

Helikon and Klio

The most important historical event to have occurred on Mt. Helikon involved the movements of the Spartan and Boiotian armies that culminated in the battle of Leuktra in 371 BC, when in one day both the Spartan army and the myth of its invincibility were shattered. Interest in these events and modern investigation of them have also led to results that go beyond that campaign. Many new or previously unappreciated sites have been located on Mt. Helikon that have little or nothing to do with the events of 371 BC. These sites provide scholars with the opportunity to study more closely the story of human settlement on the mountain. This research has also led to a fuller knowledge of Boiotian and Phokian topography¹. For all that, more can and must be said of the movements of the armies before the battle, for the topic also involves an historical and philological example of how history has been, but should not be, written.

In 371 BC, either in July or August, the Spartan king Kleombrotos and an army were stationed in Phokis, most probably near Delphoi². After Agesilaos had excluded the Thebans from the peace of Sparta, Kleombrotos asked for further instruction from his home government. The Spartans told him that unless the Thebans left the other Boiotian cities autonomous, he should lead his army against Thebes. When the Thebans rejected the ultimatum, Kleombrotos led his army over Mt. Helikon to Leuktra, where they met their doom at the hands of Epameinondas and Pelopidas³.

¹ E.g. A. Snodgrass, in P. Roesch and G. Argoud, eds, *La Béotie Antique* (Paris, 1985), 87-94; J.M. Fossey, *Topography and Population of Ancient Boiotia* (Chicago, 1988), 301-340; J. Bintliff and A. Snodgrass, in H. Beister and J. Buckler, eds, *BOIOTIKA* (Munich, 1989), 285-299.

² H. Beister, *Untersuchungen zu der Zeit der Thebanischen Hegemonie* (Munich, 1970), 13-72; J. Buckler, *The Theban Hegemony, 371-362 BC* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 233, 318.

³ T.T.B. Ryder, *Koine Eirene* (Oxford, 1965), 58-78; Buckler, *Theban Hegemony*, 48-55; P. Cartledge, *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta* (Baltimore, 1987), 369-381; M. Jehne, *Koine Eirene* (Stuttgart, 1994), 65-74.

According to the *communis opinio*, Kleombrotos led his army from Phokis into Boiotia, until he encountered the Boiotian army at Koroneia. Finding the pass blocked, he retreated to Ambrossos (modern Distomon) in Phokis, and thence struck across Mt. Helikon, in the course of which he destroyed a Theban flank-guard under Chaireas, descended upon Thisbe, and then took the shore road past Siphai and Kreusis to capture the Boiotian fleet. Only then did he march inland to confront Epameinondas at Leuktra⁴.

A challenge to this interpretation has rightly come from C. Mazzucchi and C.J. Tuplin, who have argued on the basis of the manuscripts of Diodoros that Kleombrotos moved his army to Chaironeia not Koroneia, before he made his thrust into Boiotia⁵. Tuplin's ignorance of Mazzucchi's earlier article comes as something of a surprise, but their views are significant enough to merit a fresh review of the evidence, both literary and topographical, in order to determine the precise course of events.

The only contemporary source for these events is Xenophon, who was quite familiar with the Spartan officers involved in them, and who had enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the campaign with some of the survivors⁶. His description (*Hell.* 6, 4, 3-4) is concise:

ἡ δ' ἐκκλησία ἀκούσασα ταῦτα... ἐπέστειλαν δὲ τῷ Κλεομβρότῳ μὴ διαλύειν τὸ στράτευμα, ἀλλ' εὐθὺς ἄγειν ἐπὶ τοὺς Θηβαίους, εἰ μὴ αὐτονόμους ἀφίσειεν τὰς πόλεις... ἐπεὶ οὖν ἦσθετο οὐχ ὅπως τὰς πόλεις ἀφίεντας, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τὸ στράτευμα διαλύοντας, ὡς ἀντετάττοντο πρὸς αὐτόν, οὕτω δὴ ἄγει τὴν στρατιάν εἰς τὴν Βοιωτίαν. καὶ ἦ μὲν οἱ Θηβαῖοι ἐμβάλειν αὐτὸν ἐκ τῶν Φωκέων προσεδόκων καὶ ἐπὶ στεωῶ τινι ἐφύλαττον οὐκ ἐμβάλλει· διὰ Θισβῶν δὲ ὄρεινῃν καὶ ἀπροσδόκητον πορευθεὶς ἀφικνεῖται εἰς Κρεῦσιν, καὶ τὸ τεῖχος αἰρεῖ καὶ τριήρεις τῶν Θηβαίων δώδεκα λαμβάνει. ταῦτα δὲ ποιήσας καὶ ἀναβάς ἀπὸ τῆς θαλάττης, ἐστρατοπεδεύσατο ἐν Λεύκτροις τῆς Θεσπικῆς. οἱ δὲ Θηβαῖοι ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο ἐπὶ τῷ ἀπαντικρῷ λόφῳ οὐ πολὺ διαλείποντες.

The [Spartan] assembly sent a message to Kleombrotos not to disband the army but to lead it immediately against the Thebans, if they did not leave the Boiotian cities autonomous... When he realized that the cities were in no way being left autonomous, and that the Thebans were not

⁴ J.F. Lazenby, *The Spartan Army* (Warminster, 1985), 151-152; C.D. Hamilton, *Agessilaus and the Failure of the Spartan Hegemony* (Ithaca and London, 1991), 204.

⁵ Mazzucchi, *Istituto Lombardo, Rendiconti* 107 (1973), 671-675; Tuplin, *Klio* 69 (1978), 72-77; *CQ* n.s. 29 [79] (1979), 347-357; *The Failings of Empire* (Stuttgart, 1993), 135.

⁶ *Hell.* 6, 4, 5, 8, 12; see also H.R. Breitenbach, *Xenophon von Athen* (Stuttgart, 1966), 1690-1691.

disbanding their army, but rather they were ranging it in line of battle against him, he led his army into Boiotia. And at the point where the Thebans were expecting him to invade from Phokis and were awaiting him at a certain guarded pass, he did not make his entrance there. Traversing a mountainous and unexpected route through Thisbe, he arrived at Kreusis, and seized the wall and took twelve Theban triremes. Having accomplished these things and having marched up from the sea, he encamped at Leuktra in the region of Thespiiai. The Thebans encamped opposite him on a hill not far away.

The pertinent details are that Kleombrotos took the Boiotians by surprise. Having descended from Mt. Parnassos, he did not confront them at the pass that they guarded. Instead, he led his army over a mountainous and unexpected route to Thisbe, thence marching to Kreusis and Leuktra.

Though not next in chronological sequence, Pausanias (9, 13, 3) writes:

Ἐπαμινώνδας μὲν ἔχων τοῦ στρατοῦ μοῖραν ἀντεκάθητο ὑπὲρ τῆς Κηφισίδος λίμνης ὡς ποιησομένων ταύτῃ Πελοποννησίων τὴν ἐσβολήν, Κλεόμβροτος δὲ ὁ Λακεδαιμονίων βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ Ἀμβρόσσου τρέπεται τῆς Φωκῶων ἀποκτείνας δὲ Χαίρειαν, ὅς φυλάσσειν διετέτακτο τὰς παρόδους, καὶ ἄλλους τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ Θηβαίους, ὑπερέβη καὶ ἐς Λεύκτρα ἀφικνεῖται τὰ Βοιωτία.

Having a part of the army, Epameinondas encamped above Lake Kephisis⁷ reckoning that here would be the point of the Peloponnesian invasion. Kleombrotos the Spartan king, however, turned towards Ambrossos in Phokis. Having slain Chaireas, who had drawn up in order of battle to guard the pass, and other Thebans who were with him, crossed over and arrived at Leuktra in Boiotia.

Thus, Epameinondas and the main Boiotian force held a position above the Kephisian (or Kopaic) lake, where they expected Kleombrotos' attack⁸. The king, however, having turned towards Ambrossos, crossed the high ground, destroying Chaireas' contingent along the way, before reaching Leuktra. In another passage Pausanias (10, 37, 2) states that he does not know whether any route by land ran between Antikyra and Boulis, owing to the rough and difficult

⁷ Bölte, «Κηφισίς λίμνη», *RE* 11 (1921), 226.

⁸ Paus. 9, 33, 1-3; J.G. Frazer, *Pausanias's Description of Greece* V (London, 1898), 110-120; for historical background: C. Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece* (Berkeley, 1985); C. Bearzot, *Storia e storiografia ellenistica in Pausania il Periegeta* (Venice, 1992). For the lake in antiquity: J. Knauss *et al.*, *Die Wasserbauten der Minyer in der Kopais* (Munich, 1984); J. Knauss, *Die Melioration des Kopaisbeckens durch die Minyer im 2. Jt. v. Chr.* (Munich, 1987); *Wasserbau und Geschichte Minysche Epoche-Bayerische Zeit* (Munich, 1990).

terrain⁹. He seems instead to have surveyed this part of the coast by sea. Thus, Xenophon and Pausanias, two authors who were themselves familiar with the terrain, are in substantial agreement.

The first discordant note comes from Diodoros, who in this part of his work epitomized the longer history of Ephoros (15, 52, 7-53, 2)¹⁰:

ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἐπαμεινώνδας... εὐθὺς γὰρ προαγαγὼν τὴν δύναμιν, καὶ προκαταλαβόμενος τὰ περὶ τὴν Κορώνειαν στενά, κατεστρατοπέδωσεν. Ὁ δὲ Κλεόμβροτος πυθόμενος τοὺς πολεμίους προκατειληφέναι τὰς παρόδους, τὸ μὲν αὐτῆ ποιῆσθαι τὴν διέξοδον ἀπέγνων, πορευθεὶς δὲ διὰ τῆς Φωκίδος, καὶ διεξελθὼν τὴν παραθαλαττίαν ὁδὸν χαλεπὴν οὖσαν, ἐνέβαλεν εἰς τὴν Βοιωτίαν ἀκινδύνως· ἐν παρόδῳ δὲ τινὰ τῶν πολισματίων χειρωσάμενος δέκα τριηρῶν ἐγκρατῆς ἐγένετο. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καταντήσας εἰς τὰ καλούμενα Λευκτρα κατεστρατοπέδωσε καὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐκ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας ἀνελάμβανεν. οἱ δὲ Βοιωτοὶ προάγοντες ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους, ὡς ἤγγισαν αὐτοῖς καὶ λόφους τινὰς ὑπερβαλόντες ἄφνω κατενόησαν τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους ἐπέχοντας ἅπαν τὸ Λευκτρικὸν πεδίου, κατεπλάγησαν ἰδόντες τὸ μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως.

Epameinondas... at once having led forth the army and having occupied the pass at Koroneia, made camp there. Learning that the enemy had occupied the pass, Kleombrotos despaired of forcing it, and proceeding through Phokis and passing through a difficult coastal road, he entered Boiotia without danger. In his passage he seized some towns and ten triremes. Afterwards, having reached a place called Leuktra, he encamped and rested his men after their march. And the Boiotians advancing against the enemy, as they drew near them and climbing certain hills, observed the Spartans unexpectedly covering the entire plain of Leuktra. They were astounded by the size of their army.

Diodoros avers, at least according to the Teubner text, that the Boiotians first seized the pass at Koroneia. When Kleombrotos reached this point, he waited for those of his allies who were tardy. Having realized the danger of a frontal attack, on the position, Kleombrotos led his army back through Phokis, and having marched over a difficult coastal road, he entered Boiotia safely. In his passage he captured some unnamed towns and ten triremes before he reached Leuktra. Some of Diodoros' additions actually contradict the testimony of other sources. The most important is the march to Koroneia, and the next is the mention of the shore road as though it was located in Phokis, before Kleombrotos even debouched in Boiotia.

⁹ Frazer, *Pausanias V*, 456; Buckler, *Theban Hegemony* 55-59.

¹⁰ G.L. Barber, *The Historian Ephoros* (Cambridge, 1935); F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* II C (Leiden, 1963), 22-35.

Modern historians and topographers have drawn a variety of conclusions from this evidence. Three prominent problems remain, the first being where and whether Kleombrotos made a diversion either to Koroneia or to Chaironeia, next where Epameinondas assumed his defensive position above Lake Kopais, and lastly the location of the *parathalattia hodos*.

The starting-point is Mazzucchi's and Tuplin's rejection of the standard printed text of Diodoros concerning Kleombrotos' movements before his actual invasion of Boiotia. They both rightly object to Wesseling's emendation of the manuscript at 15, 52, 1, in which the latter reads Κορώνειαν, instead of the χερώννειαν PA, or χαιρώννειαν c.¹¹ Although Diodoros is hardly a master of onomastics, he clearly meant to write Χαιρώννειαν in this passage. In fact, Wesseling's emendation makes nonsense of what is admittedly a garbled and worthless historical account. The whole point of Xenophon's and Pausanias' accounts is that Kleombrotos decided to invade Boiotia where he was unexpected. With Epameinondas and his field-army stationed in the vicinity of Koroneia, Kleombrotos could hardly expect to be unexpected there.

The next point is to explain why Diodoros wrote *Chaironeia* in the first place. A brief summary of his account easily clarifies the matter. Diodoros (15, 51, 3) states that finally (τέλος) the Spartans made their huge army ready, sent envoys to Thebes with an ultimatum that was rejected, whereupon the Spartans ordered Kleombrotos and his army immediately (εὐθύς) against Thebes. The Spartans and their allies were eager for the confrontation, feeling that they faced no danger¹². Indeed, they expected no battle whatsoever. Diodoros (15, 52, 1) relates that having obeyed orders, Kleombrotos advanced to Chaironeia to await allies too late to arrive. Diodoros' account makes no sense: the preparations had been made and the allies eager for the result. Nor is there any suggestion of whom Kleombrotos was await-

¹¹ See also Fr. Vogel's amusing, if somewhat indignant, remarks on p. xix of the Teubner text: «Ich will hier bemerken, dass Dindorf [immo Wesseling!] durch die Bezeichnung mit K diese an sich wertlosen Codices heillos durcheinander geworfen hat.» He refers specifically to Codex a=AHL, irrelevant to the present topic, but indicative of Vogt's opinion of Wesseling's readings in general.

¹² Xen., *Hell*, 6, 3, 20; Diod. 15, 51, 3; Plut., *Pel*. 20, 1.

ing or why they were so necessary as to cause him to halt a march that he had been ordered to make immediately¹³.

This is where both Mazzucchi and Tuplin fail to comprehend the full significance of their findings. They simply reject Wesseling's emendation, while accepting the rest of Diodoros' account. It actually does not matter whether Diodoros wrote Chaironeia or Koroneia. Instead of examining the historical validity of Diodoros' testimony, they merely adjust the account of a worthless source. Their narrative of the action is as erroneous as that of others who have treated the matter. They have neglected or misunderstood the sounder testimony of Xenophon and Pausanias.

The next matter is the question of where Epameinondas deployed his forces to confront Kleombrotos. The problem is vexed and perhaps ultimately insoluble. Although Diodoros wrote τὰ περὶ τὴν Κορώνειαν στενά, one should not equate this reading with Pausanias' more nebulous ὑπὲρ τῆς Κηφισίδος λίμνης. It is poor historical method to pick and choose details as one pleases from a source that has been demonstrated to be unreliable. Only topography can provide an inkling of where Epameinondas made his stand. Eastwards from Lebadeia stood a string of strong points upon or above the corridor between Lake Kopais and Mt. Helikon. They can all be outflanked by various roads debouching from the south¹⁴. The exception is Haliartos, which offered the Thebans a host of advantages. First, it conforms to Pausanias' evidence, and is supported by Strabo (9, 2, 30)¹⁵. Haliartos covered the western approach to Thebes, and could not easily be outflanked¹⁶. There was, moreover, ample room, somewhat more than two kilometers, for two sizeable forces in which to

¹³ A literary explanation can be offered for Diodoros' narrative. At precisely this point Diodoros (15, 52, 1-53, 1) breaks off his narrative of Spartan movements to describe the state of affairs at Thebes. He thus conveniently leaves Kleombrotos waiting in the wings until he is again needed. Kleombrotos re-enters the narrative only after he has realized that the Boiotians had already seized the main road into Boiotia. Some scholars have suggested that Kleombrotos made a feint at Koroneia in order to turn back from a contest that he felt undesirable, something that he did in 375 BC (Xen., *Hell.* 5, 4, 59). Xenophon (*Hell.* 6, 4, 5) likewise reports Spartan doubts about Kleombrotos' resolve even on the eve of Leuktra.

¹⁴ Personal observations of 13-16 August 1980.

¹⁵ P.W. Wallace, *Strabo's Description of Boiotia* (Heidelberg, 1979), 117-119.

¹⁶ R.M. Kallet-Marx, in H. Beister and J. Buckler, eds, *BOIOTIKA* (Munich, 1986), 301-311.

engage, with the numerically inferior defending army having the advantage of the terrain. For anyone hoping to bar the usual invasion route into central and eastern Boiotia, Haliartos is the most obvious candidate for a commanding position.

Intricately connected with the problems of the alleged feint to Chaironeia and the position of Epameinondas' defense is the question of Diodoros' *parathalattia hodos*. One of the earliest travelers, W.M. Leake, suggested that Kleombrotos traversed a shore road along the southern slopes of Mt. Helikon to Boiotia¹⁷. Leake himself did not trace his purported coastal road. Instead, having ridden from Thisbe to Boulis, he struck inland to Kyriakion upon Mt. Helikon. He nonetheless took the opportunity to observe that no traces of such a road then existed. He further remarks upon the difficulty of the terrain, especially the steep, barren ridges surrounding the gulf of Aspra Spitia (Antikyra). J.G. Frazer addresses the topic of Kleombrotos' march thrice in his commentary on Pausanias, although he did not explore the routes involved. He suggests that once Kleombrotos had reached the Cleft Way, he struck southwards through the mountains to Thisbe. Arguing against G.B. Grundy's view that the Spartans reached Leuktra by way of the Valley of the Muses, he postulates a complete circuit of the mountain along its southern side. In so doing, he accepts Leake's conclusion that Kleombrotos took a coastal road from Antikyra to Boulis and thence to Leuktra¹⁸.

In the monumental *Antike Schlachtfelder* J. Wolter repeats Diodoros' testimony about Kleombrotos' descent from Phokis onto Koroneia and his subsequent invasion of Boiotia¹⁹. He then opines that the reconstruction of the king's subsequent route can be made without the aid of topographical investigation. He postulates that the Spartans marched from Ambrossos across Mt. Helikon to Chorsiai (modern Khostia), where they encountered Chaireas' contingent. From there they moved onto Thisbe. He rejects the testimony of Diodoros about the *parathalattia hodos* by reference to Pausanias

¹⁷ W.M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece* II (London, 1835), 514-524.

¹⁸ *Pausanias*, V, 50-52, 456; for the Cleft Way, see his *Pausanias and Other Sketches* (London, 1900), 373-374. Frazer is surely right in his criticism of Grundy's views. Any route through the Valley of the Muses would have been far too difficult for an army.

¹⁹ In J. Kromayer and G. Veith, *Antike Schlachtfelder* IV (Berlin, 1930-1931), 290-294.

(10, 37, 2), and further suggests that Kleombrotos detached only a small force to seize the Boiotian triremes at Kreusis.

In 1949 A.R. Burn reported his considerable topographical exploration of Mt. Helikon that is perhaps the most significant treatment of the subject²⁰. He too accepts Diodoros' testimony about Kleombrotos demonstrating before Epameinondas' position at Koroneia, with, however, a slight hint of doubt. He, like Wolter, concludes that Kleombrotos withdrew from Koroneia to Ambrossos in order to strike over Helikon, past the modern village of Kyriakion, east of which he destroyed Chaireas' detachment. Thence, he marched onto the modern village of Koukoura before descending upon Thisbe. Burn's topographical work seems to have stopped at Koukoura. Although Burn accepts the seizure of Kreusis, he did not himself examine the terrain. He does, however, expressly reject the notion of Kleombrotos' having used a coastal route between Ambrossos and Thisbe.

W.K. Pritchett, like previous scholars, accepts Diodoros' testimony that the campaign began, when Kleombrotos approached Koroneia, and thence marched from Ambrossos to Thisbe²¹. Unlike Burn, he believes Diodoros' statement of a coastal road, which he places somewhere between Stiris and Boulis. From Boulis, in his opinion, Kleombrotos advanced past Chorsiai to Leuktra. He suggests that Chaireas retreated from atop Helikon to intercept the Spartans at Chorsiai, for which there is no ancient evidence. It is also obvious from his discussion that Pritchett did not personally examine the entire route that he proposes²².

H. Beister in his masterful study of the problem has reviewed all of the views proposed before the date of his book, the conclusions of which can be summarized briefly²³. He agrees substantially with Wolter's idea that Kleombrotos retreated from Koroneia, until upon

²⁰ *BSA* 44 (1949), 313-323, esp. 321.

²¹ *Studies in Ancient Greek Topography* I (Berkeley, 1965), 52-57. The route from Lebadeia to Thespias, described by Pritchett, is irrelevant to this problem: *Studies in Ancient Greek Topography* V (Berkeley, 1985), 138-165; VI (Berkeley, 1989), 112-113; personal observations of 13-14 August 1980.

²² In fact Pritchett adds little original to the discussion, and one learns virtually nothing, especially about the coastal route, that cannot already be found in the earlier article by W.A. Heurtley, *BSA* 26 (1923-1925), 38-45.

²³ *Untersuchungen zu der Zeit der Thebanischen Hegemonie* (Munich, 1970), 35-51.

reaching Ambrossos, the Spartans struck overland past Stiris and the modern Kyriakion. Unlike Wolter, however, he suggests that atop Mt. Helikon at the small triangular plain bounded by Megali Loutsas, Kiveri, and Paliovouna, Kleombrotos continued eastwards towards the modern Koukoura before descending upon Thisbe. For the latter part of the march, Beister agrees with Burn's findings. His analysis of Diodoros' text easily offers the best explanation of the meaning of *parathalattia hodos* in this context, from which he concludes that the section between Siphai and Kreusis can satisfy the text²⁴. It is, however, unclear from his otherwise penetrating study of how much of the area he examined at first hand.

Relying heavily upon the earlier work of Burn and Beister, J. Buckler proposed an interpretation similar to theirs²⁵. Like his predecessors, he erroneously accepts without question Diodoros' testimony that Kleombrotos demonstrated before Koroneia before retiring to Ambrossos, whereupon he advanced up Mt. Helikon past Kyriakion and Koukoura before debouching on Thisbe. He accepts also with Pritchett and Beister that from Thisbe Kleombrotos marched eastwards until he reached the modern village of Xeronomi, whence he fell upon Siphai and Kreusis before moving inland to Leuktra. Above Kyriakion Buckler encountered a large fort that dates to the Third Sacred War and east of Koukoura a Turkish cobbled road never previously reported²⁶. Although neither discovery can be directly linked to the time of Kleombrotos' march, both prove the existence of a major route over Mt. Helikon, one capable of use by a large army with cavalry and a baggage-train.

Most recently, Ph. Dasios has found substantial traces of a difficult mule track stretching between Paralia Distomou and Boulis²⁷. It runs generally at the height of 300 meters above the Corinthian Gulf, and entails a great deal of rise and fall en route. Personal investigation of part of it proved physically demanding because of the consistent pattern of ridges and valleys that culminate in the high

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

²⁵ *Theban Hegemony*, 55-59.

²⁶ *Teiresias*, Sup. 2 (Montreal, 1979), 15-17; personal observations of the road from 24 December 1970.

²⁷ Φ. Ντάσιος, ΦΩΚΙΚΑ ΧΡΟΝΙΚΑ 5 (1993), 40-53. It is a pleasure to thank Dr. Dasios for having graciously taken time from his duties at the Delphi Museum on 21 July 1994 to discuss these matters with me.

ridge separating Boulis from Chorsiai in Boiotia²⁸. The terrain is so rough that it would have been quite daunting to a large army. While overlooking the sea, the track cannot literally be called coastal, and Dasios questions whether it could successfully have served Kleombrotos' purposes²⁹. Independent inspection confirms his doubts, for this path is a part of a system that serves primarily local needs. Furthermore, Xenophon directly and Diodoros apparently link the coastal road to the capture of some Boiotian towns and warships. Although absolutely nothing even remotely suggests that elements of the Boiotian fleet were permanently stationed in Phokis, Siphai and Kreusis, which could with some difficulty be reached by a coastal route, were prominent naval bases. Thus, there is nothing to recommend the conjecture of Leake and Pritchett of a major route between Antikyra and Chorsiai, a route that neither of them had walked. Moreover, the idea of Wolter and Pritchett that Kleombrotos descended at Chorsiai before advancing upon Thisbe has little to recommend it. Chorsiai is, like Boulis, an isolated place, and to reach Thisbe from it requires either the crossing of a high ridge or a return to the main road above³⁰. Both were unwise in the face of an enemy that enjoyed an easy route from Haliartos to the plain of Thespias. Supported by the testimony of Xenophon and Diodoros, insofar as the latter can be trusted, Burn is surely right to suggest that Kleombrotos overwhelmed Siphai and Kreusis only after his descent onto Thisbe. His motive was to ensure the safety of his retreat in the event of defeat, which is precisely what subsequently happened. Although most of the track between Siphai and Kreusis has now fallen out of use, a significant length of it can still be found to the west of Kreusis³¹.

²⁸ Personal observations of 24 February and 5 May 1971.

²⁹ The precise meaning of *παραθαλάττιος* is obviously pertinent in this connection. Ephoros, Diodoros' source, used the adjective only in one other connection, that regarding Haliéis (*FGrH* 70, F 56), a city now located not only on the coast but some of it submerged beneath the sea. Xenophon (*Hell.* 4, 5, 5) uses the term identically in his discussion of the route between modern Oasis and the Heraion, which skirts the coast: personal observations of 1 August 1994.

³⁰ From Sarandi to Thisbe over the steep ridge separating them demands an hour for a lone walker. For an army the march would have taken much longer. Personal observations of 22 June 1971. Nor is it immediately apparent what strategical value such a small and isolated place like Chorsiai could possess.

³¹ Personal observations of 11 August 1977.

The solution to all of these problems comes, as usual, from a proper understanding of the best sources. The reports of Xenophon and Pausanias indicate that upon his descent from Mt. Parnassos in Phokis, Kleombrotos reached the «Cleft Way», so famous from the legend of Oedipus, whence he continued directly over Mt. Helikon to Thisbe, and thence to Siphai and Kreusis. Diodoros' use of τέλος at 15, 51, 3 surely proves that Kleombrotos' preparations were completed before his initial movements. He had no reason to delay. The detour found in Diodoros existed only in his misreading or misunderstanding of Ephoros' history. Moreover, without the detour the testimony of Xenophon and Pausanias makes very good sense, simply because it satisfactorily explains how Kleombrotos was able to catch Epameinondas unawares.

Several conclusions can easily be drawn from this discussion. Diodoros intended to write Chaironeia in his text, and Wesseling's mistaken emendation only makes further nonsense of it. Historians from Pritchett to Buckler have erred in accepting uncritically Diodoros' account of Kleombrotos' detour, whether to Chaironeia or Koroneia. They all make an obvious mistake: Diodoros' testimony is so self-contradictory that one is not justified in taking individual statements as facts. Diodoros has so muddled his narrative that the only reasonable thing to do is to discard it completely. Diodoros simply got it all wrong. There is the further danger that historians may unwittingly or unquestioningly rely on convenient emendations of texts. Unnecessary emendation of the text distorts the meaning of what the author actually wrote, and does no justice to the philologist. Likewise, it makes it all the more difficult for the historian to evaluate properly the worth of his source. At worst, it leads to the danger that some historians will think that everything written in antiquity is honest and accurate. That, in turn, baffles the notion that an ancient source could simply be in error or more reprehensively guilty of bias.

Modern topographers, most of whom have not explored entirely the routes in question, have likewise been wrong to assume that Diodoros and Ephoros knew of a road that stretched the entire length of this southern coast. Nor should that be surprising. There is, after all, no reason to conclude that either ancient historian had even visited the area. Xenophon and Pausanias, who had, knew better. So did Mathew Arnold, who describes the situation perfectly in his famous lines:

Not here, O Apollo!
Are haunts meet for thee.
But, where Helicon breaks down
In cliff to the sea³².

For that matter, with the present exception, had any topographer even attempted to walk all of the suggested routes. Speculation has often taken the place of research. As a result, it is only now that a clear picture, one that does justice to all of the evidence, literary, topographical, and archaeological, can be drawn. The entire episode is an excellent lesson in how not to write history.

University of Illinois

John BUCKLER

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³² «Empedocles on Etna», I, 11, 421, in M. Arnold, *Poems II* (London, 1903).