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Religion and the *Polis*: The Cult of the Tyrannicides at Athens*

Abstract: As formulated by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, *polis* religion is intimately linked to the formation of religious, civic, and cultural identities and it focuses on the dominant group, rather than the individual. In this essay, I ask whether this religious system left space for views which were not that of the dominant group and to what extent it could accommodate multiplicity. Focusing on the cult of the Tyrannicides at Athens, I argue that this cult provided a specific version of the overthrow of the tyrant and the establishment of democracy which served the needs of the city. It did not prevent other versions from circulating, but these alternative traditions could not compete indefinitely with the city's and so they died out. Thus *polis* religion can include multiple voices, but groups promulgating these different views will need constantly to counteract the influences of the city's dominant version.

Résumé : Telle que l'a définie Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, la *polis* religion est intimement liée à la formation des identités religieuse, civique et culturelle, et elle est davantage concernée par le groupe dominant que par l'individu. Cet article pose la question de savoir si le système religieux laisse de la place à des conceptions qui ne relèvent pas du groupe dominant et dans quelle mesure un tel système peut s'accomoder de la variété. En partant du culte des Tyrannoctones à Athènes, il s'agit de montrer que ce culte offre une version spécifique de la mise à terre du tyran et de l'établissement de la démocratie qui rencontre les besoins de la cité. Cette version n'a pas empêché d'autres de circuler, mais ces traditions alternatives ne pouvaient pas entrer indéfiniment en compétition avec la cité et elles se sont dès lors éteintes. Au total, la *polis* religion peut inclure des voix multiples, mais les groupes qui les portent doivent sans cesse lutter contre les influences de la version dominante, qui est celle de la cité.

* The oral version of this essay was presented in July 2008 at the University of Reading at the conference 'Perceptions of Polis-Religion: Inside/Outside, A Symposium in Memory of Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood'. I would like to thank both Ian Rutherford and Milette Gaifman for their invitation to contribute to their conference and the participants for their comments and suggestions. While working on the Tyrannicides and their cult, I have benefited from the help and advice of many friends and colleagues. It is my pleasure now to thank particularly: Joe Day, Simon Goldhill, Kris Lorenzo, Rob Nichols, Robin Osborne, Kurt Raaflaub, Ian Ruffell, T. Leslie Shear, Jr., and John Tully. Some of this material was presented in rather different forms at the annual meetings of the Archaeological Institute of America in Chicago in 1998 and at the universities of Cambridge and Glasgow; I would like to thank the participants at those three occasions for their comments. For permission to study the remains of the Tyrannicides' base, I am grateful to Jan Jordan at the Agora Excavations. Thanks are also due to John Camp, Fred Ley, and Matt Buell for their help with the Agora plan (fig. 2). Any remaining mistakes are, of course, my own.



Fig. 1. Roman marble copies of the Tyrannicides by Kritios and Nesiotes

(Museo Archeologico, Naples G103-4). The bronze originals were erected in the Athenian Agora in 477/6 B.C. (Courtesy of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut-Rom, Neg. D-DAI-Rom 1958.1789, photograph by Bartl.)

For ancient Greeks, the *polis* was one of the fundamental units of their world and, as such, it provided an important context for religious activity, particularly for what has become known to modern scholars as *polis* religion.¹ As Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood stated in her seminal study, ‘the Greek *polis* articulated religion and was itself articulated by it ... Ritual reinforces group solidarity and this process is of fundamental importance in establishing and perpetuating civic and cultural, as well as religious, identities’.² These dynamics were not limited to the city itself: ‘each significant grouping within the *polis* was articulated and given identity through cult’.³ As formulated here, the focus is on the group, rather than the individual, and this emphasis suggests the dominance of the single voice of the group. Indeed, the possibility of other positions is not discussed. If we wish to understand the dynamics of *polis* religion, we must ask, therefore, whether this system left room for alternative voices, for views which were not that of the dominant group, and to what extent it could accommodate multiplicity, issues which were not addressed by Sourvinou-Inwood in her examination of the religion of the city. Addressing these questions will also allow us to include some complexity in our understanding of the interrelationship between the city and its religion.⁴

In order to unpack these interactions between the *polis* and alternative traditions, the cult of the Tyrannicides Harmodios and Aristogeiton at Athens provides us with an important case-study. As one of the foundation stories of Athenian democracy, Harmodios’ and Aristogeiton’s tale is well-known, but its familiarity obscures an unusual situation: the city’s surprising institution of a cult in the Tyrannicides’ honour soon after the assassination of Hipparchos. As I shall argue, the cult was set up by the *polis* in the last decade of the sixth century when the rituals promulgated a specific version of the overthrow of the Peisistratidai and the foundation of the democracy which served the needs of the city.

¹ The classic definition of *polis* religion was provided by SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2000a) and (2000b), which were originally published in 1990 and 1988 respectively. More recently, her model has been criticised by scholars of Roman religion for the great control exerted by the *polis* on religion and for its lack of complexity, particularly in the Roman imperial period; e.g. WOOLF (1997); BENDLIN (2000); note also SCHEID (2005), p. 125-128. For scholars of the Greek *polis*, religion controls the city too much; HANSEN and NIELSEN (2004), p. 130-133. Scholars of Greek religion have criticised the lack of emphasis on the individual, belief, and what Bremmer calls the ‘messy margins’; KINDT (2009); BREMMER (2010); EIDINOW (2011). Despite these criticisms, only Eidinow attempts to provide an alternative way of understanding the religion of the *polis*, but even her ‘network approach ... builds on existing elements of ... *polis* religion’, while both Woolf and Bremmer explicitly accept the general validity of the model; EIDINOW (2011), p. 34; WOOLF (1997), p. 72; BREMMER (2010), p. 33, 35. As Parker has rightly noted, Sourvinou-Inwood’s paradigm was never intended to be an all-embracing theory of Greek religion; PARKER (2011), p. 58. We should, therefore, be very wary of critics who, for their own purposes, present *polis* religion in this fashion.

² SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2000a), p. 22.

³ SOURVINOU-INWOOD (2000a), p. 27. Cult, of course, includes ritual.

⁴ Compare the comments of WOOLF (1997), p. 76.

Nevertheless, this sanction did not prevent other variants of these seminal events from circulating during the course of fifth century when they were used by different sub-groups in Athens. These different stories presented in ritual settings for the whole city and for its sub-groups will be the focus of our discussion. In the fourth century, distance from the events and the annual repetition of the Tyrannicides' cult caused only the city's version to flourish, while the alternative traditions died out so that the rituals and traditions now focused only on the *polis*. *Polis* religion, accordingly, can accommodate alternative voices, but the groups promulgating these different traditions will need constantly to counteract the influences of the city's dominant voice. Over time, these dynamics are unequal and they lead to the dominance of the version of the *polis* and to the suppression of alternative voices.

1. The Cult

Various scholars, including Michael Taylor, Robert Garland, and Robert Parker, have discussed the rituals for Harmodios and Aristogeiton; despite the small number of testimonia, there is general consensus that the Tyrannicides were, indeed, figures of cult.⁵ The occasion for the cult, however, has inspired rather less agreement. If we are to understand how the rituals served to articulate the city and its various identities, then we must place them in their correct setting and context. As we shall see, the rituals first seem to have been instituted at the end of the sixth century B.C., when the well-known statues were erected, and they took place annually at the Panathenaia, the occasion of the Tyrannicides' deed and of Harmodios' death.

The clearest evidence for the cult of Harmodios and Aristogeiton comes from the third quarter of the fourth century. At this time, they received annual *enagismata* from the *polemarchos* and 'libations and wine-offerings at the sacrifices in all the sanctuaries'; they were also celebrated in song and honoured (τιμᾶτε) equally with the heroes and gods.⁶ Multiple ritual occasions seem to be described here because the *enagismata* should be separate from the libations and wine-offerings. The libations at sacrifices find parallels in occasions when offerings for heroes accompanied offerings to specific divinities.⁷ The *enagismata* should map

⁵ TAYLOR (1991), p. 5-8; GARLAND (1992), p. 94-96; PARKER (1996), p. 123, 136-137; see also e.g. KEARNS (1989), p. 55, 150; RAUSCH (1999), p. 59-61; ANDERSON (2003), p. 202-204; RAAFLAUB (2003), p. 65.

⁶ Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 58, 1 (CHAMBERS), repeated by Pollux, *Onomastikon* VIII, 91; Demosthenes, 19, 280. For the textual problems of *Athenaion Politeia*, 58, 1, see the *apparatus criticus* of Chambers' Teubner edition (1994) and RHODES (1981), p. 650-652.

⁷ As, for example, Pelops at Olympia (scholia on Pindar, *Olympian*, I, 149a; cf. Pindar, *Olympian* I, 90-93; Pausanias, V, 13, 2; BURKERT [1983], p. 96-101) and Pandrosos on the Akropolis (Philochoros, *FGrHist* 328 F 10; repeated by Harpokration, *Suda*, s.v. ἐπιβουιον; *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. ἐπιβουιον καὶ ἐπιβουιον; KEARNS [1989], p. 25-26, 192). For some

on to the honours equal to those of heroes and gods because honours equal to those of gods are usually understood as sacrifice and other attendant rituals, while the words *τιμάω* and *τιμή*, when used in connection with heroes (and gods), identify them as recipients of cult.⁸ As Gunnel Ekroth has shown, the term *enagismata* in connection with heroes or individuals other than the ordinary dead is rare at this time.⁹ Such offerings were completely destroyed; heroes typically received an animal victim, while the ordinary dead were given non-fluid offerings such as cakes, fruits, and prepared food.¹⁰ *Enagismata* particularly emphasised the dead state of the recipients and were very often connected with individuals who died violently.¹¹ As such, they were particularly appropriate for Harmodios and Aristogeiton who probably received some sort of animal victim.¹² In the middle of the first century B.C., Cicero describes the honours which Greek cities awarded to tyrant-slayers: although he does not mention Harmodios and Aristogeiton by name, he locates the honours at Athens among other cities and recalls the 'divine rites', the *cantus*, and the *carmina*.¹³ These men, he states, 'are deified almost to the sanctity and memory of immortality' (*prope ad immortalitatis et religionem et memoriam*). The invocation of Athens points towards Harmodios and Aristogeiton as among the tyrant-slayers honoured in this fashion and the rituals described find good parallels in Demosthenes' speech.

While there is general agreement that the Tyrannicides were the recipient of a cult, the occasion for the *enagismata*, the primary manifestation of the cult, has proved difficult to identify securely. Scholars have frequently associated these honours with the Epitaphia.¹⁴ Doing so requires us to rely on the text of the *Athenaion Politeia* as transmitted in the papyrus, but this version was unknown to Pollux, who presented the text in a slightly different form: for him, the games for the war-dead were a separate occasion from the *enagismata* for Harmodios and

epigraphically attested examples, see e.g. *IG* I³, 256bis, 52-56 = *NGSL* 1, 52-56; *SEG* LII, 48, fr. 3A, 60-76; *RO* 37, 90-92, 93.

⁸ Honours equal to gods: HABICHT (1970), p. 195-205, 212; FISHWICK (1987), p. 21-31; CHANIOTIS (2007), p. 158-159; cf. HABICHT (1996), p. 132-133. Since Lykourgos associates *isotheoi timai* with Kodros and other contemporary kings who gave their lives for their country and thus became *eponymoi*, such honours were appropriate for recognised heroes; Lykourgos, *Leokrates*, 88; PARKER (1996), p. 136 note 55; on this passage, see also STEINBOCK (2011), p. 289-294. Demosthenes' use of similar terms ought to indicate that, in the context of cult, the Tyrannicides were equivalent to heroes, even though the term 'heroes' is not applied to them in our extant sources, as Parker notes; PARKER (1996), p. 136; PARKER (2011), p. 121. *Τιμάω* and *τιμή*: MIKALSON (1991), p. 183-202; NAGY (1999), p. 118-119 with note 2; EKROTH (2002), p. 199-206.

⁹ EKROTH (2002), p. 74-128.

¹⁰ EKROTH (2002), p. 89, 127-128.

¹¹ EKROTH (2002), p. 88-89, 96-98, 126-127.

¹² Victim type: EKROTH (2002), p. 170.

¹³ Cicero, *Pro Milone*, 80.

¹⁴ E.g. MOMMSEN (1898), p. 302-303, 307; DEUBNER (1932), p. 230; CALABI LIMENTANI (1976), p. 11-12, 26; TAYLOR (1991), p. 7-8 with earlier bibliography; ERMINI (1997), p. 20; ANDERSON (2003), p. 202; cf. CURRIE (2005), p. 95.

Aristogeiton.¹⁵ Recent editors have accepted his version of the text.¹⁶ Furthermore, the known prizes awarded to victors in the Epitaphia specify that they are ‘for those who (died) in the war’ and they do not mention Harmodios and Aristogeiton.¹⁷ There is, accordingly, no evidence to connect the rituals for the Tyrannicides with the games for the war-dead and their *enagismata* were almost certainly not offered on that occasion.

Much better evidence for the festival at which these offerings were made comes from Philostratos’ *Life of Apollonios of Tyana*, a text not previously brought into scholarly discussions. In this passage, Apollonios continues his efforts against the despotic emperor Domitian and he attempts to encourage the governors of the Roman provinces to act against the emperor:

διήγει δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ τὰ Παναθηναῖα τὰ Ἀττικά, ἐφ’ οἷς Ἀρμόδιός τε καὶ Ἀριστογείτων ἔδονται, καὶ τὸ ἀπὸ Φυλῆς ἔργον, ὃ καὶ τριάκοντα ἡμοῦ τυράννους εἴλε, καὶ τὰ Ῥωμαίων δὲ αὐτῶν διήγει πάτρια, ὡς κάκεινοι δῆμος τὸ ἀρχαῖον ὄντες τὰς τυραννίδας ἐώθουσι ὀπλοῖς.

He discussed with them both the Attic Panathenaia, at which Harmodios and Aristogeiton are celebrated in song, and the deed from Phyle, when the Thirty Tyrants were conquered together, and he also went through the ancestral history of the Romans themselves, that, in antiquity, they, too, were a *demos* accustomed to throw out tyrannies with arms.¹⁸

Although forms of the verb to sing (*αἰεῖδω*) are used in a variety of ways in the *Life of Apollonios*, there is no exact parallel for this passage.¹⁹ A number of examples concern the singing of songs or hymns in a ritual setting, a context analogous to the situation at the Panathenaia.²⁰ The closest parallel, however, is provided by the people of Gadeira (modern Cadiz) who are ordered ‘to make a sacrifice of thanksgiving for good news, celebrating in song Nero as a triple Olympic victor’.²¹ At this ritual occasion, the songs make the reason for the

¹⁵ Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 58, 1: ὁ δὲ πολέμαρχος θύει μὲν θυσίας τήν τε τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι τῇ ἀγροτέρῃ καὶ τῷ Ἐνυαλίῳ, διατίθησι δ’ ἀγῶνα τὸν ἐπιτάφιον {καὶ} τοῖς τετελευτηκόσιν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ καὶ Ἀρμόδιῳ καὶ Ἀριστογείτονι ἐναγίσματα ποιῆι. ‘The *polemarchos* makes the sacrifices to Artemis Agrotera and to Enyalios, and he arranges the funeral games for those who have died in the war, and he makes *enagismata* to Harmodios and Aristogeiton’. When Pollux reported this passage, he rendered the crucial phrase as διατίθησι δὲ τὸν ἐπιτάφιον ἀγῶνα τῶν ἐν πολέμῳ ἀποθανόντων; Pollux, *Onomastikon* VIII, 91. That is to say, he omitted the disputed *καὶ* before τοῖς τετελευτηκόσιν/τῶν ἐν πολέμῳ ἀποθανόντων. I discuss this passage further in SHEAR (2012).

¹⁶ Above note 6.

¹⁷ *IG I³*, 523-525: ἀθλα ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ; VANDERPOOL (1969), p. 4 note 7.

¹⁸ Philostratos, *Vita Apollonii* VII, 4, 3; Philostratos’ text is cited according to Jones’ new edition (2005). In what follows, I draw on my discussion of this passage and the cult’s setting at the Panathenaia in SHEAR (2012).

¹⁹ Note, however, that the same verb is used in Demosthenes, 19, 280.

²⁰ Philostratos, *Vita Apollonii* I, 14, 1; 30, 1; III, 14, 3; 17, 2; cf. V, 42, 2.

²¹ Philostratos, *Vita Apollonii* V, 8, 1: εὐαγγέλια θύειν τρισολυμπιονίκην Νέρωνα ἔδοντας.

sacrifice explicit, while they also commemorate the emperor's achievements. Similarly, at the festival of the Panathenaia, Harmodios' and Aristogeiton's deed is also the subject of song. The biggest difference between the two passages is in the nature of the occasion: the Panathenaia was held regularly, but the sacrifice for Nero's victory was a unique event.

Furthermore, in the first passage, Apollonios could encourage the governors without mentioning the Panathenaia or the songs; instead, Philostratos has deliberately chosen to juxtapose the festival, the songs, and the men.²² The association should indicate that the Panathenaia was the occasion for their cult which ought to have been well known to Philostratos' readers; if the rituals were obscure or had lapsed, then Apollonios' point would have been lost.²³ The songs described here also map on to those mentioned by Demosthenes and Cicero. This passage, accordingly, provides the context for the rituals and it indicates that they continued to be part of the festival in the early third century A.D. The Panathenaia is a particularly appropriate venue for the cult because it was the occasion of the Tyrannicides' deed and Harmodios' death. Adding the annual cult to the festival maintained precisely these connections.

The Athenians probably instituted the cult not long after the events. The Harmodios *skolia* refer to the *kleos* of Harmodios and Aristogeiton and the Isles of the Blest, which are inhabited not only by Harmodios, but also by swift-footed Achilles and Diomedes; the Homeric diction marks the equation of the Tyrannicides with Homeric heroes, many of whom had cults.²⁴ If these songs do go back to the end of the sixth century, as has been suggested by various scholars,²⁵ then they would point towards an early date for the start of the rituals. Further evidence is provided by the bronze statues made by Antenor and set up in the Agora. According to Pliny, they were erected in the same year as the expulsion of the kings from Rome.²⁶ While Varro placed this event in 510/9,

²² Compare Philostratos, *Vita Apollonii*, V, 34, 3; VIII, 16 (Panathenaia as occasion of their deed).

²³ The Panathenaia is independently attested at this time by a number of inscriptions: e.g. *SEG* XLIII, 732, 11-14; *Agora* XVIII, C222; *SEG* XXXIV, 176; XXI, 505, 26; XXX, 82, 2, 28-29; *IG* II², 2241; *SEG* XII, 512, 1-6; *IG* II², 3169/70, 11-12. As hoplite general (and citizen) at Athens ca. A.D. 205, Philostratos should have been well informed about religious activities in the city; *Agora* XV, 447, 4-6; 448, 4-5; TRAILL (1971), p. 323-325; FOLLET (1976), p. 101-102; BYRNE (2003), p. 262 no. 152; BOWIE (2009), p. 19-20.

²⁴ Harmodios *skolia* *PMG* nos. 894, 896 = Athenaeus, XV, 695a-b, nos. 11, 13. For a parallel, see Simonides, fr. 11 (WEST²), the so-called elegy on Plataia; BOEDEKER (2001).

²⁵ E.g. OSTWALD (1969), p. 121-136; FORNARA (1970), p. 158, 178-180; BRUNNSÄKER (1971), p. 23-24, 121; TAYLOR (1991), p. 24-32 with further references; CASTRIOTA (1998), p. 203; RAUSCH (1999), p. 50-54; RAAFLAUB (2003), p. 65-66; RAAFLAUB (2004), p. 94-95 with further references. For a date in the second half of the fifth century, see FORNARA and SAMONS (1991), p. 42-48. The poems are regarded as undatable by THOMAS (1989), p. 259-260 and ANDERSON (2003), p. 202-203.

²⁶ Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* XXXIV, 17.

Polybios and Cicero located it in 508/7 and Cornelius Nepos put it in 507/6.²⁷ These alternative dates suggest that the statues of the Tyrannicides were erected in the Agora in 507 when they would have been part of the project to erect the first public buildings and to make the area fully public space as the city's Agora.²⁸

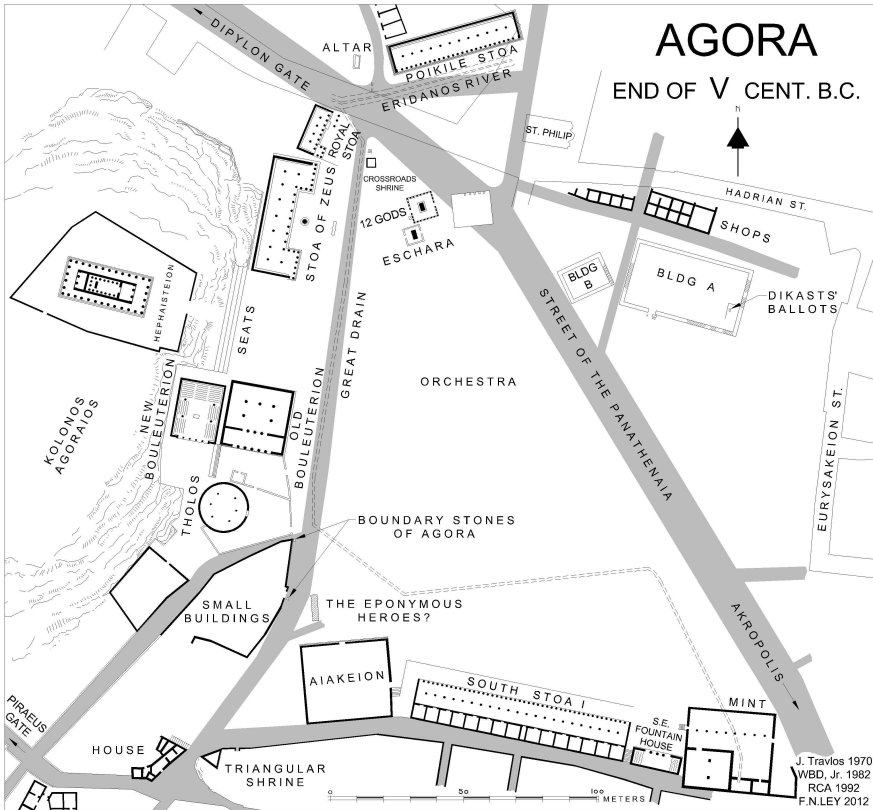


Fig. 2. Restored plan of the Athenian Agora in ca. 400 B.C.

The statues of the Tyrannicides were located to the west of the Panathenaic Way and south of the newly discovered enclosure east of the Altar of the Twelve Gods. Its approximate location is marked by the rectangle east of the Altar of the Twelve Gods. (Courtesy of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens: Agora Excavations.)

²⁷ Polybios and Cicero: WALBANK (1957), p. 340, 665-669 with further references; cf. CASTRIOTA (1998), p. 206. Cornelius Nepos: ERMINI (1997), p. 16-17, 18-19 with additional references.

²⁸ Creation of Agora: SHEAR, JR. (1994), p. 228-245 with further bibliography; SHEAR, JR. (1993), p. 418-429; for the Bouleuterion, see also SHEAR, JR. (1995), p. 157-171. The altar of Aphrodite Ourania was also part of this project; SHEAR, JR. (1984), p. 24-30.

These statues, however, were anomalies: public honorary statues did not exist in Athens until 394/3 when the Athenians awarded bronze figures to Konon and Euagoras of Cypriot Salamis for their role in the naval victory at Knidos;²⁹ beyond Attica, such statues appear to be a fourth-century development.³⁰ On the late archaic Akropolis, the only (vaguely) similar monument is the bronze chariot celebrating the victories over the Boiotians and Chalkidians in 506, but it apparently did not include human figures.³¹ Otherwise, the monuments most comparable to the Tyrannicides are the statues of Kleobis and Biton and of Arrachion. Herodotos tells us that the Argives dedicated the figures of Kleobis and Biton at Delphi, again a sanctuary context.³² The two young men may also have been the recipients of cult, as was Tellos the Athenian with whom Herodotos links them.³³ Even in sacred settings, however, public figural monuments were rare in the late archaic period. The archaic statue of Arrachion was seen by Pausanias in the Agora at Phigalia.³⁴ Since Arrachion died winning his third Olympic victory in the *pankration*, he was probably the recipient of a city cult as a victorious athlete.³⁵ The best parallel for Antenor's group, consequently, is the statue of a divinity or hero located in sacred space, a connection presupposing the existence of a cult when the figures were set up in the Agora.

Collectively, our evidence suggests that the institution of the Tyrannicides' cult and the erection of their statues belong together in 507 B.C. when they must have been approved by the *demos* of the Athenians.³⁶ The figures will also have been part of the larger project to construct public buildings north of the Areiopagos and to create a new Agora for the Athenians. The primary occasion for their rituals was the Panathenaia when the *polemarchos* made the *enagismata* and songs were sung for them. These rites continued to be carried out as late as the early third century A.D. By the 340s B.C., the Tyrannicides also received libations at all the sacrifices. Together the rituals and the statues will have kept the Tyrannicides' deed ever present in the minds of the Athenians.

²⁹ Konon and Euagoras: Demosthenes, 20, 69-70; Isokrates, 9, 56-57; Pausanias, I, 3, 2-3; SHEAR (2007a), p. 107-109; SHEAR (2011), p. 274-281.

³⁰ MA (2007), p. 203; DILLON (2010), p. 12-13.

³¹ Herodotos, V, 77, 3-4; *JG I*³, 501A.

³² Herodotos, I, 31, 5. Whether the pair of early kouroi found at Delphi (Delphi Inv. 1524, 467) represents these statues does not affect my argument. For a summary of the issues, see CHIASSON (2005), p. 41 note 1.

³³ Herodotos, I, 30, 5; NAGY (1990), p. 244; cf. CURRIE (2005), p. 144. This example raises the question of the status of a person figured in an archaic dedication, but this important topic is beyond the scope of this essay.

³⁴ Pausanias, VIII, 40, 1-2; KRUMEICH (1997), p. 202 with further bibliography.

³⁵ SHEAR (2007a), p. 109. On the phenomenon, see CURRIE (2005), p. 120-157 with further references.

³⁶ For an early date for the institution of the cult, see also e.g. FORNARA (1970), p. 157; TAYLOR (1991), p. 6; VERSNEL (1995), p. 381; RAUSCH (1999), p. 61; ANDERSON (2003), p. 203-204, 278 note 16 with further references; cf. PARKER (2011), p. 121.

2. The City and the Cult

From 507, accordingly, the Athenians will have sacrificed regularly to the Tyrannicides at the Panathenaia and their statues will have been highly visible in the Agora. These commemorations, however, were not neutral; instead, they presented a specific version of the events and a particular image of Harmodios and Aristogeiton. These two men were thought to have killed the tyrant and to have made Athens a place of equal rights. In the aftermath of the Persian Wars, the Tyrannicides also came to be understood as the bringers of freedom to Athens. This imagery constructed the city as democratic and it provided a specific model for good citizens to follow: they should imitate Harmodios and Aristogeiton and protect the city's freedom. In this way, the rituals served to create and perpetuate a very specific set of identities which served the interests of the city.

Already in the Harmodios *skolia*, Harmodios and Aristogeiton are described as killing the tyrant and making Athens *isonomos*, a place of equal rights.³⁷ In this version, the death of the tyrant leads directly to *isonomia* for Athens, as if no time at all had elapsed between these two events in 514 and 508. In the third poem, the tyrant is specifically named as Hipparchos.³⁸ Significantly, the term freedom, *eleutheria*, does not appear in these texts. As Kurt Raaflaub has shown, this noun and the concept of freedom as a political value developed only in the years immediately after 480 in the aftermath of the Persian Wars.³⁹ For these reasons, the poems very probably go back to the period before 480 when they must have been in fairly wide circulation, hence their preservation and Aristophanes' references to them in the later fifth century.⁴⁰ The sentiments expressed are appropriate both for men supporting the new Kleisthenic political system and also for the city's rituals for Harmodios and Aristogeiton. The likely source for this depiction of the events would appear to be the cult of the Tyrannicides and particularly its songs.⁴¹ This association would explain the focus of the *skolia* on slaying the tyrant and bringing equal rights to Athens because hymns for heroes often concentrate on the crisis leading to the individual's status as a figure of cult.⁴²

³⁷ Harmodios *skolia*, *PMG*, nos. 893, 896 = Athenaeus, XV, 695a-b, nos. 10, 13.

³⁸ Harmodios *skolia*, *PMG*, no. 895 = Athenaeus, XV, 695a-b, no. 12.

³⁹ RAAFLAUB (2000), p. 253-254, 264; RAAFLAUB (2004), p. 58-102, 117.

⁴⁰ Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, 979-981, 1094; *Wasps*, 1225; *Lysistrata*, 632-634; fr. 444 (*PCG*).

⁴¹ Since Furley and Bremer have described the first four *skolia* in Athenaeus' collection as 'hymnic' with an origin in hymns sung to the gods, a connection between the Harmodios *skolia* and the Tyrannicides' cult is not implausible and the *skolia* may be more closely associated to the cult's songs than has usually been thought; *PMG*, 884-887 = Athenaeus, XV, 694c-d; FURLEY and BREMER (2001), p. 258-260.

⁴² FURLEY and BREMER (2001), p. 19-20.

Harmodios and Aristogeiton, however, did not remain simply the killers of the tyrant and the bringers of *isonomia*; with the invention of political freedom, they also became the bringers of freedom. This version may have been reflected on the now fragmentary base for the second statue group made by Kritios and Nesiotes to replace Antenor's earlier group and erected in 477/6.⁴³ The poem says that Aristogeiton and Harmodios killed Hipparchos and also that they did something for the fatherland.⁴⁴ Since the crucial section of the epigram is not preserved, we do not know exactly what these two men did and both freedom and *isonomia* have been restored in this section.⁴⁵ The parallel between the great light born from their deed in the first line of the epigram and Aischylos' use of the same metaphor in the *Choephoroi* shows that Harmodios and Aristogeiton could already have been understood as bringers of freedom in the 470s.⁴⁶ Certainly, both Herodotos and Thucydides knew this tradition.⁴⁷ The equation is particularly clear in Herodotos' report of Miltiades' speech to Kallimachos on the eve of the Battle of Marathon. By way of encouragement, Miltiades offers the *polemarchos* a choice: he has the opportunity either to enslave Athens or to make her free and to leave a memorial greater than that of the Tyrannicides.⁴⁸ Harmodios and Aristogeiton provide an apt comparison because they, too, are bringers of freedom. They are so depicted in other late fifth-century texts. In Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, the leader of the men's chorus equates resisting tyranny with carrying a myrtle branch and the statue of Aristogeiton in the Agora which he will imitate.⁴⁹ These connections emphasise the Tyrannicide's role as someone who frees the city from tyranny. In 410/9, Demophantos' decree specifying how the Athenians should act if the democracy were overthrown in the future specifically invokes Harmodios and Aristogeiton in the oath taken by all the Athenians.⁵⁰ They are to kill with impunity anyone who overthrows the democracy and anyone who dies in the process and his sons will receive the Tyrannicides'

⁴³ Antenor's group: Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* XXXIV, 70; Arrian, *Anabasis* III, 16, 7-8; VII, 19, 2; Valerius Maximus, II, 10, ext. 1; Pausanias, I, 8, 5. Kritios' and Nesiotes' group: Pausanias, I, 8, 5; Lucian, *Philopseudes*, 18; *IG XII 5*, 444 = *FGrHist* 239, A54, lines 70-71.

⁴⁴ *IG I³*, 502; Hephaistion, *Enchiridion*, 4, 16 = Simonides fr. 131 BERGK (fr. 1, PAGE, *FGE*). I would stress here that, in the current state of our evidence, we simply do not know what was inscribed on the base for Antenor's statues. Hephaistion can only have known the epigram for the post-Persian monument of Kritios and Nesiotes.

⁴⁵ ἰσόνομον: PEEK in *SEG X*, 320; cf. RAAFLAUB (2003), p. 64; ἐν ἐλευθερίαι: FRIEDLÄNDER and HOFFLEIT (1948), p. 142; see also RAAFLAUB (2000), p. 261, 264.

⁴⁶ Aischylos, *Choephoroi*, 809-810, 863, cf. 1046; RAAFLAUB (2003), p. 64.

⁴⁷ Herodotos, VI, 123, 2; Thucydides, VI, 53, 3; 54, 3; 56, 3; on the last two passages, see HORNBLOWER (2008), p. 443, 449.

⁴⁸ Herodotos, VI, 109, 3; cf. 109, 6.

⁴⁹ Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 630-635.

⁵⁰ Andokides, 1, 96-98.

benefits.⁵¹ Here, Harmodios and Aristogeiton are specifically associated with democracy and freedom and the Athenians swear to be(come) tyrannicides. By the late fifth century, accordingly, Harmodios and Aristogeiton were certainly associated not only with the end of the tyranny, but also with the bringing of freedom to the city.⁵² This role likely goes back to the 470s and the period immediately after the Persian Wars.

After the end of the fifth century, the image of the Tyrannicides as liberators is, of course, common and well known. When Demosthenes came to speak against Leptines, he emphasised that Konon was the first man after Harmodios and Aristogeiton to receive a bronze statue because his contemporaries thought that ‘he, too, had ended no small tyranny in breaking up the Spartan empire’; on the *stèle* with the decree, they made the same point by stating that he had ‘freed the allies of Athens’.⁵³ As the juxtaposition indicates, both Konon and the Tyrannicides brought freedom to the Athenians after tyranny. In his speech on the false embassy, Demosthenes associated Harmodios with Thrasybulos of Steiria, who led the *demos* back from Phyle in 403, and Epikrates, who was active in the Peiraieus in the same year.⁵⁴ In this way, the men who overthrew the Thirty and restored freedom and democracy to the city are connected with the man who freed Athens from the tyranny of the Peisistratidai. In the early third century A.D., Philostratos could still equate the Tyrannicides, freedom, and the return from Phyle.⁵⁵ Despite the intervening centuries, the associations had lost none of their potency and Harmodios and Aristogeiton remained the liberators of Athens. Both Demosthenes and Philostratos link this tradition with contexts mentioning the cult, an association which suggests that this version was being disseminated through the rituals for the Tyrannicides. Such a setting with its annual repetition would further explain why this tradition was so dominate for so long.

According to our evidence, the cult for Harmodios and Aristogeiton seems to have promulgated a very specific version of their deed and the events surrounding the assassination of Hipparchos. The killing of the tyrant by these two men

⁵¹ The eldest male descendants of Harmodios and Aristogeiton received *sitesis*, *proedria*, and *ateleia*; Isaios, 5, 47; Demosthenes, 20, 18, 127-130; *IG I³*, 131, 1-9; SHEAR (2007b), p. 152, 252-253 note 23. Although all three benefits are first mentioned together by Isaios in ca. 389, they ought to have been awarded at the same time because Demosthenes mentions a *stèle* authorising the grant; Demosthenes, 21, 170. It presumably predates *IG I³*, 131 which awards *sitesis* to various honorands, including the Tyrannicides’ descendants, and probably belongs in the 430s.

⁵² There is no support, accordingly, for Thomas’ claim that this role for the Tyrannicides belongs to the fourth century; THOMAS (1989), p. 246, 250, 254, 257, 261.

⁵³ Demosthenes, 20, 69-70.

⁵⁴ Demosthenes, 19, 280. On Epikrates, see MACDOWELL (2000), p. 323-324. For other fourth-century examples of the Tyrannicides as liberators and benefactors, see e.g. Isaios, 5, 46-47; Plato, *Symposium*, 182c 5-7; Demosthenes, 20, 159; 21, 169-170; Aischines, 1, 132, 140; Lykourgos, *Leokrates*, 51; Hypereides, *Epitaphios*, 39-40 (text as HERRMAN [2009]).

⁵⁵ Above note 18.

led directly and immediately to the foundation of the democracy. This tradition set the rule of the *demos* in opposition to tyranny and, after the Persian Wars, associated it firmly with freedom, which the Tyrannicides brought to the city. Indeed, the cult may have been instrumental in causing the Athenians to link democracy and civic liberty.⁵⁶ Together, the cult and the statue group in the Agora continually kept this foundational moment present for the Athenians and they stressed that keeping Athens democratic might cost a citizen his very life.

For the *polis* in the last decade of the sixth century, this imagery would have been of particular benefit because it provided an authorised account, as it were, of how the isonomic system came into being. This version overlooked the four years of tyranny after Hipparchos' assassination and the *stasis* which followed the overthrow of Hippias.⁵⁷ It also eliminated the Spartan participation which actually allowed the Athenians to remove Hippias so that the events were (re)constructed as purely an Athenian affair.⁵⁸ Similarly, the role of the Alkmeonidai was eliminated so that one family was not favoured at the expense of others, a situation which might then cause further disunity.⁵⁹ Since the men singled out for honour were conveniently dead, they could not make special demands. Their families do not seem to have been particularly prominent at this time⁶⁰ and, therefore, the institution of the cult would not have given them the power to destabilise the city. The cult and the statues in the Agora recall the honours given to *oikistai* of colonies, particularly their monuments in *agorai* and their rituals, so that the Tyrannicides are configured as the founders of the new political order and of a new start for the city.⁶¹ Through the cult, the city is articulated in a completely new way: now it is *isonomos* and tyranny has been banished.

⁵⁶ They ought to have been already associated when the Athenians decided to locate the new cult of Zeus Eleutherios in the Agora so that it was juxtaposed with the Tyrannicides, the Bouleuterion, and the Stoa Poikile. The cult was probably introduced soon after the Battle of Plataia and certainly by ca. 450; *IG I³*, 1056 = *Agora XIX*, H7; RAAFLAUB (2004), p. 102-108. Raaflaub's contention that this link started only in the 440s is, thus, untenable; RAAFLAUB (2004), p. 203-221.

⁵⁷ Herodotos, V, 55; 66, 1; 69, 1 – 73, 1; Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 19, 1-2; 20, 1 – 21, 2; Thucydides, VI, 59, 4.

⁵⁸ Spartans: Herodotos, V, 62, 1 – 65, 2; Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 19, 2-6; Thucydides, VI, 53, 3; 59, 4.

⁵⁹ Alkmeonidai: Herodotos, V, 62, 2 – 63, 2; VI, 123, 1-2; Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 19, 3-4; Thucydides, VI, 59, 4. Kleisthenes was also a member of this family.

⁶⁰ DAVIES (1971), p. 472-474. Other members of these families are attested from the middle of the fifth century through the third century B.C.; DAVIES (1971), p. 472-479 with further references. For one of Harmodios' descendants, see below. Some of the male descendants will have received the Tyrannicides' benefits; above note 51.

⁶¹ Compare CASTRIOTA (1998), p. 202; RAUSCH (1999), p. 47. *Oikistai* and *agora*: e.g. Pindar, *Pythian*, 5, 93 (Battos); Thucydides, V, 11, 1 (Brasidas); MALKIN (1987), p. 200-206, 213-216; and cult: e.g. Pindar, *Pythian* 5, 94-95 (Battos); Herodotos, VI, 38, 1 (Miltiades); Thucydides, V, 11, 1 (Brasidas and Hagnon); MALKIN (1987), p. 190-200, 204-240; EKROTH (2002), p. 184-186, 206-212, 257-258.

Of all the events between the killing of Hipparchos in 514 and the institution of the rule of the *demos* in 508/7, the assassination was perhaps the only one which all Athenians could (potentially) share. If, as Josh Ober has argued, the spontaneous uprising of the Athenians against the Spartans and Isagoras was the crucial moment for the creation of the Kleisthenic democracy, then this event would not have been easy to commemorate.⁶² The actual implementation of the new system would have required a series of decisions made over a period of time, a situation which precludes celebration within regularly repeated ritual. In contrast, commemorating the actions of the Tyrannicides involved none of these complications. Celebrating in ritual the story of how Athens came to be ruled by the *demos* both created and reinforced unity among the Athenians and gave them a moment which they could agree to commemorate together.⁶³ The disunity which marked the years after the overthrow of Hippias would not be allowed to continue.

These processes of commemoration also established a paradigm for the good Athenian citizen: he was a democrat modelling himself on the Tyrannicides. Our fifth-century texts demonstrate the force of this model. As we have seen, in Herodotos' narrative of the Battle of Marathon, Miltiades invokes the Tyrannicides to encourage Kallimachos to cast the deciding vote to engage with the Persians; like them, Kallimachos can free Athens.⁶⁴ Here, Harmodios and Aristogeiton show how a good Athenian ought to behave and Kallimachos ought to model himself on them. He does, indeed, do so and the Athenians defeat the Persians, while Kallimachos himself gains lasting renown. In *Lysistrata*, the leader of the men's chorus is going to stand up to the tyranny of the women by imitating the example of Aristogeiton.⁶⁵ Doing so requires him to act against tyrants and his conduct identifies him as a proper democratic Athenian. Swearing the oath provided in Demophantos' decree makes all the Athenians into potential tyrant slayers who kill men overthrowing the democracy.⁶⁶ In this way, it delineates the appropriate behaviour for citizens who are democrats and act against those overthrowing the rule of the *demos*.⁶⁷ In all three of these cases, the

⁶² OBER (1996), p. 32-52; OBER (2007).

⁶³ For discussion of the dynamics involved and some further examples, see SHEAR (2011), p. 15-16, 135-154, 188-217, 286-294.

⁶⁴ Above note 48.

⁶⁵ Above note 49. According to Sommerstein and Ober, when the male chorus leader said 'I'll stand beside him [Aristogeiton] like this', he imitated the pose of Harmodios rather than of Aristogeiton whom he names in the preceding line; SOMMERSTEIN (1990), p. 81, 187-188; OBER (2003), p. 220. He has, however, just quoted the Harmodios *skolion* 'in the future "I shall carry my sword in a myrtle branch"' and the audience could presumably finish off the well-known phrase 'like Harmodios and Aristogeiton'. This reference with its injunction to be like the Tyrannicide suggests instead that the chorus leader actually imitated Aristogeiton's pose, as Henderson suggested; HENDERSON (2000), p. 355.

⁶⁶ Above note 50.

⁶⁷ See further SHEAR (2007b) and SHEAR (2011), p. 75, 96-106, 136-141, 147, 160-161.

Tyrannicides explicitly serve as models for Athenian men. For those individuals who were not committed democrats, it would have been a rigid definition of what it meant to be a citizen of the city.

These three examples use the imagery promulgated by the rituals in other civic and cultural contexts which then serve to perpetuate it. The dynamics of Herodotos' speech are particularly striking because, from the middle of the fifth century, they were mirrored in the topography and monuments of the Agora. Harmodios' and Aristogeiton's statues stood somewhere in the centre of the square, probably just west of the Panathenaic Way (*Fig. 1*).⁶⁸ To the north, the Stoa Poikile with its painting of the Battle of Marathon faced south on to the Agora (*Fig. 2*).⁶⁹ Viewers, particularly those standing on the stoa's steps, were able to look from one monument to the other and to see both the inspiring models of the Tyrannicides and the results of imitating them in the victory celebrated by the painting. With *Lysistrata* and Demophantos' decree, the contexts also involved rituals, but not ones connected with the Tyrannicides: the play is thought to have been performed at the Lenaia of 411, while the oath of Demophantos was sworn by the Athenians shortly before the Dionysia of 409.⁷⁰ This oath shows the potency of the Tyrannicides: in the aftermath of the oligarchies of 411, they were instrumental in bringing the divided city back together again.⁷¹ At the moment when democracy's continuing existence had been brought into question, invoking its foundation after the overthrow of the tyrant suggested that this system would indeed continue. With the addition of libations at sacrifices in all sanctuaries, Harmodios and Aristogeiton were imported into the city's other religious rites. The repetition of their imagery in different parts of Athens at different times of year united the *polis* repeatedly in time and space.

The Tyrannicides' cult, consequently, created a particular set of images for the city. Harmodios and Aristogeiton were presented as the slayers of the tyrant and the bringers of *isonomia* and democracy to Athens. In the aftermath of the

⁶⁸ THOMPSON and WYCHERLEY (1972), p. 157-158; AJOOTIAN (1998), p. 3-7. In the winter of 2011, rescue excavations carried out by the First Ephoreia below the tracks on the south side of the electric railroad revealed that the five limestone bases uncovered in 1974 belong, not to the starting line of a racetrack, as previously supposed, but to an enclosure similar to that surrounding the monument of the Eponymous Heroes; SHEAR, Jr. (1975), p. 363-365; CAMP (2012). Since the excavations in the 1970s show that the enclosure was installed in the middle of the fifth century B.C. and out of use by the end of the century, it presumably did not surround the Tyrannicides, which must have stood to the south of this enclosed space; SHEAR, Jr. (1975), p. 363 with note 66.

⁶⁹ Marathon painting: Pausanias, I, 15, 1, 3.

⁷⁰ *Lysistrata*: GOMME, ANDREWES, and DOVER (1981), p. 184-190, 193; SOMMERSTEIN (1977); HENDERSON (1987), p. xv-xxv; SOMMERSTEIN (1990), p. 1; AVERY (1999), p. 130-134; oath of Demophantos: SHEAR (2007b), p. 153-158; SHEAR (2011), p. 136-141; see also WILSON (2009), p. 15-16, 23-26.

⁷¹ On the oath and the creation of Athenian unity, see SHEAR (2007b), p. 158-159; SHEAR (2011), p. 138-141.

Persian Wars, their image changed and they were identified as the men who freed Athens from tyranny. Their role as liberators certainly goes back at least to the 450s when the monuments in the Agora made visible the same dynamics which Herodotos would later use in Miltiades' speech to Kallimachos. This identity may very well have been invented in the 470s when freedom became a political value. The Tyrannicides also promulgated a very particular image of the good Athenian: he was a male citizen who acted against tyrants and so protected the freedom of the democratic city. After 411, these good citizens were understood as prepared to become tyrannicides themselves. This imagery also set tyranny and democracy in opposition to each other and it stressed that the city was ruled by the *demos*. After of the overthrow of the Peisistratidai and the subsequent events, the cult served to create unity among the divided Athenians and these dynamics would subsequently be used again in 409 in the aftermath of the oligarchies of 411. In these ways, the *polis* created a cult which served very well to articulate a particular identity both for herself and her citizens. In turn, the rituals continually reinforced the images of the city and the good Athenian so that the *polis* was also articulated by them. The influence of the Tyrannicides spread beyond rituals because they also provided the model for honouring the city's most important benefactors: as Demosthenes noted, Konon was the first man after Harmodios and Aristogeiton to receive a bronze statue, voted because of the victory at Knidos in 394/3.⁷² Ritual and civic spheres are closely intertwined here and these developments further articulated the identities of the city and the good citizen.

3. Alternative Traditions about Tyrants and Democracy

In the Tyrannicides' cult, accordingly, we can see the *polis* using religion for its own ends and being articulated by it. The institution of these rituals by the city, however, did not prevent the circulation of other versions about how the tyranny of the Peisistratidai was overthrown and how the city came to be ruled by the *demos*. These alternative traditions are now preserved in Thucydides, Herodotos, Aristophanes, and the orators and these sources indicate that different versions of the events not only circulated, but also flourished in the fifth century.⁷³ In some case, these variants can be traced to specific sub-groups

⁷² Demosthenes, 20, 69-70; GAUTHIER (1985), p. 92.

⁷³ Herodotos' and Thucydides' sources have been extensively discussed in the scholarly literature; particularly important treatments are JACOBY (1949), p. 152-168 and THOMAS (1989), p. 238-282, especially p. 242-251. For the debate stimulated by Jacoby's work, see e.g. EHRENBERG (1950), especially p. 530-537; VLASTOS (1953), especially p. 337-344; PODLECKI (1966); FORNARA (1968); FORNARA (1970); helpfully summarised by THOMAS (1989), p. 241-242. On Athenian family traditions, see THOMAS (1989), p. 95-154. She focuses on identifying the different traditions and on their oral nature, but she never considers how they were passed on. The roles of ritual and cult are also never discussed.

of the *polis* which seem to have promulgated their accounts in ritual settings. For them, these alternative traditions created a narrative about what it meant to be a member of that particular group. This story then served to create an identity for this community. For us, these variants bring out the multiplicity of traditions in fifth-century Athens about the end of the tyranny and the beginning of the democracy.

Thucydides discusses the assassination of Hipparchos at length and he is notoriously hard on the Athenians for their mistaken beliefs.⁷⁴ In creating his narrative, he is evidently drawing on a number of different versions. As we saw earlier, he knew the tradition in which Harmodios and Aristogeiton freed Athens from tyranny. In this version, Hipparchos, not Hippias, was identified as the tyrant; Thucydides, in contrast, emphasises that Hippias, as the eldest, was the ruler.⁷⁵ In book VI, he stresses that the assassination was the result of a love affair and, by implication, it was not undertaken for political reasons.⁷⁶ In his narrative, however, this tradition is in tension with the story promulgated by the cult so that Aristogeiton plots to overthrow the tyranny and the conspirators later hope that the bystanders at the Panathenaia will want to join in liberating themselves.⁷⁷ In Thucydides' rendition, Peisistratos and his sons were not harsh rulers until after the death of Hipparchos and Hippias managed to stay in power for another four years.⁷⁸ About the end of the tyranny, the historian knows a variety of stories: that it was put down by the Spartans, not Harmodios and the Athenians; that it was ended by the Spartans and the Alkmeonidai in exile; and that Harmodios and Aristogeiton were responsible, as articulated by the cult.⁷⁹ In creating his narrative, Thucydides is reacting against the version promulgated by the Tyrannicides' rituals, but he is also drawing on several other traditions, the sources of which are not readily identifiable.

Herodotos also knows several different stories about Hipparchos' death and the end of the tyranny. Miltiades' speech before the Battle of Marathon reflects the version of the rituals, as we saw earlier. Herodotos' narrative of the events themselves presents a more complicated picture. There, Harmodios and Aristogeiton do, indeed, kill Hipparchos, but the tyranny continues for another four years.⁸⁰ Its end begins when the Alkmeonidai bribe the Pythia to tell the Spartans to free Athens; they duly invade and, on their second attempt, they

⁷⁴ Thucydides, I, 20, 2; VI, 54, 1-2; 55, 1.

⁷⁵ Thucydides, I, 20, 2; VI, 54, 2; 55, 1-3. That he knew the version in which Hipparchos was tyrant is also clear from VI, 55, 4.

⁷⁶ Thucydides, VI, 54, 1; 59, 1; cf. VI, 57, 3. As Fornara notes, Thucydides is the earliest source to stress that Harmodios and Aristogeiton were lovers; FORNARA (1968), p. 411.

⁷⁷ Thucydides, VI, 54, 3; 56, 3; HORNBLLOWER (2008), p. 443, 449.

⁷⁸ Thucydides, VI, 53, 3; 59, 2, 4.

⁷⁹ Thucydides, VI, 53, 3; 59, 4.

⁸⁰ Herodotos, V, 55.

force out Hippias.⁸¹ The crucial players in so doing are described as Kleomenes ‘with those of the Athenians who wished to be free’.⁸² The institution of the democracy comes out of the subsequent *stasis* between Isagoras and Kleisthenes.⁸³ In his attempts to gain the upper hand, Isagoras calls in Kleomenes and the Spartans who end up being besieged on the Akropolis by the Athenians.⁸⁴ The defeat of the Spartans then makes it possible for democracy to flourish. Later in book VI, in discussing the actions of the Alkmeonidai after the Battle of Marathon, Herodotos states that, in his opinion, the Alkmeonidai did more than the Tyrannicides to free Athens, ‘if, indeed, they really bribed the Pythia to tell the Lakedaimonians to free Athens, as I showed earlier’.⁸⁵ Like Thucydides, Herodotos was evidently aware of multiple versions about how the tyranny was brought to an end. Various groups of Athenians seem to have assisted or joined the Spartans and the variations probably originate in different versions of the events. The information about the Alkmeonidai in book VI has often been identified as coming from that family, but, as Rosalind Thomas has argued, the emphasis on the bribery of the Pythia is not a credit to the Alkmeonidai and we are more likely seeing here a tradition hostile to that family.⁸⁶ Herodotos and Thucydides together attest to the existence in the late fifth century of a number of different versions about the end of the tyranny and the liberation of Athens; the story promulgated by the cult of the Tyrannicides was simply one tradition in competition with a series of others. This impression is reinforced by Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata*: in addition to the liberation by the Tyrannicides, *Lysistrata* refers to a version in which the Spartans help the Athenians to drive out Hippias.⁸⁷ The men’s chorus also mention the Athenians’ siege of Kleomenes on the Akropolis, the same story which Herodotos presents, but without connecting it to the institution of the democracy.⁸⁸ In these three authors, there is a certain amount of overlap between the variants not connected with the cult, but their origins are not identifiable. They must, however, have been circulating fairly widely at this time, hence their use, and so preservation, by these authors.

In addition to these traditions, there were also stories about the end of tyranny which were promulgated by specific families and celebrated the actions of their ancestors. In the case of the Alkmeonidai, we have not only the hostile version(s) in Herodotos’ narrative, but also the family’s own tradition about its

⁸¹ Herodotos, V, 63, 1-65, 2.

⁸² Herodotos, V, 64, 2. If these Athenians are the Alkmeonidai, they are not so identified.

⁸³ Herodotos, V, 66, 1-2.

⁸⁴ Herodotos, V, 70, 1 – 72, 2.

⁸⁵ Herodotos, VI, 123, 2. The reference is back to V, 63, 1.

⁸⁶ THOMAS (1989), p. 247-251, 262, 264-265, 272, 280-281.

⁸⁷ Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 1150-1156.

⁸⁸ Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 273-282.

role in the events, as we learn from the younger Alkibiades, who was related to the family through his paternal grandmother, Deinomache, the daughter of Megakles of Alopeke.⁸⁹ He begins his recitation of their history with Alkmeon, who was the first Athenian to win a chariot race at Olympia, and then refers to the family's goodwill towards the people which it demonstrated in the time of the tyrants.⁹⁰ He continues:

For the Alkmeonidai were kinsmen of Peisistratos and, before he came to power, they of all the citizens were especially close to him; they refused to share in the tyranny, but they chose to go into exile rather than to see the citizens made into slaves. During the forty years of civil strife (*stasis*), they were hated by the tyrants so much more than everyone else that, whenever they were in power, the tyrants not only demolished their houses, but they also dug up their graves, and thus they were so trusted by their fellow-exiles that, for the whole time, they continued to be leaders of the *demos*. Finally, Alkibiades and Kleisthenes, my father's great-grandfathers on his father's and mother's sides respectively, as generals of the exiles, brought back the *demos* and drove out the tyrants and they established that democracy.⁹¹

As presented here, the family's history stresses the democratic credentials of its members, even before the democracy had been invented. The forty-year exile and the tyrants' retaliation against the Alkmeonidai emphasise the family's hostility to tyranny. We must understand that these feelings finally led to the actions of Kleisthenes and Alkibiades, who was not related to the Alkmeonidai: the overthrow of the tyrants, the return of the *demos*, and the establishment of democracy.⁹² In this version, there is no mention of Harmodios, Aristogeiton, and Hipparchos nor of the Spartans' involvement nor of the four years between the expulsion of Hippias and the institution of the rule of the *demos*. Instead, the focus is on members of the family and their services to the *demos*. They are configured as good democrats who fight against tyranny and who make important contributions to the city's political life. For later generations of the family, this history provides a model to imitate and a standard of behaviour to be reached: it indicates how good Alkmeonidai should act. Repeated in the context of family rituals, this history would reinforce the expected behaviour for a member of this family. For the younger Alkibiades and his father, this history also demonstrates that their democratic credentials are long standing and come from both sides of the family.

⁸⁹ DAVIES (1971), p. 16-19, 376, 379.

⁹⁰ Isokrates, 16, 25.

⁹¹ Isokrates, 16, 25-27.

⁹² This history, incidentally, demonstrates that the family did not overlook Kleisthenes' role in the establishment of democracy, as has been alleged; FORNARA and SAMONS (1991), p. 47; cf. ANDERSON (2003), p. 198.

Some elements of this history appear elsewhere. Thucydides attributes the overthrow of Hippias to the Spartans and the exiled Alkmeonidai.⁹³ Herodotos reports that the Alkmeonidai were in exile for the whole period after Peisistratos gained the tyranny for the third time in 546 and he also describes the family as ‘tyrant-haters’.⁹⁴ Much of Herodotos’ narrative, however, does not reflect well on the Alkmeonidai.⁹⁵ Stressing the bribing of the Pythia and the involvement of the Spartans would easily have thrown mud on the family and undermined their own positive version of the events. If they particularly wanted to emphasise their contributions to Athens, then they could also have stressed that they acted because of their concern for the Athenian *demos* and not out of personal pique over a love affair gone wrong. One of the influences on Herodotos’ and Thucydides’ narratives, accordingly, will have been the interplay between the Alkmeonidai’s own history and the other versions in circulation. That Demosthenes could summarise the essential aspects of the family’s version in 347/6 even though he was not related to the family indicates just how well known their tradition had become by the middle of the fourth century.⁹⁶

The histories of several other families also included actions against the Peisistratidai. Andokides mentions just such traditions about his own family in two of his orations. In his speech on the Mysteries, he tells us:

For, after great evils had happened to the city, when the tyrants were ruling the city and the *demos* was in exile, your fathers fought the tyrants and defeated them at Pallenion under the generals Leogoras, my great-grandfather, and Charias, whose daughter Leogoras married and from whom my grandfather was born; returning to their fatherland, they killed some, they sent some into exile, and they allowed some to remain in the city, but they deprived them of their rights as citizens.⁹⁷

In this version, the focus is on Andokides’ ancestors Leogoras and Charias who are described as generals and defeat the tyrants at Pallenion.⁹⁸ This military action results in their return and, by implication, that of the exiled *demos*. They are, consequently, responsible for bringing democracy to Athens, but, since the *demos* is presented as having been in exile under the tyrants, we must understand Leogoras’ and Charias’ actions as bringing back the rule of the *demos*. In this version, there is no mention either of the Spartans’ actions in defeating Hippias or of the establishment of the Kleisthenic democracy. Since that system is

⁹³ Thucydides, VI, 59, 4.

⁹⁴ Herodotos, I, 64, 3; VI, 123, 1; cf. THOMAS (1989), p. 248, 263.

⁹⁵ THOMAS (1989), p. 248-249, 250, 265-266, 267, 269.

⁹⁶ Demosthenes, 21, 144. He mentions the family’s exile for championing the *demos* in *stasis*, its borrowing of money from Delphi, its liberation of the city, and its expulsion of the Peisistratidai.

⁹⁷ Andokides, 1, 106.

⁹⁸ This event may be the battle of Pallene in 546, but its identity is disputed; see MACDOWELL (1962), p. 212-213; THOMAS (1989), p. 139-141; EDWARDS (1995), p. 182

assumed to be already in existence, this family is unlikely to have been among Thucydides' or Herodotos' sources. In the slightly earlier speech on his return, Andokides again has recourse to the family history. On this occasion, he tells us that his father's great-grandfather Leogoras engaged in *stasis* against the tyrants on behalf of the *demos*; although he could have reconciled with the tyrants, married into their family, and joined them in ruling the city, he chose to go into exile with the *demos* rather than be a traitor.⁹⁹ Again, the focus is on Andokides' ancestor who is depicted as a good democrat who has nothing to do with tyrants and the *demos* is described as being in exile. These two versions differ primarily on the relationship of Leogoras to Andokides.¹⁰⁰ They both focus on the actions of Andokides' ancestors who are constructed as good democrats who prefer exile to tyranny. The rendition in the speech on the Mysteries stresses the social standing of the family by describing both named men as generals and it implies that they were instrumental in making Athens democratic (again). This family history provides a model for subsequent members and it indicates how they should act.

In both of these family traditions, the ancestors are imagined as being actively opposed to the tyrants and in exile during their rule. A similar history must lie behind the words of the speaker of Lysias' speech against Euandros. In a pre-emptive attempt to fend off charges of hating the *demos*, the speaker describes his and his family's relationships to non-democratic regimes. His ancestors, he claims, were not subject to the tyrants because they were in a state of *stasis* against them the whole time.¹⁰¹ In a fuller version, the *demos* was probably in exile and the ancestors may have played a significant role in bringing the people back to Athens, as we see in the traditions of the Alkmeonidai and of Andokides' family. Since the speaker describes his ancestors in the plural (*πρόγονοι*), the family's history probably resembled Andokides' with several relations participating in the *stasis* against the tyrants. As with our other examples, this tradition will have constructed the family members as democrats and it will have indicated how they should behave.

In all three of these cases, the families' versions differ significantly from the story promulgated by the cult of Harmodios and Aristogeiton and the role of the Tyrannicides is ignored. In the family of Harmodios, however, the situation was quite different, as Isaios' speech on the estate of Dikaiogenes shows. The speaker imagines that his opponent, a descendant of Harmodios, will appeal to

⁹⁹ Andokides, 2, 26. The appearance of the exiled *demos* in this speech shows that this characterisation existed before the period of the Thirty; *contra*: THOMAS (1989), p. 252-254; FORSDYKE (2005), p. 267.

¹⁰⁰ On the problems of this relationship, see MACDOWELL (1962), p. 1, 206; DAVIES (1971), p. 27-28; THOMAS (1989), p. 130, 142-143; EDWARDS (1995), p. 193.

¹⁰¹ Lysias, 26, 22. I see no reason to dismiss this tradition at wishful thinking, as suggested by Thomas; THOMAS (1989), p. 129.

family history to bolster his case: that his ancestors slew the tyrant; the speaker also emphasises that the Tyrannicides were honoured because of their bravery rather than their birth.¹⁰² In contrast to the other family traditions, this version involves a single tyrant, a detail which suggests that it was probably very similar to the account promulgated by the cult. Harmodios' family, consequently, had a very distinctive tradition which was quite different from the other family histories and it will have focused on their unique contributions to the city. It will have been reinforced both by the version of the cult and by the Tyrannicides' benefits. These external factors, however, will also have made it impossible for Harmodios and Aristogeiton to be imported into the traditions of other families because they would have detracted from the actions of those families' own ancestors.

In the late fifth century, accordingly, a series of different stories existed about how the tyranny of the Peisistratidai was overthrown and how the democracy was instituted; the cult's version represented only one of several different traditions. When Herodotos and Thucydides came to write their accounts of the death of Hipparchos, the end of the tyranny, and the institution of democracy, they will have had a variety of different versions from which to create their narratives, hence the traces of multiple variants which we can still see in their texts. Similarly, Aristophanes could draw on various well-known stories when he wrote *Lysistrata*. In addition, there were traditions which focused on the history of particular families, as we have seen in the cases of the Alkmeonidai, Andokides, the speaker of Lysias 26, and the family of Harmodios. These versions constructed the relevant ancestors as proto-democrats who fought against the tyrants. In order to create such an image, family members became the focus of events which were telescoped and selected to (re)construct family history appropriately. This process required the curtailment or elimination of the actions of unrelated Athenians and external forces because they would have detracted from the family's image. The resulting stories differed both from each other and from the narrative of the cult. Just as the cult's version served the purposes of the *polis*, so these family narratives articulated what it meant to be a member of that particular family: to be a democrat who fought against tyrants and so followed ancestral example. In the case of the Alkmeonidai, their role in the institution of the Kleisthenic democracy was emphasised, while the history of Harmodios' family probably resembled the version promulgated by the cult so that members of this family were also configured as bringing freedom and democracy to the city. Families without these obvious connections, in contrast, could only gain an association with the democracy by bringing back or helping to bring back the *demos*. Within individual families, sharing a story which emphasised the members' services to Athens will have brought different parts of the family together.

¹⁰² Isaios, 5, 46-47.

These family traditions were put to use in legal speeches where they were certainly helpful for speakers burnishing their credentials in the law courts. Legal cases, however, can not have been the primary setting for telling and disseminating these histories. Handing on such traditions from one generation to the next requires a setting in which family members communicate with each other in an orderly way, that is through ritual, so that they remember their past together and pass it on to future members.¹⁰³ Telling stories of a shared past in this way articulated the group and gave it identity, as Sourvinou-Inwood has noted.¹⁰⁴ The primary contexts in which families gathered to celebrate their continued existence were in religious rituals marking birth, coming of age, marriage, and death.¹⁰⁵ Such rites, consequently, are the most likely occasions when these family histories were repeated and transmitted. Although no inscribed list of sacrifices for any Athenian family is known, we can identify a number of occasions when such stories would have been appropriate. The most obvious are the rituals connected with the dead: burial and the subsequent feast, later commemorative ceremonies, and annual rites, all of which offered scope for repeating the family's history.¹⁰⁶ From the late fifth century, the existence of family tomb *periboloi* containing inscribed *stelai* which commemorated the family's dead over a number of generations may have encouraged further repetition of these traditions whenever the graves were visited for post-funeral rituals. So also did the *Genesia* on 5 Boedromion, when families probably gathered at their graves.¹⁰⁷ Since, as Robert Parker notes, the *Apatouria* 'was by definition a festival at which kinsmen came together',¹⁰⁸ it provided a further potential occasion for rehearsing these family traditions.

Harmodios and his family were also members of the *Gephyraoi*, who seem to have been a *genos*.¹⁰⁹ The extant list of sacrifices of the *Salaminioi* indicates how ritually active a *genos* might be, although this document provides us with no indication of the content of the accompanying rites.¹¹⁰ According to Herodotos, the *Gephyraoi* had shrines and rituals which were restricted to members of the group;¹¹¹ they would have provided an ideal setting for rehearsing the

¹⁰³ CONNERTON (1989), p. 39-40; CUBITT (2007), p. 166-167, 180-181; SHEAR (2011), p. 10.

¹⁰⁴ Above note 3.

¹⁰⁵ Compare the *Labyadaí*, a gentilicial group at Delphi, whose regulations focus on all of these occasions; RO 1.

¹⁰⁶ On these rituals, see GARLAND (1985), p. 39-40, 146 and PARKER (2005), p. 27-29, both with further references.

¹⁰⁷ PARKER (2005), p. 27-28 with further references.

¹⁰⁸ PARKER (2005), p. 42.

¹⁰⁹ Herodotos, V, 57, 1; PARKER (1996), p. 288-289.

¹¹⁰ RO 37, 85-94. The most obvious occasions for rehearsing the history of the *Salaminioi* are the sacrifices to *Eurysakes* on 18 *Mounichion*, to *Poseidon* and others in *Boedromion*, and the *Apatouria*; cf. PARKER (1996), p. 313-316; RHODES and OSBORNE (2003), p. 191-192.

¹¹¹ Herodotos, V, 61, 2.

group's history and for stressing that the killing of the tyrant made its members different from other Athenians. Perhaps, like the Salaminioi, the Gephyraoi also made their own additional sacrifice at the Panathenaia;¹¹² certainly such an offering would have been extremely appropriate and it would have brought out their unique history. Andokides and the Alkmeonidai probably also belonged to *gene*, but we do not know their identities.¹¹³ Their rites would have provided additional occasions for telling the two families' traditions. Such religious rituals at the level of both the family and the *genos*, consequently, must have provided one of the primary settings for repeating the histories of these groups and (re)creating the members' identity.

4. Multiple Traditions and the *Polis*

Our evidence shows that, during the later fifth century, the city's cult of the Tyrannicides served as only one source among others for traditions about how the tyranny ended and the democracy was established. The rites focused on the actions of Harmodios and Aristogeiton, who were identified as tyrant slayers and, from the second quarter of the fifth century, as bringers of freedom. It also promulgated a specific image of the good Athenian as a democrat protecting the city and her freedom against tyrants. Embedded in a ritual of the city, this imagery and tradition were shared by all Athenians and so served to unify them. Other stories about these events came from individual families. In contrast to the cult version, they focused on the actions of members of the family and they articulated what it meant to be a member of that particular sub-group of the city. Some of these histories will have been of interest only to members of the specific family, but the tradition of the Alkmeonidai actually inspired a negative response focusing on the family's less positive actions. The role of the Spartans in overthrowing Hippias was well enough known that Aristophanes could mention it in *Lysistrata*; this version can not have been limited to one particular sub-group. These competing stories suggest that the overthrow of the tyranny and the establishment of the democracy remained the subject of contestation close to a hundred years after the actual events. What a family had (or had not) done and how it positioned itself relative to these events still mattered in the late fifth century as different families contended for power. In the aftermath of the oligarchic revolutions of 411 and 404/3, these stories will have particularly reiterated the family's commitment to democracy and their opposition to other types of regime.

The competing traditions of these sub-groups, however, did not all continue beyond the early fourth century. The Alkmeonid story appears with genealogi-

¹¹² Salaminioi: RO 37, 88-89.

¹¹³ Andokides: DAVIES (1971), p. 27; Alkmeonidai: PARKER (1996), p. 318-319.

cal errors and simplification in Demosthenes' speech against Meidias, but otherwise, the fourth-century orators repeat versions reflecting the Tyrannicides' cult.¹¹⁴ Those rituals annually presented Harmodios and Aristogeiton as the killers of the tyrant and the bringers of democracy to Athens so that they made this moment ever present for the Athenians; when the libations were added to sacrifices in all the sanctuaries, they imported the cult's focus on democracy and democratic identity to other rituals. Demosthenes does not specify the occasion for this development, but he also does not say that the authorising law was new.¹¹⁵ The first half of the fourth century does not provide obvious circumstances for this legislation. In the late fifth century, however, there seems to have been renewed interest in the Tyrannicides, particularly around 415-410. The opposition between tyranny and democracy would especially fit into the Athenians' public responses to the events of 411, but not to the Thirty, when democracy was juxtaposed with oligarchy.¹¹⁶ This evidence suggests that the introduction of the libations to all the sacrifices probably took place in the years immediately after 411 when the new rituals will have constituted part of the Athenians' reactions to oligarchy.

At this time, the version promulgated by the rituals for the Tyrannicides became all pervasive and inescapable. It would also have been reinforced by public monuments, particularly the statues in the Agora, but also the men's grave in the *Demosion Sema*.¹¹⁷ This repetition together with the authorisation of the *polis* made the cult's version far more powerful than the stories of any individual family. These alternative versions would have been told in various settings, including family rituals, but these occasions in the fourth century would not have been as numerous as the sacrifices in all the sanctuaries and these histories may well not have been reinforced by physical monuments. Faced with such stiff competition from the *polis* in the years after 411, these alternative versions could not compete indefinitely and they quickly died out: only the Alkmeonid tradition is attested after 380 and only then in a speech given by Demosthenes, a man who was not a member of the family, in 347/6.¹¹⁸ The cult, in contrast, flourished and it continued to articulate what it

¹¹⁴ Demosthenes: above note 96; orators: above note 54. The account in Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 18, 1-20, 4 is derived primarily from Herodotos and Thucydides with additions from other sources; RHODES (1981), p. 189-191. The version in [Plato], *Hipparchos*, 228b 4-6; 229b 2 – 229d 7 is anomalous and focuses on Hipparchos and Aristogeiton as rival educators. Like the tradition of the cult, it describes Hipparchos as the eldest of Peisistratos' sons.

¹¹⁵ Above note 6.

¹¹⁶ SHEAR (2011), p. 96-106, 109-111, 119-121, 126-127, 139-140, 151, 162-163, 247-250, 259-262, 272, and cf. 314-319; cf. OSBORNE (2003), p. 256-270 for the broader shift in the discourse of tyranny at this time.

¹¹⁷ Pausanias, I, 29, 15.

¹¹⁸ Andokides 1 dates to 400, Isokrates 16 to soon after 397, Isaios 5 to ca. 389, and Lysias 26 to 383/2; MACDOWELL (1962), p. 204-205; TODD (2007), p. 409-410; MIRHADY and TOO (2000), p. 67; TODD (2000), p. 161; EDWARDS (2007), p. 80; TODD (2000), p. 272-273.

meant to be a citizen in democratic Athens and how that citizen should act. The end of tyranny and the institution of democracy was now the story of the whole city and not the possession of individual families. After the early fourth century, these families would have to (re)create their histories and identities in other ways so that they did not compete with the city and its religious rituals.

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