

Stasis and autonomia* in Samos: A Comment on an Ideological Fallacy

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The excellent discussion of the Samian Revolt and its aftermath by Graham Shipley contains little on the internal political developments in Samos and especially on the role played by *autonomia* in her relations with Athens.¹ The relevance of this question to the role of ideology in Athenian control over her allies makes a new investigation worthwhile. Following Aristotle's advice to proceed from the known to the unknown, I shall begin in mid-stream rather than at the beginning. Thucydides' account of domestic events in Samos in 412 BCE runs as follows: "About this time, too, there occurred in Samos the insurrection of the δῆμος against the δυνατοί, in which Athenians joined who happened to be on the scene with three ships. The Samian δῆμος killed altogether some two hundred of the δυνατώτατοι, punished four hundred with exile and distributed among themselves their lands and households. When thereupon the Athenians voted them autonomy on the grounds that they were now reliable, they henceforth administered the city and gave the γεωμόροι neither any other rights nor did they permit any member of the δῆμος to give his daughter in marriage to them or to take a wife from them".²

The natural interpretation of this passage proceeds from the assumption that δῆμος here denotes the common people and δυνατοί and δυνατώτατοι the upper classes, and that the γεωμόροι constitute at least part of the upper classes. This means that what is described is a violent insurrection on the part of the common people against an existing upper-class government or oligarchy, of

* I hope it is not amiss to honor a distinguished literary scholar with an essay on a subject, whose primary literary connection is its association with the generalship of Sophocles. I wish to dedicate it to her and to the memory of her teacher and the friend who brought us together, the late Moshe Schwabe. — I wish also to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to my friend and colleague Professor A. John Graham for having saved this paper from a number of mistakes.

¹ Graham Shipley, *A History of Samos, 800-188 BC* (Oxford 1987), 113-28.

² Thuc. 8.21.

which rich landowners formed a significant part. The extent of the violence — slaughter, exile, expropriation, and even the prohibition of intermarriage with the γεωμόροι after the people had secured power — suggests that long and bitter grievances against the upper classes had accumulated over a period of time to explode in this insurrection. This makes the question of the degree of Athenian responsibility for inciting this outbreak almost academic: if the comparatively small number of Athenians had any part in instigating the revolt, the Samian δῆμος will certainly have been more than ripe for striking a blow. Of Athenian sympathy for the insurgents, however, there cannot be any doubt, because as soon as the δῆμος had control of the government firmly in hand, the Athenians voted αὐτονομία for Samos.³ The obvious inference to be drawn is that for an indeterminate amount of time before this Samos did not enjoy αὐτονομία.

These inescapable conclusions drawn from Thucydides 8.21 are slightly muddled by his terse account in the sequel. At 8.63.3 we learn that after the overthrow of the democracy at Athens, Peisander and his fellow envoys “instigated the δυνατώτατοι of the Samians to join them in trying to establish an oligarchy, despite the fact that they had risen up against their fellow-countrymen in order not to have an oligarchical government”.

We get some further information on these δυνατώτατοι just before the Samian democrats enlist the help of the Athenian generals Leon and Diomedon against the impending attack: “those Samians who, as being the δῆμος, had earlier risen up against the δυνατοί changed again, persuaded both by Peisander upon his arrival and by his Athenian accomplices: they constituted a conspiracy of about three hundred men who were going to attack the rest on the grounds that they were the δῆμος (ὡς δῆμῳ ὄντι).”⁴ Since only 8.63.3 speaks of oligarchy, while the other two passages I have cited describe the uprisings actual and attempted as involving the δῆμος and the δυνατοί, one scholar has advanced the intriguing idea that the original insurrection of 412 was not against an oligarchy in power, but a pre-emptive blow struck by the δῆμος against a resurgent oligarchical faction to prevent the establishment of oligarchy and to preserve the democracy which, he thinks, had ruled Samos ever since 439 BCE.⁵ Apart from the historical improbability of having a δῆμος disjoined from democracy and identifying the δυνατοί as members of an upper class who might be animated by either a democratic or an oligarchical ideology, the fact that Thucydides describes the insurrection of 412 as an ἐπανάστασις shows that the

³ On the character of this αὐτονομία, see now D. Whitehead, “Samian Autonomy”, in *Nomodeiktēs*, edd. R.M. Rosen and J. Farrell (Ann Arbor, MI 1993), 321-29.

⁴ *Ibid.* 73.2.

⁵ R.P. Legon, “Samos in the Delian League”, *Historia* 21 (1972), 145-58.

uprising was against a government actually in power,⁶ that is, that the δυνατοί against whom the δῆμος arose were an oligarchy which included the γεωμόροι: they were “powerful” or “influential” in that their political power was based on their social and economic clout, as is shown by the confiscation of their lands and the prohibition of intermarriage between them and the δῆμος after their overthrow. The same is not necessarily true of the δυνατώτατοι, whom Peisander and friends won over to the oligarchical cause, driving a wedge between them and the rest of the δῆμος: these were simply men who had “influence” with the δῆμος and could be counted on to add three hundred of their followers to the oligarchical cause. The very fact that they started out on the democratic but then switched over to the oligarchical side shows that they were not prompted by ideological motives. What their motives may have been is hard to tell. A good guess is that they were inveterate supporters of close ties with Athens, whom Peisander persuaded that Athenian friendship was contingent upon an oligarchical government at Samos.

We can thus conclude so far that the Samian insurrection of 412 was directed against an oligarchical government, and that, once the δῆμος was securely entrenched in power, Athens gave its blessing by bestowing αὐτονομία on Samos, which that island had evidently not enjoyed under the now-ousted oligarchy.

The question of when Samos had lost her αὐτονομία is closely related to the question of when the oligarchy terminated in 412 was first established. The Samian Revolt — or rather, the circumstances surrounding the Samian Revolt — which lasted from 441 to 439 BCE, is the obvious starting point for this part of our inquiry. Since the revolt was in part triggered by Pericles’ forceful imposition of a democracy on Samos, involving the taking of fifty men and fifty boys as hostages and the installation of an Athenian garrison on the island,⁷ we are safe in assuming that up until that time Samos had been oligarchically governed. How long that had been the case is not quite certain. We learn from Herodotus that after Salamis the Persians had installed Theomestor as tyrant over Samos.⁸ How precisely he was removed and what kind of government was established in Samos after his removal we are not told. But it is a safe bet that he had been removed by the time Samos, Chios and Lesbos were admitted into the Hellenic League after their victory at Mycale. It is an equally safe bet that the members of the new government were recruited from among that group of Samians who had earlier despatched Hegesistratus, Lampon and Athenagoras behind Theomestor’s back to the Greek camp at Delos to invite them to stage the attack on the Persians which resulted in the victory of Mycale.⁹

⁶ For a full discussion of this passage, see A. Andrewes in *HCT* V (1981), 45.

⁷ Thuc. 1.115.3.

⁸ Hdt. 8.85.2-3, 9.90.1.

⁹ *Id.* 9.90-92.1.

The political purpose of this group will have been to liberate Samos and Ionia from Persian domination and from the puppet tyrant the Persians had put over them. The question of whether they were “democrats” or “oligarchs” cannot be answered, because it makes no sense: ideological questions of this kind did not enter into the issues they had to face. Sure enough, they are likely to have been members of the upper classes, for otherwise they would not have been able to ransom five hundred Athenian prisoners and return them to their homes,¹⁰ and to send an embassy and equip ships to sail against Persia without the aid of public funds, which were at that time controlled by the tyrant. It is, therefore, not entirely wrong but merely inappropriate to call the government they constituted after Theomestor’s fall an “oligarchy” or, as some scholars prefer, an “aristocracy”.¹¹

It will have been this Samian government which, together with the Chians, Lesbians and “the Ionians and those who had recently been liberated from the King”,¹² approached the Athenians in 477 BCE and requested them to take over their leadership, the first step in the formation of the Delian League. Two points are worth making about this event. In the first place, we have strong reasons to believe that Chios had some form of oligarchical government at this time and kept it until her revolt in 412 BCE,¹³ and that Mytilene was oligarchically governed at least at the time of her revolt in 428 BCE,¹⁴ and there is no reason to believe that this form of government was not already established in 477 BCE. This, it seems, suggests that the form of government prevailing in a member state was initially of no concern to Athens, and perhaps remained a less intense concern longer than is generally believed.

The second observation is that initially all member states, and that surely included Samos, enjoyed αὐτονομία. This can be inferred from Thucydides’ explicit statement to that effect,¹⁵ even though there is reason to believe that this is only a *de facto* statement which was not explicitly mentioned in the charter of

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 99.2.

¹¹ The view of J.P. Barron, *The Silver Coins of Samos* (London 1966), ch. 7, that Samos was a democracy between 479 and 454 BCE, has been convincingly refuted by E. Will, “Notes sur les régimes politiques de Samos au V^e siècle”, *REA* 71 (1969), 305-19, esp. 308-11.

¹² Thuc. 1.95.1, cf. Plut., *Arist.* 23.4.

¹³ This is a probable, but not necessary, inference from Thuc. 8.24.4-5, cf. R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1972), 208 with n. 3, but see Thuc. 8.38.3. Cf. also T.J. Quinn, “Political Groups at Chios: 412 B.C.”, *Historia* 18 (1969), 22-30, and *Athens and Samos, Lesbos and Chios: 478-404 B.C.* (Manchester 1981), 39-49; J.L. O’Neil, “The Constitution of Chios in the Fifth Century”, *Talanta* 10-11 (1978-79), 66-73.

¹⁴ Thuc. 3.27.2-3, 39.6, and 47.3.

¹⁵ *Id.* 1.97.1: ἡγούμενοι δὲ αὐτόνομων τὸ πρῶτον τῶν ξυμμαχῶν.

the Delian League.¹⁶ The question thus arises: when did Samos lose the *αὐτονομία* which was restored to her only after the successful democratic *coup* of 412 BCE? For although there is no explicit statement anywhere that she lost the *αὐτονομία* she had in 477 BCE, the mention of its restoration in 412 clearly implies that she had been deprived of it at some point.

That point can only have been the capitulation of Samos to Athens after her revolt had been quelled in 439 BCE, as is suggested by the fact that after that date only Chios and Lesbos are referred to as *αὐτόνομοι* member states of the Delian League.¹⁷ There is no doubt that the loss of *αὐτονομία* was associated at that time with a change of regime in Samos; but it is still regarded as controversial whether the new regime was a democracy or a restoration of oligarchy.¹⁸ The background required to resolve that issue, though familiar, needs to be briefly rehearsed in order to focus on the essential.

The trouble began with a war between Samos and Miletus over the control of Priene. The intervention of Athens was invited by the Milesians after they had been defeated, and “private citizens from Samos itself who wished to change the constitution by revolutionary means”¹⁹ joined their appeal. From the Athenian response — the dispatch of forty ships to Samos, the imposition of a democracy, enforced by the taking of hostages, and the installation of an Athenian garrison²⁰ — it has been inferred that the Samian petitioners were democrats²¹ and that the government they wanted to overthrow was an oligarchy. The last part of this inference is immune to challenge; but the first raises two interrelated questions which cast doubt on the assumption that the identification of the Samians as democrats exhausts the reasons for their appeal.

First of all, why did they not appeal to Athens on their own, rather than join the petition of the Milesians? And second, what made the Athenians respond so promptly and so forcefully? Was the Athenian aim the establishment of a democracy in Samos? If that was an end in itself, we ought to look for a motive, since up until that time relations with oligarchical Samos had, as far as we know, left nothing to be desired. Samos had been a loyal member of the Delian League: she had sent a contingent to the battle of the Eurymedon in 469,²² had partici-

¹⁶ See M. Ostwald, *Autonomia: Its Genesis and Early History* (Chico, CA 1982), 23-25.

¹⁷ Thuc. 3.10.5, 39.2, 6.85.2, 7.57.5, cf. 1.19.

¹⁸ See Shipley (above, n. 1), 120-22, and S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides I* (Oxford 1991), 192-93.

¹⁹ Thuc. 1.115.2: *ξυνεπελάβοντο δὲ καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς Σάμου ἄνδρες ἰδιῶται νεωτερίσαι βουλόμενοι τὴν πολιτείαν.*

²⁰ See n. 6 above.

²¹ D.M. Lewis in *CAH V²* (1992), 143.

²² G.F. Hill, *Sources for Greek History between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars*, edd. R. Meiggs and A. Andrewes (Oxford 1951), B. 123.

pated in the Egyptian Expedition,²³ and had even proposed the portentous transfer of the League treasury from Delos to Athens in 454 BCE.²⁴ What should make Athens now wish to supplant the oligarchy with a democracy?

With that we enter the realm of speculation, since our sources are silent on that point. But it is not an eccentric guess that Athens could ill afford not to intervene in a war between two member states of the League geographically close to Persia. Moreover, we learn from Plutarch that Pericles refused bribes offered both by the Samian oligarchs he took hostage and by the Persian satrap Pis-southnes to induce him not to establish a democracy on Samos,²⁵ and Thucydides reports that the same Pissouthnes soon helped the exiled oligarchs to return to Samos to overthrow the democracy.²⁶ Does this indicate that the Samian oligarchy had enjoyed the support of Pissouthnes already in the war against Miletus? And does this, in turn, mean that the "private citizens from Samos" who joined the Milesian appeal to Athens "wishing to change the constitution by revolutionary means" were prompted less by an ideological attachment to democracy than by a desire to oust a regime that had made common cause with the Persians against another Greek city? The scenario is not implausible; whether or not we accept the Peace of Callias as having been concluded some nine years earlier,²⁷ relations with Persia were still hedged with suspicions. The Athenians would not have detailed sixty ships to sail against Samos and all ten generals to command them, and the Chians and Lesbians would not have joined them with their twenty-five ships, if there had been no genuine fear of Persian intervention.²⁸ Moreover, this fear is substantiated by Pericles' first departure from Samos to meet the Phoenician fleet off Caunia and Caria.²⁹ In short, nothing in our sources compels us to assume that ideological motives prompted the Athenians to impose a democracy on Samos by violent means. It was in the interest of Athens to overthrow a regime which had enlisted Persian help in attacking a fellow-member of the League; it was not in Athens' interest to attack Samos because it was an oligarchy. If a democracy was installed to replace the oligarchy, it was because there was no alternative to filling the vacuum except tyranny, and tyranny was naturally out of the question.

²³ *Ibid.* B. 113.

²⁴ Plut., *Arist.* 25.3. The exact date of the proposal is not known: it must have been before the death of Aristeides, which had occurred some time before the actual transfer in 454 BCE.

²⁵ Plut., *Per.* 25.2-3.

²⁶ Thuc. 1.115.4.

²⁷ I am not convinced by the arguments of E. Badian, "The Peace of Callias", *JHS* 107 (1987), 1-39.

²⁸ Thuc. 1.116.1-2.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 116.3.

Two further considerations demonstrate that Pericles was not engaged in a crusade to make Samos safe for democracy. It cannot be regarded as certain whether Miletus, at whose request Athens intervened, was governed by a democracy or by an oligarchy in 441 BCE.³⁰ If it was an oligarchy, she is not likely — as she would be following an argument from ideology — to have approved of the abolition of the Samian oligarchy by the Athenians. If this encourages our view that political ideology played no part in these events, this conclusion is confirmed by the parallel of Chios and Lesbos, both of which were oligarchically governed at this time, both of which enjoyed αὐτονομία, and contributed first twenty-five and then an additional thirty ships to the eventual suppression of the Samian Revolt.³¹

This revolt was staged by Samian oligarchs who had fled to Persia, and now with Persian help and the collusion of influential oligarchs still left in Samos, invaded the island at night, deposed the puppet democracy, freed the hostages taken by the Athenians, seceded from the Delian League, captured and turned over to Pissouthnes the Athenian garrison and its commanders and continued the war against Miletus.³² The immediate and sweeping success of the oligarchs may perhaps be an indication that the Athenian-imposed democracy did not enjoy popular support.

The details of the revolt need not concern us here. Of greater interest is the question of what happened to Samos when, after a stubborn resistance, she surrendered to Athens eight months later.³³ The conditions of surrender were the razing of the walls of Samos, the giving of hostages, the surrender of her fleet and the payment in installments of an indemnity for the costs of the siege. We know from the treatment of Thasos about 463, of Aegina in 457/6 and of Mytilene in 427 BCE that the forcible razing of walls, surrender of a fleet and imposition of tribute spelled for a seafaring state the loss of αὐτονομία.³⁴ The substitution of an indemnity for tribute and the additional taking of Samian hostages made the treatment of Samos more severe than that of Thasos and Aegina, and means that Samos, too, was deprived of her αὐτονομία even if our ancient sources do not specifically say so. Moreover, since we hear nothing about either deprivation or restoration of Samian αὐτονομία until 412, we may assume that the αὐτονομία then voted for the Samian democracy constituted the restoration of a loss sustained by the treaty of 439 BCE. This view seems corroborated by the fact that, while Aristotle assigns a special status to Samos, Chios and Lesbos in the early days of the Delian League,³⁵ Thucydides' narra-

³⁰ See below, p. 61.

³¹ *Ibid.* 116.2 and 117.2.

³² *Ibid.* 115.5.

³³ *Ibid.* 117.3. Cf. Diod. 12.28.3-4; Plut., *Per.* 28.1.

³⁴ See Ostwald (above, n. 16), 26-30.

³⁵ Arist., *Ath. Pol.* 24.2; *Pol.* 3.13, 1284a38-41.

tive of events between 439 and 412 speaks, as already mentioned, only of Chios and Lesbos as retaining αὐτονομία.³⁶

To ascertain whether these terms were accompanied by a renewed imposition of a democratic form of government on Samos is a more difficult matter, and modern scholarship is divided on that issue.³⁷ The only explicit statement to have come down to us, Diodorus' assertion that Pericles established a democracy, may be a doublet of the establishment of democracy before the revolt³⁸ and has to be weighed against the silence of Thucydides. The only other document that may contribute to a solution of the problem, an inscription of 440/39 BCE, most accessible in ML, no. 56, is so fragmentary and so heavily restored that it is hard to feel confident about anything in it. Yet the tone of lines 15-21, when taken in conjunction with the first persons singular -άσο and ἐρῶ at the end of line 21,³⁹ make it clear that it gives the texts of two oaths, the first promising something to the Athenians, and the second to the Samians. The editors of *ATL*, who made these restorations, assume that the Samians swore part I and the Athenians part II. If this is accepted, the rather astonishing result, noted as such by Meiggs and Lewis, is that the loyalty usually sworn by subjects to the Athenians is here sworn by the Athenians to a state recently subjected after a long and bitter revolt. The explanation required by this unusual phenomenon is then the circular argument — a *petitio principii* — that Athens wanted to give her support to the newly established democracy. But, as Fornara has pointed out,⁴⁰ there is no need whatever to attribute this oath to the Athenians. It is as valid and more sensible to assume, on the parallel of the Chalkis Decree,⁴¹ that the first oath (lines 15-21) was sworn by all adult male Samians, while the second was sworn by the Samian βουλή. Fornara restores line 21: ὁμόσαι δὲ τὴν βολὲν κατὰ τάδε, and explains: "As a standard precautionary measure against possible counter-revolution, the Samian *bouleutai* were required to affirm their

³⁶ See n. 17 above.

³⁷ Will (above, n. 11) and Quinn 1981 (above, n. 13), 13-19 believe that the oligarchical government continued after 439; Barron (above, n. 11), 81, Meiggs (above, n. 13), 193-94 and W. Schuller, "Die Einführung der Demokratie auf Samos im 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr.," *Klio* 63 (1981), 281-88, believe that it was replaced by a democracy. The problems are excellently identified by A. Andrewes in *HCT* V, 44-47.

³⁸ Diod. 12.28.2, cf. 27.2.

³⁹ ML, no. 56, 15-21: δρ]/[άσο καὶ ἐρῶ καὶ βολεύσο τῶι δέμοι τῶι Ἀθηνα]/[ῖον ἡό τι ἄν δύνομαι καλὸν κ]αὶ ἀ[γ]αθόν. [οὐδὲ ἀ]/[πιστέσομαι ἀπὸ τῶ δέμο τῶ Ἀθηναίων οὔτε λ[ό]/[γοι οὔτε ἔργοι οὔτε ἀπὸ τῶν χουμμάχων τῶν Ἀ]/[θηναίων. καὶ ἔσομαι πιστὸς τ]ῶι δέμοι τῶι Ἀθ[ε]ναίων Ἀθηναίος δ' ὁμόσαι· δρ]άσο καὶ ἐρῶ καὶ ...

⁴⁰ C.W. Fornara, "On the chronology of the Samian War", *JHS* 99 (1979), 7-19, esp. 17-18.

⁴¹ ML, no. 52, 21-32.

loyalty to the newly established democracy". This is good as far as it goes, but the obvious objection to it is that, if the new government imposed on Samos in 439 was a democracy, its βουλή would be democratic, too, so that there would be no need to have it swear allegiance to the democracy. The imposition of this oath makes more sense if we think of it as sworn by an oligarchical βουλή in order to make sure that there would neither be any recrimination against those who had participated in the Athenian puppet democracy a year earlier, nor any future divisive action against the Samian δῆμος. This reconstruction seems preferable to one which retains the Athenians as swearing the oath but substitutes τῆι πόλει τῆι οἱ τῆι βολῆι τῆι for τῶι δέμοι τῶι in line 22, so that their oath constitutes a guarantee of the oligarchical government of Samos which they had left in power.⁴²

Since any argument, be it for the retention of oligarchy or for a renewed establishment of democracy, has to rest on reconstructions of the scholar who makes them, the resulting interpretation cannot be reliable. The strongest evidence which moves me to believe in the retention of an oligarchy at Samos is the silence of Thucydides on the form of government in control of Samos between 439 and 412 and the evidence he provides at 8.21 that an oligarchy was overthrown at that time and replaced by a democracy, which was recognized by Athens through the restoration of αὐτονομία to Samos. Corroborative arguments for this have been convincingly stated by Will.⁴³ The fact that hostages were taken suggests that they were taken from the upper classes; they are less likely to have been taken if a democracy had been installed in 439. Moreover, the restoration of democracy in 439 would have entailed some bloodletting in that the democrats, originally installed by Pericles and driven out by the oligarchs, would have been deprived of some rights and properties. This would not have been in Athens' interest because it would have perpetuated unrest in Samos and because it was to the advantage of Athens as well as of the Samian δῆμος to have Samos run by rich landowners who would be able to raise the indemnity of 1276 talents,⁴⁴ which, if paid in instalments of 50 talents *per annum*, would have been paid off in 414/13, i.e., one year before the democratic revolution.⁴⁵

Those who find it difficult to believe that Athenian control over an island just subjugated after a bloody revolt could have been maintained without a democracy favorable to Athens fail to see that before the death of Pericles there is very little evidence that Athenian interference in the internal affairs of another state

⁴² For these restorations, see D.W. Bradeen and M.F. McGregor, *Studies in Fifth-Century Attic Epigraphy* (Norman, OK 1973), 120-21, and Quinn 1981 (above, n. 13), 14-15.

⁴³ See n. 11 above.

⁴⁴ ML, no. 55 with Fornara (above, n. 40), 9-12.

⁴⁵ ATL III, 334-35.

had a democratic bias. A policy based on ideology is first advocated in Thucydides by Diodotus in the Mytilenean Debate, when he suggests that the Athenians can best control their subjects if they support the democrats among them,⁴⁶ and this is followed in rapid succession by Thucydides' accounts of *stasis* in Corcyra and Megara. Once introduced, ideology tends to dominate policy until the end of the Peloponnesian War. There is no reason to assume that the same policy was already pursued before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. Even though the Athenian temperament will have favored democracy, the Athenians supported or imposed democracies only when that was in the interest of their imperial policy, which always took precedence over ideology. A well-known passage in the Old Oligarch is no evidence to the contrary:

The Athenians seem to me to be ill-advised, too, in that they side with the lower classes in cities embroiled in civil strife. They do this as a matter of policy; for if they were to side with the upper classes, they would side with those whose outlook is different from their own. For in no city is the better element well-disposed toward the people, but in every city it is the worst element that is well disposed toward the people. For like is well disposed to like, and for that reason the Athenians take the side with which they are in sympathy. On every occasion on which they took sides with the upper classes it was to their disadvantage: within a short time the common people in Boeotia were enslaved; further, when they sided with the upper classes in Miletus, they revolted within a short time and butchered the common people; and again, when they sided with the Lacedaemonians rather than the Messenians, within a short time the Lacedaemonians subdued the Messenians and were at war with Athens.⁴⁷

The complaint here, whether exaggerated or not, is modified by the evidence it supplies for at least an occasional support for local oligarchies by the Athenian democracy, and an examination of the evidence shows that even where democracies are supported the motive is imperial rather than ideological in the middle of the fifth century. There is no indication that the rift between the δήμος and

⁴⁶ Thuc. 3.47.2.

⁴⁷ [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 3.10-11: δοκοῦσι δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ τοῦτό μοι οὐκ ὀρθῶς βουλευέσθαι ὅτι τοὺς χείρους αἰροῦνται ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι ταῖς στασιαζούσαις. οἱ δὲ τοῦτο γνώμη ποιούσιν. εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἤρουντο τοὺς βελτίους, ἤρουντ' ἂν οὐχὶ τοὺς ταῦτ' ἀγνώσκοντας σφίσιν αὐτοῖς· ἐν οὐδεμιᾷ γὰρ πόλει τὸ βέλτιστον εὖνον ἐστὶ τῷ δήμῳ, ἀλλὰ τὸ κάκιστον ἐν ἐκάστη ἐστὶ πόλει εὖνον τῷ δήμῳ· οἱ γὰρ ὅμοιοι τοῖς ὁμοίοις εὖνοί εἰσι· διὰ ταῦτα οὖν Ἀθηναῖοι τὰ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς προσήκοντα αἰροῦνται. ὅποσάκις δ' ἐπεχείρησαν αἰρεῖσθαι τοὺς βελτίστους, οὐ συνήνεγκεν αὐτοῖς· ἀλλ' ἐντὸς ὀλίγου χρόνου ὁ δήμος ἐδοῦλευσεν ὁ ἐν Βοιωτοῖς. τοῦτο δὲ ὅτε Μιλησίων εἶλοντο τοὺς βελτίστους, ἐντὸς ὀλίγου χρόνου ἀποστάντες τὸν δήμον κατέκοψαν· τοῦτο δὲ ὅτε εἶλοντο Λακεδαιμονίους ἀντὶ Μεσσηνίων, ἐντὸς ὀλίγου χρόνου Λακεδαιμόνιοι καταστρεψάμενοι Μεσσηνίους ἐπολέμουν Ἀθηναίους.

the παχεῖς, which had prompted Naxos in 500 BCE to solicit Persian help via the tyrant of Miletus,⁴⁸ played any part in her revolt in the 470s, and the “enslavement” to which she was subjected after the revolt had been put down shows no concern for her form of government. One of the few known cases where a settlement after a revolt seems to have led to the establishment of a democracy is Erythrae, which had apparently seceded from the League, encouraged by the strength of Persia and the weakness of Athens manifested in the failure of the Egyptian Expedition.⁴⁹ However, this democracy replaced a medizing tyranny; its Council was established by Athenian ἐπίσκοποι and it was supervised by an Athenian φρούραρχος and his Athenian garrison. Moreover, it was established with the consent of the allies, presumably acting at a *synedrion* of the League at Delos, who, whether democratically or oligarchically governed, will have been more pleased that a medizing tyranny had been abolished than concerned that the new regime might turn against the rich.

In the case of Miletus, whose revolt seems to have followed close upon the secession of Erythrae, the passage from the Old Oligarch just quoted suggests that ideological considerations did not enter into the settlement which left an oligarchy as her government. The date of this oligarchy as well as the circumstances under which it butchered the people and revolted are far from certain. Modern orthodoxy, established by the editors of *ATL*, assumes the original tolerance of oligarchy to refer to 450/49, and infers from the tribute lists that its government was in revolt from Athens again from 446 to 442 BCE and that this revolt ended with the imposition of a democracy on Miletus.⁵⁰ But more recent scholarship has shown that the reconstruction rests on weak foundations.⁵¹ The date of 450/49 depends on the restoration of Euthynos as archon for the year in which the relevant decree was passed,⁵² on the assumption that, because Diodorus⁵³ called the archon of 426/5 (Euthynos) Euthydemos, the archon of 450/49, whom he also calls Euthydemos, must in fact have been Euthynos. Moreover, any inferences from the tribute lists are of necessity subject to a great variety of possible interpretations, and the basis for dating the end of the second revolt and the establishment of a democracy in 442 rests on the very shaky legs of inferences drawn from an undated inscription recording political expulsions

48 Hdt. 5.30.1-3.

49 See Meiggs (above, n. 13), 112-14.

50 *ATL* III, 150, 151.

51 See especially H.-J. Gehrke, “Zur Geschichte Milets in der Mitte des fünften Jahrhunderts v. Chr.,” *Historia* 29 (1980), 17-31, and, more recently, N. Robertson, “Government and society at Miletus, 525-442 B.C.,” *Phoenix* 41 (1987), 356-98, esp. 384-90, with full bibliography on pp. 356-57 n. 1.

52 *IG* I³ 21. The name Euthynos is restored in line 3, but appears unrestored in line 61 and is partially preserved in line 86.

53 Diod. 12.58.1; 3.1.

from Miletus, which need not mark the final suppression of oligarchy;⁵⁴ it may just as well indicate a rift in the upper classes.

The earliest hint that Athens may have regarded democratic regimes as more reliable guarantors of control than oligarchies comes in the wake of her subjugation of all Boeotia, with the possible exception of Oenophyta, in 457 BCE.⁵⁵ It seems that at first local governments were left intact.⁵⁶ But the presence of a large number of presumably oligarchical exiles at Orchomenus and Chaeroneia some ten years later, who defeated Tolmides at Coroneia,⁵⁷ suggests that most of the cities under Athenian rule were democratically governed about 447 BCE. Whether the changes of government had been engineered by Athens remains a moot point; we learn from the Thebans' speech in Thucydides that there was *stasis* in Boeotia at this time.⁵⁸ In Thebes an earlier democracy had been replaced by an oligarchy after Oenophyta,⁵⁹ and it may well be that the Athenians had discovered that the oligarchical regimes in the cities they had conquered were more interested in reviving the Boeotian League under the leadership of the Theban oligarchy than in living under Athenian domination, and Athens may have felt constrained to introduce democracies in order not to lose her foothold in Boeotia. If this conjecture is correct, the change from oligarchy to democracy, with oligarchy dominant again after Coroneia, can only be explained as motivated by Athenian interest and implemented by Athenian interference, which did not take place until the βέλτιστοι had proved themselves untrustworthy to Athens.

It is generally believed that a democracy was established in Colophon after a revolt had been put down in 447/6 BCE.⁶⁰ This belief, as well as our knowledge of the revolt, depends largely on the restoration δημο[κρατίαν] in a loyalty oath imposed upon the Colophonians for which a very fragmentary inscription is our only evidence.⁶¹ There is no basis even for guessing whether the new regime replaced an earlier democratic or non-democratic form of government.

We are slightly better informed about the settlements with Eretria and Chalcis after the revolt of Euboea had been put down in 446/5 BCE. In neither case is there any suggestion that new democratic regimes were installed but rather that pre-existing democracies were strengthened. Since in the year before the outbreak of the Euboean Revolt Euboean exiles had fought on the side of Boeotian

⁵⁴ ML, no. 43 with pp. 106-7; but cf. Meiggs (above, n. 13), 188 with 562-65.

⁵⁵ Thuc. 1.108.2-3, Diod. 11.83.1.

⁵⁶ [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 3.11.

⁵⁷ Thuc. 1.113.1-4, Diod. 12.6.

⁵⁸ Thuc. 3.62.5 and 4.92.6.

⁵⁹ Arist., *Pol.* 5.3, 1302b25-30.

⁶⁰ *ATL* III, 153. See also W. Schuller, *Die Herrschaft der Athener im Ersten Attischen Seebund* (Berlin and New York 1974), 91.

⁶¹ ML, no. 47, 48

oligarchs against the Athenians at Coroneia,⁶² it looks as if most Euboean cities were democratically governed at that time. The Athenian defeat at Coroneia may have spurred those members of the upper classes whose kinsmen had contributed to the defeat to instigate Euboea's defection from the Delian League a year later. The expulsion of the wealthy *hippobotai* from Chalcis⁶³ tends to corroborate this, while the harsher treatment meted out to the people of Histiaea, because they had captured and killed the crew of an Athenian ship, suggests that her government had been in the hands of the upper classes before and during the revolt.⁶⁴ A democratic government at Chalcis and Eretria before the defection might also explain why, despite the expulsion of the *hippobotai*, there is no allusion whatever to the establishment of a democracy in the surviving decrees concerning the settlement of these two cities.

In short, there is ample evidence that before the Peloponnesian War it mattered little to Athens whether an ally was oligarchically or democratically governed as long as that ally remained loyal to the ἡγεμῶν; only when loyalty was doubted was a regime friendly to Athens imposed, usually by force. The Samian democracy imposed initially by Pericles had proved untenable: there was no reason, then, why Athens should not come to terms with an emasculated oligarchy so long as that oligarchy would not rely on Persia.

An objection to this interpretation remains to be met. Thucydides mentions the presence of anti-Athenian exiles from Samos at Anaea between 427 and 424 BCE. Some scholars, equating anti-Athenian with anti-democratic and anti-democratic with oligarchical, see in the presence of those exiles evidence that Samos had become democratic in 439, causing extreme oligarchs to take refuge in Anaea.⁶⁵ But there is no reason to regard ideology as the only or even as the most natural reason for their exile.⁶⁶ They may well have looked upon the loss of Samian αὐτονομία as a sell-out to the Athenians which they did not wish to countenance. And that the Samian oligarchy did remain loyal to Athens is indicated by the fact that Samos was a reliable base for the Athenian navy even immediately before the democratic revolt of 412,⁶⁷ which, in turn, makes it likely that the Samian contingent contributed to the Athenian expedition against Sicily⁶⁸ were also despatched by an oligarchical government.

If the argument is correct that Athens remained indifferent to the way the Samians were governed, as long as they remained loyal and accepted the terms imposed on them in 439 BCE, there is no denying that ideological considerations

⁶² Thuc. 1.113.2.

⁶³ Plut., *Per.* 23.4; cf. Aelian *VH* 6.1.

⁶⁴ Thuc. 1.114.3, Diod. 12.7 and 22.2.

⁶⁵ E.g., Legon (above, n. 5), 154-55.

⁶⁶ Cf. Shipley (above, n. 1), 122.

⁶⁷ Thuc. 8.16, 17, and 19.

⁶⁸ *Id.* 7.57.4.

did enter the relationship between Athens and Samos in 412. The presence of three Athenian ships at the time of the revolt, described as coincidental by Thucydides,⁶⁹ has been interpreted by some as evidence that the revolt of the δῆμος was instigated by the Athenians.⁷⁰ That the Athenians supported the insurgents is clearly stated by Thucydides, but that they actively instigated them is made unlikely by the fact that this is the smallest number of Athenian ships present in Samos about this time. However, it is possible that the δῆμος took encouragement from the fact that the ships were Athenian. Earlier that summer Strombichides had brought eight ships to the Samian base,⁷¹ soon to be followed by twelve ships under the command of Thrasyclus⁷² and by sixteen under the command of Diomedon.⁷³ If the Athenians had instigated the revolt they would surely have waited until they could give stronger support to the δῆμος. It is more plausible that the Athenians gave their support to the δῆμος when the revolt was already under way. They may have been ideologically motivated: this is, after all, only a few months before the revolt of the Four Hundred, which was to polarize Athens into an oligarchical and a democratic camp.

Still, ideology cannot have been a primary motive. Thucydides gives no reason for the democratic insurrection, but the severity of the measures taken by the victorious δῆμος against the γεωμόροι suggests long-simmering social and economic grievances. It is possible to hazard a guess why these grievances came to a head at this particular time. The decree which regulates relations between Athens and Samos after the revolution praises, in its unrestored part, the Samian δῆμος for having expelled “those Samians who invited the Peloponnesians <to move> against Samos and [Ionia]”.⁷⁴ Is it not possible that the Samian oligarchs were trying to use the insignificant Athenian presence to regain their αὐτονομία under Peloponnesian auspices? If so, this would have been a most opportune moment for the δῆμος to strike, realizing that they would have Athenian support. This hypothesis goes some way toward explaining Peisander’s success with some of the δυνατώτατοι among the democratic rebels, when he tried to have them re-establish an oligarchy on Samos: these men had joined the democratic camp out of loyalty to Athens, but when Peisander persuaded them that loyalty to Athens was compatible with oligarchy, they succumbed to his ar-

⁶⁹ *Id.* 8.21.

⁷⁰ See Will (above, n. 11), 315-16 with 316 n. 1.

⁷¹ Thuc. 8.16.1

⁷² *Ibid.* 17.3.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 19.2.

⁷⁴ *IG* I³.96.1-4: [τῶ]ι μὲν δέμοι τῶι Σαμίον ἐπαίνεσαι ὅτι σφᾶς αὐτὸς [ἀπελευθέρωσαν τῆν ὀλιγαρχίαν τῆν αὐτοῖς ὑπάρχουσαν καταλύοντες καὶ Σαμίον τὸς ἐπάγοντας Πελοποννησίους ἐπὶ Σάμον κ[αὶ τῆν Ἴονίαν ἐχσέβαλον]

guments.⁷⁵ It also provides an explanation why Athens restored αὐτονομία to Samos when she did: she wanted to show that she would of her own accord restore rights to a loyal Samian democracy which disloyal oligarchs had tried to obtain by clandestine dealings with the enemy.

The victory of the Samian democrats was eventually assured with the help of Athenian forces hostile to the oligarchy which had been established at home. While we hear little about internal affairs at Samos for the next few years, there is evidence from the period after Aegospotami that Samos remained Athens' most loyal ally to the end of the Peloponnesian War. With Lysander master of the Aegean, all allies defected except for Samos.⁷⁶ In recognition of the successful resistance offered by the Samian democrats the Athenians passed a decree conferring citizenship upon the Samians.⁷⁷ This was more than a sentimental gesture to reward a loyal ally: the decree was passed as the result of Samian, not of Athenian, initiative, and it was preceded by negotiations about the relations between Athens and Samos for the remainder of the war and beyond. Its purpose was to make the Samians free and equal partners of the Athenians and not subject allies. The grant of citizenship is not merely potential:⁷⁸ all Samians who had remained loyal to the democracy at the time of the crisis of 405 BCE (and, implicitly, no other Samians) were made henceforth Athenian citizens, wherever they happened to live at that time.⁷⁹ The phrase Σαμίος Ἀθηναίος εἶναι, πολιτευόμενος ὅπως ἂν αὐτοὶ βόλωνται (12-13) makes sense only if abandonment of their homeland is not a precondition for Athenian citizenship. Potential Samian exiles will thus have a home rather than a refuge in Athens. Those who choose to stay in Samos are guaranteed their independence: they retain complete control over the form of government under which they choose to live (13: πολιτευόμενος ὅπως ἂν αὐτοὶ βόλωνται), they will enjoy autonomy in legislation and the administration of justice (15-16: τοῖς δὲ νόμοις χρῆσθαι τοῖς σφετέροις αὐτῶν αὐτονόμος ὄντας),⁸⁰ and all judicial disputes arising between the two states will be settled in conformity with existing treaties (16-18: καὶ τᾶλλα ποιεῖν κατὰ τὸς ὅρκος καὶ τὰς συνθήκας καθάπερ ξύγκειται Ἀθηναίοις καὶ Σαμίσις· καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐνκλημάτων ἃ ἄγ γίγνηται πρὸς ἀλλήλους διδόναι καὶ δέχεσθαι τὰς δίκας κατὰ τὰς συμβολὰς τὰς ὄσας). The bonds between two independent democracies are affirmed and

⁷⁵ Thuc. 8.63.3.

⁷⁶ Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.6.

⁷⁷ ML, no. 94, M.J. Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens I* (= *Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België* 98 [1981]), 33-37 with II (*id.* 101 [1982]), 25-26, and with Whitehead (above, n.3)

⁷⁸ W. Gawantka, *Isopolitie. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen in der griechischen Antike* (= *Vestigia* 22) (Munich 1975), 178-97.

⁷⁹ Whitehead (above, n. 3), 324-25.

⁸⁰ On this phrase, see Whitehead (above, n. 3), 326-27.

strengthened in the face of a victorious power which had already succeeded in replacing democracies with oligarchies elsewhere; imperial rule over a subject ally is a thing of the past.

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