In my article "How Often Did the Ecclesia Meet?" I argued that the Athenians in the second half of the fourth century (355–307/6 B.C.) convened a maximum of four assemblies during a prytany. One of the four meetings was the ἐκκλησία κυρία described by Aristotle in Ath. Pol. 43.4–5. The other three meetings were simply called ἐκκλησίαι, and no technical term existed for these meetings. Each of these four ecclesiai was an ordinary meeting if it was summoned by the prytaneis on their own initiative and at four days’ notice, whereas the meeting was an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος if it was summoned at short notice or prescribed by a decree passed in a previous meeting. An analysis of the term ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος shows that it certainly denotes a meeting of the assembly summoned in a special way, but not a meeting held in addition to the four meetings summoned every prytany.

The only evidence that can be produced in support of the view that the term ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος denotes an extra meeting is some notes in the scholia and lexica:

Schol. Dem. 18.73: σύγκλητος ἐκκλησία λέγεται ἡ γενομένη διὰ τὶ ἐξαίφνης κατεπείγου τρεῖς γὰρ ἐκκλησία τοῦ μηνὸς γίνονται ώριμέναι, ἢ δὲ σύγκλητος οὐχ ὦριμένη.²

Schol. Dem. 24.20: ἵστενον γὰρ ὅτι κατὰ μῆνα τρεῖς ἐκκλησίαι ἐποιοῦντο, . . . πλὴν εἰ μὴ ἄρα ἀνάγκη τις κατέλαβε πολέμου, ὡστε καὶ περί ἐκείνου ἄλλην ἐκκλησίαν ποιῆσαι πλέον τῶν ὦριμενῶν.³

Harpocratio s.v. σύγκλητος ἐκκλησίας τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν αἱ μὲν ἐξ ἔθους καὶ κατὰ μῆνα ἐγίνοντο· εἰ δὲ τὶ ἐξαίφνης κατεπείξειν ὡστε γενέσθαι ἐκκλησίαν, αὕτη ἐκαλεῖτο σύγκλητος ἐκκλησίας· Δημοσθένης ἐν τῷ κατ᾽ Αλέξιον.⁴

These notes are brought as comments on passages in Demosthenes and Aeschines; but, since they all mention three ecclesiai every month.

¹ GRBS 18 (1977) 43–70.
² Same note in schol. Dem. 19.123.
³ Similar notes in schol. Aeschin. 1.60; Phot. s.v. κυρία ἐκκλησία; schol. Ar. Ach. 19.
instead of four ecclesiai every prytany, the information must bear on the period of twelve phylai, when a prytany in an ordinary year usually was concurrent with a month.5

In my article I did not exclude the possibility that the scholiasts and lexicographers might be right in describing ἐκκλησίαι σύγκλητοι as additional meetings if their information is applied to the period of twelve phylai. A change from ten prytanies (and four ecclesiai summoned during each prytany) to twelve prytanies (and three ecclesiai in a prytany) resulted in a reduction of the number of assemblies from forty to thirty-six. It is a reasonable guess that some ἐκκλησίαι σύγκλητοι could now be summoned as additional meetings in order to make up the difference. A closer inspection of the epigraphical evidence, however, indicates that the scholiasts are wrong and that—even in the Hellenistic period—an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος, if summoned during a prytany, replaced one of the (three) regular meetings summoned by the prytaneis on their own authority. The term σύγκλητος means only that the meeting was summoned in a special way, either at short notice or by decree. There is no evidence that it was an extra meeting. Quite the contrary.

During the period of twelve phylai6 the type of ecclesia is regularly stated in the prescript of all ψηφίσματα τοῦ δήμου. With a few exceptions7 one of the terms ἐκκλησία, ἐκκλησία κυρία or (rarely) ἐκκλησία ἀρχαιεύεια8 is recorded between the date of the decree and the mention of the proedroi. Sometimes the place of meeting is mentioned as well,9 and in four instances the meeting is described as an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος:10

7 IG II² 500, 545, 680, 774, 798. The type of ecclesia is of course omitted also in defective prescripts such as IG II² 467 and 903.
8 IG II² 892 (cf. SEG XXI 433), 954 (cf. infra), 955.
9 Cf. W. A. McDonald, The Political Meeting Places of the Greeks (Baltimore 1943) 47–61. ἐκκλησία ἐν Διονίσου (Table I p.48), ἐκκλησία ἐμ Περαιαί (Table II p.52), ἐκκλησία ἐν τούς θεάτρων (n.74 pp.56–58).
10 A possible fifth example is Hesperia 17 (1948) 11, a decree of 246/5, which is restored by Meritt as follows: ἐξ[κλησία]ις ἐν Διονίσου [ἐν σύγκλητος κατὰ ψήφισμα δ . . . . . .] O [. . . . . .] ἐστὶν. The restoration is, however, so doubtful that I prefer to leave out the decree in my discussion of ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος. The term ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος is not discussed by A. S. Henry in The Prescripts of Athenian Decrees (Leyden 1977).
From this evidence we may conclude that an ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος is either an assembly convened in accordance with a psephisma or an assembly convened by order of the board of generals via the boule; apparently the board of generals requested the boule to pass a decree that an ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος be summoned. An ordinary ἐκκλησία and ἐκκλησία κυρία, on the other hand, is probably, as in the fourth century, a meeting summoned by the prytaneis on their own initiative and at four (?) days' notice.12

Now the terms ἐκκλησία στρατηγῶν παραγγειλάντων, ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐκκλησία and ἐκκλησία κατὰ ψήφισμα occur in other precepts without the additional information that the meeting is an ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος.

5. SEG XXI 440: βουλή ἐμ βουλευτηρίωι εὐγκλητος στρατηγῶν παραγγειλάντων καὶ ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐκκλησία κυρία ἐν τοῖς θεάτρισι (193/2).13

6. IG II² 897: βουλή ἐμ βουλευτηρίωι εὐγκλητος στρατηγῶν παραγγειλάντων καὶ ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐκκλησία [κυρία] ἐν τοῖς θεάτρισι (εα a. 185/4).

7. IG II² 954: βουλή ἐμ βουλευτηρίῳ εὐγκλητος στρατηγῶν παραγγειλάντων καὶ ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐκκλησία [κυρία] ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ (εα a. 165/5).14
Each of the decrees 5–7 is passed in a meeting of the *boule* and in a meeting of the *ecclesia* held on the same day.\(^\text{16}\) There is nothing extraordinary about a meeting of the *boule* being held on an assembly day. I have argued elsewhere that the assembly days were not among the ἡμέραι ἁφεσίμοι of the *boule* and that a meeting of the assembly was regularly followed by a meeting of the council.\(^\text{17}\) But in the three prescripts quoted above it is worth noting that the meeting of the *boule* is held before and not after the *ecclesia*. From the classical period we have one example of this practice, viz. the *ecclesia* held in the autumn of 339 after Philip’s capture of Elateia. Demosthenes describes (18.168ff) how a meeting of the *boule* was followed immediately by an emergency meeting of the *ecclesia*, undoubtedly an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος.\(^\text{18}\)

We know from numerous sources that an *ecclesia* in the classical period was opened at dawn.\(^\text{19}\) On the assumption that the time of meeting was the same in the Hellenistic period, we cannot interpret these decrees as evidence of an extraordinary meeting of the *boule* (βουλή σύγκλητος) followed by an ordinary meeting of the *ecclesia*. Although the term σύγκλητος is applied to βουλή and not directly to ἐκκλησία, it seems reasonable to infer that in these cases a βουλή σύγκλητος convened by the *strategoi* was followed by an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος.

formula στρατηγῶν παραγγελάντων being used without the term σύγκλητος and the formula ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐκκλησία. As an alternative Meritt proposes ἀπὸ βουλῆς ἐκκλησία κυρία σύγκλητος, which is equally unconvincing for the same reasons. The forged decrees inserted in Demosthenes’ speech *On the Crown* contain the formulae σύγκλητος ἐκκλησία ὑπὸ στρατηγῶν καὶ προτάνεων (Dem. 18.37) and ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος ὑπὸ στρατηγῶν (Dem. 18.73). It has been suggested that the forger derived the content and style of his decrees from actual psephismata of the second century B.C. Cf. P. L. Schläpfer, *Untersuchungen zu den attischen Staatsurkunden und den Amphiktyonenbeschlüssen der Demosthenischen Kranzrede* (Paderborn 1939) 28–29 and 207.

\(^{15}\) Cf. SEG XXI 312 (Hesperia 7 [1938] 476–79 n.31), where a similar formula is found in a decree from the period of ten φυλαί (319/8): ἐ[κκλησία] κατὰ ψήφισμα βουλῆς.

\(^{16}\) Cf. SEG XVI 84 (AJP 78 [1957] 375–81), where Meritt proposes the following restoration of IG II² 893: [βου]λή [καὶ ἐκκλησία ἐν τοῖς] θεατρω, μεταχειρίζεται ἐκ [Παναθηναϊκοῦ σταδίου].

\(^{17}\) "The Duration of a Meeting of the Athenian *Ecclesia,*" *CP* 74 (1979) 43–49. Cf. Aeschin. 1.112.

\(^{18}\) Cf. Hansen, *op.cit.* (supra n.1) 46–47.

\(^{19}\) Cf. Hansen, *op.cit.* (supra n.17) 43.
cůγκλητος opened late in the morning or in the afternoon. The procedure adopted by the strategoi was undoubtedly necessitated by the probouleumatic procedure. Since no proposal could be brought before the demos without a probouleuma, an emergency decision by the ecclesia must be preceded by a meeting of the boule providing the probouleuma. So the strategoi had to summon an emergency meeting of the boule during which a decree was passed that an emergency meeting of the ecclesia be held later the same day. We know from the classical sources that an ἐκκλησία cůγκλητος was an emergency meeting, and, on the analogy of 1 and 2 above, the conclusion seems to be that the ecclesiae described in 5–7 were ἐκκλησίαι cůγκλητοι.

In the classical period an ordinary meeting of the ecclesia was warranted by law (Aeschin. 2.72; Dem. 19.185) and summoned by the prytaneis on their own initiative. On the assumption that the Athenians followed the same practice in the Hellenistic period, any ecclesia warranted by a psephisma of the boule or of the demos must be a special meeting. In two of the decrees in which the term ἐκκλησία κατὰ ψῆφισμα is found the meeting is expressly described as cůγκλητος (1–2 above), and I suggest that the other two ecclesiae summoned by decree (8–9) were ἐκκλησίαι cůγκλητοι as well.

The date of the decrees may provide us with more information about the ἐκκλησίαι cůγκλητοι. If, by analogy with the fourth-century evidence, we accept for the Hellenistic period that an ἐκκλησία cůγκλητος was inter alia an emergency meeting summoned at short notice whereas an ordinary meeting had to be summoned at four days’ notice, we must conclude that any psephisma dated Pryt. (I–XII) 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th must have been passed in an ἐκκλησία cůγκλητος.22 I have come across the following examples:23

20 Dem. 19.122–23; Aeschin. 2.72.
21 From the decrees honouring prytaneis it is apparent that the prytaneis in the Hellenistic period were still responsible for the χυδαγή τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δῆμου. Cf. P. J. Rhodes, The Athenian Boule (Oxford 1972) 21.
22 A further assumption is, of course, that the prytaneis had to preside over the meetings they had summoned and could not pass on the presidency over an assembly summoned by them to the subsequent board of prytaneis. I base this assumption on the fact that the boule was not allowed to pass on a probouleuma to the subsequent boule (Dem. 23.92; cf. Rhodes, op.cit. [supra n.21] 63) and that the basileus was not allowed to pass on a homicide trial to his successor (Ant. 6.42; cf. D. M. MacDowell, Athenian Homicide Law [Manchester 1963] 34–35).
23 Restorations to give one of the first four days of a prytany can be found in: IG II² 389 (SEG XXI 354); IG II² 455, 791; SEG XIX 98.
Finally, meetings of the ecclesia occurring on festival days were probably ἐκκλησίαι σύγκλητοι. In his speech Against Ctesiphon Aeschines protests against a meeting of the assembly being held on a festival day (Aeschin. 3.67), and J. D. Mikalson has recently demonstrated that sessions of the ecclesia on annual festival days were most exceptional.25 The Athenians may have had a law prohibiting meetings of the assembly on annual festival days, and even if no such law existed, it is still reasonable to assume that a meeting convoked on a festival day must have been an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος and not an ordinary meeting summoned by the ἀρχηγοί at four days' notice. So we may add to the list of possible examples of ἐκκλησίαι σύγκλητοι the following five decrees passed by the people on annual festival days:


Since the term σύγκλητος does not occur in any of these decrees (10–17), the inference is (as in the case of 5–9 supra) that the indication of whether an ἐκκλησία was σύγκλητος or not was optional, as was the indication of the place of meeting.

On the basis of the epigraphical evidence we can form an opinion of what an ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος was in Hellenistic Athens.

1. In 5 and 6 we have evidence of an ἐκκλησία κυρία εὐγκλητος, and this is in my opinion a fatal blow to the theory that the ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος was an additional meeting. This theory can be upheld only on the assumption that the Athenians might convene an additional ἐκκλησία κυρία, so that during a prytany two ἐκκλησίαι κυρίαι might be held, one regular and one extraordinary.

2. Similarly in 7 we have evidence of an ἐκκλησία ἀρχαρείαι εὐγκλητος. Again, the ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος cannot be an extra meeting but must be a regular meeting summoned at short notice, perhaps because the sacrifices favoured immediate action (cf. Arist. Ath.Pol. 44.4).

3. As regards the contents of the decrees, it is worth noting that all are honorific. Admittedly the vast majority of the preserved ἱστολογία are honorary decrees, but it is remarkable that such decisions were regularly on the agenda of an ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος. We must assume that an ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος was not an assembly reserved for some urgent matter. In addition to the important question which had caused the summoning of the people at short notice or by decree, the people were requested to discuss and take the vote on routine business such as honorary decrees. The urgent matter did not fill the whole meeting; it was only an extra item on the agenda, and the inference is that the ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος was one of the three ἐκκλησίαι held during a prytany; it was summoned at short notice and/or by decree, but the epigraphical evidence does not support the assumption that it was an extra meeting. Quite the contrary.

The information derived from scholia and lexica carries no weight against the epigraphical evidence, especially since the notes on ἐκκλησία εὐγκλητος are muddled and contradictory. (a) A description of the ecclesia in the period of twelve phylai is erroneously brought as a comment on passages in Demosthenes and Aeschines. (b) Although the summoning of the ecclesia followed the conciliar year (divided into prytanies), the lexicographers mention three ecclesiae every month. Admittedly in an ordinary year a prytany was probably concurrent with a month, but as regards intercalary years the information is misleading. (c) Some of the notes set off ἐκκλησίαι

26 Of the decrees discussed above, nos. 3–9, 11–12 and 14–17 are honorific. Nos. 1–2, 10 and 13 are decrees of unknown contents.
which is manifestly wrong. The \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι} \) constitute only a fraction of the stipulated meetings—in the classical period one-fourth and in the Hellenistic period probably one-third. (d) Two of the notes refer to fixed days for the meetings. Schol. Ar. \( \text{Ach.} \) 19 mentions the 1st, the 10th and the 30th, and schol. Dem. 24.20 the 11th, the ca 20th and the ca 30th. So the scholiasts contradict each other, and both are wrong. No \text{ecclesia} was usually held on the first day of a prytany or of a month, whereas the people could be summoned on any other day during a prytany and on most days during a month. The 11th day of a prytany and of a month is frequently attested as an assembly day, but there was no regular distribution of the \( \text{ecclesiae} \) over the prytany or the month.

So the lexicographers' information about \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι σύγκλητος} \) does not inspire confidence. They may be right when they state that \text{three ecclesiae} were summoned during a month (read 'prytany'). If so, one of the three meetings was probably an \( \text{ἐκκλησία κύρια} \). On this assumption twelve \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι} \) were held every year in the Hellenistic period as against ten in the classical period. On the other hand, the description of \( \text{ἐκκλησία σύγκλητος} \) as an additional meeting is unsupported and even contradicted by the epigraphical evidence and must, accordingly, be rejected.

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{27} Photius; schol. Ar. \textit{Ach.} 19; schol. Aeschin. 1.60.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Cf. Mikalon, \textit{op.cit.} (supra n.25) 183–86.
\item \textsuperscript{29} In the later fourth century the ratio of \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι} \) to \text{ecclesiae} was 1:3 (Arist. \textit{Ath.Pol.} 43.3–4). In the period of twelve \textit{phylai} the ratio must have been 1:2 if one \( \text{ἐκκλησία κύρια} \) was summoned every prytany. Now in the decrees covering the period 307/6–130/29 (excluding the period 224/3–202/1), the term \( \text{ἐκκλησία κύρια} \) is found or restored in some sixty decrees, whereas the term \( \text{ἐκκλησία} \) occurs in about one hundred decrees. The ratio is approximately 2:3. This is a surprisingly high proportion of \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι} \), but, on the assumption that honorary decrees were frequently passed in an \( \text{ἐκκλησία κύρια} \), the epigraphical evidence is not incompatible with the view that the ratio of \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι} \) to \text{ecclesiae} in the Hellenistic period was 1:2. In any case, it is very likely that the proportion of \( \text{ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι} \) was higher than in the fourth century. 
\item \textsuperscript{30} I should like to thank Professor R. S. Stroud for reading and commenting on a draft of this paper.
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