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Tafeln 1–16

SALVATORE TUFANO

The Epitaph of Leuktra (*CEG II 632*)
and Its Ancient Meaning(s)*

Plate 10

What party for Thebes?

In a study on the role of the party in Western history, P. Ignazi summarised the debate on the existence of political parties in the ancient world.¹ Whatever Greek or Latin word one may want to see as its best ancient equivalent, the suitability of the term ‘party’ is disputed: while some scholars accept that different groups, in specific times, could be seen as parties, other scholars stress the differences between our contemporary labels and these ancient groupings.² Both readings draw attention to the political life of the ancient society under investigation, but often take for granted a static notion of ‘political party’: «apparently these authors conceive of parties in terms of the ‘mass party’ only,

* I would like to thank here the editors and the anonymous peer-reviewers for their useful comments on this paper. Dr. R. van Wijk also kindly offered his advice on a previous version of this contribution. This paper is one of the products of a research project on ‘Egemonia e multipolarismo in Beozia dal 404 al 361 a.C.’ (2017–2018), conducted at Sapienza Università di Roma under the supervision of Pietro Vannicelli. Unfortunately, the final version of this article was submitted before I could read S. M. L. Stringer, *The Leuktra Epigram* (IGvii 2462), in J. M. Fossey, *Boiotia in Ancient Times. Some Studies of Its Topography, History, Cults and Myths*, Leiden, Boston 2019, 304–312.

¹ P. Ignazi, *Party and Democracy. The Uneven Road to Party Legitimacy*, Oxford 2017, 5–31.

² For an overview of the different positions, cf. the essays collected by C. Bearzot, F. Landucci (eds.), *‘Partiti’ e fazioni nell’esperienza greca*, Milan 2008. Among the optimistic scholars, one may list, with due caution, B. S. Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War. Class, Faction and Policy, 403–386*, Ithaca (NY) 1986; P. J. Rhodes, *The Acephalous Polis*, *Historia* 44 (1995) 153–167; C. Bearzot, “‘Partis’ politiques, cités, états fédéraux. Le témoignage de l’historien d’Oxyrhynchos”, *Mouseion* 9 (2009) 239–256. Scholars less keen to use the term ‘party’ for the ancient world, either for lack of sources or for the idea of an irreducibility of concepts, are J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens. Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*, Princeton 1989; V. I. Anastasiadis, *Political “Parties” in Athenian Democracy. A Modernising Topos*, *Arethusa* 32 (1999) 313–335; M. H. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes. Structure, Principles and Ideology*, Oxford 1999; R. Nicolai, *La terminologia delle parti politiche ateniesi tra VI e V secolo a. C. Alcune riflessioni*, in: Bearzot, Landucci (eds.), *‘Partiti’ e fazioni* (cf. supra) 3–31.

discarding the presence of different features of political parties either preceding or following the mass party».³

Among the different forms of parties developed in the West in the last centuries, one may recall, for instance, the *parti philosophique* (late-XVIII century France): in that context, the term *parti* designated those sections of the public opinion which used to unite around philosophers, in some Parisian cafés.⁴ The parallel is telling, insofar as it could be applied to one of the most frequent examples adduced to support the existence of ancient political parties, namely the Theban society of the first decade of the fourth century BC.⁵ Here, according to the historian of the *Hellenika of Oxyrhynchos*,

ἐν δὲ ταῖς Θήβαις ἔτυχον οἱ βέλτιστοι καὶ γνωριμώτατοι τῶν πολιτῶν, ὥσπερ καὶ πρότερον εἶρηκα, στασιάζοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους. ἡγούντο δὲ τοῦ μέγρους τοῦ μὲν Ἴσμηνίας κα[ί] Ἀντίθεος καὶ Ἀνδροκλείδας, | τοῦ δὲ Λεοντιάδης καὶ Ἀσίας καὶ Κοιρατάδας. ἐφρόνουν δὲ τῶν πολιτευομένων οἱ μὲν περὶ τὸν Λεοντιάδην τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων, [ο]ἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἴσμηνίαν | αἰτίαν μὲν εἶχον ἀττικίζειν, ἐξ ὧν πρόθυμοι πρὸς | τὸν δῆμον ἐγένοντο ὡς ἔφυγεν.⁶

These two subcommunities belonged to the same elite: the constitution of the time, with a complex balance of federal and local bodies, allowed for the formation of these two *mere*. However, neither of them could definitely and permanently control and influence the foreign policy of the Boiotian constitution. For instance, when Leontiadas, in 382 BC, was

³ Ignazi, *Party and Democracy* (n.1) 7. As exemplified by Bearzot, “*Partis*” *politiques* (n.2) 240, the focus on Athens showed that it is hard, in fact, to find static labels, a rigid internal organization, a fixed plan and a clear place in the political bodies. When one looks for these categories, it will be therefore normal to accept the absence of such a party.

⁴ On the *parti philosophique* and its role in the French Enlightenment, see J. I. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested. Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670–1752*, Oxford 2006, 814–839, spec. 825 on the diffusion of the ideas; the philosophers emerged as «the leaders of a radical tendency proclaiming *la philosophie* the path not just to genuine human knowledge but to a general improvement of humanity and a wider happiness» (ibd.).

⁵ On this chapter and on its usefulness to recognize Theban parties, see esp. P. Cloché, *La politique thébaine de 404 à 396 av. J.-C.*, RÉG 31 (1918) 315–343; M. L. Cook, *Ancient political factions: Boiotia 404 to 395*, TAPhA 118 (1988) 57–85; Bearzot, “*Partis*” *politiques* (n.2). On the political parties in Thebes in the Nineties, see H. M. Hack, *Thebes and the Spartan hegemony, 386–382 B.C.*, AJP 99 (1978) 210–227; Cook, *Ancient political factions* (cf. supra); J. P. González, *Las facciones políticas tebanas en el período de la formación de la hegemonía (379–371 a.C.)*. I: *La conspiración democrática del 379*, Polis 3 (1991) 121–135; Id., *Las facciones políticas tebanas en el período de la formación de la hegemonía (379–371 a.C.)*. II: *Liderazgo y democracia (378–371)*, Polis 4 (1992) 187–208 (on a substantial continuity of the same divisions in the Seventies). E. Occhipinti, *The Hellenica Oxyrhynchia and Historiography. New Research Perspectives*, Leiden, Boston 2016, 96 speaks of «rival hetaireiai within the same oligarchic group».

⁶ H.Oxy. 20.1 Chambers. Tr. R. A. Billows: «[T]he best and most noble of the citizens were at strife with each other. Ismenias and Antitheos and Androkleidas were the leaders of one party; Leontiadas and Asias and Koiratadas (?) were (the leaders) of the other. As to their policies, the party of Leontiadas was disposed to favor the Lakedaimonians, while the party of Ismenias was accused of being pro-Athenian because they had supported the demos (of the Athenians) when it was in exile».

responsible for the betrayal of the city to the Spartans, he was a *πολέμαρχος* just like Ismenias (Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.25): this means that the two ‘parties’ coexisted and were able to express positions of the highest rank at the same time. This situation created a precarious balance, which necessitated a violation of the law to enact a neat change of policy.⁷

The constitution of the Boiotian League after 379/378 BC was sensibly different, because it tended to reduce the capability of the local forces to counterbalance the Theban influence. The region was now substantially in control of a board of seven boeotarchs, who might have been all Theban in the first period, even if this is not certain;⁸ then, there was an assembly held in Thebes, an eponymous archon, and local governments in the single cities of the region. Given the absence of federal councils and of a direct proportion between the Theban bodies and those of the single cities, the Boiotian government in the years of the Theban hegemony has been therefore labelled as an *oligarchia isonomos*.⁹ Moreover, in

⁷ On this balance and on the career of Leontiadas and Androkleidas, another important man who was allied with Ismenias, see S. Tufano, *The Liberation of Thebes (379 BC) as a Theban Revolution. Three Case Studies in Theban Prosopography*, in: H. Beck, F. Marchand (eds.), *The Dancing Floor of Ares*, Special Issue of AHB (i.p.).

⁸ These seven boeotarchs could actually have corresponded to seven territorial subunits (D. Knoepfler, *La loi de Daitōndas, les femmes de Thèbes et le collège des béotarques au IV^e et au III^e siècle avant J.-C.*, in: P. Bernardini (ed.), *Presenza e funzione della città di Tebe nella cultura greca. Atti del Convegno internazionale (Urbino 7–9 luglio 1997)*, Pisa, Rome 2000, 345–366, at 353–355; C. Müller, *ΠΕΡΙ ΤΕΛΩΝ: Quelques réflexions autour des districts de la confédération béotienne à l’époque hellénistique*, in: N. Badoud (ed.), *Philologos Dionysios. Mélanges offerts au Professeur Denis Knoepfler*, Geneva 2011, 261–282; on the history of the Boiotian districts, see E. Mackil, *Creating a Common Polity. Religion, Economy and Politics in the Making of the Greek Koinon*, Berkeley, Los Angeles 2013, 371–377. For the debate surrounding the provenance of the known boeotarchs, see esp. P. J. Rhodes, *Boiotian Democracy?*, in: S. D. Gartland (ed.), *Boiotia in the Fourth Century B.C.*, Philadelphia 2016, 59–64, at 60–61 and 184 nn.21–23. It is important to be prudent, in the absence of explicit indications in our sources. When one considers the chart of boeotarchs proposed by D. Knoepfler (*Apports récents des inscriptions grecques à l’histoire de l’Antiquité*, Paris 2005, 84–85) for the years 371–62 BC, which are relatively well-known, one is faced with only four administrative years when the composition of the board can be determined with a good degree of certainty. This does not imply, moreover, that the origin of these politicians can always be inferred: very often, one can at most recognize a subregional group of anthroponyms (for Boiotia, see e.g. G. Vottéro, *Suffixes caractéristiques dans l’onomastique personnelle de Béotie*, in: A. Alonso Déniz et al. [eds.], *La suffixation des anthroponymes grecs antiques (Saga). Actes du colloque international de Lyon, 17–19 septembre 2015*, Geneva 2017, 591–623); only rarely, as in the case of Leontiadas (see Tufano, *The Liberation of Thebes* [n.7]) or Daimachus of Plataiai (S. Hornblower, *Thucydides and Boiotia*, in: A. X. Χριστοπούλου [ed.], *Επετηρίς της Εταιρείας των Βοιωτικών Μελετών: Β’ Διεθνές Συνέδριο Βοιωτικών Μελετών (Λιβαδιά, 6–10 Σεπτεμβρίου 1992). Τ. Β’*, Athens 1995, 667–78, at 672–673 [= *Thucydidean Themes*, Oxford, New York 2010, 124–125]), it is legitimate to presume the origin of an active politician from a single polis.

⁹ Rhodes, *Boiotian Democracy?* (n.8). On the ambiguous autonomy of the Boiotian poleis in the *koinon* suppressed in 386 BC, see a recent overview by J. Ma, *The Autonomy of the Boiotian Poleis*, in: Gartland, *Boiotia* (n.8) 32–41; on the conflicting claims of autonomy and federalism in the *koinon* of the fourth century, see H. Beck, *‘The Laws of the Fathers’ versus ‘The Laws of the League’*: *Xenophon on Federalism*, CPh 96 (2001) 355–375 and C. Bearzot, *Federalismo e autonomia nelle Elleniche di Senofonte*, Milan 2004.

describing the history and politics of Thebes in the Seventies and in the Sixties of the fourth century BC, we tend to repeat Polybius' arguments:

ὅτι γὰρ οὐχ ἡ τῆς πολιτείας σύστασις αἰτία τὸτ' ἐγένετο Θηβαίοις τῶν εὐτυχημάτων, ἀλλ' ἡ τῶν προεστώτων ἀνδρῶν ἀρετή, παρὰ πόδας ἡ τύχη τοῦτο πᾶσιν ἐποίησε δῆλον· καὶ γὰρ συνηξήθη καὶ συνήκμασε καὶ συγκατελύθη τὰ Θηβαίων ἔργα τῷ τ' Ἐπαμινώνδου καὶ τῷ Πελοπίδου βίῳ προφανῶς. ἐξ ὧν οὐ τὴν πολιτείαν αἰτίαν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἀνδρας ἡγήτεον τῆς τότε γενομένης περὶ τὴν Θηβαίων πόλιν ἐπιφανείας.¹⁰

If the society did not allow now for a proper confrontation of groups, is it still legitimate to argue for the existence of parties in the Theban constitution of these years (379/378–335 BC, when Alexander destroyed Thebes)? The present paper suggests a positive answer, by focusing on a specific example. The actions and the career of a prominent politician active in these years, in fact, may indicate that a form of opposition to Epameinondas existed. This personal opposition was probably the most feasible line of action which anyone might choose, in a 'blocked' political system where the normal functioning of party politics did not have other stages.¹¹ For this reason, by accepting that a personal party is just another form of representation of ideas towards a different direction (a man, and not a group), it will be argued that the foe/ally of Epameinondas, Xenokrates, was a living example of the existence of parties and political confrontation in the years of the Theban hegemony. Moreover, our evidence is an interesting example of the ancient echoes of this self-presentation.

Xenokrates and the Politics of Memory

Before the battle of Leuktra, a lively discussion took place in the Theban camp (Paus. 9.13.6–7).¹² Pausanias alludes to a disagreement on a fundamental line of action:

¹⁰ Pol. 6.43.5–7. Tr. W. R. Paton: «[T]hat the successes of the Thebans at that time were due not to the form of their constitution, but to the high qualities of their leading men, was made manifest to all by Fortune immediately afterwards. For the success of Thebes grew, attained its height, and ceased with the lives of Epaminondas and Pelopidas; and therefore we must regard the temporary splendour of that state as due not to its constitution, but to its men». On the literary perspective of Polybius on the history of Boiotia, see however the observations by C. Müller, *The Rise and Fall of the Boiotians: Polybius 20.4–7 as a Literary Topos*, in: B. Gibson, T. Harrison (eds.), *Polybius & His World. Essays in Memory of F.W. Walbank*, Oxford 2013, 267–278.

¹¹ On the role of influential leaders and on their potential to represent on their own a political position see, for the Athenian case, Rhodes, *The Acephalous Polis* (n.2). J. Buckler, *The Theban Hegemony. 371–362 BC*, Cambridge (MA) 1980, 149 claimed that «Menekleidas cannot be shown to have been the leader of a political faction. His attacks on Epameinondas and Pelopidas were individual, the work of an able rhetor». This judgement may exemplify the limits of a univocal understanding of party politics in the ancient world (for a different reading of political trials in the Sixties, see e.g. S. Tufano, *The Opposition to Pelopidas and Epameinondas and Theban Foreign Policy*, in: M. Köiv et al. (eds.), *Power and Opposition in the Ancient World*, Stuttgart, in print.

¹² Pausanias had very good sources on this event, not limited to Plutarch's lost Life of Epameinondas. The relationship between Pausanias and Plutarch's lost Life of Epameinondas

τῶν δὲ βοιωταρχούντων οὐ κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἐγίνοντο αἱ γῶμαι, διεσθηκυῖαι δὲ πολὺ ἀπ' ἀλλήλων· Ἐπαμινώνδα μὲν γὰρ ἤρεσκε καὶ Μάλγιδι καὶ Ξενοκράτει κατὰ τάχος πρὸς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους ποιεῖσθαι μάχην, Δαμοκλείδας δὲ καὶ Δαμόφιλος καὶ Σιμάγγελος συμβάλλειν μὲν οὐκ εἶων, ἐκέλευον δὲ ὑπεκθεμένους ἐς τὴν Ἀττικὴν γυναῖκας καὶ παῖδας ὡς πολιορκησομένους αὐτοὺς παρασκευάζεσθαι. 7 τῶν μὲν δὴ ἕξ ἐς τοσοῦτον ἦν κεχωρισμένα τὰ βουλευμάτα· προσγενομένης δὲ ψήφου τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἐπαμινώνδαν τοῦ ἐβδόμου τῶν Βοιωταρχῶν, ὃς ἐφρούρει μὲν τὴν κατὰ τὸν Κιθαιρῶνα ἐσβολήν, ὄνομα δὲ ἦν οἱ Βραχυλλίδης, τούτου τοῦ ἀνδρός, ὡς ἐπανήλθεν ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον, προσθεμένου τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἐπαμινώνδαν, τότε καὶ πᾶσιν ἐδέδοκτο ἀγωνίᾳ διακρίνεσθαι.¹³

represents a debated issue. Starting from a cursory observation by U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (*Abrechnung eines Boiotischen Hipparchen*, *Hermes* 8 [1874] 431–441, at 439 n.2), some scholars have repeated that the excursus on Epameinondas in Pausanias' Boiotian book (9.13–15) is indebted to Plutarch's lost biography (cf. G. Shrimpton, *Plutarch's Life of Epameinondas*, *Pacific Coast Philology* 6 [1971] 55–59; C. Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece*, Berkeley 1998, 97–98; R. M. Frakes, *In Search of Plutarch's Lost Life of Epameinondas*, *The Historian* 47 [2017] 451–475, at 461–467, with a full discussion): there are both points in common with the preserved Plutarchean materials on Epameinondas and further details, which could derive from the not extant text of Plutarch. On the other hand, C. J. Tuplin (*Pausanias and Plutarch's Epameinondas*, *CJ* 34 [1984] 346–358) argued for the absence of strong arguments concerning the reciprocal reading of these two authors: although not being able to utterly deny the possibility that Pausanias read and used Plutarch on Epameinondas, Tuplin prudently remarked that this cannot have been his sole option. Detecting common sources for both of them, in the deluge of Boiotian local historiography, may be particularly risky. Nonetheless, both authors arguably had what we could call 'good' sources on the Boiotian events of the fourth century BC: Plutarch may have directly Aristophanes of Boiotia, a contemporary of Epameinondas and Pelopidas who had written a *History of Boiotia* and *Theban Annals* (see his *BNJ* 379 FF 5–6, quoted by Plutarch in his *On the Malice of Herodotus*, and the commentary by S. Tufano (*Boiotia from Within. The Beginnings of Boiotian Historiography*, Münster 2019)); Pausanias, as claimed by D. Knoepfler (*ΠΟΛΥΜΝΙΣ est-il l'authentique patronyme d'Épameinondas ? Réexamen critique de la tradition à la lumière d'un décret de Cnide récemment publié*, in: M. B. Hatzopoulos [ed.], *Φωνής χαρακτήρ εθνικός. Actes du V^e congrès international de dialectologie grecque. (Athènes, 28–30 septembre 2006)*, Athens 2007, 117–135), generally sceptical on the reliability of the textual tradition of the Ninth Book, seems to have had an autopic experience of an epigraphic list of the board of boeotarchs of 371 BC. The most prudent line of action, in sum, seems to be the careful use of both Plutarch and Pausanias, because they both had access to a number of sources which do not allow the modern scholar to possibly see, in either of them, a simple repetition of the other sources.

¹³ Tr. W. H. S. Jones: «The boeotarchs were not agreed, but differed widely in their opinions. For Epameinondas, Malgis and Xenocrates were minded to do battle with the Lacedaemonians at once, but Damocleidas, Damophilus and Simangelus were against joining in battle, and urged that they should put wives and children safely out of the way in Attica, and prepare to undergo a siege themselves. So divergent were the views of the six. The seventh boeotarch, whose name was Brachyllides, was guarding the pass by Cithaeron, and on his return to the army added his vote to the side of Epameinondas, and then there was a unanimous decision to try the ordeal of battle». The Greek text reproduces the edition by M. H. Rocha Pereira (*Pausanias Periegeta. Graeciae descriptio III*, Leipzig 1989); however, the passage is textually troublesome, especially in connection with the personal names Malgis and Simangelus (see D. Knoepfler, *Anthroponymes béotiens à corriger dans le livre IX de Pausanias*, in: F. Poli, G. Vottéro [eds.], *De Cyrène à*

Pausanias describes this debate as if it were a democratic vote among the seven men. It is clear that Epameinondas' will was being challenged. The text seems to imply that by opposing themselves to Epameinondas' plan, the other three boeotarchs were implicitly rejecting a whole policy: when, in early 369, Epameinondas will force the other boeotarchs, then in the Peloponnesus, to attack Sparta, our sources claim that he was thus 'disobeying' and disrespecting the mandate of the assembly and breaking the common law.¹⁴ The boeotarchs were assigned a duty to perform, before their dispatch abroad or on the battlefield: whenever this mandate was not explicit enough, as in the case of Leuktra, it would then seem that the boeotarchs had to displace abroad the process towards a common decision.

Pausanias claims that three boeotarchs disagreed with Epameinondas' decision to attack. This line of action, at the time, was being suggested by an astonishing series of good omens for the Thebans and bad omens for the Spartans (that these were likely inspired and orchestrated by Epameinondas is something that our sources do not deny and that we are not really in a position to doubt).¹⁵ Then came the vote (9.13.7: προσγενομένης [...] ψήφου) of the seventh man, which bound all the colleagues in the final decision. The tradition on the omens and the necessity that the discussion lead to a vote suggest that the activism of Epameinondas was being seriously challenged, in the Theban higher military ranks.

The dynamics demonstrates how in moments of crisis the board of boeotarchs represented the prosecution of internal opposition even abroad: it was clear that, by extending their agenda, the boeotarchs were moving the theatre of politics from Thebes to the battlefield. In other words, these situations show how a meagre confrontation among a few men, with the possible consequence that they be all condemned or praised according to the outcome of their decision,¹⁶ reduces all the actual possibilities of

Catherine: Trois mille ans de Libyennes. Études grecques et latines offerts à Catherine Dobias-Lalou, Nancy, Paris 2005, 119–36).

¹⁴ *Nep. Ep.* 7.3–8 (*Epaminondas populi scito non paruit*); *Plut. Pel.* 24–25.2 (24.1–2: μὴνός δὲ τοῦ τελευταίου φθίνοντος ὀλίγα περιήσαν ἡμέραι, καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔδει παραλαμβάνειν ἐτέρους εὐθὺς ἱσταμένου τοῦ πρώτου μὴνός, ἢ θνήσκειν τοὺς μὴ παραδιδόντας, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι βιοωτάρχαι, καὶ τὸν νόμον δεδιότες τοῦτον, καὶ τὸν χειμῶνα φεύγοντες, ἀπάγειν ἔσπευδον ἐπ' οἴκου τὸ στράτευμα). On this first trial, see H. Beister, *Untersuchungen zu der Zeit der thebanischen Hegemonie*, Munich 1970, 75–105; J. Buckler, *Plutarch on the Trials of Pelopidas and Epameinondas (369 B.C.)*, *CPh* 73 (1978) 36–42; Tufano, *The Opposition* (n.11).

¹⁵ On Epameinondas' active intervention in the creation and in the promotion of these omens, see *Xen.* 6.4.7; *Diod.* 15.53.4; *Polyaen.* 2.3.8, with H. Beister, *Ein thebanisches Tropaion bereits vor Beginn der Schlacht bei Leuktra: Zu Interpretation von IG VII.2463 und Paus. 4.32.5f.*, *Chiron* 3 (1973) 65–84 at 76–77, and C. J. Tuplin, *The Leuctra Campaign: Some Outstanding Problems*, *Klio* 69 (1987) 72–107, at 99–103 (*SEG* 38.406). *Plutarch* (*Ages.* 28.4) must have written at length on these prodigies in the lost *Life of Epameinondas*: πολλῶν δὲ σημείων μοχθηρῶν γενομένων, ὡς ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἐπαμεινώνδου γέγραπται.

¹⁶ Another proviso necessitated that the boeotarchs resign and return to Thebes, at the end of their mandate (*Plut. Pel.* 25.1, with A. Georgiadou, *Plutarch's Pelopidas. A Historical and Philological Commentary*, Stuttgart, Leipzig 1997, 25–26 for a full list of the other sources): apparently, the violation of this norm and the decision to attack Sparta, thus enacting a decision

opposition which the opponents to Epameinondas and Pelopidas had. Theban politics was controlled, as stated in the introductory section, by a sheer number of families, because elites from the other cities had a very limited area of influence and impact in the real decision.

Had there been the alternation of four federal councils, as in the previous *koinon*,¹⁷ a more balanced situation could have also been reached at the level of the assembly; as a matter of fact, however, this Theban assembly could only act against or not in favour of Epameinondas' plans and Pelopidas' when the men were absent. The policies of Epameinondas did not go unchallenged and this is confirmed by contemporary and parallel sources.¹⁸ These only partially echo the existence of Boeotian fugitives in the Peloponnesus,¹⁹ which is something we would not be able to understand without reconsidering the strength of the opposition to the policies by Epameinondas and Pelopidas.

not assigned by the assembly to the boeotarchs, were the legal grounds on which Epameinondas and his colleagues were tried on their return to Thebes in 369 BC.

¹⁷ Thuc. 5.38.1–3. On the internal civic councils, see H.Oxy. 19.2 Chambers: εἶχεν δὲ τὰ πράγματα τότε κατὰ [τῆ]ν Βοιωτίαν οὕτως· ἦσαν καθεστηκυῖα βουλὰι τετάρ[τες παρ' ἐ]κάστη τῶν πόλεων, ὧν οὐ[χ ἅ]πασι | τοῖς πολ[ί]ταις ἐξῆ]ν μετέχειν, ἀ[λλὰ] τοῖς κεκ[τη]μένοις | πληθός τι[ς] χρημά[των]· τούτων δὲ τῶν βουλῶ[ν] κατὰ μέρος ἐκάστ[η] προκ[α]θημένη καὶ προβουλεύ[ουσα] | περὶ τῶν π[ρα]γμά[των] εἰσέφερον εἰς τὰς τρεῖς· ὅτι | δ' ἔδοξεν ἀπάσα[ι]ς τοῦτο κύριον ἐγίνετο (tr. R. A. Billows: «[a]t that time [395 BC], affairs in Boiotia were ordered as follows. Four councils were established at that time in each of the cities; not all of the citizens were able to participate in them, but only those possessed of a certain amount of wealth. Each of these councils in turn would meet and reach a preliminary decision about matters, and then refer it to the other three; what seemed good to all of them would be binding»).

¹⁸ Cf. what happened, for instance, in 364 BC, when, under the influence of Menekleidas, a long-time foe of Epameinondas and Pelopidas, a plot occurred during the joint absence of the two men (Plut. *Pel.* 25.3–7). Menekleidas, with his likely plot in Orchomenos, is a good example of the rare attention which has been paid to Theban opposition in these years. See on this episode M. Bertoli, *Diodoro e l'egemonia tebana: il caso di Orcomeno*, in: D. Ambaglio (ed.), *συγγραφή 7. Atti del Convegno "Epitomati ed epitomatori: il crocevia di Diodoro Siculo"* (Pavia, 21–22 aprile 2004), Como 2005, 125–135; on Menekleidas' use of public speeches, cf. L. J. Samons II, *Forms and Forums of Public Speech*, in: H. Beck (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Greek Government*, Malden (MA), Oxford, Chichester 2013, 267–283, at 271.

¹⁹ Diod. 15.62.1: κατὰ δὲ τὴν Πελοπόννησον Λακεδαιμόνιοι μὲν Πολύτροπον στρατηγὸν ἐξέπεμψαν εἰς τὴν Ἀρκαδίαν, ἔχοντα πολιτικούς μὲν ὀπλίτας χιλίους, φυγάδας δ' Ἀργείων καὶ Βοιωτῶν πεντακοσίους (tr. C. L. Sherman: «In the Peloponnesus [369/8 BC], the Lacedaemonians dispatched Polytropus as general to Arcadia with a thousand citizen hoplites and five hundred Argive and Boeotian refugees»; see *ibid.* 64.2 and 65.6 on these Boeotian fugitives). Paus. 9.15.4: ὡς δὲ βοιωταρχεῖν αὐθις ἤρητο καὶ στρατῷ Βοιωτῶν ἀφίκετο αὐθις ἐς Πελοπόννησον, ἐκράτησε μὲν περὶ Λέχαιον Λακεδαιμονίους μάχη, σὺν δὲ σφισιν Ἀχαιῶν Πελληνέας καὶ Ἀθηναίων οὐς Χαβρίας ἦγεν ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν. Θηβαῖοις δὲ ἦν καθεστηκός τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους, ὀπότους αἰχμαλώτους ἔλοιεν, ἀφίναί χρημάτων, τοὺς δὲ ἐκ Βοιωτῶν φεύγοντας ζημιοῦν θανάτῳ· πόλισμα οὖν ἔλῶν Σικυωνίων Φοιβίαν, ἐνθα ἦσαν τὸ πολὺ οἱ Βοιωτῆται φυγάδες συνηγμένοι, ἀφήσι τοὺς ἐγκαταληφθέντας, ἄλλην σφισιν ἦν ἔτυχε πατρίδα ἐπονομάζων ἐκάστῳ (tr. W. H. S. Jones: «[e]lected again to be boeotarch, and again invading the Peloponnesus with an army of Boeotians, he [Epaminondas] overcame the Lacedaemonians in a battle at Lechaem, and with them Achaeans of Pellene and Athenians led from Athens by Chabrias. The Thebans had a rule that they should set free for a ransom all their prisoners except such as were Boeotian fugitives; these they

Among those who had apparently supported Epameinondas before the battle of Leuktra, Xenokrates stands out because he is also mentioned in another context in apparent agreement with Epameinondas. Xenokrates went to Lebadeia, in fact, to fetch Aristomenes' shield: an oracle of Trophonius had promised the divine help, if the Thebans would dedicate the shield as a trophy before the battle (Paus. 4.32.5–6; P.-W. 253):

φασὶ δὲ οἱ Θηβαῖοι μελλούσης τῆς μάχης ἔσσεσθαί σφισιν ἐν Λεύκτροις ἐς ἄλλα τε ἀποστεῖλαι χρηστήρια καὶ ἔρησομένους τὸν ἐν Λεβαδεΐα θεόν. [...] Τροφώνιον δέ φασιν εἰπεῖν ἐξαμέτρῳ·

πρὶν δορὶ συμβαλέειν ἐχθροῖς, στήσασθε τρόπαιον,
ἀσπίδα κοσμήσαντες ἐμὴν, τὴν εἴσατο νηῶ
θοῦρος Ἀριστομένης Μεσσηνίος. αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τοι
ἄνδρῶν δυσμενέων φθίσω στρατὸν ἀσπιστάων.

6 ἀφικομένου δὲ τοῦ χρησμοῦ δεηθῆναι Ξενοκράτους λέγουσιν Ἐπαμινώνδαν· ὁ δὲ τὴν τε ἀσπίδα μεταπέμπεται τοῦ Ἀριστομένου καὶ ἐκόσμησεν ἀπ' αὐτῆς τρόπαιον, ὅθεν τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις ἔσσεσθαι σύνοπτον ἔμελλεν. ἤδεσαν δὲ ἄρα τὴν ἀσπίδα οἱ μὲν αὐτῶν ἐν Λεβαδεΐα καθ' ἡσυχίαν ἐωρακότες, ἀκοῇ δὲ καὶ πάντες· ὡς δὲ ἐγέντο ἡ νίκη Θηβαίοις, ἀποδιδόασιν αὐθις τῷ Τροφώνιῳ τὸ ἀνάθημα. Ἀριστομένους δὲ καὶ χαλκοῦς ἀνδριάς ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ Μεσσηνίων σταδίῳ.²⁰

The narrative may have originated from the actual presence of the shield in Lebadeia,²¹ even if looking for a proper historical pinpoint is hard (in the first place, one wonders what may have led the Messenian Aristomenes to reach Lebadeia). Three aspects are conspicuous, in particular, in light of the recent research on Theban history: firstly, the connection between the oracle of Trophonius and the battle of Leuktra. The Thebans clearly used this oracle, in the aftermath of the battle, as a regional focus to create a new festival, the Basileia, and to place their military success under the aegis of the sanctuary: this was probably also a strategy to prioritize the local over the panhellenic oracles.²² Secondly, as will be shown in more detail later, the focus on Epameinondas

punished with death. So when he captured the Sicyonian town of Phoebia, in which were gathered most of the Boeotian fugitives, he assigned to each of those whom he captured in it a new nationality, any that occurred to him, and set them free»).

²⁰ Tr. W. H. S. Jones: «The Thebans say that when the battle of Leuktra was imminent, they sent to other oracles and to enquire of the god of Lebadeia. [...] Trophonius, they say, answered in hexameters: “Or ever ye join battle with the foe, set up a trophy / and deck it with my shield, which impetuous / Aristomenes the Messenian placed in my temple. / And I will destroy the host of foemen bearing shield”. When the oracle was brought, they say that Epaminondas urged Xenokrates, who sent for the shield of Aristomenes and used it to adorn a trophy in a spot where it could be seen by the Lacedaemonians. Those of them who had seen the shield at Lebadeia in peace-time knew it, and all knew it by repute. After their victory the Thebans restored the offering to Trophonius. There is also a bronze statue of Aristomenes in the Messenian running-ground».

²¹ So H. W. Parke, D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle I-II*, Oxford 1956, at I 218–219.

²² Diod. 15.53.4. On the history of the Basileia and on their regional importance, see, with further references, A. Schachter, *A consultation of Trophonius (IG vii.4136)*, *AJP* 105 (1984) 258–270 (= *Boiotia in Antiquity. Selected Papers*, Cambridge 2016, 381–392); L. A. Turner, *The Basileia*,

retains the association of this character with the Theban victory, despite the previous general reference to the ‘Thebans’.²³ the oracle did not speak to Epameinondas himself, and yet he was considered the direct addressee, as if he were a predominant representant of the Theban army (this makes the presence of Xenokrates all the more noteworthy). Finally, the recovery of the (presumably) old shield in Lebadeia recalls that antiquarian revival with which the Thebans seem to have been obsessed in these years: the recent publication of an inscription which shows the rewriting of an archaic dedication in the fourth century BC also tells us of the focus on these ancient votives, which already Herodotus had found a notable feature of the religious decorations of the Ismenion.²⁴ The Thebans were probably rediscovering, in these years, the political aura of the archaic vestiges of their sanctuaries; it would actually seem that local historians too, active in these decades, were inspired by this generational movement towards the appreciation and the ‘instrumentalisation’ of the past.²⁵

This Theban tradition on the use of the shield of Aristomenes as a good omen is therefore a piece of a bigger puzzle, where these prophecies belong to a wider recollection of the Theban past in these years. This scenario seems confirmed by a discussed inscription (*IG* VII 2462 = *CEG* II 632), which mentions in the same context Xenokrates and the erection of a trophy.²⁶

in: J. M. Fossey, P. J. Smith, J. Buckler (eds.), *Boeotia antiqua VI, Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Boiotian Antiquities (Loyola University of Chicago, 24–26 May 1995)*, Amsterdam 1996, 105–126; M. Nafissi, *Zeus Basileus di Lebadea. La politica religiosa del koinon beotico durante la guerra cleomenica*, *Klio* 77 (1995) 149–169; D. Knoepfler, *Louis Robert en sa forge : ébauche d’un mémoire resté inédit sur l’histoire controversée de deux concours grecs, les Trophônia et les Basileia à Lébadée*, *CRAI* 52 (2008) 1421–1462; A. Manieri, *Agoni poetico-musicali nella Grecia antica I. Beozia*, Pisa, Rome 2009; P. R. Grigsby, *Boiotian Games: Festivals, Agônes, and the Development of Boiotian Identity*, PhD Thesis: Univ. of Warwick 2017 passim; S. Tufano, *The Local Games of Lebadeia and Koroneia*, in: S. Scharff (ed.), *In the Shadow of the ‘Big Four’*. *Studies in Local Athletic Contests in Ancient Greece*, Münster, in print.

²³ On the specific connection between Epameinondas and these eulogistic traditions, see E. Lanzillotta, *I prodigi per la battaglia di Leuttra*, in: Id. (ed.), *Problemi di storia e cultura spartana*, Rome 1984, 163–179.

²⁴ N. Papazarkadas, *Two New Epigrams from Thebes*, in: Id. (ed.), *The Epigraphy and History of Boeotia. New Finds, New Prospects*, Leiden, Boston 2014, 223–252, and *BE* 2015 n.306, with Hdt. 1.46–54. The so-called ‘Croesus-inscription’ inspired a vast debate and it remains to be fully explained why, in the fourth century BC, the Thebans were reinscribing this text. See the discussions by L. Porciani, *Creso, Anfiarao e la nuova iscrizione da Tebe*, in: S. Struffolino (ed.), *Ἡμέτερα γράμματα. Scritti di epigrafia greca offerti a T. Alfieri Tonini*, Aristonothos 12 (2016) 101–111 and P. Thonemann, *Croesus and the Oracles*, *JHS* 136 (2016) 152–167.

²⁵ On Boiotian local historiography, cf. G. Zecchini, *Rassegna di storiografia beotica*, in: J. Bintliff (ed.), *Recent Developments in the History and Archaeology of Central Greece. Proceedings of the 6th International Boeotian Conference*, Oxford 1997, 189–200, and Tufano, *Boiotia from Within* (n.12).

²⁶ I reproduce here the text as published in *CEG*. Among the many problems raised by this inscription, the actual value of τροπῆα at 1.6 is disputed: it is unclear whether the trophy to be set before the battle coincides with the one mentioned at 1.9. This is one of the numerous issues

Ξενοκράτης
 Θεόπομπος
 Μνασίλαος
vacat

- ((5)) ἀνίκα τὸ Σπάρτας ἐκράτει δόρυ, τινάκις εἶλεν
 Ξενοκράτης κλάρῳ Ζηνὶ τροπαῖα φέρειν
 οὐ τὸν ἀπ' Εὐρώτα δείσας στόλον οὐδὲ Λάκαιναν
 ἀσπίδα. “Θηβαῖοι κρείσσονες ἐν πολέμοι”
 ((9)) καρύσσει Λεύκτροις νικαφόρα δουρὶ τροπαῖα,
 οὐδ' Ἐπαμεινώνδα δεῦτεροι ἐδράμομεν.

«Xenokrates, Theopompos, Mnasilaos. When the Spartan spear prevailed, Xenokrates succeeded through lot in erecting a trophy for Zeus — he feared not neither the army from Eurotas, nor the Laconian shield. “The Thebans are stronger in war”, claims in Leuktra the victory-bringing trophy by the spear. We ran not second to Epameinondas.»

This monument raises a number of questions, concerning, on one side, its very nature, and, on the other side, the historical implications of these verses. First of all, only very recently was the original date positively reassessed, on the basis of its lettering: after the isolated position of Kaibel, in fact, the epigram had been commonly considered coterminous with, or very slightly posterior to, the battle of Leuktra (371 BC) mentioned at l.8. However, a close scrutiny of the lettering strongly suggests a date in the late fourth century BC or even in the early third century BC, as argued by Papazarkadas:²⁷ the distinctive serifs in which the strokes end and the absence of apices, typical of mid-fourth century inscriptions, invite to dismiss a date in the years of the Theban hegemony. It would seem, moreover, that the same hand was responsible for the writing of the personal names and of the verses.

Some of the contents of these verses will be discussed in more detail in the next section; it must be premised, nonetheless, that the redating of this monument imposes a reconsideration of the debate, based on the new historical context. Recalling once again the Theban victory over the Spartans at Leuktra, in the new Thebes refounded by

related to the difficult language of the inscription, whose ambiguity can hardly suggest a straightforward translation. For a recent discussion of all the main problems, see Mackil, *Creating a Common Polity* (n.8) 415–416; N. Papazarkadas, *The Epigraphic Habit(s) in Fourth-Century Boiotia*, in: Gartland, *Boiotia* (n.8) 121–146, at 142–146; A. Inglese, *Stele tebana commemorativa di Leuktra*, in: C. Antonetti, S. De Vido (eds.), *Iscrizioni greche. Un'antologia*, Rome 2017, 184–187. If our interpretation of CEG II 632 is correct, one may even suggest that this be a metaphorical trophy: in not running second to Epameinondas, the three Thebans were announcing in the first line that all the Thebans had been superior in war.

²⁷ G. Kaibel, *Epigrammata graeca ex lapidibus conlecta*, Berlin 1877, xvi–xvii; Papazarkadas, *The Epigraphic Habit(s)* (n.26) 145. I wish to thank here Klaus Hallof (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften) for sending me three clear pictures of the squeeze of the inscription; the one, reproduced on plate 10, was taken in 2018 by the team of *Inscriptiones Graecae*.

Cassander in the spring of 315 BC,²⁸ may have hardly been dictated by the necessity to repeat a historical truth, or even, paradoxically, to reinvent it. In the final section, we will return on the new circumstances which elicited the underlining of the parallel between the merits of Cassander in the Peloponnesus and those of Epameinondas, as fostered by the Antipatrid himself.

For the moment being, one may start excluding that the present inscription is a Hellenistic invention or a fake inscription, given the obvious truth of the basic historical fact here retold (the victory of Leuktra), apart from the unclear details on the trophies fetched by Xenokrates. Unlike the ‘Oath of Plataiai’, this epitaph has a predominantly private destination, signalled by the clear beginning with three personal names, without patronymics:²⁹ the onus of the proof lays on those who should explain why a family should invent such a tradition, in a city where none of the three figures seems to have held monarchic or influential positions in the early third century BC. All we can posit is that a new historical context, the refoundation of Thebes, fostered the necessity to reinscribe an otherwise lost text, and that the descendants of the interested men found such a choice apt and justified by the new conditions. In the final remarks, we will suggest what led the families of Xenokrates, Theopompos and Mnasilaos to reproduce this text; as far as the content is concerned, however, we remain persuaded that these lines had originally been composed in the middle of the fourth century BC.

a) CEG II 632 in a ‘post-Leuktra’ Context

The comparison between the monument and Pausanias 4.32.5–6 (above) led Beister (1973) and Tuplin (1987) to express contrasting views. Beister advocated a literal interpretation of the epitaph: he suggested that the text, meant as an epitaph, commemorated the erection of a trophy before the battle. Xenokrates had been elected among the boeotarchs to take on his shoulders the votive to Zeus: the note by Pausanias on the personal nomination, by Epameinondas, would derive from a biased tradition, since the choice of the responsible trophy-bearer could only depend on a democratic vote. Theopompos and Mnasilaos were his helpers. Fourteen years after Beister, Tuplin

²⁸ Although commonly dated to 316 BC, a more careful chronological assessment of the sources suggests that it was only in the final part of the Attic year 316/315 BC that Thebes was refounded (see, e.g., D. Knoepfler, *La réintégration de Thèbes dans le Koinon béotien après son relèvement par Cassandre, ou les surprises de la chronologie épigraphique*, in: R. Frei-Stolba, K. Gex [eds.], *Recherches récentes sur le monde hellénistique. Actes du colloque international organisé à l’occasion du 60^e anniversaire de Pierre Ducrey (Lausanne, 20–21 novembre 1998)*, Bern 2001, 11–25, at 11; F. Landucci Gattinoni, *L’arte del potere. Vita e opere di Cassandro di Macedonia*, Stuttgart 2003, passim).

²⁹ The internal features of the text are, in our view, sufficient to claim that this was a private enterprise. The incompleteness and the likely continuation of the text make the idea of an omission of the deeds of Theopompos and Mnasilaos unlikely (that other texts for them could exist goes without saying, but the hypothesis has no bearing on our interpretation of the epitaph; cf. Malouchou quoted by Papazarkadas, *The Epigraphic Habit(s)* [n.26] 203 n.98).

reanalyzed the text and expressed a more sceptical position on the journey of Xenokrates to Lebadeia before the battle; he claimed that the inscription *per se* cannot solve the issue: for instance, the adjective $\nu\kappa\eta\phi\acute{o}\rho\omicron\varsigma$ is very rare and could also mean “that it announces an already reached victory”.

A further issue concerns the other characters listed in the second and in the third line. Xenokrates might have been the allotted predestinate, but the last line has a first plural person and the disposition of the texts speaks for the actual original presence of Mnasilaos and Theopompos in the performance of the duty. We ignore the career of Mnasilaos, but we know that a Theopompos had joined Pelopidas in the active liberation of Thebes in 379 BC. It could even be, if we followed Plutarch’s witness in his *On the daimonion of Socrates*, that Theopompos had been on the opposite side in contrast with Epameinondas, who had argued against a violent action.³⁰ Once we exclude the unlikely literal meaning of ‘running’, as if the man or the men were carrying on their shoulders the trophy, the political reading cursorily alluded in the past³¹ may thus deserve a renewed attention.

We are not helped by the findspot of the inscription, because it comes from the suburbs of Thebes, from the cemetery of Pyri in the Northwest, and it is a reinscription, thus depriving us of the context where it was originally displayed. For this reason, nothing allows us to say that the men died at Leuktra and not later, in a minor skirmish: the two suggested destinations, funerary and honorary, might be present at the same time.³² A death in a later moment seems more likely, unless one assume the men had arranged for such a text to be written before the battle; the incompleteness demands prudence, especially because a specific section on Theopompos and Mnasilaos may have focused on further accomplishments.

³⁰ Plut. *Pel.* 8 and *De Gen.* 594d and 597c. The Theopompos of the *On the Daimonion of Socrates* does not receive a strong characterization; however, he stabs Kabirichos and utters a strong declaration in line with the spirit of the liberators: $\mu\grave{\eta}\ \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\iota\varsigma\ \sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\alpha\nu\acute{\omega}\sigma\alpha\iota\omicron\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \Theta\acute{\eta}\beta\alpha\iota\varsigma\ \mu\eta\delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \theta\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\tau\iota\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\tau\lambda.$ (l.c.).

³¹ Tod II 130; G. S. Shrimpton, *The Theban Supremacy in Fourth Century Literature*, *Phoenix* 25/4 (1971) 310–318, at 313; G. Vottéro, *Boeotica Epigrammata*, in: J. Dion (ed.), *L’épigramme de l’Antiquité au XVII^e siècle ou Du ciseau à la pointe*, Nancy 2002, 69–122, at 85; see also Lanzillotta, *I prodigi* (n.23) and IHG 45.

³² Cf. the recent rereading of the inscription by Inglese, *Stele tebana* (n.26) and Tuplin, *The Leuktra Campaign* (n.15) 94–95: «[T]he text’s failure to declare itself openly and explicitly as dedicatory puts the onus of proof on those who would deny that it is a gravestone». However, given the incomplete status of the text, one may wonder whether the missing text also included information on two other characters and on a further function of the monument. A late issue in the Theban magistrate coins presents the legend $\Xi\text{E-NO}$, which has been tentatively linked with Xenokrates by R. Hepworth, *The 4th Century BC Magistrate Coinage of the Boiotian Confederacy*, *Nomismatika Chronika* 17 (1998) 61–96 and A. Schachter, *Towards a Revised Chronology of the Theban Magistrates’ Coins*, in: Gartland, *Boiotia* (n.8) 42–58, at 53 (more sceptical). This group of coins might be dated later in the Sixties or even in the Fifties, but their possible fake nature and the overall likely funerary nature of CEG II 632 speak against an association with the boeotarch of 371 BC.

A pivotal dimension of the text emerges from the beginning of the epigram: Leuktra was isolated because the Theban perspective connected this battle with the definitive victory over Sparta. This is what is clearly alluded to by the first line of the epigram (4: “When the Spartan spear prevailed...”), which can hardly imply the initial stage of the battle where the Spartans were apparently winning (something only Xenophon reports).³³ The figurative meaning of δόρου adds to the view of the encompassing impact of the epitaph: this is a statement of political pride, because being at Leuktra was the greatest achievement of the three men (9: ἐδράμομεν). Even line 4, which concentrates on the Theban superiority in war, suggests that the text echoes an ideology of military pride, not isolated in the extant local sources of the middle fourth century BC.³⁴

This political interpretation of CEG II 632 can be corroborated through the inclusion in the ‘Xenokrates-dossier’ of another inscription, Epameinondas’ epitaph, which is quoted by Pausanias (9.15.6):

ἡμετέρας βουλαῖς Σπάρτη μὲν ἐκείρατο δόξαν,
Μεσσήνη δ’ ἱερὰ τέκνα χρόνῳ δέχεται
Θήβης δ’ ὄπλοισιν Μεγάλη πόλις ἐστεφάνωται,
αὐτόνομος δ’ Ἑλλάς πᾶσ’ ἐν ἔλευθερίῃ.³⁵

The author asserts to have seen the epigram under the statue of Epameinondas in the main Theban square: D. Knoepfler doubted this assertion, on the grounds that it would be unlikely that the statue was still up in the second century AD and that its very description would be too vague; moreover, the absence of the name of the sculptor would raise suspicions.³⁶ It would not be unlikely that Pausanias actually quoted the text from a literary source, say Plutarch or an author of Boeotian local historiography.³⁷ However, an unnoticed detail concerns the indirect tradition: in the same century of Pausanias, Aelius Aristides (28.148) quotes from the epitaph of Epameinondas and claims that it was in the Peloponnesus. Here, precisely in Messenia, we know from

³³ Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.14. Cf. Beister, *Ein thebanisches Tropaion* (n.15) 72 and Tuplin, *The Leuctra Campaign* (n.15) 104.

³⁴ On this ideology, see shortly Mackil, *Creating a Common Polity* (n.8) 416–417.

³⁵ Tr. H. Beck: «By our counsels Sparta was shorn of her glory, / And holy Messene finally received her children: / With Thebes’ arms Megalopolis was surrounded, / and all Greece won independence and freedom». Single lines of the text are quoted by Cic. *Tusc.* 5.49 (l.1: *consiliis nostris laus est attonsa Laconum*); Plut. *Non posse* 1098a (l.1: ἡμετέρας βουλαῖς Σπάρτη μὲν ἐκείρατο δόξαν); Σ Aeschin. 3.211 (l.1: ἡμετέρας βουλαῖς Σπάρτη μὲν ἐκείρατο δόξαν); Ael. Arist. 28K.148 (ll.1–2: ἡμετέρας βουλαῖς Σπάρτη μὲν ἐκείρατο δόξαν, / Μεσσήνη δ’ ἱερὰ τέκνα χρόνῳ δέχεται). See a commentary in C. Zizza, *Le iscrizioni nella Periegesi di Pausania. Commento ai testi epigrafici*, Pisa 2006, 344–349. On Epameinondas’ foundation of Megalopolis as reflected in this text, see esp. H. Beck, *Thebes, the Boiotian League, and the Rise of Federalism in Fourth Century Greece*, in: Bernardini (ed.), *Presenza e funzione della città di Tebe* (n.8) 331–344, at 341–342.

³⁶ Knoepfler, *ΠΟΛΥΜΝΙΣ* (n.12) 121–122.

³⁷ To give an example of the variety of this production, a name like Aristodemos of Thebes, with his Survey of the Theban Epigrams, may have included texts like this in his collection (Aristodemos *BNJ* 383 FF 1–8).

Pausanias (4.31.10; 32.1)³⁸ that two statues were erected for Epameinondas in Messene. The other indirect sources³⁹ do not specify where the text for Epameinondas was, and only Pausanias (9.15.6) quotes also the third and the fourth verses. Against Aelius Aristides, whose vagueness does not suggest reliability, one then wonders whether, *apart* from the undeniable literary and indirect tradition on this epitaph, there actually was still a physical copy of this text, when Pausanias was alive.⁴⁰

What is clear is that such a text, whose lines are already mentioned by Cicero (*Tusc.* 5.49), surely belonged to a favourable tradition, where Epameinondas' career was summarised in three verses: the victory of Leuktra as a victory on Sparta (Σπάρτη ἐκείρατο δόξαν), the refoundation of Messene (3) and that of Megalopolis (3). As a consequence of these acts, all concluded by 369, all Greece found its autonomy and an ideology of self-vindication expanded: the local origin of this tradition is betrayed by a passage which records the self-defence speech by Epameinondas when he was tried, in 369, on his return from Laconia. There, the general had forced his colleague boeotarchs to continue their campaign and attack Sparta, despite an explicitly more restricted agenda conferred on them by the assembly. In one of the texts which record his apology, Epameinondas is reported as saying to the judges that, were he found guilty, the judges should dare write on his gravestone (ἐπιγράψαι τῇ στήλῃ):

ὅτι μὴ βουλομένους Θηβαίους Ἐπαμεινώνδας ἠνάγκασε τὴν Λακωνικὴν πυρπολῆσαι, πεντακοσίοις ἐνιαυτοῖς ἀδήωτον οὖσαν· οἰκίσαι δὲ Μεσσήνην δι' ἐτῶν τριάκοντα καὶ διακοσίων· συντάξαι δὲ καὶ συναγαγεῖν εἰς ταῦτόν Ἀρκάδας· ἀποδοῦναι δὲ τοῖς Ἑλλησι τὴν αὐτονομίαν.⁴¹

Epameinondas' glory had been summed up, both in his allegedly actual epitaph and in his own provocative epitaph, in three points: the destruction of Sparta (Leuktra), the liberation of Messenia, and, as a consequence, the liberation/autonomy of the entire Greece. It is interesting to remark two points of contact with the tradition on Xenokrates, as it is retold by Pausanias and by the inscriptions: these are the identification of the battle of Leuktra with the end of the Spartan dominion and the strong connection between Thebes and Messenia (Xenokrates is physically responsible for the recovery of the shield of Aristomenes: Paus. 4.32.5–6).

This second strong tie is somehow less clear in the oracle reported by Pausanias in the Fourth Book, where Xenokrates is only responsible for the recovery of the Messenian

³⁸ See Knoepfler, *ΠΟΛΥΜΝΙΣ* (n.12) 123–124.

³⁹ Cicero, *Tusc.* 5.49; Plut. *Non posse* 1098a; Σ Aeschin. 3.211.

⁴⁰ On the role of the statue in the internal excursus on Epameinondas, see M. Moggi, *Scrittura e riscrittura della storia in Pausania*, RFIC 121 (1993) 396–418, at 412–413.

⁴¹ Plut. *Mor.* 194B, tr. F. Cole Babbitt: «That Epameinondas had compelled the Thebans against their will to lay waste Laconia with fire and sword, which for five hundred years had been unravaged; and that he had repopulated Messene after a space of two hundred and thirty years, and had organized the Arcadians and united them in a league, and had restored self-government to the Greeks».

shield. However, the overall relationship is only reversed: here, the benefactor is Aristomenes (Aristomenes, a Messenian hero, helps the Thebans), whereas Epameinondas' oracle depicts Messenia as the beneficiary of the Theban help (the Thebans help the Messenians). It is therefore possible that the laud of Xenokrates, preserved by CEG II 632, reprised the same elements, perhaps as an echo of Epameinondas' self-portrait. These parallels work like a *mise en abîme*: despite the literary passages which suggest a positive relationship between the two men, there might have been a divergence of views on their respective merits on the day when Thebes won against Sparta.

Even if we ascribed all the elements of Pausanias' anecdote to a Messenian tale, as the current approaches on Pausanias' text tend to,⁴² some elements remain profoundly and explicitly Boiotian and 'Theban' in flair: according to Diodorus (15.53.4), the Thebans decided to inaugurate the Basileia in Lebadeia as a thanksgiving festival for Trophonius after the battle of Leuktra.⁴³ Moreover, despite the undeniably Messenian origin of the 'logos of Aristomenes', Pausanias (4.32.5) assigns the tradition to the Thebans and quotes Xenokrates: what would be the point of mentioning an (apparently) secondary figure in a Messenian narrative?⁴⁴

Two other sources directly connect the role of the oracle of Trophonius with Epameinondas' stance before Leuktra.⁴⁵ It must be then ascertained that a line of the tradition favourable to Epameinondas, with an undeniable basis in the reality — the Basileia were an important festival of the period and we have good documentary sources on this festival — insisted on the relationship between the man and Zeus Basileus. It will therefore be no chance that Xenokrates, however poorly represented, is always connected with the same god (Zeus) and, in one case (Paus. 4.32), with the same oracle: he had to use the same language and, in this way, to reinvert the direction of the narrative towards his own persona.

The inscription CEG II 632 seems to betray an ideological, and possibly political, opposition to a reconstruction of the events of Leuktra unfairly centred on the Epameinondas: the lot where Xenokrates was a winner can therefore be understood in contrast with a narrative only centred on Epameinondas. Moreover, once we eliminate the

⁴² Cf. in particular Beister, *Ein thebanisches Trophaion* (n.15) and R. Nicolai, *Le tradizioni sulla Messenia in Pausania*, in: V. Foderà (ed.), *Le tradizioni del Peloponneso fra epica e storiografia locale*, Tivoli 2016, 1–24.

⁴³ The choice of the setting had a strong political meaning, given its topographical setting, «within the ancient territory of Orchomenos, overlooking the route to Delphi. [...] It was an overt political statement, intended not only to impress passers-by on the road to Delphi, but also to discourage the Orchomenians and any other potential dissidents» (Schachter, *Boiotia in Antiquity* [n.22] 117).

⁴⁴ That this tradition is not entirely Messenian can be further seen from the internal characteristics of Pausanias' Fourth book. Here operates an 'epic-historical' line, according to Nicolai, *Le tradizioni sulla Messenia* (n.42), which goes together with the oral traditions on Aristomenes. This further line of tradition recovered original elements of the Theban traditions, including those concerning the opponents to Epameinondas. It is all the more trustworthy, because in connection with Leuktra, despite all the other extant sources, it does not limit itself to Epameinondas. It sheds light on the merits upon which a man could build his own political career.

⁴⁵ Callisthenes *BNJ* 124 FF 22a–b and Polyæn. 2.3.8. For an analysis of the tradition, see Tufano, *The Local Games* (n. 22).

Messenian elements of the story on Aristomenes, that tradition too can be seen as an attempt by the same figure to redefine his role in the battle and, consequently, in the aftermath of the event.

It could be that behind this tradition on Xenokrates as retold by Pausanias was the inscribed epitaph of Epameinondas, which however only mentions a trophy and does not describe its features. Nonetheless, the other indication in Pausanias (9.13.6–7, the debate of the boeotarchs) confirms the impression that Xenokrates was actually involved in the preparations before the battle of Leuktra, very probably in a more direct way than by merely advocating Epameinondas' cause.

As a consequence, if we accept a connection between the formation of 'the legend of Epameinondas', initially centred on Leuktra, and the historical figure of Xenokrates, we detect a possible reaction, in Xenokrates and, probably, in his companions in death, to an overwhelmingly limited version of the history of the battle, which only focused on Epameinondas' merits. The final line of the inscription (9: "We did not run second to Epameinondas") has a double meaning: on the one side, it refers to all the Thebans who had succeeded at Leuktra; on the other side, it must focus on those high figures who had made a prompt effort to contribute. Besides, I would suggest that Xenokrates was instrumental in the institution of a specific relationship between Epameinondas and the shrine of Trophonius: Aristomenes aside, Pausanias' Messenian sources cannot have invented anew this tradition.⁴⁶ This interpretation results from the text, as it was probably composed in the aftermath of Leuktra; it remains now to understand what to do with a reuse in the late century.

b) Xenokrates, Epameinondas, and Cassander

In the previous section, we maintained that Xenokrates occasionally sided with Epameinondas (9.13.6) before Leuktra, and generally enjoyed an opaque, however resistant, profile in the different pictures provided by Pausanias on the events preceding the battle of Leuktra. Xenokrates' bravery may thus have entailed a further dimension, represented by his resistance to the fictional and unrealistic refusal by the Spartans that the Thebans erect a trophy after the victory. No matter when he died, he might have wanted that his self-presentation be associated to just the same rank as that of Epameinondas.⁴⁷

A further sign of the relevance of this 'anti-Spartan' motif in the self-presentation of Theban elites in these years⁴⁸ is the rarity of the feminine adj. *λάκαινα* for the 'Spartan

⁴⁶ This is all the more noteworthy, because a number of resemblances unite the legendary profile of Epameinondas and that of the Messenian hero, Aristomenes (on these parallels, see in particular D. Ogden, *Aristomenes of Messene. Legends of Sparta's Nemesis*, Swansea 2004, 141–142).

⁴⁷ Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.14, with Tuplin, *The Leuctra Campaign* (n.15) 104. This would strengthen the possibility that the trophy was erected after the battle.

⁴⁸ Cf. also *Σπάρτην χήρω[σας ---]*, 'destroyer of Sparta', as the first line of the epigram which accompanied a statue of Pelopidas established by the Thessalians in Delphi and executed by Lysippos (*SEG* 22.460, l.1 = *DNO* 2210). The date is actually disputed and both higher (369 BC) and lower dates, after his death (364 BC), have been suggested (see D. Graninger, *Cult and Koinon in Hellenistic Thessaly*, Leiden, Boston 2011, 72–73 n.98); on the Theban presence in

shield', never used for the territory. More in general, the literary Doric of CEG II 632 is a curious characteristic, together with the epic forms: this same language appears on other dedications of the mid-fourth century BC.⁴⁹ Where our reinscribed text stands out is in the rarity of the passage from the indirect to the indirect speech at l.7, with the mere juxtaposition of the verb κηρύσσω. In his commentary on the CEG (II 632), Hansen added as a parallel a hellenistic epigram ascribed to Simonides, *A.P.* 7.431 (*HE* 5 = 65 Page):

οἶδε τριηκόσιοι, Σπάρτα πατρί, τοῖς συναρίθμοις
 Ἴναχίδαις Θυρέαν ἀμφὶ μαχεσσάμενοι,
 αὐχένας οὐ στρέψαντες, ὅπα ποδὸς ἔχνια πρᾶτον
 ἀρμόσαμεν, ταῦτα καὶ λίπομεν βιοτάν.
 ἄρσενι δ' Ὀθρυάδαο φόνῳ κεκαλυμμένον ὄπλον
 καρύσσει· “Θυρέα, Ζεῦ, Λακεδαιμονίων.”
 αἰ δέ τις Ἀργείων ἔφυγεν μόρον, ἧς ἀπ' Ἀδράστου·
 Σπάρτα δ' οὐ τὸ θανεῖν, ἀλλὰ φυγεῖν θάνατος.⁵⁰

This epigram adopts a Spartan perspective to celebrate the victory at Thyrea against Argos.⁵¹ Here, Othryadas is a brave man, whose blood is the ink through which the public announcement is written on the shield. The final line, which recalls the Spartan bid not to survive a military defeat, is in strong contrast with the version of the battle retold by Herodotus (1.82): here, Othryadas is ashamed of having survived the fight, and consequently commits suicide, despite the overall victory of Sparta over Argos. The contrast between the epigram and Herodotus has been explained with the use, by the poetic tradition, of a local historiographic source of Argive origin.⁵² The meta-

Delphi in the Sixties, see M. Scott, *The Performance of Boiotian Identity at Delphi*, in: Gartland (ed.), *Boiotia* (n.8) 99–120. Another dedication accompanying a statue, also by Lysippos (*SEG* 56.551 = *DNO* 2211; P. Ducrey, C. Calame, *Notes de sculpture et d'épigraphie en Béotie II: Une base de statue portant la signature de Lysippe de Sicyone à Thèbes*, BCH 130 [2007] 63–81), may be associated either with Pelopidas or with Epameinondas (*BE* 2009 n.259): here the victory over Sparta is not mentioned, but the prestige gained by the dedicatee for his fatherland equally has an impact over all Greece (l.1–2: [π]ατρὶς ἀριστεύουσ' ἀλκῆ δορὸς Ἑλλάδος ἄλλης) [ε]ἴλετο τὸνδ' αὐτῆς ἠγεμόν' ἐμ πολέ[μοι].

⁴⁹ See the commentaries in *R.-O.* 30 and by Inglese, *Stele tebana* (n.26) 184.

⁵⁰ Tr. F. Cairns: «Sparta our country, we three hundred fought with as many Argives for Thyrea. Not turning our necks, we laid down our lives where we first planted our footprints. The shield, covered with the virile blood of Othryadas, proclaims “Thyreas, Zeus, belongs to the Lacedaemonians”. But if any Argive fled his fate, he was a descendant of Adrastus. At Sparta death is not death: flight is death».

⁵¹ The episode was traditionally set in the middle of the sixth century BC, but was later subject to a complex and stratified rereading. The tradition seems to have an Argive origin, but may later have been purportedly adapted and accepted by the Spartans themselves: see E. Franchi, *Comunicare con le chiome: la battaglia dei Campioni e la social memory spartana*, in: M. G. Angeli Bertinelli, A. Donati (eds.), *La comunicazione nella storia antica. Fantasie e realtà. Atti del III incontro internazionale di storia antica (Genova 23–24 novembre 2006)*, Rome 2008, 237–241.

⁵² B. M. Palumbo Stracca, *Argo e Argivi negli epigrammi greci*, in: P. Bernardini (ed.), *La città di Argo. Mito, storia, tradizioni poetiche*, Pisa, Rome 2004, 211–226, at 214–216; see also

inscriptional character of the epigram is thus part of a mimetic tension and may explain, with the mention of the initial three hundred, the ascription of the text to Simonides.⁵³

As with *CEG* II 632, the epigram by ‘Simonides’ adopts a similar strategy, through «a very unconvincing inscription»,⁵⁴ where the talking trophy must not be considered at face value. The parallel confirms the literary nature of *CEG* II 632 and the impossibility to use the inscription as a ‘factual’ piece of evidence on the events preceding the battle of Leuktra: more than a written piece of evidence on the events following or preceding the battle, this text for Xenokrates, Mnasilaos and Theopompos served an internal debate. The Thebans must be declared superior to the Spartans *also* because of the value of these men: this interpretation thus sees in the final, metaphorical line (‘We did not run second to Epaminondas’) the logical evolution of an apology in verse.

If the previous understanding is correct, one has to see what use a Theban family would make of this echo of the internal debate, after 316/315 BC. The city was refounded by Cassander for more than one reason: the ancient sources record both the legacy of his personal hatred towards Alexander the Great, who had destroyed Thebes in 335 BC (Paus. 9.7.1–2), and the importance of a panhellenic ideology and the quest for an immortal fame (Diod. 19.53.2 and 54.1).⁵⁵ A city like Thebes could not be lost for good, and both Pausanias and an inscription list the many donors which contributed to the rebuilding of the city, over a span of time.⁵⁶ In fact, an often mentioned anecdote by Polemon reports how a Theban found, in 305 BC, a treasure which he had hidden before 335 BC.⁵⁷

shortly, on the epigram, F. Cairns, *Hellenistic Epigram. Contexts of Exploration*, Cambridge 2016, 308–309.

⁵³ The epigram belongs to a production which can be possibly dated to the third century BC (L. Bravi, *Gli epigrammi di Simonide e le vie della tradizione*, Rome 2006, 89–90, also on the ‘meta-inscriptional’ character of the text). This does not necessarily mean, however, that there already was a parallel between the sacrifice of Leonidas and that of Othryadas (E. Franchi, *Otriada, Leonida e i Trecento: la Battaglia dei Campioni e il miraggio spartano in età imperiale*, *SemRom* n.s. 2 [2013] 131–158, at 147–148).

⁵⁴ Page in *HE* 5.

⁵⁵ For an analysis of the ancient sources on the refoundation of Thebes, and of their ideology, see C. Bearzot, *Cassandro e la ricostruzione di Tebe: propaganda filellenica e interessi peloponnesiaci*, *RIL* 129 (1995) 107–120 (= 1997, in: Bintliff [ed.], *Recent Developments* [n.25] 265–276), from where I quote in the following. The scholar and Knoepfler, *La réintégration de Thèbes* (n.28) generally tend to accept a multiplicity of reasons behind the decision of Cassander, not undermining the strategic position of Thebes.

⁵⁶ Paus. 9.7.1–2 and *IG* VII 2419 = *Syll.*³ 337 + K. Buraselis, *Contributions to Rebuilding Thebes: The Old and a New Fragment of IG VII 2419 ≈ Sylloge 3 337*, *ZPE* 188 (2014) 159–170 (*SEG* 64.403), a new fragment belonging to the same list of donors. For an analysis of the inscription, see, after the classical article by M. Holleaux, *Sur une inscription des Thèbes*, *RÉG* 8 (1895) 7–48, Knoepfler, *La réintégration de Thèbes* (n.28) and Landucci Gattinoni, *L’arte del potere* (n.28) 107–110.

⁵⁷ Polemon FHG III F 25, with the commentary by Knoepfler, *La réintégration de Thèbes* (n.28) 18 and 24 n.72.

Modern scholarship has readdressed the various causes underlying the choice of Cassander to contribute to the rebirth of Thebes; in particular, C. Bearzot concentrated on the contemporary traits of the propaganda which stressed the Peloponnesian merits of Cassander. According to the scholar, the decision to refound Thebes was both fostered by and elicited a general parallel with Epameinondas' Peloponnesian ventures.⁵⁸ Between 317 and 315 Cassander fought against Alexander and Polyperchon in the Peloponnesus and was not supported by all the cities in this region: while Messene and cities like Megalopolis answered his call for freedom, other important cities did not rally with Cassander. Among our extant sources, Justin (14.5.6–7) especially suggests an «attteggiamento irriducibilmente ostile di Sparta»:⁵⁹ the Spartans disregarded the prophecies and their *gloria uetus*, by encircling with protective walls their city, fearing the army of Cassander.

If a relatively late chronology for the beginning of the refoundation of Thebes is accepted, the act would coincide with the end of the Peloponnesian venture. While the physical reconstruction was a slow process, the repopulation must have been relatively quick: one thinks, first of all, of the Theban exiles who had lived in Athens for twenty years.⁶⁰ The details of the local institutions of Thebes in these years are not clear, until 287 BC, when the city properly reentered the Boiotian *koinon*.⁶¹ One may suppose that local families would try to remark their background and restate what had been publicly clear for decades, before 335 BC: Dio Chrysostom (*or.* 7.121) claimed that the first decision of the Thebans, on their return to the city, had been to rewrite an epigram in the public square which emphasised their pride in the *auletike techne*, in a situation of general destruction (τῶν ἡφανισμένων ἀπὸ πολλῶν μὲν ἱερῶν, πολλῶν δὲ στηλῶν καὶ ἐπιγραφῶν).

The verse mentioned by Dio has been associated, with few doubts, with a longer version of an epigram for Pronomis of Thebes, a famous pipe-player of the fifth century BC.⁶² N. Papazarkadas uses this parallel as an example of the necessary restorations of these years. Another similar case concerning a Theban, despite not being in Thebes, regards Promenes, Hippolaos and Leontiadas, three *proxenoi* who had represented Delphi in Thebes: the citizens of Delphi had to rewrite and confirm their status around 324/323 BC, probably because the previous document had been lost by that date.⁶³

⁵⁸ Bearzot, *Cassandro e la ricostruzione* (n.55).

⁵⁹ See Bearzot, *Cassandro e la ricostruzione* (n.55) 268–269; quote at 269.

⁶⁰ On these Theban exiles who had been in Athens since 335 BC, see Diod. 19.53.2 and 54.1, with the commentaries by B. Gullath, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Boiotiens in der Zeit Alexanders und der Diadochen*, Frankfurt 1982, 88–89, Bearzot, *Cassandro e la ricostruzione* (n.55) 265–266, and Knoepfler, *La réintégration de Thèbes* (n.28) 12.

⁶¹ On this date, see shortly Knoepfler, *La réintégration de Thèbes* (n.28) and Mackil, *Creating a Common Polity* (n.8) 94–95.

⁶² On the career of Pronomis and on the ancient tradition of the dedicatory epigram mentioned by Dio, see P. Wilson, *Pronomis and Potamon: Two Pipers and Two Epigrams*, *JHS* 127 (2007) 141–149.

⁶³ Papazarkadas, *The Epigraphic Habit(s)* (n.26) 146. *FD* III 1.356, with Gullath, *Untersuchungen* (n.60) 120–121 and Tufano, *The Liberation of Thebes* (n.7).

In a city in ruins, the Theban elites were choosing to rewrite and recover the most meaningful documents which had summarised its history and represented the aristocracy of the city in the previous decades. The inscription of Amphiaraios may be another case in point, if its copy in Ionic characters is dated after 316 BC:⁶⁴ that would be another case where a lost document had to be rewritten, to be publicly reassessed.

Perhaps not directly as a consequence of the fierce Spartan resistance to Cassander, we believe that the families of Xenokrates, Theopompos and Mnasilaos were trying to reinstate their credit and prestige. What had been an original statement of opposition against Epameinondas by their ancestors, perhaps during the same lifetime of Epameinondas, thus lost its ancient political subtext and was used to possibly promote the public image of these descendants, in an age of general rewriting of the past.

Concluding Remarks

In light of the institutional features of the Boiotian *koinon* in the years of the Theban hegemony, the politicisation of memory was one of the few viable means which any opponent could use: since the system, far from representing all the local instances and the Theban elites, put much of the executive power in the hands of the boeotarchs, a direct attack on them or the discussion of their self-representation had a wider meaning than a personal offense. In terms of internal stability, the system was unable to face a long-standing opposition: while the previous League, as described by the historian of the *Hellenika Oxyrhynchia*, incorporated a way to deal with opposition and the Theban parties had branches all over the region, this Theban-led *koinon* was basically the imposition of the will of a few Theban men over the rest of the region.

Xenokrates may have been a less strong opponent than Menekleidas (Plut. *Pel.* 25.3–4), who was described by J. Buckler (*The Theban Hegemony* [n.11] 149) as the opponent *par excellence*. We have a piquant characterization of the man in Plutarch's *Life of Pelopidas*, which describes the man in relationship with Pelopidas in a similar way as Xenokrates with Epameinondas: even if both men had cooperated in a momentous action, envy or other factors could cooperate in distancing the politicians. Menekleidas' plan to display in a picture a minor victory of Charon was criticized and rebutted by Pelopidas on the ground ὅτι Θεβαίους οὐ πάτριον ἦν ἰδίᾳ κατ' ἄνδρα τιμᾶν, ἀλλὰ τῆ πατρίδι κοινῶς τὸ τῆς νίκης ὄνομα σφάζειν (25.7).

In fact, Theban politics seems to have been the opposite of this principle: which is also unsurprising, on the grounds of the political traditions on the single figures. The ancient fortune of the epigram for Xenokrates testifies to this personalization, insofar as it was probably reinscribed to support the career of these descendants. The literary tradition on Xenokrates seems therefore to shed light both on the interpretation of the original function of the epigram and on its ancient fortune.

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⁶⁴ Cf. Thonemann, *Croesus* (n.24) and *SEG* 64.405.

Tafel 10



zu S. Tufano, S. 210

IG VII 2462 = CEG II 632, picture sent to the author by Klaus Hallof.
Courtesy of the BBAW.