

Kairos: a cultural history of time in the Greek *polis*

by

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Acknowledgements..... | ii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Chapter I: The goals of timekeeping..... | 5 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Astronomy and timekeeping | 7 |
| Timekeeping without astronomy: comparative examples | 11 |
| Agricultural time..... | 14 |
| Hesiod: Signs to the <i>kairos</i> | 17 |
| Meton and the intersection of astronomy and meteorology..... | 22 |
| Astronomers' time, layman's time: Egyptian and Greek calendars | 29 |
| Athenian timekeeping | 34 |
| Athenian calendars..... | 36 |
| Adjusting the calendars | 39 |
| “Routine” and “irregular” intercalations..... | 42 |
| Irregular intercalation at Athens | 44 |
| Internal views I: How Athenians talked about time | 50 |
| Internal views II: Time according to Aristophanes | 54 |
| Conclusions | 60 |
| Chapter II: <i>Helikai</i> : Ancient Greek age-classes | 62 |
| Introduction | 62 |
| Defining age classes..... | 65 |
| The problem of statelessness | 69 |
| Expanding the role of age-classes: Conscription by age | 74 |
| Age classes and military discipline: a comparative study..... | 79 |
| Citizen adulthood at a glance | 87 |
| Athens: Age and entry into citizenship..... | 88 |
| Epebes and the performance of status..... | 95 |
| Athenian and Spartan age grades..... | 101 |
| Spartan complications | 106 |
| Conclusions | 110 |
| Chapter III: History in the courtroom | 112 |
| Introduction | 112 |
| Lysias 7, On the Olive Stump | 115 |
| Public dates in private transactions?..... | 128 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Isaeus 6, On the Estate of Philotekmon | 133 |
| The Sicilian Expedition viewed from 50 years later | 137 |
| Social expectations and women's ages | 142 |
| When Athenian women married..... | 143 |
| Demosthenes, <i>On the Crown</i> | 150 |
| Demosthenes and <i>kairos</i> | 156 |
| The fall of Elateia and manipulation of memory..... | 158 |
| Conclusions | 167 |
| Chapter IV: Time and community from <i>deme</i> to <i>oikumene</i> | 169 |
| Introduction | 169 |
| From Hesiod to the practicalities of cult..... | 174 |
| Patchwork Attica | 177 |
| A case study: the deme of Marathon and the Marathonian Tetrapolis | 181 |
| Deme and Tetrapolis..... | 183 |
| Simultaneous festivals and Attic networks | 188 |
| In Marathon and everywhere: Panhellenism and simultaneity | 192 |
| In Athens and Ionia: the Apatouria..... | 197 |
| Colonies and mother cities' festivals | 204 |
| A case study in colonial foundations: Thourioi..... | 205 |
| A comic aside: Cloudcuckooland | 208 |
| Colonization and empire: Athens' Brea decree..... | 208 |
| Colonization and empire: Amphipolis | 215 |
| Conclusions | 220 |
| Conclusion..... | 223 |
| Works Cited..... | 226 |

Introduction

Human experience of time is shaped by cultural constructs. Not even seemingly-basic categories such as “day” and “year” are universally agreed upon; a day can begin at sunrise, sunset, or at some certain fixed hour, while different calendrical systems use different lengths of year, and such variations as academic years and fiscal years have their own rules within a larger system. This dissertation is intended to call attention to distinctive aspects of constructions of time in Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. The concept of *kairos*, I believe, is at the heart of Greek approaches to time. “*Kairos*” denotes a moment of opportunity, the right time to do the right thing, and states and individuals alike valued the flexibility to watch for and respond to a *kairos*.

Each chapter addresses a different aspect of the experience of time in Classical Greece. Chapter 1 introduces the idea of different kinds of time, their relations with each other, and the central concept of the *kairos*. Agriculture, religion, and civic business each had their own schedules. Social institutions and knowledge traditions guided individuals and communities through navigating these schedules. Ultimately, the practice of observing and interpreting signs that indicate a *kairos* was the foundation of Greek approaches to time.

In chapter 2, I turn from the year and the calendar to the human lifespan and social age. Athens and Sparta both used the ages of male citizens to determine their liability for military service and eligibility for various offices and honors, but neither

registered the births of infants. Athens, in particular, took no official notice of citizens' sons until they were enrolled as citizens — yet a minimum age was one qualification for citizenship. Rather than keeping track of citizens' biological ages, these states assigned citizens a social age when they were judged to have attained a certain standard of maturity; in the case of Athens, young men were deemed to be 18 years old (the age of attaining citizenship) when the citizen members of their communities judged them mature enough to take on the first obligations of citizenship, and the next few years were marked by occasions in which the new citizens confirmed their role by publicly performing their new status.

Chapter 3 moves from state tracking of citizens' ages to citizens' use of social memory. Using examples from Attic oratory, I show that multiple streams of memory co-existed in fourth-century Athens, and that litigants in the courts and orators in the assembly employed selective reference to different aspects of communal memory as a persuasive strategy. Official documents of civic business, more generalized civic memories in which wars and political upheavals figure as prominent symbols, and alternate interpretations — including oligarchic views of Athenian history — were all potentially available to speakers and audiences. References to past events were not neutral appeals to objective fact, but rather, a discourse in their own right and a means of encoding ideological appeals. Speakers and audiences jointly constructed shared versions of the past, and speakers sought to guide these versions toward vindication of their cases.

Where chapter 1 considered religious time as a social construct in itself, chapter 4 examines it as a tool for establishing and articulating relations among communities.

Athens again takes center stage. The many small communities of Attica each had their own versions of religious time, which included shared festivals in which they joined together into parts of a larger whole. When the Athenians found themselves in possession of an empire, they attempted to extend the network of shared ritual time to integrate the territories under their control.

Two major themes recur across these disparate spheres of life. One is the importance of the interpretation of signs. A farmer observing the weather or the behavior of animals when deciding when to plant his crops, a panel of elders examining adolescents for the signs of physical maturity, and the Athenian Council scheduling meetings of the assembly all looked for indications of a favorable *kairos* before respectively planting, enrolling the youth as a new citizen, and choosing a meeting day. The other is that approaches to time reflect social priorities. The egalitarian ethos of Athenian democracy divided up the year, for administrative purposes, into ten equal segments so that each of the tribes could hold the prytany for an equal length of time. Similarly, the Athenians treated all citizens of the same social age as equals, while the hierarchical organization of Spartan society treated royalty, ordinary Spartiates, and *periokioi* very differently. A related feature of Greek timekeeping is the sense that different situations call for different degrees of precision. Astronomers could keep very precise records of their observations; ordinary people saw no need to refer even to dates unless involved in a commercial or legal transaction in which each day mattered.

These recurring themes share an emphasis on flexibility. The concept of the *kairos* itself, with the accompanying understanding that *kairoi* could be identified in advance via signs accessible to human interpretation, reflects a worldview in which

success depended on the ability to act at the right moment. This worldview encouraged institutions that accommodated changing circumstances. And, in turn, the flexibility to adapt conveyed the flexibility to build other desired values into each community's shared sense of time and to treat different kinds of time differently. Much as Athenian maritime courts concerned themselves with the details of law and matters of fact to a much greater extent than the popular courts, the Athenian festival calendar was more flexible than the bouletic calendar and different situations were felt to call for different degrees of precision and specificity. Much like Athenian law, Athenian time combined a wide variety of procedures for tracking time, each with different standards and objectives.

Chapter I: The goals of timekeeping

Introduction

This chapter has three major goals. The first of these is to introduce and provide an overview of experiences of time in Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. In particular, this chapter will focus on the year and on Athens. For most ancient Greeks, agricultural time was a primary concern. Hesiod's *Works and Days* presents a vision of social order in terms of performing the right agricultural labor at the right time. The unpredictability of the weather, the growing seasons of crops, and the tasks necessary for the continued functioning of a rural household combined to encourage a sense of time centered on the *kairos* (more on which below) by making life a series of decisions, e.g. Is it time to sow wheat? Should I plant a crop of lentils or some other crop? Is last year's vintage ready yet? Layered on top of this was religious time, and on top of that, civic time. Religious festivals were virtually the only events that regularly occurred on the same date year after year, giving them a sense of eternal continuity, while civic events were scheduled in a way that allowed business to be conducted when it was needed and did not conflict with agricultural or religious necessities.

The second goal of this chapter is to problematize the relationship between what I will call "natural" and "constructed" time. Very briefly put, there is a long tradition of studying human timekeeping in terms of efforts to construct calendars that maintain

fidelity to the cycles of the sun and moon. This ideal of precise correspondence to astronomical cycles, however, is by no means the only way to design a calendar, as I will show using comparative examples from anthropological studies. Ultimately, I believe that Greek approaches to defining and dividing the year show a range of approaches, deliberately selected with different goals in mind. In particular, I will contrast Greek timekeeping traditions that do anchor themselves in specific astronomical or seasonal events with others that do not.

Specifically, the festival and bouletic calendars of Athens are self-contained systems without essential reference to natural time. Although intercalary months were used to keep festival calendars from diverging too far from the year of the seasons, the fact that entire months were intercalated, rather than smaller and more frequent adjustments, meant as a necessary consequence that the correspondence between a calendar date and a time of the solar year varied. On the other hand, farmers and astronomers both participated in a tradition at least as old as Hesiod that defined the year in terms of events in the heavens and sought to correlate them with changes in weather. Cicero professed to find the idea of adjusting a calendar to keep days and months aligned with astronomical events strikingly and distinctively Greek, but the Greek calendars that Romans encountered in the first century BCE were based on an understanding of the relationship between science and calendrical practice that had, over centuries, developed into something very different from the situation in Classical Greece.¹

The third goal of this chapter is to introduce the concept of *kairos* and the centrality of flexibility in Greek approaches to time. A *kairos* is a moment of

¹ Cic. *Verr.* 2.2.129; Feeney 2007:193-96.

opportunity, the right time to do some particular thing. The allegorical sculpture made by Lysippos and described in an ephrastic epigram of Posidippos² had attributes suggesting speed, sharpness, and elusiveness; its hair was long in front but shaved in back, because the *kairos* can be seized as it approaches but is lost once it is gone. Behind the idea of *kairos* is an understanding of the universe as only predictable up to a certain point and full of uncontrollable factors that can affect the likelihood that human action will succeed or fail. By extension, seeing time in terms of *kairos* makes human action a defining factor and encourages a multiplex view of time, as different circumstances favor or require different kinds of action. Time is thus a qualitative rather than a quantitative phenomenon.

Later chapters will deal with specific social uses of timekeeping. Chapter 2 will examine the male life-course, with a special focus on the means by which Classical poleis determined when citizens were eligible for particular forms of military and civic service. Chapter 3 will consider historical memory as it was constructed and used in Attic oratory. Finally, Chapter 4 will address the use of local and regional festival calendars to articulate communities within Attica and to integrate Attica into a single unit, and Athenian attempts in the fifth century to incorporate imperial possessions into this network of shared ritual time.

Astronomy and timekeeping

A number of natural cycles provide reference points for the measurement of time. The sun rises and sets, the moon waxes and wanes, the seasons come and go in a

² AB 142 = GP 19.

predictable order. The more precisely these different cycles are observed, the more difficult it becomes to construct systems of timekeeping that accommodate them all. The time from new moon to new moon is approximately 29.5 days, making it impractical for a calendar month to be precisely as long as a lunar month. A solar year is roughly 365.25 days — not only is this not a round number, it is not an even multiple of lunar cycles. Thus, keeping calendar dates at the same point in both solar and lunar cycles would thus require either regularly observing the sun and moon to see whether they were in the proper places for a given festival, or calculating correcting factors to compensate for the accumulation of fractional differences between the astronomical state of things and the count of days in a calendar.

The latter approach is most familiar in the 21st century. The Gregorian calendar, which is based upon the Julian calendar designed by Julius Caesar with the aid of an Alexandrian astronomer and made the official calendar of Rome in 45 BCE, preserves correspondence between the calendar year and the solar year through regularly-scheduled leap days. It deals with the lunar cycle quite simply: by ignoring it and arbitrarily assigning different lengths to different months. Caesar's scientific advisor, one Sosigenes,³ likely took as his starting point the calendar long used in Egypt and adopted by Greek astronomers, which divided the year into twelve 30-day months plus five days that did not belong to any month.

Another, equally viable approach, attempts to preserve the lunar month. Babylonian astronomers determined that 19 solar years are almost exactly equal to 235 lunar months, and constructed a system in which the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, and

³ Plin. *HN* 18.25.

19th years of this 19-year cycle had an intercalary month added, making them 13 lunar months long, while the other years contained 12. This cycle of intercalations is widely known as the “Metonic cycle”, after the fifth-century astronomer Meton, and one of the older arguments in the history of the study of Greek calendars is when and whether this cycle was adopted by particular cities. My arguments against the theory that Athens instituted lasting calendar reforms within the Classical period will come later in this chapter. It is notable, however, that a calendar based upon the Metonic cycle with further adjustments is in wide use today. This is the Hebrew calendar, which adds intercalary months using the Metonic cycle and uses a carefully-calculated ratio of 29-day to 30-day months to keep the calendar year aligned with the solar year with a high degree of precision. The end result is that intercalary years are 29 or 30 days longer than other years, but the overall average year length is 365.2468 days, as compared to 365.2425 for the Gregorian calendar.⁴

Calendars can thus be based on calculations from either the length of the year or the month, but another approach uses observation of the sun and/or moon. The sun’s apparent travel from north to south through the course of the year provides a means of tracking progress through the solar year. For example, the sun will always rise at the same point on the horizon, as viewed from the same vantage point, every summer solstice. A properly-placed pair of pillars can simplify this observation; when the sun is seen to rise between the pillars, then it must be the summer solstice (or whatever other date in the solar year the observatory was designed for). This “horizon observation”

⁴ Reingold and Dershowitz 2001:98, 49; see Reingold and Dershowitz 2001:95-114 for a full description of the Hebrew calendar.

method can be used in a wide variety of contexts. Several shrines around the capital of the Inca empire included such monuments, one of which was used to mark the beginning of the planting season;⁵ a medieval monastery instructed its sacristan to “tell time by watching the sun and stars as they appeared at various windows”;⁶ and Stonehenge has been interpreted as facilitating a number of such observations. For such astronomical monuments to be useful, however, the weather must allow clear observation of the sunrise on the same calendar date year after year. There is also a limit to the precision this method allows: the margin of error in horizon observations is normally equivalent to several days’ variation in the position of the sun.⁷ This approach, thus, works better as a way of scheduling events than as a basis for scheduling leap days or the equivalent.

Astronomical precision, however, is not the primary goal of all systems of timekeeping. In the next section, I will examine two particularly interesting examples, from the anthropological literature, of approaches to timekeeping centered on human action rather than astronomical cycles. This in turn prepares the ground for my reading of Hesiod as illustrating a tradition of Greek timekeeping, distinct from formal festival and civic calendars. The tradition of Hesiod is based upon interpreting astronomical, weather, and other natural phenomena as guides to action. Greek calendars, although connected (with varying degrees of closeness) to the lunar month and solar year, served more to order and prioritize actions than to prescribe when specific actions should be taken. Although festival calendars appear to prescribe specific actions on specific days, they contain more complexity than appears on the surface. In particular, as I shall show,

⁵ Dearborn and Schreiber 1989, esp. pp. 60-64.

⁶ McCluskey 1998:112.

⁷ McCluskey 1998:95, 95n71.

the Athenian festival calendar tracked the solar year relatively loosely and was designed to be adjusted at the discretion of the archon.

Timekeeping without astronomy: comparative examples

The Nuer of southern Sudan and western Ethiopia, as described by Evans-Pritchard,⁸ and the Mursi of southwestern Ethiopia, as described by Turton and Ruggles,⁹ practice what could be called one extreme of timekeeping. Although members of these peoples agree with each other on the names of the months, they do not all observe the same month at the same time. Rather than a count of days or observation of the moon, the transition from one month to the next is marked by a change of activities. For example, the Nuer spend part of the year as pastoral nomads and part living in villages and farming, and the month Dwat is the month in a community returns to its village. If one community has moved into a village while another is still living in camps following their cattle, then it is Dwat for the former group but still the previous month, Gwaan, for the latter.

The same principle obtains among the Mursi at an even finer grain; while Nuer within the same community generally agree about what month it is (while their neighbors may be observing a different month),¹⁰ Mursi within a community can and do disagree about what month it is. Turton and Ruggles found this so striking that titled article on Mursi timekeeping “Agreeing to Disagree”. Among both peoples, however, the order of

⁸ Evans-Pritchard 1939, Evans-Pritchard 1940: 94-108.

⁹ Turton and Ruggles 1978.

¹⁰ Evans-Pritchard 1939:201-02.

months is set. What is left to each individual or group to decide is when one month has ended and the next begun.

Seasonal weather events, most conspicuously the alternation of dry and rainy seasons, play a large role in regulating the passage of time for the Nuer and Mursi, as the activities that define a given month are often related to weather conditions, as for example the Nuer grow crops during the wet season and herd cattle during the dry season. The Mursi do, however, make astronomical observations, including horizon observations of the sun of the sort that, as I have noted, played a significant role in the timekeeping of other cultures:

Particularly interesting, however, are two types of astronomical correlating agents used by the Mursi: the rising position of the sun on the eastern horizon and the positions of certain stars at particular times of the night. These observations are interesting because they are directly linked to the time of the solar year, so that any one observation *could* be used to determine unequivocally the time of the solar year, thus eliminating all disagreement at a stroke. Because the Mursi rely on time reckoning by lunations, however, they do not see the movement of the sun or a particular star as any more reliable than the onset of the big rains. (Turton and Ruggles 1978:589)

The lack of interest in finding a way to synchronize everyone's calendars, and the idea of putting the sun and stars at the same level of importance as weather events, are both foreign to modern Western ideas of timekeeping. As I shall show, however, there are significant similarities between the Nuer and Mursi approaches to timekeeping and

those of Hesiod and later Greeks. The variations in Greek calendars were more closely parallel to the Nuer situation than that of the Mursi, insofar as communities regulated timekeeping. The tendency to consider astronomical phenomena as on par with other kinds of observable events, rather than as the primary tools for “true” timekeeping, can be found also in Hesiod; like the Mursi, the *Works and Days* treats astronomical events as no more or less important than weather signs, animal behavior, or other kinds of observable phenomena.

While the residents of each city agreed on what day and month it was at any given moment, the same could not be said across different cities. Poleis used different month names and observed different festivals within their months.¹¹ And although all Greek months notionally ran from new moon to new moon, different poleis numbered the same day differently. For example, Thucydides gives the dates in the Athenian and the Spartan calendars on which two treaties between the two cities took effect; the date of the first was the 14th of the month at Athens but the 12th in Sparta¹² and the second was the 27th at Athens but the 25th at Sparta.¹³ Thus, the two cities must have had different rules for determining when a month should begin, and whether this was done by observation or by calculation is open to debate.¹⁴ Meanwhile, within a particular city, some groups

¹¹ And, as I show in chapter 4, the naming of months and scheduling of festivals could be and were used strategically to articulate group identity and relations among different communities.

¹² Thuc. 4.118.12-4.11.1.

¹³ Thuc. 5.18.11.

¹⁴ Samuel 1972:14-15.

celebrated festivals on days that had no special significance for members of other groups.¹⁵

The Nuer and Mursi provide examples of timekeeping based, ultimately, on the variations in weather over the course of the year, as reflected in typical activities undertaken in different seasonal conditions. It is also possible to construct a calendar on mathematical principles, although most such calendars which have been used still tend to be based on the solar year, merely dividing it in a way that does not attempt to correspond with the lunar month. The French Revolutionary calendar, with its uniform 30-day months and replacement of weeks with *décades*, constituted a limited attempt to reform the Gregorian calendar along more mathematically rational lines.¹⁶ More dramatic is the Baha'i calendar. 19 is a sacred number in the Baha'i faith, hence a calendar which divides the year into nineteen named 19-day segments (plus 4-5 intercalary days to make a 365-day year or 366-day leap year), and names years according to a 19-year cycle.¹⁷ The best-attested Greek example of a calendar with a year length (roughly) correlated with the solar year, divided in a way that is not based on lunar cycles, is the Athenian bouletic calendar, which was divided into ten periods corresponding to the ten Athenian tribes and used to facilitate the rotation of administrative duties among the tribes.

Agricultural time

Agricultural time combined broad predictability with specific unpredictability.

The pattern of the seasons can be counted on to repeat itself consistently, but while spring

¹⁵ Again, see ch. 4 below.

¹⁶ Reingold and Dershowitz 2001:233-35.

¹⁷ Reingold and Dershowitz 2001:223-25.

reliably follows winter, the conditions for particular agricultural labors do not repeat themselves at precisely the same time each year. Planting requires that the fields be neither too dry nor too wet, which means that late or early rains lead to anxiety and difficult decisions. Different crops have different growing seasons and require different preparations for planting and tending before the harvest. As a result of the unpredictability of weather and the diversity of crops and agricultural labors, peasant life can be viewed as an ongoing string of *kairoi*. Ancient farmers needed to watch for signs and be ready to carry out or make new plans based on what they saw, often at the risk of hunger or outright starvation.

Students of Roman agriculture have the advantage of detailed handbooks, written by Cato the Elder, Varro, and Columella, which purport to teach the owner of an estate how to manage their lands, crops, livestock, and personnel. The treatises by Varro and Columella, in particular, attempt a systematic presentation of the tasks and knowledge necessary to run a farm.¹⁸ These preserve a wealth of information about what Roman farmers did when. There is no equivalently complete source for the timetables of Greek agriculture, however. The closest Greek primary source to such a thing is Hesiod's *Works and Days*, which, as a guide to farm labors, cannot be considered complete. Other sources, however, can fill in certain details; and, more importantly yet, the *Works and Days* can be read as an expression of a mentality that stressed the interpretation of signs as a means of identifying *kairoi* for the tasks that needed to be done to maintain a rural household.

¹⁸ White 1970: 14-46, Spurr 1986:x-xiii.

Osborne has used Eleusinian accounts to infer which times of year saw the least need for agricultural labor, on the assumption that building projects employed laborers when they were not needed in the fields.¹⁹ He identifies a construction season in late summer, which joins the military campaigning season in late spring as the second major lull in the agricultural year. But these lulls were only relative. While olives, wheat, barley, and grapes are the agricultural products that first come to mind as Greek crops (and Hesiod addresses only grain and grapes), they were only part of the repertoire of ancient peasant farmers, and ancient farming techniques relied on intensive labor to increase the productivity of the land. Crop diversification was and is a valuable strategy by which subsistence farmers managed the risk of crop failure.²⁰ If, for example, a lack of timely rainfall threatened a crop of winter wheat (a very real danger in some parts of Greece today, and likely also in the Classical period),²¹ a late crop could be planted in the hope that the drought would end in time for this second crop to succeed, or more spring crops sown.²² Thus, even the amount of particular kinds of work changed in response to circumstances, and a time of relative rest in one year could become a time of frantic activity in another.

Between the different growing seasons of different crops, travel time between scattered plots of land,²³ and the labor involved in manuring the soil, plowing, and irrigating and weeding the crops,²⁴ there was almost always work to do. When the fields

¹⁹ Osborne 1987:13-16.

²⁰ Gallant 1991:36-38.

²¹ Osborne 1987: 31-34.

²² Gallant 1991: 37.

²³ Osborne 1987:37-38.

²⁴ Osborne 1987:40-44.

did not need attention, that meant an opportunity to repair or make tools or to build granaries or make winter clothes.²⁵ Deciding which tasks to prioritize over others was a significant part of rural life, and as Hesiod shows, these decisions could be eased by learning how to interpret natural events as indications of which tasks had the greatest chance of success at a particular moment.

Hesiod: Signs to the *kairos*

The *Works and Days* does not mention, for example, crops other than grain, grapes, and olives,²⁶ although we know from Theophrastus and other sources that Greek farmers also grew beans, lentils, chickpeas, millet, sesame, and still other crops and that planting a wide variety of crops was considered wise and prudent.²⁷ Furthermore, the Greek world was large, and Greece itself full of microclimates.²⁸ So, while the *Works and Days* enjoyed Panhellenic circulation, farmers in Ionia, Southern Italy, the Black Sea region, Arcadia, and Attica would all have worked on different timetables and, in many cases, planted different crops, as each followed the dictates of local conditions.

While Hesiod will not give us a complete picture of a Boetian farmer's year, he does show us a mindset. I wish here to call attention to this mindset, not the details of when to pick grapes and when to sail, because what Hesiod teaches, as paraphrased in the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, is that looking to the *kairos* is the essence of wisdom.²⁹ The *Works and Days* taught its audiences to read specific signs as signals to do or avoid

²⁵ Hes. *Op.* 414ff., 502-503, 536-46.

²⁶ Edwards 2004: 156.

²⁷ Gallant 1991:36-38.

²⁸ Osborne 1987: 33-34.

²⁹ “τῆς σοφίης δὲ τί τέκμαρ ἐπ’ ἀνθρώποισι πέφυκεν; γινώσκειν τὰ παρόντ’ ὀρθῶς, καιρῶ δ’ ἅμ’ ἔπεσθαι.” (section 11)

doing specific things. It thus provides a clear presentation of a principle which continued to define Greek views of time through the Classical era, namely the principle of *kairos*.

Hesiod gives several different kinds of reference points as indications of the proper *kairos* for different activities. The plant and animal worlds are sources of signs, e.g.:

τὸν δὲ μετ' ὀρθογῶν Πανδιονίς ὤρτο χελιδῶν
ἔς φάος ἀνθρώποις ἔαρος νέον ἰσταμένοιο·

After him [the star Arcturus] the early-wailing swallow, daughter of Pandion, appears to men when spring is just beginning. (Hes. *Op.* 568-569)

ἄλλος δ' εἰαρινὸς πέλεται πλόος ἀνθρώποισιν:

ἦμος δὴ τὸ πρῶτον, ὅσον τ' ἐπιβάσα κορώνη
ἴχνος ἐποίησεν, τόσσον πέταλ' ἀνδρὶ φανείη
ἐν κράδῃ ἀκροτάτῃ, τότε δ' ἄμβατός ἐστι θάλασσα:
εἰαρινὸς δ' οὗτος πέλεται πλόος.

But there is also a spring season for men to sail: when the leaves a man sees at the top of a fig tree are the size of a crow's foot, then the sea is passable: that is the spring sailing season. (Hes. *Op.* 678-682)

Migratory birds, including swallows, respond to changes in the length of the day, and thus tend to leave and return to an area at the same points in the solar year, year after year. The growth of plants is likewise closely connected to the length of daylight, although affected by other factors, such as rainfall. In this sense, plant and animal signs do correlate to specific points in the solar or seasonal year. Since the seasons are

essentially arbitrary divisions of the year, the return of the swallows (which takes more than a single day) is as reasonable a way as any of defining the beginning of spring.

The sailing season was defined by weather, and as such, variable both from year to year and from place to place. The storms that made sailing dangerous were concentrated in the winter, broadly speaking, though the month of heaviest rainfall is December in southern Greece but October in northwest Greece.³⁰ Fig trees begin growing leaves several months after this, and this particular sign may thus contain a deliberate safety margin.

Returning from modern to archaic Greek views of the world, observation of animals and plants for purposes of deciding when to sail or when to begin springtime work is very much of a piece with watching animal behavior for omens. We understand bird migrations as predictable in a way that the behaviors used for bird-divination in the ancient world were not, but in either case, birds were thought to convey information not otherwise accessible to human knowledge. Such signs always needed, however, to be interpreted. Hesiod shares the knowledge necessary to correctly interpret these natural signs as cues for action.

ένδεκάτη δὲ δυωδεκάτη τ', ἄμφω γε μὲν ἐσθλαί,
ἤμὲν ὄϊς πείκειν ἠδ' εὐφρονα καρπὸν ἀμάσθαι:
ἠ δὲ δυωδεκάτη τῆς ένδεκάτης μέγ' ἀμείνων:
τῆ γάρ τοι νῆ νήματ' ἀερσιπότητος ἀράχνης
ἤματος ἐκ πλείου, ὅτε ἴδρις σωρὸν ἀμάται:
τῆ δ' ἰστὸν στήσαιτο γυνὴ προβάλοιτό τε ἔργον.

³⁰ Osborne 1987: 31.

The eleventh and the twelfth [of any month] are both good for shearing sheep and harvesting kindly grain, but the twelfth is much better than the eleventh. That is the day when the web of the high-swinging spider is spun in the fullness of the day, while the provident one [i.e., the ant] gathers its pile. On that day a woman should put up her loom and set up her work. (Hes. Op. 776-779)

This example involves a complex tangle of signs. In the sense that a month is the period from new moon to new moon, it is astronomical, specifying a lunar phase in between first quarter and full moon. The information that spiders spin webs and ants gather food around noon on this day of each month casts this as an animal-sign. Ants gathering food is a sign of a propitious time for harvesting grain, and spiders weaving their webs likewise indicate that the present moment is suited for humans to weave cloth – but spiders and ants do these things on other days of the month as well. Hesiod's instruction is not to watch ants and harvest grain when they gather their own food, or to watch spiders and shear sheep when the spiders weave their webs, but to harvest and shear on specific days of the month. This suggests that the animals themselves recognized the numerological significance of each day. Both animal signs and the count of days, then, can show which dates are favorable and unfavorable for which things, but the count of days takes precedence.

Furthermore, monthly signs like this one will have had to be weighed against annual and other kinds of signs. No matter how propitious the 12th may be for the harvest, it seems unlikely that many farmers would have cut unripe grain or let ripe grain stand for weeks for the sake of following this advice of Hesiod's. Here is a problem that

Hesiod does not explicitly address: the prioritization of signs. When different signs simultaneously suggest different actions, which takes precedence? This problem existed at the civic scale as well as the individual, and because the growth of crops takes as long as it takes and cannot be hurried, most often took the form of conflicts between agriculture and other kinds of action. Foxhall has observed, for example, that Athenians did not schedule festivals associated with agricultural labor for times when those labors needed to be performed.³¹ Instead, religious celebrations took place when people could be spared from the fields long enough to celebrate them. Military activity also had to be scheduled around agriculture; destroying crops was a favored tactic in Greek warfare, but a polis at war had to decide when to allot manpower to harvesting its own crops and when to attack the enemy's.³²

Still other signs are astronomical:

εὐτ' ἂν δ' Ὠαρίων καὶ Σείριος ἐς μέσον ἔλθῃ
οὐρανόν, Ἀρκτοῦρον δ' εἰσίδη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως,
ὦ Πέρση, τότε πάντας ἀποδρέπεν οἴκαδε βότρους:
δειξαι δ' ἠελίῳ δέκα τ' ἡμέρα καὶ δέκα νύκτας,
πέντε δὲ συσκιάσαι, ἕκτω δ' εἰς ἄγγε' ἀφύσσαι
δῶρα Διωνύσου πολυγηθέος....

When Orion and Sirius are at mid-heaven, and rosy-fingered Dawn sees
Arcturus, then, Perses, then pick all the grape-clusters and bring them
home. Show them to the sun for ten days and nights, then cover them for

³¹ Foxhall 1995.

³² Hanson 1998:36.

five, then on the sixth day draw the gift of joyous Dionysos into vessels.

(Hes. *Op.* 609-614)

Although we can divide Hesiod's signs into different categories, some of which recur at more consistent intervals than others, Hesiod does not distinguish between, e.g., astronomical events and bird migrations. There are many channels of communication between humans and gods, by which humans can identify the proper *kairoi* for particular actions. Over time, however, an extensive tradition developed that separated out astronomical signs from others and sought to increase their predictive value. In particular, many ancient astronomers wanted to use events in the heavens to predict the weather on specific days.³³

Meton and the intersection of astronomy and meteorology

The most famous exemplar of fifth-century Greek astronomy is Meton of Athens. He is said to have observed the summer solstice of 432 BCE, to have calculated a nineteen-year cycle of intercalations that would keep a calendar based upon lunar months in synchronization with the solar cycle,³⁴ and to have put up some kind of instrument for astronomical observations in a public space, either on the Pnyx or in the deme Kolonos.³⁵ The extent to which he influenced Athenian timekeeping, however, has been a subject of debate. I am convinced that any Athenian calendar reform inspired by the work of Meton or any of his colleagues was short-lived, if it ever happened, and that Meton worked

³³ Lehoux 2007:3-12.

³⁴ Diod. Sic. 12.36; discussion in Lehoux 2007:88-90.

³⁵ Σ ad Ar. Av. 997=FGrHist 328F122.

within an intellectual tradition whose practical applications were in the realm of weather prediction rather than that of calendar reform.

The strongest ancient claim for Meton as calendar reformer comes from Diodoros Siculus, who in the 1st century BCE concluded his brief presentation of Meton's career with this praise:

δοκεῖ δὲ ὁ ἀνὴρ οὗτος ἐν τῇ προορήσει καὶ προγραφῇ ταύτῃ
θαυμαστῶς ἐπιτετευχέναι· τὰ γὰρ ἄστροα τήν τε κίνησιν καὶ τὰς
ἐπισημασίας ποιεῖται συμφώνως τῇ γραφῇ· διὸ μέχρι τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς
χρόνων οἱ πλείστοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων χρώμενοι τῇ ἐννεακαιδεκαετηρίδι
οὐ διαψεύδονται τῆς ἀληθείας.

And it seems that this man succeeded marvelously in this prediction, for the stars make their movements and changes in the weather in agreement with his writing. Down to our own time, most Greeks use his nineteen-year cycle and are not deceived. (Diod. Sic. 12.36.3)

There is good reason to believe that the Hellenistic era saw significantly greater interest in calendrical precision than the Classical,³⁶ and although the evidence does not allow definitive proof, there is also little reason to believe that Meton's contemporaries adopted his 19-year cycle.³⁷ There was ample time between Meton and Diodoros for the gradual acceptance of the Metonic cycle, not to mention the belief that interactions between the cycles of the sun and moon contained a truth that human calendars should reflect. The strongest argument in favor of Meton's work leading to contemporary

³⁶ See below, in the next major section.

³⁷ Pritchett 2001:99n6 gives an overview of scholarship on the subject.

calendar reform is Dunn’s suggestion that the bouletic calendar was, for a period of roughly 30 years in the late 5th century, based on a 366-day solar year rather than the essentially lunar festival year. I will address this argument more fully in my discussion of the bouletic calendar, below; but the issue of the nature of Meton’s influence requires some engagement with Dunn’s ideas.

Meton appears in Aristophanes’ *Birds* as one of a series of freelance specialists who come to offer their services to the newly-founded colony of Cloudcuckooland.³⁸ He offers to survey the skies and make land allotments for the colonists. The implication of his appearance in the play is that he was a public figure of some kind circa 414, when the play was first produced, and his lines would seem to indicate that his contemporary reputation had something to do with the skies and the deme of Kolonos. Unfortunately, even this vague information is uncertain. Although we know Meton as an astronomer, the offer to “geometrize the sky” could as easily have been made by Aristophanes’ version of Socrates; interest in *ta meteora* was part of Aristophanes’ satire of prominent intellectuals, and there is not enough here that is distinctive enough to pin down how Meton differed from this generic portrait.

The scholia which tell us about his astronomical accomplishments all pertain to the line, “Who am I? Meton, famous in Greece and Kolonos.”³⁹ Troublingly, Philochoros’ explanation – the oldest and most extensive of the scholia to this line – says that Meton did nothing of consequence in the deme of Kolonos, but rather he put up a *heliotropion* in the Pnyx in the year that Diodorus Siculus later identified as the year in

³⁸ In chapter 4, I discuss this passage as a source of information about colonial foundations.

³⁹ “Ὅστις εἴμ’ ἐγώ; Μέτων, ὃν οἶδεν Ἑλλάς χά Κολωνός (Ar. Av. 997)

which Meton observed the solstice.⁴⁰ Dunn 1998b:44ff argues that this was an instrument for observing solstices and equinoxes, and that its placement in the Pnyx constituted an institutionalization of Meton's scientific knowledge.⁴¹

As Dunn reconstructs it, this instrument resembled a sundial, with a gnomon casting a shadow on a sort of bowl rather than onto a sundial's flat disc. Over the course of a day, the gnomon's shadow moved across the bowl in an arc mirroring the sun's apparent motion across the sky. Each day of the solar year would have had a characteristic arc, and engraved lines in the "heliotrope" would indicate the solstices and equinoxes, so anyone could tell that, e.g., the summer solstice had arrived because on that day and only on that day, the gnomon's shadow would follow the engraved arc for that solstice. This much is more convincing than the alternative interpretation that the ἡλιοτροπίον was a sundial, despite its etymology, which strongly supports the hypothesis that it had something to do with solstices (ἡλίου τροπαί, "turns of sun"). The question, though, is the purpose behind the instrument.

For Dunn, the *heliotropion* in the Pnyx is evidence that the Boule wanted a calendar that did not vary from year to year and sought Meton's scientific expertise in constructing a solar calendar that met this criterion:⁴²

It may be that the council, unlike the archon, was interested in scientific developments and wanted the city's administrative calendar to be up-to-date and scientifically correct; but more important are the practical uses of

⁴⁰ FGrHist 328F122.

⁴¹ Dunn 1998b:44-45.

⁴² Dunn 1999: gives the full version of Dunn's argument that the bouletic calendar, from c. 432 to roughly the end of the fifth century, was purely solar, in contrast to the lunisolar festival calendar. Dunn 2007: 22-27 presents a slightly different version.

a consistent calendar. In 432, as Athens prepared for war and as the boule prepared for exceptional levies and expenditures, the advantages of a solar calendar would have been especially evident. (Dunn 1998b:45)

He goes on to suggest that the purpose of the *heliotropion* in the Pnyx was essentially persuasive: it made the solar year as directly observable as the phases of the moon and thereby helped the Athenians to accept the Boule's new solar calendar as no less valid than the traditional lunar calendar.

I think it more likely, however, that the *heliotropion* was intended to assist tracking agricultural, rather than civic, time. Hesiod's correlations between the risings and settings of certain stars and changes of season set the foundation for a longstanding and extensive astrometeorological tradition.⁴³ Over time, this tradition developed extensive lists of astronomical events and weather conditions which were said to accompany them. Such lists have survived in both written and inscribed forms. These inscriptions took the form of *parapegmata*, which provided a means for identifying at a glance what kind of astronomical events were taking place and what kind of weather to expect, in the form of a peg that was moved through a series of holes in the stone.

There is a fragment of a fifth-century Athenian inscription that contains a list of numbers each with a hole for a peg next to it,⁴⁴ but what it tracked is unknowable. The oldest known *parapegma* that contained information correlating astronomy and weather prediction comes from 1st-BCE Miletus; a third-century papyrus, however, correlates

⁴³ Lehoux 2007.

⁴⁴ *IG II²* 2782, discussion at Lehoux 2007:22-23.

astronomy, weather, and the Egyptian calendar.⁴⁵ While the surviving *parapegmata*, both on papyrus and in stone, thus date from the Hellenistic period and continue (and become more elaborate) through the Roman era, the tradition also cites Meton and his contemporary and fellow Athenian, Euktemon.⁴⁶

Dunn is aware of Meton's place in the development of astrometeorology, and offers the possibility that he offered "farmers a precise and useful almanac... without affecting the city's calendar",⁴⁷ only to dismiss it on the grounds that the *heliotropion's* place in the Pnyx proves that it had a civic purpose. It is certainly reasonable to expect that a monument in the Pnyx would have been somehow connected to the assembly, but this is not sufficient to prove that it was part of a public-relations campaign to convince the citizen populace that Meton's astronomy showed the proper way to regulate the bouletic calendar. Placing a scientific implement that indicated the time of year in the Pnyx may instead have been related to the timing of meetings of the Assembly, whose length was limited by the available daylight, and thus changed with the seasons. Such placement shows awareness that natural as well as socially-constructed cycles coexisted; it does not necessarily prove an attempt to bring the artificial cycles of Athenian calendars into harmony with natural cycles.

Dunn proposes that "[i]n a city whose calendars had always been lunar, it would be necessary to establish the authority and reliability of a solar scheme", and suggests that Meton's astrometeorological work was intended as part of such a public-education campaign, replacing the Hesiodic tradition with a more precise almanac based upon the

⁴⁵ P. Hibeh 27.

⁴⁶ Lehoux 2007:20.

⁴⁷ Dunn 1998b:39, 43-44.

solar year.⁴⁸ This argument combines two major flaws. First, who persuaded whom? The implicit model here of a government educating its citizenry about the merits of a particular policy makes a poor fit for the Athenian democracy. The citizens who saw the value of following the solar year in their lives as farmers, sailors, or merchants (who were also directly affected by the seasons), while at the same time regulating other matters – including legal matters and, as Aristophanes dramatized in the *Clouds*, loans – by the lunar month would presumably have been the same citizens who voted in favor of changing the bouletic calendar and endorsing Meton’s heliotropion.

Second, Dunn suggests that *parapegmata* influenced the civic calendar, but the evidence indicates rather that they occupied separate spheres. The few surviving Greek *parapegmata* do not cross-reference astronomical events with civic calendars; the one exception to this, P. Hibeh 27,⁴⁹ uses the Egyptian calendar, which Greek astronomers adopted as a universal standard for reasons I discuss more fully below. Rather than providing an example of ways to improve a civic calendar, *parapegmata* appear rather to have supplemented calendars. In Lehoux’s words:

It is true that many *parapegmata* are concerned with astronomical phenomena – the stellar phases – which are closely tied to the annual motion of the sun. And it is exactly this annual motion of the sun which Greek civil calendars were unable to keep good track of. So it is no accident that we find pegged astronomical and astrometeorological *parapegmata* almost exclusively in Greece. On the other hand, the late

⁴⁸ Dunn 1998b:376-77.

⁴⁹ Which dates to the early 3rd century (Lehoux 2007: 153); Lehoux’s edition and translation are pp. 217-223.

Republican and early Imperial Romans, whose calendar kept much better track of the solar year (but was useless for lunar cycles), largely used their pegged parapegmata to keep track of lunar and other cycles. In this light, parapegmata can be seen as *extra-calendrical* devices used for keeping track of non-calendrical cycles. (Lehoux 2007: 86)

While Meton is remembered for contributions to two areas of astronomy, the one that is emphasized today is likely not the one for which his contemporaries knew him. Athenians of Meton's generation and the next several generations after him knew the "Metonic cycle" (which had already been known to Babylonian astronomers for some time, and was implemented in the Persian Empire by Xerxes)⁵⁰, if at all, as a scientific abstraction rather than as a feature of the city's calendars or even a solution to a problem that needed one. The other Meton, who used the stars to predict the weather, had information to offer that was of far greater practical value to the average Athenian.

Astronomers' time, layman's time: Egyptian and Greek calendars

Claudius Ptolemy's *Almagest*, perhaps the most famous and influential astronomical handbook of antiquity, advises astronomers to use the Egyptian calendar to record their observations and also defines starting points from which to number years. This standard allowed astronomers to share their findings with colleagues everywhere. Thus, for example, astronomers in Athens could share results with their peers in Rome, or astronomers could consult records of observations made centuries before, without having to translate dates from one place into those used at another, research intercalations, or

⁵⁰ Britton 2007:122.

otherwise deal with the differences between timekeeping of different places or eras. The Egyptian calendar was adopted by astronomers as a tool for making scientific data universally accessible.

The *Almagest* was written c. the mid-2nd century CE, and it defines two epochs: the “Era of Philip”, which began in the year in which Alexander died, and the “Era of Nabonassar”, which began in 747 BCE and is described as the epoch used by Babylonian astronomers (Ptolemy *Almagest* 3.7). Ptolemy lived in a very different world from that of 5th- and 4th- century Greeks, and it is impossible to say when Greek astronomers adopted the approach to timekeeping which he advised. The Egyptian calendar, however, has a very long history indeed before its adoption as a universal scientific standard. Paradoxically, one of the features which made it desirable for astronomers wishing to record precise dates also illustrates ongoing lack of interest in using astronomical knowledge to calibrate civic calendars.

The intellectual prestige of Alexandria likely influenced the selection of the Egyptian calendar as the astronomer’s standard, but there are also strong practical reasons for the choice. The Egyptian year consisted of twelve 30-day months, plus five more days which were not considered to be a part of any month, totaling 365 days per year. There were no intercalations. Thus, each year was exactly the same as each other, each month was the same length as each other, and the whole was orderly and predictable.

The very orderliness of the Egyptian calendar, combined with the long span over which it was used, could have pointed the way to making it exactly match the solar year. Every year, scribes recorded the date on which the star Sirius first became visible. These records showed a consistent pattern, which the author of the Canopus Decree of 238 BCE

explicitly notes: every four years, the rising of Sirius was displaced by one calendar day.

⁵¹ Thus, regular observation of Sirius gave the Egyptians clear evidence that a 365-day year did not exactly match astronomical cycles, and that if they switched to a $365\frac{1}{4}$ -day year, Sirius would rise on the same day each year. Eventually, Egypt did adopt a calendar that included a leap day every four years, but this was a consequence of Roman rule rather than a locally-inspired reform.⁵² Millennia of Egyptian priestly observations of the rising of Sirius were not judged sufficient reason to alter the 365-day calendar.

The question “Why did the Greeks not use the astronomical knowledge available to them to reform their civil calendars?” has become customary. Centuries of Egyptian practice show that the Greeks were not aberrant in separating astronomical knowledge from calendar reform, and indeed, nothing requires applying such knowledge to such practice. If we ask instead “What practical advantage would the Greeks have seen in adopting calendars informed by their astronomical knowledge?”, the problem appears very different.

On human time scales, the accumulated discrepancy between any particular ancient calendar and our scientifically-informed Gregorian calendar grows quite gradually. Over the course of a century, the 365-day Egyptian calendar lost not quite a month relative to a $365\frac{1}{4}$ -day calendar. In the contest of Solon’s attempt to persuade Croesus of the uncertainty of human life, Herodotus describes a Greek schedule for intercalations:

⁵¹ Depuydt 2007:38-39.

⁵² Depuydt 2007:44.

ἐν γὰρ τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ πολλὰ μὲν ἐστὶ ἰδεῖν τὰ μὴ τις ἐθέλει, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ παθεῖν. ἐς γὰρ ἑβδομήκοντα ἔτεα οὖρον τῆς ζόης ἀνθρώπῳ προτίθημι. οὗτοι ἐόντες ἐνιαυτοὶ ἑβδομήκοντα παρέχονται ἡμέρας διηκοσίας καὶ πεντακισχιλίας καὶ δισμυρίας, ἐμβολίμου μηνὸς μὴ γινομένου: εἰ δὲ δὴ ἐθελήσει τοὔτερον τῶν ἐτέων μηνὶ μακρότερον γίνεσθαι, ἵνα δὴ αἱ ὥραι συμβαίνωσι παραγινόμεναι ἐς τὸ δέον, μήνες μὲν παρὰ τὰ ἑβδομήκοντα ἔτεα οἱ ἐμβόλιμοι γίνονται τριήκοντα πέντε, ἡμέραι δὲ ἐκ τῶν μηνῶν τούτων χίλια πεντήκοντα. τουτέων τῶν ἀπασέων ἡμερέων τῶν ἐς τὰ ἑβδομήκοντα ἔτεα, ἐουσέων πεντήκοντα καὶ διηκοσιέων καὶ ἑξακισχιλιέων καὶ δισμυριέων, ἢ ἑτέρη αὐτέων τῇ ἑτέρῃ ἡμέρῃ τὸ παράπαν οὐδὲν ὅμοιον προσάγει πρῆγμα. οὕτω ὦν Κροῖσε πᾶν ἐστὶ ἄνθρωπος συμφορῇ.

In the long term, there are many things to see and much to experience, willingly or not. I set the limit of a human lifespan at 70 years. Those 70 years contain 25,200 days, not counting intercalary months. If you choose to make every other year longer by a month so that the seasons happen as they should, then there will be 35 intercalary months in those 70 years, and 1050 days in those months. So the days in 70 years number 26,250 in all, and no two of them are alike in what they bring. Thus, Kroisos, man is entirely chance. (Hdt. 1.32.2-4)

This system is not as good a match for the solar year as the Egyptian 365-day calendar, but it is actually a better match than it is here presented as being. The 26,250

days Solon calculates as being 70 years imply a year of 375 days, but this is based on the assumption that every month consists of 30 days. Because a lunar month is roughly $29\frac{1}{2}$ days long, Greek calendars used a rough alternation between 29-day “hollow” and 30-day “full” months.⁵³ If we take alternating 12- and 13-month years but, instead of each month being 30 days, assume an equal number of 29- and 30-day months, the result is alternating 354-day and $383\frac{1}{2}$ -day years, averaging $368\frac{3}{4}$ days per year. Twelve lunar months contain 354 days, so a simple lunar calendar will drift almost as far from the seasonal year in two years as the Egyptian 365-day would calendar in a century.

Intercalary months cause more difference between when, in seasonal terms, particular festivals happen, but reduce the average amount of drift from $11\frac{1}{4}$ days per year to $3\frac{1}{2}$. Eight years would be sufficient time for an unintercalated festival calendar to “lose” a full 90 days relative to the solar year, the equivalent of every festival being held an entire season earlier than it had once been. Intercalating a month every other year means that it would take almost 25 years for a festival to “drift” by a full season. (It also, incidentally, reverses the direction of drift, so that festivals would come later, rather than earlier.)

By modern standards, the calendar described in Hdt. 1.32 is not very satisfactory. In the northern hemisphere, January is reliably a winter month and August reliably a summer one, and while some years are one day longer than others, February 29 comes only every four years or so. Hekatombaion moving around the solar year is as different from our expectations as alternating years having different numbers of months. But both calendars came about through series of more or less arbitrary decisions. It is no more or

⁵³ Mikalson 1975:8-9. The details of how and when Athens decided whether a given month should be full or hollow are less than clear, however (Pritchett and Neugebauer 1947: 11-14).

less necessary for February to always have 28 days as it is for Skirophorion to vary in length, just as it is no more or less necessary to choose the solar year over the lunar month as the primary natural cycle which one's calendar should reflect.

The practice of intercalating entire months rather than mere days, and Herodotus' explanation of intercalation as being used "so that the seasons happen when they should"⁵⁴ very strongly suggest that Greeks saw no need for a perfect alignment between calendar date and time of the solar year, but rather had a mere sense that the calendar year should roughly track the seasons and a preference for simple solutions over more precise ones. Intercalating an entire lunar month every second or third year was thus good enough for the purpose at hand. For the average person, a calendar that was straightforward was better than one that was precise. Astronomers who needed a universal calendar found one in the Egyptian calendar. Even for this specialized scientific use, however, Greeks valued simplicity: an astronomer's calendar that included leap years would open the possibility of forgetting or misremembering when the extra days fell and thus introducing errors when astronomers shared their data.

Athenian timekeeping

Studies of the workings of the Athenian calendars have tended to use later evidence to reconstruct earlier practices. The reason for this is simple: much of the evidence for the intricacies of the Athenian calendars comes from inscriptions later than the Classical period, and some of the most interesting evidence is late in the Hellenistic era. It is understandable that, for example, a group of inscriptions which give a date in

⁵⁴ ἵνα δὴ αἱ ὥραι συμβαίνωσι παραγινόμεναι ἐς τὸ δέον (Hdt. 1.32.3)

the bouletic calendar, a date in the festival calendar “according to the archon”, and a date “according to the god[dess]” (generally interpreted as the moon), all of which describe the one day on which a particular decree was issued, have been extensively studied. These triple dates give clear indications of discrepancies between two kinds of calendar reckoning, and have been used to establish the variance between a strict lunar calendar and the festival calendar as adjusted by intercalating and omitting days at the archon’s discretion. But triple dating is first attested only in the early second century BCE,⁵⁵ and the variance between “archontic” and “lunar” dates then does not tell us anything about such variance two or three centuries earlier.

My approach attempts to address only the fifth century and fourth centuries, though I believe that it is possible in some cases to cautiously infer continuous practice extending back from the earliest surviving attestation. As an example of using such inferences within my period, the earliest inscriptions unambiguously identifying an intercalary month (IG II² 381 and 382) date to 320/319, after the Lamian War and the change of government Macedon imposed upon the Athenians in its aftermath. Herodotus speaks of intercalary months (Hdt. 1.32) and it appears safe to assume that a practice he presents Solon as describing had a continuous history before 320.

There is an apparent long-term trend in Athenian inscriptions toward correlating increasing numbers of calendars, which I suspect indicates that precision in timekeeping gradually came to be valued more highly. Before 337 BCE, inscriptions were routinely dated using only the festival calendar. Rhodes and Osborne no. 77 is “the earliest surviving decree which gives the date in full in both [festival and bouletic] calendars” (p.

⁵⁵ Pritchett 2001: 2-5 lists the known examples.

383-4), and later inscriptions ordinarily give paired dates until triple dates begin to appear in the second century, cross-referencing the festival calendar with both the bouletic calendar and the lunar month. All three cycles were known and noted long before Athenians began to cross-reference them, of course. The moon has been there to be observed longer than there have been humans to observe it; Mycenaean tablets attest named months, at least one of which is also attested in a third-century inscription;⁵⁶ and the rotating prytanies date to Cleisthenes' reforms. What changed is the level of interest in correlating these cycles; but in the fifth and bulk of the fourth centuries, the festival calendar, the bouletic calendar, and the actual phases of the moon (and other natural cycles) were allowed to exist independently of one another.

Athenian calendars

Although it has become customary to talk about the Athenian “civic calendar” or “civil calendar”, the label is somewhat misleading. The months and days by which religious festivals were scheduled were also used in official dating formulas, but meetings of the assembly and other civic business were scheduled using an entirely different calendar. Thus, I prefer to talk about the “festival calendar” and the “bouletic calendar”. The festival calendar is what other writers call the “civic calendar” or, because it began with the entry into office of a new eponymous archon and that archon had the authority to regulate it, the “archon’s calendar”. The bouletic calendar was used by the Boule, hence the name, in scheduling meetings of the assembly and other civic events. This calendar divided the year into ten numbered segments. These were called

⁵⁶ Samuel 1972:64-65.

“prytanies”, because in each one, a different tribe’s representatives in the Boule served as prytaneis, making up a sort of executive committee for the Boule. Each year, the tribes drew lots to determine which prytany they would hold.

The festival calendar was basically lunar, but subject to adjustments as judged necessary by the eponymous archon. This calendar consisted of twelve named months, each running from new moon to new moon, although such details as whether polis officials actually watched for the visibility of the first sliver of moon before declaring the new month are open to debate.⁵⁷ The months of the Athenian festival calendar were Hekatombaion, Metageitnon, Boedromion, Pyanepsion, Maimakterion, Poseidon, Gamelion, Anthestherion, Elaphebolion, Mounichion, Thargelion, and Skirophorion. The traditional understanding that Hekatombaion always began with the first new moon after the summer solstice is a mirage; because the festival year was based on months rather on the solar year, with some years consisting of 12 lunar months (c. 353 days) and some of 13 (c. 383 days), there was no fixed correspondence between Athenian months and any point in the solar year.⁵⁸ Athenians used almanacs and parapegmata to keep track of where they were in the solar year; the festival year was an entity independent of the solar or seasonal year. This conclusion has the consequence that the commonly-used correspondences between Athenian and Gregorian months, which begin with the assumption that Hekatombaion corresponds to the period from mid-July to mid-August, are only accidentally valid.

⁵⁷ Samuel 1972: 14-15.

⁵⁸ Pritchett 1970:39-42; Pritchett 2001: 101ff.

Festivals took place on specific dates in the festival calendar, unchanging from year to year – although, in practice, the eponymous archon could intercalate or omit days from the calendar at his discretion, so even though festivals happened on set dates, the date does not necessarily indicate how much time had passed since the last performance of that festival.⁵⁹ Set dates, therefore, did not necessarily mean fixed times. Most of what we might, imprecisely, call government business was scheduled even more flexibly. The festival calendar was designed to make sure that religious activities followed each other in the proper order and that none were neglected. The bouletic calendar was designed to promote democratic fairness and equal access to power. Where the festival calendar was divided into months based on lunar phases, the bouletic calendar was divided into ten roughly equal segments called prytanies. During each of the ten prytanies, which were designated by numbers rather than names, the bouletai of a different tribe took on the responsibilities of prytaneis. Each year, tribes were assigned to prytanies by lot.

The bouletic year regulated each tribe's access to the authority of the prytaneis, ensuring each got a roughly equal share, but scheduled civic activities only loosely. The assembly met four times in each prytany, but did so on dates chosen by the Boule rather than set in advance.⁶⁰ On a similar principle, the assembly was required to deal with particular kinds of business but not given a prescriptive timetable for doing so. *Ath. Pol.* 43.5, for example, indicates that during the sixth prytany the assembly was to vote on whether to hold an ostracism and hear accusations of sycophancy and charges of having

⁵⁹ Especially since there could have been an intercalary month in between. My full discussion of intercalation at Athens, and the related scholarly debates, is below.

⁶⁰ *Ath. Pol.* 43, Hansen 1983:83-102.

failed to deliver on promises to the *demos*. Such laws preserved flexibility – meetings were to be held when needed, and their agendas were drawn up in response to present needs – while also ensuring that essential business was done and that meetings occurred at least 40 times each year.

Although Hesiod records a tradition of observing solstices, equinoxes, and the rising and setting of stars for the purpose of judging when to undertake agricultural work, and Greek astronomers were capable of a respectable degree of precision in such observations, neither of the official Athenian calendars was anchored in astronomical events. The closest thing we have to ancient evidence for such a connection is Plato, *Laws* 767c, which specifies that the imaginary polis in Magnesia should begin its year after the summer solstice. While Plato may well have used Athenian laws as models, it is quite impossible to identify which those may have been. It is worth noting, however, that Plato's interest in the heavens, as evidenced by the complex cosmological and temporal system of the *Timaeus*, went far beyond that of the average Athenian. Thus, Plato's text cannot be taken as evidence of Athenian practice.

Adjusting the calendars

One of the most controversial aspects of Greek timekeeping is the extent and frequency of human intervention in calendars. Consider, for example, this incident that happened in 419:

ὡς δ' αὐτοῖς τὰ διαβατήρια θυομένοις οὐ προухώρει, αὐτοί τε ἀπῆλθον ἐπ' οἴκου καὶ τοῖς ξυμμάχοις περιήγγειλαν μετὰ τὸν μέλλοντα (Καρνεῖος δ' ἦν μῆν, ἱερομηνία Δωριεῦσι) παρασκευάζεσθαι ὡς στρατευσομένους. Ἀργεῖοι δ'

ἀναχωρησάντων αὐτῶν τοῦ πρὸ τοῦ Καρνείου μηνὸς ἐξελθόντες
τετράδι φθίνοντος, καὶ ἄγοντες τὴν ἡμέραν ταύτην πάντα τὸν
χρόνον, ἐσέβαλον ἐς τὴν Ἐπιδαυρίαν καὶ ἐδήρουν.

Since the sacrificial omens for crossing the border were unfavorable, they
[the Spartans] returned home and sent word to their allies to be ready to go
on campaign in the next month, because it was Karneios, a month sacred
to the Dorians. But the Argives marched out on the 27th of the month
before Karneios, and calling it the same day for the entire time, attacked
and raided Epidauros. (Thuc. 5.54.2-4)

That is, the Argives postponed a sacred truce which was to begin on the first day
of the month Karneios by repeatedly declaring different days the same date. This
particular case is perhaps doubly underhanded, because what freed the Argives to go on
military adventures of their own rather than campaigning with their Spartan allies was a
series of omens indicating that it was not a good time to go campaigning. Thus, the
Argives ignored the unfavorable omens received by the Spartans (although they doubtless
understood them as only applying to the Spartans or to fighting Athenians, not to fighting
in general by Spartan allies) and postponed a sacred truce. This action disregarded two
traditional ways of judging the wisdom of a particular plan of action – divination, which
reveals what course the gods favor, and the observance of festivals. The Argives' action
inspired several other poleis to threaten retaliation,⁶¹ but the stratagem of repeating the
date made perfect sense to the Argives. The internal understanding of the way the
festival calendar worked allowed for human intervention. There was, in other words, an

⁶¹ Thuc. 5.55.

authority at Argos that could declare the date as it saw fit, and in Argos, the date was what that authority declared it to be.

We do not know exactly who at Argos had this power. At Sparta, the ephors were in charge of the calendar,⁶² and at Athens, the festival calendar was ultimately under the jurisdiction of the eponymous archon. As is so often the case, the bulk of the evidence for how this authority was used in practice comes from Athens, and so my discussion will focus on Athens. It is very likely, however, that other poleis had more in common with each other than one might expect, given the range of types of government and other institutions across Greece. The Spartans officially designated their years using the names of eponymous ephors, just as the Athenians designated theirs by eponymous archons; and if these two cities, so often regarded as polar opposites, had magistrates charged with timekeeping, it is likely that others did as well.

The frequency with which archons used their authority to intercalate and omit days, and the reasons behind such interventions, are poorly-attested and, accordingly, much-debated. But this was one of two different kinds of intercalations. Besides the *ad hoc* addition of days to, removal of days from, or reordering of days in, the festival calendar by the Athenian archon and other officials in other cities, there was also the kind of intercalation described by Solon in Hdt. 1.32: intercalation of entire months at regular, customary intervals, for the purpose of keeping the festival calendar roughly in step with the cycle of the seasons.

⁶² Cartledge 1987: 128.

“Routine” and “irregular” intercalations

The Gregorian calendar is based on a year length that matches the length of a solar year almost exactly, with leap years added at regular intervals to make up the fractional difference between the 365 days of the calendar year and the roughly 365¼ days it takes the earth to orbit the sun. This means that the calendar year drifts very slightly with respect to the solar year and is then gently corrected. The system described in Hdt. 1.32 allows more drift, followed by relatively drastic corrections every other year. This means that the relationship between the festival calendar and other kinds of time, such as the agricultural year, constantly shifted. *Ad hoc* intercalations thus provided a way to ensure that festivals did not conflict with other pressing needs.

To illustrate the changing relation between particular dates in a Greek festival calendar and other calendars, imagine a hypothetical calendar with alternating 29- and 30-day months (labelled A-L rather than given names), and an intercalary month inserted every other year. If we start this calendar with Day 1 of Month A of Year 1, on January 1 of Year 1 of the Gregorian calendar, the first days of each Greek month will correspond to Gregorian dates as follows:

| | Year 1 | Year 2 (intercalary) | Year 3 |
|---------------|----------|-------------------------|---------|
| A1 | Jan. 1 | Dec. 21 (of year 1) | Jan. 9 |
| B1 | Jan. 31 | Jan. 20 | Feb. 7 |
| C1 | Mar. 1 | Feb. 18 | Mar. 9 |
| D1 | Mar. 31 | Mar. 20 | Apr. 7 |
| E1 | Apr. 29 | Apr. 18 | May 7 |
| F1 | May 29 | May 18 | Jun. 5 |
| G1 | Jun. 27 | Jun. 16 | Jul. 5 |
| H1 | Jul. 27 | Jul. 17 | Aug. 3 |
| I1 | Aug. 25 | Aug. 14 | Sept. 2 |
| J1 | Sept. 24 | Sept. 13 | Oct. 1 |
| K1 | Oct. 23 | Oct. 12 | Oct. 31 |
| L1 | Nov. 22 | Nov. 11 | Nov. 29 |
| intercalary 1 | | Dec. 10 | |

The discrepancies between the two calendars can be seen to change at an irregular rate from year to year. In this comparison, the Gregorian year also serves as a stand-in for the seasonal year, because of the closeness with which it tracks the solar year — although, of course, the onset of winter rains or spring weather varies from year to year. Over the three years of this simple model, a single Greek date will drift across a period of more than two weeks. This is not enough to mean drastically different seasonal weather, but potentially enough to put a festival in conflict with planting or harvesting or some other particular agricultural task one year but not the next.

The intercalation of entire months raises a question that may well be unanswerable: what festivals, if any, were observed during an intercalary month? Greek festival calendars had twelve names for months, with no specific instructions for intercalary months. Intercalary months repeated the name of another month, although the evidence for this is, like so much of the evidence for Greek calendars, Athenian, limited, and mostly post-Classical. Pritchett found only ten clearly-identified intercalary months in Athenian inscriptions before 100 BCE;⁶³ the earliest of these is “Later Posideon” (Ποσιδεῶν ὕστερος) of 320/19, the date of two decrees (*IG II² 381 and 382*), and the second is “Later Gamelion” in 307/6 (*IG II² 1487.53-54*, a report on divine treasuries).

Fully half of these intercalary years were in the second century, and, as I have argued above, likely reflect views of timekeeping different from those of the Classical period. Pritchett’s table shows that intercalary months were more likely to be named Posideon than anything else, but intercalary Hekatombaion, Metageitnion, Gamelion, and Anthesterion also appear. Together, these facts suggest that intercalary months may not

⁶³ Pritchett 2001:7-8.

have been consistently identified as such in Classical-era inscriptions. We may thus have inscriptions recording events of intercalary months that are, for us, indistinguishable from ordinary months.

Whether intercalary months duplicated the annual festivals of the month whose name they borrowed, or contained fewer festivals than other months, they would have had a markedly different character from “ordinary” months. It is possible that intercalary months were given different names as a way to spread out the disruption to festival observances, so that the same festivals were not observed twice in every intercalary year or the same portion of every intercalary year allowed to be deficient in ritual activity.

Because the festival calendar was its own cycle not strongly bound to any other cycle, festivals would have happened each year at different points relative to the solar year. This in itself provides one reason for irregular intercalations: intercalary days provided a way to adjust when festivals fell, relative to temporal cycles other than the festival calendar.

Irregular intercalation at Athens

One of the striking features of Athenian timekeeping is that festivals were practically the only events that occurred on fixed dates from year to year. In other areas of life, scheduling worked on an *ad hoc* basis. Judging by Hesiod, farmers looked to an eclectic mixture of astronomical, weather, and other natural signs for guidance when deciding when to plant, harvest, or begin other tasks. Although an astrometeorological tradition in which regularly-recurring astronomical events were associated with specific kinds of weather did gradually develop, we have very little direct evidence for its

evolution between Hesiod and the third century BCE,⁶⁴ and in any event, this tradition always remained distinct from civic timekeeping. For the purposes of scheduling meetings of the assembly, the year was divided into prytanies and a set number of meetings required in each prytany — but when, within the prytany, meetings were held was left to the discretion of the prytaneis, rather than determined in advance.⁶⁵ There was a customary sailing season determined by the basic pattern of alternation between stormy and calm periods of the year, and a customary campaigning season determined largely by the agricultural year, but no set dates to begin maritime or military activities. Only festivals had assigned, unvarying dates.

Yet, although the dates of festivals were set, dates in general were social constructs that could themselves be altered on an *ad hoc* basis. I began this section with a particularly notorious example of such alteration, in which the Argives postponed a festival to give their armies more time to raid Epidaurian territory. Another famous case is reported by Plutarch: at the request of Demetrios Poliorketes, the Athenians declared Mounikhion to be Anthesterion and then Boedromion for a few days each, so that Demetrios could be initiated into the Lesser and Greater Eleusinian Mysteries during a single visit to Eleusis.⁶⁶

This and the renaming of months and tribes to curry favor with a series of Alexander's successors were products of Athenian dependence on foreign kings during the Hellenistic period, and earned the Athenians Pritchett's observation that "[i]f the

⁶⁴ Lehoux 2007.

⁶⁵ Hansen 1983:87.

⁶⁶ Plutarch, *Demetr.* 12, Pritchett 2001:26.

political situation required, the authorities did not hesitate to do strange things to the festival calendar.”⁶⁷

Not all changes to the Athenian festival calendar, however, were motivated by such strong external pressures. It is perhaps an unfortunate side effect of Pritchett’s sense of the Athenian festival calendar as a self-contained system, which made his invaluable contributions to the study of Athenian timekeeping possible, that Pritchett came to regard irregular intercalation as almost as great a threat to the integrity of the Athenian festival calendar as renaming months after Hellenistic kings. In his debate with Dunn (especially Pritchett 1999 and Dunn 1998a), arguments over whether irregular intercalation should be called “tampering with” or “manipulating” the calendar became sufficiently heated to obscure the real, substantive difference between the views of the two.

Ultimately, Pritchett regards intercalations as temporary adjustments which were necessarily corrected for, so as to maintain the overall length of the year: “It has been my position that compensatory (= subtracted) dates were preceded by retarded (= embolimoi) dates in a festival lunar calendar of $354\pm$ or $384\pm$ days.”⁶⁸ Dunn’s version of the calendar is far less concerned with precision; instead, the discretion of the archon is built into the system as a corrective measure. The overall conceptual framework in which Pritchett operates is a modern one, insofar as it assumes a calendrical system that is expected to maintain itself with a minimum of ongoing adjustment. Dunn’s model of a system that deliberately incorporates occasional adjustments is much closer to the approach the Athenians took to other administrative tasks.

⁶⁷ Pritchett 2001:20.

⁶⁸ Pritchett 1999:80.

Pritchett's model of Athenian intercalations would require much more concern with precise timekeeping on the part of the archon than was displayed by Athenians in general, but there is no indication that archons were expected to have such interests. One of the characteristic features of Athenian democracy was its hostility to putting specialists in charge of decision-making. Instead, Athenians valorized the ideal that every citizen should be a statesman of sorts, and so capable of fulfilling the duties of virtually any civic office.⁶⁹ The process by which archons were selected did not look for specialized knowledge of astronomy, or any particular interest in timekeeping in general.⁷⁰ It is thus unlikely that any given archon would have had the knowledge or inclination to approach the calendar in the way that Pritchett imagines it to have been regulated.

Dunn is also right to call attention to the fact that the Athenians did not have a uniform sense of time, but rather, regulated different activities in different ways:

We tend to think, with our modern prejudices, that a calendar should somehow be regular or precise, and that an irregular calendar must be diverging from a more regular or more accurate counterpart. But there is no reason to imagine that Greek festival calendars were ever designed to be, or were ever expected to be, precise. Their purpose was to schedule monthly and annual festivals, and to allow these to be performed at a reasonable or convenient time. When the city required a more regular calendar for administrative and financial purposes, the calendar of the Boule or prytany calendar filled this need. It is therefore anachronistic to

⁶⁹ See, e.g., Ober 2008.

⁷⁰ All nine archons were selected from the same pool of candidates, preselected by the demes. (*Ath. Pol.* 22.55).

suppose that even large-scale adjustments to the festival calendar would have struck an Athenian as unusual or as something to be corrected. (Dunn 1998a:224)

The differences between the festival calendar and other ways of structuring time make Dunn's sense of the archon's role more convincing than Pritchett's. Some matters — e.g., the terms of loans, cases in the maritime courts, and other financial dealings — demanded more precise timekeeping, others less so. The Athenians clearly had a sense that there was a “right” time to perform each of the festivals given a place in a calendar. They also, however, wanted to make sure that if some emergency threatened a festival, the *kairoi* for dealing with the emergency and for celebrating the festival could be made distinct from one another. Accordingly, the eponymous archon received the authority to adjust the festival calendar as he judged necessary.

The debate over the frequency and intent of intercalation tends also to draw attention away from the larger implications of giving the eponymous archon the ability to add days to and remove days from the festival calendar. First, note that only the festival calendar was subject to the archon's judgment; there is no indication that the bouletic calendar was ever similarly adjusted, and indeed, much of the argumentation over the frequency of intercalation assumes that the bouletic calendar was immutable. The bouletic calendar set limits within which particular kinds of business were to be done, without specifying when within those limits the Boule or assembly were to do each particular thing. The festival calendar preordained that specific festivals be performed on specific days, but the archon's authority to intercalate effectively gave the Athenians the

same kind of flexibility with regard to religious activity that the bouletic calendar provided for civic business.

If, for whatever reason, the archon adjusted the calendar around the time of a festival, the festival happened on the traditional date regardless of when that date might have fallen without the archon's intervention. This reflects a fundamentally different idea than that held by the modern West about the relation between days and dates. To put it rather gnomically, the festival determined the date rather than the date the festival. Recall here the unorthodox initiation of Demetrios Poliorketes, and note that the archon did not declare that the Mysteries were to be celebrated in Mounikhion on a one-time basis, but rather ordered that the dates of the Lesser and Greater Mysteries be observed outside of the normal sequence.

The last section of the *Works and Days* (lines 765ff.) gives a sort of numerological almanac, indicating which days of the month are favorable and unfavorable for particular activities. I suspect that similar logic is at work in the scheduling of festivals, with dates judged appropriate for worship of particular deities for reasons not always accessible to us. Regardless, the dates of festivals were significant in that they were outside of human control in one sense (the festival of the Greater Mysteries began on the 15th of Boedromion) but subject to it in another (the 15th of Boedromion fell when the archon said it did).

The next question, or set of questions, deals with the ways that Athenians experienced and discussed time. What did the varied and potentially-inconsistent set of systems for organizing different kinds of time look like from the inside?

Internal views I: How Athenians talked about time

Universal familiarity with the calendar is a feature of modern life. As I write this, there is a printed calendar on the wall above my desk, and my computer is one of at least four electronic devices within reach that “know” the current date and time. Email is automatically time-stamped, but when we send or receive letters on paper, it remains customary to note the date on which they are written. And so on — we are not just aware of the calendar, but think in terms of dates. Returning to Classical Athens, inscriptions bristle with dates. The assembly, Boule, and smaller associations of Athenian citizens, such as demes and phratries all customarily began their decrees by noting when they were issued. But did ordinary Athenians think about their daily lives in terms of calendar dates, and if they did, to what extent did they do so?

I will take Aristophanes – to whom I will turn again in the next section, to provide a sense of whether Athenians were satisfied with the flexibility of their festival calendar – and the orators as my sources for non-official perspectives. Comedy and oratory are, of course, not natural, everyday speech of everyday people, but both genres rely on verisimilitude and as such, provide the closest approximation we have from the fifth or fourth century. The purpose of comedy is to inspire laughter and oratory is intended to persuade hearers of the rightness of the speaker’s case, but juries must find a speaker’s story plausible to vote in their favor, and comedy rests on conveying a kernel of truth.

The general pattern is that, outside of references to events that would have produced official documentation, references to when past events happened are imprecise. Aristophanic characters refer on occasion to festivals as temporal markers, but almost never use the names of months. The *Acharnians* ends on the Choes festival, and in line

1076, the warlike Lamakhos is sent away to protect the city from raids during the Choes and Chytroi. At *Knights* 547, the chorus notes that the play is being performed at the Lenaia, and the “baby” wineskin at *Thesmophorozousai* 746 “was born around last Dionysia”⁷¹. There may well be comic intent in the choice of festivals of Dionysus and/or involving wine. When the month of Mounichion is named at *Birds* 1046, the context is legal – “I call Peisetairos to face a charge of hubris, in the month of Mounichion”⁷² – suggesting that civic use of the festival calendar in dating formulas created an association between month-names and legal formality. In fact, it is Aristophanes who enabled Todd to reconstruct the official formula for indicting someone;⁷³ *Clouds* 1221-25 and *Wasps* 1406-08 provide the formula ““I summon [name of defendant] before [name of official] on [name of day] to answer a charge of [name of offence].”

The ways that orators refer to the times when events happened also show a pattern in which official dating formulas appear less often than events of civic or personal importance as temporal reference points. In Chapter 3, I will examine the strategic choice of time references using a series of case studies of legal and political speeches, but here, I wish to identify the general picture.

As in the *Birds*, dating formulas, especially month names, appear when speakers refer to legal proceedings: Lysias 17.3 cites a prior judgment handed down in the archonship of Xenaenetus, and 17.5 notes that further proceedings had been scheduled for the month of Gamelion. Isaeus 5.31 mentions a court case going on in Maimakterion.

⁷¹ σχεδὸν τοσοῦτον χῶσον ἐκ Διονυσίων

⁷² καλοῦμαι Πεισέταιρον ὕβρεως εἰς τὸν Μουνιχιῶνα μῆνα

⁷³ Todd 1993: 125.

Demosthenes 33.23 notes that the naval courts were open from Boedromion to Mounichion. Demosthenes 3.5 uses a list of month names to dramatize Athenian inaction in the face of Macedonian aggression – “Hecatombaeon came, and Metageitnion, and Boedromion” – and Isaeus 3.58 dates the death of the last heir to an estate by month and year. These examples show that month names were not reserved exclusively for talking about court cases, but when the orators talk about past legal proceedings, they usually note (by name) the month in which they took place. It is quite likely that this practice derives from the existence of documents pertaining to the case, which would have used official dating formulas. Quoting the documents thus showed familiarity with the case and legal procedures in general.

References to past years take three major forms in the orators: counting back from the present, reference to familiar events, and reference to archons. These can be politically significant, especially in the era of Lysias, in which speakers often felt the need to explain where they were and what they did during the rule of the Thirty. Lys. 7 is one of my case studies in Chapter 3, because of its particularly involved interweaving of Athenian political history with the use and ownership history of a particular plot of land, but there are ample other examples. In Lysias 16, it is the very crux of the case; the speaker has been accused of having served the Thirty as a cavalryman, so the assertion at 16.4 that his father had sent away from Athens “before the disaster at the Hellespont” and he had not returned until after the restoration of democracy is not just a time reference but an argument for the defense.

Identifying past years by the name of their archons, like the use of month names, is rare and primarily occurs in contexts in which the speaker could have been quoting an

official document. How well audiences would have understood archon dates is another question; while month names follow one another in a predictable sequence (though a sequence somewhat complicated by intercalary months), identifying the year in which a particular man was archon could be a test of memory or require research. Fragments survive of an archon list in stone, originally inscribed c. 425 and presumably updated or supplemented with the names of new eponymous archons afterward.⁷⁴ This would have made chronology by archons publically accessible, without requiring a visit to the city archives. Thomas' observations, however, about inscriptions as monuments to be viewed and admired vs. inscriptions as sources of information to be read apply here.⁷⁵ Jurors would presumably not have had the opportunity, even if they had the inclination, to consult a monument in order to identify the year in which a litigant said something had happened; but the use of archon dates may well have encouraged jurors to see that litigant as the sort of person who pays attention to details and knows how the city operates.

The use of eponymous officials to designate years, rather than a numbered epoch (as employed by most calendars in current use), has one further implication beyond increasing the difficulty of determining how long ago an event took place. That is that future years have no proper designation; they can be referred to only by counting forward. Rhodes & Osborne no. 81, lines 7-10, for example, designates the term of a lease of sacred land as ten years. This would make determining when the lease ended rather more complex than it would have been, had it been possible to identify the ending point of the lease directly: counting back through past archons, looking to see how many

⁷⁴ Bradeen 1963.

⁷⁵ Thomas 1992:84-88.

there had been between the present and the year of the inscription, would have been necessary. But here, the precision was considered appropriate and worth the effort. The use of sacred land was something to monitor closely.

The pattern of references to past events strongly suggests that the formulas used in dating inscriptions, which combine months and days in the festival calendar with years identified by their eponymous archons, were felt to belong more to officialdom than to daily life. This has the further implication that the calendars of Athens were much less significant to the majority of Athenians than the kinds of time described by Hesiod and elaborated by Meton and later astronomer-meteorologists.

Internal views II: Time according to Aristophanes

The seventeenth-century scholar Hezekiah ben David da Silva of Jerusalem charged that a method of scheduling intercalations other than the one he recommended “will – perish the thought – cause the holy and awesome fast to be nullified, leaven to be eaten on Passover, and the holidays to be desecrated.”⁷⁶ The Christian church saw several controversies over the scheduling of Easter during late antiquity and the early medieval period, which led in some cases to accusations of heresy.⁷⁷ The traditions that produced such polemics regard holy days as being established by divine authority, and human calendars as being charged with the task of properly identifying holy days so that they can be properly observed. But did Greeks of the Classical era hold similar views about their festivals?

⁷⁶ *Peri Hadash, Orah Hayyim*, 428; Reingold and Dershowitz 2001: 100.

⁷⁷ McCluskey 1998:77-96.

A choral passage of Aristophanes' *Clouds* expresses a concern that festivals were not being held when the gods expected them to be:

ἄλλα τ' εὖ δρᾶν φησιν, ὑμᾶς δ' οὐκ ἄγειν τὰς ἡμέρας
οὐδὲν ὀρθῶς, ἀλλ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω κυδοιδοπᾶν·
ὥστ' ἀπειλεῖν φησιν αὐτῇ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐκάστοτε
ἡνίκ' ἂν ψευσθῶσι δείπνου κἀπίωσιν οἴκαδε,
τῆς ἑορτῆς μὴ τυχόντες κατὰ λόγον τῶν ἡμερῶν.
κᾶθ' ὅταν θύειν δέη, στρεβλοῦτε καὶ δικάζετε·
πολλάκις δ' ἡμῶν ἀγόντων τῶν θεῶν ἀπαστίαν,
ἡνίκ' ἂν πενθῶμεν ἢ τὸν Μέμνον' ἢ Σαρπηδόνα,
σπένδεθ' ὑμεῖς καὶ γελᾶτ'· ἀνθ' ὧν λαχὼν Ὑπέρβολος
τῆτες ἱερομνημονεῖν, κᾶπειθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν θεῶν
τὸν στέφανον ἀφηρέθη· μᾶλλον γὰρ οὕτως εἴσεται
κατὰ σελήνην ὡς ἄγειν χρὴ τοῦ βίου τὰς ἡμέρας.

She [the moon] says she treats you well even though you get the days wrong, getting them all mixed up and upside-down, so she says the gods scold her whenever they're misled about a dinner and go back home after not finding the festival according to the count of days. When it's time to sacrifice, you're torturing witnesses and making judgments, and often, when we're observing a fast in mourning for Memnon or Sarpedon, you're pouring libations and laughing. And that's why Hyperbolos, allotted the job of *hieromemnon*, had his crown taken away by us gods, so he'll know

better that he should manage the days of his life according to the moon.(Ar. *Nub.* 615-625)

This has become one of the passages most frequently cited in discussions of Athenian calendars, where it is generally taken at face value as presenting an internal view of the festival calendar as flawed. The images of gods expecting sacrifices that do not arrive at the proper times and mortals feasting on occasions that call for fasting certainly sound similar to da Silva's warning of the consequences of miscalculating the dates of holidays. But, while comedy can be a valuable source for Athenian attitudes and concerns, it is also potentially misleading. Had Athenians genuinely objected to the handling of the festival calendar, they would have corrected the perceived problem. Instead, Aristophanes invited his audience to notice an incongruity that was real, but not normally regarded as important.

Strikingly, when Aristophanes gives specific examples of human and divine behavior diverging because humans mismanage their calendars, his examples are hero cults observed by the gods but neglected by humans. Memnon and Sarpedon were both demigods who died in the Trojan War, Sarpedon being the more noted of the two because his father Zeus considered intervening to save his life but ultimately allowed him to meet his fate.⁷⁸ Having gods mourn Sarpedon is thus a reference to the *Iliad*, in which Zeus begins mourning for him before he dies. For a paradigmatic example of a divinely-ordained festival that the Athenians frequently mistime, however, it is a decidedly obscure choice. Worse yet, cults of Sarpedon and Memnon are not otherwise attested as

⁷⁸ *Il.* 16.477-683.

existing at all in Attica. These lines could just as easily be a comment on the existence of heroes who received cult in some places but not in others.

This passage suggests that the Athenian festival calendar deviated sharply from the phases of the moon, but although Hyperbolos' neglects to "manage the days of his life according to the moon", the rest of the *Clouds* treats the moon as the means of timekeeping *par excellence*. The play opens with Strepsiades dreading the waning moon, because the new moon meant the beginning of a new month, and the first of the month meant that payments on his loans were due. Thus, the action is in a sense set into motion by the advancing phases of the moon. The moon becomes almost a metonym for time. Compare the moon's conveyed complaints in lines 615-625 to lines 749-757, which literalize the place of the moon in Athenian timekeeping:

Στρεψιάδης

γυναίκα φαρμακίδ' εἰ πριάμενος Θετταλὴν
καθέλοιμι νύκτωρ τὴν σελήνην, εἶτα δὴ
αὐτὴν καθειρίζαιμι ἔς λοφεῖον στρογγύλον,
ὥσπερ κάτοπρον, κᾶτα τηροίην ἔχων —

Σωκράτης

τί δῆτα τοῦτ' ἂν ὠφελήσειέν ζ' ;

Στρεψιάδης

ὄ τι;

εἰ μηκέτ' ἀνατέλλοι σελήνη μηδαμοῦ,
οὐκ ἂν ἀποδοίην τοὺς τόκους.

Σωκράτης

ὅτι ἤ τί δῆ;

Στρεψιάδης

ὅτι κατὰ μῆνα τὰ γύριον δανείζεται.

Strepsiades: If I bought a Thessalian witch and brought down the moon by night, and then shut it up in a case as if it were a mirror, and kept it under guard—

Socrates: What good would that do?

Strepsiades: What good? If the moon never rose again, I'd never pay interest.

Socrates: Why is that?

Strepsiades: Because money is loaned out by the month. (*Ar. Nub.* 749-757)

The contrast between these two passages builds upon the contrast between official time and daily experience, reinforcing the view that Athenians did not typically think in terms of calendars. Taken together, they also imply that the “everyday” sort of time is more rigid than calendar time. Strepsiades does not have the archon’s authority to decide what the date is. So, because he cannot intercalate extra days to keep his loan payments from coming due, he decides to keep the new moon from appearing. Strepsiades’ approach to time aligns him to the natural world – for all that he is dealing with the human institution of interest payments – in contrast to the human construction of calendars.

Yet elsewhere, however, Aristophanes suggests that the moon and sun cannot be relied upon for purposes of timekeeping. In the *Peace*, when Trygaeus informs Hermes that those celestial bodies are plotting to betray Greece to barbarians, the god replies:

ταῦτ' ἄρα πάλαι τῶν ἡμερῶν παρεκλεπτέτην
καὶ τοῦ κύκλου παρέτρογον ὑφ' ἀμαρτωλίας.

So that's why they've been stealing days and nibbling at the circle! (Ar. *Pax* 415-16)

This cryptic joke has been interpreted in a variety of ways, but the heart of it is that the sun and moon, as gods of the barbarians, have been stealing festivals from the Greek gods. In the *Clouds*, the moon relayed the Greek gods' complaint that mortals have been mismanaging their festival calendars and thus cheating the gods out of their festivals. Here, it is the moon that is cheating the gods, with the sun as co-conspirator. Taken together, these passages clearly do not add up to a consistent critique of Athenian timekeeping, nor does Aristophanes unquestionably regard religious festivals as divinely ordained to the extent that he has been taken to.

The presence of jokes about different ways of tracking time – calendars on one hand, the sun and moon on the other – does suggest that his audiences found it incongruous that different systems co-existed. It also suggests that Aristophanes' audiences preferred that natural and constructed time did not get too far out of step with each other, but recognized both as part of their experience (if not equally-prominent parts), and could find oddities in each.

Conclusions

The Greek experience of time was not uniform. Natural time, as manifested in the progression of the seasons and the phases of the moon, governed agriculture, sailing, and – by extension – warfare, all of which depended upon weather conditions. The uncertainty of the weather inspired both a reactive and a predictive tradition. Hesiod presents the agricultural year as a series of signs which must be properly interpreted, a long string of *kairoi* showing the alert farmer what he should be doing at any given moment so as to ensure the self-sufficiency of his household. Gradually, astronomers elaborated Hesiod's astronomical signs into a complex system of weather prediction based upon observations of the stars.

Although our Gregorian calendar is fundamentally based upon precise measurements of the solar year, for Classical Greeks, astronomy was considered far more relevant to the weather than to calendars, which were constructed systems bound relatively loosely to natural time. At Athens, Sparta, Argos, and probably also throughout the Greek world, civic authorities could and did make adjustments or changes to the calendar as they saw fit. Mismatches between the calendar year and the solar year were not only tolerated but normal. Some years had twelve months, some added an intercalary month. And while Greek calendars were roughly based on lunar months, the Athenian bouletic calendar worked distinctly differently; it divided the year into ten roughly equal segments.

Official Athenian documents were precisely dated by the months and days of the festival calendar and the eponymous archon of the year, but citizens made little use of month or archon names except when talking about events which would have been

documented in the official record. Natural time and constructed time coexisted in Athenian life, but Aristophanes and the orators show that natural time was more familiar. Finally, although Aristophanes has been used to argue that Athenians were displeased with the archon's ability to alter the festival calendar, a more careful look at the passages in which aspects of timekeeping are parodied suggests that time was no more problematic than other civic institutions.

Chapter II: *Helikai*: Ancient Greek age-classes

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I used the interactions between Athenian calendars and the cycles of the sun and moon to introduce the distinction between natural and socially-constructed kinds of time. There, the year served as the basic unit of time; now, I move my focus to the human lifespan. In much the same way that Greek cities added calendars to seasonal and astronomical cycles and used them to regulate religious festivals and civic business, they assigned social ages to their citizens and used them to regulate responsibility for military service and eligibility for religious and political office.

This chapter will discuss the life course of male citizens in classical Greece, particularly in Athens and Sparta, primarily as revealed through the means by which poleis tracked the eligibility of individual citizens for military and political service. The idea that Spartans passed through a regulated series of age-based grades on their way to full citizen rights is familiar, even if the details are open to argument; but I will show that Athens had close equivalents to Spartan age grades for adult citizens, and that in fact, the Athenian system was more orderly in some ways than the Spartan. Further, these age grades do not so much represent gradual acquisition of citizen rights as different “packages” of responsibilities and honors. Perhaps most importantly of all, personal age as understood in Classical Greece was a kind of social status attained through the recognition of one’s fellow citizens. Age was not – as it is considered in the modern

West – an innate biological attribute verifiable through reference to official records of birth, but a cultural construct. Consequently, viewing ancient social reality through this modern definition of age inevitably leads to misunderstandings. Each age grade, from the polis' first official notice of a citizen (or potential citizen) on, constituted a particular status attained by performing the activities associated with that age grade and being accepted by peers and the polis as part of that age grade.

While Archaic lyric and Hellenistic epigram include meditations on personal age, the evidence from the Classical period skews heavily toward official inscriptions and accounts of political practice. The mechanisms by which Athens and Sparta kept track of liability for military service and eligibility for office in the 5th and 4th centuries are more accessible than the criteria by which individual Athenians and Spartans decided what they should be doing at different points in their lives. The main sources I will use in this chapter are, for Athens, ephebic inscriptions and the Aristotelean *Constitution of the Athenians*.

Although my main discussion of the uses of time in the Attic orators will appear in the next chapter, the courts also provided some evidence pertinent to this discussion. In particular, although it came out of an exceptional circumstance, pseudo-Demosthenes 57 illustrates an Athenian understanding of citizenship that I believe also to underlie the process by which young men became citizens. In this speech, the speaker justifies his claim to citizenship through his past participation in citizen activities. This strategy strongly supports my interpretation of citizenship as a status attained through performance, rather than such factual criteria as biological age.

The Spartan sources are fewer and present outside views rather than perspectives from within Spartan culture. In my reconstruction of the Spartiate life-course, I will rely largely on Xenophon's *Lacedemonian Constitution* and *Agesilaus*, with some cautious reference to Pluratch's *Agesilaus*.

Before going through the life-course of Spartan and Athenian citizens, I will examine some anthropological theories of the role and purpose of age grades, critique past scholarship on Greek age-grades, and show that – although, in cultures observed by anthropologists, age-based organization is strongly correlated with a lack of political organization – age grades were a functional part of the organization of the Classical Greek polis. In the theoretical framework of Bernardo Bernardi's *Age Class Systems* (which I supplement with more recent work on particular aspects of age-class organization in several societies), the rotation of age classes through age grades ensures that power is equally shared among individuals and generations. In Greece, age-based organization was used alongside political organization in the service of the idea that citizenship consisted of ruling and being ruled in turn. The evidence that Athens, and likely Sparta as well, increased the significance of age classes in the 4th century by conscripting men into military service by age-ranges, further substantiates that age-based institutions were useful to the Classical polis. This reform also provides a key point in my refutation of Robert Sallares' image of Greek age classes as static institutions passed down unchanged from a prepolitical past to the last generations of the ancient world. A comparative digression into the Zulu kingdom further illustrates the advantages that age-based military organization offers a state. Athens, Sparta, and the Zulu all found that age-based organization encouraged young men to feel a sense of mutual equality and

support toward each other combined with deference toward their elders — important elements of military discipline. Furthermore, the comparison shows that age-class systems operate differently in more egalitarian societies than in more hierarchical societies. In Sparta and the Zulu kingdom, not everyone was subject to the same age-based regulations; in Athens and the stateless societies discussed by Bernardi, there were no exceptions.

Defining age classes

I will begin with Bernardi, not because his work is by any means the last word on the subject, but because it offers a helpful taxonomy and hypothesis. Furthermore, in this work can be found the seeds of a false problem which has unduly influenced prior work on age-based organization in antiquity.⁷⁹ Prior applications of this area of theory to ancient history have made much of a supposed incompatibility between age-based and political organization, and I believe this derives at least partially from Bernardi's analysis. Bernardi observes that the societies in which anthropologists have been able to directly observe age classes have all possessed comparatively rudimentary political structures, and suggests that the regulated passage of age classes through age grades (associated with distinct sets of rights and obligations) constituted a means of legitimizing authority and ensuring stable transfers of power in the absence of political structures.

This perceived dichotomy between age-based and political institutions informs Robert Sallares' work on age classes. Sallares attempts to reconcile age classes with

⁷⁹ Bernardi 1985.

Greek political structures through two lines of argument: first, that political organization was a later accretion on top of primeval age-based institutions, and second, that age-based institutions guided aspects of social life which were not regulated by political structures. As I shall show, both of these arguments are flawed, but more importantly, the key premise that makes them necessary is itself false.⁸⁰ In particular, there is substantial evidence that ephebic reforms in fourth-century Athens increased the role of age-based institutions in military organization, at the command of and for the advantage of the state.⁸¹

Age-class systems, as Bernardi defines them, are cultural institutions which allocate particular combinations of privileges and responsibilities to particular portions of a society based upon age. In societies that use this mode of organization, age is a social construct disconnected from biological age. Children do not typically have a social age,⁸² the usual pattern is that a group of people judged to have attained adulthood within a particular temporal window will become an age class, and all be considered to be of the same age regardless of the differences in their biological ages. When a new age class is formed, each existing age class moves up a grade and gives up one bundle of rights and responsibilities for another. Thus, age classes rotate through a series of grades, with each grade conferring different rights, obligations, and expectations.

Bernardi is primarily interested in age-class systems as a means by which societies with little or no institutionalized government regulate access to power. The

⁸⁰ Sallares 1991.

⁸¹ As argued by Christ 2001. My full discussion is below.

⁸² Cf. Robertson's discussion of the ages of Athenian children. It appears that the age of a boy not yet enrolled as an ephebe was not a defined fact, but rather open to argument (Robertson 2000:158-60).

passage of each age class through the sequence of age grades ensures that each generation will, over the course of the human lifespan, be equal to other generations in its access to positions of authority, as each group rotates into and out of authority on an established schedule. This summary is, of course, something of a simplification. To deal with the range of cultural practices that have come to be considered as age-class systems, Bernardi defines a number of different models, presenting example cultures for each.

In many ways, he uses his “initiation model” as a baseline. In this model, age classes are created when young men are initiated into adulthood,⁸³ and men remain strongly identified with their age class throughout their adult lives. The frequency of initiation ceremonies varies across and often within cultures, so the biological ages of the men in a particular age-class will typically fall within a span of several years, but socially they are all considered to have the same age. This shared social age means that men of the same age class treat each other as strict equals, while their status relative to other age classes changes at intervals as each class moves through the same sequence of grades.⁸⁴

Among the Masai, whom Bernardi uses as the example of a culture that fits the initiation model, initiation rituals are held every fifteen years. Each time an initiation is held, the new age class created at the initiation ceremony enters the first age grade (called *Il murrán*, and described as focused on military activity). Men leave the *Il murrán* grade

⁸³ In many cultures, only men are assigned to age classes, and female age-classes tend, when they do occur, to be less structured than male age-classes within the same culture. Bernardi devotes chapter 11 to the subject of female age classes, and ultimately concludes that the reason age classes for women are less common and less developed than their counterparts for men is the political marginalization of women.

⁸⁴ On the subject of initiation in Greek contexts, see Dodd and Faraone 2003. For the purposes of Bernardi’s model, the content or other functions of the initiation ceremony are largely irrelevant and it is the transformation of a group of boys into an age-class of young men that is significant.

and enter the second (*Il moruak*) grade at marriage. At this transition, they cease to be warriors, and focus on raising children and expanding the wealth of their households. After another cycle of initiations, the age class that had been *Il moruak* enters the *Il piron* grade. The men of this grade constitute the ruling council of each community. Those who live long enough to enter the fourth grade, *Il dasat*, step down from the council and, because of their great age, “are highly respected for their link with the afterworld.” Their proximity to the ancestors brings them religious authority, and men of this grade are revered as bearers of tradition.⁸⁵ Throughout their adult lives, all Masai men are considered equal all of to their agemates, and each age class in turn collectively yields the privileges and responsibilities of each grade to the next age class.⁸⁶

In other societies, the importance of the bond between members of an age class diminishes over time. Bernardi terms this the “initiation/transition” model; men are assigned to age classes at initiation, but at some point, there is a transition after which solidarity within an age class gives way to competition among individuals. The Shavante of Brazil serve as representatives of this model, and in Bernardi’s analysis, age classes serve to unify the young men in a society otherwise strongly divided into moieties. For elders, however, “the class itself no longer represents a corporate bond”.⁸⁷ In the preceding age grades, the bonds of kinship had been downplayed in favor of age-class solidarity. Among the elders, kinship ties re-emerge as the basis of political factions as elders compete with one another to advance their personal agendas.

⁸⁵ Bernardi 1985:53.

⁸⁶ Bernardi 1985:46-56.

⁸⁷ Bernardi 1985:70-71.

Bernardi offers one other model, the “generation model”, but that one is sufficiently baroque that it would almost certainly leave clear evidence of complexities which did not exist in Classical Greece.⁸⁸ The well-attested reality of competition among citizens for prestige and power would rule out the simple initiation model, but an age-class system of the initiation/transition model — in which young men are encouraged to identify with their agemates, then “graduate” to an independent political existence — corresponds interestingly to certain features of Greek society, and as I shall show, the rights and responsibilities of Athenian and Spartan citizens in the Classical period change in a pattern that strongly suggests age grades.

The problem of statelessness

Robert Sallares has written perhaps the most detailed, and arguably most controversial, analysis of ancient Greek age-classes.⁸⁹ In his view, age-based organization was one of the defining features of Greek society; it was established by the Bronze Age, persisted into the Roman era, and explains everything from how Greeks decided when to marry and start families to why Greeks were never as generous with citizenship as were Romans.⁹⁰ His insistence that Greek age classes originated in the truly remote past and continued to function essentially unchanged throughout a broad

⁸⁸ In generation-based systems, men’s assignment to age classes depends on which age grade their fathers occupied when they were born, in such a way that men can be assigned to the same age class as others who are biologically much older or younger. Some of these mismatches can be so extreme as to effectively deny the right to marry or to father legitimate children; sons born late in their father’s life can be assigned to an age class that has already left the grade that conveys the right to marry. Based on this, some anthropologists have interpreted generation-based age class systems as a form of birth control (Bernardi 1985:74-80, 170).

⁸⁹ Sallares 1991:160-92.

⁹⁰ Sallares 1991:187,65-66,90-91.

expanse of time and space is one of the odder features of the discussion. I suspect that this desire to see Greek age-classes as inheritances from a prepolitical past derives in part from a tendency in the anthropological literature to see age classes as opposed to political structures.

One of the traits that Bernardi identifies as strongly correlated with age-class systems is an absence of political structures. For Bernardi, age class organization is an alternative to political organization. Sallares appears to have combined this sense of the incompatibility of the two with the fallacy that the presence of identical or similar institutions in multiple poleis is evidence that those poleis inherited the institutions in question from some common, ancestral source.⁹¹ He is willing to take this logic to extreme lengths. Because he has been able to identify age-based organization throughout the Greek world, in communities that spoke every dialect and used every form of government, Sallares proceeds to look for evidence of age classes in “the original dialect of Greek, even preceding the division between Mycenaean and proto-Doric which had occurred by the time of the Linear B tablets.”⁹² He finds it in the word that would become κούρος.

Sallares is correct, however to identify the relationship between state and age-based organization as an interesting problem. Given that the degree of political organization in Classical Greece was manifestly higher than that of those age-class societies which have been accessible to fieldwork, the possibility exists that Greek

⁹¹ A very Greek kind of wrong conclusion; see my discussion in ch. 4 of the Apatouria festival and the idea that its being celebrated in Ionia is evidence that the Ionian cities originated as Athenian colonies for an ancient example of this fallacy.

⁹² Sallares 1991:187.

institutions pertaining to age bear no more consequential resemblance to those of the Masai or Shavante than do contemporary Western school grades. Or, in other words, if the anthropological models of age-class systems are not compatible with the degree of political organization displayed by Greek poleis, then any attempt to apply them to Greek poleis is misguided.

The solution Sallares offers to this problem is that political and age-based organization dominated separate spheres of Greek life. In his view, age-based customs regulated marriages and other sexual relationships in the same way that law regulated other aspects of life. In the absence of legal control, social expectation led people to take part in certain kinds of relationship at particular stages of their lives. Unfortunately, here again his methodology undermines his argument; extreme diachronism returns,⁹³ and the distinction between legal regulation and age-based social organization blurs. For example, in Crete "...where an age class system best preserved its original traits into historical times, the timing of marriage was not left to individual choice but determined by the socio-political organization"⁹⁴ – suddenly, social and political organization have become parts of a single whole, rather than contrasting spheres of age-based social organization and law-based political organization.

Furthermore, age clearly mattered in contexts beyond sexual relationships.

Athenian citizens had to reach the age of 30 to qualify for many magistracies and

⁹³ "As evidence of the demographic significance of age class organization in Ionia, at Ephesos the age class of boys aged sixteen had to meet the age class of girls aged fourteen with a view to arranging marriages" (Sallares 1991:168) takes the meeting of the young lovers in the *Ephesian Tale* as normative for all "Ionian" poleis. I cannot share Sallares' confidence, and if there is evidence of age classes in pre-Mycenean Greek, and also in Greek novels, what this tells us about primeval Greece, Roman-era Ephesos, or any other specific time and place remains unclear.

⁹⁴ Sallares 1991:176.

priesthoods, and as I shall show, both Athens and Sparta began to organize their armies by age in the fourth century — *contra* both Sallares' emphasis on continuity of age-based institutions throughout antiquity and his attempt to restrict their area of influence.⁹⁵

More recently, James Davidson has attempted to align Classical Greece with the age-class societies studied by anthropologists by questioning the degree of political organization in the Greek polis:

The theory that acephalousness, statelessness, egalitarianism or whatever, is linked to age-class organization, that, as power-rotating, coeval-identifying, collective-succession societies by definition, they are structurally opposed to power-cornering and power-perpetualising government, clearly needs further elaboration. But it is no coincidence that Greek historians have also been arguing, without reference to age-class structure, that the polis is 'acephalous' or 'stateless'. It is a discourse typical of students of age-class societies and their research makes investigation of the relationship between Greek age-class systems and kingship (in Macedonia and Sparta) or tyranny of special interest.

(Davidson 2006:36)

Where Sallares attempted to avoid the apparent incompatibility of state and age-based organization by assigning each a separate portfolio, Davidson suggests that they are indeed incompatible, but Greece was not as politically organized as is commonly

⁹⁵ And as Forsdyke 2008 shows, Greek political institutions and social practices were tightly interconnected; the kind of compartmentalization Sallares envisions would be strange indeed.

believed. Davidson's version of the polis is thus more like the "tribal" societies studied by anthropologists.

By "Greek historians", Davidson here refers chiefly to Moshe Berent, and Berent's thesis that the Classical polis should be considered a stateless society is by no means uncontroversial.⁹⁶ Without going too far into the argument, I will note that Mogens Herman Hansen's critique of Berent provides a version of Greek views of citizenship that is useful and relevant here.⁹⁷ Hansen defines the polis in terms starkly different from Davidson's "power-cornering and power-perpetualising government"; instead, it is "a community based on rotation, and rotation in office is the key behind the organisation of the democratic polis."⁹⁸ Political and age-based modes of social organization need be mutually exclusive. While one could argue that the one-term magistracies and priesthoods, rotating prytanies, and other means by which Athens kept power from staying too long in the same hands made age-based rotation unnecessary, there is evidence that the Athenians used age-based organization as one more means to the desired end.

While the ideology of rotating power is distinctively democratic, a similar concept appears even among the Spartiates, whose mutual equality was as marked as that of Athenian citizens. The Spartan *agoge* is perhaps the most familiar example of a Greek system of age classes in which the younger consented to obey their elders and, in turn, were obeyed by those younger than themselves. For reasons that shall become clear, my detailed

⁹⁶ While it is certainly true that no Classical polis had the bureaucratic institutions of a modern government, that merely proves that they were not modern states — and Berent 2000, for example, places entirely too much weight on Athens' relative lack of bureaucracy.

⁹⁷ Hansen 2002.

⁹⁸ Hansen 2002:28.

discussion of Sparta will come at the end of this chapter; in the next section, I will set out the Athenian evidence for age classes. After that, it remains to ask whether the anthropological evidence clearly shows that age-based and political organization cannot coexist. The case study of the Zulu under Shaka indicates that the case for exclusivity is not airtight, and also offers interesting parallels to Classical Greek use of age-based organization in military contexts. Although the 19th-century transformation of Zulu government and society responded to circumstances very different from those of early fourth-century Greece, comparing the role of age in military organization in both situations shows some of the advantages of such organization, and prepares the ground for a side-by-side look at Athenian and Spartan age classes.

Expanding the role of age-classes: Conscription by age

There is clear evidence that, in the fourth century, Athens assigned citizens to age classes as a means of tracking their obligations to military service and eligibility for priesthoods, the Boule, and other civic offices. It is by no means clear when these age classes were instituted, but whether they were age-old institutions given new significance or only established for the first time in the fourth century, they represent deliberate use of age-based organization by the polis.

The most complete description of the Athenian age classes is provided by *Ath.*

Pol. 53:

δαιτηται δ' εἰσιν οἷς ἂν ἐξηκοστὸν ἔτος ἦ. τοῦτο δὲ δῆλον ἐκ τῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ τῶν ἐπωνύμων.

εἰσὶ γὰρ ἐπωνυμοὶ δέκα μὲν οἱ τῶν φυλῶν, δύο δὲ καὶ τετραράκοντα οἱ τῶν ἡλικιῶν· οἱ δὲ ἔφηβοι ἐγγραφόμενοι πρότερον μὲν εἰς

λελευκωμένα γραμματεία ἐνεγράφοντο, καὶ ἐπεγράφοντο αὐτοῖς ὅ
τ' ἄρχων ἐφ' οὗ ἐνεγράφησαν, καὶ ὁ ἐπώνυμος ὁ τῷ προτέρῳ ἔτει
δεδιαιτηγῶς, νῦν δ' εἰς στήλην χαλκὴν ἀναγράφονται, καὶ ἴσταται ἡ
στήλη πρὸ τοῦ βουλευτηρίου παρὰ τοὺς ἐπωνύμους. (53.4)

...

χρῶνται δὲ τοῖς ἐπωνύμοις καὶ πρὸς τὰς στρατείας, καὶ ὅταν
ἡλικίαν ἐκπέμπωσι, προγράφουσιν, ἀπὸ τίνος ἄρχοντος καὶ
ἐπωνύμου μέχρι τίνων δεῖ στρατεύεσθαι. (53.7)

Men who are 60 years old can be arbitrators. This is clear from the
archons and the *eponymoi*, for there are ten *eponymoi* of the tribes and 42
of the age-classes. Ephebes used to be inscribed on whitened tablets, and
the archon of the year in which they were registered and the *eponymos*
who had arbitrated the previous year, but now they are inscribed on a
bronze stele and the stele is set up in front of the Bouleuterion, beside the
eponymoi [of the tribes]. (53.4)

...

They [the age-*eponymoi*] are also used with regard to military expeditions.
When they send out an age-class, they announce in advance that everyone
from a certain archon and *eponymos* to a certain other [pair] must serve.
(53.7)

As Matthew Christ has shown,⁹⁹ this system of military conscription originated during the fourth century and replaced an earlier system in which each tribe drew up a new list of men each time an army was gathered. It is not clear precisely when the transition between the two methods of conscription occurred, but the old method was used during the Peloponnesian War, and Aeschines was called up using the new system some 30 or so years after the end of the war.¹⁰⁰ It is thus clear that the Athenian assembly voted at some point in that interval to adapt their military organization so that it made greater use of age-based organization. This decision clearly shows not only that political and age-based forms organization coexisted in Classical Greece, but also that Greek poleis could employ age-based organization as an instrument to achieve state goals – in this case, ensuring that citizen-soldiers were called up on an equitable basis, and (through the combination of this change with the reformed epehebeia) as members of established units of men who consistently trained and served together.

Nor was Athens alone in extending the role of age in military organization; although 4th century Spartan *syssitai* grouped men of different ages,¹⁰¹ Spartans went to war alongside their agemates rather than their messmates. *Xen. Lac.* 11.2 states that before a military expedition, the ephors announced what age range would be called to serve, just as *Ath. Pol.* 53.7 describes the Athenians doing. Xenophon's *Hellenica* describes a Spartan army organized by five-year blocks, with “τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἡβης” forming the core of the army, and six more groups, comprising men aged 30 to 60, called upon less frequently.

⁹⁹ Christ 2001.

¹⁰⁰ Aesch. 2.167-168.

¹⁰¹ *Xen. Lac.* 5.5.

When exactly the Spartans began to use age-based military organization is subject to debate, and even less certain than the date of the parallel Athenian reform. Herodotus' description of the three Spartan graves at Plataea has sometimes been taken as evidence that Spartans treated men of different ages differently at least as early as 479. This interpretation, however, requires an emendation to the text which would itself create new problems,¹⁰² and in the best case can only count as indirect evidence for the organization of living soldiers. Thucydides shows no awareness of age-based organization in the Spartan military, and he consistently describes the Spartan army as being divided into seven parts. Such an arrangement would be incompatible with the eight divisions that would be created by dividing the age range 20-60 by five,¹⁰³ and this discrepancy between Thucydides and Xenophon suggests that the Spartans changed their military organization after the Peloponnesian War, much like the Athenians.

Assigning each year's new ephebes – that is, the group of young men who were newly enrolled as citizens in that year – an eponymous hero with whom they would be identified for most of their adult lives (the 42 years of theoretical eligibility for military service) would have provided them with a sense of group identity, as would their term in the ephebeia. Regular cult dedicated to their eponymous hero, and shared military service, would have strengthened the corporate bond. Enrollment as a citizen and ephebe functioned like the initiation ceremonies described by Bernardi, in which children gained

¹⁰² At 9.85.2, the manuscripts agree on ἱεράς, but giving priests who fell in battle a separate tomb is unparalleled, and an ancient lexicon to Herodotus contains the word εἶρεν, which is nowhere in the manuscripts; hence the suggestion that the Spartans built a tomb for *eirenes* rather than for priests, at Plataea. Among other problems, though, this produces a suspiciously young commander. For further discussion, see How and Wells ii.235.

¹⁰³ For a detailed discussion of the differences between Thucydides' and Xenophon's descriptions of the Spartan army, see Xenophon and Lipka 2002, appendix III.

the social identity of adults, were collectively assigned a social age¹⁰⁴ and *agemates*, and granted the privileges and expected to uphold the responsibilities of a new age grade, in this case the rights and obligations of *ephebes*. But the absence of unequivocal evidence for these *helikai* before the fourth century, and the fact that the evidence we do have largely pertains to a role they did not have in the fifth century, raises many questions. For example, James Davidson writes:

If the whole system was a fourth-century invention, which by the time of Aristotle had managed just one, if that, complete cycle, one would expect to have found traces of such an important reform... Do we envisage a massive (unmentioned) operation to assign new annual age-sets to all current citizens *en masse*? Until evidence for such an upheaval turns up, it seems wiser to assume that the system was adjusted not invented in the fourth century. For how did fifth-century Athenians know how old people were?... My impression, though I wouldn't stake my life on it, is that some kind of age-class system had operated in all Greek *poleis* from time immemorial... (Davidson 2006:39)

Retroactively assigning tens of thousand Athenians to age classes would indeed have been a monumental endeavor, and we have no direct evidence of such a thing. The decree of Demophilos in 346 ordered an event of similar scope – scrutiny of the citizen rosters in each deme, with demesmen to vote on cases of newly-disputed citizenship –

¹⁰⁴ My full argument that social age was assigned to Athenian only when they were enrolled as citizens is below, but in brief: the ages of Greek children appear to never have been quite certain, and the *Ath. Pol.*'s account of the registration of new citizens strongly implies that new citizens were defined as being 18 rather than that biological age was a carefully-observed prerequisite for citizenship.

and left a mark in several surviving speeches. While the prospect of losing one's citizenship was more threatening than being informed of membership in a new kind of association, the lack of testimony regarding such an extensive reorganization invites skepticism.

On the other hand, there is no clear evidence of Athenian age classes before that provided by Aeschines. While Davidson identifies a number of interesting possible reflections of the 42-year cycle of age-eponymoi, the evidence does not allow conclusive proof that the institution existed long before Aeschines' experience of it. On balance, it seems likely (but unprovable) that Davidson's impression that age classes pre-existed their role in military organization at Athens is substantially correct, and that they were not invented in the 4th century but rather given new importance then.

The very possibility of such change contradicts Sallares' framework, which assumes an extreme degree of continuity across centuries and even millennia. Even if Greek poleis inherited age classes in some form from the prepolitical past, Athenian and Spartan age classes clearly acquired military functions in the 4th century which had not been theirs in the 5th. The fact of change within a political system is more important than the details of the *status quo ante* for showing that, despite the hypothesis that political and age-based organization are fundamentally incompatible, ancient states could and did make use of age classes.

Age classes and military discipline: a comparative study

Age-based military organization in the Zulu kingdom offers a useful comparison to 4th-century Greece. While the autocratic Zulu monarchy was a markedly different political structure from either Athenian democracy or the complex Spartan constitution,

all three societies undeniably possessed significantly greater political organization than Bernardi's model considers compatible with an age-class system. But the existence of age-based organization among the Zulu is not controversial, and the creation of a system in which age classes became military units was connected to the rise of the Zulu monarchy. The Zulu thus demonstrate that a state could, and at least once did, expand the role of age classes to further its own ends in a way quite similar to that which I believe happened in Athens and Sparta after the Peloponnesian War.

In addition, the Zulu age-class system was complicated by exceptional statuses restricted to specific aristocratic lineages. These parallel the exceptional status of the Spartan kings and crown princes, who were exempt from the *agoge* and could continue to wage war after reaching the age at which other Spartiates retired.¹⁰⁵ This indicates that age-based organization took different forms reflecting the values and priorities of those who used it. In Athens and in egalitarian "pre-political" communities, age classes affirm the equality of all full members of society, but in more stratified societies like Sparta and the Zulu, members of some social classes enjoyed privileges denied to others. The military benefits of age-based organization are, however, essentially the same everywhere; it encourages solidarity among the members of each age class and deference toward their elders, thereby channeling the aggressive impulses of young men in directions chosen by the established authorities.¹⁰⁶

The Zulu kingdom essentially began when Shaka took control of the Mthethwa empire which had earlier subordinated the Zulu people, in a reversal evocative of

¹⁰⁵ See below.

¹⁰⁶ Lamphear 1998.

Herodotus' account of Cyrus turning the Persians from servants of the Medes into their masters. Shaka is generally credited with transforming the Zulu political, social, and military structure, although there is good reason to believe that he has been credited with more innovation than was truly his. It is also true and also often overlooked that Shaka's reign spanned just over one decade of the Zulu kingdom's 62 years of independent existence, and the kingdom's institutions were not frozen in amber at the moment of Shaka's death. Central control grew weaker over time, starting with the attempted revolt of one major clan shortly after Shaka's death. By the 1870s, the Zulu kingdom functioned more like a loose federation, and the king required the assent of notionally-subordinate chiefs who ruled nearly-independent territories.¹⁰⁷

Before his war with the British, King Cetshwayo had not called up an army in twenty years. The army he raised when he needed one belies the notion that Zulu men were not allowed to marry until completing their term of military service; a majority of the Zulu soldiers who fought at Rorke's Drift were married men in their forties.¹⁰⁸ The men who left their wives and children at home to fight the Boers and then the British, however, did so organized in "age-regiments" — that is, even decades after Shaka, age classes served together as military units.

The origin of Zulu age-regiments is intimately connected to Shaka's rise to power. He likely borrowed the idea of age-based military organization from Dingiswayo, the Mthethwa king he served and whose heirs he displaced; and Dingiswayo had

¹⁰⁷ Dodds 1998:36ff, Edgerton 1988:23-24.

¹⁰⁸ Edgerton 1988:23-25, 96-99.

instituted age regiments precisely to centralize his control of his armies.¹⁰⁹ Traditionally, Mthethwa and Zulu armies alike were organized by kinship groups, and each clan raised its own troops. In the Mthethwa and then the Zulu empires, each regiment drew its members from many clans, and was given its own barracks and distinctive uniform. The bonds of kinship were thus replaced with new regimental loyalties. Each age class not only trained, lived, and fought together, but were provided with a set of visual symbols that served as focal points for group identity and enabled each age class to be distinguished from all others by sight.

Individual identification with the regiment was further bolstered by rivalries between regiments.¹¹⁰ This competition between regiments echoed Xenophon's observation that Spartiates of military age engaged in a constant "competition for excellence",¹¹¹ with each striving to show himself braver than his peers. Similarly, the cult of eponymous heroes in Athens would have provided symbols of group unity that served purposes similar to those of Zulu regimental regalia.

Zulu men were in the king's service until the age of forty, at which point they ceased to be liable for military service; only then were they allowed to marry. After marriage, men were allowed to turn their attentions to family responsibilities and the clan loyalties which had been suppressed during their military careers (but recall that by the Anglo-Zulu Wars, this was no longer necessarily the case).¹¹²

Replacing clan units with age regiments had effects much the same as those of the fourth-century Attic ephebic reforms. First, age-classes are cross-sections of the society

¹⁰⁹ Deflem 1999:376-77.

¹¹⁰ Edgerton 1988:35-36, 181-82.

¹¹¹ ἔρῳν περὶ ἀρετῆς (Xen. *Lac.* 4.2).

¹¹² Dodds 1998:19-21.

from which they are drawn, insofar as the homes and blood ties of the men in them are essentially random. A class of Athenian ephebes was thus a scale model of the polis, coming from different demes and brought together at the beginning of adulthood to learn how to fight. Their ephebic and then military service formed lasting bonds that cut across their affiliation with different demes, phratries, and other social groups, and were reinforced during peacetime by the cult of an eponymous hero assigned to each age class.

Unlike Attic ephebes, however, not all Zulu soldiers were treated equally. Certain aristocratic lineages kept special privileges after the transition from lineage-based to age-based military organization, and part of the Zulu military was not reorganized at all:

Under Shaka, the top offices of these royal sections [territorial divisions] were monopolized by Zulu royals and members of collateral clans. The north was therefore one section of the Zulu army that was not organized on an age basis. Moreover, the divisions in the army were not uniform; they differed from one another both in status and composition; clear distinctions existed between privileged and inferior units. Access to the former was determined by birth, rather than age or ability... For example, men of the elite amaWombe unit were permitted to marry, while those of the less privileged isiPezi, who were of the same age or older, could not. (King 2006:169)

Similarly, important military and civic offices were filled with men from a few prestigious clans, rather than selected from the population at large on the basis of merit. And although Shaka valorized youth and denigrated age, he allowed many elders – those

he favored, or who favored him – to keep their positions of authority when he took power.¹¹³

This version of Zulu political and military organization was a system with two strata. Those of royal or otherwise noble birth were exempted from many of the restrictions placed upon those whose origins were less prestigious, and had more avenues for personal advancement open to them. They were also allowed to blur the distinction between age grades. For Zulu commoners and non-Zulu subjects of the empire, military service and marriage were mutually incompatible, but members of the hereditary elite were allowed to combine the two and divide their loyalties between state and household in a way specifically forbidden to others.

In this respect, the Zulu parallel Sparta more than Athens. The fourth-century Attic ephebeia was standardized for all citizens,¹¹⁴ and all citizen-soldiers were conscribed and served under the same conditions. The Spartan age-class system, however, contained a number of special exceptions. Most conspicuous of these exceptions were the kings, who were in a sense ageless; because crown princes were exempt from the *agoge*, they were never assigned to age classes, and some continued to lead armies in the field long after their peers were considered too old to fight.

The contrast between a class of soldiers who live by one set of rules and aristocrats who live by others is an expression of the stratification of these societies. For

¹¹³ King 2006:169-70.

¹¹⁴ Although this point remains controversial, with some arguing that the ephebeia was restricted to the hoplite classes. The *Ath. Pol.*'s description of the ephebeia begins with an account of how new citizens were registered and treats enrollment as an ephebe as part of that process, with no indication that different new citizens were treated differently. I find this convincing enough.

Spartan *homoioi* and Zulu commoners alike, being assigned to age classes helped to define a place in a hierarchy. Spartan princes were exempt from the *agoge*, but Lacedaimonian *perioikoi* were not allowed into it; the difference is consequential. But if inclusion in and exclusion from age classes were means of reinforcing social stratification, they could be so because the members of an age class were considered equal to each other.

Now, to return briefly to Bernardi. Bernardi sees the Zulu as something of an aberrant case, because their age-class system focused on military functions and their political system replaced councils of elders with an autocratic king:

[The military role of age classes is traditionally] important, but not exclusive: It was only the historically unique reform found among the Nguni that made it so central. But such a manipulation of the military function altered the nature of the entire social organization. Shaka's reforms not only affected 'the sexual labour division,' but had even greater consequences for the distribution and exercise of power. Shaka's true goal, beyond his technological and organizational reforms, was that of concentrating in the supreme chief all forms of power and command. Although this concentration was the basis for extraordinary efficiency, it altered the traditional nature of military activity. From a right/duty, exercised in a polity that, if not acephalous, was certainly not highly centralized, military service became an obligation imposed from on high and entirely subordinated to the wishes of the king. (Bernardi 1985:119)

Granted, there should be significant differences between an autocratic conquest state and a society with a minimum of formal government, but I think Bernardi attempts here to present a difference of degree as a difference of kind. The Zulu life course continued to follow the same basic pattern that Bernardi presents as normative: men were assigned to age-classes at initiation into adulthood, and an age grade focused on military service was followed by one in which men were expected to marry, raise children, and build up the wealth of their households. Developments after Shaka make clear that the military uses of age classes persisted through phases of political decentralization, rather than being necessarily tied to the authority of a strong central king. While Shaka found age-based organization useful as a tool for disrupting old loyalties and strengthening his rule, it had other uses as well, which were not tied to a specific set of political developments. Here, the perspective of military historian John Lamphear is more useful. In an article examining the military functions of age classes in several East African societies, Lamphear notes their role in moderating intrasocietal conflict:

...[T]he dynamics of the age-class systems often provide a 'queue discipline' which encourages young men to wait their turn, and play out a role entailing group solidarity, communal brotherhood, and obedient deference until such time as they enter a new role where individual acquisitiveness and differentiation are the norm. In many instances, then, age-class systems emerge as institutions to moderate and control the potential violence of the younger men who, somewhat ironically, are trusted with the security of the society. (Lamphear 1998:81)

Put slightly differently, age-class systems help channel young men's aggressive tendencies outward, away from their own communities, while also encouraging them to cooperate with each other in pursuits approved by their elders. This is doubly conducive to military discipline, which demands that soldiers support the other members of their units and obey orders from superiors.

Citizen adulthood at a glance

With the theory of age classes and age grades and the military uses of age classes in place, it is now time to examine Greek age grades. The best-known Classical age grades are those of the Spartan *agoge*. After completion of the *agoge* and thus entrance into adulthood, however, Spartiates continued to progress through another sequence of age grades. As *hebontes*, Spartans spent ten years as soldiers separated from family, political, and even economic life. They then became *akmazones*, gaining the right to marry while remaining theoretically liable for military service until the age of 60, at which point they advanced to the status of elders and became eligible for the Gerousia. Although the vocabulary is less distinct, adult Athenian citizens also went through a nearly identical progression, becoming eligible for office at 30, and remaining theoretically liable for military service until the age of 60.

As I mentioned in the comparative study of the Zulu, the Spartan system contained several special cases for exceptional social statuses – both above and below those of the *homoioi* – while the Athenian system was uniform for all citizens. Not only were age classes a tool that governments could use, they were used in ways that reflected the principles of the governments that used them. For the radical democracy of Athens, age classes, as one of many institutions that encouraged social bonds between citizens,

encouraged egalitarianism. At Sparta, they were a means for making equals of the *homoioi*, but also for distinguishing them from their social inferiors and superiors. The *perioikoi* did not take part in the *agoge*, but neither did heirs to the Spartan thrones; and if a Spartiate disgraced himself in battle, he suffered punishments that resembled a demotion in age grade.

Because the Athenian system was uniform for all citizens, it will be the subject of the next section. Once the baseline has been established with Athens, a discussion of Sparta will follow.

Athens: Age and entry into citizenship

After being accepted into his deme, a new Athenian citizen was – at least in the time of the *Ath. Pol.* – enrolled as an ephebe. This at once marked the polis' first official notice of the new citizen, assigned him a social age, and placed him into an age class. The demesmen's vote of approval was not sufficient for full acceptance as an adult and citizen, however; that took completion of the ephebeia, which combined military training, social bonding among age-mates, and visible participation in public festivals. In a very real sense, young men acquired the status of ephebes by performing the role of ephebe, and it is through being seen and accepted as ephebes that their fellow-citizens came to accept and acknowledge them as new citizens.

Regardless of when they had been born, all new ephebes were officially 18 years old. The inscription of their names under the heading of the year's eponymous archon and an eponymous hero made their age a social fact and made precise determinations of age possible for the rest of their adult lives. There were more age-based status changes to come after the beginning of citizenship. In addition to casual divisions into *neoi* and

presbyteroi, three precise breakpoints distinguished stages of adult life. The ages 18 through 20 were the formal *ephebeia*, a period of military training during which men were allowed to participate in legal cases only in special circumstances; most citizen rights followed at 20, the age of 30 brought eligibility for bouletic service and other *archai*, and the age of 60 – for those who reached it¹¹⁵ – meant the official end of liability for military service (though in practice men in their 40s and later would be called onto the battlefield only in extreme emergencies) and a year-long term as an arbitrator of civil disputes.

These same breakpoints are, as I shall show below, also significant at Sparta, though Sparta was home to a number of special niches or alternate patterns that complicate the overall picture. At Athens, a citizen was a citizen, but Sparta incorporated differences of status into its age-class system via special treatment for – most prominently – crown princes, kings, and cowards.

The *Ath. Pol.* straightforwardly provides an age for the beginning of citizenship at Athens:

μετέχουσιν μὲν τῆς πολιτείας οἱ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων γεγονότες ἀστών,
ἐγγράφονται δ' εἰς τοὺς δημότας ὀκτοκαίδεκα ἔτη γεγονότες.

¹¹⁵ It is difficult to evaluate potential demographic models for Classical Greece. The most extensive information we have about the age structure of any population in the ancient world comes from Roman-era Egyptian census records, which enabled Bagnall and Frier to conclude that Coale-Demeny model 3 West life tables are a plausible demographic model for that time and place (Bagnall and Frier 1994). If that model is also appropriate for 4th century Athens, then only about a quarter of males who lived to reach the age of 5 would survive to see their 60th year.

Citizenship belongs to those whose parents are both members of the city. They are registered in their demes when they are 18 years old. (*Ath. Pol.* 42.1)

How exactly demesmen knew when a prospective citizen turned 18, however, is not transparent. Modern states document the births of children, and number years according to a well-established era. The result of these practices is that determining anyone's age is a simple matter of subtraction that can be performed by government clerks and private citizens alike. Classical Athens, however, designated years by names of annual magistrates rather than numbers. In this system, determining the time between recorded events, or the time between a recorded event and the present – and note that we are almost never told who was eponymous archon at the birth of any particular Athenian – would require knowledge of how many eponymous archons had served between the two named years.¹¹⁶

The *Ath. Pol.*'s description of the enrollment process, which immediately follows this summary of the qualifications to become an ephebe, casts further suspicion on the apparent fixed standard. A prospective citizen's demesmen were asked to verify both criteria for citizenship before adding him to the roster: they had first to decide whether he really was of age (εἰ δοκοῦσι γεγονέναι τὴν ἡλικίαν τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου), and then

¹¹⁶ There is a possible mechanism that would simplify the tracking of years; the annual inscriptions described at *Ath. Pol.* 53.4, listing new ephebes with the names of the year's eponymous archon and an eponymous hero – more about which later – would constitute a publically-accessible listing of eponymous archons in order. But we have no evidence that these inscriptions were ever used for this purpose, and precise dating seldom appears in Classical sources at all. See Chapter 3 for my full discussion of the ways Athenians talked about when past events had happened; archon names were almost never used in this capacity, and the usual reference points were festivals and events of great civic importance, e.g. the year of the Thirty Tyrants or of a major battle.

whether he was free and of legitimate birth (εἰ ἐλευθεριὸς ἐστὶ καὶ γέγονε κατὰ τοὺς νόμους).¹¹⁷ There is no indication here of objective evidence, no records or other documentation. Instead, the demesmen were asked to use their judgment, showing that demes did not keep a record of prospective-citizen births any more than did the central administration of the polis. Here as elsewhere, the Athenian government functioned through collections of citizens rather than bureaucracies. The collective judgment of the deme determined whether a prospective citizen was of age or not. And if age was determined by judgment rather than proof, then it cannot have been understood as the objectively-verifiable property we generally consider it to be.

The next question, then, is on what basis demesmen made their judgments of prospective citizens. If ὀκτοκαίδεκα ἔτη γεγονότες did not mean – as we might expect – “born more than 17 but fewer than 19 years before the present date”, then the age of 18 represented something other than biological age. What the demesmen were asked to provide was “a qualitative assessment of the prospective citizens’ physical maturity”¹¹⁸ and of their general readiness to take on the obligations of citizenship. When demesmen were asked to evaluate a young man’s “age”, they responded not by attempting to investigate a past event, but by judging the candidate’s present status. In Robertson’s words, “the date of birth of a citizen was not common knowledge: it did not constitute a social fact,” but the *dokimasia*, in which the nude body of the candidate was compared to an ideal adult male citizen body, established his age as a social fact.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ *Ath. Pol.* 42.1

¹¹⁸ Robertson 2000:149.

¹¹⁹ Robertson 2000:158, 61.

To extend the argument a bit further, demesmen evaluated prospective citizens in a more holistic way than *Ath. Pol.* 42.1 narrowly describes. The *Ath. Pol.* focuses on specific requirements of “age” – as judged through the observable traits of physical maturity – and legal status (under the requirements of the Periclean citizenship law), but the larger question before the demesmen was whether to accept the candidate as one of their own. Verifying the status of a candidate’s parents (and their marriage) and the candidate’s own physical state was part of judging his eligibility and readiness to become a citizen.

Although deme membership was hereditary and thus did not always reflect current residence, most citizens still lived within the territory of their demes. Accordingly, the men who voted on a prospective citizen would have had many opportunities to see the boy around the markets, at festivals, in the gymnasium, etc., as he grew up. There would also be overlap between the father’s deme and his phratry, to whom he would have ceremonially introduced his son in childhood and again in adolescence.¹²⁰ Thus, demesmen would have been expected to be familiar with the prospective citizen and his family; they would be able to serve not just as witnesses that a valid marriage existed and that the prospective citizen was the son of his claimed father, but also aware of the boy’s level of physical and social maturity.

The *Ath. Pol.* does not tell us how demes decided when to review a particular candidate for citizenship, or how often – or on what grounds – objections were raised against their decisions. We can imagine proud parents eager to declare their sons men, or

¹²⁰ These two introductions to the phratry were the *meion* and *koureion*, discussed in Lambert 1993: chapter 4, especially p. 161ff.

for the sons to become economically self-sufficient, but parents would also have potential motives for claiming that a youth was still a boy. Registration as a citizen meant the beginning of liability for military service, so delaying registration would mean shielding a boy from the dangers of war — for a time.

The same familiarity that enabled demesmen to vote on a youth's maturity would likely also help to determine when it was time to vote on each youth. There is evidence, however, that hastening or delaying enrollment in the ephebeia could be socially acceptable or at least tolerated. An inscription honoring the ephebes of the tribe Leontis in 324/3 includes four pairs of ephebes with the same patronymic, listed on consecutive lines – column I lines 7-8 (Alkimakhos and Diodoros, sons of Kallimakhos), column I lines 9-10 (Pasiphon and Arkhepolis, sons of Pantenor), column II lines 18-19 (Purros and Philophron, sons of Pankles), column II lines 25-26 (Sosikles and Sosistratos, sons of Sosistratos) – and one pair separated by names with different patronymics – column II, lines 29 and 32 (Dionusippos and Thallippos, sons of Euangelos).¹²¹ Four or five pairs of twins, in a group of 62 young men, would be entirely too many.

Accordingly, Reinmuth speculates that the pairs on adjacent lines were probably brothers close in age, and Dionusippos and Thallippos – the pair not immediately adjacent in the inscription – were the sons of two different Euangeloi. Hansen notes that it is biologically possible for a woman to bear two children within a twelve-month period,¹²² but it would still be statistically improbable for four pairs of siblings in a

¹²¹ Reinmuth 1971, inscription no. 15

¹²² Citing a study in which 2-3% of children were born within a year of a sibling (Hansen 1994).

sample of 62 boys to have been born in the same year. Thus, we are almost certainly looking at cases in which brothers were enrolled as ephebes together.

Perhaps the demesmen of Phrearrhoi tried to discourage Kallimakhos from holding back his older son from citizenship, or from rushing his younger son into adulthood, but the difference in biological age between Alkimakhos and Diodoros was never a concern to the polis. Because Alkimakhos and Diodoros were enrolled as citizens in the same year, they belonged to the same age-class and had the same social age for the entirety of their lives as citizens. What mattered was the eponymous hero and archon under whom they were first enrolled as citizens, not their biological ages.

The decision by the polis to delegate enrollment of new citizens to the demes itself suggests that the evaluation of new citizens was not restricted to externally-verifiable criteria. *Ath. Pol.* 43.2 describes annual inscriptions that collected every deme's list of new citizens into a single list posted in the Agora, and such lists could be used to verify at least whether the man a would-be citizen claimed as his father was himself a citizen;¹²³ the procedure for *dokimasia* before the Boule, when a potential citizen's age was disputed, could just as easily have been used as ordinary practice, instead of a vote by demesmen. The registration of citizens would require essentially the same administrative apparatus regardless of which level of organization handled it.

What the polis gained by making deme membership the means of acquiring Athenian citizenship was the appearance of letting citizenship be determined by a face-to-

¹²³ Although this suggestion may itself be an instance of modern thought imposing itself on the past. *Ps.-Demosthenes 57* – a speech appealing a deme's decision that the speaker's father was not in fact a citizen – makes no appeal to such inscriptions. Rather, the plaintiff charges that the vote against him was conducted improperly, and lists his own and his father's services to the deme and city.

face society. Attica as a whole was far too large for everyone to be personally acquainted with everyone else, but some demes were small enough to make such familiarity possible, and the rest could at least sustain the fiction that every citizen knew every other.¹²⁴

Ephebes and the performance of status

The 4th-century Attic ephebeia consisted of military training, service as border guards, and a number of appearances in civic and religious festivals.¹²⁵ The ephebes were repeatedly put on display before the citizen body they were learning how to join. Their demesmen had already, by voting to enroll them as members of demes, recognized them as eligible and ready for citizenship, but new citizens had yet to earn the recognition of the larger society of the polis. This meant successful completion of military training and participation in ritual activities; through being seen performing the role of ephebe, young men came to be acknowledged as Athenian citizens.

According to *Ath. Pol.* 53.4, each year's ephebes were listed on a bronze stele, displayed before the Boleuterion and beside the statues of the Eponymous Heroes.¹²⁶ We do not know how 139 lists of new demesmen became one new ephebic inscription each year, but somehow both the rosters and the ephebes themselves needed to be gathered from their separate demes and integrated.

¹²⁴ Osborne 1985:45 estimates the total population of the smallest demes at about 130 and the largest around 1500.

¹²⁵ The debate over whether the 4th-century ephebeia was a new institution or a reformed version of an older one has a long history. For the purposes of the present discussion, I am interested in how the ephebeia functioned at one particular historical moment, rather than in its origins and development over time.

¹²⁶ That is, those of the tribes; we have no unambiguous indications of statues of the age-class *eponymoi*.

The account of the ephebeia in *Ath. Pol.* 42 begins with officials selected by the tribes gathering the new ephebes and leading them on a procession around certain shrines. At the end of their first year's training, the ephebes came back to the city for a ceremonial display, then headed off to patrol the Attic countryside.

This account emphasizes the isolation of the ephebes, but both the initial procession and the display of drill put on by ephebes starting their second year, “when the Assembly meets in the theater” (ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ)¹²⁷ would have put them before the eyes of the *demos* in a combined military, civic, and ritual spectacle. Furthermore, the *stelai* described in *Ath. Pol.* 53.4 monumentalized each year-class of ephebes, permanently and visibly recording who had been ephebes with whom, and when.

The ephebes themselves were also put on display. The *Ath. Pol.* does not describe the ceremonies accompanying the posting of the new *stele* and the mustering of the new ephebes, nor does it list the shrines they visited — although Dem. 19.303 indicates that ephebes took an oath at the shrine of Aglauros, which suggests that the ephebes also toured the shrines of the related heroes Herse and Pandrosios, if not of the entire Acropolis — but a procession of hundreds of fledgling citizens would have presented an excellent opportunity for spectacle. Placing a new *stele* in the Agora would also provide an occasion for ceremony.

Besides these rituals directly associated with the ephebeia, the Prometheia, Hephaistaia, and Panathenaia included torch-races between relay teams of ephebes.¹²⁸ At

¹²⁷ (*Ath. Pol.* 42.4)

¹²⁸ It has even been suggested that before 335, the first year of ephebic training was

the Plynteria, ephebes escorted the procession taking the statue of Athena to the sea to be washed, which cast them as protectors of the city's divine patron. A ceremonial escort is a military spectacle; these ephebes were not expected to fight, but they were still an army, and an army assigned to protect the city's divine patron.¹²⁹ Other polis festivals appear to have acquired special roles for ephebes over the course of the Hellenistic period:

| <u>Festival</u> | <u>Ephebic action</u> | <u>First attestation</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Proerosia | Lift sacrificial bulls onto altar | Between 129 and 102 BCE (<i>IG II² 1028</i>) |
| Diisoteria | Boat race | 122/1 BCE (<i>IG II² 1006</i>) |
| Marathon anniversary | Procession to temple of Artemis | Between 102 and 30 BCE (<i>IG II² 1058</i>) |

These extend the pattern, established no later than the 4th century, of putting the ephebes' military order and discipline on display before the Athenian *demos* at religious festivals.

The battle of Marathon occupied a place of pride in Athens' version of its military history, and so ephebes who took part in the festival of Artemis Agrotera at Marathon established a connection with and a challenge to live up to the example set by the legendary *Marathonomachoi* who repelled the might of Persia with no help from the rest of Greece. Boat races at the Diisoteria complemented the footraces and let the ephebes prove themselves skilled in handling ships, and so ready for battle on sea as well as land. Lifting sacrificial victims onto an altar was not precisely a military activity, but it does require group coordination and physical strength, which were also used in battle. Thus, these festivals displayed the ephebes' military training and physical strength to the entire city.

concerned primarily with training for these races (Sekunda 1990).

¹²⁹ Parke 1977:153.

Ath. Pol. 42.4 describes a display of drill made by ephebes starting their second year, “when the Assembly meets in the theater” (ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ). There is some question as to whether all of the ephebes, or only a selected subset of them, took part in this display. John Dillery understands it as involving an entire year-class, and so has argued that this cannot be the Theater of Dionysus, which was not large enough for 500 or more ephebes to maneuver. Instead, he suggests the Panathenaic Stadium as the actual location.¹³⁰ This invites moving the occasion from the securely-attested meeting of the Assembly in the Theater of Dionysus after the City Dionysia to an otherwise-unattested occasion. Such a move does make sense, however, as the meeting in the theater would presumably be that held (according to Demosthenes 21.8-9) ἐν Διονύσου to discuss religious matters in general and to hear specific complaints about the procession and contests of the festival. There is no obvious reason for ephebes to put on a show at a meeting devoted to these subjects; although the City Dionysia was the occasion at which war orphans who had come of age were presented with hoplite equipment, which might be an indication that new ephebes began their service on or shortly after that festival, this does not constitute conclusive evidence.¹³¹

Wherever it took place and regardless of whether all ephebes participated or only a selected few, this event put the ephebes on display as soldiers before the assembly, affirming the connection between civic and military life and letting established citizen-soldiers see their new peers. Gathering the assembly in the Theater of Dionysus rather than the Pnyx for this one occasion each year would also mean that more of the *demos*

¹³⁰ Dillery 2002.

¹³¹ Parke 1977:133-34.

than the Pnyx could hold saw the ephebes display their military training. Ideally, the citizen body as a whole would have looked as a group upon the group of new citizens and remembered their own time as ephebes, and the experience shared across the generations would have reinforced the sense of community.

The experience of the Attic ephebe, then, combined military training in relative isolation with public display. Despite time spent in camp and at outposts on the edges of Attica, Athenian youths were more visible to the demos than they had ever been in their prior lives. They were also more visible than most would ever be again, and those who would become prominent would do so as individuals rather than as part of a class of ephebes. At the various festivals and other displays, ephebes participated in groups.

Enrollment as an ephebe gave young men a social identity, not just as part of the citizen body, but as part of a group defined by age in which they would remain for decades. And it was the display of the ephebes – the men themselves performing various ritual roles, and the inscriptions listing their names – that effected their change of status. It was not turning 18 that made an Athenian boy an adult citizen, but rather acting as a citizen – first, through the structured role of the ephebe – and the acceptance of the community as a citizen. The demesmen’s decision to enroll a new member into a deme granted permission to enter the ephebeia, but successful and visible participation in ephebic activity made that new demesman into an Athenian citizen.

While Attic demes were asked to evaluate new citizens on a regular basis, the entire demos still needed to see the new ephebes performing ephebic activities. Past this brief period of highly-structured status performance, the new citizens were expected to continue taking part in activities proper to citizens — attending meetings of the *ekklesia*;

fighting for the polis when called upon to do so; participating in festivals of polis, deme, phratry, and other associations; using the courts to resolve their disputes; and so forth. In short, having a particular status was a function of being seen doing the things people of that status did.

This understanding of status becomes particularly clear from cases of disputed citizenship.¹³² In Ps.-Demosthenes 57, for example, the speaker Euxitheos appeals the decision of the deme of Halimous to remove him from its register of members. Another resident of Halimous, one Euboulides, had claimed that Euxitheos' father had been a metic who falsely presented himself as a citizen. Euxitheos' defense includes the charge that Euboulides, who was his personal enemy, saw to it that the vote against him was carried out improperly (57.9-13), but this is not the bulk of his argument. Euxitheos brings witnesses – members of the families of both of his father's parents, *phrateres*, *gennetai*, and demesmen – to testify first that his father had rightfully been a citizen (57.20-23) and then that Euxitheos himself had served as *phratriarchon* (57.23); that no one had questioned the citizenship of Euxitheos' father while he was living (57.26-27); that no one had objected to the burial of Euxitheos' brothers in a tomb shared by their *genos* (57.28); building up to a catalog of Euxitheos' and his family's participation in the life of the deme and the city (57.54-69).

Part of Euxitheos' defense is that he and his father participated in a phratry and a *genos* — associations which, while not legally related to membership in a deme, were

¹³² “An Athenian remained a full citizen only for so long as he was accepted by his fellows. Although he would have to be shown to have broken the law for his citizenship to be impaired, given the latitude of Athenian juries to interpret the law in terms of the good of society, this meant that in practice an Athenian (particularly one frequently involved in lawsuits) was secure in his possession of citizenship only as long as his public behavior conformed to the norms of Athenian society” (Ober 1989: 267).

restricted to citizens, and likely to overlap in membership with the deme as well as with each other. Part is that no one had ever – before Euboulides found his opportunity, that is – challenged their participation in these groups. Euxitheos' argument is that he personally and his father before him had always acted as citizens and been accepted as citizens, and therefore that they were and had always been citizens. This legal case dramatizes a process that happened as a matter of course on a regular basis. Recognition of the right to perform certain citizen activities, like joining the ephebeia, constituted permission to perform (in due course) other citizen activities, like voting in the *ekklesia* and (after finishing the ephebeia) having disputes settled in the courts.

Athenian and Spartan age grades

Comparison of the life-course for male citizens at Athens and Sparta reveals the same basic pattern in both poleis. As I have already noted, Athenians were enrolled in their demes when their demesmen accepted them as physically mature, and were considered to be 18 years old as of that year. Two years of military training and participation in festivals followed. Attic ephebes were allowed only limited participation in civic life; for those two years, they were exempt from taxes and court cases, excepting only cases concerning heritable property and priesthoods.¹³³ While these restrictions were lifted upon completion of the ephebeia, eligibility for service on the Boule and most magistracies and priesthoods had to wait another ten years. After the age of 30, an Athenian's gradually-increasing seniority likely won him deference from younger men but no other formal change of status until the social age of 60 – that is, 42 years after

¹³³ *Ath. Pol.* 42.5

being enrolled as a citizen – which brought the official end of liability to military service (though in practice, men in their 40s and 50s would be called upon to fight only in emergencies)¹³⁴, and eligibility or obligation to serve for one year as an arbitrator.

To summarize:

<18 no social age assigned; not a direct concern of the polis (although a boy would be introduced to his father's phratry in early childhood and again in adolescence)¹³⁵

18-20 *ephebe*; required to participate in military training and certain civic and religious rituals; limited access to courts

21-29 eligible for regular military service; most citizen rights, but not eligible for most offices

30+ eligible for Boule and various *archai*

60+ no longer liable for military service; can serve as arbitrator

Although the Spartiate life course is controversial, most of the controversy concerns childhood and adolescence. Nigel Kennell's reconstruction of the male life-course in Classical Sparta, which is based primarily on Xenophon's *Constitution of the Spartans*, can be roughly summarized as:

7?-14? *pais*; education begins

15?-19? *paidiskos*; ready to become an *eromenos*¹³⁶

20?-29 *hebon*; eligible for military service but not full political activity

30+ *akmazon*; most citizen rights, expected to marry¹³⁷

60+ no longer of military age; eligible for the Gerousia

¹³⁴ Demosthenes' *Third Olynthiac* describes the Athenians reacting to news that Philip was sieging Heraion by voting to send a fleet manned by citizens up to the age of 45 (τούς μέχρι πέντε καὶ τετραράκοντ' ἐτών) and to pay for it with an emergency *eisphora* (Dem. 3.4). Demosthenes' point is that the Athenians wasted an opportunity through delay – the fleet sailed months late, with a fraction of the intended strength, and returned before accomplishing anything – but the suggestion that a frightened assembly could call on men in their 40s to fight is likely valid.

¹³⁵ On the *meion* and *koureion*, see Lambert 1993: chapter 4, especially p. 161ff.

¹³⁶ Kennell 1995:125.

¹³⁷ Kennell 1995:132.

Kennell believes that the Hellenistic and Roman sources document invented traditions which have no history in the Classical period, and accordingly disregards them. However, the reconstruction of Paul Cartledge, whose more traditional approach encompasses later evidence, is essentially identical past the onset of adulthood:

| | |
|--------|---|
| 7-11 | first stage of <i>agoge</i> |
| 12-17 | <i>agoge</i> becomes harsher; expected to become an <i>eromenos</i> |
| 18-19 | <i>paidiskos</i> ; service analogous to Attic ephebeia, some eligible for Krypteia |
| 20 | entry to <i>syssition</i> |
| c. 25? | expected to marry ¹³⁸ |
| 30+ | allowed to live with wife; full citizen status possibly only attained upon fatherhood |
| 60+ | no longer of military age; eligible for the Gerousia |

In both reconstructions, the ages of 20, 30, and 60 appear as significant milestones. Thus, scholars roughly agree on the ages of status transitions in Athens and Sparta, and the similarities between these two customary opposites suggest that they were representative of the larger Greek world in this regard.

It should be noted, however, that these tables reflect modern views of ancient phenomena, rather than contemporary understandings of the life cycle —most ancient sources, and especially the sources for Sparta, do not give numbers. In particular, Xenophon's apparent vagueness about when, for example, a *hebon* becomes an *akmazon* has frustrated modern scholarship. But Xenophon's interest in what Spartans did at particular stages of life rather than in the moments of transition is in itself valuable evidence for 4th-century ideas of age as status. Xenophon's *Spartan Constitution* supports the interpretation that membership in a particular age grade is attained, as I

¹³⁸ Cartledge 2001:102, 16.

argued above in the context of the Athenian *ephebeia*, not by reaching a particular chronological age, but by participating in a particular set of activities.

The important moments in an adult male's life were not the ages of 18, 20, 30, and 60 in the modern sense, but the reconstruction of breakpoints is still solidly grounded in ancient sources. Xenophon saw the Spartiate's life as divided by *hebe*, *akme*, and the onset of old age. The first marked the beginning of his career as citizen and soldier; the second brought the maturity to participate in matters of state and to head an *oikos* of his own; the third meant a transition from soldier to advisor.

20 appears to have been the customary structural age of *hebe*. Boys drawing near *hebe* were ephebes, given military training and structured roles in civic and religious ritual in preparation for their coming advancement to citizen status. Xenophon clearly identifies *hebe* with the moment of eligibility for military service when, as at *Ages.* 1.31 and *Hell.* 3.4.23, Spartans call up τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἥβης – that is, the Spartiates of the first ten year-classes in a reckoning that began at *hebe* – for battle. *Ath. Pol.* 42's two-year *ephebeia* beginning at the structural age of 18 puts the beginning of regular military service at the same age for Athenians as for Spartans.

Akme is perhaps more arbitrary than *hebe* as the name for a moment of transition, but I have adopted it from *Xen. Lac.* 1.6, which states that Lycurgus required that men marry “at their physical peak” (ἐν ἀκμαίς τῶν σωμάτων). Men past “the youthful stage of life” (τὴν ἡβητικὴν ἡλικίαν) appear at *Xen. Lac.* 4.7 and 11.3, and I take this to refer to the same stage of life as 1.6. 30, then, is the structural age of those Spartans who have just ceased to be among τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἥβης and also of those Athenians newly eligible for civic office.

At Athens, Kennell comments, men between the ages of 20 and 30 “were expected to be the very model of soldierly punctilio, while having yet to enjoy untrammelled rights of citizenship”¹³⁹ – expected to fight, and allowed most of the rights of citizenship, but barred from political offices. Their Spartan counterparts faced restrictions on participation in political, economic, and family life alike. As Lupi’s discussion shows, the expectation was that this stage of life should be devoted to military readiness and activity.¹⁴⁰

I would prefer to reframe the status of Spartan and Athenian men aged 20-30 as not restricted citizenship, but rather, as a different age grade from that of more mature citizens — that is, as a distinct but not inferior set of obligations and responsibilities. Men of this age grade were considered to be vigorous in body but not yet fully mature in judgment, and so their talents were better applied to defending their polis and its interests on the battlefield than to debate in the *ekklisia*.

War, however, also offered opportunities to win a reputation on which a career could be built in the next age grade. The Attic orator Aeschines provides a particularly clear example. His defense of his military record stresses the public prominence he attained through his actions in battle, both directly (a crown awarded by the *demos* after the battle of Tamynae) and indirectly (another crown awarded as part of the honor of reporting the victory).¹⁴¹ Although a successful military career was not essential for a political career, as it was in the Roman Republic, military glory gave Aeschines name

¹³⁹ Kennell 1995:118.

¹⁴⁰ Lupi 2000:49ff.

¹⁴¹ Aeschin. 2.168-9.

recognition among his fellow citizens, and thereby helped to establish him as a public figure.

In addition to the opportunity to win personal glory, these ten years were also a sort of extended apprenticeship in citizenship. Xenophon emphasizes this point when he explains that each *syssition* contained members spanning a range of ages so that young men could learn from their elders.¹⁴² Men between 20 and 30, then, were expected to apply their physical strength to defending their cities, while at the same time observing the examples of political life set by men of the next age class and so preparing for their own turn as decision-makers.

Spartan complications

Not everyone in Lakedaïmon progressed through age grades in the same orderly way. The right to enter the *agoge* and thus begin the progression was narrowly restricted to Spartiates, with lesser residents of the territories under Spartan control denied the training their rulers prided themselves on.

The Spartiates themselves were not guaranteed promotion, but had to continue to prove themselves in order to remain part of their age class. Those who showed cowardice on the battlefield were branded “tremblers”, subjected to public humiliation and a loss of rights. The rights taken from “tremblers” included those that were gained at the transition from *hebon* to *akmazon* at the structural age of 30; in particular, neither men under 30 nor tremblers were allowed to marry. Marcello Lupi suggests that the status of cowards and young men both amounted to “imperfect citizenship”, and that the

¹⁴² Xen. *Lac.* 5.5-6.

punishments for cowardice amounted to a demotion in age.¹⁴³ The role of the adult Spartiate included conspicuous courage on the battlefield, so those who showed cowardice in battle failed to perform the role properly. Accordingly, they received a new status that shared the restrictions placed upon those who, due to youth and inexperience, were not yet considered to have adequately proven their bravery, plus additional reminders of failure.¹⁴⁴ Cowardice on the battlefield was taken as proof that the “trembler” had not and never could develop the judgment of a fully mature man, and thus, he was forever young in the worst of all possible ways. Having failed to live up to the standard set for *akmazontes*, they were given a special status modeled on that of *hebontes* – who were in a sense apprentices not yet given full responsibilities¹⁴⁵ – with the addition of a range of humiliations to distinguish those who were tested and failed from those who had not yet been fully tested.

This idea of special statuses that share some but not all privileges and responsibilities with age grades casts light on another oddity of the Spartan age-class system, namely, the anomalous place kings found in it — or rather, the fact that they did not have a place in it. In democratic Athens, all citizens were equal, and age grade was the primary determinant of whether a particular citizen was liable to military service, eligible for magistracies and priesthoods, etc.; Sparta complicated its age-class system with honors and dishonors that separated particular men from those who would otherwise be their peers.

¹⁴³ Lupi 2000:59-60.

¹⁴⁴ Thuc. 5.34.2 adds a special case of this: the Spartiates who surrendered at Sphacteria were forbidden to hold office or to buy/sell, but later rendered ἐπίτιμοι again.

¹⁴⁵ At Xen. *Lac.* 4.1-2, their education is still in progress.

Paul Cartledge has observed that “the usual necessary links between successful passage through the *agoge*, membership of a mess, and full Spartan citizenship were snapped in the case of the kings. In short, properly speaking the kings were not Homoioi.”¹⁴⁶ He refers particularly here to crown princes’ exemption from the *agoge*, for which our source is Plutarch’s *Life of Agesilaos*. According to Plutarch, custom dictated that Spartan royal heirs receive a special education, but because Agesilaos was not expected to become king, he went through the *agoge* like the son of any ordinary Spartiate, thus becoming exceptional for having experienced what was expected of his subjects.¹⁴⁷

Whatever we understand the *agoge* of Agesilaos’ boyhood to have entailed, it would have been the point at which Spartan boys were assigned to age-classes, the point at which they were given a social age. If crown princes were not enrolled in the *agoge*, then presumably they were never part of an age-class. The kings of Sparta also enjoyed a privilege that was normally restricted to the most senior Spartiates — membership in the Gerousia. 28 of the 30 members of the Gerousia were selected from men over the age of military service; we could call eligibility for the Gerousia one of the privileges of the last Spartan age grade. But the other two members of this council of elders — whose importance, in Cartledge’s view at least, was so great as to make Sparta a gerontocracy — were the two kings, regardless of their age, and while simultaneously serving as military commanders.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, they enjoyed privileges which no age grade combined;

¹⁴⁶ Cartledge 1987:104.

¹⁴⁷ Discussed briefly at Cartledge 2001:44 and more fully in Chapter 3 of Cartledge 1987:.

¹⁴⁸ Cartledge 2001:60.

gerontes did not fight, and *hebontes* and *akmazontes* did not serve in the Gerousia, but kings did both.

If Agesilaos' boyhood was that of a typical *Homoios*, his old age certainly was not: leading mercenaries in the service of an Egyptian rebel is a strange enough pastime for a Spartan king, but more striking still for a man in his 80s. Xenophon praises the old king for, among other things, proving that *arete* is timeless and making the young look weak in comparison to his own old age.¹⁴⁹ Plutarch has Agesilaos declining to personally fight the "tearless battle" on the grounds that he is too old,¹⁵⁰ but at that point he was already 76 years of age,¹⁵¹ and had thus already been campaigning for a decade and a half longer than would be expected of (or allowed to?) an ordinary Spartiate — so well before his anomalous last campaign, he had already been campaigning past the age at which other Spartiates lay down their arms. This suggests that Sparta's kings continued to fight and counsel regardless of age; as anomalous as Agesilaos' career was in other ways, there is no indication that kings were expected to retire at 60.

At the other end of a reign, we know that heirs could take the throne while still too young to rule – as Pleistarchus did after his father Leonidas' celebrated death – in which case a regent, in Pleistarchus' case the notorious Pausanias, was appointed. Less clear is when a regency would end. Pausanias is our best-documented case of a Spartan regent, but his career was, again, highly atypical, so we should look elsewhere for hints as to the required age to be accepted as king. One of the better hints is briefly analyzed in an article by Mary White, who observes that Thucydides reports at 1.107.2 that

¹⁴⁹ Xen. *Age.* 14ff.

¹⁵⁰ Plut. *Age.* 33.3.

¹⁵¹ Cartledge 1987:355.

Pleistoanax was too young to command the Spartan forces in Tanagra (458/7), but did take the field in 446, and that Plutarch adds that the ephors sent him advisors because of his youth.¹⁵² White takes this to mean that he was under 20 at the time of the battle of Tanagra, and not yet 30 by 446. It certainly seems reasonable to assume that a man too young to speak in the assembly should not be allowed to vote with the Gerousia. The detail from Plutarch is intriguing, and White's interpretation of it provocative. The problem of the *hebon*-king appears to be part of the problem of the child-king, however. Normally, kings were *akmazontes* before taking the throne, as Agesilaos was; he became king in his early forties. If Spartan cowards were eternally underaged, then Spartan kings were timeless.

Conclusions

Scholars have long been aware that Greek cities apportioned privileges and responsibilities to their citizens according to age. The parallels between age-based institutions in Classical Greece and age-class systems documented in the anthropological literature have also been noted, but studies of these parallels have been influenced by an unnecessary belief that such social institutions somehow conflict with political organization. This has led to attempts to make Greek age classes organization into relics from an ancient, prepolitical past, or else compartmentalized away from civic institutions.

Evidence from the fourth century, however, makes clear that both Athens and Sparta instituted military forms that extended the role of age classes. Such reforms prove that political institutions could employ age-based organization. The parallel of the Zulu

¹⁵² White 1964:140-41.

kingdom, in particular, suggests that when age classes are used as military units, increased unit cohesion results, with loyalty to the other members of the age class superseding loyalties to kinship groups.

At Athens, being assigned to an age class marked entry into citizenship, but status was only fully acquired through performance. Thus, ephebes were put on display before the citizen population, so that they could be recognized as new citizens and as part of a group that would serve together in battle in future years. Ephebic participation in public festivals meant that there would be many witnesses to their status, provided that the new citizens performed their duties as expected.

Finally, although the ages at which Athenian citizens and Spartan *Homoioi* became eligible for expanded responsibilities were the same or very close, the age-class systems of these two poleis reflect the differences in their political systems. The ideology of equality among citizens in the Athenian democracy produced a system in which all citizens of the same age had the same legal rights and responsibilities. Sparta, however, incorporated status distinctions into its age-based organization. Kings and crown princes simultaneously enjoyed privileges that, for ordinary Spartiates, were associated with different ages; *perioikoi* were not allowed into the system that made all Spartiates equals; and Spartiates who failed to live up to expectations were punished by revocation of the privileges of their ages.

Chapter III: History in the courtroom

Introduction

One of the major themes of my work thus far has been that, in dealing with time, Greek states and individuals did not always seek out the greatest possible level of precision. To the contrary, what we think of as accurate timekeeping would strike a citizen of Classical Athens as completely unnecessary for most situations. In this chapter, I turn to the terms in which Attic orators discussed past events.

Alcidamas' treatise *On the Writers of Written Speeches* argues, and Aristotle's *Rhetoric* concurs,¹⁵³ that marked attention to detail is a characteristic of works written to be read. In speeches intended to be delivered orally, these authors hold that details threaten the illusion of extemporaneity and so should be avoided. Portraying oneself as an amateur by avoiding precise detail and otherwise diverting attention away from the fact that you prepared your speech in advance was a valid rhetorical strategy (as was asking a logographos to avoid precise detail in the speech that you will pretend that you did not hire someone to prepare in advance for you). It was not, however, the only strategy that could succeed before Athenian jurors or Athenian assemblies. In particular,

¹⁵³ "The style of written compositions is most precise, that of debate best suited to delivery" (ἔστι δὲ λέξις γραφικὴ μὲν ἢ ἀκριβεστάτη, ἀγνωστικὴ δὲ ἢ ὑποκριτικωτάτη, Arist. *Rhet.* 3.12.2)).

litigants and orators often found it useful to present themselves as having precise knowledge of the past or the ability to precisely recognize opportunities in the present.

In this chapter, I will examine instances in which Attic orators used precise details about past events, as part of calculated rhetorical strategies. The choice to mention specific points in time, as well as the decision to present particular details of what happened at those points and even to identify those points in particular ways, could win the audience's sympathies and convince them of the speaker's authority. My three major case studies are *Lysias 7*, *Isaeus 6*, and *Demosthenes 18*.

Lys. 7.4-11 contains the apparently-extraneous detail of a list of previous owners and users of the plot of land from which the speaker is accused of having removed the stump of a sacred olive tree. This list begins eight years and three prior owners before the speaker purchased the land; but, as I shall show, this extended ownership history is not extraneous to the speaker's defense. Rather, it is used to build connections between the history of that land and the political history of Athens in the tumultuous period from 411 to 403 BCE. The speaker then uses the analogy between his own land and Athens as a whole to establish his loyalty to the democracy and distance himself from impious oligarchs.

The speaker of *Isaeus 6.13-14* contests an opponent's claim to inherit an estate using, in part, a mathematical argument combining cultural expectations for Athenian women with the history of the Sicilian Expedition. In the opponent's version of his family history, his grandfather had died in the Sicilian Expedition, but left a daughter in the care of the decedent; that daughter then married her guardian. The speaker takes the time since the departure of the Sicilian Expedition, which he specifies by archon year,

subtracts the age of the would-be heir, and declares that the woman was old enough to have been married to someone else and thus not need a guardian other than her husband.

The precision of the archon date and the calculation amount to a claim to authoritative knowledge of the past. The speaker uses this historical and mathematical precision to claim he knows more than his opponent does about events in his opponent's claimed family history. In this way, he asserts that he has the authority to declare the other man a fraud and impostor.

Demosthenes began his political career by urging his fellow Athenians to seize opportunities to stop the military expansion of Macedon and ensure lasting independence through swift action at the right moment. His claim to authority as a statesman rested largely on his ability to recognize a *kairos* before it was gone, and advise the *demos* of the course of action that would bring the greatest possible chance of success if they acted quickly enough. The bulk of my discussion of Demosthenes, however, will focus not on the speeches by which he established his reputation, but rather the speech by which he defended it after Macedonian hegemony was undeniable.

In particular, I examine the account in Dem. 18.169-179 of Athenian reactions to the fall of Elateia and the speech in which Demosthenes proposed allying with Thebes against Macedon. This account was given nearly a decade after the events it describes, and has long been famous for its vivid detail. Here, I will argue, Demosthenes sought to steer his hearers' recollections of the evening when news of Elateia's defeat reached Athens and the next morning's meeting of the assembly toward accepting that the policy he then proposed was validated by the total acceptance of the *demos*.

Lys. 7, Is. 6, and Dem. 18 each illustrate interweaving of different kinds and scopes of time. Political time affects each. This is most obvious in Dem. 18, which is ultimately a rhetor's defense of his past policies, but Is. 6 gives an example of a family history anchored in political time (or more precisely, an attempt to unanchor a family history from political time, as the speaker is trying to take away his opponent's claim to an ancestor who died in the Athenian military), and Lys. 6 shows the effects of political turmoil on a specific part of the Attic countryside. The speaker of Is. 6 disputes a claim made about the Sicilian Expedition from two generations after the Peloponnesian War, and Demosthenes invokes not only the sweep of Athenian-Macedonian relations but also the Persian Wars, to present himself as calling upon the Athenians to live up to the heroic examples of their ancestors. Athenian courts heard many kinds of disputes involving different kinds of citizens, and this meant involvement in different kinds of time. By using major events in the history of the city as reference points for events in personal or family histories, litigants appealed to civic ideology, characterizing themselves as fellow-citizens of the jurors and sharers of common experiences. The choice of temporal reference points was used to create a sense of solidarity and faith in the Athenian system.

Lysias 7, On the Olive Stump

Lysias 7 contains three intersecting chronologies in the ownership and usage history of a single plot of land. Those are Athenian political history, the official civic calendar of Athens, and the sequence of owners and cultivators of the land itself. The combination of the three characterizes the speaker's land as a victim of the Peloponnesian War and the oligarchic revolutions of 411 and 404, and the speaker himself an Athenian

everyman who endured these sufferings with his fellow-citizens and remained loyal to democracy.

In the first chronology, the passage of time is marked by dramatic events: the short-lived oligarchies of the Four Hundred in 411 and the Thirty in 404/3 and the restoration of democratic government after each. The second uses eponymous magistrates to identify years: Pythodoros was the eponymous archon in 403 (put into office by the Thirty) and Souniades in 397/6.

The third chronology, that of the users of the land, is expressed in two ways. Sales and purchases of the land had closely tracked political upheavals. Since the Amnesty of 403, however, the land had only one owner, but was worked by several renters. The speaker recounts the use history of the land under his ownership in terms of a series of tenants dated by the lengths of their leases. The events in civic history are thus more internal to the case than some other Athenian court speeches, in which references to political and military history are used more to establish a bond of shared experience between litigant and jurors than to present evidence directly relevant to the case

Although the prosecutor, Nikomakhos, charged that the speaker had destroyed a sacred tree in 397/6,¹⁵⁴ the defense shifts attention to the last years of the Peloponnesian War. More specifically, although he suggests in section 8 that Spartans had ravaged the land in question and destroyed any sacred olives then present, the speaker cites the revolutions and counter-revolutions that plagued Athens as the war turned against them as times when trees were destroyed. The charge of impiety very likely, as it did in the

¹⁵⁴ When exactly the case was heard is less clear, as the speaker accuses his opponent of waiting for years before prosecuting him. See Todd 2007a: 481 and my further discussion below for more on this delay.

trials of Socrates, Alcibiades, and Andocides, served as a proxy for accusations of oligarchic politics.¹⁵⁵ In drawing audience attention toward undisputed enemies of the Athenian democracy, the speaker attempts to undermine the implicit charge that he held anti-democratic opinions.

In 411, a group of oligarchs had staged a coup and replaced the democratic government with first a ruling council of 400 and then an assembly of 5000. *Ath. Pol.* 29-33 and Thuc. 8.53-54, 65ff. differ more in the importance of individual actors than in the overall course of this short-lived regime. The *Ath. Pol.*'s treatment concludes, somewhat laconically, that the *demos* soon reclaimed its power. Thucydides describes a struggle between the oligarchs who controlled the city and the democrats of the navy, which the navy ultimately won.

Especially significant to Lys. 7 is the assassination of Phrynikhos, who was one of the 400. According to Thuc. 8.92, this murder marked the first resistance to the oligarchs, as an Athenian with an Argive accomplice – neither of whom is named – killed Phrynikhos on his return from an embassy to Sparta. Lysias 13.70-71 gives us a different pair of assassins – Thrasubolos of Calydon and Apollodoros of Megara – and it is here that events of 411 become directly relevant to Lysias 7. The speaker's land had been owned by a supporter of the 400, but, according to Lys. 7.4, was confiscated and given to Apollodoros the Megarian as an expression of the *demos*' gratitude for his killing Phrynikos.

When oligarchs were in power, the land had belonged to an oligarch; when democrats deposed them, the land was given to a supporter of the democracy. Thus, this

¹⁵⁵ See Todd 2007a: 479-481.

political history, which might appear irrelevant to the matter at hand – what does anything that happened in 411 have to do with whether the speaker destroyed an olive tree in 397/6? – is used to connect the land to the political situation of Athens as a whole.

The next political event that appears in Lysias 7 is the imposition of another oligarchy upon a defeated Athens by Sparta in 404. Athenian social memory of 404-403 emphasized, on the one hand, the Thirty's reign of terror and, on the other, the heroism of the democratic partisans who gradually retook their homeland. Even Plato's Socrates decried the Thirty – prominent among whom was Critias, Plato's uncle and Socrates' student – as murderers who sought to compel every Athenian to take on a share of their guilt.¹⁵⁶ Lysias himself was known for his support of the democratic counter-revolutionaries, who made good use of shields manufactured by his family's business. This speech does not dwell upon the misrule of the Thirty, but their time in power does appear as another reference point in the history of the speaker's land. Just as the transition from oligarchy back to democracy in 410 meant a new owner for the land, it had a different owner during the rule of the Thirty.

Turning now to the text of the speech, the list of owners and users of the land is strikingly long and complete:

(4.) Ἦν μὲν γὰρ τοῦτο Πεισάνδρου τὸ χωρίον, δημοθέντων δ' ἐκείνου τῶν ὄντων Ἀπολλόδωρος ὁ Μεγαρεὺς δωρεῖαν παρὰ τοῦ δήμου λαβὼν τὸν μὲν ἄλλον χρόνον ἐγεώργει, ὀλίγω δὲ πρὸ τῶν τριάκοντα Ἀντικλῆς παρ' αὐτοῦ πριάμενος ἐξεμίσθωσεν· ἐγὼ δὲ παρ' Ἀντικλέους (5.) εἰρήνης οὔσης ἐωνούμην· ἡγοῦμαι τοίνυν, ὦ

¹⁵⁶ Pl. *Ap.* 32c-d.

βουλή, ἐμὸν ἔργον ἀποδείξαι, ὡς, ἐπειδὴ τὸ χωρίον ἐκτησάμην, οὔτ' ἐλάα οὔτε σηκὸς ἐνήν ἐν αὐτῷ. νομίζω γὰρ τοῦ μὲν προτέρου χρόνου...

This land used to belong to Peisander, but when his property was confiscated, Apollodoros the Megarian received it as a gift from the people and farmed it for some time. A little while before the Thirty, however, Antikles bought it from him and rented it out. I bought it from Antikles when peace had been made. (4) It seems to me, councilmen, that what I need to do is show that when I took possession of the land, there was neither an olive tree nor a stump on it. I think it would be unjust for me to be punished for the time before then...

...(6) πάντες γὰρ ἐπίστασθε ὅτι <ὁ> πόλεμος καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν αἴτιος κακῶν γεγένηται, καὶ τὰ μὲν πόρρω ὑπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων ἐτέμνετο, τὰ δ' ἐγγὺς ὑπὸ τῶν φίλων διηρπάζετο: ὥστε πῶς ἂν δικαίως ὑπὲρ τῶν <τότε> τῇ πόλει γεγενημένων συμφορῶν ἐγὼ νυνὶ δίκην διδοίην;...

You all know that the war was to blame for many other evils also, and that distant things were cut down by the Spartans and nearby things were plundered by the allies. So how could it be just for me to be punished now for disasters that happened to the city then?

...(9.) Ἄλλὰ γάρ, ὦ βουλή, περὶ μὲν τῶν πρότερον γεγενημένων πολλὰ ἔχων εἰπεῖν ἱκανὰ νομίζω τὰ εἰρημμένα· ἐπειδὴ δ' ἐγὼ παρέλαβον τὸ χωρίον, πρὶν ἡμέρας πέντε γενέσθαι, (10.)

ἀπεμίσθωσα Καλλιστράτῳ, ἐπὶ Πυθοδώρου ἄρχοντος· ὃς δύο ἔτη ἐγεώργησεν, οὔτε ἰδίαν ἐλάαν οὔτε μορίαν οὔτε σηκὸν παραλαβών. τρίτῳ δὲ [ἔτει] Δημήτριος οὕτωσὶ ἠργάσατο ἐνιαυτόν· τῷ δὲ τετάρτῳ Ἀλκία Ἀντισθένης ἀπελευθέρῳ ἐμίσθωσα, ὃς τέθνηκε· κᾶτα τρία ἔτη ὁμοίως καὶ Πρωτέας ἐμισθώσατο. Καί μοι δεῦρ' ἴτε.

MARTYRES

(11.) Ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν ὁ χρόνος οὗτος ἐξήκει, αὐτὸς γεωργῶ. φησὶ δὲ ὁ κατήγορος ἐπὶ Σουσιάδου ἄρχοντος σηκὸν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ἐκκεκόφθαι, ὑμῖν δὲ μεμαρτυρήκασιν οἱ πρότερον ἐργαζόμενοι καὶ πολλὰ ἔτη παρ' ἐμοῦ μεμισθωμένοι μὴ εἶναι σηκὸν ἐν τῷ χωρίῳ.

Although I have much to say about prior events, councilmen, I think enough has been said. When I took over the land, before five days had passed I rented it to Kallistratos, in the archonship of Pythodoros. He farmed it for two years, and did not take over any private olive tree, sacred olive tree, or stump. In the third year, Demetrios here worked it for a year, and in the fourth, I rented it to Alkias, Antisthenes' freedman, who is dead. After that, Proteas rented it from me for three years on similar terms.

Come forward, please.

(Witnesses)

Since this period of time ended, I have worked the land myself. My accuser says that a stump was cut by me in the archonship of Souniades. The people who worked it before me and those who rented it from me

have all testified to you, however, that there was never a stump on the land.

In response to the charge of having destroyed a sacred olive tree and removed the evidence that there had ever been such a tree on his land,¹⁵⁷ the speaker puts himself in the position of having to prove a negative. To so, he claims first that there was no olive tree or stump to remove when he took possession of the land. He can bring as witnesses a string of tenants who never saw an olive tree or stump there. And – in case the Boule suspects that the tree was removed before the first witness to testify could have seen it – only a few days passed between the speaker’s buying the land and renting it to Kallistratos. Perhaps there had once been sacred olives on the land, he says, but if so they had been destroyed in the Peloponnesian War.

This speech thus cites several turning points in Athenian history — the war, the brief oligarchy of the Four Hundred (among whom Peisander was prominent) in 411, and the rule of the Thirty (404/3). The reasons for giving an account of prior owners of the land that starts the better part of a decade before he purchased it, and for emphasizing the land’s connection to political violence, are not immediately transparent. The list of men to whom he had leased the land could thus serve to introduce witnesses who would testify

¹⁵⁷ Although I use the traditional translation of *σηκός*, “stump,” I find interesting Todd’s argument that the word refers instead to an enclosure of some kind marking off the area around a sacred tree (Todd 2007a:487-87). If *σηκός* refers to what remains in the ground after a tree is cut down, then it would be valuable olivewood, but would also require extensive labor to remove. Removal would also have left disturbed earth that the prosecution could have used as evidence, provided that the prosecution moved their case quickly enough. If *σηκός* here means something more like the livestock pens Hesiod uses the word for, then removing the *σηκός* is more an attempt to conceal that a removed tree had been sacred.

that they had not seen any olive tree or stump on the land either, but it is unlikely to say the least that Peisander gave testimony.

Of the prior owners, only Antikles, from whom the speaker bought the land, would have been able to testify about the presence or absence of sacred olive trees at the time when the speaker took possession. Indeed, reminding the audience of the revolutions of 411 and 404/3 could have been counterproductive. The jurors hearing *Lysias 7* all had firsthand knowledge of the rule of the Thirty, the democratic restoration of 403, and the period in which the Attica remained divided between a democratic Athens and an oligarchic enclave at Eleusis. The age requirement to be a member of the Boule would have meant that the speech's audience had all been citizens for at least ten years, so if the trial happened by 393 – four years after the alleged destruction of the olive stump – the entire jury would have been adults during 404/3. All would have been alive, and most likely adults, during the regime of the Four Hundred as well. In the 390s, the memories of the last years of the Peloponnesian War were still fresh and the scars of the political divisions between democrats and oligarchs still raw.

What was to be gained by invoking those divisions in this case? Given that the charge was essentially one of impiety, one might expect the defense to emphasize the speaker's fulfillment of religious obligations. Yet instead of the sacrifices he had performed and festivals he had been involved in, he tells a story of the land on which he is accused of committing a crime against religion.

Rather than characterizing himself as conventionally pious, the speaker's presentation of history from 411 on characterizes the land itself as a victim of the war and its consequences. Like the government of Athens, the land had been in the possession of

an oligarch in 411, then reclaimed by the *demos*. The political leanings of Antikles cannot be determined, but his buying the land shortly before the Thirty took power and selling it after the end of the regime suggests that he had oligarchic sympathies and parted with the property in preparation to flee the city, or at least to lower his profile. In fact, every change of ownership recounted here coincided with a change of government. Since peace was made between the men of the city and the men of the Piraeus, the land had only one owner – the speaker – just as Athens has had one form of government – the democracy.

To extend the metaphor, the orderly transition from tenant to tenant according to the pre-arranged terms of leases parallels the rotation of citizens through magistracies with set terms of office. As planned financial transactions replaced the reactions to uncontrollable circumstance that had deprived previous owners of it, the land itself came to enjoy the benefits of peace. Although the speaker does not directly refer to the depredations of the Thirty (while explicitly referring to other depredations in section 6), reminding the jurors of their rule and of the earlier regime of the Four Hundred suggests that just as the land had benefited from peace over the past few years, it had previously suffered from the revolutions; perhaps it was not Spartans but Athenians who committed sacrilege there.¹⁵⁸

Besides the informal reference points of previous owners of the land and the sequence of renters, the official Athenian formula of archon dates appears twice. Those archons are Pythodoros (404/3) – whose name is often euphemistically avoided by the

¹⁵⁸ With the subtext that the charge of impiety constituted an attempt to return Athens to the former chaos and make a political martyr of the speaker?

orators because he was archon during the reign of the Thirty¹⁵⁹ – and Souniades (397/6), in whose archonship the sacred tree was allegedly destroyed. Although archon dates were part of the standard dating formulas for official decrees, they appear only rarely in other contexts. Lysias 7 is one of only three speeches in the Lysianic corpus as we have it that use archon dates, and they are similarly rare in the works of the other orators. In placing the alleged desecration in the archonship of Souniades rather than using a more organic reference point, the speaker may simply be quoting the prosecution.

Many of the examples of archon dates in Attic oratory are references to previous court cases, which suggests that the courts were one of the environments in which citizens most often encountered official dating formulas. Here, however, the speaker wishes his audience to believe that a significant amount of time passed between the supposed crime and the prosecution, but his precise chronology ends with that year — the speech itself does not indicate how long after 397/6 the case was heard. This can be interpreted in two ways: either the Boule were familiar enough with official dating formulas to know how long ago Souniades had been archon, or they were not.

If they were not, the archon date constitutes a sort of “officialese” used to obscure that “such a long delay”¹⁶⁰ was not in truth unreasonably long after all. In Lysias 17 and 21, which also use archon dates, the speakers address their audiences with the formula ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί (“men of the jury”), implying normal citizen juries. Three is too small a sample to draw strong conclusions from, but it is enough to say that Lysias does not

¹⁵⁹ Todd 2007a: 520.

¹⁶⁰ τοσούτῳ χρόνῳ ὕστερον (Lys. 7.42).

reserve archon dates solely for trials before the Boule, who were after all intended to be a representative sampling of the Athenian citizen body much as were normal juries.

Given the separation between 7.11, where the date of the alleged desecration is given, and the peroration's insinuation that a long time has passed and the prosecution was therefore malicious, Lysias may have intended that the Boule not think too much about how long ago Souniades really had been archon when the subject of delay was raised at 7.42. But quoting the prosecution at 7.11 would have held added weight if there really had been a long delay between crime and prosecution, with the Bouletai invited to mentally calculate — “That wasn't this year, or last year...” — and get the delay as the solution to a kind of puzzle.

The strategy of appealing to memories of shared Athenian misfortunes was not without its risks, however. One thread of the modern scholarship on this speech has constructed a reading in which this is essentially a political trial, and one stacked against the defense. In this view, the prominent trials of Socrates and Andocides in 399 inspired the prosecutor in this case to bring his accusation of impiety against the speaker, a man of known or suspected oligarchic views.¹⁶¹ The speaker was wealthy enough to buy land as an investment and a source of rent, and his refusal to state where he was during the oligarchy and his connection to Alkidas — whose having bought land shortly before the oligarchic coup, only to sell it as soon as the Thirty were expelled makes him look quite the oligarch — make him look still less like a loyal supporter of the democracy.

The reference to Pythodoros raises a further question: because Pythodoros was installed as archon while the Thirty were in power, Athenian sources usually avoid

¹⁶¹ Todd 2007a:479-81.

mentioning him by name. Lys. 21.4 and Isoc. 18.5 avoid acknowledging that there was an eponymous archon at all in the year of the Thirty, and Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.1 makes explicit that Athenians customarily referred to it not as the year of Pythodoros but as the year without an archon.¹⁶² Evidently, many found it embarrassing to acknowledge that the Thirty did not suspend all the institutions and magistracies of the democratic government. The Thirty filling the office of eponymous archon hints at greater continuity of institutions than would fit into the standard narrative of violent misrule followed by counter-revolution and the reestablishment of the ancestral democracy.

Given the lengths other sources went to in order to avoid acknowledging the archonship of Pythodoros, the use of his name here, by a speaker with possible oligarchic views and connections, appears suspicious in itself. Does this name constitute a glimpse of an alternate political chronology, an oligarchic memory of 404/3 as the archonship of Pythodoros – a year not fondly remembered, but also not so different from other years as the democrats chose to remember it as being?

The problem with this interpretation is that it would be counterproductive, to say the least, to evoke oligarchic social memory when on trial before the democratic Boule.¹⁶³ And the speaker is careful to emphasize that the Thirty were already out of power when he purchased the land, and also makes it clear that – because Antikles had bought it

¹⁶² Πυθοδώρου δ' ἐν Ἀθήναις ἄρχοντος, ὃν Ἀθηναῖοι, ὅτι ἐν ὀλιγαρχίᾳ ἤρθεθι, οὐκ ὀνομάζουσιν, ἀλλ' ἀναρχίαν τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν καλοῦσιν. (“But as Pythodoros was chosen archon in Athens in a time of oligarchy, the Athenians don’t name [that year after him], but call it “the archonless year.”)

¹⁶³ On the class structure of Athenian juries more generally, and orators’ appeals to the values presumably held by juries, see Todd 2007b.

before the Thirty came to power, and sold it “when peace was established”,¹⁶⁴ it had not been confiscated by the Thirty; the speaker carefully excludes the possibility that he profited from the Thirty’s judicial murders. And one consequence of beginning the historical narrative with 411 is that the speaker establishes a succession of ownership in which the land passed from an oligarch (Peisander) to a benefactor of the *demos* (Apollodoros) to a (likely) oligarch (Antikles) to himself. The plot’s confiscation from Peisander when democracy had been reestablished after the coup of the Four Hundred makes it not only a microcosm of the *polis* but a sort of bellwether as well. When the city was controlled by oligarchs, this plot was controlled by an oligarch; and once the city was again ruled by a democracy, the plot’s new owner could not have been an oligarch.

The names of controversial figures thus help to establish a reading of the land’s history that casts the defendant as loyal to the democracy. But this still leaves the presence of Pythodoros, the archon who largely dropped out of democratic memory. There is a good chance that this reflects nothing more than the speaker repeating the dating formula on a document, in this case the lease of the land to its first tenant after the speaker bought it.

The immediate context reinforces the interpretation that the reference to Pythodoros was intended to establish the speaker’s detailed knowledge of the relevant past, rather than as a political statement:

¹⁶⁴ ἐγὼ δὲ παρ’ Ἀντικλέους εἰρήνης οὔσης ἐωνούμην (4-5); this must be the peace between the men of the Piraeus and the supporters of the Thirty rather than that between Athens and Sparta, because it clearly happens after the Thirty had become established.

ἐπειδὴ δ' ἐγὼ παρέλαβον τὸ χωρίον, πρὶν ἡμέρας πέντε γενέσθαι,
ἀπεμίσθωσα Καλλιστράτῳ, ἐπὶ Πυθοδώρου ἄρχοντος
When I took possession of the plot, in the archonship of Pythodoros, I
rented it to Kallistratos before five days had passed. (9-10)

This is one of two instances in which official dating formulas anchor the sequence of transitions that define the history of the land, and in each of them, it is probable that the official formula was lifted from an official document.

The other instance is the note that the alleged sacrilege was said to have happened in the archonship of Souniades,¹⁶⁵ which is likely a direct quote from Nikomakhos' official charges. The filing of an indictment would have led to the creation of documents which would have been dated using the standard formula: name of archon, name of month, day of month. But the speaker's purchase of the land from Antikles and his lease of it to Kallistratos were both private transactions, and thus might not have been documented in a way that used full official dating formulas. I believe, however, that private transactions pertaining to land borrowed the form of similar public transactions. In the next section, I will examine examples of public leases, which very likely provided models for private leases such as those described by the speaker of Lys. 7.

Public dates in private transactions?

Although the terms of leases between individuals are largely unknown, a number of surviving inscriptions record leases of land owned by cities and associations of various kinds. Demes, phratries, and groups of *orgeones* funded their activities by renting out

¹⁶⁵ φησὶ δὲ ὁ κατήγορος ἐπὶ Σουνιάδου ἄρχοντος σηκὸν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ἐκκεκόφθαι (section 11)

land, often land associated with religious sanctuaries; besides sacred lands, Athens also rented mines to be worked by private citizens.

Public lands were generally rented out for longer periods of time than the 1-3 year terms described in Lysias 7, sometimes even in perpetuity,¹⁶⁶ while mines were rented for a year at a time. Thus, while we do not have an example of a lease between two private citizens, we have examples of different kinds of leases by corporate entities. The similarities of form between leases issued by the polis and leases issued by phratries indicate that the forms of public leases affected those of private ones, and make it likely that leases between individuals used similar forms.

Rhodes and Osborne no. 36 provides the earliest available documentation of mine leases. It is dated to the archonship of Polyzelos (367/6), and the date is supplemented by a list of the names of each of the *poletai* who presided over the transactions and the head of the Eleven with whom they worked:

ἐπὶ Πολυζήλο ἄρχοντος πωληταὶ
Πολύευκτος Λαμπρεύς, Δεινίας Ἐρχιεύς, Θεαῖος
Παιανιεύς, Θεότιμος Φρεάροριος, Ἀριστογένης Ἴφ-
ιστιάδης, Γλαύκων Λακιάδης, Κηφισοκλῆς Πειρα-
ιεύς, Νικοκλῆς Ἀναφλύστιος, οἷς Ἐξήκεστος Κοθ-
ωκίδης ἐγραμμάτευεν, τάδε ἀπέδοντο παραλαβόν-
τες παρὰ τῶν ἕνδεκα Φαίακος Ἀφιδναῖο καὶ συναρ-

¹⁶⁶ *IG II²* 2492, for example, is a 40-year lease of land belonging to the deme Axione, starting in 345/4 (the archonship of Euboulos, line 20). *IG II²* 2501 is a lease of sacred land from a group of *orgeones* to one Diopeithes “and his descendants, for all time” (καὶ ἐγγόνοις αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον).

χόντων...

In the archonship of Poluzelos, the *poletai* Polueuktos of Lamprai, Deinias of Erkhia, Theaios of Paiania, Theotimos of Phrearrhioi, Aristogenes of Iphistiadai, Glaukon of Lakiadai, Kephisokles of Piraeus, and Nikokles of Anaphlustos, for whom Exekestos of Kothokidai served as secretary, sold the following, having taken them from the Eleven, Phaiax of Aphidna and his fellow magistrates... (lines 1-8)

The names of the *poletai*, their secretary, and one member of the Eleven are present not as extended dating formulae but because they were parties to the transactions recorded in the inscription. Lines 8-39 report the sale of a house that had been confiscated as a criminal punishment and the reimbursement of several of the criminal's creditors; it was one of the jobs of the Eleven to confiscate property in such cases,¹⁶⁷ and auctioning it and mine leases were the responsibility of the *poletai*. The year's leases of mines are reported beginning in line 40, and following a standard pattern:

...Μέταλλα ἐπράθη ἐπὶ τῆς Ἴπποθωντίδος πρώτης, Δεξιακὸν ἐν Νάπει ἐπὶ Σκοπιᾶι, ὧι γεὶ πανταχόθεν Νικίας Κυδαν, ὦνη Καλλίας Σφήττι ΔΔ: Διακὸν ἐπὶ Λαυρείωι, ὧι γεὶ : πρὸς ἡλίῳ ἀνιόντος τὰ χωρία τὰ Ἐξωπίου, δυομένο τὸ ὄρος, ὦνη Ἐπιτέλης ἐκ Κερα ΔΔ...

Mines sold during the first prytany, of Hippothontis:

Dexiakon in Nape, at Skopiai, adjacent on every side to [property] of Nikias of Cydantidai, purchaser Kallias of Sphettos, 20 drachmae.

¹⁶⁷ Rhodes and Osborne 2003:178.

Diakon at Laureon, adjacent to the land of Exopios on the east and the mountain on the west, purchaser Epiteles from Kerameis, 20 drachmae....(lines 40-44)

The leases are grouped by the prytany in which they were issued, and each mine is identified by its name and location (specified by landmarks and the owners of neighboring land); the lessees are identified by name and deme, and the amount of the rent specified. When and how often these rents were paid is unclear (as discussed at Rhodes and Osborne 2003:181); leases of sacred and other public lands usually specify a month, and sometimes the day of that month, when rent was to be paid annually. In explaining who has worked the land since he purchased it, the speaker of *Lysias 7* follows the pattern of public leases, omitting information that would be extraneous to his defense against the charge of sacrilege. He does not need to repeat the identification of the land he rented out, and the amount of the rent is irrelevant for establishing the chronology or the renter's presence as witnesses in his defense, but the eponymous archon in which the lease began, the name of the lessor, and the duration of the lease do matter for his purposes.

These are leases of property belonging to the polis, negotiated and documented by polis officials, but Lambert's T 5 Dyaleis (*IG II² 1241*) is an inscription recording a lease of property belonging to a phratry. The description of the land being rented parallels the public leases, and the beginning of the lease is identified by archon and month:

... ἐμίσθωσαν τὸ χωρίο]-
ν τὸ Μυρρινοῦντι ο[ι] φρατρίαρχοι Κα[λλ]-
ικλῆς Ἀριστείδου Μυρρινούσιος κα[ὶ Δ]-

ιοπείθης Διοφάντου Μυρρινούσιος [κα]-
ἰ τὸ κοινὸν Δυαλέων τὴν Σακίνην καλ[ου]-
μένην ἔτη δέκα, νν ὡι γείτων βορρῶθεν κ. -
[ἡ]πος, νοτόθεν Ὀλυμπιοδώρου χωρίον, ἡλ-
ίου ἀνιόντος ὁδός, δυομένου Ὀλυμπιοδ-
ώρου χωρίον, Διοδώρωι Κ[α]νθάρου Μυρρι-
νουσίωι ΠΗ νν τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκάστου·

...

ἄ[ρ]χει τῆς μισθώσε-
ως ὁ ἐπὶ Ἡγεμάχου Μουνιχιών·

The phratriarchs Kallikles son of Aristeides of Myrrhinous and Diopeithes son of Diophantes of Myrrhinous and the Dyaleis together have leased the property called Sakine, which is bounded by an orchard to the north, the land of Olympiodoros to the south, a road to the east, and the land of Olympiodoros to the west, to Diodoros son of Kantharos of Myrrhinous for ten years at 600 drachmas per year.

The beginning of the lease is Mounikhion of the year of Hegemakhos. (IG II² 1241.4-13, 29-30)

The section I do not quote contains terms detailing how Diodoros should maintain the property, which are analogous to those in other public leases.¹⁶⁸ Throughout, this lease parallels those of city and temple properties, and the similarity strongly suggests

¹⁶⁸ E.g. Rhodes & Osborne 59/ *IG* XII.vii 62.

that similar forms were used in transactions between individuals as well as between individuals and corporate entities.

The use of archon dates in Lysias 7 thus indicates contexts in which Athenians had occasion to use the official dating formulas of the city, and illustrates that – even in the context of the courts – such dates are “marked” and their use reflects various combinations of contact with official documents and strategic decisions about self-representation. When Sickinger noted “[T]he average Athenian dates events by month and day of the archontic calendar”,¹⁶⁹ he was commenting on the relative obscurity of the bouletic calendar. But, although average Athenians used the months of the festival calendar and the names of eponymous archons to date events when they perceived a need, they used dates much less frequently than we did. It was judged desirable to remember the dates of events such as court cases and major transactions like the sale or lease of land. In most contexts, however, Athenians found such temporal precision unnecessary. Everyday experience was for the most part disconnected from official calendars.

Isaeus 6, *On the Estate of Philotekmon*

Family histories often appear in the speeches of Isaeus – unsurprisingly, given that his surviving speeches deal with inheritance disputes – but their chronologies are rarely anchored in political or military events. Speech 6, *On the Estate of Philotekmon*, presents an interesting exception. The speech was written in support of one Khairestratos, who presented himself as the adopted son of Philotekmon, the (deceased)

¹⁶⁹ Sickinger 1999:155.

son of Euktemon and thus heir to Eutekmon's estate. The adoption was, however, contested, and two rival claimants to the estate had presented themselves as sons of the deceased from a second marriage. Because Athenian inheritance law favored blood relations over adoptees, in order for Khairestratos to inherit, the jury had to reject his rivals' claim to be sons of Euktemon and then accept the validity of Khairestratos' adoption. The speaker's case on behalf of Khairestratos begins with an argument that his rivals' claim to be sons of Euktemon is impossible on chronological grounds:

ἐρομένων δ' ἡμῶν ὅστις εἶη καὶ εἰ ζῆ ἢ μὴ, ἐν Σικελίᾳ ἔφρασαν
ἀποθανεῖν στρατευόμενον, καταλιπόντα ταύτην θυγατέρα παρὰ τῷ
Εὐκτήμονι, ἐξ ἐπιτροπευομένης δὲ τούτῳ γενέσθαι, πρᾶγμα
πλάττοντες ἀναιδεῖα ὑπερβάλλον καὶ οὐδὲ γενόμενον, ὡς ἐγὼ ὑμῖν
ἀποφανῶ ἐκ τούτων πρῶτον ὧν αὐτοὶ ἀπεκρίναντο. τῇ μὲν γὰρ
στρατιᾷ, ἀφ' οὗ ἐξέπλευσεν εἰς Σικελίαν, ἤδη ἐστὶ δύο καὶ
πεντήκοντα ἔτη, ἀπὸ Ἀριμνήστου ἄρχοντος, τῷ δὲ πρεσβυτέρῳ
τούτων, ὧν φασιν ἐκ τῆς Καλλίπης καὶ τοῦ Εὐκτήμονος εἶναι, οὕτω
ὑπὲρ εἴκοσιν ἔτη. ἀφελόντι οὖν ταῦτα ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ
ὑπολείπεται πλείω ἢ τριάκοντα ἔτη· ὥστ' οὐτ' ἐπιτροπεύεσθαι
προσῆκε τὴν Καλλίπην ἔτι, τριακοντούτῃν γε οὖσαν, οὔτε
ἀνέκδοτον καὶ ἄπαιδα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ πάνυ παλαι συνοικεῖν, ἢ
ἐγγυηθεῖσαν κατὰ νόμον ἢ ἐπιδικασθεῖσαν.

[The speaker's rivals have stated that their mother was Kallippe, the daughter of Pistozenos.] And when we asked who he [Pistozenos] was and whether he was alive or not, they said that he died while on military

service in Sicily and left a daughter in the house of Euktemon and that they were born to him while she was being raised, inventing a thing beyond shamelessness and which never happened, as I will show you, first from the answers they themselves gave. It has been 52 years since the expedition sailed for Sicily, counting from the archonship of Arimnestos, but the older of these two who claim to be sons of Kallippe and Euktemon is not over twenty years old. Leaving these out, more than thirty years still remain since the Sicilian expedition, so Kallippe should not have been being raised, if she were thirty, nor unmarried and childless, but married for a long time already, whether engaged according to the law or as the result of a court case.¹⁷⁰ (Isaeus 6.13-14)

This passage raises two sets of chronological issues. First, there is the social memory of the Sicilian Expedition and, by extension, the entire Peloponnesian War. The speaker here thinks that his exceptional chronological precision refutes his opponents' claims about their family history.

The strategy behind the story of Pistoxenos used events that no one present at the trial had experienced first-hand, but which had been made newly salient by Athenian attempts from the late 370s on to re-establish imperial power. While this use of civic and military history is broadly similar to the appeals to shared experience in Lys. 7, the temporal separation between the Sicilian Expedition and the court case in which

¹⁷⁰ On the distinction between ἐγγυηθεῖσαν and ἐπιδικασθεῖσαν, see Todd 211-12. In brief, the *engue* would indicate marriage by agreement between her *kurios* and a bridegroom, *epidikasia* a marriage arranged for the purpose of ensuring that any property for which she was *epikleros* remained under control of a relative.

Pistoxenos' participation in it was mentioned changes its function. Rather than shared experience, the appeal here is to notions of the city's past and ancestral glories and misfortunes.

The second set of issues concerns the age and status of women. While the polis needed to keep track of the ages of male citizens in order to know who was eligible for military and political duties, no corresponding need existed for women. Men went through status transitions based on their socially-constructed age — becoming citizens and ephebes when judged ready by their demesmen, then gaining one bundle of obligations and responsibilities at the completion of their ephebeia, and transitioning to other statuses at 30 (gaining eligibility for bouletic service, magistracies, and certain priesthoods) and 60.¹⁷¹ The most important status transition in a woman's life, however, was marriage, which did not occur at a regulated age.

Is. 6.14 charges the speaker's opponents with attempting to capitalize on the uncertainty about women's ages that was made possible by the polis' lack of interest in them. His claim, in essence, is that the brothers have represented a woman as a child — that Kallippe's biological age when the elder of the young men who claim to have been her and Euktemon's sons precludes her having been in Euktemon's household under the claimed circumstances. Thus, with its reliance on the presumption that it was unheard-of for an Athenian woman to reach the (biological) age of 30 without having been married, the speech raises questions about the life course of women in fourth-century Athens.

¹⁷¹ As I discuss in detail in chapter 2.

The Sicilian Expedition viewed from 50 years later

While funeral orations are famous for citing events in the historical as well as mythic past,¹⁷² references to events before the speaker's lifetime are rare in courtroom speeches. In Is. 6, the speaker clearly wants his audience to believe that the brothers' use of the Sicilian Expedition was a poor decision. In his version of his opponents' case, they seized upon a famous disaster to explain away the nonexistence of a spurious ancestor.

The narrow function of the story of Pisto Xenos' participation in the Sicilian Expedition is fairly clear. It explains how Kallippe and Euktemon came to meet and ultimately marry – as Pisto Xenos made Euktemon his daughter's *kyrios* before going off to war – and emphasizes the citizen origins of the brothers who now claim to be Euktemon's heirs. In the speaker's eyes, this story is a doubly-dangerous deception, for Kallippe is not Kallippe at all but rather an ex-prostitute named Alke, and the brothers are attempting to steal not just property but citizenship and respectability as well.

It is of course impossible to know how large a part Pisto Xenos' death in Sicily played in the speech to which Is. 6 was the response, but there are factors in contemporary history that would have given the Sicilian Expedition special resonance in 364. One coincidence that relates especially closely to this case is the indication of another military campaign in Sicily, at the beginning of the speech. The speaker illustrates the closeness of his friendship with Khairestratos by recounting their shared experience as soldiers and prisoners of war together:

¹⁷² Loraux 1986.

ὅτε γὰρ εἰς Σικελίαν ἐχέλπει τριηραρχῶν Χαιρέστρατος, διὰ τὸ πρότερον αὐτός ἐκπεπλευκέναι πρήδιν πάντας τοὺς ἐσομένους κινδύνος, ὅμως δὲ δεομένων τούτων καὶ συνεξέμπλευσα καὶ συνδυσύχησα καὶ ἐάλωμεν εἰς τοὺς πολεμίους.

When Khairestratos sailed to Sicily commanding a trireme, because I had sailed there before and knew the dangers, all the same, because these men asked, I sailed with him and shared his misfortune and we were taken prisoner by the enemy. (Is. 6.1)

When exactly this misadventure happened is unclear, as there is no secure attestation of Athenian military activity in Sicily in this period. Many editors have emended εἰς Σικελίαν out of the speech; the rationale for this is that, since we do not have other evidence for such an expedition, there must not have been one, and εἰς Σικελίαν could have been interpolated by a scribe who confused Khairestratos' experience with the famous Sicilian Expedition.¹⁷³

Athens had, however, formed an alliance with Dionysius of Syracuse in 368/7, and it is possible that Khairestratos went to Sicily to fight one of Dionysius' battles. If this is the case, then in section 13, a man who had been taken prisoner while fighting alongside Syracusans is speaking against a claim about a man who had been killed – quite possibly by being worked to death as a prisoner –by Syracusans. In the speaker's view, the story about Pistoxenos would then be a dishonest attempt at one-upmanship, in which Khairestratos' rivals took a part of his biography, raised it to a more historically significant form, and appropriated it for their fictional ancestor.

¹⁷³ Wyse 1904: 488-89.

Even if the place where the speaker and Khairestratos were prisoners of war was somewhere other than Sicily, there were ample reasons in the mid-fourth century to think about the Peloponnesian War. Through the 370s and 360s, the Athenians had been working to rebuild the power their ancestors had held and lost. In 378, an alliance established on terms designed to assure member states that the Athenians would not revive the demands made upon subjects of the fifth-century empire drew in most of the former tributaries. The crushing defeat of the Spartans at Leuktra made the stated goal of this alliance unnecessary, but much as the Delian League had been established to fight Persians and then used against Peloponnesians, the second Athenian confederacy found new purposes rather than disbanding.

In 368, the Athenians had begun campaigns against Amphipolis and the cities of the Chersonese, attempting to regain control of territories they had lost in the 420s (and beginning to spark tensions with the allies that would, just over a decade later, lead to the Social War). In 366, Athens had taken Samos from Persian control and established a cleruchy there, in an echo of the fifth-century turn toward empire. When Athenian foreign policy sought to recover the influence it had lost in the Peloponnesian War, even as the rise of Thebes made imperial designs still more precarious, it is not surprising that the actions of ancestors who fought the Spartans became prominent in Athenian family histories.

Given this context, telling the story of Pisto Xenos' death in Sicily was a strategic move as well as a statement of fact. This narrative explains when and how Kallippe and Euktemon met, and, through the shorthand of their grandfather's participation in a key moment of Athenian history, characterizes the entire family as citizens who have done

their duty to Athens. But to the speaker of Is. 6, the story is a dangerous deception. Against this perceived fraud, he notes that Pisto Xenos left no witnesses to his having been a citizen, or even having existed, and that none of Euktemon's slaves or relatives acknowledged Kallippe (sections 15-16).

This argument is a mirror image to that of Demosthenes 57. The speaker in Dem. 57 argues that he and his father were unjustly disenfranchised, and points to their participation in the life of their deme as evidence that they were and had always been citizens. The speaker of Is. 6 argues that Khairestratos' rivals fraudulently claimed citizenship, and to back this up, he emphasizes that Euktemon's friends, family, and slaves did not know his supposed second wife. Both arguments rely on the idea that citizen status could be confirmed only by witnesses, and that witnesses were convinced of someone's status by seeing them take part in activities considered to be proper to citizens.¹⁷⁴ Both speeches assume that the testimony of witnesses can establish not only the present status of the individuals whose situation is in doubt, but their past status as well. In Dem. 57, the speaker and his father were both retroactively declared to never have been citizens, and if the speaker's appeal succeeded, both generations were equally retroactively re-declared to have always been citizens. In Classical Athens, the power of democratic consensus was nearly boundless.¹⁷⁵

The chronological argument, with its precise dating and calculation, constitutes an attempt by the speaker to undo one of his opponent's rhetorical moves. The account of

¹⁷⁴ For a detailed discussion of Dem. 57 and the performance of status, see chapter 2, in which I examine both in the context of young men becoming Athenian citizens.

¹⁷⁵ My discussion of Demosthenes *On the Crown*, below, will bring out further aspects of this feature of Athenian ideology.

Pistoxenos' ill-fated participation in the Sicilian Expedition entails that Kallippe was the daughter of a citizen, and of a citizen who died on behalf of the city. The speaker counters that she was instead a prostitute, and the argument about dates and ages specifically counters the claim that her father was a citizen.

Knowledge here represents a kind of authority, and the speaker demonstrates that he knows more precisely when events happened than do those for whom they are key moments of family history. The speaker's use of the archon date reinforces the precision of his calculations and also aligns him with political authority. The archon date takes the Sicilian Expedition out of family history and puts it into political time. Through his knowledge of archon dates, the speaker casts himself as one who is familiar with the administration of the polis. While Athenians prided themselves on democratic equality, the ideology of equal citizens coexisted with reverence toward civic institutions and authorities. The council of the Areopagus is the most familiar example of an institution treated in this way long after being made democratic — by the time of the orators who praised its authority, its members had become eligible for their posts by having been selected by lot to first serve as one of the nine annual archons. The Areopagus is but one example of a larger pattern, which the speaker here seeks to profit from. The city's official dating formulae carry the authority of the city.

At the time of the trial for which Lys. 7 was written, the year that Souniades was archon (which is when the prosecution claims the olive stump was destroyed) must have been a part of the experience of the jurors whether they thought of it in those terms or not. The speaker can still quote that date from the prosecution's indictment and then, later in the speech, present it as having been "a long time ago". In Is. 6, the archonship of

Arimnestos truly was a long time ago. The speaker's identification of the year the Sicilian Expedition departed as the archonship of Arimnestos implies that he has spent time with the city's archives, in the institutional memory of the polis itself and thus close to venerable institutions.

Social expectations and women's ages

The argument about Kallippe's age in Is. 6.13-14 does not hold up under close inspection, but its flaws reveal interesting points of Athenian ideology. In the speaker's version of his opponents' story, the brothers claim that they were born while Kallippe "was being raised" (ἐπιτροπευομένης) by Euktemon. By subtracting the age of the older of the brothers from the time since the Sicilian Expedition departed, determines that she must have been at least 30 years old when he was born. At that age, she could not have been ἐπιτροπευομένης; she must have been married long before.

The speaker is here indulging in some misrepresentation of his own, eliding the difference between an ἐπίτροπος and a κύριος.¹⁷⁶ Kallippe may well have been a child and thus Euktemon her ἐπίτροπος when her father left for Sicily, but while he would not have still been her ἐπίτροπος thirty years later, there are several ways that he could have been her κύριος then. Presumably, Euktemon would have formally become her κύριος instead of her ἐπίτροπος when she reached marriageable age – more on when that was, below – and at that point, he would have been obligated to find her a husband and provide her with a dowry.

¹⁷⁶ Wyse 1904:499.

The speaker regards the possibility that Euktemon failed to arrange a marriage for her until after she reached the age of 30, and then decided to marry her himself, as impossible. But if she had married and then divorced or been widowed, then Euktemon would have become her κύριος again, and her first marriage and any children that resulted from it would not have been directly relevant to the dispute at hand.

When Athenian women married

Contemporary evidence relevant to the larger subject of the ages of women, and the social expectations that women faced at specific ages, is sparse, but largely supports the speaker's expectation that a woman would marry before the age of thirty. One of the three surviving fourth-century funerary inscriptions that gives the age of the deceased¹⁷⁷ was for a woman:

Φίλαγρος Ἀγγελήθεν. Ἡγίλλα Φιλάγρο.

ἡλικίαμ μὲν ἐμὴν ταύτην δεῖ πάντας ἀκούσαι·

εἰκοστῶι καὶ πέμπτῳι ἔτει λίπον ἡλίου αὐγὰς

τοὺς δὲ τρόπους καὶ σωφροσύνην ἣν εἴκομεν ἡμεῖς

ἡμέτερος πόσις οἶδεν ἄριστ' εἶπεν περὶ τούτων.

Philagros of Angeleis. Hegilla (daughter of) Philagros.

All must hear my age:

In my twenty-fifth year I left the light of the sun.

As for my ways and *sophrosune*,

my husband knows best, and can speak of them. (*IG II² 5239*)

¹⁷⁷ The others are *IG II² 5452*, for a man who reached the age of 90, and *IG II² 5768*, for a man who died at 22.

This epitaph is remarkable in highlighting Hegilla's age, but conventional in calling her husband as witness to her (wifely) virtues. We know also that Lysimakhe served as priestess of Athena Polias for 64 years before dying at the age of 88,¹⁷⁸ but in general, women's ages are mentioned less often than men's in ancient sources. This, I believe, is a consequence of the fact that Greek poleis used age to determine men's status and eligibility for political and military service, but were concerned with women primarily as wives and mothers and saw no need to regulate the eligibility of woman for marriage. But the argument in Is. 6.13-14 shows that, despite the absence of regulation, there were strong social expectations about when women should marry.

The amount of direct Classical evidence regarding the customary age of women at first marriage is severely limited. The question of when women (and men) should marry did, however, attract the interest of philosophers and comedians alike. A joke in the *Lysistrata* suggests that there was significant pressure for women to marry by a certain age, although Aristophanes does not feel a need to precisely identify that age. Among the costs of war, *Lysistrata* counts women doomed to never marry because – although even men who are old and gray can readily find wives – women have only a brief window of opportunity (σμηρὸς ὁ καιρὸς) after which no one will want to marry them.¹⁷⁹ Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle do offer precise ages, and I will address their recommendations below.

Some descriptive evidence exists to complement the prescriptive writings of philosophers, and there is also considerably more comparative material. As noted,

¹⁷⁸ *IG II²* 3455, Connelly 2007:130.

¹⁷⁹ *Ar. Lys.* 591-93.

Hegilla left a widower behind when she died at the age of 25, and the speaker of Is. 6's was confident that his audience will accept that it is unthinkable for a woman to remain unmarried until the age of 30. Roman and early modern populations are documented in considerably more detail and likely had similar demographic patterns.

In particular, the survival of census records from Roman Egypt has provided more data for analysis than we have from any other ancient population. Studies suggest a typical pattern in the Roman Empire of the first two centuries CE in which men first married in their twenties and women in their late teens. On the basis of the surviving census records from Egypt, Bagnall and Frier conclude that roughly 65% of women were married by the age of 20 and a majority of men married by the age of 25.¹⁸⁰ Based on the similarity between these studies and early modern evidence, Gallant argues that Classical Greek girls also most often married at ages 16-19.¹⁸¹

Turning now to fourth-century philosophy, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle all offer specific ages or age ranges at which women should marry. Plato touches on the ages at which men and women should marry in two dialogues — or more accurately, he deals with ideal ages for reproduction in one dialogue, and ideal ages for marriage in another, for one of the two is the *Republic*. Traditional marriage has no place in the utopian community of the *Republic*, but women there are to bear their first children at 20 and men to father their first children at 30.¹⁸² In the less radical community imagined in

¹⁸⁰ Bagnall and Frier 1994:111ff.

¹⁸¹ Gallant 1991:18-19.

¹⁸² Pl. *Resp.* 460e.

the *Laws*, women were to marry between the ages of 18 and 20.¹⁸³ In Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, Iskhomakhos' ideal wife was not quite 15 when he¹⁸⁴ married her, and he takes pride in having educated her.¹⁸⁵

Aristotle's approach to the question is the most fully developed of the three. He recommends that men should get married in their late thirties to women in their late teens, for both biological and social reasons.¹⁸⁶ Men, he says, retain the ability to father children until the age of 70 while women lose their fertility at 50. A 20-year age difference therefore ensures that both partners' reproductive lives are maximized. The specific age ranges, he explains, were chosen to allow both partners to reach full physical maturity before reproducing – because children born to parents who are too young will not be as vigorous as those born to mature parents – and so that a couple's first son will be fully adult in time to support his parents in their old age.

Pomeroy regards the marriage of a man around the age of 30 to a girl of 14 as the Athenian ideal,¹⁸⁷ although there is little beyond Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* that suggests that such a young age at first marriage might have been customary for women. It is possible that the idea was supported in part by a misreading of Hesiod's instruction to marry a woman in her fifth year after puberty as advising marrying a girl of 15.¹⁸⁸ The

¹⁸³ Pl. *Leg.* 833d, in which the context is a discussion of athletic contests; girls are to compete in footraces from the age of 13 until they are married.

¹⁸⁴ Α καλὸς κ' ἄγαθος by general acclamation (Xen. *Oec.* 6.16-17), who has performed liturgies and been challenged to antidoseis (7.3), but does not indicate how old he was when he got married.

¹⁸⁵ Xen. *Oec.* 7.5.

¹⁸⁶ Arist. *Pol.* 1335a-b.

¹⁸⁷ Pomeroy 1975:64 Pomeroy 1991:5.

¹⁸⁸ West on Hes. *Op.* 698-99.

same passage of the *Works and Days* also shows that Hesiod thinks men should marry around the age of 30; this, at least, appears to have been a subject of broad agreement for quite some time.

We do know of one certain case of an Athenian girl from a wealthy family becoming engaged while still a child, and the girl in question was not yet married at the age of 15. Demosthenes' father saw to it that his daughter, who was then five years old, was provided with a fiancé and a dowry when he died.¹⁸⁹ Ten years later, as it appears from Dem. 27.65, 28.15, and 28.21, the girl was still unmarried. Since the context of these two speeches is Demosthenes' case against his guardians for mismanagement of his inheritance, his concern with the engagement is that Demophon effectively pocketed the two talents intended as the dowry and left Demosthenes' sister with neither husband nor dowry. However, it is not clear whether this should be taken as an indication Demosthenes regarded his sister as being old enough to marry, or that Demophon considered her too young to marry; the social expectation here is ambiguous.

Either way, Demosthenes can evoke the pathos of a girl cheated out of her dowry¹⁹⁰ whether or not she is in a position to immediately need that dowry. Isaeus 2.3 illustrates what would presumably have happened had Demosthenes been an adult when his father died; in that speech, the two brothers of a deceased father arrange a dowry and

¹⁸⁹ Dem. 27.4-5.

¹⁹⁰ “And they are not even ashamed that they do not pity my sister, who even though she was judged worthy of two talents [as a dowry] by our father, will now receive none of what is due her” (καὶ οὐδ' ἠσχύνθησαν, εἰ μὴ ἠλέησαν, τὴν ἐμὴν ἀδελφὴν, εἰ δυοῖν ταλάντων ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀξιοθεῖσα, μηδενὸς τεύξεται τῶν προσηκόντων, Dem. 27.65).

find a husband for their sister “when she was the right age”.¹⁹¹ This highly compressed account gives us no indication of what that age might have been, but reinforces the impression that there was broad consensus on what it was.¹⁹²

It is no surprise that there are discrepancies between the recommendations of fourth-century philosophers and the practices of ancient populations from which we have more abundant demographic information. How closely Athenian populations and practices of the 4th century BCE resembled those of Egypt in the first two centuries CE is ultimately an unanswerable question, but the basic pattern suggested by the census records from Roman Egypt includes a smaller difference between the ages of husbands and wives than philosophers recommend. Most of this discrepancy comes from men marrying younger in Egypt than Aristotle, in particular, suggests. It appears that most women in Roman Egypt married by or close to the time the fourth-century Greek philosophers thought that women should marry, but the usual difference in age between spouses was a decade or less, because men married younger than Aristotle recommends.

The philosophical recommendations and the ages derived from comparative data do, however, resemble each other closely enough that it is clear that both support the contention of Is. 6 that a 30-year-old woman should be married — or rather, that by that age, a woman should be or should have been married — and the sense that there were strong social expectations that young women marry within a relatively well-defined range of ages.

¹⁹¹ ἐπειδὴ εἶχεν ὥραν, Is. 2.3.

¹⁹² For another illustration of a brother providing a dowry for his sisters, see Lys. 16.10, in which it appears as one of several examples of the speaker’s exemplary behavior toward his relatives.

The stratagem in Is. 6.13-14 attempts to draw the jury's attention toward societal expectations about the ages at which women should marry and away from the fact that Euktemon need not have been Kallippe's first husband. When all we know about the life of Kallippe comes from this brief and hostile account, we can only speculate about how and when she might have returned to her father's house — but if she had lost both a father and a husband to the Peloponnesian War, she would not have been the only woman so bereaved.

The chronological argument of Is. 6.13-14 thus provides a window into a complex knot of argumentative strategies and aspects of the Athenian construction of time. When the speaker calculates Kallippe's age at the birth of her son and declares that he has proven that his opponents' version of how she first entered the household of Euktemon cannot be true, he uses expectations about the female life course to distract his audience from the fact that he is distorting the story. His mathematical precision conveys a sense that he must know her life better than her own children, for he can declare what her status would have been when the Sicilian Expedition left, and by conspicuously choosing an archon-date as the starting point for the calculation, he characterizes himself as a member of the political elite.

Knowledge of the past, if sufficiently detailed, becomes power. This superior knowledge of detail also enables the speaker to counter his opponents' claim that the Sicilian Expedition was a pivotal moment in their family history, and thus deny them the place they sought to claim in Athenian collective memory of the Peloponnesian War. And the development of Athenian foreign policy in the speaker's generation had given

those collective memories a new prominence, as the city reassembled parts of its fifth-century empire and sought to rebuild the rest.

Demosthenes, *On the Crown*

The long-standing rivalry between Demosthenes and Aeschines has become one of the most celebrated aspects of 4th-century Athenian history, in no small part because it left us the only two surviving pairs of speeches written for opposing sides in the same case — Demosthenes 19/Aeschines 2 *On the False Embassy* (343 BCE), and Aeschines 3/Demosthenes 18 *On the Crown* (330 BCE).¹⁹³ I wish to focus here on Demosthenes' *On the Crown*, because of the importance of the past in it. In Aeschines' charge that a decree honoring Demosthenes was illegal, Demosthenes found an opportunity to defend and justify his entire political career. To do so, he constructed a version of history in which defeat at Macedonian hands did not undermine the correctness of Demosthenes' anti-Macedonian policies.

The case is an excellent example of the kind of indirect attack that fourth-century Athenian political figures commonly used against their rivals.¹⁹⁴ Demosthenes had

¹⁹³ There are also two “imperfectly matching pairs” — Lys. 6 and Andok. 1, of which Lys. 6 is probably a supporting speech for the prosecution of Andokides on charges of impiety, and Dem. 43's re-opening of the earlier dispute of Is. 11 (Todd 1993:37).

¹⁹⁴ See, e.g., Todd's discussion of this practice at Todd 1993: 158-60. I suspect that the possibility of humiliating more than one opponent at a time provided another motivation for indirect prosecution. Aeschines could likely have found a direct charge to use against Demosthenes, and had he done so and won, Demosthenes would have been humbled. Had he won his case against Ctesiphon, however, both Demosthenes and Ctesiphon would have been humbled. On the other hand, Aeschines' decision did give Demosthenes an opening to charge, at 18.279, that Aeschines was a coward for not attacking Demosthenes directly.

exerted considerable influence on Athenian foreign policy through most of Athens' dealings with Macedon (including proposing the embassy in 346 which became the seed of his feud with Aeschines; his accusation in 343 was that Aeschines and his fellow ambassadors had not followed the instructions given to them by a decree which Demosthenes had himself proposed), but the Macedonian victory at Chaeronea gave Demosthenes' domestic enemies an opening to attack him as the man whose advice led to defeat.¹⁹⁵

In 336, Ctesiphon had proposed a decree granting Demosthenes an honorary crown for his work rebuilding the fortifications of Athens (both as an official of the *polis* and a donor of his own resources) and general services to the city, and Aeschines responded with a *graphe paranomon* charging that Ctesiphon's decree violated a law specifying that holders of public office were ineligible for honors until after completing their term of service and passing the inspection that followed.¹⁹⁶ Thus, the narrow issue of whether it was proper for Ctesiphon to have proposed the honorary decree while Demosthenes was still on the board supervising the city walls provided Aeschines with a way to bring before a jury the question of whether Demosthenes was to blame for Macedonian hegemony over Greece.

Consequently, *On the Crown* is Demosthenes' defense of his entire political career, throughout which he had urged the Athenians to resist Macedon. As Yunis has argued, this largely amounts to attempting to persuade his audience that he should not be

¹⁹⁵ Yunis 2001:2-6.

¹⁹⁶ Todd 1993:159-60, Yunis 2001:7-12.

held responsible for the defeat at Chaeronea.¹⁹⁷ This was not an easy case to make, especially because the demos could become very dangerous indeed to an aristocrat they had earlier embraced. In Yunis' interpretation, Demosthenes in this speech

...rejects the standard of evaluation that Aeschines, following Athenian legal and political custom, applied to him... that is, he rejects the success-oriented model of public discourse and portrays himself as a hero deserving public honor, even though the policy, his policy, failed. (Yunis 2000:104)

This self-portrait attempts to replace the standard terms of political argument with those of epic and tragic poetry. Where the courts were associated with a fundamental optimism that disputes could be resolved, literary heroes, especially tragic heroes, found themselves victims of circumstances beyond human control. The standard discourse of the courts would favor Aeschines' case, in this interpretation, and so Demosthenes sought to lead the jurors into seeing his situation not as a typical court case but rather a contemporary echo of familiar literary situations. His argument is that placing blame for the defeat at Chaeronea would accomplish nothing, but he had done the right thing in exhorting his fellow Athenians to fight for the freedom of Greece and they had done the right thing in fighting bravely, like epic heroes whose battles also had preordained outcomes.

The two modes of thought Yunis contrasts are connected to distinct views of time. To reframe Yunis' argument in temporal terms, Demosthenes attempted to shift the case away from the recent past (the realm of the courts) by assimilating that past to the heroic

¹⁹⁷ Yunis 2000.

age (the realm of tragedy and epic). The typical discourse of the courts operated within a relatively narrow time horizon and a progression of discrete events, for all that the specific period relevant to any particular case was itself (as I have shown in my examinations of Lys. 7 and Is. 6) subject to dispute and each litigant strategically chose a chronology to suit their overall case.

The worldview of heroic poetry was associated with a vaguely remote past, though one that historical events could readily enough be assimilated into. The most conspicuous site for such mingling of history and myth was the funeral oration, but Dem. 18.208 evokes those who had died fighting the Persians.¹⁹⁸ Demosthenes' use of the Persian War dead here is idiosyncratic in that he calls attention to the battles that were lost, rather than the war that was won, to make the point that fallen soldiers are honored regardless of which side won the battle in which they died.

Viewing sections 169ff. of the speech in terms of recent and remote pasts makes clear that Yunis has identified only part of Demosthenes' strategy and the reason for his overwhelming success in winning over the jury. The account of Athenian reactions to the news from Elateia does resemble a tragic messenger speech, but it is also a persuasive account of events of which Demosthenes' audience would have had their own memories. On the way to invoking the logic of tragedy and the relative timelessness of ideology and historical exempla, Demosthenes addresses specific events of several years prior in a way that effectively seeks to tell the jury what they remember.¹⁹⁹ There is a double strategy at

¹⁹⁸ On funeral orations more generally, see Loraux 1986.

¹⁹⁹ Later in the speech, when constructing oppositions between himself and Aeschines, Demosthenes will claim that a rhetor's value is in "favoring the policy of the majority, and having the same friends and enemies as his country" (προαιρεῖσθαι τοῖς

work. Demosthenes finds both the sense of time customary in political and legal discourse (and the associated expectation that disputes can be resolved) and that of tragedy (with its concern with disputes that allow no resolution) useful in constructing a multileveled defense.

Before assuring his audience that the decision to fight Macedon was in keeping with timeless Athenian opposition to tyranny, and that their enemy was as much fate as it was Philip, Demosthenes takes great care to walk his audience through the stages of reaction to the news that Elateia had fallen and help them relive the assembly at which the Athenians voted to ally with Thebes against Philip. In so doing, he tells his audience that they remember agreeing with him at the crucial moment. The narrative of the assembly at which only one man spoke presents a version of the past in which everyone agreed that Demosthenes' proposal was the only course of action that merited serious consideration, in which the *demos* wholly embraced resistance to Macedon.

This emphasis on the absence of other proposals and the vote in favor of Demosthenes' proposal relies on a key aspect of Athenian democratic ideology. As described by Todd:

Athenian public discourse rests on a success-oriented model of politics in which incompetence is criminal. The military context of much of Greek political life may be relevant here, for in war (and in the fifth century at least, politicians were regularly generals) results matter more than good

πολλοῖς καὶ τὸ τοὺς αὐτοὺς μσεῖν καὶ φιλεῖν οὔσπερ ἂν ἡ πατρίς, Dem. 18.280). The rhetoric of being guided by public opinion while guiding it required a deft hand, as Ober's discussion of that passage and, more generally, the relationship between rhetoric and "mass wisdom" illuminates (Ober 1989:166-70).

intentions; and it is true also that Athenians did not distinguish as we perhaps might between political error and legal offense. But it may again be connected with the sovereign power of the *demos*, which is, according to Athenian constitutional theory, always right, because there is no way for its decisions to be proved wrong. If a democratic decision leads to disaster, the fault must lie not with the voters, because it is impossible to put them on trial for it, but with either the proposers or the executors of this policy... (Todd 1993:306)

While Demosthenes' defense needed to give the jury a reason to not hold him culpable for the failure of the policies he proposed, the notion of the infallibility of the *demos* provided a means by which to do this without obligating them to step entirely outside of the usual conceptual framework of the Athenian courts.²⁰⁰ Accordingly, where Yunis sees the account of the news of Elateia's fall and the meeting of the Athenian assembly on the next day as Demosthenes borrowing from literary traditions to frame his policy and its failure as inevitable,²⁰¹ I believe that it is also crucial in Demosthenes' presentation of his proposals as having the approval and therefore validation of the *demos*.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Or perhaps better, gave them multiple rationales by which they could decide to find Demosthenes' policies, and thus Ctesphon's decree awarding him a crown, blameless. Athenian juries were large and diverse, making it a sound strategy to employ a variety of persuasive strategies; furthermore, trials, especially high-profile ones, attracted bystanders, so the litigants addressed still larger and less homogenous audiences than just the jurors (Lanni 1997).

²⁰¹ Yunis 2000:105ff.

²⁰² Ober's analysis of the theater as a realm of communication between mass and elite gives reasons to see the distance between rhetoric and tragedy as shorter than Yunis presents it as Ober 1989:152-55. In particular, he observes that "The process of

Demosthenes and *kairos*

As Luca Asmonti has noted,²⁰³ Demosthenes was particularly fond of the term *kairos* as part of a rhetoric of urgency, and especially so in his earlier speeches urging Athenian action against Macedon. Asmonti's argument begins with a tally of the number of times Demosthenes uses the word *kairos* in each of his public speeches, from which he calculates the frequency of the word in each speech. The *Olynthiacs* and *First Philippic* appear at the top of the resulting list of speeches sorted by frequency of *kairos*-references. Asmonti's conclusion from this is that Demosthenes sought to present the period 351-349 as a *kairos par excellence*:

In quel periodo, l'oratore, non ancora politico di primissimo piano, cercava di imporsi all'attenzione dei suoi concittadini presentandosi come alfiere della guerra contro Filippo, un conflitto che, come ai tempi delle Guerre Persiane, rappresentava il momento supremo – il *kairos* per l'appunto – in cui venivano messi in gioco I valori fondamentali della *polis* e del quale Atene poteva uscire o trionfantrice, o distrutta per sempre.

In that period, the orator, not yet a politician but beginning to become one, set himself the task of drawing his fellow-citizens' attention and presented himself as the standard-bearer of a war with Philip — a war which, like

identification with tragic characters provided the Athenians with symbolic paradigms and may have tended to humanize the elite litigant for the members of mass juries" (Ober 1989), which would make an appeal to tragic paradigms less of a leap on Demosthenes' part.

²⁰³ Asmonti 2003.

the time of the Persian Wars, presented a supreme moment – a true *kairos* – in which the fundamental values of the *polis* were at stake and Athens would either pull through and triumph, or be destroyed forever. (Asmonti 2003:276)

Demosthenes' version of *kairos* is thus a particularly military one, in contrast to other uses of the term (especially by Aeschines; Asmonti cites Trédé's casting of the opposition between the two in terms of war-focused vs. peacetime definitions of *kairos*). He used the word as part of a rhetoric of imminent danger that could be defeated only by swift action, calling upon Athens to fight the Macedonians as quickly as possible. Philip's actions against the Olynthians and others in these years also presented Demosthenes himself with a personal *kairos*. In the Macedonian threat, he saw an opportunity to turn the skills he had developed as a *logographos* into a new career as a statesman.

From there, Asmonti's scope expands beyond *kairos*, into the contrast between Demosthenes' criticism of his fellow-citizens as slow to act and Thucydides' criticism of an earlier generation of Athenians as too quick to act. But I wish to focus on the idea that Demosthenes' ability to recognize a *kairos* qualified him to become a statesman. The overall theme of the *Olynthiacs* and *Philippics* is that the Athenians could end the threat of Philip through swift military action. Demosthenes' feud with Aeschines began with the accusation that, as ambassador to Macedon, Aeschines wasted an opportunity that Demosthenes had called to the attention of the city. It was Demosthenes who saw the

kairoi and knew what the city should do; part of his characterization of Aeschines as the opposite of a good rhetor in *On the False Embassy* is that he squandered opportunities.²⁰⁴

Yet although Demosthenes made his career by identifying moments for decisive action, one of his most famous speeches required him to defend past decisions rather than urge present action. My next section will address the use of the past, specifically the retelling of Athenian reactions to the fall of Elateia, in *On the Crown*. There, the rhetoric of urgency is adapted to encompass the past as well as the present. In a speech that proclaims “Even though the *kairos* for action has passed, the *kairos* for understanding is always present to the wise”,²⁰⁵ the key to understanding Demosthenes’ value to Athens is reliving the *kairos* before passing judgment.

The fall of Elateia and manipulation of memory

In Lysias 7, the speaker uses the past he shares with his audience to construct parallels between his private property and Athens, and between himself and the democracy as restored after the rule of the Thirty. Opponents of the speaker of Isaeus 6 use the Peloponnesian War itself, over fifty years after the fact, to characterize their family as respectable, patriotic citizens. The speaker counters this tactic by using his precise knowledge of the past to, in effect, take the Sicilian Expedition away from them. When, in 18.169ff., Demosthenes recounts Athenian reactions to the fall of Elateia and repeats what he presents as the speech he gave before the assembly on the next morning,

²⁰⁴ E.g., “By wasting time, he [Aeschines] lost *kairoi* for many important matters” ἀνηλωκότα τοὺς χρόνους ἐν οἷς πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων πραγμάτων καιροὶ προεῖνται τῇ πόλει (Dem. 19.8).

²⁰⁵ καὶ γὰρ εἰ παρελήλυθ’ ὁ τῶν πραγμάτων καιρός, ὁ τοῦ γ’ εἰδέναι τὰ τοιαῦτα καιρός ἀεὶ πάρεστι τοῖς εὖ φρονούσι (Dem. 18.48).

he is attempting to convince his audience of a version of the past in which his policy unambiguously became the policy of the *demos*.

In the larger framework of the speech, this passage prepares the ground for an explicit argument that, even though Macedon could not be resisted, Demosthenes' policy of resistance had been approved by the *demos* and was the only proper course of action. In the news that Philip and his army had taken Elateia and were thus in position to threaten Boetia and Attica, Demosthenes saw an opportunity to make common cause with the Thebans against Macedon, and urged the assembly to seize that opportunity. The alliance was made, but soon proved inadequate to the task. Demosthenes' strategy in this section of the speech is to persuade the jury that they had supported him in the past and that he thus should not be made a scapegoat for the failure of a policy that the *demos* had favored. He meets the challenge by evoking and manipulating memories of trauma, both evoking collective memory and replacing it with his own version of what happened.

The narrative of Athenian reactions to the fall of Elateia is famous for its vivid and detailed account of events, which guides the audience through reliving the hours leading up to Demosthenes' proposal to ally with Thebes to fight Macedon and the assembly's vote to implement it. Demosthenes evokes the audience's emotional recollections of unwelcome news arriving without warning and sending shockwaves through the city. A rapid succession of images conveys the sense of surprise and dismay: there is the image of messengers arriving in the evening and catching the prytaneis as they were eating their dinner, the roar of *θορόβος* spreading as the rest of the city learned of Philip's proximity and clear aggressive intent, the lighting of signal fires, the spread of rumor, the herald plaintively repeating the invitation to speak over and over

before assemblymen who, in sharp contrast to the uproar of the previous evening, were uniformly struck silent. This retelling of events creates a version that all were to identify with, a single narrative for all hearers to fit their memories into.

After recreating this atmosphere, Demosthenes begins to speak for his audience and explains to them why they had not spoken in that assembly:

καίτοι εἰ μὲν τοὺς σωθῆναι τὴν πόλιν βουλομένους παρελθεῖν ἔδει,
πάντες ἂν ὑμεῖς καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι Ἀθηναῖοι ἀναστάντες ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμ'
ἐβαδίζετε: πάντες γὰρ οἶδ' ὅτι σωθῆναι αὐτὴν ἐβούλεσθε: εἰ δὲ τοὺς
πλουσιωτάτους, οἱ τριακόσιοι: εἰ δὲ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρωθεν ταῦτα, καὶ
εὐνοοῦς τῇ πόλει καὶ πλουσίους, οἱ μετὰ ταῦτα τὰς μεγάλας ἐπιδόσεις
ἐπιδόντες· καὶ γὰρ εὐνοία καὶ πλούτῳ τοῦτ' ἐποίησαν. ἀλλ', ὡς
ἔοικεν, ἐκεῖνος ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα 'κείνη οὐ μόνον εὐνοοῦν καὶ
πλούσιον ἄνδρ' ἐκάλει, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρηκολουθηκότα τοῖς πράγμασιν
ἐξ ἀρχῆς, καὶ συλλελογισμένον ὀρθῶς τίνος εἴνεκα ταῦτ' ἔπραττεν ὁ
Φίλιππος καὶ τί βουλόμενος· ὁ γὰρ μὴ ταῦτ' εἰδὼς μὴδ' ἐξητακῶς
πρόρρωθεν, οὔτ' εἰ εὐνοοῦς ἦν οὔτ' εἰ πλούσιος, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἔμελλ' ὅ
τι χρὴ ποιεῖν εἴσεσθαι οὐδ' ὑμῖν ἔξιν συμβουλεύειν.

If men who wanted to save the city were to come forward, then all of you and all the other Athenians would have risen and gone to the speaker's platform, for I know that everyone wanted to save the city. If it had been the wealthiest, then the Three Hundred would have come forward; if those who were both well-inclined toward the city and wealthy, then those who later brought large contributions, for they did so from goodwill and

wealth. It seems instead that that *kairos* and that day did not call for a well-inclined and wealthy man, but one who had followed the situation from the beginning and correctly inferred why Philip had done this and what he wanted to achieve. A man who did not know this and had not been following events for some time, whether or not he was well-intentioned or wealthy, would not know what needed to be done or to advise you. (Dem. 18.171-172)

Demosthenes here constructs a distinction between the ordinary citizens, who wanted to see Athens safe but did not have the particular talents to devise a plan to save it, and the elite orators.²⁰⁶ He will next contrast himself to the other orators,²⁰⁷ who failed to offer any advice at the crucial time and thereby proved themselves inferior to him. Before characterizing his rivals as deserters, though, he wants the *demos* on his side. Of course, Demosthenes cannot know what the other Athenians at the assembly on that morning had been thinking, or why no one but him came forward to speak, if indeed he was the sole speaker:

There was no debate, no opposition in the Athenian assembly! – A statement that rightly strains a historian’s credulity. The fact of the matter is beyond our reach, but the rhetorical intent is clear: Demosthenes wants

²⁰⁶ Another group, the generals, appear in section 170 (“No one rose to speak, though all the generals were present, and all the orators”, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἀνίστατ’ οὐδεῖς, ἀπάντων μὲν τῶν στρατηγῶν παρόντων, ἀπάντων δὲ τῶν ῥητόρων), but not in 171-172. On parallelism between generals and orators, see Ober 1989:119-21; the need for cooperation between the two groups which Ober notes likely explains why Demosthenes does not criticize the generals alongside the other orators, as only the latter are really his rivals.

²⁰⁷ Though not yet Aeschines by name; that happens at 18.191, after the “historical” section of the speech.

to claim sole responsibility for the Chaeronea policy, in both conception and execution. (Yunis 106)

I would say rather that Demosthenes wants to claim sole responsibility *among the rhetors* for the Chaeronea policy, while simultaneously asserting that he and he alone spoke for the *demos*. If only one voice was heard at a meeting of the Athenian assembly, then it must have been the voice of Athens. Demosthenes' reasoning is that, because no one else spoke at the crucial meeting, Demosthenes' own proposal was the will of the *demos*. Athenian ideology held that democratic deliberation always determined the correct course of action, and so if a meeting of the assembly only offered one possible course of action, then that must have been the correct course.

Sections 169-170 of *On the Crown* describe emotional reactions to the news that Philip was three days' march from Athens. Sections 171-172 explain the shortage of speakers at the next morning's meeting of the assembly in rational terms, as the *demos* and Demosthenes correctly and rationally playing their parts while the other rhetors abandoned theirs. This explanation of the unusual assembly as the result of reasoned calculation rather than emotional shock or *aporia* invites the jury to accept Demosthenes' account as what actually happened, because it lets them think that, far from being paralyzed with fear, they each did exactly what they should have done.²⁰⁸ In it, each

²⁰⁸ A point which will be made explicit in 199ff. The argument there is that fighting for freedom was such a defining part of Athenian character that, even though Macedon could not be defeated with the resources that could be gathered against him, not resisting Philip would have constituted an unthinkable betrayal. Thus, Demosthenes' role was reminding his fellow-citizens of the legacy of the Marathonomachoi who saved Greece from Persian tyranny.

Athenian citizen responded to the crisis by coolly asking himself “Am I the one who can save Athens at this point?” rather than with fear or panic.

In this version of the past – and note that the trial for which *On the Crown* was written was held in the summer of 330, but Elateia had fallen in late 339, so the years and other intervening trauma in between would soften and alter memories – the men of the assembly silently agreed that the situation required someone with an extensive background in Athenian-Macedonian relations. Demosthenes, of course, had such a background, and he proposed a course of action that could make the most of the situation.

The rhetoric does sharpen soon afterward, when Demosthenes likens himself to a hoplite who kept his place in the line of battle when others fled.²⁰⁹ It will sharpen still more when Demosthenes turns directly to Aeschines and catalogs his failings as a statesman, aristocrat, and Athenian in general. That is yet to come, however. At this moment in the speech, the contrast is between Demosthenes himself and the other rhetors as a group, rather than between himself and the citizen body at large.

Viewed in the light of the nuanced relationship between the *demos* and elite orators in Athens,²¹⁰ Demosthenes presents the ordinary assemblymen as accepting that the situation did not call for dedication to the city or any other quality they possessed, but rather the skills and experience of an elite rhetor. Meanwhile, Demosthenes’ elite rivals failed to perform their duty to the city, so Demosthenes and the mass of citizens acted properly while the other rhetors did not. Others in the assembly kept their silence not because they felt helpless, but because they knew that their particular talents were not

²⁰⁹ μόνος τῶν λεγοντῶν καὶ πολιτευμένων ἐγὼ τῆς εὐνοίας τάξιν ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς οὐκ ἔλιπον (173)

²¹⁰ As analyzed in Ober 1989, ch. 4.

those the city most needed at the present crisis. It was thus Demosthenes' *kairos*, not theirs.

After setting the scene and explaining that he was uniquely qualified to guide Athens through that *kairos*, Demosthenes proceeds to re-enact the speech he had given nine years prior. The words with which he introduces this speech, εἶπον τοίνυν ὅτι (beginning of 174), reinforce the vividness, with τοίνυν and the choice of direct discourse sustaining the illusion that the speech, with its call to resist panic and act quickly to show strength and offer support to the Thebans, belongs not in the audience's past but their present. By quoting at length from his earlier speech, Demosthenes implicitly asserts that the arguments that were valid in 339 remained valid in 330. This further prepares the ground for the forceful claim of 18.203ff. that it is timelessly in the nature of Athenians to resist foreign rule at all costs.

As has been noted, this is part of a strategy of presenting Demosthenes' policies as correct and himself as admirable even though opposition to Macedon led ultimately to crushing defeat at Chaeronea followed by subjugation. The vivid retelling of the reaction to Elateia and Demosthenes' own speech urging solidarity between Athens and Thebes against Macedon may seem to risk inviting Demosthenes' audience in 330 to remember that Athens and Thebes were jointly defeated, but the temporal aspect of his strategy is intended to focus attention on 339 rather than 338 or later. By bringing one historical moment into vivid new life, Demosthenes reminds his audience of the policy they voted for at that moment, of their support for it, and of the fact that no one else offered competing guidance.

The explanation for the assembly's near-universal silence invited Demosthenes' hearers to accept his version of the past by flattering them, but the continuation of the narrative asserts their support for his policy, and the historical section closes by repeating that the *demos* supported Demosthenes and Demosthenes, in turn, finished what he had begun:

ταῦτα καὶ παραπλήσια τούτοις εἰπὼν κατέβην. συνεπαινεσάντων δὲ πάντων καὶ οὐδενὸς εἰπόντος ἐναντίον οὐδέν, οὐκ εἶπον μὲν ταῦτα, οὐκ ἔγραψα δέ, οὐδ' ἔγραψα μὲν, οὐκ ἐπρέσβευσα δέ, οὐδ' ἐπρέσβευσα μὲν, οὐκ ἔπεισα δὲ Θηβαίους, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἄχρι τῆς τελευτῆς διεξήλθον, καὶ ἔδωκ' ἑμαυτὸν ὑμῖν ἀπλῶς εἰς τοὺς περιεστηκότας τῇ πόλει κινδύνους.

After saying those and similar words, I stepped down. Everyone joined in agreement and no one spoke in opposition, and I did not speak without proposing the motion, nor propose the motion without serving as ambassador, nor serve as ambassador without persuading the Thebans, but followed the process from beginning to end, and dedicated myself entirely to facing danger on behalf of the city. (Dem. 18.179)

In other words: The entire *demos* agreed with what Demosthenes had said. Accordingly, Demosthenes had spoken for the city, and the unanimity of the assembly confirmed that Demosthenes' proposal was the will of the *demos*. Then Demosthenes fulfilled his end of the social contract by successfully doing his part to carry out the will of the *demos*. The vote of approval transformed his proposal into a command from the entire city, and so punishing him for making an alliance with Thebes after being ordered

by the *demos* to do so would have been unjust and nonsensical. Demosthenes' account of the post-Elateia meeting of the assembly makes the battle of Chaeronea into a necessary consequence of both proximate history (with the unanimous vote for the proposal that led to it) and the more nebulous sort of history that defined Athenian character (from the Persian Wars back through the heroic age).

This strategy of retelling the decision to go to war with Macedon as the *demos* wholeheartedly accepting Demosthenes' proposal relies on one further ideological position: that decisions of the *demos* are timeless. Demosthenes wants the jury to believe that the decision made in 339 was not only correct at the time, but remained correct in 338 and also in 330 despite the further expansion of Macedonian power. Hence the paradox of asserting that it is a waste of time to argue about the past, in the midst of presenting an extended argument about the past:

ἀλλὰ μὴν τὸ μὲν παρεληλυθὸς ἀεὶ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀφείται, καὶ οὐδεὶς περὶ τούτου προτίθησιν οὐδαμοῦ βουλήν: τὸ δὲ μέλλον ἢ τὸ παρὸν τὴν τοῦ συμβούλου τάξιν ἀπαιτεῖ. τότε τοίνυν τὰ μὲν ἔμελλον, ὡς ἐδόκει, τῶν δεινῶν, τὰ δ' ἤδη παρῆν, ἐν οἷς τὴν προαίρεσίν μου σκόπει τῆς πολιτείας, μὴ τὰ συμβάντα συκοφάντει. τὸ μὲν γὰρ πέρασ ὡς ἂν ὁ δαίμων βουλευθῆ πάντων γίγνεται: ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις αὐτὴ τὴν τοῦ συμβούλου διάνοιαν δηλοῖ.

But the past is let go by everyone, and no one makes plans about it. It is the future and the present that call the statesman to duty. At that time, you know, some dangers were in the future and others already present, so consider my policy in light of that and don't quibble about outcomes.

Ultimately, everything happens as the god wishes, but an orator's policy reveals his insight. (Dem. 18.192)

Partially, of course, this is a swipe at Aeschines for initiating a prosecution over events long gone. But it is also a transition from specific past events to timeless, gnomic pronouncements. Because the outcome of human events is ultimately beyond human control, the display of human character becomes critical.²¹¹ The *daimon* decreed that Philip would become hegemon of Greece, but – as Demosthenes explicitly argues in 201ff –it was up to the Athenians to choose whether to live up to their city's glorious past and fight the tyrant, or to betray their ancestors and demean themselves by accepting subjugation. The Athenians who fought at Marathon were glorious in victory, and the Athenians who fought at Chaeronea were glorious in defeat; both groups were in a sense living the same moment, instantiating the eternal willingness of Athenians to fight and die for the cause of liberty.

Conclusions

Athenian court speeches illustrate a range of ways in which the past and memory could be used in persuasive strategies, and the intertwining of different kinds and scopes of time in citizen life and disputes. The three speeches I have chosen as case studies show that seemingly extraneous information about when things happened, or changes in the level of precision in the dating of past events, could encode ideological appeals to shared citizen experience or the prestige of civic institutions.

²¹¹ It is here that the argument of Yunis 2001 is most insightful.

When the speaker of Lys. 7 presented a lengthy and detailed list of prior owners of the land from which he was accused of removing a sacred olive tree, he answered implicit accusations of oligarchic leanings by aligning himself with the *demos* as fellow-victim of the regimes of the Four Hundred and the Thirty. In Is. 6, the speaker retaliated against charges that he had not legally been adopted by the man whose inheritance rights he claimed by using a detailed and precise temporal argument to argue that his opponents were not citizens. In Dem. 18, Demosthenes adapted the blending of historical and mythic past characteristic of public funeral orations, and the civic ideology that the *demos* is always right, into a version of his political career in which the failure of his policies is irrelevant to his merit as a rhetor.

These speeches mix public, personal, and family histories into appeals to the democratic values of Athenian audiences. Sometimes, especially in Lys. 7 and parts of Dem. 18, the speaker's references to the past are chosen to create a sense of solidarity between litigant and jury by emphasizing shared experiences. In other instances, especially in Is. 6 and other points in Dem. 18, the speaker's precise historical knowledge is deployed as a mark of superiority over his opponent.

Sometimes, the dating formulas used by the polis are used to align the speaker with the prestige of civic institutions, sometimes they are used to indicate familiarity with the details of important transactions or events, and often they are avoided in favor of unofficial references to shared memories of important events. Throughout, the choice of which past events to mention and what terms to use in referring to them, provided Athenian litigants with a range of possible strategies.

Chapter IV: Time and community from *deme* to *oikumene*

Introduction

In Chapter 1, I examined the Athenian festival calendar in terms of the relationship between social construction and natural phenomena. Although the months of the Athenian year (and those of other poleis) were roughly based on the phases of the moon, and intercalary months were used to keep the calendar year roughly in step with the cycle of the seasons over the long term, the calendar itself was a social construct. In this chapter, I turn to the social uses of Greek festival calendars, specifically those pertaining to definition of group identity and formation of ties between communities.

Recent years have brought to ancient historians an ever-increasing facility with tools developed in other disciplines, especially anthropology, for the study of how groups construct themselves through ritual. Current exemplars of this synthesis – and major influences on this chapter – include Jonathan Hall, for his analysis of Greek ethnic identity as expressed by fictive history and retrojections of present conditions into myth; Irad Malkin's approach to the uses of religion in defining colonies as communities with obligations to others; Barbara Kowalzig, for setting myth and ritual together (after the reaction against the Cambridge School led to their largely being studied in isolation from one other) and in specific context; and Robin Osborne, who continues to take Greek social and cultural history in new and productive directions.

This developing theoretical framework, I believe, can easily be extended and applied to the construction of time. The repetition of particular rituals on a particular schedule creates a “timescape” for those who practice those rituals. To use modern religions as examples, Catholic and Orthodox Christians pay more attention to saint’s days than do most Protestant Christians, and neither takes much note of Rosh Hashanah or Ramadan; and so the liturgical years of different faiths, and also of different branches of the same faith, are shaped differently from each other. My particular interest in this chapter is the way that the arrangement of rituals over the year (and other intervals of time, as Greek communities commonly also celebrated monthly, biennial, and quadrennial festivals) make time an integral part of local self-definition through cult.

The segmented nature of Greek society encouraged communities at every scale, from the Greek-speaking world as a whole down to villages and local kinship groups, to shape the year in their own ways and express their relationships with other segments. Festivals put their participants on display in front of non-participants in the vicinity, making group members visible to the larger community. Greek sacrifice was visible to passersby, and so were the processions to the open-air altars that normally preceded sacrifice and the musical and athletic contests associated with many festivals. Other possibilities included joint festivals, or sending representatives to or receiving representatives from other groups. Such mutual arrangements could amount almost literally to one group making time for the other.

After an opening excursus into the archaic period to consider Hesiod’s *Works and Days* as a temporal structuring of society, this chapter will focus almost exclusively on Athens, Athenian colonies, and the fifth-century Athenian empire. Part of the reason for

this focus is that, as is so often the case, Athenian institutions are simply better documented than those of other Classical poleis. The most extensive study in this chapter will be that of the Attic deme, because of the survival of several key inscriptions.

The Athenian empire demands attention as a new phenomenon, which created new needs for communities to define themselves in relation to one another;²¹² and colonization became intertwined with empire through Athenian use of the language of colonization for the relation between imperial power and subject, and Athenian colonies founded as outposts of empire. Broadly speaking, the Athenians of the fifth century inherited a tradition of using religious festivals to bind disparate segments of society together, and sought with varying degrees of success to extend this framework throughout the territories under their imperial influence.

The festival calendars of the deme of Marathon and the regional association of the Marathonian Tetrapolis provide particularly detailed evidence for the use of cult to articulate a social group's identity and relationships to other groups at the same and higher structural levels. The calendars of Erkhia and Thorikos indicate that although Marathon was exceptional in the amount of information we have for its regional associations, it was typical of Classical Attic demes in that its members shaped time to construct a sense of deme identity. The same strategies played out at the successive levels of deme, regional association of demes, and demesmen celebrating at Athens (routine for the Erkhians, less common for more remote demes) or Athenian polis

²¹² And not just in the form of relationships between Athens and individual other poleis; rather, the growth of empire gave other poleis new terms in which to define themselves and their relations. “[I]t is in confrontation with the emerging Athenian empire that the question of the role of individual cities is most seen to be disputed” (Kowalzig 2007:398).

festivals held in demes away from the city (e.g., the Eleusinian Mysteries or the annual commemoration of the Battle of Marathon).

Furthermore, the relationship between deme and polis also mirrored the relationship between local communities and the Greek world as a whole; these relationships were articulated through local, distributed cult (e.g. worship of Apollo on the 7th day of each month in disparate communities) as well as hosting festivals and inviting participants from other poleis (or demanding participation, as the Athenians did of their subjects for the Greater Panathenaia and the City Dionysia) or sending *theoroi* to a festival hosted by another polis or pan-Hellenic sanctuary.

The Athenian and Ionian festival of the Apatouria illustrates a nexus of colonial and imperial ties and bridges intra-Attic and large-scale relations. In Athens, this festival was celebrated in a decentralized manner, by phratries who – by feasting at civic expense – simultaneously declared themselves descendants of a common ancestor, Athenian citizens, and members of the Ionic *ethnos*. In the 5th century, the fact that this festival was celebrated in Athens and in the cities of Ionia was considered to be evidence that the Ionians were descended from Athenian colonists. The belief that the common festival was proof of common descent served a political, if not to say propagandistic, function. The claim that the Ionians had been dependent on Athens in the remote past was used to justify contemporary Ionian dependence on Athens.

This deployment of mytho-history to justify present circumstances sought to elide the difference between colony and subject, but as I shall show, clear differences between the two remained apparent in cult and the shaping of religious time. Put briefly, colonies were allowed independence to freely shape their festival years and thereby define

themselves, but Athens' demand that subjects send offerings and representatives to specific Athenian festivals obligated those cities to observe the Athenian festival calendar as well as their own. Thus, the Athenians imposed their own time upon that of their subjects.

To further illustrate the temporal difference between colony and subject, I will use three case studies, which highlight different aspects of Athenian attempts to blend the status of colony and subject: Brea, Thourioi, and Amphipolis. For Brea, we have the decree ordering the foundation of the city, which grants the new foundation the right to its own distinctive festival calendar but also imposes the demand that subjects send offerings to the Greater Panathenaia and the City Dionysia. Contrary to the old consensus that colonies inherited the festivals of their mother cities, the settlers at Brea were specifically prohibited from establishing sanctuaries in their new home, and thereby forbidden to establish local branches of Athenian cults. They were also, however, required to keep track of the Athenian calendar and participate in key festivals in the mother city, as subjects of Athens.

Thourioi represents a failed Athenian attempt to claim another community as its colony, and Amphipolis is a colony that slipped out of Athenian control. Athenian attempts to claim the Panhellenic colony of Thourioi led the Thourians to ask Delphi who they were to consider their founder, and the answer – Apollo himself – shows again how cult and constructed pasts served as tools for the construction of group identity. When Athens offered a version of history in which an Athenian had founded the city, the Thourians appealed to Delphi and got a past in which their oikist was no mere mortal, but the divine patron of colonization himself.

At Amphipolis, one human founder was replaced with another, and replacement of a cult honoring one founder (the Athenian Hagnon) with that of another (the Spartan Brasidas) constructed a change of political relations as a new foundation of the city. Cult here provided the means to reshape both past and future, relative to the moment in 422 that brought the end of Athenian control of Amphipolis.

From Hesiod to the practicalities of cult

The first depiction of Greek social order, the *Works and Days*, prominently features yearly and monthly calendars. Hesiod guides his audiences through the year, describing astronomical and natural cues which indicate when to plant, when to harvest, when to change the rations given to workmen and animals, and so on. The poem then concludes with walk through the month, explaining which numbered days bring good and ill omens. Although the almanac section of the *Works and Days* focuses on a single household striving to be as independent as possible, it is nonetheless a window into a particular structuring of society, and one largely defined by a shared sense of time. The poem served as a vehicle for a particular tradition of weather lore and numerological divination to become not just Boetian but pan-Hellenic.

Each performance created a community of hearers, the local and narrowly-circumscribed group of people who shared the experience of having been present together as a particular poet sang or recited the *Works and Days*. Larger by far than any particular group of hearers who were present at the same time and place of one performance was the group of those who shared the experience of having heard the poem at all, which eventually expanded to include readers as well as hearers — sharing a similar experience in different times and places.

The poem also created another kind of community, one whose members likely did not think of themselves as such: those who followed the poet's advice for finding the *kairos* for the labor at hand, and who had the same experience of watching for particular natural signs simultaneously but in different places. Hesiod's agricultural calendar created a pan-Hellenic community in the same way that each city's civic and festival calendars created an identity for that polis. Watching for Orion to rise as the signal to begin threshing grain (line 597) or for fig leaves to reach a certain size before sailing in the spring (678ff.) is functionally the same as performing the social role of Athenian citizen by closing one's business for the City Dionysia and watching the tragic agon, and in general, those who structure the year by the advice in the *Works and Days* are no less a community than those who use a particular city's month-names and festival cycle — and a community whose membership overlapped with that of many others.

Following Hesiod's weather signs and numerological omens is in this way no different from an Athenian citizen's observance of the festivals of his particular deme, phratry, and tribe as well as those of the polis. Just as the multiplicity of different kinds of time in the classical Greek world reflected a sense that different spheres of life coexisted but operated on different schedules, so also each of the multiplicity of communities and levels of social organization invited participation in its own structuring of time.

The means by which people knew when to expect upcoming festivals are less clear. While much of our knowledge of Greek festival calendars, and Greek calendars in

general, comes from inscriptions, the extent to which the citizens of a classical polis could and did consult inscriptions is by no means obvious.²¹³

Further, the use of the word “calendar” to describe the inscriptions recording religious activities is somewhat misleading. The bulk of them were intended to track or mandate expenditures for sacrifice, and so do not give instructions for scheduling or observing the rituals associated with the sacrifices. Rather, they presume that such necessary knowledge was already shared by everyone involved. An inscription which specifies the kind and price of an animal to be sacrificed, and to which divinity it was to be sacrificed, but omits the day of the month (as does *IG II² 1358*, which I will discuss below) and all other details of the ritual, cannot have been intended to tell anyone when, where, or how to observe a festival.

The knowledge of particular festivals was thus a part of what Bourdieu would call the *habitus* of those who celebrated them.²¹⁴ Individual Greeks learned when they should do what through experience, beginning in childhood; but emphasis on the ingrained habits of festival participation should not obscure change. Several of my case studies involve the introduction or attempted introduction of new cults, and in Thourioi and Amphipolis, the institution of founder cult became a heated political issue. The illusion of continuous ritual practice going back through time immemorial masked this strategic aspect of cult.²¹⁵

²¹³ Thomas 1992:84-88 is the classic formulation of this problem.

²¹⁴ Bourdieu 1977.

²¹⁵ See Kowalzig 2007:34-43 for a theoretical discussion of ritual’s claim to transcend time, and how this claim enhances its effectiveness as a tool for changing social relations.

Despite the ease with which the members of a particular Greek community might have believed that the practice of a particular set of cults and the structuring of time that resulted from the arrangement of various rituals were ancestral and natural, these were deliberate and strategic arrangements. As Lin Foxhall has shown, even the scheduling of festivals related to agriculture is disconnected from the natural cycles that govern agricultural labors.²¹⁶ In most cases, we cannot point to the reasons a particular community chose to observe a particular ritual on one specific day, and not the day or month before or after. We can, however, identify patterns of coordination between communities, especially in and around Athens.

Patchwork Attica

Attica provides a richly-documented demonstration of the segmentation of Greek societies. The Athenian citizen body, the territory of Attica, and time itself were all subdivided in parallel. Regularly-scheduled recurrence of religious festivals was a key means by which subdivisions of the Athenian citizenry defined their group identity both independently of and in relation to each other. Although this section will primarily focus on groups and their use of time for self-definition, it should be noted as well that the multiplicity of festival calendars also provided individual Athenians with regularly-scheduled opportunities to affirm their status as members of a potentially-dizzying array of named and organized groups, and these group arrangements of time provided a backdrop against which all residents of Attica performed their daily activities.

²¹⁶ Foxhall 1995.

Each male Athenian citizen²¹⁷ had as his birthright membership in two clusters of organizations — one that based membership on descent from real or fictive common ancestors and one created by the reforms of Cleisthenes as specifically Athenian institutions. In early childhood and again in adolescence, the typical Athenian was ceremonially introduced to his father's *phratry*, the primary lineage-based group and one of such antiquity that it took over the Indo-European root that in other languages became words for "brother".²¹⁸ At the onset of legal adulthood, he was enrolled in his father's *deme*, the foundation of Athenian political institutions.²¹⁹ Within each phratry there were a number of named *gene*, lineages that had their own sense of corporate identity and set of ritual activities; some *gene* also had the conspicuous role of providing priests for certain polis priesthods.²²⁰

In addition to these traditional and Cleisthenic institutions, by the mid-4th century, there were probably also regular meetings of age-classes, as I have discussed in chapter 2. All of these groups had overlapping membership, and members of different demes, phratries, and *gene* lived side by side. Demes and phratries were both connected

²¹⁷ Whether and to what extent women were members of these groups is a bit more complex. Technically, women were not members of demes, but this was only a bar to involvement in the *political* life of the deme; insofar as a deme was a religious community, men and women alike were equal members. There is some evidence (notably the scholion to Aristophanes describing the Apatouria, which I shall discuss below) suggesting that women were considered full members of phratries, but other sources (see Whitehead 1986:77-81 and Lambert 1993:178-88) suggest that women were allowed the same restricted participation in phratries as in demes.

²¹⁸ Lambert 1993:268-69.

²¹⁹ See my discussion in ch. 2 of the process by which young Athenian men became citizens.

²²⁰ While each Athenian citizen belonged to a phratry, *genos* membership appears to have been more exclusive. Whether all members of *gene* could be considered aristocrats has been the subject of debate, but "by the fourth century, all Athenians who belonged to a prominent *genos* were, by definition, nobly born" (Ober 1989:252-53).

to specific places²²¹ – demes were originally defined by geographic centers, and phratries had shrines of their own – but not all demesmen or phrateres lived in close proximity to the centers of their demes or phratries, and the members of a particular phratry were not necessarily also all members of the same deme. Trittyes, tribes, and age-classes, by their very design, brought together men who lived in different parts of Attica, to act as larger-scale unifying forces for the citizen body.

Whether based on (real or fictive) common descent, place of residence, social age, or administrative fiat; whether tied to one particular population center or shrine, or dispersed across a larger geographical area; and whether consisting of a few dozen or tens of thousands of members, each of these groups had its own calendar of activities and thus its own construction of time. Regular ritual activity provided a means by which the varied subgroups of the Athenian citizen population articulated their identities and their relations with others, and provided citizens with opportunities to perform the role of demesman, phrater, and so on, in the same way that the festival and civic calendars of the polis were a means of creating Athenian identities. There was a kind of fractal self-similarity in the temporal lives of Athenian institutional groups. Festivals conducted jointly by multiple demes parallel the participation of Athenian *theoroi* in pan-Hellenic festivals and the celebration of the Apatouria separately by each Athenian phratry corresponds to the celebration of that festival in other cities which identified themselves as “Ionian.”

The following discussion will focus on scheduled religious observances, and specifically those held by the deme of Marathon and the neighboring demes that together

²²¹ Osborne 1985:73.

comprised the Marathonian Tetrapolis. The most basic reason for this focus is that in *IG* II² 1358, we have a calendar inscription that provides an unusually clear picture of coordinated religious activity among different groups. In addition to sacrifices performed in and for the deme of Marathon, it records joint sacrifices paid for by a regional association (the Tetrapolis), and hints at coordination between the deme and polis and possibly even further.

As is often the case, festivals and sacrifices are better documented than other kinds of gatherings. We know of more regularity in the scheduling of religious activity; Athenian polis festivals had set dates for their annual observances, while (as discussed in chapter 1) meetings to conduct civic business were scheduled on an *ad hoc* basis.

Finally, and most importantly for the present discussion, religious activity implies social interaction and displays social relations. Every attested sacrifice implies a group of participants sharing equal portions of meat in a communal meal, which means a number of people collectively designated as equals given an opportunity to interact over food.²²² Festivals also often included entertainment in the form of athletic competitions, music, dance, and other performances; theater and the Olympic Games alike were parts of religious festivals.

The sacrifice itself also constituted a visual spectacle with an audience that extended beyond those who participated in the feasting. When, for example, the Salaminioi sacrificed a pig at the Panathenaia,²²³ other Athenians who were not direct participants in the sacrifice would see Salaminioi acting in their capacity as members of

²²² Schmitt Pantel 1992 is perhaps the classic work on Greek communal dining and the significances thereof.

²²³ Rhodes and Osborne no. 37, line 8.

that *genos*. Thus, religious festivals reinforced the boundaries of the group for those inside and outside the group alike, as insiders performed the ritual and shared in feasting, while outsiders looked on and could note who the members of the group were.

A case study: the deme of Marathon and the Marathonian Tetrapolis

We have a handful of so-called deme calendars from the 5th and 4th centuries, although the label “calendar” is somewhat misleading because their content is primarily financial, recording the religious festivals a deme paid for over the course of a year. The relative expense of deme festivals likely reflects their relative importance – the sacrifice of an ox was a significantly greater expense, and provided significantly more meat to be distributed, than the sacrifice of a pig, sheep, or goat — but these inscriptions do not tell us what other ritual actions accompanied each sacrifice. Processions, contests, and the like are invisible except when other sources report them.²²⁴

Here I am going to examine in detail *IG II² 1358*, a sacrificial calendar from the deme of Marathon, because it provides unusually rich evidence for the ways that Attic demes scheduled their religious activities around the calendars of other demes and the central polis. While other inscriptions record festivals performed by a single deme (or *genos* or other group), this one records sacrifices performed by a regional association of

²²⁴ Though they can sometimes be inferred from the available information; for example, when a deme calendar specifies the location of a sacrifice – as the Erkhia calendar often does, with several recurring locations in the territory of the deme and others in Athens and elsewhere – a procession to the specified shrine was likely. Other communities were more interested in documenting details of ritual, e.g. mid-4th century Cos; one of the four *stelai* of Rhodes and Osborne 62 gives detailed procedures for a specific sacrifice to Zeus Poleius, from preliminary rituals the day before the festival through the selection of the victim to accompanying offerings and final libations. After these extraordinarily detailed instructions, though, the Coan calendar returns to a pattern much closer to the Attic examples, in which the date, victim, officiant, and perquisites for the priests are the only details specified for most sacrifices.

four demes as well as others performed by one deme alone. It also gives glimpses of local observation of a pan-Hellenic festival – commemoration of the birth of Apollo on the numerologically-significant 6th day of a month – and the extension across Attica of the Eleusis-based cult of Demeter.

We also know through other sources of an Athenian polis festival celebrated in Marathon, in commemoration of the famous battle against the Persians. Thus, we can see how the deme of Marathon used the scheduling of festivals to develop its own corporate identity and its role as a component of the Marathonian Tetrapolis, of Attica, and ultimately of the Greek *oikumene*. There is good reason to believe Marathon's participation in regional and even larger-scale cult is unique only in being well documented. The two other best-preserved deme calendars, one from Thorikos and one from Erkhia, also mention festivals conducted jointly with neighboring demes and visits to regional shrines.²²⁵

Although deme calendars have value for us as records of the religious life of these communities within Attica, their function *in situ* was likely rather different. Demesmen did not – indeed, could not – have relied on them to know when to go to which shrine for what festival. That information had to be distributed in other ways, and even if the inscriptions had contained full accounts of the rituals required for each occasion, ancient literacy rates remain difficult to establish. Even those who could read might not find the text on the *stelae* easy to access and convenient to read.

²²⁵ *SEG* 21.541, column 1, lines 35-6 records Erkhians and Paianians sacrificing together, and lines 61ff of col. 5 record a festival at the sanctuary of Zeus on Mt. Hymettos. Similarly, *SEG* 33.147.13 records Thorikans going to Sounion for a festival, in another pairing of neighboring demes.

It is more likely that these inscriptions served as monuments to the deme and symbols of the accountability of its officials. As microcosms of the polis, demes shared the idea that inscriptions reflected transparency of government, by putting decrees and transactions of the state in public view. The financial detail of deme calendars thus shows that the officials who were responsible for organizing and funding deme festivals had nothing to hide from their fellow demesmen. The inscriptions recording sacrifices also, much like the inscriptions accompanying dedicatory offerings, constituted lasting evidence that the deme had performed its religious duties. These were monuments to the deme's attention to proper religious practice and transparency of government.²²⁶

Deme and Tetrapolis

The inscription published as *IG II² 1358* dates to the second half of the 4th century. As such, it is not the oldest deme calendar we have,²²⁷ but it does have several features which Whitehead judged “create a distinctly archaic impression”;²²⁸ the most interesting peculiarity of this inscription, however, is not its age but that it records the religious expenses of a regional association as well as those of a deme. One column of the inscription records sacrifices made jointly by the “Marathonian Tetrapolis”, and the other (and better preserved) records sacrifices paid for by the deme of Marathon alone.

In addition to its fame from the battle against the Persians, Marathon was a relatively large deme, and much more populous than its neighbors. The Marathonian

²²⁶ In addition to the discussion of Thomas 1992, Steiner 1994 offers an extended analysis of the role of inscriptions as monuments of democracy.

²²⁷ *SEG* 33.147, a calendar of Thorikos, dates to c. 430; most surviving deme calendars are from the 4th or 3rd C.

²²⁸ Whitehead 1986:190.

Tetrapolis consisted of Marathon itself and the neighboring demes Probalinthos, Oinoe, and Trikorynthos. Using Robin Osborne’s estimated ratio of 130 citizens per *bouleutes*,²²⁹ the bouleutic quotas of these demes indicate a total citizen population of about 1300 for Marathon and 1560 for the other three demes of the Tetrapolis combined. *IG II² 1358* thus documents a group of smaller villages joining together with a larger one for shared festivals.

The very existence of the name “Tetrapolis” also points to longstanding connections among these four villages, quite possibly predating their organization as Cleisthenic demes, and legend gave them a common founder in the heroic past. Such legends serve an important role in the creation of community, and the version recorded in Strabo 8.7.1 features a founder who carries a great deal of symbolic weight: Xouthos the son of Hellen, brother to the eponymous ancestor of the Dorians, husband of Erechtheus’ daughter, and father of the eponymous ancestors of the Ionians and Achaeans.²³⁰ Marathon also figures in the myth of Theseus,²³¹ Philochoros’ list of the communities Theseus unified in the synoicism of Athens (*FgrH* 328 F 94) and the story of the Heraclidai.²³² This remarkably large footprint in the heroic age for one community in Attica complements Marathon’s glory from the victory over the Persians, and may in part be a consequence of it.

²²⁹ See Osborne 1985:43ff for the methodology.

²³⁰ Jonathan Hall has worked extensively on this family tree and the ways its successive versions reflect differing political situations (Hall 1997: 42ff, Hall 2002: 25ff.).

²³¹ Who tamed and sacrificed the “Marathonian bull” (Plut. *Thes.* 14).

²³² As dramatized by Euripides. Eur. *Heracl.* 80 specifically places the play in the Tetrapolis.

In any event, the heroic past figures prominently in the community's construction of its own identity. A foundation myth starring Xouthos makes the Tetrapolitans equal in antiquity to the Dorians, Ionians, and Achaeans, as if they were an *ethnos* in their own right. Marathon's place in Theseus-myth reaffirms the claim that it was once an independent polis of venerable age, while steering the legend of an autonomous Tetrapolis toward integration into Athens; Attica's own culture hero paused to free Marathon from a monster on his way to the ultimate synoicism of Attica. Marathon also has connections to Heracles. As Euripides called to the attention of the audience of his *Heracleidae*, it was specifically the Marathonian Tetrapolis that granted refuge to the children of Heracles in a myth that became a commonplace in Athenian claims to have always been benefactors to other Greeks.²³³

Because *IG II² 1358* records sacrifices to be celebrated jointly by Marathon and three neighboring demes in addition to those paid for by and performed in Marathon itself, it enables us to see regional coordination in religious activity. In addition to the simple fact of sacrifices shared among the entire Tetrapolis, it appears that the joint sacrifices and the Marathon-only sacrifices were scheduled so as to reinforce one another.

The column recording sacrifices jointly observed by the so-called "Marathonian Tetrapolis" is less well preserved than that recording those observed by Marathon alone, but there is at least one month marked by a particularly large number of sacrifices in both the Tetrapolis and the deme. The spring month of Mounikhion²³⁴ saw more sacrifices performed in the Tetrapolis than any other month, and was also one of the major periods

²³³ A trope already visible in *Hdt.* 9.27, where it is part of the argument that Athenians deserve the right wing in the battle of Plataea.

²³⁴ As I discussed in detail in Ch. 1, equivalences between Athenian months and our months are necessarily imprecise and thus potentially misleading.

of activity in Marathon, with an ox and two sheep sacrificed in each of two occasions and a separate sacrifice of four sheep — providing enough meat to serve 1400 (roughly the entire population of the deme) and 800 people, respectively.²³⁵

Rosivach's interpretation is that

In Mounikhion at least then, the Tetrapolis calendar reinforces the emphasis of the deme calendar rather than e.g. providing sacrifices when the deme did not. It would appear from this that whatever considerations produced the clustering of sacrifices in Mounikhion on the two calendars did so independently, and the scheduling of the deme calendar was not intended, in this case at least, to fill a void left by the Tetrapolis. (Rosivach 1994:39-40)

I would suggest that this common emphasis on Mounikhion reflects deliberate coordination among the demes involved and not just independent responses to similar environmental factors. The recipients of these sacrifices, when we can read them, all appear to have had purely local significance — heroes, nymphs, the otherwise unattested *Prakterios*,²³⁶ and many unknowns in the Tetrapolis,²³⁷ the similarly unknown *Nekhos* and *Neanias*, and several anonymous heroines in Marathon.²³⁸ The inscription is too poorly preserved to tell us whether the same divinities were worshipped by both Marathon and the Tetrapolis, but the obscurity of those we can read suggests that neighbors gathered to

²³⁵ Using numbers in the middle of Rosivach's estimated ranges for the meat yield of sacrificial animals and an average portion of 4 ounces of meat, an ox would yield about 1000 servings of meat, and a sheep about 200 (Rosivach 1994:157).

²³⁶ Although it is just possible that this is an epithet of personified Fortune; the word is attested as such in a line of Aeschylus and is otherwise unknown (Lambert 2000:50).

²³⁷ Column 1, lines 6 and 46 have names that can be read if not necessarily recognized; the names in lines 22, 30-21, 34-36, and 46ff. are mostly or entirely lost.

²³⁸ Col. 2, lines 20-22.

worship local divinities at shrines around the Tetrapolis, perhaps continuing regional cults that pre-existed Cleisthenes' redefinition of the Tetrapolis as four demes.

The implication of this is that Mounikhion was considered an appropriate time in the region of the Marathonian Tetrapolis for relatively intensive cult in honor of regional divinities. Within the deme of Marathon, Mounikhion began a period of relatively densely-scheduled festivals that lasted through Hekatombaion, and the winter months of Poseidon and Gamelion show a secondary cluster of religious activity.²³⁹ The calendars of Erkhia and Thorikos show similar patterns but with differences of emphasis, suggesting that different regions of Attica chose to distribute their festivals differently across the year.²⁴⁰

We know of few Athenian polis festivals during the winter, so when the demesmen of Marathon and Erkhia scheduled festivals in Poseidon and Gamelion, they may have intended to patch that gap in the polis calendar. While the motivations for the scheduling of specific sacrifices are obscure, it is suggestive that each of these three demes chose slightly different sections of the year in which to concentrate their festivals. The emphasis on local divinities in Marathon-area sacrifices in Mounikhion indicates another realm of regional variation; the cluster of sacrifices in Erkhia in Gamelion emphasized Olympians, especially Apollo (who figures prominently throughout the Erkhian calendar, as does Artemis),²⁴¹ while the cluster at Thorikos in Boedromion

²³⁹ Rosivach 1994:34.

²⁴⁰ The sacrifices in the early-mid 4th-century calendar from Erkhia (*SEG* 21.541) cluster in the month of Gamelion and the period from Thargelion through Boedromion—roughly late spring through early fall. The Thorikos calendar (*SEG* 33.147), which dates to the mid-5th, shows clusters in Boedromion and the period from Elaphebolion through Skirophorion, late winter through early summer (Rosivach 1994:21, 29).

²⁴¹ The Erkhians sacrificed to Apollo Lykeios on the 7th of Gamelion, apparently

included a sacrifice to Zeus Polieos and others to local divinities.²⁴² Just as demes and regions emphasized different times of year in their festival activity, they also emphasized different divinities.

Simultaneous festivals and Attic networks

Although *IG II² 1358* dates most festivals only by the month in which they were observed, omitting the day of the month, two events in the Marathon deme calendar are dated relative to polis festivals. One of these was “before the Mysteries”, *πρὸ μυστηρίων*, (lines 5-6) and the other before the Skira (line 30ff). These are the only two references to polis festivals on the stone, although of course there is a chance that the damaged areas originally contained other cross-references to the calendar of the city. The decision to connect deme and polis festivals in this way suggests some meaningful connection between the pairs. Ritual connections between Marathon and Eleusis are a particularly interesting possibility, especially because the Tetrapolis calendar includes a very fragmentary mention of an Eleusinion.²⁴³

While the joint festivals of the Tetrapolis illustrate coordination with neighboring communities, Marathon and Eleusis lie on opposite sides of Attica. The journey between the two is about 55 km over modern roads, quite a distance for a procession on foot. Rather than making such a journey, the citizens of the Marathonian Tetrapolis hosted a

separately in the deme (*SEG* 21.541 col. 5, lines 33ff) and in Athens (col 1. lines 4ff); then on the 8th, they sacrificed to Apollo Nymphagetes and the Nymphs (col. 5, lines 41ff.) Col. 2, lines 27ff add sacrifices to the presumably-local “Erosourioi”, Athena, and finally Kourotrophos.

²⁴² *SEG* 33.147.15ff.

²⁴³ Column 1, line 17; it’s not even clear when sacrifice was performed there, just that it was before Mounikhion.

local “branch” of the Eleusinian temple of Demeter and Persephone. This is one of five known Eleusinia; besides the famous one on the Acropolis in Athens and the one in the Piraeus, there are also inscriptions mentioning two other Eleusinia away from the urban center, in the demes of Paiania and Phrearrhioi.²⁴⁴

Marathon is far to the north on Attica’s east coast, Phrearrhioi near its southern tip (and roughly the same distance from Athens as is Marathon, with Paiania a few kilometers inland from the halfway mark of a line connecting them.²⁴⁵ This amounts to remarkably even spacing around Attica, and means that every resident of Attica would have lived within about a day’s travel from either Eleusis or an Eleusinion. This particular Demeter cult was thus readily accessible throughout Attica.

Although the cult of Artemis at Brauron also had a satellite shrine in the urban center, and there were Athenian shrines of several panhellenic cults, nothing else matches the number and distribution of Eleusinia. It is likely that these other Eleusinia hosted regional celebrations of the Thesmophoria. The chronological relationship between the Mysteries and a sacrifice at Marathon, however opaque, also hints that there were rites that initiates or initiates-to-be could participate in at these satellite shrines. Perhaps the

²⁴⁴ Parker has a brief discussion of these, although he suggests that the Eleusinion of the Paiania inscription was not in that deme but rather the one on the Acropolis or Piraeus. Simms makes a similar suggestion about that of the Phrearrhioi inscription, but I find it less convincing than Parker’s case against a Paianian Eleusinion, partly because the features he finds identical to ones attested in the Eleusinion on the Acropolis (two altars, a sanctuary of Plouton that is not actually attested on the Acropolis until the 2nd BCE, and an ἀύλίη) could easily have been duplicated locally, but more because of the distances involved (Parker 2005:332; Simms 1998).

²⁴⁵ The reasons for sites in these particular demes are not entirely obvious. Like Eleusis itself, Marathon and Phrearrhioi contained coastal plains, but inland Paiania cannot have been chosen for terrain similar to that of Eleusis.

functions of these shrines included serving as places for Athenians from the outlying portions of Attica to gather on their way to Eleusis to be initiated.

Such theories must remain speculative for now, but symbolic duplication of a major religious center would enable synchronous celebration of the same festival by the entire population, getting around the connection between festival and shrine. For Eleusis to be the center thus duplicated both illuminates and extends the importance of Eleusinian Demeter.²⁴⁶

The festival commemorating the battle against the Persians is not mentioned in the Marathonian sacrificial calendar, even though it would have been the largest festival hosted by Marathon, most likely because it was paid for by the polis rather than the deme. The omission serves as a reminder that our sources convey only a portion of the religious life of any part of the Greek world. In addition to that polis sacrifice and the deme and Tetrapolis sacrifices we know of, and the others that were on the inscription but are not now legible, there were also phratries and *gene* with shrines in and around Marathon, each of which observed their own festivals unknown to us. Each of these festivals provided opportunities for those in the group conducting it to reiterate their membership in that group and for others to see who the members of that group were.

The many concurrent festival calendars fostered the performance of diverse roles – individual, member of a particular family, *genos*-member, phrater, demesman, resident of the Tetrapolis, Athenian citizen, Ionian, Hellene – following a complex emergent

²⁴⁶ Cf. the Rural Dionysia, which local communities observed independently, and possibly on their own schedules as well (Parke 1977:100-03).

schedule, which in turn must have shaped the rhythm of life for everyone in a particular geographic locale.

In addition to the two sacrifices identified as happening before polis festivals, *IG* II² 1358 gives full dates for two sacrifices: a Tetrapolis sacrifice of a goat to Apollo Apotropaios on the 7th of Hekatombaion,²⁴⁷ and a black goat offered by the deme of Marathon “at the oracular shrine” (ἐπὶ τῷ μαντείῳ) on the tenth of Elaphabolion.²⁴⁸ The seventh of Hekatombaion may have been the date of the Hekatombaia, the festival of Apollo which gave its name to the month; and in any event, the seventh of each month was considered sacred to Apollo,²⁴⁹ making this one of the few occasions where a local sacrifice is clearly synchronized with similar observances across a very large area — quite possibly the entire Greek world, in this case.

The evidence from Marathon thus includes examples of cult activity restricted to a single deme (most of the sacrifices on the Marathon calendar); jointly practiced by a regional association of demes (the sacrifices on the Tetrapolis calendar); organized by the polis but observed in the deme of Marathon (on the anniversary of the battle against the Persians); connected to a pan-Attic network of shrines of Eleusinian Demeter; and, finally, observed in a decentralized manner in the deme and elsewhere in the Greek world (worship of Apollo on the 7th of any month).

The next section will examine this decentralized kind of Panhellenism, manifested through local observance of days thought sacred to particular deities, but the overall themes are these: each of these festivals provided individuals with the opportunity to act

²⁴⁷ Col. 1, lines 24-26.

²⁴⁸ Col. 2, line 17.

²⁴⁹ Mikalson 1975:19, 26, and see my discussion below.

as members of a particular group before a particular audience, whether Marathonian among Marathonians, Marathonian among citizens from elsewhere in Attica, Athenian among Athenians, or whatever permutation. From the perspective of the group (deme, regional association, citizen body), time provided a means for self-differentiation via the scheduling of cult participated in by members of that group only, and for defining connections to other groups through the intersection of their calendars.

In Marathon and everywhere: Panhellenism and simultaneity

The sacrifice to Apollo by the Marathonian Tetrapolis on the 7th of Hekatombaion is an example of a kind of Panhellenic festival distinct from the major athletic and other festivals that gathered contestants and celebrants from widely separated cities — “grassroots” rather than “top-down” Panhellenism. It also raises the question of simultaneity. Where the Apatouria showed Athenian recognition of phratries as important components of society and did not demand to be celebrated simultaneously everywhere (see fuller discussion below), recurring festivals of Apollo throughout the Greek world resulted from the common Greek knowledge that the number 7 was sacred to that god, and were necessarily observed on the 7th of each month everywhere. And yet, different poleis numbered the same day differently,²⁵⁰ with the paradoxical result that these observances were held on the same day everywhere and yet on different days in different places.

Sacred heralds went out from Olympia, Delphi, Nemea, and the Isthmus of Corinth to announce upcoming games so that local aristocrats could come from their

²⁵⁰ E.g., the Peace of Nicias took effect on the day the Spartans called 27 Artemisium and the Athenians 25 Elaphabolion (Thuc. 5.19).

home cities to compete against each other. The 7th however, saw decentralized local observances that must have had different meanings in different communities and households. As the royal house of Macedon knew, competing in the prestigious games granted recognition as Hellenic, but celebrating the sacred day of Apollo was no less a claim of Hellenic identity. These two kinds of ritual participation were both performances of Hellenic status, for all that we know of gatekeepers at the athletic festivals who could question would-be participants' status but have no direct evidence regarding exclusions from or challenges against the right to honor Apollo locally.

As was true of Athenian citizenship,²⁵¹ individuals attained a particular status – in this case, that of “Greek” – by taking part in the activities proper to holders of that status and having their right to do so confirmed by the acceptance of others who held that status. And here too, exceptional cases have made a greater mark upon the historical record than daily practice. We happen to have an account of the procedure for judging challenges to an Athenian youth's claim to citizenship and a speech written for a case of disputed citizenship,²⁵² but social recognition of new citizens happened routinely and without comment. Similarly, the exceptional question of whether Macedonians were Greeks was decided at Olympia and reported to us by Herodotus,²⁵³ but the simple business of acting like a Greek, which included following a Greek sense of time, happened without notice.

²⁵¹ Discussion in ch. 2.

²⁵² *Ath. Pol.* 42.1, Ps.-Demosthenes 57; again, my full discussion of these is in ch. 2.

²⁵³ Hdt. 5.22, with the supporting story of how an Argive exile became king of Macedon at 8.137ff.

We can identify one vector for the idea that the 7th day of each month was sacred to Apollo:

πρώτον ἔνη τετράς τε καὶ ἑβδόμη ἱερὸν ἡμαρ·

τῇ γὰρ Ἀπόλλωνα χρυσάορα γείνατο Λητώ·

The first, fourth, and seventh are holy days,

for on (the seventh) Leto gave birth to Apollo of the golden sword. (Hes.

Op. 770-71)

While polis, deme, *genos*, etc., festivals – and those pan-Hellenic festivals which were observed at one particular location – were typically repeated annually or at intervals of two, three, or four years, monthly observance appears to have been common for the decentralized festivals which were observed across the Greek world.

Worshipping Apollo on the 7th is but one example; in addition to Hesiod's list of the 1st, 4th,²⁵⁴ and 7th as holy days, Mikalson collects evidence of repeated religious observances in Athens on the 2nd, 3rd, and 8th, and possible others on the 16th, 18th, 19th, and 30th as well.²⁵⁵ Of these, he can identify pan-Hellenic observance only of those days identified by Hesiod plus the 6th, which was widely regarded as the birthday of Artemis, but it is at least plausible that, e.g, the 3rd was not only sacred to Athena and the 8th to Poseidon at Athens. In any event, these monthly observances honored the new month/moon itself plus one Olympian per day in the early portion of each month. While

²⁵⁴ The fourth was particularly fraught with significance. One scholion explains that the day was sacred to Heracles and Hermes, another says Aphrodite and Hermes, the Homeric Hymn to Hermes also identifies the fourth as Hermes' birthday, and a proverb indicates that it was regarded as Heracles' birthday as well (Mikalson 1975:16-17).

²⁵⁵ Mikalson 1975:14ff.

the relative prominence of different Olympian gods of course varied from polis to polis, worshipping all of the Olympians was an effective means of self-presentation as Greek.²⁵⁶

The Apollo festivals attested for the 7th of Hekatombaion in the deme of Marathon and the urban center of Athens illustrate civic reinforcement of non-civic calendars.²⁵⁷ Sacrifice to Apollo on the 7th of every month was normally a decentralized practice, conducted (as Hesiod advised) in individual households, but on this one month of the year (it is perhaps important that Hekatombaion was the first month of the Attic festival calendar, and also the month of the Panathenaia), celebrants from different households gathered at central altars of polis or deme for a large-scale version of their usual observance. The effects of this likely matched those of Athenian public funding of the decentralized observances of the Apaturia, including reiteration of the smaller group's role as a component of the polis and producing a uniform experience for heterogenous celebrants.

The list of monthly festivals attested at Athens includes several lower-profile figures alongside major Olympians:²⁵⁸

| Day | Deity |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | the moon/the month itself (Noumenia) |
| 2 | ὁ ἀγαθὸς δαίμων |
| 3 | Athena |

²⁵⁶ Note Herodotus' habit of defining the religions of non-Greek peoples via the Olympian gods whom they do not worship, as well as the names by which they know those they do worship.

²⁵⁷ These were only two of many; Mikalson identifies also Apollo festivals conducted on the 7th day of various months by the Salaminiotai and Erkhians, in addition to polis sacrifices to Apollo on the 7th of Boedromion, Pyanopsion, and Thargelion as well as Hekatombaion (Mikalson 1975: 19).

²⁵⁸ After Mikalson 1975:24.

| | |
|----|---|
| 4 | Hermes, Aphrodite, Eros, Herakles |
| 6 | Artemis |
| 7 | Apollo |
| 8 | Poseidon and Theseus |
| 30 | Hekate (less securely attested than the others on the list) |

There are definite oddities in this list – why should three gods and a hero share the 4th, while the 5th is sacred to no one in particular? Why is no day sacred to Zeus or Hera or Demeter? The *Agathos Daimon*? – and also hints that other poleis differed in their observances; it is unlikely that many other poleis had a monthly festival honoring the Attic culture-hero Theseus.

When we have any ancient evidence for the logic behind the associations, they are generally presented as the birthdays of the gods and heroes honored. Harpokration and the Suda (s.v. τριτομηνίς) agree that Athena was born on the 3rd, Σ Plato *Ap.* 19C identifies the 4th as Herakles’ birthday, Diogenes Laertius 2.44 says the Athenians considered the 6th of Thargelion Artemis’ birthday, and the *Works and Days* says Apollo was born on the 7th. At least some of these may be later antiquarian attempts at explaining monthly worship rather than contemporary understandings; perhaps scholiasts and other scholars, aware (e.g., from *Works and Days* 771) that the birthdays of gods and heroes were celebrated monthly rather than yearly, assumed that these days were considered birthdays. The claim that Athena was born on the 3rd, for example, clashes with the statement of *FGrH* 124f52 that the Panathenaia was Athena’s birthday party.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ And some ancient authorities claimed the 28th as Athena’s birthday. Confusion between τρίτη (“on the third day of the month”) and τρίτη φθίνοντος (“on the third-to-last day of the month”) is also plausible, and the τρίτη here probably began from the interpretation of her Homeric epithet τριτογενής as “born on the third” (Mikalson

Perhaps every day was Zeus' day, but the evidence of Hesiod suggests that the 7th was truly Apollo's day everywhere people spoke Greek and acknowledged Apollo. These festivals, although their profile is much lower than that of centralized Panhellenic festivals, indicate Greek identity was in part expressed through the belief that certain days of each month "belonged" to certain gods and heroes. Sometimes, poleis or other groups larger than the family organized more formal festivals on these days; sometimes, families sacrificed individually on their own private altars.

Regardless of the level of organization at which these recurring acts of worship were solemnized, however, they reflect an arrangement of time that Greeks from different poleis could agree on, and that comprised part of the definition of Greekness. Sacrificing to Apollo on the 7th was a way of performing Greekness, wherever you were and whenever it was when you calculated that it was the 7th day of the month.

In Athens and Ionia: the Apatouria

According to Herodotus, two things define a city as "Ionian": not geographic location or use of the Ionian dialect (Hdt. 1.142 tells us that four distinct dialects were spoken in different Ionian cities), but a claim of descent from Athens and the celebration of a festival called the Apatouria. This definition is immediately qualified: the Ephesians and Colophonians, although Ionian, do not celebrate the Apatouria.²⁶⁰ Worse yet, the two qualifications are almost the same idea put in different terms. The Ionian celebration of the Apatouria was itself considered evidence of Athenian origins, on the grounds that Athenian settlers took the festival with them when founding the cities of Ionia.

1975:23).
²⁶⁰ Hdt. 1.147.

Frustratingly, although we know that the Apatouria was widely celebrated in Ionia, our information about the content of the Apatouria comes from Athens. There, the festival was associated primarily with the phratries and only secondarily with Ionian ethnic identity. There is also the complicating factor that our sources appear to have been less interested in the festival itself than in a myth whose connection to the festival is less than transparent.²⁶¹

The fullest account of the festival comes from a scholion to Aristophanes' *Acharnians* explaining a line in which a character looks forward to stuffing himself with sausages on the Apatouria. According to this source,²⁶² the festival lasted three days. On the first, the *phrateres* feasted; they sacrificed to Zeus Phratrios and Athena (presumably also in the aspect of Phratria) on the second day, and registered young men and women as new *phrateres* on the third. This festival thus combined feasting for its own sake with sacrifices that led naturally to further communal dining, and culminated in the admission of new members to the group. Further, because phratry membership was hereditary, the whole also had the aspect of a family reunion.

Parke describes the Apatouria as not properly a polis festival, but rather a festival conducted by individual phratries.²⁶³ The Aristophanes scholion, however, describes it as

²⁶¹ The myth centers on an Athenian named Melanthios facing the Boeotian king Xanthios in a contest of champions, killing him deceitfully, and receiving the kingdom of Attica as a reward. Given the lack of evident connection between this story and the festival itself (or phratries, for that matter), Lambert suggests that the connection between myth and festival originates in an ancient scholar's attempt to "explain the origin of the Apatouria in terms of the festival's obscure name" (Lambert 1993:152).

²⁶² Σ *Ar. Ach.* 146.

²⁶³ Parke 1977:88ff.

“at public expense” (δημοτελής), so while it may have been organized by individual phratries, at some point (possibly always?)²⁶⁴ it was paid for with public funds.²⁶⁵

This kind of confusion between public and private is widespread and informative. Fragment 3 of the *Ath. Pol.* describes a primeval Athens in which each deme was made of a set number of phratries and each phratry of a set number of *gene*,²⁶⁶ but the segmentation of Classical Athens was far less systematic than that. Technically there was no connection between phratry membership and *deme* membership. In practice, when Cleisthenes initially created demes as geographical divisions of Attica, many members of each pre-existing phratry found themselves members of the same new deme, and this coincidence would continue across the generations, even though phratries were not a part of the political organization of Athens in the same way that demes and the larger units made by grouping demes together were.

Phratry membership could be used in court as evidence of family relationships, including those based on adoption as well as those based on blood kinship. In Isaeus 3 and 7, participants in inheritance cases call phrateres of the deceased as witnesses to his having introduced a man to his phratry as his adopted son, in support of the claim that a

²⁶⁴ Given that the direct source for this fact is a scholion, the chronological question here is probably insoluble. However, W. R. Connor has shown that Athenians sought to define themselves as Ionian because of the economic and cultural prosperity of archaic Ionia, which makes it quite likely that state support for the Apatouria in Athens was established well before the empire (Connor 1993).

²⁶⁵ Lambert 1993:153.

²⁶⁶ This complex scheme, in which there are four tribes because there are four seasons, each tribe consists of three phratries corresponding to months, and each phratry consists of 30 *gene* corresponding to days, more closely resembles the number mysticism of Plato and the Pythagoreans than anything more solidly documented as actual practice. More troubling is that Herodotus thinks that each Cleisthenic tribe contained exactly ten demes, for a total of 100 demes rather than the 139 – a rather more awkward number – that we know of (Hdt. 5.69).

valid adoption took place.²⁶⁷ By defining themselves as the descendants of a remote common ancestor, phratries gave themselves origins independent of and perhaps even older than the polis. The eponymous ancestor of the genos Eumolpidai, to name one famous example, helped found the Mysteries at a mytho-historical moment in which Eleusis was an independent city at war with Athens.

The idea that Ionian cities observed the Apatouria because they originated as Athenian colonies entails the belief that the ancestors of Ionian phratries had been Athenians. The disagreement between Parke and Lambert over whether the Apatouria in Attica should be called a festival of the polis or of the phratries thus reflects ancient ambiguities in the relationship between phratries and the polis. Every citizen celebrated the festival, but each phratry had its own celebration, and the festival provided an occasion to commemorate a version of phratry history that potentially reached back before the foundation of the city in which the phrateres celebrated.

The fact that Athens paid for every phratry's separate celebration of the Apatouria has further implications. While we know that at least some phratries owned land and rented it out for income,²⁶⁸ we have seen in Marathon that the polis could and did spend considerably more on festivals than its constituent units. And even if some phratries could afford three days of sacrifices and feasting for all their members, the available wealth of individual phratries must have varied. Public funding provided a way to even out disparities, letting all phratries and all phrateres be equal. A festival celebrated by

²⁶⁷ And although we do not have an account of such a case, it seems likely that phrateres could also appear as witnesses in favor of a youth whose admission into his deme (and thus citizenship) was contested.

²⁶⁸ Lambert 1993:182ff.

phratries at polis expense presents the polis as a collection of phratries, and the celebrants simultaneously perform the roles of Athenian citizen, of phrater, and – via the mytho-historic role of phratries as a link between Athens and Ionia – of Ionian.

Ultimately, as it was observed in Attica, the Apatouria was the intersection of the polis' and each phratry's festival calendar, and the place that polis and phratry granted each other in their structuring of the year. The polis of course had an extensive array of festivals which placed no particular emphasis on the fact that citizens were also members of phratries, and phratries likely met on occasions other than the Apatouria to conduct other business.²⁶⁹ The Apatouria was the one occasion known to us that had a place in the calendars of all phratries and of the polis. Furthermore, public funding for the celebrations of individual phratries cast the connection between Athens and Ionia as an organic relationship of common descent, which was then recognized and supported by the state.

Contrast this to the festival of Bendis established in 429, in which the alliance between Athens and the Thracian *ethnos* was performed and represented by Athenian citizens and Thracian metics making separate processions to a single shrine and, after sacrificing together, competing in games.²⁷⁰ The Athenians maintained a symbolic distance between themselves and the Thracians through the use of representatives and a sanctuary located in a Thracian enclave within the territory of Attica; the universal, decentralized celebrations of the Apatouria, however, proclaimed the identity of Athenians and Ionians. The polis created the connection between Athenians and

²⁶⁹ Lambert 1993:202-3, 322-23.

²⁷⁰ Parke 1977:149ff., Garland 1992.

Thracians with the institution of the Bendidia, while public funding for the Apatouria conveyed the message that the polis recognized and supported an ancestral connection between Athenians and Ionians.

The date when Athenians celebrated the Apatouria was celebrated is not certain. Parke believes that each phratry set its own schedule, though all celebrated the festival in the autumn month of Pyanepsion and tied the scheduling into human biology and a cultural preference for early spring weddings. He suggests that this time was chosen because the Apatouria involved the introduction of male children to their phratries, and a child conceived in the (wintry) “wedding month” Gamelion would be born in Pyanepsion.²⁷¹

Lambert, however, notes that a decision of the Boule to grant itself a holiday to allow the bouletai to “celebrate the Apatouria with the other Athenians in the traditional way” only makes sense if all phratries celebrated at the same time, and offers the 19th through the 21st and the 26th through the 28th as the most likely candidates for the three days of the festival.²⁷² In the calendar of Miletus, which uses most of the same month names in the same order as that of Athens, the month immediately following Pyanopsion was called Apatourion, which might be taken as a suggestion that the proper time to celebrate the festival was roughly the same everywhere it was celebrated.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Parke 1977:92. Presumably, this would be a symbolic pregnancy rather than a literal one; although there are occasions in oratory when children are said to have been presented to phratries soon after birth, it appears more usual for children to be several years old when the introduction occurred (Lambert 1993:162).

²⁷² Lambert 1993:156.

²⁷³ Samuel 1972:115. Samuel’s index of months lists 20 cities known to have called a month “Apatourion” or “Apatoureon”, though for most of these, we have only the mention of the month-name in an inscription and no indication of when in the year it fell.

In practical terms, it's unlikely that different cities celebrated the Apatouria simultaneously, or even tried to — we know that the calendars of different poleis were not synchronized, and intercalations could cause the festival calendars of any particular pair of cities to drift apart even had they been synchronized at some point — but the rhetorical effect of celebrating the “same” festival does not depend on every Ionian phratry sitting down to dinner at the same moment. Festivals like mystery initiations and Panhellenic games obviously required participants from different poleis to gather in the same place at the same time.²⁷⁴ The Panionia appears to have been a festival of this type and thus to have given Ionians from different cities regular opportunities to cultivate their sense of ethnic solidarity, but the Apatouria did not depend on gathering Ionians from all around the Aegean to make their declarations of community.

Rather, separate celebrations of the same festival tied poleis together through their shared decision to give the celebration of the phratries a place in the year. This decision appears to have been particularly strategic at Athens, where it became part of the claim to ancestral leadership of all Ionians that helped to justify Athenian leadership of the Delian League. Athens' status as fictive mother city to Ionia does not, however, negate the fact that the Ionian cities also decided to celebrate common festivals. And recall also that Ephesus and Colophon, according to Hdt. 1.147, did not celebrate the Apatouria. These two cities rejected the Athenian narrative of Ionian origins, or at least one aspect of it, but their perceived need to justify the omission shows how pervasive the Athenian definition of Ionian-ness had become.

²⁷⁴ And for this reason, heralds were sent out in advance to notify various cities of the upcoming Eleusinian Mysteries by announcing a sacred truce, and similarly for games open to contestants from other cities than the ones hosting them (Parke 1977:61).

Colonies and mother cities' festivals

Traditional scholarship long held that Greek colonies normally inherited the festival calendars of their mother cities, with the addition of a hero cult honoring the oikist. Under scrutiny, however, two things become clear. First, ancient accounts of colonial foundations do not include such inheritance. Second, because most religious festivals were tied to particular shrines, processional routes, and other specific geographic sites, and many also to particular families or other social entities, it would have been impossible in practice to simply transfer a full festival calendar to a new location. The claim that a colony observed the festivals of its metropolis must refer to something less than the full set if it is to make any sense.

It is quite plausible, in fact, that the inheritance of calendars meant little more than using the same month names. While the Apatouria was celebrated in Athens and most of the Ionian cities, there was considerable variation among the other festivals observed and the month names used by these cities. The claim that celebration of the Apatouria, which may have been the only festival common to these otherwise diverse calendars, shows that a claim that one city originated as a colony of another could be supported by, and accepted on the basis of, quite little in the way of common festivals.

The idea of a lawgiver as founder of cults, or as reformer of a secular calendar, is out of place in Classical Greece. Though Herodotus' account of Solon visiting Croesus does associate the sage with improving the calendar, and *Pythian 5* credits Battos with instituting festivals,²⁷⁵ the role of calendrical reformer is absent from Greek accounts of

²⁷⁵ Malkin takes this as a suggestion that the sanction of Delphi licenses an oikist not only to found a new settlement, but also to write sacred law as they see fit. I cannot,

oikistai. This function of the lawgiver appears to have been much more solidly developed in the Roman era, as can be seen from Plutarch's *Life of Numa*, in which calendar reform becomes part of the establishment of civic order. Part of Numa's introduction of religious and civic law to fledgling Romans who previously had devoted themselves almost exclusively to military affairs was bringing the calendar into better harmony with the seasons. The closest Greek equivalent to this appears in the legend of Solon. The calculation of the number of days in a human lifespan at Hdt. 1.32, which I have discussed in chapter 1, may reflect a tradition that the reforms of that Athenian lawgiver had included a new rule for intercalation. But Greek lawgivers and *oikistai* were not Numa, and concern for timekeeping ranked low among their interests.

A case study in colonial foundations: Thourioi

Diodorus Siculus' account of the refoundation of Thourioi is one of the most detailed Greek foundation narratives, and it includes lengthy praise of the accomplishments of the colony's lawgiver, Charondas. Diodorus reports the riddle that led the founders to the site of the new city and the names of the main street; he gives accounts of the distribution of land and the establishment of tribes (10.5-11.4), but says nothing of the dedications of temples or the establishment of festivals.

Among Charondas' admirable accomplishments, he instituted public education in reading and writing for the sons of citizens (12.12.4) and numerous other measures from punishing people for keeping bad company (*κακομιλίας*) (12.3) to punishing fathers who remarried (12.1) to, famously, requiring that anyone who proposed a new law wear a

however, find sufficient evidence that such authority was in practice used to be convinced by this interpretation (Malkin 1987:68).

noose while doing so (17.1) and mandating the death penalty for carrying weapons into the agora (the last of which led to his own death after a moment of carelessness (19.1-2)) — but nothing about timekeeping of any kind. Given Diodorus’ approving mention of the astronomer Meton at 12.36.2-3, which concludes with the statement that by using the Metonic cycle, the greater number of Greeks escape deception (οὐ διαψεύδονται τῆς ἀληθείας), we cannot attribute the absence of a calendar in his account of Thourioi to a lack of interest in timekeeping on Diodorus’ part.

Furthermore, the story of Thourioi problematizes the very concepts of oikist and mother city; although Athens claimed to be the metropolis, the colonists came from a large number of cities, and it took a response from Delphi that Apollo was to be considered the oikist to calm what Diodorus calls a state of *stasis* (12.35). The population of Thourioi had sorted itself into factions based on the settlers’ places of birth, and adopting Apollo as oikist reinforced the pan-Hellenic nature of the settlement as well as refuting Athens’ claim to the city; all Greek cities recognized Apollo, so no one city had a sufficiently stronger claim on Thourioi than any other (despite Athens’ efforts), and being founded by a god conveys greater prestige than being founded by a mortal.²⁷⁶

Unfortunately, we do not know what names the people of Thourioi called their months, nor which festivals they celebrated. Inherited festivals are also absent from the argument over who should be called the founder of Thourioi; according to Diodorus, Athens and Sparta both claimed the title of metropolis on the basis of the number of

²⁷⁶ Cf. Kowalzig’s analysis of the role replacing a founder hero with the god Helios in the mythology of Rhodes played in the construction of a sense of “Rhodian” identity, in advance of the synoicism of that island (Kowalzig 2007:224-66).

settlers they contributed to the colony, and unnamed individuals sought to be named oikist as a form of recognition as benefactors.

Competing claims from Athens and Sparta invite viewing the struggle over Thourioi as a competition between two hostile powers in which “colony” meant something closer to “strategic outpost.” It is, however, clear that the simple model of inheritance cannot apply to a place settled by Greeks from many different cities. The entire story also dovetails quite nicely with Robin Osborne’s radical re-envisioning of the process by which cities later deemed colonies formed in the Archaic period, in which colonization happens not through state initiative but rather the independent decision of Greeks from various places to form or join a permanent settlement,²⁷⁷ and further suggests that organic creation of settlements remained a possibility in the Classical period.

As Osborne notes,

[M]odern scholarship, in classifying a colony as founded by a particular city of the Greek mainland, is often more or less arbitrarily selecting only one of a number of cities to which the ancient sources make reference.

(Osborne 1998)

With this in mind, the case of Thourioi suggests that modern scholars have absorbed the rhetoric ancient cities used to enhance their prestige and strategic position by claiming other cities as their colonies. If Athens had been able to solidify its claim to Thourioi, would we notice the many non-Athenian Thourians besides Herodotus and Lysias?

²⁷⁷ Osborne 1998.

A comic aside: Cloudcuckooland

The satirical foundation narrative of Aristophanes' *Birds*, like Diodorus' historical narrative of Thourioi, shows extensive concern for land distribution and legislation, but a lack of interest in cult and calendar. Meton appears here not in his capacity as calendar reformer but rather as geometer. He interrupts the foundation sacrifices for Cloudcuckooland with offers to survey the sky, square the circle, and lay out a plan for the city with streets radiating out in a star pattern. Although there is a reference to the place where he set up a sundial (line 998), he does not try to convince Peisetairos to adopt his nineteen-year cycle of intercalations (992ff).²⁷⁸

The unwanted guest immediately before Meton had been the closest thing to a religious specialist among the new city's unwanted visitors: a *khresmologos* asking for clothes and food, but not new religious observances (958ff.). A little while after the *khresmologos*, a "decree-seller" arrives offering laws for purchase (1035ff.) — so this colonial foundation gets a surveyor, a religious charlatan, and a would-be lawgiver-for-profit (plus a poet and an *episkopos*), but no calendars of any sort.

Colonization and empire: Athens' Brea decree

Ancient literary accounts, then, do not support the old consensus view that calendars inherited the festivals of their mother cities. The view which the Athenians themselves used as a rhetorical strategy to win over their Ionian subjects appears not to have been based upon actual practice. It does appear that month names were inherited

²⁷⁸ About which see my discussion in Ch. 1.

from mother cities,²⁷⁹ but month names are a small part of the calendar. Festivals were bound to specific shrines, processional routes, and social groups, and while place names could be imported and colonists continue to identify themselves with the same phratry or tribe after moving, festivals with the same name celebrated in different cities would still necessarily have been different festivals.

Nonetheless, fifth-century Athenians seized the idea of colonies' religious obligations to their mother cities and adapted it into the rhetoric of empire. A decree appended to the 425-4 reassessment of tribute may make the connection quite explicit:

Θόδιππος εἶπε· ἠοπός

[εἰσι πό]λεσι φόρος [ἐτάχ]θ[ε ἐπὶ τ]ῆς [βολῆς ἠ]ῆι Πλειστί[ας πρῶτος

[ἐγρα]μμάτευε ἐπὶ Στρατοκ

[λέος] ἄρχοντος βῶ[ν καὶ πανθοπ]λ[ίαν ἀπάγεν ἐς Παναθ]έναια τὰ

με[γάλα] ἠαπάσας· πεμπόντων

δ[ὲ ἐν] τῆι πομπῆι [καθάπερ ἄποι]κ[οινονν κατὰ τάδε ἔτα]χσεν τὸμ

φό[ρον τῆ]σι πόλεσιν ἠε βολ[ῆ

ἠ]ῆι [Πλ]ειστάς πρ[ῶτος ἐγραμμ]ά[τευε...]

[O]n the proposal of Thoudippos: All the cities assessed for tribute under

the Council to which Pleistias was first Secretary in the archonship of

Stratokles are to bring a cow and a full set of armour to the Great

Panathenaia; they are to take part in the procession in the same way as

Athenian settlers abroad. (ML 69. 55-59; tr. Osborne)

²⁷⁹ E.g., Miletos and its colonies Cyzicus, Olbia, and Sinope; while we do not know every month name at each of these three colonies, the names and ordering that are attested all match those of Miletos (Samuel 1972:114-18).

The reconstruction καθάπερ ἄποικοι does have the problem of leaving four letters' worth of empty space in a stoichedon inscription, but a foundation decree from the 440s confirms the cow and panoply as a colonial obligation. That decree is IG I² 45, pertaining to Brea – a site near Amphipolis – and what follows is its entire section regarding religion:

[τὰ δὲ τεμ]ένε τὲ ἐχσειρεμένα ἐάν καθά[περ ἐστ-]

[-ί καὶ ἄλ]λα μὲ τεμενίζεν. βοῦη δε καὶ π[ανθοπλ-]

[-ίαν ἀπά]γεν ες Παναθέναια τὰ μεγάλ[α καὶ ἐς Δ-]

[-ιονύσι]α φαλλόν.... (lines 10-13)

The sacred precincts that have been set apart are to be left as they are, but no further precincts are to be consecrated. The colony is to make an offering of a cow and panoply to the Great Panathenaia and a phallus to the Dionysia. (tr. Graham)

There are two interesting aspects to this. One is that the offerings to be presented at the Greater Panathenaia and the City Dionysia are precisely those required of imperial subjects; the other is that the settlers are prohibited from establishing new cults.

This falls immediately after a vague clause that Democleides is to “establish the colony as *autokrator*, to the extent of his ability” (Δεμοκλείδην δὲ καταστήσαι τὲν ἄποικαν αὐτοκράτορα καθότι ἂν δύνηται ἄριστα, lines 8-9), which could perhaps be construed as granting permission to set sacred calendars alongside other undefined tasks. The instruction regarding sanctuaries is concerned, however, with the allocation of land rather than with establishing festivals – those sacred precincts that already exist on the site are to remain undisturbed, but no new land is to be dedicated. This means that no

Athenian cults were to be imported to Brea; the colony was to have and keep its own distinct religious identity.

The prohibition against disturbing established sanctuaries also raises questions, although they are less important for the present discussion than is the clear fact that this colony was forbidden from importing its mother-city's festivals. What were these *temene*, and what rites performed there? Malkin's suggestion²⁸⁰ that these were shrines established by Greeks who had settled in the region without the official sanction of a metropolis is intriguing, and fits well with my general suspicion that Osborne's theory of colonization without metropoleis applies to Classical as well as Archaic colonization.²⁸¹ It may well be that Athens did not create a new community at Brea, but – as it attempted to do at Thourioi – claimed jurisdiction over a pre-existing one.

On the offerings sent to Athens, Graham concluded,

We may thus assume that a practice originally colonial was applied to the allies in general, which recalls the tendency of Athens to exaggerate her share in the colonization of Ionia as a way of justifying her empire.

(Graham 1964:63)

He is correct in seeing a nexus between colonization and Athenian rhetoric of empire, which opens important questions. Athens' justification of empire through a claim of colonization elides the important distinction between festivals performed locally,

²⁸⁰ Malkin 1984.

²⁸¹ Contra Malkin's later sense (Malkin 1987: 121-2) that Classical colonization, or at least Classical Athenian colonization, was of a different and better-organized character than earlier practice.

on a schedule set by the community that celebrated them,²⁸² and festivals that gathered participants from several poleis at one central point.

Celebrating at Brea a festival which was also celebrated in Athens would express a different relationship between Brea and Athens than would sending a cow and panoply from Brea to the Greater Panathenaia. The festival in the former case had a place in Brean time independent of its existence in Athenian time, but the latter would be an imposition of Athenian time upon Brea.

The trick of Athenian propaganda was defining Athenian practice of Ionic ethnic signifiers as evidence that all Ionians were descended from Athenian colonists, and then using these fictive metropolis-colony relationships to justify the imposition of Athenian time upon the poleis of the empire. In the foundation decree of Brea, metropolis-colony and imperial polis-subject relations are (deliberately?) confounded. The decree explicitly required from Brea the same displays of dependence on Athens that were demanded of subjects, while ruling out satellite shrines of Athenian cults and leaving implicit whatever other deference a colony was expected to show its mother city. This assimilates the status of subject to that of colony.

Colonies had the spatial and temporal independence to choose their own times and places for cult activity, while subjects were made temporally dependent by the requirement to make certain appearances on Athenian territory in Athenian time no less

²⁸² Even if a colony's festival calendar was originally derived from the mother city's, festivals are tied to specific places. Brea and Amphipolis presumably had the same month names as Athens, and the various colonies of Miletos demonstrably used Miletos' month-names (Graham 1964:116ff), but the religious activities that took place during those same-named months must have been adapted to the circumstances of the colony. The settlers at Brea did not try to build a replica of the Athenian Acropolis in which to celebrate replicas of Athenian festivals.

than the obligation to fight or fund Athenian wars. By defining Brea as both subject and colony, the decree supports the claim that all Athenian subjects were first Athenian colonies and their dependence at one historical moment is thereby justified despite their previous independence. It is through this redefinition of subject and colony that locally-held and locally-scheduled observances of the Apatouria become justification for Athenian control of Ionian poleis.

In addition, the question of how subject poleis knew when to bring their tribute (and symbolic dedications) to Athens has significant implications. There is no available evidence that Athenian officials set forth to give advance notice of the Dionysia or Panathenaia, in the manner in which heralds from Olympia and the other sites of panhellenic games proclaimed sacred truces and thereby indicated the time remaining until the festivals began.

The Kleinias Decree (*SEG* 42.8/Osborne 2000 no. 190; uncertain date, but perhaps in the 440's) put the burden of collecting and delivering tribute payments on the locals, but the only mention of Athenians going to subject cities is a command that representatives of Athens go to demand payment from poleis that failed to bring their tribute in time for the Dionysia. The Kleonymous Decree of 426 (*ML*68/Osborne 2000 no. 136) changed some details of the procedure for collecting tribute, but offered no more indication that Athenians were to help tributaries remember when the deadline of the Dionysia would arrive.

The primary decree recorded in *ML*69 does call for heralds to summon representatives from the empire, but this appears to be exceptional in several ways. First, the occasion was a reassessment of tribute. Second, the representatives were to come to

Athens outside the usual sailing season, in the winter month of Maimakterion. Lacunae obscure the reason for the summons, but the decree then goes on to set up a special court for tribute cases, which is to meet during the notoriously stormy month of Posideion. The demand that tributaries send ambassadors after the end of the normal sailing season, risking dangerous weather, suggests an emergency meeting, and the reassessment itself was clearly a wartime measure to increase Athens' military budget.

Even for the settlers at Brea, who had presumably grown up with Athenian systems of timekeeping, following the Athenian calendar from a distance would not be trivial; unpredictable intercalations meant that, like the gods in Aristophanes' *Clouds* 615ff., *theoroi* arriving early or late for the festivals. If the Athenians expected the entire empire to track Athens' festival calendar as well as their own local calendars, that was a powerful imposition. Commercial contact would have helped with the practical difficulties – merchants would provide frequent contact between Athens and their home ports, and doing business with Athenians encouraged keeping up with such matters as when the Athenian maritime courts were open to resolve disputes²⁸³ but would not diminish the symbolic weight of what was ultimately a one-sided obligation.

The Apatouria once again shows the contrast: the Athenians saw the festival as a mark of their connection to the Ionians, but did not go to Ionian shrines to celebrate it. Rather, Athenians decided for themselves when to celebrate the festival, and celebrated it in places of their own choosing, close to their own homes. Attic demes related to the polis calendar as constituent parts of a greater whole, but placing Athenian time above

²⁸³ Which happened on a regular schedule, as detailed in Cohen 1973 and Lanni 2006.

that of imperial subjects produces a distorted analogy. Much as the Athenians chose the Apatouria as the festival by which to justify Athenian dominance over Ionia, requiring participation in Athenian festivals reinforced a hierarchy in which Athens was superior at the same time as it displayed the semblance of equal participation in a larger ritual community.

Colonization and empire: Amphipolis

The case of Amphipolis dramatically illustrates that founder cults could change to reflect contemporary political circumstances, and thus the potential use of festival calendars in writing official history. Thucydides reports that, after Brasidas' death in battle, the Amphipolitans displaced their Athenian founder to honor the Spartan general and invite Spartan support:

νεκρούς τε ἐσκύλευσε καὶ τροπαῖον ἔστησεν. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὸν Βρασίδαν οἱ ξύμμαχοι πάντες ξὺν ὅπλοις ἐπισπόμενοι δημοσίᾳ ἔθαψαν ἐν τῇ πόλει πρὸ τῆς νῦν ἀγορᾶς οὔσης· καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν οἱ Ἀμφιπολίται, περιείρξαντες αὐτοῦ τὸ μνημεῖον, ὡς ἥρωί τε ἐντέμνουσι καὶ τιμὰς δεδώκασιν ἀγῶνας καὶ ἐτησίους θυσίας, καὶ τὴν ἀποικίαν ὡς οἰκιστῆ προσέθεσαν, καταβαλόντες τὰ Ἄγνώνεια οἰκοδομήματα καὶ ἀφανίσαντες εἴ τι μνημόσυνόν που ἔμελλεν αὐτοῦ τῆς οἰκίσεως περιέσεσθαι, νομίσαντες τὸν μὲν Βρασίδαν σωτήρᾳ τε σφῶν γεγενῆσθαι καὶ ἐν τῷ παρόντι ἅμα τὴν τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων ξυμμαχίαν φόβῳ τῶν Ἀθηναίων θεραπεύοντες, τὸν δὲ Ἄγνονα κατὰ τὸ πολέμιον τῶν Ἀθηναίων οὐκ ἂν ὁμοίως σφίσι ξυμφόρως οὐδ' ἂν ἠδέως τὰς τιμὰς ἔχειν.

After this all the allies attended in arms and buried Brasidas at the public expense in the city, in front of what is now the marketplace, and the Amphipolitans having enclosed his tomb, ever afterwards sacrifice to him as a hero and have given to him the honor of games and annual offerings. They constituted him the founder of their colony, and pulled down the Hagnonic erections and obliterated everything that could be interpreted as a memorial of his having founded the place; for they considered that Brasidas had been their preserver and courting as they did the alliance of Sparta for fear of Athens, in their present hostile relations with the latter they could no longer with the same advantage or satisfaction pay Hagnon his honors. (Thuc. 5.11, tr. Crawley as edited by Strassler)

Burial in the agora of a colony was one of the honors traditionally awarded an oikist, and burial within city walls was associated with heroic honors; but while declaring a benefactor a hero upon his death had precedents (as well as later becoming a precedent for awarding divine honors to Hellenistic kings), displacing one oikist with another appears quite strange.

Viewed one way, the replacement of the Athenian Hagnon – who clearly had a role in the foundation of Amphipolis – with Brasidas as oikist anticipates the airbrushing of disgraced Communist Party officials out of old photographs in the Soviet Union. Given Thucydides' own ignominious role in Amphipolis' estrangement from Athens, the author may well want us to see the Amphipolitans as sinister. But in a less hostile view and one perhaps closer to that of the Amphipolitans themselves, the move from Athenian to Spartan influence constitutes a refoundation of the colony.

Amphipolis had only existed for some 13 years before being abandoned by its metropolis, as its population saw it — and a metropolis that only a portion of the citizens had ever been meaningfully connected to, at that. Like Thourioi, Amphipolis had attracted many settlers from cities other than Athens.²⁸⁴ Thucydides also describes Athenians leaving Amphipolis *en masse*;²⁸⁵ regardless of the extent to which this was true, Brasidas' terms of surrender clearly did let those unwilling to live under the new dispensation leave, so the citizen body of the new Amphipolis was not quite the same as the old.

The workings of government must have changed as well, as those with the greatest investment in the prior relationship with Athens had the greatest incentive to go elsewhere. The displacement of Hagnon in favor of Brasidas signified that, although the name of the city and most of the population continued unchanged, its relationship to Athens was no longer that of colony to metropolis. Declaring Brasidas the oikist of the refounded Amphipolis integrated this change into its physical space and festival calendar. The annual occurrence of games and sacrifices in Brasidas' honor displayed Amphipolitan independence.

Indeed, Brasidas proved a better oikist than Hagnon, for a colony is supposed to be an independent polis, and Brasidas left Amphipolis independent where Hagnon had established it as part of the Athenian empire. Hagnon differed from the traditional ideal oikist in other ways as well; rather than being told by Delphi to found a city and living there for the rest of his life, he was chosen by the Athenians to lead settlers to

²⁸⁴ Thuc. 4.105.2.

²⁸⁵ Thuc. 4.106.

Amphipolis, then returned home. Heroic honors were conveyed on *oikistai* at death, as the Amphipolitans did for Brasidas, and the oikist's tomb (traditionally in or near the agora, as again that of Brasidas was) provided the center for hero cult. In 422, Hagnon was very much alive and thus an inappropriate subject for heroization.

Thucydides' account of the refoundation of Amphipolis gives more detail about the change of founder cult than Diodorus offers about Thurioi, but the parallels between the two are strong. Both sites drew in heterogeneous groups of settlers from around the Greek world, both slipped away from Athenian control, and most importantly for the present discussion, both inscribed their independence of Athens into their festival calendars via cult.

The traditional view of the significance of founder cult as simultaneously identifying and differentiating metropolis and colony through a figure who came from the metropolis but becomes a hero honored only in the colony is valid. The accuracy with which founder cults preserved historical knowledge, however, is open to question.

Malkin's views here reflect a traditional perspective:

It is little wonder, therefore, that despite the profusion of unhistorical foundation tales, the essential historical facts about a colony's foundation were accurately remembered centuries later: the name of its mother-city, the date of its foundation, and the identity of its oikist. (Malkin 1987:189)

I believe that this misses a key function of founder cults. Cult practice constructs a history and reinforces it through repetition, but those repeated rituals and myths adapt themselves to changing contemporary circumstance — and it is through that repetition of ritual that a community fashions its identity through its construction of time.

As the contrast between the Ionians on the one hand and the settlers at Thourioi and Amphipolis on the other shows, however, negotiation plays a key role in such constructions. While the Ionian poleis had existed for generations before Athens claimed to be their metropolis, the claim was ultimately the same as Athens made on the fifth-century settlements. The difference is that the Ionians ultimately accepted the offered relationship and the version of history that came attached.

Rather than going too far into the venerable question of how popular Athens was among the subjects of the empire, I wish here to stress that communities decided for themselves whether to embrace Athens' claim to be their metropolis, as well as the double use of time in that claim. First, a mutual past was constructed in which the other city (whether Amphipolis or Miletos) is figured as having been founded by an Athenian. Second, that relationship was incorporated into present and future via the addition of appropriate cult (whether a festival of Hagnon, or the Apatouria interpreted as a link between Athenians and Ionians) into one or more festival calendars.

Here again the Athenian demand that *theoroi* and offerings be sent from subject cities to Athenian festivals marked a departure from traditional panhellenic cults. Within Attica, center and periphery were connected by reciprocal cult — demes conducted festivals in the urban center, and the polis conducted festivals in various demes. The construction of the Apatouria as the same festival celebrated in Athens and Ionia used similar terms of reciprocity. But the relationship between Athens and tributary was asymmetrical, and the requirement that subjects participate in Athenian festivals, rather than, e.g., instituting local versions of Athenian cults and festivals analogous to the

“branch” Eleusinia and the Rural Dionysia in Attica,²⁸⁶ forced them to observe Athenian time as well as their own.

Conclusions

Time was as much a defining factor as membership or territory for Greek communities, and cult provided a double tool for the shaping of time. Through ritual’s capacity for creating a sense of timelessness, cult practice conveyed a sense of continuity between present and past — so that when Amphipolis celebrated Brasidas as its founder, the games and sacrifices strengthened a version of local history in which Hagnon and Athens played no special role.

Repetition of rituals also structured the present and future in ways that supported the construction of group identity. Because Greek society was heavily segmented, the interactions among different groups’ ritual calendars reveal the intricacies of interaction among different structural levels.

The demesmen of Marathon were also all members of the regional association of the Marathonian Tetrapolis and citizens of Athens, and different demesmen were members of different gene and phratries. Accordingly, the Marathonians had their own observances distinct from those of the other demes of the Tetrapolis, but also observances shared with other Tetrapolitans but distinct from those of other regions; the shared festivals of the Thorikans and Sounians were at different times of year than those of the

²⁸⁶ Although it has been argued that some Athenian cults were exported, whether e.g. Samian *horoi* inscribed Ἀθηνή Ἀθηῶν μεδέουσα represent local branches of Athenian cults rather than Athenian confiscation and dedication of land has yet to be conclusively proven. And in any event, the possible existence of local branches of Athenian cults does not invalidate my interpretation of the symbolism of requiring attendance at the City Dionysia and Greater Panathenaia (Meiggs 1972:295-98, Osborne 2000:110).

Marathonian Tetrapolis. There demesmen of Marathon shared yet other observances with citizens of other parts of Attica but distinct from those of other poleis, and still other observances (such as considering the 7th day of each month sacred to Apollo) shared with other Greeks and distinct from those of other peoples.

The Athenians used reciprocal participation in festivals to tie the subdivisions of Attica and of the citizen population together into a larger whole. They also strategically extended this network of ritual into a tool of empire. The Apatouria shows the range of possibilities. Viewed purely as celebrated in Attica, it is another example of ritual integration of different structural levels of society — phratries celebrated the festival independently of one another, but with the sanction and material support of the polis, which set apart a few days each year to honor the phratries as constituents of the Athenian citizenry. But the Apatouria was also celebrated in most of the major Ionian cities, and its role as common bond between Athenians and Ionians made it suitable for a new role as propaganda. Athenian imperial control of Ionia was partially justified on the grounds that Athenian governance of Ionians was the natural consequence of remote history, in which Athenian colonists founded the Ionian cities. Thus, common observance of the Apatouria became evidence that the Ionians owed ancestral debts to Athens.

The same sort of propaganda by which Athenians connected the fifth-century empire to mytho-historical colonial foundations was also applied to newly-founded colonies. The case of Brea shows both the dichotomy between colonies (which as independent poleis were expected to construct their own identities and devise their own calendars in the process) and subjects, and Athenian attempts to elide the distinction.

The requirement that tributaries send representatives and offerings to the City Dionysia and the Greater Panathenaia added a temporal as well as a religious element to Athenian imperialism. Obligating one community to participate in the festivals of another amounts to appropriating its right of self-definition. At Thourioi and Amphipolis, we see cult used to resist Athenian imperialism. The settlers of Thourioi resisted Athens' attempt to define them as an Athenian colony, by appealing to the Panhellenic (and frequently anti-Athenian) authority of Delphi. By choosing a version of their origins in which Thourioi was founded by Apollo, and thus not obligated to the original polis of any mortal oikist, the Thourians claimed present independence from Athens via an origin independent of Athens. And when Amphipolis declared Brasidas, the Spartan general who was fatally wounded while his army conquered the city, their founder, the Amphipolitans rejected their original Athenian oikist along with their dependence on and subjection to Athens.

Conclusion

Time is a vast subject, and the ancient Greek world was large and varied. Because of the impossibility of a full treatment, I have selected a few case studies illustrating different aspects of Greek approaches to time in order to illuminate larger patterns.

The first of my major themes is the extent to which the experience of time is culturally constructed. As part of its embrace of scientific and technological progress, the modern West has tied timekeeping closely to natural phenomena, first astronomical and then the still-more-precise motion of atoms. Such diverse technologies as railroads and the Internet have made “universal” standards both feasible and necessary. At the same time, though, the definition of seconds, minutes, and hours is ultimately arbitrary, and we continue to use a calendar that evolved through accidents of history. As Aristophanes’ jokes about calendars show and Thucydides’ anecdotes about actions of other cities support, though, Greeks in the fifth century were conscious of the arbitrariness and human basis of calendars in a way that we often are not.

The second major theme is that of the *kairos*, which must be recognized from signs. Here, I take Hesiod as representing the basis of a view of the world in which external influences constrain human action, but a skilled interpreter can identify the most favorable times to do what must be done.

The fact that *kairoi* for different actions come at different times and are recognized from different signs leads to my third major theme, the importance of flexibility and prioritization. Greek citizens had agrarian, military, religious, and political responsibilities, all of which had to be managed. To survive and prosper, the community as a whole had to be able to prioritize different needs, and be able to seize a *kairos* whenever it presented itself.

Finally, the need for flexibility gave each community the freedom to build its priorities into its own sense of time. While the agricultural year was largely determined by geography and local climate variations, and military activity was constrained by agricultural activity, religious and political calendars could be arranged to suit. Thus, different cities defined themselves through their festivals and scheduled political activities appropriate to their systems of government. As the best-documented Classical region, Attica shows us how different communities could situate themselves relative to each other through cooperation in setting their religious calendars.

The fact that the Athenians sought to use the same means to unify their empire as were used to unify the Athenian citizen body shows the importance of this use of time; the strategic aspect of choosing references to the past in speeches before Athenian juries and assemblies gives a further sense of the extent to which Athenian political ideology shaped Athenian time. As Isaeus 6 shows, the ideal of citizen service found its way into family histories. One side of this case used social memories of the Peloponnesian War to present a past that supported one claim to a contested inheritance. In his attempt to counter this, the speaker combined temporal precision, social expectations about women's lives, and the present knowledge of the community. When the speaker of Is. 6

says he could find no witnesses who knew who Pistozenos was, this is itself a kind of temporal argument — no one knows *now* who Pistozenos was *then*, therefore the supposed descendants of Pistozenos have lied their way into citizenship. Regardless of which side won the case, citizen consensus determined not only the present but also the past.

In many ways, Classical Greek approaches to time emphasized human judgment. Whether the question at hand was one of when to plant or harvest, whether a boy had become a man, or when to worship which god, Protagoras' famous dictum, "Man is the measure of all things," applied to time. Time was – and is – shaped by human decisions.

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