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ABHANDLUNGEN

THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ATHENIAN "TYRANNICIDE"-CULT

On the first day of the Great Panathenaea of 514 B.C., two members of the noble clan of the Gephyraioi slew Hipparchus, brother of the Athenian tyrant, Hippias. The dust of time and historical conjecture has hidden the motive of their action. Thucydides, who presents the first coherent account of any detail that we possess,¹ emphasizes the personal motive, and we can therefore not be certain that the attack was against the tyranny as such at all. But most commentators believe that the deed of Harmodius and Aristogeiton was part of a larger, specifically political, plot.

The assassination of Hipparchus, if intended to eliminate the tyranny, merely aggravated it. Within four years, however, Hippias was driven out by the Spartan King Cleomenes and a force of Spartans acting under the promptings of an Alcmeonid-inspired Delphi.² In some year between this (511/0) and 480 statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, the work of the sculptor Antenor, were set up in the Agora. This original group was removed from Athens to Susa by Xerxes in 480, but a new grouping of the "tyrannicides" was dedicated in 477/6, according to the Parian Marble.³ By the middle of the century, the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were firmly established. Some time after the middle of the century a decree confirming the right of the oldest living descendant of each to public maintenance in the Prytaneion was passed, almost certainly on the motion of Pericles himself.⁴ From later sources we learn that the "tyrannicides" were honored by a tomb in the Cerameicus⁵ and that annual sacrifices were offered to them by the polemarch.⁶ By the end of the century Thucydides considered it necessary to go out of his way to correct an almost universal misconception that Hipparchus had been tyrant, and that, therefore, Harmodius and Aristogeiton really were tyrannicides.⁷ But in the fourth century Plato could write that Harmodius and Aristogeiton "destroyed the rule of the tyrants",⁸ and a reference in the Platonic *Hipparchus* to Hipparchus as the eldest of the Peisistratids and the confused attempts of the *Ath. Pol.* to reach

¹ Thucydides 6. 53. 3-59. ² Herodotus 5. 62-65 (a suggestion of bribery: 63. 1, 66. 1).

³ Ep. 54, lines 70ff. ⁴ *I. G.* 1². 77 (see M. Ostwald, *AJP* 72 [1951] 24ff., esp. 32-35).

⁵ Pausanias 1. 29. 15.

⁶ *Ath. Pol.* 58. 1.

⁷ Thuc. 1. 20. 2, 6. 54. 2.

⁸ Plato, *Symp.* 182C; errors die hard: R. G. Bury's note in his first ed. *ad loc.* states that the tyrannicides "slew the Peisistratids in 514 B.C."

a compromise on Hipparchus' exact position⁹ show Thucydides' protests to have gone unheeded.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine the early years of the "tyrannicide-" cult and to criticize several recent interpretations of its political significance.¹⁰

Jacoby's treatment of the political background of the cult is consistently more satisfactory than later ones which profess to correct it.¹¹ The overriding merit of his analysis is that he takes as his logical and indisputable starting-point an observation so obvious that its disregard or denial must impair any reconstruction: the Alcmeonids could point proudly to their *real* expulsion of Hippias in 511/0, and so would have opposed vehemently anyone who put forward the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton to tyrannicide. There is a logical corollary: the supporters of the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton must have been the political opponents of the Alcmeonids, at least in the early stages of the fiction before it became established as the "official version."¹² This simple observation, that the Alcmeonids had true claims of their own, ought to silence once and for all any attempt to cast the Alcmeonids in the role of supporters of the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton.¹³ Jacoby seems certainly right to look for the earliest supporters of the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton in the circles of anti-Alcmeonid nobles.

By the middle of the fifth century, then, there were two rival claimants to the *kudos* attaching to the expulsion of the tyrants: the Alcmeonids, who maintained that they had liberated Athens by winning over Delphi to effect Spartan

⁹ *Hipparchus* 228 B, *Ath. Pol.* 17. 3, 18. 1; cf. *Atthis* 332, n. 7.

¹⁰ I wish to thank Prof. M. E. White of Trinity College, Toronto, and Mr. W. G. Forrest of Wadham College, Oxford, for helpful discussion and criticism. The latter would agree with my main conclusion (cf. *C. Q.* 10 [1960] 237 n. 4), but the arguments, and any errors that they may contain, are my own.

¹¹ F. Jacoby, *Atthis* (Oxford 1949) Chap. III. 2, "The Tradition about the Peisistratids," pp. 152-168.

¹² Not that "opponents of the Alcmeonids" were always the same; the personnel of the opposition may have changed. Jacoby, therefore, is misleading when he writes: "the antagonisms of the 'parties' *primarily remained the same* in their main lines, . . . in the contests about the forming of the State the events after the overthrow of the tyranny were exploited again and again for attack and defence by the *heirs of the participants*" (*Atthis*, 166, my italics).

¹³ As, for example, Bowra's: "the Alcmeonids wished to get rid of the odium of asking the Spartans to expel Hippias, and they hoped to do so by putting up another story and seeing that it was universally known and accepted" (quoted from the first ed. of *Greek Lyric Poetry* by Jacoby, 339, n. 53). A charge linking Alcmeonids and Spartans could be countered, as Jacoby notes, by pointing to the expulsion of the "accursed" by Cleomenes and Isagoras, and "a 'brilliant propaganda' which surrenders the highest glory to a rival clan seems to me to defeat its own ends" (*Atthis*, 339, n. 53).

co-operation, *vs.* the supporters of the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. The former account was kept alive in Alcmeonid circles and must have been used by them to counteract charges of disloyalty to Athens at the time of Marathon.¹⁴ It is reflected in Herodotus' treatment, and is believed by most scholars to stem from his Alcmeonid authorities;¹⁵ he refers only cursorily to the deed of Harmodius and Aristogeiton (5. 55–56), concentrating instead on the Phoenician origin of the Gephyraioi.¹⁶ His emphasis on the four-year interval between the murder of Hipparchus and the expulsion of Hippias, "in which the Athenians were tyrannized over no less but more than before"¹⁷ is also interpreted by Jacoby as stemming from Alcmeonid tradition, "which insisted on this interval because it proved that the murder of Hipparchus did not imply liberation from tyranny."¹⁸ On the other side stood the "official version" which "the general public (Thukydides' *πληθός*) believed... because it had daily before its eyes the statues and the honorary tombs of the tyrannicides and was yearly reminded of them by the cult which the polemarch conducted."¹⁹ The controversy raged into the last decade of the century, when, on Jacoby's hypothesis, the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were renewed in the *Atthis* of Hellanicus.

The major fault in Jacoby's reconstruction is that it does not go far enough, that it leaves certain features of the cult unexplained. Jacoby is nowhere clear about when he supposes the "official version" originally to have been put forward. We have on the one hand his statement that "the question is whether this 'publicistic' contest, as we may call it, began at once or after the final overthrow of Kleisthenes. *Some points favour the former period.*"²⁰ And on the other: "The second notion was the official one: it had taken its origin in the circles of the nobility hostile to the Alcmeonids (*after the overthrow of Kleisthenes at the earliest*), and this notion had carried the day in consequence of the ambiguous policy of the Alcmeonids between 510 and 490 B.C."²¹ The equivocation shows that Jacoby is aware of a major difficulty: how could the "official," anti-Alcmeonid version have taken root either at a time when the Alcmeonids were acting in concert with the other nobles (510–508) or when the Alcmeonid Cleisthenes held the upper hand (after 508)? This is the major obstacle to

¹⁴ Herodotus 6. 121, 123.

¹⁵ "[The Alcmeonids'] information about historical events is always authoritative for Herodotos, and he champions their honour, their standpoints and their claims on all occasions" (Jacoby, *Atthis*, 223).

¹⁶ Jacoby interprets this as a slander from Herodotus' Alcmeonid sources (337, n. 40).

¹⁷ 5. 55, cf. 6. 123: "Thus it was these (the Alcmeonids) who freed Athens much more than Harmodius and Aristogeiton... For the latter made the rest of the Peisistratids savage by killing Hipparchus... while the Alcmeonids manifestly brought freedom..."

¹⁸ *Atthis* 336, n. 33.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 162.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 340, n. 53, my italics; Jacoby leaves these "points" unexplained.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 162, my italics.

accepting Pliny's date of 509 for the erection of the "tyrannicide-" group by Antenor,²² a sculptor much in demand in Alcmeonid circles, e. g., at Delphi.²³

If Jacoby's reconstruction leaves unexplained the origins of the cult, it gives an even less satisfactory account of its stupendous growth. "The ambiguous policy of the Alcmeonids between 510 and 490 B.C.," Jacoby's only attempt at an explanation, will not really do; at best, it points in the right direction. The Alcmeonids' ambiguous policy laid them open yet again to the attacks of their enemies, provided a handle for the opposition. We must look for the man who wielded the flail.

I have lingered over Jacoby's views because there is much in them that is true and illuminating. Less can be said for several more recent accounts. Ehrenberg, in his complex study of the earliest appearance of the terminology, and so the concept, of democracy,²⁴ noted that the first occurrence of a later synonym for "democracy" is in the Harmodius-skolia,²⁵ where Harmodius and Aristogeiton are praised for making the Athenians *ἰσονόμους*. In complete disregard of Jacoby's cogent criticisms of such a view, Ehrenberg maintained that their claims to have freed Athens "obviously . . . originated among the same people who bewailed their dead in a similar song remembering the battle of Leipsydryon," viz. the Alcmeonids.²⁶ If anything should have become obvious from Jacoby's discussion it is that 514 and 510 must be kept completely distinct. To maintain that the Alcmeonids (who, after all, had a true expulsion to point to in 510) "took part . . . equally in the establishment of the legend of the tyrannicides"²⁷ is paradoxical in the extreme. *Facilis descensus Averno*: Ehrenberg is confronted by an even larger paradox ahead. On the basis of the debate on constitutions in Herodotus²⁸ he assumes that *ἰσονομία* was an early watchword for "democracy."²⁹ Its appearance in the Harmodius-skolia shows that the act of Harmodius and Aristogeiton must at some stage have been put forward as the foundation and cornerstone of democracy, which "can only have been done by somebody who had fallen out with the rest of the nobility and wanted a symbol for his own democratic policy. It must have been the doing of Cleisthenes . . . who made the liberation from the tyrants the prelude to democracy."³⁰

²² Pliny, *N. H.* 34. 17 "eodem anno quo et Romae reges pulsi"; but his later ascription of the statues to Praxiteles (34. 69) does not inspire confidence.

²³ P. de la Coste-Messelière, *Fouilles de Delphes* IV. 3 (1931) 67 ff.

²⁴ V. Ehrenberg, "Origins of Democracy", *Historia* 1 (1950) 515-548.

²⁵ Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca* II, Scolia Anonyma 10-13.

²⁶ Ehrenberg, 530. For the Alcmeonids at Leipsydryon after 514, Herodotus 5. 62.

²⁷ Ehrenberg, 532.

²⁸ Herodotus 3. 80-82, esp. 80. 6: *πλῆθος δὲ ἄρχον πρῶτα μὲν οὖνομα πάντων κάλλιστον ἔχει ἰσονομίην*.

²⁹ So, too, J. A. O. Larsen, in *Essays . . . to George H. Sabine* (Cornell 1948) 8.

³⁰ Ehrenberg, 533, where, from the context, "liberation from the tyrants" is used as the equivalent of "murder of Hipparchus by Harmodius and Aristogeiton."

But we have no way of knowing that *ῥεονομία* became a watchword for "democracy" as early as the late 6th century, and to see in Cleisthenes the man responsible for snatching it from the aristocrats and turning it into a democratic slogan by means of the Harmodius-song flies in the face of the probability that, if he had required a selling-point for himself and his constitution, he needed to look no further than the actual expulsion of 510. In any case, it is easy to exaggerate the importance of claim and counter-claim to the honor of ending the tyranny in the fight between Cleisthenes and Isagoras. After all, how eager was the *demos* to be rid of the Peisistratid house? The common people's ambitions to national self-consciousness, and, more important, their material well-being were well provided for by the tyrants. It was only Cleomenes' attempt to create a new oligarchic Council composed of 300 of Isagoras' supporters that led to the collapse of their plans and the recall of Cleisthenes.³¹ It seems preferable to infer that a claim to the honor of ending the tyranny did not originate until the possible *return* of the tyrant constituted a threat to the new-found political consciousness of the people, i. e. not until the last years of the century, when Sparta was championing the restoration of Hippias, and in the 490's, when Hippias himself began to play the lever in Persia's hands.

Jacoby seems to have protested in vain against the view that the "official version" was insisted on, even by the Alcmeonids, because of the assumed impossibility of emphasizing a "liberation" in which Sparta had taken part. The error is committed both by Ehrenberg and, more resoundingly, by Bowra. "Hippias had in fact been expelled by Spartan troops, and it was necessary for those who had taken part in this to find some more glorious and more national myth. This was found in the pair of tyrannicides..."³² Bowra thus ignores Jacoby's insistence that all Cleisthenes would have to have done to counter a charge of laconism (for which there is no evidence) was point to the fact that he was the first victim of the co-operative venture between Isagoras and the spear-rattling Cleomenes. It was only after Cleomenes and Isagoras snatched away the prospect of political participation which Cleisthenes had dangled so tantalizingly before the *demos* when he "took them into partnership," and Cleomenes began to sponsor a restoration of Hippias, that "Spartan intervention" could be used as a political smear—and then, not against the Alcmeonids, but their enemies.

Brunnsåker, in a recent study which is concerned mainly with an attempt to reconstruct the statues of Critius and Nesiotes from descriptions and later copies,³³ also surveys the literary evidence for the cult and offers an interpretation of its political significance. His analysis of the "historical evidence" for the years immediately following the expulsion of Hippias is not reassuring. "The

³¹ Herodotus 5. 72. 1.

³² C. M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry*² (Oxford 1961) 394. See also above, note 13.

³³ Sture Brunnsåker, *The Tyrant-Slayers of Kritios and Nesiotes* (Lund 1955).

Alkmaionids and the aristocrats together with the military assistance of the Spartans had overthrown the tyrannical government... It is to my mind hardly conceivable (writes Brunnsåker) that Isagoras and Kleisthenes would have left out of consideration the excellent propaganda value of the Tyrannicides... I am sure that no politician could have resisted the temptation to use this perfect story for political purposes...³⁴ No politician, perhaps, except one who, like Cleisthenes, could point to a perfectly good—and, better, *true*—expulsion of the real tyrant in 510. But Brunnsåker continues to theorize against the probabilities undeterred. He insists that in the years after 510 both Cleisthenes and Isagoras fostered the memory of the “tyrannicides.” “It is even possible, though not susceptible of proof, that the Alcmeonids were concerned in the conspiracy, too... If both the oligarchs and the Alcmeonids had been concerned in the assassination of Hipparchos neither party would have had any interest in concealing the importance of this event...³⁵ On the contrary, if (as seems unlikely) the Alcmeonids had been involved in the murder of Hipparchus, they would have covered up their share in a deed which glorified their aristocratic rivals as soon as they could point to a successful expulsion of their own. So much, at least, seems certain from Herodotus’ narrative. Brunnsåker’s reconstruction is further vitiated by a too rigid view of Athenian political “parties,” their programs and personnel. “Though direct evidence is lacking we may surmise that Kleisthenes fostered the memory of Harmodios and Aristogeiton. The honours paid to the Tyrannicides in later times were all due to the initiative of the democrats... If Kleisthenes had been averse to them, why should the democrats later choose them as symbol of their policy?”³⁶ The answer is clearly that someone may have taken up and furthered the claims of the “tyrannicides” for his own purposes in post-Cleisthenic Athens.

Finally, Brunnsåker drives home the consequences of illogic with disturbing consistency. Cleisthenes and the democrats have adopted the “tyrannicides”; this leaves the other aristocrats resigning their claims to Harmodius and Aristogeiton and depreciating the significance of 514. “Since the Tyrannicides tended to be the principal symbol of the democracy, the opposition may have tried to minimize the importance of their achievement as much as possible. The personal motive for the murder of Hipparchos which no doubt existed was brought to the fore and the whole affair was given an entirely private character. In the oligarchic families this negative judgment of the Tyrannicides was presumably handed on as a family tradition.”³⁷ With the other aristocrats supporting neither version, the Alcmeonids must support both: “the Alcmeonids who were the leaders of the democratic ‘party’ had adopted the Tyrannicides and made them a useful symbol of their own policy, but, on the other hand, they were

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 97–98.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

naturally anxious to stress their own share in the liberation of Athens."³⁸ Thus we find the Alcmeonids, those masters of political intrigue, embracing a policy both contradictory and self-defeating; we may be sure that the impasse exists only in the mind of the modern commentator.

II

Who, then, put forward the claims of Harmodius and Aristogeiton to having been liberators of Athens, and when was this "official version" given the impetus which put it in such a prominent position in the latter part of the fifth century? We have looked in vain for an answer to the question in the years immediately following 510. The Antenor "tyrannicide"-group cannot be dated with certainty, nor can it have made much of an impact.³⁹ We must look to the restoration of the statues after Salamis, for here the field of evidence can be brought into coherent focus.

The Parian Marble reports that in 477/6 B.C., "Simonides the Cean . . . won the prize for producing a chorus at Athens, and the statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were set up . . ."⁴⁰ A distich quoted by Hephaeston in his "Handbook on Metres" purports to be a two-line epigram by Simonides: "A great light indeed was it for the Athenians when Aristogeiton and Harmodius killed Hipparchus . . ."⁴¹ A fragment of an inscription published by Meritt⁴² shows that, in addition to the distich cited by Hephaeston, Simonides' epigram included another two lines, and that the four lines were a dedicatory inscription. From the citation in Hephaeston alone, it might be supposed that an anonymous dedicatory epigram had been drawn into the orbit of the most famous epigrammatist of the early fifth century. But the notice in the Parian Marble, juxtaposing as the two most notable items of the year the victory of Simonides and the statues of the "tyrannicides", makes it virtually certain (as certain as such things can be) that Hephaeston's ascription is trustworthy; Simonides was in Athens, at the height of his popularity; his dithyrambic victory in this year was commemorated in the epigram "when Adeimantus was archon and the tribe of Antiochis won the lovely tripod . . ." ἀμφὶ διδασκαλίῃ δὲ Σιμωνίδῃ ἔσπετο κῦδος,⁴³ and we are probably to see a reference to this same victory in Simonides' own dedication, "you won 56 bulls and tripods, Simonides, before

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 27. It is wrong to speak of the Alcmeonids as "leaders of the democratic party." As W. G. Forrest well remarks, "No Alcmeonid does anything even faintly democratic after the disappearance of Kleisthenes" (*CQ* 10 [1960] 234).

³⁹ "Every critic will agree, I think, that Antenor's Tyrannoktones never enjoyed a great popularity; they never became so popular as the later group," J. H. Jongkees, *Mnemosyne* ser. 3, 13 (1947) 160.

⁴⁰ Marm. Par. ep. 54.

⁴¹ Hephaeston, *Ench.* 4, who cites it as coming ἐκ τῶν Ἐπιγραμμάτων

⁴² B. D. Meritt, *Hesperia* 5 (1936) 355-358 (= *S. E. G. X.* 320, p. 127).

⁴³ fr. 77 D.

you set up this tablet..."⁴⁴ What could be more natural than that those who were attempting to establish the "tyrannicides" in the public esteem by dedicating to their memory new statues by Critius and Nesiotes, should ask the celebrated poet to add his lustre to the occasion?⁴⁵

I should conjecture that the major obstacle to acceptance of the Simonidean ascription is a scruple which the more tender-hearted scholars feel in attributing to Simonides an epigram which betrays an attitude of disloyalty to his former patrons; for we are told that Hipparchus brought the poet to Athens as a cynosure of the tyrant's court.⁴⁶ Thus Bowra: "Since the evidence for his authorship is at least dubious, we need not defend him from the charge of disloyalty and ingratitude to his former hosts."⁴⁷ Likewise Meritt: "the long-standing association between Simonides and Hipparchus makes Simonidean authorship more than usually dubious."⁴⁸ But "long-standing" is a figment of Meritt's; we have no way of knowing how long before 514 Simonides was summoned to Athens. Taking the evidence as it stands, however, and allowing the probabilities to point to Simonidean authorship of the "tyrannicide" dedication, we may ask how much support the authenticity of the epigram reasonably gives to a charge of "disloyalty and ingratitude." Hipparchus had, after all, been killed 37 years previously in another century and in a different political world; Simonides had been employed by the Peisistratids but was now in the employ of others. To expect him to have refused the commission for the Critius-base out of deference to the memory of the Peisistratids seems unrealistic.

We would then be free to accept the evidence for Simonidean authorship and proceed to consider its implications were it not for a curious about-face executed by Meritt in the last paragraph of his article on the then newly-discovered Critius-base:

The epigram on Antenor's base (he writes) like the epigrams of Simonides and of Aeschylus on the cenotaph for those who fell at Marathon, was not available to the collectors who made the anthologies. But the Marathon monument was not replaced after the Persian destruction, as were the statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. The natural assumption is that the inscription from the old base was carved again on the new, so that even though the stone and the lettering of the epigram are of 477 the epigram itself is probably the same as that of 510.⁴⁹

This is a particularly treacherous argument *e silentio*: the absence of the Antenor-epigram proves it must have been the same as that on the later Critius-

⁴⁴ fr. 79D, so Bowra, 318, n. 1.

⁴⁵ It is perhaps of importance that the monument shows the "tyrannicide" – dedication to have been of four lines. The two best authenticated of Simonides' dedicatory epigrams, 79D (autobiographical) and 83D (Megistias' tomb, Herodotus 7. 228) are also of 4 lines.

⁴⁶ *Ath. Pol.* 18. 1, ? Plato, *Hipparchus* 228C.

⁴⁷ *Greek Lyric Poetry*², 322.

⁴⁸ *Hesperia* 5 (1936) 356.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 358.

base! That the earlier epigram was re-copied onto the later base is not a "natural assumption" at all, it is simply an assumption of Meritt's (which has, nevertheless, misled many).⁵⁰ For Meritt assumes what he sets out to demonstrate, that the base-epigram was in a parallel case with the Marathon-epigrams and would have been lost if it had not been re-inscribed. The fact that it *was* available to later authors is adequately accounted for on the hypothesis that it was a new epigram, composed specially for the Critius-group and inscribed for the first time in 477/6. Furthermore, the appearance of the epigram on an Antenor-base of 509 is ruled out by acceptance of Simonidean authorship. The alternatives are stated clearly by Brunnsåker: "We do not know, however, whether the same epigram was used also for the earlier statues. It is as likely as not. In that case Simonides was probably not the author, for he left Athens for some time after the murder of Hipparchus and the expulsion of Hippias."⁵¹ The only other alternative, that the epigram was genuinely Simonidean, but copied from an Antenor-base of much later⁵² is mere conjecture and goes against the probabilities.

At some time after the expulsion of Hippias in 510 a dedication was made of a group by Antenor in honor of two stalwarts who had struck a first, if ineffectual, blow against tyranny. The impact of the dedication, to judge from the absence of echoes or copies, cannot have been large, and the statues themselves were carried off to Susa by Xerxes in 480. Some three years later, the plundered statues were replaced by a new and probably more impressive grouping by Critius and Nesiotes. The leading epigrammatist of the day was called on to compose the dedicatory verses. The effect of the dedication was immediate and widespread: within a decade the new "tyrannicides" were being represented on vases.⁵³ Extraordinary honors to their descendants were confirmed in a decree, probably by Pericles himself, and by the end of the century the "official version" had become so firmly entrenched that not even the repeated insistence of Thucydides could uproot it.

⁵⁰ Friedländer and Hoffleit, *Epigrammata* (Berkeley 1948) 141-142; even Jacoby! (*Atthis* 339, n. 52).

⁵¹ Brunnsåker, 122. His doubts here are strangely inconsistent with his arguments for Simonidean authorship at pp. 86-88, where he concludes: "These arguments are not, of course, in any way conclusive, but they give nevertheless a certain bias to Simonides as the author of this epigram."

⁵² Raubitschek dates the Antenor-group "not earlier than 488 B.C." (*AJA* 44 [1940] 58 n. 2) and "not before 487 B.C." (*Dedications from the Athenian Acropolis* [Princeton 1949] 513). Apparently approved by Richter, *Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks* (New Haven 1957) 200, n. 9.

⁵³ "The stamnos by the Copenhagen Painter in Würzburg dates from c. 475; the small black-figured lekythos by the Emporion Painter in Vienna [the Skaramanga lekythos] from c. 470; the Villa Giulia fragment from 460-450" (Bowra, *GLP*², 394, with refs. there, esp. Beazley, *JHS* 68 [1948] 26-28). For attempts to find artistic echoes of the earlier Antenor group, see G. Becatti, *Arch. Class.* 9 (1957) 97-107; K. Schefold in *Mus. Helv.* 1 (1944) 189ff., *ibid.* 2 (1945) 263-264; J. H. Jongkees (above, note 39) 145ff.

Whose was the hand behind the act of 477 which set this version on its way to so long and lusty a life? We have only to remember the real significance of the "official" version: it purported to replace the valid claims of a real expulsion by the *Alcmeonids*. Need we look any further than the Alcmeonids' arch-enemy? After Marathon the weapon of ostracism had been unsheathed against the very man (if the *Ath. Pol.* is to be believed) against whom it had been forged, Hipparchus the son of Charmus, and for the next two years the Athenians continued to ostracize τοὺς τῶν τυράννων φίλους, of whom the *Ath. Pol.* calls Hipparchus the ἡγεμὼν καὶ προστάτης.⁵⁴ The victim of 486 was Megacles the Alcmeonid, nephew of Cleisthenes and uncle of Pericles. To find an Alcmeonid washed away in a deluge of anti-tyrant feeling should not surprise us, for the story (true or not) must already have spread that the Alcmeonids had help up a shield at Marathon as part of a conspiracy to restore Hippias, a story whose persistence is shown by Herodotus' vociferous protests against it.⁵⁵ The man behind the ostracisms as well as the story of the shield-signal was very probably Themistocles.⁵⁶

A further link in the chain of evidence connecting Themistocles with the dedication of 477/6 is his friendship with Simonides,⁵⁷ whose poetic lustre Themistocles must have been glad to add to the occasion for personal as well as political reasons. The tenor of the "tyrannicide" story was specifically anti-Alcmeonid: when Themistocles' turn came to be the target for political ammunition he was prosecuted by Leobotes *an Alcmeonid*.⁵⁸ But for the moment he could bring all his forces to bear against his Alcmeonid enemies, and insist as they might that they had been the ones to expel the tyrant in 510, their protestations of loyalty⁵⁹ were lost in the deafening roar of charges of medism *cum* tyranny whose author was Themistocles.

The quality in Themistocles which most impressed Thucydides was his on-the-spot inventiveness: κράτιστος... αὐτοσχεδιάζειν τὰ δέοντα (I. 138. 3). But his uncanny ability to extemporize a plan was never shown so surely as in this brilliant stroke against his foes: to resuscitate the doubtful claims of two somewhat obscure nobles to have anticipated the expulsion by four years; to re-write history by seeing to it that this version of "tyrannicide" eclipsed the truth of 510; to put the death-stroke once and for all to the patriotic preten-

⁵⁴ *Ath. Pol.* 22. 4.

⁵⁵ Hdt. 6. 121–124.

⁵⁶ A date of c. 487 for the Antenor "tyrannicides" would therefore not disturb me: it would have been part of Themistocles' earlier anti-Alcmeonid campaign. But the epigraphical evidence seems to me too ambiguous (see above, note 52) and the historical arguments too *a priori* (Valeton, *Mnemosyne* 37 [1909] 367–369 and 379) to warrant a departure from Pliny's date of 509.

⁵⁷ Plutarch, *Them.* 1. 3, 5. 4–5 (cf. also Cicero, *de Fin.* 2. 32 and the 'Suda' s. v. Timocreon).

⁵⁸ Plutarch, *Them.* 23. 1.

⁵⁹ καὶ οὕτω τὰς Ἀθήνας οὗτοι ᾗσαν οἱ ἐλευθερώσαντες πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἢ περ Ἀρμόδιός τε καὶ Ἀριστογείτων (Hdt. 6. 123. 2).

sions of the Alcmeonids; and to provide the progressive wing of Athenian politics for the remainder of the century with a rallying cry and an ideal.

Additional Notes

A. Who sang the "Harmodius-Song", and When?

Ehrenberg originally put forward the view that it "originated among the same people who bewailed their dead in a similar song remembering the battle of Leipsydryon", viz. the Alcmeonids.⁶⁰ But if the Alcmeonids sang the song, it must have been before 510, when they had a true expulsion of their own to sing about. And this is what Ehrenberg maintained: "There was at that moment—in the years after 514—no difference of aims or methods between the Alcmeonids and the other nobles; they were united in their fight against the tyrant."⁶¹ But it seems impossible that a song which spoke of "making the Athenians *ἰσονόμους*" (whether or not the term was a synonym for "democracy") could have been sung by *anyone* while Hippias was still in power. Therefore, it must have originated after 510; therefore, not by the Alcmeonids.⁶²

Jacoby put forward the more plausible theory that it originated with the anti-Alcmeonid nobility in the years after 510. "It seems likely that we hear in these skolia the voice of the opposition of that time to the Alcmeonid who in the contest which broke out at once with the reactionary majority of the nobility *ἑσσούμενος*... τὸν δῆμον προσεταιρίζεται," viz. Cleisthenes.⁶³

The song itself tells us little or nothing. Bowra believes that it "looks more like a series of quatrains meant to cap each other than a single poem,"⁶⁴ and says "our series of quatrains may date from about 510 or from 477 or be a mixture of both dates with perhaps some later additions or changes."⁶⁵ We can take our pick. Why not 477? Some version or part of the song may have been sung earlier, but what better time for a revival of an "old favorite" and even an expansion of it, than the occasion of the new "tyrannicide" dedication? The term *ἰσονομία* in the poem (10. 4, 13. 4) is suggestive. Ehrenberg was misled by its occurrence in Herodotus as a synonym for "democracy" to connect it with the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes, and he was followed by Bowra: "We do not know what catch-word Cleisthenes used when he 'took the people into partnership,' but it is quite possible that he referred to the establishment of 'equal laws'."⁶⁶ Possible, but not likely if the term had to be popularized in an essentially anti-Alcmeonid version of the end of the tyranny. It seems

⁶⁰ *Historia* 1 (1950) 530.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 531.

⁶² Ehrenberg later so far modified his views: Skolion 12 (which speaks of *ἄνδρα τύραννον* and not *τὸν τύραννον*) was composed before, Skolion 10 after, 507, as „das Triumphlied der Demokratie“ („Das Harmodioslied“, *Wiener Studien* 69 [1956] 68). He continued to insist, however, that it was Cleisthenes „der die Idee seiner Isonomia mit dem Attentat von 514 verband“ (69).

⁶³ *Atthis*, 160.

⁶⁴ *Greek Lyric Poetry*², 394.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 395.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 395.

equally possible, and more likely, that it was Themistocles who gave the term *ἰσονομία* the particular democratic slant which it was later to bear. His creation of the fleet, as Thucydides saw, had done much to make the theory of democracy a living reality. He now had both a story which overshadowed his Alcmeonid enemies and a ready-made song to popularize it, equipped with a term that could be turned into a democratic slogan. That the story and song were literally untrue made little difference: they made for good singing. And the slogan became so popular that it was used by even the pro-Alcmeonid Herodotus as *the* term to denote "democracy."

B. Callimachus

At 6. 109. 3, Herodotus has Miltiades say to Callimachus the Polemarch before Marathon, "It is now in your power, Callimachus, either to enslave Athens or to make her free and leave a memorial for all future generations of men greater even than that of Harmodius and Aristogeiton." Within a very few chapters, however, we are being told that it was not Harmodius and Aristogeiton who freed Athens from the tyrants, but the Alcmeonids; Harmodius and Aristogeiton merely "exacerbated the remaining Peisistratids by killing Hipparchus" (6. 123. 2).

Clearly the two contexts are out of line. The first occurs in a straight narrative of Marathon. Herodotus may have thought a reference to Harmodius and Aristogeiton particularly appropriate in an exhortation to their fellow-Aphidnaian, Callimachus; more likely it is a mere rhetorical commonplace.⁶⁷ The later mention of them occurs in a digression (Chaps. 121–124) in defence of the Alcmeonids, an attempt to refute the charge that they held up a shield to signal the Persians at Marathon. Herodotus had already mentioned the charge, in a much more dispassionate tone, within the narrative just a few chapters before (115).

The discrepancy is additional proof (if such were needed) that 6. 121 ff. (perhaps the remainder of the book) was written later—I should have said much later—and inserted into an already completed narrative. Herodotus had begun by thinking Harmodius and Aristogeiton national heroes; he later found out (from his Alcmeonid friends?) that their act of "liberation" had simply put Athens into a worse state from which she had to be rescued by the Alcmeonids.

C. Pericles

I. G. I². 77, line 3, [. . .] $\iota\kappa$ [λ] $\epsilon\varsigma$, makes it virtually certain that Pericles was mover of the decree.⁶⁸ Jacoby⁶⁹ dates the decree to "the second half of the

⁶⁷ F. Koepp, who notes the discrepancy (*N. Jbb.* 9 [1902] 624, n. 2), calls this „die volkstümliche Ansicht“.

⁶⁸ Wade-Gery, *BSA* 33 (1932–3) 123.

⁶⁹ *Atthis*, 237–238, n. 3.

forties" and finds a "certain irony" in the fact that the Alcmeonid Pericles should have been the one to propose or confirm honors for these rival claimants. But others have dated the decree later.⁷⁰ Can we not detect here a shrewd counter-stroke by Pericles in the propaganda battle which was to culminate in the Spartan demand that the Athenians "drive out the curse of the goddess"?⁷¹ Pericles might well have proposed the decree confirming the right of the oldest living descendant of these rivals of the Alcmeonids to public maintenance in the Prytaneion as a skillful attempt to rid himself of the odium which attached to the tainted name of "Alcmeonid."

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⁷⁰ Wade-Gery dated it to the early thirties (*BSA* 33, 126) and Hiller von Gaertringen to the Archidamian War (in *I. G. I*²).
⁷¹ Thucydides 1. 126. 1-2, 127.