

## ANCIENT POLITICAL FACTIONS: BOIOTIA 404 TO 395\*

MARGARET COOK  
Cornell University

Throughout the Peloponnesian War, Boiotia was the strongest of Sparta's allies. Where our sources give figures, we find Boiotia contributing more troops and

\* This paper is a revision of a paper presented at the 1982 APA meeting in Philadelphia. All dates are B.C. The following works will be cited below by author or author and short title: A. Andrewes, "The Opposition to Perikles," *JHS* 98 (1978), 1–8; J. Beloch, *Die Attische Politik seit Perikles* (Leipzig 1884); J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte* (Berlin 1922); I. A. F. Bruce, "Internal Politics and the Outbreak of the Corinthian War," *Emerita* 28 (1960) 75–86; Bruce, "The Political Terminology of the Oxyrhynchus Historian," *Emerita* 30 (1962) 63–69; P. Cloché, "La Politique thébaine de 404 à 396 av. J. C.," *REG* 31 (1918) 315–343; Cloché, *Thèbes de Béotie* (Namur 1952); Cloché, "Les hommes politiques et la justice populaire dans l'Athènes du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Historia* 9 (1960) 80–95; W. R. Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens* (Princeton 1971); M. I. Finley, "Athenian Demagogues," *Past & Present* 21 (1962) 3–24; Finley, *Politics in the Ancient World* (Cambridge 1983); A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, and K. J. Dover, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1945–70); G. Grote, *Greece* (2nd London ed., repr. New York 1900); C. D. Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories* (Ithaca, NY 1979); A. H. M. Jones, *Athenian Democracy* (Oxford 1957); D. Kagan, "The Economic Origins of the Corinthian War," *PP* 80 (1961) 321–41; E. Kagarow, "Formes des Mouvements sociaux dans le monde antique," *Eos* 32 (1929) 177–90; V. Martin, "Aspects de la société Athénienne, II: La Vie Politique," *BAGB* 40 (1933) 7–43; E. Meyer, *Theopomps Hellenika* (Halle 1909); J. S. Morrison, "Meno of Pharsalos, Polycrates, and Ismenias," *CQ* 36 (1942) 57–78; C. Mossé, *Athens in Decline 404–86 B.C.* (London 1973); L. Pearson, "Party Politics and Free Speech in Democratic Athens," *G&R* 7 (1937) 41–50; S. Perlman, "The Causes and the Outbreak of the Corinthian War," *CQ* 14 (1964) 64–81; Perlman, "Political Leadership in Athens in the Fourth Century B.C.," *PP* 114 (1967) 161–76; Perlman, "Athenian Democracy and the Revival of Imperialistic Expansion at the Beginning of the 4th Century B.C.," *CP* 63 (1968) 257–67; Perlman, "The Politicians in the Athenian Democracy of the Fourth Century B.C.," *Athenaeum* 41 (1963) 327–55; O. Reverdin, "Remarques sur la vie politique d'Athènes au Ve siècle," *MH* 2 (1945) 201–12; J. T. Roberts, "The Athenian Conservatives and the Impeachment Trials of the Corinthian War," *Hermes* 108 (1980) 100–114; Roberts, "Athens' So-Called Unofficial Politicians," *Hermes* 110 (1982) 354–62; Roberts, *Accountability in Athenian Government* (Madison 1982); G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, "The Character of the Athenian Empire," *Historia* 3 (1954–5) 1–41; de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca, NY 1972); de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca, NY 1981); R. Sealey, "The Entry of Pericles into History," *Hermes* 84 (1956) 234–47, cited from his *Essays in Greek Politics* (New York 1967), 59–74; Sealey, "Callistratos of Aphidna and his Contemporaries," *Historia* 5 (1956) 178–203 = *Essays* 133–63; Sealey, "Athens and the Archidamian War," *PACA* 1 (1958) 61–87 =

more ships than any other member of the Peloponnesian League.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of a brief period of cooler relations during the Peace of Nikias,<sup>2</sup> Boiotia's loyalty to Sparta was steadfast. Moreover, Boiotia had profited from the war, particularly during its last years.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless in 395 B.C., eight years after the end of the Peloponnesian War, Boiotia launched a war against Sparta even before making certain it had allies. The usual interpretation of the political situation in which this change took place is not fully satisfactory.

According to the Oxyrhynchos historian, this change in foreign policy arose from a *stasis*,<sup>4</sup> a division into two factions, which arose "not many years before" 395.<sup>5</sup> The issues dividing the factions are not entirely clear, but both factions were composed of aristocrats,<sup>6</sup> and when a shift in power occurred, it was not accompanied by a change in constitution. Clearly, then, it was not what G. E. M. de Ste. Croix has called "a *stasis* of the usual character—

*Essays* 75–110; Sealey, "The Revolution of 411," *Essays* 111–32; B. Strauss, "Thrasybulus and Conon: a Rivalry in the 390s B.C.," *AJP* 105 (1984) 37–48; Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca, NY. 1986); H. T. Wade-Gery, "Thucydides Son of Melesias," *JHS* 52 (1932) 205–27; T. Walek-Czernecki, "Les Partis politiques dans l'antiquité et dans les temps modernes: une comparaison," *Eos* 32 (1929) 199–214.

<sup>1</sup> Thucydides 1.27.2; 3.62.5, 68.4; 4.72; 5.17.2, 57.2; 7.19.3, 30, 58.3; 8.3.2, 5.2; Xenophon *Hellenika* 1.3.15; 3.5.14 (all further references to Xenophon are to the *Hellenika* unless otherwise noted); Diodoros 13.8.3, 47.3–5., 72.4, 98.4–5; Isokrates 14.31.

<sup>2</sup> Thucydides 5.17–18, 23, 26, 35–39. Boiotia was unwilling to join in the Peace of Nikias; Athens would not give up the prisoners from Sphakteria until the fort at Panakton (which Boiotia held at that time) was returned to her. This put Boiotia in a position to force a concession from Sparta, and they did so. See note 16 below.

<sup>3</sup> P 12.3.4. All references to P (= the Oxyrhynchos historian) will be to the original numbering of the London fragment.

<sup>4</sup> *Stasis* in a Greek polis often led to civil war or revolution, particularly during the Peloponnesian War, when Athens was usually willing to be called in to support democrats while Sparta supported oligarchs (cf. Thucydides 3.82.1). Nevertheless, as Finley argues in *Politics* 105–6 and "Athenian Demagogues" 6, *stasis* should not invariably be understood as equivalent to violent revolution. That it has often been taken so (cf. Wade-Gery 208, who calls it a "class war"; Pearson 42; Sealey, "Entry of Pericles" 67; Reverdin 203) is perhaps largely a result of Thucydides' memorable analysis of *stasis* in Kerkyra (3.82–84) and Aristotle's *Athenaiôn Politeia*, which in giving the history of the Athenian Constitution necessarily reports only those struggles which aimed at constitutional change and were therefore revolutionary.

<sup>5</sup> "οὐ γὰρ πολλοῖς ἔτεσιν πρότερον ἔτυχον εἰς στασιασμὸν οἱ Βοιωτοὶ προελθόντες..." (P 11.1)

<sup>6</sup> It must be noted that P's language indicates not merely that the leaders of the factions were aristocrats ("οἱ βέλτιστοι καὶ γνωριμώτατοι," P 12.1), which was almost invariably the case, even in democratic factions, but that the members were aristocrats as well.

oligarchs against democrats.”<sup>7</sup> One of these factions, led by Leontiades,<sup>8</sup> Astias, and Koirantadas, was pro-Spartan and had been dominant throughout the Peloponnesian War. The other was led by Ismenias,<sup>9</sup> Androkleides, and Antitheos; our only information about their policy is that they had been accused of being pro-Athenian, because of the help they had given to the exiled Athenian democrats in 403, but according to P they were by no means pro-Athenian:

ἐν δὲ ταῖς Θήβαις ἔτυχον οἱ βέλτιστοι καὶ γνωριμώτατοι τῶν πολιτῶν, ὥσπερ καὶ πρότερον εἴρηκα, στασιάζοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους. ἡγοῦντο δὲ τοῦ μέρους τοῦ μὲν Ἴσμηνίας καὶ Ἀντίθεος καὶ Ἀνδροκλ(εῖδα)ς, τοῦ δὲ Λεοντιάδας καὶ Ἀσίας καὶ Κο(ιρα)τάδας, ἐφρόνουν δὲ τῶν πολιτευομένων οἱ μὲν περὶ τὸν Λεοντιάδην τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων, [οἱ] δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἴσμηνίαν αἰτίαν μὲν εἶχον ἀττικίζειν, ἐξ ὧν πρόθυμοι πρὸς τὸν δῆμον ἐγένετο ὡς ἔφυγ(ε)ν· οὐ μὴν ἐφρόν[τιζον] τῶ[ν] Ἀθηναίων, ἀλλ’ εἶχ[ον] . . . . .] P 12.1.

Unfortunately there is a lacuna in the papyrus at the point where P recorded his evaluation of the actual policy of Ismenias’ faction. It was Ismenias’ faction which was dominant in 395 and brought about the Corinthian War, and it had come to this position “a little earlier.”<sup>10</sup>

P’s account of the political situation in Boiotia in 395 agrees with the information we get from Xenophon, Pausanias, and Plutarch.<sup>11</sup> The *stasis* continued under the same leaders for some 20 years after the outbreak of the

<sup>7</sup> de Ste. Croix, “Character” 9.

<sup>8</sup> Eurymachos son of Leontiades, “ἀνδρὸς Θηβαίων δυνατωτάτου,” brought about the attack on Plataea in 431 B.C. (Thucydides 2.2.3); Leontiades, son of Eurymachos, led the (reluctant) Theban contingent at Thermopylai (Herodotus 7.205, 233). These were clearly relatives, and very probably the father and grandfather of the Leontiades of the Corinthian War. (Cf. Gomme’s comment in *HCT* 2.4: “A long-lived and mischievous family.”)

<sup>9</sup> For the sake of familiarity, I retain here the spelling of most of our literary sources, in spite of J. Buckler’s argument (*The Theban Hegemony 371–362 BC* [Cambridge, Mass. 1980] 281 note 2) that the name is properly Hismenias, the spelling in Plutarch’s *De Genio Socratis*. Ismenias’ family is unknown, but the name is a Theban epithet of Apollo (like that of Galaxidoros, on whom see note 11 below). There was also a hill and a river named Ismenios, near one of the gates of Thebes (Pausanias 9.10.2–4; Pindar *Nemean* 9.22; 11.36); the tradition that Antigone’s sister was named Ismene also suggests that the family was an old one.

<sup>10</sup> “ἐδύναντο δὲ [ὅτε μὲν καὶ ἔτι μικρῶ πρότερον οἱ περὶ] τὸν Ἴσμη[νίαν καὶ τὸν] Ἀνδ[ροκλείδ(α)]ν καὶ παρ’ αὐτοῖς τοῖς Θηβαίοις καὶ [παρὰ] τῇ βο[υλ]ῇ τῶν Βοιωτῶν.” P 12.2.

<sup>11</sup> Xenophon 3.5.1 names Ismenias, Androkleides, and Galaxidoros as προσεστώτες in Thebes in 395 B.C. (the word *stasis* is not used); Pausanias 3.9.8 names Ismenias, Amphithemis, and Androkleides. Xenophon 5.2.25–36 names Ismenias and Leontiades as opposing leaders of *hetairiai* in a *stasis* in 382 B.C.; Plutarch *Pelopidas* 5.1–3 names Ismenias, Androkleides, and the young Pelopidas as members of a *hetairia* hostile to Sparta in 382.

Corinthian War.<sup>12</sup> It would be helpful to know exactly when the shift in power from Leontiades' faction to that of Ismenias took place. By examining Spartan behavior and other details of the situation at that time, we might learn what provoked the change; from this we would learn more about Ismenias' policy.

A great deal of scholarly effort has been spent, therefore, on trying to determine exactly when this happened.<sup>13</sup> In each case the approach has been the same: each Boiotian public act between 404 and 395 B.C. is examined to identify the point at which the change of behavior is most striking. This is then assumed to be the time at which the shift in the strength of the factions occurred. The argument is based on the assumption, plausible enough, that a

<sup>12</sup> Leontiades, the leader of the rival (pro-Spartan) faction, betrayed his city in 382 B.C., overthrew the government, and invited the Spartan army to install a garrison on the Kadmeia. Plutarch's *De Genio Socratis* 577A11 names Galaxidoros as another of the anti-Spartan conspirators in 379, who had not fled into exile in 382 with the others. Amphitheos was in jail under a death sentence (577D, 586F) in 379, but was rescued by the conspirators after Leontiades was executed (598A–B). Ismenias was arrested and put to death by the Spartans in 382, but Androkleides escaped (with Pelopidas) to Athens, where he was later assassinated by agents of Leontiades (Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 6.2; *De Genio Socratis* 596B, Lysias fr. 448).

On the other hand, it is certain that the government of Boiotia during the "Theban hegemony" (371–62 B.C.) was a democracy (see the collected sources and the discussion in Buckler, (above, note 9) 30–42. This appears to have been an important part of Thebes' appeal to the common people in the Boiotian cities, as it gradually freed them after 379 from narrow oligarchies and Spartan garrisons ("ὁ μέντοι δῆμος ἐξ αὐτῶν εἰς τὰς Θήβας ἀπεχώρει· ἐν πάσαις γὰρ ταῖς πόλεσι δυναστεία καθειστήκεσαν, ὥσπερ ἐν Θήβαις," Xenophon 5.4.46). Whether ideology played a role in Ismenias' policy in the 380s is unknown. In any case, there is no hint of a democratic "platform" in the 390s, nor any indication of changes in the constitution when Ismenias' faction was dominant. It is the period of Ismenias' domination to which P refers (τότε) when describing the oligarchical constitution of 11.2–4.

There had been, however, a democratic faction in Thespiiai in the 420s which were to have betrayed their city to Athens; they were later charged with Atticizing. (Thucydides 4.76, 4.133.) It is not improbable that there were some Boiotians who wanted democracy in 395, but Ismenias had not openly espoused their cause.

Plutarch, whose account of the events of 382–79 is strongly hostile to Leontiades, remarks that Ismenias' *hetairia* seemed to the Spartans to be "φιλελεύθεραν ἅμα καὶ δημοτικὴν" (*Pelopidas* 5.1–2). It was Pelopidas, Galaxidoros, and the other heirs of Ismenias who liberated the Kadmeia in 379, and Plutarch is much taken by the similarity between the liberation of the Kadmeia with the restoration of the democracy in Athens in 403 (e.g. *Pelopidas* 6.4; 7.2), so it is possible that this has affected his perception of the situation in 382.

<sup>13</sup> Beloch, *GG* 3.1.62; Meyer 47–48, 82–83; B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, "Theopompus (or Cratippus), Hellenica," *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* V (Oxford 1908) 229; Cloché, "Politique thébaine" 326; Cloché, *Thèbes*, 95–101; Perlman, "Causes" 65; Kagan 330–32; Hamilton, 148–61.

difference in public behavior must reflect a difference in the voting strength of the two factions in the federal βουλή, where decisions concerning foreign policy were made.<sup>14</sup> The difficulty is that Boiotian actions during these years are curiously ambivalent and vacillating, so that there has not been any consensus on the decisive change.<sup>15</sup> The almost universal opinion is that the two factions each had roughly half of the voting power in the federal βουλή until 396, when the Boiotarchs' insult to the Spartan king Agesilaos at Aulis is unanimously agreed to reflect dominance by Ismenias' faction.

<sup>14</sup> This is clear from P's description of the "constitution" of the Boiotian Confederacy (P 11.2–4). See the discussions of R. J. Bonner, "The Boeotian Federal Constitution," *CPh* 5 (1910) 405–17; Bonner, "The Four Senates of the Boeotians," *CPh* 10 (1915) 381–85; G. W. Botsford, "The Constitution and Politics of the Boeotian League," *Political Science Quarterly* 25 (1910) 271–96; I. A. F. Bruce, *An Historical Commentary on the Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* (Cambridge 1967) 157–64; R. J. Buck, *A History of Boeotia* (Edmonton, 1979) 154–60; Buck, "Boiotian Swine as Political Theorists," *EMC* 25 (1981) 47–52; T. Frank, "Representative Government in the Ancient Polities," *CJ* 14 (1918–19) 533–49; G. Glotz, "Le conseil fédéral des Béotiens," *BCH* 32 (1908) 271–78; W. A. Goligher, "The Boeotian Constitution," *CR* 22 (1908) 80–92; J. A. O. Larsen, *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* (Berkeley 1955), 31–40; Larsen, "The Boeotian Confederacy and fifth-Century Oligarchic Theory," *TAPA* 86 (1955) 40–50; Meyer 92–102; P. Roesch, *Thespies et la Confédération béotienne* (Paris 1965) 123–24; H. Swoboda, "Studien zur Verfassung Boiotiens," *Klio* 10 (1910) 315–34.

Representation at the federal level was roughly proportional to population, but the method of selection of Boiotarchs and βουλευταί is unknown. Some form of election or appointment which represented local opinions is generally assumed. If selection to the federal council, which was sovereign, did represent local opinions, this is the only known example of true representative government (as opposed to leagues, amphikytone, and alliances) in classical Greece. Some arguments against political parties (in anything resembling the modern sense) apply only to direct democracies like Athens, and cannot be assumed to hold for Boiotia. Other evidence, however, will demonstrate that factions in Boiotia seem to have behaved very much like factions in Athens.

<sup>15</sup> The Boiotians sheltered the Athenian exiles in 404 (below, note 18) refused to join Pausanias against Athens in 403 (Xenophon 2.4.30, 3.5, 8; 16, Lysias 12.60) and persuaded the Corinthians to do the same (Xenophon 3.5.5); in 399 they refused to join the Spartan attack on Elis, but did not aid Elis against Sparta (Xenophon 3.2.24–5, 30–31; Diodoros 14.17–18); in 399 or 398 they did not actively protest the Spartan garrison restored at Herakleia in Trachis (Diodoros 14.38.4–5, 82.6), in 397 they refused to attend a meeting to plan the Spartan attack on Persia (Pausanias 3.9.3).

Of the discussions cited in note 13 above, Kagan agrees with Grenfell and Hunt that Ismenias held a slight lead from 403 on; Beloch and Meyer that Ismenias' faction had already become dominant before the reception of the Athenian exiles in autumn of 404; Perlman believes the shift occurred well before 396; Cloché and Hamilton believe that Leontiades' faction held a slight lead until 396.

The protection of the Athenian democrats in exile has sometimes been viewed as evidence that the shift to Ismenias' faction had occurred already. One scholar has even argued that a change in government must have occurred,<sup>16</sup> yet there was certainly no revolution, and we have seen that the annual change in members of the βουλή had not taken place. De Ste. Croix has argued that the demand to destroy Athens completely arose as much from fear that Sparta would hold Athens as a threat to Boiotia as from hatred of Athens, but this does not seem to account adequately for the viciousness of the proposal.<sup>17</sup>

A detail which has been overlooked in this connection, however, raises serious doubts about this interpretation. We know that the Boiotian civil year began at the first new moon after the winter solstice, approximately the beginning of our January.<sup>18</sup> In spring of 404, at a meeting of the Peloponnesian League before the final surrender of Athens, the Boiotian delegate Erianthos proposed to raze the city of Athens, enslave the population, and turn all of Attica to pasture.<sup>19</sup> In autumn of that same year, not only did the Athenian democrats in exile find refuge and hospitality in the homes of those individual Thebans who were later accused of being pro-Athenian,<sup>20</sup> but Boiotia publicly refused, in defiance of Sparta's demand, to surrender the Athenian democrats to the Thirty.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, according to Plutarch, they decreed that Boiotian citizens

<sup>16</sup> Morrison 76: [the change of policy in 404] "cannot have taken place without a change of government."

<sup>17</sup> de Ste. Croix, *Origins*, 343.

<sup>18</sup> Plutarch *Pelopidas* 24.1, 25.

<sup>19</sup> Xenophon 2.2.19; Isokrates 14.31; Demosthenes 19.65; Plutarch *Lysander* 15.2; Diodoros 15.63.1.

<sup>20</sup> P 12.1; Xenophon 2.4.1; Plutarch *Lysander* 27.2-4, *Pelopidas* 6.4; 7.2; Justin 5.9.3-8; Diodoros 14.6.1-2; Pausanias 9.11.6.

<sup>21</sup> Plutarch *Lysander* 27; Lysias 12.95; Demosthenes 15.22. Cloché, "Politique thébaine" 321 doubts the authenticity of the Spartan demand, but I see no reason to do so. In any case there was no doubt, until the reconciliation effected by Pausanias the next year, that the Spartans were backing the Thirty. For the refusal: Plutarch *Lysander* 27.3, *Pelopidas* 6.4. No doubt Boiotian resentment at being ordered about as if she were a dependent ally was an important factor in this decision.

The Boiotians probably had a legal right to refuse to follow Sparta's direction in foreign policy. During the Peace of Nikias, the Boiotians refused to surrender the fort of Panakton to Athens until they won from Sparta a separate alliance "just like the Athenians" (Thucydides 5.39.3: "ἥν μὴ σφίσι ξυμμαχίαν ἰδίαν ποιήσωνται ὥσπερ Ἀθηναίοις"). The context makes it certain that some concession is at stake here, and it must therefore be in the terms of the alliance between Athens and Sparta, which Thucydides has quoted verbatim at 5.23-24; the alliance between the Athenians and the Spartans did not require them to "have the same friends and enemies" as Sparta, but called for mutual decisions about foreign policy. This is an alliance of de Ste. Croix's "type B," an alliance between equals. (See his discussion in *Origins*, appendices 5 "'To have the Same Friends and Enemies' and the nature of the Delian League oaths and synods" 17; "Membership of the Peloponnesian League"; and 18 "The 'Constitution of the Peloponnesian League', a summary.") De Ste. Croix demonstrates that Boiotia had been a member of the Peloponnesian League, in which the decision of a majority

were subject to a heavy fine if they failed to help any Athenian resisting forcible extradition.<sup>22</sup>

Since both these actions occurred during a single civil year, we cannot avoid the conclusion that a very drastic change in Boiotia's official behavior had occurred without any change in the members of the federal βουλή. If P (12.2–3) is correct in saying that the pro-Spartan faction was decidedly stronger throughout the Peloponnesian War, this must have been reflected in the βουλή of 404, yet this same federal βουλή defied Sparta and protected the Athenian exiles. We know that the leaders of the two factions maintained their position to their deaths, Ismenias in 382 B.C. and Leontiades in 379. Indeed, Leontiades betrayed his city to the Spartans in 382, and accepted a Spartan garrison on the Kadmeia.<sup>23</sup> It seems very unlikely, then, that the leaders of the pro-Spartan faction changed their fundamental position between spring and autumn of 404 B.C., reverted to their original position again before 395, and maintained it through 382. This abrupt change in official behavior in 404, therefore, suggests that there is something seriously wrong with our picture of Ismenias and Leontiades fighting for a majority of seats in the federal βουλή of Boiotia.

P's account of the events of 396 and 395, the outbreak of the Corinthian War, raises a similar problem. By 395, Ismenias' faction was predominant in Boiotia, according to both P and Xenophon, and had been for at least a year. At the beginning of the campaign season of the previous year, Agesilaos had set out at the head of what he had hoped would be a pan-Hellenic expedition against Persia. The Corinthians and Athenians had made more or less polite excuses, but the Boiotians flatly refused. Agesilaos tried to put the best face on it, and sacrificed at Aulis in ostentatious imitation of Agammemnon while his troops

of allies was binding; he argues that Thucydides 5.39.3 refers only to an alliance which is separate, like that with the Athenians, rather than one with the same terms as that between Sparta and Athens. An alliance which was merely separate (and not on different terms) would be of no particular value, while Sparta needed Boiotia to hand over Panakton so that Athens would release the Spartans from Sphakteria. Boiotia was in a position to win a special concession, and it is clear that she did so. It is true, as de Ste. Croix argues, that we hear no more about it, but this is not surprising. Boiotia did not dispute the resumption of war soon after this treaty; indeed, Boiotia had never agreed to the Peace of Nikias. Further, Spartan hegemony during the war was not disputed. There was no occasion for intransigence until 404 and after.

This special status may have been the grounds for Boiotia's refusal to join Pausanias in 403, the campaign against Elis, and Agesilaos' Asian campaign in 396 as well. It is difficult, however, to believe that Leontiades, who was willing to betray the Kadmeia to Sparta in 382, would have been so touchy about Boiotia's status in 404. The special standing of Boiotia may have given her the *right* to refuse to cooperate, but it scarcely made her refuse.

<sup>22</sup> Plutarch *Lysander* 27.3; Diodoros 14.6.3. Clearly the Boiotian response goes beyond mere touchiness at being ordered to give up the exiles.

<sup>23</sup> Xenophon 5.2.25–36; Plutarch *Pelopidas* 5, and see note 12 above. The situation was similar to that in 403, 399, and 396: the Boiotians refused to join an expedition of the Spartans against Olynthos; in this case, however, they were considering an alliance with Olynthos.

gathered at Geraistos. The Boiotarchs, claiming some ritual irregularity, insulted Agesilaos by throwing his sacrificed victims from the altar. Agesilaos swallowed his rage and departed for Persia; his hostility toward Boiotia seems to date from this incident.<sup>24</sup> Agesilaos' imitation of Agamemnon, of course, implied a claim to a pan-Hellenic hegemony which cannot have been welcome on the Kadmeia; nevertheless the insult was a grave one and must reflect a failure of the pro-Spartan faction to control the federal βουλή.

All our sources agree that this remained true in 395: Ismenias and his faction were directing Boiotian activity. Nevertheless P reports that this faction, knowing that they could not get the federal βουλή to vote directly for a war against the Spartans because Sparta was so strong, needed to resort to deceit ("ἄπάτη") to actually begin a war (P 13.2). Instead of a direct declaration of war, they deliberately exacerbated a minor and long-standing border skirmish between Phokis and Lokris, which led the Boiotians to invade Phokis in support of their allies, the Lokrians.<sup>25</sup> Evidently the faction leaders expected that at least some of the citizens would not realize that Sparta, as Phokis' ally, would surely intervene.

It is a curious way to begin a war, and has puzzled many historians dealing with the period. The actions of the faction leaders and decisions of the federal βουλή do not fit the usual picture of the workings of the two factions in the government. The most extreme reaction to the account is that P is simply wrong. Bruce argues that since P had said that the anti-Spartan "party" was dominant at this time, "the ascendancy of Ismenias can only mean that in the councils of Thebes (and of Boeotia) there were majorities of his supporters...the party of Ismenias was in control in Boeotia as well as Thebes, and must presumably have controlled the federal council which decided matters of foreign policy," they would only have needed to put it to a vote. P's statement suggests rather that Ismenias' faction "needed the stratagem to deceive the majority of their own supporters."<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, argues Bruce, P must be wrong in making Ismenias the instigator of the border dispute. This is a serious accusation to make about a source which has been widely viewed as second only to Thucydides in quality. Throughout what has survived of his work, P shows considerable interest in Boiotian politics and care concerning the relation of internal politics to foreign policy. Bruce himself has elsewhere praised the precision of P's political terminology.<sup>27</sup> To conclude here, as Bruce does, that the events of the outbreak of the war were accidental and that P has been misled by later reports which reflected the biased accusations against Ismenias before a Spartan "court" in 382, calls P's reliability into question for all of his surviving work.

<sup>24</sup> Xenophon 3.4.3–4, 5.5; Plutarch *Agesilaos* 6.4–6; Pausanias 3.9.3–4.

<sup>25</sup> Xenophon 3.5.3–4; P 13.2–4; Pausanias 3.9.10–11; Plutarch *Lysander* 27.1; Diodoros 14.81.1.

<sup>26</sup> I. A. F. Bruce, "Internal Politics" 80–81.

<sup>27</sup> I. A. F. Bruce, "Political Terminology."



In fact, however, the problem here is not so much in P's account of the events as in our own assumptions about what is implied by his analysis of the factions and their relative power in 395:

διακε[μ]ένων δὲ τῶν ἐν [ταῖς Θήβαις οὕτω κ]αὶ τῆς ἐταιρείας ἐκατ[έρ]ας ἰσχυούσης . . . .]τα[. προ]ήλθον πολλοὶ καὶ τῶν ἐν ταῖς [πόλεσι ταῖς κ]α[τὰ τῇ]ν Βοιωτίαν κα[ὶ] μετέ[σ]χον ἐκ[ατέρ]ας τῶν ἐταιρειῶν ἐκείνοις. ἐδύναντο δὲ τ[ότε μὲν καὶ ἔτι μικρῶ] πρότερον οἱ πε[ρὶ] τὸν Ἴσμη[νίαν καὶ τὸν Ἄνδ]ροκλείδ(α)ν καὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς τοῖς Θηβαίοις κ]αὶ [παρὰ] τῇ βο[υλ]ῇ τῶν Βοιωτῶν, ἔμπρ[οσθεν δὲ] προ[εἶ]χον οἱ π[ε]ρὶ τὸν Ἀστίαν καὶ Λεοντ[ιάδην, χρόνον δὲ τι]να συχρὸν καὶ τὴν πόλιν διὰ κ[ράτους εἶ]χον. (P 12.2)

Accustomed as we are to modern political parties, it is easy to read this as meaning more than it says. P tells us that there were two *hetairiai* (small upper-class clubs), that men in all parts of Boiotia had joined them (which implies that the issues were not local), and that these were reflected in the federal βουλή. What he does not say is that all or even most Boiotians were adherents of these *hetairiai*, nor that there was anything resembling a "party organization" or "party discipline" by which all "party members" could be made to vote according to the policy of the "party leaders." Yet it is precisely that assumption which leaves us confused about the abrupt shift in policy in 404 and about Ismenias' need to resort to deceit to begin a war in 395. Before we reject P's analysis, we need to reconsider our assumptions about the nature and role of political groups.

The issue here is not simply one of vocabulary, but of implicit assumptions about the function of political groups in reaching political decisions. In particular, the assumption that these groups, whatever we call them, aimed at controlling the state by holding a majority of seats in the governing body, has led to a great deal of confusion. Almost everyone writing since Sealey's influential 1956 article "Callistratos of Aphidna and his Contemporaries," has avoided using the term "party," and referred to "factions" or "political groups" instead.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, parallels with modern political organization are still frequently assumed, with resulting confusion; as Connor has put it, "for the most part scholarship has avoided the word ['party'] but retained the concept."<sup>29</sup>

I should like first, therefore, to consider what is usually implicit in our assumptions about political groups, then to examine what sort of groups seem to have operated in ancient politics. There are several important considerations here: first, what role the political group plays in the formal structure of the state; second, the size of the political groups (for instance, is the political group larger than groups based on kinship or personal friendship) and the degree to which membership in some group is widespread among citizens; finally, the

<sup>28</sup> Roberts, noting that the groups are small, informal, temporary, and often bound by personal and family ties (*Accountability* 13), nevertheless refers to political groups as "parties" (57).

<sup>29</sup> Connor 8.

degree of organization and unity achieved in the group's participation in the political process. The nature of the evidence is such that we inevitably know far more about Athenian politics, on which much has been written;<sup>30</sup> it will be necessary to examine, as far as is possible, the extent to which Boiotian politics resembled Athenian politics. The results of this inquiry may then illuminate the specific episodes of Boiotian history above.

Modern political parties play a crucial role in a representative government. A party is united by a more or less coherent policy, sometimes directing their efforts toward the good of a class or subset of the total population (the "Labor party," etc.) or toward a specific foreign policy ("hawks," "doves," etc.); their goal is to fill as many positions of authority as possible with their own adherents in order to carry out the policy. They are formally organized, usually having party officers of some sort, who present to the voters a "platform" of specific proposals, and a "slate" of candidates committed to it. Citizens vote for a candidate who will represent their views by adhering (more or less) to the party's platform.

In the direct democracy at Athens, there was no function for political parties in this sense,<sup>31</sup> since officials other than *strategoi* were appointed by lot and had

<sup>30</sup> Beloch, *Attische Politik* (1–19 *et passim*); *GG* 3.1.104: "Es gab dort eine mächtige Partei, welche die Politik missbilligte, die Boeotien im Gegensatz zu Sparta getrieben hatte...jetzt bekleidete einer der Führer dieser Partei, Leontiadas, das höchste Staatsamt Thebens...Ismenias, das haupt der Sparta feindlichen Partei..."; P. Cloché, *La Politique étrangère d'Athènes de 404 à 338 avant Jésus-Christ* (Paris 1934), 14: "le parti anti-laconien d' Ismenias"; Cloché, *La Démocratie Athénienne* (Paris 1951), 281–82 "un parti de la revanche [at Athens in 403], " "le parti de la guerre" [Demainetos in Athens in 396], "le parti antilaconien d'Ismenias avait décidément obtenu la prépondérance à Thèbes," etc.); Cloché, *Thèbes* 95: [Thebes] "est alors divisé en deux partis...le parti philolaconien de Léontiades"; Cloché, "Hommes politiques" 87: "chef du parti de la guerre"; Perlman, "Causes" 67: "the two parties mentioned by the Hellenica Oxyrhynchia..."; 69: "the pro-Spartan party...". See also: G. M. Calhoun, *Athenian Clubs in Politics and Litigation* (Austin, Texas 1913; rpt. Rome 1964 = *Studia Historica* 7); M. Croiset, *Aristophanes and the Political Parties at Athens*, tr. Loeb (London 1909); G. T. Griffith, "The Union of Corinth and Argos (392–386 B.C.)" *Historia* 1 (1950) 236–56; M. H. Hansen, "The Athenian 'Politicians', 403–322 B.C.," *GRBS* 24 (1983) 33–55; D. H. Kelly, "The 'Theban Hegemony'," *Anc. Soc.* 3.1 (1973) 35–53, reprinted with revisions in *Hellenika: Essays on Greek History and Politics*, ed. Horsley (North Ryde N. S. W. 1982) 151–63; C. Pecorella Longo, "Eterie" e gruppi politici nell' Aten del IV sec. a. C (Firenze 1971); F. Sartori, *Le Eterie nella vita politica ateniese del VI e V secolo a. C.* (Rome 1957); L. Whibley, *Political Parties in Athens During the Peloponnesian War* (Cambridge 1889).

<sup>31</sup> This point was noted in passing by Grote (6.290), although he continued to refer to "parties," raised explicitly by Walek-Czerniecki in 1929, by Kagarow in the same year, by Martin in 1933, again by Pearson in 1937, and again very forcefully by Reverdin in 1942; yet references to Athenian "parties" continued to be made. Recently the argument has been restated by Finley, "Athenian Demagogues," Connor 6, and Hansen (preceding note) 55–56.

no significant executive power.<sup>32</sup> Any citizen could address the voters, who retained executive power in the assembly.<sup>33</sup> Thucydides' accounts of debates in the Athenian assembly demonstrate that decisions were indeed made on the spot. In the Mytilene debate, for example, Kleon had no "party discipline" at hand to coerce the voters to uphold the "party line" on the second day of debate, but had to try to convince them again with specific arguments.<sup>34</sup> Had Kleon and his group been "in control" of Athenian politics at this time, his original proposal would have been carried out. Clearly a large number of voters in Athens were not firmly associated with either Kleon or any opposition group, but could be swayed by arguments about particular issues, and could change their minds from one day to the next.

In Boiotia, however, members of the federal βουλή did have binding power to make decisions on federal issues, which certainly included foreign policy. The Boiotian Confederacy, therefore, was to some degree a representative government.<sup>35</sup> We do not know how these βουλευταί were chosen, but in Boiotia, if anywhere in Greek politics, there is a place for political parties.

Yet there is no hint of such a thing in any of our sources. Boiotian political leaders are referred to in exactly the same personal and individual terms as Athenian leaders, even by P, who seems unusually well informed on Boiotian matters. We have no precise parallel to the Mytilene debate in Boiotia, but a bit of diplomatic intrigue which misfired in 420 suggests the same conclusion: in that year the Boiotarchs had negotiated an alliance with Argos which had Sparta's secret backing; when they presented it to the βουλή without explanation, it was rejected (Thucydides 5.36–38). Among the implications of this story is the fact that the decisions of the βουλή could not be predicted, even by those well aware of the political leanings of βουλευταί who had been elected that year. This implies a βουλή composed mostly of men not permanently affiliated to an established political group. Furthermore, the Boiotarchs themselves had been elected in the same year, yet could not rely on the βουλή to follow their lead; clearly, their election did not give them a clear mandate on foreign policy.

<sup>32</sup> E. Badian, "Archons and *Strategoi*," *Antichthon* 5 (1971) 1–34, has demonstrated that even in the early years of the Athenian democracy, the archonship does not seem to have been held by politically prominent men. F. J. Frost, "Politics in Early Athens," *Classical Contributions = Studies in honour of M. F. McGregor* (Locust Valley, New York 1981) 33–39 argues that those men who were prominent politicians were not actually trying to do anything, but that it was an activity "which in Aristotle's scheme did not produce an end result but which was an end in itself, like flute playing."

<sup>33</sup> Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.6.1 refers to Plato's brother Glaucon, then less than 20 years old, whose friends were trying to prevent him from making a fool of himself by speaking from the *bêma*; 3.7.1 shows Plato's uncle Charmides being urged to take a role.

<sup>34</sup> Martin 28–37 particularly stresses the point that Athenians "échappe à la tyrannie des partis, c'est à dire des comités restraints."

<sup>35</sup> See the discussions in note 14 above; particularly the contributions of Larsen and Frank.

Similarly, the members of the βουλή in 404 chose a policy in the autumn of 404 which was radically different from that voted in the spring. Had Leontiades' faction been in "control" of the federal βουλή, as the demand to raze Athens and enslave the population might suggest, Boiotia would surely have bowed to Sparta's demand later in that year to surrender the Athenian exiles. Clearly many of the βουλευταί were not committed to Leontiades' pro-Spartan faction, though they had voted with it earlier that year.

Athenian generals were elected, and we assume that these elections sometimes represented some public consensus on policy; therefore some have tried to read into the elections the effect of political groups. Generals, however, had executive power only in the field, while campaigns were planned in the assembly. Sometimes even in the fifth century, and increasingly in the fourth, some generals were military men rather than politicians.<sup>36</sup> The example of Perikles may mislead us: his dominance in political decisions was not inextricably based on his military position, but on his persuasiveness. Elections of generals must often have reflected the public estimation of their military capacity, not their policy. The election of both Nikias and Kleon in 424/3, and both Nikias and Alcibiades to the leadership of the Sicilian expedition in 415,<sup>37</sup> prove that election to the *strategia* did not necessarily imply approval of one man's policy over another's. Thus the fact that two men were generals in the same year, or even for the same campaign, did not imply that they had the same policy or belonged to the same political group.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, trials and exile might punish military failures, whether or not they had political consequences; therefore such trials may not necessarily imply attacks by one political group on another.

<sup>36</sup> Phormio, for instance, does not seem to have had a political career. Aristophanes *Knights* 562, *Peace* 347, *Lysistrata* 804, and Diodoros 12.48.3 all refer to his military record. The scholiast to *Peace* 347 (citing Androtion *FGrHist* 324 F 8) and Pausanias 1.23.10 report an occasion when the Akarnanians specifically asked for Phormio, who was unable to go because of a debt, until the demos paid it for him by creating a sinecure. (The scholiast reports that the debt, with ἀτιμία, resulted from being unable to pay a fine at his εὔθυναί.) Diodoros stresses his daring in the episode told recorded by Thucydides (2.81–92); perhaps he was judged to have been reckless in joining battle with so great a numerical disadvantage. See the discussion in Gomme *HCT* 2.234–37. There is no indication that the historian Thucydides had any sort of political career; he seems to have been exiled solely because of his failure to save Amphipolis (5.26).

<sup>37</sup> J. Beloch, *Attische Politik* Appendix I, has a very useful list of the names, patronymics, and demotics of the known Athenian generals from 441/0 to 356/5 from which this can be clearly seen.

<sup>38</sup> I am uneasy, therefore, over arguments like these of Strauss, "Thrasybulus and Conon" 42–43: "Conon and Thrasybulus...did not share an admiration for Alcibiades, however. Unlike Thrasybulus, Conon did not serve in Alcibiades' fleet, nor did Conon fall from power with Alcibiades. In fact, Conon was sent out to replace Alcibiades after the battle of Notium. Thrasybulus and Conon therefore were not likely to have been friends in the late fifth century." The same argument is maintained in *Athens* 121–55.

Like Athenian *strategoi*, the generals of Boiotia, the *Boiotarchoi*, seem to have been elected. Nevertheless, at Delion the Boiotarchs were unable to agree whether to join battle with the Athenians (Thucydides 4.91). Pagondas finally appealed directly to the hoplites on the field.<sup>39</sup> The Boiotarchs evidently did not believe they had a clear mandate in their election, nor did they share a common policy.

Modern political parties are large and usually long-lasting; even the many parties in the smallest modern European countries transcend local groups of kinship and acquaintance, and normally last over several generations. Parties are identified by a collective name, not only by the name of an individual leader; adherents, opponents, journalists and historians consistently refer to them by this name. Most citizens belong to one party or another, and once a voter has joined a party, he will tend to follow the urgings and arguments of its leaders in forming his opinions and voting for candidates.

There is no evidence at all, for any ancient *polis*, that officially recognized and organized political parties in this sense ever existed. There is no vocabulary developed for the party itself,<sup>40</sup> or for official positions in it; no references whatever to such an organization in Aristotle's *Athenaiôn Politeia* (where we would certainly expect it), none in the historians, none in the orators.

There were, however, large social and economic groups which naturally had shared interests affecting political choices. The evidence for economic class struggles in antiquity and their effect on local constitutional struggles, has often been discussed.<sup>41</sup> Probably the most influential treatment remains that of de Ste. Croix, who demonstrates the connection, during the period of the Athenian empire, between the conflicts of democrats and oligarchs in individual *poleis* in

<sup>39</sup> If, as is often suggested, the Boiotians governed themselves by a hoplite franchise, an appeal to the army would amount to an appeal to the full citizen body. This might account for the fact that Thucydides does not suggest that there is anything irregular about Pagondas' action.

<sup>40</sup> Whibley (note 30) 4–13, 92 recognizes the lack of vocabulary, only to remark that our sources are "deficient" on the subject.

<sup>41</sup> Beloch *Attische Politik*; P. Cloché "Les Conflits politiques et sociaux à Athènes pendant la guerre Corinthienne (395–387 avant J.-C.)," *REA* 21 (1919) 157–92; Connor, 7; Finley, *Politics*, 1–11, 101–5; G. T. Griffith, (above, note 30) 236–56; Grote *Greece* 6.244–47 (Kleon vs. Perikles), 6.282 (Kerkyra), 6.286 (Nikias), 6.290 (Nikias vs. Kleon), etc; C. D. Hamilton, "The Politics of Revolution in Corinth, 395–386 B.C." *Historia* 21 (1972) 21–37; P. Harding, "In Search of a Polypragmatist," *Classical Contributions* (above, note 32) 41–50, who argues that class did not play a role in Athenian foreign policy; Jones 130–32; D. Kagan, "Corinthian Politics and the Revolution of 392 B.C." *Historia* 11 (1962) 447–57; Kagan, "Economic Origins"; Kagarow; Mossé, 29–30; Pearson; de Ste. Croix, *Class Struggle* 292, who argues that there was no class division in Athens in the early fourth century; Sealey, "Revolution"; C. Tuplin, "The Date of the union of Corinth and Argos," *CQ* 32 (1982) 75–83; Strauss, *Athens* 26–27, 42–69; Wade-Gery; Whibley, (above, note 30) 35–37; Whitby, "The Union of Corinth and Argos: a Reconsideration," *Historia* 33 (1984) 295–308.

the Athenian empire, with alliances (and requests for support) with Athens and Sparta respectively.<sup>42</sup>

Thucydides' analysis of the *stasis* in Kerkyra (3.82–4) taken together with Aristotle's discussion of the tendency for classes to govern in their own interests (*Politics* 1279b11–1280a6) demonstrate that the Greeks were themselves fully aware of this phenomenon. As de Ste. Croix puts it, "Aristotle makes the economic basis of Greek party politics as clear as anyone could wish."<sup>43</sup> The Greeks had an established vocabulary for this particular division: Aristotle's *Athenaiōn Politeia* presents the history of Athens as a struggle between the δῆμος and the ὀλίγοι; in the *Politics* (1279b18–80a7, 1301b28–1302a16) he remarks that what this really means is a struggle between the poor and the rich—and that he would use the same names even if the poor were few and the rich were many!<sup>44</sup> This struggle is so common that de Ste. Croix is justified in referring to a "stasis of the usual character—oligarchs against democrats."<sup>45</sup>

At times shared economic interests might affect other issues, including foreign as well as domestic policy: the upper classes would normally be more reluctant to begin wars which they would have to pay for and fight in; the farmers might be reluctant to have their land ravaged and their source of income

<sup>42</sup> "Character." Marxist analysis is applied to internal politics at Athens in *Origins* 34–49 and to the entire Mediterranean in *Class Struggle*. Much of this material was already gathered by Grote (6.404–6), to the same effect. One notes, however, Finley's caution (*Politics* 61) "ancient authors restrict their information to the constitutional issues and to the bare bones of assassination, exile and confiscation." Thus evidence for other issues might be omitted, still, there is no reason to suspect the evidence for class struggle on that account.

<sup>43</sup> de Ste. Croix, "Character" 21. Elsewhere Aristotle comments that the source of *stasis* is always a struggle for equality of power—equal power with the rich, in the case of the poor, but power equal to their "worth", in the case of the rich (*Politics* 1301b: ἔστι δὲ διττὸν τὸ ἴσον, τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀριθμῷ τὸ δὲ κατ' ἀξίαν). Lysias also has a client remark that all men are democrats or oligarchs out of self-interest: "οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπων φύσει οὔτε ὀλιγαρχικὸς οὔτε δημοκρατικός, ἀλλ' ἦτις ἂν ἐκάστῳ πολιτεία συμφέρῃ, ταύτην προθυμεῖται καθεστάναι" (25.8). K. J. Dover, *Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum*, Sather Lecture 39 (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1968.) 49, notes that Lysias' client does not actually say that all rich men are oligarchs and poor men democrats. The speaker (addressing a democratic jury at a time when open expression of a desire for oligarchy would be nearly suicidal) asserts that rich men with a claim on the gratitude of the poor desire democracy out of self-interest. Only those rich men who have alienated the δῆμος by past crimes desire oligarchy—or so he would have us believe. [Xenophon] *Ath. Pol.* 1.4–5 and Demosthenes on many occasions (e.g. 21.208–212) do assume that all rich men are oligarchs.

<sup>44</sup> Aristocratic sources controlled the language about these groups, as a number of scholars have pointed out: Reverdin 208–10; de Ste. Croix "Character" 22–26; Bruce, "Political Terminology." Cf. Grote (6.284): "the Grecian oligarchies, exercising powerful sway over fashion, and more especially over the meaning of words, bestowed upon themselves the appellation of 'the best men, the honorable and good, the elegant, the superior,' etc., and attached to those without their own circle epithets of a contrary tenor, implying low moral attitudes."

<sup>45</sup> de Ste. Croix, "Character" 9.

destroyed; the urban poor might be more eager for war, which might lead to conquests and *kleruchies*, and in any case offered steady pay in the fleet.<sup>46</sup>

Class interest, however, does not fully explain ancient political activity. In the first place, there was not always a group actively aiming to change the constitution in a *polis*;<sup>47</sup> in the intervals, there is no sign of continuing political groups working for the benefit of particular economic classes—nothing like a modern Labor or Socialist party, for instance.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, political

<sup>46</sup> cf. Aristophanes *Ekklesiazousai* 197–99. Whibley (above, note 30) 115–117, argues that war was not financially advantageous for any classes; Finley, *Politics* 101–21, argues that only the “conquest-states” of antiquity (Sparta, Athens, and Rome) were politically stable, because only here did the poor have an opportunity to improve their position without attacking the rich. Jones, 131, also points to the *kleruchies* as an important factor in the greater willingness of the poor to go to war. Certainly rowers were not paid enough to make war especially attractive to them on that account alone. Harding (“Search,” above, note 41) demonstrates that all the classes in Athens had an interest in maintaining and expanding the empire; Strauss (*Athens* 59–63) argues that the passage from the *Ekklesiazousai* does not show a difference in interests between the town and the countryside, and that τοῖς πλουσίοις δὲ καὶ γεωργοῖς is an instance of *hendiadys*: Rich farmers are opposed, not all farmers. Neither argument excludes a pattern of interest-based differences of policy

<sup>47</sup> Martin 31–37 argues that latent economic issues found ideological expression only when an individual rose to lead the lower classes; Walek-Czerniecki 204 points to the lack of a “petit-bourgeoisie”; Kagarow 180–82 argues that moral issues were most important in many cases.

The fact that class interests as such are not usually made explicit does not, of course, mean that they did not underlie some proposals. Nevertheless, in *Politics* 109–10, Finley points to the fact that there is little evidence of any faction dedicated to achieving, in actual fact, a “Utopian” abolition of property rights or the redistribution of the land in any Greek *polis*. Perlman, “Politicians” 337 and “Political Leadership” 164–5 points to the fourth-century evidence that preservation of private property was always assumed as a basic principle at Athens. Andokides 1.88 gives a regulation designed to avoid the cancellation of debts; similarly the “oath of the Heliasts” (Demosthenes 24.149–151) forbids the cancellation of debts or redistribution of land. In [Demosthenes] 17.15, the prospect of cancellation of debts, confiscation of property, freeing of slaves for a revolution, and partition of land, are held up as a kind of bogey, as if they were possible if the Athenians came to terms with Alexander in 336 or 335 B.C. While these sources do make it clear that preservation of property was basic to Athenian law, it must also be noted that the oaths and threats also show that arguments for cancellation of debts were in the air in this period of widespread economic suffering and roving bands of landless mercenaries (cf. also Thucydides 5.4 [Leontini], 8.21 [Samos], as well as more theoretical or rhetorical comments in Plato *Laws* 3.684D–E, 5.736C–E, Isokrates 12.259, Polybios 6.9.9) Nevertheless, no political group in any major *polis* seems ever to have taken up these demands.

<sup>48</sup> Sealey, “Entry of Pericles” 67, “Athens and Archidamian War” 82–3 “Callistratos” 180. There does not seem to have been an actively oligarchic group in Athens in the first half of the fourth century, for example; Beloch, *Attische Politik* 110–1 remarks that no one could espouse oligarchy directly after

disputes often seem to have arisen as specific rather than ideological issues; we do not usually find politicians inciting the poor against the rich; normally the appeal is to the good of the state.<sup>49</sup>

Many political groups do not seem to have differed in the economic class of either leaders or adherents, nor do differences in the policy of groups or individual leaders seem regularly to have been determined by class interests.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, Sealey has argued that even in the revolution at Athens in 411, where the constitution was, apparently, the central issue, in fact the motivations were largely personal.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, the rivalry between Konon and Thrasybulos in Athens in the 390s apparently concerned neither economic class nor constitutional preferences.<sup>52</sup>

403, but many wanted to limit the rights of the poor while calling the government a democracy; see also Finley "Athenian Demagogues" 17–8 and *Politics*, 101–111; Mossé 23; Perlman, "Politicians" 334 and "Political Leadership" 166–67; de Ste. Croix, "Character" 28–29 argues that the results of the revolutions of 411 and 404 had discredited oligarchy at Athens: "those who were in fact moderate oligarchs found it politic to pretend that what they wanted was nothing but democracy—only of course it must be the good old democracy which had flourished in the good old times, not the vicious form of democracy which had led to all sorts of unworthy men gaining power for their own nefarious ends." There was apparently a democratic faction, perhaps led by impoverished merchants, in Corinth in the 390s, but there is no evidence that this had been the case earlier. See the work of Griffith (above, note 30) and Kagan, Hamilton, Tuplin, and Whitby on the union of Corinth and Argos, cited above in note 41.

<sup>49</sup> Finley, "Athenian Demagogues" 18–19 comments: "...the appeal was customarily a national one, not a factional one. There is little open pandering to the poor against the rich, to the farmers against the town or to the town against the farmers. Why indeed should there have been? Politicians regularly say that what they are advocating is in the best interests of the nation, and what is more important, they believe it. Often, too, they charge their opponents with sacrificing the national interest for special interests, and they believe that. I know of no evidence which warrants the view that Athenian politicians were somehow peculiar in this respect." This is not true in the lawcourts, however: cf. Demosthenes 21.208–13.

<sup>50</sup> This is acknowledged by de Ste. Croix, *Class Struggle* 292–96. P. Harding, "Androtion's Political Career," *Historia* 25 (1976), 186–200 demonstrates that Androtion's career does not show a consistent ideological or economic policy; P. J. Rhodes, "On Labelling 4th-century politicians," *LCM* 3 (1978) 207–11, writes of Demosthenes in the middle of the fourth century, "It seems to me perverse to deny that this was a period when politicians disagreed on matters of policy" (210).

<sup>51</sup> Sealey, "Revolution of 411" 114–15, 119.

<sup>52</sup> Bruce, "Internal Politics" 80–81; Bruce, "Athenian Foreign Policy in 396–395 B.C.," *CJ* 58 (1963) 289–295; G. L. Cawkwell, "The Imperialism of Thrasybulus," *CQ* 26 (1976) 270–277; Cloché, "Hommes politiques" 80–95; Perlman, "Athenian Democracy" 257–67; Perlman, "Political Leadership"; Seager, "Thrasybulus, Conon and Athenian Imperialism, 396–386 B.C.," *JHS* 87 (1967) 95–115; Sealey, "Callistratos"; Strauss, "Thrasybulus and Conon," *Athens* 104–13.



There is nothing to suggest that the situation was different in Boiotia. The extant part of P's account of the dispute in 395 indicates that the division between Ismenias and Leontiades concerned foreign policy, and that the two groups did not differ in economic or social status, nor, evidently, ideology.<sup>53</sup> P describes the two political groups in Boiotia as composed of, not merely led by, aristocrats (οἱ βέλτιστοι καὶ γνωριμώτατοι τῶν πολιτῶν). Certainly the political organization of Boiotia did not change when Ismenias' faction became more powerful than Leontiades'. Not until the 370s, when both Ismenias and Leontiades were dead and the pro-Spartan oligarchy had been shamed by the suppression of the Boiotian Confederacy by the Spartans and the betrayal of the Kadmeia to Sparta, was there a change of constitution.<sup>54</sup>

Classes, then, while large like modern parties, did not have a continuous organization in antiquity. The Greeks had a more organized kind of political group, but it was much smaller and was usually referred to by the name of an individual. We never, for instance, find a political group blamed collectively for the failure of a policy. Whether in historical accounts or in later rhetorical accusations, policies are invariably referred to individuals, not to political groups.<sup>55</sup> Accusations of personal graft (cf. P 2.2) and personal abuse of power are common, but not corresponding accusations against a group or class. The frequency of charges of graft, or of policy decisions being made to secure "jobs for the boys," also implies that the groups were small and personal.<sup>56</sup> Thucydides' well-known remark (2.65.9) that Athenian politics in the time of Perikles was "rule of the first man," not "rule of imperialists," or "rule of the war party," and Herodotos' identification of Aristekides (8.79) as "an opponent of Themistokles," rather than by policy or group identity, are typical of this pattern. Political struggles, unless a change of constitution was the issue, (and often even then) are described as struggles between individuals.

The same seems to be true in Boiotia. The Boiotian ambassador to Athens in 395 did not argue that a different political party had been in charge of policy

<sup>53</sup> Kagan, "Corinthian Politics" (above, note 41) 452, seems to have thought so in 1962, but has since changed his mind, according to a note in Hamilton based on a private communication, "Politics of Revolution" (above, note 41) 28 note 36.

<sup>54</sup> See discussion and sources above, note 12.

<sup>55</sup> Roberts, "Athenian Conservatives"; Roberts, "Athens' So-Called Unofficial Politicians"; Roberts, *Accountability*; Perlman, "Politicians" 353; Wade-Gery 219–21; cf. Reverdin, "c'est autour des hommes politiques plutôt qu' autour d'idées abstraites et de programmes généraux que se groupait l'opinion." (212). This implies something more than the mere personal influence which can override party lines. For modern parallels, however, compare "Reaganomics," which was neither a theory developed by Reagan personally, nor a policy espoused by him individually.

<sup>56</sup> Sealey, "Callistratos" 135, 155. C. D. Hamilton, 172, argues that P 2.2 has been misinterpreted, and actually referred to an expectation of general advantage to Athens from imperialistic policies. This may well be correct, but does not weaken Sealey's point, since accusations of graft are remarkably frequent in Athenian politics. Political groups must have been small enough to make such accusations plausible.

in early 404, but blamed (admittedly tendentiously) Erianthos, who had made so savage a proposal to the Peloponnesian League in 404, as a single individual: "οὐ γὰρ ἡ πόλις ἐκεῖνα ἐψηφίσατο, ἀλλ' εἰς ἀνὴρ εἶπεν, ὃς ἔτυχε ἐν τοῖς συμμαχοῖς καθήμενος" (Xenophon 3.5.8).<sup>57</sup> We do not find either Xenophon or P speaking of "the peace party," "the pro-Spartans," or "the nationalists" in Boiotia, or anything of that sort. Instead we hear of "Ismenias' and Androkleides' group," or "those associated with Leontiades," and so on. The language, "οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἀνδροκλείδαν καὶ Ἴσμηνίαν," "οἱ περὶ τὸν Λεοντιάδην," is exactly the same as that used of political groups in Athens.<sup>58</sup>

It is the importance of individual leaders which made impeachments and other political trials so effective a weapon.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, the peculiar Athenian institution of ostracism is not compatible with large political parties. If removal of a single individual will cripple an opposing group, the opposing group must have no continuing organization and no subordinate ready to fill the vacant position.<sup>60</sup> Thus Plutarch remarks, with reference to the ostracism of Thucydides son of Melesias, that Perikles, by banishing his rival, also disbanded the opposing *hetairia*: "ἐκεῖνον μὲν ἐξέβαλε, κατέλυσε δὲ τὴν ἀντιτεταγμένην ἑταιρείαν" (*Perikles* 14.2). Aristotle's account of the development of the Athenian constitution indicates that this was effective: after the ostracism of Thucydides, Perikles was not opposed. This suggests that there

<sup>57</sup> That this was, in fact, tendentious seems clear enough: Erianthos' proposal is in accord with Boiotia's policy and enmity to Athens up to that point. It is not his proposal which surprises us, but Boiotia's policy a few months later which requires explanation.

<sup>58</sup> P also uses the same value-laden labels of political groups as those usual for Athenian politics. (See note 44 above.)

<sup>59</sup> Cf. the deposing and fining of Perikles in the first years of the Peloponnesian War (Thucydides 2.65.3; Plutarch *Perikles* 35.4). See also Roberts, *Accountability*, "Unofficial Politicians."

<sup>60</sup> Martin 32–34; Finley, *Politics* 55; Connor 73–75; E. Vanderpool, "Ostracism at Athens" (Semple Lecture, University of Cincinnati, 1970); D. J. Phillips, "Athenian Ostracism," in *Hellenika: Essays on Greek History and Politics*, ed. G. H. R. Horsley (North Ryde, N. S. W. 1982) 21–43, collects the known instances of ostracism, but adds little discussion of its purpose.

Pearson extends the idea that ostracism was intended to prevent *stasis*, to the claim that it is intended to prevent dissent entirely: "Nicias and Alcibiades must have known well that democracy was unworkable in affairs of war. They knew also that their own policies were incompatible. The people, seeing this, decided upon ostracism, but showed how it forgotten to use this valuable instrument by picking on the insignificant Hyperbolus. So Athenian democracy went to its ruin." (49–50) Earlier, Pearson argues, the assembly had given up control of foreign policy to Perikles and contented itself with insignificant domestic issues. This, he claims, is why we hear of the great political leaders, Themistokles, Aristides, Xanthippos, Kimon, Ephialtes, Thucydides, and Perikles, only in reference to foreign policy or constitutional change: "the assembly debated and voted to its heart's content about domestic issues, whilst imperial policy remained in the hands of others" (48).

was no continuous and organized group of "anti-imperialists."<sup>61</sup> At other times there were several leaders all espousing a particular policy, with no clear hierarchy.<sup>62</sup> Again this suggests that political struggle took place between individuals rather than parties.

The Boiotians did not, so far as we know, use ostracism. However, the arrest and execution of Ismenias and assassination of Androkleides in 382, instigated by their political enemy Leontiades, and similarly the assassination of Leontiades in 379 by the faction liberating the Kadmeia,<sup>63</sup> suggest that eliminating the individual was expected to effectively cripple the opposition. The political trials of Pelopidas and Epaminondas in the 360s resemble political trials in Athens and further confirm the analogy.<sup>64</sup>

This small political group, both in Athens and in Boiotia, was called a *hetairia*, a name often associated with *stasis*. Some have argued that it always refers to a subversive and revolutionary group; Grote even offers "conspiracy" as a translation.<sup>65</sup> This, however, seems largely a result of the word's anti-democratic associations in late fifth-century Athens and the rhetoric of the fourth century.<sup>66</sup> Originally the *hetairia* was an informal social group, usually of upper-class men who could afford to give banquets for their friends and were prominent enough to be vulnerable to law-suits, in which members assisted each other.<sup>67</sup> Naturally, these often were formed of men of similar political leanings and might form a politically active clique, but the bonds remained largely personal.

<sup>61</sup> Martin 33. Harding, "Search" (above, note 41) 41–50, argues that there were never any anti-imperialists at Athens.

<sup>62</sup> Reverdin 206–7.

<sup>63</sup> See above, note 12.

<sup>64</sup> For the political trials of Pelopidas and Epaminondas see Plutarch *Pelopidas* 24–25; 28.1; *Agesilaos* 32.8; *Moralia* 194B–C; 540D–E; 542B; 805C; Nepos *Epaminondas* 5, 7–8; Diodoros 15.72.1–2; Aelian *VH* 13.42 and discussions in G. L. Cawkwell, "Epaminondas and Thebes," *CQ* 66 (1972) 254–78; J. Buckler *Theban Hegemony* (above, note 9) 138–50. The government of Boiotia in this period was a democracy, and therefore analogies with the earlier constitution must be tentative.

<sup>65</sup> Walek-Czernecki 211; Pearson 42; Grote 6.290. The Greeks had a word for conspiracy: συνωμοσία. This word is used, more rarely, in political contexts in ways which suggest that it may be a hostile substitution for *hetairia*. (Cf. Thucydides 8.54.4 and Plato *Apology* 36B.)

<sup>66</sup> Perlman, "Politicians" 380; Finley, "Athenian Demagogues" 6.

<sup>67</sup> The origin, size, makeup, and function of *hetairia* is fully treated by Calhoun (above, note 30); I summarize here. The use of friends as character witnesses in court was common: Andokides 1.150; Aischines 2.184; Lysias 12.85–88; Plato *Apology* 33D–34A, 36B, 38B. Calhoun takes *Apology* 36B to imply that "political clubs [were] one of the matters to which the majority of the citizens customarily give their attention," but they are only one of many activities which might distract one from the pursuit of truth. See discussions in Connor 25; Reverdin 119; Sealey, "Entry of Perikles" 66; see also Strauss, *Athens*, 20–28, who understands all references to φίλοι in a political context, to refer to *hetairiai*.

A group which begins as a kind of supper club is obviously not very large. Amid all the accusations in the affair of the profaning of the Mysteries and the mutilation of the herms, emerges the fact that all the activity took place in private homes; in the end, only 42 men were named, yet the Athenians feared that they represented a plot to overthrow the democracy (Andokides 1.12, 34, 36, 38–43, 45, 61–64). If Athenians were accustomed to organized political groups large enough to be comparable to modern parties, we would not expect them to react so strongly to these relatively small groups.

P has two ways of denoting the political groups in Boiotia: at 12.2 he refers to the groups as *hetairiai*, while at 12.1, 13.1, 13.3, and elsewhere he refers to the groups as “οἱ περὶ τὸν [δεῖνα].” In Athenian politics, as here, the expressions are clearly equivalent. The expression “the followers of [so-and-so],” if we are not seriously misled, is the *hetairia* in its political role; it is more common in a political context, and seems never to denote a purely social group.

Members of these groups sometimes acted together in the assembly: Plutarch reports that Thucydides the son of Melesias opposed Perikles “περὶ τὸ βῆμα”:

οὐ γὰρ εἶασε τοὺς καλοὺς κάγαθοὺς καλουμένους ἄνδρας ἐνδiesπάρθαι καὶ συμμεῖχθαι πρὸς τὸν δῆμον, ὡς πρότερον, ὑπὸ πλήθους ἡμαυρωμένους τὸ ἀξίωμα, χωρὶς δὲ διακρίνας καὶ συναγαγὼν εἰς ταῦτὸ τὴν πάντων δύναμιν ἐμβριθῆ γενομένην ὥσπερ ἐπὶ ζυγοῦ ῥοπὴν ἐποίησεν. *Perikles* 11.2

Thucydides had a group of like-minded aristocrats sit together and increase their influence, which was otherwise “weakened” or obscured by being scattered among the commoners.<sup>68</sup> Wade-Gery says of this “the method which the son of Melesias invented is comparable to the modern Caucus, or the Whip system: the Opposition was instructed to vote, not on the merits of the case, but as it bore on the question of breaking Perikles; not by their private judgment, but as the party decreed.”<sup>69</sup> That is a good deal more than Plutarch says. Thucydides gathered a group of individuals to act together against another individual, at least at particular times on particular issues. It is difficult to see what this could mean other than mutual support for an unpopular position, and possibly some intimidation of wavering voters sitting nearby. He had no means of discipline, and the need to sit together in the assembly suggests the group was small. This is not a political party; in modern terms, perhaps, they have discovered the “political action committee.” Even this much organization does not seem to have been habitual, for Nikias assumes that his supporters are mixed with younger supporters of Alkibiades in the assembly, although some of Alkibiades’ friends were sitting together (Thucydides 6.13.1).<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> In the *Ekklesiazousai* 296–8, we find the women agreeing to sit together for similar reasons. See the discussions in Wade-Gery 208, Andrewes 2, Sealey, “Entry of Pericles” 66.

<sup>69</sup> Wade-Gery 206.

<sup>70</sup> After the revolution of 411, deliberate group seating in the βουλή seems to have been made illegal: the members must sit “ἐν τῷ γράμματι ᾧ ἂν λάχωσιν” (Philochoros *FGrHist* 328 F 140). Places in the assembly could not have been

On occasion, these small groups might join forces for a particular issue, as we see in Plutarch's account of the supporters of Nikias and of Alkibiades, faced with an impending ostracism in which one of the two would be forced out, joining forces and engineering the ostracism of Hyperbolos instead.<sup>71</sup>

The policy of particular groups was changeable, as was the affiliation of individuals to groups.<sup>72</sup> Men sometimes adopted a particular political policy for completely personal reasons: Thucydides accuses Alkibiades of interfering with the alliance with Argos in 421 (5.43.2, 45.2–3) and supporting the Sicilian expedition out of personal ambition and rivalry with Nikias (6.15.2–3). Friendship and family ties might then involve an entire *hetairia* in the policy adopted by one member for personal reasons. Even when the issue was not merely personal, groups did not necessarily differ on long-term ideological, economic, or foreign policy issues; rather they seem to have differed on more immediate and specific policy decisions.

A *hetairia*, then, was a small group, held together by personal friendships and by family and marriage ties.<sup>73</sup> It might act as a unit or even act jointly with another *hetairia* on particular political issues, but may not have actively recruited members, was not necessarily permanently organized, and may have directed its energies to elections or political decisions only occasionally.

Sealey's conclusion in "Callistratos of Aphidna," that political groups were small and held together with personal ties, should not be misunderstood (as it often is) to mean that policy decisions always arose only from personal

assigned, however, and it is not clear what the point of assigning places in the βουλή would have been, or whether the fragment refers to individuals or tribes. (The latter appears more likely, and some sort of tribal precedence may be the issue.)

<sup>71</sup> Plutarch *Nikias* 11.4, *Alkibiades* 13.4. Several finds of large numbers of ostraka bearing Themistokles' name and inscribed by a few hands suggest both political cooperation within a group, probably a *hetairia*, and also that the group was fairly small. Cf. O. Broneer, "Excavations on the North Slope of the Acropolis, 1937," *Hesperia* 7 (1938) 161–263 (228–43 on the ostraka). For the collected evidence on ostracism, see Phillips, "Athenian Ostracism," and Vanderpool "Ostracism in Athens." (both above, note 60). Vanderpool notes that finds of ostraka from the same pot, in the same hand, but bearing different names, suggest that scribes may have set up booths on ostracism day to aid the illiterate or unprepared, which makes the case for "rigging" an ostracism more difficult to establish by identifying many ostraka from the same hand.

<sup>72</sup> Perlman, "Politicians" 352; Finley, "Demagogues" 15; Sealey, "Athens and the Archidamian War" 98–9, "Callistratos"; Harding, "Androtion" (above, note 50); Rhodes (above, note 50).

<sup>73</sup> Personal ties: Perlman, "Politicians" 352–54; Finley, "Athenian Demagogues" 15; Connor 35–84; Martin 36; Pearson 48; Sealey, "Entry of Pericles" 66, "Revolution of 411" 128, "Callistratos" 155; Strauss, *Athens*, 20–28. Family and marriage ties: Connor 9–18; Pearson 42; Sealey, "Entry of Perikles" and "Athens after the Social War," *JHS* 75 (1955) 74–81 (= *Essays* 164–82): "Athenian public life was the scene of personal and family-feuds; party-alignments depended sometimes on men, not measures," 178; Strauss, "Thrasylbulus" 42 note 22; Grote (e.g. 6.245 on Perikles and Kleon).

motivations,<sup>74</sup> and never from genuine beliefs about the best interests of the *polis*. Even when the motives of the leaders were purely personal, that does not imply that they did not present different policies to the voters, or that the voters did not make choices based on differing beliefs about the best foreign or domestic policy.<sup>75</sup> As Strauss puts it, "...like it or not, a politician usually had to identify himself with some policy, because clientelist ties or personal charisma were rarely enough to win votes in the assembly."<sup>76</sup> As we have seen, Alkibiades is singled out by Thucydides as proposing policies out of personal jealousy and ambition, but he had a reasonably coherent policy to present to the voters.<sup>77</sup> It seems clear from Thucydides, Xenophon, and Demosthenes' public orations, that politicians tried to persuade the assembly with specific arguments; personal influence cannot be excluded, but could not be counted on to provide majority votes.

While it is sometimes appropriate, then, to refer to factions by naming their policy, the picture is of a few small political groups, bound by a variety of ties including personal, economic, ideological, and other political ties, without formal organization, recognition, or specific power, and not necessarily united by class interests or long-term ideological beliefs. At no time do we hear of more than three or four named political groups in any city, and each of those is

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Perlman "Political Leadership" 167: "membership of a party was not based on social ideology, but a totally personal political association...Any kind of party discipline was foreign to the spirit of the Athenians"; elsewhere Perlman argues that the political trials "were a means of evaluating the state of public opinion and its attitude towards policies represented by rival groups" ("Politicians" 342). On the use of personal lawsuits as an expression of policy disputes, see also Roberts, "Athenian Conservatives," "Unofficial Politicians," and *Accountability*.

<sup>75</sup> Finley, "Athenian Demagogues" 15–16, emphasizes that in spite of the absence of organized political parties, and the fact that there were no party posts or offices with official standing in the assembly, an individual still represented a particular policy each time he addressed the voters. The "leaders had no respite. Because their influence had to be earned and exerted directly and immediately—this was a necessary consequence of a direct, as distinct from a representative, democracy—they had to lead in person, and they had to bear, in person, the brunt of the opposition's attacks. More than that, they walked alone. They had their lieutenants, of course, and politicians made alliances with each other. But these were fundamentally personal links, shifting frequently, useful in helping to carry through a particular measure or even a group of measures, but lacking that quality of support, that buttressing or cushioning effect, which is provided by a bureaucracy and political party..." See also Rhodes (above, note 50).

<sup>76</sup> *Athens* 26.

<sup>77</sup> Sealey has shown in "Revolution of 411" that Alkibiades' personal concern in the various intrigues of 411 was his own recall, and that he was prepared to deal with either oligarchy or democracy or limited democracy to that end. Similarly in the debate concerning the Sicilian expedition, although he was motivated by personal ambition (Thucydides 6.15), his speech offered political and military reasons for the decision (Thucydides 6.16–18).

small. It follows that the majority of citizens did not belong to any group;<sup>78</sup> the leaders would need to appeal to the voters on every issue as it arose.

Did Boiotia have the same sort of small political groups as Athens? Such evidence as we have suggests that it did. In the first place, political groups in Athens were identified by naming the leader: “Thrasyboulos’ group,” or “those who associate with Epikrates and Kephalos.” In this respect, as we have already seen, our sources identify Boiotian political groups by the names of the leaders in exactly the same way as Athenian political groups. P, for instance, writes “ἡγοῦντο...τοῦ μέρους τοῦ μὲν Ἴσμηνίας καὶ Ἀντίθεος...τοῦ δὲ Λεοντιάδης...οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἴσμηνίαν...” (P 12.1). Since P is particularly interested in internal political struggles, and well informed on Boiotian government, it seems justifiable to conclude from his language that in this respect Boiotian political groups worked in essentially the same way as those of Athens; Xenophon and Plutarch use the same language.<sup>79</sup>

Naturally this does not mean that Ismenias’ group and Leontiades’ group were only personal associations without distinctions in policy. In P’s account of Athenian politics, after a political group is named by the name of the leader, a policy is sometimes predicated (οὗτοι...ἔτυχον ἐπιθυμοῦντες ἐκπολεμῶσαι τὴν πόλιν [P 2.2]), and social or economic class may be added: (ὅσοι γνώριμοι καὶ χαρίεντες ἦσαν...οἱ μὲν ἐπιεικεῖς καὶ τὰς οὐσίας ἔχοντες...οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ καὶ δημοτικοί [P 1.2–3]) In describing the situation in Boiotia too, no sooner has P introduced us to the two factions by the names of their leaders, than he informs us of their policies (P 12.1): Leontiades’ group “ἐφρόνουν...τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων, οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἴσμηνίαν αἰτίαν μὲν εἶχον ἀπτικίζειν...οὐ μὲν ἐφρόντιζον τῶν Ἀθηναίων, ἀλλ’... lacuna].” Ismenias’ group, though accused of favoring Athens, had some other foreign policy, which is unfortunately lost in the lacuna. He indicates social and economic class as well: “οἱ βέλτιστοι καὶ γνωριμώτατοι τῶν πολιτῶν” (P 12.1).

Still, because the active political groups are bound by personal ties, it is clear that they were small; the necessary conclusion, in Boiotia as in Athens, is that many citizens, including those who were politically active (Athenians who attended the assembly at least when issues important to them were on the agenda, and Boiotians who were members of the federal βουλὴ) were not associated with any continuing and cohesive political group. They had to be

<sup>78</sup> Strauss, *Athens*, 17–31, seems to be the only scholar explicitly separating the voters as a whole from the leaders. He suggests “followings” for the “even less-structured” groups of non-politicians, then further subdivides this into “action-sets” and “quasi-groups,” the latter a set of “action-sets.” Strauss does not make further use of these terms, which do not seem to elucidate the facts at hand. The state of the evidence leads us inevitably to assume that any person named in a political context is a politician, any group, a political group. It follows that we have no information about non-politicians who belong to no political group. Nevertheless, if politicians did not approach the ekklesia with arguments based on facts and policies rather than appeals to personalities and personal loyalties, we have been so seriously misled by our sources that we must throw up our hands in despair.

<sup>79</sup> Bruce, “Political Terminology.”

persuaded by specific arguments about specific issues, and the leaders could not always count on their votes to go as they wished.

In Athens, as has often been noted, this made rhetorical eloquence a prime qualification of political leaders.<sup>80</sup> Again, we have much less evidence for Boiotia, but what we have clearly implies a similar situation. P remarks that the Lokrians, in instigating the Corinthian War in 395 B.C., sent to the Boiotians for help:

οἱ δὲ Λοκροὶ δηνουμένης τῆς χώρας πέμψαντες πρέσβεις εἰς  
Βοιωτοὺς κατηγορίαν ἐπο[ι]οῦντο τῶν Φ[ω]κέων, καὶ βοηθεῖν  
ἐκείνους αὐτοῖς [ῆ]ξι[ο]υν· διάκειν[τ]αι δὲ πρὸς αὐτοὺς αἰεὶ  
ποτε φιλίως. (P 13.4)

That is, the Lokrians sent ambassadors to the Boiotian federal βουλή (since this was a foreign policy issue). They “made an accusation” there, and they stressed their own history of friendship, presumably in the expectation that this would affect the vote. Clearly, the members of the βουλή were free to decide on the issue. Once the Lokrian ambassadors were there, Ismenias’ political group attempted to influence the decision of the βουλή:

[ἀρπ]άσαντες δὲ τὸν καιρὸν ἀσμ[έν]ως μάλα οἱ περὶ τὸν  
Ἴσ[μ]ηνίαν καὶ τὸν Ἀνδροκλε[ίδαν] ἔπεισαν τοὺς Βοιωτοὺς  
βοηθεῖν τοῖς Λοκροῖς. (P 13.4)

Ismenias’ group, then, could not simply tell them how to vote, but must “persuade” them. Meanwhile, the Phokians had sent to Sparta for support; the Spartans arrogantly ordered Boiotia to submit to arbitration, which aggravated the situation and pushed the Boiotians into action:

οἱ δὲ (i. e. the Spartans) καίπερ λέγειν αὐτοὺς (i.e. the Phokian ambassadors to Sparta) νομισάντες ἅπιστα [πέμψαντες ὅμως] οὐκ εἶων τοὺς Βοιωτοὺς πόλεμον ἐκ[φέρειν πρὸς τοὺς] Φωκέας, ἀλλ’ εἴ τι ἀδικεῖσθαι νομίζουσ[ι] δίκην λαμβάνειν παρ’ αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖς συμμάχοις [ἐκέλευον. οἱ δὲ (i.e. the Boiotians), πα]ροξυνόντων αὐτοὺς τῶν καὶ τὴν ἀπ[άτην καὶ τὰ πρ[ά]γματα ταῦτα συστησάντων, τοὺς μὲν [πρέσβεις τοὺς] τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων ἀπρακτοὺς ἀπέστε[ι]λαν, αὐτοὶ δὲ] τὰ ὅπλα λαβόντες ἐβάδ[ι]ζον ἐπὶ τοὺς Φωκέας. (P 13.4)

The *agora* at Thebes may not have been as full of sophists teaching rhetoric as that in Athens, but we still find Ismenias’ group “παροξύνοντας” in the βουλή. Notice, again, the description of this group: “those who had worked together to contrive the trick and the situation.” Clearly we are dealing with a

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Plutarch’s evaluation of the importance of Perikles’ eloquence in *Perikles* 15.4–5. Perlman, “Political Leadership” 173; Martin 25–28; Reverdin 211; Finley, “Athenian Demagogues” 13; Walek-Czernecki 213. It has been suggested that in the fourth century financial expertise became a prime qualification for political leadership as well, but W. E. Thompson, in “Athenian Leadership: Expertise or Charisma,” in *Classical Contributions = Studies in honour of M. F. McGregor* (Locust Valley NY. 1981) 153–60, argues that expertise was needed only among the secretaries and treasurers and tax farmers, not among the demagogues.



small (in this case, even conspiratorial) group working to persuade or manipulate the voters.

Other political mechanisms, such as bribery, generosity, and economic pressure on dependents, clearly played some role in Athens. Plutarch reports that the wealthy Kimon allowed anyone who liked to take food from his land, gave away food to anyone who came to his door, and gave away good clothing to the deserving poor (*Kimon* 10.1–3). Perikles, who could not compete with Kimon on these terms, “bribed the people with their own money,” distributing *kle-rouchies*, instituting pay for jurors and other civic duty, grants for festivals (*θεωρικοί*), which he is supposed to have devised for their amusement (*Perikles* 9.1–4); and in general “σχεδὸν ὅλην ποιιοῦσιν ἔμμισθον τὴν πόλιν” (12.4). Plutarch describes the Periklean building project as a sort of giant public-works program, designed to support those of the urban poor who were not employed as hoplites or rowers (12.5–13.9). Andrewes has objected that much of this “could not have been written by a contemporary,” and that Plutarch or his sources have been influenced by Roman politics.<sup>81</sup> This may be true of Perikles’ new festivals to amuse the rabble, but the rest cannot be dismissed. The story occurs as early as Aristotle *Athenaiōn Politeia* 27.3–4, and need not be true to be significant; the fact that it could be told means that political influence could be bought by personal largess or by the economic benefits of a policy. Andrewes also argues that the notion of a “full employment policy” is an anachronism, but at least by the fourth century it could be claimed that the government (in the good old days) saw to it that the urban poor could find work (cf. Isokrates 7.55). Once might compare Konon’s popularity and political dominance after he returned to Athens in 393, with enough Persian gold to rebuild the Peiraeus fortifications, employing many Athenians in the process (Xenophon 4.8.9).

Thus political groups in Athens could affect voting through economic pressure of various sorts.<sup>82</sup> It seems likely that this would be possible in Boiotia as well, and in fact we have evidence that it was. A passing reference in Plato’s *Meno* (90a) shows that Ismenias had received a windfall shortly before 402, and from *Republic* 336a, we learn that he used it to achieve political power in some unspecified way.<sup>83</sup> P (12.4) also makes it clear that economics had

<sup>81</sup> Andrewes, 4.

<sup>82</sup> Connor (18–22) calls this “the politics of largess”; Finley, *Politics* 34–37, 39–49, regards the situation as essentially similar to the Roman *clientela*; Sealey, “Entry of Pericles,” 66–71. For another aspect of this sort of political activity, see David Whitehead, “Competitive Outlay and Community Profit: φιλοτιμία in Athens,” *C&M* 34 (1983) 55–74. Whitehead refers to the exchange of money for honor as a “political investment in goodwill” (60). It is more fully explored in J. K. Davies, *Wealth and the Power of Wealth in Classical Athens* (Salem, New Hampshire 1984).

<sup>83</sup> cf. Morrison, “Meno.” While I disagree with Morrison’s interpretation on a number of points, I agree that “the wealth of Polykrates” which Ismenias is said in the *Meno* to have received cannot be a reference to the bribe sent by Persia with Timokrates in 396: “it is hardly possible that anyone could credit Plato with such insensitivity to anachronism as to allow the mention of an event which took place after all the participants in the dialogue were dead” (58). Both

much to do with the political dominance of the pro-Spartan faction during the profitable Dekelean war.

We see, then, that all available evidence indicates that while the formal structure of the federal, representative, and oligarchic government of Boiotia differed from the radical democracy of Athens, the activity of political groups was much the same. There was a substantial body of Boiotians who were not ideologically and permanently committed to either of the factions, but sometimes followed the lead of a particular faction only out of self-interest or some other temporary reason, and then fell away when self-interest or *cause célèbre* ended, or perhaps decided on specific policy issues independently of any faction. These Boiotians cannot have been simply apolitical, or their opinions would have had no effect on public policy.<sup>84</sup> They must have been involved in politics; indeed, the decisions of 404 are not credible unless some of these men serving in the Boiotian federal council that year were uncommitted to a faction.

The Boiotian government, then, was more responsive to the changing moods of its citizens than has generally been recognized, and it is the attitudes of the uncommitted voters which explain some decisions. The leaders of factions must often have had to compromise on particular issues where the voters felt strongly, lest they lose their standing on other issues.

This model illuminates Boiotia's foreign policy and domestic politics, and explains some of the vacillating behavior of Boiotia between 404 and 395 B.C.

references to Ismenias appear to be hostile, but not so hostile as Morrison argues in claiming that Plato classes Ismenias "as one who reduced everything, even morality, to the level of commerce" (77). The passage in question reads: "αὐτὸ [a definition of justice as helping friends and harming enemies] Περιάνδρου εἶναι ἢ Περδικκου ἢ Ξέρξου ἢ Ἰσμηνίου τοῦ Θηβαίου ἢ τινος ἄλλου μέγα οἰομένου δύνασθαι πλουσίου ἀνδρός" (*Republic* 336A), which shows only that Ismenias made a claim to power based in some way on his wealth.

This leaves a number of puzzling questions unanswered. The origin of Plato's hostility to Ismenias remains unexplained. Further, it is unsettling that the remark in the *Meno* occurs in the context of an apparent compliment to the father of Anytos, who became wealthy, "οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου οὐδὲ δόντος τινός, ὥσπερ ὁ νῦν νεώσται τὰ Πολυκράτους χρήματα Ἰσμηνίας ὁ Θηβαῖος, ἀλλὰ τῇ αὐτοῦ σοφίᾳ κτησάμενος καὶ ἐπιμελείᾳ" (90A). We would not ordinarily expect Plato to praise earning money by one's own skill. Worse, besides being an ardent democrat, Anytos was a chief villain in the death of Sokrates and one is surprised to find his family praised. Finally, Anytos was one of the men "of Phyle," who with Thrasyboulos had found refuge in Thebes and thereby formed friendly relations, perhaps even ξενία, with Ismenias, so that it is surprising to have him praised at Ismenias' expense. Evidently the remark is ironic, but the intent is not clear.

<sup>84</sup> I differ somewhat here from Cloché, who translates P's "ἐφρόνουν δὲ τῶν πολιτευομένων οἱ μὲν περὶ τὸν Λεοντιάδην τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων, [οἱ] δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἰσμηνίαν..." (P 12.1) as "les gens qui s'occupant de politique...Entre les deux groupes se trouvait...une masse flottante" ("Politique thébaine" 326). His "masse flottante," the citizens who were not attached to the factions, were not thereby apolitical. If they were, we could not explain the abrupt shifts in policy of 404 and 395.

We must now envision the leaders of the two factions trying to rouse the uncommitted citizens by playing on their shifting moods, portraying Spartan actions as arrogant, threatening, conciliatory, provocative: whatever suited their purposes. Indeed, the situation would encourage the faction leaders to manipulate the citizens' moods with propaganda, rhetoric, appeals to emotion, patriotism, or self-interest, and downright deceit.

This is, in fact, exactly the picture P gives us: the pro-Spartan faction dominated throughout the Peloponnesian War only because it was to the citizens' advantage to support Sparta.<sup>85</sup> During the Dekeleian War, for instance, Boiotia demanded Apollo's tithe of the spoils, in spite of Spartan resentment (P 12.3). When the pro-Spartan policy ceased to be in their interest, the citizens fell away. In 404, they proposed to raze Athens and enslave the population, which would be profitable for the same reasons as the Dekleian war had been: since they were on the spot, they were in a position to get the spoils at a good price (P 12.4). It is not surprising, then, that they showed their resentment at Sparta's usurping all of the spoils of the war, including the leftover Persian subsidies (Plutarch *Lysander* 27.2). Leontiades could not prevent this reaction, but that did not mean that Ismenias was in control.

Since we now see that these voters were not much concerned with Sparta's interests, it is no longer surprising to find them reacting defiantly to Sparta's order to surrender the exiles. Their sense of pride and importance was offended by Sparta's arrogance, and they were surely concerned about the threat posed by a Spartan puppet state on their border. For the same reason, they refused to join the Spartan army under Pausanias which was ordered to restore the Thirty to power in 403, but neither did they officially and actively support the democrats with Thrasybulos.<sup>86</sup> No doubt Leontiades was anxiously reassuring them that their long-standing allies, the Spartans, were no real threat to them. In any case, few of them were truly concerned about the Athenians; according to P, even Ismenias was not.

Similarly, in 399 they refused to join the Spartan attack on Elis, but they also rejected Elis' appeals for help against Sparta.<sup>87</sup> After all, Leontiades was no doubt urging, Elis had offended Sparta, and Spartan dominance within the Peloponnese was no threat to Boiotia. Ismenias, perhaps, was urging them to

<sup>85</sup> P 12.3.

<sup>86</sup> Diodoros 14.6.3, 32.1; 15.25.4; Plutarch *Lysander* 27.4; Xenophon 2.4.2, and Justin 5.9.8 all make it clear that the aid to the Athenian democrats was private; this seems confirmed by the fact that it was not mentioned by the Boiotian ambassador to Athens in 395, when the situation would certainly have called for it (Xenophon 3.5.8). Diodoros 14.32.1 and Plutarch *Lysander* 27.4 add that the help was "secret." Xenophon 2.4.30, 3.5.8, 16 and Lysias 12.60 report the refusal to help Pausanias; in Xenophon 3.5.5 we find that the Boiotians were later accused of having persuaded the Corinthians to join them in their refusal; in Xenophon 2.4.30 we find that the Corinthians at least gave a polite and plausible excuse, that it was not in accordance with their oaths to march against Athens when the Athenians were not *παρασπόνδοι*. The Boiotians probably had a right to refuse; see above, note 21.

<sup>87</sup> Xenophon 3.2.24–5, 3.2.30–31; Diodoros 14.17.

stand on their pride and not be ordered about like one of the dependent allies, but is unlikely to have tried to rouse pro-Eleian sentiments.

In 399 or 398, they did not respond to the re-imposition of a Spartan garrison in Trachinian Herakleia, although that garrison was in a very threatening position and cut them off from possible expansion in central Greece.<sup>88</sup> This is more surprising; Leontiades must have had to work hard to soothe them. But after all (he must have argued), the Spartans had established the stronghold years before, and had never used it against Boiotia. When King Agis died in late 398 and the succession was disputed, there was some uncertainty about Sparta's policy,<sup>89</sup> yet the Boiotians did not take advantage of it. Leontiades, one suspects, was urging them to wait and see, while Ismenias was waiting for some piece of arrogance serious enough to swing the pendulum of emotion toward open enmity. Throughout this period, we should imagine not two factions each controlling about half the voters, but a large group of unaffiliated voters listening to appeals to pride, fear, nationalism, greed, inertia, and so on.

Ismenias seems to have been making slow inroads into the traditional votes to cooperate with Sparta when nothing else interfered: when, in the winter of 397, Sparta summoned her allies for an expedition against Persia, Boiotia refused with no attempt at courtesy (Pausanias 3.9.3). Not until 396, however, when the Boiotarchs cast Agesilaos' victims from the altar at Aulis, was there a clear and official act of hostility.<sup>90</sup> Even then, the Boiotarchs stopped short of violence, and Plutarch's account of the incident suggests that the "official" version tried to portray Sparta as the aggressor.<sup>91</sup> Agesilaos sailed off to Asia, nursing a grudge; he could not give up the campaign for a local war. Ismenias had to wait another year for a *casus belli*.

P's account of the outbreak of the war now makes perfect sense, and his analysis is vindicated. We no longer have to struggle to understand why Ismenias, with "control" of the βουλή, began the war in so indirect a way. Ismenias didn't have "control." He had only a small group of citizens committed to his policy and willing to direct events as he wished. The events themselves, together with whatever inflammatory rhetoric (παροχυνόντων) and persuasion he could manage, had to push the voters into war. The occasion was perfectly chosen: all Ismenias needed to do openly, was to urge ordinary support of a long-standing ally within their own sphere of influence in central Greece (P 13.1–4).

Ismenias and his group were certainly convinced that Sparta was a threat to Boiotia, but the uncommitted voters were not; this was the perfect situation to test Sparta's intentions. If Sparta had been mainly concerned with her traditional domination of the Peloponnese (as Leontiades was no doubt assuring them),

<sup>88</sup> Diodoros 14.38.4–5 is our only source for this, and the date is not certain. The Spartan garrison was still there in 395 (Diodoros 14.82.6).

<sup>89</sup> Xenophon 3.3.1–4; Plutarch *Lysander* 22.3–6, *Agesilaos* 3; Justin 6.2.4–6; Nepos *Agesilaos* 1; Pausanias 3.8.8–3.9.1.

<sup>90</sup> Xenophon 3.4.3–4, 3.5.5; Plutarch *Agesilaos* 6.4–6; Pausanias 3.9.3–4.

<sup>91</sup> C. D. Hamilton, *Sparta's Bitter Victories* 156–58.

there would have been no crisis, and Boiotia would have established her authority to direct matters in her own area. That Sparta went so far as to order Boiotia to submit a grievance in central Greece to the arbitration of the Peloponnesians confirmed all the fears Ismenias must have been urging all along. Plutarch's report (Lysander 27.2) that some of his sources blamed Lysander for the Corinthian War has this much to be said for it: it was not until Sparta sent to the Boiotians "forbidding" them ("οὐκ εἶων τοὺς Βοιωτοὺς πόλεμον ἐκφέρειν") that war was certain.