How Many Athenians Attended the *Ecclesia*?

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IN MOST MODERN BOOKS on democracy[1] the author opens his account by distinguishing between direct and representative democracy.[2] Even in systematic treatments of the subject this problem is invariably dealt with in a historical context. Everyone acknowledges that direct democracy does not exist any longer, in any case not as a form of government,[3] and this indisputable fact is usually followed by a statement, not quite as convincing, to the effect that direct democracy nowadays is impossible because of the size of modern states.[4]

[1] References in this article, hereafter cited by author's name and page number, are to: G. BUSOLT and H. SWOBODA, *Griechische Staatskunde* I–II (München 1920–26). P. CLOCHÉ, *La démocratie athénienne* (Paris 1951). W. DINSMOOR, review of *Hesperia* 1 in *AJA* 37 (1933) 180–82. M. I. FINLEY, *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (London 1973). G. GLOTZ, *La cité grecque* (Paris 1928). M. H. HANSEN, *The Sovereignty of the People's Court in Athens in the Fourth Century* B.C. *and the Public Action against Unconstitutional Proposals* (Odense 1974), and *Eisangelia, The Sovereignty of the People's Court in Athens in the Fourth Century* B.C. *and the Impeachment of Generals and Politicians* (Odense 1975). B. HOLDEN, *The Nature of Democracy* (London 1974). A. H. M. JONES, *Athenian Democracy* (Oxford 1960). K. KOUROUNIOTES and H. A. THOMPSON, "The Pnyx in Athens," *Hesperia* 1 (1932) 90–217. J. A. O. LARSEN, *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1955). J. LIVELY, *Democracy* (Oxford 1975). E. MEYER. *Einführung in die antike Staatskunde* (Darmstadt 1968). W. A. MCDONALD, *The Political Meeting Places of the Greeks* (Baltimore 1943). P. J. RHODES, *The Athenian Boule* (Oxford 1972). G. SARTORI, "Democracy" in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. E. S. STAVELEY, *Greek and Roman Voting and Elections* (London 1972). H. A. THOMPSON and R. L. SCRANTON, "Stoas and City Walls on the Pnyx," *Hesperia* 7 (1943) 269–301. H. A. THOMPSON and R. E. WYCHERLEY, *The Athenian Agora XIV: The Agora of Athens* (Princeton 1972). J. TRAVLOS, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens* (New York 1971). R. G. USSHER, *Aristophanes, Ecclesiazusae* (Oxford 1973). R. E. WYCHERLEY, *The Athenian Agora III: Literary and Epigraphical Testimonia* (Princeton 1957).

[2] *Cf.* Holden 26–34, Lively 29ff, Sartori 115.

[3] Direct democracy is of growing importance in the form of 'industrial democracy' (Holden 20, Sartori 114). But in this case the basic unit is not a whole state but small economic communities which are face-to-face societies.

[4] Holden 27, Sartori 115, Lively 30. Holden, however, is right in pointing out (p.28) that modern technology has made a return to direct democracy possible (but perhaps not desirable): "There could, for example, be a system in which television viewers, after watching some sort of debate or presentation of policy proposals, voted directly on the issues by means of buttons attached to their sets."

The historical view, however, varies according to the author's nationality. Following Montesquieu some German and Scandinavian scholars concentrate on 'Die germanische Urdemokratie'.[5] The French have since Rousseau had a propensity for giving an account of the Swiss cantons,[6] whereas Anglo-Saxon writers almost invariably give prominence to the Greek city-states and especially to the Athenian democracy of the classical period.[7] I find it wisest to follow the Anglo-Saxon scholars. 'Die germanische Urdemokratie' is a romantic fiction without any foundation in reliable sources.[8] The Swiss cantons are constituent states without autonomy,[9] and so we are left with the Athenian democracy of the fifth and fourth centuries as the only important example of a direct democracy of which we have any knowledge. We can exclude the fourth possible historical parallel, *viz.* the Italian cities in the Renaissance. Admittedly, Florence, Venice and Milan were city-states and in many respects comparable to the Greek *poleis*; but the form of government was either monarchic or oligarchic, and accordingly no parallel can be established when dealing with democracy.[10]

The body of government constituting a direct democracy is the people's assembly. In Athens all adult male citizens were admitted to the *ecclesia*, and every citizen was entitled to address the assembly and make proposals. A decree passed by the assembly was—in theory—a decision made by all Athenians,[11] but in reality only a part—perhaps only a small part—of the citizens attended the meetings. Thus, any evaluation of Athenian democracy as a direct democracy presupposes a discussion of the crucial problem: how many citizens were present when the decisions were made in the assembly?

As usual the scanty sources do not allow us to answer this question satisfactorily, and as usual the sources divide themselves into two groups which cannot form the basis of one comprehensive conclusion. Two literary sources give us some information about the Athenian

[5] Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois* 11.6 *ad finem*.

[6] *e.g.* A. Siegfried, *La Suisse, Démocratie-témoin* (Neuchâtel 1948), ch. 5 § 2.

[7] Holden 29, Lively 29, 32, Sartori 115.

[8] The principal source, mentioned by Montesquieu and frequently discussed by later scholars, is Tacitus, *Germania* 11.

[9] Holden 29.

[10] *Cf.* J. Plamenatz, *Man and Society* I (London 1963) 9–11.

[11] Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.9: *διαψηφίεσθαι Ἀθηναίους ἅπαντας κατὰ φυλάς.* Dem. 24.48: *εἰ πᾶσιν Ἀθηναίοις ἐδόκει.*

assembly during the Peloponnesian War, whereas a group of laws (quoted in the forensic speeches) and decrees (preserved on stone) concern fourth-century conditions. The written sources, however, can be supplemented by archaeological evidence covering the whole classical period. The meeting place of the assembly on the Pnyx has been excavated in 1930–31 and described in several important articles in *Hesperia*.[12] The size of the auditorium can be determined with some accuracy for all periods, and through the reconstructions published by the archaeologists we are in a position to form a conclusion as to the *maximum* number of citizens attending the meetings of the assembly. Accordingly, the question: "How many citizens attended the *ecclesia*?" is linked with another important question: "Where did the Athenians hold the meetings of the assembly?"

I. Where Did the Assembly Meet?

It is the generally accepted view that the Athenian people used to meet on the Pnyx,[13] with the important exception that 'plenary assemblies' were held in the Agora.[14] Furthermore, the people convened in the Theatre of Dionysus immediately after the Greater Dionysia, in Hellenistic times on other occasions as well;[15] and when naval matters were on the agenda the assembly might be convoked to the Piraeus.[16]

The weak point in this statement is the assemblies in the Agora, about which our sources are silent. The assemblies in the Theatre of Dionysus are mentioned both in epigraphical[17] and in literary sources,[18] and in classical times, as far as we know, the Athenians held assembly in the precinct of Dionysus only once a year, *viz.* after the Greater Dionysia when a debate on the feast was one of the items of agenda.[19] Similarly, the assemblies in the Piraeus are referred to both

[12] See *supra* n.1.

[13] Busolt 990, Glotz 180, Meyer 90, Staveley 80, McDonald 44, 67–80.

[14] Busolt 990, Staveley 79, McDonald 44–45, Kourouniotes and Thompson 104.

[15] Busolt 991, Meyer 90, Staveley 79, McDonald 47–51.

[16] Busolt 991, Meyer 90, Staveley 79, McDonald 51–56.

[17] A table of the epigraphical evidence can be found in McDonald 48. *Cf.* Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*², rev. J. Gould and D. M. Lewis (Oxford 1968) 68ff.

[18] Dem. 21.9, Aeschin. 2.61.

[19] *IG* II/III² 223 B 6 (Elaphebolion 343/2). *IG* II/III² 345 (19 Elaphebolion 332/1). *Hesperia* 8 (1939) 26 no.6 (19 Elaphebolion 332/1). (In addition to the latter two, the decrees *IG* II/III² 346 and 347 were passed on 19 Elaphebolion 332/1, but in these two decrees the meeting

in decrees and in the forensic speeches. Admittedly, the preserved inscriptions are all of the Hellenistic period,[20] but two passages in Demosthenes' speech *On the Embassy* corroborate that the Athenians in the fourth century convened in the Piraeus, and probably only when the principal business was to discuss naval matters.[21] Pnyx and Agora, on the other hand, are not once mentioned in the inscriptions as the meeting place of the assembly. As regards the Pnyx, however, the numerous references in the literary sources are sufficient proof that it was the regular meeting place of the Athenian people.[22] Otherwise with the Agora: we have not a single reliable source in support of the assumption that the assembly in classical times met in the market place. The evidence usually cited may be subsumed under four headings:

1. Two accounts in Plutarch's *Life of Solon* indicate that the Athenians in the Archaic period convened in the Agora: Solon recited his poem on Salamis for the Athenians in the Agora (*Sol.* 8.2), and Peisistratus came into the Agora showing the Athenians his self-inflicted wounds and asking for a bodyguard (30.1).

2. Harpocration relates in his note on *πάνδημος Ἀφροδίτη*[23] that the goddess' sanctuary in the Agora gained this epithet because the Athenians in former times held their assemblies in this part of the market place.

3. In 403, after the defeat at Mounichia, the Athenians 'from the city' assembled in the Agora, deposed 'the Thirty' and appointed 'the Ten' in their place.[24]

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place is left unmentioned). *IG* II/III² 348 (19 Elaphebolion 331/0). The only unquestionable example of a meeting of the assembly being held in the Theatre of Dionysus on another occasion than after the Greater Dionysia is *IG* II/III² 350 (*cf. Hesperia* 8 [1939] 33), a decree passed by the people in the Theatre of Dionysus probably in Anthesterion 318/7. (On Thuc. 8.93–94 *cf.* n.27).

[20] A table of the epigraphical evidence can be found in McDonald 52.

[21] Dem. 19.60 *τῇ τετράδι φθίνοντος ἠκκλησιάζετε μὲν τόθ' ὑμεῖς ἐν Πειραιεῖ περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς νεωρίοις, . . .* Dem. 19.125. *Cf.* Lys. 13.32–33 and 55–56.

[22] Ar. *Ach.* 19–23; *Eq.* 42, 749–51, 1109; *Vesp.* 31–36; *Pax* 679–81; *Eccl.* 243–44, 282–84. Thuc. 8.97.1. Dem. 18.169. Aeschin. 3.34. Philochorus, *FGrHist* 328 F 122. Plut. *Them.* 19.6. *Nicias* 7.7. Poll. 8.132. Harp. *s.v. Πυκνί.* Phot., *Suda*, *Etym.Magn. s.v. Πνύξ. Lex.Seg.* 292.30. Schol. Dem. 18.55. Schol. Dem. 19.125. Schol. Aeschin. 3.34. Schol. Pl. *Criti.*112A. *Cf.* Dem. 25.20: *τὸν δῆμον εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἀναβαίνειν.*

[23] Harp. *s.v. Ἀπολλόδωρος ἐν τῷ περὶ θεῶν πάνδημόν φησιν Ἀθήνησι κληθῆναι τὴν ἀφιδρυθεῖσαν περὶ τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἀγορὰν διὰ τὸ ἐνταῦθα πάντα τὸν δῆμον συνάγεσθαι τὸ παλαιὸν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις, ἃς ἐκάλουν ἀγοράς.*

[24] Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 38.1: *καταλαβόντων τῶν ἀπὸ Φυλῆς τὴν Μουνιχίαν καὶ νικησάντων μάχῃ*

4. When an ostracism was held, the taking of the vote took place in the Agora, as described by Philochorus (*FGrHist* 328 F 30) and Plutarch (*Aristides* 7.5).

The evidence produced in support of assemblies held in the Agora is inconclusive:

re 1. Even admitting that Plutarch is reliable on this point of detail, we may at most conclude that assemblies were held in the Agora in the archaic period, but we are not allowed to draw any conclusion concerning classical times. The Pnyx of the first period was probably not constructed until *ca* 500 B.C.,[25] and the most reasonable inference to be drawn from the scanty sources seems to be that the Athenian people convened in the Agora in the archaic period but on the Pnyx after Cleisthenes' reforms.

re 2. Harpocration quotes Apollodorus (*FGrHist* 244 F 113), and the statement is presumably only an inference from, or an attempt to explain, the title *πάνδημος*.[26] Accordingly, Apollodorus' value as a source is very limited, and even accepting his explanation we can conclude only that Harpocration's note confirms the assumption that assemblies were held in the Agora in the archaic period.

re 3. An assembly attended by only a fraction of the people in the middle of the civil war of 404–03 B.C. cannot be adduced as evidence for the peacetime conditions under democracy.[27] Furthermore, the first reconstruction of the assembly place on the Pnyx was probably going on during the regime of the Thirty, so that the Athenians temporarily had to find another meeting place for the assembly.[28]

re 4. It is an indisputable fact that *ostrakophoria* took place in the Agora in accordance with a decree passed by the assembly. It is unwarranted, however, for modern historians to consider the *ostrakophoria* itself to be a meeting of the assembly.[29] The only obvious point

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τοὺς μετὰ τῶν τριάκοντα βοηθήσαντας, ἐπαναχωρήσαντες μετὰ τὸν κίνδυνον οἱ ἐκ τοῦ ἄστεως καὶ συναθροισθέντες εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ τοὺς μὲν τριάκοντα κατέλυσαν, αἱροῦνται δὲ δέκα τῶν πολιτῶν αὐτοκράτορας ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ πολέμου κατάλυσιν.

[25] Kourouniotes and Thompson 109, Thompson and Wycherley 48.

[26] Wycherley 224–25 (no.731).

[27] Similarly, during the revolution of 411 assemblies were convened extraordinarily in Colonus (Thuc. 8.67); in the theatre in the Piraeus with no discussion of naval matters (Thuc. 8.93); in the Theatre of Dionysus in Athens, without connection with the Greater Dionysia (Thuc. 8.93–94).

[28] McDonald 46–47.

[29] Busolt 990 n.4, 1002; Staveley 92; Thompson and Wycherley 50–51.

of resemblance is that at least 6,000 citizens were required to cast their votes, just as some decrees could be passed by the assembly only if a quorum of as many as 6,000 was present. Everything else was different: there was no meeting, no debate, no agenda, no presidency, only the vote itself which was undertaken in a very peculiar way different from all other forms of ballot known to us.

So, the statement that 'plenary assemblies' were held in the Agora in the classical period is not based on any evidence. It is only an inference drawn partly from the fact that some decrees, at least in the fourth century, required a quorum of 6,000 citizens and partly from the *a priori* assumption that the Athenians must have had one meeting place for the assembly admitting all citizens, or at least a majority of them. Again, it has been questioned whether the Pnyx could accommodate 6,000 citizens in the fifth and fourth centuries (period I and II) before the rebuilding undertaken by Lycurgus *ca* 330 (period III), and even after this extension the assembly on the Pnyx could not hold more than a fraction of the Athenians.[30] The conclusion has been that the people sometimes assembled elsewhere, especially when crucial questions or decisions requiring a quorum were on the agenda, and on the basis of the sources discussed above many scholars have assumed that 'plenary assemblies' were held in the Agora.[31]

This theory is not only undemonstrable, it is also open to serious objections. If the most important decisions were made by the people in the Agora and not on the Pnyx, how can it be that the sources dealing with the Athenian assembly in the classical period never once refer to the Agora but always to the Pnyx?[32] and how can we explain that the Pnyx was considered almost a symbol of Athenian democracy? It is no mere coincidence that the master in Aristophanes' *Knights* is called *Demos Pyknites* (42), and it is in my opinion significant that he refuses to pass sentence in the combat between the tanner and the sausage-monger if it takes place elsewhere than on the Pnyx (750). Furthermore, it is explicitly stated in the *Acharnians* that the important ἐκκλησία κυρία takes place on the Pnyx (19–20). Consequently, the problem must be turned upside down: when the sources seem to show that all assemblies met on the Pnyx (except for the assemblies where naval matters or the Greater Dionysia were discussed), we

[30] See p.131.

[31] Kourouniotes and Thompson 104, McDonald 44.

[32] See *supra* n.22.

must conclude that the Pnyx had accommodation for the quorum of 6,000 citizens. On the other hand, it must be admitted that a meeting of the assembly was never attended by more than a minority of the citizen body.

II. How Many Citizens Attended the Meetings?

If we assume that the assembly always met on the Pnyx and never in the Agora, it should be possible on the basis of the excavations of the Pnyx and the archaeologists' estimate of the extent of the auditorium to calculate the maximum number of citizens attending the assembly. Conversely, the written sources, especially those of the fourth century, may give us a notion of the minimum attendance.

The accepted opinion seems to be that only the infrequent 'plenary assemblies' were attended by as many as 6,000 Athenians, whereas usually no more than 2,000 to 3,000 showed up at the regular meetings.[33] The weak point in this rather pessimistic estimate is the concept 'plenary assemblies',[34] in German 'Vollversammlungen',[35] in French 'Assemblées plenières',[36] a technical term invented by modern historians on the basis of the slightest possible evidence. (1) In *IG* I² 114, a decree dealing with constitutional matters, some important decisions are enumerated which can be made only by δῆμος πληθύων,[37] *e.g.* decisions on capital punishment and declaration of war. (2) Some fourth-century laws prescribe that a decision is valid only if it is made when a quorum of as many as 6,000 Athenians are present.[38] δῆμος πληθύων, it is argued, must denote a special form of *ecclesia* different from the simple δῆμος usually found in our sources, and furthermore, an attendance of 6,000 citizens must have been a rare occurrence. A combination of these sources leads to the conclusion that the Athenians at intervals must have held a special type of assembly where decisions were made not by the δῆμος but by the δῆμος πληθύων = 6,000 citizens.[39] Historians who accept this line of argument acknowledge the existence of three different types of ordinary assembly: the

[33] Glotz 181, Staveley 78. A more optimistic position is taken by Jones (p.109).

[34] *e.g.* Staveley 88.

[35] *e.g.* Busolt 990.

[36] *e.g.* Glotz 197.

[37] *Cf.* Rhodes 195–98.

[38] See p. 125.

[39] Busolt 987, Glotz 198. Cloché, "Le conseil athénien des cinq cents et la peine de mort," *REG* 33 (1920) 29.

'plenary assemblies', the ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι and the other ordinary assemblies. A certain overlapping is accepted. The ἐκκλησία κυρία of the 6th prytany, for example, is sometimes supposed to be a plenary assembly, and this reconstruction, which is quite unwarranted by the sources, has given rise to the assumption, often mentioned as a simple fact, that the law of ostracism prescribed a quorum of 6,000 not only at the *ostrakophoria* itself, but also at the assembly where the Athenians took a vote on whether an *ostrakophoria* be held that year.[40]

Two serious objections can be raised against this reconstruction. (1) *IG* I² 114 is an inscription delimiting the powers of the Council of Five Hundred. The phrase δῆμος πληθύων probably denotes 'the entire people' in opposition to the Council, which was only a fraction of the people. Consequently δῆμος πληθύων is a reference to the assembly pure and simple and not to any special form of assembly.[41] This interpretation is confirmed by the observation that the expression δῆμος πληθύων does not occur in any other source. (2) I hope to show in this paper that 6,000 was a normal attendance, at least in the fourth century. Thus, δῆμος πληθύων can no longer be taken to mean an assembly where at least 6,000 citizens were present, and the concept 'plenary assembly' must accordingly be abandoned. The only tenable distinction is that between ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι and other ordinary assemblies.

As mentioned above, the written sources must be divided into two groups: (1) two literary sources deal with the fifth-century democracy; (2) some laws and decrees prescribing a quorum of 6,000 concern the democracy after the restoration in 403/2. These two source-groups must be kept apart since we are not allowed to extrapolate the fourth-century laws and postulate that the quorum of 6,000 was binding on the assembly in the fifth century. Admittedly, the quorum of 6,000 was applied to ostracism, but *ostrakophoria* was not a vote taken in the assembly, and an argument from analogy is inadmissible without further proof, since we know positively that one of the laws requiring an attendance of 6,000 citizens at the meeting of the assembly was not introduced until *ca* 370 B.C., *viz*. the provisions for ratification of citizenship decrees. Similarly, another of the laws in question presupposes the formal distinction between laws (νόμοι) and decrees

[40] Thompson and Wycherley 51, Glotz 198.

[41] Larsen 16. Hansen, *Sovereignty* 20; *Eisangelia* 52 *pace* Rhodes 197–98.

(*ψηφίσματα*), which was not introduced until after the restoration of the democracy in 403/2.

III. The Fifth Century: Literary Evidence

Thucydides 8.72 is the only source which gives us any direct information about the number of citizens attending the meetings of the assembly. The text runs: *Πέμπουσι δὲ καὶ ἐς τὴν Σάμον δέκα ἄνδρας παραμυθησομένους τὸ στρατόπεδον καὶ διδάξοντας ὡς οὐκ ἐπὶ βλάβῃ τῆς πόλεως καὶ τῶν πολιτῶν ἡ ὀλιγαρχία κατέστη, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν ξυμπάντων πραγμάτων, πεντακισχίλιοί τε ὅτι εἶεν καὶ οὐ τετρακόσιοι μόνον οἱ πράσσοντες· καίτοι οὐ πώποτε Ἀθηναίους διὰ τὰς στρατείας καὶ τὴν ὑπερόριον ἀσχολίαν ἐς οὐδὲν πρᾶγμα οὕτω μέγα ἐλθεῖν βουλεύσοντας ἐν ᾧ πεντακισχιλίους ξυνελθεῖν*. This passage is not an impartial statement made by Thucydides, however, but an argument adduced by oligarchic envoys in a speech delivered before the democrats manning the fleet at Samos in 411. The oligarchs try to persuade the democrats by conveying the impression that the greatest possible number of citizens have a share in the power, *viz.* 5,000 and not 400, and conversely the envoys wish to minimize the number of citizens who exercised their political rights before the oligarchic revolution. The figure 5,000 must therefore be viewed with scepticism, and it loses almost all value as a source when we notice that the oligarchs themselves are forced to make reservations: they admit that the low figure is due to the war and service overseas, thus indicating that the attendance was much better in peace time. Accordingly it is impossible to draw any conclusion from this passage.[42]

The other source is the opening scene of Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (17–22). Dikaiopolis is seated in splendid isolation on the Pnyx early in the morning before the *ἐκκλησία κυρία*. He laments that no one has turned up, whereas the Agora is packed with people who try to avoid *τὸ μεμιλτωμένον σχοινίον*.

> *Ἀλλ' οὐδεπώποτ' ἐξ ὅτου 'γὼ ῥύπτομαι*
> *οὕτως ἐδήχθην ὑπὸ κονίας τὰς ὀφρῦς*
> *ὡς νῦν, ὁπότ' οὔσης κυρίας ἐκκλησίας*
> *ἐωθινῆς ἔρημος ἡ πνὺξ αὐτή,*
> *οἱ δ' ἐν ἀγορᾷ λαλοῦσι κἄνω καὶ κάτω*
> *τὸ σχοινίον φεύγουσι τὸ μεμιλτωμένον.*

[42] *Cf.* Jones 109.

Aristophanes' verses point to the same conclusion as Thucydides' prose, *viz.* that very few citizens attended the meetings on the Pnyx; but again we are dealing with war-time conditions, and once more our source is biased. The difficulties raised by interpreting a comedy passage as a source for history are well known,[43] and the only fixed point in Aristophanes' account is in fact the information about *τὸ μεμιλτωμένον σχοινίον*, on which the scholiast offers the following comment: *τὸ σχοινίον φεύγουσιν: (Ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐξ ἀνάγκης αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰς ἐκκλησίας συνιέναι τοῦτο ἐμηχανῶντο καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλα. ἀνεπετάννυσαν γὰρ τὰ γέρρα καὶ ἀπέκλειον τὰς ὁδοὺς τὰς μὴ φερούσας εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὰ ὤνια ἀνῄρουν ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς, ὅπως μὴ περὶ ταῦτα διατρίβοιεν· ἔτι μὴν καὶ) μεμιλτωμένῳ σχοινίῳ περιβάλλοντες αὐτοὺς συνήλαυνον εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. τοῦτο δὲ ἐποίουν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ βραδῦναι. ὅσοι γὰρ ἐχρίοντο ζημίαν ἐξέτινον.* The scholiast seems to be well informed, and his explanation is in my opinion convincing.[44] This peculiar institution is an indication that the Athenians wished to increase the number of citizens attending the meetings of the assembly, and with this end in view they adopted measures by which a citizen could be fined if he remained on the Agora instead of mounting the Pnyx and attending the meeting. Combining the two passages in Aristophanes and Thucydides we may perhaps conclude that the attendance during the Peloponnesian war was considered too low and that the government took measures to stimulate it.

IV. The Fourth Century: Literary and Epigraphical Evidence

The number of citizens attending the meetings of the assembly is not stated expressly in any fourth-century source, but for this period we have extensive evidence by which it is possible indirectly to calculate the attendance. The basis is some provisions that certain decisions are valid only if they are made by a minimum of 6,000 citizens who vote by ballot and not by show of hands. This provision is known from three different laws, but it may have applied to other laws as well. It is significant that for two of the three laws we have only one source, so

[43] *Cf.* A. W. Gomme, "Aristophanes and Politics" in *More Essays in Greek History and Literature* (Oxford 1962) 70–91.

[44] *Cf.* Poll. 8.104, and Kourouniotes and Thompson 112.

that we can safely assume that our evidence is fragmentary. The sources in question are the following:

1. In the speech *Against Timocrates* (Dem. 24.45) Demosthenes quotes a law[45] by which it is prohibited to lodge an application for reprieve or remittance of debts to the state unless a majority of 6,000 citizens in the assembly has bestowed *adeia*, thereby allowing that the application be placed on the agenda (presumably for the next meeting of the assembly). *NOMOΣ. Μηδὲ περὶ τῶν ἀτίμων, ὅπως χρὴ ἐπιτίμους αὐτοὺς εἶναι, μηδὲ περὶ τῶν ὀφειλόντων τοῖς θεοῖς ἢ τῷ δημοσίῳ τῷ Ἀθηναίων περὶ ἀφέσεως τοῦ ὀφλήματος ἢ τάξεως, ἐὰν μὴ ψηφισαμένων Ἀθηναίων τὴν ἄδειαν πρῶτον μὴ ἔλαττον ἑξακισχιλίων, οἷς ἂν δόξῃ κρύβδην ψηφιζομένοις. τότε δ' ἐξεῖναι χρηματίζειν καθ' ὅ τι ἂν τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ δοκῇ.*

2. In the speech *On the Mysteries* (And. 1.87) Andocides quotes a law prohibiting the proposal of *ad hominem* legislation, *viz.* a law (in contrast to a decree) concerning a named person (and not all Athenians). A *νόμος ἐπ' ἀνδρί*, however, may be passed (by the *nomothetai*) if the *ecclesia* previously by a vote taken among at least 6,000 citizens has permitted that the proposal be made. *NÓMOI. Ἀγράφῳ δὲ νόμῳ τὰς ἀρχὰς μὴ χρῆσθαι μηδὲ περὶ ἑνός. Ψήφισμα δὲ μηδὲν μήτε βουλῆς μήτε δήμου νόμου κυριώτερον εἶναι. Μηδὲ ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ νόμον ἐξεῖναι θεῖναι, ἐὰν μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν Ἀθηναίοις, ἐὰν μὴ ἑξακισχιλίοις δόξῃ κρύβδην ψηφιζομένοις.* (The same law is quoted in Dem. 24.59).

3. In the speech *Against Neaera* (Dem. 59.89–90) Apollodorus paraphrases a law prescribing that a citizenship decree when passed by the assembly be ratified at the subsequent meeting of the *ecclesia* by a vote taken among at least 6,000 citizens. *πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ νόμος ἐστὶ τῷ δήμῳ κείμενος μὴ ἐξεῖναι ποιήσασθαι Ἀθηναῖον, ὃν ἂν μὴ δι' ἀνδραγαθίαν εἰς τὸν δῆμον τὸν Ἀθηναίων ἄξιον ᾖ γενέσθαι πολίτην. ἔπειτ' ἐπειδὰν πεισθῇ ὁ δῆμος καὶ δῷ τὴν δωρεάν, οὐκ ἐᾷ κυρίαν γενέσθαι τὴν ποίησιν, ἐὰν μὴ τῇ ψήφῳ εἰς τὴν ἐπιοῦσαν ἐκκλησίαν ὑπερεξακισχίλιοι Ἀθηναίων ψηφίσωνται κρύβδην ψηφιζόμενοι. τοὺς δὲ πρυτάνεις κελεύει τιθέναι τοὺς καδίσκους ὁ νόμος καὶ τὴν ψῆφον διδόναι προσιόντι τῷ δήμῳ πρὶν τοὺς*

[45] Since the fundamental study by E. Drerup ("Über die bei den attischen Rednern eingelegten Urkunden," *NJbb* Suppl. 24 [1898] 221–365) most scholars have unhesitatingly accepted the authenticity of the documents inserted into the forensic speeches. *Cf. e.g.* D. MacDowell, *Andocides, On the Mysteries* (Oxford 1962) 127, and "Lawmaking at Athens in the Fourth Century B.C." *JHS* 95 (1975) 62–74 (on the authenticity of the documents in Dem. 24 see p. 62). Only the decrees in Dem. 18 and some of the documents inserted into Aeschin. 1 and Dem. 21 must be rejected as spurious.

ξένους εἰσιέναι, καὶ τὰ γέρρα ἀναιρεῖν, ἵνα κύριος ὢν αὐτὸς αὑτοῦ ἕκαστος σκοπῆται πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄντινα μέλλει πολίτην ποιήσεσθαι, εἰ ἄξιός ἐστι τῆς δωρεᾶς ὁ μέλλων λήψεσθαι. Admittedly, it is only stated explicitly in the third law that the 6,000 citizens constitute a *quorum* and not a majority voting for the proposal. In this case, however, an argument from analogy must be allowed, and the conclusion is that all three laws prescribe a quorum of 6,000.

It is remarkable that the decisions requiring a quorum are always made by ballot[46] and not, as was usual in the assembly, by show of hands. The explanation is probably that a ballot was the only way by which it could be ascertained whether 6,000 citizens were present. Leaving aside the difficulties raised by counting 6,000 hands with precision, we must admit that only a ballot could guarantee that nobody voted twice or abstained from voting. Let us suppose that only 5,000 turned up. If 4,000 voted for a proposal but suspected that the attendance was not sufficient to constitute the required quorum, a part of them, for example 1,000, could have voted against the proposal too if the vote was taken by show of hands. In this case the decree would seemingly have been passed with 4,000 votes against 2,000. Reversely, a minority could have blocked a proposal if they abstained from voting, in which case the decree would have been passed with an overwhelming majority but not by the required quorum. Such devices were precluded when the people voted by ballot since we may assume by analogy with the voting procedure practised in the courts that no citizen had any possibility of using both his ψῆφοι and that no citizen could obtain his *per diem* unless he actually cast his vote (Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 68). To abstain from voting would mean to forfeit the drachma obtained for attending the assembly.

Furthermore, voting by ballot is in my opinion an indication that the number 6,000 was taken seriously. Sceptical historians may perhaps object that '6,000 votes' only means 'many votes' and that the Athenians did not care whether actually 6,000 votes or 5,000 were cast. This scepticism can be ruled out when the vote was taken by ballot. The ψῆφοι must have been counted with precision, and the sources testify to the Athenians' respect for procedure and formalities. The complicated procedure for appointing the jurors is a well-known

[46] The text of all three laws gives κρύβδην ψηφίζεσθαι, which is explained by the phrase ψῆφον διδόναι found in Dem. 59.89 and in the citizenship decrees. See *infra* n.55.

example,[47] and if the Athenians could carry on a lawsuit for one whole day because a debt to the state amounting to seven minae was three days overdue (Dem. 19.293), I do not doubt that 6,000 votes mean 6,000 votes. Occasionally a decision may have been ratified by for example 5,990 votes, but then a *graphe paranomon* was probably brought by one of the politicians opposing the decree and he would presumably have argued in the speech delivered before the jurors that democracy could not be upheld unless the decrees were passed according to the strict letter of the law.

In his paraphrase of the law on citizenship decrees Apollodorus supplies us with the important information that the vote requiring the quorum was taken at the beginning of the meeting. It would no doubt have been too complicated in the middle of a meeting to let the whole people pass by the voting urns and back again to their seats. A debate was unnecessary since the decree had already been discussed at the previous *ecclesia*. It needed only its ratification, and the most reasonable procedure must have been to place the voting urns near the entrance and take the vote before the beginning of the actual meeting. No matter how the voting was organized we may infer from Apollodorus' information that only one decree could be ratified during one meeting of the assembly.

From the three laws prescribing a quorum most historians have concluded that occasionally more than 6,000 citizens must have attended the *ecclesia* and that the decisions requiring the quorum must have been gathered together and passed in the infrequent 'plenary assemblies'.

This statement is open to at least three serious objections: (1) The way the vote was taken precludes the possibility of gathering together the proposals requiring a quorum of 6,000. (2) The preserved inscriptions show that the ratification of a citizenship decree could be undertaken at any meeting of the assembly. (3) Accordingly, the notion 'plenary assemblies' is pure fantasy without any foundation in the sources.

Both the granting of *adeia*[48] and the passing of a νόμος ἐπ' ἀνδρί[49]

[47] *Cf.* Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 63ff.

[48] The assembly's granting of *adeia* is referred to in Patrokleides' amnesty decree, And. 1.77.

[49] We have three examples of privileges to named persons passed by the assembly in the form of decrees, but referred to the *nomothetai* for ratification (*IG* II/III² 222,41ff; *IG* II/III² 330,18ff; *Syll.*³ 298,37ff). In these cases the decision made by the *nomtaothei* must be a

may have been a rare occurrence, but we know positively that the Athenians frequently passed citizenship decrees. The first known instance of a double vote as described in the speech *Against Neaera* is a decree passed in 368 B.C. and bestowing citizen rights on Dionysius I of Syracuse.[50] From this year until the abolition of democracy in 322 we know of some sixty persons who obtained citizen rights by decree. Seventeen decrees are preserved on stone,[51] and in addition the literary sources provide us with forty-seven names.[52] As usual our sources are scanty, and we may safely assume that more than one hundred and probably several hundred foreigners were made citizens by decree

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νόμος ἐπ' ἀνδρί, and accordingly the decree prescribing the ratification before the *nomothetai* must have been passed by a quorum of 6,000 citizens.

[50] *IG* II/III² 103. The double vote is not referred to in the citizenship decrees from the period before 368 (*IG* II/III² 1, 10, 19, 25).

[51] *IG* II/III² 103 (369/8) Dionysius I (*PA* 4269), *cf. SEG* XVI 46. *IG* II/III² 109 (363/2) Astycrates (*PA* 2654), *cf. SEG* XVI 47. *Hesperia* 13 (1944) 229 no.3 (357/6) Aristomenes (not in *PA*). *IG* II/III² 185 (*ante a.* 353/2) ? . *IG* II/III² 207 (349/8) Orontes (*PA* 11490), *cf. SEG* XV 92, XXI 261; Bengtson no.324. *IG* II/III² 222 (344/3) Pisithides (not in *PA*). *IG* II/III² 237 (338/7) Phormio (*PA* 14961) and Carphina (*PA* 8261), *cf. SEG* XVII 24, XXI 266, XXIV 95. *IG* II/III² 251 (*ante a.* 336/5) ? . *IG* II/III² 282 (*ante a.* 336/5) ? . *IG* II/III² 297 (*ante a.* 336/5) ? . *IG* II/III² 301 (*ante a.* 336/5) ? . *IG* II/III² 336 (334/3) Archippus (*PA* 2564), *cf. SEG* XV 97, XXI 273. *IG* II/III² 369 (323/2) ?? of Bosporus, *cf. SEG* XXI 298, XXIV 102. *IG* II/III² 405 (335/29) ? . *IG* II/III² 438 (*post a.* 336/5) ? . *IG* II/III² 448 (323/2) Euphron (*PA* 6126), *cf. SEG* XXI 297, XXIII 59. *Hesperia* 13 (1944) 232 no.5 (*ante* 321/0) ? of Plataea. Furthermore, *cf. IG* II/III² 511 (*fin. s.* IV) and 578 (*s.* IV).

[52] *Agauus* (*PA* 108) Dem. 23.202. *Alexis* (*PA* 549) *Suda s.v. Alcimachus* (*PA* 626) Harp. *s.v. Alcimachus* (not in *PA*) *IG* II/III² 391. *Amphis* (*PA* 785) *Suda s.v., cf. IG* II/III² 347. *Antipatrus* (*PA* 1180) Harp. *s.v.* Just. *Epit.* 9.4.5. *Antiphanes* (*PA* 1219) *Suda s.v. Apollonides* (*PA* 1504) Dem. 59.91. *Apollonius* (not in *PA*) Dem. 20.30. *Ariobarzanes* (*PA* 1621) Dem. 23.141, 202. *Aristodemus* (not in *PA*) schol. Aeschin. 2.15; Dem. 19 hyp. 2.2. *Arybbas* (not in *PA*) *IG* II/III² 226. *Bianor* (*PA* 2850) Dem. 23.12. *Bryaxis* (*PA* 2930) Clem.Al. *Protr.* 4.48. *Callias* (*PA* 7898) Hyp. 1.20; Aeschin. 3.85. *Cersobleptes* (not in *PA*) Dem. 12.8, 23.203. *Chaerephilus* (*PA* 15187) Din. 1.43. *Charidemus* (*PA* 15380) Dem. 23.65. *Clearchus* (*PA* 8485) Dem. 20.84. *Conon* (*PA* 8700) Din. 1.43. *Diogenes* (not in *PA*) *IG* II/III² 3474. *Epigenes* (*PA* 4782) Din. 1.43. *Euderces* (not in *PA*) Dem. 23.203. *Euthycrates* (not in *PA*) Hyp. fr.80–91 (Baiter and Sauppe). *Harpalus* (*PA* 2251) Ath. 586D, 596B. *Heraclides* (*PA* 6488) Dem. 23.119. *Leucon* (not in *PA*) Dem. 20.30. *Lycophron* (not in *PA*) Arist. *Rhet.* 1410a18. *Menelaus* (*PA* 9961) *Syll.*³ 188. *Neoptolemus* (*PA* 10647) schol. Dem. 5.6. *Paerisades* (not in *PA*) Dem. 20.29, *cf. IG* II/III² 212. *Pamphilus* (*PA* 11555) Din. 1.43. *Phayllus* (not in *PA*) Dem. 23.124. *Pheidippus* (*PA* 14163) Din. 1.43. *Pheidon* (*PA* 14184) Din. 1.43. *Philip of Macedon* (not in *PA*) Plut. *Dem.* 22.4. *Philiscus* (*PA* 14430) Dem. 23.141, 202. *Phormio* (*PA* 14951) Dem. 46.13. *Phrasierides* (*PA* 14976) Dem. 23.202. *Pitholaus* (*PA* 11762) Dem. 59.91. *Polysthenes* (not in *PA*) Dem. 23.202. *Python* (*PA* 12479) Dem. 23.119. *Simon* (*PA* 12709) Dem. 23.12. *Spartocus* (not in *PA*) Dem. 20.29, *cf. IG* II/III² 212. *Sthennis* (*PA* 12641) *Suda s.v. Κάρανος. Taurosthenes* (*PA* 13435) Din. 1.44, Aeschin. 3.85. *Teres* (not in *PA*) Dem. 12.8. *Cf.* A. Billheimer, *Naturalization in Athenian Law and Practice* (Gettysburg 1917) 110–28: List of Naturalized Athenians.

during this period of less than fifty years. Consequently 6,000 citizens must have attended the meetings of the assembly on several occasions every year. As I have argued above the notion 'plenary assemblies' is based on the assumption that 6,000 was a rare attendance figure, but even rejecting the plenary assemblies as pure fantasy we are still faced with the possibility that the proposals requiring a quorum of 6,000 were reserved for the ten principal assemblies (*ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι*), which were presumably attended by more citizens than the other ordinary assemblies. In the principal assemblies important matters were discussed such as the defence of the country and the food supply. Furthermore, legal claims for the right of succession to inheritances and of marrying an heiress were read out to the people at the principal meetings, undoubtedly because the information reached the largest number of citizens by this form of 'notification'.[53] Finally, we know from the *Constitution of Athens* that the *per diem* paid out to the citizens for attending the assembly was one-and-a-half drachmas at the principal meeting against one drachma only at all other meetings.[54]

The ratification of citizenship decrees, however, was not reserved for the *ἐκκλησίαι κύριαι*. The epigraphical evidence shows that the decree itself was passed at the first meeting, subject to the proviso that the people's decision be ratified at the subsequent meeting.[55] We must conclude that the decree was passed but not published until after ratification.[56] In the speech *Against Neaera* it is explicitly stated that the quorum of 6,000 was required at the second meeting when the decree was submitted to the people for ratification.[57] Yet two of the decrees preserved on stone have been passed at an *ἐκκλησία κυρία*,[58] and accordingly more than 6,000 citizens must have attended the subsequent *ecclesia*, which cannot have been an *ἐκκλησία κυρία*.

[53] Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 43.4; Dem. 43.5.

[54] Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 62.2. See p.133.

[55] In the earliest decrees: *ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ*; later: *εἰς τὴν πρώτην ἐκκλησίαν*, sometimes with the addition *κατὰ τὸν νόμον*. *Cf. IG* II/III² 109 B,16–19. *IG* II/III² 185,2–5. *IG* II/III² 207,6–7. *IG* II/III² 222,23–26. *IG* II/III² 251,5–10. *IG* II/III² 282,1–3. *IG* II/III² 297,3–6. *IG* II/III² 301,1–3. *IG* II/III² 336,20–23. *SEG* XXI 298,26–29 (*IG* II/III² 369). *IG* II/III² 448,31–33. *Hesperia* 13 (1944) no.3,13–15; no.5.

[56] *Cf.* the decrees which, in their published form, presuppose a ratification by the *nomothetai*. See *supra* n.49.

[57] Dem. 59.89: *ἐὰν μὴ τῇ ψήφῳ εἰς τὴν ἐπιοῦσαν ἐκκλησίαν ὑπερεξακισχίλιοι Ἀθηναίων ψηφίσωνται κρύβδην ψηφιζόμενοι.*

[58] *IG* II/III² 336, *IG* II/III² 448.

Moreover, the other decrees published on stone must have been passed without the people knowing whether the next meeting would be an ἐκκλησία κυρία. As is well known a principal meeting could be placed on any day in the prytany from the third to the thirty-sixth,[59] probably according to a decision made by the *prytaneis* or the Council. So a citizenship decree must always have been passed by the Athenians on the assumption that it was likely that 6,000 citizens would be present at the subsequent meeting. The accepted view that an ordinary meeting of the assembly was attended only by 2,000 to 3,000 citizens must be adjusted. Presumably 6,000 was a normal attendance, and at the principal meetings even more citizens were present due to the importance of the matters discussed and to the additional fee of half a drachma.

V. The Archaeological Evidence

The literary and epigraphical sources give us an idea of the minimum number of citizens attending the meetings of the assembly. Conversely, on the basis of the excavations of the Pnyx we are in a position to calculate the maximum attendance.

The joint Greek–American excavations of the Pnyx carried out in 1930–31 have established three periods in the history of this meeting place of the Athenian people. The Pnyx of the first period served the Athenians as their political forum from Cleisthenes to the oligarchic revolution in 404 B.C. The auditorium was reconstructed and the whole structure reversed in the years around 400, and this Pnyx II was improved and greatly enlarged by Lycurgus in the years around 330. In the course of the third century, however, the theatre of Dionysus became the regular meeting place of the assembly, and Lycurgus' magnificent structure embellished with two stoas (Pnyx III) was used only once a year for the electoral assembly (Poll. 8.133).

Concerning the size of the auditorium the excavators have arrived at the following conclusions:

Pnyx I (*ca* 500–*ca* 400)	*ca* 2,400 m²
Pnyx II (*ca* 400–*ca* 330)	*ca* 2,600 m²
Pnyx III (*ca* 330–)	*ca* 5,550 m²

The problematical figure is 2,600 m² for Pnyx II. The excavators have,

[59] On the 3rd day of the prytany: *IG* II/III² 363. On the 36th: *IG* II/III² 367. *Cf. IG* II/III² 336, 340, 356, 359, 362, 368 and 448. *Hesperia* 13 (1944) no.6.

arbitrarily, placed the *bema* of period II about 10 m in front of the surviving *bema* (of period III).[60] Dinsmoor[61] and McDonald[62] have objected to this reconstruction and adduced important arguments in favour of the view that the *bema* was placed further south near the *bema* of period III, thereby giving a full semicircular form and an area of *ca* 3,200 m² to the auditorium.

We have only scanty information about how the auditorium was fitted out. It is apparent from several passages in speeches delivered before the assembly that the citizens were seated.[63] In the fifth century the people sat on the bare rock[64] (perhaps on cushions), whereas the *prytaneis* were seated on wooden benches.[65] For the fourth century our only sources are two passages in Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae*[66] where he uses the expression ἕδρας καταλαβεῖν about the audience. ἕδραι probably mean some kind of artificial seat, perhaps wooden benches, but we do not know.

On the reasonable assumption that people in antiquity required the same space as they do in our times, we are in a position to calculate the maximum number of citizens which the Pnyx could accommodate. The minimum space required for a human being attending a large meeting seems to be 0.4 m², a figure comprising the space filled by rows of benches (or cushions) and the space between the rows.[67] With this figure as our basis we arrive at the following conclusion:

Pnyx I	6,000 citizens max.
Pnyx II	6,500 citizens max. (excavators' scheme)
	8,000 citizens max. (Dinsmoor-McDonald reconstruction)
Pnyx III	13,400 citizens max.

Thus, the Pnyx of period I had room for exactly 6,000 citizens, whereas Pnyx II and Pnyx III could easily accommodate gatherings of this size.

[60] Kourouniotes and Thompson 121, Travlos fig. 595 and 596.

[61] See *supra* n.1.

[62] McDonald 71–76.

[63] *e.g.* Thuc. 6.13.1 παρακαθῆσθαι.

[64] Ar. *Eq.*754, 783; *Vesp.* 31–33, 42–44. Kourouniotes and Thompson 111–12.

[65] Ar. *Ach.* 25.

[66] Ar. *Eccl.* 21, 86–87. McDonald 75ff.

[67] The Danish building regulations of 1972 (6,6,1 sec.6) prescribe a maximum of two persons *per* square meter, but this figure is fixed with a view to the fire hazard. An architect constructing lecture halls and a consultant architect designing sports centres have informed me that 0.4 m² is sufficient space for a person attending a large open-air meeting if the audience is seated either on narrow benches or on cushions.

It cannot be a coincidence that the maximum attendance in the fifth century is identical with the quorum required in the three fourth-century laws discussed above. On the other hand, the auditorium of all three periods was too small to admit all Athenians or even a majority of them.

Moreover, it is remarkable that both reconstructions resulted in an enlargement of the seating floor. The assembly place suiting the Athenians of the fifth century was not large enough for the citizens after the restoration of the democracy in 403, and the most magnificent rebuilding of the Pnyx was undertaken by Lycurgus in a period usually connected with the decline of democracy.

The written sources point to the same conclusion. In so far as the passages in Thucydides and Aristophanes have any value as sources we may infer that the meetings of the assembly were attended by fewer citizens in the fifth century than in the fourth, and this in spite of the fact that the number of citizens was declining. On the basis of Thucydides 2.13.3 the population of Attica has been estimated at *ca* 43,000 adult male citizens in the year 431, whereas a century later only 21,000 citizens were left according to the population census conducted by Demetrius of Phalerum in Ol. 117 (Ath. 272c). So the meetings of the assembly were never attended by more than one-seventh of the citizens in the fifth century, whereas between one-third and one-fourth showed up in the fourth century. Contrary to the accepted view the conclusion seems to be that the people's interest in their democratic institutions was greater in the fourth century than in the fifth and that popular participation was increasing after the restoration of the democracy.

This development is even more remarkable considering that the powers of the assembly were restricted during the fourth century and that the decisions made by the assembly were increasingly subjected to control exercised by the people's court.[68] The most reasonable explanation, in my opinion, is the introduction of the ἐκκλησιαστικόν in the beginning of the fourth century. In his *Politics* Aristotle suggests that participation in the government can be stimulated in two different ways: either by fining those who stay away or by paying those who attend (4.13, 1297a). The latter method is the more democratic solution to the problem. Whereas the Athenians in the fifth century used τὸ μεμιλτωμένον σχοινίον and similar coercive measures, in the fourth

[68] *Cf.* Hansen, *Sovereignty* 15–21.

century they switched over to payment for attendance,[69] apparently with good results. According to the *Constitution of Athens* Agyrrhius first introduced a fee of one obol; afterwards Heraclides of Clazomenae, with the surname 'king', a fee of two obols; and then again Agyrrhius a fee of three obols.[70] In the time of Aristotle the rate was one drachma and a half for an *ekklesia kyria* and one drachma for other assemblies (Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 62.2). During a year the Athenians held ten *ekklesiai kyriai* and at least thirty other meetings of the assembly (Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 43.3). Supposing that 6,000 was a normal attendance, the expenditure on ἐκκλησιαστικόν amounted to *ca* 50 talents. Thus payment for attending the assemblies must have been one of the largest items of the budget, together with the theoric payments, which cannot be calculated; but they must have been considerable since they are described by Demades as the glue of the democracy (Plut. *Mor.* 1011B). The theoric payments and the payment for attending the meetings of the assembly shed light on an important problem. Many historians hold that the Athenian democracy was made possible only by the income from the Delian League and that the fourth-century democracy was a shadow of the Periclean democracy. Professor Finley, for example, writes in *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (49–50) "Then, when the empire was forcibly dissolved at the end of the fifth century B.C., the system [the Athenian type of democracy] was so deeply entrenched that no one dared to replace it, difficult as it was in the fourth century to provide the necessary financial underpinning." This statement does not harmonize with the fact that ἐκκλησιαστικόν and θεωρικά were *introduced* in the fourth century. The fourth-century Athenian democracy must have been a much more costly institution than the imperialistic democracy led by Perikles, and in this respect the democratic constitution became more radical after the abolition of the oligarchy in 403, whereas in other respects

[69] τὸ μεμιλτωμένον σχοινίον was probably out of use in the fourth century. Following Coulon, van Leeuwen and Ussher (*supra* n.1) I take Ar. *Eccl.* 376–79 to mean that *miltos* in the fourth century was used to exclude those who arrived to find the 'House' full.

[70] Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 41.3. Ar. *Eccl.* 183–88, 289–310, 383–95. The Aristophanes passages allow of two interpretations: (1) late-comers, who found the 'House' full, were excluded from attendance as well as from payment; (2) the three obols were paid out to only some of those who attended the meeting of the assembly. If we accept (2), we do not know whether the dole was paid out to, say, 1,000 or 6,000 citizens. It might be suggested that the three obols were paid out to the required quorum of 6,000 and that *miltos* was used to make sure that the *per diem* was obtained by the 6,000 who arrived first. See *supra* n.69.

the democratic restoration meant a change of the political system towards a more moderate form of democracy.[71]

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[71] *Cf.* Hansen, *Sovereignty* 59–61; Jones 5–6.