# Political Parties in Democratic Athens?

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T HE THEME of this article is the question whether in classical Athens there were large groups of voters each following a political leader or a small group of political leaders, in other words: did the Athenan democracy generate what we can call political parties?

It goes without saying that the concept of political party cannot be applied without modification in an analysis of ancient societies. In order to speak about political parties in ancient Athens three requirements must be fulfilled. First, the evidence must show that there were competing groups, each containing a small number of leaders but also a substantial number of followers. Second, over a period such a group must exhibit some degree of stability and loyalty towards its leader(s). And third, the groups must be competing to win a majority of votes on the basis of which the winning group will be able to impose its will.

Now, as to the first criterion, it is commonly allowed that there were groups amongst the leaders, and that is what is always adduced when historians talk about political parties at Athens. But that is to stop half-way: we must ask whether those leading personalities had substantial numbers of followers in their political train.

As to stability and loyalty, the fact that all are agreed that ancient city-states did not have political parties exactly in our sense does not necessarily mean that they had none at all, for perhaps their formation was simply less developed. After all, the oldest modern political parties emerged in the first half of the 19th century,[1] yet we do not hesitate to speak of political

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[1] M. Duverger, *Political Parties* (London 1964) xxiii–xxxvii. The oldest po-

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parties in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.[2] On the other hand, we must demand a minimum of stability: if changing groups of leaders from day to day and from issue to issue were supported by changing groups of followers it does not make sense to talk about political parties.

Finally, a widely-accepted modern definition of a political party runs thus: "a party is any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or nonfree), candidates for public office."[3] That shows how the modern concept of a party is entirely bound up with elections, and so with representative government. So here we might have a syllogism: Athens was a 'direct democracy' and did not have representative government, therefore Athens cannot have had political parties. Undoubtedly there is a core of truth in this line of thought, but it must not be used as an easy way of closing an important investigation. In contemporary societies decisions are made by politicians who directly or indirectly are elected by the people. In Athens decisions were made directly by the people. The point of resemblance is that important issues are decided by popular vote, and so the ground is prepared for the formation of political groups, both among the followers (who vote) and among the leaders (who attempt to command a majority by controlling how the followers vote). If we want to apply the concept of 'party' to ancient Athens, the criterion 'election' must be replaced by the broader concept of 'voting', and we must inspect our sources to find evidence of the formation both of smaller groups of leaders in the Assembly or before the people's Court and of followers among those who listened to

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litical party in the modern sense is the Democratic Party in USA which emerged in the wake of the presidential election of 1828.

[2] E.g. Tories and Whigs in England from 1679, R. Willman, "On the Origins of 'Whig' and 'Tory' in English Political Language," *The Historical Journal* 17 (1974) 247–264; and Hattar and Mössor in Sweden after 1720, S. Carlsson and J. Rosén, *Svensk Historia* II (Stockholm 1961) 104, 200.

[3] G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems* (Cambridge 1976) 63–64.

the leaders and voted on the proposals or passed a verdict.

A substantial amount of evidence supports the existence of small groups of political leaders.[4] As to the label for such political groups, they were called by the name of the leader(s).[5] What I want to consider here is whether large groups of ordinary Athenian voters regularly followed particular leaders, thereby constituting what can reasonably be called political parties. According to the model outlined above it is usually assumed that a coalition of small groups might sometimes be large enough to control the majority vote,[6] and a leading *rhetor* might enjoy the allegiance of a large proportion of the citizenry for some time.[7] Hardly anything at all of the kind is to be found in the sources.

*Two late sources*

Two pieces of evidence must first be dealt with which, on the face of it, powerfully support the belief that political parties existed at Athens, at least in the fifth century, to which they both refer. The first is the story of how Thucydides the son of Melesias separated off the *kaloi kagathoi* in the Assembly so as to give them greater weight, and the other is the story of how

[4] See M. H. Hansen, *The Athenian Assembly in the Age of Demosthenes* (Oxford 1987) 74–81; *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes*[2] (London 1999) 280–283.

[5] E.g. Thuc. 8.65.1 οἱ ἀμφὶ τὸν Πείσανδρον, *Hell.Oxy*. 7.2 οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἐπικράτη καὶ Κέφαλον. O. Aurenche, *Les groupes d'Albiciade, de Léogoras et de Teucros* (Paris 1974); P. J. Rhodes. "On Labelling 4th-century Politicians," *LCM* 3 (1978) 207–211.

[6] G. M. Calhoun, *Athenian Clubs in Politics and Legislation* (Austin 1913) 115; R. Sealey, "The Entry of Pericles into History," *Hermes* 84 (1956) 234–247, at 241; W. R. Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens* (Princeton 1971) 84, 134–136; P. J. Rhodes, *What Alcibiades Did or What Happened to Him* (Durham 1985) 9.

[7] Calhoun, *Athenian Clubs* 111 ff.; G. Glotz, *The Greek City* (London 1929) 176–177; V. Ehrenberg, *The Greek State* (Oxford 1960) 49–50; Connor, *New Politicians* 136. Contra: A. H. M. Jones, *Athenian Democracy* (Oxford 1957) 130–131.

Nikias and Alkibiades combined their followers to secure the ostracism of the hapless Hyperbolos.

> He (Thucydides) did not allow the so-called *kaloi kagathoi* (gentlemen) to be dispersed in and mingled among the populace, as had been the case, dulling their prestige amidst the masses. Instead he separated them off and assembled them together and made their collective influence count, as if it were a weight in the balance.[8]

> Those in Nicias' circle and in Alcibiades' (οἱ περὶ τὸν Νικίαν καὶ τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην), recognizing his worthlessness, met secretly, discussed the matter, combined forces (στάσεις) and arranged it that neither of them was ostracised, but Hyperbolus instead.[9]

Both passages describe institutions which, in my opinion, are parties in the broad sense outlined above. But are the stories reliable? The trouble is, simply, that they both come from Plutarch, who wrote 500 years later. Plutarch was a learned man with much common sense and a critical mind. But he was a moral philosopher rather than a historian, and he had the political temper of the age of Trajan.[10] He had neither the inclination nor the qualifications to understand the political institutions of the Greek *poleis* in the classical period. The two terms used by Plutarch are στάσις and ἑταιρία. Both in Plutarch and in classical authors στάσις always denotes a group that wants to preserve or obtain power by deceit or violence, never[11] a political group operating within the constitutional framework of the *polis*, i.e. what we call a political

[8] Plut. *Per.* 11.2, transl. Connor, *New Politicians* 24.

[9] Plut. *Nic.* 11.5, transl. Connor 80. The same incident is told again in *Arist.* 7.3–4 and in *Alc.* 13.7–9, where Plutarch adds a variant story that the alliance was between Alkibiades and the faction of Phaiax. Here the term used is ἑταιρία, which indicates a group of a score or so.

[10] Gomme, *HCT* 1 (Oxford 1945) 59–60; A. Andrewes, "The Opposition to Perikles," *JHS* 98 (1978) 1–8, at 1–2.

[11] The only possible example is Thuc. 2.22.3 where στάσις is presumably used in the neutral sense of political group.

party.[12] The words ἑταιρεία and ἑταιρικόν refer, in so far as they are used in a political context, to the time of the oligarchical revolutions in Athens and are used of the oligarchical factions that overthrew the democracy in 411 and 404. They were revolutionary cells, and a law of 410–404 prescribed that an *eisangelia* should be brought against anyone "who tries to overthrow the democracy or form a ἑταιρικόν."[13] While στάσεις could be large groups of perhaps more than a thousand followers,[14] a ἑταιρεία was a small group of leaders with no more than one or two score members.[15]

It is disquieting that the stories about Thucydides and Hyperbolos together with other passages taken from Plutarch are the principal sources adduced by historians who discuss larger political groups in fifth-century Athens.[16] Unless Plutarch tells us what source a story comes from, so that we can assess that, or his account is supported by other evidence, he cannot bear the weight historians want to place upon him.[17] He does not

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[12] The word στάσις literally means stance; but it underwent shifts of meaning as follows: (1) stance (Hdt. 9.21.2); (2) standpoint (Hermagoras fr. 10 Mathes); (3) group of people with the same standpoint (Thuc. 7.50.1); (4) in the plural, two or more groups with opposing standpoints (Thuc. 4.71.1, Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 13.4); (5) the split between the groups (Arist. *Pol.* 1302a9–13); (6) civil war (Solon fr.4.19, Hdt. 8.3.1).

[13] Hyp. 3.8. For the date see M. H. Hansen, *Eisangelia* (Odense 1975) 17–20.

[14] Cf. the three στάσεις in sixth-century Athens descibed in *Ath.Pol.* 13.4.

[15] Calhoun, *Athenian Clubs* 29–31; Connor, *New Politicians* 67; Aurenche, *Les groupes* 20; D. Rosenbloom, "*Ponêroi* vs. *Chrêstoi*: The Ostracism of Hyperbolos and the Struggle for Hegemony in Athens after the Death of Perikles," *TAPA* 134 (2004) 55–105 and 323–358, at 328–329.

[16] L. Whibley, *Political Parties in Athens during the Peloponnesian War* (Cambridge 1889) 37; C. Hignett, A *History of the Athenian Constitution* (Oxford 1952) 256, 267; Connor, *New Politicians* 24, 79–80; B. S. Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War* (New York 1986) 30; P. J. Rhodes, "The Ostracism of Hyperbolus," in R. Osborne and S. Hornblower (eds.), *Ritual, Finance, Politics. Athenian Democratic Accounts presented to David Lewis* (Oxford 1994) 85–98.

[17] Rosenbloom, *TAPA* 134 (2004) 57, argues that "Plutarch anachro-

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quote his sources for these two anecdotes, so we must look to contemporary evidence and ask whether the sources of the fifth and fourth centuries furnish examples of substantial numbers of ordinary citizens who constituted larger groups and regularly voted according to the instructions of their political leader or leaders.[18] The relevant sources are grouped in accordance with the four institutions in which voting took place: the Assembly, the Courts, the Council, and the *ostrakophoria.*

*The Assembly*

(1) During the second meeting of the *ekklesia* held in 415 just before the Sicilian expedition was launched, Nikias sought support from the older citizens to counter Alkibiades' attempt during the previous *ekklesia* to prevail upon the younger attendees. Rhodes takes the incident—as told by Thucydides—to mean that Alkibiades had summoned his supporters among the young to attend the second meeting which then was dominated by a packed audience.[19] But that is not what Thucydides says at 6.13.1: οὓς ἐγὼ ὁρῶν νῦν ἐνθάδε τῷ αὐτῷ ἀνδρὶ παρακελευστοὺς καθημένους φοβοῦμαι, καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις ἀντιπαρακελεύομαι. Rhodes follows LSJ s.v. παρακελευστός: "summoned, of a packed audience." But the opposition between παρακελευστός and ἀντιπαρακελεύομαι supports a better interpretation offered by Steup and Classen ad loc.: "von demselben Manne aufgemuntert, angespornt (nämlich zur Unterstützung seiner Pläne). Dass die W. so aufzufassen sind,

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nistically uses Thucydides' debate on the Sicilian expedition to explain this *ostrakophoria.*" At 328 he finds it "doubtful whether the membership of *hetaireiai* was large enough to decide an *ostrakophoria* by combining against a rival," and he notes that "we have no evidence for a *hetaireia* of Nikias or Phaiax apart from Plutarch" (329).

[18] Rhodes, in *Ritual* 93 n.44, adduces the following sources as evidence of assemblies packed with supporters: Thuc. 6.13.1, Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.8, Dem. 18.143; cf. Thuc. 8.66.1; Lys 12.44, 75–76; Dem. 22.38.

[19] Rhodes, in *Ritual* 93 n.44 and 95 n.55 ("cf. Nicias' appeal in 13.1 to the older citizens to resist the men summoned to support Alcibiades").

zeigt das Gegensatz τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις ἀντιπαρακελεύομαι."[20] Dover takes the same line,[21] and so does Hornblower.[22] The point must be that Alkibiades, e.g. in a speech delivered in the *ekklesiai* referred to at Thuc. 6.8.2, angled for support from the young, not that, in advance of the meeting, he had persuaded a number of his younger supporters to turn up for the *ekklesia*. The meaning of παρακελεύεσθαι is not to 'summon' or 'invite' (for which the proper word is παρακαλεῖν) but to 'advise' or 'exhort'.[23]

(2) In 411 the Athenians were split into two opposing factions: a large group of oligarchically-minded activists including a number of assassins as against what was still the majority of the citizens who wanted to uphold the democratic constitution; but in an *ekklesia* held outside of the city they were frightened into voting for a change of the constitution. That is at least how Thucydides describes the situation at 8.65–70. By terrorist methods the oligarchs controlled both the Council and the Assembly (66.1–2). They were not a party in the constitutional sense but a faction of conspirators.[24]

(3) After the battle of Arginoussai in 406, the followers of Theramenes wanted to get the generals convicted for failing to rescue survivors from the wrecked ships. The incident is described by Xenophon[25] and the unanimous interpretation suggested by Anglo-American scholars is that Theramenians

[20] *Thukydides Erklärt von J. Classen*, Dritte Auflage von J. Steup III (Berlin 1905) 33. For the dative τῷ αὐτῷ ἀνδρί denoting the agent see R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik* II.1 (Leipzig 1898) 422, §423.18.c.

[21] *HCT* IV (Oxford 1970) 238.

[22] S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* III (Oxford 2008) 334–335. Hornblower is also right in rejecting Hobbes' attempt to take παρακελευστούς to be active with τῷ ἀνδρί as its object.

[23] Cf. Dem. 18.143 ἐκ παρακλήσεως (see no. 7 below).

[24] Thuc. 8.66.2 τὸ ξυνεστηκός, 69.2 τοῖς ἐν τῇ ξυνωμοσίᾳ.

[25] For a full account see M. H. Hansen, "Political Leaders and Followers. A Note on Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.8," in *Bürgersinn und staatliche Macht in Antike und Gegenwart. Festschrift für Wolfgang Schuller* (Konstanz 2000) 125–132.

persuaded a large number of citizens to come to the crucial *ekklesia* dressed as mourning relatives of those who drowned after the battle (*Hell.* 1.7.8):

μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐγίγνετο Ἀπατούρια, ἐν οἷς οἵ τε πατέρες καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς σύνεισι σφίσιν αὐτοῖς. οἱ οὖν περὶ τὸν Θηραμένην παρεσκεύασαν ἀνθρώπους μέλανα ἱμάτια ἔχοντας καὶ ἐν χρῷ κεκαρμένους πολλοὺς ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἑορτῇ, ἵνα πρὸς τὴν ἐκ-κλησίαν ἥκοιεν, ὡς δὴ συγγενεῖς ὄντες τῶν ἀπολωλότων, καὶ Καλλίξενον ἔπεισαν ἐν τῇ βουλῇ κατηγορεῖν τῶν στρατηγῶν. ἐντεῦθεν ἐκκλησίαν ἐποίουν…

The most recent translation of the passage is that of John Marincola:[26]

After this came the feast of the Apatouria, in which fathers and their relatives meet together. Now Theramenes and his followers suborned many men to wear black cloaks and have their hair shorn close during the festival so that, when they went to the Assembly, it might appear that they were relatives of the men who had died; they also persuaded Kallixenos to accuse the generals in the Council. They then held an assembly…

The two problems with this text are how to interpret (a) παρε-σκεύασαν followed by an accusative and a participle, and (b) ὡς δή followed by a causal participle.

Re (a): the normal construction of παρασκευάζειν in the sense of making someone do something is with the infinitive.[27] In particular παρασκυάζειν and—more frequently—παρα-σκευάζεσθαι is used in the sense 'procure' or 'suborn' with an accusative object of the suborned person(s),[28] to which, of

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[26] *The Landmark Xenophon's Hellenika* (New York 2009) 33. Similar transla-tions by C. L. Bronson in the Loeb (1918), R. Warner in Penguin Classics (1966), P. Krentz in Aris and Phillips Classical Texts (1989) followed by S. D. Lambert, *The Phratries of Attica* (Oxford 1993) 150. See also J. Hatzfeld in the Budé (1960) 61.

[27] See e.g. Isoc. 1.38, παρασκεύαζε σεαυτὸν πλεονεκτεῖν μὲν δύνασθαι; but examples with the participle are attested, e.g. Xen. *Cyr.* 1.6.18.

[28] W. Wyse, *The Speeches of Isaeus* (Cambridge 1904) 591. See e.g. Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 66.2, [ἵνα] μηδεὶς παρασκ[ευάζη]ι [μήτε] τὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ὕδωρ μήτε τοὺς ἐπὶ τὰς ψήφους. Cf. Thuc. 3.36.5, Andoc. 1.123.

course, an attributive participle can always be added.[29] In this case the complement of παρασκευάζειν is a clause introduced with ἵνα.[30]

Re (b): it is true that ὡς δή with a causal participle often indicates that the reason stated is suspect or even false;[31] see e.g. the story told by Xenophon later on in Book 5 about the Theban political exiles who, one evening in 379, slipped through the gates of Thebes pretending to be farmers coming back from their fields (*Hell.* 5.4.3): ἔπειτα δὲ ἡμερεύσαντες ἔν τινι τόπῳ ἐρήμῳ πρὸς τὰς πύλας ἦλθον, ὡς δὴ ἐξ ἀγροῦ ἀπιόντες. But in other cases the phrase ὡς δή plus a participle is used to state a true, although perhaps not an honourable motive.[32] One example is Xen. *Cyr.* 6.2.4: ὁ δὲ Κῦρος τά τε ἄλλα εἰς τὸν πόλεμον παρεσκευάζετο μεγαλοπρεπῶς, ὡς δὴ ἀνὴρ οὐδὲν μικρὸν ἐπινοῶν πράττειν, "all other preparations for war were taken care of by Kyros on a magnificent scale, since he had no intention of undertaking a small enterprise." It is worth noting that the—often false or suspect—motive suggested by ὡς δή is not always ascribed to the logical subject of the participle, but sometimes to other persons mentioned in the context, e.g. Eur. *Alc.* 536–537, (Ἡρ.) φεῦ. εἴθ' ηὕρομέν σ', Ἄδμητε, μὴ λυπού-μενον. (Ἄδ.) ὡς δὴ τί δράσων τόνδ' ὑπορράπτεις λόγον; where "δή marks Admetus' suspicion of Heracles' intentions."[33]

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[29] In this sense παρασκευάζειν may also be construed with an infinitive but not with a participle; see Isae 8.3, ὁ τοῦτον παρασκευάσας πράγμαθ' ἡμῖν παρέχειν.

[30] E.g. Isae. 8.39, τὰ ἔνατα ἐπήνεγκα ὡς οἷόν τε κάλλιστα παρασκευάσας ἵνα αὐτῶν ἐκκόψαιμι ταύτην τὴν ἱεροσυλίαν.

[31] J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*2 (Oxford 1954) 230.

[32] Denniston 230: "in other passages δή does not throw doubt on the facts, but suggests that they constitute an unworthy or inadequate cause or motive … Sometimes there is little or no trace of irony or scepticism."

[33] Denniston 230. Cf. Pl. *Prt.* 342C, ὡς δὴ τούτοις κρατοῦντας Ἑλλήνων τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους, where δή marks the motive adduced, not by the Lakedaimonians themselves, but by the laconising Athenians and perhaps also by Sokrates' critical attitude to the view.

To sum up, I suggest (a) that παρεσκεύασαν ἀνθρώπους μέλανα ἱμάτια ἔχοντας κτλ. does not mean "to make some people wear black dress" but "to suborn or prevail upon some people who, during the festival, were wearing black dress," and (b) that ὡς δὴ συγγενεῖς ὄντες τῶν ἀπολωλότων does not mean "pretending to be relatives of the dead Athenians." ὡς δή explains what the Theramenians thought, and the sense is rather "assuming that they were relatives of the dead Athenians." It was by approaching citizens dressed in black during the feast that the Theramenians could identify the relatives of those who had been killed in the battle and persuade them to attend the next *ekklesia* in their mourning dress.

In consequence, I prefer the following interpretation of Xenophon's story, here presented as a paraphrase with the interpretative bits in square brackets:

> [The first *ekklesia*] was followed by the Apatouria during which fathers and relatives meet [in their phratries]. Theramenes and his followers [availed themselves of this opportunity] and during the festival they suborned [or perhaps: prevailed upon] a good many persons [who showed up at the meetings in the phratries] dressed in black and with their hair cut close to the skin. Their purpose was [to persuade these people] to come to [the next] *ekklesia* and they did it on the [mostly correct] assumption that these [mourners] were relatives of the Athenians killed [in the battle of Arginousai].

On this interpretation of Xenophon's narrative every piece of information makes sense and it is linguistically impeccable. παρεσκεύασαν is used in the normal sense of 'suborn' or 'prevail upon' (with an attributive participle added); the complement is a clause introduced with ἵνα; and ὡς δή with a causal participle reveals the tactics employed by the Theramenians: to approach citizens dressed as mourners of whom the great majority would be relatives of those killed in the battle.[34]

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[34] Given that in 406/5 there were some 115,000 Athenian citizens (of both sexes and all ages) the presumption is that 'normal' mortality would be about 3000 per year. On the assumption that people would be in mourning

As often with ὡς δή, an indignant tone can be heard: Xenophon's message may be that to use genuine mourning for sinister political purposes is not a nice thing to do. In a wider perspective this incident tells us that Theramenes controlled a few score of supporters whom he could instruct to go to the meetings of the phratries and approach every person dressed as a mourner. But he did not control a large group of followers whom he could instruct to attend the *ekklesia* dressed as if they were mourners. The passage is not evidence of large groups of regular supporters because in that case the regular followers, and not the mourners, would have been the hard core of those who supported Theramenes and Kallixenos at the second *ekklesia*. Let me add that this interpretation of Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.8 is not new. It is briefly suggested in the old commentaries of Breitenbach and Büchsenschütz.[35]

(4) In 404 the Thirty were set up by a decree passed by the *demos* in an *ekklesia* held after the Spartans had occupied Athens. The meeting was dominated by Theramenes. According to Lysias (12.71–76) he was met with heckling, whereupon Lysandros addressed the Assembly and frightened the Athenians into voting for the decree. The democratically-minded citizens kept quiet or left the meeting before the vote was taken, and the decree was passed by a few bad citizens who voted as they were told. We are in a period during which the Athenians were split into factions and not into parties. Lysias' account of the incident is obviously biased, but even so he does not say that it was an *ekklesia* packed with all those who supported Theramenes.

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for one month, there would normally be about 250 Athenians who had died so recently that their close relatives would be in mourning. Probably at least 1000 citizens were lost in the battle of Arginoussai, so that at the Apatouria their close relatives in mourning would constitute about 80% of all the mourners. See M. H. Hansen, *Three Studies in Athenian Demography* (Copenhagen 1988) 16, 27.

[35] L. Breitenbach, *Xenophons Hellenika* (Berlin 1884) 151; B. Büchsenschütz, *Xenophons Griechische Geschichte* (Leipzig 1908) 57.

(5) Ergokles was a member of the board of generals of 390/89. He was indicted by an *eisangelia* for treason, embezzlement, and corruption, but before the *demos* met to hear the trial he had—allegedly—succeeded in bribing no less than 2100 citizens.[36] Here was another attempt to influence large numbers and secure a majority of votes; but according to the story it was done by bribery, not by the mobilisation of supporters or a large political group with which Ergokles was affiliated.

(6) In 346 during the peace negotiations with Philip of Macedon Demosthenes was shouted down in the Assembly (Dem. 19.23):

ἀναστὰς δ᾿ ἐγὼ ταῦτα τ᾿ οὐκ ἔφην εἰδέναι καὶ ἅμ᾿ ἐπειρώμην τι λέγειν τούτων ὧν εἰς τὴν βουλὴν ἀπήγγειλα. καὶ παραστὰς ὁ μὲν ἔνθεν, ὁ δ᾿ ἔνθεν οὑτοσὶ (Aischines) καὶ Φιλοκράτης, ἐβόων, ἐξέκρουόν με, τελευτῶντες ἐχλεύαζον. ὑμεῖς δ᾿ ἐγελᾶτε, καὶ οὔτ᾿ ἀκούειν ἠθέλετ᾿ οὔτε πιστεύειν ἐβούλεσθ᾿ ἄλλα πλὴν ἃ οὗτος ἀπηγγέλκει.

The protests were apparently instigated by two leaders, Aischines and Philokrates; the rest of the audience joined in the heckling, and Aischines carried the day.

(7) A similar incident took place in 339. Demosthenes was interrupted by heckling organised by Aischines and his followers who sat together in the Assembly. Others followed suit and Demosthenes could not make himself heard (Dem. 18.143):

οἱ μὲν ἐκ παρακλήσεως συγκαθήμενοι οὐκ εἴων με λέγειν, οἱ δ᾿ ἐθαύμαζον καὶ κένην αἰτίαν διὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ἔχθραν ἐπάγειν μ᾿ ὑπελάμβανον αὐτῷ.

Once more Demosthenes was brought to silence and it was only in a subsequent *ekklesia* that he could persuade the Council and the Assembly to adopt his line of policy (Aeschin. 3.125–127). In this case Demosthenes mentions a group of followers sitting with Aischines and probably close to the *bema*. A few score of attendants would suffice and we do not have to think of a large Aischinean party.

[36] Lys. 29.12; cf. Aeschin. 1.86, Isoc. 8.50.

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The group referred to is probably the so-called "lesser *rhetores*" (ἐλάττονες ῥήτορες) mentioned by Hypereides in the speech against Demosthenes (1.12): τοῖς μὲν ἐλάττοσι ῥήτορσιν ἀπέτινεν ὁ Ἅρπαλος χρυσίον, τοῖς θορύβου μόνον καὶ κραυγῆς κυρίοις, σὲ δὲ τὸν τῶν ὅλων πραγμάτων ἐπιστάτην παρεῖδεν; They did not normally address the people but served as supporters of the political leaders by shouting and heckling if any rhetor opposed their leader (Pl. *Resp.* 564D): ἐν δημοκρατίᾳ δὲ τοῦτό που τὸ προεστὸς αὐτῆς, ἐκτὸς ὀλίγων, καὶ τὸ μὲν δριμύτατον αὐτοῦ λέγει τε καὶ πράττει, τὸ δ᾽ ἄλλο περὶ τὰ βήματα προσίζον βομβεῖ τε καὶ οὐκ ἀνέχεται τοῦ ἄλλα λέγοντος ὥστε πάντα ὑπὸ τοῦ τοιούτου διοικεῖται ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ πολιτείᾳ χωρίς τινων ὀλίγων. And they acted as prosecutors in the courts and proposers of decrees which a political leader would not propose in his own name, lest the decree be indicted by a *graphe paranomon* (Dem. 59.43): οὐ γάρ πω ἦν ῥήτωρ (Stephanos), ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι συκοφάντης τῶν παραβοώντων παρὰ τὸ βῆμα καὶ γραφομένων μισθοῦ καὶ φαινόντων καὶ ἐπιγραφομένων ταῖς ἀλλοτρίαις γνώμαις.

By the letter of the law interruptions were forbidden (Aeschin. 3.2), but the Athenians disregarded the regulation.[37] To keep interruptions under control a law was passed in 346/5, perhaps in consequence of what happened during the peace negotiations with Philip. It prescribed that all members of one tribe, i.e. about a tenth of all those tho attended the *ekklesia*, were made responsible for the maintenance of order. The presiding tribe, as it was called, ἡ προεδρεύουσα φυλή, was selected by lot before the session and given the privilege of the front seats in the auditorium, προεδρία (Aeschin. 1.33–34). With several hundred ordinary citizens seated around the *bema* it would be much easier to control both the leading *rhetor* on the platform and the lesser *rhetores* who cheered their own leader and interrupted his opponents. However, the law did not have

[37] Hansen, *The Athenian Assembly* 69–72.

the desired effect, as is apparent from what Demosthenes experienced once again in 339 as well as from other sources.[38]

*The Council*

The Council of Five Hundred could not be packed with supporters in the same way as the Assembly, at least not in principle. But far from all councillors came to the ca. 275 meetings,[39] which means that the Council could be dominated by the politically active members.

(8) In the speech *Against Androtion* Demosthenes describes a group of some four to ten councillors who, in collusion with Androtion, were capable of controlling the Council of Five Hundred (22.38):

> ἴσως ἀναβήσεται καὶ συνερεῖ τῇ βουλῇ Φίλιππος καὶ Ἀντιγένης καὶ ὁ ἀντιγραφεὺς καί τινες ἄλλοι, οἵπερ ἐκεῖ δι᾽ ἑαυτῶν εἶχον μετὰ τούτου τὸ βουλευτήριον καὶ τούτων τῶν κακῶν εἰσιν αἴτιοι.

The passage testifies to a small group of leaders. Allegedly they deceived the Council. Whether they had a large group of regular followers is left unmentioned.

(9) A source of a different kind is the law of 410/09 which prescribed that the seats in the *bouleuterion* be assigned to the councillors by lot:[40]

> ἀλλ᾽ οὐ λαχοῦσ᾽ ἔπινες ἐν τῷ γράμματι] παρ᾽ ὑπόνοιαν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐδίκαζες. ὅτι δὲ κατὰ γράμματα ἐκληροῦντο προείρηται. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐβουλεύοντο οὕτως, τῷ πρὸ τούτου ἔτει ἀρξάμενοι. φησὶ γὰρ Φιλόχορος ἐπὶ Γλαυκίππου "καὶ ἡ βουλὴ κατὰ γράμμα τότε πρῶτον ἐκαθέζετο· καὶ ἔτι νῦν ὀμνῦσιν ἀπ᾽ ἐκείνου καθε-δεῖσθαι ἐν τῷ γράμματι ᾧ ἂν λάχωσιν."

The reason for the reform must have been that the Athenians wanted to thwart a tendency among the councillors to seat themselves in political groups. The law was probably directed against group formation among the leaders rather than the

[38] Aeschin 3.4, Dem. 25.90.

[39] Dem.22.36; cf. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 254–255.

[40] Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 140 (from schol. Ar. *Plut*. 972).

followers. Furthermore, the law is an amendment to the bouleutic oath, and it is worth noting that it was passed in the year when democracy was restored after the regime of the 400 and the 5000. Before the restoration the Council had been controlled by a faction of oligarchically-minded citizens (Thuc. 8.66.1–2) who probably sat together in the *bouleuterion*. The reinstated democrats would put a stop to such practices.

*The Courts*

The daily sortition first of the jurors and then of the specific court to which each juror was assigned made it virtually impossible for a prosecutor or a defendant to pack a *dikasterion* with supporters (*Ath.Pol.* 63–65). The only strategy open to the parties in a lawsuit was in advance of the trial to influence as many citizens as possible by addressing them in the agora or before the courts in the hope that they would be selected by lot as jurors and assigned to the court selected by lot to hear their case (Ar. *Vesp.* 552–558). In the court each juror was issued a new token indicating his seat so that supporters of either party in the case could not sit together.[41]

(10) In the introduction to the speech *Against Meidias* Demosthenes tells the jurors that Meidias had imposed himself on the citizens before the court and canvassed for their votes (21.4):

ἃ δ' ἐν ὑμῖν μετὰ ταῦτ' ἐστὶν ὑπόλοιπα, ὅσῳ πλείοσιν οὗτος ἠνώχληκε καὶ παρήγγελκεν (ἑώρων γὰρ αὐτὸν ἄρτι πρὸ τῶν δικαστηρίων οἷ' ἐποίει) τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον ἐλπίζω τὸ δίκαιον ἕξειν.

MacDowell has the following note on the passage: "if it is true that what we have is the draft written before the trial and not revised later, this sentence is not a simple record of fact but a piece of speculation. D[emosthenes] could have omitted it in delivery, if it had turned out not to be true."[42]

(11) Twice the Athenians witnessed a clash between Aischines and Demosthenes, first in 343/2 when Demosthenes called

[41] *Ath.Pol.* 65.2, cf. P. J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* (Oxford 1981) 712.

[42] D. M. MacDowell, *Demosthenes: Against Meidias* (Oxford 2000) 223.

Aischines to account for his embassy to Philip in 346 (Dem. 19 vs. Aeschin. 2), and then again in 330/29 when Aischines brought a *graphe paranomon* against Ktesiphon for having proposed a crown for Demosthenes (Aeschin. 3 vs. Dem. 18). On both occasions each of them asserted that the other had touted for support amongst the prospective jurors before the hearing:

> Dem. 19.1: ὅση μέν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, σπουδὴ περὶ τουτονὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ παραγγελία γέγονεν, σχεδὸν οἶμαι πάντας ὑμᾶς ᾐσθῆσθαι, ἑορακότας ἄρτι τοὺς ὅτ᾽ ἐκληροῦσθ᾽ ἐνοχλοῦντας καὶ προσιόντας ὑμῖν.

> Aeschin. 3.1: τὴν μὲν παρασκευὴν ὁρᾶτε, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ τὴν παράταξιν ὅση γεγένηται καὶ τὰς κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν δεήσεις, αἷς κέχρηνταί τινες ὑπὲρ τοῦ τὰ μέτρια καὶ τὰ συνήθη μὴ γίγνεσθαι ἐν τῇ πόλει.

In both cases a group is involved in the attempt to recruit adherents among the prospective jurors, probably small groups of at most a few score citizens and not followers by the hundred. Furthermore, there is no indication in any of the four speeches that these attempts met with any success, and on the second occasion Demosthenes does not even hint that Aischines' acquittal on the first occasion had been due to the court being packed with his supporters.

*Ostracism*

(12) The evidence most frequently adduced in support of the view that the political leaders had large groups of followers is the 191 ostraka found together in a well and all (minus one) designed for use against Themistokles. Comparison of style and letter forms reveals that 180 of the sherds were inscribed by only fourteen persons.[43] As a rule they are carefully incised and very legible. The uniformity of all the 190 ostraka found in isolation in one deposit makes it highly improbable that they were

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[43] M. Lang, *The Athenian Agora* XXV *Ostraka* (Princeton 1990) 143–157. The remaining eleven are fragmentary and the preserved letters too few to allow an identification of the hand. The pots used for the ostraka may indicate a date in the 480s.

ever used.[44] They were probably thrown into the well shortly after the ostracism for which they had been prepared.[45] The traditional view is that these ostraka were prepared by a group of at least fourteen persons opposed to Themistokles.[46] But the use of prefabricated ostraka has been further elucidated by the discovery in the Kerameikos in 1966–1968 of some 8500 ostraka.[47] Here, again, we find prefabricated ostraka and, again, several ostraka inscribed by the same person. Thus four joining sherds inscribed with Megakles' name were undoubtedly produced by one person.[48] But among the Kerameikos ostraka we also find evidence that one person could produce ostraka against different candidates! One person produced two joining ostraka, one inscribed with the name of Kimon, the other with that of Themistokles.[49] Again, three joining ostraka, one against Megakles and two against Kallikrates, were undoubtedly inscribed by one person.[50] And of four joining sherds from the same vessel two were inscribed with the name of Megakles, one with that of Themistokles, and one with that of Hippokrates.[51] Such ostraka suggest quite a different scenario, vividly described by Vanderpool in a lecture he gave shortly after the discovery of the Kerameikos hoard:[52]

[44] Lang, *Ostraka* 142.

[45] O. Broneer, "Excavations on the North Slope of the Acropolis, 1937," *Hesp*eria 8 (1938) 161–263, at 228.

[46] F. D. Harvey, "Literacy in the Athenian Democracy," *REG* 79 (1966) 585–635, at 591; Meiggs and Lewis, *SGHI* p.43; Connor, *New Politicians* 25; Rhodes, in *Ritual* 93–94.

[47] S. Brenne, "Die Kerameikos-Ostraka," in P. Siewert (ed.), *Ostrakismos-Testimonien* 1 (Stuttgart 2002) 40–43, and "Ostraka and the Process of Ostrakophoria," in W. D. E. Coulson et al. (eds.), *The Archaeology of Attica and Athens under the Democracy* (Oxford 1994) 13–24.

[48] Brenne, in *The Archaeology* 19, fig. 20.

[49] G. Daux , *BCH* 92 (1968) 731, fig. 5.

[50] Brenne, in *The Archaeology* 20, fig. 23.

[51] Brenne, in *The Archaeology* 20, fig. 25.

[52] E. Vanderpool, "Ostracism at Athens," in *Lectures in Memory of Louise*

> On Ostracism Day many scribes would set up booths or tables at various points in the Agora and along the roads leading to it. They would be ready, for a small consideration, to sell you a sherd with the name of your candidate already written on it. These scribes would probably have prepared beforehand sherds with the names of the leading candidates of the day, which, although never officially announced, must have been generally known. But they would also be ready with blank sherds on which to write any other name the voter might wish.

On this interpretation the 190 ostraka against Themistokles can no longer be adduced as evidence of political groups.

As said above, the traditional explanation of the 190 ostraka is that fourteen members of a *hetaireia* prefabricated a large number of sherds inscribed with Themistokles' name. When the ostracism was over they were left with 190 ostraka which they dumped into an unused well. But there is no evidence that they produced a much higher number. Supposing that they inscribed 250 ostraka, they succeeded in handing out only 60. In that case they may still have formed a small group of anti-Themistoklean citizens but the ostraka cannot be used as evidence of a large group of followers. Even if the 190 ostraka are what was left over from a much larger stock, the only thing uniting the users of the sherds may have been their wish on that particular occasion to get rid of Themistokles. Alternatively the fourteen persons may have been slaves or professional scribes. There may have been a wealthy citizen who wanted Themistokles out of Attica and ordered fourteen of his slaves or employees to produce the ostraka. In that case the anti-Themistoklean faction dwindles to one man. And he need not even be an antagonist of Themistokles. He may have been a businessman who had the sherds produced to make a profit. Believing that Themistokles was an obvious candidate, he instructed his employees to produce Themistokles sherds only. In this scenario all evidence of political groups disappears. As long as the 190 Themistokles ostraka were the only evidence of mul-

*Taft Semple* Second Series (Cincinnati 1973) 217–243, at 225.

tiple ostraka inscribed by a few persons, the idea that the fourteen persons belonged to a political group seemed plausible. With the Kerameikos ostraka we have obtained a number of examples of ostraka with the names of different candidates inscribed by one man. In such cases the explanation must be that these ostraka were produced by scribes or literate citizens without any party affiliation and for the purpose of assisting citizens who were illiterate or found it difficult to handle a knife and a sherd.[53] This explanation may apply to the 190 Themistokles ostraka as well. Like the texts, the physical remains of the ancient world are often open to a number of rival interpretations.

*The only explicit classical source for large groups of followers*

(13) There is however, one source which indisputably supports the assumption that followers as well as leaders were sometimes organised: Demosthenes in his Assembly-speeches often criticizes his fellow-Athenians for their way of conducting politics, and in two passages he puts his criticisms in identical terms:[54]

πρότερον μὲν γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κατὰ συμμορίας εἰσεφέρετε, νυνὶ δὲ πολιτεύεσθε κατὰ συμμορίας. ῥήτωρ ἡγεμὼν ἑκατέρων, καὶ στρατηγὸς ὑπὸ τούτῳ καὶ οἱ βοησόμενοι, οἱ τριακόσιοι. οἱ δ' ἄλλοι προσνενέμησθε οἱ μὲν ὡς τούτους, οἱ δ' ὡς ἐκείνους.

Men of Athens, you used to pay your taxes by symmories, now you conduct your politics by symmories. There is a *rhetor* in charge of each, and a *strategos* as his henchman, and three hundred to do the shouting, and the rest of you are divided between them, some in one group and some in another.

The political groups thus described by Demosthenes are very close to what we should call 'parties': each is composed of a

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[53] D. J. Phillips, "Observations on Some Ostraka from the Athenian Agora," *ZPE* 83 (1990) 123–148.

[54] Dem. 13.20 (354/3), repeated almost verbatim at 2.29 (348) (quoted here). See Hansen, *The Athenian Assembly* 82–83.

small number of leaders and a larger number of followers; all (or most) citizens belong to one or other of them, and the rivalry between them takes place in the Assembly, where the followers vote on proposals moved by the leaders. The followers are subdivided into two groups: a core of 300 "to do the shouting" and all the others. The number 300 is undoubtedly a reference to the 300 leading members of the symmories, and since there were twenty symmories in 354/3 when Demosthenes delivered his speech *On the Symmories*,[55] there would—on average—be some fifteen in each symmory "to do the shouting." That is in fact what we should expect from what we know about the small groups of political leaders. The pronoun ἑκατέρων as well as οἱ μέν … οἱ δέ in what follows indicates that the citizens in the audience were—at least sometimes—split into two opposing groups, and so were the leaders as is attested e.g. in the sources we have for the peace between Athens and Philip in 346 and its aftermath in the following years.

The passage has not attracted the attention it deserves, and has never been adduced by the historians who believe in Athenian political parties though they would be wise to give it the central place in their evidence instead of the all-too-frequently-quoted passages from Plutarch or the other classical sources listed above. If we can trust what Demosthenes says it must, undeniably, be concluded that groupings of political followers were sometimes to be found at Athens. But note Demosthenes' critical attitude to this deplorable situation. How far can his comparison between symmories and political groups be pressed?

And can the calculated outburst of anger by an orator in an Assembly speech outweigh the silence elsewhere—in the thousands of pages of rhetoric in which political rivalry is the theme?

[55] Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 113–114.

Arguments from silence are, indeed, not without danger: is the general silence as to political parties due to their non-existence or because the sources for some reason did not see fit to mention them? That latter line of argument does not apply when the question is about political parties. Many passages in the speeches both to the Courts and to the Assembly refer to political rivalries: the duel between Aischines and Demosthenes, for example, is the central theme of four speeches amounting to more than 300 pages.[56] In them we hear, indeed, about narrow groups of political leaders, comprising some twenty to thirty people; but never is there any indication that Aischines or Demosthenes belonged to, or controlled, a larger political party. And when, in the sources, a political leader has to admit and explain a defeat he has suffered in the Assembly or the Courts, he may allege that his opponent won a majority of the votes by specious rhetoric;[57] he may claim that his rivals interrupted his speech and prevented the Assembly from taking proper account of his views;[58] he may allege bribery, of the *proedroi* to estimate the vote wrongly[59] or of a large number of the voters themselves;[60] he may assert that his adversary moved his proposal late in the meeting when many citizens had already gone home.[61] But one argument is never heard: "my opponent packed the Assembly with his political party: if the voters had been a fair cross-section of the People I'd never have been defeated." Indeed, if anything, the orators probably exaggerate the importance of factions in order to blacken their opponents. So the silence as to larger political groups is after all significant, and strongly implies that they did not normally exist.

[56] Aeschin. 2 and 3; Dem. 18 and 19.

[57] Aeschin. 3.97–102; Dem. 18.132.

[58] Dem. 19.8, 23–24, 45–46.

[59] Aeschin. 3.3.

[60] Aeschin. 1.86; Lys. 29.12.

[61] Aeschin. 3.126; Dem. 21.193.

*A modern parallel*

Here a comparison with modern democracies is relevant. In the 19th century European parliaments, groupings amongst the elected politicians regularly developed sooner than the corresponding groupings amongst the voters, but the organisation of the leaders always led in the long run to the organisation of the followers.[62] If, then, at Athens, there is evidence of some organisation into groups of those who initiated matters in the Assembly, etc., should it not follow that during the two centuries of the democracy from 507 to 322 B.C. their supporters must in the long run also have been organised? Not necessarily, as the experience of the Swiss Landsgemeinden may serve to show. Like other contemporary western societies Switzerland has a developed party system. The elections to the federal parliament are completely dominated by the parties, which play a similar role in elections in those cantons which have parliaments and not Landsgemeinden. Every spring the political parties in the Landsgemeinde-cantons arrange political meetings and instruct their supporters how to vote on the crucial issues. Furthermore, many speakers who address the People in the meeting of the Landsgemeinde are members of one political party or another and put forward that party's point of view. Nevertheless, party affiliation is weakened to the point of virtual dissolution in the Landsgemeinde. At the meeting-place, the voters never group themselves according to parties; relatives, friends, and neighbours often stand together, but no faction or party-group can be detected. Furthermore, the debate does not follow party lines, and an influential speaker may turn the scales, so the outcome of the vote on a controversial issue is often unpredictable even a few minutes before the show of hands takes place. It would be an exaggeration to say that the political parties have no influence at all in the Landsgemeinde: occasionally a matter may be settled along party lines. But it is

[62] Duverger, *Political Parties* xxiii–xxx.

not the characteristic behaviour of those assemblies.[63]

If, then, a fully developed modern party-system more or less dissolves when several thousand citizens vote directly in an Assembly-meeting, the same can have been true at Athens. The existence of groups of political leaders does not, in the face of the general silence of the sources, necessarily imply corresponding groups of supporters, and the outcome of the vote in the Assembly may have been as unpredictable as it is today in the Landsgemeinden.

The Athenian political institutions seem to have behaved in accordance with the democratic ideal: the People did not just vote according to the crack of their leaders' whips.[64] The success of an Athenian political leader depended upon personal qualities: his political skill, his rhetorical gifts, his charisma, and his reputation for acting in the people's interest and for not being corrupt. In the Assembly and in the Court he could not rely on support from a large group of regular followers. He had from meeting to meeting and from case to case to persuade a majority of citizens to take his advice. That is why *rhetor* is the Athenian's term for what we call a politician or a stateman.[65]

The Athenians did what they could to counteract group formation both among the leaders and the followers, and both in the Assembly, in the Council of Five Hundred, in the Courts, and among the elite citizens. We have the law about the presiding tribe in the assembly;[66] the law about seats in the *bouleuterion* being determined by the lot;[67] the law about the daily sortition

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[63] M. H. Hansen, *The Athenian Ecclesia* (Copenhagen 1983) 221–222.

[64] Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 286. So also J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton 1989) 121–125, at 123: "When he addressed the Assembly or court, the orator stood alone, before the people." I believe, however, that Ober may be too dismissive of the small groups of political leaders and of supporters "to do the shouting," see 381 with n.4 above.

[65] Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 268–271.

[66] Aeschin. 1.33–34, 3.4; Dem. 25.90; see (7) above.

[67] Philoch. fr.140, see (9) above.

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of jurors and their assignment to specific courts;[68] and the law that forbade the formation of political clubs.[69] The Athenians seem to have avoided group formation among the followers, Some cooperation between political leaders, however, was indispensable for the working of the democratic institutions, and is abundantly attested in our sources.[70]

*Epilogue*

From the non-existence in classical Athens of large groups of regular supporters of political leaders it cannot be inferred that they did not exist in other *poleis*. In fact, our sources show that most *poleis* were split into what in the sources are called two opposed *poleis*,[71] typically one of the rich (supporting oligarchy) and one of the poor (supporting democracy).[72] In such *poleis* most of the citizens must have belonged to one of two opposing groups and the result was in many cases a *stasis* between the two groups. The Copenhagen *Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* records 279 outbreaks of *stasis* in 122 named *poleis*. To this impressive number must be added information about *stasis* affecting all or most *poleis* in a region.[73] And we must remember how scanty our sources are. But in all these cases the opposing factions were not political parties in the proper sense, but revolutionary groups. And such groups are also attested in Athens in the sources we have for the oligarchic revolutions of 411 and 404.[74] But after the restoration of the democracy in

[68] *Ath.Pol.* 63–65, see (10) and (11) above. At Theophr. *Char.* 29.6, for συνεδρεῦσαι read συνηγορῆσαι.

[69] Hyp. 3.7–8, see Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 281–283.

[70] Hansen, *The Athenian Assembly* 77–78.

[71] Pl. *Resp.* 422E, 551D, *Leg.* 945E; Arist. *Pol.* 1310a4 ff.; Eur. fr.173.

[72] Pl. *Resp.* 555B, 557A; Arist. *Pol.* 1266a37–38, 1289b27–40, 1290b18–20, 1302a10–13, 1303a1–2.

[73] M. H. Hansen and T. H. Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford 2004) 124.

[74] Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 40–43. See (2) and (4) above.

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403 oligarchy was discredited[75]—which did not, of course, prevent political leaders from accusing one another of oligarchical sympathies. Also there were indeed enormous differences between rich and poor. The rich counted their wealth in talents, the poor in drachmas. Nevertheless, in sources covering the classical period there is no evidence of any attempt to have a cancelation of debts as in the age of Solon or a redistribution of land. It was the relatively moderate degree of social tension in fourth-century Athens which ensured that the political system could work without factions and without political parties.[76]

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[75] Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy* 296.

[76] I would like to thank the anonymous referee for helpful suggesstions and I promise in a future contribution to describe in more detail how I think an Athenian political leader manoeuvred when he did not have a large group of loyal followers to support him.