

Chapter 5

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The Local Games of Lebadeia and Koroneia*

Prelude: The Games of Koroneia and Lebadeia and their Geographical Horizon

Festivals played an important role in Boiotia since the earliest perception of a regional identity. Between the sixth and the fifth century BC, Alkaios and Pindar hint at seasonal games at which people from the entire region met. Alkaios refers to the rule of a warlike Athena which was either that of Athena Itonia in Koroneia or that of the Alalkomenion in the western part of the territory of Koroneia.¹ Pindar's more obscure 'seasonal games of the Boiotians'² are less easy to identify, but surely imply a regional horizon.³ Between the Late Archaic age and the early fifth century BC (i.e. in the decades of Alkaios and Pindar), a regional body was slowly developing in Boiotia: there was a boiotarch, a 'leader of the Boiotians', and people could on occasion meet at an assembly;⁴ shared coin types and regional cults added to this picture of regional ethnogenesis.⁵

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1 F 325 Campbell, with Schachter 2016: 179–180.

2 Pind. *Ol.* 7.84.

3 See *infra* (1) on the ancient and the modern reading of this expression.

4 Boiotarchs in the first quarter of the fifth century BC: SEG 60.509 (Aravantinos 2014). Assembly: Hdt. 5.79.1. An eponymous *árchōn* and a council (βωλά) are mentioned in SEG 60.507 (Matthaïou 2014).

5 On Boiotian ethnicity, see Kühn 2007; Larson 2007; Prandi 2011; Ganter 2014; Beck and Ganter 2015. It now seems almost certain that a form of regional cooperation existed between the end of the sixth century BC and the first quarter of the fifth century: what it exactly entailed, however, is still debated. Cf. the recent overviews by Beck and Ganter

In 447/46 BC, the victory of the Boiotians over the Athenians at Koroneia marked the definite start of a new era. After this battle, probably through a process of progressive implementation, a new regional federal body was born: the ‘classical koinon’. We know the complex system of this body thanks to a long chapter of the *Hellenika of Oxyrhynchos* and to the indirect references in other contemporary sources.⁶ Even in this period, it seems that the Boiotian League was still exploiting the shared festivals “as a way of consolidating its own identity”. In the late fifth century BC, the ancient sanctuary of Athena Itonia at Koroneia saw the dedication of a trophy and of two cult-statues:⁷ these acts officially made it a symbolic venue and this aura was shared by the festivals which probably took place here already in this century.

A few decades later, in 371 BC, the Boiotians decided to establish another regional festival in Lebadeia. Since the site had been badly sacked by the Spartans in 395/4 BC, the choice had a political implication.⁸ As we will see, other implications can be drawn from the identification of Lebadeia as the scene of this new festival. In Lebadeia, the oracle of Trophonion had been known to offer valuable prophecies since at least the sixth century BC: according to Herodotus, even the Persians were aware of its reliability. The decision to increase the political value of the spot with the addition of an agonistic dimension testifies to the awareness of the complex implications raised by the administration and the delivery of these regional festivals.

This chapter reassesses the history and the main evidence for the Pamboiotia held in Koroneia from the fifth century BC and for the Basileia held in Lebadeia from the fourth century BC, with a focus on their links with the region and on their local nature. Despite the international catchment area of the Basileia, both games remained ‘local’ because we lack positive evidence that they were ever granted ‘stephanitic’ status. Only in one case there is the indirect possibility that the Boiotian koinon was trying to have Delphi declare the *agōn* of Lebadeia ‘sacred’, but this single piece of evidence does not explicitly refer to the festival.⁹ It is actually hard to agree on a criterion to define an *agōn* as ‘local’ in the sense of ‘not-Panhellenic’: the Pamboiotia, for instance, were always restricted to Boiotian teams and athletes in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but they might have

2015 and Schachter 2016: 51–64 (on “The early Boiotoi: from alliance to federation”; this book is a selection of papers, in many instances already published, but coherently revised and updated [Schachter 2016: xi]; for this reason, I will only quote from this updated state of Schachter’s ideas on the matter).

6 *Hell. Oxy.* 19.2 Chambers. Further sources and references: Beck and Ganter 2015.

7 “[A]s a way of consolidating its own identity”: Parker 2004: 15. Trophy: Plut. *Ages.* 19.2. Bronze statues: Paus. 9.34.1. The cult statues represented Athena and Zeus; Zeus probably replaced a theriomorphic entity, possibly a snake (Schachter 1981: 120).

8 Establishment of the festival: Diod. Sic. 15.53.2. Sack of Lebadeia: Plut. *Lys.* 28.2, with Nafissi 1995: 162.

9 IG VII 4136, on which see *infra* in text.

hosted foreign dancers and athletes in the decades of Bakchylides and Pindar. Conversely, the Basileia changed name between the second and the first centuries BC; the new name ‘Trophonia’ might depend on the decision not to stress unwanted dangerous links in the eyes of the Romans.¹⁰

In general, the Basileia and the Pamboiotia can be read in the light of recent studies on the history of Hellenistic athletics which revealed that this period was not marked by an ‘agonistic explosion’, as many of the new traditions actually predated the fourth and third centuries BC.¹¹ In the third century BC, the appearance of isolympic games and of stephanitic *agōnes* added new labels and demands to pre-existing habits.¹² Initially, the central criterion underlying the request that a festival should be accepted as *isolympios* or stephanitic is “that the prize money and other awards were to be paid by the home city, not by the festival city”.¹³ The dispatch of delegates (*theōroi*) had often other priorities in mind than the mere or exclusive recognition of the ‘Panhellenic’ identity of a festival: in the first document attesting the word ἰσολύμπιος, Ptolemy II requests that the festival newly established in the memory of his father, the Ptolemaia (279/8 BC), should be ‘isolympic’, i.e. “that the same prizes (τὰ(?) ἴσα ἄθλα) and honours be given to the winners of this festival as the ones given to those who won the Olympic games (ὅσα περ καὶ τοῖς τὰ Ὀλύμπια νενικ[η]κόσι)”.¹⁴ This practical dimension of the technical terms also emerges from the first document which attests to the word στεφανίτης: when the Aitolians founded their Soteria in order to commemorate the liberation of Greece from the Galatians, they sent ambassadors to have them declared stephanitic. The surviving response from the Chians stated that they accepted the

crowned (στεφανίτην) festival established by the Aitolians in honour of the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi and of the safety of the Greeks, such as it was voted by the koinon of the Aitolians, namely isopythian for the musical contests, and isonemean for the gymnastic and hippic contests as far as the classes of age and the honours are concerned. The citizens who will participate

¹⁰ See *infra* section 4.

¹¹ Nielsen 2018: 11–118. “Agonistic explosion”: Robert 1984. A summary of recent studies in Hellenistic festivals is offered by Mann 2016.

¹² On the continuity of these habits, see Parker 2004. On the introduction of iso-games in this period and the role of Ptolemy II, see Mann 2018.

¹³ Slater 2012: 169.

¹⁴ *CID* 4.40, l. 18–21; see on this festival the short remarks of Remijsen 2014: 352–353. In the adjectives, the equality also applies to the frequency of the new contest, which has to be the same than that of the corresponding bigger one (cf. Musti 2002).

in and win the Soteria will receive the same prizes as those of the winners of the Pythic and Nemean Games (ὅσαπερ καὶ τοῖς Πύθια καὶ Νέμεα νικήκασι).¹⁵

This geographical subjectivity explains how some cities accepted festivals as ‘stephanitic’ which did not receive the same status in other towns.¹⁶ Not even the prize itself represents an unambiguous hint to the status of a festival: staphanitic games could grant crowns of gold and life-long pensions,¹⁷ but the information on these prizes comes from contests in Asia Minor which do not necessarily reflect the Boiotian situation. As far as Boiotia is concerned, we only know of one contest which might have solicited the elevation of some of its *agōnes* to a staphanitic status in the last quarter of the third century BC: the Mouseia of Thespiiai.¹⁸ The Ptoia of Akraiphia which are considered together with the Basileia in a dossier on which we will return later are only initially declared ‘sacred’, and sought recognition as ‘stephanitic’ no earlier than in the second half of the second century BC.¹⁹ To sum up, it is legitimate to consider the Pamboiotia and the Basileia as ‘local’ festivals, despite the presence of international competitors (on which see *infra*), because we have no proof that the koinon actively sought an elevation of their status to a ‘stephanitic’ (Panhellenic) one.

In general, the main sources on the organization of Boiotian festivals date to the beginning of the first century BC and show that sanctuaries could rely on land rents and private funds.²⁰ Since only the Boiotians participated in the celebration of the Pamboiotia, the (possibly) annual festival held in Koroneia for Athena Itonia can be considered a local event on the basis of the catchment area of the victors.²¹ Most of our epigraphic evidence on the origin of the winners of this contest dates to the third and to the first centuries BC:²² we never read the names or ethnics of foreign victors. The only exception concerns

¹⁵ *Syll.*³ 402, l. 13–18.

¹⁶ For this geographic subjectivity and for the weight of the financial considerations before accepting a new Panhellenic festival, see Slater 2012 and id. 2015. Remijsen 2011 argued for a stricter definition of these festivals.

¹⁷ *LMilet* 1.3.147, l.18–21; *JÖAI* 8.161n1. Cf. Remijsen 2011: 99 and Pleket 2014.

¹⁸ *I.Thespiiai* 155 = Manieri 2009, *Thes.* 12. On this festival, see Schachter this volume.

¹⁹ *IG VII* 4135–4138; on the evolution of the Ptoia, see Schachter 1981: 71 and Parker 2004: 19.

²⁰ On the financial administration of Boiotian festivals, see Migeotte 2006; in general on the administration of festivals under Roman rule, see Camia 2011a.

²¹ The festival is often considered annual, but the existence of a month Pamboiotios in Hellenistic Boiotia does not necessarily mean that this was the case (Schachter 1981: 124n3), as we have no positive evidence on the frequency of the festival. Moreover, as will be argued in this chapter, different frequencies might have applied in the different stages of the festival: it would seem sounder, for instance, to consider the military Pamboiotia of the Hellenistic koinon (287–171 BC) annual.

²² Third century BC: *I.Thespiiai* 201 (Thespiiai, ca. 240 BC); *I.Thespiiai* 202 (Thespiiai, 225–220 BC); *IG VII* 3087 (Lebadeia, mid-third century BC); *SEG* 26.551 (Koroneia, Lebadeia, Thisbe; mid-third century BC); *SEG* 3.354 (*ágeima* from Koroneia); *SEG* 3.355 (team from Thisbe). Second / first century BC: *IG VII* 1764 (inscriptions of winners from Thespiiai). First century BC: *SEG* 28.456 (Koroneia, single winners). The Itonion later became a regional meeting point and a point of reference for the college of the *naopoioi* (*IG VII* 2711, AD 37; *IG VII* 3426; *SEG* 38.380,

an Italian living in Boiotia.²³ On the other hand, the Basileia established in the fourth century BC were open to competitors from all the Mediterranean Sea during the third and the second centuries BC: they had attracted participants from Italy and Asia Minor.²⁴

In light of the strong ties with the corresponding sanctuary and of the specific association between the history of the Pamboiotia and the Basileia and that of the Boiotian koinon, this chapter will follow a chronological order from the fifth century BC to the Roman period. On the basis of the evidence considered and with a specific theoretic framework, the final synopsis will draw on the historical evolution outlined in the previous sections and argue that the festivals remained the socio-political backbone of the koinon and a local phenomenon.

The Fifth Century BC

With the mention of a warlike (πολεμάδοκε) Athena, Alkaios testifies to the Panhellenic fame of a sanctuary not far from Koroneia between the seventh and sixth centuries BC:²⁵

possibly AD 100: Knoepfler 1988; on all these texts, see Müller 2014: 127–129 and cf. *infra* section 4); these documents cannot be used to claim that foreign or regional athletes joined the *panēgyris*; this procession is still attested by the dossier of Epameinondas of Akraiphia (IG VII 2711, l. 56).

23 IG VII 2871, a list which presents single victors from different Boiotian cities (Thebes, Orchomenos, Thespiiai), an Aulos Kastrikios, and a group (*tēlos*) from Thespiiai (see Papazarkadas 2019: 209 and Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020: 166–167 on the secretary of the board of the *naopoioi* in this inscription). The document was dated by Gossage to around 75 BC, but Müller 2014: 128–129 argued for a collocation in the first decades of the first century AD. Her main arguments are the similarity between this text and two other texts which mention the Pamboiotia (the *apologia* of Nikarchos, SEG 38.380, and the dossier of Epameinondas, IG VII 2711: see previous note), and the fact that the single non-Boiotian victor recorded by IG VII 2871, Aulos Kastrikios son of Aulos, belongs to a family that is well-attested in Thespiiai in the early first century AD. As the only non-Boiotian winner ever attested at the Pamboiotia, this Aulos might be the same Aulos Kastrikios who appears in CIL III 7301 (AD 14). The family of the Castricii occurs in Thespiiai at the end of the first century BC, and it seems they might have been *negotiatores* previously living in Delos (Müller 1996b: 162–163). The exceptional nature of this participation of the *Castricii* does not seem to betray a wider trend, in contrast with the four Roman winners at the Basileia (see *infra*): in general, the participation of Roman citizens to Greek local festivals seems to have been a strategy to adapt in the local society; a survey of the extant documents shows that these Roman and Italian competitors were already living in Greece and their presence in the victory lists does not imply a specific travel to Greece (Zoumbaki 2014: 206–207).

24 On the Italian and Roman participants and on the international status of the festival in general, there are good observations to be found in Turner 1996 and Papazarkadas 2019: 209 and 218. See *infra* in text on the institution of the festival and on these international athletes. Manieri 2009 lists 16 documents of literary and epigraphic nature related to the Basileia; Turner 1996 has a catalogue of 35 relatively certain documents connected with the Basileia. In the absence of relevant new material, we possess thirty-three texts which document the origin of the athletes from the middle of the fourth century BC (IG VII 552; IG VII 2532; FD III 1.510) to the middle of the third century AD (LAG 81; IG II² 3169–3170).

25 Alkaios might have written the hymn for the inauguration of the temple of Athena Itonia in Koroneia (Mackil 2013: 159), and it has been argued that the ‘war-like’ goddess has the same traits of the Thessalian Athena Itonia allegedly imported by the Boiotians during their migration southwards (Kowalzig 2007: 362 and n73). In light of the kinship relationships between Boiotians and Lesbians attested by Thucydides in the late fifth century BC (see Hornblower 2010: 131–132 and Fragoulaki 2013: 110–111), it might not be coincidental that a Lesbian would choose to dedicate a

“O lady Athena, warlike one, who rules [...] over Koroneia [...] before the temple [...] by the banks of the river Koralios”.²⁶ The goddess mentioned could either be Athena of Alalkomenion situated between Haliartos and Koroneia in the western area of the chora of Koroneia or Athena of the Itonion where the Pamboiotia were celebrated. The latter sanctuary was possibly located inside the city and the vague reference to it by Alkaios would also seem to indicate this.²⁷ The ambiguity resurfaced on another occasion when an ancient scholiast on Lactantius also wondered whether Bacchylides in a fragment²⁸ on Athena Itonia “meant the same as that of the Alalkomenion”.²⁹ The two sanctuaries were probably related at the beginning, and in the absence of clear positive evidence, we might prefer to understand it as a reference to Athena Itonia because of the absence of strong military associations with the parallel cult of Athena of Alalkomenai.

Finally, for reasons unclear to us, the rites in honour of Athena Itonia, which probably included competitions from the first quarter of the fifth century BC, had gained a “trans-regional importance”: this fame added to the strong local resonances of Koroneia for the Boiotians. In fact, Koroneia, would only later become the focus of the Boiotian military identity after the magnificent victory over the Athenians in 446 BC.³⁰ The liberation of the region constitutes a *terminus post quem* in the history of Boiotia and in the history of the games held in Koroneia: the history of the *agōnes* such as the Pamboiotia and the Basileia has a strong connection with the history of the koinon as a whole.³¹ In Koroneia, the Boiotians placed a trophy³² which would signal their national pride. Another aspect of the monumentalization of memory was the erection of two new bronze cult statues in the sanctuary realized by a pupil of Phidias: Agorakritos.³³ These statues represented Athena and Zeus and therefore identified the male *parhédros* of the goddess once and for all by replacing a theriomorphic mate probably represented by a snake.

Between Alkaios and the elevation of Koroneia and the Itonion to a momentous display of Boiotian identity, we have other indications that a number of regional activities took

hymn to a Boiotian goddess (see Schachter 2016: 180n12 for the observation that he deals with other Boiotian sites in his fragments). On the other hand, the later tradition on the Thessalian migration of the Boiotians (see *infra* in text) would seem an improper comparandum, as the few lines of Alkaios preserved by Strab. 9.2.29 [411C] actually focus on Koroneia alone and can hardly be connected with an early reflection on the Thessalian links of the Boiotians.

26 F 325 Campbell. Transl. A. Schachter.

27 On the confusion between these two Athenas who were both central to the nascent community of the Boiotoi, see Schachter 2016: 179–180 and id. 1981: 113.

28 F*15 Sn.

29 Σ Stat. Th. 2.721: *et Alalcomenam ipsam significavit*. Cf. Schachter 1981: 112 and n7.

30 “Trans-regional importance”: Beck and Ganter 2015: 135. Battle of Koroneia: Thuc. 1.113.1; Diod.12.6; Hell. BNJ 4 F 81; Plut. *Per.* 18.2; *Ages.* 19.2; Paus.1.27.5, with Beck and Ganter 2015: 141.

31 See esp. Knoepfler 2008: 1462.

32 Plut. *Ages.* 19.1.

33 Paus. 9.34.1.

place on the spot. In the sixth century BC, there was a ritual procession for Athena and another god, who was later identified as Zeus:³⁴ the scene is represented on a *lekánē* of the middle of the sixth century BC.³⁵ The rites were part of a more complex organization, which also included games: we have reasons to believe that, after Alkaios, Pindar also helped enhance the international fame of the Itonion and of the activities which happened there.

The Theban bard offers an emic perspective on the *agón* and on the status of the competitions in his *daphnephorion* (F 94b S.-M.) for Agasikles of Thebes son of Pagondas.³⁶ In the surviving lines, the victories at the Pamboiotia are compared to those at Onchestos and at Pisa (l. 44–48):

for their celebrated victories
with swift-footed horses,
for which on the shores of famous Onchestos
and by the glorious temple of Itonia
they adorned their hair with garlands
and at Pisa [...].³⁷

Maybe this song was written after the aforementioned battle of Koroneia, as it is often believed:³⁸ the dedicant Agasikles was probably the son of the Pagondas who led the Thebans at the Delion.³⁹ What matters the most here, is the mention of victories in agonistic games: these must probably be distinguished from the dance competitions which also formed part of the program of the Pamboiotia (see *infra*). Pindar refers to victories in horse races (43–44: ἵππων τ' ὠκυπόδων πολυ|γνώτοις ἐπὶ νίκαις) at Onchestos (46) and at the temple of Athena Itonia (47). At these sites the family was crowned with garlands (48–49: χαίταν στεφάνοις ἐκό/σμηθεν). Before this list of victories, Pindar recalls the proxenies obtained by Agasikles and his family (41): a combination of the references to agonistic victories and political career might have consequences for the reading of the previous reference to the honours received by “those

34 On the identity of Athena's *parhédros*, the current state of research is represented by Schachter's lemma on “Athena (Koroneia)” in his *Cults of Boiotia* (Schachter 1981: 119–121) and the most recent systematic study of the Pamboiotia (Olivieri 2010–2011).

35 *BM B* 80; see Ure 1929: 167–171 and Schachter 1981: 122–123. The presence of a crow on the *lekánē* (gr. κορώνη) has been considered as a reference to the city of Koroneia, but sometimes the bird is understood as a raven, gr. κόραξ; cf. Schmidt 2002: 51–62.

36 On this family, see Mackil 2013: 160–161; Schachter 2016: 259–260; Papazarkadas 2018.

37 Transl. E. Mackil.

38 See most recently Mackil 2013: 160–161 and Schachter 2016: 257. The main support to this family tree firstly reconstructed by Wilamowitz Moellendorff (1922: 435–436) is the fact that the *daphnēphória* “was led by a *pais amphithalēs*, a boy with both parents still living (Procl. *ap.* Phot. Bibl. 321b)” (Mackil 2013: 160n54).

39 424 BC: Thuc. 4.91–93.

who dwell around” (41–43: τίμαθεν γὰρ τὰ πάλαι τὰ νῦν τ’ἀμφικτιονέσσιιν). These *Amphiktíones* might possibly impersonate an association or a regional body connected with the festival of the Pamboiotia and with the one held at Onchestos.⁴⁰ The regional character of the reference seems to depend on the Theban audience of the ode, which must have easily understood the allusion. Therefore, this could actually be an indirect indication of a political organization or even one of the earliest testimonies to the new Boiotian koinon, if we assume that the ode was written in the later forties. This hypothesis is probably more likely than what in Pindar is a mere reference to the Boiotian extension of the festivals of Athena Itonia and of Onchestos. One wonders what need there was to stress the Boiotian extension and inclusiveness to an audience joining in the celebration of a Boiotian victor. It needs to be emphasized that, from a syntactic point of view, Pindar is referring not only to the Pamboiotia but also to the festival of Poseidon.⁴¹ Contrary to previous readings, I would therefore suggest that the Pamboiotia are presented by Pindar as part of the network of Boiotian regional festivals and not as a preeminent or focal meeting of the Boiotians. Moreover, their regional aura proves a prestige which did not prevent the author from listing this event together with the Olympic games. This is a curious elevation of a strictly local festival to an ‘almost-Panhellenic’ status through the lens of its regional impact.

We learn from Bacchylides’ and Pindar’s hyporchemata that, in addition to horse races, the Pamboiotia also included dance competitions.⁴² The hunting komast dancers participated in a celebration of which we know less than we would like to with regard to the Archaic period. We already mentioned the possibility that this *panégryis* is depicted on a *lekánē* of the sixth century as the arrival of the devotees to the divine couple.

By the second half of the fifth century BC, the Pamboiotia also played a pivotal role in the ethnogenesis of the Boiotians. The celebration was connected with the memory of the alleged migration of the local inhabitants from Thessaly: Armenidas, a local historian who probably lived at the beginning of the fourth century BC, lingered on the etymology which explicitly states the origin of Itonian Athena from the Thessalian Iton.⁴³

40 Mackil 2013: 162–163.

41 The last verse mentions Pisa (49: [...] ἐν τε Πισσῇ περὶ [...]), but the lacuna of between eight and ten characters according to Snell and Maehler might suggest to warn against a “juxtaposition of the Itonion with the renowned sites of Olympia and Onchestos” (Larsen 2007: 134). Maybe the final verse introduced a new verb, or a clearer distinction was made in the missing section.

42 See Bacchyl. F 15 and F 15a S. and Pind. FF 106 and 107ab S. –M.; cf. Kowalzig 2007: 363–364 and Mackil 2013: 160.

43 *BNJ* 378 F 1.

Moreover, the national hero Boiotos was sometimes believed to be the son of Itonos:⁴⁴ despite the usual conundrums caused by these mythical genealogies, it is clear that the Boiotians slowly assigned a focal place to Athena Itonia. Once we remember this, we can understand that their national games, despite being reserved to Boiotians, could be seen from the outside as a celebration worthy of recollection and memory. Just as Alkaios sung of Athena, so would the travelling Bacchylides and Pindar, and so would the battle finally glorify and give a sempiternal meaning to the competitions. Suffice it to recall here how, in the Boiotian political discourse,⁴⁵ the battle of Koroneia is the Boiotian version of a war of liberation in contrast to the less unifying memory in Boiotia of the Persian Wars.⁴⁶

In the same century, Lebadeia was a much less significant city in terms of political power. It was very influential and well-known only for the oracle of Zeus Trophonios, which was also popular abroad and particularly famous among the Athenians.⁴⁷ Herodotus, for instance, recalls the visit of the Carian Mys sent by Mardonios,⁴⁸ but only mentions the descent of the man (καταβῆσαι). It is sure that the festival of the Basileia was a later creation by Epameinondas and the rites on the spot did not include games at this stage. However, it is interesting to note that, according to the Augustan grammarian Didymos, an obscure mention of ‘Boiotia’s seasonal games’⁴⁹ in Pindar could refer to “the Basileia and the Amphiareia and the Delian in the precinct of Delian [Apollo] and the Trophoneia in Lebadeia”⁵⁰ in the first century BC.

Pindar lists the other victories achieved by Diagoras of Rhodes, and this is the only occasion⁵¹ where he does not specify the name of the city. Diagoras was a *περιοδονίκης*,⁵² since he won at the Isthmus, at Nemea, at Delphi, and at Olympia. The *Seventh Olympian Ode*, which was probably performed at a symposium in Rhodes, was sent to him by Pindar. This epinician probably written ca. 464 BC is an important, further testimony to the fame of a Boiotian competition abroad, even if it is at all unlikely that this competition is among the ones listed by Didymos (who also ignores, as have other scholars in more recent times, that the Trophoneia in Lebadeia cannot have been a

44 On Boiotos and Itonos, see especially Ganter 2014: 237–238 (with further references). On the connection of the festival with the tradition of the origin from Thessaly, see Kowalzig 2007: 364. Maybe it was only after the battle of Koroneia of 446 BC that Athena Itonia was given “a more explicitly ethnic, pan-Boiotian role” (Mackil 2013: 193).

45 Imagined on the basis of a few political passages in the work of Thucydides (3.62.5; 3.67.3; 4.92.6).

46 Thuc. 3.62.5: *μαχόμενοι ἐν Κορωνείᾳ καὶ νικήσαντες αὐτοὺς ἠλευθερώσαμεν τὴν Βοιωτίαν*.

47 On the oracle of Trophonios, and in general on Zeus Trophonios in Lebadeia, see Schachter 1994: 66–89; 109–118 and Bonnechere 2003.

48 Hdt. 8.134.1.

49 *Ol.* 7.84: *ἄγῶνες τ’ ἔννομοι Βοιωτίων*.

50 F 13 Branswell, transl. K. Branswell.

51 Cf. the less unclear mention of Thebes in l. 83.

52 Giannini in Gentili 2013: 167–173.

different and additional festival from the Basileia: see *infra*). The Pamboiotian trait⁵³ makes the identification of these ἀγῶνες ἔννομοι with the festival of Koroneia quite likely: it is no coincidence that the mention of the mere ethnicity Βοιωτίων is not accompanied by the significant prefix παν- which will be used for the name of the festival in the Hellenistic period.

We have no way of knowing how old the denomination of ‘Παμβοιωτία’ was,⁵⁴ but this prefix seems to mark an exclusion rather than an inclusion:⁵⁵ in other words, as it is the case with the history of the ethnic *Panhellēnes*, the prefix παν- seems to confine the celebration to the Boiotians while excluding other ethne at the same time.⁵⁶ Moreover, its mere existence is a clear indication of the circulation of the simple ethnic *Boiōt(i)oi*, since these forms with *pan-* can only be understood if the simple form pre-existed.

To sum up: in the Archaic period the Boiotians performed dance and gymnastic contests in Koroneia which soon gained an international reputation. These contests involved boxing, chariot races, and maybe also performances of flute players, if we accept the classical interpretation of a series of black-figure vases found in Koroneia considered to be the output of a ‘workshop of the Itonion’ by Ure.⁵⁷ This external fame was further enhanced by the military victory of 446 BC which added an air of national pride to the city. Even if we ignore the name of the celebration at this stage, it was so well-known that a mere mention in the form of ‘the *agōn* of the Boiotoi’ could make the association clear.

The Fourth Century BC

Epameinondas, who saw that the soldiers were superstitious on account of the omens that had occurred, earnestly desired through his own ingenuity and strategy to reverse the scruples of the soldiery. [...] He placed before them another man as one who had recently ascended from the cave of Trophonios, who said that the god had directed them, when they won at Leuktra, to institute a contest with crowns for prizes in honour of Zeus the king.⁵⁸ This

53 On the ethnic value of this identification as proof of the ethnicity of the Boiotians in the fifth century BC, see Grigsby 2017: 9.

54 As such, it occurs for the first time in Polybius with reference to the *panēgyris* (4.3.5; cf. Schachter 1981: 123).

55 The same is true for the well-known case of Homer’s πάνελληνες (Hom. *Il.* 2.530).

56 On the existence of a “criterio di esclusione” behind the Homeric πάνελληνες, see esp. Antonetti 1996: 9–10. On the prefix *pan-* and its various meanings, see Hall 2002: 132.

57 Ure 1929: 167–170; Larsen 2007: 134 and n24, with further references.

58 ἀγῶνα τιθέναι Διὶ βασιλεῖ στεφανίτην. The adjective στεφανίτης is common in fourth-century BC prose to describe the games of the ‘Big Four’ (Xen. *Mem.* 3.7.1; Aeschin. *In Ctesiphontem* 179; Arist. *Rhet.* 1357a19–20; IG IV² 1.68; see Remijsen 2011: 99 and n3). As stated in the introduction, however, we do not have positive evidence that the

indeed is the origin of this festival which the Boiotians now celebrate at Lebadeia.⁵⁹

The Basileia were a creation designed by Epameinondas to commemorate the Theban victory at Leuktra: the *agón* is a concrete dedication to Zeus Basileus, “protecteur attitré de la nation béotienne”.⁶⁰ The choice of Lebadeia marked a strategic stronghold on the road between Thebes and Delphi. On the one hand, the site occupied the chora of the then destroyed Orchomenos, which had once controlled Lebadeia. Since Lebadeia had always been in the “Einflußbereich von Orchomenos” at that time, it was more than a neutral place: Epameinondas’ choice signalled even more than the battlefield itself the Theban lead of the Boiotian League in 371 BC.⁶¹ On the other hand, the Spartans had plundered Lebadeia only twenty-five years before in 395/94 BC.⁶² The re-semanticization of the place also worked as a new beginning for a spot, which was to honour Zeus through a new festival. It is clear that the Thebans wanted to make the most of this new federal venture because they detached the name of the festival from the underground oracular god Trophonios who had ruled over the site until then. In the same context of activities at Lebadeia, a new cult statue of Trophonios was realized in the sanctuary by Praxiteles,⁶³ just like the battle of Koroneia (447 BC) had prompted a redefinition of the cult at the Itonion. However, the dedication of the festival to Zeus Basileus, not the most common epithet of Zeus in Boiotia,⁶⁴ aimed to give an international echo to the institution. The new term was immediately successful, and we have three mid-fourth century BC inscriptions which document the participation of athletes from Tanagra, Thebes and Delphi.⁶⁵ In the first two cases, the restitution of the name Βασιλεία is certain: the Theban victor Timokles raced with the horses at the Basileia and at the Herakleia of

Boiotians ever actively sought an alignment of the Basileia to these Panhellenic venues. If Müller 2014: 129 is right in placing the recent reinstitution of the Basileia in Diodorus’ time, the use of the adjective is telling in itself. It can be argued that Diodorus accepted the Boiotian version that the festival had never stopped, not even after the Roman dissolution of the Boiotian koinon in 171 BC, since it had only temporarily changed its status from regional to local (thence the new name Trophoneia). Since Diodorus only uses the expression ‘crowned *agón*’ at one other occasion (in 4.14.1 with regard to the Olympic games), we cannot exclude a general meaning of the adjective.

59 Diod. Sic. 15.53.4; transl. C. H. Oldfather = Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 1.

60 Knoepfler 2008: 1436.

61 “Einflußbereich von Orchomenos” (Kühr 2007: 284). The advantages of choosing Lebadeia over Leuktra for a festival indirectly confirm, then, the predominant role of Thebes in the post-378 koinon (Schachter 2016: 115n7 defines Lebadeia “a flagship for the Theban-led Boiotoi”). On the geopolitical value of Lebadeia, see Beck 1997: 191–192; Farinetti 2011: 89; Mackil 2013: 208–210; Schachter 2016: 117 and 187; Tufano 2023b: 113–115.

62 Plut. *Lys.* 28.1.

63 Paus. 9.39.4.

64 See Schachter 1994: 111 on the novelty of the choice of this epithet.

65 *IG* VII 2532; 552; *SEG* 23.332, a list of victories from Delphi: *FD* III 1.510 = Ebert 1972: no. 42 = *CEG* II 803; cf. *BE* 1970, 315 and Knoepfler 2008: 1426 and n17, where the scholar recalls Robert’s support for the identification of the Zeus *skēptrophóros* of the inscription with Zeus Basileus. Cf. also *IG* VII 530 (from Tanagra, early third century BC: *καλὸν ἀγῶνα Διός*, with Knoepfler 2008: 1436n46 and Manieri 2009: 152).

Thebes.⁶⁶ His epitaph was written under a statue of Polykleitos and the city decided to restore the statue after the destruction of 335 BC:

οὐκ ἔστ' οὐδὲν τέρμα βίου θνητῶν ἐπινοίαις,
 ἀλλὰ τύχη κρείσσων ἐλπίδος ἐξεφάνη,
 ἧ καὶ Τιμοκλέην Ἀσωπίχου ἠφάνισ' υἱὸν
 πρόσθε πρὶν ἐνδείξασθ' ἔργα πρέποντα φύσει,
 ὃς Βασίλεια Διὸς καὶ ἐν Ἡρακλέους τρις<ι>ν ἄθλοις
 ἵπποις νικήσας δώματ' ἐπηγλάϊσεν.

vacat

Πολύκλειτος ἐπόεισε.

There is no end in life to the cures of the mortals,
 but Fate proved stronger than Hope:
 It removed from our sight Timokles, son of Asopichos,
 before he could show deeds worthy of his nature.
 By winning with the horses at the Basileia of Zeus and three times
 at the Herakleia, he honoured his home.
 Made by Polykleitos.

This is one of the first examples of Theban tradition to focus on the pride of these young victors.⁶⁷ It is not clear whether these victories in horse racing were only won at the Herakleia or if they jointly refer to both competitions. In any case, it is an early sign of the fact that Thebes recognized the victory at the Basileia as a definitive glory to remark. We note that it is sufficient at this stage to refer to the contest by specifying the god. Despite the detail on the original stephanitic status, this indication seems to support the testimony of Diodorus about the creation of the festival by Epameinonda.

Zeus Trophonios had symbolically presided over the victory of the Boiotian army against Sparta and, despite the certain fictitious character of these *ex-post* tales, there is a number of specific traditions which developed around the battle of Leuktra and emphasised the pious devotion of Epameinondas towards this god. Diodorus connects the festival to the celebration of the victory: the god has directed Epameinondas, and he therefore institutes the contest. An opposite path was mentioned by Kallisthenes: in his *Histories*, Kallisthenes wrote about the singing of hens and cocks in Lebadeia,⁶⁸ which had foretold the Theban

66 IG VII 2532, l. 5–6; CEG II 630. For useful comments on this text, see Grigsby 2017: 95–97. I am not sure whether the restriction of the competition to horse races also applies to the Basileia, given only three direct documents from the fourth century BC, while it may remain true for other Boiotian games.

67 See on this tradition Scharff 2016.

68 BNJ 124 FF 22a–b: *gallos gallinaceos in eo loco sic adsidue canere*.

victory. Cicero, as the source of the fragment, claims that the Boiotian augurs had interpreted this as a sign of forthcoming victory but does not repeat the version of Diodorus on the institution of the *agón*. This inauguration is also absent in the third source on Epameinondas and the *omina* of Lebadeia: Polyaeus.⁶⁹ Polyaeus lists fifteen stratagems performed by Epameinondas in his career among which we find the exhibition of a man with a crown and ribbons, who told the reluctant soldiers that he had been sent by Trophonios to tell the Thebans that the first to attack would win the battle.

Diodorus is thus isolated, but his very good knowledge of Boiotian history is a fact we should not ignore: not only is his fifteenth book indebted to Ephorus who had perused Daimachos of Plataiai a universal historian of the fourth century BC, well-versed in Boiotian history, Anaximenes and Kallisthenes. Diodorus also knew the work of two other universal historians of the fourth century BC: Dionysodoros and Anaxys.⁷⁰ The fact that Kallisthenes is quoted by Cicero in a list which aims at completion on the *omina* might confirm that Kallisthenes did not report the institution of the Basileia. If this were true, it is possible that another local source was behind Diodorus' information on the festival. Anaxys and Dionysodoros are only two names, which are not necessarily more likely, even if it is very tempting to associate these two Boiotian historians, who had written *Greek Histories* down to the battle of Mantinea, with the tradition.

Most of our information on the origin of the winners at the Basileia and at the later Trophonia dates to the second and to the first centuries BC. Until the third century BC, which represents a turning point in the organization of this festival, a growing number of athletes celebrating their victory at the Basileia often originated from other cities in Greece.⁷¹ Zeus Basileus and Hera Basileia became two of the four representative Boiotian gods in the external self-presentation of the Boiotians,⁷² and this will have raised the interest of the other Greeks for the context. In 281/80 BC, the Athenian taxiarch could claim that visiting the Basileia at Lebadeia equated a foreign embassy to the Boiotian League.⁷³ Among the surviving documents about the Basileia dated between the early

69 Polyaeus, *Strat.* 2.3.8.

70 On Ephorus' plagiarism of Daimachos, Kallisthenes, and Anaximenes, see *BNJ* 65 T 1. Dionysodoros and Anaxis: *BNJ* 67 and 68 (Diod. Sic. 15.95.4: τῶν δὲ συγγραφέων Διονυσόδωρος καὶ Ἀναξίς οἱ Βοιωτοὶ [τὴν τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἱστορίαν] εἰς τοῦτον τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν κατεστρόφασιν τὰς συντάξεις).

71 The reference for the epigraphic catalogues of the Basileia is Turner 1996. The additions to this dossier are limited and uncertain. A turning point was represented by Knoepfler 2008; further indications on the epigraphic dossier of the Basileia are to be found in Müller 2014.

72 In international treaties, the Boiotians swore by Zeus, Ge, Helios, Poseidon, Ares, Athena Areia, and all the gods and goddesses (*IG IX* 1², 1, 170, treaty of 302/1 BC concluded with the Aitolians and Phokians). Zeus Basileus, Hera Basileia, Athena and Poseidon are isolated in a treaty with Phokis of 228/7 BC (*IG IX* 1, 98); cf. Schachter 2016: 188 and n31.

73 *SEG* 25.90.

third century and the beginning of the second century BC, there are seven documents that confirm this limited catchment area of the Basileia, if one excludes for the time being the documents associated with the monumentalization of the sanctuary.⁷⁴ Apart from an isolated and chronologically slippery text by the people of Klazomenai,⁷⁵ three other victories are by Theban athletes and only two certain exceptions remain. Kallistratos of Sikyon⁷⁶ and Demetrios of Tegea⁷⁷ remember their victories at the Basileia of Lebadeia in a long record of victories at Panhellenic and local contests.⁷⁸ Like the Theban Athanichos⁷⁹ who died during a military campaign, both were extremely successful athletes. Yet, despite the paucity of the extant lists, the impression remains that the Basileia had the same limitations up to the middle of the second century BC (see *infra*) as those identified in a recent study of the Amphiaraia of Oropos, namely a noticeable expansion of the catchment area only under Roman influence.⁸⁰

This predominantly local character of the festival also included a religious dimension, which until recently could only be appreciated thanks to a later text. The procession for Zeus Basileus is mentioned in an Imperial text which might describe a Hellenistic setting. The first *Love Story* ascribed to Plutarch⁸¹ concerns a girl who is contended by two men and finally dies in the quarrel which occurs between the suitors. In the narrative, the maiden is presented as a future *kanēphóros* (basket carrier) for Zeus Basileus in Lebadeia.⁸² The entire plot has a prenuptial character. But why would this girl from Haliartos, Aristoklea, go to Lebadeia to perform these rites where she was seen by one of the two pretenders (Straton of Orchomenos) while the other suitor Kallisthenes came from Haliartos? Folklore aside, the further mention of the oracle of Trophonios confirms the possibility that the procession for Zeus which lay behind the *kanēphoría* of the girl was part of the program of the contest, and not an isolated nuptial rite. The publication of a

74 IG VII 1711 (= Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 4: early third century BC; Schachter 1994: second century BC); IG IV 428 (260–220 BC); IG V 2, 142 (late third century BC); IG VII 2487 (late third/early second century BC); IG VII 4247 (late third/early second century BC); SEG 9.338 (200–180 BC); IG VII 3102 (unknown date, probably ‘Hellenistic’: Turner 1996); IG VII 3079 (‘Hellenistic’: Turner 1996).

75 IG VII 3079.

76 IG IV 428; MAFAS 578.

77 IG V 2.142.

78 For a general overview of these victors, see Knoepfler 2008: 1440–1441.

79 IG VII 4247; MAFAS 223.

80 Van Nijf and Williamson 2016.

81 Linguistic reasons prevented Ziegler from ascribing the essay to Plutarch, even if the peculiarities of style might depend on the genre of the short stories, as outlined by Giangrande 1991. For a recent overview of the state of the art, and a short commentary, see de Jesus 2009; Tufano in Lelli 2017; Tufano 2019. The prenuptial character is underlined by Bonnechere 2003: 310.

82 Plut. *Mor.* 770F: ἐμελλε γὰρ τῷ Διὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ κανηφορεῖν.

new *apología* from the first century BC now confirmed the practice of a πομπή during the festival.⁸³

Our evidence allows us to confirm that the Basileia included gymnastic and equestrian competitions.⁸⁴ We lack a specific program of the contest, but victories are attested in running contests including the race-in-armor (ὀπλίτης [δρόμος]), in the *péntathlon*, in wrestling (πάλη), boxing and in the *pankrátion*.⁸⁵ Since the festival was never interrupted, apart from a few decades in the second century BC (see *infra*), it can be assumed that the competitions recorded in the first-century BC inscriptions can be traced back to the first years.

It was a festival for individual athletes and not for groups.⁸⁶ The almost complete absence of a military trait marks another difference from the Pamboiotia.⁸⁷ The festival was celebrated during the month of Panamos, the ninth Boiotian month, between August and September. On the basis of the accounts delivered and published in the first century BC, the account rendering occurred in Panboiotos, the tenth month.⁸⁸

83 Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020, A 32–33.

84 For a comprehensive introduction to the Basileia, see Schachter 1994: 85–86 and 116–118; Turner 1996; Knoepfler 2008.

85 Running contests: e.g., in the *stádion* (ca. 600 m: *IG* 45.2–3: 200–180 BC; *SEG* 14.478a,3: 100 BC); *díaulos* (equivalent to two stadia: *SEG* 14.478a,3: 100 BC); *dólichos* (long course on a distance between 7 and 20 stadia: *IG* V 2.142, l. 40: third century BC). Wrestling: *IG* IV 428, l. 2: 240–220 BC; Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020 (first half of the first century BC). *Pankrátion*: e.g. *SEG* 3.367 (= Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 12, 40–30 BC [see Müller 2014: 129 on the date]) and Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020. Boxing: e.g. *IG* VII 47 (early first century BC? [cf. Knoepfler 2008: 1455–1456n119]) and Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020. *Péntathlon*: e.g. *SEG* 3.367. The race-in-armor probably had different origins in the different places where it was disputed (Patrullo 1972): in Boiotia, the *hoplítēs* was also part of the Eleutheria of Plataiai (Philostr. *gymn.* 8). For the Basileia, we have proof that the *hoplítēs* was part of the contest in the first century BC (*SEG* 3.367 and *SEG* 14.478a, from Poteidaia: I assume that the indication of the Basileia forces us to postdate the inscription after the institution of the Boiotian koinon and the change of name, but that this happened immediately after 86 BC is uncertain to date. See, however, Grigsby 2017: 192–193 for the possibility that Sulla awarded Lebadeia for the good omens which he had received from the oracle). This proof is the only one with a more explicitly military reminiscence, even if the late attestation does not allow us to assume that it was necessarily present from the beginning. For the horse races, see a convenient list of documents in Turner 1996: 122, 19–24. From the lists in *SEG* 3.367 and in the new *apología* (Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020), we learn that the contests included the *apóbasis*, a race on a chariot where one of the two men on it had to complete the distance on foot, the horseback race (*kélēs*) and the two-horse chariot race (*synōrís*).

86 The previous list draws extensively on Turner 1996: 109 and 121–122, even if I would disagree on the frequency of the musical contests. For the dates of most of the inscriptions, a good update is offered by Grigsby 2017: 287–288.

87 Note also that, whereas the Pamboiotia were certainly a yearly festival, the frequency of the Basileia is still uncertain (Knoepfler 2008: 1440–1441 and id. 2020: 222).

88 On the month, see Roesch 1982: 37–41 and Turner 1996: 109. We are well informed on the administrative aspects of the festival during the first century BC: see Knoepfler 1988; Turner 1996: 107; Fröhlich 2004: 469; Müller 2014: 126–127; Schachter 2016: 189–190; Knoepfler 2020.

The Third and the Second Century BC

If you wanted to attack the Boiotians between the third and the second centuries BC, you needed to move against Koroneia. This is the lesson to be learned from the fierce reproaches of the Boiotians against the Aitolians at the meeting of the Hellenic League in 220 BC.⁸⁹ The Aitolians had attacked the Itonion, probably between 224 and 227 BC,⁹⁰ and this εἰρήνης ὑπαρχούσης (despite the peace, probably a sacred truce). In 196 BC during the First Macedonian War, Flamininus had to move against Akraiphia and Koroneia,⁹¹ where in a tense and violent moment most of the previous attacks on Roman soldiers had concentrated. In 191 BC, the consul M. Acilius Glabrio violently attacked the city when he saw a statue of Antiochos III there.⁹² He then stopped the pillaging, since such a decision could not depend on the sole inhabitants of Koroneia: the erection of the statue had been a common decision of the Boiotians (*cum communi decreto Boeotorum posita esset statua, indignum esse in unum Coronensem agrum saevire*).⁹³ These few anecdotes help explain how important the festival might have looked from the outside, since it occurred in a city which remained momentous, despite the Roman knowledge that the actual ‘capital’ of the koinon was Thebes.⁹⁴

The episodes reveal how important the Pamboiotia could be in the region. This was the festival held in the spot where most of the federal decisions were made in the third century BC. This situation might explain why the temple of Athena Koroneia might have sought *asylia* in the sixties of the third century BC:⁹⁵ the location of the Itonion mentioned in the inscription ([ἐν Κορωνείαι], l. 14) is actually a restoration and Pouilloux *ad loc.* wondered whether the Thessalian namesake sanctuary could not be a valid alternative. However, the aforementioned passages in Polybius and Livy are good indications that the sanctuary enjoyed this inviolability between the third and the second centuries BC and that this status was not perceived to be particularly old by the

89 Polyb. 4.25.2.

90 Walbank *ad* 4.3.5.

91 Liv. 33.29.9.

92 Liv. 36.20.

93 On this episode, see Müller 1996a: 134 and Thornton 2014: 112–113.

94 Liv. 33.1.

95 SEG 18.240 = FD IV 358, 266/62 BC. Cf. on this document Schachter 1981: 123 and n6. It is sometimes assumed (Kowalzig 2007: 362n70) that the status of *asylia* preexisted in the third century BC, since a series of sources claim that a few Boiotians took refuge in the temple in 394 BC (Xen. *Hell.* 4.3.20; Plut. *Ages.* 19.2; Polyaeus, *Strat.* 2.1.5; Paus. 3.9.13). Only Pausanias, however, calls these defeated Boiotians ἰκέτας in this context; all the other sources report that Agesilaos allowed to let them go and leave the temple without force, and record his piety. Thus it was rather a royal decision than the actual technical status of *asylia* at this stage.

Boiotians.⁹⁶ Only in the third century BC, one sees a renewed interest in this sanctuary and, apparently, in the festival.

There is a significant gap in our documentation on the Pamboiotia between the Classical period and this floruit, which coincides with the recognition of *asylía* to the sanctuary. A possible late and so far neglected echo of the Classical *agónes* is represented by a curious anecdote reported by Diodorus.⁹⁷ From his retelling of the events of 404 BC, we learn that in the same year Lasthenes, an Olympic champion from Thebes, also defeated a race horse (πρὸς ἵππον ἀθλητὴν δραμόντα νικῆσαι) on the route from Koroneia to Thebes. The distance of roughly thirty miles does not correspond to any of the known race competitions, and the anecdote has no parallel among the extant sources. I would nevertheless suggest that the city of Koroneia might still have been the scene of national games in the final years of the Peloponnesian War.⁹⁸

After this episode, Polybius refers to the *panēgyris* of the Boiotians, and the documents of this century clearly show that the entire Hellenistic koinon saw in these competitions with their strong military character a performance of the military prowess and skills of the Boiotians. As we will see, the competitions served as a way to check the military training of the subunits of the federal army.⁹⁹

The long period of silence approximately coincides with the fourth century BC, i.e. the time after the new statues in the Itonion had been erected by the end of the fifth century BC.¹⁰⁰ At the dawn of the Hellenistic koinon, which emerged in 287 BC, a fundamental treaty was concluded between the Boiotians and the Aitolians in 301 BC in which Athena (probably Itonia) served as one of the oath deities.¹⁰¹ A possible *argumentum ex silentio* might be Epameinondas' decision itself to establish the Basileia as a festival of national pride, with all the aforementioned strategic advantages, in the apparent oblivion of an eventually pre-existing festival of the Boiotians in Koroneia. For these reasons, it is possible that a first organization of the festival of the Pamboiotia only occurred in the second quarter of the third century BC.¹⁰² However, it seems more prudent to think of a re-organization in connection with the new needs of the Boiotian League.

96 See Rigsby 1996: 55–9 and Mackil 2013: 224.

97 Diod. Sic. 14.11.5.

98 Alternatively, Sebastian Scharff suggests that this may be read as a foundation myth for the *híppios* event. The complexity of Diodorus' sources makes this hypothesis quite interesting.

99 Polyb. 4.3.5 and 25.2; 9.34.11. Documents: cf., e.g., *IG* VII 3087 and *SEG* 3.354–355, on which see *infra* in text. Military character of the Pamboiotia: cf. Olivieri 2010–2011 and Mackil 2013: 224–225.

100 Paus. 9.33.1.

101 *IG* IX² 1.170.

102 So Schachter 1981: 124 and n1.

We anticipated in the introduction that only Boiotians participated in the Pamboiotia whose lists of victors are preserved. We can now add that these lists are in fact lists of teams and that their composition parallels that of the military subunits trained during these decades. There was a “unified system of military organization and training for the poleis of the Boiotian League”.¹⁰³ The participation of teams was a means of displaying their effective capacity, and we can find an interesting case in the parallel disposition of these units in the texts.

In the middle of the third century BC, the victorious team of the Koroneians made a dedication.¹⁰⁴ This group was probably led by the first mentioned subunit, the *ágeima*. The noun ἄγεια is usually used to define an infantry formation of attack, especially in reference to the Macedonian ἄγημα. However, it could also describe a specific elite force, similar to the Theban *hierós lóchos*, the “Sacred Band”.¹⁰⁵ In a way, both readings might be kept: the undeniable Macedonian derivation of the corps could coexist with the commemoration of other local elite groups now renamed after the Macedonian model. The other Koroneian victorious subunits were the πελτοφόροι (l. 1), a group of light infantry, the ἐπίλεκτοι (l. 1) whose vague denomination might indicate another elite formation, possibly on constant call, and two specific subunits: the archers (φαρετρίται, l. 2) and the slingers (σφενδονῆται, l. 2). In a similar way, the so-called ‘Great Stele of Thespiai’,¹⁰⁶ a magistrate list, lists, in l. 20–9, the following infantry regiments: the *ágeima* (l. 20: λοχαγός τῷ ἀγείματος), the leaders of the light infantry (l. 21, ἀγεμόνες πελτοφόρης), the leader of the mandatory military education (l. 23: ἐφείβαρχος), the ἐπίλεκτοι (l. 23–4), a φαρετρίτης (l. 25), a σφενδονάτης (l. 26), a chief-huntsman (l. 26: ἀρχικούναγος), and a leader of the hoplites (l. 28–9). Among the extant inscriptions of this period, we find the same pattern *ágeima* – *epílektoi* – *peltophórai* – *pharetrítai* in another dedication of a victorious team at the Pamboiotia from Thespiai,¹⁰⁷ which lists the single leaders of these subunits: in this case, however, the slingers are substituted by simple soldiers (l. 13: τὸ πεδδύ).

The few surviving dedications confirm a participation of teams and a close connection between these and the different *télé* of the Boiotian army, whose composition reflected

103 Grigsby 2017: 121, to whom I owe also the comparison between *IThesp* 84 and *SEG* 3.354.

104 *SEG* 3.354, l. 2–3: Κορωνείων | τῷ τέλειος.

105 Relationship with the homonymous Macedonian unit: Feyel 1942: 201–202. Connection with the Theban Sacred Band: Schachter 2016: 208. On the long term, however, in view of the foreign policy perpetuated by the Boiotians, a Macedonian origin would seem more likely (cf. *BE* 2008, 223 on Polyb. 5.25.1. Liv. 13.51.4 probably derives here from Polybius).

106 *IThesp* 84, 210 BC.

107 *IThesp* 201, ca. 240 BC.

the seven *télē* of the Hellenistic koinon.¹⁰⁸ The relationship between these teams and their single place of origin is always remarked: sometimes, as in the aforementioned inscription from Koroneia,¹⁰⁹ the entire *télos* takes pride in the victory; on other occasion, for reasons unclear to us, the single poleis of this specific *télos* (Lebadeia, Koroneia, and Thisbe) chose to make explicit the different contributions of these subunits of the geographical *télos*.¹¹⁰ Finally, a single polis could also participate, perhaps independently of its *télos*, as in the case of Lebadeia whose horsemen made their own dedication after having won the horse race at the Pamboiotia.¹¹¹

These new Pamboiotia are characterized by this collective organization, in contrast to the individual participation in the fifth century BC. In the third century, the military character of the games was probably a novelty that allowed them to linger in the national memory of the Boiotians: Koroneia had persisted as a federal sanctuary, and as we mentioned before, it was where the Boiotians had expelled the Athenians and where they had fought a local war of liberation. The local teams of military units had to demonstrate their training. The aforementioned horsemen of Lebadeia, for instance, won the ἵππασίη¹¹² during the Pamboiotia. This race could consist of a sort of scenographic exhibition of horses, a fake tournament and performance of complicated moves, not very different from the ἐπίδειξις described by Xenophon.¹¹³ It might not be excluded that there was a form of historical performance in such a competition, if we think of the contemporary historical carousel of the *carabinieri* in Italy: this exhibition of grandiose manoeuvres of horses was established during Fascism (1933) to celebrate the army, and each of the units which repeat the carousel every year wears a specific uniform, which is the one of the victorious unit of specific moments of the past. Would it be too bold to assume that in a region like Boiotia, which was well-known for the quality of its horses, and in a city like Koroneia, which was at the center of the national historical memory, the *hippasíē* had the task of combining sport with history – in other words, that it was an agonistic form of thinking about the past?

108 On the seven *télē* of the Hellenistic koinon, see Knoepfler 2001 and Müller 2011.

109 SEG 3.354.

110 SEG 26.551, a dedication from Koroneia, where we find these three ethnics in l. 14–6.

111 IG VII 3087 (mid-third century BC).

112 IG VII 3087.

113 Xen. *Hipp.* 3.10–3; for this interpretation, see Olivieri 2010–2011: 89–90. Needless to say that the parallel is a good one and helps the understanding of the *agónes*, but we should always remember Robert's remark on the seriousness of Greek festivals: "On ne s'amuse pas; on combat pour vaincre, pour être déclaré et proclamé le premier et, plus souvent, il n'y a même pas du second. [...] Cet effort agonistique est le contraire d'une activité ludique. L'agôn, le concours, se distingue radicalement aussi de l'épideixis, récitation, représentation, sans concurrent" (Robert 1984: 36 = Id. 2007: 268).

Even simple soldiers could participate in the Pamboiotia,¹¹⁴ which also included a specific competition for armed men: the εὐοπλία.¹¹⁵ It is generally accepted that this military performance was similar to the military *agōnes* of the Athenian Theseia.

It is not hard to see how the Pamboiotia, with their “replication of the socio-political structures that defined the Boiotian koinon”,¹¹⁶ might seem more dangerous from the outside than the Basileia. Moreover, together with Haliartos and Thisbe, Koroneia was one of the Boiotian cities which were more constantly and vehemently aligned with the Macedonians during the Macedonian Wars.¹¹⁷ After 171 BC, there were no more federal archons, and the survival of games could only apply to specific games where “a sublimation of the militaristic self-expression denied them [*sc.* to the Greeks] under Rome” would be limited to specific cases: the Basileia included an armed race, but it was nothing like the open field competition among teams of soldiers at the heart of the Hellenistic Pamboiotia. It could be argued that the Boiotians were able to maintain and preserve a sense of regional identity through the festivals, which could be seen as a means of politics in Boiotia in the period between the end of the Third Macedonian War and the re-emergence of the koinon.¹¹⁸ Even the Basileia, which had been established to commemorate the victory against Sparta and which had seemingly superseded the Pamboiotia in terms of collective success and regional relevance in the fourth century BC, survived in a local form and with a new name. The exception of the Pamboiotia in this period could depend on the strong military connotations of the festival, as it had been reorganised in the third century BC. Boiotia had displayed an ambiguous position during the Macedonian Wars, and the energies of the cities (and a Roman prohibition?) might have warned against a continuation of a festival where military units showed how good their training was.

While the Pamboiotia were a festival open to teams, the Basileia remained individual competitions: despite isolated mentions, there was probably no fixed musical section in either contest.¹¹⁹ Poetic performances of *poeti vaganti* could, however, occur and place our

114 SEG 3.355,13: τὸ πᾶν δδύ.

115 Moretti 1953: 102–103.

116 Mackil 2013: 225.

117 See esp. Müller 1996a and 2007.

118 “A sublimation ... under Rome”: Grigsby 2017: 137. See Müller 2014: 122 and 136, and Grigsby 2017.

119 In the case of the Basileia, a musical competition taking place in the third century BC might be inferred from IG II² 3779: this is a list of victories of the *kiṯharōdós* Nikokles of Tarentum, but it has only a value for this period (Knoepfler 2008: 1439). The presence of heralds in this period (IG VII 530, ca. 250 BC), later in time (IG II² 3158a, I AD) and in the Imperial celebrations, when the festival was called Trophonia (IG II² 3169–70 = IAG 90, AD 253–257; see Manieri 2009: 169–171), does not imply that the Basileia were an *agōn mousikós*, as correctly emphasized by Knoepfler (2008: 1456n120). An auletic part was probably introduced only in the Imperial period (FD III 1.550; Manieri 2009: 167–169, but see *infra* in text).

festivals in the Mediterranean climate of the second century BC: Zotion of Ephesos, an otherwise unknown tragedian, performed several plays in Koroneia sometime in the middle of the second century BC. The proxeny decree issued for him by the city¹²⁰ suggests that the koinon had already been dissolved by the time this text had been produced, although the use of the dialect does not allow to establish a low dating in the century.¹²¹ I doubt that the Pamboiotia in their entirety continued in different forms after 171 BC, despite the loss of any political resonance: they were now probably administered by a group of *naopoioí*, as two victors' lists of the first century BC seem to confirm.¹²² The possibility that Zotion performed at the Pamboiotia can be considered only if we assume (see *infra*) that a celebration *a minori* was taking place, and in any case the rites for Athena Itonia could also be an alternative performative arena. In other words, the proxeny decree for Zotion does not explicitly allow us to argue for a continuity of the festival, unless we presuppose a reduction of the agonistic element.

The situation can be better understood if we now turn to what had happened in Lebadeia in the second half of the third century BC, when a new sanctuary was to be built for Zeus Basileus. We have eight work contracts (*syngraphai*) pertaining to the construction of this temple, which was never completed.¹²³ One of these contracts preserved on a plinth indicates the names of two archons of the Boiotian League: Andronikos (220 BC) and, probably, Potidaios (221 BC).¹²⁴ These names appear in a context which refers to an advanced stage of the project and therefore represents a *terminus ante quem* for the decision to start the construction of this new temple located on the hill of Prophitis Ilias near modern Livadeia. The complex organization of the project was described by a *ναοποικὸς νόμος*.¹²⁵ The architects, the boiotarchs and the financial board of the *katóptai* had to work with the newly established college of the *naopoioí*. This college was established to oversee the erection of the new sanctuary of Zeus Basileus as a federal venture. It would remain the only federal institution after the dissolution of the koinon in 171 BC, despite the abrupt end of works on the temple, which remained unfinished.

The intervention of the Boiotian League in Lebadeia concerned also other aspects, such as the request of *asylía* for the new project of the temple. The proof of this is a document

120 SEG 57.443.

121 On this text, see Schachter and Slater 2007.

122 IG VII 1764 (ca. 60 BC: see Schachter 1981: 125–126 and Müller 2014: 128) and IG VII 2871 (late first century BC: see Müller 2014: 128–129 and Grigsby 2017: 196–197). On both texts and their value for the theory of a reorganization of the Pamboiotia in the first century BC, see Knoepfler 2020: 202–206.

123 IG VII 3073–3076; AM 22 (1897), 179; BCH 20 (1896), 318; BCH 64/65 (1940/41), 37 n. 23; and JHS 15 (1895), 92.

124 Wilhelm 1897. I refer to the new edition of the text, republished and commented by Pitt 2014.

125 IG VII 3073, l. 87–89; for the general meaning of these lines, see Schachter 2016: 389 and n39.

describing a consultation of the oracle of Trophonios and found in a dossier with two other texts concerning the Ptoia of Akraiphia:¹²⁶

Kalliklidas, a Lokrian from Opous, having gone down to Trephonios, has reported that you are to consecrate Lebadeia to Zeus Basileus and Trephonios and Akraiphia to Apollo Ptoios, and that none should do them wrong. They are to solicit the sacred funds together, for the common well-being, throughout every land, and are to proclaim the sacred *agón*. Whosoever has been in charge of the temple of Zeus Basileus, will win the crown.¹²⁷

This text raises a number of questions which cannot be fully addressed here. For our understanding of the historical evolution of the Basileia of Lebadeia, however, it is important to stick to the letter of this document. The man, who according to Schachter (1984) was probably paid by the Boiotian League, descended into the cave on matters related to the Ptoia of Akraiphia and the temple of Zeus in Lebadeia. The sacred funds are to be solicited ‘throughout every land’ (κατὰ πᾶσαν χώραν) and the cities – in the infinitive order, the common subject is οὕτως – have to proclaim ‘the sacred *agón*’. The singular form of this expression and the fact that the text was found in a dossier with the decree of the amphictyony confirming this καταγγελία¹²⁸ are a sure indication that the *agónes* alluded to here are the Ptoia. The ambiguity of the adjective is another historical problem, because it is not certain that it already has a Panhellenic meaning.¹²⁹ It is important to note, however, that the descent of Kallikleidas was not connected with a reform or a change in the festival of the Basileia: it was about spreading the news of the *asylía* of the temple of Zeus Basileus.

We anticipated in the previous section that other Greek communities were already aware of the existence of the Basileia during the third century BC, before the new work on the sanctuary was carried out. The eight documents which can be dated between the late third century BC and the floruit of inscriptions during the first century BC do not challenge this relatively narrow catchment area of the winners.¹³⁰ The known victors

126 IG VII 4135 and 4137.

127 IG VII 4136 transl. by A. Schachter; on IG VII 4136, see most recently Schachter 2016: 381–396 (with previous scholarship). The building contracts of the temple represent a rich dossier, on which Pitt 2014 offers a good starting point. The area of the temple of Zeus Basileus is unfortunately poorly known and published: see Gadoulou 2009 (with Knoepfler 2008: 1441n46 and BE 2010, 283) and Pitt 2014: 383–384.

128 IG VII 4135.

129 If this was the case, it would indeed be the first instance: Schachter 2016: 287.

130 SGDI II 2961 (170–30 BC); IG XII 1.78 (second century BC); IG IX² 614a (second-first centuries BC); SEG 14.478a (100 BC); Dow 1935: 81n38 (150–30 BC); ID 1957 (150–30 BC); IG VII 47 (196–86 BC); SEG 3.368 (second century BC). The documents ID 1957 and IG VII 47 are actually listed among the ‘Trophonia Monuments’ by Turner 1996, because they refer to the Trophonia. In light of the interpretation followed in the text, however, whereby the transition between the Basileia and the Trophonia did not imply an overlap, it is legitimate to consider these texts in the

came from Athens, Delphi, Rhodes, Larisa, Poteidaia, and Megara. Only in a very fragmentary inscription from Chaironeia,¹³¹ there is a victor from Antiochia ad Pyramum (l. 6) and a Χρυσσορεύς (l. 13), but the relevance of this victor list for the Basileia is uncertain.

From what we read, the variety of the contests did not change.¹³² It is possible that the only concrete innovation was the choice of an *agōnothētēs* from any city of the confederation. This figure is better known for his duties thanks to documents of the first century BC. The task of managing the festival with the sacred funds may also have implied personal intervention.¹³³ Before the end of the third century BC, there is a document¹³⁴ that records the *agōnothesía* of the Theban Neon son of Askondas.¹³⁵

Since a series of documents dating from the late second and early first centuries BC to the full third century AD report the existence of Trophonia in Lebadeia, it was once believed that the Basileia and the Trophonia were two different, and possibly coterminous, festivals. Since the detailed and welcome studies of the inscriptions concerning the festival of Lebadeia of the second and the first century BC, the issue has now lost most of its urgency. A reappraisal of a series of notes by Louis Robert allowed Denis Knoepfler in 2008 to link the evolution of the Basileia with the history of the koinon, which was dissolved by the Romans in 171 BC and only slowly re-emerged in the eighties of the first century BC after the battle of Chaironeia (86 BC). This continuity which will be reassessed in the next section is in line with the re-dating of the Amphiareia Rhomaia suggested by Kalliontzis in 2016. By antedating *I.Oropos* 521 to the years 149–46 BC, Kalliontzis was able to show the continuity of this festival and the precocious ‘Romanization’ of it. In the case of the Amphiareia, the likely establishment of the festival in honour of Rome in 148 BC was the way in which Oropos reacted to the historical events. In the same decades, the inhabitants of Lebadeia simply opted for an alternative by renaming their previous contest.

same context here. I doubt whether the casual increase in our evidence means an actual implementation in the program (Grigsby 2017: 118).

131 SEG 3.368.

132 See the notes by Robert 1936: 22. The three categories of age-classes attested for the winners of the Basileia are παῖδες (“boys”), ἀγένοιοι (“bearded youths”), and ἄνδρες (“men”). They probably ran different distances in the running events, but it is not certain whether Plato’s description of these distances (*Leg.* 8.833C) applied to all the festivals. Among the festivals of the *períodos*, the Olympic and the Delphic games did not have a category for the *agéneioi* (see the short overview by Schöpsdau 2011 *ad Pl. lc.*).

133 On these aspects, see *infra* and Migeotte 2006.

134 IG VII 3079.

135 See Knoepfler 2008: 1441 on this figure.

The First Century BC and the Roman Koinon

From the end of the second century BC, the Basileia of Lebadeia are mentioned under the name of “Trophonia”. An important document of this stage is the victory catalogue of Menodoros of Athens,¹³⁶ who won the wrestling and *pankrátion* competitions at the Τροφώνια τὰ ἐν Λεβαδείᾳ around 120 BC.¹³⁷ Only in the first century BC did they reappear as Basileia, before a second wave of “Trophonia” inscriptions emerged in the third century AD. While the Pamboiotia with their strong political semantics had not been celebrated in full in the years between 171 BC and the birth of the new koinon, we can posit a different behaviour for the Basileia, which continued under a different, i.e. more local, leadership. It was only with the definite creation of the Roman koinon in the first century BC that the Basileia could be positively and systematically reorganised by a *federal* board. This means that scholars of Boiotian history had to reconsider the *idées reçues* on the early re-appearance of the koinon after 146 BC. At the same time, the political motivation explains the fact that the festival appears under a different name for a while. It is indeed possible, though by no means certain, that the Boiotians reorganised the Basileia only a few decades or little more after Sulla’s presence in Boiotia, a hypothesis which is in line with a recent reconsideration of the dossier of inscriptions of the first century BC.¹³⁸

To an external observer, nothing had really changed in the daily life of the Basileia. Writing in the forties of the first century BC, Diodorus can claim that the festival introduced by Epameinondas is the one now carried out in his time.¹³⁹ As a historian, Diodorus connects the information found in his source (the invention of the games) with the present celebration of the Basileia. The scholar Didymos, a contemporary of Diodorus, ignores the distinction in his comments on Pindar’s ἀγῶνες ἔννομοι and seems to place *Basileia* and *Trophonia* side by side.¹⁴⁰ The juxtaposition, however, can only emerge from the point of view of a scholar who is aware of the existence of the two names (no variation is attested by Diodorus). Denis Knoepfler observed that the two games were never celebrated together,¹⁴¹ and Didymos, an erudite scholar, does not contradict that view. One could say that Didymos is wrong and right at the same time, just like a modern scholar who claimed that the Basileia and the Trophonia were “due

136 ID 695.

137 On the date, see Knoepfler 2008: 1430–1432. The victory catalogue is preserved on two copies, one from Delos (ID 1957 = IAG 51), the other from Athens (IG II/III² 3147).

138 IG VII 3078 (= Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 11, 80–51 BC); SEG 3.367 (= Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 12, middle of the first century BC); BE 1973 n.213 (first century BC); IG VII 3095 (first half of the first century BC); IG VII 1764 and 2871 (first century BC). This further low-dating by Müller 2014 is, however, doubted by Knoepfler (BE 2015 n. 249).

139 Diod. Sic. 15.53.4: ταύτην ποιοῦσι τὴν πανηγυρίαν.

140 F 13 Braswell, on which see *supra*.

141 Knoepfler 2008: 1462.

festività nettamente distinte”:¹⁴² this is only correct if it means that they were celebrated at different times.

Given the opacity of our literary sources, one can only speculate on the rationale of the change of name of this festival in contrast to the stability of the term ‘Pamboiotia’: a possible indication might come from the Imperial inscriptions in which the Basileia once again seem to have been replaced by the Trophonia. It might be that, after the dissolution of the koinon and the harsh treatment of the Macedonian supporters Haliartos, Koroneia and Thisbe, the Basileia sounded too ‘royal’ and monarchic under the Roman government of Greece.¹⁴³ We can recall here the case of one of the last victors among the *paides*: the Delphian Eudokos, grandson of Praxo.¹⁴⁴ This woman had granted hospitality to Euandros of Crete and to three Macedonians vested by Perseus with the mission to kill Eumenes of Pergamon. Livy reports the failed plan¹⁴⁵ and comments on the close relationship between the woman and Perseus.¹⁴⁶ One of the consequences of the failure of the plan would be the ruin of the Boiotians, and Gaius Valerius brought the woman from Delphi back to Rome after finding out that her house had been the *receptaculum latronum* (17.2).

A nephew of such a compromised figure had primed in the Basileia and the ambiguous echoes of the name of the festival made it an uneasy cultural thorn for the Romans. These small hints might help explain why, if slowly, a possible survival or re-appearance of the contest could only happen under a new, less compromised term. The exact relationship between Trophonios and Zeus (Basileus)¹⁴⁷ remains unexplained, but the sudden decision of Epameinondas in 371 to call this *agón* the ‘Basileia’ must not have sounded irrational or strange to the attendants of Trophonios. Conversely, the original name could explain the choice of the local organizers to adopt a more locally coloured name in the period between about 146 BC and the first quarter of the later century. The focus on the local seer in contrast to a broader characterisation might have been an idea of the *naopoioí*, the federal board which survived the dissolution of the koinon. In other words, the change of

142 Moretti 1953: 107. The list of Didymos, with the inclusion of Basileia and Trophonia, is not in itself ‘valid’ for the Augustan period (Knoepfler 2008: 1435) but can be seen as the result of a scholarly research, deprived of the historical sensibility of Diodorus.

143 Müller 1996a and ead. 2002.

144 *SGDI* II 2961, late seventies of the second century BC; For the date and a discussion of this document, see Knoepfler 2008: 1443–1445. Two other possibly coterminous documents, which attest how, until the dissolution of the festival, it was extremely popular, are a stele for Agasias of Chalkis (*BE* 1979 n.116) and a dedication of a Messenian boxer, winner at the Pythia and at the Basileia, considered earlier by Knoepfler (2008: 1445n80) and later by the editors of the *SEG* (59.417).

145 Liv. 42.15–17; On the entire plan, see Thornton 2014: 145–146.

146 Liv. 42.15.3: *hospitam principem auctoritate et opibus Delphorum*.

147 See esp. Schachter 1994: 88–89 and Bonnechère 2003.

administration coincided with the decision to return to focus on a strong, regional deity such as Zeus whose impact on the Boiotians was certainly stronger than a reduction to the oracular numen. It was always the same festival, but the different divine patron gave it a new allure and reinforced its political implications.

Only after the resurrection of the political federation could the Basileia regain their name of a “fête viscéralement fédérale”¹⁴⁸ and a regional administration. The *apologíai* of the first century BC document the activity of *agōnothétai*, who declare their expenses and organize a festival which is now a regional and no longer local event.¹⁴⁹ The Basileia were organised on behalf of the college of the *naopoioí* by an *agōnothētēs*, who was presumably chosen by a body representing all the Boiotian cities and elected at a local level. The *agōnothētēs* remained in office from the end of the previous edition of the Basileia during the month of Panamos to the month Pamboiotios of the next year, when he had to present his expenses (*apología*).¹⁵⁰ We have three long *apologíai* of *agōnothétai* of the first century BC: one by Xenarchos of Lebadeia,¹⁵¹ the second by Prokles held in front of the archons of Thespiiai,¹⁵² and the third by Sostratos of Tanagra.¹⁵³

These documents probably represent an abridged version of the actual sums involved in the organization of the festival as far as the mere list of incomes and outcomes is concerned. Moreover, the *apología* of Xenarchos¹⁵⁴ is actually preceded by a catalogue of agonistic victors and followed by a list of delegates sent by the Boiotian cities and by an account of the procedure raised by Xenarchos against his predecessor Platon.¹⁵⁵ On the other hand, the *apología* of Prokles¹⁵⁶ is also preceded by an analogous catalogue and followed by the transcript of a trial against his predecessor, which follows a different procedure from the direct accusation levied by Xenarchos against Platon since Prokles entrusts a board of three jurors. These jurors were the *enkritaí*, another group of locally appointed judges who came to Lebadeia acting in their legal capacity and representing

148 Knoepfler 2020: 259.

149 See on these texts Müller 2014; on the role of these and other *apologíai* for our understanding of the financing of Boiotian festivals, see Migeotte 2006.

150 The term ἀπολογία is common in Boiotia to indicate the list of expenses of a magistrate at the end of his mandate. The corresponding Attic word is ἀπολογισμός (Rougemont and Rousset 2005: 123).

151 IG VII 3078 = Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 11. This was the first inscription on the finances of a Boiotian festival to be published (see Knoepfler 2020: 194–195).

152 SEG 3.367 = Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 12. A new fragment belonging to this *apología* was recently published by Knoepfler 2020.

153 Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020.

154 Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 11.

155 See Manieri 2009 *ad loc.* and Rougemont and Rousset 2005 n.22 for a commentary on this text.

156 Manieri 2009, *Leb.* 12.

their own hometown.¹⁵⁷ The presence of these judges is confirmed by the last published *apologíā*, where the provenance of the *enkritaí* attests to a “pattern of widespread representation”.¹⁵⁸

We learn from these documents that the financial administration mostly rested on the rental of sanctuary lands and on the *eisphorai* of the Boiotian cities which decided to participate. In particular, Xenarchos recalls renting the hippodrome and the stadion (l. 21) and managing the sums for games that did not take place (l. 22). Moreover, he took care that all the Boiotian cities delivered their own εἰσφορά (l. 23) and ‘personally’, probably as an act of euergetism, paid for the sacrifices and the *agón* (l. 25). The same document also shows that the people who rented these spaces were from Lebadeia.

It is interesting to note, however, that despite the wealth of details about the festival, these *apologíai* contain no hint of an attempt to commemorate previous victors or to claim an alignment with the great games of the *períodos*. At the same time, the agonistic catalogues of the first century BC and the other contemporary documents shed light on a much larger catchment area. The athletes who now won at the Basileia came from Rome,¹⁵⁹ from the new parts of Greece and Boiotia (Epidamnos, Anthedon, Opous), from Asia Minor (Nikaia of Bithynia, Bargylia) and from the Near East, since we know athletes from Tyre, from Seleukeia on the Tigris and from Egypt.¹⁶⁰

The presence of a Ptolemy who must be identified with Ptolemy XII Theos Philopator Neos Dionysos (80–51 BC)¹⁶¹ is an interesting chapter in the history of a local festival which had long been attended mainly by Boiotians and other Greeks. According to a recent hypothesis, this wide international catchment area may depend on kinship ties sought by the Boiotians, since every city or region outside Greece may be likely linked to the mythical history of Boiotia.¹⁶² If this interesting scenario were true, one could recognize a further aspect of the political implications of the Basileia here. The Boiotians were probably trying to rebuild those ties which had formed the core of their internal

157 On this board of judges, see Papazarkadas 2019: 208–209; Knoepfler 2020: 227–228; Matthaïou and Papazarkadas 2020: 181–182.

158 Papazarkadas 2019: 209.

159 Victors from Rome are attested in both the surviving *apologíai*. The presence of Publius Licinius son of Publius in the *apologíā* of Prokles may help postdate this inscription to the last third of the first century BC (Müller 2014: 127). However, the expansion of the community of the Romans living in Boiotia in this period (cf. Müller 2002) may suggest that the presence of these athletes is not a strong indication of the international appeal of the Basileia.

160 Epidamnos: *IG* VII 3078A, l. 1. Anthedon: *IG* VII 3078A, l. 11. Opous: *AD* 1971 no. 34–40, l. 7. Nikaia of Bithynia: *IG* VII 3078A, l. 3; *AD* 1971 no. 34–40, l. 19. Bargylia: *SEG* 3.367, l. 11. Tyre: *IG* VII 3078A, l. 23.27; *AD* 1971 no. 34–40, l. 5. Seleukeia on the Tigris: *AD* 1971 no. 34–40, 9.11.13.15. Cf. also the chart by Papazarkadas 2019: 211. The new *apologíā* of Sostratos of Tanagra (Matthaïou and Papazarkadas 2020) only includes winners from Boiotia.

161 See Manieri 2009 *ad Leb.* 11.

162 Papazarkadas 2019.

mythical history, and the instrumental use of such a festival, in which two federal boards, the *naopoioí* and the *enkritaí*, coexisted,¹⁶³ aimed at looking for external confirmation of this antiquarian revival. On the basis of the three surviving *apologíai* of the first century BC, it is hard to claim when exactly the new koinon was established. It is currently certain that this must have been after the Mithridatic Wars (86 BC) and before the erection of a honorific statue for Marcus Iunius Silanus in the context of which the koinon is properly addressed as such (34/3 BC).¹⁶⁴

The type of competitions performed at the Basileia did not change significantly, and even now there were no musical events. In the first century BC, the Pamboiotia underwent a new change. They lost their “raison d’être” (Schachter), namely the participation of the military *télē*, and involved athletic and equestrian *agónes*. This third phase of the Pamboiotia also coincided with the recovery of their previous political perspective, as it had developed in contrast with the less politicised status of the Basileia which were maybe not coincidentally, open to foreigners.

The first century BC is also the last period when the Pamboiotia reappear in our epigraphic evidence. By now, the reorganization, probably under the reborn Boiotian koinon, was part of a more general “antiquarian revival”.¹⁶⁵ The same body of *naopoioí*, which had been created at a federal level in the late third century BC to oversee the construction of the temple of Zeus Basileus, now organised both the Basileia and the Pamboiotia.¹⁶⁶ While the Basileia had survived the shock of the Roman dissolution of the koinon through a period of local management under a different name (the Trophonia), the Pamboiotia are not attested between the end of the Third Macedonian War and the years of Sulla and Lucullus. It is quite unlikely that this is a matter of pure lack of evidence, despite the general inferiority of inscriptions related to the Pamboiotia in contrast with those on the Basileia/Trophonia. The Hellenistic Pamboiotia had been a political *agón* in a stronger and more piquant way than the parallel and more international contest of the Basileia.

We have seen how the Basileia had been able to survive the Roman intervention in Greece through a slow, but not necessarily early reorganization of the games in a local

¹⁶³ The two bodies possibly performed different tasks (Knoepfler 2020: 230).

¹⁶⁴ IG II² 4114. The opinion is still divided between those who prefer a relatively higher date in the middle of the century, especially after the publication of the new *apología* (Knoepfler 2020; Matthaiou and Papazarkadas 2020: 168–169), and the low estimate of 40–30 BC suggested by Müller 2014 who claimed that the koinon was not properly reborn until a clear self-definition was used in the public transcript.

¹⁶⁵ Schachter 2016: 189.

¹⁶⁶ See Müller 2014: 125–126. For the idea that the group had never ceased its existence, probably just ‘rescheduling their activity’ in the period of the organization of the Pamboiotia, see *supra*.

form, before being re-established in their original federal form in the eighties of the first century BC. The Pamboiotia had experienced a first moment of celebration as a contest for individual competitions in the Archaic and Classical periods (until the middle of the fifth century BC, possibly a little later). In a second stage, the Hellenistic koinon had reorganised the games to celebrate its military power in the third century BC.

The Roman Imperial koinon was indeed “an institution with religious overtones”.¹⁶⁷ The Itonion became the heart of such an institution, and the presence of an ἐπιμελετὴς τῆς πανηγύρεως¹⁶⁸ later distinguished the Pamboiotia from the analogous *agōnothētēs* of the Basileia. A possible precedence of the reorganization of the Basileia over the Pamboiotia might be posited. On the one hand, despite the risks of any argument based on documents preserved or not preserved, the epigraphic documents related to the Pamboiotia are slightly later than the documents in support of the Basileia;¹⁶⁹ on the other hand, it is interesting to note that Diodorus writing in the forties of the first century BC knows that the Basileia were still carried out. In contrast, Strabo¹⁷⁰ curiously places the celebration of the Pamboiotia in the past (συνετέλουν). He seems to have lived some time after Diodorus, and perhaps he only copied a source, as Schachter remarked.¹⁷¹ However, it cannot be ruled out that Strabo was not yet familiar with the new Pamboiotia when he wrote his ninth book, or that the festival was still being restructured.

The name of the new Boiotian body (τὸ κοινόν) is reflected in those sources which allow us to know how it was seen from an emic perspective. Its first occurrence ca. 33/32 BC¹⁷² is strikingly in line with all those documents in which τὸ κοινόν is linked with the administration of the Roman Pamboiotia. Expressions such as τὸ συνέδριον Βοιωτῶν¹⁷³ or τὸ κοινὸν Παμβοιωτῶν συνέδριον¹⁷⁴ confirm how the Boiotian body viewed the agonistic dimension as an indissoluble part of the rediscovered unity.¹⁷⁵ In particular, the dossier of Epameinondas of Akraiphia (AD 37) allows us to date the decision to collocate the record of a collective decision in the sanctuary of Athena Itonia to the early Imperial period, which is also firm evidence for the flourishing of this festival (and of the revival of the Ptoia).¹⁷⁶ The Boiotians still met there in Pausanias’ time.¹⁷⁷ One wonders whether the

¹⁶⁷ Müller 2014: 129.

¹⁶⁸ IG VII 2781.

¹⁶⁹ Müller 2014: 129–130.

¹⁷⁰ Strab. 9.2.29.

¹⁷¹ Schachter 1981: 124n3.

¹⁷² IG II² 4114.

¹⁷³ IG VII 2711.

¹⁷⁴ IG VII 2712.

¹⁷⁵ See also IG VII 2878 with the commentary by Knoepfler 2012: 240–246.

¹⁷⁶ On this dossier, see Oliver 1971; Chaniotis 2008: 67–87; Grigsby 2017: 207–213.

¹⁷⁷ Paus. 9.34.1–2.

historical scenario of another *Love Story* by Plutarch also refers to the Hellenistic period.¹⁷⁸ In this short story, a girl joins the celebration of the Pamboiotia¹⁷⁹ because she is looking for justice against thirty violent pretenders: the Boiotians present on the spot listen to her and are furious with the men. Despite the undeniable fictitious character of the story, the idea that the Itonion could act as a central spot where a girl would present her allegations against men of different Boiotian origin is in line with the notion that Boiotians routinely met at Koroneia in the second century AD. The fact that she introduces herself as *ικέτις* might support the idea that the sanctuary still enjoyed *asylía* at this stage, but we lack further evidence on this.

The Pamboiotia had then lost their military dimension, but regained political meaning, insofar as this was possible under Roman administration. It is likely, however, that even the board of boiotarchs reappeared in a new form probably in the first century BC. Hadrian's letter to Naryka of AD 138 is good evidence of the existence of more than one boiotarch (probably eight) in Imperial times.¹⁸⁰

While the Pamboiotia had become a fossil of the ethnic imaginary of the Boiotians, the Basileia were still celebrated. The documents of the first century AD provide no evidence in this regard, but only confirm that the festival was still held and had a good reputation. At about his time, the herald Onetor dedicated golden apples to Apollo in Delphi to commemorate his victories.¹⁸¹ He first lists his victory at the *εὐεπῖν* contest in Delphi (l. 1–2), but then focuses on the crowns he had won at Nemea, Thebes and *εὐρύχορος Λε[β]άδεια* (l. 3). If there were firm evidence that the Pamboiotia ever included a contest for heralds, we might expect to find this in the record.¹⁸² However, it is not sure that the victory of the herald at the '*agón* of Zeus' mentioned in an earlier inscription refers to the Basileia.¹⁸³ All we can say is that Onetor was proud of a victory at Lebadeia and that the mere mention of the name of the city, just like that of Nemea, sufficed to refer to a prestigious contest.

Between the second and third centuries AD, the Basileia are called Trophonia once again.¹⁸⁴ Perhaps there had been a previous transitional phase in which both names were

178 Schachter 1981: 124n3.

179 Plut. *Mor.* 774E: τὴν τῶν Παμβοιωτίων ἑορτήν.

180 The letter was written in the last months of Hadrian's life and is a pivotal document for the history of Central Greece in the first half of the second century AD. The occasion of its publication caused a debate among scholars; see Knoepfler 2005: 66–73; *SEG* 51.641; *BE* 2005, 249; Knoepfler 2006; Jones 2006; Knoepfler 2012: 224–228. On the Imperial boiotarchy, see Knoepfler 2012 and Tufano 2023a.

181 *IG* II² 3158.

182 So Manieri 2009, *ad Leb.* 14.

183 *IG* VII 530, mid-third century BC. For the view that this expression refers to the Olympic games, see *IAG* 38.

184 Cf. *SEG* 26.258 and 263, both from Athens and dated to the second century AD.

used, although the story of the *agōn* does not testify to the likelihood of this possibility. The board of the *naopoioi* and the activity of the *koinon* are certain facts for the second century, and it is therefore unlikely that the conditions for the existence of the Basileia were not met: in fact, a herald was crowned probably in this period.¹⁸⁵ Pollux's indication on the name Trophonia might not be necessarily unreliable, as it was the output of an erudite scholar.¹⁸⁶

A new dissolution of the *koinon* in the thirties of the third century apparently had to put an end to both the Basileia and the Pamboiotia. Until the beginning of this century, the Boiotians were still involved in a number of local *agōnes* including the ephebic contests in Tanagra.¹⁸⁷ The Eleutheria of Plataiai and the Herakleia of Thebes were also still practiced at this time.¹⁸⁸ Possibly at the beginning of the third century, Flavia Laneika is defined ἀρχιερεία κοινοῦ Βοιωτῶν τῆς Ἰτωνίας Ἀθηνᾶς.¹⁸⁹ Around the middle of the century there is again epigraphic evidence of victories at the Trophonia.¹⁹⁰ What can we make of this new change of name? We have tried so far to link the history of the Basileia and of the Pamboiotia with the history of the Boiotian *koinon*. Is it therefore possible that the *koinon* was dissolved once again in the thirties of the century and that Lebadeia decided to continue the old festival under a more parochial name, as argued by Knoepfler?

We lack positive evidence that the *koinon* was dissolved in the thirties, whereas the myth of a Gordianus III *philhellène*, while based on good grounds, is not in itself sufficient to claim that this emperor deliberately allowed or encouraged the reintroduction of a festival.¹⁹¹ On the whole, the idea of a shift of the festival from the exhibition of regional identity to a return to local celebrations might hold true.¹⁹² Good hints in this direction are the composition of the Panhellenion created by Hadrian and the success of the civic identities in the second century AD.¹⁹³ The particularism of the third century AD might be part of the explanation, while Boiotianness continued in other forms, e.g. through the institution of *ephēbeia*.

The situation is maybe less clear and more complex than what a single, however likely, explanation can offer: the *naopoioi* disappear together with the festivals, but it is possible

185 ID 2552.

186 Poll. 1.37.

187 IG XII Suppl. 646; IG VII 2450; Charami 2011.

188 See IG VII 49 and FD III 1.155, with Grigsby 2017: 231.

189 IG VII 3426; on this important document, see Knoepfler 2012: 237–240.

190 FD III 1.550; IG VII 49 (*post* AD 242), IG II² 3169/3170 (*ca.* AD 253–257); FD III 1.555 (*ca.* AD 250). See Grigsby 2017: 239.

191 On the paradigm of Gordian III's philhellenism, see Robert 1970: 16.

192 Cf. Grigsby 2017: 238–239.

193 Cf. Gordillo 2012.

that their original function was inherited by the boiotarchs.¹⁹⁴ A document often mentioned in connection with the Basileia does not record the name of the festival, but has often been included in their dossier. This text refers to Drusus the son of Tiberius and has been dated between AD 14 and 23. The *agōnothētēs* of the text cared about the Kaisareia and another festival, which is not preserved (Καισάρεια καὶ [...]). At this time, the name of the festival most likely still had to be Basileia, as Knoepfler rightly observed.¹⁹⁵ The cult of the emperors was quite popular in Boiotia and, in the case of the Ptoia, the noun Καισάρεια even substituted the original name of the festival. The re-foundation by Epameinondas of Akraiphia of τὰ μεγάλα Πτώϊα καὶ Καισάρηα¹⁹⁶ was a renovation of a festival no longer held for economic problems.

We have evidence for the imperial cult in Lebadeia and of the fact that also in other parts of Boiotia more than one festival was rebranded in favour of the emperors during the first century AD.¹⁹⁷ Perhaps we should wonder why the Trophonia still bear this name in the third century AD, while the Basileia had been subsumed under Kaisareia – perhaps also because the names of these two festivals (?) display a strong affinity in meaning. In the absence of explicit indication of the name of the festival for the period of the first two centuries AD, I would suggest that the Basileia had been absorbed into the imperial cult and that the festival could only reappear as Trophonia in the third century AD: the Lebadeian Kaisareia are attested in the first century AD and between the second and the third century AD.¹⁹⁸ Albeit unusual, it could be that the imperial denomination had elicited obliteration or that the double name (Kaisareia [kai] Basileia) was simply shortened or not recorded. This seems to be a specific strategy to grant the survival of an agonistic tradition, while realizing that history demands a change, in other words: “the horizontal action of these festivals, in bringing these cities together, was combined with the vertical action of positioning them in relation to their new rulers”.¹⁹⁹

A further indication of this overlapping of the Basileia and of the Kaisareia might lie in the ambiguity of the status of Cn. Curtius Dexippos, the son of Flavia Laneike who had dedicated a statue to his mother famously called “lifetime *archiéreia* of Athena Ithonia on behalf of the Boiotian koinon and of the Phokian koinon and of the Homonoia of the

194 Disappearance of the *naopoioi* in connection with the loss of documentation for the festivals: Schachter 2016: 145n25.

195 Knoepfler 2008: 1457–1458.

196 IG VII 2712, l. 56–59.

197 On Epameinondas of Akraiphia, see *supra*; on the imperial cults in Boiotia, cf. Camia 2011b: 125–128 and Grigsby 2017: *passim*.

198 IG VII 3103, IG VII 3106; on the date of IG VII 3106, and on the imperial festivals in Lebadeia, see Camia 2011b: 127 and n527.

199 Van Nijf and Williamson 2015: 108.

Greeks at the Trophonion”.²⁰⁰ Her son Dexippos was a boiotarch (9), a *logistés* of Chaironeia (11), and ἀρχιερεὺς διὰ βίου τῶν Σεβαστῶν (9–10). *Archiereís* could work at the same time for the imperial cult and for local demands (here the nexus with Athena Itonia is quite clear).²⁰¹ Even if the current example only explicitly refers to the imperial cult of Chaironeia, it remains likely that it was this overlap between local and imperial festivals that caused the apparent oblivion of the local festivals in our documentation.

Synopsis

Research into the Pamboiotia and the Basileia still suffers from a limited number of documents, which often only allow for hypotheses. As Albert Schachter once wrote, “we are very much at the mercy, not only of what has or has not survived, but also of what may or may not have been inscribed in the first place”.²⁰² These two festivals were able to unify and represent the Boiotian region to a point that Didymos’ confusion over the identification of Pindar’s ἀγῶνες ἔννομοι Βοιωτῶν as either the Basileia or the Pamboiotia does not seem entirely far-fetched.

The Pamboiotia were the show of Boiotia’s military nature, the perfect stage to exemplify why Epameinondas would call his land ‘the dancing floor of Ares’.²⁰³ Their location at Koroneia in the fifth century BC, even if under a different, unknown name, forever linked the festival with a capital victory of Boiotian history. No wonder that the later redesigning of the Hellenistic period could transform the religious meeting into a military venue and that from then on the athletes marched under a national agenda. It was not a celebration which the Romans could accept or like. The dissolution of 171 BC made their survival completely impossible, in light of the strong federal administration of the event. Only under the new koinon of the Late Republic could the Boiotians recover and regain this regional manifestation and place of public decision making. Maybe the games were still held in the first three centuries of the empire, but now the meeting had a more social aspect, while the individual competitions made it similar to many other contests of mainland Greece.

Initially, the Basileia were the festival of the golden years of the Theban hegemony, a Theban project to mark forever the military glory and show it to anyone. For this reason,

200 IG VII 3426, l. 2–6.

201 On these *archiereís*, and especially on Dexippos, see Camia 2011b: 165–166 and 166n746–747; Knoepfler 2012: 237–240.

202 Schachter 2016: 350n17.

203 Plut. *Marc.* 21.3 and *Mor.* 193A. On the Boiotian military culture of the third century BC, cf. Ma 2005.

there were probably no official rules that impeded the participation of foreigners. In fact, the catchment area of the victors sensibly expanded only in the first century BC. Under the Hellenistic koinon the recollection of that great time of effective power, however short lived, probably inspired the realization of the complex with the start of the construction of that never completed Temple of Zeus Basileus. Trophonios with his oracle and his sacred shadow over the competition had always been there and the fame of the oracle would certainly have helped the contextual success of the festival. Besides, the federal body which was initially designed to oversee the constructions became an ideological weapon in the hands of the Boiotians, when the new koinon of the first century BC was born. Had such a plan remained in their hearts? The short season of the Trophonia in the last two centuries BC suggests that Lebadeia had organised the festival alone in the first decades after the Roman expansion in Greece; but now, after Sulla's arrival and Trophonios' good *omina* for the dictator,²⁰⁴ the *naopoioi* could certainly be seen as a adequate body of Boiotians who could also care for the reorganization of the Basileia.

From the age of Augustus, the story of the Basileia and of the Pamboiotia, which had been combined for a few years, diverged again. The Pamboiotia probably remained popular thanks to the connection with the Itonion, while the Basileia may have been overshadowed by the cult and festival for the emperor. What happened between the first and third centuries AD can only remain in the realm of hypothesis, but no one will doubt that the strength of the koinon was based on other reasons in the meantime.

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204 Plut. *Sull.* 17, with Grigsby 2017: 192–193. Sulla might have assigned the tax revenues to the temple of Zeus and this could be a sign of a special treatment, but the religious and the fiscal plan should probably be distinguished, and this has not necessarily in itself consequences on the festival (on the possible assignment of tax revenues, see Larsen in Frank 1938: 307–308 and Rigsby 1996: 83).

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