

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN BOEOTIA*

In this article I try to give a precise meaning to the political terms which are used in the sources, and to use those terms for an understanding of political developments. I take these developments in their historical order, and at the end of each period I assess the value of the evidence. I finish with reflection on the contributory system and the hegemony of the Thebans.

1. FROM EARLY TIMES DOWN TO 479 B.C.

Herodotus provides the earliest literary evidence. He recorded circumstances late in the sixth century which resulted in the adoption of Plataea by Athens. The initiative was taken by Thebes alone. It was the Thebans who ‘pressed the Plataeans’;¹ and when the Plataeans were accepted by the Athenians, it was the Thebans who made the attack on the Plataeans (6.108.2 and 4). As the Spartans had foreseen, that initiative spelt trouble for ‘Boeotians’ (6.108.3 *πόνους συνεστεῶτας Βοιωτοῖσι*). Arbitration was undertaken by the Corinthians. According to their ruling it was the ‘Thebans’ (not the Boeotians) ‘who should let those Boeotians be who were unwilling to subscribe to Boeotians’ (6. 108.5 *ἔάν Θηβαίους Βοιωτῶν τοὺς μὴ βουλομένους ἐς Βοιωτοὺς τελεῖν*).² At this point the Athenian troops who had been helping Plataea began to withdraw. But they were attacked by ‘Boeotians’. However, the Athenians defeated the Boeotians, adopted the Plataeans and laid down the boundary of Plataea and Hysiae with Thebes.

* The following abbreviations are used:

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| <i>AEMTh</i> | <i>Arkaialogiko Ergo ste Makedonia kai Thrake</i> (Thessaloniki). |
| Beck | H. Beck, <i>Polis und Koinon. Historia Einzelschrift</i> 114 (Stuttgart, 1997). |
| Beloch | K. J. Beloch, <i>Griechische Geschichte</i> 3 (3rd edn, Berlin, 1922). |
| Bruce | I. A. F. Bruce, <i>An Historical Commentary on the Hellenica Oxyrhynchia</i> (Cambridge, 1967). |
| Buck, <i>BBL</i> | R. J. Buck, <i>Boiotia and the Boiotian League, 423–371 B.C.</i> (Edmonton, 1994). |
| Buck, <i>HB</i> | Id., <i>A History of Boiotia</i> (Edmonton, 1979). |
| Buckler | J. Buckler, <i>The Theban Hegemony, 371–362</i> (Cambridge, 1980). |
| <i>Coll. Stud.</i> | N. G. L. Hammond, <i>Collected Studies</i> 1–4 (Hakkert, 1993–7). |
| Hansen | M. H. Hansen (ed.), <i>Sources for the Ancient Greek City-state</i> (Copenhagen, 1995). |
| <i>Hell. Oxy. (HO)</i> | B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, <i>Hellenica Oxyrhynchia</i> (Oxford, 1899). |
| Larsen | J. A. O. Larsen, <i>Representative Government in Greek and Roman History</i> (Berkeley, 1955). |
| Roesch | P. Roesch, <i>Thespies et la Confédération Béotienne</i> (Paris, 1965). |
| Seltman | G. Seltman, <i>Greek Coins</i> (London, 1933). |
| Vial | C. Vial, <i>Diodore de Sicile</i> XV (Budé edn, Paris, 1977). |

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The chronology is as in my *History of Greece to 322 B.C.* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1986). A full bibliography is provided by Buck, *BBL*, 165–73.

References to *HO* are to chapters as numbered in Bruce and *Hell. Oxy.* as cited above.

¹ Hdt. 6.108.2 *πιεζέμενοι ὑπὸ Θηβαίων*.

² The verb *τελεῖν* means to ‘pay taxes’ and so ‘to subscribe to’ or ‘belong to’ the Boeotian association (see LSJ s.v. II.1a and II.3) For taxes at a later date see *HO* 11.4 *τὰς εἰσφοράς ἐποιούντο*.

The distinction between 'Thebans' and 'Boeotians' is important.³ The Thebans clearly exercised political and military powers as the hegemonic state; and the Boeotians were the associated group with a common citizenship within which Thebes held the hegemony. The origin of these hegemonic powers was stated by Thucydides as follows. Sixty years after the fall of Troy 'Boeotians' proceeded from Thessaly to settle in the land which had been called 'Cadmeis' and 'now is called Boeotia' (1.12.3). In the last stage of the advance the Thebans expelled a mixture of peoples and founded Plataea and neighbouring places with Boeotians, who thereafter took the name 'Plataeans'. These Boeotians accepted at the start the hegemony of Thebes. It was only later that they rejected it (3.61.2 οὐκ ἡξίουσαν οὐτοί, ὥσπερ ἐτάχθη τὸ πρῶτον, ἡγεμονεύεσθαι), they alone of the Boeotians breaking the traditional relationship (ἐξω τῶν ἄλλων Βοιωτῶν παραβαίνοντες τὰ πάτρια).⁴

'Boeotians' took action only when Athenian forces had entered the conflict. The Boeotians were described as an *ethnos* c. 506 B.C. (Tod, *GHI* 1.12 = ML 15), a racially interconnected group. It was in this sense that Thucydides wrote of the very early movements of the Boeotians. In classical times the members of the group lived in a large number of independent communities, mostly small. They were associated together traditionally in forming a *συνμαχία*, 'alliance' or military coalition (Thuc. 2.2.4 κατὰ τὰ πάτρια τῶν πάντων Βοιωτῶν ξυμμαχεῖν).⁵ They did so willingly. Plataea had been willing at the time of its foundation and afterwards, until for an unknown reason it tried to withdraw. It was then that Thebes as Hegemon applied pressure; and that the Corinthians in their arbitration upheld the principle that only those who were willing should be members of the association of the Boeotians.⁶

The existence of this association is known from the coinage which bore on the

³ I disagree with the opinion of Buck (*BBL* 18) that 'Thucydides was confusing the League with Thebes' and sometimes uses Thebes 'as synonymous with the League'. He cited as an instance *Θηβαῖοι Θεσπιῶν τεῖχος περιεῖλον βουλόμενοι μὲν* . . . with the comment: 'what is really meant by Thucydides here is that the League, not just the citizens of Thebes, had long desired the demolition of the Thespian walls'. In my view Thucydides was an accurate writer and wrote with precision of meaning. Hansen (44) observed that 'Thucydides did not care much about technical terms'; for instance at 1.96 Thucydides was using literal terms which only later were to become 'technical'.

⁴ This passage is most important in considering the position of Thebes within the Boeotian association in the fourth century. For example, in 370 the Arcadians, Argives, and Eleans sent envoys to 'the Thebans' to seek an alliance and 'the Boeotians immediately led out their army' (Diod. 15.62.3-4). The approach was to Thebes as Hegemon, and the decision was that of the Boeotians. So too the Thessalians sent envoys to Thebes asking for help (Plut. *Pel.* 26.1), and subsequently 'the Boeotians invaded Thessaly' (Diod. 15.75.2). In 364 the Thessalian cities sent envoys to Thebes and the decision was taken to send 7,000 hoplites (Plut. *Pel.* 31.1-2), that is Boeotian hoplites, since Thebes alone did not have so many hoplites (see my *History of Greece* 663). The ancient sources did not always mention a preliminary approach to Thebes (e.g. Diod. 15.69.3 and 15.68.1). In his article 'Alliance and hegemony in fourth-century Greece: the case of the Theban Hegemony', *Ancient World* 5 (1982) 79-89, Buckler discussed the position of Thebes not within 'the Boeotian Confederacy' but within 'the Boeotian-Peloponnesian alliance'.

⁵ After 379 'the Boeotians gathered together and made for themselves an alliance in common' (Diod. 15.28.1 οἱ Βοιωτοὶ συνεστράφησαν καὶ κοινὴν συμμαχίαν ποιησάμενοι). The Boeotian army consisted of the Thebans and 'the rest of the allied force' (Paus. 3.9.13).

⁶ I use the term 'association', because its derivation from 'socius' preserves the sense of ἡ *συνμαχία*. In this article I avoid the terms 'league', 'federation', and 'confederacy', which have been used by Buck, Buckler, Hansen, and Roesch, because their connotations are so vague, and because they have no equivalent in the Greek text. Buckler (18) is mistaken in saying that 'the sources usually describe this new government (i.e. in 379 onwards) as a *koinon*'. The expression occurred first in Diod. 16.85.1 under the year 338/337. Roesch (72) commented on the occurrence of τὸ κοινόν in Roman times.

obverse a shield and on the reverse a mill-sail pattern with the inscription *BOI*, indicating the common citizenship. This coinage is usually dated to the period c. 550–479 B.C.⁷ The funds for the coinage were subscribed by the members of the association.⁸ The chief magistrates, acting also as commanders-in-chief, were called 'Boeotarchs'. They were mentioned as guiding the Persian forces of Mardonius in 479 (Hdt. 9.15.1). When the Boeotians decided to go to war, as against the Athenians, the troops were provided by the members.⁹ It is generally agreed, though not stated by an ancient source, that the political complexion of the association's members was oligarchic. The hegemonic state, Thebes, was ruled by an oligarchic junta at the time of the Persian invasion (Thuc. 3.62.3 *δυναστεία ὀλίγων ἀνδρῶν*).¹⁰ During this period Thebes and five other states were issuing their own coinage alongside the Boeotian coinage.¹¹ This was a sign of the autonomy of the members of the association.

What value do we attach to the literary evidence for this period? Herodotus spoke to participants in the Persian Wars. One of them was Thersander of Orchomenus in Boeotia. Herodotus cited his words in direct speech (9.16.1–5), concerning the dinner given at Thebes to Mardonius. When he was reporting the conflict between Plataea and Thebes, he cited the words of the Lacedaemonians in direct speech (6.108.2–3). The implication is that Herodotus heard this from a Lacedaemonian informant. On other occasions he obtained information personally from Lacedaemonians (3.55.2 and 6.52.1). Thus we may accept the account of the conflict between Thebes and Plataea as having been derived from participants by Herodotus, and therefore as factually correct.

In his opening chapters Thucydides showed a remarkable knowledge of the earliest period of Greek history.¹² It was based on his understanding of epic poems and of oral tradition. Of the Boeotians he noted that at the time of the Trojan War their ships were manned by 120 men (1.10.4), and that they lived partly in Thessaly and partly in Boeotia. Then sixty years after the Trojan War the bulk of them were driven out of Arne in Thessaly and settled in 'what is now Boeotia but had been previously Cadmeis' (1.12.3). Thucydides drew on this knowledge when he composed the speech of the Thebans at the trial of Plataeans in 427 B.C. He referred then, as we have seen,

⁷ Seltman (54–7); Kraay preferred c. 525 in *JHS* 84 (1964), 80.

⁸ In *HO* 11.4 the peoples of the eleven divisions made financial contributions (*εἰσφοράς*).

⁹ *Ibid.*: each division was under order to provide 1,000 hoplites and 100 cavalrymen.

¹⁰ LSJ s.v. translates *δυναστεία* as 'power, lordship, domination', that is here 'of a few men'. The version of S. Hornblower in his *Commentary on Thucydides* I.457 'a small family clique' imports the idea of 'family' which is not in the Greek words. He cites Aristotle, *Politics* 1292b7 and 1293a32 in which a hereditary system of close oligarchy is called a *δυναστεία*; but this is an instance and not a definition of *δυναστεία*. In the present case 'the few men' were 'the Medizers' of Herodotus, whose actions and thoughts were reported in the form of a narrative and a speech (9.86–7). In the course of the speech the leader of the few, Timegenides, claimed that they had acted 'with the community'. Hornblower accepted the claim as a fact, and he preferred it to the statement of Thucydides, which occurs in the speech of the Thebans (3.62.3). However, Herodotus was not reporting an actual speech delivered in 479 B.C. He was putting in the form of a speech a self-justifying claim, such as is made by any junta. Thucydides knew the work of Herodotus. He took the opportunity to put in the mouth of the Thebans, speaking in 427 B.C., a much fuller justification of their behaviour under the junta in the Persian War (3.62.3–4); and that speech, in the Thucydidean manner, was keeping 'as close as possible to the general sense of what was actually said' (1.22.1). My conclusion is that it was the close oligarchy alone which Medized, and that they did so not with the agreement of the community.

¹¹ Seltman (56), naming Haliartus, Aulis, Mycalessus, Coronea, and Pharae.

¹² In *CQ* 34 (1940), 49 I argued that Thucydides made a special study of early Greek history before he began work on the Peloponnesian War.

to the Theban foundation of Plataea late in the occupation of Boeotia and to the traditional acceptance of Theban hegemony. He did so because he believed the traditions to be true. His judgement should be respected.

2. FROM 479 B.C. TO 386 B.C.

When the Persians withdrew from Greece, the Thebans were compelled by the victorious Greek states to surrender their leaders (the extreme oligarchs) and to lose their position of hegemony in Boeotia (Hdt. 9.86–8; Diod. 11.81.1–2). Plataea as the guardian of the Greek dead was treated as inviolate and so independent by the victors after the battle of Plataea. It was only in 457 B.C. that the Lacedaemonians reconstituted the association of Boeotians and ‘the entire hegemony’ for Thebes (Diod. 11.81.3), and they obtained the support of the ‘Boeotians’ in the battle of Tanagra in that year (Paus. 1.29.9). But the revival was short-lived. In the same year the Athenians defeated the Boeotians decisively and kept control of the country for ten years, 457–447 B.C. During this time the Athenian policy was to divide and rule. The association was disbanded, Thebes lost her hegemony, and ‘democracies’ were imposed or developed in place of the oligarchies.¹³ It is probable that Athens made the Asopus river the boundary between Plataea (with her associated places) and Thebes, as she had done in the late sixth century.

In 446 B.C. the exiles from Boeotia and other parts of central Greece defeated the Athenians and forced them to evacuate ‘all Boeotia’ (Thuc. 1.113.3; Diod. 12.6.2)—words which include Plataea and its neighbours. For the period from 446 B.C. to 386 B.C. the Boeotians maintained their independence. The organization of the country was described by the Oxyrhynchus Historian in an important passage. To what period was he referring? The description was appended to the events of 396–395. It was introduced with emphasis on ‘at that time’ (*HO* 11. 2 *τότε . . . τότε*). Imperfect tenses were used; and there was a contrast with a later present situation in the remark: ‘they were continuing this organization of their individual affairs’ (11.3 *τὰ μὲν ἴδια διετέλουν οὕτω διοικούμενοι*). Since the major change came in 386 with the disbanding of ‘the Boeotians’, the situation the Historian was describing did in fact last until 386, and the contrasted present situation was presumably after 379, when Thebes won its independence and reconstituted the Boeotian association. He does not, however, indicate when the period began. It is likely to have been from 446 B.C. onwards.¹⁴

The description begins with the political system in the members of the association. ‘In each of the cities four councils had been established.’ Membership of these was permissible ‘not for all the citizens but for those who were in possession of a certain amount of property’ (*τοῖς κεκτημένοις πλεῖθος τι χρημάτων*). This property was assessed in land. Moreover, anyone who had not abstained from trade for ten years

¹³ Buck (*HB* 147) rejects the statement of Diodorus 11.83.1 that ‘Myronides became master of the cities of Boeotia except Thebes’. But Diodorus was justified. For whereas Myronides imposed ‘democracies’ elsewhere, the democracy at Thebes seems to have arisen spontaneously according to Aristotle, *Pol.* 1302b31.

¹⁴ Bruce (4 and 103) maintained that the constitution described in *HO* 11.2 as *τότε* began in 447/446 and was dissolved in 386, and that the Oxyrhynchus Historian composed his history perhaps as early as 374 and certainly before 346. In that case the present situation for the Oxyrhynchus Historian was that which commenced after 379/378. Whether he went on to describe that present situation is an open question. Buck, *HB* 154, attached less importance to the year 446 B.C. as the beginning of a new era in Boeotia.

was not eligible for the full franchise of Thebes (Arist. *Pol.* 1278a25, 1321a29). Where was the property-bar drawn? In other oligarchic states the bar was usually at the level of the hoplite census, and this can be inferred in the case of Thebes in the words 'all Thebans, both cavalrymen and hoplites' (X. *H.G.* 5.4.9 *re* 379 B.C.).¹⁵ The four councils in each city operated in turn, one being probouleutic and the other three deciding on its recommendations. Their decisions were binding on the community.

The political organization of 'the Boeotians' was as follows. 'All the inhabitants of the land were divided into eleven parts, and each of them used to provide from itself one Boeotarch' (*HO* 11.3). In addition, each used to provide from itself sixty councillors (11.4). Although the Historian did not say so, a statement by Thucydides indicates that the 660 councillors acted as four councils in the same way as the four councils in each city, and that their decisions were sovereign. For in writing of 421 B.C. Thucydides mentioned 'the four councils of the Boeotians which hold all the sovereignty' (5.38.2). These councils met at the Cadmea of Thebes. Each part of the Boeotians provided pay for the councillors and other funds; federal judges; and a prescribed military force of 100 cavalrymen and 1000 hoplites. It was a fully integrated association (*HO* 11.4).

Of the eleven Boeotarchs, four were provided by 'Thebans' from themselves,¹⁶ two being for the city and two for a group of lesser cities. I shall come to a description of these lesser cities in the next paragraph. In *HO* 11.3 two Boeotarchs were provided by Orchomenians and Hysiaeans; two by Thespians together with Eutresis and Thisbae; one by Tanagraeans; one in turn by each of three peoples (Haliartians, Lebadeans, and Coroneans); and one similarly by another set of three (Acraephnion, Copae, and Chaeronea). Within Boeotia there were many more than the thirteen cities that the Historian named.¹⁷ How did these other cities participate in politics and make their contributions of men, money, and judges to the Boeotian state? The answer must be that they were associated with the named cities, even as some lesser cities were associated with Thebes and were represented by two Boeotarchs, being Theban citizens.

The Historian reported two stages in the history of the lesser states which came to be associated with Thebes. 'Earlier' (*πρότερον*) 'Plataeans, Scolus, Erythrae, Scaphae and the other places were living as fellow-citizens with them', i.e. with Plataeans (*HO* 11.3 *ἐκείνους*). Thus the common citizenship which they shared was as 'Plataeans'.¹⁸

¹⁵ That the property-bar for the franchise was drawn at the hoplite census was regarded as 'not unreasonable' by Bruce (104, 158); so also Beck (91 with n. 39). In X. *H.G.* 5.4.9 the following sentence begins with *οἱ πολῖται*. Light-armed troops evidently did not qualify.

¹⁶ In *HO* 11.3 the middle voice *συνεβάλλοντο* indicates that the Thebans provided 'from themselves'; so too *παρέχοντο* and *παρίεχτο* in 11.3 and 11.4. The significance of the middle voice was not appreciated by Bruce (105, 161) when he thought of two Boeotarchs being 'sent from Plataea'. Roesch (96) seems to be of my opinion.

¹⁷ In the Homeric Catalogue twenty-nine places were named for the Boiotoi, more than for any other region (*Il.* 2.494–516). Diodorus 15.20.1 under 382/381 referred to Boeotia's *πόλεων πλῆθος* and 15.26.1 to the number of its men being greater than in any other Greek state (*πλήθει τῶν ἀνδρῶν*). Here *poleis* means not city-states but independent communities. Arcadia too was remarkable for its large number of communities (Paus. 8.27.3–4). Both areas had summer pastures in nearby mountains and winter pastures in swampy ground which suited small communities of transhumant pastoralists. Evidence of such pastoralism by Boeotians is in Sophocles, *OT* 1134–9 and in *HO* 13.3. For the very numerous small communities in Epirus, see my article in *ICS* 16 (1991), 83–92. 'The *koina* of Epirus and Macedonia'. Those who maintained that Boeotia had only some ten *poleis* have been convincingly refuted by Hansen (18ff.).

¹⁸ In *HO* 11.3 *πρότερον μὲν ἐκείνους συμπολιτευομένων* the word *ἐκείνους* refers to the only

The middle voice of the verb indicated that they were willing fellow-citizens in this sympolity. This system was presumably in operation before the reorganization of Plataea by Thebes in 427 B.C.

That there were other such sympolities is indicated by the precise diction of the Historian. For just as he used the personal 'Plataeans' as leaders of places, so also he wrote of 'Thespians' together with two places (Eutresis and Thisbae). In other words the common citizenship of Thespians and the peoples of these two places was Thespian. Similarly I take it that 'Orchomenians', for instance, meant peoples with a common citizenship as such. On the other hand, where the Historian used the place-name (e.g. Scolus or Chaeronea), he meant that place by itself alone. I see no other explanation for the clear distinction in the diction used by the Historian.¹⁹

We must now consider the second stage (τότε). 'Then they were contributing to Thebes' (τότε δὲ συντελούντων εἰς τὰς Θήβας). I translate *συντελούντων* with the literal meaning of *συντελεῖν* (LSJ s.v. II.2).²⁰ What were they contributing? The Historian does not tell us, but we may be sure that these contributions included men for training at Thebes, and contributions of money for their upkeep there (analogous on the federal level to money for the upkeep of the councillors). There is no suggestion that this was a compulsory, enforced relationship.²¹

personal precedent. The word *συμπολιτεύω* means to 'live as fellow-citizens' (LSJ s. v.), and the shared citizenship is indicated as 'Plataean' by the additional word *ἐκείνοις*. Thus a citizen of Scaphae could call himself both 'Scapheus' and 'Plataeus'. A similar sympolity had Thespian as the common citizenship (*SEG* 26.475 'the Thespians and those with them', and *HO* 11.3 'Thespians with Eutresis and Thisbae'). The famous example in fourth-century Greece was in Chalcidice, where many *poleis* were induced to 'live as fellow-citizens' with a common citizenship as 'Chalcideis' (X. *H.G.* 5.2.12 *συμπολιτεύειν*; Tod, *GHI* 111); and the situation in Epirus was even more remarkable (see the preceding note). It is necessary to stress the meaning of the word. For it is often misunderstood. Buck, *HB* took it to mean 'united with them', and Hansen (28) wrote of Scaphae 'being subdued by Plataea'. Roesch (33, n. 2) treated *sympoliteia* as synonymous with *synoikia*. So too did Buck, *BBL* 120, comparing the situation in Boeotia to that in Attica; but it is a false comparison since local councils were abolished in Attica (Thuc. 2.15.3) but continued in Boeotia (*HO* 11.2).

¹⁹ This distinction seems not to have been commented on hitherto.

²⁰ I keep the sense of *σύν* and *τελέω* in my translation 'to contribute' (as in Thuc. 2.15.2; so LSJ s.v. II.2); the compound has to be contrasted with *ὑποτελεῖν* and *ὑποτελής*, which have the sense of 'subjection' (as in Thuc 3.46.2, 5.111.4). The noun *συντέλεια* sometimes means the members of a contributing group, just as *συμμαχία* may stand for 'the allies' as in Tod, *GHI* 27 = *ML* 32. This is so in a dedication c. 300 B.C. in Macedonia to *Μητρὶ θεῶν καὶ συντελείᾳ* with figurines of the contributing deities (*AEMTh* 10A [1996], 44 with plate 1), and in the Roman period in an inscription recording the Thessalian 'contribution' *συντέλεια* to the Macedonian *koinon* (L. Gounaropoulou and M. B. Hatzopoulos, *Ἐπιγραφές κάτω Μακεδονίας* 1 (Athens, 1998), 188–9. A sacrifice and 'services' are similarly 'contributed' (Roesch, *Études béotiennes*, 105; M. B. Hatzopoulos, *Meletemata* 22.2, no. 39, line 12). The two meanings were correctly given in 1977 by Vial (137) as contributions and 'groupe de contribuables', and with accompanying arguments by Beck (208–10) in 1997. However, McKechnie and Kern in their translation (83) in 1988 rendered the phrase 'at that time subject to Thebes'. Hansen (23–4) in 1995 wrote of small states 'being subsumed' or 'subordinated' to a larger state (so also Buck, *BBL* 107). And Beck (208) wrote of the 'syntelie-Herrschaft'. In his extensive study 'The fate of Thespieae during the Theban Hegemony', *Athenaeum* 64 (1986), 321–41, C. J. Tuplin held that 'the implications of *synteleia* remain uncertain' (324); that 'Thespieae and Tanagra were (more or less) incorporated into the Theban State' (322); and that they were 'from some point(s) of view subsumed' (339 endnote).

²¹ An advantage for a contributing small state was that it enjoyed the protection of a powerful state such as Thebes or Thespieae. It was this advantage which led the 'allies' of Athens to contribute ships or money (Thuc. 1.96.1). A similar system operated in Macedonia, where small communities 'participated on equal terms' with a larger state (M. B. Hatzopoulos, *Meletemata* 22.1 [Athens, 1996], 71).

My interpretation of the Historian's account receives some confirmation from other pieces of literary evidence. The common citizenship 'Plataeans' is seen in the naming of the territory south of the Asopus, including Hysiae, Erythrae, and Scolus, as 'Plataeis' (Paus. 9.2.1, 9.4.4). So too 'the Thespian land' included Siphae and Leuctra (Thuc. 4.76.3; X. *H.G.* 6.4.4), and 'the Haliartian land' included Medeon, Ocalea, and Onchestus (Strabo 410 and 412 fin.). 'The land around Tanagra' comprised a group of four villages, named by Strabo (405 fin. τῆς τετρακωμίας τῆς περὶ Τάναγρον). There is also confirmation of a contributory system in the remark of Thucydides that 'Chaeronea contributes to Orchomenus' (4.76.3).²²

Thucydides' account of the disposition of the Boeotians in the Battle of Delium in 424 B.C. provides an example of the military system outlined by the Oxyrhynchus Historian. There were two Boeotarchs 'from Thebes' (4.91). These were evidently the Historian's 'two on behalf of the city' (*HO* 11.3). They and their Thebans were on the right wing of the Boeotians, holding the place by virtue of Thebes' hegemony. Alongside them on the right wing were 'those in the same units with them'.²³ They were evidently commanded by two Boeotarchs in charge of 'those contributing to Thebes' (*HO* 11.3). On the left wing were three contingents (Thespians, Tanagraeans, and Orchomenians); and as we see from the Historian they were under four Boeotarchs, since the Thespians had two and the others one each (*HO* *ibid.*). The centre was occupied by three contingents (Haliartians, Coroneaeans, and Copaeans-with-others-beside-the-lake) evidently under the command of three Boeotarchs. The Oxyrhynchus Historian mentioned these three places with a different form of command. But it is clear that in the Battle of Delium the centre was commanded by three Boeotarchs. For there were eleven Boeotarchs in command of the Boeotians (Thuc. 4.91). It is not to be supposed that the numerous other cities in Boeotia did not send troops. Indeed Thucydides said expressly that the Boeotians came 'from all the cities' (4.91). The troops of the lesser cities were evidently under the command of the named cities. There are other examples of the system of command. In 431 B.C., when the Thebans alone attacked Plataea, they were commanded by two Boeotarchs (Thuc. 2.2.1), evidently those 'of the city'. And in 414 B.C. the Boeotians sent to Syracuse Thespians, Thebans, and Plataeans (7.25.3, 7.57.5) under the command of one Thespian and two Thebans (7.19.3), one of the latter being presumably in command of the Plataeans 'contributing to Thebes' (*HO* 11.3).

The exercise of Thebes' hegemony is seen in Thucydides' account of the Battle of Delium. Of the eleven Boeotarchs, ten were unwilling to engage the Athenians in battle, but one wished to do so. He was Pagondas, one of the two Boeotarchs provided 'from Thebes' (4.91), and it was his day of 'hegemony',²⁴ that is of the operational command (this was evidently vested in Thebes and rotated day by day between the two Theban Boeotarchs). As commander-in chief on that day, Pagondas addressed the Boeotian troops, contingent by contingent, and persuaded them to engage in battle. 'In haste he led them' towards the enemy; 'for it was indeed already late in the day'.²⁵

²² Thucydides was explaining why there were men 'from Orchomenus' in Chaeronea. The contributory relationship evidently included soldiers. In 395 Chaeronea was no longer a contributing state (*HO* 11.3).

²³ Thuc. 4.93.4 οἱ ξύμμοροι αὐτοῖς. The μόρα was a unit (like a battalion), and men of lesser states fought alongside Theban hoplites.

²⁴ The Greek texts are βουλευτῶν ἐκ θηβῶν and ἡγεμονίας.

²⁵ Thuc. 4.93.1 ἡδὴ γὰρ καὶ τῆς ἡμέρας ὄψε ἦν. Pagondas acted 'in haste'. The battle was fought in daylight, and night fell in time for many Athenians to escape (νυκτὸς ἐπιλαβούσης).

In this way he achieved his purpose before his day of command expired. From this account we see that as Hegemon, Thebes had exceptionally strong powers.

The coinage of the period 446–386 B.C. shows the influence of the Boeotian association. For the Boeotian shield, as an emblem of the association, appeared on the obverse of almost all coinages from 446 onwards. Three cities issued their own coinages from the late fifth century, and some other cities soon followed suit. The three were Thebes, Tanagra, and Thespieae.²⁶

The Peloponnesian War brought an increase of strength to Boeotia and especially to Thebes. In 427 B.C., when the bulk of the population of Plataea had fled to Attica, Thebes razed the site and confiscated the territory of what was still called Plataea (Thuc. 3.68.3). The population of Thebes doubled, because the inhabitants of un-walled cities, being exposed to Athenian raids, moved into the city for the sake of protection (*HO* 12.3 *συνωκίσθησαν*).²⁷ Among them were the inhabitants of Erythrae, Scaphae, and Scolus, which were already ‘contributing to Thebes’; and no doubt the others (Aulis, Schoenus, and Potniae were named) did likewise.

In the interval between the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404 B.C. and 386 B.C. the anti-Spartan group of oligarchic leaders in Thebes gained the upper hand and led the Boeotians into the Boeotian War (Diod 14.81.3) and the Corinthian War against Sparta (*HO* 13.1, 13.4). The increase in the power of the Boeotians was already alarming its ally Athens, when the king of Persia and Sparta proposed the terms of a general peace in Greece in 386 B.C.

The literary evidence we have cited for this period is certainly dependable. Herodotus and Thucydides consulted contemporaries of events in the fifth century, and they themselves were contemporary witnesses in many cases. Diodorus drew on Thucydides and other fifth-century writers. The Oxyrhynchus Historian gave a factual account of Asia Minor and of Boeotia which was based on personal knowledge and accurate observation. If he completed his history at the latest before the end of the Third Sacred War, as is generally supposed,²⁸ he was conversant with the situation in Boeotia in the last years before 386 B.C.

3. IN 386 B.C.

The terms of the proposed general peace were that all states, both small and great, were to be autonomous, and that any dissentient state would be attacked by Persia and by any willing states. When Thebes claimed the right to accept the terms ‘on behalf of all Boeotians’, its claim was rejected, and under Agesilaus’ threat of war it and the other Boeotian cities had to accept the proposals individually. Thus, as Xenophon expressed it, ‘the Thebans let the Boeotian cities be autonomous’ (*H.G.* 5.1.33 *αὐτονόμους ἀφέντες τὰς Βοιωτίας πόλεις*).

On what grounds may Thebes have been accused of infringing the autonomy of the Boeotian cities? According to contemporary political theory, the existence of the Boeotian association and of a hegemonic state within it was consistent with the autonomy of the members, as we see in the cases of Athens and Sparta with their

²⁶ Seltman (156 with plate xxxiii 1–6). Hansen (20–1) gives the recent evidence for the dating of these so-called ‘autonomous coinages’.

²⁷ The passive voice is used because they were forced to synoecize through their fear of Athens.

²⁸ Bruce (4–5) concluded that the *HO* was composed perhaps as early as 384 and certainly before ‘the conclusion of the Third Sacred War in 346’. Modern opinion accepts the second date, e.g. in *OCD*² 766 and *OCD*³ 1089.

associations, which were also called 'alliances'.²⁹ What was exceptional about the situation in Boeotia was that the hegemonic powers of Thebes were so overriding, as exercised for instance by Pagondas in 424 B.C., and that the contributory system which Thebes was applying so widely was giving her an unrivalled military strength within the association. In 395 she had the ability to control Orchomenus in some way; for in that year Lysander 'caused the Orchomenians to revolt from the Thebans' (X. *H.G.* 3.5.6 ἀπέστησε). He went on to persuade the Haliartians 'to revolt and become autonomous' (3.5.18 ἀφίστασθαι καὶ αὐτονόμους γίνεσθαι); but there were some Theban troops inside the city, and they staved Lysander off until help came from Thebes itself.³⁰ Agesilaus had a personal reason for his enmity towards the Boeotian association, in that the Boeotarchs had torn his offerings from the altar at Aulis in 396 (X. *H.G.* 3.4.4; Plut. *Ages.* 6.6).³¹ But his purpose in insisting on the autonomy of the Boeotian cities was not to dissolve the Boeotian association but to weaken the power of the Thebans (Plut. *Ages.* 23.3 ὅπως . . . ἀσθενέστεροι γίνωνται).

4. FROM 386 B.C. TO 371 B.C.

Under the terms of the King's Peace the hegemony of Thebes within the Boeotian association and its contributory system were both annulled. Each city in Boeotia was henceforth autonomous. One such city was Plataea. Its population was increased by exiles returning from Attica, and its walls were rebuilt. These Plataeans were hostile to Thebes and friendly to Athens. Orchomenus too was hostile to Thebes; for the Orchomenians had fought alongside the Lacedaemonians against the Thebans at Coronea in 394 B.C. (X. *H.G.* 4.3.16–18; Plut. *Ages.* 18.1).

In the years after 386 B.C. Plataea was one of the Boeotian cities that marked their independence by issuing a coinage in their own names. The Boeotian shield was on the obverse, and each city placed its own emblem on the reverse.³² Their independence seemed to be further guaranteed when the Spartans occupied the Cadmea of Thebes with a garrison in 382. This came about through the bitter strife between the rival cliques of oligarchic leaders in Thebes (X. *H.G.* 5.2.25); for the pro-Spartan clique opened the gate to a passing Lacedaemonian army, and of the anti-Spartan clique 300 fled to Athens (5.2.31). Pro-Spartan cliques seized power in the cities around Thebes, including Thespieae, and also in Tanagra (5.4.46 δυναστεῖαι; 5.4.49 for Tanagra).

The tide turned in December 379 B.C. A small number of the anti-Spartan clique in Athens returned secretly to Thebes and raised the people in revolt. The Spartan commander in the Cadmea sent to Plataea and Thespieae for help. The Plataeans set out, but they were defeated by the Theban cavalry; and the Spartan commander evacuated the Cadmea on condition of a safe conduct for himself and his troops. In 378 and 377 B.C. large Lacedaemonian armies invaded Boeotia, failed to take Thebes, which was supported by Athens, but overran the rest of Boeotia. In 376 B.C. the Lacedaemonians were unable to carry the southern passes and switched their forces to warfare at sea against Athens. 'The Thebans were campaigning boldly against the neighbouring cities and were regaining control of them' (X. *H.G.* 5.4.63

²⁹ In them the Hegemon was named first (Thuc. 1.97.1; Tod, *GHI* 27 = M–L 36). For the Boeotian 'alliance', see Thuc. 2.2.4 ξυμμαχεῖν and Diod. 15.28.1 κοινὴν συμμαχίαν ποιησάμενοι.

³⁰ Thebes was evidently acting as Hegemon in these cases.

³¹ The Boeotarchs were acting as officials of 'the Boeotians'; for they were upholding τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰ πάτρια Βοιωτῶν according to Plutarch loc. cit.

³² Seltman (158) and Hansen (20–1).

πάλιν ἀνελάμβανον). 'The Boeotians boldly clubbed together, made a common alliance for themselves, and assembled a considerable force' (Diod. 15.28.1 under 377/376 κοινήν συμμαχίαν ποιησάμενοι). The two operations were separate. The Thebans were rebuilding and extending the contributory system which made them very powerful; and the association of Boeotians, having Thebes as their hegemonic state, was re-forming gradually. Force was used to expel the Lacedaemonian troops which had ensconced themselves in some states and were supported in them by pro-Spartan juntas. For instance, the Thebans 'compelled the Thespians and the Tanagraeans to contribute to Thebes' (Isoc. 14.9 συντελεῖν εἰς τὰς Θήβας ἀναγκάζειν).³³ By 374 the only Lacedaemonian base in Boeotia was at Orchomenus.

The increase in the power of Thebes alarmed Athens as much as Sparta: Thebes' contributory system was interpreted as a form of subjugation. As Xenophon expressed it, 'the Thebans subdued the cities in Boeotia' (*H.G.* 6.1.1 κατεστρέψαντο), and Isocrates wrote of the Thebans' harsh treatment of some Boeotians and of their attempt 'to rule' the country (14.35 ἄρχειν). In 374 Athens and Sparta agreed to a peace on the status quo. They refused to treat Thebes as a third party (Isoc. 14.37); it had to accept the peace as one of Athens' Allies. However, the peace was aborted by Athens. In 373 the Boeotarchs, as commanders of the association of Boeotians, made a surprise attack on Plataea, which as an ally of Athens was said to be asking for Athenian troops, and expelled all Plataeans from Boeotia (Diod. 15.46.5). The territory of Plataea was handed over to the Thebans, who let it out as pastureland, and the walls on the site were razed (Isoc. 14.7; Diod. 15.46.6). The Plataean refugees were accepted by Athens and accorded some rights. Thespieae too was attacked, and pro-Spartan Thespians were expelled.³⁴

In 371 B.C. the Thebans were applying their contributory system to the whole of Boeotia. This was stated clearly by Diodorus in two passages. 'The Thebans were organizing all Boeotia under the contributory system of the Thebans' (15.38.3 τὴν Βοιωτίαν ἄπασαν ὑπὸ τὴν τῶν Θηβαίων συντέλειαν ταττόντων). 'The Thebans were bringing Boeotia under one contributory system . . . they were holding Boeotia together in the single contributory system to themselves' (15.50.4 τὴν Βοιωτίαν ὑπὸ μίαν ἄγοντες συντέλειαν . . . συνέιχον τὴν Βοιωτίαν ἐν τῇ καθ' αὐτοὺς μᾶ συντελείᾳ).³⁵

In 371 B.C. Sparta and Athens, with the support of Persia, held a peace conference. On the first day a peace was agreed on the basis that all states, small and great, should be autonomous. Oaths to observe this peace were taken with Thebes appearing as an ally of Athens. On the second day the Theban delegates asked to substitute the word 'Boeotians' for 'Thebans' in their oath, thereby asserting their right to speak on behalf

³³ The Loeb translation of συντελεῖν, 'to submit to the hegemony of Thebes', is incorrect. The terms for 'submission' to a hegemon are ἔπεισθαι (Plut. *Pei.* 24.3) and ἀκολουθεῖν (as in X. *H.G.* 6.5.23 ἡγεῖσθαι . . . ἡκολουθῶν).

³⁴ Thespias was 'pillaged' in 374/373 (Diod. 15.46.6; cf. Isoc. 6.27 and X. *H.G.* 6.3.5); for the expulsion see X. *H.G.* 6.3.1 and Diod. 15.51.3. The city provided a contingent of Thespians to the Boeotian army at Leuctra; but as he distrusted them Epaminondas let them go home before the battle (Paus. 9.13.8).

³⁵ The Loeb translation of these passages takes συντέλεια to mean 'confederacy' and makes 'the confederacy subject to the Thebans'. So also Buck, *BBL* 102 'to set all Boeotia under the federation of the Thebans', and further on pp. 107, 118. Vial (48) translates the passage as 'ils réduisaient la Béotie tout entière à n'être qu'une ligue tributaire de Thèbes', and (64) 'une ligue qui leur payait tribut'; and Roesch sometimes writes 'ligue Thebaine'. The term 'league' is extremely vague; for there is little in common between the Boeotian League, the Peloponnesian League and the League of Nations. LSJ⁹ does not include 'league' as a meaning of συντέλεια.

of the Boeotian association. The request was refused 'because all the Greeks wished the oaths and the treaty to be concluded city by city' (Diod. 15.50.4). Since Thebes persisted, she was excluded from the treaty. At the time there was a large Lacedaemonian army in Phocis, which was ordered to invade at once and force Thebes to submit. The force reached Leuctra, some ten miles from Thebes, before its advance was opposed. The Theban army, commanded by its own Boeotarch, Epaminondas, was supported by such Boeotians as there had been time to conscript (Diod. 15.52.2). Although Epaminondas was only one of the seven Boeotarchs at Leuctra, he alone held the operational command on the critical day, as Pagondas had done at Delium. By concentrating his Theban hoplites against the Spartan troops of the enemy right wing, he overwhelmed them before the rest of the line could engage (Plut. *Pel.* 23). Of the 700 Spartans, 400 were killed (X. *H.G.* 6.4.15). The victory proved to be decisive. The Theban system of contribution was vindicated, and the Theban hegemony of the Boeotian association was justified.

Most of the literary evidence for sections 3 and 4 is provided by contemporaries: Xenophon, who had special knowledge of the Spartan side; Isocrates, who wrote a year or two after the destruction of Plataea and was informed by Plataean refugees in Attica; and Ephorus, as the probable source used by Plutarch for the Battle of Leuctra. As they were writing for contemporaries it is certain that they were correct on the facts, even if their interpretation was affected by personal sympathies. Diodorus presents something of a problem. He described a general peace twice in very similar terms: at 15.38 under his Attic year 375/374, and at 15.50 under 372/371. As Beloch showed,³⁶ Diodorus misplaced his account at 15.38 and misapplied it to the abortive peace of 374 B.C. He then repeated the account, applying it correctly to 371 B.C. The repetition does not affect the value of the account, which is particularly important in mentioning the contributory system of the Thebans.

5. FROM 371 B.C. TO 362 B.C.

After the battle, Orchomenus was abandoned by the Spartans. The Thebans intended to destroy the city. But on the advice of Epaminondas 'they placed the Orchomenians in the category of the allies', thereby making them members of the association but not granting them Boeotian citizenship.³⁷ It was probably due to Epaminondas that the Phocians were made 'friends' at this time (Diod. 15.57.2), whereas later they were made subject to the rule of the Boeotians (X. *H.G.* 6.5.23 *ὑπήκοοι γεγεννημένοι*).

³⁶ Beloch 3.1.156, n. 1 'Diod. XV 38 verwechselt diesen Frieden (in 374) mit dem drei Jahre später vor Leuktra abgeschlossenen Vertrage (Diod. XV 50).' So also Vial (47, n. 1) 'le récit de la paix de 371 (50.4–51.1) est un doublet de celui de la paix de 375 (38.1–39.2)'; see also 64, n. 1. Buck (*BBL* 103) expresses this differently as 'Diodorus is anticipating . . . what really happened in 371'. In *The Craft of the Ancient Historian*, ed. J. W. Eadie and J. Ober (New York, 1985), A. Andrewes tries to explain how Diodorus erred through misunderstanding two supposed passages of Ephorus. It is an interesting speculation; but Vial (x) maintains that Diodorus was using 'au moins deux sources distinctes' for Greek affairs in Book 15.

³⁷ This is Buck's translation (*BBL* 105) of the text with the reading of F: Diod. 15.57.1 *εἰς τὴν τῶν συμμάχων χώραν κατέταξαν*. He cites X. *Anab.* 5.6.1 *ἐν ἀνδραπόδων χώρα ἐσόμεθα* as a parallel. If one takes *χώραν* literally as 'territory', the meaning is much the same; for Minyan Orchomenus' territory would cease to be Minyan and become Boeotian and so an integral part of Boeotia. Vial (146) preferred the reading of other MSS *πόλιν*. He then emended it to *πολιτείαν* and argued that the Orchomenians were given the political rights of the Boeotian association. I prefer the reading of F.

The organization of Boeotian affairs which brought victory in 371 B.C. enabled the Boeotians to be the dominant military power of the Greek mainland for the next nine years. We must therefore begin by describing that organization in detail.

The full franchise of the Boeotians seems to have been limited to those in possession of landed property of the hoplite census and above, as it had been in the past on my interpretation of *HO* 11.2. This limitation will have applied also to the citizenship of Thebes and of the other Boeotian cities. In the case of Thebes it is noteworthy that in the struggle for liberation in December 379 B.C. 'all Thebans' were defined as 'both cavalrymen and hoplites' and were called 'the citizens' in the next sentence (*X. H.G.* 5.4.9). During the ascendancy of the Boeotians similar associations to theirs were formed in the Peloponnese. 'The Arcadians' were organized on 'one contributory system' and had an assembly of 10,000 citizens (*Diod.* 15.59.1). This number was appropriate for the cavalrymen and the hoplites of Arcadia, of which the total adult male members may have been some 30,000.³⁸

The narrow oligarchic system of the four councils of the Boeotians and of the member-cities may have been superseded in 386 B.C., but what followed was even narrower, namely pro-Spartan juntas in 386 to 379. There was continual strife in the Boeotian association and in the member-cities between two cliques of wealthy leaders (*HO* 12.1–2 *ἐταιρείας*). Members of one clique were called 'Laconizers' because they looked to Sparta for support. Members of the other clique were called Atticizers, 'not that they took concern for the Athenians' (*οὐ μὴν ἐφρόντιζον τῶν Ἀθηναίων*), but because Athens gave them asylum. In the case of Thebes it was 300 members of this clique who fled to Athens in 382 B.C., and it was some of them who returned secretly to Thebes and liberated the city in 379 B.C. One of the liberators was Pelopidas. He was said to be a member of 'the clique which was thought to be freedom-loving and populist'³⁹ (*Plut. Pel.* 5.1 *τὴν ἐταιρείαν . . . φιλελεύθερον ἅμα καὶ δημοτικὴν εἶναι δοκοῦσαν*). It was this clique which abolished the narrow oligarchic system and put in its place a populist form of administration both in the Boeotian association and in the member-cities.

This populist form of administration is shown decisively in three inscriptions, which are dated c. 365 B.C.⁴⁰ They record decisions of the demos of the Boiotoi, that is of the citizen body of Boiotoi in an assembly. It was this assembly which was called 'the meeting of the Boiotoi' by Diodorus (15.80.2 *συναχθεῖσης τῆς κοινῆς συνόδου τῶν Βοιωτῶν . . . οἱ Βοιωτοί*).⁴¹ In the inscriptions the executive officials of the Boiotoi were seven Boeotarchs, their names being recorded. The same number was given by Diodorus 15.52.1 and 15.53.3. There was now a single currency, sometimes with the inscription *BOIO*. The initial letters of the name of a mint-official appeared

³⁸ Opinions are divided on this matter. Buck (*BBL* 106) and Buckler (44) believe that the citizenship was given to all free adult males in Boeotia in imitation of Athenian democracy.

³⁹ I translate *δημοτικός* as 'populist', in contrast to *δημοκρατικός* being 'democratic'. The Loeb translation 'popular form of government' leads towards an imitation of Athenian democracy. Buck (*BBL* 79) argued that the gathering of the people in an assembly at dawn when the Cadmea was still held by the Spartans (*Plut. Pel.* 12.4 *συνήθροιστο εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ὁ δῆμος*) showed the commitment of the Thebans to an Athenian type of democracy; and Roesch (101 with n. 2) supposed that it was an assembly of all the Boeotians. In fact it was not a formal assembly of citizens but a summoning of anyone in Thebes willing to take arms against the Spartans, as in *Diod.* 15.25.2.

⁴⁰ They were published and discussed by Roesch in *REG* 97 (1984), 45–60.

⁴¹ This passage is translated in the Loeb edition as 'when the common council of the Boeotians convened'. There is evidently confusion with the oligarchic councils of the earlier period (*HO* 11.1).

on the coins.⁴² Since Boeotarchs were elected to command armies of Boeotians (e.g. Paus. 9.15.4), it is probable, though not attested, that they were elected by and were answerable to the assembly of Boeotians.⁴³

The member-states of the Boeotian association also had the populist form of administration. This is known from the evidence of inscriptions which mention assemblies and magistrates, including 'treasurers'. Member-states were able to initiate and pursue their own policies, provided they did not clash with the policies of the Boeotian association. For example, Epaminondas persuaded the people of Thebes (ὁ δῆμος) in an assembly (ἐκκλησίας) to build 100 triremes in 364/3 (Diod. 15.78.4–79.1). In the same year 'the Thebans made the decision' (ἔδοξε) to destroy Orchomenus. The decision was taken by 'the people' in an assembly (ἐκκλησία), and the Thebans proceeded to annihilate the Orchomenians and sell their wives and children into slavery (Diod. 15.79.3–6). It was this act and similar acts carried out by the Theban people which led Polybius to criticize 'the mob' (ὁ ὄχλος) at Thebes as 'having been schooled in violence and passion' (6.44.9).⁴⁴

Let us now consider the contributory system of the Thebans. It was already in operation in the Peloponnesian War, when Plataea and the neighbouring small states 'were contributing to Thebes' (HO 11.3) and when the troops contributed by them and probably by some other states were fighting in mixed units with Thebans under Theban command (Thuc. 4.93.4 ξύμμοροι αὐτοῖς). In the fourth century Thebes extended this system by stages until in the winter of 368/367 'the Thebans had brought all Boeotia under one contributory system in accordance with their own plan' (Diod. 15.70.2 Θηβαῖοι κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν ὅλην τὴν Βοιωτίαν ὑπὸ μίαν ἀγαγόντες συντέλειαν).⁴⁵ The troops so contributed must have been sent as youths for training alongside Thebans at Thebes; for they were to fight shoulder to shoulder with Thebans in the hoplite formation. The greatest importance was attached to such training in the sources. Epaminondas urged the Theban youths to excel in wrestling in the gymnasia (Plut. *Pel.* 7.3).⁴⁶ The Thebans developed their physique and their

⁴² Seltman (159 with plate xxxiii 12). Hansen (20, 63 *Additional Note*) has shown that the so-called 'magistrate coins' were issued first c. 390 or perhaps even earlier. Roesch (102–3) suggested that the names on these coins were all those of Theban Boeotarchs, but there is no evidence in favour of his view.

⁴³ According to Diod. 15.72.2 under the year 368/367 Epaminondas was accused of treason and was removed from office as Boeotarch by τὸ πλῆθος, i.e. by the Assembly of the Boeotians.

⁴⁴ As F. W. Walbank states in his *Commentary on Polybius* 1 (Oxford, 1957 and 1970), 726, 'Polybius is thinking of contemporary Thebes.' But Buckler (30), having attributed the destruction of Orchomenus to a decision not of the Thebans but of the Boeotian assembly on his p. 182, transferred the statement of Polybius from the Thebans to 'the Boeotian Confederacy'. Buckler and Buck (*BBL* 106) thought that Polybius was referring to the Boeotian association or/and the Theban state as a radical democracy. But Polybius was commenting not on the constitutions but on the tendency of any assembly to behave in the manner of 'a mob'. No ancient source draws a parallel between the Boeotian democracy and the Athenian democracy.

⁴⁵ The aorist tense of the participle is to be contrasted with the present tense of Diod. 15.50.4 ὑπὸ μίαν ἄγοντες συντέλειαν. The aorist tense is correctly translated in the Loeb edition: 'they (the Thebans), adhering to their own design, had brought all Boeotia into one syntelesia'; but it is misrepresented by Vial (88) 'ils étaient décidés à maintenir la Béotie tout entière unifiée en une ligue tributaire'. Buckler (297, n. 47) 'hesitated to accept Diodorus' testimony'. but without discussing Diodorus' source. The texts of the Teubner, Budé, and Loeb editions read ἀγαγόντες; the first two mention a variant reading ἄγοντες, which is adopted by Beck (209). However, Beck has the same belief as I do that the 'syntelie-Gebiet' of Thebes eventually became co-extensive with the Boeotian association.

⁴⁶ Thebes was renowned for its gymnasia. In *Phoenissae* 368, produced c. 410, Euripides had Polynices recall his upbringing in the γυμνάσια.

courage by continuous practice in the gymnasia (Diod. 15.50.5 *ἐν τοῖς γυμνασίοις συνεχῶς διατρίβοντες εὖρωστοι τοῖς σώμασιν ὑπήρχον*). 'The Boeotians too were all undergoing training in regard to the weapons' (X. *H.G.* 6.5.23 *οἱ Βοιωτοὶ ἐγυμνάζοντο πάντες περὶ τὰ ὄπλα*). The result was that the Thebans and the Boeotians excelled in bodily strength and in courage (Plut. *Pel.* 7.3 fin. *ταῖς ῥώμας*; Diod. 15.39.1 *τῇ τε ῥώμῃ καὶ ταῖς ἀλκαῖς διαφέροντες*; 15.50.5 *εὖρωστοι τοῖς σώμασιν*; 15.69.3 *ταῖς τῶν σωμάτων ῥώμας*). It was these qualities which brought them supremacy in land warfare. When the contributory system brought such unsurpassed success, we may be sure that it was willingly accepted by the contributing states.

Another factor to which they owed their success was the authoritative hegemony of Thebes and the brilliance of Theban commanders. Thus in 371 Epaminondas was operational commander-in-chief of the army of Thebans and Boeotians. He persuaded the seventh Boeotarch to support him in the decision to engage the enemy at Leuctra (Diod. 15.52.1–2, 15.53.3), and the credit for victory was accorded to Epaminondas (15.56.3). During the invasion of the Peloponnese in the winter of 370/369 the huge forces of allies willingly accepted the hegemony of Boeotia⁴⁷ and thus the orders of its two Theban generals (Plut. *Pel.* 24.3–4). During the campaign Epaminondas and Pelopidas overruled the other Boeotarchs who wished to return to Boeotia (24.2).⁴⁸

The literary evidence for the period is again provided mainly by contemporaries of the events: Xenophon, the Oxyrhynchus Historian, and Ephorus, if he is the main source of Plutarch, *Pelopidas*. The Oxyrhynchus Historian in particular has a detailed knowledge of the internal politics of Thebes and of the other Boeotian states both before and after the end of the Peloponnesian War. The evidence of Diodorus 15 part A is, as we have seen, confirmed as accurate by some inscriptions of the period. His evidence is of special importance, because he writes of the contributory system, the training in the gymnasia, the constitution of the Boeotians, the treatment of Orchomenus and the brilliance of Epaminondas. I hope to consider the source or sources used by Diodorus in due course; but it will be the subject of a separate article.

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⁴⁷ Buckler (73) held that 'Thebes was not formally accorded the position of hegemon'. There were in fact two levels of hegemony: that of 'the Boeotians', whom their allies 'followed' (X. *H.G.* 6.5.23 *ἡκολούθουν*) and that of 'the Thebans', whom the Boeotians followed. When hegemony at both levels was operating, the Thebans led the way for both groups into Lacedaemonian territory (Plut. *Pel.* 24.2 Epaminondas *ἡγούμενος*). The hegemony, however, was not automatic. 'The Argives, Eleans and Arcadians in their own assemblies were contending in rivalry with the Thebans for the hegemony', in action 'they followed the Theban generals' (ibid. 24.4). The ancient sources were concerned less than Buckler with 'formalities'. It is the same with his contention that the joint forces did not have a formal council. For when it came to action, there was such a council: in 370 the various leaders sat in council (Diod. 15.62.5) and decided to split their forces into four parts for the invasion of Laconia (Diod. 15.63.4). Buckler did not refer to these two passages.

⁴⁸ In the same way Pagondas had overruled the other Boeotarchs at Delium in 424.