

SYMPOLITEUOMENOI IN BOEOTIA: AKRAIPHIA AND ITS ISOTELEIS METICS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD CENTURY BC (ABOUT SEG 67.253)*

By Christel Müller

Summary: A decree from Akraiphia in Boeotia, published in 2017 by Yannis Kalliontzis, grants *isoteleia* to city residents, called πεδάρφοικοι, for their active participation in a battle probably fought in 291 BC against the Macedonian king Demetrios Poliorcetes. The privilege granted brings these metics very close to citizen status, to the point that they are included in the category of *sympoliteuomenoi*, a term rightly restored by the editor at the beginning of the text. We can therefore see the contours of a large community, a particular form of *sympoliteia*, which encompasses these *isoteleis*, while distinguishing them from the rest of the *politai*.

The attention that Mogens H. Hansen paid to classical Athens throughout his work did not prevent him from taking an interest in many other regions, notably Boeotia, neighbouring Attica, which he considered to be an excellent ‘test case’. He first devoted a long article to the region in 1995, intended to assess his hypotheses on the conditions of existence of dependent *poleis*.¹ Then, in 2004, he tackled the Boeotian cities himself in

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1 Hansen 1995. Other works by Hansen on Boiotia are as follows: Hansen 1996a (*autonomia* of Boiotian *poleis* in the classical federations); Hansen 1996b (inventory of Archaic and Classical Boiotian *poleis*). On dependent *poleis*, see Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 87-94 (‘A Typology of Dependent *Poleis*’).

the *Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*.² It is therefore a Boeotian tribute that I wish to pay to a historian whose works never leave my desk.

In 2017, Yannis Kalliontzis published an inscription from Akraiphia kept at the Museum of Thebes,³ the content of which is exceptional for our knowledge of the military, social and institutional history of this small city in the eastern Copais (Fig. 1). Inscribed on a marble block, it consists of two texts: on the front, a civic decree granting *isoteleia* to metics to reward them for having participated, alongside the citizens, in a war against Demetrios Poliorcetes; on the left side, a list of male names, undoubtedly those of the beneficiaries, which forms the expected follow-up to the decree. The editor has shed light on the historical context,⁴ showing how difficult relations between the Macedonian king and the Boeotian *koinon* led to two successive revolts in 292 and then 291. The inscription probably refers to the second one but was not set up until after 287 BC, when Boeotia was liberated from the domination of Demetrios Poliorcetes and underwent a profound transformation of its federal organisation, which resulted in the definitive establishment of the Hellenistic *koinon* as reconstructed by Denis Knoepfler.⁵ However, while the military history issues and formal aspects raised by this text are now clear, the social and institutional aspects have received less attention, as can be seen from reading the few subsequent comments made by the editor. This article is therefore devoted to a re-examination of these aspects, in particular to the question of the inclusion of the beneficiaries in a group of *sympoliteuomenoi*. My intention, in these few pages, is not to study *isoteleia* in detail, nor the various forms of *sympoliteia*. It is simply to assess the validity of the restoration proposed by the editor *princeps* and to draw all the historical implications of the link between the presence of *sympoliteuomenoi* and the granting of this fiscal privilege.

2 Hansen 2004.

3 Kalliontzis 2017; Knoepfler 2019: 281-82 for hypotheses on how the stone came to be housed in the Thebes Museum; the author emphasises in particular that the excavations carried out by French archaeologists since the 19th century were not responsible for the discovery, and that the block was probably “found in reuse.”

4 Kalliontzis 2017: 692-94.

5 Knoepfler 2001a.

For the sake of clarity, I reproduce here the text of SEG 67.253 with Kalliontzis' translation (modified):

A. Front side (Fig. 2)

- [- - - c. 7 - - -]ιω ἄρχοντος τοῖ ἀπεγράψανθο ἐν τῷς συ[μπο]-
[λιτευομέ?]νωσ καττὸ ψάφισμα τῷ δάμω*vacat*
[- - - c. 6 - - -]Μειλιῆος ἔλεξε· δεδόχθη τοῖ δάμοι⁶ ὅπως καὶ φιδῶ[νθι]
4 [πάντε]ς τοῖ Ἑλλανες ὅτι Ἀκραφιεῖες πολλὰν ἐπιμέλειαν πο[ιῶνθι]
[τῷ]ν χρεισίμων ἐν τοῖς κηροῖς γ[ι]νυμένων τῇ πόλι, δεδόχθ[η τοῖ]
[δ]άμοι, ὅποττοι τῶν πεδαφοίκων συνεπολέμεισαν τὸμ π[όλε]-
μον τὸμ περιστάντα περὶ τὰν πόλιν τὸμ ποδ Δα-
8 μάτριον ἐπὶ Ξενοκρίτῳ ἄρχοντος κῆ διέμειναν ἐν τῇ πόλι πι[θό]-
μενοι τοῖς ἀρχόντεσσι κῆ ταδδόμενοι ὅποις ἕκαστον κατέτ[αξαν],
εἶμεν αὐτοῖς φισοτέλιαν δεδομένην παρ τᾶς πόλιος κῆ α[ὐτοῖς]
κῆ τοῖς ἐκγόνοις, ἐμφερόντεσσι ἐν τὰν πόλιν κῆ ἐν τὸ κο[ινὸν]
12 Βοιωτῶν ἅ κα κῆ τοῖ ἄλλοι πολῖτη ἐμφέρωνθι· ἐπιμέλεσ[θη δὲ]
τῷς πολεμάρχως ὅπως μειδὶς αὐτῷς ἀδικίει, ὅπ[ως δὲ]
ἂ δωριά κουρία ἴει αὐτοῖς ἐμ πάντα τὸν χ[ρόνον, κῆ φανε]-
ροῖ ἴωνθι ὁπόττοις δέδοτη ἂ φισοτ[έλια παρ τᾶς πόλιος, ἀπο]-
16 γράφεσθαι αὐτῷς ποττῷς π[ολεμάρχως τῷς ἐπὶ *nomen*]
-ω ἄρχοντος ἐν τοῖ πρόσθα [- - - - - ἀπο]-
γράψαντας αὐτῶν τὰ ὀνύμα[τα - - - - -]
ἐν τοῖ δάμοι· ἐπὶ δὲ κα ἀν[αγράφωνθι τὰ ὀνύματα - - - - -]
20 ἢ τίς κα βεῖλιξε[τη] [τῶν πολιτῶν - - - - -]

[- - -] being archon, the following persons were registered among the
[*sympoliteuomenoi*] in accordance with the decree of the People.

[- - -] son of Meilias made the proposal; be it resolved by the People,
so that

- 4 all Greeks may know that the Akraiphians take great care
of those who have rendered service to the city in times of hardship,
be it resolved

6 The text presents two motion formulas and not one enactment formula and one motion formula, contrary to what Kalliontzis 2017: 679 writes.

- by the People: Regarding all the metics who fought with [the Akraiphians]
 in the war against Demetrios, which threatened the town
 8 under the archon Xenokritos, and who remained in the town, obeying
 the magistrates and staying where the latter had assigned each of
 them, let there be
isoteleia for them, granted by the city, both for themselves and their
 descendants,
 such that they contribute to the city and to the *koinon*
 12 of the Boeotians what the other citizens contribute.
 The polemarchs shall ensure that no one commits any injustice
 against them. So that
 this gift may be valid for them forever and that
 all those who have been granted *isoteleia* by the city may be known,
 they shall be
 16 registered with the polemarchs under the archon [- *personal name* -],
 in [- *place name* -] in front of [- -----]; after
 inscribing their names [- -----]
 before the assembly of the people; after they have [inscribed the
 names - - - -]
 20 if any of the [citizens] wishes to [- -----
 - -]

L. A7: τὸμ ποδ Papazarkadas (the M is clearly visible on the photograph): Kalliontzis τὸν.

B. Left side (Fig. 3)

Note: the upper third of this side has been left blank by the stonecutter.

- Κάρπος Διωνουσίω, Φι[λέ]-
 τηρος Καλλίππω, Πύ[ρραν]-
 δρος Λίοντος, Ἑρμάϊ[ος Ἑρ]-
 4 μαΐω, Θίων Δαμοτέλ[ιος],
 Μένων Δαμοτέλιος, [Σω]-
 τειρίδας Δαμοστρότιος,

- Πανκλεῖς Σιμίαο, Ὀνασίωv
 8 Παράλω, Διωνουσόδωρος Χα-
 ριξένω, Δρόμων Διωνουσο-
 δώρω, Πατρώνδας Πάτρων-
 ος, Θρασοκλεῖς Ἀρχεβώλω,
 12 Ζώπυρος Θρασοκλεῖος, Ἐρά-
 [των] Στροτώνιος, Νικόλαος
 [- - - - -]Ν Θιαγέ-
 [νιος - - - - -]

Karpos son of Dionousios, Phileteros son of Kallippos, Pyrrhandros son of Lion, Hermaios son of Hermaios, Thion son of Damoteleis, Menon son of Damoteleis, Soteiridas son of Damostrotos, Pankleis son of Simias, Onasion son of Paralos, Dionousodoros son of Charixenos, Dromon son of Dionousodoros, Patrondas son of Patron, Thrasokleis son of Archebolos, Zopyros son of Thrasokleis, Eraton son of Stroton, Nikolaos [son of?, - - - - -]N son of Thiageneis [- - - - -].

Commentary

1. A group of *πεδάφοικοι*

The first point concerns the initial status of the beneficiaries of the decree. The latter refers to them as *πεδάφοικοι*, a dialectal form for *metoikoi*, attested here for the first time in Boeotia. We are therefore dealing with free non-citizen residents, a category that sources rarely mention for the region. As the editor observes, for the Hellenistic period, *metoikoi* are known only in connection with Alexander's siege of Thebes in 335, in the writings of Diodorus.⁷ The term is then that of the *koine*, but it has the advantage of informing us about the presence of such residents on the

7 Diod. 17.11.2: οἱ δὲ Θηβαῖοι τοὺς μὲν ἵππεῖς ἐντὸς τοῦ χαρακώματος ἔταξαν, τοὺς δ' ἐλευθερωθέντας οἰκέτας καὶ τοὺς φυγάδας καὶ τοὺς μετοίκους τοῖς πρὸς τὰ τεῖχη βιαζομένοις ἀντέταξαν: "For their part, the Thebans stationed the cavalry within the palisades, assigned their enfranchised slaves, along with refugees and resident aliens, to face those who drove at the walls" (ed. and tr. C.B. Welles, Loeb Classical Library, 1963).

territory of the city. Later, well after the break-up of the Hellenistic *koinon* in 171, *paroikoi* are found in inscriptions. In central Greece, this term refers to resident foreigners and not to free peasants settled in the *chora* as in certain cities of Asia Minor.⁸ It is attested from the second half of the 1st century BC in Megaris in Pagai,⁹ as well as in Boeotia in Thespiiai, but also in Akraiphia itself, where the benefactor Epaminondas, in the first half of the 1st century AD, lavishly entertained several categories of inhabitants, including the *paroikoi*.¹⁰ The existence of ‘resident foreigners’ in the cities of Boeotia during the Hellenistic period and the early Empire is therefore both undeniable and expected, even if there is little evidence of them.

Another, more delicate question is to understand the number and origin of these πεδάρφοικοι. Here they are considered as a group that enjoyed a collective privilege, even if its enforcement could only be individual. They were soldiers who συνεπολέμεισαν τὸν π[όλε]μον τὸν περιστάντα περὶ τὰν πόλιν τὸν ποδ Δαμάτριον, “fought with [the Akraiphians] in the war against Demetrios which threatened the town.” One may hesitate here as to the meaning of *polis*, ‘city’ or ‘town’.¹¹ In any case, it is not simply a matter of “participating in the war against Demetrios,”¹² but rather a situation viewed from a physical perspective: one should give a concrete sense to the participle περιστάντα applied to a particular place. *Polis* could, of course, refer to the city and its surrounding territory, but it seems to me that the rest of the narrative shows an emergency situation linked primarily to the urban perimeter. These metics, indeed, had the merit of remaining ἐν τῇ πόλει, “in the town” (διέμειναν being endowed with a preverb emphasising the persistence of their behaviour), and not leaving the positions assigned to them (A.ll. 8-9). In other words, they did not desert. We must therefore assume that not all the fighters, whatever their status, had shown the same courage.

8 Gauthier 2011 [1988]: 73.

9 IG VII 190 (= IG VII² 1 434: decree for Soteles, son of Kallinikos, dated between 64/3 and 56/5 BC by Adrian Robu in his forthcoming edition of the IG volume).

10 IG VII 2712 (= see the better edition by Oliver 1971: 225-36: decree for Epaminondas, between 37 and 67 AD), ll. 12 and 64-65.

11 For the two meanings of the term, see Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 39-46 and 138-43.

12 As Kalliontzis 2017: 675 puts it.

They appear not as scattered foreigners, but as a group assigned tasks and places in the battle, exactly as was the case in Diodorus with the metics stationed at Thebes during Alexander's attack in 335.

Nevertheless, it remains difficult to assess whether, outside of the military context, the metics of Akraiphia formed a homogeneous social group. Because the individuals listed here are labelled as πεδάρφοικοι, they cannot be mercenaries, even if that was the case originally. What can be said about them in 'civilian' life? Kalliontzis assumes that the list began at the end of the front side and continued on the left side.¹³ The list, as it is preserved, contains 17 names and is incomplete, which may bring the total to at least 20 people, taken from among those eligible for military service, in principle men between the ages of 20 and 49.¹⁴ Military catalogues, which list the annual conscripts belonging to the civic body, varied in the Hellenistic period for Akraiphia between 7 and 37 names, an average of just under 20 per year, if we count from the 17 catalogues that have been preserved. Demographic calculations by Thierry Lucas and Guillaume Dubach show, for the city, a population of 600 to 900 male citizens and of 350 to 550 soldiers aged 20 to 49.¹⁵ The *metoikoi* in the decree therefore do not form a large contingent, but we should not expect to find thousands of foreigners eligible for enlistment in Akraiphia.¹⁶ Moreover, these *metoikoi* represent only a fraction, albeit undoubtedly an important one, of the group of 'resident foreigners': soldiers of fighting age who participated in the defence of the city and were rewarded. The social group itself was therefore larger, if we count those who were not eligible for military service and the rest of the families. The latter can be identified thanks to the patronyms: we find two brothers, Thion and Menon, sons of Damoteleis (B.ll. 4-5), and two pairs of father and son, Dionousodoros son of Charixenos,¹⁷ with Dromon son of Dionousodoros (B.ll.

13 One might wonder why the stonecutter did not inscribe anything in the upper part of this side, leaving a third of the surface blank: perhaps there was a painted image that has left no trace?

14 According to the probable calculation by Lucas & Dubach 2023: 504 n. 111.

15 Lucas & Dubach 2023: 508-10.

16 Knoepfler 2019: 283.

17 Omitted by Kalliontzis 2017: 678-79.

8-10), and Thrasokleis, son of Archebolos, with Zopyros, son of Thrasokleis (B.ll. 11-12).

Their geographical origin is much more problematic, and the 17 names in the catalogue generate more questions than answers. Kalliontzis' careful and lengthy onomastic analysis, based on occurrences in the *LGPN*, shows a great variety of origins: some names are rarely attested in Boeotia (*Dromon*), whilst others are fairly common (*Patron*), but these occurrences alone are not sufficient to conclude that these metics were Boeotians. Hence Kalliontzis' conclusion that "this is clearly a group of non-Boeotian foreigners who settled in Akraiphia."¹⁸ The linguistic features specific to the Boeotian language, especially the presence of patronymic adjectives and certain dialectal characteristics, do not allow us to conclude that these names are local,¹⁹ but rather that they have been Boeotianised. The interpretation can be taken even further. A highly probable hypothesis is that Boeotians residing outside their city of origin enjoyed privileges such as *eppasis* (dialectal form for *enktesis*) or *isoteleia* within the territory of the Confederacy. This explains the absence of civic decrees honouring members of the *koinon* prior to its dissolution. Under these circumstances, the metics of Akraiphia cannot have been Boeotians from neighbouring *poleis*, as they would not have needed to be granted *isoteleia*. There was undoubtedly no Boeotian metics, or *πεδάφοικοι*, at all within the borders of the *koinon*.

Another point has, curiously, escaped commentators: the absence of ethnics after the patronyms. Such an absence is surprising, and there are three possible hypotheses to explain it, with varying degrees of probability:

- The first, which remains unverifiable, would be to say that the absence of ethnics is only apparent and that our metics came from one or more cities whose names would have been indicated at the bottom of the decree, in the damaged part of the stone. A parallel example is the politography of Larissa dating from 217-214, in which

18 Kalliontzis 2017: 679.

19 It remains difficult to understand why Denis Rousset, in his review of the article (Rousset 2019: 534, no. 210), writes that "their names are characteristic of Boeotian onomastics and dialect" and concludes that we are dealing with people from the region.

naturalised citizens are classified according to their origin: one citizen from Samothrace, 142 from Krannon, and more than 60 from Gyrtion.²⁰

- In the second hypothesis, the absence of ethnics is an expected situation. It might be, for instance, an indication of another status, that of freedmen residing in Akraiphia, in which case we are no longer talking about resident foreigners *stricto sensu*. In another Thessalian politography, that of Pharsalos,²¹ dating from the last third of the 3rd century BC, the catalogue contains 177 names, 154 of which have no ethnic and 23 neither a patronym nor an ethnic. The latter beneficiaries are considered, most likely, to be *Penestai*, in other words a local population of servile status, while the others are believed to be *Penestai* who had already been freed.²² Boeotia did not have this type of rural population, but it did have freedmen who are well known in several cities.²³ The two questions raised by this status are that of the ‘disappearance’ of the freedmen after their emancipation or once the possible period of *paramone* had ended, and that of the fate of their family, if they had one. This brings up the problem of the value of the so-called patronymic genitive, placed after the *onoma*, which could refer, for example, to a biological father, and would not be a marker of citizen status. One must therefore consider the onomastic characteristics of the individuals concerned. The difficulty here is that the concept of ‘servile onomastics’ is not always effective; it has even been challenged by Kostas Vlassopoulos for classical Athens and by Dominique Mulliez for Late Hellenistic Delphi.²⁴ An

20 IG IX.2 517, ll. 48-93.

21 I. Vallée *Enipeus* 50.

22 Ducat 1994: 73, 107-13, followed by Bouchon 2021: 169. See below (n. 59) for another hypothesis by Oetjen 2010: 246-48, concerning their origin, in relation to the participle *sympoliteuomenoi*.

23 See the corpus edited by Darmezin 1999, with, admittedly, a slightly later documentation for the manumissions.

24 See Vlassopoulos 2010 and 2015: his detailed quantitative study shows, p. 102, that “the majority of Athenian slaves bore names that did not distinguish them from citizens; and different groups of slaves show different onomastic patterns”; the conclusions are roughly the same in Mulliez 2023: 346: one observes “the predominant use

exchange with Mulliez has convinced me that, in our case, the names did not sound especially servile, except perhaps Karpos or Onasion.²⁵ The names themselves therefore do not help to clarify their status. Beyond this criterion, if we accept the hypothesis that they were freedmen, they could well have been classified as *πεδάρφοικοι*, which is paralleled in other cities, even if not all *apel-eutheroi* automatically fell into the category of metics.²⁶ A critically important argument in favour of this hypothesis is to be found in the text by Diodorus already cited:²⁷ among the combatants of Cadmea in 335, the Thebans had formed three groups of fighters, one of which consisted of “freed slaves (ἐλευθερωθέντες οἰκέται), as well as refugees (φυγάδες) and resident foreigners (μέτοικοι),” which shows the possible inclusion of such freedmen in the ranks of the army and their closeness to the metics.

- A third hypothesis is that the catalogue mentions the result of the operation, in other words that these soldiers would now be Akraiphians, so their ethnic is irrelevant. This would imply the granting of citizenship, a point to which we will return later. However, politographies, whether individual or collective, always give the original (and not the final) status of the beneficiary. This is the case in the lists of Miletos, dated 250-180 BC, which record the *neopolitai* who became citizens ‘by decree of the People’: in these lists, the only people mentioned without an ethnic are the *nothoi* or *nothai*, the ‘illegitimate children’, whose situation requires regularisation.²⁸ Beyond *politeia*, decrees granting privileges to foreigners, whether residents or not, do not omit the ethnic of the beneficiaries,

of Greek names, which has a counterpart: once slaves are freed, it becomes difficult to identify them in Delphic society and to measure the place they occupy there.”

25 Mulliez *per epistulam*.

26 Dimopoulou-Piliouni 2008, according to whom the transition from the category of freedmen to that of metics could be the result of both statutory and social promotion; Zelnick-Abramovitz 2005: 307-19. The question remains unresolved for Athens: Kamen 2013: 43-54.

27 Diod. 17.11.2.

28 E.g., *I.Delphinion* 41 (226/5 BC).

and this is the case in Boeotia as elsewhere.²⁹ If the omission here is deliberate, it becomes meaningful in itself. We must then assume that, in the case of these πεδάφοικοι, the omission implies, first and foremost, residence in the area and a distancing from the city of origin: this might be the most reasonable solution. In this respect, it is worth noting that individuals with *isoteles* status frequently appear in inscriptions without their ethnic. In the case of Athens, for example, some funerary stelae show the ethnic being replaced by a reference to their *isoteleia*.³⁰

Little more can be said about the πεδάφοικοι. Ultimately, the key point is to accept that this category is not necessarily a homogeneous one.³¹

2. The privilege of *isoteleia*

These πεδάφοικοι receive a privilege that is the main focus of the decree: *isoteleia*.³² This privilege is very frequently given in Boeotia to foreign benefactors, for whom there is no evidence of residence, but who could be attracted by such a grant. It is generally accompanied by other advantages, notably the ‘right to acquire land and a house’, which is called γᾶς κὴ φυκίας ἔπασις.³³ One deals here with a collective grant to brave metics, that had, in fact, a greater impact than individual decrees. The best parallels for such collective grants can be found in Athens, where on various occasions the *demos* granted *isoteleia* to a group, as it did in 401/0 BC to foreign soldiers who had taken part in the Battle of Mounychia and

29 E.g., in Akraiphia, Perdrizet 1899: 90–91 (two decrees of proxeny for Chalcidians, late 3rd century BC).

30 E.g. *IG II*², 8652 (4th century BC): Εὐκόλον | Ὀνησίμου | Ἡρακλεώτου. | Ὀνήσιμος | Μνησικλέους | [ἰσο]τελής, κτλ., “Eukolon daughter of Onesimos from Heraclea; Onesimos son of Mnesikles *isoteles*.” It is the woman’s name that indicates the city of origin of Onesimos.

31 Dimopoulou-Piliouni 2008: 47.

32 I discuss the topic of *isoteleia* in greater depth in Müller forthcoming.

33 E.g. *IG VII*² 3, 18 (Tanagra, late 3rd century BC, decree in honour of Histieos son of Ariston of Miletos). For the *eppasis* privilege in Boeotia, see Mackill 2013: 258–59, with her epigraphic dossier that provides further examples.

liberated Piraeus.³⁴ In our case, *isoteleia* is not associated with the granting of *eppasis*, perhaps because the πεδάφοικοι had already received it, or because the Akraiphians did not deem it appropriate to grant it then, a less likely hypothesis given the usual Boeotian generosity in this matter.

Isoteleia implies that the beneficiaries change tax category: instead of paying the tax reserved for resident foreigners, the local equivalent of the Athenian *metoikion*, they will pay the same taxes as citizens. The text, which is perfectly clear on the topic, provides a definition of *isoteleia* as it applies in Boeotia in the 280s BC: εἶμεν αὐτοῖς φισοτέλιαν δεδομένην παρ τᾶς πόλιος κῆ α[ὐτοῖς] κῆ τοῖς ἐκγόνοις, ἐμφερόντεσσι ἐν τὰν πόλιν κῆ ἐν τὸ κο[ινόν] Βοιωτῶν ἅ κα κῆ τοῖς ἄλλοι πολῖται ἐμφέρωνθι, “let there be *isoteleia* for them, granted by the city, both for themselves and their descendants, such that they contribute to the city and to the *koinon* of the Boeotians what the other citizens contribute.”

The reason this document is so crucial is that it refers explicitly to the tiered structure of taxation between the civic and federal levels.³⁵ The existence of taxation in the Boeotian *poleis*, along with exemptions, is well documented: this may have taken the form of ordinary *tele*, such as those on the import and export of commercial goods, but the list is by no means exhaustive. However, federal taxation is more difficult to grasp from the sources. Apart from decrees granting *ateleia* or *isoteleia* to foreign benefactors at the level of the *koinon*, there are two main sets of documents that refer to federal levies: the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, which describe the situation in Boeotia during the second half of the 5th century BC, with *eisphorai* paid by each district;³⁶ and three leases from Thespiiai which mention a *telos* to be paid, if required, by the farmer either to the

34 Rhodes & Osborne, *GHI* 4.7–9. See other parallels cited by Kalliontzis 2017: 684. All the Athenian cases are discussed by Flament 2022.

35 Mackill 2013: 289–304, about various confederacies, including the Boeotian *koinon*.

36 *Hell.Oxy.* D 19.4 (ed. M. Chambers [Teubner 1993]): ἀπλῶς δὲ δηλῶσαι κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα καὶ τῶν κοινῶν ἀπέλαυνον καὶ τὰς ε[ἰ]σφορὰς ἐποιοῦντο καὶ δικασ-τὰς-ἐπεμπον καὶ μετεῖχον πάντων ὁμοίως καὶ τῶν κακῶν καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν “In short, in proportion to the number of magistrates, they shared in the common funds, paid the taxes (*eisphorai*), sent judges, and took part in everything on an equitable basis, both in the burdens and in the benefits” (transl. Lucas 2023: 14).

city or to the *koinon*.³⁷ Three questions arise, all interrelated: what taxes were paid in Boeotia? Who benefited from these taxes (the *koinon* or the city)? How was collection carried out? Regarding the nature of the taxes, the *koinon* levied *eisphora*-type taxes, intended mostly to finance the army and military operations. These levies were proportional to the population of each district in the classical period, and there is every reason to believe that the same was true in the Hellenistic period. It is indeed the districts, whatever their institutional existence, that were liable for taxation and that spread the burden across each of the member cities. This required a “tremendous coordination effort on the part of the several *poleis* that made up a single district.”³⁸ We do not know, however, how frequently these levies were imposed. One cannot help but think that they must have been regular, given the responsibilities borne by the federal authorities regarding the protection of the Boeotian territory. The *telos* mentioned in the Thespiiai leases is more mysterious: it represents a tax on land (?), appears to be levied on individual farmers, but does not seem to be collected systematically, either at the civic or federal level.³⁹

What does the decree for the πεδάφοικοι bring to the issue? It does not, of course, give a list nor describe the nature of the taxes concerned, but it does not exclude any of them a priori. We can therefore venture the hypothesis that the use of the verb ἐμφέρω, a dialectal form of the verb εἰσφέρω, implies that a possible *eisphora* or ‘exceptional contribution’ could also be involved.⁴⁰ But both terms can take on a very general

37 *I.Thespies* 55, ll; 1-2 and 26-27 (Pernin 2014: 122-25, no. 25), ca. 230-215 BC: εἰ δέ τί κα δέει τέλος ἐμφερέμεν ἐν τὰν πόλιν εἴ ἐν τὸ κοινόν | Βοιωτῶν, ὅσι ὁ γ[α]ργός, “if tax is to be paid to the city or to the Boeotian Confederacy, the farmer will pay it” (transl. Pernin). The phrase (restored) also appears in two other leases (*I.Thespies* 48 = Pernin 2014: 108, no. 22, l. 15-16 [250-245 BC], and *I.Thespies* 54 = Pernin 2014: 118, no. 24, l. 5-6 [230-215 BC]). In all three cases, the *telos* relates to a sacred domain: Mackill 2013: 297, therefore writes that “it is possible that sacred land may somehow have formed the basis of the tax assessment for a *polis*,” which is not very clear.

38 Mackill 2013: 297.

39 Pernin 2014: 139-40.

40 On *eisphora*, see Migeotte 2014: 518-24.

meaning to refer to the payment of any amount of money in a wide variety of contexts.⁴¹ Regarding the collection of taxes, there is no reason to interpret the expression κῆ ἐν τὸ κο[ινὸν] as implying a direct payment to the *koinon* by the citizens, any more than in the case of the *telos* mentioned in the Thespiiai leases. Such a practice would make no sense in this hierarchical system, which sought, moreover, to minimise transaction costs. These are simply taxes owed to the *koinon*, which were collected by the city. The decree shows that these contributions were themselves based on levies imposed on the citizens. To pay their due to the *koinon*, the cities did not use only (or at all) the revenues collected, for example, from harbour or sales taxes. Concerning the πεδάφοικοι, it is impossible to say whether they already paid similar taxes in the ‘metics’ category. The decree definitely allows them to contribute in the ‘citizens’ category, with all the changes that may be involved.

We know that *isoteleia* could be granted by the *koinon* itself:⁴² This implies that it had sufficient authority over the cities to impose a specific tax regime on them in favour of a particular individual.⁴³ This privilege is also attested at the civic level, in Haliartos, Orchomenos, Plataea, Tanagra, Thespiiai, Thisbe and, above all, Oropos during the time it belonged to the Confederacy. This is its first attestation in Akraiphia, probably for chronological reasons: the civic decrees there are mainly dated after the period of the Hellenistic *koinon*, during which *isoteleia* was granted elsewhere in the region. The new decree makes it clear that, in this case, it is the *polis* that grants the privilege: εἶμεν αὐτοῖς φισοτέλιαν δεδομένην παρ τᾶς πόλιος, the last part of the sentence serving to emphasise the point.

The granting of *isoteleia* is described as a *doria*, ‘gift’ (l. 14), a term often used in inscriptions to refer to an honour or a privilege. The text ensures that it is effectively applied by recording the names, the polemarchs be-

41 E.g. in the dossier concerning the loan granted by Nikareta of Thespiiai to the city of Orchomenos, the term ἐνφορά (= εἰσφορά), accompanied by the verb εἰσφέρω, refers to the ‘contribution’ intended for repayment: Migeotte 1984: 53–69, no 13: III (F), l. 49 (150).

42 E.g. IG VII² 2, 1 (ca. 270 BC), l. 7: federal decree for Ophelas son of Philemon of Amphipolis.

43 Mackill 2013: 294.

ing responsible for enforcing this ‘equality of tax’, while also guaranteeing the safety of *isoteleis* metics (ll. 12-13), another fundamental grant.⁴⁴ It is worth noting how counterintuitive it is for a modern mind to describe the payment of a tax as a ‘gift’.⁴⁵ Indeed, *isoteleia* here is not simply a matter of exemption from the tax levied on resident foreigners, nor is it simply equivalent to *ateleia*, in a weakened sense, as sometimes happens including in Boeotia.⁴⁶ It consists of paying the same taxes as citizens, in this case at two levels, civic and federal.⁴⁷ It is therefore difficult to imagine that this grant constituted a real tax relief. *Isoteleia* plays in fact a special role that goes far beyond the financial issue alone. In the toolbox of *philanthropa* that a city can grant, when *isoteleia* is bestowed on resident foreigners, it represents the highest possible privilege before *politeia* itself: in this regard, it should be noted that the Boeotians rarely granted citizenship and preferred to maintain an ethnic basis for the exercise of political offices. As a result, *isoteleia* placed its beneficiaries as close as possible to the body of citizens, without granting them full participation. This was also the case in Athens, where the *isoteles* metic became a quasi-citizen, deprived only of sharing in the *arche*.⁴⁸ This brings us to the question of a possible *sympoliteia* between these privileged πεδάφοικοι and the *politai*.

44 Kalliontzis 2017: 686 recalls that in Athens, it was also the polemarchs who “played an important role in the relationship between metics and the city.” Although the title is the same, it is not certain that the office was exactly equivalent in both regions. In Athens, there was a single magistrate, the archon polemarch, while in Boeotia there was a board of three people who performed multiple functions: Roesch 1965: 162-76; Kalliontzis 2020: 65-66.

45 See already Müller 2017 [2014]: 551.

46 This usage can be observed in a number of Boeotian proxeny decrees, especially in Oropos, which often grants *isoteleia* (e.g. IG VII² 2, 126, l.6 (for Hekataios son of Noumenios of Mesembria, ca. 235-205 BC)). On this equivalence, see Knoepfler 2001b: 58-9; Knoepfler 2019: 282, for Euboea; Migeotte 2014: 111 n. 310 (about Odessos) and 115. On the extent of the different forms of *isoteleia*, see Müller forthcoming.

47 Kalliontzis 2017: 685.

48 Kamen 2013: 55-61; Migeotte 2014: 461-64.

3. What kind of *sympoliteia*?

The most formidable difficulty in the text arises in the first two lines, which are unfortunately mutilated in the worst possible place. We read: [- - - c. 7 - - -]ιω ἄρχοντος τοῖ ἀπεγράψανθο ἐν τῷς ΣΥ[- - | - c. 9-11 - - - - -]ΝΩΣ καττὸ ψάφισμα τῷ δάμῳ: we have here the dating by an archon whose name has been lost, and a title that is the beginning of the list of beneficiaries (τοῖ = οἶδε). The latter are included in a group beginning with ΣΥ- and stated in the middle-passive participle (-ΝΩΣ). There are not many solutions for the reconstruction, and all are linked to three possible fields: military, fiscal or political:

- A first idea would be to find a verb related to the military field, since the formula τοῖ ἀπεγράψανθο ἐν τῷς usually appears at the top of conscripts' catalogues to specify that they are enrolled in a particular corps, for example that of the peltophors. One might think of the middle verb συμμάχομαι, 'to fight with', 'to be an ally, an auxiliary', but the participle *symmachomenoi* (here potentially συ[μ]μαχομέ[ν]ως) does not seem to have any obvious epigraphic parallel. Furthermore, it does not sufficiently fill the gap, even if the spacing and size of the letters are subject to variation in the text.
- A second solution is to choose a verb from the field of taxation, because of the privilege of *isoteleia*. Denis Knoepfler suggested συντελέω, 'to contribute together', here in the middle voice, and restored συ[ν]τελιομέ[ν]ως: metics would thus be included in a category of contributors.⁴⁹ The difficulty is that, here too, there is no epigraphic parallel with such a meaning, and the uses of this verb are generally limited to expressing, in the active voice, the completion of an action – sporting event, sacrifice, ceremony etc.⁵⁰ An interesting parallel can nevertheless be found in the passage of *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* concerning the Boeotian federal organisation in 395 BC and the Theban district: the latter provided four Boeotarchs, two for the city and two for Plataea, Skolos, Erythrai, Skaphai and the other

49 Knoepfler 2019: 283.

50 Among many examples, see IG XII 5, 865 (Tenos, 2nd century BC), which refers to performing 'the ceremony and the sacrifices' (l. 12-13): καὶ συντελοῦντες τὸν τελεσμὸν καὶ τὴν θυσίαν.

places which were then tributaries (συντελούντων) of Thebes.⁵¹ As expected here, the participle is in the active voice. Furthermore, if the Akraiphia group had, in these lines, a fiscal meaning, we would rather expect the adjective *isoteleis* to designate it.

- This leaves us with the ‘political’ solution proposed by the editor: συ[μπο|λιτευομέ?]νως, a reconstruction that fits the size of the lacuna. According to Denis Rousset, “the participle is reconstructed, cautiously but quite plausibly, based on what follows.”⁵² Denis Knoepfler, on the other hand, expresses doubts, “because a *sympoliteuomenos* is in principle someone who enjoys the same rights as native citizens, which can hardly be the case here, since these metics did not receive full *politeia*.”⁵³ It is this statement that we must now address in order to draw all the conclusions from the situation, beyond the broad outline proposed by the editor.

If one sticks first to internal criticism, a weighty argument, which curiously is not invoked by Kalliontzis, lies in the mention, in line 12, of τοὶ ἄλλοι πολῖται. *Isoteleis* will be subject to the same taxes as “other citizens.” The text could have simply referred to τοὶ πολῖται: the adjective ἄλλοι implies that the group receiving the privilege is understood to be included in the civic body in one way or another. It is therefore quite logical to restore συ[μπο|λιτευομέ?]νως in lines 1-2, which can be translated as ‘those who are associated with the citizen body’. The question remains as to the nature of this association.

As a brief reminder,⁵⁴ one distinguishes for practical purposes between bilateral sympolities, involving one or more *poleis*, and federal sympolities, where cities are placed in a *koinon* with a two-tier citizenship. In this regard, Hellenistic Boeotia, described as a *koine sympoliteia* by

51 *Hell.Oxy.* D 19.3 (ed. M. Chambers [Teubner 1993]). Transl. Lucas 2023: 14. See below n. 56 for the full passage.

52 Rousset 2019: 533, n° 210.

53 Knoepfler 2019: 282-83.

54 See Reger 2004 and Pascual 2007, while awaiting the publication of Priol 2023. *Sympoliteia* is not to be confused with *isopoliteia*, ‘granting of equal citizenship’, which was recently discussed in Gagliardi 2025 and Müller 2025, with previous bibliography.

Polybius,⁵⁵ fell into the second category. At a lower level, and in between the two categories, we can cite the *sympoliteuomenoi* grouped around Plataea before its destruction in 427 BC and probably already in 431: they consisted of the series of villages or small dependent cities, which after that date were tributaries of Thebes, as mentioned above.⁵⁶ However, these two types of *sympoliteia* do not exhaust the meaning of the concept. As Luigi Moretti had already pointed out,⁵⁷ a third sympolitic arrangement may exist within a city itself, when it establishes links with a community of free residents and forms with it a group, whose members do not all have the same relationship to citizenship. For this type of *sympoliteia*, Kalliontzis offers a series of parallels for a better understanding of the Akraiphian decree. Among them, the text that seems to me the closest and most relevant is the one already mentioned, the Pharsalos politygraphy from the end of the 3rd century BC.

The first lines of this decree specify the action of the city: ἡ πόλις Φαρσαλίων τοῖς καὶ οὓς ἐξ ἀρχᾶς συμπολιτευομένοις καὶ συμπολ[εμισάντε]σσι πάνσα προθυμία ἔδουκε τὰν πολιτείαν καττάπερ Φαρσαλίοις τοῖς|ἐξ ἀρχᾶς πολ[ιτευομένοις], “the city of the Pharsalians, to those who have already been *sympoliteuomenoi* since the beginning and have participated in military actions with all their zeal, has granted *politeia* on the same terms as [those that exist] for the Pharsalians who have been *politeuomenoi* since the beginning.”⁵⁸ The beneficiaries are thanked here, as so often, for their eagerness to fight alongside the citizens. The expression ἐξ ἀρχᾶς is not easy to understand, but seems to refer to a long-

55 Plb. 27.2.10.

56 *Hell.Oxy.* D 19.3: δύο δὲ ὑπὲρ Πλαταιέων καὶ Σκώλου καὶ Ἐρ[υ]θρῶ[ν] καὶ Σκαφῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων χωρίων τῶν πρότερον μὲν ἐκείνοις συμπολιτευομένων, τότε δὲ συντελούντων εἰς τὰς Θήβας, “two for Plataea, Skolos, Erythrai, Skaphai and the other places which, previously, formed a *sympoliteia* with Plataea, but were then tributaries of Thebes.” For the various Parasopia sites, see Hansen 2004: 440–41, s.v. Erythrai; 441 s.v. Eteonos/Skaphai; 449–51 s.v. Plataiai; 452 s.v. Skolos. The case of this sub-region is discussed from multiple perspectives by Mackill 2013: 41 n. 93; 185–86; 188; 205; 284–85; 296; 336; 371 and 404.

57 Moretti 1975: 63, n° 96 and, following him, Pascual 2007, who also distinguishes three forms of *sympoliteia*.

58 *I.Vallée Enipeus* 50 (= Decourt 1995: 61–63, n° 50). See the excellent commentary by Ducat 1994: 107–13.

standing coexistence of the two statutory groups on the territory of the polis: that of the ‘authentic’ citizens, the native Pharsalians, and that of the citizens ‘aggregated’ to the whole, undoubtedly the *Penestai*, some already free, others manumitted by the decree itself, as we saw above in relation to their denomination.⁵⁹ The most likely scenario is that the *Penestai*, at least the free ones (?), had various rights within the territory prior to naturalisation, with the exception of the one that characterised by default the group of the native Pharsalians: *political rights*, in other words the *arche*, the ability to govern. Therefore, *sympoliteuomenoi* should not be translated, as Jean-Claude Decourt does, as “those who, from the outset, have been participating with the Pharsalians in the exercise of political rights,”⁶⁰ because this is precisely what they lack and what *politeia* grants them. It is indeed the granting of this *politeia* that tips them over to the side of the authentic Pharsalians, those who enjoy the most complete status.

Returning to Akraiphia, if we accept the restoration συ[μπο]λιτευ-ομέ]νως, the registration process is located, so to speak, ‘one step lower’: thanks to *isoteleia*, the *πεδάφοικοι* are included in the group of *sympoliteuomenoi* and become comparable to the Pharsalian *sympoliteuomenoi*, that is the *Penestai* before naturalisation. The *sympoliteuomenoi* are not to be confused with the *politai*.

4. Conclusion

All these texts seem to me to show that, in both 3rd century BC Boeotia and Thessaly, there could exist a tiered form of local citizenship, in which

59 Another hypothesis, put forward by R. Oetjen (2010: 246–48, repeated in Oetjen 2014: 99–101), suggests that these *sympoliteuomenoi* were military colonists settled by the Macedonian royal power, as part of a genuine Antigonid colonisation program. However, this hypothesis faces numerous objections, including the absence of any ethnic or any allusion to a ‘royal intervention’ for these settlers. On the contrary, the mention of ἐξ ἀρχᾶς suggests a much older situation, or at least one that was experienced as such. The author considers that “here, *sympoliteuein* is not a technical term describing a legal status but means ‘to be a fellow citizen,’” which is hardly comprehensible, and proposes a complicated translation for τοῖς καὶ οὗς ἐξ ἀρχᾶς συμπολιτευομένοις: “those who behaved as if they had been fellow citizens from the beginning.”

60 Decourt 1995: 61.

a large group of *sympoliteuomenoi* involved privileged residents, whatever their origin. They were not included in the narrower group of *politai* or *politeuomenoi*, but were not far from it for various reasons,⁶¹ not least of which was their zeal to fight alongside citizens. Consequently, there is no longer any contradiction, in the Akraiphian case, between the status of *isoteles* and that of *sympoliteuomenos*. This situation recalls Aristotle's remarks, in *Politics*,⁶² on the ambiguous position occupied by the *archomenoi*, the 'governed', in relation to 'those who exercise power', the *archontes*, particularly in oligarchic cities: these *archomenoi*, who are nevertheless called *politai* in some places, do not have access to public offices. Modern historians have concluded that there existed incomplete or passive forms of citizenship, to quote terms used by Claude Mossé.⁶³ For Aristotle, presenting these 'passive citizens' as true *politai* is an *apate*, a 'deception': ἄλλ' ὅπου τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπικεκρυμμένον ἐστίν, ἀπάτης χάριν τῶν συννοικούντων ἐστίν, "where this exclusion is concealed, it is for the purpose of deceiving the people who reside in the city."⁶⁴ Interestingly, he uses the participle *synoikountes*, 'those who share residence', to describe these people who are made to believe they are citizens: their real status, he explains, brings them closer to metics, which takes us back to our Akraiphian πεδάφοικοι. In this case, beyond shared residence, the participle *sympoliteuomenoi* has other implications: for the beneficiaries of *isoteleia*, the operation is indeed a promotion and, despite the watertightness of statutory compartments, the term *sympoliteuomenoi*, which has both strong legal and ideological connotations, is meant to refer to the wider community beyond the restricted civic body. There is no doubt that Mogens H. Hansen would have loved to read this inscription, he who had written so extensively on *politeia* and *politeuma*!⁶⁵

61 On the question of the position of each status in relation to that of the *polites* in Greek cities, see Müller 2026: 206–9.

62 Arist. *Pol.* 3.1278a13–40.

63 Mossé 1979.

64 Transl. Pellegrin 2015: 237.

65 I would like to cite here an article that I believe is a perfect example of his method: Hansen 1994, which deals with *polis*, *politeuma*, and *politeia* in "one of the trickier passages in the *Politics*" (1278b6–14). More than *sympoliteia*, however, it was *synoikismos* that had caught his attention: see Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 115–19, 'The Emergence of Poleis by *Synoikismos*'.

Figure 1
General map of ancient Boeotia
 (© Thierry Lucas)



Figure 2

Front side of the inscription Kalliontzis 2017

(© EFA, Ephorate of Antiquities of Boeotia, Ioannis Kalliontzis)



Figure 3

Left side of the inscription Kalliontzis 2017

(© EFA, Ephorate of Antiquities of Boeotia, Ioannis Kalliontzis)



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