

## THE PROGRESS OF EPITEICHISMOS

Scholarly interest in epiteichismos has, for various reasons, been centred almost exclusively upon the Athenian occupation of Pylos and the Spartan occupation of Decelea.<sup>1</sup> In occupying Pylos the Athenians were adopting epiteichismos for the first time, as were the Spartans in occupying Decelea. Both enterprises were on a considerable scale and deeply influenced the course of the Peloponnesian war, though neither so decisively as had initially seemed likely. Another source of interest in them is their link with the perennial problem of speeches in Thucydides. The Thucydidean versions of speeches delivered shortly before the outbreak of the Archidamian war include references to the possibility that epiteichismos might be attempted by both sides (1. 122. 1; 142. 3-4), although in fact Athens did not do so until 425, and then partly by accident, and Sparta not until much later. These puzzling references have been thought by some scholars to be anachronistic,<sup>2</sup> while others have disputed this inference, maintaining that even before the war military leaders had in mind the possibility of epiteichismos.<sup>3</sup> A similar if less vexed problem arises from the fact that the occupation of Decelea, vigorously recommended by Alcibiades in the Thucydidean version of his speech at Sparta at the end of 415 and apparently accepted with enthusiasm (6. 93. 1-2), was not implemented until the spring of 413.<sup>4</sup>

This paper will not attempt to throw new light upon the occupation of Pylos and of Decelea or upon the problems arising therefrom. My purpose rather, after considering why epiteichismos came into being and suggesting a possible origin, is to show that it was prevalent not only during the last quarter of the fifth century but also during the first half of the fourth, in many cases where the term does not appear in the ancient evidence; that, while the principle remained the same, some variations in practice were introduced; that when, with Greece increasingly dominated by Macedonia, epiteichismos became largely obsolete, the term acquired a more general significance, often metaphorical; that, strangely enough, it came to be widely used centuries later, sometimes in theological contexts, by some most unmilitary authors.

## I. ORIGINS

The introduction of epiteichismos in inter-state warfare is largely attributable to the notorious backwardness of the Greeks in conducting assaults on fortified positions, however weak,<sup>5</sup> until the Macedonians demonstrated how most walled cities could

<sup>1</sup> F. E. Adcock, *CR* 51 (1947), 2-7, provides a brief but basic survey. Y. Garlan, *Recherches de Poliorcétique grecque* (Athens, 1974), pp. 33-40, studies epiteichismos rather more widely and gives an admirable summary of its functions, but his discussion, punctuated by translations of relevant passages, is also brief.

<sup>2</sup> cf. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1972), pp. 209-10.

<sup>3</sup> Adcock, *op. cit.* (above n. 1), 5-7; D. Kagan, *Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca, 1969), p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> Considered briefly but convincingly by K. J. Dover in A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes and Dover, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides* 4 (1970), p. 367.

<sup>5</sup> Towns stated to have been taken by storm (in most cases *κατὰ κράτος* or *αὐτοβοεῖ*) in the late fifth or early fourth centuries were insignificant or unwalled, as the following selection will show: Astacus (Thuc. 2. 30. 1); Aegitium (3. 97. 2); Galepsus (5. 6. 1); Lampsacus (8. 62. 2, unwalled); Magnesia (Diod. 14. 36. 2-3, unwalled); Caryae (Xen. *Hell.* 7. 1. 28); Cromnus (7. 4. 20). Assaults on fortified positions normally involved casualties on a scale which Greek states could not afford.

be stormed.<sup>6</sup> Unless aided by treachery, Greeks normally had to resort to circumvallation designed to lead to surrender through starvation, but this process, often lengthy, could be costly both in finance and in manpower, as the Athenians found at Potidaea. The traditional method of attacking an enemy might prove effective, namely by conducting a brief invasion of his territory at an appropriate season and, if he declined to fight a pitched battle, which he might well avoid because of its probable costliness in manpower, by plundering his farms and destroying his crops.<sup>7</sup> The most celebrated failure of this method was the ineffectiveness, contrary to general expectation (Thuc. 7. 28. 3), of successive invasions of Attica by the Peloponnesians in the opening years of the Archidamian war. Even less was achieved by Athenian seaborne raids on enemy coasts. By 425 neither side could expect to gain a decisive advantage by using conventional offensive methods.

Whatever the source may have been from which the theoretical conception of epiteichismos was derived,<sup>8</sup> the existence of favourable conditions and a substantial amount of planning and organisation were essential before a project for the establishment of a permanent fortified base in enemy territory could be put into operation. A site must be found which was easily defensible by limited forces and from which a large area of productive and well developed country could be ravaged. It must be easily accessible by sea or land so that supplies of all kinds, as well as relays of relieving troops, could be brought in without much difficulty, even in winter. Its prospect of success would be much enhanced if it could serve as a rallying point for local dissidents or slaves, who could provide the garrison with information or military assistance. Fortifications might have to be built or at least strengthened, and for this purpose craftsmen and their tools would probably be required. A type of offensive operation hitherto untried in inter-state warfare might prove to be a costly failure.

There is no means of determining where or by whom epiteichismos was first conceived. To deny that the Greeks might have learned about it through contact with other peoples would be hazardous, though its suitability to the geographical, climatic, social and political conditions of Greece does suggest that it was an indigenous growth. Its development in inter-state warfare during the last quarter of the fifth century is probably to a large extent the outcome of experience gained from similar operations which had already, since before the Persian wars, become a not uncommon feature of civil strife. Bodies of dissidents, often exiles, would seize and fortify a position within the boundaries of their own state, sometimes with external aid, with the intention of harrying and, if possible, overthrowing the regime of their political opponents.<sup>9</sup> Operations of this kind have obvious affinities with epiteichismos, as adopted in inter-state warfare towards the end of the fifth century, and must surely have influenced

<sup>6</sup> On Greek siegecraft, Gomme, *op. cit.* (above n. 4) 1 (1945), pp. 16–19; F. E. Adcock, *Greek and Macedonian Art of War* (Berkeley, 1957), pp. 57–9, who points to some improvement in the fourth century. Aristotle, *Pol.* 7. 1330b–1331a, maintains that a city needed strong walls because of recent improvements in the efficiency of assault weapons.

<sup>7</sup> An interesting example of success achieved by this method is the invasion of Acarnania by Agesilaus in 389. His troops were harassed in mountainous districts and failed in attempts, which pressure by his allies imposed upon him, to capture enemy towns, but in the following spring the Acarnanians capitulated in order to save their territory from further plundering (Xen. *Hell.* 4. 6. 4–7.1).

<sup>8</sup> This question will be considered below. It may be observed that the abstract nouns *ἐπιτελιχισμός* and *ἐπιτελίχσις* are virtually interchangeable and denote the military process; that *ἐπιτελιχισμός* denotes a fortification built in the course of this process; that the verb *ἐπιτελιχίζειν* is intransitive in Thucydides but elsewhere often has a place-name as its object.

<sup>9</sup> At an earlier stage, in the eighth and seventh centuries, members of a defeated faction forced to leave their native city would normally initiate or join colonial enterprises overseas.

its development. They might be termed internal epiteichismos.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, for those belonging to a period of some eighty years before the Peloponnesian war the surviving evidence is not sufficiently detailed to provide a wholly satisfactory picture.

An early example of this internal epiteichismos is the seizure and fortification of Leipsydryon on Mount Parnes about 513 by the exiled Alcmaeonidae. Although joined by some supporters from Athens, they were apparently not strong enough to put the tyrant-house under severe pressure and were overwhelmed after a valiant resistance (Hdt. 5. 62. 2; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 19. 3). In 499 the ill-starred expedition directed against Naxos by Aristagoras with Persian support, which led indirectly to the Ionian Revolt, was the result of representations to Miletus by Naxian oligarchs exiled by the democracy. Before the Persians withdrew to the mainland, they built fortifications for these exiles, presumably to serve as a base for harrying their political opponents (Hdt. 5. 30. 1; 34. 3). The oligarchs cannot have gained control of the island, since nine years later the Persians under Datis burned the capital city in revenge for this earlier fiasco (Hdt. 6. 95. 2–96). In Sicily the Gamoroi, who established themselves at Casmenae in Syracusan territory after their expulsion from Syracuse about 491, probably took action against the democrats, who had expelled them, until they were restored by Gelon (Hdt. 7. 155. 2).<sup>11</sup> An episode involving Aeginetan exiles, which occurred shortly before or shortly after 490, is similar in character to those already mentioned but differs from them somewhat because they operated from a point not on Aegina but on the nearby mainland.<sup>12</sup> After a coup led by an exiled democratic leader and designed to betray Aegina to Athens had failed to overthrow the ruling oligarchy, he escaped with some supporters to Attica. The Athenians granted him a base at Sunium, whence he conducted plundering raids against Aegina (Hdt. 6. 88–90). Since the oligarchical government retained control of the island, these raids do not seem to have achieved any striking success.

A celebrated example of internal epiteichismos, more likely than any other to have been borne in mind by leaders responsible for military planning before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war and during its opening stages, was the occupation of Mount Ithome by rebel helots and perioeci in 464. Interest in the revolt has always centred largely upon its influence in leading to a rift between Sparta and Athens and also, for modern scholars, upon its formidable problems of chronology. The narrative of Thucydides is even more sparing of military detail than is normal in his excursus on the Pentecontaetia (1. 101. 2–102. 2). According to Diodorus, whose account is unusually free from conventional rhetoric, the rebels, though abandoning their initial intention to attack Sparta itself, occupied a stronghold in Messenia and 'conducting their offensive from there, proceeded to overrun Laconia' (11. 64. 1).<sup>13</sup> This picture may be a little overcoloured, but it receives some confirmation from a reference by Herodotus (9. 64. 2) to an engagement at Stenyclarus in the upper Messenian plain when 300 Spartans were killed. It is clear that, before the lengthy and fateful struggle to reduce Ithome began, the rebels used their fortified area in the mountains<sup>14</sup> as a

<sup>10</sup> Examples of this civil warfare which occurred during the Peloponnesian war are classed by scholars as epiteichismos, cf. Adcock, *op. cit.* (above n. 1), 7, and Garlan, *op. cit.* (above n. 1), 33.

<sup>11</sup> cf. *ibid.* 153. 2 on Geloan exiles at Mactorium, which was not far from Gela, many years earlier.

<sup>12</sup> The case of Anaea (see below p. 15) is comparable.

<sup>13</sup> cf. *ibid.* 4, where both sides are stated to have won victories.

<sup>14</sup> Gomme, *op. cit.* (above n. 4), 1 (1945), p. 301, justifiably considers Ithome to have been a palisaded camp and not a walled town. The term *πολιορκία* used here by Thucydides (1. 102. 2) is very elastic; cf. 7. 28. 3, *πολιορκουμένους ἐπιτειχισμῷ ὑπὸ Πελοποννησίων*, which refers to Decelea.

base for offensive operations certainly into the Pamisus valley<sup>15</sup> and probably further afield.

Another internal epiteichismos which apparently belongs to the Pentecontaetia was the occupation of Anaea, situated on the mainland facing Samos, by Samian dissidents. References by Thucydides to their activities during the Peloponnesian war do not provide positive evidence to date their occupation of Anaea in 439.<sup>16</sup> It is, however, reasonable to believe that immediately after the collapse of the Samian revolt in that year oligarchs were expelled, or voluntarily fled, from the island. Throughout the Peloponnesian war these Samian exiles at Anaea seized every opportunity to harm the Athenians and aid the Peloponnesians. They also continually harassed their compatriots on the island and welcomed political refugees from there (Thuc. 3. 19. 2; 32. 2; 4. 75. 1; 8. 19. 1; 61. 2).

During the period between 431 and the occupation of Pylos in 425 two instances of internal epiteichismos which, at the outset at least, proved highly effective may have encouraged the belief that epiteichismos directed by one state against another might, despite the difficulties involved, yield valuable results. In 427 after the famous stasis at Corcyra five hundred surviving oligarchs occupied forts in Corcyrean territory on the mainland, whence they inflicted so much damage upon their democratic enemies as to cause severe famine. They then crossed to the island, where they built a fort on Mount Istone, and gained control of the countryside until 425, when the Athenian force which had been in action at Pylos came to the rescue of the democrats (Thuc. 3. 85. 2-3; 4. 46. 1). In 426, or perhaps a little earlier, oligarchs expelled from Megara by the ruling democracy seized the Megarian port of Pagae on the Corinthian Gulf.<sup>17</sup> It was sufficiently well fortified to be easily defensible<sup>18</sup> and conveniently situated to serve as a base for plundering the more fertile parts of the Megarid and for denying the democrats access to the Corinthian Gulf. The oligarchs exploited it so successfully that by 424 a large section of the Megarian populace was prepared to consent to their repatriation rather than suffer further hardship (Thuc. 4. 66. 1).<sup>19</sup>

Although internal epiteichismos continued to be practised for many years,<sup>20</sup> it can no longer have exerted much influence upon the strategy of inter-state warfare after the success of the Athenian experiment at Pylos.

## II. ARCHIDAMIAN WAR

As has already been noted, neither the Athenians nor the Peloponnesians, though perhaps giving some thought to epiteichismos, attempted to put it into practice during the first six campaigning seasons of the Archidamian war.

Some scholars have maintained that the principal aim of Pericles in his seaborne

<sup>15</sup> cf. W. G. Forrest, *History of Sparta, 950-192 B.C.*<sup>2</sup> (London, 1980), p. 102.

<sup>16</sup> E. Will, *Rev. ét. anc.* 71 (1969), 318. Nor does Thucydides attest that the coast around Anaea was hitherto a *peraia* controlled from Samos, as the authors of *A.T.L.* 3 (1950), p. 196, suggest.

<sup>17</sup> These oligarchs are almost certainly to be identified with, or at least included in their number, the Megarian exiles settled temporarily at Plataea in 427 but removed a year later (Thuc. 3. 68. 3).

<sup>18</sup> N. G. L. Hammond, *Studies in Greek History* (Oxford, 1973), p. 439.

<sup>19</sup> The complex and obscure stasis at Colophon and Notium from 430 to 427 (Thuc. 3. 34) is regarded by Adcock, *op. cit.* (above n. 1) 6, and Garland, *op. cit.* (above n. 1) 33, as epiteichismos, but there is no mention of attacks by exiles.

<sup>20</sup> Examples are: Antandrus in 424 (Thuc. 4. 52. 3; 75. 1); Phyle in 404 (Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 2-7); Phigalea and Phlius about 375 (Diod. 15. 40. 2 and 5); Zacynthus in 374 (Xen. *Hell.* 6. 2. 2-3; Diod. 15. 45. 2-4).

expedition against the Peloponnesians in 430 was to establish at Epidaurus, which narrowly escaped capture by the Athenians, a permanent base for raiding Peloponnesian states.<sup>21</sup> This suggestion should be rejected. Being an inhabited town of some size, Epidaurus would have been vulnerable to attacks by the Peloponnesians, and to have provided a permanent garrison strong enough not only to defend it but also to conduct offensive operations into enemy territory would have imposed a severe strain upon the limited manpower of Athens. In addition, the Athenians had opportunities during their seaborne raids in 431 and 430 to establish bases in sparsely populated localities much better suited to *epiteichismos* than Epidaurus, and yet they chose to withdraw without leaving garrisons.<sup>22</sup> Another Athenian offensive action, which was on a far smaller scale, has also been unjustifiably regarded as *epiteichismos*. When Nicias in 427 seized Minoa, a small island off the coast of the Megarid, his intention was to secure an observation post so that enemy preparations for raids on Attica or on Athenian shipping could be more easily detected and also to reinforce the Athenian blockade of Nisaea (Thuc. 3. 51). The operation was not designed to provide a base for plundering raids on the adjacent mainland, nor does Minoa seem to have ever been used for this purpose. Little could have been gained thereby, since the Megarid was thoroughly devastated by a full levy of the Athenian land forces in a series of invasions begun in 431 and repeated each autumn for the next six years (Thuc. 2. 31).

The remarkable success won by the Athenians through their occupation of Pylos encouraged them to attempt to establish raiding bases at several localities during the remaining four years of the Archidamian war. Through their command of the sea they could disembark troops at appropriate sites with good prospects of achieving surprise, and they could expect immunity from retaliation because they held the Spartans captured on Sphacteria.

In 425 soon after their success at Pylos the Athenians landed a powerful force in Corinthian territory, which won a victory at Solygeia but was then withdrawn by sea (Thuc. 4. 42–4). This operation is believed by some scholars to have had as its objective the establishment of a raiding base in Corinthian territory, which was not implemented because of Corinthian reactions.<sup>23</sup> Thucydides here records in great detail the course of the operation, but he does not provide any information about its aims.<sup>24</sup> The suggestion that *epiteichismos* was intended is not at all convincing: the occupation, fortification and maintenance of a base at Solygeia would have been a hazardous and burdensome undertaking unlikely to produce sufficiently advantageous results to compensate for the effort involved.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the same expeditionary force, after further brief landings, seized, fortified and garrisoned Methana with its peninsula on the Saronic Gulf, which was conveniently situated for raiding the territories of Troezen, Halieis and Epidaurus and could easily be supplied by sea (4. 45). Before the spring of 423 Troezen had come to terms with Athens (4. 118. 4), presumably because its rich coastal plain was plundered by the garrison from Methana.<sup>26</sup>

In 424 the Athenians continued their new strategy by sending an expeditionary force

<sup>21</sup> H. Delbrück, *Die Strategie des Perikles* (Berlin, 1890), p. 121, who points out advantages to be gained therefrom.

<sup>22</sup> D. Kagan, *Archidamian War* (Ithaca, 1974), pp. 72–6; de Ste. Croix, *op. cit.* (above n. 2), 209.

<sup>23</sup> G. Busolt, *Gr. Gesch.* 3. 2 (Gotha, 1904), 1114–16; Adcock, *op. cit.* (above n. 1), 6; Garland, *op. cit.* (above n. 1), 33.

<sup>24</sup> cf. my *Individuals in Thucydides* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 89–90.

<sup>25</sup> Gomme, *op. cit.* (above n. 4) 3 (1956), p. 494; Kagan, *op. cit.* (above n. 22), 252–4.

<sup>26</sup> Halieis also probably submitted at this time, cf. Kagan, *op. cit.* (above n. 22), 306 n. 8.

to Cythera, which was occupied without much difficulty.<sup>27</sup> After landing at several localities on the mainland, this force withdrew to deliver further attacks elsewhere, but it left behind a garrison, which proceeded to make a series of plundering raids on Laconia. These raids, combined with those from Pylos, had a very damaging effect upon Spartan morale (4. 53–7).<sup>28</sup> Cythera is about five miles from the nearest point on the mainland, and a novel feature of this latest epiteichismos was that raiding parties were transported by sea from their base to their objectives, so that they were doubtless often able to land unopposed and to take the enemy by surprise.

The new strategy was not, however, everywhere successful. Thucydides makes abundantly clear that in 424 the Athenians intended to fortify Delium as a permanent base from which an Athenian garrison could plunder Boeotia, support revolutionary movements in Boeotian towns and provide a rallying point for dissidents (4. 76. 5). It was conveniently situated for this purpose, being close both to the coast and to the frontier of Attica.<sup>29</sup> The project embraced all the characteristics of the ideal epiteichismos. It failed because the Athenian army led by Hippocrates suffered a major defeat and the fortification built at Delium was later captured through the use of an ingenious siege engine (4. 90–101).<sup>30</sup>

### III. DECELEAN-IONIAN WAR

Apart from the vitally important occupation of Decelea by the Peloponnesians, which became the epiteichismos par excellence (Andoc. 1. 101; Lys. 14. 30; Isocr. 16. 10), the operation was adopted sparingly between 413 and 404, largely because the Athenians could seldom take any offensive action owing to financial exhaustion and a shortage of manpower. They held Pylos till 409 and Cythera perhaps till the same time but can have made little use of them. Immediately after the Sicilian disaster they abandoned for financial reasons a fortification on an isthmus in Laconia which they had garrisoned some months earlier as a refuge for helot deserters and a base for plundering raids (Thuc. 7. 26. 2; 8. 4).

The Athenians did, however, direct against Chios an offensive which for some five months in 412–11 was strikingly successful and reduced the most powerful and most active of rebel cities almost to capitulation. This offensive should undoubtedly be classed as epiteichismos,<sup>31</sup> but it was abnormal in that throughout its most effective period the Athenian troops operating on Chios were supported by a sizable fleet. Because of this abnormal feature the episode requires examination in some detail, especially as the narrative of Thucydides does not provide explicit answers to questions which it raises.

In the summer of 412 Athenian forces had already raided several districts of Chios, defeated Chian forces and caused so much damage to the prosperous countryside that some Chians favoured a rapprochement with Athens (8. 24. 2–6). The success of these brief raids so alarmed the Peloponnesians that they sent Pedaritus, a Spartan, to Chios with some mercenaries to take command there (28. 5; 32. 2), and so encouraged the

<sup>27</sup> cf. G. L. Huxley in J. N. Coldstream and Huxley, *Kythera* (London, 1972), p. 38, whose reconstruction of this operation is based on examination of the terrain.

<sup>28</sup> Thucydides notes (53. 2) the benefits hitherto enjoyed by the Spartans through possessing Cythera, which were now lost.

<sup>29</sup> W. K. Pritchett, *Studies in Ancient Greek Topography* 2 (Berkeley, 1969), pp. 24–36, cf. 3 (1980), pp. 295–7, locates it at Dilesi.

<sup>30</sup> Early in 421 Sparta announced preparations for epiteichismos (Thuc. 5. 17. 2) but only to make Athens more favourably disposed towards the conclusion of peace.

<sup>31</sup> cf. Garlan, *op. cit.* (above n. 1), 36–8.

Athenians that they undertook a more ambitious offensive against the Chians conducted by three generals in command of thirty ships and an unspecified number of hoplites (30). The troops landed on the north east coast and proceeded to fortify Delphinium, described by Thucydides as 'a position naturally strong on the landward side and possessing harbours and not far distant from the city' (38. 2).<sup>32</sup> Thereafter his narrative is confined to a record of action, or inaction, on the part of the Chians and Peloponnesians and of their increasing tribulations. Pedaritus, too weak to challenge the enemy, sent desperate appeals for help to the Spartan nauarchos Astyochus, but in vain. Chian morale was weakened by suspicions of treachery and by the desertion of many slaves, who gave the Athenians valuable information (40). Eventually Pedaritus in despair led an attack on Delphinium, but his force was crushingly defeated, and he was himself killed (55. 3). The Chians, closely beset by land and sea, suffered severely from famine (56. 1).

The tide now turned (63. 1). The decisive factor was not that a Spartan sent with a small squadron to replace Pedaritus gained a slight advantage in a naval engagement (61. 2-3), but that twenty-four of the thirty-two Athenian ships were withdrawn from Chios to deal with a dangerous situation in the Hellespont (62. 2). Although these twenty-four ships were soon recalled to the Aegean, they were then based at Samos, not Chios. Thereafter, while the Athenians maintained a garrison at Delphinium till 406 (Diod. 13. 76. 3-4), the Chians no longer suffered either from famine or from intrigues by dissidents. They resumed their role as the most aggressive of rebel cities and contributed more ships than any of them to fleets under Spartan command.

Thucydides may be thought to imply that Chios was reduced to desperate straits because the Athenians exploited their command of the sea to blockade the island effectively. They doubtless made every effort to intercept supplies from the mainland, but triremes were ill suited to the task of maintaining a blockade, as had been found even in the narrow waters of Pylos. Chios is thirty miles long, and the channel between island and mainland only five miles wide at one point. Bad weather during the winter months, when the Athenian offensive was at its height, could also have caused difficulties. Thucydides mentions twice that the Chians were hard pressed by land as well as by sea (40. 1; 56. 1), so that the garrison of Delphinium must also have played an effective part. Delphinium is, however, inconveniently situated as a base for raids by land on the most fertile and developed parts of the island, which lie in the south east, whereas the northern half is mostly rocky and barren. To reach the south east by land would involve lengthy marches, especially as the environs of Chios city would have to be avoided. Although Thucydides, whose information seems to be derived almost wholly from Peloponnesian sources, does not explain how these raids were conducted, it is highly probable that, as during the earlier offensive when the Athenians had as yet no land base (24. 2-6),<sup>33</sup> troops were successively landed at selected points and, after causing as much devastation as possible, were re-embarked. Now that the Athenians held Delphinium, raids could be more frequent than before and their destructiveness intensified. This conclusion is supported by the rapidity of the Chian recovery after most of the Athenian fleet was withdrawn. The few remaining ships can have done little more than keep the garrison at Delphinium supplied.

This offensive, which is in some degree anticipated by the more modest operations based on Cythera, is of special interest because it apparently combined the well-established tactic of the seaborne raid with the relatively novel tactic of the fortified base in enemy territory.

<sup>32</sup> J. Boardman, *BSA* 51 (1956), 41-54, provides a valuable report on excavations conducted there.

<sup>33</sup> See above p. 17.

At a later stage of the Ionian war the Athenians established a fortified base on another rebel island. In 407 Alcibiades, after his triumphant return to Athens, was sent with a powerful force to take command at Samos. He interrupted his voyage to attack Andros, which had revolted, apparently several years earlier. The Athenians seized and fortified Gaurium on the north west coast, a most promising site for epiteichismos with some easily defensible hills close to a well-protected harbour. The Andrians, supported by some Spartans, committed their entire army to battle but were defeated and fled to their capital, which the Athenians then attacked. Alcibiades, in haste to reach the main theatre of war, remained for only a few days before he sailed for Samos, leaving behind some of his troops to garrison Gaurium (Xen. *Hell.* 1. 4. 21–3; Diod. 13. 69. 4–5).<sup>34</sup> Thereafter Conon was evidently in command of twenty ships based on Andros for the next few months. He may have been under orders to protect convoys sailing from the Hellespont, which were now vulnerable, but he may also have used his considerable naval force to transport troops from Gaurium to ravage some of the cultivable areas of Andros. When he and his squadron were sent to Samos, his successor, who had only four ships, can have done little more than safeguard the supply route from Attica, though he did capture two enemy triremes (Xen. *Hell.* 1. 5. 18–19). The fortified base at Gaurium seems to have been held until 405.<sup>35</sup>

#### IV. FOURTH CENTURY<sup>36</sup>

During the first half of the fourth century epiteichismos in various forms was not infrequently adopted. In a period when most Greek powers suffered severely from shortages of money and manpower it proved attractive largely because it was relatively economical in both. Modern scholarship seems disinclined to acknowledge that it was a fourth-century, as well as a fifth-century, phenomenon, although the term is applied by ancient authorities to some of the operations to be considered below.

In 400 the Spartans sent out an army under Agis to chastise the Eleans for persistent recalcitrance against their authority. The first invasion was abandoned because of an earthquake, but Agis returned in the next year with allied support and plundered the rich countryside. He made little effort to storm the unwallied capital, evidently expecting that an uprising by oligarchs against the democratic government would deliver the city into his hands. When this coup failed, he withdrew his army, leaving behind a garrison, assisted by refugee oligarchs, at Epitalium in Triphylia. From this fortified base, which occupied a strong position on high ground near the mouth of the Alpheus,<sup>37</sup> Elean territory was for many months so effectively devastated that in the following year the democratic government made overtures to Sparta and accepted terms amounting almost to capitulation (3. 2. 21–31; Diod. 14. 17. 4–12; 34. 1; Paus. 3. 8. 3–5). By adopting epiteichismos, which was combined, as so often, with aid from dissidents, the Spartans ended this war at very modest cost to themselves.

Between 391 and 389 there was fighting on Rhodes, where Sparta assisted an

<sup>34</sup> According to Plut. *Alcib.* 35. 2, he was castigated by his enemies for having failed to capture the city. The accounts of Xenophon and Diodorus suggest rather that initially he had no intention of capturing it but that the Athenian victory led him to improvise a brief attack in the hope that it might be surrendered to him.

<sup>35</sup> cf. T. Sauciuc, *Andros* (Vienna, 1914), pp. 65–9.

<sup>36</sup> In this section references naming neither the author nor the work are to Xenophon, *Hellenica*.

<sup>37</sup> On the topography see Strabo 8. 3. 24; Paus. 3. 8. 5. E. Meyer, *Neue pelop. Wanderungen* (Bern, 1957), pp. 49–50, 60–1, locates Epitalium on a plateau above Agulinitsa.



oligarchical faction against a democratic faction assisted by Athens. The course of events is obscure because the accounts of Xenophon (4. 8. 20–5) and Diodorus (14. 97. 1–4; 99. 4–5) are not easily reconcilable,<sup>38</sup> and indeed the conflict might be thought to be an instance of what was defined above as internal epiteichismos. It is, however, noteworthy that at different stages each side operated from a fortified base evidently somewhere in the Rhodian countryside, the oligarchs with Spartan support when the democrats held the capital (4. 8. 25) and the democrats with Athenian support when the oligarchs held it (Diod. 14. 99. 5).

In 389 the Spartan harmost on Aegina encouraged Aeginetans to ravage the coast of Attica. The Athenians responded by sending a hoplite force, supported by ten ships, to occupy a fortified base on the island and proceeded to harry the Aeginetans by land and sea (5. 1. 1–2).<sup>39</sup> The ships were soon driven off by a much superior Spartan fleet, but the hoplites held their fortified base for four months. Eventually, when they found themselves under greater pressure than they were able to impose on the enemy, they had to be evacuated to Attica (5. 1. 5). The failure of this epiteichismos induced the Athenians to launch a brief offensive on a larger scale, and the success of this more conventional operation temporarily protected them against attacks from Aegina (5. 1. 10–13).

The war in which the Spartans and their allies reduced Olynthus to submission in 379 has considerable relevance for the present investigation. Although battles were fought close to the walls of the city and eventually capitulation became unavoidable because its inhabitants were starving, it was at no time closely invested. During much of the war, which lasted three years, the Spartans concentrated their efforts largely upon ravaging enemy territory, and the modified form of epiteichismos which they adopted proved ultimately the decisive factor in overcoming resistance.

At the outset a small advance guard was too weak to do more than establish a raiding base at Potidaea and send garrisons to friendly towns threatened by Olynthus (5. 2. 24; Diod. 15. 21. 1). Later, when Teleutias arrived with a stronger force, he won an unimpressive victory near Olynthus and devastated the countryside, but he then withdrew leaving the enemy free to ravage the territory of towns supporting Sparta (5. 2. 37–43; Diod. 15. 21. 2). Next year he continued his devastation so effectively that the Olynthians could cultivate only a fraction of their land, but he then rashly allowed himself to be drawn into an engagement close to their walls, where he and many of his soldiers were killed. The survivors scattered in flight to Spartolus, Acanthus, Apollonia and Potidaea (5. 3. 1–6). It was evidently from bases at these towns, which form an arc on the landward side of Olynthus, though at a considerable distance, that the Peloponnesians ravaged Olynthian territory. The Olynthians took advantage of the respite gained by their victory to replenish food supplies (Diod. 15. 21. 3). When Agesipolis arrived with powerful reinforcements, they were unable to prevent him from devastating agricultural land hitherto untouched and from destroying corn in the territory of their allies (5. 3. 8–9, 18; Diod. 15. 22. 2; Paus. 3. 5. 9). Agesipolis died, but his offensive measures virtually ended resistance. Hitherto most members of the Chalcidian League had evidently remained faithful to

<sup>38</sup> The difficulties are judiciously discussed by A. Momigliano, *Riv. Fil.* 14 (1936), 51–4.

<sup>39</sup> Xenophon uses both *ἐπιτειχίζειν* and *πολιορκεῖν* in his account of this operation: as noted above (n. 14), the latter is a wide term, not necessarily denoting siege or circumvallation. The site of this fortified base is not specified, but it was probably on the north coast so as to be easily accessible from Attica, since the Athenians did not enjoy undisputed command of the sea. A possibility is Souvala, some five miles from the capital, with an anchorage and conveniently situated for plundering fertile areas in the north west of the island.

the Olynthians,<sup>40</sup> whom they must have provided with sufficient foodstuffs to prevent starvation when Olynthian territory was devastated. With this source of supply removed, the Olynthians became so weakened by famine that early in 379 they had to treat for peace. The Spartans thus eventually achieved their aim to reduce Olynthus by plundering raids, but they found themselves compelled to commit much larger forces than had originally been intended, thanks to the resilience of the Olynthians loyally supported by Chalcidian allies.

In 377 an Athenian force commanded by Chabrias ravaged the territory of Histiaea, which alone of Euboean towns had not joined the Second Athenian Confederacy but remained faithful to Sparta. He then fortified a strong position on a nearby hill and left a garrison there before withdrawing the rest of his troops for service elsewhere (Diod. 15. 30. 5). Soon afterwards Histiaea revolted from Sparta, though not primarily, if an anecdote recorded by Xenophon is authentic (5. 4. 56–7), because of pressure from the garrison established by Chabrias.

An operation exhibiting some characteristics of epiteichismos was the Spartan expedition to Corcyra in 373–2, described at some length by Xenophon (6. 2. 3–11, 15–26) and briefly by Diodorus (15. 46. 1–3; 47. 1–6). Mnasippus, the Spartan commander, did not attempt to storm the city or to reduce it by circumvallation. It cannot have been closely invested, since six hundred peltasts under an Athenian general contrived to join the defenders inside the walls without being detected. Mnasippus used his troops, mostly mercenaries, to ravage the well cultivated and richly stocked countryside and prevented the Corcyreans from reaching it from the city. He established a camp on a hill some distance from the walls, protecting it with a stockade, while his fleet blockaded the principal harbour whenever weather permitted.<sup>41</sup> The Corcyreans thus became desperately short of food, and large numbers of slaves and others deserted. The remainder of this campaign, which ended disastrously for the Spartans, has little relevance here. Xenophon is interested in it because he saw in Mnasippus an example of a military commander who by neglecting the well-being of his troops brought catastrophe upon them and himself.<sup>42</sup> It is, however, noteworthy that, according to Diodorus, the initial appeal for Spartan intervention was sent by dissident oligarchs friendly to Sparta, of whom some, having evidently become refugees, joined the forces of Mnasippus on his arrival, and also that, when the Athenian general reached the city, he found the population still torn by civil strife.

During the period after Leuctra Phlius, which remained faithful to Sparta, was frequently harassed by more powerful neighbours allied with Thebes. The loyalty of insignificant Phlius to the Spartans in their desperate straits won the admiration of Xenophon. He devotes a long and graphic but rather naive excursus to the exploits of the Phliasians, who had often to struggle to preserve their independence (7.2. 1–23).<sup>43</sup> Their enemies, who received some aid from local dissidents, occupied two naturally strong positions on mountain summits not far from the city to serve as bases for ravaging the plain. One of these had been fortified by the Argives (*ἐπιτετειχότων*) on Mount Tricarantum in Phliasian territory, the other was being fortified by the

<sup>40</sup> M. Zahrnt, *Olynth und die Chalkidier* (Munich, 1971), p. 95. It was for this reason that the Peloponnesians had previously to operate from bases far from Olynthus.

<sup>41</sup> B. Schmidt, *Korkyraeische Studien* (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 50–6, discusses the topography of this episode, but his conclusions do not seem wholly convincing.

<sup>42</sup> J. K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon* (Berkeley, 1970), pp. 55–6.

<sup>43</sup> The tone of this excursus is not unlike that of a Victorian adventure story for boys. Diod. 15. 75. 3 is very brief.

Sicyonians at Thyamia within their own territory but near the Phliasian border.<sup>44</sup> Attacked and pillaged from two directions, the Phliasians were unable to grow sufficient food and became dependent on what they could seize from their enemies and what they could bring in by a dangerous route from Corinth. In desperation they appealed to the Athenians, who sent Chares with a small mercenary force. He helped them to protect a food convoy against enemy attacks, and they persuaded him to support them in an attack on the unfinished fort at Thyamia. The garrison, taken by surprise, fled in panic. The Phliasians continued the construction of the fort, intending to turn the tables on the Sicyonians and use it as a base for raiding their territory.<sup>45</sup> This intention apparently remained unfulfilled because peace was concluded soon afterwards on terms requiring the restoration of Thyamia to Sicyon (7. 4. 11). There seems, however, to be no other recorded instance of what might be termed *epiteichismos* in reverse.

In Sicily, where factional strife was almost more prevalent than in Greece, *epiteichismos* might have been expected to have been widely practised, but it was not. One reason may have been that, because Sicily was more fertile than Greece, the devastation of agricultural land tended to be less effective and was therefore less frequently adopted. Another factor was that the Siceliots, through bitter experience at the hands of the Carthaginians in the last decade of the fifth century, became more advanced in the technique of assaulting walled cities than the Greeks of the homeland. The spectacular success of the elder Dionysius in storming Motya was won largely by adopting methods of siege warfare hitherto alien to the Greeks. The reputation that he gained thereby must have caused many a Greek city threatened by him to choose submission in preference to resistance. Nevertheless, some varieties of *epiteichismos* were not unknown in Sicily in the fourth century and continued to be practised somewhat longer than in the homeland.

For many years Leontini was the traditional rallying point for refugees from Syracuse. It was, for example, to Leontini that the friends of Dion fled when worsted by Callippus in civil strife at Syracuse and from Leontini that Hipparinus, doubtless with their support, soon afterwards ousted Callippus (Diod. 16. 36. 5; Plut. *Dion* 58. 4; Polyae. 5. 4). After the younger Dionysius had regained his tyranny, a curious episode occurred in which an unsuccessful *epiteichismos* undertaken against Syracuse by Hicetas led to a crushing victory over the troops of Dionysius. Taking the offensive from Leontini, Hicetas occupied the Olympieum, situated on a hill above the Great Harbour, and protected it with a stockade. He doubtless hoped for assistance from Syracusans hostile to the tyranny, but evidently no uprising took place, and eventually he had to withdraw. His troops turned on those of Dionysius, who were pursuing them, and defeated them so decisively that the entire city except Ortygia fell into his hands (Diod. 16. 68. 1–3, cf. Plut. *Timol.* 9. 3).

Later Timoleon adopted what appears to have been a form of *epiteichismos* when striving to complete his crusade for the liberation of Sicily from military adventurers, who still held important cities but were now beginning to forfeit the loyalty of their own mercenaries. His success in liberating Leontini was achieved because, after he appeared there with an army, Hicetas was handed over to him in chains by mutinous mercenaries; evidently neither assault nor circumvallation was attempted (Plut. *Timol.* 32. 1). A clearer example of this technique was his offensive against Messina, where

<sup>44</sup> The most recent study of the topography is that of Pritchett, *op. cit.* (above n. 29), 2. 103–5 (Tricarantum) and 107 (Thyamia).

<sup>45</sup> In their plea to Chares for collaboration in attacking Thyamia the Phliasians are stated to have told him *τοῖς πολεμίοις ἐπιτετειχικῶς ἔσῃ* (7. 2. 20).

Mamercus had taken refuge with the local despot Hippon. Timoleon established a base some twenty miles from Messana at Mylae, where he seems to have remained, though not necessarily inactive, until Mamercus surrendered to him personally and Hippon tried to escape by sea but was caught and tortured to death by the Messanians.<sup>46</sup>

The rise of Macedonia under the leadership of Philip was to a considerable extent due to his exploitation of new techniques in siege operations. Demosthenes chose to maintain that the successes of Philip against Greek cities were achieved mainly by bribery, and undoubtedly treachery often played a part. There is, however, abundant evidence that with the aid of professional experts Philip was responsible for dramatic advances in siegecraft.<sup>47</sup> Although he failed to reduce Perinthus and Byzantium, his unprecedented success in capturing walled towns by storm, often very rapidly, astonished and dismayed the Greeks. Because he enjoyed the benefit of these new developments, epiteichismos had no attraction for him, and the Greeks had little occasion to use it against one another, especially after the formation of the Hellenic League under his leadership. Alexander displayed a mastery of siegecraft superior even to that of his father, and in none of his many assaults on fortified positions did he ever fail. It is, however, interesting that even he did not entirely neglect epiteichismos. During his Indian campaign he ordered Coenus to occupy a fortified base in order to exclude the inhabitants of Bazira from access to their cultivable land (Arr. *Anab.* 4. 27. 7, ἐπιτειχίσαι). The operation proved effective, since the inhabitants abandoned their city, which was then garrisoned by his troops (ibid. 28. 1). This isolated and unimportant incident illustrates his versatility. Far more often, however, he developed new and original ideas, which permanently changed the traditional principles of strategy and tactics. Military leaders in the Hellenistic age, though taking advantage of some technological advances, were for the most part content to imitate his methods.

## V. AFTERMATH

An indication that epiteichismos was already almost obsolete by the middle of the fourth century is provided by passages in the speeches of Demosthenes in which the term is seen to have acquired a more general, non-specialised meaning.<sup>48</sup> Apart from a reference to Decelea (21. 146),<sup>49</sup> there is only one passage in which Demosthenes could be deemed to be using the term in its special sense. In the *First Philippic* (4. 5) he suggests that Philip might have considered the Athenians difficult to confront in war in the past when they held τῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιτειχίσματα τῆς αὐτοῦ χώρας, among which Pydna, Potidaea and Methone have been named in the preceding sentence. Demosthenes puts up this suggestion only to reject it, and he does not picture Philip as considering that these places had been occupied as fortified bases in his territory for plundering agricultural land,<sup>50</sup> but rather that they had been, more generally,

<sup>46</sup> A fragment of Athanis (*FGrHist* 562F3, quoted by Plut. *Timol.* 37.9) refers to the base at Mylae, and the evidence of this contemporary historian is more likely to be accurate than a statement by Plutarch (ibid. 34. 4) that Timoleon blockaded Messana by land and sea; cf. my *Timoleon and his Relations with Tyrants* (Manchester, 1952), p. 51.

<sup>47</sup> G. T. Griffith in N. G. L. Hammond and Griffith, *History of Macedonia 2* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 444–9.

<sup>48</sup> In this section I use 'the term' to embrace the nouns and the verb referred to above n. 8. Hereafter the verb is by far the commonest. In *Hell.* 3. 2. 1 Xenophon uses the verb in a non-specialised but still military sense.

<sup>49</sup> cf. Aeschin. 2. 76. Later writers continue to apply the term to the occupation of Decelea; cf. Plut. *Alcib.* 23. 2, Paus. 3. 8. 6 and Polyaeus. 1. 40. 6, though Strabo 9. 1. 17 uses ὀρυγήριον.

<sup>50</sup> Potidaea was in fact outside Macedonia.

potential bases for any kind of offensive action. Such indeed is the meaning of the term where Demosthenes applies it, as he does several times, to interference by Philip in Euboea, especially by supporting tyrants there, with the intention of putting pressure on Athens, Euboea, he declares, as a whole is being exploited by Philip as an ἐπιτείχισμα against Attica (8. 66; 10. 68; 18. 71, cf. 87), and elsewhere the verb ἐπιτευχίζειν has tyranny in Euboea (10.8), or an individual tyrant (8. 36), as its object.<sup>51</sup> The special features normally associated with epiteichismos are absent here, and the term has become largely metaphorical, as also in a passage relating to Rhodes (15. 12). Another development is that ἐπιτείχισμα begins to be used of any fortress, whatever its function or character. In a speech belonging to the Demosthenic corpus the fort at Eetionea is so described (58. 67), whereas in Thucydides it is τεῖχος (8. 90. 1–92. 10) or τεῖχοςμα (92. 10; 93. 1; 94. 1).

A far stranger development took place long after epiteichismos had become outmoded as a military operation. The term began to appear in the vocabulary of authors in various fields, including philosophers and theologians, who used it in contexts mostly unconnected with warfare and in many cases concerned with abstract thought. A foretaste may be seen in a phrase quoted by Aristotle (*Rhet.* 3. 3, 1406b 11) from Alcidas, who declared that philosophy was ἐπιτείχισμα τῶν νόμων. It was, however, only under the Roman empire that the metaphorical use of the term seems to have become commonplace. Its popularity with authors of that period may be illustrated by referring to a brief and largely random selection of passages. The fashion may perhaps have been set in the first century A.D. by Philo Judaeus, who was evidently fond of it. In his works the verb denotes the act of setting up something as a menace or weapon (τῶν ἐπιτευχίζοντων ψευδολογίαν κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας, *de aet. mund.* 69; γῆν ἐπετείχισαν οὐρανῶ, *de vit. Mos.* 2. 194), while ἐπιτειχισμός means in one passage an accusation brought against an individual (*ibid.* 176) and in another a powerful threat (*ibid.* 185). Josephus uses the term literally in military contexts, but with reference to fortification of any kind, as in the passage from the Demosthenic corpus cited above. The verb thus occurs with φρούριον as its object (*B.J.* 1. 419; 4. 446; cf. Dio Cassius 47. 31. 2; 54. 33. 4), but it may also have a metaphorical significance (δυναστεία ἐπιτετείχισται τῇ πόλει, *B.J.* 4. 352). Similarly, ἐπιτείχισμα may denote an actual bastion (*A.J.* 15. 292), but also a figurative one, as in a striking passage where Herod recalls one of his sons to serve ὥσπερ ἐπιτείχισμα against his other sons (*B.J.* 1. 448).

A consequence of the development whereby the term was applied to any kind of fortification was that it came to be used, in its metaphorical sense, of defensive or protective action, though still, and indeed more commonly, of offensive action. In Philostratus a miserly person ἐπιτευχίζει τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πλούτον (*V.A.* 8. 7. 161), and in two passages of Sextus Empiricus ἐπιτείχισμα bears the sense of protection, though in both cases what is protected is something undesirable (*adv. Math.* 1. 298; 11. 180). On the other hand, Sextus also uses the verb of offensive action (*ibid.* 5. 2), as do Lucian (ἐπιτευχίσαντες τῷ πλούτῳ ὑπεροψίαν, *Nigr.* 23) and Alciphron (*frag.* 5). As late as the end of the fourth century A.D. the verb occurs in the homilies by St John Chrysostom on the Gospels and Epistles, where, for example, God is stated to have built up a bastion (ἐπετείχισε) against the Devil (*hom.* 26. 2 in 1 *Cor.*, 230D). A far cry from Pylos and Decelea.

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<sup>51</sup> When making precisely the same point in 19. 219 and 326, Demosthenes uses the non-technical word ὀρητήρια.