PHILOPOEMEN IMMODICUS AND SUPERBUS AND SPARTA

The decision taken by the Achaean League in the autumn of 192 B.C. at Aegium to wage war against the Aetolians and their allies was crucial to the Greeks and their future. Greece proper had been divided for generations among several political bodies — and, in fact, had never been united into one state. Yet all those known as Ἕλληνες felt the natural human desire to avoid the unnecessary violence, bloodshed, and self-destruction engendered by ceaseless competition for preeminence and hegemony in the domestic arena. The so-called "Tragic Historians" adopted these emotions as the *leitmotif* of their principal efforts to delineate the deeds and omissions of the Greek leadership and populace.[1]

Rome's powerful political-strategical penetration east of the Adriatic sea, into Mainland Greece, particularly during the later decades of the third century B.C., undermined the precarious balance of internal Greek politics. The embarrassment which had seized most of Greece is easily understandable. Yet the Achaeans at Aegium do not appear to have been inspired by the memory of their ancestors' resistance to the Persians.

The Achaean leaders, Philopoemen not excluded, rejected Aetolian pleas for help or, at least, non-intervention in the struggle that they had started in the name of Ἕλληνες for the whole of Greece. Somewhat surprisingly, the Achaean leaders hastened to declare war on the Aetolians, anticipating even the Roman crossing to Greece[2]. These are the bare facts available to us (Livy 35.50.2–6). However, the conventional interpretation of these occurrences derived from Polybius [3] tends to be pathetic more than historical, and constitute an embellished portrait of Achaean policy and politicians of those days rather than an honest guide to the political realities of the Ἕλληνες and Greece proper.

A more critical reconsideration of the Spartan affairs of the Achaean League

[1] Cf. F.W. Walbank, "Tragic History ,a Reconsideration", *BICS* 2 (1955) 4–10. E. Gabba, "Studi su Filarco", *Athenaeum* n.s. 35 (1957) 7 f.

[2] Polyb. 39.8.3, and cf. G.A. Lehmann, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Glaubwürdigkeit des Polybios* (Münster 1967) 238. A. Aymard, Les Premiers Rapports de Rome et de la Confédération Achaienne (Bordeaux 1938) 323 f. R.M. Errington, *Philopoemen* (Oxford 1969) 113.

[3] Cf. J. Deininger, *Der politische Widerstand* ...; (Berlin 1971) 116 f. "Die aitolisch-seleukidischen Argumente machten im achaiischen Koinon keinerlei Eindruck".

during the years 192–188 B.C., however, may help to clarify the nature of the changing reality in Greece as well as the new trends.

a. The basic evidence pertaining to the incorporation of Sparta in the Achaean League consists of only a few lines in Livy 35.37.1–3 and a single passage in Plu. *Phil.* 15.2. Plutrach, concerned more about the artistry of his portrait of his hero than with historical precision, strives to reveal political acuteness and courage in Philopoemen. The ἁρπαγὴ τὸν καιρόν (*ibid.*), the ability to exploit opportunity, is vital to a success-thirsty leader, and Philopoemen was no exception. Brutal exploitation of strategic advantage with no provocation however, is a deed lacking heroic lustre. Therefore it was only natural for Plutarch to prefer in his sources [4] the quasi-dramatic δέσις to Philopoemen's forceful intervention. Sparta was thus deemed to be in a state of ταραχή (*ibid.*) with the hero emerging from the midst of the general confusion to restore the longed-for order. Plutarch did not try to diminish or to conceal the implied justification. Livy is less poetic in interpreting Polybius' report. Yet even Livy repeats Polybius' statement that ταραχή existed in Sparta and paraphrases it by *omnia turbata metu* (35.37.1). Less impressed by Philopoemen's sincerity towards Sparta, Livy informs us of the necessary steps taken by the Spartans after the violent attempt of the Aetolians to enforce their their policy upon them.

As soon as the Spartans learned about the murder of their king Nabis and of the intentions of the Atolians, they crowned Laconicus, a boy whose royal origin was beyond question, and took up arms to "regain the liberty" stolen from them (*ibid.* 36.7–8). The Aetolians were driven out, and order was restored.

Polybius was unable to argue that, on Philopoemen's arrival in Sparta, any sort of internal war or violent dissention disturbed its population. Polybius' ταραχή describes, then, the perplexity which befell Sparta in the face of Philopoemen's unexpected incursion at the head of an Achaean army (μετὰ δυνάμεως Plu. *Phil.* 15.2) from the north. No less alarming to the Spartans was the news from the southern frontier that twenty-four Roman *quinqueremes* under the command of Aulus Atilius were approaching Cytheum. Our source (Livy 35.37.3) makes it quite clear that the aid of the Roman fleet was decisive in bringing Sparta under the sway of the Achaean League. It should therefore be doubted whether, in a state of ταραχή in Sparta, Philopoemen would actually have been compelled to ask for the help of the Romans.

Philopoemen, consequently, had to overthrow the newly established govern-

[4] Though Plutarch could have used several authorities while composing the biography of Philopoemen (e.g. Aristocrates), it is clear that Polybuis' writings whether the 'Life of Philopoemen' (cf. H. Niessen, *Kritische Untersuchungen* . . .; (Berlin, 1863), 280 sq.) or the 'Histories' (R.M. Errington, *op. cit.*, 232) were his main source.

ment and the recently appointed king of Sparta. The introduction to power of a group of Spartans dependent on and loyal to the Achaean League rounded out Philopoemen's march on Sparta[5].

The traditional policy of the ἄριδτοι in Sparta had never included a policy of subordinate annexation to the Achaean League. In spite of Polybius' silence one should doubt whether this constitutional and political transfiguration in Sparta was realized by Philopoemen without violence and bloodshed (*cf.* Plu. *Phil.* 15.2). No details can be obtained from our sources about the necessary alterations made in Sparta by Philopoemen during his adjunct arrangements; there are no notes concerning the property and valuables he restored, or disposed of, to the ἄριστοι among the Spartans he brought with him in the march on Sparta. These men could easily have been inspired by his statements to see him as the guardian of their "liberty", this liberty being understood as the implementation of all the rights they claimed — material no less than political. Philopoemen did not leave his sole allies in Sparta — the exiles headed by his guestfriend Timolaos — destitute and landless.

Supported by the Achaean detachments, this small group now completely dominated Sparta; only after wholly gaining the upper hand were they able to seize their former possessions and fortunes. The Timolaos Group was quite aware of the debt it owed Philopoemen, personally, for its new strength and position. After confiscating "the house and property of Nabis", they decided jointly to present the hundred and twenty talents obtained from the sale to Philopoemen in person (Plu. *Phil.* 15.4).

Philopoemen seems to have met with no special difficulties at the Achaean council, which ratified the formal application by the new leadership of Sparta to be incorporated into the League. According to Polybius (*cf.* Plu. *Phil.* 15.3) the Achaeans even admiringly (θαυμαστῶς) applauded Philopoemen's Spartan campaign. Yet the solitude of Philopoemen during the whole enterprise should raise the question of whether the rest of the political grandees of the Achaean League stood aloof from the πρόσκτησις of Sparta, and the method Philopoemen had chosen to secure its retention henceforth.[6]

[5] Cf. B. Niese, Geschichte der Griechischen und Makedonischen Staaten (Gotha 1893): II 687–8. G. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani;* (Torino 1923) 138–9. Yet M. Gelzer, in "Die Achaica im Geschichtswerk des Polybius", *Abh. Berl. Akad.* (1940) 25, names the annexation 'Angliederung' and denotes it "the greatest advance of Achean policy since Aratus". H.E. Stier, *Roms Aufstieg zur Weltmacht und die Griechische Welt* (Köln 1957) 169, admits that the annexation of Sparta was an "Anschluss". F.W. Walbank, *Commentary on Polybius* (Oxford 1957) 1.221 states that "the Spartans were forcibly incorporated by Philopoemen in 193". R.M. Errington, *op. cit.* (n. 2 supra) 109, writes of Philopoemen's "attempt to bring Sparta into the Achaean League". It should not, therefore, be seen as inevitable that Philopoemen was assisted in conquering Sparta by a Roman fleet rather by minute prearrangements with its admiral than by coincidence.

[6] It should be taken in account that Philopoemen was absent from Achaea for six or

The "Peloponnesian" ideology (Plu. *Phil.* 8.2), formulated by Aratus of Sicyon more than a generation earlier, seems to have supplied the best possible arguments to justify Philopoemen's one-sided violent intervention in Sparta, as well as his arrangements there. But it was clear to less enthusiastic Achaeans that the extreme oligarchic regime which Philopoemen imposed on Sparta did not promise peace there and political calmness within their own League.

The policy adopted by Aristaenos and his supporters at the beginning of the nineties showed clear preference for obtaining political shelter from the Romans rather than joining the Aetolians and other Greeks in a renewed attempt to safeguard Mainland Greece against great-power influence and intervention (*cf.* Livy 34.24.2–4). This departure from the traditional policy prevailing in Mainland Greece was an unsettling experience for the Achaeans, as this infringement of Greek political convention deeply affected the political life of the whole of Greece. This crisis shocked, primarily, the Achaean leadership itself.

The tendency of the Achaean leaders to abandon hope of a broader collaboration of Hellenes to safeguard their common "liberty" — of whatever sort it might be — undermined their self-respect and their political expectations as members of a meaningful community. The diminished status of their common name of Hellenes affected the Achaean leadership acutely. They fell out among themselves, becoming mutually alienated and extraneous each of whom tried his luck in the confused situation[7].

The "Peloponnesian" ideology now adopted by most of them proved a poor substitute for the traditional sharing of the common name of Hellenes[8]. These dismembering predispositions among the Achaean leaders under Roman sway thus transformed what was still called Achean policy into keen competition for personal glory, wealth and power. It seems reasonable to think that the motives for Philopoemen's "Spartan March" derived at least in part from this mood of disintegration which had gripped Achaean politicians since Aristaenus' yielding to Rome. Diophanes did not strive to appear exceptional, he only tried to emulate Philopoemen's success, following in his footsteps as far as Sparta.

b. It had taken the shocked Spartans half a year to recover from Philo-

seven years, from 200 to 194 B.C., a decisive period in the political orientation and fate of the Achaean League. The gap his absence created was filled up immediately by others. De Sanctis, *op. cit.* (n. 5 supra) 169, is convinced that at this time Diophanes was an "avversario politico di Filopemene"; cf. Aymard, *op. cit.* (n. 2 supra) 323, though Errington, *op. cit.*, 113, accepts Polybius 21.9 (Livy 37.20.2) as conclusive.

7 The fervour of the perplexing debats among the Hellenes at this time seems to have found some reflection in the impulsive arguments presented by Stier, *op. cit.* (n. 5 supra) 146 and passim.

8 This new tendency is summarized in Polybius 11.38.1.

poemen's success. In the spring of 191 B.C. the Spartans were able by their opposition activities (νεωτερίζειν Plu. *Phil.* 16.1) to cause a failure of nerve among Philopoemen's clients there, i.e. the Timolaos Group. Naturally enough Timolaos asked for urgent aid from the federal authorities of the Achaean League. Diophanes, the *strategos*, was eager to exploit the proffered opportunity; it seems that Diophanes had decided to return from Sparta only after having left in power there a group of men loyal to him personally, as Philopoemen had done in his turn. Diophanes found it useful for his schems in Sparta to collaborate with Flamininus, the Roman delegate to Greece. Being well aware of Roman mastery over the whole of Greece, Diophanes came to the conclusion that no arrangement in that area could last long without Roman consent. Flamininus fully appreciated the benefits accruing from support of Rome and willingly joined Diophanes on his way to Sparta.

Plutarch, rewriting his sources, lets us know that Philopoemen "tried to mollify Diophanes and put a stop to his wrath" (*Phil.* 16.1). Yet, it is to be doubted whether this wrath provoked the Spartans. A battle veteran and statesman (πολεμικώτερος) is not likely to lose his professional calm in the face of a martial encounter, especially when victory is assured. The cause of Diophanes' anger, then, were Philopoemen's representations. Though he formulated his request in pious political terms (*ibid.*), Philopoemen demanded of Diophanes that he avoid making any changes in Sparta, because of his fear that the latter might outbid Philopoemen's clients or install an oligarchical faction of his own in Sparta which would be indifferent, if not actively hostile to Philopoemen. These interchanges of views, in keeping with their character, ended in a quarrel and in anger (*cf. ibid.* 16.3 ἀγανακτήσις").

Diophanes decided to ignore Philopoemen's admonitions, but the latter refused to give ground, or to accept with equanimity the loss of "his" Sparta. He therefore ventured upon an act which was "unlawful" (οὐ νομιμόν *ibid.*) and obviously unconstitutional (οὐδ' ἀπηκριβωμένων ἐκ τῶν δικαίων *ibid.*). Philopoemen was the first to arrive in Sparta; he succeeded rapidly in restoring the self-confidence of his clients and the effective control of the state. Moerover, he ordered his men to shut the gates of Sparta to Diophanes and the official Achaean troops. The situation seems to have been very explosive.

This hazardous and precipitate expedition of Philopoemen to Sparta acquires its fuller historical meaning only after one distinguishes and identifies the pursuit of prestige by the strong men within the League. These men turned the Achaean League into their private domain whose laws were determined by them alone. Even the active citizenry of the League had not been expected to intervene, as it actually did. It was clearly Diophanes who prevented bloodshed in Sparta and, very likely, a violent collision with Philopoemen and his supporters as well. No less illuminating is the fact that none of Diophanes' adherents nor Achaeans from others spheres of power within the League

impeached Philopoemen for having violated their common law. This underscored silence is indicative of the dissenting opinions that even active citizens held about the leadership of the League, and reflects their low self-esteem as men able to protect their own political rights and constitution.

These political patterns, typical of an extreme oligarchy or a semi-tyrannical group, had become common in the Achaean League of the nineties of the second century B.C. Though his csuccess was displacing law, Philopoemen — in spite of that παρανομία — was able to secure only a few months later the "strategy" of the League for the next year for himself.

Other potentates of the Achaean League knew how to appreciate Diophanes' self-restraint before the gates of Sparta, and a few months later followed him willingly (*effiuso exercitu* Livy 36.31.5) in his quest for glory at the expense of Elis and Messene (*ibid.* 1–4). An inscription on a statue erected in the agora of Megalopolis — Diophanes' native town — celebrated his greatness: the unifying of the Peloponnesos (Paus. 8.30.5). Yet the statue seems to have been merely a consolatory gesture by his townspeople, for Diophanes was unable to attain a second "strategy" while Philopoemen and his men succeeded in controlling it almost incessantly. As the commander of a small expeditionary force, of one thousand infantry and one hundred cavalry, Diophanes was kept away from the *strategos*-elections in autumn 190 B.C. as far as Pergamon (*ibid.* 37.20.1).

Flamininus by accompanying Diophanes on his way to Sparta, made it clear to all concerned that the Roman legate was discontented with Philopoemen's winning of Sparta. After taking counsel with Rome, Flamininus began taking political steps designed to restore Roman influence over Sparta. When the Spartans became aware of Flamininus' preference the tide turned very quickly. Philopoemen's clients were expelled from Sparta almost immediately at the approach of winter 191-190 B.C. There is no evidence in our sources of any attempt made by the new rulers of Sparta to secede from the Achaean League. This inaction illustrated their loyal policy towards the League and the fact that they had acted against the personal interests of Philopoemen alone, i.e. against his clients in Sparta, and in no way against the League itself. It was the task of Philopoemen to make every effort needed to identify his own interests with those of the Achaean League. Henceforth, the declaration of war against the Spartans (*ibid.* 38.32.1) was the most desirable and urgent purpose of Philopoemen and his supporters.

c. But even Philopoemen thought that a majority vote in the Achaean assembly for a declaration of war against Sparta was unattainable. The arguments Philopoemen had to bring before the assembly — a local interchange of the leading groups in Sparta — seem to have been insufficient to have a decisive effect on the Achaean crowds. The policy of non-intervention in the internal faction-struggles of a neighbouring country was well-tested and had

proved rewarding to the Greeks. Philopoemen was, therefore, obliged either to await or to create a more favourable opportunity (Livy 38.31.4) for his ambitions. It took almost two years (late autumn 191 — autumn 189) before Philopoemen sensed that this opportunity had arrived, in the form of a squabble (which claimed a few unnecessary victims) in Las, a small settlement on the north-western shore of the Laconian bay (*ibid.* 31.2).

The Spartan leadership was convinced in the period following the battle of Magnesia that the Romans would not prevent them from enjoying a small favour, that of secure access to the sea. The reasons given by Livy 38.30.7 (=Polybius) for the Spartan attempt are explicitly local and economic. Even Polybius had not asserted that this Spartan endeavour was the beginning of a new persecution policy initiated by the current Spartan authorities against Spartan exiles, i.e. Philopoemen's clients, thereby provoking Philopoemen intentionally. The Spartans, acting with great caution, had sent a number of men who were instructed to penetrate undiscovered under cover of night into this small seaport (vicus; *ibid.* 31.2) and there demonstrate official Spartan presence from then on. It seems that the whole operation was planned so as to avoid bloodshed, otherwise it would have been impossible to expell them from Las by daybreak after only a "slight effort" (*ibid.* 8). These Spartan exiles, "whose residence were there," had a fair knowledge of Philopoemen's urgent desideratum, for almost two years, of harsher relations with Sparta. A joint delegation, in the name of the local population and of the Spartan exiles, was rapidly dispatched to Philopoemen, at that time the *strategos* of the Achaean League. Philopoemen immediately followed up the Las mishap by a far-reaching decree of the Achaean council against the leadership of Sparta, as the Achaeans now demanded that "the principals in and the accessories to this crime should be surrendered to the Achaeans" (*rei auctores adfinesque . . . dederentur Achaeis*, *ibid.* 38.31.2).

Phiopoemen undoubtedly calculated his political interests very shrewdly when formulating the bill he brought before the Achaean council. Indeed, the anti-Philopoemen leaders of Sparta could hardly accept the demeaning demand of Philopoemen, now in the name of the Achaean League, for their political elimination. Actions which were to lead to war between Sparta and the Achaean League seemed preferable to them. They passed a decree abrogating their alliance with the Achaean League, while still hoping to obtain the direct protection of the Roman consul and people (*ibid.* 38.31.6).

This extreme Spartan reaction is indicative of the loss of hope among the anti-Philopoemen leadership in Sparta of recruiting support for their cause from anti-Philopoemenists within the League as a whole; and equally concerning the quasi-tyrannical position Philopoemen held within that League. Yet, this twofold Spartan retort, secession and a formal quest for Roman tutelage, only played into the hand of Philopoemen. The tension having

already been artificially exacerbated by Philopoemen, he was now able easily to evoke a declaration of war against Sparta by presenting the Spartan preference as a challenge to the prestige of the Achaean League and a danger to its vital interests, and by citing the recently annexed Elis and Messenia. The immediate opening of hostilities was prevented only by the winter conditions (*ibid.* 38.32.1).

Livy's report that "all the cities which were represented at the council" (*ibid.*) approved the declaration of war arouses the question of the position taken by the rest of the cities, which clearly intentionally had not sent their ambassadors to the council. This silent opposition seems to have increased Diophanes' chances of being elected several months later, together with Lycortas, a follower of Philopoemen, to head the Achaean delegation to Rome.

The reply of the Roman consul Marcus Fulvius to the entreaties of the Spartans was deceptive and embarrassing. Fulvius, instead of receiving the Spartans *in fidem dicionemque Populi Romani* (*ibid.* 31.6), an action which Roman consuls always preferred in order to augment their *dignitas*, summoned them to a council at Elis to debate there in his presence with the Achaeans the questions in dispute between them. The Spartans, as well as Philopoemen, understood the broader implications of this unusual omission on the part of the Roman consul. They were obliged to interpret his decision as the result of a standing order of the Roman senate to the consul, forbidding the consul in charge either to undertake or to support political changes within the Greek theatre which might implicate the Romans there. The council of Elis spelled then, another political success for Philopoemen and his faction. Nevertheless, Marcus Fulvius demanded of both sides that they send ambassadors to the senate in Rome. The Achaean assembly appointed Lycortas and Diophanes to head its delegation.

No doubt, Philopoemen might have preferred to have only Lycortas leading the delegation. Such a choice on the part of the Achaeans would have underlined the support Philopoemen boasted he possessed throughout the League. The nomination of Diophanes, then, not only reflects the strength of the opposition to Philopoemen in those days, but also illustrates the views of these opponents on the whole Spartan conflict. Lycortas, acting on the instructions of Philopoemen, asked for a free hand for his faction leader in Sparta, in terms of legal rights and political justice (*ibid.* 38.32.8). An entirely different proposal was expounded before the Roman senate by Diophanes. He was in favour of entrusting the Roman senate with the adjudication of all questions in dispute between the Achaeans and the Lacedaemonians. (*ibid.* 7)[9].

[9] Impressed by the "Glaubwürdigkeit des Polybios", modern scholarship tends to paraphrase him faithfully in classifying the potentates of the Achaean League. E.G., Lehmnan, *op. cit.* (n. 2 supra) 200 and passim. Deininger, *op. cit.* (n. 3 supra) 117 and passim.

A closer consideration of the expectations of both sides leads to the conclusion that Philopoemen and his supporters adapted themselves to the new political situation without much regret, accepting both the Roman mastery over Greece and the tendencies towards disintegration introduced by the Romans. Philopoemen had only to follow in the footsteps of Aristaenos[10], the *strategos* of the Achaean League six years earlier (196-195 B.C.), who in an epoch-making speech in the Corinthian council summoned by Flamininus, had stated *ex officio* that not only were preferential or emotional connections non-existent between the Achaenas and their Greek neighbours, but, even worse, that the Achaeans hated the Aetolians as well as the Spartans though for different reasons. This mood of estrangement was Philopoemen's guide when he was deciding about Sparta. Meanwhile the anti-Philopomenists, less opportunistic, had found it much more difficult to deny their common name of Hellenes. In their view, it was rather less Hellenic to force themselves upon Sparta in the existing situation than to allow Sparta to leave the League.

It seems that this time the Roman senate had not devoted much attention to the Spartan and Achaean delegations. Even the double-headed Achaean delegation had not arouse political inquisitiveness in Rome, in the light of the new dimensions of Roman politics in the winter of 189-188 B.C. This local quarrel on the borders of Mainland Greece could not arouse serious political interest in Rome. The Senate was not likely at that particular moment to go into the matter thoroughly. The evasive reply of the Senate, although ambiguous, aimed at bringing about a standstill in the struggle between Spartan and Achaean leadership, and a sort of appeasement of both sides involved in the dispute. Yet, while the Spartans explained that *responsum perplexum* (*ibid.* 32.9) in terms favourable to themselves, and in keeping with their hopes, Philopoemen had drawn conclusions much closer to Roman political reality. He learned from the Roman answer that the Romans were not inclined in the interim to prevent him from taking decisive action against Sparta, and that they would even finally acknowledge its results. His main problem, therefore, remained how to circumvent the restraining influence of the anti-Philopoemenists within the League, that is of all those who, by a common effort, were able to elect Diophanes to head the Achaean delegation. Philopoemen decided on immediate and decisive action against Sparta in pursuance of the war declaration against Sparta still formally in effect. The results were inevitable. Livy's introductory sentence to the story of the Compasion massacre (*ibid.*) clearly indicates Philopoemen's unrestrained and tyrannical use of power against Sparta and its anti-Philopoemen leadership. This time, Philopoemen was not satisfied, as he had been four years earlier, with installing his Spartan clients in power and with formal annexation Sparta to the Achaean League.

10 Stier, *op. cit.*, 172: "Philopoemen war nicht weniger Realpolitiker als Aristaenos".

In addition to annihilating his political opponents in Sparta, he abolished every vestige of the ancient Lycurgan constitution and its traditional institutions.

This Spartan constitution, which had been a constant source of curiosity, controversy and inspiration within the political arena of Mainland Greece for centuries, was not exclusive to Sparta. It had become a typifying feature of the Greek entity as a whole. Philopoemen's abolition of the Spartan constitution was, therefore, more than the deliberate disregard by a local potentate for the Greek tradition, according to which a polis should be free to decide its own political fate and order. By his unprecedented action Philopoemen openly abjured one of the basic obligations of an honest participant in the common name of Hellenes. This violence and public denial of Greek values meant his tangible secession from all those who still aspired to maintain Greece as an entity as far as was possible under Roman lordship. It seems reasonable to state that those in Achaea who attempted to check Philopoemen's lust for war against Sparta and for its submission may be identified with the last of the Greeks. This *immodicus* and *superbus* Philopoemen[11], as he appeared against Sparta, was seen by the Romans as an obedient and submissive subordinate [12] who, as the price of his services and submission to Rome, had sought its approval for subduing his Greek neighbours[13], who were, like the "Achaeans" in whose name he acted, equally subjected to Roman rule.

The failure of nerve, which had afflicted the Achaean leadership at the end of the nineties of the second century B.C., under the heavy pressure of the Roman presence in Mainland Greece, had led this leadership to political opportunism, self-denial and alienation, thus opening the path to the summit for potentates and semi-tyrants. Freed from Greek political tradition, they easily yielded to Rome while destructively oppressing their kinsmen and ruining their common future.

Thus, those who named Philopoemen "the last of the Greeks" [14] might have been more accurate historically if they had described him differently.

11 The political figure standing behind the "power the Achaeans employed unrestrainedly and tyrannically" (Livy 38.32. 10).

12 Polyb. 39.3.8. cf. Aymard, *op. cit.*, 326; Deininger, *op. cit.*, 116. And, explicitly, Polybius in 24.11.6; "Philopoemen cordially accepted and helped to execute, without raising any objection, all requests (sc. of the Romans) which were in accordance with the law and the terms of the alliance" (LOEB trans.).

13 Even Deininger, *op. cit.*, 119 had to admit that the main field of activity of the so called ἀντερείδειν policy of Philopoemen was limited to the "Spartan problems".

14 The unidentified Roman to whom Plutarch (*Phil.* 1.4) ascribed the opinion that Philopoemen was "the last of the Greeks", undoubtedly derived his impression from writings most favourable to the latter. It is reasonable to assume that a biography of Philopoemen written by an admirer such as Polybius would have contained a similar comment. It is also clear that the Roman had not a Socrates in his mind. According to Pausanias 8.52.1, it could

be a Miltiades. Livy (39.50.10.11) tell us that Greek and Latin historians thought Philopoemen a famous general (*clarus imperator*) of equal rank with Hannibal and P. Scipio. Yet, it would have been more interesting historically to know in what terms Aristocrates of Sparta (Plu. *Phil.* 16.3), for example, described Philopoemen.

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