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The συναρχία in the Achaian federation and its member cities*

The term συναρχία (“joint magistracies”) was in use as early as the 4th century BCE, designating the joint meetings of different boards of magistrates. According to Aristotle, in those democratic *poleis*, in which the assembly was summoned to consider only the most important matters, the current questions related to city governance were resolved by the συναρχία (Aristot. *pol.* 4.1298a14–15). In the early Hellenistic period, this term appears in a few inscriptions from Asia Minor to denote the executive officials of a city taking part in solemn processions along with the priests and the other citizens, taking care of a distinguished foreigner or dining together at the city’s expense.¹ In Polybius’ lexicon, the word συναρχία is employed to designate the meetings of high-ranking officials: those of Messene (4.4.2)² and those of the Achaian *koinon*; the latter are shown to negotiate with the Roman envoys (27.2.11) and to discuss some important political matters in secrecy (38.13.4–5).³ On other occasions, the federal magistrates as a single board are named otherwise: οἱ συνάρχοντες (23.16.6), αἱ ἀρχαί (22.10.2), οἱ προεστώτες (2.46.4–6; 4.9.3; 38.18.10), or simply οἱ ἄρχοντες (23.5.17 and many times

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¹ *I.Priene* 10, l. 26; 14, l. 21–22; *IG XII.6* 30, l. 19; see S. Dmitriev, *City Government in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor*, Oxford 2005, 25, 61.

² The historian employs here an Achaian term to designate a meeting of Messenian magistrates, although this passage refers to the period when Messene had not yet entered the federation. How the Messenians themselves did call such a session, is not known. The context of this phrase implies that the core of the board consisted of the college of ephors, who had invited the Aitolian Dorimachos to meet the “joint magistracies” of the city, but the συναρχία of Messene may not have been composed of the ephors alone (so F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius I*, Oxford 1957, 452–453; N. Deshours, *Les institutions civiques de Messène à l’époque hellénistique tardive*, *ZPE* 150 [2004] 143); the board could have included some other important magistrates as well.

³ Which officials attended the meetings of the federal συναρχία is not known; the *strategos* and the *damourgoi* certainly participated in these meetings (G. Niccolini, *La confederazione Achea*, Pavia 1914, 214; A. Aymard, *Les assemblées de la confédération achaienne: étude critique d’institutions et d’histoire*, Bordeaux 1938, 322 n. 9; Walbank, *Commentary I* [n. 2] 219), and so probably did the *hipparchos*, the *nauarchos* and the secretary (H. Swoboda, *Die griechische Volksbeschlüsse*, Leipzig 1890, 137–138; J. A. O. Larsen, *Greek Federal States: Their Institutions and History*, Oxford 1968, 222).

elsewhere). All these terms seem to be used more or less synonymously,⁴ but the most precise of them is *συναρχία*, a word which reflects both the collegiate organization of the board⁵ and the diversity of titles and duties of those involved, at the same time being applied only to the executive officials.⁶ In a federal state consisting of many *poleis*, a frequent convening of popular assemblies was impossible, and therefore the magistrates had to resolve many questions of current policy as a joint-board (*συναρχία*), a practice exactly corresponding to that described by Aristotle in the passage cited above.

In the epigraphy of the Peloponnese, the *συναρχία* do not appear any earlier than the 3rd century BCE, and their emergence in the Peloponnesian cities seems to coincide with the time of the growth of the Achaian federation.⁷ Hence the following view which is predominant in the scholarship: the “joint magistracies” of the *poleis* were organized as local copies of the federal board.⁸ This assumption looks like the only plausible explanation as to why the same institution appeared simultaneously in several Peloponnesian

⁴ Swoboda, *Volksbeschlüsse* (n. 3) 137–138; Walbank, *Commentary I* (n. 2) 219 and id., *A Historical Commentary on Polybius III*, Oxford 1979, 248. According to Aymard, *Les assemblées* (n. 3) 322 n. 9, ἄρχοντες should be understood as a broader term designating all the federal magistrates, whereas the *συναρχία* included only the *strategos* and the *damourgoi*. However, in the Polybian passage 23.5.16–17, the ἄρχοντες are directly identified with the *strategos* and the *damourgoi*, so if these terms have different meanings, the *συναρχία* would have comprised more officials than the ἄρχοντες.

⁵ Aymard, *Les assemblées* (n. 3) 322.

⁶ In the Greek cities of Asia Minor, the term ἄρχοντες sometimes indicated not only executives, but also other officials like city councilors and prytanes, whereas *συναρχία* always designated the executive magistrates (Dmitriev, *City Government* [n. 1] 109–113).

⁷ Some inscriptions mentioning the “joint magistracies” are suggested by the editors, mainly on the basis of letter-forms, to belong to the 3rd (*Syll.*³ 531; *I.Olympia* 38), or even to the 4th century BCE (*IG IV* 753). These indications are far from certain, however, especially since all the documents referring to this institution, which may be assigned to a certain period, do not predate the 2nd century BCE. As for the inscription *IG IV* 753 (a decree of Troizen in honor of a *gymnasiarchos*), Swoboda has already remarked that the date of this document cannot be as early as the 4th century BCE (H. Swoboda, *Studien zu den griechischen Bünden, III: Die Städte im achäischen Bunde*, *Klio* 12 [1912] 45 n. 2). In fact, nothing hinders the dating between 240 and 200 BCE offered by N.M. Kennell, *Ephebeia: A Register of Greek Cities with Citizen Training Systems in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, Hildesheim 2006, 133, if not a later one. If the restoration of the lines 14–15 of *I.Olympia* 38, also accepted by S. Minon, *Les Inscriptions Éléennes Dialectales (VI–II siècle avant J.-C.)*, Geneva 2007, no. 33 — [ταῖρ συνα]ρχία[ρ] καὶ [τοῖ δάμοι] — is correct, the *συναρχία* existed in Elis too, but a precise dating of the inscription is impossible, and the proposed “3rd century” may well be replaced with “after 192 BCE” (the date of Elis’ accession to the Achaian *koinon*). The decree of Dyme (*Syll.*³ 531) is commonly dated to the 3rd century BCE as well (Hiller von Gaertringen *ad Syll.*³ 531, p. 777; J. Bingen, *Inscriptions d’Achaïe*, *BCH* 78 [1954] 86; A. D. Rizakis, *Achaïe III. Les cités achéennes: épigraphie et histoire*, Athens 2008, 49), although a later date cannot be ruled out; in any case, at this time the city was a member of the federation (*Syll.*³ 531, ll. 4, 6). Thus, there is no reliable evidence for the activities of the *συναρχία* in any Peloponnesian city before its entry into the *koinon*.

⁸ Swoboda, *Die Städte im achäischen Bunde* (n. 7) 43–46; W. Schwahn, *Συμπολιτεία*, *RE* 4A, 1 (1931) 1261; E. Meyer, *Megara* (2), *RE* 15, 1 (1931) 200–201; A. H. M. Jones, *The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian*, Oxford 1940, 166; 337 n. 2; J. Touloumakos, *Der*

communities. Indeed, the activities of the *συναρχίαι* during the membership of the respective cities in the *koinon* are attested in the following *poleis*: Dyme (*Syll.*³ 531), Aigosthena (*IG VII 223*),⁹ Megara (*IG VII 15*),¹⁰ Sparta (*IG V.1 4*)¹¹, Troizen (*IG IV 756*)¹²,

Einfluss Roms auf die Staatsform der griechischen Stadtstaaten des Festlandes und der Inseln im ersten und zweiten Jhd v. Chr., Göttingen 1967, 13–16; N. M. Kennel, *IG V 1, 16 and the Gerousia of Roman Sparta*, *Hesperia* 61 (1992) 199; *The Spartan Synarchia*, *Phoenix* 46 (1992) 345; P. Cartledge, A. Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta: a Tale of Two Cities*, London, New York 2002, 133; A. Robu, *Recherches sur l'épigraphie de la Mégaride: le décret d'Aigosthènes pour Apollodoros de Mégare (IG VII, 223)*, in: N. Badou (ed.), *Philologos Dionysios. Mélanges offerts au professeur Denis Knoepfler*, Geneva 2011, 88; *La cité de Mégare et les Antigonides: à propos d'une magistrature mégarienne extraordinaire (le collège des six stratèges)*, in: C. Feyel, J. Fournier, L. Graslin-Thome, F. Kirbihler (eds.), *Communautés locales et pouvoir central dans l'Orient hellénistique et romain*, Nancy 2012, 102. Aymard, *Les assemblées* (n. 3) 173 n. 1 remarks that the “joint magistracies” were not imposed on the cities by the federal authorities, but rather emerged due to a spontaneous initiative.

⁹ The cited decrees of Dyme and Aigosthena are dated by the name of the federal secretary and therefore were passed when both *poleis* participated in the Achaian *koinon*.

¹⁰ The honorand of the Megarian decree was a governor of Aigina appointed during the reign of Eumenes II (197–159 BCE). Megara returned to the Achaian federation not long before 192 BCE after a period of membership in the Boiotian *koinon* (Pol. 20.6.9), and a date between 197 and 192 BCE must be rejected because the decree does not show any signs of the Boiotian influence which can always be traced in the decrees of the non-Boiotian cities that participated in this federation (see G. Busolt, *Griechische Staatskunde II*, Munich 1926, 1438; M. Feyel, *Polybe et l'histoire de Béotie au III siècle av. notre ère*, Paris 1942, 198–199; P. Roesch, *Thespiens et la Confédération béotienne*, Paris 1965, 161–162; R. K. Sherk, *The eponymous officials of Greek cities, I*, *ZPE* 83 [1990] 281; *II*, *ZPE* 84 [1990] 237–238, 252; P. Liddel, *The Decree Cultures of the Ancient Megarid*, *CQ* 59 [2009] 426–427).

¹¹ This Spartan decree is commonly attributed to the period immediately after 188 BCE, at which time the Lakedaimonians “had to be accustomed to the Achaian institutions” imposed on the city instead of its traditional political bodies (Liv. 38.34.3: “*uti <...> Lucurgi leges moresque abrogarent, Achaeorum adsuescerent legibus institutisque*”; 38.34.9; 39.36.4; 39.37.2–8; Plut. *Philop.* 16.8; *Tit.* 22.6). The appearance of a magistrate named ἐπίδαμοργός and of the *συναρχίαι* in the decrees *IG V.1 4* and *5* is usually considered to be a consequence of this institutional reform (Touloumakos, *Der Einfluss Roms* [n. 8] 14–15; Larsen, *Greek Federal States* [n. 3] 446; Walbank, *Commentary III* [n. 4] 138; M. Clauss, *Sparta: Eine Einführung in seine Geschichte und Zivilisation*, Munich 1983, 88; L. Piper, *Spartan twilight*, New Rochelle 1986, 125; Kennel, *IG V 1, 16 and the Gerousia* [n. 8] 201–202; id., *Spartans: A New History*, Oxford 2010, 181–182; G. Shipley, *The Greek World after Alexander. 323–30 BC.*, London, New York 2000, 278; Cartledge, Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta* [n. 8] 72, 78, 133; E. Mackil, *Creating a common polity. Religion, economy, and politics in making a Greek koinon*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 2013, 369).

¹² This inscription from Troizen contains a mention of the war in Crete, which lasted twenty years — from 204 to 184 BCE. The document has been attributed to a more narrow stretch of time, namely to the period of Nabis' involvement in the affairs of the Argolid, from 197 to 195 BCE (M. Fraenkel *ad IG IV*, p. 146; P. Legrand, *Inscriptions de Trézène*, *BCH* 17 [1893] 109), but an earlier or a later date is possible too (M. H. Jameson, C. N. Runnels, T. Van Andel, *A Greek Countryside: The Southern Argolid from Prehistory to the Present Day*, Stanford 1994, 91–92 n. 33). In any case, Troizen joined the Achaian *koinon* long before this war (Plut. *Arat.* 24.3; Paus. 2.8.5).

Argos¹³, and, with a high probability, also Epidauros (*IG IV*².1 79) and Elis (*I. Olympia* 38).¹⁴ Some of these documents cite the *συναρχία* as conducting negotiations on behalf of the city (Argos) and assigning the newly naturalized citizens to one or another tribe (*phyle*) by lot (Dyme). It seems, however, that their meetings were held more often with the purpose of deliberating in advance on those issues that were to be brought before the council and the assembly and bringing proposals forward for discussion in the council.

The decrees of two *poleis* of the Megarid contain almost the same formula: *συναρχία προεβουλευσαντο ποτί τε τοὺς αἰσιμνάτα[ς καὶ τὰν] βουλὰν καὶ τὸν δᾶμον* (Megara, *IG VII* 15, l. 1–2); *συναρχί[αι προ]εβουλευσαντο ποτί τὰν βουλ[ᾶν] καὶ τὸν δᾶμον* (Aigosthena, *IG VII* 223, ll. 3–5). The procedure appears to have been the following: the “joint magistracies” proposed a motion and approached the council¹⁵ and the council then made a preliminary resolution which was approved by the people. The citation formula of the decree of Troizen begins with a shorter expression: *δεδοχ[θαι ταῖς] συναρχίαις καὶ τῷ δάμῳ* (*IG IV* 756, ll. 7–8). This compressed formulation does not necessarily imply that the “joint magistracies” brought their *probouleuma* before the people thus bypassing the council; the latter probably is not mentioned due to the abbreviated form of the decree.¹⁶ In the Spartan decree *IG V*.1 4, the enactment formula

¹³ P. J. Rhodes, D. M. Lewis, *Decrees of the Greek States*, New York 1997, 69 quote a recently found document — which still remained unpublished at the time when the present paper was finished — with a text of four letters sent sequentially by Lucius Mummius, the consul of 146 BCE, to the city of Argos. When the *συναρχία* of Argos, prompted by the first letter of Mummius, received a delegation of the Dionysian *technitai*, the Achaian War had already ended, but the Roman regulations reforming the political institutions of the Achaian cities, had not yet come into force (M. Piérart, *Penser Rome en Grec... Penser Rome en grec*, in: O. Curty (ed.), *Épigraphie romaine et historiographie antique et modern. Actes de la journée d'études en mémoire du Prof. ém. T. Zawadzki (28 octobre 2011)*, Fribourg 2013, 26–27). Consequently, the activities of the Argive *συναρχία* in 146 BCE should be regarded as a continuation of the practice that has developed in the city in the Achaian period of its history.

¹⁴ The fragmentary document *I. Olympia* 38 may well have been recorded when Elis participated in the Achaian federation (see n. 7), which is also true for the decree of Epidauros (*IG IV*².1 79 = W. Peek, *Inschriften aus dem Asklepieion von Epidauros*, Berlin 1969, no. 33) attributed by the editors to the early 2nd century BCE.

¹⁵ The *αἰσιμνάται* of Megara probably constituted an executive committee of the council and corresponded to the Athenian prytanes (G. Busolt, *Griechische Staatskunde I*, Munich 1920, 374–375; K. Hanell, *Megarische Studien*, Lund 1934, 146; F. Cordano, *Magistrature megarisi dalla Grecia al Mar Nero*, *Rationes Rerum. Rivista di filologia e storia* 1 [2013] 51–52; on the origin of this institution in Megara, see now M. L. del Barrio Vega, *The Aisimnatai at Megara*, in: E. R. Lujan, J. L. Garcia Alonso [eds.], *A Greek Man in the Iberian Street. Papers in Linguistics and Epigraphy in Honour of Javier de Hoz*, Innsbruck 2011, 17–24).

¹⁶ Another decree of Troizen, which cannot be dated precisely, but may also belong to the period of the city's membership in the Achaian *koinon*, probably contains a reference to the “joint magistracies” as well: *ἔδοξε [ταῖς συναρχίαις] καὶ τῷ βουλᾷ* (*IG IV* 751, ll. 4–5). If the restoration is correct, as it seems to be, this time the formula fails to mention the *δάμος*, though the proxeny is declared to be given [ὑπὸ τ]ῆς πόλιος (l. 2), i.e. by the assembly. It has been suggested that in the non-extant last part of the text there should have been a supplement like “ἔδοξε καὶ τῷ δάμῳ” (Swoboda, *Volksbeschlüsse* [n. 3] 60–61; Touloumakos *Der Einfluss Roms* [n. 8]

— ἔδοξε τῶι δάμωι (l. 8) — omits a reference to the “joint magistracies,” but the preamble shows which steps the applicant, Damion from Ambrakia, took in order to obtain the proxeny: πτόθοδον ποιησαμένου Δαμίωνος τοῦ Θεοκρίτου Ἀμβρακιάτα περὶ προξενίας καὶ ἐπελθόντος ἐπὶ τε τὰς συναρχίας καὶ τὸν δάμον (ll. 1–5). It follows that Damion waited for the joint meeting of the top officials and approached them with his request; then, having gained their consent, he applied to the people. It is not known whether the γερουσία of Sparta survived the reform of 188 BCE or was replaced with another body, but in any case some kind of council should have certainly existed in Sparta when the city “became accustomed to the Achaian institutions,” despite the fact that the decree does not mention it. However, this omission must not imply that the συναρχίαι acted as the sole probouleutic body in the process of granting proxenies. If we are to take the text of a similar decree of the same time, *IG V.1 5*, at face value, then another applicant, Karneades from Kyrene, did not obtain a *probouleuma* at all, having addressed the assembly immediately, a procedure that was unusual even in the most democratic *poleis*. In some decrees of Roman Sparta, as restored by Peek and Kennell, the preamble begins with the phrase: γνώμα τῶν συναρχιῶν (or γνώμα συναρχιῶν), καθὼς (or καθὰ) καὶ οἱ γέροντες ἐπέκριναν.¹⁷ The Spartans continued to assemble the συναρχίαι after the city’s secession from Achaian *koinon* in 146 BCE, and the probouleutic procedure of the Roman times may well have remained the same as that of the Achaian period. It would be reasonable, therefore, to refrain from any definite conclusion as to whether or not the συναρχίαι in some Achaian cities appropriated the exclusive right to carry out probouleutic functions for the assembly. The usual procedure must have been the following: the συναρχίαι approached the council and the council made a *probouleuma* for the assembly.¹⁸

The probouleutic activity of the συναρχίαι has been interpreted as a sign of the oligarchic tendency in the political development of the Achaian *poleis*.¹⁹ If this is correct,

14, 31 n. 2). At any rate, the inscription clearly demonstrates that the council of Troizen was also involved in the passage of the honorific decrees. The word συναρχία can be restored in the decrees *IG IV 749* and *755* as well, but both inscriptions are too poorly preserved to draw certain conclusions.

¹⁷ *IG IV².1 86*; *V.1 11*; 18; Peek, *Inscriptionen aus dem Asklepieion* (n. 14) no. 36; Kennell, *IG V 1, 16 and the Gerousia* (n. 8) 200; *The Spartan Synarchia* (n. 8) 350. The restoration is inspired by the preamble of a decree passed by the city of Pherai in the 1st century BCE (*IG V.1 1370*). The identity of formulations implies that this Messenian community imitated not only the institutions of Sparta (γερουσία), but also the phraseology of Spartan decrees. The citizens of Pherai could have chosen the constitution of Lakadaimon as a model because they claimed to be descendants of the Spartan colonists (Cartledge, Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta* [n. 8] 133), although the reliability of the evidence on this subject (Nep. *Con.* 1.1) is doubtful (G. Shipley, *The Other Lakadaimonians: the Dependent Perioikic Poleis of Laconia and Messenia*, in: M. H. Hansen [ed.], *The Polis as an Urban Centre and as a Political Community*, Copenhagen 1997, 257; N. Luraghi, *The Ancient Messenians: Constructions of Ethnicity and Memory*, Cambridge 2008, 141, n. 150). More probably, the decree of Pherai postdates the decision of Augustus to assign some Messenian towns — including Pherai — to Lakonia (Paus. 4.30.2).

¹⁸ Rhodes, Lewis, *Decrees of the Greek States* (n. 13) 112.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Jones, *The Greek City* (n. 8) 168; Touloumakos, *Der Einfluss Roms* (n. 8) 16; and especially Cartledge, Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta* (n. 8) 133: “In

the purpose of the implementation of this practice in the cities would be quite clear, since the Achaean federation is generally considered to have been a polity dominated by a wealthy elite,²⁰ which may well have aspired to limit democracy in the *poleis* too. However, the coalescence of different magistrates into a single board with mainly probouleutic functions does not *per se* entail a deviation from the democratic procedures. Private persons, both citizens and foreigners, were not deprived of the right to propose motions. The proposal to reward two brothers from Crete with proxeny and other honours for services rendered to the city of Troizen was originally introduced by an ordinary citizen ([πόθο]δον ποιησαμένου Δορκύλου τοῦ Δαμ[οστρά]του: *IG IV 756*, ll. 4–5); the passage of two proxeny decrees of Sparta (*IG V.1 4* and 5) was initiated by the foreigners who hoped to gain the title. Of course, the “joint magistracies” could have served as an additional filter to screen out proposals which seemed to be unacceptable for the local elite, but a single board of chief officials — such as the *damiourgoi* or the *strategoï* — if it also consisted of “persons of standing and substance”, would have coped with this task no worse than the *συναρχίαι*. Besides, not all the decisions made by the assemblies of the Achaean cities appear to have received the approval of the “joint magistracies;” on the contrary, most of the decrees do not mention this stage of their passage. In some cases, this omission may be explained with the abbreviated form of a decree, but in certain documents, for instance, in the verbose inscription from Troizen related to fundraising for the defence of the city and containing repetitive references to the decision made by the council and the people (*IG IV 757*, ll. A 10, 30; B 3, 5, 7, 11), the failure to mention the *συναρχίαι* seems to be quite implicative. The connection between the “joint magistracies” and the oligarchic trends of late Hellenism, therefore, is not obvious, and in fact, nothing should prevent one from considering them, as did Aristotle, as an institution peculiar to a certain kind of democratic government.²¹

Greece itself, this tendency is particularly associated with member cities of the Achaean League, in which *sunarkhiai* were characteristic institutions with oligarchic overtones, since they lent themselves to the concentration of decision-making power into the hands of the ‘persons of standing and substance’ who usually held the chief magistracies in this period.”

²⁰ Niccolini, *La confederazione Achea* (n. 3) 216, 262; A. Aymard, *Les premiers rapports de Rome et de la confédération achaienne*, Paris 1938, 30–32; K.-W. Welwei, *Demokratie und Masse bei Polybios*, *Historia* 15 (1966) 284–288; D. Musti, *Polibio e la democrazia*, *ASNP* 36 (1967) 198–199; G. A. Lehmann, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Glaubwürdigkeit des Polybios*, Münster 1967, 377–386; Larsen, *Greek Federal States* (n. 3) 232; P. Oliva, *Die soziale Frage im hellenistischen Griechenland*, *Eirene* 12 (1974) 56; D. Mendels, *Polybios and the Constitution of the Achaian League: A Note*, *SCI* 5 (1979/1980) 85–93; F. W. Walbank, *The Hellenistic World*, Brighton 1981, 157; J. L. O’Neil, *The Political Elite of the Achaean and Aetolian leagues*, *AncSoc* 15/17 (1984/1986) 42; P. Scholz, *Demokratie in hellenistischer Zeit im Licht der literarischen Überlieferung*, in: C. Mann, P. Scholz (eds.), “Demokratie” im Hellenismus: von der Herrschaft des Volkes zur Herrschaft der Honoratioren?, Mainz 2012, 34–36; V. Grieb, *Polybios’ Wahre Demokratie und die politeia von Poleis und Koina in den Historien*, in: V. Grieb, C. Koehn (eds.), *Polybios und seine Historien*, Stuttgart 2013, 215–217.

²¹ According to Rizakis, the board of *συναρχίαι* was one of the “corps démocratiques” that existed in the Achaean cities before the Roman conquest (A. D. Rizakis, *Les cités péloponnésienes entre l’époque hellénistique et l’Empire: le paysage économique et social*, in: R. Frei-

Another idea shared by many scholars is that the local *συναρχίαι* were exact copies of the corresponding federal body.²² As far as their functions are concerned, there is an important difference. The federal *συναρχίαι* (*ἀρχαί, ἄρχοντες*) are never attested to have made a *probouleuma* for the Achaian assembly. At the federal meetings, each of the participants could have moved the motion (Pol. 29.24.10; Liv. 32.20.1), and in 198 BCE, when no one dared to take over such an initiative at the assembly, “there was silence for a long time, the meeting participants looking at each other” (Liv. 32.20.1). When at last the federal *strategos* took the floor, he blamed the Achaians for such timidity, going on to forward a proposal on his own behalf (Liv. 32.20.3–21.37). In the numerous accounts of the Achaian federal assemblies — either written by Polybius himself or derived from his work — the *strategos* quite often proposes decisions on his own behalf, but never refers to the formal motion moved by the *ἄρχοντες* as a whole, nor does he cite any *probouleuma* whatsoever.²³ Consequently, it is quite doubtful that the practice of the preliminary approval of the decrees by the *συναρχίαι* initially emerged in the *koinon* and thereafter was imposed on the cities.

Nevertheless, the simultaneous appearance of the “joint magistracies” as a probouleutic body in several cities of the Peloponnese, especially in Sparta — which was forced to take over “the Achaian institutions” — demands an explanation, if only a hypothetical one. It seems likely that the *συναρχίαι* as an institution spread around the Peloponnese from Achaia, the core region of the *koinon*. The custom of assembling all the executive officials together on important occasions under the name of *συναρχίαι* has been attested, as already noted, in the city of Dyme (*Syll.*³ 531, ll. 29–30). This document is usually attributed to the 3rd century BCE²⁴ and may reflect a long-standing tradition which had taken root in the cities of Achaia before the *koinon*’s expansion beyond its ethnic borders. It is impossible to determine which “joint magistracies” emerged first: the local *συναρχίαι* or those of the federation, but in the latter case there was a special reason for this practice of the magistrates’ consolidation into a single board. Before 255 BCE, the Achaians did not elect a single chief official to the head of the *koinon*, nor did they confer considerable power to a large and authoritative board of top magistrates like the *boiotarchoi* of Boiotia. The federal authorities consisted of two *strategoi* and a federal secretary appointed by the cities in rotation (Pol. 2.43.1); no doubt, they were assisted by the ten *damiourgoi*, each representing one of the ten Achaian *poleis*.²⁵ None of them — unlike the single *strategos* after 255 BCE — was individually granted such power and authority as to make decisions on behalf of the federal

Stolba, K. Gex (eds.), *Recherches récentes sur le monde hellénistique. Actes du colloque international*, Bern 2001, 75).

²² See the works cited in n. 8, except for that of A. Aymard.

²³ Aymard, *Les assemblées* (n. 3) 362–366, 370–371 (with a supposition that sometimes the *strategos* may have spoken on behalf of the assembly’s presidium).

²⁴ See n. 7 above.

²⁵ Ten *damiourgoi*: Liv. 32.22.2. The list of ten cities that originally constituted the federation after its revival in the 3rd century BCE: Pol. 2.41.7–8. The federal *damiourgoi* of Achaia in the 4th century BCE: *SEG* XIV 375, ll. 2–3.

government during the long intervals between the meetings of the assembly, so the federal officials, whatever their titles and duties, had to meet periodically in sessions of the board, the most appropriate (and perhaps official) name of which must have been αἱ συναρχίαι.²⁶ This practice seems to have survived the reform of 255 BCE, despite the fact that the single *strategos* vested with power “over everything” (ὕπερ τῶν ὅλων: Pol. 2.43.2) could now convene his συνάρχοντες as a board of advisors rather than as a decision-making body.

Whatever its origin, the custom to periodically assemble the “joint magistracies” was entrenched by tradition in both the cities of Achaia and the *koinon*; consequently, it became associated with the “Achaian institutions” in general. The mention of the συναρχίαι in a decree of Sparta is an obvious indication of this. Thus, the very appearance of the “joint magistracies” in Sparta and elsewhere may well have resulted from the imitation of the practice adopted in Achaia by some non-Achaian cities of the *koinon*. The probouleutic activities of the συναρχίαι, however, is another matter. As already noted, evidence for this function of the federal “joint magistracies” is lacking in the sources, nor is it attested in the cities of Achaia. The latter argument, however, carries little weight because the extant text of the decrees passed by Dyme and Tritaia does not contain full enactment and citation formulas. It is quite plausible that the procedure of preliminary consideration of the proposals at a meeting of the συναρχίαι had originated in the *poleis* of Achaia, not in the *koinon*, later being borrowed by some other cities as a component of the “Achaian institutions.” It may also be suggested — although it seems less likely — that in the cities outside Achaia, the mere appearance of such an authoritative and representative board, the consent of which significantly increased the chances of passing a motion, provoked an influx of those seeking honors for themselves or for others to the meetings of the “joint magistracies,” and gradually became a custom. At any rate, the Achaian origin of the Peloponnesian συναρχίαι appears to be beyond all doubt, but there are no sufficient grounds for treating them as simply the local copies of the federal institution with the same functions and responsibilities. The rationale behind their development in the member states of the *koinon* must have been much more complicated.

It should be added that the custom to amalgamate different boards of officials into one body was in full force under Roman rule, although the term συναρχίαι at this time gave way to other designations — συναρχία in singular and οἱ ἄρχοντες.²⁷ It was in this

²⁶ For συναρχίαι as the probable official title of the board, see Walbank, *Commentary I* (n. 2) 219. Polybius uses this term far less frequently than οἱ ἄρχοντες, but his habit to avoid official style wording (*Kanzleistil*) referring to state institutions and procedures is well-known (J. Palm, *Polybios und der Kanzleistil*, in: *Ärsberättelse. Kungliga Humanistiska Vetenskapsamfundet*, Lund 1956/1957, 63–93; Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* [n. 20] 349–351; C. Koehn, *Polybios und die Inschriften: Zum Sprachgebrauch des Historikers*, in: V. Grieb, C. Koehn [eds.], *Polybios und seine Historien*, Stuttgart 2013, 159–182).

²⁷ For the συναρχία of Roman Sparta, see Kennell *The Spartan Synarchia* (n. 8) 342–351; Cartledge, Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta* (n. 8) 134–135. The joint board of ἄρχοντες

period, that the activities of the joint boards of magistrates actually acquired “oligarchic overtones:” they interacted more with the *συνέδριον*²⁸ than with the people, and sometimes made ultimate decisions — whether together with the *σύνεδροι* or alone — on important matters.²⁹ Whatever their function and name, these boards certainly seem to have been a legacy of the membership of respective cities of the Achaian *koinon*,³⁰ so the list of *poleis* in which the *συναρχία* should have existed in the Achaian time can be expanded by adding Messene³¹ and Antigoneia (former Mantinea); the evidence of Roman times may be taken as an additional confirmation of the fact that this institution in Argos and Epidauros had an Achaian origin as well. Consequently, the scope of expansion of this Achaian institution across the Peloponnese must have been much larger than is attested by the documents predating 146 BCE, but there is still not enough evidence to claim that the board of *συναρχία* was imposed by the federation on all the member cities.

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in the 1st century BCE: *SEG* LV 409 (Argos), *IG* V.2 266 (Antigoneia), *Syll.*³ 736 (Messene), *IG* IV².1 65–66 (Epidauros).

²⁸ *Συνέδριον* — probably, a Greek equivalent for *senatus* — was a new type of a city council which emerged in the Peloponnesian cities under Roman rule. M. Piérart has convincingly shown that the renaming of the city councils in the Peloponnese was connected with the political reform carried out by Mummius and the ten commissioners in 146 BCE (Piérart, *Penser Rome en Grec* [n. 13] 27–32; *Une nouvelle proxénie argienne de la basse époque hellénistique et les synédres d’Argos*, in: A. Ivantchik [ed.], *Monumentum Gregorianum*, Moscow 2013, 283–287). The *συνέδριον* is usually characterized as a stronghold of the local wealthy elite, a puissant political institution that developed into a ruling social group like the Roman senatorial order (S. Accame, *Il dominio romano in Grecia dalla Guerra Acaica ad Augusto*, Roma 1946, 137–139; Touloumakos, *Der Einfluss Roms* [n. 8] 18–19; 22–25; J.-L. Ferrary, *Les Romains de la République et les démocraties grecques*, Opus 6/8 [1987/89] 210–212; F. Quass, *Die Honoratiorenschicht in den Städten des griechischen Ostens*, Stuttgart 1993, 382–394; P. Fröhlich, *Les Cités grecques et le contrôle des magistrats (IV^e – I^{er} siècle avant J.-C.)*, Geneva, Paris 2004, 238–239, 305–306; P. Hamon, *Le Conseil et la participation des citoyens: les mutations de la basse époque hellénistique*, in: P. Fröhlich, C. Müller [eds.], *Citoyenneté et Participation à la Basse Époque Hellénistique*, Geneva 2005, 121–144).

²⁹ The decrees with an enactment formula “ἔδοξε τοῖς ἄρχουσι καὶ συνέδροις”: *IG* V.2 266; *IG* IV².1 66; *SEG* XLIX 500. The Mystery-inscription from Andania (*Syll.*³ 736) describes the ἄρχοντες selecting candidates to the organizing committees of the feast (ll. 46, 127–128) and — together with the *σύνεδροι* — planning reconstruction works at the sanctuary.

³⁰ Swoboda, *Die Städte im achäischen Bunde* (n. 7) 43–44; Touloumakos, *Der Einfluss Roms* (n. 8) 16–17.

³¹ As already mentioned (see n. 2 above), Polybius (4.4.2) applies the Achaian term *συναρχία* to the meeting of Messenian magistrates summoned long before the city’s entry into the *koinon*, and it is unlikely that his terminology corresponded to that of the Messenians used at that time. The evidence for local *συναρχία* in the period of the Messenian membership in the federation is lacking.