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WITH OR WITHOUT A *KOINON*.
THE *LONGUE DURÉE* OF
TWO REGIONAL FESTIVALS.
I. THE PAMBOIOTIA AND THE
BASILEIA FROM THEIR BEGINNINGS
TO THE FOURTH CENTURY BC

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

Festivals played an important role in Boiotia from the earliest perception of a regional identity.¹ Between the Low Archaism and the early fifth century BC, a regional body was slowly developing in Boiotia: there was a boiotarch, a ‘leader of the Boiotians’, and people could on occasion meet at an assembly.²

In 447/6 BC, at Koroneia, the victory of the Boiotians over the Athenians marked the definite start of a new era: after this battle, probably through a process of progressive implementation, a new federal body was born, the ‘classical *koinon*’. Already in this period, it seems that the Boiotian League exploited the shared festivals “as a way of consolidating its own identity”. At Koroneia the ancient sanctuary of Athena Itonia saw, in the late fifth century BC, the dedication of a trophy and two cult statues;³ these acts made it a symbolic venue, and this aura was shared by the festivals which probably took place here already in this century.

A few decades later, in 371 BC, the Boiotians decided to establish another regional festival in Lebadeia, the Basileia. In Lebadeia, the oracle of Trophonios had offered valuable prophecies since at least the sixth century BC. The decision to increase the political value of the spot

¹ Schachter 2016, 179–180; Grigsby 2017.

² Boiotarchs in the 1st quarter of the 5th cent. BC: *SEG* 60. 509 (Aravantinos 2014). Assembly: Hdt. 5. 79. 1. On Boiotian ethnicity, see Kühr 2007; Larson 2007; Ganter 2014; Beck–Ganter 2015.

³ “[A]s a way ... identity”: Parker 2004, 15 (on the Hellenistic period). Trophy: Plut. *Ages.* 19. 2. Bronze statues: Paus. 9. 34. 1. See *infra* (Section 1) on the trophy.

with the addition of an agonistic dimension testifies to the awareness of the complex implications raised by the administration of these regional festivals.⁴

Recent years have seen an upsurge of studies in Boiotian festivals: these span from focuses on case studies, such as the Basileia,⁵ to broader overviews of the epigraphic evidence for specific festivals,⁶ the entire history of all the festivals⁷ or specific moments of their history.⁸ In particular, two topics attract the attention of the scholars more than others: on the one hand, the survival of the Basileia and their status in the first century BC;⁹ on the other hand, the relationship between the Pamboiotia and the development of Boiotian identity.¹⁰ No comparative study exists, however, of both the Pamboiotia and the Basileia, although these two regional festivals share two significant characteristics, namely their attachment to the celebration of regional identity and the very long celebration down to the imperial era.

These games remained ‘local’ – we lack positive evidence that they were ever granted ‘stephanitic’ status. Only in one case is it possible that the Boiotian *koinon* was trying to have Delphi declare ‘sacred’ the *agon* of Lebadeia, but this single piece of evidence does not explicitly refer to this festival.¹¹ It is hard to agree on a criterion to define as ‘local’ an agon in the sense of not-international. The Pamboiotia, for instance, were always restricted to Boiotian teams and athletes in the Hellenistic and the Roman period, but they might have hosted foreign dancers and athletes in the fifth century BC. Conversely, the Basileia changed name between the second and the first century BC; the new name, ‘Trophonia’, might depend on the decision not to stress unwanted dangerous links in the eyes of the Romans.¹²

Generally, the Basileia and the Pamboiotia can be read in the light of the recent acquisitions on the history of Hellenistic athletics: many of the new traditions predated the fourth and the third centuries BC.¹³

⁴ Establishment of the festival: Diod. 15. 53. 2 (see Section 3). See Section 1 on the earlier fame of Lebadeia.

⁵ Knoepfler 2008; Knoepfler 2020.

⁶ Manieri 2009.

⁷ Grigsby 2017.

⁸ See e.g. Müller 2020.

⁹ On this point, see Knoepfler 2020 and Matthaïou–Papazarkadas 2020.

¹⁰ See Kühn 2019.

¹¹ *IG* VII 4136, on which see Section 3 (Part II).

¹² Cf. Section 4 (Part II).

¹³ On the recent approach to the Hellenistic festivals, see Mann 2016.

In the third century BC, the appearance of *isolympic* and of *stephanitic* games added new labels and demands to pre-existing habits;¹⁴ initially, the central criterion underlying the request that a festival be accepted as *ισολύμπιος*¹⁵ or *στεφανίτης* is “that the prize money and other awards were to be paid by the home city, not by the festival city”.¹⁶ The dispatch of delegates (*θεωροί*) aimed at the recognition of the ‘panhellenic’ identity of a festival.¹⁷

Not even the prize represents an unambiguous hint of the status of a festival: *stephanitic* games could grant crowns of gold and lifelong pensions,¹⁸ but the information on these consequences is restricted to contests in Asia Minor and does not necessarily reflect the Boiotian case. As far as Boiotia is concerned, we only know of one contest that solicited the elevation of some of its *ἀγῶνες* to a *stephanitic* status in the last quarter of the third century BC, the *Museia* of Thespiiai (*I. Thespiiai* 155 = Manieri *Thes.* 12). It is legitimate to consider the Pamboiotia and the Basileia as ‘local’ festivals, despite the presence of international competitors,¹⁹ because we have no proof that the *koinon* actively sought an elevation of their status to a ‘panhellenic’ one.

Based on the catchment area of the winners, the Pamboiotia, the festival held in Koroneia for Athena Itonia, can be considered a local (regional) event, since only the Boiotians participated in this celebration. Most of our epigraphic evidence on the origin of the winners of this

¹⁴ On the continuity of these habits, see Parker 2004.

¹⁵ In the first document with the word *ισολύμπιος*, Ptolemaios II requests that the new festival in the memory of his father, the Ptolemaia (279/8 BC), be ‘isolympic’, i.e. “that the same prizes (*τὰ(?) ἴσα ἄθλα*) and honours be given to the winners of this festival as the ones given to those who won the Olympic games (*ὅσα περ καὶ τοῖς τὰ Ὀλύμπια νενικ[η]κόσι*)” (*CID* 4. 40. 18–21 and Remijsen 2014, 352–353). The practical dimension of these technical terms also emerges from the first document testifying the word *στεφανίτης*: the Aetolians sent ambassadors to have their *Soteria*, founded to commemorate the liberation of Greece from the Galatians, declared *stephanitic* (see *Syll.*³ 402. 13–18).

¹⁶ Slater 2012, 169.

¹⁷ I use the adj. “panhellenic” to refer to this wide recognition. The linguistic use was suggested by Robert 1984, but it was criticized because only the four main festivals of the Greek mainland (Olympia, Pythia, Isthmia, and Nemea) bore the status of ‘panhellenic’ (Funke 2003). I thank the anonymous reviewer for this suggestion and remain persuaded that the Hellenistic evolution of these local festivals allows for the label ‘panhellenic’ in this new, wider sense.

¹⁸ *I. Milet* 1. 3. 147. 18–21; *JÖAI* 8. 161 n. 1. Cf. Remijsen 2011, 99 and Pleket 2014.

¹⁹ On these international competitors, see Sections 3–4 (Part II).

contest dates to the third and the first century BC;²⁰ we never read the names or ethnic of foreign winners and the only exception might concern an Italian living in Boiotia (*IG* VII 2871: cf. Section 4). On the other hand, the *Basileia*, established in the fourth century BC, were open, during the third and the second centuries BC, to competitors from all over the Mediterranean Sea: this celebration attracted participants from Italy and Asia Minor.²¹

As suggested by Christel Müller, a form of ‘federal memory’ granted the survival of festivals such as the *Basileia* during the second century BC, despite the official dissolution of the Boiotian *koinon* in 171 BC.²² In this essay, I will concentrate on the very long history of the *Basileia* and the *Pamboiotia*, to understand the reason for the long success of these two festivals. When a *κοινόν* existed in Boiotia, it can be proved that both these festivals were organized by the *κοινόν*; at the same time, they predated the existence of federal ties and, through what Müller defined a ‘federal memory’, they acted as carriers of regional memory down to the latest documents on the Boiotian federal institutions in the third century AD.

The First Part (I) of this investigation will concentrate on the early stages of both festivals and show the paths through which *Koroneia* and *Lebadeia* began to exert a centripetal attraction that naturally granted their festivals a regional aura. This is evident from what happened in the fifth (Section 1) and the fourth century BC (Section 2). In the Second Part (II), I will focus on the Hellenistic fate (Section 3) of the festivals, when both were held and supervised by the *κοινόν*. A transition then occurred in the first century BC (Section 4), when the Boiotian federal institutions, dismantled by the Romans in 171 BC, were partially revived under new forms. The final section (5) will consider the sources about the two festivals under the Roman empire.

²⁰ The main epigraphic catalogues for the *Pamboiotia* are still Schachter 1978 and Schachter 1980; for the Hellenistic period, see Kalliontzis 2020, 90. On the later fate of the *Itonion*, see Knoepfler 1988, Müller 2014, 127–129 and Part II.

²¹ On the Italian participants and the international status of the festival, see Turner 1996 and Papazarkadas 2019, 209 and 218. Manieri 2009 lists 16 documents, of literary and epigraphic nature, related to the *Basileia*; Turner 1996 has a catalogue of 35 documents connected with the *Basileia*. In the absence of relevant new acquisitions, to this date, we possess thirty-three texts which document the origin of the athletes, from the mid. 4th cent. BC (*IG* VII 552; *IG* VII 2532; *FD* III 1. 510) to the mid. 3rd cent. AD (*LAG* 81; *IG* II² 3169–3170).

²² Müller 2014 and Müller 2020. See Kühr 2019, 83–85 on the role of the “emotional bond” in the history of the *Pamboiotia*.

A general conclusion will draw on the historical evolution outlined in the previous sections and argue that the festivals remained the socio-political backbone of the *koinon*, because they had always been perceived as a regional event with unparalleled continuity. It is exactly this unique link between these two festivals and the history of Boiotian identity that makes a combined study of their evolution particularly interesting.

1. The Fifth Century BC: Festivals in Koroneia, Oracular Cult in Lebadeia

In the early stages of the Pamboiotia, we only possess indirect literary sources down to the end of the fifth century BC. This first section will discuss these materials and introduce the parallel history of Lebadeia, where no regional festival existed in this period. However, it will be argued that the site already enjoyed regional fame, that later allowed its upgrade as a spot of national pride for all the Boiotians.

The available sources on the Pamboiotia are literary (Alcaeus, Bacchylides, Pindar, Plutarch) and material (vases of difficult interpretation). In the late seventh or the early sixth century BC, Alcaeus (F 325 Liberman) attests to the international fame of a sanctuary not far from Koroneia, when he mentions a warlike Athena:²³

Ὦνασσ' Ἀθανάα πολεμάδοκε,
ἃ ποι Κορωνήας <πεδίω> μέδ<ης>
ναύω πάροιθεν ἄμφι<
Κωραλίω ποτάμῳ παρ ὄχθαις.

At this stage, the goddess might either be Athena of Alalkomenion, situated in the western area of the *chora* of Koroneia (between Haliartos and Koroneia), or Athena of the Itonion, where the Pamboiotia were later celebrated. The Itonion was possibly inside the city, and the vague

²³ Alcaeus might have written the hymn for the inauguration of the temple of Athena Itonia in Koroneia (Mackil 2013, 159), and it has been argued that the 'warlike' goddess has the same traits as the Thessalian Athena Itonia, allegedly imported by the Boiotians during their migration southwards (Kowalzig 2007, 362 and n. 73). In light of the kinship relationships between Boiotians and Lesbians attested by Thucydides in the late fifth century BC (Hornblower 2010, 131–132 and Fragoulaki 2013, 110–111), it might not be coincidental that a Lesbian would choose to dedicate a hymn to a Boiotian goddess (cp. Schachter 2016, 180 n. 12).

indication of Alcaeus on the placement of the temple (Κορωνήας πεδίω μέδης)²⁴ would also seem to indicate this.²⁵

This ambiguity resurfaced in another instance, if we can judge from another discussed fragment by Bacchylides (F *15 Sn.):

Οὐχ ἔδρας ἔργον οὐδ' ἀμβολᾶς,
ἀλλὰ χρυσαίγιδος Ἰτωνίας
χρῆ παρ' εὐδαίδαλον ναὸν ἐλ-
θόντας ἀβρόν τι δεῖξαι.

An ancient scholar already wondered whether Bacchylides “meant the same (sc. Athena) as that of the Alalkomenion”.²⁶ The Alalkomenion and the Itonion were probably related at the beginning; in the absence of clear positive indications, we might prefer a reference, in Alcaeus, to Athena Itonia, because of the *absence* of strong military associations with the parallel cult of Athena of Alalkomenai. Neither Alcaeus nor Bacchylides explicitly mentions regional games for the goddess in these short fragments, but they are important to support a high chronology for the cult of the goddess.

Progressively, for reasons unclear to us, the rites in honour of Athena gained regional importance. This fame added to the profound local resonances of Koroneia for the Boiotians. Koroneia would only later become the focus of the Boiotian military identity, after the victory of 446 BC against the Athenians.²⁷ The liberation of the region was a seminal event in the history of Boiotia and in the history of the games held in Koroneia: the evolution of *agones* such as the Pamboiotia has a profound connection with the history of the κοινόν as a whole.²⁸

In Koroneia, the Boiotians placed a trophy which would signal their national pride (Plut. *Ages*. 19. 2):

πλησίον γὰρ ὁ νεῶς ἐστὶν ὁ τῆς Ἰτωνίας Ἀθηνᾶς, καὶ πρὸ αὐτοῦ
τρόπαιον ἔστηκεν, ὃ πάλαι Βοιωτοὶ Σπάρτωνος στρατηγοῦντος
ἐνταῦθα νικήσαντες Ἀθηναίους καὶ Τολμίδην ἀποκτείναντες ἔστησαν.

²⁴ Cp. Liberman 1999, 234 n. 265 on the restitution of v. 2.

²⁵ See Schachter 2016, 179–180 and Schachter 1981, 113 on the confusion between these two Athenas, that were both central to the nascent community of the Boiotoi. On Athena Itonia see Lalonde 2019 (87–166 on the Boiotian cult).

²⁶ Σ Stat. *Th*. 2. 721 = Bacchyl. F *15 A Sn. See Schachter 1981, 112 and n. 7.

²⁷ Cp. Beck–Ganter 2015, 135. Battle of Koroneia: *BNJ* 4 F 81; Thuc. 1. 113. 1; Diod. 12. 6; Plut. *Per*. 18. 2; *Ages*. 19. 2; Paus. 1. 27. 5, with Beck 2020.

²⁸ See Knoepfler 2008, 1462.

A second aspect of the monumentalization of memory was the erection, in the sanctuary, of two new bronze cult statues, realized by a pupil of Phidias, Agorakritos (Paus. 9. 34. 1). These statues represented Athena and Zeus and therefore identified the male *πάρεδρος* of the goddess once and for all, by replacing a theriomorphic mate probably represented by a snake.²⁹

Between Alcaeus and the elevation of Koroneia and of the Itonion to a momentous show of Boiotian identity, there are other indications that many regional activities took place on the spot. In the sixth century BC, there was a ritual procession for Athena and another god, who was later identified as Zeus: the scene is represented on a lekane of the middle sixth century BC.³⁰ These rites were part of a more complex organization, which shows in detail the participants to a sacrifice and the necessary instruments.

We have reasons to believe that, after Alcaeus, Pindar also helped enhance the international fame of the Itonion and of the activities which happened there. He offers an emic perspective on the *agon* and the status of these competitions, in his *daphnephorion* (F 94 b Sn.–M.) for Agasikles of Thebes, son of Pagondas.³¹ In the preserved verses, the victories at the Pamboiotia are listed together with those at Onchestos and at Pisa (vv. 44–48):

...ἵππων τ' ὠκυπόδων προ[λυ-
 γνώτοις ἐπὶ νίκαις,
 αἷς ἐν αἰόνεσσιν Ὀρχ[ηστοῦ κλυ]τᾶς,
 ταῖς δὲ ναὸν Ἰτωνίας α[.....]α
 χαίταν στεφάνοις ἐκό-
 σμηθεν ἐν τε Πίσᾳ περιτ[.]

Maybe this song was written after the aforementioned battle of Koroneia.³² What matters the most here is the mention of victories in

²⁹ On the identity of Athena's *πάρεδρος* see Schachter 1981, 119–121.

³⁰ BMB 80. See Ure 1929, 167–171 and Schachter 1981, 122–123. The presence of a crow (κορώνη) on the lekane has been considered a reference to the city of Koroneia, but sometimes the bird is understood to be a raven (κόραξ): cf. the state of the art in Schmidt 2002, 51–62 and Connelly 2007, 168–169 on the reading of this procession as a *panegyris*.

³¹ This family tree was reconstructed by Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 1922, 435–436; see also Mackil 2013, 160–161; Schachter 2016, 259–260; Papazarkadas 2018.

³² See most recently Mackil 2013, 160–161 and Schachter 2016, 259–260. An important piece of information is the fact that the *daphnephoria* was led by a *παῖς ἀμφιθαλής*, a boy with both parents still living (Mackil 2013, 160 n. 54).

contests: these horse races must have belonged to this embryonal stage of the Pamboiotia. Pindar refers to victories of horse races (43: ἵππων τ' ὠκυπόδων) at Onchestos (46) and at the temple of Athena Itonia (47). Before this list of victories, Pindar recalls the proxenies obtained by Agasikles and his family (41): the combination of these aspects (agonistic victories and political career) might have consequences on the reading of the previous reference to the honours received by “those who dwell around” (41–43: τίμαθεν γὰρ τὰ πάλαι τὰ νῦν τ' ἀμφικτιονέσσιν). These people might impersonate an association or a regional body connected with the festival of the Pamboiotia and with the one held at Onchestos;³³ the regional character of the reference seems to depend on the Theban audience of the ode, which must have easily understood the reference. Therefore, this could be an indirect sign of a political organization, or even – assuming that the ode was very likely written in the later forties – one of the earliest witnesses to the new Boiotian *koinon*.

From a syntactic point of view, Pindar is referring not only to the Pamboiotia, but also (and firstly) to the festival of Poseidon.³⁴ Therefore, I would suggest that the Pamboiotia are presented by Pindar as part of the network of Boiotian regional festivals and not as a preeminent meeting of the Boiotians; moreover, their regional aura proves a local prestige which allowed Pindar to list this event together with the Olympic games. This is a curious elevation of a strictly local festival, through the lens of its regional impact, to an ‘almost panhellenic’ status.

As well as horse races, we may have hints of dance competitions at the Pamboiotia, if we accept Kowalzig’s suggestion of “Boiotian military dances staged as hunts based on some Thessalian model”.³⁵ In addition, the ritual procession on the aforementioned lekane may be the setting for contests of boxers and chariot races, and maybe concerts of aulos players, since such players can be seen on a series of black-figure vases found in Koroneia, considered to be the output of a “workshop of the Itonion” by Ure.³⁶

³³ Mackil 2013, 162–163.

³⁴ The last verse mentions Pisa (49: [...] ἐν τε Πισᾷ περὶ[]), but the lacuna, of eight to ten characters according to Snell and Maehler, might suggest warning against a “juxtaposition of the Itonion with the renowned sites of Olympia and Onchestos” (Larson 2007, 134). Maybe the final verse introduced a new verb, or a clearer distinction was made in the missing section.

³⁵ Kowalzig 2007, 364. See Bacchyl. F 15 and F 15a Sn. (*supra*). Cf. Kowalzig 2007, 363–364 on Pind. FF 106–107 Sn.–M. and Mackil 2013, 160 for this hypothesis, that remains highly speculative.

³⁶ Ure 1929, 167–170; Ure 1935; Larson 2000, 205 n. 57; Larson 2007, 134 and n. 24.

By the second half of the fifth century BC, the Pamboiotia also played a pivotal role in the ethnogenesis of the Boiotians. The celebration was connected with the memory of the alleged migration of the local inhabitants from Thessaly: Armenidas, a local historian who probably lived at the beginning of the fourth century BC, lingered on the etymology which explicitly states the origin of Itonian Athena from the Thessalian city of Iton (*BNJ* 378 F 1). Moreover, Boiotos, the national hero, was sometimes believed to be the son of an Itonos:³⁷ it is clear that the Boiotians slowly assigned a focal place to Athena Itonia. Once we recall this, we can understand that these games, despite being reserved for Boiotians, could be seen from the outside as a celebration worthy of recollection and memory: just as Alcaeus sang of Athena, so would travelling Bacchylides and Pindar refer to those competitions.

While the Pamboiotia were then a likely reality of Boiotian cultic and political life in the fifth century BC, possibly not yet under this name,³⁸ in the same century, Lebadeia was a much less significant city in terms of political power. Nonetheless, the literary sources indicate that Lebadeia was well known for the oracle of Trophonios, which was also popular abroad and particularly among the Athenians.³⁹

Herodotus (8. 134. 1) recalls, for instance, the visit of the Carian Mys, sent by Mardonius, but only mentions the descent of the man:

οὗτος ὁ Μῦς ἔξ τε Λεβάδειαν φαίνεται ἀπικόμενος καὶ μισθῷ πείσας
τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἄνδρα καταβῆναι παρὰ Τροφώνιον.

³⁷ On Armenidas' fragment, see Tufano 2019a, 131–138. On Boiotos and Itonos, see Ganter 2014, 237–238. On the connection of the festival with the tradition of the origin from Thessaly: Kowalzig 2007, 364. Maybe only after the battle of Koroneia of 446 was Athena Itonia given “a more explicitly ethnic, pan-Boiotian role” (Mackil 2013, 193).

³⁸ We have no way of knowing how old the denomination of ‘Παμβοιώτια’ was: as such, it firstly occurs in Polybius regarding the *panegyris* (4. 3. 5; cp. Schachter 1981, 123). As in the well-known case of the *πανελλήνες* in Homer (*Il.* 2. 530), *παν-* seems to mark an exclusion more than an inclusion: in other words, as is the case with the history of the ethnic *πανελλήνες*, the root *παν-* seems to confine the celebration to the Boiotians, while excluding other *ἔθνη* (on the existence of a “criterio di esclusione” behind the Homeric *πανελλήνες*, see esp. Antonetti 1996, 9–10. On the root *παν-* and its meanings, see Hall 2002, 132). At the same time, it is a sure sign of the circulation of the simple ethnic *Βοιωτίοι/Βοιωτοί*, since these forms with *παν-* can only be understood if the simple form pre-exists.

³⁹ On the oracle of Trophonios, and on the Trophonion in Lebadeia, see Schachter 1994, 66–89; 109–118 and Bonnechere 2003.

The Basileia were a later creation by Epameinondas, and the rites on the spot did not include games in the fifth century BC. It is however interesting how, by the first century BC, the mention, in Pindar (*Ol.* 7. 84), of the ἀγῶνες τ' ἔννομοι Βοιωτίων, could be interpreted by the Augustan grammarian Didymus (F 13 Braswell = 116 Coward–Prodi) as Βασίλεια καὶ Ἀμφιάρεια καὶ Δήλια ἐπὶ Δηλίων καὶ Τροφώνεια ἐν Λεβαδείᾳ.⁴⁰

Pindar is listing the other victories achieved by Diagoras of Rhodes, and this is the only occasion⁴¹ where he does not specify the name of the city. Diagoras was a *περιοδονίκης*,⁴² since he won at the Isthmus, at Nemea, at Delphi, and at Olympia. Pindar sent him the *Seventh Olympian Ode*, which was probably performed in Rhodes.

This victory ode, probably written ca. 464 BC, is a witness of the fame of a Boeotian competition abroad, although it remains uncertain whether these seasonal games are among the suggestions listed by Didymus (F 13 Braswell), who also ignores that the Trophonia in Lebadeia cannot have been an additional game different from the Basileia.⁴³ The Pamboiotian trait⁴⁴ makes the identification of these ἀγῶνες ἔννομοι with the festival of Koroneia likely: not incidentally, it should be noted how the mention of the mere ethnicity, Βοιωτίων, is not accompanied by the significant root *παν-* which will be used for the name of the festival in the Hellenistic period.⁴⁵

To sum up: the Boiotians performed gymnastic contests in Koroneia, in the archaic period, which soon gained an international reputation. These contests cannot be reconstructed in detail due to the absence of complete surveys of the program of the early Pamboiotia; yet, the external fame of this cult and the activities involved must not have escaped the foreigners, who associated the Boiotians with this lively cult.

This external fame was further enhanced by the military victory of 446 BC, which added a flair of national pride to the city and enhanced the interest in the new κοινόν. Even if we ignore the name of the celebration at this stage, it was so well-known that a mere mention in the form of

⁴⁰ See Prodi 2020 for a useful study of Didymos' profound knowledge of Pindar's poetry.

⁴¹ Cf. the less unclear mention of Thebes at v. 83.

⁴² Giannini in Gentili 2013, 167–173.

⁴³ On this double name, see Part II.

⁴⁴ On the ethnic value of this identification, see Grigsby 2017, 9.

⁴⁵ I agree with the suggestion of the anonymous referee that “ἀγῶνες ἔννομοι Βοιωτίων could well be a poetical transformation of the name Pamboiotia known to the audience”.

‘Βοιωτίων ἀγῶνες’ could make the association clear. The Basileia were a later creation, but Lebadeia was already an internationally renowned Boiotian spot. Both Koroneia and Lebadeia, therefore, possessed by the late fifth century BC the potential to represent abroad the Boiotian regional activities, as well as, in the case of Lebadeia, attracting also foreigners interested in the local cult.

2. The Fourth Century BC

The situation described in the previous section is reversed in the following century. While the birth of the Basileia in 371 BC is luckily witnessed by an important literary source and followed by a good number of inscriptions, we lack sources on the history of the Pamboiotia in the fourth century BC. In the final part of this section, we will comment on this specific situation.

After the suppression of the Boiotian *koinon* in 386 BC and its re-foundation after 379 BC, Thebes was successful in establishing a regional and international hegemony that is now believed to have survived the death of one of its great men such as Epameinondas (362 BC).⁴⁶ Epameinondas was instrumental in the victory against the Spartans at Leuktra (371 BC) and took the chance to celebrate the event with the decision to establish a new festival at Lebadeia (Diod. 15. 53. 4 = Manieri 2009 Leb.1):

ἄλλον δὲ κατέστησεν ὡς ἀπὸ Τροφωνίου προσφάτως ἀναβεβηκότα
καὶ λέγοντα, διότι προστέταχεν ὁ θεὸς αὐτοῖς, ὅταν ἐν Λεύκτροις
νικήσωσιν, ἀγῶνα τιθέναι Διὶ βασιλεῖ στεφανίτην· ἀφ’ οὗ δὴ Βοιωτοὶ
ταύτην ποιοῦσι τὴν πανήγυριν ἐν Λεβαδείᾳ.

The Basileia were designed by Epameinondas to commemorate the Theban victory at Leuctra: the ἀγών is dedicated to Zeus Basileus, “protecteur attitré de la nation béotienne”.⁴⁷ The choice of Lebadeia marked a strategic stronghold on the road between Thebes and Delphi. On the one hand, the site occupied the *chora* of the then-destroyed Orchomenos, which had once controlled Lebadeia. Since Lebadeia was in the “Einflußbereich von Orchomenos”, it was not a neutral place:

⁴⁶ Cf. Schachter 2016, 112–132.

⁴⁷ Knoepfler 2008, 1436.

Epameinondas' choice signalled the Theban lead of the Boiotian League in 371 BC,⁴⁸ because the new festival was established in a place internationally renowned as Lebadeia, and in a site which recalled the Theban opposition to Orchomenos.

On the other hand, the Spartans had plundered Lebadeia only twenty-five years before, in 395/4 BC (Plut. *Lys.* 28. 1). The new importance given to this area also marked a new beginning, for a spot which was to honour Zeus through a new festival. The Thebans wanted to make the most of this new federal venture when they detached the name of the festival from the underground oracular god, Trophonios, who had been presiding over the site until then. In the same context of activities at Lebadeia, just like the battle of Koroneia (447 BC) had prompted a redefinition of the cult at the Itonion, a new cult statue for Trophonios was made in the sanctuary by Praxiteles (Paus. 9. 39. 4).

Zeus had symbolically presided over the victory of the Boiotian army against Sparta and, despite the certain fictitious character of these *ex-post* tales, there are several traditions that developed around the battle of Leuctra and emphasised the devotion of Epameinondas towards this god. Diodorus connects the festival to the celebration of the victory: the god has directed Epameinondas and he institutes the contest.⁴⁹ Diodorus' very good knowledge of Boiotian history is a fact we should not dismiss: not only is his fifteenth book indebted to Ephorus, who had perused Daimachus of Plataiai (a universal historian of the fourth century BC well-versed in Boiotian history), Anaximenes and Callisthenes. Diodorus also knew the work of two other universal historians of the fourth century BC, Dionysodorus and Anaxys.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ "Einflußbereich von Orchomenos": Kühr 2007, 284. The advantages of choosing Lebadeia over Leuctra for a festival indirectly confirm the predominant role of Thebes in the post-378 *koinon* (Schachter 2016, 115 n. 7 on Lebadeia as "a flagship for the Theban-led Boiotoi"). On the value of Lebadeia, see Beck 1997, 191–192; Farinetti 2011, 89; Mackil 2013, 208–210; Schachter 2016, 117 and 187.

⁴⁹ A different path was followed by Callisthenes (*BNJ* 124 FF 22 a–b). In his *Histories*, Callisthenes reported about the good signs that had foretold the Theban victory. Cicero, the source of the fragment (*De div.* 1. 74. 9), does not repeat the version of Diodorus on the institution of the *agon*; this inauguration is also absent in the third source on Epameinondas and the *omina* of Lebadeia, Polyaeus (*Strat.* 2. 3. 8); on these traditions, see Tufano 2023, 76–82.

⁵⁰ On Ephorus' plagiarism of Daimachus, see *BNJ* 65 T 1 and Tufano 2019a, 325–333. Dionysodorus and Anaxis: *BNJ* 67 and 68 (= Diod. 15. 95. 4).

The dedication of the festival to Zeus Basileus, not the most common epithet of Zeus in Boiotia,⁵¹ aimed to give at least a regional acknowledgment to the institution: the new term was immediately successful, and we have three inscriptions, from the middle fourth century BC, mentioning athletes from Tanagra, Thebes and Delphi.⁵² In the first two cases, the restitution of the name Βασίλεια is certain: the Theban winner, Timokles, raced with the horses at the Basileia and at the Herakleia of Thebes.⁵³ His epitaph was written under a statue of Polykleitos and the city decided to restore the statue after the destruction of 335 BC:

οὐκ ἔστ' οὐδέν τέρμα βίου θνητῶν ἐπινοίαις,
 ἀλλὰ τύχη κρείσσων ἐλπίδος ἐξεφάνη,
 ἧ καὶ Τιμοκλέην Ἀσωπίχου ἠφάνισ' υἱὸν
 πρόσθε πρὶν ἐνδείξασθ' ἔργα πρέποντα φύσει,
 ὃς Βασίλεια Διὸς καὶ ἐν Ἡρακλέους τρισ<ι>ν ἄθλοισι
 ἵπποις νικήσας δώματ' ἐπηγλάῃσεν.
vacat
 Πολύκλειτος ἐπόεισε [*sic*].

This text almost inaugurates the Theban tradition to focus on the pride of these young victors.⁵⁴ It is not clear whether Timokles' victories in horse-racing were only won at the Herakleia or jointly refer to both Basileia and Herakleia. In any case, the epigram is an early sign of the fact that Thebes recognized the victory at the Basileia as a definitive glory to remark. In this dedication, moreover, we note that it is sufficient to refer to the contest by specifying the god, at least in Thebes.

The later epigraphical evidence suggests that the Basileia included – possibly already in the fourth century BC – gymnastic and equestrian competitions:⁵⁵ we lack a specific program of the contest, but victories are attested in running contests, in the wrestling (πάλη), in the παγκράτιον,

⁵¹ See Schachter 1994, 111 on the novelty of the choice of this epithet.

⁵² *IG* VII 2532; 552. *SEG* 23. 332, a list of victories from Delphi: *FD* III 1. 510 = Ebert 42 = *CEG* II 803; cp. Knoepfler 2008, 1426 and n. 17, where the scholar recalls Robert's support for the identification of the Zeus σκηπτοφόρος of the inscription with Zeus Basileus. Cf. also *IG* VII 530 (from Tanagra, early 3rd cent. BC: καλὸν ἀγῶνα Διός), with Knoepfler 2008, 1436 n. 46 and Manieri 2009, 152.

⁵³ *IG* VII 2532, ll. 5–6; *CEG* II 630. See on this text Grigsby 2017, 95–97.

⁵⁴ On this tradition: Scharff 2016.

⁵⁵ For a broad introduction to the Basileia, see Schachter 1994, 85–86 and 116–118; Turner 1996; Knoepfler 2008.

in the boxing, in the πένταθλον and the race with arms, the ὀπλίτης (δρόμος).⁵⁶ Since the festival was never interrupted (see Part II), it can be assumed that the competitions recorded on in the first century BC inscriptions can be traced back to the first years.

It was a festival for individual athletes, and not for groups;⁵⁷ the almost complete absence of a military trait marks a difference from the Pamboiotia.⁵⁸ The Basileia were celebrated during the month of Panamos, the ninth Boiotian month, between August and September; based on the accounts delivered and published in the first century BC, the account rendering occurred in Pamboiotos, the tenth month. The frequency of this festival is controversial.⁵⁹

This predominantly local festival included a procession for Zeus. Until recently, this event could only be hypothesized thanks to a later text: the procession for Zeus Basileus is mentioned in an imperial text which might describe a Hellenistic setting. The first *Love Story* ascribed

⁵⁶ Running contests: e.g. in the stadion (ca. 600 m: *LAG* 45, 2–3: 200–180 BC; *SEG* 14. 478a, 3: 100 BC); δίαυλος (equivalent to two stadia: *SEG* 14. 478a, 3: 100 BC); δόλιχος (long course on a distance between 7 and 20 stadia: *IG* V 2. 142. 40: 3rd cent. BC ex.). Πάλη: *IG* IV 428, 2: 240–220 BC; Matthaiou–Papazarkadas 2020 (1st half of the 1st cent. BC). Παγκράτιον: e.g. *SEG* 3. 367 (= Manieri 2009, Leb. 12, 40–30 BC [see Müller 2014, 129 on the date]) and Matthaiou–Papazarkadas 2020. Πυγμή: e.g. *IG* VII 47 (early 1st cent. BC? [cf. Knoepfler 2008, 1455–1456 n. 119]) and Matthaiou–Papazarkadas 2020. Πένταθλον: e.g. *SEG* 3. 367. The armed race probably had different origins in the different places where it occurred (Patrucco 1972): in Boiotia, the ὀπλίτης was also part of the Eleutheria of Plataiai (Philostr. *Gymn.* 8). For the Basileia, we have evidence that the ὀπλίτης was part of the contest in the 1st cent. BC (*SEG* 3. 367 and *SEG* 14. 478a, from Potidaia: the indication of the Basileia forces us to postdate the inscription after the institution of the Boiotian *koinon* and the change of name, but this might have happened immediately after 86 BC; however, see Grigsby 2017, 192–193 for the possibility that Sulla awarded Lebademia, for the good omens which he had received from the oracle). This evidence is the only one with a military reminiscence, and thus the late attestation does not allow us to consider it present from the beginning. For the horse races, see a list of documents in Turner 1996, 122, nos. 19–24. From the lists on *SEG* 3. 367 and on the new *apologia* (Matthaiou–Papazarkadas 2020), we learn that the contests included the ἀπόβασις, a race on a chariot where one of the two men on it had to complete the distance on foot, the horseback race (κέλης), and the two-horse chariot race (συνωρίς).

⁵⁷ The previous list draws on Turner 1996, 109 and 121–122.

⁵⁸ Cp. Knoepfler 2008, 1440–1441 and Knoepfler 2020, 222.

⁵⁹ On the month, see Roesch 1982, 37–41 and Turner 1996, 109.

to Plutarch⁶⁰ concerns a girl who is contended by two men, and finally dies in the quarrel which occurs between the suitors. In the narrative, the maiden is presented as a *κνηφόρος*, “carrier of a basket”, for Zeus Basileus in Lebadeia.⁶¹ The story also proves that the festival was visited by foreigners: in order to perform these rites, the girl came to Lebadeia from Haliartos, and was seen there by one of the two pretenders, Straton of Orchomenos. The publication of a new *ἀπολογία* from the first century BC now confirmed the practice of a *πομπή* during the festival.⁶²

Although relatively few in number (few inscriptions, one literary reference), we have seen that some sources allow a relatively complete picture of the early celebrations of the Basileia in the fourth century BC, testifying also to the impact of these celebrations on the consolidation of the regional networks and on the Theban control (at least possibly until 335 BC, when the city was destroyed). Nonetheless, it was necessary to complete the direct witnesses with an eye to later inscriptions. A different situation, with few exceptions, is typical for the history of the Pamboiotia in the same fourth century BC.

There is a significant gap in our documentation on the Pamboiotia after the end of the fifth century BC: a possible late echo of the classical *ἀγῶνες*, so far neglected, is a curious anecdote reported by Diodorus (14. 11. 5). Retelling the events of 404 BC, he reports that in that same year Lasthenes, a Theban and Olympic winner, had also won against a racehorse (*πρὸς ἵππον ἀθλητὴν δραμόντα νικῆσαι*), on a route from Koroneia to Thebes. The distance, roughly thirty miles (more than 44 400 meters), does not correspond to any of the known race competitions, and the anecdote has no parallel among the extant sources. I would suggest that the city of Koroneia, in the final years of the Peloponnesian War, might still be the setting of local games, even if the singularity of the episode must be taken with due prudence.

After this episode, we only have Polybius, who refers to the *panegyris* of the Boiotians on the spot, and epigraphic documents of the third century BC attest that the entire Hellenistic *koinon* performed, in these competitions with a strong military character, the military prowess and skills of the

⁶⁰ Linguistic reasons prevented Ziegler from ascribing the essay to Plutarch, even if the peculiarities of style might depend on the genre of the short stories, as outlined by Giangrande 1991. For a recent overview of the *status quaestionis* see de Jesus 2009 and Tufano 2019b. The prenuptial character of the short story is underlined by Bonnechere 2003, 310.

⁶¹ Plut. *Am. narr.* 770 F: ἐμελλε γάρ τῳ Διὶ τῳ βασιλεῖ κνηφορεῖν.

⁶² Matthaiou–Papazarkadas 2020, A 32–33.

Boiotians: it was now a way, as we will see in the next section (3, Part II), to check the military training of the subunits of the federal army.⁶³

Therefore, the long period of silence approximately coincides with the fourth century BC. Before the Hellenistic *κοινόν* born in 287 BC, we have a treaty (*IG IX² 1. 170*), signed between the Boiotians and the Aetolians around 270 BC, sworn also by Athena, probably Itonia.⁶⁴ A possible *argumentum ex silentio* against the continuity of the Pamboiotia might be the decision itself, by Epameinondas, to establish the Basileia as a festival of national pride, with all the aforementioned strategic advantages, in the apparent oblivion of an eventually pre-existing festival of the Boiotians in Koroneia.

For these reasons, it could be that the first organization of the festival of the Pamboiotia only occurred in the second quarter of the third century BC;⁶⁵ however, it seems better to think of a reorganization in connection with the new needs of the Boiotian League. Perhaps the Pamboiotia had not been institutionalised and fully given a program and an organization before Epameinondas created the Basileia. The first relevance of this new competition contributed to the temporary eclipse of the regional celebrations at Koroneia, which could only be reprised under new circumstances, namely after the re-foundation of Thebes in 316 BC and the rebirth of the Boiotian League.

To be continued.

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⁶³ Polyb. 4. 3. 5 and 25. 2; 9. 34. 11. Military character of the Pamboiotia: Olivieri 2010–2011; Mackil 2013, 224–225; Kalliontzis 2020, 89–90; Section 3 (Part II).

⁶⁴ On this date, see Knoepfler 2007, 1250 and Müller 2020, 58 and n. 1.

⁶⁵ So Schachter 1981, 124 and n. 1.

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The paper offers the first half of a comprehensive historical survey of the two most important Boiotian regional festivals, i.e. the *Basileia* of *Lebadeia*, for Zeus *Basileus*, and the *Pamboiotia* of *Koroneia*, for *Athena Itonia*. The author contends that these festivals had a regional impact and were performed independently of the existence of a federal government in Boiotia. Part I, in particular, addresses the origins of the two festivals and their status in the fourth century BC. Until the end of the fifth century BC (Section 1), the *Pamboiotia* are not attested with this name, but indirect evidence of literary and archaeological nature suggests that ritual processions and contests were held in *Koroneia* for *Athena Itonia*. The *Basileia* were only established in 371 BC, but in the sixth and the fifth centuries BC *Lebadeia* gained a wide reputation as an oracular site, also abroad. Section 2 concentrates on the fourth century BC, which marks the actual beginning of the *Basileia*. The literary and epigraphic evidence of the fourth century BC on this festival is discussed, but needs to be integrated with later sources: this is possible because of the continuity of the *Basileia* throughout the Hellenistic and the Republican periods. The *Basileia* were an individual competition and, although Theban in its first initiative, the festival became a national venture of the Boiotians. The fourth century BC marks a gap in the extant evidence on the *Pamboiotia*. The author contends that this was a moment of minor fortune for the festival and that the *Basileia*, at first, substituted the *Pamboiotia* as an occasion of self-celebration in Boiotia.

Публикуется часть I статьи, в которой автор дает всесторонний исторический обзор двух наиболее важных беотийских празднеств – Басилей в Лебадее в честь Зевса Басилевса и Памбеотий в Коронее в честь Афины Итонии. Автор доказывает, что они имели региональное значение и проводились вне зависимости от существования в Беотии федерального органа управления. В части I рассматривается предыстория этих праздников и их статус в IV в. до н. э. Вплоть до конца V в. (раздел 1) не засвидетельствовано название “Памбеотии”, но косвенные письменные и литературные свидетельства позволяют предположить, что в Коронее проводились процессии и состязания в честь Афины Итонии. Басилеи были учреждены только в 371 г. до н. э., но и в VI и V вв. Лебадея была известна за пределами Беотии благодаря своему оракулу. В разделе 2 автор обращается к IV в. до н. э., когда начали проводиться Басилеи. Обсуждаются письменные и археологические свидетельства IV в., но многие предположения делаются на основании более поздних источников, что обоснованно благодаря непрерывности существования Басилеев в эллинистическое и римское время. Басилеи предусматривали индивидуальные состязания. Учрежденные по инициативе Фив, они затем стали национальным праздником всех беотийцев. Для IV в. до н. э. нет свидетельств существования Памбеотий. Автор полагает, что в это время они были в упадке – как повод продемонстрировать этническую идентичность их заменили Басилеи.

CONSPECTUS

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