

THE SOURCES FOR THE SPARTAN DEBACLE AT HALIARTUS

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THE COMPLEX SERIES OF EVENTS leading to the Spartan invasion of Boeotia in 395 and the outbreak of the Corinthian war has evoked much interest from modern scholars, largely because of discrepancies between the principal authorities.¹ On the other hand, the episode at Haliartus in that year has attracted little attention despite its momentous consequences in bringing about the death of Lysander and the disgrace of King Pausanias. One reason for the relative neglect of that episode may be that, whereas the London papyrus of the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* contains a detailed account of the developments leading to the Spartan invasion of Boeotia, the papyrus unfortunately breaks off before reaching the section in which the invasion itself must have been recorded. It is, however, surprising that scholars have tended to accept uncritically the version of the events at Haliartus by Xenophon in his *Hellenica* (3.5.6–7 and 17–25), the only primary authority, and virtually to ignore accounts by Diodorus (14.81.1–3 and 89), Plutarch (*Lysander* 28.1–30.1), and Pausanias (3.5.3–6).² The account of Diodorus is brief and that of Pausanias not much longer, but that of Plutarch is substantial and contains far more topographical detail than that of Xenophon.³ Each of the four versions includes information not found in any of the other three. The purpose of this paper is to suggest that they supplement one another and that they represent four separate and independent traditions, each of them being very largely trustworthy and making a contribution of some value.

Before discussing the four accounts separately and then in conjunction, it will be convenient to give a bare outline of the campaign, including only basic essentials on which they are in general agreement. Lysander was sent

¹C. D. Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories* (Ithaca, N. Y. 1979) 192–201, discusses the problems lucidly and judiciously.

²For example, A. H. M. Jones, *Sparta* (Oxford 1967) 104–106, cites only Xenophon, while K. J. Beloch, *Gr. Gesch.*² 3.1 (Berlin 1922) 68–71, though citing other authorities, bases his narrative almost exclusively on Xenophon, as does H. Schaefer, *RE* 18.4 (1949) 2581–83. S. Accame, *Ricerche intorno alla guerra corinzia* (Naples 1951) 33–41, repeated in his *L'imperialismo ateniese all'inizio del secolo iv a.c.* (Naples 1966) 113–124, examines all four accounts but considers only those of Xenophon and Diodorus to be trustworthy. He maintains that additional material contributed by Plutarch and Pausanias is largely distorted by the influence of rhetoric or prejudice. His conclusions are, in my opinion, for the most part unconvincing, as will be seen below, where his work (the 1951 publication) will be cited as Accame. It is gratifying to find that in a recently published work J.-F. Bommelaer, *Lysandre de Sparte* (Athens 1981) 193–197 (hereafter cited as Bommelaer), treats the account of Plutarch as valuable evidence, though he chooses, mistakenly in my view, to ignore that of Pausanias (193, n. 108).

³There are bare references to the episode at Andoc. 3 (*On the Peace*) 20 (see below, 126), Nepos *Lys.* 3.4, and Justin 6.4.6–7.

to raise an army from Phocis and neighbouring states and to invade Boeotia from the north, while King Pausanias with a Peloponnesian army was to conduct a second invasion from the south. According to two of the accounts they were to have met at Haliartus. Lysander arrived there first and without waiting long for Pausanias delivered an attack on the city in which his forces were routed and he himself was killed. The survivors fled to high ground, where they inflicted losses upon the pursuing Thebans. When Pausanias arrived, he eventually decided against engaging the enemy and, after negotiating a truce whereby he recovered the bodies of the fallen, withdrew from Boeotia. At Sparta he was impeached and without awaiting the verdict fled into exile at Tegea.

I THE FOUR ACCOUNTS ASSESSED SEPARATELY

The account by Diodorus (14.81.1–3), besides being the shortest of the four, is also the least illuminating. It is a record of action taken and does not reflect any definitive viewpoint. Its brevity and lack of colouring is most unfortunate because it must surely be derived, through Ephorus, from the Oxyrhynchus historian, whose evident interest in the antecedents of the Spartan offensive against Boeotia (16–18, Bartoletti) suggests that his treatment of that operation was detailed and would, had it been preserved, have proved most valuable. Diodorus here exhibits his usual capriciousness in deciding how fully to reproduce the substance of his source: he devotes considerably more space to operations in the following year in central Greece, which may be thought to have had far less impact and to be less interesting (82.6–10). He does, however, include on the Spartan offensive two items of information not recorded elsewhere: that few soldiers were sent with Lysander to Phocis⁴ and that the army led by Pausanias numbered 6,000 (81.1). He notes that the Athenians were persuaded to support the Boeotians (81.2), but he does not mention the presence of Athenian troops in Boeotia at any stage. His account ends with the withdrawal of Pausanias to the Peloponnese, but in a later note derived from his chronographical source he refers to the prosecution of the king and his flight into exile (89.1).

The account by Pausanias (3.5.3–6) is more valuable than that of Diodorus and has not received from modern scholars as much attention as it deserves. It is included in a biographical sketch of King Pausanias belonging to a long survey of Spartan kings. The author draws a highly complimentary portrait of his namesake and, unlike Xenophon and Plutarch, seeks explicitly to vindicate the decision of the king to negotiate a truce instead of fighting a battle (5.5). The most distinctive feature of this version is its emphasis on

⁴Accame (40) maintains that there is inconsistency here with Plut. *Lys.* 28.1, where Lysander is stated to have had many soldiers with him, but the passages refer to different stages of the campaign. When Lysander left Sparta, he had only a small force with him, but when he invaded Boeotia, he had assembled troops from Phocis and several other states.

the part played by the Athenians, which is not at all prominent in any of the other versions. Here Pausanias is stated to have resolved, on arriving in Boeotia, to continue offensive operations, despite the defeat of the other invading force and the death of Lysander, but to have changed his mind on hearing that Thrasybulus with an Athenian army was not far away and was planning to take the Spartans in the rear when they were committed to battle with the Thebans (5.4–5). The extent to which the Athenians influenced the outcome may well be exaggerated in this account, but there is no reason to dismiss it as a fabrication.⁵ That feature, however, together with the reference to the unfulfilled plan of Thrasybulus, does suggest that the author from whose work Pausanias derived his material was an Athenian. Any attempt to identify this author must be conjectural, but of Athenians known to have written on this period Androtion is perhaps the likeliest. His *Atthis* is quoted verbatim by Pausanias on the execution of the Rhodian Dorieus at Sparta (*FGrHist* 324 F 46), which occurred in the same year as the offensive against Boeotia. Pausanias has preserved another fragment of Androtion (F 58): its context is uncertain, but together the two quotations show that he had some acquaintance with the *Atthis* or at least with a work based on the *Atthis* and containing quotations from it. Another passage of Pausanias (3.9.11) mentioning an Athenian mission to urge the Spartans to refer the dispute with Thebes to arbitration, to which there is no reference elsewhere,⁶ provides a further indication that for the events leading to the Corinthian war he is dependent on an Athenian source. In addition to Androtion, a celebrated Athenian known to have written about these events is Philochorus (*FGrHist* 328 F 148), but Pausanias nowhere cites his work.

The account by Plutarch (*Lys.* 28.1–30.1) contains, as is his practice in the *Lives*, a sprinkling of notes on topics somewhat loosely connected with his main theme but evidently considered by him to be interesting and worth recording.⁷ Of these passages one is concerned with local myths (28.7–9), interrupting the military narrative at a crucial stage, and a second with oracles (29.5–12, cf. *Mor.* 408a–b). Such minor digressions are demonstrably the fruit of widespread investigations by Plutarch himself and reflect his assiduous reading in various fields. On the other hand, the bulk of his narrative

⁵See below, 130–131. Although the Athenian assembly had voted *unanimously* (πάντες) in favour of supporting Thebes (*Xen. Hell.* 3.5.16), some Athenians liable for enlistment seem to have been reluctant to serve in the expeditionary force (*Lys.* 16.13, cf. 14.14; *Aristoph. Eccles.* 193–196), as is pointed out by R. Seager, “Thrasybulos, Conon, and Athenian Imperialism, 396–386 B.C.,” *JHS* 87 (1967) 95–115, at 98–99.

⁶Accame (26–27) seems to me to be right in suggesting that Androtion is the probable source of this report but wrong in believing it to be false. V. Martin, *La vie internationale en Grèce* (Geneva 1940) 538–540, doubts its authenticity but does not positively reject it. I. A. F. Bruce, *Historical Commentary on the Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* (Cambridge 1967) 120, and Hamilton, (above, n. 1) 204–205, accept it.

⁷For a survey of such passages in the *Pelopidas* see *CQ* 33 (1939) 12–15.

in this instance has a uniformity suggesting that it is founded upon material derived from a single work. Its content also indicates that the author of that work was thoroughly familiar with the characteristics of Greek warfare at the beginning of the fourth century and that his interest in the campaign was not confined to the fate of Lysander.

A feature prominent in the narrative of Plutarch is that most of it, though not all, reflects the viewpoint of the Thebans. Hence, while it does not betray any flagrant prejudice in favour of Thebes, there is a strong case for ascribing its ultimate origin to a Boeotian source. Its wealth of information on Boeotian topography, noted above (page 120), points in the same direction: this topographical information, though doubtless of special interest to Plutarch as a Boeotian, cannot have been introduced by him on his own initiative. These features are especially noteworthy because elsewhere in the *Lysander* he has certainly derived a substantial amount of material from the *Hellenica* of Xenophon.⁸ Here, however, when for the first time in the career of Lysander relations with the Boeotians are paramount, the version by Xenophon, though doubtless known to Plutarch, was certainly not his principal source. He appears rather to have chosen to derive his material from the work of some author who was either himself a Boeotian or had access to Boeotian sources.

Boeotia developed a modest tradition in historiography. In the fourth century Daimachus of Plataea (*FGrHist* 65) and Anaxis and Dionysodorus, also Boeotians (*ibid.* 67, 68), produced works which were apparently general histories of Greece and included at least some material on events of their own times.⁹ These Boeotian historians are little more than names, and it is most unlikely that Plutarch had access to their obscure works.¹⁰ His version of the episode at Haliartus may well, however, be based upon an account by a better known historian who in turn was dependent on the work of some Boeotian predecessor. This better known historian can hardly be Ephorus, although he was accused of plagiarism from Daimachus (*FGrHist* 65 T 1a = 70 T 17): his main source for this period was almost certainly the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, and the version by Diodorus, which, as noted above, is surely dependent on Ephorus, has little in common with that of Plutarch and does not reflect the viewpoint of the Thebans. If Plutarch is following his normal practice of deriving historical material from standard histories,

⁸Cf. R. Flacelière in his introduction to the *Lysander* (*Vies* 6 [Paris 1971, Budé]) 165–166; Bommelaer 44.

⁹There were also works on local history, though only a few were written by Boeotians, cf. F. Jacoby, *FGrHist* 3 b Komm. (Text, Leiden 1955) 151–153, for a general introduction.

¹⁰He does quote (*Lys.* 12.6–8) a passage of some length from a work *On Piety* by a Daimachus (F 8), but this author could well be a different person from the fourth century historian, cf. Jacoby *ibid.* 2 c (Berlin 1926) 4, and in any case Plutarch, as often in passages of discussion, may well have extracted his quotation from an intermediate source.

his immediate source here may well be the much-read *Hellenica* of Theopompus.¹¹ There seems to be no means of dating the publication of this work at all accurately, but it preceded the more famous *Philippica* and followed the *Hellenica* of Xenophon. Although Theopompus is accused of plagiarizing the latter (*FGrHist* 115 F 21), he might well have chosen to rely for his account of the episode at Haliartus on a Boeotian historian who was more familiar with the terrain and perhaps had been an eyewitness of the events. Plutarch was well-acquainted with both the major historical works of Theopompus (cf. F 321–337), and indeed in the next sentence, after concluding his account of the sequel to the Spartan withdrawal from Boeotia, he quotes a passage of Theopompus (F 333), evidently from the *Hellenica*, extolling the private virtues of Lysander.

As will be noted below (Section II), Plutarch includes in his account a considerable amount of information not found in any of the other three accounts, and none of it is demonstrably apocryphal.

The account by Xenophon (*Hell.* 3.5.6–7 and 17–25) differs from those by the other three authors in being manifestly dependent on oral, and not literary, sources. Virtually all his narrative throughout the *Hellenica* is based either on his own experiences or on reports from informants who were in some cases eyewitnesses and in others had some personal knowledge of events on which they were consulted. Most of such informants on events recorded by him from the beginning of the third book onwards were certainly Spartans, so that, especially as his own sympathies lay with Sparta, the narrative normally reflects the Spartan viewpoint. His account of the events at Haliartus is no exception. It is true that he claims to be well-informed about fluctuations of Theban morale at various stages after the death of Lysander (21–22). This passage, however, is evidently influenced by his notorious animosity towards the Thebans¹² and probably reproduces camp gossip on the Spartan side based on observation of Theban reactions to changing circumstances rather than trustworthy evidence from Theban sources. This interpretation is supported by the vague use of ἔφασσαν without a subject expressed (21).

His version of the strategic plan on which the Spartan offensive was based (6) strikes an authentic note and may well be founded on information from Spartans of high rank who helped to frame it. On the other hand, his narrative of successive developments at and around Haliartus, through

¹¹Flacelière (above, n. 8, 162–165) lists passages in the *Lysander* where Plutarch, though not citing Theopompus or Ephorus, may be thought to have derived material from their works. These passages are exceptionally abundant in 28.2–12 on the Spartan invasion of Boeotia. Since Theopompus evidently used the work of Xenophon for parts of his *Hellenica*, he is likely to have used a written source for this invasion, which occurred almost two decades before his birth.

¹²Cf. M. Sordi, "I caratteri dell' opera storiografica di Senofante nelle Elleniche, 2," *Athenaeum* 29 (1951) 273–348, at 303–304. An even more disparaging passage (4.2.18) accuses the Thebans of cowardly reactions at Nemea in the following year.

doubtless dependent initially upon reports by Spartans who served there, is not so complete or so clear as might have been expected. For example, he is uncertain why Lysander persisted in his ill-fated attack on the town, and he offers alternative explanations (19).¹³ Nor does he provide sufficient topographical detail to provide the reader with even a rough understanding of the movements by the various bodies of troops involved in the operations; nor does he mention the part played by the Athenians, apart from a reference to the arrival of an Athenian force (22).

It is noteworthy that during 395 and much of 394, when there was intensive activity, both diplomatic and military, in Greece, including the Spartan invasion of Boeotia, Xenophon was abroad in Asia and can have had no personal experience of events at home.¹⁴ Nor, until he returned with Agesilaus, can he have begun to collect from others the information about these events upon which he based his account of them in two substantial sections of the *Hellenica* (3.5.1–25 and 4.2.9–23). These two sections were probably not written until some years later, and indeed the penultimate sentence of the first section (3.5.25) refers to the death of Pausanias, which must be dated after 381, since he outlived his son Agesipolis, who died in that year (*Hell.* 5.3.19).¹⁵

Xenophon does not give an unequivocal answer to the crucial question whether Pausanias, having agreed to be outside Haliartus on a prearranged date, was late in arriving or whether Lysander reached the rendezvous before the prearranged date and decided to take action without waiting for Pausanias.¹⁶ Possibly Xenophon lacked trustworthy evidence, but Pausanias had long been a controversial figure, and the issue of his guilt or innocence at Haliartus was hotly disputed among leading Spartans at the time and doubtless long afterwards. Hence Xenophon is likely to have been reluctant to commit himself explicitly. In 403, when he was apparently a moderate member of the city faction at Athens, he had deplored the harshness of Lysander and approved the relatively mild policy of Pausanias in effecting

¹³H. R. Breitenbach, *Historiographische Anschauungsformen Xenophons* (Basel 1950) 23–24, believes that the two explanations derived from different informants. It is perhaps more likely that Xenophon was unable to obtain satisfactory information from any Spartan eyewitness and suggested the alternative explanations on his own initiative.

¹⁴H. R. Breitenbach, "Xenophon," *RE* 9A2 (1967) 1680–81.

¹⁵Breitenbach, *ibid.* 1681, who also justifiably believes that the speech by the Theban envoy at Athens asking for assistance (3.5.8–15) was written after a long interval. Much of the argument contained in it gives the impression of having been supplied by Xenophon rather than a Theban envoy, who would hardly have been tactless enough to have referred so bluntly to the conflict between rival factions in the Athenian civil war (9). P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Laconia* (London 1979) 278–279, notes that the speech contains misrepresentations, which he tentatively attributes to the hostility of Xenophon towards Thebes.

¹⁶Neither the statement that Lysander ἐφθη τὸν Παισανίαν ἐν τῷ Ἀλιάρτῳ γεγόμενος (17) nor the charge brought against Pausanias by his accusers ὅτι ὑστερήσειεν εἰς Ἀλιάρτον τοῦ Λυσάνδρου (25) provides a basis for a satisfactory solution of the problem.

a reconciliation between oligarchs and democrats, as is shown by his own account (*Hell.* 2.4.35–39), and he seems to have felt at least doubtful whether the verdict of the Spartan tribunal in 395 was just. Many Spartiates, however, believed Pausanias to be guilty or at any rate welcomed his removal from the political arena, and they doubtless included some whom Xenophon, now a protégé of Sparta, could ill afford to offend.

In accounts of episodes discreditable to Sparta Xenophon tends to betray some embarrassment which renders his treatment of them somewhat unsatisfactory. The influence of this tendency is discernible here, though it is less striking than in accounts of other discreditable episodes, notably the battle of Leuctra.

II THE FOUR ACCOUNTS COMBINED¹⁷

(a) *The Spartan strategic plan*

Xenophon provides more valuable information on this aspect of the campaign than any of the other authors. He alone makes clear that the Spartans planned in advance a two-pronged, concerted offensive by forces invading Boeotia from opposite directions and under orders to converge on Haliartus on a prearranged day, when King Pausanias was to assume command of the united army (6). The rendezvous was admirably chosen, since Haliartus dominated a rather narrow route between mountainous country and Lake Copais.¹⁸ An army occupying this strategic position would cut off the Thebans from north-western Boeotia, which Lysander was expected to win for Sparta by diplomacy or by force, and would also have an excellent base from which to launch offensive action against Thebes and its broad and fertile plain.

There are indications in other sources of a factor to which Xenophon does not refer, namely that the Spartan plan was designed to be kept secret and to take the Thebans by surprise. According to Diodorus (1), Lysander, when sent to raise an allied force in Phocis, had only a few soldiers with him: he probably took them across the Corinthian Gulf¹⁹ in order to avoid detection. Plutarch (28.3–5) implies that the Thebans were unaware of the Spartan plan until it was already being implemented (see below on the intercepted message). Some support for this interpretation is provided by a very brief reference by Andocides in a speech delivered in 393/2 (3.20), in which he declares that the Boeotians “went to war with the intention of not

¹⁷Hereafter, unless otherwise stated, references to Xenophon are to *Hellenica* 3.5; those to Diodorus are to 14.81; those to Plutarch are to his *Lysander*; those to Pausanias are to 3.5.

¹⁸Strabo 9.2.30, ἐν στενῷ χωρίῳ. P. W. Wallace, *Strabo's Description of Boeotia* (Heidelberg 1979) 117–119, in a note on this passage, supplies a useful account of the terrain. See also P. Roesch in *Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites* (Princeton 1976) 374–375.

¹⁹Flacelière (above, n. 8) 209, n. 2.

permitting Orchomenus to be independent."²⁰ Although Andocides is notoriously unreliable, even on contemporary events,²¹ this passage is probably accurate in suggesting that initially the Boeotians regarded the defection of Orchomenus as the principal threat to their security. They doubtless expected the Phocians, with whom they were already at war, to support Orchomenus and other dissident cities. They may possibly have already learned that Lysander was in Phocis, but they apparently could only guess what his next move would be.²²

(b) *The fate of Lysander and its sequel*

After assembling an army of Phocians and other allies, Lysander invaded north-western Boeotia, where a contingent of Orchomenians joined him (Xen. 17). This invasion is almost certainly the occasion of a passage included by Plutarch in a collection of apophthegms by Lysander not assigned to any specific context (22.4; *Mor.* 229c): when the Boeotians were vacillating, he asked whether he should march through their country with spears vertical (as in peace) or horizontal (as in war).²³ His question suggests that, when he crossed the border from Phocis, some Boeotians in that area other than the Orchomenians were disposed to support him, hoping to establish their independence. Lebadēia, however, resisted and was plundered (Plut. 28.2). He then pressed on towards Haliartus.

At this stage, according to Plutarch (28.3–4), Lysander sent a message to Pausanias, then at Plataea, urging him to join forces with him outside Haliartus, where he would himself arrive at dawn, but the message was intercepted en route and fell into Theban hands. There is no reason to disbelieve this story.²⁴ It is not incompatible with the statement of Xenophon (6) that Pausanias had agreed to reach Haliartus on a prearranged day. Because of the difficulties experienced in attempting to synchronize the movements of Greek armies,²⁵ the two commanders were doubtless prudent enough to wish to communicate with one another as they approached their rendezvous, so that each would know the whereabouts of the other. Pausanias appears

²⁰Nepos makes the same point (*Lys.* 3.4, cited above, n. 3., with the Andocides passage).

²¹Cf. *Phoenix* 31 (1977) 319–329.

²²Xenophon 7, cf. 17, implies that their appeal to Athens was made very shortly before the invasion of Boeotia.

²³The significance of these terms is explained by J. K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon* (Berkeley, etc. 1970) 88–89.

²⁴Accame (39) rejects it as a rhetorical fabrication. The messenger would however have had to pass through territory controlled by the Thebans, where the risk of interception was certainly high. Messages in antiquity might for various reasons go astray, cf. Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.23 and Plut. *Dion* 26.7–10.

²⁵The risks involved had been illustrated by the disastrous failure of the Athenian plan for concerted action against Boeotia in 424 (Thuc. 4.76–77, 89–101).

to have sent word to Lysander that he was approaching Plataea,²⁶ and the intercepted message was the reply. The reaction of the Thebans on learning the content of this message shows that, whatever they may have known or guessed about the Spartan offensive plan, they can have had no inkling that Haliartus was its keystone. Now, benefiting from their windfall, they made a forced march by night from Thebes to Haliartus, a distance of about 20 kilometers. They arrived shortly before Lysander, and, while some entered the town, others, certainly the majority and including cavalry as well as hoplites (cf. Xen. 19), remained outside. An Athenian force, which had come to Thebes to support them, was left to guard their city (Plut. 28.5).²⁷

Lysander evidently fulfilled his undertaking to reach a position close to Haliartus at dawn, but he seems to have remained ignorant that Theban forces were in the neighbourhood.²⁸ At first he stationed his troops on a hill, presumably south-west of the town in the direction of Helicon, and waited for Pausanias. Later in the day, however, when, as both Xenophon (18) and Plutarch (28.6) indicate, his patience became exhausted, he led them in column to within a short distance of the wall and then himself went forward with a small detachment to try to persuade the Haliartians to revolt.²⁹ He must have been encouraged by dissidents to believe that his offer of autonomy might be welcomed, but his overtures were stifled by the Thebans recently sent into the town.³⁰ Thereupon he launched an assault on the wall, but at this point his troops, evidently not yet deployed, were attacked in the rear, near a spring called Cissoussa, by the Theban army operating outside the town (Plut. 28.7).³¹ The Theban and Haliartian troops inside

²⁶The phrase ἐκ Πλαταιῶν in the text of the intercepted message (Plut. 28.3) suggests this conclusion.

²⁷Xenophon (19), apparently dependent upon observation by Spartans for information on Theban reaction (see above, 124), is evidently under the impression that the Theban army did not begin its forced march to Haliartus until news was received that Lysander had already arrived there.

²⁸See the preceding note. The same conclusion is suggested by the uncertainty of Xenophon (19) on the reasons why Lysander had not moved from a vulnerable position close to the town wall when attacked by the Thebans.

²⁹From the action described in Plut. 28.10 it is clear that he was separated from the main body.

³⁰According to Pausanias (3, cf. 9.32.5) Athenians as well as Thebans had secretly entered the town.

³¹By failing to explain where this spring was Plutarch, who must have known the area well himself, has deprived his readers of an indispensable key to the movements of both sides. Bommelaer (194–196, cf. 52–53) makes a praiseworthy attempt to reconstruct the topographical details, but his conclusions are necessarily speculative. He also suggests that the aim of Lysander was to lure the Thebans into committing themselves to an attack on his force in order that they might be caught in a trap when Pausanias arrived and could strike at their rear. This ingenious hypothesis is unconvincing. The tactical plan attributed to Lysander would have been very hazardous, since it demanded the arrival of Pausanias at precisely the right moment. Lysander had already awaited him in vain and, especially as there had been a breakdown of communications between them, cannot have known exactly where the Peloponnesian army was.

the wall, who had hitherto remained inactive, were doubtless encouraged by seeing the attack on the rear of the enemy by the Theban hoplites and cavalry. Conscious that Lysander with his advance guard was isolated in a vulnerable position close to their wall, they made a sudden sortie from the town gate. They killed Lysander, his seer, and a few others, but most of those with him escaped to the main body. Xenophon (19) does not make altogether clear how Lysander met his death, but Plutarch (28.10, cf. 29.9)³² and Pausanias (3) agree that the force making this sortie was responsible.³³

Xenophon (18–20), Diodorus (81.2), and Plutarch (28.11–12) all state that the troops hitherto led by Lysander, mostly Phocian, fled to high ground, doubtless west or south-west of Haliartus, hotly pursued by the Thebans, but that they then rallied, aided by the rugged terrain, and inflicted substantial casualties upon their pursuers.³⁴ Plutarch (28.12) alone adds that some Thebans, who had been accused of Spartan sympathies, squandered their lives recklessly to prove their loyalty. This statement, certainly derived from a Theban source, is very probably authentic, since, according to the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* (17.1–2; 18.1), a faction favouring Sparta still remained powerful at Thebes. Despite this partial reversal of fortune the morale of the Phocian and allied troops was so shattered by the death of Lysander and their defeat that they slunk away homewards on the night after the battle (Xen. 21).

(c) *The dilemma and disgrace of King Pausanias*

Pausanias had assembled his Peloponnesian army at Tegea (Xen. 7; Paus. 4) and then led it via the Isthmus and Cithaeron to Plataea (Plut. 28.3, 29.1), evidently choosing this route to avoid encroaching on Athenian territory.³⁵

There is also every reason to believe, as noted above, that the Thebans outside the town somehow concealed their presence from Lysander, perhaps behind high ground, until they attacked his rear guard.

³²The latter passage, in which Lysander is said to have been killed by a Haliartian, occurs in one of the anecdotes about oracles which are probably derived from a source different from the main narrative (see above, 000).

³³In *Comp. Lys. et Sulla* 4.3–5 Plutarch charges Lysander with ill-considered rashness, but this judgement, as is normal in *Comparisons*, is probably based on his own impression and not derived from his source.

³⁴The Theban losses amounted to 200 according to Xenophon and Diodorus, to 300 according to Plutarch, who alone gives the figure of 1000 for the allied, mostly Phocian, losses. This figure may be an exaggeration, though some of the contingents recruited by Lysander may have suffered heavily because they were poorly armed and ill-trained.

³⁵N. G. L. Hammond, *BSA* 49 (1954) 103–115 (reprinted in *Studies in Greek History* [Oxford 1973] 417–436) has demonstrated, by reconnaissance of routes in the northern Megarid, that armies could, and on several occasions did, move from central Greece to the Peloponnese and vice versa without touching Attica. The most significant parallel to the march of Pausanias is that of Cleombrotus, who in the winter of 379/8 led an army over Cithaeron to Plataea, avoiding the route through Eleutherae because it was guarded by Athenian troops (Xen. *Hell.*

While at Plataea he had no news of Lysander because the message sent to him had been intercepted. He cannot, therefore, have known whether the invasion from the north was progressing satisfactorily and whether the simultaneous arrival of the two armies at Haliartus, which was a crucial element of the Spartan plan, was likely to be achieved. He may well have remained at Plataea longer than he had intended, waiting for a communication from Lysander, and, when it did not arrive, have set out for Thespieae en route for Haliartus (Plut. 29.1) at an abnormally slow pace. In the circumstances he had every reason for wariness, even if delay meant that he would not reach Haliartus on the prearranged day. Although his enemies must have accused him of deliberate dawdling designed to endanger or at least discredit Lysander,³⁶ it is most improbable that he was guilty of such treachery.³⁷ His failure to arrive at Haliartus in time to support Lysander is more convincingly explained on other grounds.

He was on the road from Plataea to Thespieae when he received news of what had happened at Haliartus (Plut. 29.1). He must thereupon have advanced more speedily, since he reached Haliartus, with his troops in battle formation, apparently early on the day after the death of Lysander. He received a further shock on learning that the Phocians and other allies had fled during the night (Xen. 21). According to his namesake (4) he was determined to engage the Thebans in battle,³⁸ but no action developed on that day. The Thebans doubtless took up a strong defensive position awaiting the support of the Athenian force under Thrasybulus, which they must have urged to come to their aid with all speed. On the following day this force arrived (Xen. 22) from Thebes (Plut. 29.1), and the Thebans now offered battle (Paus. 4).

At this point there occurs for the first and only time an irreconcilable disagreement between two of the authorities. According to Xenophon (22) the Athenians took up a position in battle formation beside the Thebans in support of them (συνπαρετάξαντο), whereas according to Pausanias (4) Thrasybulus was waiting, evidently not very far from Haliartus, for the Spartans to attack the Theban army and intended then to take them in the

5.4.14). On the topography of this area see also S. Van de Maele, *Phoenix* 34 (1980) 153–159.

³⁶H. W. Parke, "The Deposing of Spartan Kings," *CQ* 39 (1945) 106–112, at 110.

³⁷Bommelaer (196) is inclined to accept the accusation against Pausanias. Hamilton (above, n. 1, 206) prefers the less dishonourable explanation that he "delayed out of reluctance to bring on a war that was contrary to his whole career."

³⁸Here the statement that he led his army ἐπὶ τὰς θήβας is, if the text is sound, surely a slip, perhaps the result of an intimation that the Spartan army, when united, was to have moved against Thebes (above, 126). It is strange that this statement seems to be accepted without question. Admittedly there is here no explicit mention of an agreed plan for Pausanias to join Lysander at Haliartus, but the passage implies that he would have played a part in the engagement there if he had arrived in time (4, ὅστέῃσθε μὲν τοῦ ἀγῶνος). It also suggests that he was at Haliartus when he came to terms with the Thebans (5).

rear. It is difficult to decide which version is the more convincing. Xenophon had the advantage of being able to consult contemporary witnesses, but any Spartan giving him information on this stage of the campaign might well have heard that the Athenians were near at hand without having actually seen them or having learned exactly where they were, since no fighting developed. It has already been noted that Pausanias evidently derives his account from an author eager to assign a decisive role to the Athenians and also to exculpate King Pausanias (above, 121). Nevertheless, the strategy attributed to Thrasybulus is entirely reasonable and indeed must have seemed likely to prove the best method of exploiting the situation outside Haliartus to the advantage of his Theban allies. If, however, he did adopt these tactics, his action probably had a less decisive influence upon the outcome than is claimed in the account of Pausanias.

King Pausanias was now faced with an agonizing dilemma. He was in honour bound to recover for burial the bodies of Lysander and the other Spartans, but they lay close under the town wall, so that their recovery would be difficult even if he were to defeat the Thebans in battle (Xen. 23; Plut. 29.3). On the other hand, to make a request for a truce for the restoration of the bodies would be highly discreditable to the Spartans, who were not accustomed to having to admit defeat. It would also expose him to strictures by his enemies at Sparta, which might, and in fact did, lead to impeachment and bring his career to an ignominious end. Xenophon (22–23) and Plutarch (29.2–3) give widely different accounts of his contacts with his subordinates at this critical stage.

According to Xenophon, he called a meeting of senior and junior officers to consider whether to fight or to negotiate. The arguments put forward in favour of negotiation are said to have been: that Lysander was dead and his army defeated and dispersed; that the Corinthians had refused to supply a contingent and the other allies were serving without enthusiasm; that the enemy was much superior in cavalry; that, above all, the bodies were lying close to the wall. Xenophon may have obtained reports from officers attending the meeting, but the reference to the absence of the Corinthians suggests a wider context, and his account could well be based on arguments produced later by friends of Pausanias at Sparta. Xenophon appears to be guilty of inaccuracy in explicitly attributing the decision to negotiate not to Pausanias alone but to his officers as well (23), which perhaps reflects attempts to mitigate his personal responsibility. A Spartan king might listen to, and even seek, advice from others, but when in command of an army he was normally vested with absolute authority.³⁹ Thus on this occasion responsibility for deciding whether to fight or negotiate rested with Pausanias alone. According to Plutarch, the older Spartiates were indignant on learning that the king

³⁹G. Busolt and H. Swoboda, *Gr. Staatskunde* 2 (Munich 1926) 676. In 431 Archidamus called a meeting of officers before his invasion of Attica (Thuc. 2.10.3), but after addressing

intended to negotiate a truce for the recovery of the bodies;⁴⁰ they protested to him, demanding military action and declaring that, if this failed, they would deem it an honour to lie dead beside Lysander. Despite their remonstrance Pausanias, evidently exercising his personal authority,⁴¹ proceeded to negotiate a truce. These two accounts are not so irreconcilable as they appear to be at first sight.⁴² While a majority of the officers serving under Pausanias doubtless agreed with him that negotiation was unavoidable in the circumstances, it is perfectly credible that some older men, influenced by an intense patriotism which was perhaps already becoming outmoded, were prepared to sacrifice their lives rather than bring dishonour to Sparta.⁴³ This difference of opinion may also reflect a division of loyalties, some being devoted to Lysander and others to Pausanias. The two accounts supplement, and do not contradict, one another.

On the closing stages of the campaign also they dovetail neatly into one another. Xenophon (24) alone mentions that the Thebans refused to allow the removal of the bodies unless the Spartans undertook to withdraw from Boeotia. To impose conditions when an enemy requested a truce for the recovery of the dead was a breach of established practice.⁴⁴ The Spartans might have been expected to protest, as the Athenians did in somewhat similar circumstances after the battle of Delium (Thuc. 4.97.2–99), but, according to Xenophon, they were glad to accept. His reference to their low morale during their retreat suggests a reason for their compliance. He adds that the Thebans treated the withdrawing Spartans most arrogantly, beating any who ventured from the road into the adjoining countryside. In this passage his hatred of the Thebans may have led him to exaggerate their vindictiveness, though Spartans supplying him with information perhaps tended to make the most of sufferings to which they had been subjected.

Plutarch (29.4) conveniently completes the narrative of the campaign. The Spartans, withdrawing westwards, crossed the border into Phocis and buried Lysander in friendly territory near Panopeus, where a funerary monument to him still stood in the time of Plutarch on the road from Chaeronea to Delphi.⁴⁵ Because Pausanias marched his army so far westwards instead of

them he dismissed them (*ibid.* 12.1) without seeking their advice. At Leuctra Cleombrotus, after being offered advice by his friends (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.5), held several councils of war before the battle began (*ibid.* 8).

⁴⁰The criticism of Agis by an elderly Spartan at Mantinea (Thuc. 5.65.2) is comparable.

⁴¹Here the version of Plutarch reflects a more punctilious attitude towards the legal position of Spartan kings on active service than that of Xenophon.

⁴²Accame (40) dismisses the version of Plutarch as another rhetorical fabrication.

⁴³News of their opposition to Pausanias could well have become known to the Thebans during the negotiations for the truce. It is not necessary to postulate a change of source.

⁴⁴W. K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War 2* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1974) 261–262.

⁴⁵Flacelière (above, n. 8) 168 and 211 n. 2, points out that Plutarch must often have passed this monument when travelling from his home to perform his duties as a priest of Pythian Apollo at Delphi.

returning, as he had come, via Plataea and Cithaeron, he must have had it ferried across the Corinthian Gulf to the Peloponnese. He may have chosen this route in order to reach the protection of an ally as quickly as possible, but he may also have feared that the Corinthians, who had refused to supply him with a contingent and must already have been expected to join the alliance against Sparta, might try to bar the Isthmus against him.

None of the surviving accounts, except that of Xenophon, devotes more than a few words to the trial of Pausanias, which concludes the episode. Diodorus (14.89) does not even mention the charges brought against him. Plutarch (30.1) suggests, without any explicit reference to charges, that he was impeached because he was held responsible for the death of Lysander. According to Pausanias (6) his namesake was accused of slowness in conducting the offensive against Boeotia.⁴⁶ Xenophon (25), who gives more detail, was probably able to consult well-informed Spartans about the trial, as about the Spartan strategic plan, and they may have included some holding positions of authority. He lists three charges on which Pausanias was condemned to death in absentia: that he arrived at Haliartus later than Lysander (above, p. 125); that he negotiated a truce for the return of the bodies instead of trying to recover them by force of arms; that, after trapping the Athenian democrats at the Piraeus, he allowed them to escape. The inclusion of this third charge, harking back to the Athenian civil war, is so remarkable that Xenophon might be thought mistaken in believing that the prosecution raked up an accusation on which Pausanias had been acquitted about eight years earlier (Paus. 2). There is, however, evidence that under Spartan law, which tended to be unorthodox, a defendant even after acquittal remained liable to indictment (Plut. *Mor.* 217b, ὑπόδικος),⁴⁷ apparently for an indefinite period. Xenophon is also doubtless justified in maintaining that Pausanias by deciding not to defend himself before the tribunal contributed to his conviction.

III CONCLUSION

The episode examined in this paper is of historical interest because it marks the beginning of opposition to the Spartan domination of Greece and because it encouraged that opposition by demonstrating that Sparta was not irresistible. Of even greater interest perhaps is that the foregoing study of the sources, if it has any validity, illustrates a general principle of considerable importance which tends to be neglected by modern scholars. Where two or more accounts of the same episode have survived, bias, carelessness, forgetfulness, or misunderstanding at some stage of transmission may, especially if secondary sources are involved, lead to distortion so that irreconcilable

⁴⁶Cf. 5, where the Spartans are stated to have disagreed with his decision to negotiate.

⁴⁷Cited by H. Michell, *Sparta* (Cambridge 1952) 155.

disagreements may develop. It is to such cases that most attention has been devoted by scholars, who, not unnaturally, engage in controversy on the respective merits of conflicting versions. There is, however, another category, in which the extant sources, though belonging to separate and independent traditions, may be combined to form, with hardly any discrepancy, a single, essentially trustworthy account.

One reason for consensus of this kind doubtless is that, apart from the orators, who tend to distort history in support of their own arguments, most Greek authors when dealing with historical events are both honest and painstaking, even if, like Plutarch and Pausanias, they do not claim to be historians. Another reason is more complicated. Authors seeking information on recent history were very largely dependent on oral reports from eyewitnesses, as Thucydides makes clear in a celebrated passage (1.22.2–3),⁴⁸ though his own experience was an important source. After his time the number of historians increased, and most of them, though only meagre fragments of their works have survived, are known to have devoted themselves, wholly or partly, to recent history for which their principal source must have been reports obtained from their contemporaries. Accordingly several independent versions of the same episode might be written, and each might form the basis of a separate literary tradition. Eyewitnesses were fallible, as Thucydides points out (1.22.3), and hardly any historians can have been as meticulous as he was in sifting oral evidence: Xenophon certainly was not. Nevertheless widely divergent and yet trustworthy reports could have been made on the same episode to different historians by informants who were on opposing sides in war or political disputes, or who witnessed events occurring more or less simultaneously in separate locations, or who were associated with different leaders. There was plenty of scope for the development of independent traditions supplementing one another and each containing a very high proportion of truthful material. The case discussed above affords a most illuminating example because the sources seem to belong to as many as four traditions. Another general principle exemplified here, which might be thought to be self-evident but tends to be insufficiently observed (above, p. 120, with n. 2), is that, where both primary and secondary accounts of the same episode are extant, the former should not necessarily be accepted to the virtual exclusion of the latter.

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⁴⁸His conscientiousness in applying this method is illustrated by 7.44.1, cf. 5.26.5.