντος) suggest that the move to the left was in addition to having the φάλαγξ λοξή. So Plutarch may well be using the term no differently from Diodorus (here at 15. 55. 2 and at 17. 57. 6 of Gaugamela) and the later military writers. Diodorus' use here may well reproduce Ephorus.

engage with the Peloponnesians (Plut. *Pel.* 23. 4), just as the right of the Macedonian army at Chaeronea sought to avoid the Greek left.¹

Fourthly, there was the unusual role of the cavalry battle. In hoplite battles of the past, cavalry had operated on the flanks during the battle or had skirmished before the battle.² But at Leuctra, it would seem, the Theban advance began while the cavalry were still in conflict. According to Diodorus (15. 55. 3), the Spartans made their phalanx 'moon-shaped', which is baffling. Nothing before or after in Spartan history prepares us for such innovation in 371. In Xenophon's account (*Hell.* 6. 4. 13), which is written wholly from a Spartan point of view, there is no hint of anything unusual in the formation adopted by Cleombrotus, although, if Xenophon had known of anything to explain the Spartan defeat, he might well have alluded to it. What Xenophon does say is most suggestive. He says that Cleombrotus began to advance before his army perceived that he was doing so and that the routed Spartan cavalry fell foul of the hoplite array while the Thebans were attacking.³ Considering the admirable training of the Spartan army in the transmission of orders, one can only suppose that Cleombrotus was forced to fight before he expected to do so, and that before the cavalry engagement was over Epaminondas began his advance with the left flank thrust forward and the right flank partly protected by the confusion caused by the cavalry battle, and that the Peloponnesian line bent moon-shaped round their straggling cavalry. If this explanation is right, the battle displayed for the first time in a major Greek battle that co-ordination of arms which was to be so remarkably developed by Philip and Alexander. Epaminondas timed his advance so well that only the Spartans were free to engage and were forced to do so against a superior concentration of force with enough in reserve to exploit success. No wonder Ephorus admired.

Such a revolution in the art of war was not conceived in the twenty days between the exclusion of Thebes from the peace and the battle; nor could the Theban army be trained to it in so short a period. Anyone who has had experience of foot-drill in an army and has taken part in large-scale reviews on parade will realize that without the flat unbroken surface of a parade-ground and without lines and flags to guide movement even the normal advance of a hoplite army must have required experience and practice. For the revolutionary and much more exacting changes of 371, new and intensive training must have been carried out. Indeed it is for the high training of the Theban army that Xenophon especially commended Epaminondas.⁴

¹ Cf. N. G. L. Hammond, *Klio* xxxi (1938), 201 ff.

² Cf. Kromayer-Veith, *Heerwesen und Kriegführung* (1928), 92. Xen. *Hell.* 3. 2. 16 is typical.

³ It may be remarked that Xenophon appears quite unaware of the plan of battle which Anderson (p. 216) accepts.

⁴ *Hell.* 7. 5. 19, 6. 5. 23. Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 193E. That hoplite armies generally had some sort of training in drill is likely rather than certain. Given the difficulties of advancing over ground broken up by trees, huts, and ditches, and also the infrequency of experience of full-scale battle, one might presume that occasional 'parades' would be

necessary, although in the case of Athens the evidence is not very satisfactory. Pericles in the Funeral Oration (Thuc. 2. 39) contrasts the *ἐπίπονος ἀσκήσις* of the Spartans with the relaxed life of the Athenians; but the Spartans were constantly training for war, and Pericles' words do not exclude some sort of drill at Athens. Evidently individuals chose to keep themselves in training with arms drill (cf. Plato, *Laches* 178A, 181E), and indeed in Xen. *Mem.* 3. 12. 5 Socrates says that οὐκ ἀσκεῖ δημοσίᾳ ἢ πόλιν τὰ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον, but that was in a discussion of physical fitness, a different matter from orderly manœuvring. There were regular reviews at Athens (cf. Isoc. 7. 82 *ἐξετάσεις*,

Epaminondas must therefore have begun to prepare for the great battle that would crown or debase his country as soon as he entered office. The decision to fight was no hastily conceived plan, consequent on a diplomatic reverse. He knew when he entered office that a new Common Peace was likely; that Thebes would in all likelihood have to stand, as she had nearly stood in 375, alone; that a large Spartan force would be strategically well placed to exploit her isolation. He resolved from the start to fight.

Before passing from the battle of Leuctra, one may note that the Spartan view that Cleombrotus was to blame was wildly wrong. Conventional, conservative Spartan warfare, nonplussed in 425 by the novel terrain of Sphacteria, was nonplussed in 371 by the novel methods of genius. It was not Cleombrotus that failed at Leuctra, but Spartanism. Cleombrotus in fact did well to get to Leuctra at all. Epaminondas had stationed a force under Chaereas¹ to prevent him leaving Phocis by other than the main highroad south into Boeotia between the Copaic Lake and the mountains west of Haliartus and Coronea, and Epaminondas was in position to fight his great battle where Peloponnesian superiority of numbers would be of less effect. Cleombrotus refused this course, and by appearing in the plain of Leuctra seven miles from Thebes struck terror into some Theban hearts. He had done well enough for a Spartan. It was his misfortune to confront a military genius.

Was it Thebes' good fortune that Epaminondas was in office in 371? The evidence about his age is of little value.² He certainly was of military age by 385³ and so must have been thirty-two at least by late 372. But it is not clear whether his assumption of the Boeotarchy⁴ was the natural first step of a rising Theban, *suo anno* as it were, or the deliberate descent into the cave by a remote and mature sage. In the latter case his acts of 371 would be the more deliberate, but even in the former case there is something to be said for supposing that he entered office clearly aware of what the year would bring.

There is one oddity about 371. After the re-creation of the Boeotarchy in March 377 it was the only year when Pelopidas was not Boeotarch.⁵ He died in the course of his thirteenth Boeotarchy in 364, and was never unseated by

I.G. II² 500 l. 12, *Ar. Ath. Pol.* 31. 2, and cf. *S.E.G.* 14. 64), and it seems likely enough that they involved drill (cf. *Hell. Oxy.* 15. 1, where Conon held daily reviews in Rhodes to keep the troops from idleness, presumably more than merely presenting arms, and *Xen. Anab.* 1. 2. 14 f. where ἐξέτασις involved a battle-charge). Athens with her reliance on sea-power was probably not typical; other states may have been more assiduous. The ὀπλομάχοι of Greece, who regarded Spartan drills as very complicated (*Xen. Lac. Pol.* 11. 8), must have had parades at which to exercise their art. Men like Phalinus, who claimed to be ἐπιστήμων . . . τῶν ἀμφιτάξεις τε καὶ ὀπλομαχίαν, had hardly mastered their knowledge in a merely theoretical fashion. Anderson, *op. cit.*, ch. vi usefully discusses tactical training, but it would be helpful to have a full account of the practice of Greek states in time of peace.

¹ Paus. 9. 13. 3. For discussions of where exactly Chaereas was stationed, see Beister, *op. cit.* 39.

² Cf. Swoboda, *art. cit.*, col. 2675.

³ Paus. 9. 13. 1.

⁴ It cannot be proved that Epaminondas was not Boeotarch before 371. *Plut. Mor.* 1129c is of little value and *Ages.* 27 refers perhaps only to experience in battle, but the epitome of the Plutarchian life in Pausanias (9. 13) passes directly to 371 and, if we exempt the notice of *Diod.* 15. 38, there is no other evidence concerning Epaminondas between the Liberation and the year of Leuctra. He may have been in office in 372, a quiet enough year, but 373 is unlikely, for he has no part in the evidence about the destruction of Plataea, to which he might well have been opposed (cf. *Plut. Comp. Pel. et Marc.* 1).

⁵ Cf. Appendix I.

the opponents of Epaminondas even though they did unseat Epaminondas, with whom Pelopidas was to the best of our knowledge in constant harmony. Why was the man whom many Thebans in 372 must have regarded as the real hero of Thebes restored, the victor of Tegyra, out of the Boeotarchy for the only time in his career? He was not unemployed, however, in the decisive year. As commander of the Sacred Band, he had an all-important part to play in Epaminondas' great battle.

Perhaps it will not strain credulity too far to suggest that Pelopidas was not Boeotarch in 371 because the man whom he recognized as potentially his master in war wanted no one less than the victor of Tegyra to train the Sacred Band and lead it in the coming struggle. Three of the Boeotarchs of 371 proved faint-hearted. Epaminondas presumably would not have wanted to depend so much on such men.

There was more to 371, however, than war and preparations for war. There was diplomacy too, and the year that established Epaminondas as the greatest general of the age showed the Greeks that Thebes had a statesman of no mean stature.

The Peace Congress of 371 must have been, for Greeks, a glittering occasion. The greatest of the Spartans, indeed for Theopompus the greatest man of the age,¹ King Agesilaus, presided. Delegations from all over the Greek world were there and heard the leading Athenian orator of his time, Callistratus,² plead for concord between the leading land and naval powers of Greece—a theme to which Xenophon was happy to accord space (*Hell.* 6. 3. 10–17). But no less impressive for his eloquence was the man of whose presence Xenophon did not breathe a word. Indeed the Congress was little short of a personal triumph for Epaminondas.

Nepos (*Epam.* 6. 4) concluded a discussion of Epaminondas as orator with these words. 'Yet the greatest display of his eloquence was when he was at Sparta as ambassador before the battle of Leuctra. When the ambassadors of the whole alliance had met there, in the hearing of a most crowded assembly of the embassies he exposed and denounced the Spartans' despotic power in such a manner that he severely shook their position by that speech no less than by the battle of Leuctra. For he then brought it about, as was afterwards apparent, that the Spartans were bereft of the support of their allies.' This was no exaggeration. He spoke, according to Plutarch (*Ages.* 27. 4. 28), 'not merely for Thebes but for all Greece in common', and there followed a most famous altercation with Agesilaus. When Agesilaus asked him whether his ideas of justice and equality included independence from Thebes for the cities of Boeotia, Epaminondas riposted³ with a demand for the independence of the perioecic peoples of Laconia, a doubly remarkable reply. Not only was Epaminondas asserting that Thebes had no less right to control Boeotia than Sparta to control Laconia, but also by choosing to speak about the perioecic peoples rather than the helots of Messenia he was by implication proclaiming that Thebes would seek the refoundation and independence of Messene. Others had protested about Spartan power over other states. Epaminondas' words portended the dissolution of the Spartan state itself. The hopes of the oppressed now turned to Thebes. It was no surprise that the first Theban force to invade the Peloponnese contained peoples who had but lately looked

¹ F 321.

² Cf. Nepos, *Epam.* 6. 1.

³ Cf. Paus. 9. 13. 2.

to Athens as the liberator (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 23), and, when Athens through the mouth of Callistratus was defending itself for saving Sparta from destruction by Thebes,¹ Thebes was being widely regarded as the founder and defender of the liberty of the once-oppressed peoples of the Peloponnese. Had not Epaminondas told all Greece at the Peace Congress what to expect?

There is however one aspect of this Congress which remains obscure. Epaminondas' speech presumably belongs, just as the speeches recorded by Xenophon belong, to the discussion prior to the oath-swearing, and to judge by Plutarch's account (*Ages.* 28. 1) the altercation with Agesilaus followed directly on the speech.² The burden of it all was plain. Thebes was asserting before the assembled Greeks that she was hegemon of Boeotia, that there would be in future Boeotians so called, a single state amongst the states of Greece, and no longer Thebans or Thespians. Yet, according to Xenophon (*Hell.* 6. 3. 19), the Thebans were at first listed as having sworn as 'Thebans', and the name was erased when on the following day they demanded to be registered as 'Boeotians'. How did this happen? Of course Agesilaus may have ordered 'Thebans' to be inscribed contrary to the expectation of the Theban embassy who, when they found out, demanded the change. But Xenophon gives no hint of this and the impression one gets from an admittedly far from straightforward passage³ is that the Thebans changed their minds. If so, did Epaminondas change his mind? He had proclaimed his political credo before Greece. Did his nerve fail, for the space of a day? We cannot know, but one may be pardoned for believing that the faint-heartedness was not his and that not his least service to the cause of Boeotian nationalism is wholly unattested, to wit his persuasion of his own fellow ambassadors. In Sparta, as twenty days later at Leuctra, he had Theban opposition to overcome before he could succeed.

The campaigning season after Leuctra was occupied with the consolidation of Boeotia.⁴ Thespieae had to be dealt with and Orchomenus subjected. After that, Phocis, so long a stronghold of Spartan power, had to be secured. There was in any case another reason for the Thebans not to follow up their victory. Jason of Pherae with grandiose words and grandiose plans⁵ threatened to dominate central Greece,⁶ and, until he had been killed, it was not safe to leave Boeotia unattended. When in winter 370/69 the Arcadians appealed unsuccessfully to Athens for protection against Sparta and turned to Thebes,⁷ a new period opened.

When Athens rejected the Arcadians, the debate must have been nicely poised. Military and political experience must have advised caution: to be involved in the web of Peloponnesian politics might finally contribute little

¹ *G.H.I.* 131 (decree of 369/8).

² Paus. 9. 13. 2 suggests that the altercation was before the oath-swearing. (Note the future *ἐάσουσιν*.)

³ One would never guess from Xenophon that Epaminondas and his fellow ambassadors are likely to have been in Sparta not as the Theban delegation but as the delegation representing the Boeotian *δῆμος*. So how they came to be listed as 'Thebans' is obscure. Attempts to gloss over the difficulty (e.g. Fortina, *op. cit.* 25) by supposing that

the Thebans were listed as members of the Second Athenian Confederacy fail. They swore city by city according to Xenophon (*Hell.* 6. 3. 19). Why did the Thebans swear? For earlier discussions cf. von Stern, *op. cit.* 125 ff., and Swoboda, *op. cit.*, col. 2681.

⁴ Diod. 15. 57. 1, Paus. 9. 14. 4.

⁵ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 4. 29 ff. and 6. 1. 10 f.; Isoc. 5. 119.

⁶ Diod. 15. 57. 2, 60. 1 ff.

⁷ Diod. 15. 62. 3; Dem. 16. 12.

to stability and militarily provoke the Spartan lion, wounded but not yet maimed, to attacks which Athens would hardly be able to check. On the other hand, if Athens, hegemon of the Greek world since the Congress of Athens after Leuctra (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 1), would not champion the dissident states of the Peloponnese, they would turn to the power which on the morrow of Leuctra had appealed to Athens to join in exacting vengeance in full from Sparta (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 4. 19). Demosthenes later (16. 12) pronounced the rejection of the Arcadians to be a major error. He had the advantage of hindsight. In 370/69 the right course was less clear.

The debate at Thebes was different. There was no question of leaving the opportunity to others if Thebes did not take it herself. The only issue was whether she should actively intervene in the Peloponnese and keep Sparta on the defensive, or leave the Peloponnesians to work out the consequences of Leuctra for themselves. To us it is hard to suppose that statesmen could seriously entertain the latter alternative. Sparta had lost one battle, a loss of Spartiates and a loss of prestige. For the moment Athens had displaced her as hegemon of the peace.¹ The Peloponnese was in turmoil.² In Arcadia nationalism was at long last unfettered.³ But the real sources of Spartan power remained—the mastery of Messenia and Laconia, and the devotion of ‘the best men’ of the Peloponnese to the *mirage spartiate*. As long as a Stasippus had influence in Tegea,⁴ or a Euphron in Sicyon had no support if he deserted Sparta,⁵ the damage of Leuctra might be repaired. The army was still to be reckoned with. Agesilaus was at that moment in Arcadia (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 15 f.). Thebes had to intervene. Not until the economic basis of Spartan power had been broken by depriving her of the wealth of Messenia, and Messene and Megalopolis been established as bastions of democratic power where once aristocratic ‘autonomy’ had prevailed, would Sparta be confined to the defence of her Laconian lair. Even then constant vigilance and readiness to sustain alliances would be necessary. There was no alternative. Epaminondas saw this clearly (Paus. 9. 14. 4).

Nonetheless there was division at Thebes, and Epaminondas had to overcome the opposition of Meneclidas⁶ and his party. That Meneclidas opposed

¹ It has been much discussed whether Sparta was represented in the Peace Congress at Athens after Leuctra. Cf. M. Sordi, *Riv. Fil.* n.s. xxix (1951), 34–64, and Ryder, op. cit. 131 f. The arguments are of varying worth, but the one drawn from the remarks of Cleiteles of Corinth in winter 370/69 (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 37) seems to show that Sparta was included in 371/70. When Cleiteles spoke in 369, he spoke in support of the Spartans, and said that if Athens did not help Corinth, she would be acting *παρὰ τοὺς ὅρκους*, and it was the oaths of the peace of 371/70, not those of 372/1, which obliged participants to act against transgressors (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 2 compared with 6. 3. 18). Cleiteles then went on to make it clear that he meant the oaths of 371/70—*καὶ τὰυτὰ ὧν αὐτοὶ ἐπεμελήθητε ὀρκων*—and added *ὅπως πᾶσι ὑμῖν πάντες ἡμεῖς ὁμόσαμεν*, which makes clear that the Spartans were included

in 371/70 for they were certainly in *πάντες ἡμεῖς*. (*Πάντες ἡμεῖς* cannot mean ‘all the Corinthians’, for only the magistrates had sworn in 371/70—Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 3.)

² The disturbances of Diod. 15. 40 probably go with chapters 38 and 39, and belong to 371.

³ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 6 (of 370).

⁴ Ibid. 6. 5. 7, 6. 4. 18.

⁵ Euphron was ready enough, when the time came, to change his loyalties (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 3. 2). But in 371/70 the attempt at revolution in Sicyon failed (Diod. 15. 40. 4) and Euphron and his ilk were still loyal to Sparta (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 44).

⁶ Plut. *Pel.* 25 shows that it was Meneclidas who attacked Epaminondas after his victorious first Peloponnesian campaign. Nepos, *Epam.* 5 is the only other evidence for him.

him on the policy of intervening in the Peloponnese is nowhere explicitly attested, but it may be deduced from Nepos' brief references to him. 'Because he (Meneclidas) saw that Epaminondas was at his best in the conduct of war, he was accustomed to urge the Thebans to prefer peace to war so that the services of Epaminondas as commander should not be needed' (*Epam.* 5. 2), and Nepos makes Epaminondas suitably reply '... if you wish to be the leading power of Greece, you must take to the camp, not to the wrestling ground' (*ibid.* 5. 4). A plea for peace at all costs was unlikely to have any appeal to the victors of Leuctra, and it is notable that neither in Plutarch's *Life of Pelopidas* nor in Nepos' is there any trace of Meneclidas' attacking Pelopidas for his interventions in Thessaly which certainly and inevitably involved Thebes in war. The alleged demand for peace must have been a demand for Thebes to keep out of the Peloponnese. That is why Meneclidas prosecuted Epaminondas twice in 369.¹ His first prosecution on a constitutional point was absurd. If the price of refounding Messene and of invading Laconia hitherto inviolate was a breach of the law, so much the worse for the law; and Epaminondas had not the slightest difficulty in justifying himself.² The second prosecution had more point. The invasion of summer 369¹ achieved remarkably little (*Xen. Hell.* 7. 1. 18 f.). A few mercenaries from Dionysius had been able to discomfit the Theban force (*ibid.* 7. 1. 20 f.), and resentment against Thebes was perhaps already plainly astir (*ibid.* 7. 1. 23 f.). The gloomy predictions of Meneclidas must have seemed to be coming true; Thebes had been involved in the endless skirmishing of petty Peloponnesian powers. This time Meneclidas had a more satisfactory pretext. Epaminondas could be represented as lukewarm in his determination to damage Sparta, and Meneclidas was able to keep him out of the Boeotarchy for 368 (*Diod.* 15. 72), in which year there was no intervention in the Peloponnese. It is possible too that the party of Meneclidas tried to prevent the first expedition ever going out at all. There is a curious and tell-tale remark in Xenophon which shows the difficulties Epaminondas had to overcome. The Eleans on campaign with the Mantineans and facing Agesilaus in Arcadia dissuaded battle 'until the Thebans appear; and they said that they well knew that they would appear, for they had actually borrowed ten talents from them (the Eleans) for the expedition' (*Hell.* 6. 5. 19). This is indeed curious. The Thebans had voted to help the Peloponnesians, but the Mantineans needed to be persuaded that the Thebans would be honouring their undertaking, and such was the will of the Thebans to seize the opportunity presented to them that trivial sums of money had to be scraped up to enable the expedition to depart. It is consistent with this niggardliness that Epaminondas is represented in Plutarch (*Mor.* 193B, c) as having to borrow fifty drachmas for expenses on the campaign. Unable to kill the expedition outright, his opponents perhaps tried to starve it, and, though the details are unclear, they may have sought to replace Epaminondas and Pelopidas in their command.¹ By removing the chief advocates of intervention, their opponents hoped to keep Thebes free of the Peloponnese.

The real problem for Thebes was not whether she should intervene in the Peloponnese, but by what means she should exercise her influence there. Like Sparta, she would rely principally on military power but, unlike Sparta,

¹ See Appendix II.

² Paus. 9. 14, 7, etc.

she had no ready means of maintaining control over the policies of the Peloponnesian states. Sparta had ruled, as Thucydides remarked (1. 19), through oligarchy. By supporting the landed aristocracy and indeed guaranteeing it against the social changes which would follow on the growth of large urban populations behind impregnable walls, Sparta not only secured military support in return but also could count on policies which suited admirably her own purposes. Further, the men on whom she relied were men who looked to Sparta as the nearest approach to the ideal society, the inspiration of the good life. In this way her power was in very large measure coherent and hard to disrupt. The position of Thebes was far different and far less satisfactory. Inevitably there would have to be large cities and democracies to counter Spartan power, but there was no guarantee that they would behave as Thebes desired. No one admired Thebes away from the battlefield or looked to her as a spiritual home. If the Peloponnese was to be free, it would be free of Thebes as well as Sparta. Indeed the history of Mantinea before 385 was a portent. If under the shadow of Sparta petty imperialism could flourish,¹ what would happen when that shadow was past?

As far as we can discern it, Epaminondas' method of maintaining Theban control was well suited to the Peloponnese. He did not seek to establish the inverse of the Spartan system by requiring every state that came under the Theban wing to become a democracy and to get rid of any citizens to whom democracy was uncongenial. He preferred to rely on mere treaties of alliance and the recognition by Peloponnesian statesmen that Sparta would never be allowed again to become a great power. When he incorporated Achaea into the Theban alliance, he responded to the appeal of 'the best men' and secured that the most influential citizens were not exiled nor the constitution changed (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 41 f.). This is the only piece of evidence we have directly concerning the Peloponnese, but that Epaminondas regularly pursued this policy is suggested by what we know of his policy elsewhere. When Thebes in the year after Leuctra set about securing her hold over Boeotia, Epaminondas prevented the 'enslavement' of Orchomenus (Diod. 15. 57. 1) and when in 364 the richest citizens of Orchomenus were discovered to be involved in a plot to replace the Boeotian democracy with an aristocratic system, akin perhaps to the federal oligarchies of the period before the King's Peace, the Orchomenians were sold into slavery and the city razed to the ground only because Epaminondas and his consort in power, Pelopidas, were absent from Thebes at the vital moment.² A similar moderation was displayed over Phocis in 370, the year in which Epaminondas' influence must have been at its greatest. Thebes had to secure the 'friendship' of the states of central Greece and of Phocis in particular, and proceeded to do so (Diod. 15. 57. 1). But the terms on which she did so are notable. Phocis was accorded a purely defensive alliance, and, when Epaminondas first intervened in the Peloponnese in winter 370/69, the Phocians went with him, as 'subjects' according to Xenophon, but

¹ Cf. Thuc. 5. 29. 1 and 81. 1.

² Diod. 15. 57. 1, under 364/3. Pausanias 9. 15. 3 dates the destruction of the city when Epaminondas was ceded command at the time of Pelopidas' arrest (Diod. 15. 71), but Isoc. 6. 27 shows that probably it had not happened by 366. For the absence of

Epaminondas and Pelopidas, cf. Paus. loc. cit. and Plut. *Comp. Pel. et Marc.* 1. If the destruction is rightly dated to 364/3 Pelopidas must have been absent on his final (and fatal) expedition to Thessaly, and Epaminondas presumably on his Aegean diplomacy (see below).

in fact freely (*Hell.* 7. 5. 4, 6. 5. 23). Epaminondas, it would seem, saw advantage in underplaying Thebes' power.

In this he was opposed, to judge by the case of the Achaeans (*Xen. Hell.* 7. 1. 43). He was attacked on that occasion by both the Arcadians and his political rivals for his settlement, which was shortly reversed. Democracies were set up, and 'the best men' exiled. The sequel perhaps showed the good sense of Epaminondas. When these exiles recovered the cities, they 'no longer took a middle course'.¹ Epaminondas had perceived that there were sufficient numbers of men like Euphron of Sicyon² who would relax their zeal for Sparta when Sparta lost her power to support them, and that rigid uniformity would involve greater trouble than advantage for Thebes. The only real fear in the Peloponnese was that Peloponnesians should forget their fears of Sparta.

The peace of 366/5 set the seal on Epaminondas' Peloponnesian policy. Under it the remaining members of the Peloponnesian league finally abandoned Sparta, and recognized the independence of Messenia and, presumably, the unification of Boeotia.³ But if it is correct that the peace was a Common Peace which included Athens,⁴ the gains were not all Theban; from now on

¹ Οὐκέτι ἐμέσσειον, ἀλλὰ προθύμως συνεμύχοντο τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις . . .

² *Xen. Hell.* 7. 1. 44.

³ *Xen. Hell.* 7. 4. 6–11 and Isocrates' *Archidamus*. That the participants assented to the Theban demand, so long pressed, for the recognition of the Boeotian state is a presumption. Xenophon and the Isocratean Archidamus studiously prefer the term 'Thebans'. In the *Hellenica* after recording the King's Peace Xenophon uses 'Boeotians' of the federal army only (6. 5. 23, 51; 7. 4. 36, 5. 4).

⁴ Cf. my article 'The Common Peace of 366/5', *C.Q.* n.s. xi (1961), 80 ff. which was opposed by Ryder, *op. cit.* 83 n. 1 and Appendix VII, where the only point needing further comment is the claim that I appear not to have regarded, or appreciated the significance of, 'Timotheus' re-election to the generalship in 366 and the new approach in the Peloponnese (the alliance with the Arcadians and the attempt to seize Corinth . . .)' which 'seem to show that the Athenians were pursuing a more chauvinistic and "tougher" policy, and were now less likely than before to accept the Theban terms'. As to Timotheus, he may well have been the general favoured by the *βουλευόμενοι* (cf. *Historia* xii [1963], 94), and, if he was not sent out to help Ariobarzanes 'without breaking the treaty with the Great King' (*Dem.* 15. 9) after the peace of 366/5, he may have been sent so that Persia might feel it prudent to assent to the modifications demanded by Athens for the Royal Rescript of 367 (cf. *C.Q.* loc. cit. 85). As to 'the new approach in the Peloponnese', Corinth,

Athens' ally, was a major obstacle to peace. Pasimelus, the celebrated Laconophile of the Corinthian War (*Xen. Hell.* 4. 4. 4, 7) was still in power (*ibid.* 7. 3. 2), and the city, headquarters of the war against Thebes (*Xen. Hell.* 7. 1. 28 for the meeting of allies there, as *περιέπλευσαν* suggests), was a congenial home for the equally Laconophile Xenophon (*Diog. Laert.* 2. 53, 56). Why then should the Athenians have feared that the city might not be *σῶα τῷ δήμῳ τῶν Ἀθηναίων*? The terms in which the Corinthians sought Sparta's permission to join the Peace (*Xen. Hell.* 7. 4. 8) show that there was little inclination to traffic with Thebes, and Xenophon (*ibid.* 7. 4. 6) seems to suggest that the whole peace movement at Corinth followed on the recognition that without Athenian aid the city was defenceless. So Athens cannot have feared that the city would go over to Thebes. But did the Athenians really mean to seize Corinth? Hardly, for the Athenian hoplites were assembled within Corinth itself (*ibid.* 7. 4. 5), and the Corinthians cannot have feared seizure. It seems possible enough that the curious clause in the decree of Demotion was inspired by the changing Athenian attitude towards Thebes, by a fear that the Corinth of Pasimelus would prove, as earlier (*ibid.* 7. 1. 40), the stumbling-block for peace. As for the Arcadian alliance (*ibid.* 7. 4. 2), it certainly showed a very large change of attitude towards Sparta, and the opposition of 'certain of the Athenians' was overcome only when they realized that there was advantage to Sparta and Athens if the Arcadians did not need the Thebans as well as

Athens, released from her unhappy military efforts in the Peloponnese, was free to concentrate on what concerned her most—viz. the recovery of Amphipolis and the Chersonese, to both of which her right had been confirmed by the peace.¹

It is therefore surprising that under the year 364/3 Diodorus (15. 78. 4) recorded an important development of Theban policy. Epaminondas is found urging his countrymen to naval empire, and the Boeotians accordingly decreed that a fleet of one hundred ships and a corresponding number of docks should be built and the Rhodians, Chians, and Byzantians should be urged to support these designs. Epaminondas was then sent out with a fleet to these peoples. The Athenian general, Laches, was dispatched with a large force to prevent the Thebans, but retired in fear, and Epaminondas 'made the cities friendly to the Thebans' (*ιδίαις τὰς πόλεις τοῖς Θηβαίοις ἐποίησεν*). What lies behind this passage of Diodorus,² and how is Epaminondas' policy to be evaluated?

There is some supporting evidence to make us think seriously of Diodorus' account. Aeschines (2. 105) later declared that Epaminondas had said in an assembly that 'the Thebans must transfer the Propylaea of the Athenian acropolis to the entrance to the Cadmea', and, since the Propylaea was the symbol of Athens' fifth-century naval empire, the remark may well belong to the assembly Diodorus records, or, rather, to what was said of it in Athens. Isocrates (5. 53) said the Thebans sent out triremes to Byzantium, 'with the intention of ruling both land and sea', and the appeal of the Heracleans to Epaminondas, recorded by Justin (16. 4. 3-4), probably belongs to Epaminondas' mission.³ By 362 Byzantium was plainly on bad terms with Athens⁴

the Athenians. Xenophon does not dwell on the motives of those Athenians who positively wanted the alliance—motives that may have been, to use Ryder's word, 'chauvinistic', or alternatively of a diplomatic sort; Arcadia would be assured of Athenian help against Sparta, and so would be the more able to join in a Common Peace, especially one that was not a *συμμαχία* (ibid. 7. 4. 10), i.e. had no sanctions clause. (I therefore must retract my statement on p. 85 of *C.Q.* n.s. xi [1961] that 'Thebes occupied in the Peace precisely the position that Sparta had occupied in the King's Peace of 387/6.' Thebes lacked Sparta's one-time hegemonic position.)

This peace will always divide opinion, until new evidence appears. For the present, judgement depends largely on estimation of Xenophon (whose details may be a good deal more deceptive than Ryder supposes), but, as I continue to hold, not entirely.

¹ Cf. my article discussed in the preceding note, p. 80 f., and also p. 85 for the suggestion that Ariobarzanes handed over Crithote and Sestos (Nepos, *Tim.* 1. 3) under the terms of the Common Peace. (For it is odd that a Persian satrap, whose hyparch could be said by Demosthenes (23. 142) to have held 'the whole Hellespont', should have handed over territory to an Athenian general. But

Dem. 23. 202 perhaps implies some special services contributed by Timotheus, and Ariobarzanes may have been wavering in loyalty; hence the special instruction to Timotheus of Dem. 15. 9.)

² Cf. F. Carrata Thomes, *Egemonia beotica e potenza marittima nella politica di Epaminonda* (Torino 1952), M. Fortina, op. cit. 77 ff., and, most recently, J. Wiseman, *Klio* li (1969), 195 f.

³ Justin's words (*auxilia a Timotheo, Atheniensium duce, mox ab Epaminonda Thebanorum petivere*) suggest that the Heracleans appealed to the two *duces* actually at the Hellespont.

⁴ Accame, *La lega ateniese*, 179 n. 3, argues that Byzantium was in revolt from the Second Athenian Confederacy from the mid 360s and cites *I.G.* VII 2408 (a Boeotian proxy decree for a Byzantian) which he dates 363. He then goes on to attach the special significance to the expression of Diodorus 16. 7. 3 (*Χίων και 'Ροδίων και Κώων, ἔτι δὲ Βυζαντίων ἀποστάντων*) of meaning that the Byzantians were in a different condition, i.e. they had been in revolt for some time previously. But the date of *I.G.* VII 2408 is quite unsure and could well belong in the 350s (see below) and Diodorus is rather given to such *ἐτι δε* expressions (e.g. 15. 85. 2, 16. 19. 3, 16. 21.

and this may reflect the influence of Epaminondas. So the Ephoran tradition is perhaps echoed elsewhere in the evidence. But one must also note its limits. Diodorus says nothing to imply that the ships were ever built. Epaminondas went out with a force (μετὰ δυνάμεως), but there had been a Boeotian navy of sorts since the fifth century¹ and he may have used for his voyage the ships ready to hand.² If as Diodorus asserts Laches retired in fear, this need not have been fear of the naval force of Epaminondas: presumably the large force at Laches' command (στόλος ἀξιόλογος is Diodorus' term) was made large enough to engage in battle and Athenians were still confident enough of their skill not to run away. Laches must rather have feared the political consequences of attacking Epaminondas' force and so breaking the Peace. Again, no large force of Boeotian ships ever appears in the late 360s or the 350s, though in view of Theban enmity to Alexander of Pherae, who did have and use a navy,³ there certainly were occasions for naval activity. So presumably there was no great increase in the Boeotian navy.⁴ Nor should Diodorus' remark about Epaminondas making the cities of Rhodes, Chios, and Byzantium 'attached' (ἰδίας) to the Thebans (15. 79. 1) be taken to mean that they revolted from Athens. Rhodes and Chios did not revolt until 357, though Byzantium may have been in somewhat different case.⁵ All in all, there was a grand design but it came to very little.⁶

What occasioned such a development? Are we to suppose that Epaminondas having established, as he thought, Boeotian power in central and southern Greece suddenly resolved to establish a naval empire, which would inevitably have meant naval war with Athens? Or was there some other explanation? After all, such a speech in time of peace as Diodorus (15. 78. 4) recounts was bound to cause great excitement in Greece, and the frank avowal of imperial designs would render them less likely to succeed. One may rule out from the start that Epaminondas entertained Panhellenist notions of attacking Persia of the sort entertained by Jason of Pherae.⁷ No hint of such a policy survives in the evidence,⁸ and, since the policy of concord with Persia chiefly concerned Pelopidas (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 33 ff.), it probably had the blessing of Epaminondas too. So his bluntness could not have been explained away in such terms. Why then was he so outspoken? Perhaps the right explanation is that the whole affair sprang from Athens' cleruchy to Samos. The date of Epaminondas'

1). The beaching of corn-ships (Dem. 50. 6, etc.) does not necessarily argue more than bad relations. Nepos, *Tim.* 1 (*Olynthios et Byzantios bello subegit*) is more substantial, if not literally correct (cf. Isoc. 15. 108–113, who has nothing to say on the subject—perhaps Nepos points to little more than that Timotheus was, according to Dem. 23. 149, ἐπ' Ἀμφίπολιν καὶ Χερρόνησον . . . στρατηγός).

¹ Cf. Carrata Thomes, op. cit. 13 f.

² It is to be noted that the ship-building decree of Diod. 15. 79. 1 at the same moment ordered the appeals to Rhodes, Chios, and Byzantium, presumably intending that both should be set in hand forthwith; i.e. there was apparently no question of Epaminondas waiting for ships to be built.

³ Cf. Dem. 51. 8, 50. 4, Polyaeus 6. 2. 1–2, Diod. 15. 95. 1 ff.

⁴ It is hard to know what lies behind Plut. *Philopoemen* 14. 1 f. Epaminondas was certainly not defeated in a sea-battle, or we should have heard of it. Perhaps there is not much more than that he was a bad sailor (cf. Paus. 8. 11. 10), but Plutarch concludes with the remark ἀπρακτον ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ τῶν νήσων ἀπελθεῖν ἐκούσιως. The *Epaminondas* is sadly missed on this topic.

⁵ See p. 270 n. 4 for Byzantium, and Diod. 11. 7. 3 for the revolt of 357.

⁶ Cf. Fortina, op. cit. 85 on the purpose of the expedition.

⁷ Xen. *Hell.* 6. 1. 12, Isoc. 5. 119.

⁸ Plut. *Mor.* 193c preserves a dictum of Epaminondas which might imply antipathy to Persia, but presumably the Great King would not be supposed to be offering large sums of money to Panhellenist politicians.

voyage is probably enough 364, the year when Orchomenus was destroyed in the absence of Epaminondas and Pelopidas,¹ i.e. the year after the Samian cleruchy.² The decision to send the cleruchy must have roused bitter apprehensions in Greece. It was the first occasion³ since the foundation of the Second Athenian Confederacy that Athens had had recourse to the most hated of the institutions of the fifth-century empire, and, although Samos was not a member of the Confederacy and there was no formal breach of the promises of the Decree of Aristotle, it was an ominous precedent. In 357/6 the allies of the Social War, Chios, Rhodes, and Byzantium, joined in revolt because they thought that 'Athens was plotting against them', the Rhodians at least resenting the Athenians' 'recovering' what was 'their own' (Dem. 15. 3, 15), and in 365 this must have seemed precisely what was happening in Samos and about to happen elsewhere.⁴ When Cydias bade the Athenians in his speech about the cleruchy imagine that 'the Hellenes were standing round them, actually looking on and not merely going to hear report of whatever they decreed' (Ar. *Rhet.* 1384^b32), he was presumably meaning that the debate could have

¹ Diodorus (15. 78 f.) places the expedition under 364/3, but that proves nothing. An argument of some value is that shortly after appealing unsuccessfully to Epaminondas for help the Heracleans turned to Clearchus (Justin 16. 4. 4), whose tyranny was assigned by Diodorus in a chronographic notice to 364/3 (15. 81. 4). This would be decisive enough if it were not that Diodorus has put one of the notices concerning the rulers of Heraclea in the wrong year. Clearchus after a twelve-year rule was succeeded by Timotheus (16. 36. 3, under 353/2) who in turn after a fifteen-year rule was succeeded by Dionysius (16. 88. 5, under 338/7) who died after a thirty-two year rule (20. 77. 1, under 306/5). If the consistent notices of the successors of Clearchus are correct, Diodorus should have put the notice about Clearchus under 365/4. (Beloch, *G.G.*² iii. 2 p. 94 f. curiously prefers to date Clearchus' accession from the voyage of Epaminondas. He also assigns Diod. 16. 88. 5 to 337/6.) So the argument is not entirely satisfactory, but prompts us to confine the voyage to 365/4 and 364/3.

Pelopidas marched out on his fatal expedition just after 13 July 364 (Plut. *Pel.* 31), and, if the voyage of Epaminondas began not long before, both could have been absent for the destruction of Orchomenus (cf. p. 268 n. 2). I therefore opt for 364.

The argument of G. Glotz ('Un Carthaginois à Thèbes en 365 avant J.-C.', *Mélanges Jorga*, Paris 1933), which sought to connect *S.I.G.*³ 179 with the ship-building programme, is not cogent. There is no reason to connect these honours for Nobas the Carthaginian with the ship-building (which probably did not get very far anyhow). To judge by New Comedy and Aristotle's

Politics, Carthaginians were frequent enough in fourth-century Greece and Carthage a matter of interest (cf. Gsell, *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord* iv. 152 n. 3). Nobas may well have had commercial dealings with Thebes. Nor must the inscription be dated before 362. It certainly enough belongs to the middle fourth century (Plut. *Pel.* 35 names two of the Boeotarchs the decree lists—cf. U. Koehler, *Hermes* xxiv [1889], 637 f.), but a date in the early 350s is possible. (Indeed Epaminondas' attempt as he lay dying to have Daiphantos and then Iolaïdas take command—Ael. *V.H.* 12. 3, Plut. *Mor.* 194c—suggests that they were both notable Boeotarchs in 362 and perhaps earlier. Neither name is in the list of *S.I.G.*³ 179. The only year shortly after 362 certainly excluded is 361, when Pammenes held office—Diod. 15. 94.)

² The only evidence for the date is Diod. 18. 18. 9.

³ B. R. I. Sealey, *Phoenix* xi (1957), 95 ff. redated *I.G.* II² 1609 to 370/69 (rightly, as I hope to argue elsewhere, despite J. K. Davies, *Historia* xviii [1969], 308 ff.), but the κληρουκάρχωντες of line 89 are not necessarily a sign that Athens had embarked on a radical change of policy as early as 369. The ancient cleruchy on Lemnos *I.G.* II² 30 survived the King's Peace (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 1. 31), and magistrates were sent out to the island annually throughout the century (*Ath. Pol.* 62. 2 and 61. 6).

⁴ Demosthenes' phrase (15. 15) is τοῦ κομίσασθαι . . . τὰ ὑμέτερά ὑμῖν φθονήσαντες. Κομίζεισθαι is the word commonly used for recovering possessions (e.g. Dem. 23. 153, Isoc. 8. 6, 22). Τὰ ὑμέτερα are the assets of the fifth-century empire, the ἐγκτήματα of Andoc. 3. 15 and Isoc. 14. 44.

serious consequences for Athens' relations with the Hellenes, and, although there is no other evidence of its effect on Athens' allies, it is a reasonable presumption that it did lead men to fear a return to empire. It would not be surprising if Epaminondas decided that the moment was right for Thebes to champion the liberty of the Greeks of the Aegean too.

The peace of 366/5 is a dark affair, but at least it is clear from Xenophon (7. 4. 10) that those who joined it merely swore to keep peace, and refused the Theban suggestion of alliance.¹ This meant, in terms of the Common Peace, that there was no sanctions clause of the sort to be found in every Common Peace since that of 386, and it may be suggested that what Epaminondas aimed to do was to exploit the mood of disaffection amongst Athens' allies and to provide what the recent peace had failed to provide. The burden of his speech in the assembly was 'to urge the Thebans to seek the sea-hegemony' (*ἀντέχεσθαι τῆς κατὰ θάλατταν ἡγεμονίας*—Diod. 15. 78. 4), and, although the epitome of his speech suggests that he spoke of 'sea empire' (*τὴν τῆς θαλάττης ἀρχήν*), he appears to have been talking of Spartan naval command in the Persian Wars when there was no question of their having 'sea empire'. Whatever his private intentions, publicly his purpose is likely to have been to create a defensive alliance,² and the Samian cleruchy had provided the opportunity.

As already remarked, there is no reason to suppose that Epaminondas' initiative achieved its professed aims. Rhodes, Chios, and Byzantium may have been disposed favourably to Thebes, but no more. Should Epaminondas then bear the discredit for having tried to light a damp squib? Thebes was not a naval power, and one might think that the failure of Epaminondas only made plain what from the outset he should have seen for himself. Yet that was not the view of Ephorus, who opined that Boeotia was well placed for the exercise of sea hegemony (*F.G.H.* 70F119), and one must remember that within a few years the very states to which Epaminondas made overtures combined successfully against the naval power of Athens. The allies fought at Chios with one hundred ships, and the Athenians sent out 120 for the Embata campaign.³ With such naval strengths a Boeotian fleet of one hundred could have made a decisive difference. Perhaps Epaminondas was not so wrong in his judgement.

Why then did he not pursue the plan? The answer may well lie in the situation which confronted him on his return. Pelopidas had marched out on his final campaign shortly after 13 July 364, the date of the eclipse recorded by Diodorus (15. 80. 2), and two other Boeotarchs had to lead a full expedition to deal with Alexander of Pherae. At just the same period, at the Olympic Games the festering rivalries of the Peloponnese erupted in fighting (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 4. 28 f.). The resistance to the policies of Arcadian lawlessness had begun. It required no great prescience in Thebes to see that the whole balance she had established in the Peloponnese would be soon disturbed. Finally, the wrangling at Delphi between the supporters of the Phocians and their

¹ See above, p. 269 n. 4.

² Admittedly the epitome of the speech in Diodorus 15. 78. 4 seems a frank profession of imperial ambition, but this may have been the Ephoran interpretation of Epaminondas' intentions. (Cf. Isoc. 5. 53 *εἰς Βυζάντιον δὲ πρυτάρεις ἐξέπεμπον ὡς καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης ἀρξέοντες*.) But it is very unlikely that Epami-

monondas was in fact so imprudently blunt.

³ Cf. Beloch, *G.G.*² iii. 1 p. 237 f. Despite the very large number of ships in the Athenian navy, their fleets were never in the fourth century as huge as they were in the fifth. The largest number of ships at sea of which we hear was 170 in the Lamian War (Diod. 18. 15. 8).

opponents, which flared up in spring 363 (*S.I.G.*³ 175), may have already begun,¹ and Epaminondas may have begun to fear a Sacred War.² All in all, it was no time to be embarking on ambitious plans for sea-hegemony. Thebes would clearly be stretched in defending the positions she already held. It is no surprise that nothing more is heard of the great naval expansion.

It was the opinion of Ephorus³ that the Theban hegemony was due solely to the two great leaders; for the rest, Thebes was too lacking in culture to succeed, witness the failure of the state after the death of Epaminondas. Similarly Polybius (6. 43). Were they correct? If they were, the greatness of Epaminondas is so much the greater.

One may question whether Thebes lacked men to succeed Epaminondas. In particular, Pammenes, who appears to have been the trusted lieutenant of Epaminondas, and to have inherited the position of Epaminondas, was a man of some eminence.⁴ That he is little mentioned after 361 may be due more to the lull after 362 in the troubles of the Peloponnese than to his lack of distinction. Certainly Thebes did not lack men of nerve or force of character before or after Epaminondas; one has only to think of the men who began the Corinthian War and the men who revolted in 335. It is not clear that the failure of Thebes was due merely to lack of leaders. Nor can one fully share Ephorus' conviction, very proper in a pupil of Isocrates, that the cause of Thebes' decline was connected with the neglect of education and of rational converse with other men and the concentration on military virtue.⁵ Of course, in a sense this was an important element. Athens had been 'the education of Hellas', and Sparta, or, rather, *le mirage spartiate*, had been the inspiration of the good life in the Peloponnese. The proverbial Boeotian swine could never have attained a similar position in the regard of their allies. But military power should have had a longer reign than it did, and it did not crumble in the Peloponnese because it could not excite admiration, but because the Sacred War prevented it from fulfilling its promises. So Ephorus is not entirely satisfactory.

It is not profitable to guess what Epaminondas might have done had he lived. He might have moved in time to prevent the rise of Phocian power and so the Sacred War. The Theban influence in Thessaly and beyond did not matter. It was, thanks to the geography of Greece, a frill which could be abandoned without great regret or danger. Phocis, on the other hand, was integral to the mastery of central Greece. Boeotia could not be strong if Phocis was free and powerful. Epaminondas might have secured that it was neither. Or he might not. In the long run, however, Thebes, like Sparta two centuries earlier, must have come up against the facts of geography and of her own resources in manpower and wealth. Land empire in Greece was not

¹ Cf. H. Pomtow, *Klio* vi (1906), 94 f.

² Cf. Phocian independence in 362, in contrast with their compliance in 370/69 (*Xen. Hell.* 7. 5. 4 and 6. 5. 23).

³ F119, *Diod.* 15. 79. 2, and 88. 4.

⁴ Polyaeus recorded five of his *στρατηγῆματα* (5. 16. 1-5). *Plut. Mor.* 805E-F classed him with Aristides, Phocion, Lucullus, Cato, and Agesilaus, and declared that he rose to eminence under the patronage of

Epaminondas, who used him (*Paus.* 8. 27. 2) to help the Arcadians establish Megalopolis. The young Philip was lodged as hostage with him (*Plut. Pel.* 26). For his military career after 362, cf. *Diod.* 15. 94. 2, 16. 34. 1 f., and *Dem.* 23. 183.

⁵ F119 αἴτιον δὲ εἶναι τὸ λόγων καὶ ὁμιλίας τῆς πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ὀλιγαρχῆσαι, μόνης δ' ἐπιμεληθῆναι τῆς κατὰ πόλεμον ἀρετῆς.

within the powers of any Greek state to maintain indefinitely. Epaminondas' policies would in the long run have proved to have overstretched his country's resources, and Ephorus would perhaps have done better to explain the decline of Thebes in such terms.

Yet Epaminondas must be judged not in relation to these inevitable limitations of Boeotian power. In politics, as opposed to morals, men are always choosing between evils, and all policies have some consequences that are ill. His actions must rather be judged in relation to what they prevented. To have established the power of Boeotia and ended the Spartan domination of the Peloponnese was the most and the best that a Boeotian could have done.

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APPENDIX I

The date of the restoration of the Boeotarchy

The fourth-century Boeotian state cannot be considered fully established until in the late 370s the perioecic cities had been wrested from Spartan-supported independence, but the *δημος*, the sovereign body which passed decrees (e.g. *S.I.G.*³ 179 and *I.G.* VII 2408) and which was certainly conducting business by 373 (Paus. 9. 2. 5), may well have come into existence in early 377, at the time when according to Xen. *Hell.* 5. 4. 46 the *δημος* from the perioecic cities moved to Thebes. It seems a reasonable guess that the Boeotarchy was restored at the same time.

The evidence, however, points to 378, immediately after the Liberation. Plutarch in the *Pelopidas* (13. 1) has Pelopidas and two others elected Boeotarch the morning after the murder of Leontiades, while elsewhere (14. 2) he says of the period of the raid of Sphodrias, i.e. early 378, *ἔτυχε . . . ὁ Πελοπίδας μετὰ Γοργίδου βοιωταρχῶν*. So that makes four Boeotarchs for 378, the number Thebes had had in the 390s (*Hell. Oxy.* 16. 3), and many have therefore cheerfully set the restoration of the Boeotarchy in 378. Beloch, however, rejected this (*G.G.* iii² 1 p. 145 n. 2) pointing to Isocrates 14. 29, which shows that the Thebans first tried to reassure the Spartans that they were ready *μηδὲν κινεῖν τῶν πρότερον πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὡμολογημένων*, i.e. that the King's Peace, which had dissolved the Boeotian states, still stood. How could they make such a claim if they had already appointed Boeotarchs? One may add too that the morning after the murder of the polemarchs was no moment to engage in constitutional discussions. Boeotarchy meant Boeotia, and the Boeotia of the 370s and the 360s was not the Boeotia described in the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* (cf. Busolt-Swoboda, *Gr. St.* 1426 ff.). All that would take time. What was needed immediately was merely magistrates, to act in place of the murdered polemarchs. Beloch, therefore, seems right in regarding Pelopidas, Melon, and Charon as polemarchs, and Gorgidas as hipparch (cf. Polyaeus 2. 5. 2).

Bersanetti (op. cit. 49 n. 5), who accepted the restoration of the Boeotarchy in 378, argued (in Appendix I 89 ff.) that this was consistent with what we know of the Boeotarchies of Pelopidas. Diodorus (15. 81. 4) in his obituary notice of Pelopidas declared that *ἀπὸ τῆς εἰς τὰς Θήβας καθόδου τῶν πολιτῶν μεχρὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ τελευτῆς βοιωταρχῶν πάντα τὸν χρόνον διετέλεσε*, and, while this cannot be literally true since the evidence is explicit that he was not Boeotarch in 371 (Plut. *Pel.* 20. 3, 23. 6, Diod. 15. 81. 2), it prompts one to hesitate to

declare that he could not have been in the office when he was on an embassy to Persia (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 33 ff.). In any case clearly Epaminondas was certainly Boeotarch in 371 when he was also ambassador to the Peace conference (see above), and it is far from clear that Pelopidas could not have been re-elected *in absentia*. Further, the arguments of Glotz (in 'Un Carthaginois à Thèbes en 365 avant J.-C.', *Mélanges Jorga*, Paris 1933) concerning *S.I.G.*³ 179 are quite invalid: the list of seven Boeotarchs not including Pelopidas, which presumably does belong to the period of the Theban hegemony (cf. Köhler, *Hermes* xxiv [1889], 638), may well belong after Pelopidas' death in 364, and indeed after that of Epaminondas in 362. So all of Bersanetti's arguments against Beloch (*G.G.*² iii. 2 pp. 249 ff.) are valid. Since however Pelopidas died during his thirteenth Boeotarchy (Plut. *Pel.* 34. 7), and was constantly in office (Diod. 15. 81. 4), 377 seems to be suitable for his first term. Only Bersanetti's conviction that it was in 378 leads him to seek a vacant year. The view taken in the text is much more satisfactory, in that it provides a meaning for Xenophon's dark but pregnant words about early 377 (*Hell.* 5. 4. 46) ἐκ δὲ τούτου πάλιν αὖ τὰ τῶν Θηβαίων ἀνεζωπυρεῖτο . . . This is the first step from Thebes under polemarchs to the Boeotia under Boeotarchs.

What then of Diodorus' account of 378? In 15. 25-7 (under 378/7) he gives an account of the liberation of Thebes which he carries down to the siege of Thespieae (of early 377). In chapters 28-30 (under 377/6) he recounts the formation and expansion of the Second Athenian Confederacy (of early 378) down to the campaigns of Chabrias (of 377). It would be comfortable for my theory if the opening words of chapter 28 immediately after the chronographic note about magistrates could be taken as concluding the narrative of chapter 27. Ἐπὶ τούτων, Λακεδαιμονίων ἐπταικότων περὶ τὰς Θήβας, οἱ μὲν Βοιωτοὶ θάρρησαντες συνεστράφησαν, καὶ κοινὴν συμμαχίαν ποιησάμενοι, δύναμιν ἀξιόλογον συνεστήσαντο . . . Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ . . . κ.τ.λ. It would be comfortable, but hardly in conformity with Diodorus' practice of disposing chunks of Ephoran narrative. If he had meant this notice about Boeotia to conclude the narrative of the liberation, he would have put it in before the chronographic introduction to 377/6. So, in view of the argument of this appendix, either Ephorus was wrong or Diodorus has misrepresented him. I presume the latter to be the case. In 29. 6 Diodorus records quite correctly that it was the Thebans whom the Athenians προσελάβοντο ἐπὶ τὸ κοινὸν συνέδριον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἵσοις πᾶσιν: the Decree of Aristotle shows this (11. 24, 79). The whole point was in the name. Once there were Βοιωτοί, there was, technically, no longer a state called Thebes, and Ephorus cannot have established Boeotia before he recorded the accession of Thebes to the Confederacy. Perhaps Diodorus has misinterpreted some proleptic remark of Ephorus.

APPENDIX II

The trials of Epaminondas

The matter has been endlessly discussed, most recently by H. Beister, *Untersuchungen zu der Zeit der thebanischen Hegemonie* (Munich 1970), 75 ff., where a full survey will be found of the varying opinions of scholars over the last hundred years. The text of this article presumes that there were two trials of Epaminondas, the first involving Epaminondas and Pelopidas and arising

from the first invasion of the Peloponnese in winter 370/69, in which both were acquitted, and the second involving Epaminondas alone and arising from the second invasion of the Peloponnese, in which Epaminondas was found guilty and as a result the Boeotian people 'in exasperation removed him from the Boeotarchy and sent him out without office with the rest of the army', i.e. the army sent to rescue Pelopidas and Ismenias arrested on an embassy by Alexander of Pherae (Diod. 15. 71. 2-72. 2). (This embassy was part of the second Theban intervention in the affairs of Thessaly.) This presumption of two trials needs no further discussion.

It has been commonly assumed since Beloch (*G.G.*² iii. 2 p. 239) that Epaminondas' second invasion of the Peloponnese was in summer 369, which means that he was Boeotarch for at least the latter part of 369. But has this assumption been correct? Recently J. Wiseman in *Klio* li (1969), 177 ff. has argued that we should return to the chronology of B. Niese in *Hermes* xxxix (1904), 84 ff. which set the second invasion in 368 and would get rid of the problem how Epaminondas (and Pelopidas) came to be on trial and to be Boeotarch within the same year. Beister op. cit. 98 n. 3 dismissed Wiseman with a bibliography. Others may be less confident.

I reject the Niese/Wiseman chronology principally for the following reasons:

(a) At the beginning of Book vii Xenophon recorded the discussions in Athens about the hegemony of the alliance made in mid winter 370/69 (cf. 7. 1. 2 *Ἐπεὶ περ . . . ἀγαθὸν ὑμῖν ἔδοξε ν εἶναι Λακεδαιμονίους φίλους ποιεῖσθαι* and in § 1 *ἡ συμμαχία*, i.e. an existing alliance). He introduced the account with the words *τῷ δ' ὑστέρῳ ἔτει*, which have occasioned discussion. It is not clear whether Xenophon meant, *more Thucydideo*, 'next campaigning season', or, fairly improbably in an author so little concerned with official calendars, 'next archon year'. But it is not important. The real question is when the details concerning hegemony of the alliance would be likely to be made, and there can be only one answer, viz. as soon as possible. The war was on. Even if the Thebans did not shortly return to the Peloponnese, there were the Arcadians, the Argives, and the Eleans (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 18) to be reckoned with. Strategically, it was essential to deny the Thebans access. It would be too late to set about arranging the defence once the attack had begun. So the only (historically) conceivable date for *Hell.* 7. 1. 1-14 is shortly after the Theban withdrawal in April/May 369. The first sentence of § 15 recording the decision of the Spartans and Athenians (*ἀμφοτέρων αὐτῶν*) and the allies to defend Oneion goes naturally with § 14. It is hard to believe that the largest part of a year supervenes before the second sentence, which deals with Epaminondas' second invasion.

(b) The decree of alliance of Athens with Dionysius of Syracuse is not evidence that Dionysius was still alive well into 367. As D. M. Lewis pointed out (*B.S.A.* xlix [1954], 37 f.), the supplementation of the prescript is quite uncertain (cf. K. Stroheker, *Dionysius* 235 n. 72 and 237 n. 83). The evidence for Dionysius' death for all Niese's rhetoric (art. cit. 98) is clear enough. He died shortly after making a truce with the Carthaginians for the winter (Diod. 15. 73. 5), and he died shortly after the Lenaeon festival of January 367 (*ibid.* 74. 1 f.). He must therefore have sent the two expeditions of Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 20 f. and 28 in 369 and 368, the first of which involved the Syracusans in fighting Epaminondas.

So Epaminondas was indeed Boeotarch in 369 shortly after his acquittal

at the first trial. How he came to be so cannot be decided. In Plutarch (*Pel.* 24 and 25, *Mor.* 194, 540D-E, 817F), in Pausanias (9. 14. 5 ff.), and in Aelian (*V.H.* 13. 42) Epaminondas held the Boeotarchy for four months past the expiry of his office. If this tradition is correct, he must have been reappointed Boeotarch after his acquittal. In Nepos (*Epam.* 7. 3 ff.) in Appian (*Syr.* 212 ff.) and in Cicero (*Inv.* 1. 55 f.) he refused to hand over his command to his successors. If this tradition is correct, he could have been re-elected Boeotarch for 369 *in absentia* but replaced in his command in the Peloponnese: in which case he may have been tried as Boeotarch, or deprived of the Boeotarchy for the trial and reappointed after it. Our knowledge of the Boeotian constitution is not such as to say that either procedure was against the law. What is certain is that he was acquitted and was Boeotarch later in the same year. To labour the matter further is a waste of words.