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“The Beginnings of Boiotian Local Historiography. Localism and Local Perspective in Boiotia Between the End of the Fifth Century BC and the Age of the Theban Hegemony”

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462.0.05 Salvatore Tufano (McGill University) *The Beginnings of Boiotian Local Historiography. Localism and Local Perspective in Boiotia Between the End of the Fifth Century BC and the Age of the Theban Hegemony*

Introduction

My PhD dissertation, defended in July 2016 at Sapienza University of Rome, focuses on Boiotian local historiography, in the first stage of its development, from the end of the Fifth Century BC¹ (Hellanicus' lifespan), to the age of the Theban hegemony, when it is highly reasonable to date Daimachus of Plataea: this universal historian represents a transitional figure towards a new phase of the genre and he was consequently chosen as a *terminus ante quem*.

A first theoretical section locates the research in the debate on the relationship between the so-called 'great historiography' and the local historiography, in order to check whether an emic outlook might be useful, if applied to Boiotia, for a contingent and verifiable approach to the birth of the genre. The second section of the thesis aims at providing a new critical text of the fragments of the genre, belonging to Hellanicus, Armenidas, Aristophanes of Boiotia and Daimachus of Plataea. The philological approach is combined with a new historical commentary on the fragments, necessary to highlight continuities and discontinuities of the genre. The uneven treatment of these texts in the available collections has hindered a full appreciation of the emic perspective: after the seminal section on Boiotia in the *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, in fact, all the later works have split these four authors.

Indeed, we should benefit today from a renewed attention to problems of cultural history and to Boiotia, as a fertile laboratory for the historical issue of localism. Meaningful epigraphic discoveries have been helping redefine our entire picture of the history of Boeotia, from the archaic to the classical age, since the important publication of a *kioniskos* in 2006 (Aravantinos, V.L., "A New Inscribed *kioniskos* from Thebes", *ABSA CI* (2006): 369-77). The proceedings of a conference published by N. Papazarkadas in 2014 (*The Epigraphy and History of Boeotia. New Finds, New Prospects*, Brill: Leiden – Boston 2014) contain helpful analyses of the main documents, currently in the Archaeological Museum of Thebes, which inhibit the idea of a region without any regional institution in the first half of the Fifth Century: the explicit mention of federal magistracies, whose citation in the literary sources has been subject to excessive scepticism in the past, is a fact which will deserve further thinking, in view of a necessary new history of the region and of Thebes².

My research on the historiographical strand of localism in Boiotia profited from the different studies by A. Kühr (*Als Kadmos nach Boiotien kam. Polis und Ethnos im Spiegel thebanischer Gründungsmythen*, Stuttgart 2006) and S. Larson (*Tales of Epic Ancestry. Boiotian Collective Identity in the Late Archaic and Early Classical Periods*, Stuttgart 2007), which were both momentous in redefining new perspectives on the birth of the Boiotian *ethnos* in the archaic age: these monographs took advantage of a series of new anthropological and political trends in classics, such as the studies on ethnicity³, intentional history⁴ and discursive theory⁵. In addition, D.W. Berman (*Myth, Literature and the Creation of the Topography of Thebes*, Cambridge 2015) expanded our picture of the real and imagined topography of Thebes, putting together

¹ All the subsequent dates in the present *résumé* are to be meant BC, unless otherwise stated.

² Cp. Beck, H. – Ganter, A., "Boiotia and the Boiotian League", in Beck, H. – Funke, P. (eds.), *Federalism in Greek Antiquity*, New York 2015: 132-57.

³ A good starting point, on how this topic influenced A. Kühr's book, is the review by J. McInerney (*sehpunkte* 8 (2008), nr. 4 [15.04.2008]: <http://www.sehpunkte.de/2008/04/13593.html>), to be read with the reply by M. Zahrnt (<http://www.sehpunkte.de/2008/06/kommentar/michael-zahrnt-ueber-rezension-von-als-kadmos-nach-boiotien-kam-19/>).

⁴ See Foxhall, L. – Gehrke, H.-J. – Luraghi, N. (eds.), *Intentional History. Spinning Time in Ancient Greece*, Stuttgart 2010 for an introduction to this approach.

⁵ Just consider the influence of philosophers like P. Bourdieu (*Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique, précédé de trois études d'ethnologie kabyle*, Genève 1972) on J.E. Skinner (*The Invention of Greek Ethnography. From Homer to Herodotus*, New York 2012); on this matter, I dare quote my review of the latter's book on *MedAnt* XVII 2014 [2015]: 671-82.

the diverse strands, which contributed to its description in the literary sources. Finally, we should remember here the studies on ancient federalism: after the relevant legacy of the last century (Moretti, L., *Ricerche sulle leghe greche (peloponnesiaca-beotica-licia)*, Roma 1962; Larsen, J.A.O., *Greek Federal States*, Oxford 1968), new outlooks have drawn a more nuanced description of the relationship between the hegemonic city and the confederate cities, both in Italy⁶ and in other European countries, and in Canada⁷.

As well as hinging on the interest in the history of classical Boeotia, my dissertation then centred on a tradition of studies on Greek local historiography. Still, this genre as an expression of localism has not attracted a comparable attention, even with a few recent contributions on the relationship between universal and local historiography⁸. The success of the studies on mythography, exemplified by the two volumes of text and commentary of the early Greek mythographers by R. Fowler (*Early Greek Mythography, Volume I: Text and Introduction*, Oxford 2001; *Early Greek Mythography. Volume II: Commentary*, Oxford 2013), has cast shadows on the local perspective: on the one side, this is due to the objective absence of scholarship on local historiography in this region (with the notable exception, after the observations by F. Jacoby, of a short overview by G. Zecchini⁹); on the other side, the idea of the local historians being contemporary with and sharing crucial methodological points with Herodotus switched the discussion to one on the political use of this literary genre (cp. Fowler, R., “Herodotos and His Contemporaries”, *JHS* CXVI, 1996: 62-87). Scholars were mostly attracted by atthidography¹⁰, while other partial exceptions generally limit themselves to the history of single poleis (a good starting point is Clarke, K., *Making Time for the Past: Local History and the Polis*, Oxford 2008).

Structure and Overview

The thesis consists of an introduction (1) and four chapters (2.1: Hellanicus; 2.2: Armenidas; 2.3: Aristophanes; 2.4: Daimachus of Plataea). The first chapter (1) starts with a state of the art on the relationship between universal and local history. The suggested method wants to put forward the local perspective, to study this topic: only an investigation of the historical frame and the local picture of the region, which is the subject of a historiographical work, allows a better understanding of the development of the genre and of the required prerequisites. In the second part of the Introduction, I apply this approach to Boiotia: what we can safely assume on Hellanicus’ lifespan and the promotion of a political stability, under the *koinon* of the second half of the Fifth Century, suggest a starting date, for the writing of Boiotian local history, in the Twenties.

Besides, this hypothesis is strengthened by the consideration that, despite the probable pre-existence of a political and cultural regional entity, a political frame (and stability) was necessary to foster that attention to public archives, and to their reorganisation, which constitutes a compulsory premise to the birth of local historiography. For example, Aristophanes the Boiotian is explicitly recalled as having looked in the archontal lists (T 2 = *BNJ* 379 T 2b; T 1A Fowler: ὡς Ἀριστοφάνης ἐκ τῶν κατ’ ἀρχοντας ὑπομνημάτων ἱστορήσῃ), but we are poorly informed on where and how these structures were organised in Thebes. It is generally assumed that in Athens, from the second half of the Sixth Century (Sickinger, J.P., *Public Records and Archives in Classical Athens*, Chapel Hill – London 1999: 35-92; Rhodes, P.J,

⁶ Sordi, M., *La lega tessala*, Roma 1958; Aigner Foresti, L. (ed.), *Federazioni e federalismo nell’Europa antica: Bergamo, 21 – 25 settembre 1992*, Milano 1994; Bearzot, C., *Federalismo e autonomia nelle Elleniche di Senofonte*, Milano 2004; Ead., *Il federalismo greco*, Bologna 2014.

⁷ See Beck, H. – Funke, P. (eds.), *Federalism in Greek Antiquity*, [n.3].

⁸ Cp., most recently, Thomas, R., “The Greek *Polis* and the Tradition of *Polis* History: Local History, Chronicles and the Patterning of the Past”, in Moreno, A. – Thomas, R. (eds.), *Patterns of the Past. Epitēdeumata in the Greek Tradition*, Oxford 2014: 145-72.

⁹ “Rassegna di storiografia beotica”, in Bintliff, J. (ed.), *Recent Developments in the History and Archaeology of Central Greece. Proceedings of the 6th International Boeotian Conference*, Oxford 1997: 189-200.

¹⁰ See Harding, P., “Local History and Atthidography”, in Marincola, J. (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, II, Oxford 2007: 180-8.

“Public Documents in the Greek States: Archives and Inscriptions. Part I”, *G&R* XLVIII/1, 2001: 33-44), but, in other areas of the Greek Mediterranean, probably a century earlier (Lazzarini, M.L., “La scrittura nella città: iscrizioni, archivi e alfabetizzazione”, in Settis, S. (a cura di), *I Greci. Storia Cultura Arte Società*, 2. Una storia greca, II. Definizione, Torino 1997: 723-50), there were archival practices, concerning first of all citizen rights (Pébarthe, C., “Les archives de la cité de raison. Démocratie athénienne et pratiques documentaires à l’époque classique”, in Faraguna, M. (ed.), *Archives and Archival Documents in Ancient Societies (Trieste, 30 September –1 October 2011)*, Trieste 2013: 107-25), sanctuary administration and, in due time, justice matters too. We can now prove the existence of public figures, in function as secretaries, from the end of the Sixth Century, thanks to epigraphical indications (just think of the well-known *παινικαστάς* Spensithius in Crete [van Effenterre, H. – Ruzé, F., *Nomima. Recueil d’inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l’archaïsme grec*, I, Roma 1994: n.22]), and to revealing artistic representation: sculptures read as public *γραμματεῖς* would seem to represent these public secretaries in Athens (three items on the Akropolis, dated 530-20, of disputed interpretation; Boffo, L., *Per una storia...*, [supra]: 9 and n.12; Faraguna, M., *Scrittura e amministrazione...*, [supra]: 68 and n.3) and in Thebes (a small statue now in the Louvre Museum, CA 684, showing a seating figure, who is writing: Sirat, C., “La morphologie humaine et la direction des écritures”, *CRAI* CXXXI, 1987: 7-56, spec. 46-8). I agree with R. Thomas (*Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens*, Cambridge 1989: 38-94), that, in the absence of an instinct of conservation, caused by, according to Rhodes (*Public Documents...Part II*, cit. supra: 139), a historical spirit, a real documentary mind-set, i.e. of appreciation and use of archive documents, was effective in Athens – and, it would seem, for Thebes too – only from the last quarter of the Fifth Century.

This production is hence later than Herodotus, in Boiotia, not as a reaction to his *Histories*, but for different reasons. The choice to limit the dissertation to Hellanicus, Armenidas, Aristophanes and Daimachus emerges from three considerations: firstly, judging from the main reconstructions of the genre (Jacoby, *FGrHist* III B, [n.3]: 151-3; Zecchini, *Rassegna...*, [n. 9]), these were the first authors who dealt with Boiotian local history. Secondly, I suggest new arguments to date them between the second half of the Fifth Century and the age of the Theban hegemony, making allowance for the new epigraphic habit which is emerging, in Boiotia, from a reconsideration of the epigraphic discoveries relating to the Fourth Century: the scanty linguistic evidence of the fragments can be linked to a general acceptance of the Ionic dialect and script in the years of the Theban hegemony; we cannot rule out the possibility that this regional evolution had an impact on other features of these works of Boiotian local historiography.

The ionisms *ποιεῦντες* and *καλεῦνται* in the F 3 (= *BNJ* 378 F 6; F **6 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 6) by Armenidas cannot be used, in fact, to date him, since they are not typical of a specific stage of the history of the literary use of this dialect. Its status is subject to diachronic and diaphasic variations, which make it hard to say how much recurring to such ionisms might make an author more similar to Herodotus than, say, to Ktesias or other fragmentary authors of the same century (cp. Cassio, A.C., “La prose ionienne postclassique et la culture de l’Asie Mineure à l’époque hellénistique”, in Brixhe, C. (ed.), *La Koiné grecque antique II: la concurrence*, Paris: 147-70). It is easy to see that this same kind of contraction, already in Herodotus, is still present in the so-called *Grossattisch* of the Fourth Century: we cannot therefore assume that all the *Theban Histories* were written in the ionic dialect. We should at least know more about the local literary prose, but for the time being the only support can come from the epigraphic evidence. Here, the survival of the epichoric script until the second half of the Seventies is slowly superseded by the attico-ionic alphabet, maybe together with the reception of the cultural tradition this was attached to; scholars are now inclined to date this transition in the Seventies, as firstly suggested by D. Knoepfler (“Sept années de recherches sur l’épigraphie de la Béotie (1985–1991)”, *Chiron* XXII, 1992: 411-503; see, e.g., Vottéro, G., “L’alphabet ionien-attique en Béotie”, in Carlier, P. (ed.), *Le IV siècle av. J.-C.. Approches historiographiques*, E. de Boccard: Paris 1996: 157-81; Iversen, P., “New Restorations and Date for a Fragment of *Hestiatoria* from Thespiiai (*IThesp.* 39)”, in Reger, G. – Ryan, F.X. –

Winters, T.F. (eds.), *Studies in Greek Epigraphy and History in Honor of Stephen V. Tracy*, Paris 2010: 255-68). Another vexed topic regards the reason underlying this pattern change: the established explanation was that this introduction, probably imposed by Thebes, despite previous, occasional experiments, was the result of the democratic stance of the new leaders and institutions of the Boiotian *koinon* (Iversen, P., *New Restorations...*, cit. *supra*: 262-3; Mackil, E., *Creating a Common Polity. Religion, Economics, and Politics in the Making of the Greek Koinon*, Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 2013: 337-9). According to Papazarkadas (“The Epigraphic Habit(s) in Fourth-Century Boiotia”, in Gartland, S. (ed.), *The Boiotian Fourth Century*, Oxford i.p.), actually, more stress should be put on Thebes’ will to assert oneself as a panhellenic power, through a medium of high readability and, I would dare add, in direct concurrence with the epigraphic habit of Thebes’ main hegemony contendant in these years, Athens. The epichoric script was consequently abandoned, despite being a clear mark of ethnicity (Luraghi, N., “The Local Scripts from Nature to Culture”, *CIAnt* XXIX, 2010: 68-91). We should finally make allowances for the circulation of Herodotus’ *Histories*, although we miss certain data, apart from the use of similar styles and techniques.

Finally, as I argue in a short profile of the development of the genre in Boiotia (1.1.4), the later works detach themselves from the previous ones, insofar as the new historical background emerging after the destruction of Thebes (335) and its refoundation (316) seems to have had an impact on the historiographical eye: so, there is a sense of unity among the first four authors, who form an isolable block.

In the final two sections of the Introduction, I focus on the testimonies directly pertaining to the date of Hellanicus, Armenidas, Aristophanes and Daimachus (1.2), and I provide a general synopsis of the themes dealt with in the fragments (1.3), such as the original population of the region, the foundation traditions of cities like Thebes, Chaeronea and Orchomenos¹¹ and the Boiotian relationship with Thessaly. This quick exemplification evidences a potential variety of topics, which could also directly touch contemporary events (1.3.4), even though the commentary tends not to highlight extensively the potential reference to present events, underlying the occurrence of certain myths.

The structure of the commentary starts from the philological issues concerning the fragments, and then proceeds with a consideration of the context and, only finally, with the content likely associable with the historian. The critical text is based on that of the *EGM* for Hellanicus, Armenidas, and Aristophanes of Boiotia, and on that of Jacoby (*FGrHist* 65) for Daimachus, but priority was always given to eventually more updated critical editions, whenever possible.

In the case of Hellanicus (2.1), I only considered the two fragments (1 and 2 = FF 50 and 51a Fowler; *FGrHist* 4 FF 50-1), which are explicitly ascribed to his *Boiotian Histories*: the first one mentions a population, the Ἐγγελεῖς, which lived in Boiotia probably before the very foundation of Thebes, and which can be therefore described as ‘Pre-Cadmean’. The second fragment offers a version of the foundation of Thebes, where only a few details might be originally due to Hellanicus. Since the other fragments by Hellanicus dealing with Boiotian and Theban matters are considered in the commentary, the section must be seen as an essay on Hellanicus’ picture of Theban and Boiotian history. We see, in him, a historian particularly careful to gather poorly attested variations and generally dissimilar from the other historians and playwrights, who worked in Athens in the last quarter of the Fifth Century.

I then shared Fowler’s decision, in *EGMI*, to consider all the 8 fragments ascribed by Jacoby to Armenidas (2.2), even though F 8 (= *BNJ* 378 F 4; F 8A Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 4) is certainly spurious: it had to be analysed, though, for scholarly completeness, to affirm its affiliation to Andromenidas, a peripatetic grammar of the Third Century. Apart from F 6 (= *BNJ* 378 F 7; 7 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 7), an orthographic variation of Haliartos’ toponym, the other texts

¹¹ See further Vian, F., *Les origines de Thèbes. Cadmos et les Spartes*, Paris 1963; Breglia, L., “Barbari e cultori delle Muse: i ‘Precadmei’”, in Breglia, L. – Moleti, A. – Napolitano, M.L. (eds.), *Ethne, identità e tradizioni: la “terza” Grecia e l’Occidente*, Pisa 2011: 293-317; Prandi, L., “Il separatismo di Platea e l’identità dei Beoti”, *ibid.*: 237-52.

concern either mythical figures¹² or characters, who might imply a dispute between Thebes and other cities (Athens: F 3; maybe Sparta: F 5 [= *BNJ* 378 F 5; F **5 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 5]). I wonder whether F 4 (= *BNJ* 378 F 3; F 3 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 3), on the Bibline wine in Thrace, refers to the short-lived sea campaign, started in 364 by Epaminondas. I also try to show how A. Schachter's proposal (*BNJ* 378) to read Armenidas' *Theban Histories* as a topographical commentary to single areas of Thebes might underestimate the reference to other centres (Coronea: F 1; Haliartos: F 6; Thrace: F 4), which could have been described in *excursus*, starting from the Theban doors and the roads departing from them, as in Pausanias' Book IX (for this reading, see especially Musti, D., "La struttura del libro di Pausania sulla Beozia", in Μπεκιάρης, Αλέξανδρος Π. (ed.) 1988: *Επετηρίς της Εταιρείας των Βοιωτικών Μελετών: Α' Διεθνές Συνέδριο Βοιωτικών Μελετών (Θήβα, 10-14 Σεπτεμβρίου 1986)*, Τ. Α' τ. α', Αθήνα 1988: 333-45).

Under Aristophanes' (2.3) name, we possess a fragment (12 = F 9C Fowler; *FGrHist* 737 F 1), where it was necessary to finally prove that it belongs to the homonymous grammar from Byzantium. After arguing for the existence of two separate historical works, one on Thebes and the other one on Boiotia – despite an inescapable unease when assigning the excerpts to them, I comment on the single fragments, which can be sorted into three categories: first of all, a series of texts on Thebes, one of which (4 = *BNJ* 379 F 2b; F 9A Fowler; F 421 Slater) seems to portray a Theban defence against Naxos' allegations, on Dionysus' birthplace. The other two fragments mention Herodotus' arrival to Thebes (F 5 = *BNJ* 379 F 5; *FGrHist* 379 F 5) and Aristophanes' probable recourse to local calendars (F 6 = *BNJ* 379 F 5; *FGrHist* 379 F 5). A second series of fragments concentrates on Herakles (8 = *BNJ* 379 F 7; F 9B Fowler; *FGrHist* 379 F 7; F 439 Slater [sp.] e 9 = *BNJ* 379 F 8; F 8 Fowler; *FGrHist* 379 F 8): among these, I put forward to enlarge the witnesses to F 9, including a parallel passage in Tzetzes' commentary on Lykophron (F 9 B = Σ Tzetz. in Lyc. 50 (38,17-26 Scheer)): given the relevance of this figure for Thebes, his occurrence in a fragment by Daimachus (2 = *BNJ* 65 F 2; *FGrHist* 65 F 2) should not surprise us, although the latter historian did not technically write local history; we should highlight the distinctiveness of details being isolated in the biographic tradition on the hero, who is depicted, in the case of Daimachus (F 2), as a sheer man, his mother being Philomela and not the nymph Thetis. A third group of fragments, in Aristophanes, concerns traditions on other Boiotian towns, such as Chaeronea (F 7 = *BNJ* 379 F 3; F 3 Fowler; *FGrHist* 379 F 3), the shrine of Aphrodite Argynnis (F 10 = *BNJ* 379 F 9; F 9 Fowler; *FGrHist* 379 F 9) and that of Tilphossa (F 11 = *BNJ* 379 F 4; F 4 Fowler; *FGrHist* 379 F 4), and Tanagra (FF 1 = *BNJ* 379 F 1b; F 1A Fowler and 2 = *BNJ* 379 F 1a; F 3A Fowler; *FGrHist* 379 F 1): the fragment reporting the synoecism of this city is of utmost interest, because the author of the commentary quoting Aristophanes, Theon, lived under Augustus (2.3.2.1), which might indicate the circulation of Aristophanes' works for an age earlier than Plutarch.

The last author considered in the dissertation is Daimachus of Plataea (*BNJ* 65), whom I consider earlier and distinct from his namesake who worked as an ambassador for Antiochus I and wrote a book *On India* in the Seventies of the Third Century (*BNJ* 716; 2.4.1). Daimachus wrote a *History of Greece*, in spite of the fact that the title is not explicitly mentioned in the sources and that this deduction comes from Daimachus' being paired with Callisthenes and Anaximenes (T 1 = *BNJ* 65 T 1a; *FGrHist* 65 T 1a). While, to respect the structure of the *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, J. Engels, editor of Daimachus of Plataea for the *Brill's New Jacoby* (65), quotes the *Hellenica Oxhyrhynchia* as fifth fragment (*BNJ* 65 F 5), despite discrediting Jacoby's trust in this authorship ("Der Verfasser der Hellenika von Oxhyrhynchos", *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-Hist. Klasse*, I: 13-8), it now seems better to align with the few certain data on Daimachus and deny him for once this work, as G.L. Barber firstly suggested (*The Historian Ephorus*, Cambridge 1935: ix n.1; for a critical overview, cp. Camacho Rojo, J.M., "Daimachos de Platées", in *DPhA* II, 1994: 537-40, *spec.* 537-8). The four fragments from his historical book (1-4) contain information which is not automatically understood through the Boiotian origin of the author, since I suggest that, in a

¹² Ithonos: F 1 (= *BNJ* 378 F 1; F 1 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 1); Amphion: F 2 (= *BNJ* 378 F 2; F **2 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 2); the Seven against Thebes: F 3; Actaeon: F 7 (= *BNJ* 378 F 8; F **8 Fowler; *FGrHist* 378 F 8).

universal history, more local perspectives might share the same literary span. Moreover, we know too little on Daimachus to attach him to a single political trend of the upper Theban classes in the Sixties, a decade which seems likely the underlying scenario of the current F 1 (= *BNJ* 65 F 1; *FGrHist* 65 F 1) on Aetolus: in the commentary, I contend that the genealogy being reported might be interpreted with regards to the Arcadian-Elean war and to the subsequent proliferation of genealogies on the respective eponymous heroes. Apart from the aforementioned material on Herakles (F 2), the other fragments on Solon (3 = *BNJ* 65 F 6; *FGrHist* 65 F 6), and on Pittakos (4 = *BNJ* 65 F 7; *FGrHist* 65 F 7), might find an accord with political events of the Fourth Century, respectively with the slow definition of a biographical tradition on Solon and with the political upheavals in Mytilene in the central decades. Daimachus, in addition, distinguishes himself for the existence of two other works, one on siegecraft (FF 5 = *BNJ* 65 F 3; *FGrHist* 65 F 3 and 6 = *BNJ* 65 F 4; *FGrHist* 65 F 4) and an *On Piety* (F 7 = *BNJ* 65 F 8; *FGrHist* 65 F 8).

The work therefore aimed at an improvement and enrichment of knowledge in two areas: in the first place, it is an original in-depth study on the history of Boiotia in a crucial age, from the end of the Peloponnesian War to the Battle of Mantinea, when a lively political evolution was combined with an adequate historiographical production, attracting external (Hellanicus) and internal voices, careful to report local traditions. Secondly, the Boiotian case of study wants to show how a different approach to the problem of the relationship between local vs. universal history, which gives a fair dimension to the historical processes happening in the region dealt with by the historians, allows us to solve the problem from a local point of view, without having to necessarily hinge on the greater, better known historians. It therefore acts, on the whole, as a heuristic tool, whose main lines are explained in the first part of the thesis, to be then applied to the texts, in order to check the relationship between the local dimension of these works and the historical background underlying them.

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