A tale of two cities: studies in Greek border politics

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I would like to thank the editors for the invitation to contribute to this volume in honour of PJR. Peter has taught me much about Greek history and politics, and has continued to do so, over the many years of our friendship, not only about the practicalities of Greek politics, but also its psychology. He has often pushed me to explore further the limits of my thinking! It is with this in mind that I wish to take him to the border zone between Attica and Boeotia in the fifth century BCE, and I offer him this chapter as my gift on the occasion of his 80-ish birthday.[1]

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The mountain chain of Cithaeron and Parnes, stretching from the Corinthian Gulf to the Euboean Gulf, marked the boundary between Attica and Boeotia, at least in a geographical sense. For most of the fifth century this was a region of heightened tensions, as Thebes and Athens battled for control: Athens because dominance in Boeotia was something they desired as a route to fixing their influence in central Greece and Euboea, and Thebes because it allowed them to puncture Athenian interests and enhance their own political aspirations in what was to become, in the middle of the fifth century, the Boeotian *koinon*.

In this conflict between the competing interests of Athens and Thebes, the region between the gulfs, and between Attica and Boeotia, became a war zone. Most of the cities in the border zone were very small and were easily controlled by these larger cities at different times (whether forcibly or not), but two stand out for their very different responses: Plataea and Tanagra. While there has been extensive discussion of both cities individually, and their relations with their more powerful neighbours, they have never been considered together as part of the same border region. The way they managed the politics of the border zones was very different from each other, but also instructive for seeing what life in borderlands in a Greek context could be about.

We will begin this chapter by looking in more general terms at the border between Boeotia and Attica, and the language of border politics. We will then turn attention more specifically to consideration of the border politics of two cities (Plataea and Tanagra), and the way that they needed to play with their 'in-betweenness' in Boeotia and Attica, and finally look at what this tells us about border politics in the Greek world.

[1] I wish to give many thanks to kind friends who read this chapter and made many important improvements: Neville Morley, Robin Osborne, Samuel Gartland, and Peter Rhodes himself.

The border between Boeotia and Attica

Defining the limits of territorial control was important in Greek international relations.[2] Particularly at times of heightened political tensions, to transgress a border without permission could be seen as an act of aggression, and it was generally necessary at least to request permission before crossing another city's territory with an army.[3] Thucydides says, in the context of the Archidamian War, that all Greeks had come to regard crossing a neighbours' territory without permission as suspicious, so that, when the Spartan Brasidas wanted to travel north through Thessaly in 425 BCE, he needed to summon his *xenoi* from Pharsalus to escort him, and even then their support was grudging and the crossing difficult (Th. 4.78).

However, this trenchancy about borders assumed that they were clear. Borders were often defined by natural features, such as rivers and mountains, although other physical markers, such as *horoi* ('boundary stones'), could also be used to mark territorial limits of various kinds. Pausanias, for example, says that Mount Parnon formed the border between Laconia, Tegea and Argos, and that in his time there were stone statues of Hermes on the borders to mark it (2.38.7). Likewise, Herodotus says that there was an inscribed stele set up by Croesus to define the border between Lydia and Phrygia on the River Halys (7.30.2; cf. 1.6.1, 28.1. 72.1, 103.2, 130.1), which remained an important fortified border-crossing (*ta oura*) under the Persians (Hdt. 5.52.1-2).

Nevertheless, the border between Attica and Boeotia, defined only in general terms by the mountain chain of Cithaeron and Parnes, was not always clearly articulated so that the whole region of the mountains and the corridor to the north of them running from one gulf to the other became a region of considerable contestation. To the north of the mountains, Ephorus says that the cities were of mixed descent (*summiktoi ēsan pallachothen*: *BNJ* 70 F 21) and were called the *Thēbageneis*,[4] who seem to have been united not only by their proximity but also by a ritual whereby they dedicated a golden tripod at the Ismenion in Thebes (*Schol. Pind. Pyth.* 11.5).[5] They do seem to have been a diverse group of peoples, and Buck even suggests some of them (especially Hysiae and Eleutherae) may, like the people of Oropus, have spoken a non-Attic dialect of Ionian.[6] It is almost certain that this was the small group of cities along either side of the Asopus (perhaps including Plataea) that formed a

[2] Cf. Raaflaub 1997, esp. 52-3; cf. Ober 1995, 99. The main treatment of borders in the Greek world is that of Daverio Rocchi 1988.
[3] See Mosley 2007.
[4] On the etymology of the name, Mackil (2013, 186 n. 157) accepts that given by Ephorus (they were called *Thēbageneis* because they were 'added to' the Thebans), although Hansen (2011) is sceptical.
[5] Mackil (2013, 185-8) argues that this was an early attempt by the Thebans to enforce political control of the cities in the borderland through the ritual giving of tripods by the *Thēbageneis* at the sanctuary of Apollo Ismenios at Thebes.
[6] Buck 1968, 269-70. Buck suggests that there is evidence for the same non-Attic Ionic at Hysiae and Eleutherae, and that 'a good case can be made for believing that at least the whole Asopus valley spoke Ionic to a late date, and at Oropus it survived latest'.

sympoliteia as part of the Boeotian *koinon* in 446 (*Hell. Oxyrh.* 19.3).[7] We will have more to say on that below.

The limits of Attica extended to the south of these mountains, from Oenoe, which Herodotus says was at the furthest edge of Attica (Hdt. 5.74), and Thucydides (2.18.2) says was in the *methoria gē* of Attica and Boeotia, in the 'borderland'.[8] Thucydides also says Oenoe was fortified, suggesting their aggression (or fear of an aggressive response) in occupying land that should have either been 'empty' or shared. In 422 the Athenian fort of Panactum, which was *en methoriois*, was seized by the Boeotians (Th. 5.3.5). Under the terms of the Peace of Nicias it was agreed that it should be returned to the Athenians (5.18.7, cf. 35), and it became a bargaining tool for the return of Pylos (5.36.2, 39.3, 44.3). However, the Boeotians demolished the fort the Athenians had built there on the grounds that there was an ancient agreement that this land would not be occupied but would be cultivated in common by the Athenians and Boeotians (5.42.1).[9] On this basis the building of the fort was itself an act of aggression in attempting to control this 'common land'.[10] On the other hand, these border cities were vulnerable to attack by invading Boeotians. In 506, as part of the joint effort with the Spartan Cleomenes, the Boeotians took Oenoe and Phyle (cf. Hdt. 5.74).[11] In this context it is useful to note that while on the southern side of the Cithaeron/Parnes chain Oenoe, Phyle and Deceleia were demes, a number of the border settlements, such as Panactum were not.[12]

Further, the borders of Attica were sometimes defined in other, more fluid, terms. The Athenian ephebic oath defined the 'boundaries [*horoi*] of the fatherland' not in territorial terms, but as agricultural produce: wheat, barley, vines, olives, figs (RO 88.19-21). Ober

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[7] This *sympoliteia* included Scolus whose location was probably north of the Asopus River within Theban territory; on the location of Scolus to the north of the river, see Fossey 1988, 119-26; Hansen, *IACP* 452.

[8] Borders were also not always contiguous - there was often a 'borderland', a strip of land 'between the borders' (*methorios*) which did not clearly belong to anyone, and seems to have worked as a kind of 'common land', but could become the focus of conflict. Thucydides says that the Thyreatis/Cynouria was the *methoria* of Argos and Laconia (Th. 2.27.1, 4.56.2), but in 431 the Spartans gave land there to Aeginetans displaced by the Athenians, although they later made terms regarding it in 420 as part of their treaty with Argos (Th. 5.20). This land could be 'empty'/'unnhabited' (*erēmos*): Thucydides says that Mount Cercinēs in the *methorion* between the Sintians and Paeonians was *erēmon* (Th. 2.98.1). Much of the confusion at the battle of Delium in 424 rested on doubts about the limits of Athenian controlled Oropia.

[9] Demosthenes in the fourth century mentions a campaign to secure Drymus and Panactum (19.326); Aristotle says that Drymus was 'sometimes Attic and other times Boeotian' (Arist. F 612 Rose). Ober (1985, 225) identifies the Skourta plain as the region of Drymus; cf. Daverio Rochhi 1988, 182-3.

[10] Munn 2010, 189-200.

[11] Herodotus says that the 'demes' taken were Oenoe and Hysiae, although a Theban dedication of a kioniskos indicates that it was actually Oenoe and Phyle: Mackil 2013, 188-9, 412-14.

[12] Whitehead 1986, 402.

thinks this list probably refers metaphorically to actual stone *horoi*, marking the limits of Attica.[13] However, a more literal reading is also possible, especially as the ephebes also swear to extend the fatherland (RO 88.8-11). Such a reading perhaps gives context to these fortifications within the *methoria gē*: the building of these fortifications was deliberate and aggressive colonialist activity to extend the control of the state over the resources in the borderland. The politics of the borderlands between Attica and Boeotia were not just – or only – about political control of territory for its own sake, but also about access to resources. The point has been well made that fortifications are not always (or only) about controlling access to routes and roads, but also about controlling access to land for grazing or agriculture, a point made particularly about Eleutherae.[14]

In fact, Eleutherae was a border settlement which seems to have moved in and out of Athenian and Boeotian political control, and in antiquity there was some uncertainty about whether it should be considered Boeotian or Attic (Strabo 9.2.31). Pausanias says that Eleutherae was connected to Plataea by a main road (9.2.3), and that the people of Eleutherae changed their allegiance from the Boeotians to Athens because they wanted Athenian citizenship and felt threatened by the Thebans (Paus. 1.38.8; cf. 9.1.1), but the date of the change is unclear, and it seems that in the fifth century at least it was Boeotian;[15] certainly at the time of the writing of the *Hellenica Oxyrhnchia* it seems to have been under Theban control as part of the Boeotian federation (19.3 Chambers). What is interesting about Eleutherae, however, is its double liminality: Fachard, whose focus is mainly on the fourth-century fortress, has called it the 'Gates to Boeotia', but also points to its dual identity. Overlooking the Mazi plain (on the southern side of the Kaza Pass on Cithaeron), Eleutherae was at least as much 'the gates from' as 'the gates to' the hybrid space between it and Oenoe.

However, the Athenians were not the only aggressors on this border. The population of Hysiae was located within the territory of Plataea (Hdt. 5.76.2, 6.108.6) and so close to Plataea as to share a border with Thebes (Hdt. 6.108.6).[16] From Plataea, heading east, Pausanias describes how one turned off the main road to Eleutherae (and Attica through the Kaza Pass) for a road to Hysiae and Erythrae (Paus. 9.2.1, 3; cf. 3.24.1),[17] which were near the main routes that connected Boeotia to the Peloponnese (on 'Hammond's Road').[18] Both Hysiae and Erythrae at some point probably became part of the *sympoliteia* with Plataea and other cities of the Parasopia and later were brought under Theban control (along with Aulis and other wall-less cities in southern Boeotia), probably in about 431 (19.3, 20.3 Chambers).[19] This relocation of Hysiae was almost certainly as a consequence of the Theban

[13] Ober 1995, 104-111.
[14] Fachard 2013.
[15] McKesson Camp 1991, 199-202.
[16] Herodotus also says Hysiae was a 'deme' of Attica, but see n. 11 above.
[17] On the locations of ancient Hysiae and Erythrae, see Fossey 1988; Funke 2006.
[18] Routes into Attica (although noting the identification of Hysiae by Fossey 1988**,** and accepted by Funke 2006 and Hansen, *IACP* 440-1, 443): Ober 1985, 118-21. 'Hammond's Road': Hammond, 1954, 103-22; cf. Pritchett 1980, 99-100, 190-1; Ober 1985, 120-1.
[19] The 'Hysiaeans' of *Hell. Oxyrh.* 19.3 must be the inhabitants of Hyettus: see McKechnie & Kern 1993, 157; Hansen, *IACP* 442. On the *synoikism* of these small Boeotian towns with

attack on Plataea, or at least as part of the same aggressive plan by the Thebans to take control of the Platais; the people of Hysiae probably were given little real choice.

There were also other cities in this border zone who had a preference for the protection of Athens over that of their Boeotian neighbour, Thebes, and suffered for it - Thespiae, in particular. Although the Thespians fought with the Boeotians at Delium and sustained heavy losses at the hands of the Athenians (Th. 4.93.4, 96.3), Thucydides says that in 423 the Thebans took the opportunity caused by the decimation of the Thespians at Delium to take down their walls, accusing them of 'atticising' (Th. 4.133.1); it was certainly the case that there was a long history of Thespians who were sympathetic to Athens.[20] While Athens may have been keen to encroach on Boeotian territories from the south, Thebes was not a benign Boeotian neighbour on the southern Boeotian plain.[21]

What this survey of the border zone of Attica and Boeotia has shown is the complexity of these borderlands, especially north of the mountains. While there was a general sense of what it meant to be Athenian (although it is admittedly difficult to understand how Oropus and Plataea might fit into this sense of Athenianness – more on this below), 'Boeotianness' was a very variable set of ideas which were not defined simply by territory, language, cult or political organisation. It is true that, from the eighth century, regional and cultural identities north and south of this mountain chain were expressed through pottery styles, literary production and cult,[22] but 'to be Boeotian' could mean different things. An apparently early expression of 'Boeotianness' can be seen in the Homeric 'Catalogue of ships', which begins by detailing the 'Boeotians' who took part in the siege of Troy (*Iliad* 2.494-510); the names of cities later known as important 'Boeotian' cities in a territorial sense are included in the list, not just Thebes, Coroneia and Haliartus, but also Plataea, and Graea;[23] interestingly, and probably importantly, Orchomenus is listed separately as a city of

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Thebes, see Demand 1990, 83-4. The *Hellenica Oxyrhnchia* (20.3) also says that a number of small cities were relocated to Thebes at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War because they were unwalled.

[20] An inscription dating to about 447 lists Thespian *proxenoi* being honoured by the Athenians (*IG* i^3 23), one of whom is called Athenaeus, which Lewis notes indicates the long-standing connection his family must have had with Athens (1992, 116 n. 74); in 424, one of the conspirators involved in the Delium campaign was probably from Thespiae: Th. 4.76.2 with Gomme et al. 1945-1981, 3.537 and Hornblower 1991-2008, 2.249-50; in 414 the *demos* of the Thespians made an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the magistrates in power and were forced to flee to Athens: Th. 6.95.2 (cf. *IG* i^3 72).

[21] Note Gartland 2020.

[22] Cf. Coldstream 1983. Note also the sanctuary of Zeus on Mt Parnes, which van den Eijnde (2010-11) argues was an important frontier cult centre until the sixth century, and location of significant competitive display because of its border position.

[23] Pausanias thinks Graea is in the territory of Tanagra (Paus. 9.20-1-2), and according to Strabo some say Graea is the same as Tanagra (9.2.11), although in the fifth century Thucydides says that the land which was called 'Graecan' was consonant with Oropus (Th. 2.23.3; cf. Aristotle fr. 613 Rose which also associates Graea with Oropia), which was at the time subject to the Athenians; Schachter (2016, 82-4) concludes that Graea is to be located within Oropia.

the Minyans (*Iliad* 2.511-16). Tanagra is not included at all. The cult place of Athena Itonia, near Coroneia, celebrated the settlement of the *Boiotoi* together with the sanctuaries of Poseidon at Onchestus and Apollo Ptoeus near Acraephnium, which by the end of the sixth century had come under Theban control, formed a triad of sanctuaries which provided a focus for Boeotian ethnogenesis.[24] Shared coinage from the late sixth century also suggests shared economic interests which preceded the formalisation of the political *koinon* in the mid fifth century.[25] On the other hand, Kowalzig has highlighted the importance of joint story-telling and cultic ritual in the formation of 'Boeotianness' in the fifth century, from which Athens-facing Plataea and Thespiae seem to have been excluded.[26] In fact, in the late sixth and fifth centuries, it was generally Thebes who wanted to define what it meant to be Boeotian, although not everyone agreed with their understanding. On the other hand, there were some cities in the borderland who found strength in their resistance to their Athenian neighbour south of the border, even though that also made them vulnerable to their depredations. It is to the different reactions of the border cities, and especially of Plataea and Tanagra, that we turn next.

A tale of two cities

This border zone could be a place of conflict and violence, but the violence could be directed as much towards Attica as Boeotia. In *Acharnians*, produced in 425 BCE, at the height of the Archidamian War, Aristophanes refers to border raids through the mountain passes by Boeotians (1073-7), and Andocides says that in 415 when the Boeotians heard of the mutilation of the Herms and its aftermath, they marched under arms to the borders (*epi tois horiois*) (Andoc. 1.45). However, as we have seen, there were also Boeotians who saw Athens as a better guardian of their interests than Thebes. In most of the rest of this chapter, I want to explore how two important cities in this border zone, Plataea and Tanagra, responded to the pressures of living in Boeotia, and being Boeotian, but with two more powerful neighbours, Athens and Thebes, who, for most of the fifth century, were trying to exert control in different ways over this border zone, and so secure their own place in central Greece.

Plataea was a city on the north slopes of Cithaeron in western Boeotia. According to Thucydides the Plataeans regarded themselves as 'inlanders' (*ēpeirotai*) (Th. 3.54.4), and, although Herodotus says they did send ships to the battle of Artemisium against the Persians in 480, they were not experienced in seamanship (Hdt. 8.1.1).[27] The Asopus marked the border between Plataea and Thebes, which was set by the Athenians at the end of the sixth century when Plataea first made overtures to the Athenians for a close diplomatic relationship

[24] Beck & Ganter 2015, 135-6.
[25] Mackil 2013, 247-9.
[26] Kowalzig 2007, 328-91.
[27] Pausanias says that nearby Creusis on the coast was the port of Thespiae (9.32.1).

because they were being pressured by the Thebans (Hdt. 6.108).[28] Certainly, from the late sixth century until their city's surrender to the Thebans, the Plataeans had been closely connected with the Athenians. This came about because of the heavy-handed pressure applied to them by Thebes to join the Boeotian project as defined by the Thebans. Herodotus says that when the Thebans required that they be reckoned as Boeotians (Hdt. 6.108.5: *es Boiotous teleein*),[29] they surrendered themselves to the Athenians (6.108.4). They perhaps even had Athenian citizenship from this early date (cf. Th. 3.55.3, 63.2, 68.5), although that is less clear.[30] In 427 Thucydides has the Thebans say that the Plataeans had never properly wanted to take part in 'Boeotianness': although the Thebans claimed to be the founders of Plataea, the Plataeans did not accept their leadership, and, separate from the other Boeotians, transgressed 'the *patria*', before turning to Athens (3.61.2).[31]

However, it is also unclear how Plataea fits into the picture of Athenian territorial, political and ideological control. Plataea was a *polis* in its own right. It was also clearly within Boeotia geographically-speaking, although the story was told in antiquity that the Plataeans took up the *horia* on the side of Attica before the battle of Plataea so that the Athenians could fight on their own land (Plut. *Arist.* 11.8). In fact, the Plataeans fought beside the Athenians at Marathon (Hdt. 6.108.1, 6, 111), and together with the Thespians joined the Greek resistance to Xerxes' army, although the other Boeotians, led by the Thebans, gave 'earth and water' to the Great King (Hdt. 7.132.1; cf. 8.50.2).[32] On the other hand, we have already seen how Plataea had deep roots in Boeotian cult and story-telling, and, despite their connections with Athens, in the mid fifth century, Plataea seems to have been part of the *sympoliteia* with other small neighbouring cities and also a member of the Boeotian federation, possibly formalised in 446 (*Hell. Oxyrh.* 19.3 Chambers),[33] which suggests that their relationship to Athens was quite ambiguous by this time, or perhaps points to the fact that the *koinon* was as much a social and cultural organisation as a political one.[34]

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[28] The Corinthians intervened in the dispute which arose with Thebes to fix the borders between Plataea and Thebes. Nevertheless, despite the Corinthian arbitration, the Boeotians attacked the Athenians as they were withdrawing, but lost the battle. The Athenians, as victors, then re-set the border (*ouron*) between Thebes and Plataea at the Asopus, so defining the area where they could enforce their control. Herodotus says the Plataeans submitted themselves to the Athenians, but it is unlikely that the relationship was one of *isopoliteia*: Hornblower 1991-2008, 1.449-50 (on Th. 3.55.3), 464-6.

[29] Mackil (2013, 185-8) associates this early attempt by the Thebans to enforce political control of the cities with the ritual enforcement of the *tripodophoria*: see n. 5 above.

[30] The survivors of 427 were certainly given Athenian citizenship, and were fully incorporated into the Athenian *polis*: Isocrates 12. 94 and Demosthenes 59.103-4; cf. Lysias 23.2-3. See esp. Hornblower 1991-2008, 1.449-50, 458, 464-6.

[31] Kowalzig (2007, 356) comments on how important it was for the Thebans in particular that there *was* something that constituted 'Boeotianness'.

[32] Herodotus, however, also has Thespians and Thebans among the Greek resistance at Thermopylae (7.202), although only the Thespians stayed willingly, according to Herodotus (7.222, 226); see also Gartland 2020.

[33] Mackil 2013, 22-46; Beck & Ganter 2015, 136-40; but see Kowalzig 2007, 354.

[34] Mackil 2013, 336 n. 39; Mackil 2014, 45.

In the spring of 431, the first act of outright aggression of the Peloponnesian War was the Spartan invasion of Attica, but it was preceded by the Theban assault on Plataea. The Thebans in their attack had been helped by pro-Theban sympathisers within the city who opened the gates to them (Th. 2.2.2). The majority of Plataeans, however, wanted to stay with the Athenian alliance (Th. 2.3.2), and the Thebans inside the city were put to death (Th. 2.5.7). This action on the part of the Plataeans in turn led to the Spartan siege (Th. 2.70, 75-8), which lasted from 429 until 427. It was the initial action at Plataea which Thucydides says broke the Thirty Years Peace (2.7.1); although the Spartans and their allies had voted in 432 that the Athenians had implicitly broken the treaty (Th. 1.87, cf. 125), they later changed their minds and conceded that it was the initial Theban attack on Plataea that was the cause for war (Th. 7.18.2), which may mean they knew about it in advance or that they at least tacitly condoned it.

In 429, the Spartans did not invade Attica, but, together with the Thebans, moved against Plataea (Th. 2.71). According to Thucydides, Archidamus the Spartan king, offered the Plataeans the possibility of joining them against the Athenians or to at least remain neutral (Th. 2.72-3). After consultation with the Athenians, and having been given assurances by the Athenians that they would not desert them (most of the wives and children of the Plataeans were already in Athens: Th. 2.72.2, 78.3), the Plataeans again decided stay true to their alliance with the Athenians (Th. 2.73.2-74.1). The Plataeans, placed under siege in 429, surrendered to the Spartans in 427 (Th. 3.52). Judged by the Spartans and Thebans, the Plataeans' crime against 'the law of the Greeks' (cf. Th. 3.58.3) was that they did not agree to be neutral, and so took the side of 'the enslavers' of Greece (Th. 3.67.6, 68.1, cf. 2.72.1). Thucydides says that two hundred Plataean men were killed, twenty-five Athenians, and the women who had stayed to look after them were enslaved (Th. 3.68.2; cf. 2.78.3).[35] The city was razed in 426 and the land rented out by the Thebans on ten-year leases (Th. 3.68.3).[36] The Plataeans only returned when the Boeotian *koinon* was dissolved in 386 as a result of the King's Peace (Paus. 9.1.4),[37] which broke Thebes' hold on the Boeotian cities.[38]

It was a brave choice on the part of the Plataeans to hold firm to the Athenian alliance, since the Athenians were unable to honour their promises. With the outbreak of war in 431, the Spartan army seems to have had control of the routes from the Peloponnese into Attica and Boeotia and so of the border zone both south and north of Cithaeron and Parnes such that Archidamus was able to enter Attica at Oenoe and depart through Deceleia, and take the road from Tanagra, presumably returning to the Peloponnese on 'Hammond's Road' (near Hysiae). With such an obvious show of strength by the Spartans in the border zone, the cities of Plataea must have felt cut-off from their Athenian friends, and, other than garrisoning

[35] On the apparent discrepancy in the numbers of those in Plataea, see Hornblower 1991-2008, 1.463.
[36] Beck & Ganter 2015, 145.
[37] After the Athenian siege of Scione, and subsequent slaughter of the young men and enslavement of the rest, the Athenians gave Scione to the Plataeans (Th. 5.32.1).
[38] Beck and Ganter 2015, 146-7; cf. Hansen *IACP*, 450-1 (s.v. Plataiai).

Plataea in 431 (Th. 2.6.4, cf. 2.78.3, 3.68.2), the Athenians seemed to be either unable or unwilling to offer much support once Plataea was placed under siege.

Tanagra, on the other hand, was an important Boeotian city, which was resolutely Boeotian ethnically and politically,[39] although the boundaries of the territory it controlled changed over time.[40] In the first phase of the Boeotian federation it contributed one of the eleven Boeotarchs and 60 of the 660 *bouleutae* (*Hell. Oxyrh.* 19.3-4 Chambers). It also controlled the sanctuary of Apollo at Delium on the coast facing Euboea (Th. 4.76.4).[41] It has sometimes been claimed on the basis of a coinage issue of the first part of the fifth century that Tanagra competed with Thebes for dominance in the southern Boeotian plain, but as Roisman argues this position is difficult to sustain, especially when there is positive evidence of co-operation between them at the end of the sixth century (Hdt. 5.79),[42] which is also perhaps evidenced in a shared interest in cult.[43]

To the east, Tanagra bordered on the territory of Oropus, which provided an important link for the Athenians between the mainland and Euboea through Deceleia (Th. 7.28.1).[44] Oropus was territorially Boeotian, but for most of the fifth century was a dependency of the Athenians (cf. Hdt. 6.101.1; Th. 2.23.3), although they lost control of it in 411 when it was betrayed to the Boeotians (Th. 8.60).[45] Interestingly, some Eretrians from across the Euripus were involved in the revolt of Oropus as they were also trying to bring about the revolt of Euboea (Th. 8.60).[46] It was largely because the Peloponnesian fleet was able to use Oropus as its base that it launched a successful attack on the Athenian ships and garrison at Eretria in the summer of 411 (Th. 8.95; Thucydides says that the loss of Euboea gave rise to greater panic in Athens even than the disaster in Sicily: 8.96.1). In 410 Diodorus says that the Boeotians and people of Chalcis built a bridge from Chalcis to Aulis in order to connect Euboea to Boeotia and prevent the Athenians re-taking Euboea (13.47.3-6; cf. Strabo 9.2.2 who says – citing Ephorus - that Euboea was made part of Boeotia by means of this bridge). We will return to the interest of some Eretrians in Tanagra.

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[39] The poetess Corinna probably came from Tanagra (although possibly Thebes). Although it is now generally thought she dates to the fourth century, her poetry is very Boeotian in character: see Berman 2010.

[40] See especially, Schachter 2016, 80-112; cf. Faranetti 2011, 207-9.

[41] Schachter (2016, 80-98) has suggested that Mycalessus and Aulis were not part of the Tanagrais during the Classical period (accepted by Faranetti [2011, 207-9]), although Fossey and Hansen do include them: Fossey 1988, 83-4, 222-3; Hansen 1995, 36-7; Hansen, *IACP* s.v. Mykalessos (no. 212), and Tanagra (no. 220).

[42] Roisman 1993, 81-3.

[43] Mackil 2013, 189-90.

[44] See Plant 1994, 272-3.

[45] Hansen, *IACP* s.v. Oropos (no. 214).

[46] The Boeotian historian Nicocrates (third century BCE) thought that Oropus was originally settled by Eretrians (*BNJ* 376 F 1). The dialect of Oropus was also connected with Ionic from Euboea: Buck 1968, 269-70; see also n. 6 above.

Tanagra was also on a road to Plataea:[47] when the Persian Mardonius moved his army from Attica into Boeotia to encamp at Plataea he crossed Mount Parnes at Deceleia and from there moved down to Tanagra before following a route along the Asopus River to Scolus near Plataea (Hdt. 9.15). Likewise, after the first invasion of Attica in 431, Archidamus returned to the Peloponnese through Boeotia (his progress into Attica was by way of Eleusis), ravaging the territory of Oropus on the way (Th. 2.23, so presumably also following the Asopus past Tanagra, to pick up the main road near Hysiae to the Isthmus, the so-called 'Hammond's Road').[48] Tanagra, unlike Plataea, or other cities in the border zones, was always Boeotian/Theban-facing rather than Athens-facing.

In fact, Tanagra became an important location for conflict between the Athenians and Boeotians. For example, in 458 or 457 BC there was a major conflict at Tanagra between an army comprising the Spartans and their allies, and the Athenians and theirs,[49] the first confrontation between the super-powers in what has come to be called the First Peloponnesian War. This series of conflicts in the first instance was largely centred on Corinthian hostilities against Athens on the one hand (over control of the Saronic Gulf), and Argos on the other (over control of the sanctuary of Nemea).[50] Nevertheless, in 458 or 457, a series of incidents brought Athens and Sparta, together with their allies, into a battle that neither seemed to want to avoid. We have two narrative accounts of the battle, one in Thucydides and one in Diodorus (probably based on the fourth-century Ephorus), which diverge significantly and are probably not possible to reconcile, although the general thrust is that the Spartans positioned their army at Tanagra, the Athenians and their allies met them in battle (which was either a Spartan victory or inconclusive), the Athenians returned after the Spartans had departed to fight another battle at Oenophyta, which they won, and, as a result, gained control of all of Boeotia and Phocis.[51]

In considering this battle, most attention has been given to its purpose. Thucydides' and Diodorus' explanation that the preliminaries to the battle were Spartan interventions against the Phocians on behalf of the Spartan 'metropolis' Doris (Th. 107.2; Diod. 11.79.4-6) is generally doubted, and some ingenious alternative causes have been suggested. Simon Hornblower argues that the preliminaries to the battle arose out of the Spartans' desire, not just to support Doris, which had been attacked by the Phocians, but also to further their influence, even if indirectly at this stage, within the Delphic amphictyony (cf. Plut. *Cimon*

[47] In the third century BCE, Heracleides Criticus described the road between Tanagra and Plataea (*BNJ* 369 F1): ὁδὸς ἡσυχῆ μὲν ἔρημος καὶ λιθώδης, ἀνατείνουσα δὲ πρὸς τὸν Κιθαιρῶνα, οὐ λίαν δὲ ἐπισφαλής; cf. Snodgrass 1992, 90. Mardonius' route took him from Tanagra to Scolus (in Theban territory) where he built a stockade which he used as his base for the attack on Plataea (Hdt. 9.15.1-3); cf. Pritchett 1980, 192-3.
[48] See n. 18 above.
[49] The date of the battle: Diodorus gives a date of 458 for the battle of Tanagra and 457 for the battle of Oenophyta (which Thucydides says happened two months later). Rhodes (2014, 254) notes that these archon dates could be right even if only two months apart.
[50] Hornblower 2011, 25-32.
[51] See Appendix.

17.4).[52] Ian Plant wants to move away completely from Thucydides' explanation and argues instead that the real motivation for the campaign (and the reason why the Spartans camped at Tanagra) was to support Aegina, which was itself at that point under siege by the Athenians (cf. Th. 1.105.2-4).[53]

However, the battle at Tanagra can be understood more simply in terms of the border politics of this region, and its pressures. One significant element of Thucydides' account is the claim that there had been secret overtures made to the Spartans to support an attempt to overturn the democracy, and Thucydides is insistent about this (1.107.4, 6) – although this was not a well-kept secret because the Athenians also had a suspicion (*hypopsia*) of it! In 462/1, the Athenian constitution had been newly reformed through the efforts of Ephialtes (*Ath. Pol.* 25.1-26.1). Although the exact nature of these reforms is unclear, they do seem to have transferred significant powers from the Areopagus to the popular courts, the *boulē*, and the assembly.[54] There are indications that this transition of powers provoked fears of civil war: Aeschylus' *Eumenides* 858-66 and 976-87, a play which was produced in 458, may give some context to the suspicions of the Athenians and show how pressing the fears of crisis may have been.[55] It is also probably significant that in this political storm, during which Ephialtes died (it was said to be assassination, but there are other possibilities)[56] it was later also said to be Aristodicus *of Tanagra* who was the assassin (*Ath. Pol.* 25.4).[57] Whether or not this Aristodicus (otherwise unknown – and there is good reason to think this name is not even Boeotian) was responsible is relatively unimportant; what is significant, as Roller points out, is that it was thought a man from Tanagra could have been involved.[58]

When considering the battle of Tanagra, the importance of this political crisis in Athens for the reactions of both the Spartans and Athenians has often been overlooked, or not taken seriously enough. It is true that the Spartans after the battle at Tanagra (whether it was a clear victory for them or not) did not attempt to invade Attica, but it was not necessarily the case that they ever intended or needed to. Nevertheless, it is certainly the case that an army encamped at Tanagra could have had a destabilising effect on Athenian internal politics, and helped to inflame, simply by its presence, what was already a precarious political situation. But before we discuss this issue further, we need to consider the objectives of the attack on Tanagra in 426 and the attempted *epiteichismos* by the Athenians at Delium in 424 as a way of understanding the full implications of the politics of this border zone.

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[52] Hornblower 1991-2008, 1.168-9; Hornblower 2011, 27-9, 32-3.
[53] Plant 1994, 259-74.
[54] The possibilities for these reforms are discussed by Rhodes 1993, 315-19.
[55] See Rhodes 1993, 322, cf. 312; Note, however, Macleod 1983, 25-7, who does not think these lines about civil unrest necessarily allude to the current political situation; cf. Lewis 1992, 114.
[56] David Stockton (1982) argues that there is not enough evidence to reach a conclusion on how Ephialtes died.
[57] Cf. Rhodes 1993, 324.
[58] Cf. Roller 1989.

One of the consequences of the Athenian victory at Oeonophyta seems to have been that all of Boeotia became, in a technical and political sense, part of Attica, or at least that was the concern in the 420s about what might happen if the Athenians were victorious at Delium (Th. 4.92.4).[59] Thucydides also has the Boeotarch Pagondas say that it was because of internal dissension (*hēmōn stastiazontōn*) that the Athenians were able to take control of Boeotia after Oeonophyta (Th. 4.92.6; cf. 3.62.5). Plato, who also thinks the outcome of the battle of Tanagra was indecisive and that the Athenians returned two days later to win the victory at Oenophyta (*Menexenus* 242a-c), says astonishingly that these battles were fought for the 'freedom' (*eleutheria*) of the Boeotians, which must mean the states who were coming under Theban pressure, not just Plataea, but many of the border cities who leaned towards Athens rather than Thebes.[60] Aristotle says that after Oenophyta, the constitution in Thebes was managed so badly that 'democracy' was overthrown (Arist. *Pol.* 1302b29-31).[61] Taken all together, this may well suggest that there was a general willingness, not only for popular rule in the Boeotian cities in the lead-up to the battle of Tanagra, but sympathy for Athenian control.[62]

However, the Athenian hold on the Boeotian cities started to weaken (they lost control of Orchomenus and Chaeronea). In 446 they suffered defeat at Coroneia at the hands of Boeotian exiles from Orchomenus, and as a result were forced to withdraw from Boeotia (Th. 1.113; cf. Diod. 12.6). In 431, war broke out between the Athenians and their allies and the Spartans and their allies. Plataea was placed under siege by the Spartans in 429, surrendered in 427, and the city was completely destroyed in 426.

It was probably in this context that the Athenians attacked Tanagra in the same year. In 426, the Athenian general Nicias son of Niceratus went to Melos with 60 ships and two thousand hoplites in an initial attempt to force them into the Athenian alliance. When that failed, Nicias sailed to Oropus (Th. 3.91). Thucydides said they arrived in the night and his

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[59] See Hornblower 1991-2008, 2.293-4.

[60] However, the insistence that the Athenians were fighting for the freedom of the Greeks in the fifth century is highly ironic in this fourth century context (given the fifth-century claims about their enslavement of other Greeks), especially as the battle of Oenophyta resulted in all Boeotia coming under Athenian control: Thucydides has the Theban Pagondas making exactly this point before the battle over Delium in 424 (Th. 4.92.4). So, while the Athenians may have wanted to present themselves as having a 'selfless willingness to help others', and while there were pro-Athenian Boeotians, especially among the border cities of south-west Boeotia, who may have been feeling pressure from Thebes, there were few even in the fifth century who would have given this claim much credence. Cf. Raaflaub 2004, 169. Nicole Loraux (1986, esp. 132-45) has suggested this claim to be liberators is an ideological one, which became part of the war of ideas that played out at the end of the fifth century and in the fourth century about who were liberators and who enslavers.

[61] The Athenian control of Boeotia is generally seen as the context for the comments by the 'Old Oligarch' (3.10-11) that the Athenians supported *hoi beltistoi* against the democrats, but then these turned against the Athenians at Coroneia in support of the exiles: see Gomme et al. 1945-1981, 1.318; Marr & Rhodes 2008, 162-3.

[62] This point was made to me by Samuel Gartland in the course of our correspondence over this chapter, with thanks.

soldiers immediately set out for Tanagra. They were joined there by a complete contingent from Athens with two further generals (the campaign was unprovoked but pre-arranged), and ravaged the land about Tanagra on the first day, but on the second day engaged and defeated an army from Tanagra who were supported by some Thebans. The Athenian contingents then left: Nicias' troops for further naval raids along the coast of Locris, and the others returned to Athens.

This campaign generally attracts only peripheral attention. Gomme comments that this campaign prefigures the battle at Delium a few years later, but while its aims were not ambitious it achieved little, except a show of Athenian sea-power.[63] Hornblower points out how, in order for the campaign to work, it must only have been known to those in command (there was more than one occasion when decision-making even in democratic Athens could be made in secret without the involvement of the assembly).[64] However, these comments probably underestimate the importance of this campaign at this point in the Archidamian War, particularly as it took place in the year of the Spartan destruction of the city of Plataea (Th. 3.68.3).

The route from Tanagra to Plataea ran through southern Boeotia. We have already seen how Mardonius used a route from Tanagra to Plataea, when he crossed from Attica into Boeotia through the pass at Deceleia and then went to Plataea through Scolus (Hdt. 9.15.2). There were also links to Attica at a number of points over the ranges of Cithaeron (cf. Hdt. 9.38) and Parnes between Plataea and Tanagra, as well as a connection to the main road to the Peloponnese, 'Hammond's Road' (cf. Hdt. 9.19). The Athenian attack on Tanagra seems to have constituted a show of strength not only by the Athenians, but also of their ability to assert themselves in southern Boeotia, as well as a reminder of earlier defeats of the Boeotians: in 506 (at Euripus: Hdt. 5.77) and, more importantly, at Tanagra in the early 450s, as discussed above. It increased the scope of the border zone through a demonstration of the Athenian ability to transgress the legal boundary between Athenian controlled territory and Boeotia, to move in and out of this borderland, so acting as a destabilising force on the Boeotian cities, and possibly encouraging the Boeotian cities that were leaning towards Athens, especially Thespiae. As we have already seen, Aristophanes *Acharnians* makes plain that the Boeotians were making attacks on Attica in this period, probably by Boeotians based at Tanagra crossing Parnes. These raids seem to have caused considerable anxieties in Athens, so the attack on Tanagra, then, would have had a positive effect in Athens as revenge not just for Plataea, but also for the Boeotian incursions in Attica.

Indeed, this attack on Tanagra together with the attempt to bring Melos into the Athenian alliance, carried through so dramatically ten years later, was a demonstration of Athenian aggressive imperialism during the Archidamian War probably closer than we might suppose to the level usually associated with the mid 410s.[65] The fact that the Tanagran

[63] Gomme, et al. 1945-1981, 2.394.
[64] Hornblower 1991-2008, 1.500.
[65] The attack on Melos in 416 is usually attributed to Alcibiades ([Andoc.] 4.22; Plut. *Alc.* 16.6), who was certainly one of the main agitators for the Sicilian campaign in the next year.

campaign was carefully planned and used a substantial body of troops seems to indicate that it was important on its own terms, even if not for material territorial gain. The campaign at Tanagra, while not adding to Athenian territories, was asserting their ability to transgress border districts, not just of the *polis* of Tanagra, but of the political entity that was now the Boeotian *koinon*.

This campaign against Tanagra in 426 should also probably be seen as the first stage of the campaign to establish an *epiteichismos* at Delium (in the Tanagrais) in 424, which could be used to make raids on Boeotian territories and to provide a focus for Boeotian dissidents, and, in a sense, to make more permanent a state of uncertainty in the border zone.[66] Thucydides says that some Boeotians had been in contact with two of the Athenian generals, Demosthenes and Hippocrates, with a view to inciting a democratic revolution among the Boeotian cities (Th. 4.76.2). To that end, Demosthenes and Hippocrates and the Boeotian rebels concocted a plan whereby Demosthenes and some of the Boeotians were going to bring over Siphae (on the Corinthian Gulf), exiles from Orchomenus were going to hand over Chaeroneia (bordering on Phocis), and Hippocrates and a contingent from Athens were to take the sanctuary of Delium in Tanagran territory (Th. 4.76.3-4), so a position on the Euboean Gulf.

In the event, everything went wrong, and by the time Hippocrates arrived at Delium, the plan had been uncovered and Siphae and Chareroneia were secure (Th. 4.89-90). The Athenians fortified and garrisoned the sanctuary, a battle was fought, and the Athenians were defeated (Th. 4.93-6). Thucydides says that the battle took place *en methoriois* (4.99; cf. 4.128.2), which, as Hornblower points out, made the question of legalities rather complicated.[67] There was considerable and elongated discussion over the Athenians' occupation of the sanctuary, and their rights to take up their dead. However, the objectives of the Athenian occupation of Delium help us to understand the psychology of border politics more generally.

Thucydides says the object was, by fortifying Delium, that, over time, it would be able to destabilise the Boeotian cities (Th. 4.76.5). As a strategy, e*piteichisis* was expected to cause internal instability of various kinds. Westlake talks about what he calls 'internal *epiteichismos'* where dissidents would set up a fort within the boundaries of their own state 'with the intention of harrying and, if possible, over-throwing the regime of their political opponents'.[68] In this sense, an *epiteichisis* was very like a siege (although much cheaper) as it limited access to *polis*' territory, and so brought hardship to the inhabitants of the city.

Notably in the 420s it is Nicias (who, in Thucydides, later argued against the disastrous attack on Sicily) heading-up this campaign, perhaps suggesting that the gap between the activities of Nicias and those of Alcibiades might not always have been as polarised as Thucydides suggests, although there is of course some difference in the degree of violence perpetrated in both sequences of campaigning.

[66] See Westlake 1983, 17.

[67] 1991-2008, 2.314-15. For the location of the *methorion*, and Athenian confusion about whether or not they were fighting in Boeotian territory, see Schachter 2016, 85-7.

[68] Westlake 1983, 13-15.

Interestingly, a theme running through the work on how to survive sieges by the fourth-century Aeneas Tacticus is the possibility of internal treachery.[69]

It was thought that the presence of a hostile army was enough to destabilise a city. In 411, Thucydides says that Agis at Deceleia thought, after the oligarchic coup in Athens, that the sight of a large army would further unsettle the Athenians and that they would either surrender (because they would want to return to democracy), or be easily taken, and so summoned reinforcements (Th. 8.71). However, even with the uncertainty caused by the change from democracy to rule by the Four Hundred, the Athenians retained a calm external front and would only discuss terms for peace rather than capitulation. Nevertheless, it is an important point about the psychology of ancient warfare that Thucydides could interpret Agis thinking in this way.

It is with this in mind that we should consider the importance of Tanagra and its environs to both the Boeotians and the Athenians. Tanagra stood on an important land route into and out of Attica, although of course not the only one. It was also on an important corridor along the Asopus River through southern Boeotia. While other cities along this corridor and on the mountain-passes moved in and out of Theban/Boeotian and Athenian control, Tanagra seems to have consistently identified itself with Boeotian/Theban political interests and not Athenian ones. It was also accessible by sea from the important Euboean Gulf (and connections to Euboea were enhanced, of course, after the building of the bridge). It is significant that an inscription listing Tanagran war dead (which Low thinks must date to the battle of Delium)[70] includes two Eretrians (*IG* vii 585). We have already noted that Eretrians were involved in the revolt of Oropus in 411 and Euboea itself revolted in the same year.

Tanagra, as John Ma has argued, was a city that felt and expressed its liminality, in part through its sanctuaries for Hermes (Paus. 9.22.1-2), and used this as a way of positioning itself politically.[71] It was an important location for Theban/Boeotian attempts at destabilising Athenian interests, but it was also a location that the Athenians had an interest in being unstable so that it was less able to provide a focus for Boeotian activities against Attica and Athens. In 458/7 the possibility of the destabilising and even overthrow of Athens' fairly recently reformed constitution could well explain why the Spartans moved from Phocis to

[69] Pretzler 2017. Westlake suggests that the helot occupation of Ithome would have been seen on the model of internal *epiteichisis*. Understanding the fortification at Ithome in this way helps to clarify the purposes (whether thought-through by the Athenians or not) and consequences of the Athenian fort at Pylos, established in 425. This fort not only provided a focus for deserting helots, but it also had an effect on Spartan morale because of their fear of revolution, not among the Spartiates, but among the helots as they had seen before at Ithome (Th. 4.41, 55.1, 80.2, 5.14.3). Nevertheless, it was obviously the helots who had the potential to be disaffected, and it seems that the Spartans were genuinely concerned that, if the helots were supported, it might allow, not just the destabilisation or loss of Messenia, but also the possibility of the over-throw of their whole system (cf. the Cinadon conspiracy in 395).
[70] Low 2003, 103.
[71] Ma 2008, esp. 196-9.

Tanagra and not just Thebes, which would have provided a closer link to Hammond's Road and the Peloponnese, and why the Athenians were prepared to send such a large force against them. Rather than trying to avoid a military engagement as Holladay has argued,[72] the Spartans' decision to camp its army 'on the border' was deliberate and aggressive.

Border politics

It has been argued recently that it was in Athenian interests to have access to Boeotia, and that, while generally the Athenians may have tried to secure this access peacefully, they were also prepared to use force, as we see them do in the fifth century.[73] By the same token, historical tensions between Athens and Thebes had deep roots (cf. Hdt. 5.74-81), and the Thebans were also prepared to use significant force to secure their interests, so that the border zone between the Boeotia and Attica was a place of great uncertainty, political tension and violence. The push and pull of being neighbours of Athens and Thebes meant that political affiliations did not necessarily map onto ethnic or geographical ones. The resources of these regions must have been great to make them attractive places to live and keep living. Or, at least, the people of these border zones must have become inured to the vulnerability of living in a constant state of insecurity and 'in-betweenness'. The destruction of Plataea and the battles of Tanagra, and the events surrounding them, make this point so clearly. The landing in Tanagran territory by the Athenian general Dieitrephes of the Thracian mercenaries he was escorting home in 413 (Th. 7.29-30) also belongs in this context.[74]

In fact, we have seen the fluidity of political affiliations of the cities within the territory of Boeotia, and the difficulty of maintaining any kind of political cohesiveness. Aristotle says that some cities do not allow people on the borders to be involved in decision-making in times of war because of their conflicting interests (*Politics* 1330a16-23). Even Plataea's participation, first probably in the *sympoliteia* based on the cities of the Parasopia and then in the Boeotian *koinon*, was not enough to save it from destruction in 427, even though its *chora* had also become in some sense a sacred site because this was where in mainland Greece the final battle with the Persians had been fought and where Greek soldiers had died and were buried (cf. Th. 2.71.2-4, 74.2, 3.57, 58.4-59.2; note also Hdt. 9.86.1).[75] However, it is also an indication of the importance of territory to *polis*-identity that the Plataeans returned to their border home in 386 (only to be expelled again by the Thebans in the 370s [Xen. *Hell.* 6.3.1; Isoc. 14 *passim*], and repatriated again by Philip II of Macedon [Paus. 4.27.10, 9.1.8]).

These very same reasons also demonstrate the resilience of the Tanagrans, and their commitment to the Theban-sponsored Boeotian project. Although they lived in a border zone,

[72] Holladay 1977, 54-63.
[73] van Wijk 2020, 107-37.
[74] See Schachter 2016, 89.
[75] See Zatta 2011, esp. 325-31.

throughout the fifth century they were willing to endure steadfastly life in a war zone, to live dangerously on the edges – which says something about what border politics was about.

Despite the importance of borders for defining the physical shape and extent of Greek cities,[76] political borders also did not align with other kinds of boundaries or markers of identity, creating complex loyalties in the border zones. This was particularly true of the border between Attica and Boeotia. Indeed, the very fact that there was a rich 'language' of the borders shows that boundaries and borders were something that Greeks thought about, and the contested nature of the border between Boeotia and Attica gives an indication of why and how borders could become significant.

Appendix: Sources on the battle of Tanagra 458 or 457

In Thucydides' account, the preliminaries to the battle were a Spartan campaign with 1500 of their own hoplites and 10,000 of their allies, in Doris, to relieve one of the Dorian villages which had been seized by the Phocians; the reason (or excuse) for Spartan intervention was the fact that the Spartans considered Doris to be their metropolis (1.107.2). The campaign itself was successful, but their return was hindered by the Athenians who had control of Megara, and so a sea-crossing of the Corinthian Gulf, and had also garrisoned the land route at Mt Geraneia (1.107.3). The Spartans were unsure what was the safest way to return to the Peloponnese, so remained in Boeotia. Further, Thucydides says, they had been approached by some Athenians in secret who wanted to bring down democracy and stop the building of the long walls (1.107.4). A full Athenian contingent came out against them, together with 1000 Argives (who were then their allies), as well as other contingents from their other allies, altogether numbering 14,000, aware both of the plot against the democracy, and the dithering of the Peloponnesians about their return route (1.107.5-6). The Athenians also had some Thessalian cavalry with them, although these in fact defected to the Spartan side (1.107.7).[77]

[76] See Daverio Rocchi 2016, esp. 70-4.

[77] The Thessalians made an alliance with both the Athenians and the Argives at about the same time as the Argive/Athenian alliance (Th. 1.102.4); their betrayal is indicative of Thessalian politics which tended to swing between pro- and anti-Athenian feeling (rather than to polarise between Athens and Sparta): see Rechenauer 1993, 241-2. In the 450s (after Tanagra) the Athenians had tried to restore the son of the 'king' of Thessaly who was in exile (Th. 1.111.1). That this Orestes was in exile is an indication of the political turmoil that persisted in Thessalian internal politics as different elite families jockeyed with each other for power and control of all of Thessaly: see Andrewes 1971, 219. Although not listed among the allies at Th. 1.2.9, Thessalian cavalry came to the support of the Athenians in 431 when the Peloponnesians made their first invasion of Attica (Th. 2.22.2-3). When Brasidas and his army marched through Thessaly in 424, Thucydides comments that the *plēthos* of the Thessalians had good-will for the Athenians, and it was only because Thessaly at the time was controlled by a *dynasteia* that Brasidas was allowed to proceed (4.78.2-3), although on this contrast, see Rechenauer (above), 140-1; Hornblower 1991-2008, 2.259-60. In 422/1 the Thessalians resisted the Spartans attempt to use Thessaly as a corridor again to the north

The battle took place at Tanagra, and Thucydides says it was a victory for the Spartans and their allies, although there was a great deal of slaughter on both sides (1.108.1). The Spartans then took advantage of the victory and cut their way through to the Megarid, over Geraneia and to the Isthmus (1.108.1). Despite this major defeat, Thucydides says the Athenians returned to Boeotia sixty-two days later, defeated the Boeotians at Oenophyta (generally assumed to be near Tanagra), over-ran Boeotia and Phocis, demolished the walls of Tanagra, and took as hostages a hundred of the Opuntian Locrians (1.108.2-3).

Diodorus' account is rather different. Hostilities begin in a similar way with Phocian aggression against the Dorians, Spartan reprisals, and the dispatch of an Athenian army, including Argives and Thessalians (11.79.4-80.1). It was at this point that the Spartans moved to Tanagra, and the Athenians lined up against them. A battle took place, during which the Thessalians defected, and many died in both armies (11.80.2). In Diodorus' account, the Thessalians then attacked (in the evening of the first day of the battle) a market [for supplies] (*agora*) coming from Attica, were given support by the Spartans, although the ensuing battle was indecisive, and both sides made a truce for four months (11.80.3-6). The Spartan army then seems to remain in Boeotia into the next archon year in order to strengthen Thebes (11.81.2-3). The Athenians responded by leading an army into Boeotia, won a great victory, and took Tanagra by siege (11.81.4-82.5). These actions then led to the battle of Oenophyta (Boeotians against Athenians), and all of Boeotia except Thebes came under Athenian control (11.83.1). Myronides, the Athenian general, then took Opuntian Locris and Phocis, and laid siege to Thessalian Pharsalus, although he wasn't able to take it (11.83.2-4).

As well as the narrative accounts, we also have evidence from inscriptions, but these are not straightforward. At Athens, as well as commemorating their own dead (Plato, *Menex.* 242c; Paus. 1.29.7), the Athenians commemorated the Argive dead (although the stone-cutter was an Argive) in a style similar (but not completely so) to their own commemorations of war dead (Pausanias also saw this monument together with the monument of the war-dead from Cleonae, presumably also from this battle: 1.29.7).[78] This commemorative document at least seems to confirm that the Argive number of dead were about a third of the total force (whereas hoplite warfare usually resulted in losses of between 5% and 14% depending on who were the winners and who were the losers).[79] It speaks to the significance of the battle in Athens that the Athenians wanted to commemorate not only their own dead but also those of their allies, which is certainly unusual, and it may be that the Athenians wanted to honour their allies (the point is often made that the Athenians were very enthusiastic about their new alliance with the Argives after Spartans had sent them away from Ithome under a cloud of suspicion in 462/1: Th. 1.102.4).

There is some uncertainty in our sources over the outcome of the battle. As we have seen. Thucydides says the Spartans won, whereas Diodorus/Ephorus is more ambivalent.

Aegean (Th. 5.13.1), which seems to be the context in which Athens honoured the Thessalian Callipus of Gyrton with an honorific *proxenia* (OR 162).

[78] OR 111 with Papazarkadas and Sourlas 2012.

[79] On casualties in hoplite warfare: see Krentz 1985.

Nevertheless, the Spartans made a grand statement of their victory, by appropriating the newly built temple of Zeus at Olympia and erecting a golden shield as a thanksgiving offering on the east pediment of the new temple of Zeus for them and their allies (OR 112; Paus, 5.10.2-5), the temple itself having been a victory dedication by the Eleans over the Pisatans. The Spartans were not just claiming victory, but doing so in very strong panhellenic terms which promoted their claims to leadership both in the Peloponnese and in the Greek world more widely.[80] Other memories of the battle varied significantly. Pausanias, for example, thinks that the battle lasted over two days, and that the Thessalians betrayed the Athenians on the second day, but says the Spartans won (1.29.9).

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[80] See also Scott 2010, 192-3.

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