

Studies

ANCIENT HISTORY

FROM THE “NATIONAL” TO THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN ATHENS OF THE 6TH CENTURY BCE, AND THE EMERGENCE OF DEMOCRACY

Abstract: This paper addresses the construction of a “national” identity of the Athenian inhabitants during the tyrannical governance of Peisistratos and his sons (561/0-511/0 BCE¹) mainly through a series of religious practices, such as the transfer of cults from the rural areas to the city (*asty*) of Athens, the reorganization of the Panathenaia, the establishment of the City Dionysia, etc. The present paper investigates how this developed “national” consciousness in the late 6th century, in the sense of the citizens’ nationalization within the borders of the Athenian city-state, could enable the political unification of Attica and the emergence of Democracy, taking into account the constitutional reforms of Kleisthenes the Alcmeonid, after the expulsion of the Peisistratidai. This paper focuses on the interpretation of the concept of political equality and the formation of a political identity of the Athenians in the late 6th century onwards, two notions which are treated here as very closely integrated. It was that political consciousness, following the constitutional changes of Kleisthenes, which led the Athenians to their first great military victories in the early 5th century over the Persians. These victories, which indisputably confirmed the strength of the constitution, will be brought, in short, into discussion in order to clarify the transition of Athens from the narrow borders of an archaic city-state to the rise of its naval empire in the “golden” 5th century via the newly established Democracy.

Keywords: Sixth century Athens, festivals, Kleisthenes the Alcmeonid, political identity, Athenian Democracy

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To what extent is it safe for us to use modern terms, such as “ethnicity” and “nation” or “imperialism” concerning the archaic and classical period of Greece²? Even if the six characteristics of an ethnic group, as identified by Antony Smith³, resemble those which are used to identify the emergent Greek city-states during the archaic period⁴, it is still necessary to clarify the specific “ethnic” characteristics within the borders of a single, autonomous city-state, Athens, investigating the construction of the “national” identity in the Athenians of the sixth century and its final equation with the political consciousness during the period of Kleisthenes’

¹ All dates given are BCE.

² On the ancient Greek ethnicity see in general HALL 1997; MALKIN 2001.

³ Meaning a collective name, a myth of common descent, a distinctive culture and history, communal solidarity and identification with a specific territory. See in detail SMITH 1986, 21-32.

⁴ Cf. MORGAN 2001, 77-80.

reforms onwards.

The fifty years of tyrannical governance (561/0-511/0), which gave the opportunity to the political reforms of Solon to be enforced and stabilized, gradually dismantled the aristocratic social structures in Athens. The political power of the aristocrats diminished as the power lied in the hands of the monarch, the tyrant. This gradually led the people -the "plēthos"- to realize that they could be ruled independently of the Athenian aristocrats, incorporating, in the meantime, themselves into the political city life. In addition, the notion of equality of all the Athenian citizens before the tyrant, even though still conventional, had been cultivated by Peisistratos and his sons, and stabilized⁵.

In the sixth century, important religious changes took place in Athens, which pushed forward some cults as "national" festivals. These "national" cults not only highlighted the importance of the city, but led to the formation of "ethnic" consciousness in the Athenian inhabitants as well. Firstly, in 566/5⁶ the Athena's festival was reorganized from "Athenaia" to "Panathenaia"⁷, meaning the festival of all the Athenians, however, no literary or archeological⁸ source confirms that it was happened under Peisistratos, except one⁹. It is however certain that the tyrants, especially Hippias and Hipparchus, broadened the existing festival as well as the worship of Athena¹⁰.

Yet no matter how active a role Peisistratos had or had not in 566/5, the transformation of a modest festival to a major "national" affair was a fact. The expansion of the Panathenaia as a supreme ceremonial expression of the collective identity in Athens, not only raised "ethnic" consciousness, but lessened the importance of local districts' cults, controlled by aristocrats, as well. Through these local cults, the aristocrats used to force a great deal of political control over the citizens of the rural demes but now their political power gradually ceased.

As far as the establishment of the Great Dionysia, also known as the City Dionysia¹¹, is concerned, there is no certain indication that Peisistratos actually brought the cult of Dionysus to Athens¹². It is probably more likely that the

⁵ Cf. BIRGALIAS 2009, 24-25.

⁶ On the chronology of the reorganization see ZIEHEN 1949, 459, s.v. Panathenaia; HIGNETT 1952, 113; DAVISON 1958, 26-29; SHAPIRO 1989, 19-20.

⁷ E.g. ANDERSON 2003, 174-177. On the origins of the Panathenaia see also DAVISON 1958, 25-26; ROBERTSON 1985, 266-267; ROBERTSON 1992, 91-93. On the festival of the Panathenaia see in general FARNELL 1896, vol. I, 294-298; DEUBNER 1959, 22-35; PARKE 1977, 33-50; SIMON 1983, 55-72; NEILS 1996.

⁸ Cf. BOERSMA 2000, 49-56.

⁹ Sch. AELIUS ARISTIDES 13.189.4-5 (3,323 Dindorf). It is much probable, but still contains a large element of conjecture, that it was Lycurgus, the leader of the Plainmen in the 560's (HERODOTUS 1.59), who took the initiative of the reorganization, and whose family, the Boutadae (later Eteoboutadae) controlled the cult of Athena Polias. See also SHAPIRO 1989, 20-21; SANCISI-WEERDENBURG 2000, 80 n. 4; ANDERSON 2003, 162-163.

¹⁰ On the rhapsodic competitions at the Panathenaia under the Peisistratidae see [Plato's] Hipparchus, 228b. See also DAVISON 1958, 39-40; SHAPIRO 1993, 92-107; SHAPIRO 1989, 43-44; SLINGS 2000, 67-70. On the building policy of the Peisistratidae, concerning the promotion of the Panathenaic festival (Old Propylon and Athena Polias temple [«Archaioi Neos»]) see in general BOERSMA 1970, 20-21; SHAPIRO 1989, 21-24.

¹¹ On the festival of the Great Dionysia see in general FARNELL 1909, vol. 5, 224-230; PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE 1953, 55-103; DEUBNER 1959, 138-142; PARKE 1977, 125-135; SIMON 1983, 101-104.

¹² Cf. KLEINE 1973, 26-28; SHAPIRO 1989, 86. For the contrary view see e.g. PARKE 1977, 128-129; SIMON 1983, 104. On the evidence associating

cult image from Eleutherai predated Peisistratos' tyranny¹³ and that the casual strategy of tyrants, concerning the two above-mentioned major festivals of Athens, was to "promote cults that had been firmly established in the first half of the sixth century, rather to introduce new ones", as explicitly Shapiro underlines¹⁴.

Undoubtedly though, the tyrants' policy, in the attempt to ensure their political rule, was the centralization of political power as well as the equation of the citizen body, as a whole, with the Athenian state. Towards these aims, Peisistratos and his sons extensively promoted the greatest two festivals, Panathenaia and City Dionysia, as celebrations for the whole citizenry of Athens, lessening the political power of the aristocracy in the local districts. In this way, the communal solidarity was emphasized and the abstract notion of "Athens", and "the Athenians", was clearly specified to the citizenry. Now the Athenian citizens, equal to each other on this "national" basis, could identify with this collective name -the Athenians- and the process of Attica's political unification had finally begun¹⁵, formulating the proper basis for Athens to reach the ultimate stage of its unification at the end of the sixth century, through Kleisthenes' reorganization of the state.

The emerging "ethnic" consciousness, shaped through constant tyrannical cult propaganda, would indirectly support the attachment of a greater meaning to the Athenian citizenship; as Ober precisely indicates "The Athenian masses were increasingly conscious of themselves not just in relation to inferior status groups within the state but in relation to other peoples and to the Athenian state itself".¹⁶

During the tyrannical regime in Athens, the formation of an undercurrent political identity¹⁷, especially in the citizens of the city, was in progress, mainly through the maintenance of the solonian constitutional forms¹⁸. The tyrants often summoned the Assembly, in order to inform the Athenians over their political decisions or to submit these decisions to the citizens' judgment, seeking their ratification¹⁹, shaping in the meantime, unwittingly, political consciousness. As a consequence, the importance of the Assembly, which from the middle sixth century took place in the Agora, increased in a political sense, such as the importance of the centralized -during the tyrannical governance- political power did, as the heart of the state, the city, had been reinforced²⁰. Finally, as the citizen body

Peisistratos with the City Dionysia or with Dionysus Eleuthereus see KOLB 1977, 124-134.

¹³ But even if the cult of Dionysus was not introduced to the city by Peisistratos, this deity of popular appeal, and his festivals, was surely encouraged by the tyrants in an effort to deprive aristocrats from their political privileges, which derived from their rites in rural areas. Cf. PARKE 1977, 129.

¹⁴ SHAPIRO 1989, 86.

¹⁵ On the cults and festivals as a basic part of Peisistratos' "Unification" of Athens see FROST 1990, 3-9.

¹⁶ OBER 1989, 66-67.

¹⁷ Cf. OBER 1993, 218 "The tyrants had encouraged political self-consciousness on the part of the masses of ordinary citizens by the sponsorship of festivals and building programs". See also BLOK 2000, 34-38.

¹⁸ AP, 16.2; PLUTARCH, Solon, 31.3; THUCYDIDES, 6.54.6.

¹⁹ Cf. HIGNETT 1952, 152.

²⁰ On the emergence of Athens as a "capital city" through various cults, under the tyrants, see Nilsson 1951. Of course the city of the Athenian state was reinforced also through the development of its trade and the building projects

of Athens enlarged because of the tyrants, who gradually conferred political rights to more and more of their foreign supporters²¹, the significance of the citizenry boosted. Consequently, the formation of this political identity and self-consciousness in the Athenian Demos under the tyrants – even though “hypnotized”²² – would lead to the beginning of a new era for the city-state of Athens; to the Emergence of Democracy²³.

After the defeat of Kleisthenes in the elections for the archon of the year 508/7, the Alcmeonid took the Demos into his “hetaireia”²⁴ in order to succeed the ratification of his reforms by the Assembly. One may wonder how Kleisthenes gained the loyalty of Demos, putting aside the powers of this year’s archon, Isagoras²⁵. And one may answer; he simply recognized the political power of the Athenian Demos, underlining their political identity, activating their political consciousness²⁶. Kleisthenes defeated Isagoras by recognizing the absolute authority of Demos in the political decision-making process²⁷.

The new constitutional order, at the end of the sixth century in Athens, was based on the political changes of Kleisthenes, mainly on his tribal reform²⁸, which led to the integration of the citizenry²⁹ and consequently, to the reorganization of Attica as a whole. The Alcmeonid also precisely defined the Athenian political identity. From 508/7 onwards, every existing citizen had to register in one of ca. 140 demes throughout Attica³⁰. These demes consisted of a self-defined body of citizens who would be politically equal and take the final decisions as far as the local affairs were concerned. Via this important political role, the political consciousness of the Athenian citizens was even more emphasized and promoted, rendering the main political archonship of the decision-making process, meaning the Assembly, dominant. Kleisthenes also established an advisory council of 500³¹, which would be responsible for the preparations of the agenda for all the meetings of the

Assembly. The delegates³², who were chosen within the demes³³, had to cooperate with other citizens from all over Attica, as equals with one another.

The sovereignty of Demos on the political decision-making process was based upon a newly introduced political idea, *isēgoria*, meaning the freedom of debate in the Assembly as well as the Council of 500³⁴. Kleisthenes, by answering the claim of Demos³⁵ to be part of the Athenian political life³⁶, introduced the notion of equality to the citizenry as a whole. A rhetoric question finally arises; could the concept of political equality³⁷ be simply introduced in Athens, if the “national” unification of Attica, which was based upon the concept of equality of all citizens as “the Athenians”, had not predated?

At the end of the sixth century, due to Kleisthenes’ constitutional reforms, democratic foundations were laid in the city-state of Athens, destroying once and for all the aristocratic structure of Athenian society, and the dawn of a new era for Athens had finally been reached. From now on all the Athenian citizens would take political decisions as equals, and fight their wars united³⁸. The importance of the newly established constitution that was based upon the notion of equality stressed in the most explicit way by Herodotus who, associating it with the Athenian military force, quoted³⁹:

The Athenians accordingly increased in power; and it is evident, not by one instance only but in every way, that Equality (Isēgoria)⁴⁰ is an excellent thing, since the Athenians while they were ruled by despots were not better in war than any of those who dwelt about them, whereas after they had got rid of the despots they became by far the first. This proves that when they were kept down they were willfully slack, because they were working for a master, whereas when they had been set free, each one was eager to achieve something for himself⁴¹.

In the quotation above Herodotus clarifies that

³² AP, 21.3, 43.2.

³³ Cf. MERITT/TRAILL 1974, XV.

³⁴ On the notion of *Isēgoria* see SAKELLARIOU 2008, 325. On the chronology of the introduction of this notion in Athens see GRIFFITH 1966, 115-138; FORREST 1966, 268-269; WOODHEAD 1967, 129-140; LEWIS 1971, 129-140; OBER 1989, 119.

³⁵ Meaning here the poor Athenian citizens.

³⁶ “The masses saw that these reforms [of Kleisthenes] would provide them with the institutional means to express more fully their growing sense of themselves as citizens” Ober 1993, 218.

³⁷ Though still not promoted to all sides of the political life, meaning that the concepts of *isokratia* and *isonomia* were yet to be part of the political reality until at least the middle fifth century. *Isonomia* as «*isos + nomos*», meaning the equality before the law or through the law, becomes a political reality in Athens via the constitutional reforms of Kleisthenes, whereas *isonomia* as «*isos + nemō/nomē*», meaning the equal part of political power to all the Athenian citizens, becomes a political reality in the fifth century onwards. On the concept of *isonomia* and its meaning and role during the archaic period, there is a vast debate, which is not going to concern us here. Cf. RE suppl. VII, s.v. *Isonomia*, 293-301 (V. Ehrenberg); EHRENBERG 1950, 530-537; VLASTOS 1953, 337-366 (*Isonomia* defined as «political equality maintained through the law and promoted by the law»); VLASTOS 1964, 243-294; LÉVÊQUE/VIDAL-NAQUET 1964, 40; OSTWALD 1969, 119-120, 137-160; PLEKET 1972, 63-81; RAAFLAUB 1985, 115-117; BIRGALIAS 2009, 29-30 with notes 38-40, and p. 40-41.

³⁸ The Athenian army is from now on organized according to the tribal reform. Cf. AP, 22.2, 61.

³⁹ 5.78.

⁴⁰ On the concept of *Isēgoria* within the works of Herodotus see TOULOU MAKOS 1979, 120 n. 8; NAKATEGAWA 1988, 257-275.

⁴¹ Tr. G. C. Macaulay.

mainly of the Peisistratidai (e.g. ANGIOLILLO 1997, 9-100; SANCISI-WEERDENBURG 2000, 80 n. 3; YOUNG 1980, 166 ff.). It is also reasonable enough, but still contains a large element of conjecture, the construction of the archaic city wall (Cf. HERODOTUS 7.140; STRABO, 9.396; THUCYDIDES, 1.89.3, 1.93.2) under the tyrants, which determined decisively the public character of the Agora.

²¹ On Peisistratos and party politics see FRENCH 1959, 50. On his supporters who received political rights the testimony is indirect; Cf. AP, 13.5: «μετὰ τὴν τῶν τυράννων κατάλυσιν ἐποίησαν διαψηφισμὸν», meaning that after the expulsion of the Peisistratidai the Athenians doubted the right of «οἱ τῶ γένει μὴ καθαροί» (most probably the foreign supporters of the tyrants) to possess Athenian citizenship. See also HIGNETT 1952, 112, 133.

²² See also OBER 1993, 218.

²³ Cf. EHRENBERG 1950, 515-548; OSTWALD 1969; RAAFLAUB/OBER/WALLACE 2007.

²⁴ HERODOTUS 5.66; AP, 20.1.

²⁵ The questions of how, when and in which form he passed into the Athenian Assembly his political reforms are not going to concern us here.

²⁶ On the watchword *isonomia* as a banner of Kleisthenes, aiming at taking the Demos into his political side, see OSTWALD 1969, 155-157 with note 2 p. 157; OBER 1989, 74; OBER 1993, 228.

²⁷ «ἀποδιδούς τῶ πλήθει τὴν πολιτείαν» (AP, 20.1-2). On the vast debate concerning the meaning of this quote see WADE-GERY 1933, 21; HIGNETT 1952, 126 ff., 130, 393-394; OSTWALD 1969, 155 ff.; LÉVÊQUE/VIDAL-NAQUET 1964, 51-53; RHODES 1993, 248.

²⁸ HERODOTUS 5.66.2, 5.69; AP, 21; Aristotle’s Politics, 6.1319^b 23-29.

²⁹ E.g. LEWIS 1963, 22-40; TRAILL 1975.

³⁰ Cf. LAMBERT 1993, 29-30; ISMARD 2007, 28-30.

³¹ AP, 21.3. On the Boule see RHODES 1972.

Athens, meaning the Athenians themselves who are at last identified with their own state, is strong and conscious of its strength because of the newly born constitution, which is closely integrated here with the concept of freedom.

The most explicit proof for Herodotus' statement came a few years after the political reforms of Kleisthenes, when Athens was called to support the cause of the Ionian revolt in the early fifth century⁴². The Athenians answered positively to Aristagoras' call for military help for Miletus. Even though the Ionian revolt failed⁴³, Athens was the only Hellenic city-state⁴⁴ that doubted, for the first time ever, the rule of the vast Persian Empire. The Persians did not hesitate to declare the war against a small Greek polis, somewhere in the West, as they would have surely perceived Athens.

To say in detail the course of military enterprises during the decade 490-479 is hardly necessary and would take us too far afield⁴⁵, for we are interested only in the political meaning of the Athenian victories over the Persians in the battle of Marathon (490) and the naval battle of Salamis (480). Athens, in the early fifth century, opposed the "slavery" of the Persian monarchy choosing its freedom, in other words its Democracy, which was firmly integrated to the notion of liberty, as Herodotus concludes above. Athens defeated Persia thanks to its constitution; the Athenians, due to their increased political consciousness, chose to defend their state, their constitution, themselves⁴⁶. It was that political consciousness that won these battles against the Persians, confirming in the most explicit way the constitutional strength of Athens. And it was then the critical moment for the Athenians to establish a marine Confederacy⁴⁷ with its center at Delos⁴⁸ (478/7-454/3), which would have as its main purpose to bring freedom over the enslaved Ionian states as well as to protect the independence of the states that took part in this Federacy, as allies.

It is hardly surprising that in the period of the Persian wars, the Athenians began to feel more aware of the new political order and the dawn of a new era in their state. It was during this period when the law of Ostracism was enforced for the very first time⁴⁹, the political power of the nine Archons reduced⁵⁰, and two of the most important constitutional communal bodies, meaning the Council of 500 and the tribunal of Heliaia, started to operate. The most important political fact though, as a consequence of the Persian wars, was that the political role of the Thetes, the poorest Athenian citizens, increased as it was mainly because of them that Athens won the naval battle of Salamis. Yet above all, it was the Thetes who moved the Athenian fleet, which would gradually rule the Aegean defending the vital interests of the state.

⁴² HERODOTUS 5.38.2.

⁴³ E.g. HUXLEY 1966, 144-153.

⁴⁴ Eretria sent military forces as well, consisting of five ships, out of loyalty to their old friendship with Miletus.

⁴⁵ See in general BURN 1984; CAH 1988, vol. IV, 491-622.

⁴⁶ «ἕκαστος ἑωυτῷ προθεθυμέετο κατεργάζεσθαι» (HERODOTUS 5.78).

⁴⁷ AP, 23.5; PLUTARCH, *Aristides*, 24; THUCYDIDES, 1.96.

⁴⁸ On the Delian league see in general MEIGGS 1972, 42 ff; CAH 1988, vol. IV, 461-490.

⁴⁹ Cf. AP, 22.3: «θαροῦντος ἤδη τοῦ δήμου τότε πρῶτον ἐχρήσαντο τῷ νόμῳ τῷ περὶ τὸν ὄστρακισμόν»; Arpokraton, FGrHist IIIB, 64 (F 6); Filochorus, FGrHist IIIB, 107 ff. (F 30).

⁵⁰ As the procedure of the archons' selection changes; Cf. AP, 22.5.

The constitutional reforms of Ephialtes⁵¹ and Pericles⁵² firmly established the political rule of Demos, concerning not only the decision-making process, in which Demos' rule was sovereign and undisputed from the Kleisthenic period onwards, but the command of the state affairs as well, which in the last decade of the sixth century and the early fifth was still in the hands of the aristocrats⁵³.

Due to the fact that the military force of the Athenian state derived from its constitution, it was highly necessary that Democracy would be supported not only by the state laws but by the religious practices as well⁵⁴. For this purpose the political cult of the "Ten Eponymous Heroes" was created⁵⁵, through which the Athenians worshiped the unification of Athens and the communal solidarity. The Athenians also emphasized the worship of the Tyrannicides⁵⁶ in honor of the beginnings of their political freedom from the tyrannical-monarchical bonds. In addition, the worship of Theseus, the Hero of Democracy, as the main person responsible for Attica's unification and mythical founder of Democracy⁵⁷, in contrast to Hercules, the Hero of Tyranny⁵⁸, reached its peak⁵⁹. Athens also highly projected the concept of autochthony⁶⁰ that was proven as the most powerful way for the Athenians to identify themselves with the territory of Attica. Moreover, the Panathenaia, the festival of all the Athenians, was decisively promoted under Democracy⁶¹. Finally, it was not at all by chance that the Periclean building program mainly concerned a city zone strictly religious in character, the Acropolis of Athens. Consequently, through this well organized religious policy in support of Democracy, the "national" consciousness of the Athenian citizens was further raised, serving though now clearly political purposes⁶².

The obvious supremacy of the Athenians in comparison to their allies of the Delian Confederacy⁶³, inevitably drove Athens to claim the absolute rule of the Aegean. And as Rostovtzeff most explicitly states "There were now two alternatives before Athens; either to renounce the mastery of the Aegean and revert to the state of things before the Persian wars, or to convert the confederation into

⁵¹ E.g. JONES 1987, 53-76; PICCIRILLI 1988.

⁵² E.g. WEBER 1985; BRULÉ 1994.

⁵³ There is no literal testimony that Kleisthenes diminished the political power of the nine archons or the aristocratic Boule of Areios Pagos. Cf. MOSSÉ 1971, 30; BIRGALIAS 2007, 135. The Alcmeonid also maintained the ancient religious units intact (AP, 21.6).

⁵⁴ On religion and politics in democratic Athens see BURKERT 1996, 51-65; SHAPIRO 1994, 123-129. On the political iconography of the fifth century Athens see BOEDEKER/RAAFLAUB (eds.) 1998, esp. HÖLSCHER 153-183.

⁵⁵ On the cult of the ten Eponymous Heroes see KEARNS 1989; PARKER 1996, 155-156, 173-175. See also MATTUSCH 1994, 73-81.

⁵⁶ AP, 58.1; Δημοσθένης, 19.280; IG I³ 131. See also PODLECKI 1966, 129-141; FORNARA 1970, 155-180; Taylor 1981.

⁵⁷ EURIPIDES, *Suppliants*, 353, 404-408, 433-441; PAUSANIAS 1.3.3-4; PLUTARCH, *Theseus*, 24; SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus at Colonus*, 911 ff. See also RE suppl. XIII, s.v. *Theseus*, 1212 ff. (H. Herter).

⁵⁸ E.g. BOARDMAN 1972, 57-72; BOARDMAN 1975, 1-12. See also BLOK 1990, 17-28.

⁵⁹ On Theseus in association with the Panathenaia and Democracy see TIVERIOS 1994, 131-142.

⁶⁰ Cf. SHAPIRO 1998, 127-151. On the autochthony of the Athenians see e.g. Thucydides, 2.36.1 «τὴν γὰρ χώραν οἱ αὐτοὶ [οἱ πρόγονοι] αἰεὶ οἰκοῦντες ... ἐλευθέραν... παρέδοσαν».

⁶¹ Cf. SHAPIRO 1996, 215-225.

⁶² On the ethnic identity in democratic Athens see also COHEN 2001, 235-274.

⁶³ Concerning the wealth, the military strength, and the constitutional forms.

an Athenian Empire⁶⁴. Athens chose to rule over the states of the Delian Confederacy instead of presiding them because it would be impossible to take the alternative way. The Athenians' demand over the allies⁶⁵ was that they would pay tribute to Athens⁶⁶, a condition whose maintenance was to be secured by force, in exchange for their protection. But it was not only because of this demand that Athens had finally become a naval Empire. The further victories of Cimon over the Persians, the gradual choice for more and more allies to contribute to the Confederacy by paying tribute instead of offering ships, the uprisings of the allies (e.g. Naxos, Thasos) and their ensuing suppression, the fortification of Athens and Piraeus with the "Long Walls", which secured the city as well as the harbor from possible attacks by land, permitting to Athens to carry on its activities freely, the gradual increase of its military forces, and finally the transfer of the federal funds from Delos to the Acropolis of Athens (454/3), led to the conversion of the Delian League into the vast Athenian Empire⁶⁷.

In conclusion, within the period of ca. a century, from the middle sixth to the middle fifth century, Athens was transformed from a small archaic city-state, with no political or military significance whatsoever, into a united conscious political community, which ran the internal affairs of the Athenian "nation-state" democratically and the external ones following imperialistic practices⁶⁸. There was only one Greek polis that could and would doubt the sole dominance of Athens in the Hellenic territory in the fifth century; Sparta, supported by its allies of the Peloponnesian League. The Peloponnesian war would be soon upon them and Athens not only would face a harsh defeat but most importantly, would suffer the forced overthrow of Democracy temporarily and the loss of the leadership in the Aegean permanently⁶⁹.

ABBREVIATIONS

AP: [Aristotle's] *Athenaion Politeia*

FGrHist: F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin-Leiden 1923-1958.

IG I³: *Inscriptiones Graecae I: Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno anteriores*, 3rd edition, vol. I, ed. by D. Lewis, Berlin 1981.

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The footnotes, which indicate translated bibliography, follow the chronology of the prototype's edition, but the pages cited refer to the translated edition.

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⁶⁴ ROSTOVITZ 1930, 266.

⁶⁵ Cf. MEIGGS 1972, map 1, I-VI.

⁶⁶ On the Athenian tribute lists see MERITT/WADE-GERY/McGREGOR 1939-1953.

⁶⁷ On the facts that led to the conversion of the Delian Confederacy into the Athenian Empire see Thucydides, 1.97 ff. On the Athenian Empire see MEIGGS 1972 with further bibliographic references.

⁶⁸ E.g. Thucydides, 5.84-116. See also ROMILLY 1951; McGREGOR 1967.

⁶⁹ The paper is dedicated to my precious mentor, Nikos Birgalias, Associate Professor of Ancient Greek History in the Department of History and Archaeology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, whose premature and sudden death consisted of a great loss to anyone who had the chance of his acquaintance. I personally owe everything to his teachings, his support, his appreciation.

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