

### 3 | That Sweet Enmity

#### The Conventions of Neighbourly Interactions

For (as he would say) ‘peace’, as the term is commonly employed, is nothing more than a name, the truth being that every polis is, by a law of nature, engaged perpetually in an informal war with every other polis.

—Pl. *Laws* 626a

War (and conflict) was a ubiquitous part of ancient Greek life. The Athenians and Boiotians were certainly no stranger to it. A brief glance at their history in the Classical period (Chapter 2) could turn the greatest optimist glum, if one only looks at the times of hostility. Around two centuries of co-existence were filled to the brim with conflicts, occasionally interspersed with periods of collaboration that resulted from a conflation of interests or common enemies. A dizzying array of battles and wars fill the history books, creating the impression that these neighbours were indeed naturally disinclined towards each other.

A closer look at the way these neighbours interacted, however, counters that notion. Tracing the modes of conduct between the polities will clarify my contention that the neighbours were *not* inveterate enemies. Instead, they avoided conflict on a regular basis or collaborated on account of other reasons besides mutual interests. The examples below demonstrate the complexity of human interaction and the difficulty of imposing a narrow interpretation on two centuries of shared history. These conventions were built on familiar aspects of interstate relations, such as reciprocity, but its precise application within the spheres of neighbourly relations has been overlooked. This investigation provides the opportunity to uncover other, less familiar characteristics of their relationship. Examples include the role of reputation and its perceptive influence on decision-making, or how the decision to go to war was steeped in various considerations unconnected to an inborn desire to fight each other and was more likely the result of external intervention. The examples provided below offer a glimpse of the possibilities that can be achieved by avoiding the pitfalls of *Realist* discourse and the ingrained notion of neighbourly conflict as predetermined,

or other notions such as the desire to achieve ‘a balance of power’, which was an unfamiliar term to the ancient Greeks.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.1 Opting for Conflict

The decision to go to war was a common but not a natural one in Athens. War was frequently avoided through negotiation or by deferring issues to arbitration by other poleis.<sup>2</sup> Only when these attempts failed did warfare become an option. Taking into consideration the risk associated with engaging in a pitched battle, as underlined by various classical Greek sources, the choice for war was not taken lightly.<sup>3</sup> Neighbourly relations adhere to the same notion, but a common assumption that war was the inevitable choice on account of long-standing feuds and borderland disputes still exists. That sense of hostility started in 519 with the Plataian alliance and continued unabated until the destruction of Thebes in 335, with few exceptions in between. The following examples show, however, that Atheno-Boiotian hostilities were often the result of various factors and in certain cases *could* be avoided. At other times, they occurred through external interference that thwarted attempts at a rapprochement. In each case we can retrace attempts to avoid hostilities whenever possible, even if the end result was not always convivial.

#### 3.1.1 *The Plataian Alliance with the Athenians at the End of the Sixth Century*

One example of scholarly conformity related to precedent in creating a narrative of hostility is the Atheno-Plataian alliance to the detriment of the Thebans. The fissure between the Boiotian Plataians and the Thebans was not an inevitable course that laid the groundwork for centuries of enmity to come. The episode described by Herodotus demonstrates the importance of the *choices* made in the forging of the alliance and its eventual effect on the neighbourly relationship. The Plataian decision to align with the Athenians came about through the referral by Cleomenes and relied upon the latter accepting the Plataians’ supplication, which was not a certainty.<sup>4</sup> Their predicament reinforces the notion that their plea was a last-ditch attempt. This situation does not fit the stabler times of the Peisistratid

<sup>1</sup> Cross 2019.    <sup>2</sup> Ager 1996.    <sup>3</sup> Konijnendijk 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Naiden 2006 traces the various stages of supplication, including acceptance by the other party.

tyranny. A more suitable context is the last decade of the sixth century or the invasion of Attica in 507/6.<sup>5</sup> Methodologically, it was simpler to assume the alliance occurred earlier to explain the Boiotian participation in the 507/6 invasion of Attica. But this relies on an inexact reading of our sources. Scholars preferred Thucydides' narrative over Herodotus' eulogy of Athenian democracy rather than consider their motives. A linear progression of hostilities that continued to expand fitted the dominant narrative of neighbourly hostilities. Yet the path to hostility was more sinuous.

Herodotus describes the story of the alliance, but Thucydides provides a date that stems from his acerbic remark that Plataia was destroyed in the 'ninety-third year after she became an ally of Athens' (καὶ τὰ μὲν κατὰ Πλάταιαν ἔτει τρίτῳ καὶ ἑνενηκοστῷ ἔπειδὴ Ἀθηναίων ζύμμαχοι ἐγένοντο οὕτως ἔτελεύτησεν). Since the destruction occurred in 427, the Atheno-Plataian alliance dates to 519.<sup>6</sup> A compact was thus agreed upon in 519 unless Thucydides was creative with numbers. Since the Peisistratids were firmly in charge at that date, the tyrants must have been the ones responsible for this Plataian alliance. However, I do not view this alliance as a radical break between the Athenian tyrants and the Thebans. It was the second inception of a Plataian-Athenian coalition that Herodotus describes in his account of the Battle of Marathon that irked the Thebans and fuelled their desire for revenge.<sup>7</sup> *That* alliance, in my opinion, differs from the compact of 519 and was created at a different time: in the later sixth century when hostilities between the Athenians and Thebans were already underway.

This reconstruction avoids the issue of reconciling Thucydides' date with Herodotus' account, a labour that bogged down scholars in the past. The incongruency induced some emending of the Thucydidean text to allow for a different date, either 509 or 506.<sup>8</sup> Besides the inherent epistemic difficulties in altering the text, the textual tradition here reveals no signs of corruption, making any emendation suspect.<sup>9</sup> The solution therefore cannot be found by tampering with the manuscript.

A more elegant solution to consolidate the two accounts exists: Thucydides and Herodotus are describing two different events.

<sup>5</sup> For proponents of 519: Camp 1991; Carpenter 1986: 117–23; Cartledge 2020: 79; Herington 1985: 87–91; Kolb 1977; Pickard-Cambridge 1958; Schachter 2016a: 36–50.

<sup>6</sup> Hdt. 6.108; Thuc. 3.68.5. <sup>7</sup> Van Wijk 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Amit 1970; Busolt 1885–1904: II 399 n. 4; Ducat 1973; French 1960: 91; Grote 1907: II 442 n. 54; Konecny et al. 2013; Salmon 1978: 20; Tausend 1992: 181–2; Shrimpton 1984; Fossey 2019: 50–1 remains agnostic.

<sup>9</sup> Develin 1990.

Herodotus writes the following about the Plataian alliance with the Athenians:

The Plataians had put themselves under the protection of the Athenians, and the Athenians had undergone many labours on their behalf. This is how they did it: when the Plataians were pressed by the Thebans, they first tried to put themselves under the protection of Cleomenes son of Anaxandrides and the Lacedaimonians, who happened to be there. But they did not accept them, saying, ‘We live too far away, and our help would be cold comfort to you. You could be enslaved many times over before any of us heard about it. We advise you to put yourselves under the protection of the Athenians, since they are your neighbours and not bad men at giving help.’ The Lacedaimonians gave this advice not so much out of goodwill toward the Plataians as wishing to cause trouble for the Athenians with the Boiotians. So the Lacedaimonians gave this advice to the Plataians, who did not disobey it. When the Athenians were making sacrifices to the twelve gods, they sat at the altar as suppliants and put themselves under protection. When the Thebans heard this, they marched against the Plataians, but the Athenians came to their aid. As they were about to join battle, the Corinthians, who happened to be there, prevented them and brought about a reconciliation. Since both sides desired them to arbitrate, they fixed the boundaries of the country on condition that the Thebans leave alone those Boiotians who were unwilling to contribute (τελέειν) to the Boiotians.<sup>10</sup> After rendering this decision, the Corinthians departed. The Boiotians attacked the Athenians as they were leaving but were defeated in battle. The Athenians went beyond the boundaries the Corinthians had made for the Plataians, fixing the Asopos river as the boundary for the Thebans in the direction of Plataia and Hysiai. So the Plataians had put themselves under the protection of the Athenians in the aforesaid manner, and now came to help at Marathon.<sup>11</sup>

The situation sketched by Herodotus has striking similarities to the situation of 507/6, when invading armies from Boiotia and the Peloponnese, including the Corinthians, attacked Attica. All these parties are present in the Herodotean account. Its occurrence around that time is therefore quite likely.<sup>12</sup> Simon Hornblower argues on textual and narrative grounds that the division of books five and six in Herodotus is an artificial

<sup>10</sup> For this translation of ‘τελέειν’: Mackil 2013: 27.      <sup>11</sup> Hdt. 6.108.

<sup>12</sup> Hennig 1992; Moretti 1962 view Herodotus’ account of the Plataian alliance as a later fabrication.

one, constructed by Hellenistic scholars.<sup>13</sup> If he is right, that strengthens the connection between the account of the invasion and the Plataian alliance, since no dividing line would have existed between them in Herodotus' original text. For the Thucydidean date, however, there is no evidence to support all parties being in close proximity. Evidence of absence does not equate with absence of evidence and there are possible candidates for placing these parties together at this time – like a festival – but it makes the ascription of the Herodotean account to 519 more problematic.

A more fruitful inquiry of Herodotus' text provides some relief. Herodotus insists on the Athenians as agents. This firmly places it in the democratic era. Whenever he speaks of the tyranny, he names the Peisistratids as the actors. Deviating from that course in this particular episode would seem remarkable.<sup>14</sup> He elsewhere differentiates between the Peisistratids and Athenians, signalling he does not equate the two in his narrative.<sup>15</sup> On occasions where the historian details actions undertaken by the democracy, he specifies the Athenians as actors, similar to here, where they are sacrificing to the gods.<sup>16</sup> Finally, there is the matter of semantics. Herodotus describes a subservient relationship, exemplified in words as 'ἐδεδώκεσαν', whereas Thucydides mentions an alliance or communal bond (ξύμμαχοι), which is a different kind of association.<sup>17</sup> It seems the relationship transitioned from a more voluntary affair into something resembling a client-patron relationship.<sup>18</sup>

The act of Plataian supplication before the Athenians embodies that relationship. Earlier interpretations of the event assumed every supplicant was automatically accepted, since rejecting overtures from people or communities in need who followed the prescribed norms of supplication was a faux pas bordering on insolence towards the gods. Such an interpretation favoured a Peisistratid date. This offered the tyrants a religious motive to manoeuvre out of their affiliation with the Thebans, as their hands were

<sup>13</sup> Hornblower 2013; Hornblower and Pelling 2017. <sup>14</sup> Hdt. 1.61; 5.63–5; 5.91–4; 6.35–9.

<sup>15</sup> Hdt. 1.59–60; 62–3. <sup>16</sup> Hdt. 5.64; 5.73; 5.77–9; 5.91.

<sup>17</sup> Sommerstein and Bayliss 2013: 186 n. 3 mention Herodotus rarely uses *symmachia* and only in combination with *omnumi* or *horkos*, both not used in the account.

<sup>18</sup> For the client-patron relationship: Crane 2001. Badian 1993: 221 n. 27 views the relationship as a form of *douleia*. He relies on Paus. 1.32.3 but archaeological research at Marathon undermines his story that the Plataians were buried together with the slaves: Hammond 1992; Mersch 1995. The subservient relationship emerges from the Plataians' necessity to confer with the Athenians during the Peloponnesian War: Thuc. 2.73.1; 3.54.4; 64.3.

tied by the Plataians' plea.<sup>19</sup> An obvious act of supplication put the supplicandus under immense pressure. Yet acceptance was not a foregone conclusion. The decision to accept or refuse the plea lay with the supplicandus. Refusal was not uncommon as Cleomenes' refusal clearly demonstrates.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps Herodotus wished to portray the Athenians as pious protectors of the weak, whereas the Spartans rejected these mores for more mundane reasons. This takes away the necessity for the Peisistratids to accept the Plataians and allows for a different possibility in which the tyrants could have ignored the plea if they had no desire to intervene in Boiotian affairs.

In 507/6 matters were different. Cleomenes' campaign was faltering. He was forced to withdraw from Eleusis, where the interaction between the various parties could have taken place, especially now that we know the Boiotians claimed capture of the city.<sup>21</sup> His suggestion to the Plataians could have been the additional motivation the Thebans and their Boiotian allies needed to continue the invasion, despite the lack of Spartan support.<sup>22</sup> That offers two options. Either the Athenians saw an opportunity and took it, since the Boiotians were already hostile towards them, and hoped additional forces could turn the tide. Or a more sensitive argument could take into consideration the importance of the Assembly in decision-making – if it was already in place – and assume the emotive arguments of the supplicants on their doorstep held more sway than any *Realpolitik*. This was a more time-consuming process, rather than an impromptu acceptance and arrangement of the alliance. That same example of protecting the weak and acting as the home of asylum would later be repeated in the Assembly, indicating it was a likely option. Appealing to the emotion of an audience by invoking the supplicandus status was perhaps more endearing to the demos and easier to achieve than convincing one ruler or ruling family to overhaul their relationships.<sup>23</sup> The supplication is therefore not positive evidence for a Peisistratid date.

<sup>19</sup> Mafodda 1996: 107–8: 'una opportuna motivazione religiosa alla decisione del tiranno di schierarsi dalla parte di Platea contro Tebe'. He is not completely wrong in believing it offered the Peisistratids a religious excuse to accept the Plataians, but that does not explain their willingness to affront the Thebans.

<sup>20</sup> Naiden 2006: 105–69.

<sup>21</sup> SEG 56.521 l.2: [— — —] ἠελόντες κέλευσῖνα (. . . having taken also Eleusis).

<sup>22</sup> Hdt. 5.75.1–2 for the faltering campaign. Plutarch's analysis of the situation (Plut. *de Hdt. Mal.* 861e) makes for interesting reading: 'If then Herodotus is not malicious, the Lacedaimonians must have been both fraudulent and spiteful; and the Athenians fools, in suffering themselves to be thus imposed on; and the Plataians were brought into play, not for any good-will or respect, but as an occasion of war.'

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., Hdt. 5.97. On supplicants in Athenian memory: Steinbock 2013: 155–210.

Another aspect is the intertextuality between Herodotus and Thucydides. Simon Hornblower demonstrated that Thucydides in the speeches in his own work relies on Herodotus for a majority of the historical narrative prior to the Persian Wars.<sup>24</sup> This includes the Plataian speech in 427 when they defend themselves before a Spartan jury against accusations of *attikismos*. The content of the accusation is less important here. What matters is the epichoric version of history presented by the Plataians in the trial. They relate how the Spartans drove them into Athenian arms after being pressed by the Thebans, echoing the story in Herodotus' *Histories*:

For this you were to blame. When we asked for your alliance against our Theban oppressors, you rejected our petition, and told us to go to the Athenians who were our neighbours, as you lived too far off. In the war we never have done to you, and never should have done to you, anything unreasonable. If we refused to desert the Athenians when you asked us, we did no wrong; they had helped us against the Thebans when you drew back, and we could no longer give them up with honour.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout the trial, the Plataians narrate the tribulations they suffered and how they (incorrectly) persevered as the only Boiotians to oppose the Persians alongside the Spartans.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the Persian Wars occupy a central position in the local tradition of the town and its inhabitants.<sup>27</sup> By employing direct speech, Thucydides emphasises the tragic arc of the Plataian fate.<sup>28</sup> After mentioning their efforts during the Persian Wars, the Plataians end their tale by implying the relationship between the Athenians and themselves arose *after* the Persian Wars.

It was against this reconstructed history that Thucydides aimed his remark that the alliance started in 519. One of the purposes of his work was to demonstrate the otiose uses of the past in rhetorical practice and particularly in interstate relations.<sup>29</sup> The Plataians misrepresent the truth, perhaps unwillingly, and Thucydides' acerbic remark countered that

<sup>24</sup> CT III: 130–3. The authors' interaction is perhaps stronger than previously assumed: Occhipinti 2020.

<sup>25</sup> Thuc. 3.55.1–3. <sup>26</sup> Thuc. 3.54.3. <sup>27</sup> Yates 2013.

<sup>28</sup> Scardino 2007: 453–63. The influx of Plataian refugees into Athens after the town's destruction probably gave Thucydides more detailed information undercutting any need to question the historicity of the trial's contents.

<sup>29</sup> Grethlein 2010: 234, 239–40. Bruzzone 2015 argues the Plataians are lodged in the past during their speech, ignorant that the past is irrelevant in their current predicament. This is emphasised by the names of the Plataian speakers: 'Astymachos, son of Asopolaos' and 'Lakon, son of Aieimnestos' (Thuc. 3.52.5). The name Asopolaos is no longer unattested, as it appears in a fourth-century Plataian casualty list: Kalliontzis 2014: Ἀσωπόλαος.

notion. In addition to his intentions, the tense he uses here implies that a break could have occurred. The aorist employed – ἐτελεύτησεν – suggests a past event that does not necessitate a continuous process. The first alliance could have been forged in 519 but interrupted in the intermittent period, for instance, through the expulsion of the tyrants. Thucydides shows that the shared history of the Athenians and Plataians started in 519 and ended in 427, but does not claim this was an ongoing relationship. Therefore the relationship was possibly rekindled in the late sixth century, but in a different configuration. When the tyrants aligned with the Plataians, this was not done to the detriment of the Thebans or their claims in the Parasopia, but was more in line with other Peisistratid familial ties to rulers in Central Greece, such as the Eretrians or Thessalians (Chapter 4.1.3).<sup>30</sup>

Boiotian evidence appears to confirm this picture. During the trial the Thebans paint a scene of peaceful co-existence between the Thebans and their Plataian neighbours in an earlier phase, even if it is pervaded by their own propaganda.<sup>31</sup> The lack of any fortifications at Plataia around this time suggests there were no impending fears of a Theban invasion, considering their proximity.<sup>32</sup> The late sixth-century sale of Theban-owned plots beyond the Asopos River, in what later constituted Plataian territory, implies a lack of disputes over borders. Though it concerns segments of an unpublished inscription, a Peisistratid acceptance of a Plataian alliance was apparently not the spark that lit the fuse.<sup>33</sup>

This reappraisal of late sixth-century events also has reverberations beyond the immediate alliance. If there was no rupture between the tyrants and the Thebans, we can dismiss the notion that they were involved with the Alcemonid coup, launched from Leipsydrion in 511.<sup>34</sup> Our sources omit any support. Local aristocrats were capable of establishing their own strongholds within Attica, especially in these borderlands, outside of the Peisistratid nexus.<sup>35</sup> Any notion that the Athenian tyrants intensified their

<sup>30</sup> Hdt. 5.63–4; Thuc. 6.55.1; [Arist]. *AP* 17.3, 18.2.

<sup>31</sup> Thuc. 3.61.2. ‘The Plataians not choosing to recognise our supremacy, as had been first arranged, but separating themselves from the rest of the Boiotians, and proving traitors to their nationality, we used compulsion; upon which they went over to the Athenians, and with them did us much harm, for which we retaliated.’

<sup>32</sup> Hülten 2020: 375–80. No evidence of archaic walls or fortifications were found at Plataia but their existence was speculated by Konecny et al. 2013 because of the hostility with the Thebans.

<sup>33</sup> Matthaïou 2014: ἐπ’ Ἀσοπῶ; δι’ Ἀσοπῶ and ποτ’ Εὐάκροιδι’ Ἀσοπῶ.

<sup>34</sup> Hdt. 5.62.2; Schol. Ad Ar. *Lys.* 665; [Arist]. *AP* 19.3. Rhodes 1981: 235 for the date. Buck 1979; Munn 2002 argue for Theban help.

<sup>35</sup> Anderson 2003: 34. Rönnberg 2021: 73–8 critiques some of Anderson’s arguments, though he does not refute the lack of ‘full integration’ of Attica into the Athenian polis.



relations with the Thessalians at the expense of the Thebans is equally irrelevant. These views stem from a break between the erstwhile allies and a controversial dating of the Battle of Keressos – between the Thessalians and Boiotians – to 520, whereas archaeological evidence for any such conflict leans towards a much earlier date.<sup>36</sup>

It also explains why the Thebans were not present at the overthrow of the tyrants. If a Plataian-Peisistratid alliance had agitated them, the opportunity to expel their hated enemies would have been the ideal opportunity to even the score. While Herodotus may have wanted to leave out any Theban participation in this formative event, he is not alone in omitting their involvement.<sup>37</sup> In the same vein, one can wonder why the Plataians did not rush to the Peisistratids' side. Herodotus here provides a simple answer. The tyrants asked only the Thessalians for help.<sup>38</sup> The lack of hostilities is reflected in Hipparchos' dedication at the Apollo Ptoios sanctuary in Akraiphnia. It can be dated to the years *after* 519, showing the tyrant's son was still on good terms with his Theban neighbours (Chapters 2.1, 5.2.1).

What the example of the Plataian alliance beautifully illustrates is the desire of scholars to view any possible contacts between the Athenians and Plataians as detrimental to their relation with other Boiotian poleis. In this version, however, there is no need to assume hostile relations during the tyranny. The Plataians' relationship with the Athenians became poignant only when hostilities were already underway. It is not through border

<sup>36</sup> Buck 1979: 108–9; Moretti 1962: 104–5. Keressos: Plut. *Cam.* 19.3; *De mal. Her.* 33. Scholars date it between 600 and 480; Fossey 2019: 24–60; Guillon 1963: 95–6; Larsen 1968: 30; Tausend 1992: 32. Archaeological evidence: Fossey and Gauvin 1985a: 64; Lauffer 1985: 107; Lehmann 1983. But see Hülden 2018; 2020: 365–70 for the difficulty in dating fortifications on masonry style. Hall 2002: 143; Sordi 1993: 31 connected the Battle of Keressos to *NIO* 5 and view the battle within the context of the Persian Wars (Chapter 2.3). This inscription deals with a fine handed to the Boiotians and Thessalians, although the latter are exonerated. The fine was handed out on behalf of the Athenians and Thespians, but Plutarch explicitly mentions the Boiotians as warding off the Thessalians. Despite the issues with following Plutarch on account of the conflicting dates he offers, assuming the Boiotians would be fined for defending their region against the Thessalians is remarkable. Sordi's links it with a violation of the Olympic truce. Lämmer 1982–3, however, rejects the existence of the truce. On the difficulty of the literary sources: Tufano 2019a: 40–2.

<sup>37</sup> Hdt. 5.55; 6.2–5; 6.123; Thuc. 6.53.3; 59.4; Ar. *Lys.* 1155–6; [Arist]. *AP* 17–19. There was a popular tradition that preferred viewing Harmodios and Aristogeiton as the liberators of Athens: Pownall 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Hdt. 5.63.3: Οἱ δὲ Πεισιστρατίδαι προτυνηθάνομενοι ταῦτα ἐπεκαλέοντο ἐκ Θεσσαλίας ἐπικουρίην: ἐπεποίητο γὰρ σφι **συμμαχίη** πρὸς αὐτούς. Note Herodotus' wording here, as opposed to his wording of the Plataian alliance.

disputes that tensions flared up; instead, through the changes in leadership in Athens – or the fuzziness thereof – the possibility for enmity arose.

Yet even in that situation, it was not natural animosity that led to neighbourly conflict. In 507/6 a coalition of Boiotian poleis joined the Spartan-led incursion into Attica with the intent of overthrowing the newly installed regime. Scholars have argued that the participation of Boiotian poleis in this invasion was a matter of revenge over the Plataian alliance of 519, or because of opportunism and a quick land-grab.<sup>39</sup> Instead, a likelier explanation is the personal ties between Theban leadership and Cleomenes, a network that also includes the Athenian oligarchic leader Isagoras.<sup>40</sup> Another possibility is the membership of the Boiotian poleis in the Peloponnesian League.<sup>41</sup> In accordance with their duties they followed Cleomenes' lead. That is the impression Herodotus' narrative conveys:

Cleomenes, however, fully aware that the Athenians had done him wrong in word and deed, mustered an army from the whole of the Peloponnesus. He did not declare the purpose for which he mustered it, namely to avenge himself on the Athenian people and set up Isagoras, who had come with him out of the Akropolis, as tyrant. Cleomenes broke in as far as Eleusis with a great host, and the Boiotians, by a concerted plan, took Oinoe and Hysiai, districts on the borders of Attica, while the Chalkidians attacked on another side and raided lands in Attica.<sup>42</sup>

Since Cleomenes' first intervention on behalf of Isagoras ended in retreat and was a Spartan incursion alone, the need for the full force of the League was warranted on the second attempt. Following the terms set out in the treaty, equal partners like the Corinthians and Boiotians were allowed to decide whether their assistance in a campaign could justifiably be required of them.<sup>43</sup> That is exactly what occurred at Eleusis during the invasion. The Corinthians believed they were acting unjustly upon finding out the purpose of the expedition, felt deceived by Cleomenes and decided to withdraw.<sup>44</sup> It possibly caused dismay among the Boiotians too, whose reluctance could have impelled Cleomenes to send the Plataians to the Athenians to ensure the conflict continued.<sup>45</sup> Irrespective of Cleomenes' intentions – and that part must remain speculation – the newly forged

<sup>39</sup> Buck 1979: 115; Rockwell 2017: 45–6.      <sup>40</sup> Schachter 2016a: 68.

<sup>41</sup> On the terms of the Peloponnesian League: Sommerstein and Bayliss 2013: 212–33.

<sup>42</sup> Hdt. 5.74.      <sup>43</sup> Bolmarcich 2005: 23.

<sup>44</sup> Hdt. 5.75.1: 'When the armies were about to join battle, the Corinthians, coming to the conclusion that they were acting wrongly, changed their minds and departed.' Berti 2010b for other explanations.

<sup>45</sup> SEG 56.521 l.2: [-----] ἡελόντες κέλευσῖνα (... having taken also Eleusis).

alliance between the Plataians and Athenians was an affront to Theban honour, who believed themselves to be in charge of Boiotian affairs. Since the troops were gathered and an invasion underway, the Thebans and their allies now had a new reason to continue their incursion, namely, the audacity of the new Athenian leadership to openly dismiss the Theban leadership claim over the Plataians.

The analysis of this episode traces some aspects of neighbourly relations. Deciding to engage in hostilities was never a foregone conclusion that moved from one point in the past towards the present in an inexorable matter. The Plataians' history with the Athenians demonstrates this. They moved from an alliance with the tyrannical rulers to a period of non-alignment before being pressed by their Boiotian neighbours into contributing to the *koinon*. This forced their hands to turn elsewhere for help. Their initial decision is striking. Instead of opting for the Athenians, the Plataians hoped for Spartan support. This hints at criticising the Spartans in the account, but the episode shows that for the Plataians, the Athenians were not necessarily the first choice for protection against the Thebans. Their trepidation suggests that the lack of a relationship with the new Athenian leadership prevented an earlier approach, and the situation Athens found itself in did not inspire confidence. Nor was it a given that the Athenians would rise to the challenge against the Thebans and their Boiotian allies, perhaps echoing previous experiences during the Peisistratid era.

### 3.1.2 *A Peace for Our Times? Putting an End to the Archidamian War*

The Peace of Nicias brought a temporary halt to the vicissitudes of the Peloponnesian War. The road to it was arduous, affected by the back-door dealings and clandestine affairs of some Spartans. Questions of honour, political standing, prisoner exchange and disputed lands pervade the drawn-out process. The negotiators encountered various possible pitfalls during negotiations. Some of these challenges involved the Boiotians and Athenians. Indeed, Aristophanes in his *Pax* portrays the neighbours as indifferent or even opposed to the peace, manifested through their lacklustre efforts to drag Eirene from the pit she was imprisoned in.<sup>46</sup> His scathing depiction provides a precious insight into the perception of the

<sup>46</sup> Ar. *Pax* 230–85.

peace talks. The play's second place at the City Dionysia of 421 shows some Athenians did appreciate Aristophanes' casting of the Boiotians as the main antagonist in the delicate process.

Cherishing Ares and his toxic gifts to mankind was not a typical Boiotian trait, however. Thucydides observes their obtrusive behaviour in a more neutral manner, emphasising their self-interests in the negotiation process. A closer inspection of the negotiations reveals a different motive. The participants were determined to finalise a treaty and return to a peaceful co-existence. Despite the Boiotians' successes, they did not desire to continue the war, nor was their behaviour directed by fear or dislike for the Athenians. Instead, the Peace of Nicias and its negotiations exemplify that neighbourly hostilities were uncharacteristic and how egregious behaviour concerning previous agreements exacerbated the matter.

The run-up to the treaty starts in 423 when the warring parties agreed to a one-year armistice. This short-term pact formed the basis for an enduring future treaty, signalling a desire to conclude the ongoing war.<sup>47</sup> The Spartans and the Athenians had an agreement in place, but some final details needed ironing out concerning the use of the Apollo temple in Delphi. From the wording of Thucydides, one wonders whether the Boiotians had been included in the initial discussions:

As to the temple and oracle of the Pythian Apollo, we are agreed that everyone wishing to shall have access to it, without fraud or fear, according to the usages of his forefathers. The Lacedaimonians and the allies present agree to this, and promise to send heralds to the Boiotians and Phocians, and to do their best to persuade them to agree likewise.<sup>48</sup>

Although their reluctance slowed the process, an enduring peace was within reach. The episode illustrates that the Boiotians were independent enough to insist on certain terms, since the pilgrims would be passing through their territory.<sup>49</sup> More importantly, all allies present seem to be clustered around the Peloponnese, with Megara a possible exception. The Saronic Gulf seems particularly well represented. Among the oath-takers from the Spartan side are Corinthians, Sicyonians, Megarians and Epidaurians.<sup>50</sup> Whether the Boiotians had been privy to the earlier stages

<sup>47</sup> Thuc. 4.118.13.      <sup>48</sup> Thuc. 4.118.1–2.

<sup>49</sup> *CT ad loc* views the Boiotians' control over the route to Delphi as the key to the emphasis on their role; Ar. *Birds* 188–9: 'Pisthetaerus: The air is between earth and heaven. When we want to go to Delphi, we ask the Boiotians for leave of passage.' On the passage and route: Kühn 2018: 201–10.

<sup>50</sup> Thuc. 4.119.1–3.

of negotiation remains unclear. Arnold Gomme first remarked that the agglomeration of involved poleis controlled the Isthmus, making an Athenian invasion difficult. Their inclusion was vital as their powerful fleets could oppose the Athenian naval power.<sup>51</sup> Simon Hornblower agrees with this assessment. Both remark that the absentees were deemed less important.<sup>52</sup> That could be true, yet the implications of these back-channel talks are obvious. The exclusion of the Boiotians left them isolated, which would have tempered their relationship with the Spartans. The Spartans were secure in the knowledge that the Peloponnese was secured. Their selfish arrangement could have triggered fears among the Boiotians of impending Athenian attacks. In light of the recent attack at Delion this was a palpable threat, which makes their reluctance to negotiate according to Spartan terms more understandable.<sup>53</sup> A later adherence to the treaty remains murky, but possible. The *koinon* remained dormant in 423 and 422, except for the dismantling of the Thespian walls to preserve its hoplite class against 'atticising' revolts.<sup>54</sup>

In 421 negotiations were finally underway for a lasting peace treaty, with the Spartans and their allies agreeing to a pact with the Athenians and their allies. The Boiotians were among Peloponnesian League members voting against the treaty. Despite having their claim to Plataia vindicated in the finalised agreement, the Boiotians refuted other facets of the deal like the return of the fortress at Panakton (Chapter 4.1.1).<sup>55</sup> This was a stumbling block, but not an impossible obstacle. The Boiotians cleaved to this part of the negotiations because they held the cards. The Spartans wished to retrieve their imprisoned brethren captured some years before by exchanging them for Boiotian-held Athenian prisoners. Additionally, Panakton would be swapped for the fort at Pylos. The Spartans could offer precious little in return. That predicament became worse when Spartan commanders in the north refused to hand over places promised to the Athenians in the earlier deal. In short, the Boiotians were not compelled to hand over their advantageous bargaining position for the sake of the Spartans. Keeping in mind the potential dismay from earlier negotiations, this

<sup>51</sup> Gomme 1956: *ad loc.*      <sup>52</sup> *CT ad loc.*

<sup>53</sup> It echoes Spartan behaviour during the Persian Wars, when they left Central Greece to fend for themselves. In the Athenian sources this memory remained present (Queyrel-Bottineau 2014b). There are no Boiotian sources to corroborate whether this memory rose to prominence at this time.

<sup>54</sup> Thuc. 4.133.1–2.

<sup>55</sup> The Megarians, Corinthians and Eleans also voted against: Thuc. 5.17.2.

recalcitrance should not be viewed solely through the prism of self-interest; trust and reputation played an important role too.

Another flashpoint was the Spartan Panhellenic colony at Herakleia Trachis that was founded on the Boiotians' doorstep in 426.<sup>56</sup> Liberated Greeks had settled there in droves, but the governor's abrasive behaviour towards them evaporated any goodwill accumulated by fighting Athenian suppression. The town slid into disarray because of mismanagement and fell in 420 after forces from Thessaly and its environs defeated the inhabitants.<sup>57</sup> The Boiotians then occupied the place to prevent the Athenians from taking over. Their efforts imply the colony had been a point of dispute within the Peloponnesian League.<sup>58</sup>

Trepidations among the allies remained, even after repeated insistence to accept the Peace of Nicias that was in place. Spartan allies, including the Boiotians, continued to rebuff the treaty until 'a fairer one than the present was agreed upon'.<sup>59</sup> They were emboldened by the support of the Megarians and Corinthians, who were equally reluctant to accept the terms. Together they could oppose the Athenians and were less reliant on Spartan goodwill. Exasperated at the lack of progress, the Spartans opted for a separate alliance with the Athenians to enforce the terms of the Peace of Nicias onto unwilling allies instead.<sup>60</sup>

Viewing the Boiotian resistance as a firm adherence to territorial gains at the expense of the Athenians, and thereby perhaps an inimical attitude towards the latter, seems a logical conclusion. Yet later events show the Spartans' attitude towards their allies appeared to be the cause of distress. As independent allies, the *koinon* had every reason to pursue their own aims rather than meekly follow the Spartans' directions.<sup>61</sup> The Boiotians remained open to negotiations, even after the alliance between the two blocks materialised. They agreed to a truce with the Athenians 'ἐκεχειρίαν δεχήμερον ἥγον'.<sup>62</sup> The translation of this phrase has caused some debate, but this probably meant a truce that was renewed every ten days wherein lay a perpetual de facto renewal until someone broke the agreement. Therefore it required constant attention and effort from both sides.<sup>63</sup> This was ideally achieved by the *proxenoi* in both cities, who could easily renew the truce if needed.

<sup>56</sup> Thuc. 3.92.3.

<sup>57</sup> Hornblower 2010: 271 argues the Spartans treated the Greeks in the town as helots.

<sup>58</sup> Thuc. 5.51–2. It continued to be an issue in 395: Cook 1990. Hornblower 2011: 137 writes this may emphasise Boiotian disquiet at Spartan behaviour.

<sup>59</sup> Thuc. 5.22. The phrase is ἦν μὴ τις δικαιότερας τούτων ποιῶντα. <sup>60</sup> Thuc. 5.22–3.

<sup>61</sup> Bolmarcich 2005. <sup>62</sup> Thuc. 5.26.2. <sup>63</sup> Arnush 1992; Whitehead 1995.

Donald Kagan regards this ten-day truce as a preventive measure struck out of fear of Athenian interference.<sup>64</sup> These fears stemmed from the recent Theban intervention in Thespias, done to prevent an Athenian-supported uprising. These motivations seem difficult to retrace and Kagan's interpretation betrays his adherence to the Realist dogma. He writes the following:

So frightened were the Thebans that, even while rejecting the Peace of Nicias, they negotiated an unusual, if not unique, truce with the Athenians whereby the original cessation of hostilities was for ten days; after that, termination by either side would require ten days' notice. Such fears, along with great ambitions, made the Thebans hope for the renewal of war that would lead to the defeat of war and the destruction of its power.<sup>65</sup>

In short, fear dictated that short-term truces be established to avoid escalation.

Kagan's interpretation is monolithic, however, and only views the events through a conflictual prism. The repeated truces, rather, indicate a willingness to maintain an open channel for diplomacy and return to a peaceful co-existence.<sup>66</sup> At the moment it was necessary to appease both parties in the newly formed Atheno-Spartan super alliance. The best way to achieve this was by concluding separate treaties with the Athenians until a long-lasting variant was formalised. Temporary reprieves allowed for further negotiations to take place, not to prevent a full-scale war from re-erupting. The frequent renewal of the truce indicates the parties had no desire for further war. It would have been easier to mobilise troops and attack as soon as the truce ended. A desire to utilise that time to improve the outlook of a lasting peace also explains why the Corinthians, despite their alliance with the Argives, wished to obtain a similar agreement. An Argive alliance provided the security against further aggression, a safety net the Boiotians lacked. Yet the latter rebuffed any notion of an Argive alliance, nor did they succumb to the temptation to revoke the ten-day truce at the behest of their Corinthian allies.<sup>67</sup>

A change of direction came from the Spartans in the following year.<sup>68</sup> Certain elements of Spartan society adverse to a rapprochement with the

<sup>64</sup> Kagan 1981: 24–5.      <sup>65</sup> Kagan 1981: 24.

<sup>66</sup> That appears the best way to read Thucydides' remark that this cannot 'be considered a state of peace' (καὶ εὐρήσει οὐκ εἰκός ὄν εἰρήνην αὐτὴν κριθῆναι): Thuc. 5.26.2.

<sup>67</sup> Thuc. 5.32.4–7.

<sup>68</sup> Harris 2021: 55 notes the Spartans were in a weaker position in the negotiations, as evidenced by sending *presbeis autokratores* to Athens with full powers to negotiate a treaty.

Athenians persuaded Boiotian envoys to approach the Argives for a defensive alliance. The proposal was astutely rejected by the leaders of the *koinon*, who were fearful of affronting the Spartans and risking further estrangement, unaware that the *boiotarchs* had received word from Spartan ephors to approach the Argives.<sup>69</sup> Paul Cartledge perceives the rejection as a matter of political brotherhood, with the Boiotian council wishing to remain close to oligarchic Sparta rather than throw in their lot with the democratic Argives.<sup>70</sup> Although such emotions cannot be discounted, his argument that the oligarchic Spartans would be more willing to defend the Boiotians against ‘atticising’ elements falls flat in the face of the Battle at Delion, as well as the Athenians’ lack of constitutional preferences for collaboration.<sup>71</sup> According to Simon Hornblower it meant the Boiotians still held the Spartans in awe.<sup>72</sup> But that overlooks that an Argive (defensive) alliance did nothing for the Boiotian status vis-à-vis the other two powers in the Greek world, making their reverence less likely in the face of the situation confronting them.

The Spartans saw an opening to finalise the peace treaty. They requested the Boiotians to return Panakton to the Athenians and restore the latter’s prisoners. For their cooperation, the Boiotians insisted on a bilateral alliance with the Spartans, although it constituted a breach of the Spartan-Athenian arrangement. Their insistence for this compact was probably precipitated by the Spartan-Athenian alliance. This stipulated the bilateral enforcement of the Peace of Nicias on unwilling parties. Sensing the possible ramifications of Atheno-Spartan collaboration, the Boiotians needed reassurance from their ally, rather than protection from their southern neighbours. Trust was an issue. Some of Sparta’s allies perceived the bilateral alliance as a breach of the Peloponnesian League’s system, leaving members to fend for themselves. Others perceived their pact as null and void. A separate bilateral alliance, as requested by the Boiotians, would repair some of that reputational damage. It would also elevate the *koinon*’s status by recognising it as an equal power in the Greek political sphere, a factor frequently overlooked in scholarship, but one that played a vital role in the agonistic world of Greek politics.<sup>73</sup> Degradation to a second-rank status, as accomplished by the Athenian-Spartan alliance, was unacceptable for the Boiotians, especially after their recent victories at

<sup>69</sup> Thuc. 5.36–9. Hornblower 2010: 137 argues this reflects an ‘institutional unease’ between the *boiotarchs* and the federal council.

<sup>70</sup> Cartledge 2020: 153–4. <sup>71</sup> Brock 2009. <sup>72</sup> Hornblower 2011: 167.

<sup>73</sup> Lendon 2010 argues standing was central to the Peloponnesian War.



Delion. Their request for a separate alliance was to improve their prestige and standing among the two great powers in the Greek mainland. They would willingly hand over their assets, if their status was confirmed. Their emphasis on equal status demonstrates their unease with Spartan actions and a desire to be accepted as a major player in the Greek world.<sup>74</sup>

Negotiations continued, but this time the Boiotians were in a better position thanks to their alliance with the Spartans. The latter hoped to persuade them to surrender Panakton to the Athenians and confirm the peace treaty. The Boiotians did concede, but only after demolishing the fortress. They justified their action by alluding to Athenian violations of ancient oaths.<sup>75</sup> It was an action inspired by confidence, but should not be viewed as an irreparable breach of negotiations. Panakton was handed over in compliance with the request, but with the fortress dismantled, rather than upright, as the Athenians had envisioned. The Athenians then implored the Spartans to revoke their Boiotian alliance in adherence to the original bilateral compact. In the end, it was the Spartans who clung to their Boiotian alliance.<sup>76</sup> The Athenians responded in kind by arranging an alliance with the Argives at the instigation of Alcibiades, recalibrating the political landscape in mainland Greece.<sup>77</sup>

Why did the Athenians persist in viewing the separate alliance as harmful? Status certainly played a role. The Atheno-Spartan dyad allowed both powers to direct negotiations with less regard for others. The Spartan-Boiotian alliance, and the increased status of the *koinon*, transformed that dyad into a triumvirate. Athenian negotiations were more difficult with the Boiotians. They held significant barter in the form of prisoners and lands, and the Athenians had nothing to offer in return. Any advantages the Athenians held were desiderata for the Spartans. Yet the Boiotians relinquished these to obtain a separate alliance with the Spartans. Therefore they desired to conclude a compact with the Athenians for an uptick in standing and prestige, even at the expense of valuable lands.

This episode serves as a reminder that border disputes were not an insurmountable obstacle towards peace, but could be made into one if this

<sup>74</sup> Buck 1994: 21–4 retrojects Leontiades' leadership from 395 onto this period, but the Boiotians are anonymous from Thucydides book 5 onwards, making this claim hard to substantiate.

<sup>75</sup> Thuc. 5.42, *CT* III 94 rightly points to Boiotian agency in the destruction, rather than Spartan intrigue. Seager 1976: 258 views the return of Panakton as a small price to pay for the Boiotians, but that ignores the importance of the Athenian violations of the oaths in place: Chapter 4.1.1.

<sup>76</sup> Thuc. 5.44.3.

<sup>77</sup> Thuc. 5.45; *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 83. The Athenians placed the onus of breaching the treaty on the Spartans, not the Boiotians: Thuc. 5.56.3; Low 2020.

was the intention. A malicious Boiotian attitude to the Athenians was not to blame. The Spartans' questionable actions invited the ire of the Boiotians, leading to their recalcitrance. That attitude is already present during the negotiations in 423, when they were excluded from the initial phase. It continued throughout later discussions, as the Spartans refused to acknowledge and recompensate the Boiotians for their territorial losses, despite holding the goods the Spartans were desperate to trade. These negotiations show that a plethora of factors obstructed the prospects of a lasting peace, but an inherent neighbourly hostility was not one of them.

### 3.1.3 *Parting Is Such Sweet Sorrow: The 'Auld Alliance' of 369*

The Spartan-Athenian alliance of 369 demonstrates that the Athenian decision to break with the Thebans was not a natural, swift outcome of expansionism within Boiotia. The road to Spartan perdition in Athenian eyes was more circuitous than Xenophon or Isocrates portray. Modern scholars equally view it as a quick and rational process. Yet the abandonment of the Theban alliance was one of hesitation, rather than visceral responses prompted by the outcome of the Battle of Leuktra (371). The estrangement stemmed from an emotional reaction to Prokles of Phlius' speech in a later meeting. A full year elapsed after the monumental battle before any sense of empathy for the Spartans entered the Athenian political realm: it was only triggered by the invasion of the Peloponnese under Epameinondas. Even then several months elapsed before an alliance was finalised.

According to Xenophon and Isocrates, both unfriendly to the Thebans, the seeds of antagonism were planted in 373 with Plataia's and Thespias' destruction. Previously, all Theban actions were deemed acceptable, since an attempt at Orchomenos in 375 bypassed serious condemnation.<sup>78</sup> Hence scholars have pointed to 373 as a breaking point in the relationship. The Athenians could not accept such blatant violations of their role as *prostates of autonomia* (Chapters 2.5, 3.3.3). Not too much faith should be placed in these words. Thebans continued to perform key functions in the Second Athenian Confederacy after the destruction of the Boiotian towns.<sup>79</sup> Xenophon wrote at a time of heightened tensions, making his anti-Theban bias more susceptible to exaggeration. He places this episode in a sequence of Theban hubris rendering them unfit to rule.<sup>80</sup> It leaves his

<sup>78</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.10.    <sup>79</sup> RO 29 l.15 (372 BCE).    <sup>80</sup> Pownall 2004.

countrymen out of a murky ethical predicament concerning their Theban allies and the fate of the Plataians and Thespians, who both had enjoyed fruitful relationships with the Athenians. The same applies to Isocrates. His claims come from the acerbic pamphlet *Plataicus*, which was probably never delivered in the Assembly, but rather circulated in private circles.<sup>81</sup> The speaker was supposed to be a Plataian. His viewpoint, while permeated with references recognisable to any Athenian, reflects a patently Plataian perspective.<sup>82</sup> Matteo Barbato argued the contents and tone of the speech do not fit with the discursive parameters of the Assembly but mix deliberative and forensic features.<sup>83</sup> There are few references to deliberative principles of advantage inserted into the speech. Instead, it is a moralistic piece focused on justice for the Plataians against Theban aggression. Pity and empathy for the unjustly expelled Plataians aside, the indignant outrage infused into Xenophon's and Isocrates' accounts had little effect on political decision-making.

The Athenians invited the Thebans to accompany them to the peace conference in 371:

Meanwhile the Athenians, seeing that the Plataians, who were their friends, had been expelled from Boiotia and had fled to them for refuge, and that the Thespians were beseeching them not to allow them to be left without a city, no longer commended the Thebans, but, on the contrary, while they were partly ashamed to make war upon them and partly reckoned it to be inexpedient, they nevertheless refused any longer to take part with them in what they were doing, inasmuch as they saw that they were campaigning against the Phocians, who were old friends of the Athenians, and were annihilating cities which had been faithful in the war against the barbarian and were friendly to Athens. For these reasons the Athenian people voted to make peace, and in the first place sent ambassadors to Thebes to invite the Thebans to go with them to Sparta to treat for peace if they so desired.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Papillon 2004: 218–19; Steinbock 2013: 198–200. Cartledge 2020: 195 says the pamphlet fell on willing ears in Athens, as can be gathered from the peace conference in 371, but that ignores the private capacity of the pamphlet.

<sup>82</sup> Isoc. 14.42: 'Therefore, let none of you shrink from taking on dangers when you do it with justice. And let none of you think that you will lack for allies, should you wish to give aid to all those who are unjustly treated and not just to the Thebans' (trans. T. Papillon). At 12.53, he recollects Adrastus' campaign against Thebes with Athenian help, but undermines the legitimacy of the campaign (Gotteland 2001: 202) and stresses that the Plataians are more deserving of help than the Argives were (Barbato 2020: 208).

<sup>83</sup> Barbato 2020: 207. <sup>84</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.1–2.

Modern scholars attribute the invitation to a fear of growing Theban power.<sup>85</sup> In my opinion, the Athenians wanted to include the Thebans in a treaty to maintain the alliance. This notion seeps through Xenophon's language. He acknowledges that the Athenians had no desire to declare war upon their neighbours. What's more, they were even partly *ashamed* of the possibility. This suggests the conscious move away from an alliance and pact was perceived as shameful for the Athenians. They stayed away from supporting Theban exploits on account of ancient friendships.<sup>86</sup> This was a middle way, rather than a stern departure. The invitation to attend the conference was intended to maintain the status quo, not as a ploy to handcuff the Thebans' fates to Athens or else feel its wrath.

The Athenian speeches delivered at the peace conference confirm that view. The first speaker, Kallias, a torch bearer in the Eleusinian Mystery cult, emphasised the desirability of Atheno-Spartan reconciliation, especially in the wake of Theban aggression.<sup>87</sup> It is easy to envision this proposal detrimentally influencing the Atheno-Theban alliance, but Kallias only refers to an end to hostilities between the warring parties because they hold similar views. He adds it would be weird for poleis with differing opinions to engage in war, let alone if they see eye to eye. Yet there is not a word of a future alliance or engagement contra the Thebans.<sup>88</sup> Kallias is followed by Autokles. He strikes a less congenial tone by airing his grievances over Spartan conduct and blames the war on their violations of *autonomia*. Their hypocrisy in accusing the Thebans of abrasive behaviour was uncouth and did not warrant a friendly Athenian reception.<sup>89</sup> Despite his sharp criticism, he does not defend the Thebans. Rather, Autokles exhibits an anti-Spartan perspective, as the focus on *autonomia* equally applied to the Thebans.<sup>90</sup> He demonstrates the fluidity of the term and offers an Athenian perspective to its implementation. Their view

<sup>85</sup> Buckler and Beck 2008: 43; Hornblower 2011: 255; Mackil 2013: 70. They adhere to Xenophon's words, but overlook his moralising tendencies.

<sup>86</sup> This Phocian friendship may have been a later adaptation: Franchi 2022.

<sup>87</sup> Xenophon introduces Kallias in a rather perfunctory manner and scathingly characterises him as 'a man who delighted in being praised no less by himself than by others'. This undercuts Kallias' claims concerning his political experience and importance: Tuplin 1993: 104–5 contra Gray 1992: 66 n. 19.

<sup>88</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.4–5. <sup>89</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.7–9.

<sup>90</sup> Adcock and Mosley 1975: 155 claim Autocles' speech is anti-Spartan and not pro-Theban. For the insistence on the *autonomia* clause: Gray 1989: 123–31. Plutarch adds a truculent clash between Agesilaos and Epameinondas. Epameinondas accused the Spartan king of a hollow stance on *autonomia*, stating the subjugation of the Laconian towns violated autonomy (Plut. *Ages.* 27.3–28.4; Paus. 9.13.2; Nep. *Epam.* 6.4). Rhodes 1999 discusses *autonomia* and its effect on the peace conference.

entails full external and internal freedom for each polis. Kallistratos delivers the final speech. He voices his concern over Theban conduct, shared by the Spartans, and insists on common interests, a recurring feature in the Assembly. Yet he follows that up by admonishing the Spartans to honour the *autonomia* clause, before reiterating the wish for friendship. There is again a hint of criticism, but no reference to a possible alliance.<sup>91</sup> Kallistratos is aware of Theban actions undermining their relationship with the Athenians.<sup>92</sup> But the only proposal on the table is peace. There is no talk of abandoning the Thebans nor of a pact against them. The mood was unfavourable but severing the alliance was not contemplated. The first indications of estrangement only beckoned in the aftermath of the conference.

The Thebans were excluded from the peace because of their insistence on swearing as the 'Boiotians', rather than themselves. This gave the Spartans the munition to enforce the *autonomia* clause, resulting in their eventful defeat at Leuktra. Prior to that battle, the Athenians were in an ideal situation. If the Spartans marched against the Thebans, the latter's expansionism in Boiotia could be curbed and they could be forced to accept the peace treaty (Chapter 2.5). In that scenario, the Thebans continued to be Athenian allies on favourable terms. A Theban victory was perhaps never envisioned. The stipulations of the treaty explain the Athenians' aloofness. Their participation in the pact negated any necessity to aid their allies.

The Theban response after Leuktra supports such a reading. From their perspective, the alliance was still intact. Diodorus adds that Theban families moved to Athens prior to the battle for safety.<sup>93</sup> In their message after the victory, they exclaimed their elation and desire to continue the fight, *with* Athenian help. The Spartan attack against a member of the Confederacy meant it was time to come to the Thebans' aid. Yet instead of a warm embrace, the garlanded messenger (ἄγγελον) received the cold shoulder. No courtesies were extended by the Athenians according to Xenophon. *Aggelon* often denotes a non-Greek messenger.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps he conspicuously wanted to undermine the respectability of the Theban messenger and acquit the Athenians of wrongdoing.<sup>95</sup> Such a hostile response, even if the victory was unwelcome news, would be remarkable and conflicts with the diplomatic norms. Perhaps it is Xenophon's way of emphasising the

<sup>91</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.10–17.

<sup>92</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.13: εὐδηλον ὅτι εἰ τῶν συμμάχων τινὲς οὐκ ἄρεστά πράττουσιν ἡμῖν ἢ ὑμῖν ἄρεστά.

<sup>93</sup> Diod. 15.52.1. <sup>94</sup> Adcock and Mosley 1975: 152.

<sup>95</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.20. Diod. 15.63.1 mentions nothing about it.

rising hostility towards Theban success in Athens, rather than a reflection of reality. The alliance, however, remained intact.

According to Polybius the Achaians attempted to arbitrate between the Spartans and Thebans, but negotiations broke down on a familiar theme: the status of the members of the Boiotian *koinon* and the Laconian *peroikic* towns.<sup>96</sup> The collapsed arbitration opened the door for the Athenians to proclaim their leading role over Greece with a Common Peace. This time the parties convened in Athens. In addition to solving the conundrum of handling the precarious situation that confronted them, it was also a valuable tool to assume the hegemonial role in Greece after Leuktra created a vacuum of leadership.<sup>97</sup> Everyone wishing to accept the previous treaty was invited to participate. All parties present accepted it, except the Eleans. The Thebans abstained from attending and were automatically excluded. They saw the writing on the wall and unrepentantly rejected any notion of signing as the Thebans. In the aftermath of the conference, they invaded the Peloponnese (370). After much deliberation and hesitation in the Athenian Assembly, this created the opening for a Spartan-Athenian rapprochement.<sup>98</sup>

It is within this context that Xenophon records speeches given by ambassadors of the Spartans and their allies, who were in Athens when the Assembly convened to discuss the political developments. These speeches, even if not recorded verbatim, reveal how the two former enemies reconciled (Chapter 3.2.2). On first glance, Spartan lamentations about injustice and defeat seemed futile. The collective of Arakos, Okyllos, Pharax, Etymokles and Olontheus rose up in the Assembly to present the Lacedaimonian perspective. Xenophon condenses their speeches into a brief summary, since they were saying similar things. Recollections of past benefits such as the expulsion of the Peisistratids, Athenian help against the Messenian revolt and their shared stance against the Persian invasion are alluded to throughout their speeches.<sup>99</sup> There is even talk of ‘tithing’ the Thebans, rekindling an ‘old’ promise stemming from the Persian Wars.<sup>100</sup> The boisterous expression had the opposite effect, however, as murmurs

<sup>96</sup> Polyb. 2.39.9; Str. 8.7.1 mention the arbitration. The historicity of this event is debated. Polybius may have fabricated it to boost Achaia’s status: Beck 1997: 60; Freitag 2009; Walbank 1957–79: I 226–7.

<sup>97</sup> Tuplin 1993: 157–62.

<sup>98</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 4.5.22–3; 33; Diod. 15.63.2–4. Tuplin 1993: 150 points out the Thebans are portrayed as passive followers rather than assertive actors to undercut their potential as hegemon.

<sup>99</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.33–4.

<sup>100</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.35: Ἐάν δὲ ὑμεῖς καὶ ἡμεῖς, ὦ ἄνδρες, ὁμονοήσωμεν, νῦν ἐλπίς τὸ πάλαι λεγόμενον δεκατεῦθ' ἡταιρῶν Ἰθαίων. This is an exaggeration and reflects the *Hellenica*’s time of conception, when such talk became fashionable, cf. Chapter 5.2.8.

spread through the Athenian audience recalling the Spartans' abrasive behaviour of years past. The situation was remedied when the ambassadors recalled how the Spartans prevented the Thebans' proposed destruction of Athens after the Peloponnesian War. Another set of arguments based on 'treaty and oath obligations' incurred a violent response. As Xenophon remarked, invoking the responsibilities the Athenians carried as guarantors of the peace was perhaps the longest (τὸ μέγιστον), but not the strongest (ὁ πλεῖστος λόγος) argument.<sup>101</sup> Some Athenians suggested the mess in which the Spartans found themselves was because *their* allies violated their oaths.<sup>102</sup> Aid for the beleaguered former hegemon was still illusory in large part due to the lack of Spartan envoys' understanding of the Assembly's discursive parameters.<sup>103</sup>

The mood of the audience swung when representatives of the Spartan allies spoke. Kleiteles of Corinth entreated the Athenians to help his countrymen. They were innocent victims having to endure the Thebans' unprovoked ravaging of their lands, a manifest violation of the oaths all parties had taken in 371 and which the Athenians had sworn to uphold. He implored the Athenians to rise up for his unjustly suffering countrymen, who were now feeling the repercussions of the Peace's breakdown:

While the Assembly itself was trying to determine these matters, Kleiteles, a Corinthian, arose and spoke as follows: 'Men of Athens, it is perhaps a disputed point who began the wrong-doing; but as for us, can anyone accuse us of having, at any time since peace was concluded, either made a campaign against any city, or taken anyone's property, or laid waste another's land? Yet, nevertheless, the Thebans have come into our country, and have cut down trees, and burned down houses, and seized property and cattle. If, therefore, you do not aid us, who are so manifestly wronged, will you not surely be acting in violation of your oaths? They were the same oaths, you remember, that you yourselves took care to have all of us swear to all of you.' Thereupon the Athenians shouted their approval, saying that Kleiteles had spoken to the point and fairly.<sup>104</sup>

Kleiteles only proved an intermediary, since the piece de résistance was delivered by Prokles from Phlius, a likely personal acquaintance of Xenophon.<sup>105</sup>

Men of Athens, it is clear to everyone, I imagine, that you are the first against whom the Thebans would march if the Lacedaimonians were got

<sup>101</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.34–7.      <sup>102</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.35–6.      <sup>103</sup> Barbato 2020: 69–75.

<sup>104</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.37.      <sup>105</sup> Both were Agesiلاس' *xenoi*: Cartledge 1987: 264.

out of the way; for they think that you are the only people in Greece who would stand in the way of their becoming rulers of the Greeks. If this is so, I, for my part, believe that if you undertake a campaign, you would not be giving aid to the Lacedaimonians so much as to your own selves. For to have the Thebans, who are unfriendly to you and dwell on your borders, become leaders of the Greeks, would prove much more grievous to you, I think, than when you had your antagonists far away. Furthermore, you would aid yourselves with more profit if you should do so while there are still people who would fight on your side, than if they should perish first and you should then be compelled to enter by yourselves upon a decisive struggle with the Thebans.<sup>106</sup>

His remarks focus on future Theban actions, whose proximity would inflict worse damages upon the Athenians than the Spartans could ever achieve. Helping the Spartans now would not be altruism, but a preventive measure with future advantages as it would press the Spartans into a dependent reciprocal relationship with the Athenians. The Athenians could benefit from their support against the Thebans should tensions rise and create a large front against the neighbours if necessary. Using this strategic cost-benefit analysis as a basis, Prokles continues to elaborate the benefits for his audience:

Now if any are fearful that in case the Lacedaimonians escape this time, they may again in the future cause you trouble, take thought of this, that it is not those whom one benefits, but those whom one injures, of whom one has to fear that they may someday attain great power. And you should bear in mind this likewise, that it is meet both for individuals and for states to acquire a goodly store in the days when they are strongest, in order that, if some day they become powerless, they may draw upon their previous labours for succour. So to you has now been offered by some god an opportunity, in case you aid the Lacedaimonians in their need, of acquiring them for all time as friends who will plead no excuses. For it is not in the presence of only a few witnesses, as it seems to me, that they would now receive benefit at your hands, but the gods will know of this, who see all things both now and for ever, and both your allies and your enemies know also what is taking place, and the whole world of Greeks and barbarians besides. For to none of them all is it a matter of indifference. Therefore, if the Lacedaimonians should show themselves shameful in their dealings with you, who would ever again become devoted to them?<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.98–9.      <sup>107</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.40–2.



Providing aid to the beleaguered Spartans therefore enhances the Athenian reputation throughout the Greek world and indebts the Spartans quasi-permanently, ensuring their compliance with Athenian wishes in the future since their fates would be attached to the norms of reciprocity. Should they forego their obligations, the repercussions would be in the Athenians' favour: renegeing on these promises would not only incur divine wrath, but also leave the Spartans isolated and less of a danger. Prokles then recalls past common exploits as examples of Spartan trustworthiness, such as the stand against the Persians, in contrast to the Thebans. He meanders into the Athenian reputation of lore: one of *philanthropia*, or helping others out of sense of justice without expecting a reward.<sup>108</sup> He alludes to his hosts' devotion to justice, as exemplified by two mythological precedents:

In former days, men of Athens, I used from hearsay to admire this state of yours, for I heard that all who were wronged and all who were fearful fled hither for refuge, and here found assistance; now I no longer hear, but with my own eyes at this moment see the Lacedaimonians, those most famous men, and their most loyal friends appearing in your state and in their turn requesting you to assist them. I see also the Thebans, who then did not succeed in persuading the Lacedaimonians to enslave you, now requesting you to allow those who saved you to perish. 'It is truly a noble deed that is told of your ancestors, when they did not suffer those Argives who died at the Cadmeia to go unburied; but you would achieve a far nobler deed if you did not suffer those Lacedaimonians who still live either to incur insult or to perish. And while that other deed was also noble, when you checked the insolence of Eurystheus and preserved the sons of Herakles, would it not surely be an even nobler one if you saved from perishing, not merely the founders, but the whole state as well? And noblest of all deeds if, after the Lacedaimonians saved you then by a vote, void of danger, you shall aid them now with arms and at the risk of your lives. Again, when even we, who by word urge you to aid brave men, are proud of doing so, it would manifestly be generous of you, who are able to aid by act, if, after being many times both friends and enemies of the Lacedaimonians, you should recall, not the harm you have suffered at their hands, but rather the favours which you have, received, and should render them requital, not in behalf of yourselves alone, but also in behalf of all Greece, because in her behalf they proved themselves brave men.'<sup>109</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.43–4.      <sup>109</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.45–8.

These acts of benevolence could now be emulated or eclipsed by helping the Spartans against the insolent Thebans. Prokles adds a distinct Panhellenic touch by implying the Athenians would be helping all of *Hellas*, not just the Spartans.<sup>110</sup> Perhaps this supports Leptines' alleged remark that 'he would not stand by and see Greece deprived of one of her eyes'.<sup>111</sup> After these exhortations the Athenians voted to aid the Spartans in full force, sending Iphikrates around the Peloponnese to divert the Thebans. The campaign was intended to signal support, as Iphikrates merely danced around the Boiotian army in the Peloponnese, instead of confronting it.<sup>112</sup> An alliance, however, had not yet been concluded.

According to Xenophon, the Athenians were unwilling to listen to any pro-Theban speakers. But this reflects his tendency to omit speeches advocating policies that were not followed.<sup>113</sup> There are references to speakers, such as Xenokleides, aiming to thwart any rapprochement with the Spartans.<sup>114</sup> Nor does Xenophon mention the heavy support of the influential politician Kallistratos, instrumental in pushing the pro-Spartan agenda.<sup>115</sup> Xenophon likely condenses the debate that followed Prokles' speech, in which both sides would have been heard before a decision was made.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, the Athenians were not as strong in their support. There were issues over the exact terms of the alliance. The Athenians were unwilling to submit to Spartan hegemony on land in exchange for their own leadership over naval affairs. It would be akin to leading their slaves, whereas the Spartans would lead full citizens, as one speaker notices.<sup>117</sup> As a compromise, they agreed to a rotational scheme, with an alternating leadership of land and naval military affairs. Their insistence on this condition shows the alliance was not a foregone conclusion, especially considering the 'strategic sacrifices' the Athenians had to make.

The question remains why the Athenians took the decision now.<sup>118</sup> Some of their allies were concerned about sacrificing a successful

<sup>110</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.38–48. Baragwanath 2012 believes Prokles' speeches were fabricated by Xenophon.

<sup>111</sup> Arist. *Rh.* 3.10.1411a2–3; MacDowell 2000: 235.

<sup>112</sup> Buckler 1978; Pritchett 1974–91: II 17 question the tradition of a trial for the Boiotian generals who invaded the Peloponnese.

<sup>113</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.49; Buckler and Beck 2008. <sup>114</sup> [Dem.] 59.26–7.

<sup>115</sup> At the time of the Cadmeia's occupation, Kallistratos was an avid supporter of the Thebans against Sparta: Hochschulz 2007; Sealey 1956. He was later exiled from Athens for his role in the Theban occupation of Oropos: Chapter 4.1.2.

<sup>116</sup> Canevaro 2018. <sup>117</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.1–14.

<sup>118</sup> As Buckler 2003: 310 characterises the decision: '[This] policy was short-sighted, wasteful, and potentially dangerous, and from it Athens gained nothing but regrets.'

collaboration to help a defeated nemesis on the verge of a breakdown. This becomes clear from an inscription detailing three decrees for the people of Mytilene. The decree concerns an affirmation of Mytilenean loyalty and their role in the anti-Spartan alliance. The decree is unfortunately broken off (l. 49) at a point where the explanation for this decree would begin. Parts 1 and 2 refer to subsequent embassies sent from Mytilene to the Athenians after the latter's receptive response to their worries, but decree 3 is of more concern here:

8

The Council and the People decided. Diophantos proposed: concerning what the ambassadors who have come from Lesbos say.

**Decree 3**

35 In the archonship of Lysistratos (369/8). The Council and the People decided. Kallistratos proposed: to praise the People of Mytilene because they fought together through the war which is over well and enthusiastically.

40 And reply to the ambassadors who have come that the Athenians fought for [the freedom] of the Greeks; and when [the Spartans] were campaigning against the Greeks contrary to the oaths and the

45 agreement, they themselves supported, and they called on the other allies to provide the support due to the Athenians, abiding by the oaths, against those who were [contravening] the treaty, and they think it right. (trans. S. Lambert and P. J. Rhodes)<sup>119</sup>

The dismay over allying with the Spartans, precisely those enemies the Second Athenian Confederacy was meant to combat, was probably more widespread than our (Athenian) sources reveal. It is not necessarily an expression of sympathy towards the Thebans, but the abandonment of a member of that pact for an alliance with the 'sworn enemy' of the Confederacy was certainly striking. Perhaps this ties in to the 'shame' Xenophon speaks of, when discussing the Athenian decision to no longer view the Thebans in a positive light.

Additionally, if fears over growing Theban power were pressing, the change in alignment would have occurred in 371, or even in 373 after Plataia and Thespiiai were subjugated. Realist discourse habitually dominates the interpretations of the Spartan-Athenian alliance. Fears over growing Theban power were the overriding motive for the rapprochement,

<sup>119</sup> RO 31; *AIO ad loc.* The Mytileneans were seemingly unsatisfied with Athenian explanations. The anti-Spartan lines of the Prospectus (RO 22 ll. 9–12) were never deleted, unlike the lines on the King's Peace (ll. 12–15).

despite the fact that none of the aggression was aimed at the Athenians.<sup>120</sup> Yet the Spartan envoys make no mention of this, nor is it the key aspect of Prokles' speech.<sup>121</sup> It is the evocation of the Athenian love for justice and protection of the weak that triggers the vote, framed within the context of future benefits for the Athenian people.

However, Prokles does not deviate from the Spartan arguments that much. He repeats the past collaborations between Spartans and Athenians, but he uses these exempla to gradually mould his speech to convince the Athenians to engage in an advantageous commitment of *charis* with the Spartans. Prokles thus cleverly adheres to the Assembly's discursive parameters by placing the future advantages from this policy at the forefront of his speech.<sup>122</sup> Appeals to future benefits that align with the Athenian self-identification as protectors of the weak (*philanthropia*) and their bravery makes this explicit: whereas the Spartans needed only to vote to save Athens, the Athenians have to risk their lives to do the same for their former benefactors. The speaker thus does not need to emphasise Theban *hybris* in this exhortation. He can simply focus on the Athenian perspective on the upcoming clash.

The alliance of 369 ended the neighbourly collaboration, but was not the result of an inexorable clash between inveterate enemies. Rather, Athenian desires to act as just guardians of the peace and protectors of other poleis proved instrumental in shifting their allegiance towards the Spartans. The potential benefits for the polis were another factor. That does not exculpate the Thebans from any wrongdoing, nor are the Athenians solely to blame. The Athenians proved rather helpless in stopping Epameinondas from gutting Spartan power in the Peloponnese, perhaps demonstrating their lack of enthusiasm to fully commit to the Spartans' defence. Their change in alliance proved more harmful than helpful, leading to the loss of Oropos in 366 that eventually cost Kallistratos his place as a leading Athenian politician.<sup>123</sup> It is a testimony to the continued ambivalence towards the

<sup>120</sup> Buckler and Beck 2008: 43: 'At the real heart of the matter, however, is that Athens and Sparta had come to fear Thebes more than they did each other'; Cartledge 2020 (on the peace of 375): 'The three main Greek parties concerned – Sparta, Athens and Thebes – all had their own reasons for agreeing to a cessation of hostilities; the Spartans and the Athenians mainly because Thebes's post-378 resurgence had been alarmingly too swift and too complete.' He adds a Theban takeover of Oropos in 373, but there is no evidence for this: Chapter 4.1.2. Hornblower 2011: 255: 'Nevertheless the chief Athenian anxiety continued to be Thebes'; Mackil 2013: 70.

<sup>121</sup> Steinbock 2013: 198–201, 328–30 makes a similar argument against 'fear' and realism.

<sup>122</sup> For the parameters: Barbato 2020.

<sup>123</sup> Xenophon omits it but refers to the loss of Oropos: Xen. *Hell.* 7.4.1.

new political constellation and shows that anti-Spartans and pro-Boiotians could always be found in Athens.

That the hostility towards the Boiotians would devolve into a cold war after the Battle of Mantinea best embodies the idiosyncratic relationship between the neighbours, rather than a status quo of distrust and hatred. The farewell to friendly neighbourship was the result of a rise of anxiety over Theban actions, but was sealed only several years after by evocations of the Athenian past as *philanthropoi*. That the decisive speech was delivered by a Spartan ally, instead of a Spartan ambassador, further underlines how the 'Auld Alliance' of 369 aimed at protecting the weaker Spartan allies because of the role of *prostates* the Athenians had adjudged themselves after the Peace Conference of 371. Its eventual purpose was to take a leading role in Greek affairs, wishfully bypassing the leading power at that time, Thebes (Chapter 2.6). Similar to the example of the Plataian alliance described above, the decision to go to war with the neighbours was not a natural outcome but the result of an innate Athenian desire to avoid war with the Thebans while at the same time curbing their ambitions, much to the detriment of their existing alliance. It was akin to having their cake and eating it too.

### 3.2 Friends in the Right Places: Elite Interaction, *xenia* Ties and Reciprocity

Leading politicians in the two regions distinctly influenced the neighbourly relations on various occasions. The Peisistratids, for instance, enjoyed a friendship with their Theban compatriots, which ensured a peaceful co-existence. (Chapter 2.1). The change in leadership in Thebes after the Peloponnesian War led to a rapprochement between the erstwhile enemies (Chapters 2.5, 3.2.2). Conversely, the pro-Spartan intentions of Leontiades and his group created a situation in which the neighbours were perceived as enemies of the *koinon* (Chapters 2.4, 2.5, 3.2.3). The attitudes of elites and the mechanisms to change either attitudes or leadership thus merit analysis. These elites did not function in a vacuum and they were not the only factors altering relations. Instead, this section shows how these elites could give the final push to influence neighbourly relations, either positively or negatively.

What were the mechanisms for elite interaction? One way to maintain ties was through guest-friendship (*xenia*). These were often unofficial elite people and their personal relations engaging in a reciprocal friendship.

Sometimes these connections were elevated to officialdom as *proxenos*, where citizens acted as representatives of the interests of other poleis within their home town.<sup>124</sup> These representatives could speak or act on behalf of the granting community with hopes of improving relations. Most of these ties were founded upon the concept of reciprocity, with elites exchanging favours and courtesies, just as in inter-polis affairs (Chapter 3.3). Military intervention was a more forceful way to influence matters. The Boiotians were no stranger to being on the receiving end of external interventions. Both the Spartans and Athenians were guilty of such interference on numerous occasions (Chapter 3.2.3). Their willingness to invest time, money and manpower to effectuate a change in Boiotian leadership reveals the strategic importance of the region throughout the Classical period.

The evidence for some of these interactions may be slim and thus should not be overstated. What this analysis demonstrates is how *xenia* ties could have played a role in inter-polis relations as an additional factor to other considerations. In the case of the stasis in mid-fifth-century Boiotia, for instance, strategic interests were likely the primary factor for intervention after the Battle of Tanagra (Chapters 2.4, 3.2.3). Yet the appeal of Boiotian exiles in Athens may have convinced the *demos* to act quickly. Sometimes an unfriendly disposition towards the Spartans helped elites to promote the interests of the neighbour, as the cases of Themistocles and Ismenias demonstrate (Chapters 3.2.1, 3.2.2). Personal ties were therefore useful mechanisms for improving relations, but elite manoeuvrings were just as often dictated by self-interested motives, such as improving one's standing within the community.

### 3.2.1 *Athenians and Boiotians after the Persian Wars*

The decades after the Persian Wars of 480/79 remain enigmatic with regard to neighbourly relations. Scholars point out that the previous animosity continued after Xerxes' withdrawal. The lack of references to conflict suggests otherwise. The presence of veterans who understood the complicated nature of the war and the choices made, including the initial resistance by segments of Boiotian society, allowed for a persisting, nuanced picture of the conflict. This prevented the telescoping of events into a narrower narrative in the decades following Xerxes' invasion (Chapters 2.3, 5.2.3).<sup>125</sup> Segments of Athenian society could still develop a pejorative image of the Thebans and others but this constituted only *one*

<sup>124</sup> Herman 1987; Mack 2015; Mitchell 1997. <sup>125</sup> Steinbock 2013: 116–17.

picture of the Persian Wars. This alerts us to the dangers of assuming a monolithic picture of malleable conceptions such as memory and attitudes. The experience of veterans allowed the complexities of this recent past to persist in their political outlook. This mitigated the influence of 'revanchist' notions towards the Boiotians, in both sentiment and politics.

One of these veterans was Themistocles, a leading figure in Athenian politics after the war. His actions in the Delphic Amphictyony reflect his quasi-sympathetic attitude, mentioned by Plutarch in his *Life of Themistocles*. Themistocles opposed the Spartans' wishes to exclude the Boiotians and other medizers from the Delphic Amphictyony on account of their collaboration with the Persians:

At the Amphictyonic Council, the Lacedaimonians introduced motions that all cities be excluded from the Alliance which had not taken part in fighting against the Mede. So Themistocles, fearing lest, if they should succeed in excluding the Thessalians and the Argives and the Thebans too from the Council, they would control the votes completely and carry through their own wishes, spoke in behalf of the protesting cities, and changed the sentiments of the delegates by showing that only thirty-one cities had taken part in the war, and that the most of these were altogether small; it would be intolerable, then, if the rest of Hellas should be excluded and the convention be at the mercy of the two or three largest poleis. It was for this reason particularly that he became obnoxious to the Lacedaimonians, and they therefore tried to advance Cimon in public favour, making him the political rival of Themistocles.<sup>126</sup>

The Athenian leader refutes this proposal, since the decision would exclude a great number of members from this influential Council. It would transform the Amphictyony into a vehicle of two powers, rather than serve its actual purpose. Themistocles' intention here was to prevent the Spartans from taking over the Amphictyonic Council to acquire power and prestige. His protection of the Boiotians therefore was not predicated on his previous relationship with them. The realisation of Spartan designs moved his sympathies elsewhere. The final remark by Plutarch is relevant here and serves as a reminder of the influence a popular leader could have. The Spartan desire to promote Cimon shows that other poleis were keen to influence opinions elsewhere, and perhaps we can envision the Boiotians eager to back Themistocles in light of his recent support. Their *proxenoi* in Athens could have been helpful.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Plut. *Them.* 20.3–4. On its influence: Hornblower 2010: 55–8.

<sup>127</sup> Kilinski 2003–9 describes a contemporary grave of a possible Athenian proxenos of a Boiotian polis, judging from a grave gift on top his grave depicting a Boiotian kantharos. Zaccharini

Considering the source we are dealing with, some caution is merited. Plutarch is a noted Boiotian apologist, writing many centuries after the events. His work is permeated with the fourth-century Panhellenist traditions that continued to influence Greek thinking throughout antiquity. Another warning sign is that this is an encomium of the Athenian leader. Thus we may be dealing with a retrojection of Panhellenic fervour, in which Themistocles acted on behalf of his fellow Greeks in the interest of *all of Hellas*, rather than just his polis.

Yet other examples corroborate Themistocles' behaviour towards the Spartans.<sup>128</sup> He had proven himself more reluctant to comply with their wishes shortly after the war, when they requested that Athens remained unwallled. Themistocles responded by postponing a reply until a defensible wall was built to present the Spartans with a *fait accompli*.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, the Spartans were keen to expand their influence in the Amphictyony. One example is the Thessalian expedition under Leotychides after the Persian Wars to end Aleud rule in the region because of their 'medism'.<sup>130</sup> The short-lived nature of Hellenic League against the Persians as Spartan and Athenian interests rapidly diverged after the war added further fuel.<sup>131</sup> Plutarch's account might therefore be more veracious than normally assumed.

Allowing the Spartans to pursue their plans would increase their influence in the Delphic Amphictyony and Central Greece, a troubling prospect for the Athenians. The Spartans possessed a proxy vote through the Dorians of the Metropolis, but they aimed to expand their influence at the expense of other groups by obtaining a vote allocated to their polis, rather than a kinship group.<sup>132</sup> One possible motivation was a desire to

2011: 287–8 doubts whether the Spartans could influence Athenian politics by promoting Cimon, but admits they could use their *philoï* or use Spartan families with Athenian connections and promote Cimon through their *xenoi*.

<sup>128</sup> Sanchez 2001: 98–103 is the strongest opponent. But see Hornblower 2010: 56: 'Some moderns disbelieve this, fancying in their modest way they know more about Delphi than did Plutarch, a Delphic expert, an amphiktionic representative of Boiotia, and an attested *epimelete* and *agonothete*.' Plutarch draws heavily on Thucydides and Herodotus for his *Life of Themistocles*, making the similarity perhaps less suspect. He relies on lost material, which may have related to this issue: Frost 1980: 3–59; Piccirilli 1983: xl–xliii.

<sup>129</sup> Thuc. 1.90–2; Diod. 9.39.

<sup>130</sup> Hdt. 6.72; Paus. 3.7.9; Plut. *De Her. Mal.* 859d; Hornblower 2011: 103. The Athenian alliance with the Thessalians in 461 (Thuc. 1.102) fits with curbing Spartan expansion within the Amphictyony.

<sup>131</sup> Yates 2015.

<sup>132</sup> Daux 1957: 95–120; Lefèvre 1988: 53; Sanchez 2001; Hornblower 2010: 23–54. Paus. 10.8.2–5 speaks of Lacedaimonian involvement in the sanctuary; Aeschin. 2.116 refers to



restore their reduced prestige in the wake of the Delian League's expulsion of Spartan leadership.<sup>133</sup>

Herodotus echoes the idea of Athenian protection for medizing poleis against Spartan interests. He relates how the Peloponnesian leaders conceived of a plan to resettle the Ionians in the centres of medizing people and expel the medizers to spend their lives in servitude to the Persian King. But the Athenians resolutely rebuked the plan. Herodotus' work is filled with wholesale transfers of populations, but the case of Ionia is significant. It serves as a middle ground between the Athenians and Persians and is deeply embedded in the contemporary setting in which Herodotus' work was created.<sup>134</sup> There are hints of contemporary Athenian-Ionian ideology at work here. Yet the creation of such an imaginary scheme indicates that in Athenian eyes, the Spartans were set on punishing the medizers.<sup>135</sup> Herodotus explains that the Athenian resistance to the plan is based on their sympathy for the Ionians, who were originally their colonists and should be excluded from Spartan decision-making. Strategic interests could have mattered too. Like the Ionians, the Boiotians were of strategic importance. Some had committed to the defence of Central Greece and Attica, contrary to the Spartans, even if Boiotian contributions would be ignored later (Chapter 4.3).<sup>136</sup>

The entanglement between Athenians and Boiotians continued after the war. The Athenians got involved in the reconstruction of Thespiiai. The town had lost a significant portion of their population. After the withdrawal of the Persians, several members of the Greek alliance committed manpower and money to repopulate it. With these people came cults and institutions, whose footprints were still found in later times.<sup>137</sup> Allegedly one enthusiastic sponsor of the rebuilding plans was Themistocles. According to Herodotus, he enrolled his former slave Sikinnos as a citizen of Thespiiai when they were adopting citizens. Themistocles made him wealthy, suggesting Sikinnos could have become an influential citizen.<sup>138</sup>

Lacedaimonian delegates in the Council. He refers to delegates that are part of the 'Dorian vote', not a Spartan vote.

<sup>133</sup> If the date 479/8 is correct: Flacelière 1953: 19–28.

<sup>134</sup> Hdt. 9.106; Flower and Marincola 2002: *ad loc.* If Tausend 1992: 27 correctly assigns an originally Ionian population to Boiotia, this protection of 'Ionians' adds importance to Athenian interference on their behalf. The Poseidon Helikonios cult may be a remnant of these ties: COB II 206–7.

<sup>135</sup> Sanchez 2001: 100 rejects any historicity.

<sup>136</sup> Queyrel-Bottineau 2014b reviews how the Athenians chastised the Spartans throughout the Classical period for their withdrawal to the Peloponnese.

<sup>137</sup> Roesch 1965: 238–41; Schachter 1996; Schachter and Marchand 2012. <sup>138</sup> Hdt. 8.75.

Under Themistocles' leadership we can therefore detect a more benign attitude towards the Boiotians. This attitude was the mostly the result of the Spartan-Athenian estrangement. Nevertheless, he wielded great political clout in Athens, enough to convince the demos to protect the medizing poleis, rather than punish them.<sup>139</sup>

Although Themistocles was influential, he had to rely on supporters and allies in the Assembly. It is here that other elite interactions between the two regions come into play. A recent inscription found at the Herakleion in Thebes, tentatively dated to 500–450 but most likely 500–475, describes honours granted to one or more men and their descendants:<sup>140</sup>

[- - - - - ]τῶε Ἄριστ-  
 [- - - - - ]τῶε Ἄθανα-  
 [- - - - - κ]αί παιδε-  
 4 [σσι- - - - ]ΤΕΓΟΑΝ:α  
 [- - - - - ]πρροπραχ-  
 [σίαν - - - ] ἔδον α-  
 [- - - ] Θ[ε]βαῖος υ  
 8 [- - - ]αδδαβοιοισταρχίω-↑ντος

The inscription is too fragmentary to provide any conclusive evidence, but the awardee was possibly Athenian, if the ending of line 2 is an indication: [- - - - - ]τῶε Ἄθανα (*toe Athana*). The awarding community is unknown but can be guessed at. The language contains hints of Tanagran dialect, found in contemporary inscriptions, making its provenance from that polis quite likely. A *boiotarch* (αδδαβοιοισταρχιοντος) from Thebes is mentioned, suggesting that the issuing body concerned a supra-polis polity.<sup>141</sup> That means this could be a Tanagraian *proxeny* award for an Athenian, validated by the Boiotian *koinon*. Whereas relations with the Plataians and Thespians could be viewed as a natural extension of their participation on the side of the Hellenic League, the same cannot be said of Tanagra. Yet this decree demonstrates that Boiotian sympathisers could be found in Athens. The Persian Wars did not erase that sentiment. The involvement of a polis *and* supra-polis entity shows the friendly interactions were approved on a level above that of personal ties, with the *koinon* interested in cultivating friendly ties with Athenians.

<sup>139</sup> Hdt. 8.110; 112; 123–5; Forsdyke 2005: 177.

<sup>140</sup> SEG 60.509. Aravantinos 2014: 202; Schachter 2016a: 53 n. 8 dates it to 500–475; BE 2012 no. 200.

<sup>141</sup> Aravantinos 2014.

In addition to this unknown *proxenos*, a more famous son of Athens appears to have sympathised with his Boiotian peers. An ostrakon from the Athenian agora, dated to 480–470, indicts Megakles of the Alcmeonid clan.<sup>142</sup> A vote for his ostracism is unremarkable – he was ostracised two times – but the grounds for doing so are salient in this case: ‘on account of Drymos’ (δρυμὸν ἠδὲνεκᾶ).<sup>143</sup> This economically important area was located on the Attic frontier (Chapter 4.1.1).<sup>144</sup> Angelos Matthaïou interpreted this as a vilification of the Athenian politician because the area was lost to the Boiotians under his leadership, but Mark Munn has provided a different explanation.<sup>145</sup> In his interpretation, Megakles was indicted because of his constructive attitude towards the Boiotians. He preferred to maintain Drymos as a prerogative of his aristocratic peers, rather than pursue the interests of the Athenian city-dwellers by appropriating the lands for the *demos*. Whether this was a case of elite versus the masses – which I find less likely – as opposed to a borderland mentality versus the city-dwellers, the willingness of some Athenians to oust Megakles should not be regarded as inherent hostility towards the Boiotians.<sup>146</sup> They were unsuccessful, as Megakles’ ostracisms were related to different interests, such as his love of horses, money and adultery.<sup>147</sup> In the eyes of those scribbling his name on an ostrakon the impetus for implicating Megakles had to do with his preferences to put personal interests before that of the polis. This could have been an intra-elite reckoning, with others vying to topple an influential politician unafraid to entertain cordial relations with Boiotian peers in the borderlands. The exact nature of this indictment must remain speculative, yet neighbourly animosity does not appear to be the cause. Instead, the appearance of Megakles on ostraca was the consequence of internal rivalries.<sup>148</sup> The Boiotians could thus find friends in the upper echelons of Athenian society. Megakles’ actions may have been motivated by his

<sup>142</sup> SEG 46.82.

<sup>143</sup> Lewis 1997: 110–15. He dates this ostrakon to Megakles’ second ostracism (Lys. 14.39). For Drymos’ location: Schachter 2016a: 80–112.

<sup>144</sup> Berti 2001: 59–60.

<sup>145</sup> Matthaïou 1992–8; Munn 2010: 197. Fachard 2017 argues the commonalities of Athenian and Boiotian elites in the borders in comparison to their city-dwelling countrymen led to a form of inequality in the borderlands.

<sup>146</sup> Barbato 2020 on the strength of *astu* versus border over mass versus elite.

<sup>147</sup> Forsdyke 2005: 155–6.

<sup>148</sup> That applies to his second ostracism in 471/0 (Forsdyke 2005: 176). She ponders whether the rival aristocratic group was led by Themistocles, but I would think their outlook towards Central Greece would counter that notion. Relatives of Megakles were mentioned in the ostraca, indicating the Alcmeonids were certainly targeted.

personal relations with his peers across the political divide. His actions reveal the Alcmeonid connections with the Boiotians (Chapter 5.2.1) may have persisted for over seventy years.

A string of Athenian leaders friendly to the Boiotians, such as Themistocles and Megakles, countenanced a friendly neighbourly co-existence in the 470s. Their motives were varied. Themistocles aimed to thwart the Spartans and their political ambition; Megakles' conviviality was based on shared experiences and common pastures. Their efforts underline the importance of friendly leadership to promoting a benign neighbourly relationship. The next example perhaps best embodies that seminal aspect. The rapprochement in 395 followed a devastating war that ended with the proposed destruction of Athens by the Thebans.

### 3.2.2 *Thrasybulus, Ismenias and the Atticizers in Thebes*

The need for the right kind of leadership to promote reconciliation between former enemies emerges most prominently after the Peloponnesian War. War is atrophy and the unedifying aspects of its horrendous nature came to the fore in this conflict. This particularly applies to the Athenian-Boiotian experience. From the invasion around Tanagra to the clash at Delion, the war brought intensified mutual hostility. That enmity was propelled to greater heights after the massacre at Mykalessos and the depredations the Athenians suffered from the Boiotian plundering and raiding from Dekeleia. It culminated in the Theban proposal to eradicate Athens, to prevent the city turning into a Spartan bulwark against the Boiotians (Chapter 2.4).

Yet within mere months after this proposal the Thebans were helping Athenian refugees reclaim their city from a pro-Spartan oligarchy. Their aid defied Spartan wishes for extradition. Cracks had started to appear in the pro-Spartan veneer of Boiotian leadership. Their dismissal of Spartan wishes was nevertheless a further step in the deterioration of the relationship and cannot solely account for their indifference. What lay behind this change of heart? The Oxyrhynchus historian offers a glimpse.<sup>149</sup> He describes the situation in Thebes in 395:

The political situation was this: the party of Leontiades were pro-Spartan [oligarchs], and the party of Ismenias were known as [populist] atticizers

<sup>149</sup> The historian was aware of the internal political dynamics of both Athens and Thebes: Occhipinti 2016; Schepens 2001: 223–4; Shrimpton 1991: 195. One dissident is Bleckmann 2006: 58–9. He regards references to Theban internal politics as a façade.

because of the keen support they had offered the exiled Athenian democrats – not that they actually cared about the Athenians, of course. In reality their aim was to disrupt the peace; and it was when they could not persuade the Thebans [to go along with them] that they became an atticizing party with the idea that it would be a better way of making them willing to do mischief. That being the situation in Thebes, and each of the parties now being firmly formed, many people came forward from the cities in Boiotia and joined one or other of the *hetairaia*. At that time and even a short while before, those around Ismenias and Androkleidas were dominant among the Thebans themselves and in the council of the Boiotians, but previously those around Asias and Leontiades held sway over the city through persuasion for some length of time.<sup>150</sup>

Leadership in Thebes and the *koinon* had undergone profound changes in a short period of time. The plight of the exiles played second fiddle to considerations of internal politics. It seems perfectly plausible to assume Ismenias and his group were behind the exiles' decree and the antagonism towards the Spartans, even if the exact moment of their ascension to power is uncertain.<sup>151</sup> Their method for convincing the populace and the federal council was not through obscurantism: help for the Athenians was never hidden. Instead, Ismenias obtained his influence by appealing to the Theban self-image to help the Athenians (Chapters 3.4.1, 5.2.7).

Ismenias and his followers were not inherently pro-Athenian, as the Oxyrhynchus historian points out. The stars were perfectly aligned for Ismenias to nourish anti-Spartan sentiment. Conflicts over the distribution of the booty from Dekeleia fed into the discontent, while Spartan expansionism in Central Greece and Macedonia was perceived with weary eyes. The implicit reference to Theban medism when preventing the eradication of Athens in 404 was another sign on the wall (Chapter 2.4).<sup>152</sup> Repeated Spartan attempts to intervene in Theban internal affairs fostered resentment in the polis and the region, as alluded to by Isocrates.<sup>153</sup> Helping the

<sup>150</sup> Hell. Oxy. 20.1–2 (Behrwald). This follows Beresford 2014's translation and new reading of the papyri.

<sup>151</sup> The year 404 is the consensual *termine ante quem* for their ascension: Busolt 1908; Cloché 1918; Funke 1980: 47–8; Kagan 1961: 330–2; Lendon 1989; Lérida Lafarga 2007: 613–15; Mackil 2013: 45. I adhere to the term 'group', contra Bearzot 2009, who argues for 'political parties' following set ideologically determined domestic and foreign policies, rather than individual ties.

<sup>152</sup> Booty and destruction, Athens: Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.19–20; 3.5.5; Plut. *Lys.* 27. Spartan expansionism: Cartledge 1987: 283. For humanitarian reasons, like the brutality of the Thirty regime in Athens: Hamilton 1979: 150.

<sup>153</sup> Isoc. 8.98: 'the Lacedaimonians no sooner gained the supremacy than they straightway plotted against the Thebans'. In the Loeb edition, this has been perceived as the capture of the Cadmeia in 380s, but this probably refers to the end of the Peloponnesian War.

Athenians thus served a dual purpose: it garnered clout with the Theban populace and communicated a clear independent course from the Spartans.

In subsequent years tensions within the Peloponnesian League increased. War clouds were gathering over Greece and disputes over pastures around Delphi granted the Boiotians the opportunity to escalate tensions (Chapter 2.5). The Spartans wasted no time. They gathered an army to subdue the Boiotians, who, alarmed by that prospect, immediately sent an ambassador to Athens to arrange an alliance. Xenophon provides an epitome of the ambassadors' speech.<sup>154</sup> The historicity of the speech is doubted, because of the positive evaluation of Athens. According to John Buckler and Vivienne Gray this betrays his subjectivity, and they consider it a fabrication.<sup>155</sup> Its encomiastic qualities are undeniable, but Andocides references a Theban speech in 395, making its occurrence at least credible.<sup>156</sup> Others believe the speech happened, but Xenophon was flexible with his notary skills, keeping only elements that flattered the Athenian crowd.<sup>157</sup> Flattery was not unusual in diplomacy, so perhaps he was not as creative as scholars have assumed.<sup>158</sup> The speech can be regarded as having taken place, whether the historian copied its words exactly or not.

Looking at the speech itself, the first oratorical attack involved a plethora of rational arguments, stressing the benefits of an alliance. The ambassador emphasises the Boiotians would prove far more valuable allies to the Athenians than they were to the Spartans.<sup>159</sup> He then flatters his audience on account of their reputation as protectors of the weak and liberators of oppressed peoples. Next, he recalls the help for the Athenians, demonstrating that the support for the exiles was not predicated on pure altruism:

But when the Lacedaimonians summoned us to the attack upon Piraeus, then the whole polis voted not to join them in the campaign. Therefore, since it is chiefly on your account that the Lacedaimonians are angry with us, we think it is fair that you should aid our polis. And we consider it in a far greater degree incumbent upon all those among you who belonged to the exiled democrats that you should zealously take the field against the Lacedaimonians. For the Lacedaimonians, after establishing you as an oligarchy and making you objects of hatred to the commons, came with a

<sup>154</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.8–15.

<sup>155</sup> Bearzot 2004: 21–30; Buckler and Beck 2008: 58; Gray 1989: 107–12; Schepens 2012. Tuplin 1993: 61 offers a more stringent rebuttal of questions of fabrication.

<sup>156</sup> And. 3.24. This speech is haunted by the spectre of unauthenticity: Chapter 3.4.2.

<sup>157</sup> Dalfen 1976; Seager 1967; Sordi 1950; 1951. <sup>158</sup> Orsi 2002.

<sup>159</sup> Cartledge 1987: 289–93; Hamilton 1979: 201–5; Tuplin 1993: 63 identified these aspects of the speech as *the* convincing elements to conclude the alliance.

great force, ostensibly as your allies, and delivered you over to the democrats. Consequently, in so far as it depended upon them, you would certainly have perished, but the commons here saved you. (my translation, adapted from the Loeb edition)<sup>160</sup>

He emphasises the recent help for the exiles as evidence of their good intentions. It demonstrates how reciprocity was a key factor in establishing the alliance by stressing the efforts the Thebans undertook on the Athenians' behalf (Chapter 3.3).<sup>161</sup> Whether the request was reasonable within the perimeters of reciprocity is another matter – Xenophon represents it as Theban excessive greed and avarice – but nominally, some form of quid pro quo was expected.<sup>162</sup> Hence the ambassador frames the speech according to the Assembly's norms by portraying the advantages incumbent upon the Athenians should they join their neighbours.<sup>163</sup>

Thrasybulus replied to the speech by proclaiming a Spartan attack on Boiotian soil would be met with an Athenian military response, then moved to pass a decree to conclude an alliance with the Thebans. He was aware of the risk his countrymen were taking on behalf of the northern neighbours, as he admits himself:

Thrasybulus, after replying to the ambassadors with the decree, also pointed out that although the Piraeus was without walls, they would nevertheless take the risk (παρακινδυνεύσοιεν) to repay a favour to them greater than the one they received. 'For you,' he said, 'did not join the expedition against us, while we fight on your side against them, if they march against.' (trans. B. Steinbock)<sup>164</sup>

In the Loeb version the verb παρακινδυνεύσοιεν is translated as 'brave the danger'. Xenophon uses this verb only twice in the *Hellenica*, which emphasises its importance here. The translations seem similar but do not convey the same message. Braving a danger forms part of a different cognitive sphere than taking a risk does.<sup>165</sup> The Athenians were not acting

<sup>160</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.8–9.

<sup>161</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.7–16. Steinbock 2013: 251–3 identified these arguments as the most convincing parts for the Athenians.

<sup>162</sup> Bearzot 2004: 21–30 on how this episode reflects Boiotian avarice.

<sup>163</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.15: 'but be well assured, men of Athens, that we believe we are inviting you to benefits far greater for your state than for our own'. This included the recovery and possible expansion of their former empire.

<sup>164</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.16.

<sup>165</sup> In the only other instance that Xenophon employs the verb, it is translated as 'take the risk': Xen. *Hell.* 7.3.5. The French translation (Hatzfeld 1954) goes thus: 'Thrasybule, qui fut chargé de leur transmettre ce vote en manière de réponse, leur fit en outre remarquer que c'était à un moment où le Pirée était sans murailles qu'ils acceptaient quand même de leur rendre un

altruistically by helping the Boiotians, as the ambassador promises a new Athenian *arche*. However, the self-interest was not that evident initially. They risked attacks on Attica without the protection of the Long Walls, which were still unfinished.<sup>166</sup> They were therefore more aware of the prospective risks by accepting the alliance, risks they may not have taken without the possible benefits or without the trust stemming from the recent help from the Thebans.<sup>167</sup>

However, Xenophon omits a vital piece of information. He repeatedly implies the alliance was between the Athenians and Thebans. But in reality it concerned the *Boiotoi*, as evidenced by a fragmentary bilateral treaty found on the Athenian Agora, dated to 395.<sup>168</sup>

[ - - - - -  
 - - - - - ]  
 [ . ]οι [ - - - - -  
 - - - - - ]  
 2vacat<sup>2</sup>  
 Alliance of the Boiotians and Athenians  
 for all time.  
 If anybody goes against the Athenians for war either  
 5 by land or sea, the Boiotians shall  
 help with all their strength as the Athenians  
 call on them, as far as possible; and if  
 anybody goes against the Boiotians for war either  
 by land or by sea the Athenians shall help  
 10 with all their strength as the Boiotians  
 call on them, as far as possible. If it is  
 [decided to add or subtract anything] by the Athenians  
 [and Boiotians deliberating jointly?]  
 - - - - - ]  
 15 [ - - - - - ]  
 (trans. S. Lambert)

The alliance was concluded with the *koinon* and implies that the Athenians accepted the status quo in the borderlands, such as the

service plus grand que celui qu'ils avaient resu d'eux.' This translation avoids this issue. In the Funeral Oration, Pericles speaks of meeting dangers (Thuc. 2.39), for which the phrase 'τρόπων ἀνδρείας ἐθέλομεν κινδυνεύειν' is used.  
<sup>166</sup> Conwell 2008. <sup>167</sup> Van Wijk 2021a.  
<sup>168</sup> RO 6; AIO *ad loc.* Unfortunately, the stone breaks where reasons for the alliance would be mentioned. See Matthaiou 2012: 14 on the stone, with a preceding decree perhaps ratifying the alliance.



Boiotian occupation of Plataia and Oropos (Chapters 4.1.2, 4.1.3). The difference between Thebans and Boiotians is more than semantical, despite Xenophon's wizardry with terms. Accepting an alliance with the Boiotians meant Ismenias and his party's influence stretched beyond their hometown and affected the *koinon*'s policy. Despite the perils the Athenians were undertaking, they did not press for further concessions from their allies, and the treaty is one between equals rather than hierarchical.<sup>169</sup>

In addition to the recollection of reciprocity, elite relationships played an equally central role in the formation of the alliance. The leaders in both poleis, Ismenias and Thrasybulus, had already gotten acquainted during the latter's exile in Thebes. Ismenias' help was certainly not forgotten, since the help Thrasybulus received was immortalised in the Theban Herakleion (Chapter 5.2.7). Moreover, Ismenias knew the rules of the trade and must have informed the ambassador on the norms of interstate relations by invoking the previous help granted to the Athenians.<sup>170</sup> The firm grasp of his group over Thebes and the federal council ensured the *koinon* was a willing friend, whereas the presence of several former exiles could have exerted a strong influence on the decision-making process in the Athenian Assembly. They were possibly essential in swinging the vote in favour of an alliance, despite Xenophon's claims that the alliance was accepted 'unanimously' or by a large majority (πάμπολλοι).<sup>171</sup>

Further strengthening the bonds was Thrasybulus' role as the most prominent politician in Athens. His acquaintance with Ismenias and his group laid the groundwork for the earlier rapprochement and the eventual alliance. Without a change in leadership in Theban politics and their intervention in protecting the future Athenian leader, opportunities for reconciliation and collaboration would have been severely impeded. It demonstrates the need for the right leadership at the right time to influence neighbourly policy, something Ismenias was certainly aware of if he wanted to counteract the Spartan ambitions in Central Greece.

<sup>169</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.14 where the ambassador suggests the Boiotians would be part of the future empire: νῦν δέ γε εἰκὸς τῷ παντὶ ἔρρωμενεστέρωσ ὑμῖν συμμαχεῖν ἡμᾶσ ἢ τότε Λακεδαιμονίοισ.

<sup>170</sup> Despite their boorish reputation, the Thebans were well versed in picking the right ambassadors for the job, fluent in the diplomatic lingo of the time: Tuci 2019.

<sup>171</sup> Canevaro 2018 argues unanimity was the consensus-based anchor of democratic decision-making and was not a façade to cover disputes. He explains how a lot of these decisions were extensively deliberated upon before a consensus was reached. On the exiles' presence, perhaps the ambassador's referral to 'you' and Thrasybulus' reply with 'us' referred to the exiles in attendance, rather than the generic 'Men of Athens'?

Changes in attitude were not always determined by proclivity towards the other. It is tempting to denote leaders as ‘pro-Athenian’ or ‘pro-Boiotian’ but that disregards their epichoric outlook. They often acted in the interest of their own polis first. Leaders may have entertained warmer bonds with segments of Boiotian or Athenian society, but that could not obfuscate that ‘democratic connections’ were not instrumental, nor was it a matter of ‘anti-Spartan’ sentiment. It was a mixture of personal connections, local interests and shared opponents that steered neighbourly relations. Whereas in certain cases the Athenians could promote ‘polis-centred’ elites in 424 when trying to topple the *koinon* (Chapter 3.2.3), there were no qualms in collaborating with a proud ‘*koinonist*’ like Ismenias in the 390s.<sup>172</sup>

Therefore prudence is required when speaking of ‘pro-Athenian’ or democratic parties, as their preferences included an array of interests and beliefs that cannot easily be captured in one word or ideology. But when interests aligned with the right leadership, it allowed for collaboration or triggered a hostile response that undid previous relations. The outcome was not the result of an inveterate enmity, but sometimes dictated by the change in leadership. In each of the previous two cases, these changes in leadership occurred as a result of intra-polis rivalries, spurred on by possible threats from outside. Yet a peaceful transition was not always the case, as the next section will demonstrate.

### 3.2.3 *The Descendants of Oedipus: Stasis in Boiotia and External Intervention*

Pericles allegedly used the metaphor of holm oaks battering their limbs against one another to describe Boiotian politics, ridden with strife and internecine fighting.<sup>173</sup> There is poetic license at play in the silver-tongued politician’s words, but there is sufficient evidence that Oedipus’ heritage encumbered his descendants in the fifth and fourth centuries. This discordance was exploited by the Athenians and Spartans, who both wished to install leaders in Boiotia who were friendly to their cause.

The Spartans were the first to exploit the divisions in Boiotia. In 458 they sent an expedition to Doris to help against the Phocians. The outward journey went by ship across the Corinthian Gulf, but the return went overland. On the march home, Nicomedes, the Spartan army leader,

<sup>172</sup> Thuc. 4.76. Ar. *Eq.* 475–9 for the plans in 424. <sup>173</sup> Arist. *Rhet.* 3.1407a.1–5.

lingered in Boiotia, pondering whether to force his way through Megara or ship the troops across to the Peloponnese and risk a naval engagement with the Athenians. In the cursory version of events Thucydides presents that was apparently not an issue on the first leg of the expedition.<sup>174</sup> The historian offers no further explanations. He only mentions a disgruntled faction from Athens that approached Nicomedes with a plan to topple the democracy.<sup>175</sup> The plan amounted to nothing, as the entire Athenian levy, joined by a thousand Argives and other allied forces, attacked the Spartans near Tanagra. The latter won the contested battle and marched through the Megarid, seemingly untroubled by their earlier trepidations (Chapter 2.4).

Diodorus provides a more extensive account. According to the first-century historian, the Athenians forced the Spartans' hand by sending a fleet into the Corinthian Gulf and troops to the Megarid. While the Spartans lingered in Boiotia, the Thebans offered to fight the Athenians on the Spartans' behalf:

During this year the Thebans, who had been humbled because of their alliance with Xerxes, sought a way by which they might recover both their ancient influence and reputation. Consequently, since all the Boiotians held the Thebans in disdain and no longer paid any attention to them, the Thebans asked the Lacedaimonians to aid them in winning for their city the hegemony over all Boiotia; and they promised that in return for this favour they would make war by themselves upon the Athenians, so that it would no longer be necessary for the Spartans to lead troops beyond the border of the Peloponnesus. And the Lacedaimonians [assented],<sup>176</sup> judging the proposal to be to their advantage and believing that, if Thebes should grow in strength, she would be a kind of counterweight to the increasing power of the Athenians; consequently, since they had at the time a large army in readiness at Tanagra, they increased the extent of the circuit wall of Thebes and compelled the cities of Boiotia to subject themselves to the Thebans.<sup>177</sup>

Diodorus provides an intriguing local insight into the Tanagra affair. The alleged reason for the downtrodden state of the 'Thebans' is a striking

<sup>174</sup> Thuc. 1.107–8. Chapter 4.3 analyses this manoeuvre. In Chapter 4.2.1 the importance of the Boiotian harbours for Athenian strategy is noted.

<sup>175</sup> There were real concerns over civil war erupting in 458: Aesch. *Eum.* 856–66; 976–87; Mitchell 2022.

<sup>176</sup> 'Assented' has been emended, as the verb is missing in the manuscript: Green 2006: 160 n. 328.

<sup>177</sup> Diod. 11.81.1–3. This translation follows Green 2006: 158–9 contra Haillet 2002; Oldfather 1946.

one. If medism cast such a heavy burden, the open accusations by other medizing Boiotian poleis is remarkable (Chapter 5.2.3). Perhaps it would be better to read this phrase as the Theban families that had been in charge of the polis during Xerxes' invasion and had lost their influence afterwards. The chance of recapturing their prominent position with the Spartan help would then have been a perfect opportunity to oust the Athenian-leaning or neutral groups.

The Sicilian historian presents this collusion as occurring *after* the Battle of Tanagra, but as Peter Green observes, Diodorus may have garbled the chronology.<sup>178</sup> From the surrounding narrative it appears he interjects an episode into the Boiotian account. This sequence of events is supported by remarks from Plato and Pausanias, who place Boiotian forces at the battle. Presumably, this was cavalry as the Spartans had not brought any. It suggests the Thebans had joined the Peloponnesian League prior to the conflict.<sup>179</sup> Although Diodorus grants a sliver of light in the cursory darkness of Thucydides' narrative, his account is frequently rejected over its sloppiness in chronological matters.<sup>180</sup> Thucydides' retelling, however, obfuscates any notion of Spartan agency, aside from intervening on behalf of the Dorians. Would that have been the singular objective? And would they have rushed into Central Greece without realising the Athenians could block their return?

Various explanations have been offered. Ian Plant regards the move into Boiotia as a Spartan initiative.<sup>181</sup> They aimed to put pressure on Oropos and the Athenian grain supply to force a battle and draw troops away from Aigina. Joseph Roisman stresses the internal Athenian divisions, strengthened by the return of the philolaconian Cimon from exile.<sup>182</sup> His influence could have hindered affirmative action against the Spartans in the ongoing war. Resolve was needed: by posing the Spartans as trapped, the Assembly could be convinced to send the entire levy to use this opportunity for a victory. A final proposition regards the Doris campaign as a distraction from the start. Instead, the re-establishment of a Theban

<sup>178</sup> Green 2006: 160–1 n. 329: 'This paragraph makes it clear that Diodorus' preliminary background to his account of Myronides' campaign in Boiotia refers back to the period immediately before Tanagra, the only time when the Spartans had "a large force in readiness" there. All the (very plausible) activity here described will have taken place then. This at once removes numerous inconsistencies.'

<sup>179</sup> [Pl.] *Alc.* 1 (112c); Paus. 1.29.9. For the horsemen: Pritchett 1996: 157–8. However, he exaggerates the number of Boiotians present at the battle.

<sup>180</sup> Buck 1970: 219–21; Walters 1978. Others are more lenient: Badian 1993: 213 n. 50; Sacks 2014: 4–5.

<sup>181</sup> Plant 1994. <sup>182</sup> Roisman 1993; Vanotti 2018.

counterweight to the Athenians had always been the intention.<sup>183</sup> This is plausible but denies the religious and propinquitous importance of the Doris campaign, as Simon Hornblower pointed out.<sup>184</sup>

Quite likely it was a mixture of considerations. The Spartans were wont to be secretive about campaign objectives. We may question whether Thucydides recorded *all* considerations or whether his later Spartan informants were apodictic enough in their stories.<sup>185</sup> The Spartans presumably envisioned the campaign as a good opportunity to thwart the Athenians. Camping near Tanagra is a logical move if they wished to instigate a political change.<sup>186</sup> Tanagra had been a loyal ally of Thebes and planting a Spartan army in the Boiotian heartland avoided confrontation with more pro-Athenian poleis like Thespiai or Plataia.<sup>187</sup> The tearing down of the Tanagran walls after Oinophyta could also reflect the Athenian punishment of a disobedient ally, especially if relations were closer after the Persian Wars than normally assumed.<sup>188</sup> The loss of *autonomia* occurred only after the later battle of Oinophyta, suggesting Boiotian poleis could have been members of the Delian League (Chapter 2.4).<sup>189</sup> Even if the Boiotians were an Athenian ally, their borders were permeable for the Spartans.<sup>190</sup> Forcing their way through could have signalled to the region's inhabitants that the Athenians were unwilling to protect the friendly elites in the cities and offered Boiotians with other convictions a chance for change. The suggestion that Tanagra was a pro-Athenian hegemon prior and was therefore targeted by the Spartans should

<sup>183</sup> Cloché 1946–7: 141; 1952: 66–70; Kagan 1969: 86–90. <sup>184</sup> Hornblower 2010: 131.

<sup>185</sup> Plant 1994. Pritchett 1996: 149–55; Roisman 1993 put more credence in Thucydides' integrity but overestimate the reliability of his Spartan informants (Rahe 2019: 168 n. 35). Thucydides' brevity is nevertheless odd, since Tanagra constitutes a central place in the *Pentakontaetia*: Piérart 1987.

<sup>186</sup> Mitchell 2022 suggests it was a deliberate and aggressive Spartan move to camp on the border.

<sup>187</sup> Schachter 2016a: 80–112.

<sup>188</sup> It may explain why the Athenians crossed Boiotian borders unopposed, despite being armed (Mosley 2007; Thuc. 4.78). An alliance between Spartans and Thebans would allow an unharmed march through Boiotia.

<sup>189</sup> Naxos, Samos and Thasos were forced to give up their fleets, had their walls destroyed and paid tribute after their rebellion was subdued. Thasos is listed in the *ATL* (*IG* I<sup>3</sup> 259 l. 14 = *OR* 119A); *ATL* III 272 restores Naxos in the lists for 454/3. The Samians were a special case because they paid reparations rather than tribute (*IG* I<sup>3</sup> 48). Thucydides mentions that a democracy was imposed on Samos, but whether it was part of the settlement is unclear (Diod. 12.28.4). Hansen 1995a asserts *autonomia* is incompatible with being an Athenian subject; see Thuc. 7.57.

<sup>190</sup> The north-western borders of the region are easily permeated by an army: Burn 1949. This would negate the need to obtain permission to cross a polis' territory under arms: Mosley 2007; Thuc. 4.78.

be rejected as there is no evidence supporting Tanagraian dominance in Boiotia at the time.<sup>191</sup>

If the Theban takeover occurred before the Battle of Tanagra, it is remarkable that neither Thucydides nor Diodorus mention Boiotians at the battle, unlike Plato and Pausanias.<sup>192</sup> Is it a later insertion by Plato and Pausanias? In Plato's case, the contemporary conflicts with the Boiotians possibly inspired a retrojection of their involvement at Tanagra, whereas Pausanias relies on a grave monument of two fallen Athenians.<sup>193</sup>

Diodorus mentions a four-month truce after the battle; Thucydides does not.<sup>194</sup> Truce or not, the Spartans withdrew after Tanagra. An explanation for their expedited withdrawal comes from Diodorus, who states the Thebans proposed to support the Spartans so they did not have to conduct campaigns outside the Peloponnese. The new walls the Spartans helped construct could have been sufficient in their eyes to ward off further incursions, or they did not expect a swift Athenian response. Nicomedes thus had achieved a secondary objective of their campaign: bring the Boiotians into the anti-Athenian fold.

The Spartan-installed Theban dominance faltered after sixty-two days, when Athenian forces defeated the new Boiotian leaders at Oinophyta.<sup>195</sup> What prompted the acute response, so shortly after tasting defeat at Tanagra? Thucydides is cursory in his treatment and offers no insights. He notes the Tanagraian walls were destroyed after Oinophyta and Boiotia was subdued.<sup>196</sup> Robert Buck argues political opportunism was at play here.<sup>197</sup> The hypothesis certainly has its merits – why waste a good crisis? – but ignores the groundwork laid for this opportunity. Diodorus provides a glimpse but garbles the chronology of the battles and conflates several battles into one. Despite his confusing chronology, he possibly presents a valuable Boiotian tradition. The first-century historian's account indicates

<sup>191</sup> Schachter 2016a: 61–2 contra Amit 1971: 62; Babelon 1907: 974–5; Fowler 1957; Gehrke 1985: 165; Head 1881: 21–2; Hegyi 1972: 25 n. 14; Rahe 2019: 168. It is based on Tanagraian coinage, but the chronology is notoriously difficult and coinage does not equate leadership.

<sup>192</sup> Thucydides only mentions 'allies' in the campaign to Doris: Thuc. 1.107.2 (καὶ τῶν συμμάχων μυριοῖς). Could it be that some segments of Boiotia fought on the Athenian side at Tanagra? Thuc. 1.107.6 mentions 'respective contingents from the rest of their allies' besides the Argives (καὶ τῶν ἄλλων συμμάχων ὡς ἕκαστοι). Boiotians were named as allies in a Thessalian campaign some years later: Thuc. 1.111.

<sup>193</sup> Roller 1989: 71–2 rejects Pausanias' reference to this battle. Plato places the battle of Oinophyta *two* days after Tanagra, rather than Thucydides' sixty-two, making it possible that he conflates the later battle with that of Tanagra, or as Green 2010: 160–1 n. 333 asserts, several battles were fought.

<sup>194</sup> Diod. 11.80.6. <sup>195</sup> Thuc. 1.108.3 mentions sixty-two days. <sup>196</sup> Thuc. 1.107–8.

<sup>197</sup> Buck 2008.

a recent turnaround had occurred in Boiotian politics and the Athenians may have been keen to reverse it.

An unlikely source provides some further layering: Plato's *Menexenus*. This Platonic dialogue contains a passage where after much trepidation Socrates delivers a funeral oration allegedly taken from Aspasia. During this eulogy, he makes the following statement:

and thereby our city was plunged against its will into war with the Greeks. Thereupon, when war had broken out, they encountered the Lacedaimonians at Tanagra while fighting in defence of the liberties of the Boiotians; and though the battle itself was indecisive, it was decided by the subsequent result. For whereas the enemy retired and made off, deserting those whom they had come to assist, our men won a victory after a two days' battle at Oinophyta, and rightfully restored those who were wrongfully exiled. These were the first of our men who, after the Persian war and now helping Greeks against Greeks in the cause of freedom, proved themselves men of valour and delivered those whom they were aiding; and they were the first to be honoured by the polis and laid to rest in this tomb.<sup>198</sup>

Scholars viewed the eulogy as ironic, a mockery of the Athenian self-image, and rejected its historical value.<sup>199</sup> Admittedly, the tone is mocking and the possibility of aristocratic philosophers ridiculing the beliefs of the Athenian citizenry is not unfounded. David Engels argued that the dialogue is best viewed as a serious fourth-century political pamphlet written by an unknown author.<sup>200</sup> The historical authenticity of the passage and what it claims about Athenian motives leading to Oinophyta thus attains more credibility.<sup>201</sup>

The evocation of liberation should not be read as an Athenian canard. There were segments of the population that interpreted the incursion at Oinophyta within that framework. The proposal to intervene was probably brought forward in the Assembly along those lines. The evocation of altruism combined with serving the interests of the polis are not mutually exclusive.<sup>202</sup> There would have been no compunction to frame re-installing friendly elites for the benefit of the polis as an altruistic action to restore wrongfully exiled refugees.<sup>203</sup> The notion of protecting and helping the

<sup>198</sup> Pl. *Menex.* 242b–c.    <sup>199</sup> Henderson 1975: 35–6.    <sup>200</sup> Engels 2012.

<sup>201</sup> Sansone 2020: 11–16, 135–8 is surer of Plato's authorship, albeit admits the eulogy has ironic undertones.

<sup>202</sup> Barbato 2020: 58–65.

<sup>203</sup> For later parallels of Boiotian exiles fleeing to Athens: *IG I<sup>3</sup> 23* (447/6 BCE, decree for four Thespians); *IG I<sup>3</sup> 73* (424/3 BCE, Orchomenians); *IG I<sup>3</sup> 72* (414 BCE); Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.30–1; Plut. *Pel.* 6.3; *SEG 32.47* (382 BCE).

emigrés who had fled persecution from (Theban) illicit behaviour certainly meshes with the Athenian self-image.<sup>204</sup> The core of the decision to march on Oinophyta remains intact, even if exaggerated. It was a desire to reconstitute pro-Athenian elites to ensure the Spartans did not have a befriended power on Athens' doorstep.

The Athenian willingness to intervene is easily explained. Intervention removed a significant danger on their frontier, as a hostile Boiotia was a bane to Athenian success (Chapter 4.3). To maintain command of the First Peloponnesian War, it was paramount to keep an open channel into Central Greece to cut off Spartan movements. Moreover, the truce with the Spartans prevented their participation, granting a realistic chance of besting the isolated Theban regime in battle, not to mention the possibility of obtaining help from other disgruntled elements within the region. The victory at Oinophyta inaugurated a period of Athenian domination, sustained and abetted by the Boiotian exiles who had requested help.

The political preferences of these restored exiles is harder to gauge. Aristotle remarks that the democracy in Thebes collapsed due to bad government after Oinophyta.<sup>205</sup> Paul Cartledge views this as a retrojection or Aristotle's way of saying that the previous oligarchic clique had broadened its threshold for participation in politics.<sup>206</sup> But why would a democracy be incompatible with pro-Spartan affiliations? And should we assume the Athenians collaborated only with democracies? The Spartans wished to re-establish Theban dominance to counterweigh the Athenians; Theban convictions were of less importance. Nor were the Athenians unscrupulous about supporting oligarchs whenever the situation called for it.<sup>207</sup>

Also in the following point the Athenians seem to me to act ill-advisedly: in cities embroiled in civil strife they take the side of the lower class. This they do deliberately; for if they preferred the upper class, they would prefer those who are contrary-minded to themselves. In no city is the superior element well-disposed to the populace, but in each city it is the worst part which is well disposed to the populace. For like is well disposed to like. Accordingly the Athenians prefer those sympathetic to themselves. Whenever they have undertaken to prefer the upper class, it has

<sup>204</sup> Mitchell 2022 suggests Plato might refer to the pro-Athenian Boiotian cities in the borderlands.

<sup>205</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1302b: 'as for example at Thebes the democracy was destroyed owing to bad government after the battle of Oinophyta'.

<sup>206</sup> Cartledge 2020: 104. <sup>207</sup> Brock 2009.



not turned out well for them; within a short time the people in Boiotia were enslaved; similarly when they preferred the Milesian upper class, within a short time that class had revolted and cut down the people; similarly when they preferred the Spartans to the Messenians, within a short time the Spartans had overthrown the Messenians and were making war on the Athenians.<sup>208</sup>

The account stems from an oligarchic pamphlet from the late fifth century, making his reflections on Athenian tergiversations all the more striking.<sup>209</sup> No umbilical cord existed between ‘democracy’ and ‘Athens’ in the realm of politics as interests could be re-negotiated for political expedience. Democracies were a preferred partner because of the ideological similarities, but pragmatism trumped other considerations. The need for friendly leadership prompted the Athenian intervention, but their dominance over Boiotia proved ephemeral and was overturned after the Battle of Koroneia in 446 (Chapters 2.4, 5.2.5). The ousted elites found their way southwards, but this time a response was not forthcoming.<sup>210</sup>

The thought of revisiting a possible coup in Boiotia did not leave Athenian minds. In 429 and 426 they campaigned against the *koinon* with hopes of prompting popular uprisings across the region.<sup>211</sup> A more concrete plan was conceived in 424:

Hippocrates and himself (Demosthenes) had overtures made to them by certain men in the cities in Boiotia, who wished to change the constitution and introduce a democracy as at Athens; Ptoiodoros, a Theban exile, being the chief mover in this intrigue. The seaport town of Siphai, in the bay of Krisai, in the Thespian territory, was to be betrayed to them by one party; Chaironeia (a dependency of what was formerly called the Minyan, now the Boiotian, Orchomenos), to be put into their hands by

<sup>208</sup> [Xen.] *AP*. 3.10–11. Robinson 2011: 53–4 argues a Theban democracy dissipated after the Battle of Oinophyta and was replaced by a pro-Athenian oligarchy. Marr and Rhodes 2008: 163 connect Aristotle’s remark to the Old Oligarch’s reflections and believe a Theban democratic uprising was suppressed by the Athenians.

<sup>209</sup> Marr and Rhodes 2008. Hornblower 2010: 323–46 argues for a fourth-century date, with the text a ‘clever ludic work of imaginative fiction which perhaps belongs to the genre of literature associated with the symposion or ritualized drinking session’.

<sup>210</sup> *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 23.

<sup>211</sup> Nicias attacked Tanagra, presumably in 426: Thuc. 3.91.3–6. Another option for the campaign is 429: Diod. 12.65.3–5; Athen. 218b; *SEG* 48.83; Parlama and Stampolias 2000: 366–9 no. 452: *hoīde* Ἀθηναίων ἱππέεσι λιππέεσι ἀπέθανο[ν] | ἐν Τανάγραι καὶ ἐ’ Σπαρτόλο[ι]. Spartolos is only known as a target in 429/8: Thuc. 2.79. For new interpretations of the inscription: Matthaiou 2009; Papazarkadas 2009b: 67–70. Perhaps these attacks were two separate campaigns: Schachter 2016a: 83. Demosthenes’ campaign in 426: Thuc. 3.95.

another from that town, whose exiles were very active in the business, hiring men in Peloponnese.<sup>212</sup>

In this scenario, Boiotian exiles play a key role in organising a political turnaround in the region. The political allegiance of these exiles is harder to gauge. Robert Buck views the Delion campaign as an attempt to neutralise and democratise Boiotia.<sup>213</sup> Whether democratisation was imperative for Athenian help, or whether these exiles wished to overthrow the current regimes for their own benefit and saw democratisation as the best way to achieve it, is uncertain. The Oxyrhynchus historian's description of the situation in 403 suggests the political constellation was oligarchic.<sup>214</sup> Thucydides' remark that the Theban dismantling of Thespias's walls was done on account of its *attikismos* in 423 suggests there may have been democratic predilections at stake. At the same time, sympathy for the Athenians also existed among non-democratic segments of Thespias and other poleis.<sup>215</sup> These recurring efforts throughout the first decade of the conflict demonstrate the Athenians were acutely aware of the benefits of the right leadership. The disastrous results of the Delion debacle, however, put these desires to rest. Only then did it dawn on the Athenians that the days of disturbing Boiotian harmony were over.<sup>216</sup>

Athenian aloofness in the fourth century did not palliate the festering wound of discord in Boiotia. Spreading the infection of stasis this time were the Spartans. Their intervention in Thebes is perhaps the worst excess of their hegemony. After the defeat in the Corinthian War, Ismenias and his anti-Spartan group remained influential in Thebes. His continued clout meant the embers of collaboration with the Athenians remained aglow. Realising the danger to their hegemony, the Spartans – most likely Agesilaos and his compatriots – conceived of a plan to extinguish the cinders of neighbourly cooperation. Rumbblings in the north provided the right opportunity. Compounding matters was the recent Theban decree forbidding its citizens from supporting the Spartan campaign against the

<sup>212</sup> Thuc. 4.76.2–3. *CT* II 249 writes that some manuscript traditions denote Ptoiodoros as a Thespian, rather than a Theban. Both Gomme and Hornblower prefer Thespian, due to long-lasting ties between Thespias and Athens.

<sup>213</sup> Buck 1994: 16. <sup>214</sup> Lérica Lafarga 2007: 509–600; Occhipinti 2016: 131.

<sup>215</sup> Thuc. 4.133. The suppression of the demos' uprising in 414, after which a share of the instigators fled to Athens, suggests similar sympathies: Thuc. 6.95.

<sup>216</sup> The events of 379/8 suggest Athenian help for the Boiotians, but the Spartan junta's overthrow was effected by Boiotian exiles and the Athenians played a minor role in supporting it. Moreover, that campaign was restricted to Thebes, whereas the rest of the region remained under Spartan sway.

Olynthians.<sup>217</sup> This was not quite as profound a threat as the Acanthian delegate Cleigenes presented to the Spartans – he claimed the Thebans and Athenians were arranging a triangular alliance with the Olynthians – but the refractory behaviour provided enough ammunition to foist suspicion on the Thebans.

Opportunity beckoned when the Spartan force heading to the Chalkidike encamped outside Thebes and was approached by Leontiades. He had lost his leading position to Ismenias and now invited the Spartans to change the politics of Cadmus' city:

Phoibidas, it is within your power this day to render the greatest service to your fatherland; for if you will follow me with your hoplites, I will lead you into the Cadmeia. And this once accomplished, be sure that Thebes will be completely under the control of the Lacedaimonians and of us who are your friends; whereas now, as you see, proclamation has been made forbidding any Theban from serving with you against the Olynthians. But if you join with us and accomplish this deed, we will at once send with you many hoplites and many horsemen.<sup>218</sup>

The plan worked to perfection as the women were celebrating the Thesmophoria on the Cadmeia, while the men deliberated in the agora.<sup>219</sup> Soon after, recalcitrant elements of Theban society found their heads on the chopping block – in Ismenias' case literally – or were forced to flee elsewhere, as did Androkleidas and Pelopidas. Athens was a favoured destination.<sup>220</sup> The political overhaul complete, Spartan garrisons were installed in several Boiotian poleis and worries of neighbourly collaboration quelled.<sup>221</sup> The episode proves the fissile nature of Boiotian politics. Perhaps this episode lends credence to the Athenian tendency to use Boiotia as a canvas on which to paint the dangers of stasis.

So was this a conflation of circumstances leading to a denouement that even Xenophon condemned? That is a possibility. Maybe the gods smiled particularly bright on the Spartans that day, their nightly encampment near

<sup>217</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.15; 5.2.27. This undercuts a Spartan-Theban alliance, as it violated the terms of such a compact: Gehrke 1985: 175–7. One papyrus fragment (*P.Oxy.* 1.13 = FGrH 135) refers to a Theban-Olynthian alliance but the papyrus is Hellenistic and was fabricated on the basis of Xenophon's account, cf. Hornblower 2011: 238.

<sup>218</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.26–7. Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.32–3 where Leontiades elaborates the advantages of the new arrangement to the Spartan council.

<sup>219</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.25–31.

<sup>220</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.26–31; Plut. *Pel.* 5. Trial: Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.35–6; Plut. *Pel.* 5.3; *de gen. Soc.* 576a.

<sup>221</sup> The Thebans now supported Spartan campaigns against Olynthus: Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.37; 40–1.

Thebes en route to Olynthus granting Leontiades the courage to propose such a hubristic and opportunistic ploy.

Or was the upheaval, as John Buckler argued, the objective of the Olynthian campaign all along? Eudamidas' army was already in Thrace to support the Acanthians. Phoibidas' force was meant to reinforce that campaign. On its march northwards from the Peloponnese, it inexplicably decided to detour to Thebes. It was Boiotia's most prosperous and wealthy city, but a warm welcome was not awaiting them there. Even in antiquity the agency of the Spartans was debated.<sup>222</sup> Buckler therefore suggests the only possible target of Phoibidas' march was Thebes, as there was no need to encamp in its vicinity. Fear of an impending triangular alliance between the Athenians, Thebans and Olynthians prompted this dire decision.<sup>223</sup> Evidence of such an impending compact appears to be overdrawn. Buckler invokes the above-mentioned papyrus, the Chian-Athenian alliance of 384 and a Chalkidian alliance with the Athenians. The latter omits any mention of the Olynthians, and the restoration of 'Chalkidians' is uncertain. The treaty is of an unknown date, meaning the placement of the alliance in this context is debatable.<sup>224</sup> These fragmentary mentions do not contradict the presence of Athenian and Theban ambassadors present in Olynthus according to Cleigenes of Acanthus, nor do they explain the deviation taken by Phoibidas.<sup>225</sup> Gaining control over Boiotia meant mastering a large swath of Central Greece and creating a buffer against the Athenians. Ultimately, the takeover of Thebes was like a boomerang – Xenophon views it as the fulcrum of Spartan downfall – but for now it granted the Spartans suzerainty over Boiotia.<sup>226</sup>

The Spartan junta proved ephemeral. This characteristically applies to all examples of foreign intervention in Boiotian affairs. Yet these examples re-affirm how the leadership in the Boiotian poleis was valuable in fostering attitudes towards the Athenians. Not every Boiotian disliked the southern neighbours: clashes between them often occurred as the product of

<sup>222</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.28; 32; Diod. 15.20.2 is more confirmative: 'Accordingly the Spartans gave secret instructions to their commanders, if ever they found an opportunity, to take possession of the Cadmeia.'

<sup>223</sup> Buckler and Beck 2008: 76–7.

<sup>224</sup> *P. Oxy.* 1.13 = FGrH 135 (Theban-Olynthian alliance); *RO* 20 (Chian-Athenian alliance); *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 36 ([ἐπι Διεπρέφος ἄρχ]οντ[ος]. [συμμαχία Χαλ]κιδέων τῶ[ν ἐ]-[πι Θράκιης τοῖ]ς ἐ[σ]περίοις). It is the same archon as the Chian alliance, but this is a restoration and the alliance was arranged two years before the events in Thebes.

<sup>225</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.14: 'Again, we (the Acanthians) left ambassadors both of the Athenians and of the Boiotians already there.'

<sup>226</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.1.

exogenous interference. Numerous considerations played a role in determining the outlook of elites, as detailed above. Sometimes this led to a rapprochement or hostilities between the neighbours. Part of the value of installing friendly elites was to ensure the new leaders were grateful to their benefactors through the norms of reciprocity, another important factor in interstate relations and one that often chimed with elite interactions.

### 3.3 Reciprocity in Neighbourly Relations

Reciprocity guided human and divine interactions in the Greek world. Just as pious Greeks reminded the gods of their fatty sacrifices or beautiful dedications in expectation of a reward, so too the gods expected gifts from the humans they granted favourable outcomes. Interactions between polities functioned no differently. Favours were redeemed in exchange for past deeds or future returns. We have numerous examples of ambassadors or leaders referring to previous support, favours or help in acute situations (Chapter 3.2.2).<sup>227</sup> The neighbourly relations traversed the same road and reciprocity acted as the oil that greased the cogs of the machine.

In the pages above it has been argued that reciprocity and friendly elite interaction go hand in hand. One of these examples has been discussed in Chapter 3.2.2, when the Theban ambassador to Athens reminds his audience in 395 of the protection the Boiotians offered the Athenian democratic exiles. A role reversal occurred some decades later. After the deleterious Spartan takeover of the Cadmeia in 382, the purge of Ismenias' partisans forced many to find refuge in Athens. Many were not still safe from the spectre of internecine disputes, as assassins murdered the exiles' leader, Androkleidas.<sup>228</sup> Athens nevertheless offered some reprieve and shielded the Theban exiles from incurring the Spartan wrath.

Their presence led to an intense debate in the Athenian Assembly, with mounting Spartan pressure to hand over the exiles. According to Plutarch the demos deliberated and approved the shelter for the exiles:

There came also letters from the Lacedaimonians charging the Athenians not to harbour or encourage the exiles, but to expel them as men declared common enemies by the allied cities. The Athenians, however, not only yielding to their traditional and natural instincts of *philanthropia*, but also making a grateful return for the kindness of the Thebans, who had

<sup>227</sup> Azoulay 2004: 318–26; Hunt 2010; Low 2007; Mitchell 1997; van Wees 2004: 9–13.

<sup>228</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.31; Plut. *Pel.* 5; 6.2; Tufano 2020.

been most ready to aid them in restoring their democracy, and had passed a decree that if any Athenians marched through Boiotia against the tyrants in Athens, no Boiotian should see or hear them, did no harm to the Thebans in their city.<sup>229</sup>

Plutarch is a later source, making his account more suspect. An admirer of Athenian affairs, his reference to their natural instincts of *philanthropia* extols their characteristics. Yet this was a common trope within Athenian discourse and should make us less suspicious.<sup>230</sup> Adhering to the notion of reciprocity fits in with the *charis*-dominated parameters of the Athenian Assembly. It was a grateful repayment of the Theban help for the democratic exiles in 404. That help had been immortalised in various ways within Athenian social memory (Chapter 5.2.7). The survival of many of these exiles, who now occupied leading roles within the polis, could certainly have acted as a stimulus during the deliberation. Plutarch mentions it as a key factor for ignoring Spartan demands. The exiles' guest-friends who once received Theban guest-friendship in times of peril were now openly vouching for the exiles in the Assembly and lobbying for support.<sup>231</sup> The Thebans could count on their *xenia* connections to see them through, even in the wake of Spartan aggression.<sup>232</sup>

Plutarch's words of a warm reception for the Theban exiles are corroborated by epigraphic evidence. An inscribed stele from the Athenian Akropolis records the honours awarded to Boiotian exiles after the capture of the Cadmeia:

- 1           [.....24.....]#<sup>7</sup>#<sup>7</sup>[— — —]  
               [.....22.....]#<sup>7</sup>ΤΟΣΤΑ#<sup>7</sup>Γ[. . .]  
               [.....19..... καθ]άπερ Ἀθην[αῖ]-  
               [οι .....16..... τῶν] δὲ ἄλλων ΥΓ[. . .]  
 5           [.....21.....] ἰσοτελεῖς κ[. . .]  
               [.....20..... κ]αὶ στρατεύ[εσ]-  
               [θαι ὅταν ὁ δῆμος στρατεύη]ται καὶ τ[ὸ]ς [στ]-  
               [ρατηγὸς χρῆσθαι αὐτοῖς ὦ]ιτινι ἂν ο[ὔ]ν τ[ι]-  
               [ρόπῳ βόλωνται· τὰς δὲ δίκ]ας διδόνα[ι Ἀθ]-  
 10           [ήνησι τῶν ἐγκλημάτων ὀπό]σα μετὰ τὴν φ[υ]-  
               [γὴν γεγένηται. ἂν δὲ τις αὐ]τῶν ἀποθάνη  
               [βιαιῶι θανάτῳι, γί]γνεσθα[ι τὰς τι[μ]ωρία-  
               [ς καὶ τὰς δίκας? καθάπερ εἶ]ρηται [ἐν] ταῖς

<sup>229</sup> Plut. *Pel.* 6.3.      <sup>230</sup> Barbato 2020.      <sup>231</sup> Strauss 1987: 103–4; Worthington 1992: 193–4.

<sup>232</sup> One of these, Thrasybulus of Kollytos, was mentioned by Aeschines as a frequent ambassador to Thebes (Aeschin. 3.138) and was one of the ambassadors mentioned in the Prospectus of the Second Athenian Confederacy to be sent to Thebes for further negotiations (*RO* 22, ll. 72–7).

[συμβολαῖς· ἐπιμέλεσθαι δὲ] τὸς π[ρ]υτάνει-	
[ς καὶ τὴν βουλὴν τὴν βουλε]ύο[σαν] καὶ τὸς	15
[στρατηγούς, ὡς ἄμ μὴ ἀδικῶ]νται· τὴν δὲ ἀτ-	
[έλειαν ἔναι καθάπερ τοῖς] ἐξεληλυθόσ[ι]	
[Θηβαίων καὶ Βοιωτῶν? ἐς Ἄθῆ]νας ὕστερο[ν]	
[ῆ οἱ ἐπὶ Φοιβίδα Λακεδαιμό]νιοι τὴν Καδ[μ]-	
[εῖαν κατέλαβον· ἀναγράψαι] δὲ αὐτῶν τὰ ὀ[ν]-	20
[όματα ἐν ἀκροπόλει ὑπὸ? τὰ] δεδογμένα, τ[ο]-	
[ύς δὲ φεύγοντας Ἄπολλων?]ιατῶν ἀπογρά[ψα]-	
[σθαι τὰ ὀνόματα τῶι γραμ]ματεῖ τῆς βολ[ῆς]	
[. . . . 12 . . . . εἶπεν· τὰ δ]ὲ ἄλλα κύρ[ι]α εἰ[ν]-	
[αι ἅπαντα ὅσα Ἄπολλωνια?]τῶν <sup>233</sup> τῶι δῆμῳι πρ-	25
[οεψηφισμένα ἐστὶν ὑπὸ τ]ῷ δῆμῳ τῷ Ἀθηνα(ίων). { <sup>2</sup> vacat}	

## col. [Γ]οργώπας

[Ἡρ]άκλειος	I.20
[Ἄ]ναξίλας	
[Πύ]θειος	
[Ξ]άνθων	
[Τι]μόδη[μ]ος	25
[Πυ]ριλάμπης	
[Ἄ]σίων	
[Ε]ὐφάνης	
[Ἀρ]ίφαντο[ς]	
[Φ]ειδοκρά[τη]ς	30
[Σ]θενόδημος	
[Ξ]ενοπείθης	
[Ἄ]γάθων	
[Ε]ὔανδρος	
[Κ]αλλιφάνης	35

## col. Πρα[— —]

Ἄλκίμ[α]χος	
Πολύε[υκ]τος	
Ἄριστό[πα]πιππο<ς>	
Ἄρπαλ[ίω]ν	
Κλε[αίνετ]ος?	25
Εὐ[ά]ν[ωρ]	

<sup>233</sup> Gehrke 1985: 176 n. 75 points out there is a possibility that IG II<sup>2</sup> 245 is the earlier decree mentioned and IG II<sup>2</sup> 37 an amendment of the earlier decree for the Thebans to include new arrivals from Boiotia.

	Ἐπιτ[ρε]φίδη<ς>
	Ἄρισ[τόξ]ενος
	Πολ[ίαρ]χος
30	Ξέν[αρ]χος
	Σ . . . .ς
	Ε[ύρυτ]ίων
	Θ[έογν]ις?
	Σω[κρ]άτη<ς>?
35	A # <sup>7</sup>
	[ . . . . . 24 . . . . . ] # <sup>7</sup> # <sup>7</sup> [ — — — ]
	[ . . . . . 22 . . . . . ] # <sup>7</sup> ΤΟΣΤΑ # <sup>7</sup> Γ [ . . ]
	[ . . . . . 19 . . . . . ] like Athenians
	[ . . . . . 16 . . . . . ] others Γ [ . . ]
5	[ . . . . . 21 . . . . . ] isoteleis (plural) κ [ . . ]
	[ . . . . . 20 . . . . . ] and do military service
	on the same basis as the People does military service and the
	<i>strategos</i> shall employ them in the manner he wishes;
10	and as regards any legal complaints that may arise after their exile, they
	shall be submitted to justice at Athens;
	and if anyone suffers a violent death, the punishments
	and judicial arrangements shall be as specified in the judicial convention;
	and the <i>prytaneis</i> and the boule in office
15	and the <i>strategoī</i> shall take care
	that they suffer no harm; and they shall receive tax-exemption
	on the same basis as the Thebans and Boiotians
	who fled to Athens after Phoibidas
	and the Lacedaimonians
20	took the Cadmeia;
	and to inscribe their names
	on the Akropolis under what has been decided;
	and the names of the refugees from Apollonia?
	shall be given to the <i>grammateus</i> of the <i>boule</i> .
	[ . . . . . 12 . . . . . ] said: everything else that was
	previously voted by the Athenian People for the Apollonian People
	shall be valid.
	col. Gorgopas
I.20	Herakleios
	Anaxilas
	Pytheios
	Xanthon
25	Timodemos
	Pyrilampes



Asion	
Euphanes	
Ariphantos	
Pheidokrates	30
Sthenodemos	
Xenopeithes	
Agathon	
Euandros	
Kalliphanes	35
col. Pra [— —]	
Alkimachos	
Polyeuktos	
Aristopappos	
Harpalion	
Kleainetos	25
Euanor	
Epiterephides	
Aristoxenos <sup>234</sup>	
Poliarchos	
Xenarchos	30
S. . . s	
Eurytion	
Th[eogenes]	
Sokrates	
A # <sup>7235</sup>	35

The decree is problematic since a large part is reconstructed on the basis of historians' accounts. Some things are clear. The start of the inscription details how some exiles had been fully assimilated with the Athenians, whereas others received obligations on par with the citizenry in terms of taxation and military service (ἰσοτελεῖς l. 5), judiciary protection and tax exemption (τῆν δὲ ἀτ[έλειαν] ll. 16–17).<sup>236</sup> These are customary honours

<sup>234</sup> Aristoxenos is mentioned in *IG II<sup>2</sup> 2 ll. 2–3* ([Ἀριστ—]ωι Σίμωνος Βοιωτῶι). Walbank 1982 dated the inscription to 382/1. Fossey 1991: 258–61 rejected this identification. He accepts Walbank's date but regards the honourees as two separate people, with the honouree of *IG II<sup>2</sup> 2* a Plataian bearing a different name. Lewis (*SEG* 32.38); Raubitschek 1941: 287; Tracy 2003 favour the original date of 403/2.

<sup>235</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup> 37 corrigenda et addenda*, 656–7; Wilhelm 1942: 10–11. Wilhelm mistook the names in the other columns of the stele as representing honours for Apollonian citizens but Walbank 1982: 267–70 (*SEG* 32.47) revealed these names to be Boiotian exiles. I thank Stephen Lambert for his help with the translation.

<sup>236</sup> Georgiadou 1997: 98 argues this status also entailed an exemption from the tax on metics.

for foreigners in recognition of their services.<sup>237</sup> These various assimilative efforts demonstrate that the Athenians *did* provide a shield for the exiles from Spartan aggression to regain themselves.

This granted the exiles time to conceive of a plan to recover their city.<sup>238</sup> After three years of planning they arranged to overthrow the regime in Thebes, contriving with discontent citizens in the city. In December 379 a group of exiles entered the city and assassinated the *polemarchs*. Support within the city quickly materialised and the insurgents succeeded in expelling the Spartan garrison, despite initial reinforcements from other garrisons spread across Boiotia (Chapter 2.5).<sup>239</sup> Removing the Spartans from Thebes was in the Athenians' self-interest, but the news must have been received with elation. Did the Athenians feel their past debt was now repaid? The extent of their help in the initial phase *after* the reclamation of the Cadmeia has been debated. The degree of help offered by the Athenians appears subsidiary to an investigation of reciprocity, but the framework of *charis* can help with the analysis of this difficult episode and elucidate the Athenian motives for their actions.

The dispute boils down to one key element: Did the Athenians publicly support the Thebans by sending troops to the borderlands to prevent further Spartan reinforcements from reaching Boiotia, or was it limited to shielding the exiles and sending them out on their way to Thebes, in similar fashion to Thrasybulus' march in 404?

Different accounts exist. Diodorus explicitly mentions a Theban embassy speaking in the Athenian assembly. He provides an epitome of their speech, steeped in the language of reciprocity, which convinced the demos to dispatch a force in a public show of support:

The Thebans, anticipating the arrival of a large army from Greece to aid the Lacedaimonians, dispatched envoys to Athens to remind them that they too once aided in restoring the democracy of the Athenians at the time when the Athenians had been enslaved by the Thirty Tyrants, and to request the Athenians to come with all their forces and assist them in reducing the Cadmeia before the arrival of the Lacedaimonians. The Athenian people heard the ambassadors through to the end and voted to dispatch immediately as large a force as possible for the liberation of Thebes, thus repaying their obligation for the former service and at the same time moved by a desire to win the Boiotians to their side and to

<sup>237</sup> Mack 2015: 22–83.

<sup>238</sup> On political activism of exiles: Loddo 2019.

<sup>239</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.9–13.

have in them a powerful partner in the contest against the superiority of the Lacedaimonians.<sup>240</sup>

In Diodorus' version, the Athenians voted to dispatch a large army to secure the liberation of Thebes as a token of gratitude for the previous help, thereby fulfilling their obligations. Similar support is mentioned by the orator Dinarchus:

Some of them, when the Cadmeia was garrisoned by Spartans, assisted the exiles who returned to Thebes and at their own risk set free a neighbouring city, long enslaved. Others lent aid when your ancestors were persuaded to take the field by Kephalos, who proposed the decree and who, undaunted by the might of Sparta and regardless of the risks either of military or political action, moved that the Athenians should march out to help the exiles who had taken Thebes.<sup>241</sup>

There are two issues here. Dinarchus spoke more than half a century after the events. His *Against Demosthenes* therefore could have been influenced by events between his speech and the recapture of the Cadmeia. The recent destruction of Thebes could have acted as a foil for Dinarchus to project his dismay over Demosthenes' and the Athenians' lacklustre support for the Thebans against the wrath of Alexander.<sup>242</sup> Diodorus wrote his works much later and his reputation as a bad historian led to a quick dismissal by scholars. The reference found in Dinarchus was equally unhelpful, because of the restricted appreciation for orators as historical sources. Instead, scholars were quick to anoint Xenophon, a contemporary historian, as the most reliable source.<sup>243</sup> His account and language imply a more elliptical approach, as he twice vaguely mentions 'the Athenians from the borders'. First, they arrive at Thebes to repel Spartan attacks and they intervene when the Thebans attack the Spartan garrison that was leaving the city under oath.<sup>244</sup> This suggests limited support, which appears to be confirmed by the later demos-ordained execution of the Athenian generals

<sup>240</sup> Diod. 15.25.4–26.1. At 15.26.2 he adds the Athenians despatched a significant army under Demophon.

<sup>241</sup> Din. 1.39. Isoc. 14.29 provides an ambivalent account where the help for the exiles is acknowledged, but official help or military support omitted. Isocrates is somewhat resentful and perhaps portrayed an augmented picture of Athenian support to dismiss the Thebans as distrustful people who betrayed their benefactors.

<sup>242</sup> Worthington, Cooper and Harris 2001: 12.

<sup>243</sup> Beloch 1893–1904: II 3.1.146; Buck 1994: 81–7; Hack 1978; von Stern 1884: 45–5; Worthington 1992: 195.

<sup>244</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.10; 12.

collaborating with the rebels in Thebes.<sup>245</sup> The execution is remarkable and fits more with a smaller force acting on their own account rather than a demos-ordained *psephisma* aimed at thwarting the Spartans. Xenophon's bias, however, obstructs his value as a source. He ignores any Theban role in recuperating Athens' power through the formation of the Second Athenian Confederacy, of which this is a key event.<sup>246</sup> His reference to this limited Athenian force in the wake of their intervention against Theban *hybris* appears to support this notion. As Diodorus' reputation as a historian has slowly recovered in recent years, combined with his incomparable value for describing the period of Theban ascendancy, his account has also received more appreciation.<sup>247</sup>

Therefore Diodorus' account might provide more trustworthy information for understanding the Atheno-Theban relationship at this moment. The Athenians exceeded expectations of *charis* by employing a significant army for the purpose of helping the Thebans, in addition to acting as a safe harbour for the exiles. The decree's mover, Kephalos, possibly had other motives in mind too: the build-up of a network of resistance against the Spartans since he was notorious for his anti-Spartan outlook.<sup>248</sup> By helping the Thebans, they were more likely to join any emerging anti-Lacedaimonian coalition.

That leaves the problem of the generals' execution. This presumably occurred after the expulsion of the Spartan garrison, in a period of anxiety about repercussions. This is possible, even if the generals acted in an official capacity. The generals, buoyed up by Theban partisans and personal connections with the insurgents, acted before an official decree was enacted.<sup>249</sup> They officially acted outside the premises of the decree, an

<sup>245</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.19: 'Now the Athenians, seeing the power of the Lacedaimonians and that the war was no longer in Corinthian territory, but that the Lacedaimonians were now going past Attica and invading the country of Thebes, were so fearful that they brought to trial the two generals who had been privy to the uprising of Melon against Leontiades and his party, put one of them to death, and, since the other did not remain to stand trial, exiled him.'

<sup>246</sup> Stylianou 1998: 230–1.

<sup>247</sup> Momigliano 1935; Sordi 2005. Diodorus' comeback: Badian 1995: 89; Cargill 1981: 56; Cawkwell 2011: 207–9; Kallet-Marx 1985: 140–7; Parker 2007: 15–16, 24–5, 27–8; Stylianou 1998: 230–1. Buck 1992 attempts to reconcile Xenophon and Dinarchus, but unsatisfactorily. Cloché 1952: 117–23 occupies a middle ground, arguing the generals initially moved unofficially, *after* which an alliance was concluded, with a time lapse in between.

<sup>248</sup> Din. 1.38. Kephalos' career was anti-Spartan. He was a proponent of war with the Spartans in 395 (*Hell. Oxy.* 10.1; Paus. 3.9.8) and in 384 served as an envoy to the Chians (*RO* 20 ll. 39–40); see *RO* 19 l.6.

<sup>249</sup> Stylianou 1998: 236. Later sources suppressed the trial, explaining Diodorus' omission. Later orators enhanced the extent of Athenian help: Aeschin. 2.164; Isoc. 5.43; 14.28–9.

acceptable reason for trial. Another reason could be internal politics. Eager to alter the polis' policy, the generals were sacrificed to avoid a conflict with the Spartans.

Yet there was no turning back now. The stage was set for a clash with the hegemon.<sup>250</sup> The Athenians and Thebans saw their interests converge and reciprocity formed an important part of their willingness to collaborate. Their shared resistance formed the basis of a new network of alliances aimed at thwarting the Spartans, the Second Athenian Confederacy. Under its wings, the neighbourly relationship reached a new zenith of cordiality.

A final example is less explicit but fits the mould of reciprocal gestures. The Athenians received the Theban exiles into their midst after the punishment meted out by the Macedonians following the Battle of Chaironeia in 338 (Chapter 2.7). In an eerily similar fashion to Spartan conduct in 382, the Cadmeia was once again garrisoned and a junta installed, made up of recalled pro-Macedonian exiles. Some leaders were executed, whereas others were forced into exile. Most of the exiled anti-Macedonian leaders found their way to Athens for safety and a guarantee from prosecution.<sup>251</sup> The parallels do not end there, as three years later, upon hearing rumours of Alexander's death, Theban exiles returned home by night, assassinated figures of the leading clique and appealed to their fellow citizens to rise in revolt.<sup>252</sup> The only thing missing is clear evidence of Athenian support.

It is highly likely that the exiles set out from Athens. The city harboured fugitives and was near enough for a nightly march to reach Thebes. Bernd Steinbock argued that the support took on a subdued form that was not openly publicised, for instance, the weaponry given by Demosthenes to the

Aeschin. 2.117 references the help the ungrateful Thebans forgot. A scholiast confirms it refers to 379/8: Schol. Aesch. 2.117 (257 Dilts); Steinbock 2013: 260–7.

<sup>250</sup> A Spartan force was underway when the garrison on the Cadmeia surrendered, but was forced to redirect as the passes at Eleutherai were guarded by the Athenian general Chabrias. Buckler and Beck 2008: 165–79; Cawkwell 2011: 205–9; Jehne 2004: 469 argue his presence indicates Athenian support for Thebes. I accept this premise but add that the occupation of *foreign* lands was part of the *psephisma* moved by Kephalos. This contravenes Buckler and Beck 2008: 165–79; Ober 1985a: 211, who argue Eleutherai was Athenian at this time and therefore they had every right to occupy it. Yet for most of the Classical period Eleutherai was Boiotian (Fachard 2013) thereby necessitating a decree to be moved to station Athenian troops there.

<sup>251</sup> Justin 9.4.8–9; Diod. 16.87.3. That some found their way to Athens can be gathered from [Demades] 1.17. Steinbock 2013: 272 notes these parallels must have evoked that memory among the Athenian population.

<sup>252</sup> Arr. *Anab.* 1.7.1–2; Bosworth 1980: 74–9. These exiles may have supported Amyntas, a pretender to the throne: Worthington 2003. Amyntas has more connections to Boiotia: an Oropian proxy decree (RO 75A) and a consultation of Trophonios in Lebadeia (Schachter 2016a: 128 n. 46). Prandi 1988 offers an overview but warns against ascribing Amyntas too much agency.

exiles according to Plutarch and Diodorus.<sup>253</sup> After the coup was completed, the Thebans sent an embassy to Athens asking for an alliance. This embassy would have evoked the historical precedents as an example to be emulated through the lens of reciprocity. Only this time, the Athenians used a wait-and-see approach before witnessing the destruction of Thebes by Macedonian might.<sup>254</sup>

Following the destruction of the city, Alexander issued a decree demanding the extradition of any Theban fugitive: 'They finally voted to raze the city to the ground, to sell the captives, and that the Theban refugees should be liable to seizure from all Greece and that no Greek should offer shelter to a Theban.'<sup>255</sup>

The parallels with the Spartan decree are uncanny and surely evoked memories among the Athenian population of that event. The matter was debated in the Assembly, where it was decided that instead of punishing the Theban exiles, the politicians responsible should carry the burden. An embassy under Demades was sent to Alexander, who acceded to all of the orator's points, even obtaining the king's permission for the *demos* to harbour the refugees.<sup>256</sup> Justin goes further and ascribes culpability to the Athenians for Alexander's decree, since they had opened their gates to the refugees.<sup>257</sup>

The decision to protect the refugees in 335 was made with the memories of past experiences in mind.<sup>258</sup> It is in this context that Dinarchus' remarked in 323:

The Thebans, so our elders tell us, when the democracy in our city had been overthrown and Thrasybulus was assembling the exiles in Thebes ready for the seizure of Phyle, although the Spartans were strong and forbade them to admit or let out any Athenian, helped the democrats to return and passed that decree which has so often been read before you, stating that they would turn a blind eye if any Athenian marched through their territory bearing arms.<sup>259</sup>

Discussing the admission of the exiles would certainly have reminded the attendants of the Assembly of the Theban plight and their actions for the Athenians in a similar situation. Admittedly, there is not a direct evocation of reciprocity as in the other examples, but the reference to these earlier events could have stirred similar emotions to honour a long-standing relationship, especially in the wake of their recent alliance (Chapter 2.7). Reciprocity therefore not only sowed the seeds for

<sup>253</sup> Plut. *Dem.* 23.1; Diod. 17.8.5; Steinbock 2013: 274. <sup>254</sup> Diod. 17.8.6. <sup>255</sup> Diod. 17.14.3.

<sup>256</sup> Diod. 17.15.1–5; Plut. *Alex.* 13.1, cf. Steinbock 2013: 275–6. <sup>257</sup> Justin 11.4.9–11.

<sup>258</sup> Steinbock 2013: 275–6. <sup>259</sup> Din. 1.25.

neighbourly reconciliation and collaboration at the start of the century; it also provided the foundation for later common grounds after the failed attempt to halt the Macedonian advance. Normative practices such as reciprocity, and the adherence to it, helped to establish a polis' reputation, whether negative or positive. The various forms of reputation will be treated next.

### 3.4 Reputation as a Facilitator of Neighbourly Collaboration

Accounts that focus on the *Realpolitik* aspect of interstate relations frequently overlook the importance of reputation, as fear and military power dominate their narratives. Yet a polis' reputation could smooth relations or provide the basis for alliances. The Spartans' call for *eleutheria* at the start of the Peloponnesian War is a good example. By proclaiming to be the liberators of Greece – a Persian War redux with the Athenians as the new Persians – they were able to muster a large crowd of poleis under their banner to combat the Athenians.<sup>260</sup> Their appeal to liberation granted them the trust of other poleis to join their ranks. Conversely, Athenian actions and words in suppressing other Greeks, exemplified in the Melian Debate, influenced how their peers perceived them, as the Boiotian general Pagondas eloquently put it in his speech at Delion in 424.<sup>261</sup> The prospect of reputational repercussions could influence decision-making, especially in an arena where honour was a vital instrument in guiding interstate relations.<sup>262</sup> Reputation, however, was not just subject to the opinions of other polities. The self-image of poleis and their values towards others equally guided decision-making. Self-presentation, in this case of the Athenians and Thebans, laid the foundations for alliances and other collaborative efforts. Investigating the effects of reputation thus goes beyond the monolithic 'fear of a third-party' paradigm for collaboration and offers a fresh perspective on the formation of such pacts.

#### 3.4.1 *The True Heirs of Herakles: Harbours Athenian Exiles in Boiotia*

The change of leadership in Thebes after the Peloponnesian War (431–404) prompted a different outlook on the developments taking place in Athens. Rather than support the Spartans to preserve the repressive

<sup>260</sup> Thuc. 1.139.5; Raaflaub 2004: 195. <sup>261</sup> Thuc. 4.92.4–6; 5.84–116.

<sup>262</sup> Lendon 2010; Lebow 2008, although Lebow overstates the centrality of honour as *the* determining factor.

regime of the Thirty, the *koinon* decided to shield Athenian exiles fleeing persecution in direct opposition to their allies' requests (Chapters 2.4, 3.2.2). The self-interested benefits from resisting the Spartans arguably occupied a role in the decision-making process, but by itself that cannot explain how Ismenias and his group swayed the popular opinion in the federal council against the explicit wishes of their allies and *for* former foes.

The Oxyrhynchus historian points out persuasion was the element that allowed Ismenias to take control of the polis and the council of the *koinon*. He was unable to convince the *koinon* to break the peace for no apparent reason, or for a dislike or fear of the Spartans. Instead, it was a friendlier disposition towards the Athenians that appears to have been decisive. The Theban self-image was key in swaying the sentiment. Believing themselves the descendants of Herakles in spirit, it was now time to match him in deeds. Ismenias and his men argued that harbouring the refugees would match the heroic philanthropy of both Herakles and Dionysos, worthy predecessors to emulate:

but above all, because they (the Thebans) first put the Athenians in the way of freeing themselves from the Thirty tyrants whom he had set up, whose terrorizing power the Lacedaimonians had increased by decreeing that fugitives from Athens might be brought back from every place of refuge, and that all who impeded their return should be declared enemies of Sparta. In reply to this the Thebans issued counter decrees, akin in spirit to the beneficent deeds of Herakles and Dionysos, to the effect that every house and city in Boiotia should be open to such Athenians as needed succour; and that whosoever did not help a fugitive under arrest, should be fined a talent; and that if anyone should carry arms through Boiotia against the tyrants in Athens, no Theban would either see him or hear about it. And they did not merely vote such Hellenic and humane decrees, without at the same time making their deeds correspond to their edicts; but Thrasybulus and those who with him occupied Phyle, set out from Thebes to do so, and the Thebans not only provided them with arms and money, but also with secrecy and a base of operations.<sup>263</sup>

Diodorus' testimony echoes that of Plutarch:

Though this decree was shocking, all the rest of the cities, dismayed at the power of the Spartans, obeyed it, with the exception of the Argives who, hating as they did the cruelty of the Lacedaimonians and pitying the hard lot of the unfortunate, were the first to receive the exiles in a spirit of humanity (φιλανθρωπῶπῳς). Also the Thebans voted that anyone who

<sup>263</sup> Plut. *Lys.* 27.2–4.



witnessed an exile being led off and did not render him all aid within his power should be subject to a fine.<sup>264</sup>

A divine mythological example is not evoked, but the language describing the decision (φιλανθρωπῶπῶς) hints at similar considerations. The notion of *philanthropia* was dominant in Athenian discourse and the Thebans acted in that spirit, rather than perform the role of the hubristic defilers of Greek *nomos* that the Athenians often portray them to be.<sup>265</sup>

Of course we are dealing with late sources, one written by a Boiotian apologist at worst, or a connoisseur of local interests at best, and another a compiler of other works whose reputation as a historiographer has suffered.<sup>266</sup> Xenophon's omission of the Theban decree exacerbates the matter. Tempting as it is to dismiss Plutarch's account as an interjection of later propaganda, or Diodorus' retrojection of later attitudes onto the past, there are sound reasons to accept the later testimonies. Xenophon is notoriously partisan towards the Spartans and dismissive of positive Theban characteristics.<sup>267</sup> Research into his oeuvre stressed his moralistic and artistic motives in downplaying the Theban contributions to restoring the Athenian democracy.<sup>268</sup> Omitting the Theban decree against Spartan wishes, in support of the Athenian democratic exiles whom he admired, may therefore be related to his desire to suppress events that could place the Thebans in a positive light, rather than a lack of historicity.<sup>269</sup>

There are other elements that support the historicity of the decree, as Bernd Steinbock has shown.<sup>270</sup> Both Dionysos and Herakles were of paramount importance to Thebes. It was the first place where Dionysos was allegedly worshipped, whereas Herakles was a native son of the city.<sup>271</sup> Their place in the common *imaginaire* of the Greeks found its way into diplomatic spheres. According to Justin certain Theban elders implored Alexander to spare their city because it had 'given birth not only to men but also to gods', alluding to both Herakles and Dionysos.<sup>272</sup> Material evidence, like the mid-fifth-century coinage that combines imagery of the two gods with the *ethnikon Thebaion* or *Thebaios*, confirms

<sup>264</sup> Diod. 14.6.2–3.      <sup>265</sup> Barbato 2020: 182–213.      <sup>266</sup> Steinbock 2013: 224–31.

<sup>267</sup> Buck 1994: 74 ascribes an anti-Theban bias but its prominence cannot explain all omissions of historical events.

<sup>268</sup> Dillery 1995; Gray 1989; Pownall 2004: 65–112; Tuplin 1993.

<sup>269</sup> Xenophon was not impartial to Thrasybulus (Buck 1998: 13) nor was he a one-sided ardent oligarchic sympathiser: Christ 2020.

<sup>270</sup> Steinbock 2013: 224–31. The language of the decree accords with contemporary decrees: Schweigert 1939.

<sup>271</sup> Demand 1982: 55, 69.      <sup>272</sup> Justin. 11.4.4–6.



**Figure 3.1**<sup>274</sup> Theban Herakles coinage, late fifth century.  
(Source: CNG Coins, Lancaster PA, [www.cngcoins.com](http://www.cngcoins.com))

that picture.<sup>273</sup> (See Figure 3.1.) Referring to the ancestral deeds could therefore find willing ears among the listeners.

Working in Ismenias' favour was the mythological precedent for collaboration between the two neighbours. Theseus, as representative of Athens, and Herakles, his Theban counterpart, had cooperated on numerous occasions. Herakles frequently received support and protection from Athena, the Athenians' patron goddess. This was confirmed in various contexts. On the Panhellenic stage, visitors to Olympia could witness Athena's help on the metopes at the Zeus temple at Olympia.<sup>275</sup> In Thebes visitors to the Herakleion could see the temple's pediments, as well as the rock that Athena threw to prevent Herakles from murdering his father.<sup>276</sup> These mythological precedents formed an ideal reference point for contemporary affairs and could have been instrumental in swaying the vote, besides the strained Theban-Spartan relationship.<sup>277</sup> Steinbock even speculates that the mythological precedents Ismenias drew upon were based on the collective memory of his Athenian guest-friend Thrasybulus.<sup>278</sup> The embodiment of their help in the form of statues of

<sup>273</sup> Kraay 1976: 111. The electrum coinage of the 370s depicts Herakles as the snake-strangler: Gartland 2013.

<sup>274</sup> Silver stater (425–400) 12.07 g, 6h Triton XI 08.01.2008 *Obv.* Boiotian shield; *c/m:* ivy leaf on oval punch *Rev.* Θ-E across lower field; all within square incuse. The coins combine a symbol of Dionysos – the ivy leaf – and Herakles.

<sup>275</sup> Barringer 2021: 129–31. <sup>276</sup> Paus. 9.11.2; 9.11.6.

<sup>277</sup> Isoc. 5.32 says no other polis venerated Herakles as much as the Thebans. For Herakles' and Dionysos' importance for Thebes: *COB ad loc.* Mythological precedent: Diod. 4.16.4; 26.1. Theseus' importance for Athenian identity cannot be overstated: Calamé 1990.

<sup>278</sup> Steinbock 2013: 224–31.

Athena and Herakles in the Theban Herakleion appears to point in that direction (Chapter 5.2.7).

Invoking the deeds of Herakles and Dionysos was therefore not an empty gesture to provide a cover for *Realpolitik* motives over the backs of Thrasybulus and the Athenian exiles. The pattern of self-reflective emulation of mythical precedents conforms to the ideal self-image of the Thebans and is not at odds with our knowledge of the procedure in Athens. We are the prisoners of our sources here, since we cannot ascertain whether Ismenias brought the matter before the council by evoking the city's most famous sons, but the reference to *philanthropia* and *charis* – the repayment of Athena's efforts in helping Herakles accomplish his labours and stopping him from committing patricide – were fitting remarks in the Athenian Assembly. A similar process was possible in Thebes. Ismenias would then have painted the future benefits for the Thebans and Boiotians by helping the Athenians, thereby continuing the relationship established in antiquity as the basis for future collaborative conduct (Chapters 3.2.2, 3.3).

Vital in this deliberation, however, was the Theban self-perception as people who upheld Greek *nomoi* to the highest standard, filled with faithful people who did not forget past benefactions. Their own reputation thus gave the final nudge in convincing the *koinon* to support the exiles against the Spartans. The strained relationship with the Spartans further helped matters. Yet without the appeal to the Theban reputation the decree protecting the exiles and a possible rapprochement would not have existed. Should Ismenias and his partisans have caved to Spartan demands, the democratic revolt in Athens would have died in the cradle. Their convictions to emulate Herakles and Dionysos proved to be the ideal argument to change Theban minds. It was reputation that laid the foundation of trust upon which the alliances of the early fourth century were built.

### 3.4.2 'Without them we are lost': Pseudo-Andocides and the Alleged Peace of 391

In the previous example we looked at the role of Theban self-perception and reputation in influencing neighbourly relations. In this example we will look at a possible example of the Boiotians' reputation through Athenian eyes during the Corinthian War. How did reputation play a role in the perception of the other? How were the neighbours perceived by Andocides, and how was this image conveyed to an Athenian audience? For years the Athenians and Boiotians fought side-by-side, which fostered mutual

respect and trust. The positive effect on neighbourly relations found its strongest expression in *On the Peace*, allegedly by Andocides but more likely to be a Hellenistic excursus from a rhetorical school.<sup>279</sup> This speech was allegedly delivered after a peace conference in Sparta, which occurred after the initial unsuccessful discussions in Sardis (Chapter 2.5).<sup>280</sup> While this Spartan conference in all likelihood never happened, and *On the Peace* is the later creation of rhetoricians in training rather than Andocides himself, the text is nevertheless valuable as the core of the argument rests on the Boiotians' role in the war. Inadvertently, the author of the text demonstrates the importance of their reputation by using it as the example on which to build his case. That rhetoricians in Hellenistic times expected the reference to the Boiotians to be a convincing argument in the early fourth century, despite the numerous historical errors in *On the Peace*, illustrates the lasting impact of the *koinon*'s reputation as a pivotal ally. Although the authenticity of the text can thus be rejected, it still provides a rewarding insight into the perception of the Boiotians through 'Athenian' eyes.

According to *On the Peace*, the earlier peace negotiations in Sardis broke down over the Spartans' insertion of the *autonomia* clause. This stated that every Greek polis should be autonomous and independent. The clause was aimed at weakening the Boiotians and was unsurprisingly a stumbling block for them. Their vehement opposition was backed by the Athenians. The stakes were high for both. The Boiotians feared a disintegration of the *koinon*, a daunting prospect for the Athenians as well. A fragmented Boiotia would leave them isolated and without their buffer against Spartan attacks. The Athenians were also apprehensive of the possible repercussions for their dominions, especially Lemnos, Imbros and Skyros.<sup>281</sup> Acting as a unified front against Spartan machinations was important to the two allies, as the Spartans strove to erode the union of Boiotian and Athenian power, even if it meant sacrificing the liberty of the Greeks in Asia Minor (Chapter 2.5).

<sup>279</sup> Harris 2000. Harris 2021 returns to the matter by providing an extensive investigation of the fallacies of the text, in response to Magnetto 2013; Rhodes 2016. The case now seems to be settled in Harris' favour.

<sup>280</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.12–16. Diod. 14.85.4 remains silent on Sardis. Plut. *Ages.* 23.1 conflates this mission with the eventual embassy that led to the Peace of Antalcidas in 387/6: Urban 1991: 59–78.

<sup>281</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.14–15. Hansen 1995b; 1996b; Keen 1996; Ma 2016 treat this example and the King's Peace to determine the autonomy the Boiotians poleis enjoyed under Theban leadership.

The lack of constructive results did not mean peace left the warring parties' minds. The participation of numerous poleis shows there was a genuine willingness to explore a treaty, but their presence was instigated not only by pacifistic intentions. Neglecting to participate meant the Spartans could implement their own terms. That is the situation sketched by the author of *On the Peace*, who implies another conference was held in Sparta in 391.<sup>282</sup> This treatise sets out the terms of the treaty, hoping to persuade the Athenians of the necessity to accede to it.

The speech is problematic because the document is peppered with historical inaccuracies. In addition, it would be the only *symbolleutic* speech to have survived prior to Demosthenes' oeuvre. There are two brief later references to an Andocidean speech, but these neglect to mention where it was delivered. These inadequacies, combined with ancient doubts about the historicity of the work, led Edward Harris to put forward a strong case that *On the Peace* is a Hellenistic exercise by a forger from a rhetorical school well acquainted with Classical sources.<sup>283</sup> He bases himself on various historical inaccuracies. One is the reference to ambassadors with full powers to negotiate a treaty (πρέσβεις αὐτοκράτορες), sent by both sides. This conflicts with diplomatic norms of the times, since *presbeis autokratores* were normally sent by only one party, rather than bilaterally. They were used rarely and mostly when there was an obvious hierarchical power relation. Often it was the weaker party instigating negotiations, but sometimes the victor could send these ambassadors to impose terms. One example is the Peloponnesian War's aftermath, when the Spartans sent them to Athens.<sup>284</sup>

Harris' position clashes with those scholars who view the speech as authentic. In recent years Anna Magnetto has defended the speech's historicity. She points out that ambassadors with full powers were not a rare occurrence in the diplomatic practices of the time and Andocides' text thus complies with the contemporary standards.<sup>285</sup> Peter Rhodes points out linguistic consistencies between the first three speeches of the corpus, unlike the fourth (*Against Alcibiades*), which has been found to be spurious. He mentions that Philochoros is not infallible, nor is Xenophon's

<sup>282</sup> The historicity of a second conference is corroborated by Philochoros FGrH 328 F 149. Yet Philochoros probably referred to the conference of 387/6: Harris 2021: 43 n. 49.

<sup>283</sup> Harris 2000; 2021.

<sup>284</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.16–23; 5.3.26. In light of Andocides' aims, could it be that he refers to this office precisely because he understands the contemporary diplomatic practices and wishes to convey the message that the Spartans had already won and were dictating terms?

<sup>285</sup> Magnetto 2013.

silence on the second conference a reason for rejection.<sup>286</sup> Xenophon frequently omits episodes, especially when they are incompatible with his intentions. A conference in Sparta where the thought of abandoning the Asiatic Greeks to the Persian King was entertained by the Spartans would certainly fit that mould.

Irrespective of authenticity, the author of the text provides a crucial insight by writing down arguments *he believed* would have been convincing to an Athenian audience in the early fourth century. Therefore it can be used as an exercise in understanding the role of reputation in interstate relations. ‘Andocides’ goes to great lengths to convince his polis of Sparta’s near invincibility, his praise influenced by his oligarchic sympathies and personal ties. It serves to juxtapose the futile Athenian allies in the Peloponnese with the essential Boiotians.<sup>287</sup> The speaker argues that this current peace offer is better than the previous one, since Athenian control of the islands Lemnos, Imbros and Skyros was guaranteed, and any restriction on the size of the Athenian navy lifted. With the biggest obstacles for a rapprochement removed, the time was ripe for peace, especially since a better offer would not be forthcoming.<sup>288</sup>

These ‘concessions’ to the Athenians indicate the Spartans possibly aimed to divide the allies in this fictive situation. The convergence of Boiotian and Athenian objectives at the negotiations in Sardis had prevented the enforcement of the *autonomia* clause. Conceding Imbros, Skyros and Lemnos was a small price to pay for isolating the Boiotians. An isolated Boiotia was an easier target. Splintering the *koinon* was the main Spartan objective, and without the *koinon*’s backing, the Athenians would remain subdued in the future. Offering the Athenians a more favourable deal served to weaken the Boiotians and, in turn, their southern neighbours. In this speech, however, the Boiotians had already accepted a dissolution of their *koinon*, however unlikely, which would contravene its authenticity.<sup>289</sup> The treatise is deceptive. There is no proof the Boiotians were intending to accept, or had accepted, a peace treaty in 391. They were willing negotiators and perhaps war-weary – the sense the speaker tries to convey – but not forced to accede.<sup>290</sup> Why would the speaker make this

<sup>286</sup> Rhodes 2016: 83–6.      <sup>287</sup> Missiou 1992: 140–68.

<sup>288</sup> And. 3.22. Acceptance of the treaty would improve relations with the Persian King, essential to the reclamation of the empire, according to the author.

<sup>289</sup> Harris 2021.

<sup>290</sup> Cloché 1919: 181: ‘Andocide se trompe (peut-être a-t-il été trompé par Lacédémone), ou il ment. Car c’est un fait que Thèbes n’a pas conclu la paix en 391 : sans prendre une part active à

claim then? In my opinion, that can be retraced to the reputation of the Boiotians and their value to the Athenians.

According to Anna Missiou, the speaker insists on the righteous course of the Spartans.<sup>291</sup> This contrasts with his initial portrayal of justifiable actions by the Athenians: ‘Everyone would agree, I think, that war is justified only so long as one is either suffering a wrong oneself or supporting the cause of another who has been wronged. Now we were both suffering a wrong ourselves and also supporting the cause of the Boiotians who had been wronged.’<sup>292</sup>

This accords with the Athenian self-image as protectors of the wronged against hubristic behaviour. The invasion of Boiotia by the Spartans could be portrayed in this light and meshes with how the Theban ambassador in 395 tried to convince the Athenians to forge an alliance.<sup>293</sup> The Boiotians are here viewed in a positive light, as those who were wrongfully attacked by the Spartans and demanded and deserved Athenian attention. Viewed from this perspective, the Athenians were acting as *philanthropoi*.

In the speaker’s eyes, however, that righteousness can be countered with the iniquitous turn of events, benefitting from the delight that is hindsight:

Again, what are the conditions under which the Boiotians are making peace? They went to war because they refused to allow the Orchomenians their *autonomia*. Today, after the loss of thousands of lives, after the devastation of a large part of their lands, after heavy public and private expenditure, which is now a dead loss, after four years of fighting, the Boiotians are recognizing the *autonomia* of the Orchomenians and making peace, thereby rendering their sufferings useless, as by acknowledging the *autonomia* of the Orchomenians at the outset they need never have gone to war at all. Those are the circumstances in which the Boiotians are ceasing hostilities.<sup>294</sup>

Anna Missiou comments on this passage: ‘Such a derisive reference to the Boiotians, Andokides reckoned, would serve his purpose very well: while disparaging one of Athens’ allies and indirectly Athens, it would implicitly bring credit to Sparta, who supported a just and prudent course, the granting of autonomy to Orchomenos.’<sup>295</sup> While her assessment of the

la guerre de 390–387, elle ne traitera qu’en 387/6. Sa volonté pacificatrice, en effet, ne suffisait pas pour créer un traité; Cloché 1941: 27. Hamilton 1979: 257 for a different view.

<sup>291</sup> Missiou 1992: 146. <sup>292</sup> And. 3.13.

<sup>293</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.10: ‘Furthermore, men of Athens, although we all understand that you would like to recover the dominion which you formerly possessed, we ask in what way this is more likely to come to pass than by your aiding those who are wronged by the Lacedaimonians.’

<sup>294</sup> And. 3.20. <sup>295</sup> Missiou 1992: 146–7.

objectives may be right, the orator would have made a great mistake by engaging with the listeners in such a confrontational manner. He implicitly condemns the Athenians for detaching the Corinthians and Boiotians from the Spartan alliance, thereby arguing his fellow countrymen were the aggressors despite the lenient treatment they received from the Spartans after the Peloponnesian War:

Later we gave them our oath, were allowed to erect the column, and accepted a truce upon dictated terms, a hardship which was welcome enough at the time. Nevertheless we then proceeded, by means of an alliance, to detach the Boiotians and Corinthians from the Spartans, and to resume friendly relations with the Argives, thereby involving the Spartans in the battle of Corinth. Who, again, turned the king of Persia against the Spartans? Who enabled Conon to fight the engagement at sea which lost her maritime supremacy?<sup>296</sup>

In both cases, invoking aggression acts as a foil against the notion of self-defence. The Spartans still do not come across as the righteous defenders of *autonomia* that the speaker wants them to be: that the Boiotians never agreed to the release of the Orchomenians from the *koinon* attests to that. The speaker's abrasive blaming of the Athenians for the war must have created some bad blood among his compatriots, had the speech been delivered in the Assembly.<sup>297</sup>

Scholars who accept the authenticity have looked for reasons to explain the contempt for the terms of this proposed treaty. Atavistic Athenian attitudes were possibly to blame.<sup>298</sup> Recent flirtations with the rulers of Cyprus and Egypt antagonised the Persian King and anti-Persian emotions were prevalent in the polis, despite the recent collaboration.<sup>299</sup> Another factor pushing the anti-Spartan attitude was the appointment of Strouthas to the satrapy of Asia Minor, who was openly opposed to the Spartans.<sup>300</sup> Finally, surrendering the cities of Asia Minor, precisely those poleis that

<sup>296</sup> And. 3.22.

<sup>297</sup> Viewed from this angle, the rejection of the treaty and the displeasure over the offered terms leading to the vilification and exile of the responsible ambassadors seems more understandable: Philochoros FGrH 328 F149. Harris 2021 argues that it means the negotiators had accepted the King's Peace in 387/6, as it was not unprecedented that negotiators of an accepted treaty were condemned afterwards.

<sup>298</sup> Hornblower 2011: 231 terms it a 'traditional hatred for Persia'.

<sup>299</sup> The Athenians were allies of Artaxerxes but supported Evagoras of Cyprus in his revolt (Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.24). In the honours granted to him, the Athenians spin history by omitting the King's role in the victory of Knidos, emphasising Conon and Evagoras' contributions instead: *RO* 11; *Isoc.* 9.56–7; *Gygax* 2016: 192–6.

<sup>300</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.16.



were meant to be liberated under the spectre of Panhellenism, ensured that ceding these Greeks to the King was met with dismay. The speaker glosses over this point. This concession would have meant the (temporary) end of re-establishing the empire in this war, which was one of the reasons the Athenians entered the war for in the first place: 'For at the time when you held dominion you were the leaders, you recall, of those only who dwelt on the sea; but now you would become the leaders of all alike – of ourselves, of the Peloponnesians, of those whom you formerly ruled, and of the King himself with his vast power.'<sup>301</sup> Although this phrase stems from the Theban ambassador, this prospect probably weighed on the minds of Athenian audiences. Giving up the objective of the war could have been a decisive factor in turning down the proposal.<sup>302</sup>

Another element that may have weighed heavier was the integrity of the Athenian territory, a factor overlooked by the forger in creating this speech. If he was aware of the situation, he would have understood that deep ingrained fears over the hinterland's destruction, an attitude stemming from the Peloponnesian War, still found a welcome home in the polis.<sup>303</sup> Yet the Athenians witnessed no invasions of their countryside during this war, nor a similar number of casualties.<sup>304</sup> Combined with the (near) completion of the Long Walls, the feeling of safety must have been high in Athens.<sup>305</sup> That contrasts with the sufferings of the Boiotians, whose lands witnessed devastation. The speaker hoped to elicit a vicarious response from his listeners, but his pleas fell on deaf ears. He painted a picture in which the Athenians would lose all their lands as a result of continuing the war for the favour of the Argives.<sup>306</sup>

The most likely reason for optimism, however, was the Boiotian stance. The terms of the treaty were less relevant. The Athenians rejected various treaties during the Peloponnesian War with favourable terms, and it is unlikely that a slight change in the terms could have swayed the population

<sup>301</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.14.

<sup>302</sup> And. 3.24 echoes this sentiment as the author claims the Athenians were overwhelmed with joy and confidence after concluding the Boiotian alliance.

<sup>303</sup> There might be a hint of this realisation, since references to prosperity undergirded fears of Athenian farmers for war: Missiou 1992: 144–71.

<sup>304</sup> These losses impacted Athenian society: see the monuments for the losses of the battles of Koroneia and Nemea (*RO* 7a) and the Dexileos stele (*RO* 7b); Clairmont 1983: 212–14; Osborne 2010.

<sup>305</sup> Conwell 2008: 3, 109–28.

<sup>306</sup> And. 3.26: 'And to what end? To enable us to lose our own lands as well as that of the Corinthians in the event of defeat, and to secure Corinth for the Argives in the event of victory. Will not that prove to be our object in fighting?'

into peace. The resolve shown by the Boiotians – even with the vicissitudes enumerated by the speaker – must have encouraged the Athenians to continue fighting. I believe the reputation of the Boiotians for persisting, and their trustworthiness in the face of war, strengthened the Athenian resolve, believing a crucial decision in the war could be imminent, despite recent setbacks.

The speaker's exclamations serve as a monitory example for what could happen if the Athenians did not accept a peace treaty, but inadvertently amplifies the reputation of the Boiotians by extolling them compared with the other allies:

What, then, remains to be considered? Corinth, and the appeal which the Argives are making to us. First as to Corinth. I should like to be informed of the value of Corinth to us, if the Boiotians leave our ranks and make peace with the Spartans. Recall the day on which we concluded our alliance with the Boiotians, gentlemen: Recall the assumption on which we acted. We imagined, did we not, that once they joined forces with us we could face the whole world. Yet here we are considering how we can continue fighting the Spartans without their help, now that they are making peace.<sup>307</sup>

The author belabours the point that the war is a doomed expedition without the Boiotians and assigns a key role to them in his discourse.<sup>308</sup> A better solution would be to enjoy the fruits of peace with the neighbouring Boiotians, rather than share the burdens of war with the Argives. Ironically, I believe it is here that he undercuts his own chances of success by conveying the benefits of peace:

Such are the prospects to which we are committed; and we have a choice between two alternatives, that of joining the Argives in fighting the Spartans, and that of joining the Boiotians in making common peace with the latter. Now what alarms me above all else, gentlemen, is our old fault of invariably abandoning powerful friends in preference for weak,

<sup>307</sup> And. 3.24–5.

<sup>308</sup> If Buck 1994: 2; Garnsey 1988: 112; Moreno 2007: 303 are correct in believing the Boiotians furnished the Athenians with grain, this remark takes on added importance. Other alliances were ostensibly made with the grain supply in mind: Evagoras of Cyprus (*RO* 11); Dionysius of Syracuse (*RO* 10) and the Eretrians (*Tod* II 103). Hansen 2006: 84–92; 2008 subscribes to the importance of Euboea for supplying grain and diminishes the role of Boiotia as an exporter, pointing to Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.56–7. Yet this grain shortage was the result of *two* years of failed harvests. Fachard 2012: 114–15 provides calculations that undercut Eretria's role as an exporter of grain.

and of going to war for the sake of others when, as far as we ourselves are concerned, we could perfectly well remain at peace.<sup>309</sup>

These remarks are meant to degrade the Argives, but allot great importance to the Boiotians by viewing them as the key to victory. More tangential for the reputational point is that the speaker contravenes the Athenian self-image of justifiably protecting the weak against the strong, or protecting the Boiotians from Spartan abuses. This conflicts with his previous remark. Instead of the reciprocal politics the Athenians pursued by supporting the Boiotians, it was time to join the Spartans and revert to the more righteous policies of the past: the honourable goal of protecting weaker poleis.<sup>310</sup> The author of *On the Peace* thus cemented the reputation of the Boiotians, even if it was a rhetorical exercise. The lamentations over their apparent acceptance of a peace treaty serve to confirm the importance of the neighbours in the war effort. Notwithstanding its inauthenticity, the forger accidentally demonstrated that the reputation of the Boiotians remained solid in later times for their vicissitudes and wavering commitment to the war against the Spartans to be employed in a speech of what Hellenistic rhetoricians believed would have been given in the early fourth-century Athenian Assembly. The forger nevertheless makes some errors by evoking the honourable goal of protecting the weaker poleis, in this case the Spartans, and thus misjudged the Athenian self-declared probity. In light of recent events, such as the hubristic behaviour at Aulis by Agesilaos, the Boiotians were still deemed to be the wronged polity in this scenario.

In this case, Athenian self-professed probity for justice and protecting the weak was the fulcrum that continued the Corinthian War. *Realpolitik* was less of a concern than the reputational damage the Athenians could incur from abandoning the suffering poleis and leaving them to the wanton whims of the Spartans. Reputation was elementary in resecuring the neighbourly bonds in the face of a possible disruptor. It was the valorous reputation of the Boiotians as an essential ally that allowed a later forger to use their alleged withdrawal from the war as an argument while the reputation of protecting the weak and wronged from Spartan caprices reinforced the Athenians' resolve to fight alongside their Boiotian neighbours.

<sup>309</sup> And. 3.28.

<sup>310</sup> Missiou 1992: 147–53. Azoulay 2004: 318–26 argues *charis* and *philanthropia* are interconnected aspects of the same cultural framework, meaning they were not as incompatible as Andocides portrays them to be.

### 3.4.3 Prostates of *Autonomia*: The Second Athenian Confederacy and the Thebans

After a hiatus of several years, the Athenians and the Thebans again formed an alliance to combat the Spartans. The basis for their friendship was the protection of the Boiotian exiles in Athens after the Spartan takeover of their city in 382 (Chapters 2.5, 3.2.3, 3.3). This action was widely condemned and serves as an example of the Spartan descent into amoral behaviour. One key aspect of their volatile behaviour was the enforcement of *autonomia* according to their own insights. The fraught appropriation of *autonomia* proved to be the foundational block for a more secure neighbourly arrangement.

After the King's Peace of 386 the notion of *autonomia* became an increasingly potent political tool wielded by the Spartans (Chapter 2.5). Their arbitrary implementation of the concept, combined with their military power, afforded them the freedom to abuse the term according to their own needs. The desultory manner of punishment exacted upon poleis in breach of that norm, as well as the disputes over the term in the *koinai eirenai* between 378 and 366, demonstrates the different ways of understanding and applying *autonomia* to the political landscape. The fluidity of the term lent itself to abuse by those agents policing the treaty: a 'hegemony through peace', subscribing to the potency of the Common Peace as a political weapon.<sup>311</sup> In response to Spartan abuses of the clause, a ring of resistance slowly formed, starting with the Athenian-Chian alliance of 384. The alliance is carefully worded to comply with the constraints of the King's Peace: ἐπ' ἔλευ[θε]ρίαι καὶ αὐτονομί[α]ι. A salient detail of the alliance concerns the preliminary talks. The Chians apparently initiated them, perhaps worried about Persian intentions and Spartan aloofness.<sup>312</sup>

Gradually, the seed of resistance grew into the Second Athenian Confederacy, which became a mechanism to cope with the Spartan hegemony. It employed a manifestly Athenian interpretation of *autonomia*. The Athenians expounded a view of *autonomia* that signified a polis' full independence from external and internal interference, albeit when it suited them. This meant that collecting payments (*syntaxeis*) from their allies for the maintenance of the Confederacy did not infringe upon poleis' *autonomia*, an attitude shared by several of the allies in the Confederacy.<sup>313</sup> This contrasted with the Spartan interpretation. They viewed the clause as

<sup>311</sup> Raaflaub 2010; Low 2012. <sup>312</sup> RO 20 ll. 20–1; 16–17.

<sup>313</sup> Kellogg 2007 for the alliances created by Thrasylbulus prior to the King's Peace of 386.

denoting the position of *poleis* removed from the control of an opposing power, but more importantly, integrated into their own alliance as autonomous *and* dependent allies (Chapter 2.5).<sup>314</sup> Autokles' speech at the 371 peace conference perfectly encapsulates this ambivalence:

Men of Lacedaimon, that what I am about to say will not be said to your pleasure, I am not unaware; but it seems to me that men who desire the friendship which they may establish to endure for the longest possible time, ought to point out to one another the causes of their wars. Now you always say, 'The cities must be *autonomia*,' but you are yourselves the greatest obstacle in the way of their *autonomia*. For the first stipulation you make with your allied cities is this, that they follow wherever you may lead. And yet how is this consistent with *autonomia*? And you make for yourselves enemies without taking counsel with your allies, and against those enemies you lead them; so that frequently they who are said to be independent are compelled to take the field against men most friendly to themselves. Furthermore – and there can be nothing in the world more opposed to *autonomia* – you establish governments of ten here and governments of thirty there; and in the case of these rulers your care is, not that they shall rule according to law, but that they shall be able to hold possession of their cities by force. So that you manifestly take pleasure in despotisms rather than in free governments. Again, when the King directed that the cities be independent, you showed yourselves strongly of the opinion that if the Thebans did not allow each one of their cities, not only to rule itself, but also to live under whatever laws it chose, they would not be acting in accordance with the King's writing; but when you had seized the Cadmeia, you did not permit even the Thebans themselves to be *autonomia*. The right thing, however, is that those who are going to be friends should not insist upon obtaining their full rights from others, and then show themselves disposed to grasp the most they can.<sup>315</sup>

This was the mindset behind the foundation of the Second Athenian Confederacy in 378, with the Thebans a founding member.<sup>316</sup> The Confederacy's opening clause describes the goals of the alliance: 'So that the Spartans shall allow the Greeks to be free and autonomous, and to live

<sup>314</sup> This dependence is seen in the earlier Peloponnesian League: Bolmarcich 2005. One example of disparate treatment is the Spartans' response to the Olynthians after taking the city since nothing happened to their supra-polis polity in the Chalkidike: Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.37–3.27; Diod. 15.20.3–23.3.

<sup>315</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.7–9.

<sup>316</sup> Bertoli 2003: 88–9 places the foundation of the Confederacy in the context of Spartan abuses.

at peace occupying their own territory in security, and so that the peace and friendship sworn by the Greeks and the King may be in force and endure in accordance with the agreements.<sup>317</sup> The message was clear. The Athenians (and their allies), not the Spartans, were the true champions of the King's Peace. They protected the *autonomia* and *eleutheria* of the Greek poleis. *Eleutheria* had been added to *autonomia* for emotive force in the wake of Spartan abuses.<sup>318</sup> The stone's location further emphasises this message: it stood next to the statue of Zeus Eleutherios in the Agora.<sup>319</sup> The proclamation resonated with at least some Greek poleis. Shortly after, the Chalkidians joined the Confederacy voluntarily.<sup>320</sup>

Considering the recent abuses the Thebans had suffered from the Spartan enforcement of *autonomia*, the message of protection could have been a key factor in re-establishing the military and political bonds between the neighbours. That does not mean that 'it was fear, then, that threw the Athenians and Thebans into alliance' after Sphodrias' botched raid on the Piraeus.<sup>321</sup> The slogan of liberation played a large role in the recapture of the Cadmeia: 'After this they immediately made proclamation to all the Thebans, both horsemen and hoplites, to come forth from their houses, saying that the tyrants were dead.'<sup>322</sup>

Similar pleas appear in other sources. According to Plutarch in his *Life of Pelopidas*, Pelopidas exhorted his fellow Thebans by proclaiming that they should take Thrasybulus as an example and liberate Thebes (*ἐλευθερώσωσι τὰς Θήβας*), just as Thrasybulus had expelled the Thirty (tyrants) from Athens.<sup>323</sup> The language of freedom runs through Diodorus'

<sup>317</sup> RO 22 ll. 9–14: ὅπως ἂν Λακεδ[αιμό]νιοι ἔδωσι τὸς Ἕλληνας ἐλευθε[ρ]ο[ς] [καί] αὐτόνομος ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν, τῆ[ν] χώραν] ἔχοντας ἐμ βεβαίωι τῆ[ν] ἑαυτῶν πᾶσαν, κα]ἰ [δ]π[ω]λ[ι]σ[τ]ία ἤι κ[α]ἰ δι[α]μ[ε]νήν] ἧ τε εἰρήνη καὶ ἡ φιλία ἦν ὤμοσ]α[ν] οἱ Ἕλληνες] καὶ [βα]σιλεὺς κατὰ τὰ[ς] σ]υν[θή]κας]. Accame 1941 argued this passage was deleted at some point. Investigations of the stone support this: Crowther and Matthaïou 2004–9. Perhaps the clause referring to the King's Peace was deleted after 367 when the Boiotians attempted to take the role of champions of the peace: Cargill 1981: 31–2. Or the Athenians had no use for these terms and envisioned a different character to the Confederacy. Cargill argues for a more benign Confederacy different from its fifth century predecessor, but Athenian actions in subsequent decades suggest otherwise: Hornblower 2011: 260–3.

<sup>318</sup> Bosworth 1992: 136.

<sup>319</sup> RO 22 ll. 63–72. On the cult's relation to the Persian Wars and Athenian imperialism: Raaflaub 2004: 58–117.

<sup>320</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 44 = *Harding* 38. The alliance contains interesting clauses concerning the impositions the Chalkidians will *not* be subjected to: RO p. 109. Daverio Rocchi 2008 argues the *autonomia* of all guaranteed within the King's Peace was replaced with a more limited degree of *autonomia* through the voluntary alignment of smaller poleis with the Athenians and Spartans.

<sup>321</sup> Mackil 2013: 69. <sup>322</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.9. <sup>323</sup> Plut. *Pel.* 7.2.

brief account of the episode too.<sup>324</sup> The semantic connection between tyrants and *eleutheria* cannot be overlooked in this instance, especially as it was prominent in Athenian discourse.<sup>325</sup> We may assume the message of *autonomia* and *eleutheria*, as promised by the charter of the Second Athenian Confederacy, would have found willing ears among the Thebans. Hence it is unfortunate that the Theban-Athenian treaty, agreed to just before the foundation of the Confederacy, is too fragmentary to examine the motives behind its formation.<sup>326</sup> Since the Confederacy is based on the same terms as that pact, maybe there were regulations on *eleutheria* and *autonomia*.<sup>327</sup>

Judging from the clause ‘and the *demos* shall elect three ambassadors (to go) immediately to Thebes, in order to persuade them of whatever good they can’, some issues remained to be ironed out between the two.<sup>328</sup> Scholars viewed this clause as embodying fears over the resurgence of the *koinon*.<sup>329</sup> The ambassadors were meant to convince the Thebans to join on their own behalf and not as the Boiotians.

Yet the majority of Boiotian poleis were still under the Spartan thumb, despite the re-establishment of the *boiotarchia*. I therefore believe the clause should be interpreted positively. A treaty between the Athenians and the Thessalian *koinon* features a similar clause, and Aeschines refers to it when speaking of the treaty with Philip of Macedon in 346.<sup>330</sup> The clause presumably records the Athenian intention to collaborate closely with their ally and keep in constant contact.<sup>331</sup> Moreover, the usual suspects for disrupting Atheno-Theban collaboration were not an issue. Oropos was independent after the King’s Peace, while the Plataians, Orchomenians and Thespians were under Spartan sway. The Confederacy was specifically aimed at combatting the Spartans. An expansion of Theban power within

<sup>324</sup> Diod. 15.25.2: καὶ πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων φρονούντας ἐν ταῖς ἰδίαις οἰκίαις ἐφόνευσαν, ἔτι κοιμώμενους καταλαβόντες: ἔπειτα τοὺς πολίτας ἐπὶ τὴν **ἐλευθερίαν** παρακαλέσαντες συνεργοὺς ἔσχον ἅπαντας τοὺς Θηβαίους.

<sup>325</sup> Raaflaub 2004: 58–117. <sup>326</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 40.

<sup>327</sup> RO 22 ll. 24–5: ἐπιδὲ τ[οῖς] αὐτοῖς ἐφ’ οἷσπερ Χίοι καὶ Θηβαῖοι.

<sup>328</sup> RO 22 ll. 73–5: ἐλεσθαι δὲ τὸν δῆμον πρέσβεις τρεῖς αὐτίκα μάλ[α] εἰς Θήβας, [ο]ἴτινες πείσοσι Θηβαίος δ[τ]ῆ ἂν δύνω[ν]ται ἀγαθόν. Rhodes and Osborne mention the clause does not suggest any vagaries.

<sup>329</sup> Accame 1941: 69; Cawkwell 2011: 192–3; Hornblower 2011: 241; Mackil 2013: 69.

<sup>330</sup> RO 44 ll. 46–7. It implies the Athenians initiated the alliance, rather than the Thessalians: AIO *ad loc.* Aeschin. 2.104 uses the term to denote a vagary to be exploited by Philip, who does not have to adhere to the dissolution of the Boiotian *koinon*.

<sup>331</sup> The Thebans contributed the largest part of any potential *Bundesheer*: Dreher 1995: 58–9. They performed a leading role in the *synedroi*, with a Theban proposing a vote to the allies in 372: RO 29 l. 15.

Boiotia could serve that purpose. There is no reason to believe the resurgence of the *koinon* was perceived as problematic in Athenian eyes. Depending on the Athenian interpretation of *autonomia*, the *koinon*'s formation did not violate the King's Peace.<sup>332</sup> An earlier attempt to combat the Spartans (395) unproblematically involved the *entire* Boiotian *koinon* and all of the region.

The Thebans' prominent role within the Confederacy is shown by their service in various functions, for example, as *triarchs* in the Athenian navy, proving the two worked in unison against the Spartans.<sup>333</sup> As was the case in 395, the Athenians wished to reclaim the seas. The Thebans wanted to 'rekindle the Theban business', as Xenophon put it.<sup>334</sup> These ambitions were not contradictive. The two different spheres of influence could happily coexist. Nothing suggests friction between the neighbours. On the contrary, after Sphodrias' raid the Athenians set about constructing ships and went to the help of the Boiotians zealously.<sup>335</sup>

This example demonstrates how the Athenians' reputation as the guardian of *autonomia*, triggered by Spartan abuses of the term, was the foundation of their revival as an Aegean-wide power in the 370s. Their determination to support poleis against external domination inaugurated a renewed collaboration with the Thebans, who had repeatedly been the victims of Spartan abuse.<sup>336</sup> Due to these abuses, the Athenians could proclaim to be *prostates* of the wronged poleis. They propagated *their* view of *autonomia*, realising it would resonate across the Aegean, but particularly in Thebes. Through reciprocity – protecting the Boiotian exiles in 382 – and acting as the counterfoil to the abrasive Spartans, the Athenians were able to rekindle neighbourly collaboration. In turn, this functioned as the foundation of their anti-Spartan alliance that re-granted them control over the Aegean.

Whereas the previous examples demonstrated how reputation facilitated neighbourly collaboration, the finale example will show how a bad

<sup>332</sup> It did not prohibit the 'Chalkidians from Thrace' joining later: *RO* 22 ll. 101–2; pp. 104–5.

<sup>333</sup> [Dem.] 49.14–5; 21, 48–51; 54. A catalogue of ships mentions the Thebans returned two ships: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1607 l. 49; *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1605 l.12; 1604.

<sup>334</sup> *Xen. Hell.* 5.4.46.

<sup>335</sup> *Xen. Hell.* 5.4.34: προθυμίας ἐβοήθουν. He blames the βοιωτιάζοντες for riling up the Athenians. Xenophon for the first time switches the agency from the Thebans to the Boiotians. For Atheno-Boiotian relations until 371: Buckler and Beck 2008: 33–43. The Athenians probably set out to construct 100 ships: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1604. To create a financial buffer for the coming conflict, the Athenians instituted a property tax (*eisphora*) to decrease their dependency on external sources: Christ 2007.

<sup>336</sup> An additional benefit may have been combatting of piracy in these waters: Kellogg 2007: 65–6.



reputation was an obstacle. This predicament was solved only through a determined display of trustworthiness and loyalty, revealing how essential reputation was for establishing friendly neighbourly relations.<sup>337</sup>

#### 3.4.4 How Can You Mend a Broken Heart? The Theban-Athenian Alliance of 339/8

In 339 the Macedonian king Philip gathered his forces at Elateia, awaiting preparations to invade Attica. On his way lay Boiotia. The *koinon*, though nominally his allies, already demonstrated their obstinate streak by expelling a Macedonian garrison from Nicaea and replacing it with their own. They had also allowed an Athenian mercenary force to march through Boiotia unhindered when hearing of Philip's approach to Central Greece during the recently concluded Sacred War (340–339) (Chapter 2.7).<sup>338</sup> All was forgiven in the heat of the moment. The Macedonian king sent his emissaries to Thebes to convince the *koinon* to join in the invasion or obtain free passage through its lands.<sup>339</sup> Apprehensive of the prospect of facing the two crack forces of the period, Philip's arrival at Elateia sent the Athenians into a frenzy and prompted the despatch of an embassy to Thebes to plea for an alliance. In light of the decades of uneasy enmity and the Athenian abandonment of the Boiotians after their victory at Leuktra, the mission seemed doomed from the start. The proposals from both parties split the *koinon*'s leadership. Some members threatened secession should the Athenians be favoured over Philip, an ally.<sup>340</sup> Yet the Athenians miraculously obtained the alliance.

Demosthenes, who headed the Athenian embassy, implored the Boiotians to stand against the tyrannical king and, unlike their forebears, confront the barbarian invasion to preserve Greek freedom. His speech has not survived. This reconstruction is based on his later reflections and anecdotes in *On the Crown*, but he does relate the contents of the speeches given by Philip's ambassadors. Demosthenes insists he was instrumental in achieving the alliance during the embassy's visit, a sentiment echoed by

<sup>337</sup> Most work on 'trust' in Ancient Greece focuses on economic relations or intra-polis relations, rather than the inter-polis realm: Johnstone 2011; 2017.

<sup>338</sup> Philochoros FGrH 328 F 56; Aeschin. 3.146; Din. 1.74.

<sup>339</sup> Perhaps a reminder how uncouth marching an army through one's territory without the right authorisation was; Thuc. 4.78 on the case of Brasidas marching through Thessaly.

<sup>340</sup> Marsyas FGrH 135–6 F20; Theopompos FGrH 115 F 328; Dem. 18.152–8, 168, 174–5, 178, 211–15; Diod. 16.84.3–85.1; Justin 9.3.6.

other sources.<sup>341</sup> Recently recovered fragments from Hyperides' *Against Diondas* correct this interpretation of events. They do not negate Demosthenes' value as the conductor of the alliance, but provide a more nuanced interpretation.<sup>342</sup> An analysis of these sources reveals the importance of honour, standing, social memory and mutual trust to understand the full complexity of the eventual alliance, rather than an over-reliance on Demosthenes and his invocation of rectifying past wrongs.

In *On the Crown* Demosthenes defends Ctesiphon against Aeschines' attacks, after Ctesiphon had donated his speaking time to him. Demosthenes used the opportunity to defend his anti-Macedonian policy and vehemently attack those who leaned differently. The orator explores how he had proposed an embassy to Thebes, led by himself as a *proxenos* of that polis.<sup>343</sup> It was his way of stressing his political contributions to Athenian policy. By pointing out the decrees he was associated with and which he had proposed, Demosthenes aimed to accrue social capital in Athens to demonstrate his contributions to the defence of Athens by creating a useful alliance.<sup>344</sup> In years prior, despite the inimical nature of neighbourly relations, Demosthenes had paved the way for a reconciliation by countering the dominant narrative in Athens, which viewed the Thebans as archetypical traitors of Hellas.

In the 350s and 340s Demosthenes repeatedly tried to combat that image.<sup>345</sup> In some of his speeches he hints at a possible rapprochement between the neighbours, or even an alliance. He mentions the increased friction among the Boiotians regarding Philip's actions and their doubts over their alliance with the king. Demosthenes had to tread lightly, as the negative image of the Thebans in Athens persisted – he even refers to it on two occasions – yet these occur at a time when Philip's threat is less palpable than at the end of the decade.<sup>346</sup> In *On Behalf of the*

<sup>341</sup> Dem. 18.211–15; Theopompos FGrH 115 F 328 = *Plut.* Dem.18.2.

<sup>342</sup> Carey et al. 2008; Tchernetska 2005.

<sup>343</sup> Aeschin. 2.141–3 mentions Demosthenes was a *proxenos*. <sup>344</sup> Liddel 2020: II 77–80.

<sup>345</sup> The first is *On the Symmories* of 354/3 (MacDowell 2009: 142–3; Dem. 14.33–4). The second is *On Behalf of the Megalopolitans* of 353/2 (Badian 2000a: 30–1; Karavounis 2002: 124–73; Schaefer 1885–7: I 513–19) where he argues for a possible alliance (Dem. 16.21; 25–6). The third is *On the Peace* (346); Dem. 5.14–15. Finally, *On the Chersonese* and the *Third Philippic*, both delivered in 341; Dem. 8.63; 9.27.

<sup>346</sup> In his *Against Leptines* (Dem. 14.109) from 355/4, Demosthenes jibes at the Thebans for their treatment of Orchomenos: Canevaro 2016: *ad loc*; Kremmydas 2012: 378–9. In the *Second Philippic*, he portrays the Thebans as always aiding foreign powers, unlike the Athenians, who selflessly counter any foreign threat (Dem. 6.9–12). But this probably had more to do with the Athenian self-image than any fierce condemnation of the Boiotians.

*Megapolitans* (346) Demosthenes stresses that the Boiotians are more trustworthy allies than the Spartans, already planting the seeds for their solid reputation.<sup>347</sup> In later years he stresses the Boiotians are misled by Philip rather than being devious traitors.<sup>348</sup> It is within this cognitive sphere that Demosthenes convinced his countrymen of the need to ally with the *koinon*. He realises that sixty years of inculcated and repeated abuse is hard to refashion but manages to do so with the threat of Philip looming. The embassy of 339 to Thebes meant Demosthenes had other minds besides those of his countrymen to convince. The orator had a tough act to follow, as the Macedonian ambassadors were allowed to speak first on account of the alliance with the *koinon*:

When the Thebans held their assembly, they introduced Philip's ambassadors first, on the ground that they were in the position of allies. They came forward and made their speech, full of eulogy of Philip, and of incrimination of Athens, and recalled everything you had ever done in antagonism to Thebes. The gist of the speech was that they were to show gratitude to Philip for every good turn he had done to them, and to punish you for the injuries they had suffered, in whichever of two ways they chose – either by giving him a free passage, or by joining in the invasion of Attica. They proved, as they thought, that, if their advice were taken, cattle, slaves, and other loot from Attica would come into Boiotia, whereas the result of the proposals they expected from us would be that Boiotia would be ravaged by the war.<sup>349</sup>

Their words fell on deaf ears, however, as Demosthenes saved the day with an incredible speech. Unfortunately, his speech has not survived, which would give some insights into the arguments used. Perhaps these involved invocations of honour or a possibility to rectify the past wrongs during the Persian Wars by now committing to the defence of Greece (Chapter 5.2.9). He was successful and it resulted in the alliance with the Boiotians. At least, that is the version he presents, arguably to strengthen his own social capital and defend his political record in the wake of the defeat at Chaironeia.<sup>350</sup>

<sup>347</sup> Dem. 16.21: πολὺ δὴ κάλλιον καὶ ἄμεινον τὴν μὲν Θηβαίων συμμαχίαν αὐτοῦς παραλαβεῖν; Dem. 16.29: 'I am surprised that some of you are afraid of the enemies of Sparta becoming allies of the Thebans, and yet see nothing to fear in their subjugation by the Lacedaimonians, forgetting the practical lesson to be learned from the past, that the Thebans always use these allies against the Lacedaimonians, whereas the Lacedaimonians, when they had them at command, used them against us.'

<sup>348</sup> Dem. 5.14–15; 8.63. <sup>349</sup> Dem. 18.213. <sup>350</sup> Liddel 2020: II 79.

His version seems to be vindicated by Theopompos' verdict of the event. The fourth-century historian's work partially survives in Plutarch's biography of Demosthenes:

Well, then, the Thebans, in their calculations, were not blind to their own interests, but each of them had before his eyes the terrors of war, since their losses in the Phocian war were still fresh; however, the power of the orator, as Theopompos says, fanned up their courage and inflamed their honourable ambition and obscured all other considerations, so that, casting away fear and calculation and feelings of obligation, they were rapt away by his words into the path of honour.<sup>351</sup>

The evocation of honour and standing is pivotal. Theopompos' account suggests the *koinon* overwhelmingly moved to support the Athenians. Plutarch probably exaggerated that Demosthenes was the key cog in the anti-Macedonian machine by directing its strategy, contrary to the actual terms of the alliance. Yet the observation that 'rational' considerations and their own interests were subsidiary to other interests remains valid.<sup>352</sup> This undermines the notion that fear dictated interstate interactions. Theopompos' evaluation supports the idea that Demosthenes used arguments from social memory and past events.

Words, however, were not enough to convince the Boiotians. Demosthenes portrays an advantageous account of his own role, and although seemingly confirmed by Theopompos, Gordon Shrimpton demonstrated that Theopompos' fragment is largely crafted on the basis of Demosthenes' *On the Peace*.<sup>353</sup> While Plutarch may have sprinkled in some elements of his own, it certainly prohibits ascribing too much influence to Demosthenes and his performance in Thebes. Further undermining his testimony is the decree allegedly moved before the embassy. It is filled with elements of social memory and relates past benefits rendered by the Athenians to the Heraclids or Oedipus.<sup>354</sup> But the decree Demosthenes mentions is either spurious or – worse – a fabrication, meaning his role in arranging embassies with the Boiotians can be duly doubted.<sup>355</sup> A final nail in the coffin comes from Aeschines' *Against Ctesiphon*, delivered in 330:

I think that not Phrynondas and not Eurybatos, nor any other of the traitors of ancient times ever proved himself such a juggler and cheat as this man, who, oh earth and heaven, oh ye gods and men – if any men of

<sup>351</sup> Plut. *Dem.* 18.2–3 = Theopompos FGrH 115 F 328. <sup>352</sup> Steinbock 2013: 269–71.

<sup>353</sup> Shrimpton 1991: 171–80. For Plutarch's possible additions: Flower 1994: 144–5.

<sup>354</sup> *Dem.* 18.181–7. <sup>355</sup> Spurious: Yunis 2001: 29–31; fraudulent: Canevaro 2013: 310–18.

you will listen to the truth – dares to look you in the face and say that the Thebans actually made the alliance with you, not because of the crisis, not because of the fear that was impending over them, not because of your reputation (οὐ διὰ τὴν ὑμετέραν δόξαν), but because of Demosthenes' declamations! And yet in other days many men who were trusted by the Thebans (πρεσβείας ἐπρέσβευσαν εἰς Θήβας οἱ μάλιστα οἰκείως ἐκείνοις διακείμενοι) had gone on missions to them; first, Thrasymachus of Kollytos, a man trusted in Thebes as no other ever was; again, Thrason of Erchia, *proxenos* of the Thebans; Leodamas of Acharnai, a speaker no less able than Demosthenes, and more to my taste; Archedemos of Pelekes, a powerful speaker, and one who had met many political dangers for the sake of the Thebans; Aristophon of Azenia, who had long been subject to the charge of having sympathised with the Boiotians; Pyrrhandros of Anaphlystos, who is still living. Yet no one of these was ever able to persuade them to be friends with you. (my adopted translation from the Loeb edition)<sup>356</sup>

Of course, we are dealing with Demosthenes' nemesis. He efficaciously downplays Demosthenes' rhetorical influence by enumerating previous Boiotian friends and *proxenoi* who were unable to sway opinion. It aims to contrast Demosthenes with his predecessors in order to drag his reputation through the mud, especially in the wake of Thebes' destruction (335) while Demosthenes and the Athenians stood idly by.<sup>357</sup> More pertinent to the current investigation, however, is that Aeschines pinpoints his polis' reputation as one of the contributing factors to arranging the alliance, contrary to Demosthenes' claims.

This is where the new Hypereides fragments come into play. The conclusion of the alliance was a prolonged and delicate process. Far from immediately materialising after Demosthenes' speech, the Boiotians played a patient game, hoping to extract the best possible terms from their neighbours. If their terms were unacceptable, they could choose the Macedonians' side. Sensing the desperation of their neighbours, they demanded 'preposterous' terms and sufficient proof of Athenian alacrity. That proof came late and only then was the alliance concluded, according to Hypereides in his speech delivered in early 334:<sup>358</sup>

When you heard this from us, you travelled from Eleusis to Thebes; and you were so well disposed and friendly towards each other that having

<sup>356</sup> Aeschin. 3.137–9.

<sup>357</sup> Liddel 2020: II 241 argues that decrees were easy to attack and we see an example of that here.

<sup>358</sup> Horváth 2014: 10–23. Rhodes 2009 gives a later date (mid-334), but that does not undermine my argument.

themselves entered they received your army into their city and their houses into the presence of their wives and children. And you, though you had not yet received any firm assurances from them, sent your force there while Philip was close at hand; and at that point Philip went off, without achieving any of his goals. We and the Thebans came back and rapidly confirmed the alliance. (trans. Carey et al.)

This different narrative, which was overwhelmed in later sources by the strength of Demosthenes' account, is not necessarily anti-Demosthenic. Hypereides was after all his ally.<sup>359</sup> Demosthenes' omission of the march is understandable. According to Peter Liddel, one of the primary themes of his *symbolletic* oratory is the idea that Athenian decrees were empty rhetoric, since their military behaviour failed to live up to the expectations of these decrees.<sup>360</sup> Admitting that the Athenians *actually* militarily backed up their decree with the *koinon* would contradict his argument. Hypereides' account demonstrates that the conclusion of the alliance was not a foregone conclusion. It was based on an Athenian army appearing on the Boiotians' doorstep. A committed defence of Boiotia was the *koinon*'s most important demand, as the proposals from the Athenians and Philip split their leadership. Keeping in mind the troubled recent nature of neighbourly relations, the reluctance to abandon an ally for the sake of an enemy was not a trivial matter, and broached the vital issue of trust in political relationships.

The spectre of Leuktra must have been haunting Boiotian minds. The *koinon* had been isolated from the peace treaty of 371 and the Spartans marched their army into Boiotia, but this elicited no response from their Athenian allies. This was perhaps not the crux of the matter. One can argue the Spartan invasion was a calculated risk by the Thebans. It was the aftermath of the battle that cemented the legacy of dyadic distrust. Rather than rally to the banner of their wronged ally, the Athenians stayed aloof and added injury to insult by allying with the Spartans in 369 (Chapter 3.1.3). Their abandonment of the Theban pact – in both word and deed – broke the covenant of trust. Thirty years may have healed some wounds, but the *koinon* required evidence from the Athenians that a repeat of Leuktra was not in the cards. The Athenian tergiversation lay at the root of that distrust.

The ambivalent stance towards a potential rapprochement translated not only into the request for a show of faith from the Athenians, but

<sup>359</sup> Guth 2014. For the influence of Demosthenes' legacy: Lambert 2018: 185–7.

<sup>360</sup> Liddel 2020: II 169.

equally into the unusual terms of the alliance. The terms were derided by Aeschines as being heavily skewed towards the Boiotians:

and when he had gained this point he betrayed all Boiotia to the Thebans by writing in the decree, 'If any city refuse to follow Thebes, the Athenians shall aid the Boiotians in Thebes,' cheating with words and altering the facts, as he is wont to do; as though, forsooth, when the Boiotians should be suffering in fact, they would be content with Demosthenes' fine phrases, rather than indignant at the outrageous way in which they had been treated; and, secondly, he laid two thirds of the costs of the war upon you, whose danger was more remote, and only one third on the Thebans (in all this acting for bribes); and the leadership by sea he caused to be shared equally by both; but all the expenditure he laid upon you and the leadership by land, if we are not to talk nonsense, he carried away bodily and handed it over to Thebes.<sup>361</sup>

Accusations of bribery are overdrawn, but the alliance does seem to have been a golden deal for the Thebans in terms of costs and leadership. Considering the circumstances of both parties, the concessions by the Athenians have been viewed in a more favourable light by scholars analysing the terms.<sup>362</sup> The division of the financial burden is unsurprising. Athens was a wealthier polity than the *koinon*, who were hampered by the costs of the Sacred War.<sup>363</sup> Carrying the costs of equipping a fleet had proven to be a thorny issue during their membership of the Second Athenian Confederacy. The most salient feature, however, and the one echoed in the Demosthenic and Theopompean narratives, is the leadership role assumed by the *koinon*. This aspect touches upon another facet of the creation of the alliance: honour.

In my opinion, this is what Theopompos refers to. After repeated rejections of the Boiotians' leading role in Helladic affairs, their leading role in the alliance contra Philip finally affirms their hegemonic status in Greece, as preservers and leaders of Greek freedom against Macedonian oppression. It was a role they had been craving for decades, as evidenced by their dedications in Delphi and Boiotia (Chapters 5.1.3, 5.2.8). The accruable symbolic capital from leading an alliance to victory against Philip

<sup>361</sup> Aeschin. 3.142–3. It is interesting to follow Liddel 2020: II 242–3 that there was awareness among Athenian audiences and orators for the non-Athenian audience for their decrees.

<sup>362</sup> Mosley 1971; Hunt 2010: 103 point out how these terms differ from contemporary alliances.

<sup>363</sup> Schachter 2016a: 113–32. Athens' state revenue and per capita income equalled or exceeded its fifth-century height, even though its citizen population never regained the fifth-century level (Ober 2008: 253).

could be translated into a lasting legacy afterwards.<sup>364</sup> Defeating the new threat to Greek *eleutheria* would overshadow any lingering doubts about Boiotian sturdiness in the face of foreign oppression. Similar to the Athenians, who built their empires on their Persian War credentials, the Boiotians could do the same, but against a nearer and more dangerous foe.

It was therefore neither fear nor material gains that dominated the Thebans' considerations for a neighbourly alliance.<sup>365</sup> Rather, it was their standing and honour, as well as a practical show of faith to solder the broken chain of trust. The wound was further sutured by the advantageous terms of the alliance. These should not solely be viewed as inane greediness from the Boiotians to extract as much as they could from their neighbours; it was an essential part of re-establishing the broken trust. A further conclusion can be drawn from this episode. That the *koinon* deserted their ally Philip, irrespective of their strained relationship, and re-aligned with the Athenians after thirty years of hostility demonstrates that a mutual inimical attitude was not a given. The right circumstances inoculated the neighbours against a preordained notion of dislike even after prolonged bouts of enmity. The Athenian concessions show they were aware of how to apply the right medication to the wound of distrust and proved themselves to be remarkable healers of neighbourly hostility.

### 3.5 Cultic Connections

Cultic connections are a final convention of establishing friendly relations. These could be used to solidify relations or to confirm and validate treaties. The Athenians and Boiotians were no strangers to the benefits of employing cultic ties to mend relations. In the fourth century, the Boiotians utilised such ties – by either exporting their own or importing them from abroad – to strengthen bonds with poleis around the Aegean.<sup>366</sup> The Athenians introduced the Asklepios cult from Epidauros to validate the Peace of Nicias between the two poleis during the Peloponnesian War.<sup>367</sup> These also served more quotidian interests of the city's inhabitants but could act as beacons of relations between communities.

<sup>364</sup> For symbolic capital in Greek interstate relations: Crane 1998: 105–24.

<sup>365</sup> Kelly 1980 argues Philip's alliance with the Persian King Ochus precipitated the Theban decision, but see Buckler and Beck 2008: 243 for the impossibility of that claim.

<sup>366</sup> Schachter 2014b; Schipporeit 2013: 23–4. <sup>367</sup> Van Wijk 2016.





Figure 3.2 Places mentioned in this section.

Is there a similar example of cultic exchange between the Athenians and Boiotians? (See Figure 3.2.) One possibility, though speculative, is the Athena Areia cult in Plataia and Acharnai. In Boiotia the cult is only attested in Plataia, whereas Acharnai is the sole Athenian location with evidence of this cult.<sup>368</sup> The warm bonds between the Plataians and Athenians are well known. Perhaps a cultic exchange took place at the time of the second alliance in the late sixth century (Chapter 3.1.1). In this early phase the Athenians could have forged a deeper relation with their allies, especially ones living at the crossroads between the Peloponnese and Boiotia. The reason for Acharnai would then be less obvious, but perhaps the martial valour of the deme had come to the fore in the wars of the late sixth century.<sup>369</sup>

Another sacral connection between Athens and Plataia might bear more fruit. If Plutarch's testimony of the Battle of Plataia in 479 is accepted, the

<sup>368</sup> RO 88; COB I 127–8. The sanctuary is unattested and there are no traces of cult activity in Plataia. Paus. 1.28.5 refers to an altar of Athena Areia on the Areopagus, dedicated by Orestes after his acquittal, but nothing more can be said about it. A cult in central Athens would strengthen the cultic connection between the poleis.

<sup>369</sup> For this martial valour: Kellogg 2013b.

Plataians removed their border *horoi* with the Athenians prior to the battle. This created a contiguous territory, in accordance with an oracle that proclaimed the battle would be won on Athenian soil in the plain of Eleusinian Demeter and Kore.<sup>370</sup> An abandoned shrine dedicated to the goddesses was found on the Atheno-Plataian border, implying the cult was established there: ‘By conference and investigation with these he discovered that near Hysiai, at the foot of Mount Kithairon, there was a very ancient temple bearing the names of Eleusinian Demeter and Kore.’<sup>371</sup>

The story is likely a retrojection or later tradition, but there are clues of a Demeter cult in the territory of Plataia. An early fifth-century dedication to Demeter has survived, but without an epithet.<sup>372</sup> Herodotus describes the remains of a temple that had hitherto remained unidentified.<sup>373</sup> Equally problematic is whether the epithet Eleusinia was extended to the goddess before or after the battle. If it occurred after the battle, the epithet could have been granted in honour of the protecting goddess and her support against the Persians, as Deborah Boedeker has shown.<sup>374</sup> The sudden rise and swift decline of the cult – it seems to have ended long before Plutarch wrote about it, and the lack of architectural remains appears to vindicate that impression – is striking. The vicissitudes suffered by the Plataians throughout the fifth and fourth centuries can explain why the fortunes of the cult waned with that of the town, especially if it was a token of Athenian protection.

The identification of the cult as one derived from Eleusis probably reflects a later tradition.<sup>375</sup> If not, the shrine may have been a late sixth-century vestige, with the sanctuary demarcating the border, a role frequently fulfilled by temples to Demeter. In other contexts the cult was used to articulate kinship ties or, more forcibly, the expansion of the Athenian sphere of influence.<sup>376</sup> The Plataian case could represent an older, forgotten extension of territorial claims by the Athenians or, conversely, a Boiotian

<sup>370</sup> Plut. *Arist.* 11.8: ‘And besides, that the oracle might leave no rift in the hope of victory, the Plataians voted, on motion of Arimnestos, to remove the boundaries of Plataia on the side toward Attica, and to give this territory to the Athenians, that so they might contend in defence of Hellas on their own soil, in accordance with the oracle.’

<sup>371</sup> Plut. *Arist.* 11.6. <sup>372</sup> Pritchett 1979; Schachter 2016a: 168–71.

<sup>373</sup> Hdt. 9.57.2; 62.2; 65.2; 69.1; 101. The temple’s location is disputed. A Russian traveller account from the late nineteenth century may help with a possible identification: A. Mozhajsky in *Tierrasias* 49.1 (2019).

<sup>374</sup> COB I 154. Boedeker 2007.

<sup>375</sup> Beck forthcoming suggests it may have stemmed from Eleusis.

<sup>376</sup> Fragoulaki 2013: 136–7. Bowden 2007 dismisses the dissemination of the cult as a later invention.

claim to Eleusis in the south (Chapter 4.1.1).<sup>377</sup> The reference to separate territories by Plutarch conforms with the outline of the Plataian-Athenian alliance (Chapter 3.1.1) and may provide a kernel of truth with regard to a cultic exchange under Athenian aegis. The cult then articulated the Atheno-Plataian border and was part of an effort to strengthen their relationship in the late sixth century. Herodotus' account of the Plataian *chora* suggests it was separate from Attica. Combined with the declaration of the Plataike as 'neutral soil' after the Persian Wars – thus reinstating the separation between Attica and the Plataike – there is reason to accept parts of Plutarch's account (Chapter 4.1.1).<sup>378</sup> The cult may have been used as a regulator of the borders or as a site of negotiation for peaceful interactions between communities, in line with Jeremy McInerney's and François de Polignac's depiction of border sanctuaries.<sup>379</sup> If we were to accept Plutarch's testimony, a cultic exchange between the Athenians and Plataians at the end of the sixth century could have taken place to strengthen the bonds between the two polities.

The same holds for Eleutherai. This border town on the edges of the Mazi plain became part of the Athenian nexus sometime between 507 and 501 (Chapter 4.1.1). The town's main deity was Dionysos, whose cult found its way to Athens. The god's epithet, Eleutherios, betrays its origins.<sup>380</sup> The sanctuary was located near the theatre on the South Slope of the Akropolis. Its earliest archaeological evidence stems from the first quarter of the fifth century.<sup>381</sup> Pausanias provides an etymology for the Athenian cult. He describes various aspects of the relationship between the Athenians and Eleutherians but also mentions one striking element:

The reason why the people of Eleutherai came over was not because they were reduced by war, but because they desired to share Athenian citizenship and hated the Thebans. In this plain is a temple of Dionysos, from which the old wooden image was carried off to Athens. The image at Eleutherai at the present day is a copy of the old one.<sup>382</sup>

The Eleutherians never became Athenian citizens, so Pausanias' source either describes a later situation or fabricates this motivation. In addition, recent epigraphic material from Thebes portrays a more convivial relationship between the Eleutherians and Thebans (Chapter 4.1.1). As Robert

<sup>377</sup> Daly 2015: 57 n. 88.      <sup>378</sup> Hdt. 6.108.      <sup>379</sup> De Polignac 2011; 2017; McInerney 2006.

<sup>380</sup> Connor 1996 views the cult in relation to freedom from tyranny. Raaflaub 2000 refuted this notion. The lack of tribal organisation in the City Dionysia could indicate an earlier tradition: Sourvinou-Inwood 1994.

<sup>381</sup> Paleothoros 2012: 51–67.      <sup>382</sup> Paus. 1.38.8.

Parker notes, if the introduction of the cult in Athens occurred after their takeover of Eleutherai, carrying off the image of the town's prominent deity was rather uncouth.<sup>383</sup> They were obviously capable of this behaviour, but there are not many similar occurrences of such blatant theft to establish a cultic relation. Irene Polinskaya propounds a different view: 'Whenever the Greeks succeeded in making the gods of others their own, by becoming owners *de facto* or proclaiming ownership of these gods *de iure* (gods move, boundaries stay, or boundaries move, gods stay – in both cases, owners change), they showed their respect to these gods by traditional means of veneration.'<sup>384</sup> Judged from that perspective, the Athenians were perhaps not that abrasive, but willing enablers of a cult. The decision to carry off the *xoanon* and establish a cult at the Akropolis was not a truculent act, but an appreciation of the town's deities, attached to the land.

Another etymological story holds that Pegasos of Eleutherai brought the cult and image from Eleutherai to Athens but was spurned, only for the Athenians to incur the wrath of Dionysos in the form of genital disease before caving in.<sup>385</sup> This is more in line with other Dionysiac introductions, and would better reflect the relationship between Athens and this border town, which claimed to be Dionysos' birthplace.<sup>386</sup> It details a more collaborative effort, despite the earlier dismissal of the cult, and reflects a better method for Athens to integrate this town. Some scholars doubt the connection between the introduction of the cult and political overtures by the Athenians, which is plausible.<sup>387</sup> After all, cause and effect do not have to correlate in this event. Nevertheless, the claims to be the god's birthplace and the Athenians' *de facto* confirmation and celebration thereof in the wake of recent quarrels with the Boiotians would make the introduction of the cult all the more potent. If that interpretation is correct, the introduction of Dionysos and his cult was meant to establish a stronger link with the Eleutherians and would be a means of forging more permanent connections between the Athenian *astu* and its borderlands.

A more salient case for cultic exchange between the neighbours comes from Herodotus. He provides an anecdote about the retrieval of an Apollo statue from Delos to Delion in Boiotia. The interpretation of this story reveals the desire of scholars to assume a hostile viewpoint in every vein of neighbourly interactions, even in stories of cultic embrace between the two regions. Scholars previously assumed there were inveterate inimical feelings

<sup>383</sup> Parker 1996: 94–5. <sup>384</sup> Polinskaya 2010: 67–8. See, e.g., Hdt. 5.82–6.

<sup>385</sup> Schol. ad. Ar. *Acharnians* 242. <sup>386</sup> Diod. 3.66.1; 4.2.6.

<sup>387</sup> Parker 1996: 94; Pickard-Cambridge 1958: 57–8; Sourvinou-Inwood 1994: 273–5.

at play, translating into an interpretation of the retrieval of the Apollo statue as an overt display of Theban assertiveness towards the southern neighbours.<sup>388</sup> Herodotus recounts the following:

Datis journeyed with his army to Asia, and when he arrived at Mykonos he saw a vision in his sleep. What that vision was is not told, but as soon as day broke Datis made a search of his ships. He found in a Phoenician ship a gilded image of Apollo and asked where this plunder had been taken. Learning from what temple it had come, he sailed in his own ship to Delos. The Delians had now returned to their island, and Datis set the image in the temple, instructing the Delians to carry it away to Theban Delion, on the coast opposite Chalkis. Datis gave this order and sailed away, but the Delians never carried that statue away; twenty years later the Thebans brought it to Delion by command of an oracle.<sup>389</sup>

These scholars interpret this as the Thebans asserting their domination over the coastal region, proclaiming their revival as the guarantor of Boiotian interests and perhaps taking an oblique swipe at the Athenians, who were in control of Delos at the time.<sup>390</sup> They connected this action to a loss of Theban prestige because of their medism. This re-dedication offered the perfect opportunity to vindicate themselves. The Theban agency is peculiar in this scenario, as the temple later lay in Tanagra's territory.<sup>391</sup>

Albert Schachter argued differently.<sup>392</sup> Delos was firmly under Athenian control. To claim the statue without an appropriate response from its de facto controllers, and make audacious claims towards the sanctuary, renders unilateral Theban agency unlikely. In light of the circumstances, Athenian involvement in the affair seems more probable. The retrieval of the statue was then more of a rapprochement. That interpretation finds support in the Boiotian evidence. Sherds indicating a cult of Herakles on Tanagraian territory suggest the Delion area was under Theban sway around 470. This cult was frequently used by the Thebans to appropriate

<sup>388</sup> Buck 1979: 142; Demand 1982: 27; Mackil 2013: 189–92. <sup>389</sup> Hdt. 6.118.

<sup>390</sup> Buck 1979: 142; Demand 1982: 27; Mackil 2013: 189–92. Diod. 11.81.1–2 for their medism vis-à-vis other Boiotian communities. But that applies only to Plataia and Thespias, as the rest medized. Scott 2005: 397–8 says nothing of any motives. Delos was a natural hub on the maritime routes leading from Boiotia and Attica to Asia Minor (Arnaud 2005: 57; Morton 2001: 175), so the island was a logical choice to leave the statue.

<sup>391</sup> Schachter 2016a: 80–112.

<sup>392</sup> Schachter 2016a: 69–70. Mackil 2013: 188–90 uses Athenian ownership to indicate the hostile intentions behind the dedication, but why would the Thebans look to Delos for this retrieval, rather than invent a different story, especially as Herodotus relies on Theban sources: *COB* I 44–7 *ad loc* contra Scott 2005 *ad loc*, who refers to a possible Persian or Ionian source?

their claims, as Albert Schachter points out, implying there was less need to validate their claim to Delion, if these sherds reflect such a territorial vindication.<sup>393</sup>

I would argue the cultic exchange was the result of an even closer tie since the cult of Apollo at Delos was the religious centre of the Delian League and bound its members together. The sanctuary's network stretched across the Aegean and formed an integral part of the Athenian propaganda to create a unified political and ethnic front against the Persians. Even if Delos enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy at the time, combined with the possibility of smuggling in the Cyclades, it would be remarkable if the Athenians would be unaware of this retrieval due to their control of the island.<sup>394</sup> Symbolically connecting Delos to Delion implies a conscious action on behalf of the Athenians and Thebans, as I cannot envision the Thebans acting on their own.<sup>395</sup> The story could be designated a ruse if Herodotus relied on Theban sources, but considering his bias, he would have stressed the diabolical intensions behind it.

His encomiastic writing on all things Athenian is another factor. The story of the plunder at Delion is connected to the Battle of Marathon, the grandest Athenian victory. This momentous achievement formed the core of the polis' pride as it was *their* victory, unlike other contested victories against the Persians. This allowed the Athenians to omit medizers in their recollection, perhaps offering an opening for the Thebans.<sup>396</sup> If the re-dedication was meant as an affront to the Athenians, Herodotus would have mentioned the abuse of the glorious achievement against the Persians by the people he perpetually describes as archetypical medizers, especially if he relied on Theban sources. His neglect in rectifying this story leads me to surmise that the story concerns a rapprochement between the two neighbours.

The cultic connections between Delion and Delos are well known. Delion was arguably a 'branch' of the Delos Apollo cult.<sup>397</sup> The site was not perceived as part of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, but was subsequently

<sup>393</sup> Schachter 2016a: 105. For the sherds: Andreiomenou 1985; 2007: 31–44; Vottéro 2001: 183 dates these deposits.

<sup>394</sup> Smarczyk 1990. Chankowski 2008: 9–10; 29–74; Trümper 2016: 231–49 describe the extent of Athenian control over the island. Constantakopoulou 2007 lists up to twenty sanctuaries of Delian Apollo throughout the Aegean.

<sup>395</sup> Delos and Delion had a possible shared origin: Chankowski 2008: 66; *COB* I 44–7.

<sup>396</sup> Gehrke 2007; Jung 2006: 27–224.

<sup>397</sup> Constantakopoulou 2007 lists the disseminated sanctuaries connected to Delian Apollo across the Aegean. Chankowski 2008: 9–10, 29–74; Trümper 2016: 231–49 on Athenian control over the Delian sanctuary.

written into the Boiotian version of the myth, with Apollo stopping in Tanagra on his way from Delos.<sup>398</sup> Thus the Boiotians purposely integrated themselves into the Delian myth. Later sources attest to Artemis and Leto's worship alongside Apollo at Delion.<sup>399</sup> How far back this tradition goes is unclear. Its earliest attestation comes from Pindaric fragments, suggesting a date no earlier than the 490s. Attempts have been made to connect these fragments and to integrate Delion into Apolline myth in Herodotus' story, but these remain tantalising suggestions.<sup>400</sup> Giambattista D'Alessio suggests Pindar wrote a *Hymn to Apollo* for this occasion and opted to connect Herakles with the foundation of the cult and the retrieval of the statue.<sup>401</sup> Considering the time of performance and the central role of Thebes' most famous native son, Pindar's poem may have been a rehabilitation effort. Pindar employs Herakles in a similar fashion elsewhere.<sup>402</sup> The insertion of Herakles aimed to showcase Thebes' rightful place in the Panhellenic realm of myth to remind others of its prominence in the Greek *imaginaire*. Its performance at Delion would not prohibit people from other poleis attending. Some Delians and Athenians could plausibly be present at this occasion. Reminding the audience of Herakles' work in establishing the cult at Delos (and elsewhere) would demonstrate how ingrained Herakles was in the events of the Greek world, and how subsequently the Thebans were too, as exemplified by their retrieval of an Apolline statue from Delos with the approval of the Athenians.

Could we take it a step further and argue that the inclusion of the Thebans, or Boiotians, into the Delian-Attic League was expressed by the rededication of Apollo's statue at Delion (Chapters 2.3, 3.2.3)? Delos was the political centre of the League where the allies convened. The integration of Delion into the network of Delian Apollo forged a stronger bond between the two sanctuaries and, in turn, the regions they belonged to.<sup>403</sup> Combined with the Athenians' fervent use of Delian Apollo as a propagandistic tool, the conscious connection between the sanctuaries could have promoted new political ties.<sup>404</sup>

<sup>398</sup> Mackil 2013: 189–92. Thuc. 4.76.4 places Delion in the Tanagraike.

<sup>399</sup> IG VII 20 l.12; Paus. 9.20.1, 22.1; 10.28.6; Schol. ad. Pind. *Ol.* 7.154a; Livy 31.45.6–8; 35.51. The Scholiast tradition of Pindar infers the Delia as one of Pindar's duly-order Boiotian games.

<sup>400</sup> D'Alessio 2009. <sup>401</sup> D'Alessio 2009. <sup>402</sup> Hurst 2018.

<sup>403</sup> The maritime outlook of the League connects Delion too, as the sanctuary was located near the sea front: Thuc. 4.76.4; Schachter 2016a: 85. Delos as the political centre: Thuc. 1.96.2.

<sup>404</sup> It may have had the benefit of involving Asia Minor's Aeolian Greeks, including the Lesbian poleis, as the Boiotians had shared in the colonisation of the region: Fossey 2019: 88–96.

The story allowed the Thebans to embed themselves in the Panhellenist, revanchist discourse. They could now pose as victims of Persian aggression by linking the raid of Delion to the prelude of the Battle of Marathon.<sup>405</sup> In this narrative, their recent medism could be forgotten. By offering a new chapter to the Marathon story, the Thebans meshed their story with the dominant discourse of the Delian League. Whether the evidence can be stretched this far is uncertain, but there is no reason to argue for a hostile interpretation of this event, even if the Thebans dedicated a new temple to commemorate the retrieval in 470.<sup>406</sup>

The Athenians perhaps returned the favour. A *horos* stone, delineating a sanctuary to Athena Itonia, was found in the Athenian Agora. Based on its lettering, the inscription was dated to 475–450.<sup>407</sup> Despite other plausible reasons for its presence in Athens, the cult was one of the primary Boiotian cults, intimately tied to the story of Boiotian ethnogenesis.<sup>408</sup>

The interpretation of the cult's introduction has nevertheless been troubled by the perception of contiguous neighbourly hostility. Gerald Lalonde recently dismissed the possibility of the cult's introduction through Boiotian involvement, instead preferring Thessalian connections.<sup>409</sup> His reasons for repudiating a Boiotian provenance is that 'since there is no ancient testimony or modern scholarly argument that the Athenians received the cult from Boiotia or the Cycladic island of Amorgos, the other two places of its significant manifestation, scholars have logically turned to Thessaly as the likely source'.<sup>410</sup> Yet there is no source attesting a Thessalian origin either.<sup>411</sup> The argument for Thessaly is 'based on evidence that is circumstantial but not without weight', while he adds in a footnote that

though its proximity to Attica might otherwise make Boiotia a plausible source of the Athenian cult, the relations of Boiotia and Athens in much of the sixth and early fifth centuries, the likely period of the cult's transmission, were characterized by a chronic hostility that was not very

<sup>405</sup> For the malleability of social memory, one can think of the Plataians, whose participation at Marathon was slowly forgotten in fourth-century Athenian discourse: Steinbock 2013: 138–9; Chapter 5.2.3.

<sup>406</sup> Pitteros 2000: 603 prefers a later fifth-century date for the temple.

<sup>407</sup> *Agora* XIX H1: [Ἄθ]ενοίαιος [Ἰτ]οβείαιος.

<sup>408</sup> Kowalzig 2007: 328–91; Kühr 2006; Larson 2007a. <sup>409</sup> Lalonde 2019: 167–204.

<sup>410</sup> Lalonde 2019: 183.

<sup>411</sup> Mili 2015: 231–3 makes the case that the cult stems from Philia, but was not necessarily Thessalian in the sense that the catchment area stretched beyond political borders of later political regions. Instead, it should be viewed as more of a 'Central Greek' cult.



conducive to the sharing of a cult that was, at least in Thessaly and Boiotia, largely military and political in character.<sup>412</sup>

Lalonde relies on an interlude of Thessalian cavalrymen briefly stationed in Athens to help Peisistratus as the time frame for the cult's introduction. He further argues the (speculated) location of the sanctuary in Athens was within an area that witnessed frequent Peisistratid sponsorship for cults and buildings. Yet a lot of 'Peisistratid' buildings are now dated to the period of the early democracy, making the connection more tenuous, and the area he targets was appropriated by the democracy afterwards.<sup>413</sup> Finally, he argues that the naming of a gate in the Themistoclean wall after the sanctuary and cult, built after the Persian Wars, indicates a form of familiarity with the cult that can retrace its antiquity into archaic times.<sup>414</sup> The source he alludes to, the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus*, however, dates to the latter half of the fifth century, meaning the cult could have been introduced in the 470s as well.<sup>415</sup> Nor should the breakout of hostilities at a later date prohibit a lasting embrace of the cult, if it did not harm a Thessalian origin after their betrayal at the Battle of Tanagra. This is not to castigate an eminent scholar's excellent work, but merely to demonstrate how a preconceived notion of thinking about neighbourly relations has clouded the possibility of viewing the cult as an introduction from Boiotia, especially considering its importance within the region.<sup>416</sup>

There is a possible Boiotian connection. An amendment to the sacred calendar of the Attic deme of Thorikos records the offering of a sheep to the 'Heroines of the Koroneians ([Ἡ]ρωῖνησιν Κορωνέων)'. This has been interpreted as a connection with the Boiotian polis that was home to the famous Itonia temple.<sup>417</sup> Nikolaos Papazarkadas pondered whether this association and the Athenian cult of Athena Itonia might have been parts of the same nexus.<sup>418</sup> Unfortunately, that is all that can be plausibly said about this cult, since the *horos* stone of the Athenian cult was not found in situ.<sup>419</sup> If a Boiotian origin of the cult can be entertained, the Athenians, in

<sup>412</sup> Lalonde 2019: 183 n. 63. <sup>413</sup> Paga 2021: 128–40.

<sup>414</sup> Lalonde 2019: 167–204. Admittedly, Lalonde allows for a different placement of the sanctuary that would counter the notion of Peisistratid sponsorship.

<sup>415</sup> Pl. [Ax.] 364 a–b(–d).

<sup>416</sup> There might be a Thessalian connection in Amorgos, as reconstructed by Lagos 2009 (and *IG* 12.7.22) but a similar occurrence in Athens does not automatically follow.

<sup>417</sup> *SEG* 33.147, face c l. 58. For this interpretation: Daux 1983: 158–9; Lupu 2005: 14.

<sup>418</sup> Papazarkadas 2011: 26 n. 50.

<sup>419</sup> Papazarkadas 2011: 26. The cult persisted in Athens down to the fourth century: *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 383; *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 333 ll. 18–19; *SEG* 54.143; Gawlinski 2007.

exchange for the integration of the Delion cult into the Delian Apollo network, could have integrated this quintessential Boiotian cult to reinforce the ties between these regions. Such a manoeuvre would not be uncommon, as other cults were introduced into Athens to strengthen political ties or confirm interstate treaties.

These examples demonstrate how neighbourly relationships could be reinforced by cultic exchanges. Uncertainty shall always remain, as some reconstructions offered here cannot be ascertained. This overview of possible cultic exchanges shows how cults could have functioned as adhesives between the regions and how the possibility thereof has frequently been viewed in a negative light and dismissed outright by earlier scholarship.

### 3.6 Conclusions

From the various examples treated above, certain commonalities can be inferred. The conventions of neighbourly conduct could be detriments to or stimuli for a convivial co-existence. Reputation was one such factor. The damage incurred to the Athenians' reliability after their abandonment of the Boiotians in 369 prevented an earlier rapprochement between the neighbours. Only after a significant symbolic gesture was some of the faith restored. Another example is the self-image of the Boiotians as rightful heirs to the Heraclid heritage in convincing the *populus* to support the Athenian democratic exiles in 403, which formed the basis for the later alliance of 395. A similar ambivalence was at work in the realm of leadership and the installation of friendly elites. Whenever the leadership in either Athens or Boiotia was partial to the other, relations were easier to maintain. It was such a dominant factor that throughout the fifth and fourth centuries, external powers like the Athenians and Spartans endeavoured to install friendly regimes in Boiotia. A dominant factor in all of these considerations was reciprocity. The bonds of *charis* chained people to each other and its obligations ensured a recurring cycle of benefactions between the connected parties. This meant that matters such as reputation or leadership cannot be disentangled from the ubiquitous presence of *charis* in interstate relations. Nevertheless, war was sometimes unavoidable. As the examples above demonstrate, polities always had to opt for war or peace when presented with the choice. While this did lead to conflict at times, there were just as many attempts to avoid war through arbitration or treaties. Hostility was therefore not a logical outcome of an inherent enmity towards each other, but a choice. Treaties were moreover often confirmed

with cultic connections. Linking sanctuaries from contested border regions with the centres of political power was one way in which the Athenians established firmer rapports with the Plataians and Eleutherians. The Delian cult of Apollo was purposed for conciliatory use with the Thebans after the Persian Wars. What unites this diverging spectrum of factors is the need to view neighbourly relations through a different prism and allow for the multifocality of human experience to shine through. There is no universal pattern that can explain every facet of neighbourly relations, but these conventions provide a way towards a different method for studying them.