

ISONOMIA AND CLEISTHENES: A Note*

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Oegstgeest

In his recent and stimulating book *Nomos and the Beginnings of the Athenian Democracy*¹ M. Ostwald has re-opened the debate on isonomia and Cleisthenes' interpretation of it. The background of this discussion is the theory that it was in the final decade of the 6th century B.C. that the word "thesmos" in the sense of 'law', 'statute' (imposed by a lawgiver upon a community) was replaced by "nomos" and that Cleisthenes introduced the term "nomos" ('law') into Athenian political life in the period of his reforms. In Cleisthenes' "isonomia" both components of the word are equally important. *Iisos* denotes the fundamental political equality and *nomos* points to the fact that Cleisthenes for the first time proposed concrete 'laws' to the Athenian *ekklēsia*, thereby implying that it was the Athenian *dēmos*—and not a lawgiver—who took the responsibility of accepting a series of measures.

Elsewhere I have expressed my doubts about Ostwald's theory about "nomos".² I do not think that he has shown or, for that matter, that it can be shown that *nomos* in the sense of 'law',

* I should like to thank Prof. R. S. Stroud at Berkeley who corrected my English and offered valuable criticism. Whatever faults remain are my sole responsibility. I have omitted references to studies, mentioned in Ostwald's comprehensive bibliography: the names of the scholars should suffice; see also the second edition of S. Brunnsäker's *The Tyrant-slayers of Kritios and Nesiotes* (1971), with bibliographical supplement on p. 186 and B. Borecky, *Die politische Isonomie*, *Eirene* 9 (1971), 5 ff.; M. Moggi, *In merito alla datazione dei <tirannicid> di Antenor*, *Ann. Sc. Norm. Sup. Pisa*, Cl. di Lett. e Filos., Ser. III, vol. I (1971), 17 ff. came to my notice after the completion of the manuscript. All I could do was to insert some brief notes on hopefully appropriate places. [The same is true for D. W. Knight, *Some Studies in Athenian Politics in the fifth century B.C.* (*Historia Einzelschriften*, Heft 13, 1970) and P. J. Bicknell, *Studies in Athenian Politics and Genealogy* (*Historia Einzelschriften*, Heft 19, 1972).]

¹ Oxford 1969.

² See my reviews in *Mnemosyne* Ser. IV, vol. XXV, 1972 and in *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 1972, 85-87.

'statute' is unknown in the better part of the 6th century. I quite agree with him that Cleisthenes' *isonomia* was an extremely important concept in Athenian political life; not so much, however, because he was the first Athenian to substitute *nomos* for *thesmos* in the sense of 'statute' but rather because he (with or without his aristocratic colleagues) substituted "isonomia" for "eunomia" and subsequently re-interpreted the word "isonomia". This is what I would like to show in this note.

The earliest known instances of *isonomia* seem to show that the term was primarily used in contrast with monarchical or tyrannical rule. Levêque and Vidal-Naquet, Fornara and Will have recently and independently emphasized this point.¹ O's attempt to show that for Alcmaeon (who provides the oldest example of *isonomia*) "under different circumstances *ἰσονομία* might . . . be opposed to oligarchy as well as to monarchy" (101/2) has been effectively discarded by Will, to whose account I fully subscribe. The implication of O's thesis, of course, is that *isonomia* always was the basically democratic principle of political equality. Since he interprets Alcmaeon's *isonomia tōn dunameōn* as the *isonomia* between the two members of a pair and not as the *isonomia* between all the qualities or powers mentioned in A's fragment (six at least), he interprets political *isonomia* also as the equality of *nomos* for two elements, viz. the rulers and the ruled. He frankly admits that "there is no indication that we have here in Alcmaeon an anticipation of the later definition of democracy as the form of government whose citizens rule and are ruled in turn" (106). For surely census requirements were still made for office-holding in the late 6th century.² In point of fact, however, there is no question of *isonomia* between two elements: the *isonomia tōn dunameōn* is an

¹ P. Levêque—P. Vidal-Naquet, *Clisthène l'Athènenien* (Paris 1969; a book which has been rather neglected in American studies, e.g. by Ostwald and Fornara); C. W. Fornara, *The Cult of Harmodius and Aristogeiton*, *Philologus* 114 (1970), 155–80 esp. 171–177; E. Will, *Rev. de Phil.* 45 (1971), 102–114 (review-article on Ostwald's book); in the same sense Borecky, *art. cit.*, 17/18; see also Chr. Meier, *Entstehung des Begriffs 'Demokratie'*. *Vier Prolegomena zu einer historischen Theorie* (Frankfurt 1970), 40/1.

² For the archonship the two highest census classes were eligible (see most recently E. Badian, *Archons and Strategoi*, *Antichthon* 5 (1971), 1 ff. esp. 9/10, 17).

isonomia between at least six elements. I feel that there is much to be said for Will's theory that isonomia pertains to an equal distribution (*nemein*) of the influence of the various *dynamicis* rather than to an "equality of *nomos*" for all of them.

However this may be, isonomia basically seems to be the opposite of tyranny and there is no evidence for the theory that from the beginning onwards *isos* had radical democratic overtones of arithmetical equality. On the contrary, an "equal distribution" of rights and powers, being the opposite of the complete unequality of power of the tyrant over against *all* other people, may very well point to a system of proportional, hierarchical equality. A well-known passage in Herodotus (III, 142/3) perhaps confirms this point. Here "isonomia" is the successor and—once again—the antipode of tyranny. For the Samians the essence of isonomia probably was that "the rule was now placed in the middle" (ἐγώ δὲ ἐς μέσον τὴν ἀρχὴν τιθεὶς ισονομίην ὑπὸ προσαγορέων).¹ There was no longer a *despotēs*; the citizens were *homoioi*. Since H. does not go into constitutional details and the contrast with the preceding tyranny may well have given rise to the kind of general thoughts as expressed by Maeandrius, I see no objection against accepting H's report as a reliable reflection of what actually happened in Samos (and not as an example of seeing the past with the eyes of the present). The emphasis on *tὸ μέσον*, i.e. on the people assembled in the *ekklēsia*, in the centre of political life, should be regarded as a reference to the essence of isonomia. In the *ekklēsia* the people have political equality, are politically equal. It is a kind of one man—one vote system. Every citizen is allowed to participate in the discussions. Whether for the Samians in 522 B.C. isonomia had a connotation of "nemein" or "nomos" is a question of arm-chair wisdom. There probably was a general feeling that under isonomia political rights were both "equally" distributed and based on the existing (and not necessarily on new) *nomoi*.² Maeandrius may

¹ For *ἐς μέσον τιθέναι* see M. Détienne, *Les maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque* (Paris 1967), 95 f.

² Cf. B. Borecky, *art. cit.*, 16: "Beide Deutungen des Wortes *ισονομία* waren offenbar möglich, auch schon deshalb, weil *νέμω* und *νόμος* im Grunde genommen von der gleichen Grundlage abgeleitet wurden und das Bewusstsein der Verwandschaft beider Worte bestand in Griechenland auch im klassischen Zeitalter".

not have envisaged the proposition of new laws. The very disappearance of the tyrant and the subsequent revival of respect for the *existing* laws, coupled with the emphasis on everybody's right to go to the *ekklēsia* for discussion and voting, may well have created an atmosphere of isonomia; on the basis of the *existing* laws people somehow felt that they were politically equal. By placing the rule in the middle Maeandrius probably offered the Samians an psychological innovation but not a "constitutional innovation" (O, 107) and certainly not one necessarily based upon the introduction of new laws. O. goes one step further. He argues that Maeandrius' (and later Aristagoras') isonomia included not only the right of all citizens to participate in the election of the officials *but also the right of all citizens to be candidates for election to high office* (111, see also 108, 120; italics are mine, H.W.P.). The truth is that we have no precise ideas about the details of Samian constitutional life in the 6th century B.C. It seems rather improbable that at so early a stage of archaic history *all* citizens had the right to be candidates for high office. Cleisthenes, possibly another champion of isonomia, definitely did not abolish the census-criteria for the archonship or the function of treasurer (*tamias*). There is no reason to suppose that in this field Maeandrius had more progressive ideas than Cleisthenes.

Will¹ has suggested that the *homoioi* over whom Polycrates previously ruled, were "des aristocrates samiens et non le petit peuple". This can neither be proved nor disproved. But it is a fact that, when ca. 500 B.C. the Samian tyrant Aiakes was expelled and *isonomia* established, the category of οἱ τι ἔχοντες played an important role in the new regime (VI, 13; V, 37; VI, 22). Once again *isonomia* basically is the opposite of tyranny. The 'equality' of the new regime seems to have been proportional, hierarchical. The property-owners were so to speak 'more equal' than the *plēthos*. All citizens may have been equal in that they all could go to the *ekklēsia* and vote but it was only a small minority of 'full' and well-to-do citizens that was qualified to hold office.

The well-known constitutional debate in Herod. III 80 ff. offers another example of the use of isonomia. Admittedly Herodotus

¹ E. Will, *Notes sur les régimes politiques de Samos au Ve siècle*, REA 71 (1969), 3 ff., esp. 305 note 2.

makes Otanes do the same as Maeandrius: he urged his fellow-conspirators "to place the rule for the Persians in the middle" (ἐξ μέσου Πέρσησι καταθεῖναι τὰ πρήγματα). He elaborates this vague expression further down. Isonomia is the system whereby the πλῆθος rules. The rule of the people has the following essential characteristics: sortition of magistrates, their accountability and public deliberation of all matters of public policy. Now sortition seems to have been an element of later Periclean 5th century democracy.¹ I agree with O., that a discussion on the most desirable form of government in Persia may well have been held by Otanes *c.s.*, but O. also concedes that most of the arguments used have a 5th century flavor and that, more in general, "the content of what H.'s informants told him, has possibly been cast into a form and conceptual framework current in the intellectual circles in which he moved in Athens and Thurii". Whatever this may mean exactly, I can only hope that O. agrees when I assume that H. seems to have retrojected to ca. 520 B.C. at least one feature of later democracy. The implication is that we should beware of assuming that sortition and accountability were features of the Maeandrian democracy. The link between the two passages is that in both cases things are placed in the middle, h.e. that the citizens all could participate in the discussion on political matters.

Thus in 6th century Samian isonomia was a rather vague word; but it was important for M.'s audience as the opposite of tyranny. There is no evidence that it was based on new laws, e.g. concerning sortition and accountability. O. admits that in Herodotus, Alcmaeon and the Harmodius-skolia isonomia is opposed to tyranny but at the same time he believes that this is not the essential mean-

¹ Admittedly in Solon's time, i.e. in the 6th century B.C., the Athenians are said to have practiced sortition, preceded by prokrasis by the tribes (Ath. Pol. 8, 1). Cleisthenes may have advocated election of archons, followed by sortition for the distribution of the particular posts over the archons elected (cf. Badian, *art.cit.*). From 486 B.C. we have once again prokrasis, followed by sortition for the archonship. The change from "election + sortition" to (double) sortition probably took place in or after 457/6 B.C. In Herodotus III, 80 Otanes only mentions the lot. There is no reference to preceding election. Sortition, and nothing more than sortition, does not fit in with late 6th century practice; it suits, at least in Athens, the developed Periclean democracy. Cf. now also D. W. Knight, *op. cit.*, 17 who reasonably maintains that in 508 B.C. Isagoras was elected by the vote of the Athenians.

ing of the term, *inter alia* because in the debate of the Persian nobles isonomia is opposed both to one-man-rule and to oligarchy. But are we, then, to believe that when Maeandrius (or, for that matter, Aristagoras (*Herod.* V, 37)) proclaimed "isonomia", he had the constitutional debate in H. III, 80 in his head or that Herodotus, when he had Maeandrius use the term isonomia, meant him to use it in the same sense which Otanes ascribed to it? Even if one answers the latter question in the affirmative, there is the further question whether H. perhaps anachronistically has retrojected later elements of isonomia to the last part of the sixth century. In the Samian context isonomia followed upon tyranny and consequently e contrario it probably derived much of its meaning from that fact.

It is about Athenian "isonomia" that we undoubtedly know most or, rather, are least ignorant. Herodotus does not use the word isonomia to characterize Cleisthenes' regime. But the word occurs in the well-known Harmodius-skolia. The latter have been studied extensively by Jacoby, Ehrenberg, Bowra, Podlecki and Fornara.¹ Ostwald returns to the subject. The skolia have four stanzas which in tone and content belong to two distinct groups. In nos. 11 and 12 there is little or no political ideology. No. 11 celebrates the immortality of Harmodius who is equated with Achilleus and Diomedes: he is a true, immortal hero. No. 12 mentions Harmodius and Aristogeiton and their attack on Hipparchus, ἀνδρα τύραννον (a tyrant, not *the* tyrant). These two skolia may well have been the product of the united Athenian nobility during its struggle against the tyrants in the years 514/510 B.C., but we shall return to this possibility further down (see p. 72/3). Stanzas 10 and 13 differ considerably from 11 and 12. Harmodius and Aristogeiton are praised for having killed *the* tyrant and for having made Athens ἴσονομος. Ostwald once again starts from the assumption that *ἴσονομία* denotes political equality and is usually associated with a democratic form of government. The basis for this assumption is his own analysis of the above-mentioned passages of Alcmaeon and Herodotus, and Vlastos' extensive studies on Isonomia and Isonomia Politike. As a result both Vlastos and Ostwald argue that, since

¹ For the first four scholars see O.'s bibliography; C. W. Fornara, Philol. 1970, 171 ff.

in Athens the democracy did not start until the year of Cleisthenes' reform (508/7 B.C.), this year is the *terminus post quem* for the skolia.

This in its turn implies that Cleisthenes (a) has deliberately promoted the case of Harmodius and Aristogeiton and (b) has abandoned his claim to be the true liberator of Athens. Why did Cleisthenes swallow the two big mistakes in the skolia so easily?¹ The answer is ingenious and subtle: 1) Between 514 and 510 the united and exiled nobility of Athens celebrated the exploit of Harmodius, the murderer of Hipparchus; when they managed to expel Hippias they were only too happy to credit their "heroes and martyrs", who had sustained them in exile, with the actual achievement; 2) This myth provided a good opportunity to suppress the role of the Spartans; 3) The heroic achievement of H. and A. easily captured the popular imagination; 4) Cleisthenes happily sacrificed his "true" claim to his desire to enlist popular support for his policy by presenting it as the continuation of what H. and A. had set out to accomplish: a variation, then, on the well-known theme "Paris vaut bien une messe".

The strong point in this chain of arguments surely is the idea that political leaders happily pay lip-service to a highly debatable view of the past, if that view is popular with the crowd, i.e. with the voters. The weak point is the theory that "isonomia" was so strongly associated with democracy that only the "founder of democracy" Cleisthenes may be held to have launched the slogan. Vlastos makes the same mistake as Ostwald. He retrojects 5th cent. democratic ideology to the last quarter of the 6th century. Herod. III, 80 is supposed to contain the "democratic" views of the late 6th century.

From Thuc. III, 62, 3-4, it appears that as late as 427 B.C. *ἰσόνομος* could be applied to an *δλιγαρχία*. In the political theory of that time an *δλιγαρχία* *ἰσόνομος* denotes a constitutional regime in which (a) active citizenship was restricted to those who owned a minimum amount of capital and (b) the latter enjoyed equal political rights. It is a matter of political equality for a number of qualified citizens, not for *the* citizens. Thuc. tells us that in 427 B.C. the Thebans defended themselves before a Spartan commission of judges against charges of Medism during the Persian wars, by saying that in

¹ The 'mistakes' are: a) "H. and A. slew *the* tyrant";
b) "They established isonomia".

that period they had neither an ὅλη. λοον, nor a democracy but a small oligarchical clique (a dynasteia of a few man). The problem is whether ὅλη. λοον, is a reference to the constitution under which the Thebans lived ca. 427 B.C. or to the constitution which the Spartans had in 480/79 B.C. But whatever the answer is, unfortunately we can never be sure that in 480 B.C. the people themselves would have used the term ὅλη. λοον, to characterize a certain form of a polis-organization. In other words: even if the Thebans could be shown to have had in mind the Spartan constitution of 480 B.C., we have to reckon with the possibility that they have retrojected a political term from the later 5th century to the earlier part of that same century. Thuc. III, 62 does not show that in the last decade of the sixth century isonomia was an ambivalent term, used both by democrats and anti-democrats, h.e. oligarchs, consequently it cannot help us to refute Vlastos' views on the exclusively democratic character of isonomia.

All we know about the connotation of isonomia in the period from 522 B.C. onwards is—as said before—that isonomia was the opposite of tyranny and implied a direct participation of the citizens in the deliberations on political issues. Since the tyrants frequently were the champions of the common man, it is not an unreasonable assumption that those who took over leadership after the tyrants could not avoid paying at least some attention to the *dēmos*. As to isonomia this could mean the following: The united Athenian nobility may have launched the slogan “isonomia” in the period 514-510 B.C. as a means to win the allegiance of the Athenian *dēmos* (peasants, who compared Peisistratus’ rule with a “paradise on earth”,¹ and the beginning urban “proletariat”²) for its struggle with the tyrants. Admittedly the success was meagre for the nobility failed at Leipsydron and had to resort to the Alcmaeonid machinations with Delphi and to the help of the Spartans in order to expel Hippias. But lack of success does not preclude the possibility of a preceding, albeit failing, propaganda-offensive. A prerequisite for this hypothesis is that we accept what G. J. D. Aalders has recently written: isonomia “war eine in konstitutioneller Hinsicht reichlich vage Lösung, mehr negative als positiv bestimmt, welche im Kampfe gegen die Tyrannis erhoben wurde von den Adligen, die Unterstützung von der Seite der breiten Masse des Volkes wünschten und brauchten, die darum nicht die Lösung der alten, ehrwürdigen, aber beim Volke wahrscheinlich nicht so populären eunomia erhoben,

¹ Ath. Pol. 16, 7.

² Cf. Talanta I (1969), 42-44, 50.

jedoch auch einer radikalen Lösung wie isomoiria abhold waren, da diese ihnen zu radikal und zu revolutionär war, nicht nur in politischer, sondern namentlich auch in gesellschaftlicher und wirtschaftlicher Hinsicht”¹. If we assume that there was a correlation between “isonomia” and “placing things in the middle”, the watch-word “isonomia” even in the mouth of aristocrats may have suggested that somehow the *ekklēsia* was actually going to exercise the rights which admittedly Solon had already given *in nuce* but which had remained rather dormant in the post-Solonian period. People need time to get accustomed to the idea of getting up in an assembly and contributing something to a political discussion. In the early 6th century most citizens probably lacked the courage (and perhaps even the desire) to do this. Peisistratus’ rule brought no constitutional innovation but gave the farmers and the urban population more prosperity. For the aristocrats the only way to mobilize the *dēmos* for their case was to emphasize the change in political climate after the expulsion of the tyrants, h.e. to launch the slogan “isonomia”.²

Vlastos’ objection that isonomia cannot have been used as “a neutral term which simply means liberation from tyrannic rule without any positive specification of the sort of government that followed” is an eloquent testimony to the harm which a rather formal kind of philology can do to the study of historical problems. Retrojection of Herod. III, 80 is the basis for Vlastos’ approach. But it is far more important to try to reconstruct the association which *isonomia* raised in the minds of those who first heard the word in a world where tyrants and “Fürstliche Herren” played a dominant role and the *ekklēsia* admittedly did exist but hardly functioned in the proper democratic way of the (post)-Periclean period.

¹ *Die Theorie der gemischten Verfassung im Altertum* (A'dam 1968), 11; cf. id., Lampas I (1968), 45 ff., esp. 56, note 16.

² After I had written down this paragraph I found that C. W. Fornara, *Philologus*, *art. cit.*, esp. 178 defends the same view. I do not think that analysis of the entire collection of songs, to which our four skolia belong, produces any reliable evidence as to the *precise* date of the skolia: nor does a study of the 4 skolia themselves unequivocably show that 10 and 13 cannot belong to the period 514-510. It is the assumption that “isonomous Athēnas” points to the Cleisthenic democracy of 507 B.C. which leads scholars to date these two skolia to that period.

After the expulsion of Hippias the previously united Athenian nobility, as is well-known, soon began to quarrel. As to isonomia this could mean that Isagoras *cum suis* stuck to the original 'vague' ideology of H. and A. establishing an isonomos Athens, whereas Cleisthenes launched a new interpretation of isonomia, embodied in his far-reaching reform of 508/7. Whether Cleisthenes actually continued to use the term isonomia when he turned to the *dēmos*, is a relatively unimportant question. Either he dropped the word for the time being, because it was the slogan of his enemies or he continued to use it, filling the term with a new and concrete meaning and warning the *dēmos* that he was bringing the *true* isonomia, which was betrayed so badly by Isagoras *cum suis*. The latter may well have advertised their point of view by erecting the statues of the Tyrannicides in the year 509/8 (Pliny the Elder): "whatever Cleisthenes may tell you, it is H. and A. who liberated Athens and made it *isonomos*. Cl. is simply betraying the cause he previously defended together with us. These statues show you the champions of true isonomia".

But there is another possibility, viz. that in the period 514/10 B.C. the Athenian aristocrats only sang the skolia 11 and 12 with their politically innocent contents¹ and during that period did not try to mobilize the support of the *dēmos* with ideological slogans about isonomia in Athens.² This alternative, as will be shown, may

¹ Brunnsäker, *op. cit.*, 23, dates skolia 11 and 12 to the period 514/510.

² Quite apart from the question whether or not the united aristocrats used the slogan isonomia as a propaganda-tool to win the *dēmos* for their case, it seems to me that Fornara's theory according to which the aristocrats in 510 B.C. immediately after the expulsion of the tyrants drastically and radically revised the citizenlists and "pushed out" (Herod. V, 69: *ἀπωσμένον*) the whole Athenian plēthos, is improbable and far-fetched (Cl. Ph. 1970, 245, with note 6). That was certainly not the way in which those who expelled the tyrants approached the problem of the supporters of the tyrants, viz. the problem of the *dēmos*. True, the aristocrats need not *explicitly* have sought the support of the *dēmos* but they surely did not their utmost to alienate the *dēmos* as thoroughly as possible; and that is what Fornara's suggestion amounts to. Moreover, *πρὸς τὴν ἔχυτοῦ μοῖραν προστίθεσθαι* (= *προσεταιρίζεσθαι*: V, 69 and 66) is not exactly the same as "giving back the citizenship to those who have lost it" (Ath. Pol. 20, 2), if that is what the words *ἀποδίδους τῷ πλήθει τὴν πολιτείαν* mean! Even if we assume that the 'reactionary nobility unquestionably governed' (246) in the years after 510 B.C., this does not mean that the nobility explicitly wanted to emphasize this fact by depriving the better part of the *dēmos* of its citizenship. The nobility was

imply that Cl. possibly launched the slogan of isonomia in an attempt to draw the people into his *hetaireia* but it certainly does not imply, as Vlastos and Ehrenberg have assumed, that the *skolia* 10 and 13 are the products of a Cleisthenic propaganda-offensive.

From Herodotus we learn that after 510 B.C. the united Athenian nobility soon fell apart. It is not the first time in history that the defeat of a common enemy leads to the breakdown of the previously united "front" of the victors. In the year of Hippias' expulsion (511/510) and in the following year (510/9) the aristocratic genē seem to have been in agreement on some matters. The well-known revision of the roll of citizens (*diapsēphismos*), probably belonging to the year of Scamandrius' archonship (510/9 B.C. is the inferred date for it; see Ostwald, 141 with note 1), is one of the items on which there was no disagreement. Elsewhere I have presented my views on this matter. Suffice it to say that Ostwald and I are in substantial agreement on this matter.¹ In the course of this period of silent consensus on certain, typically anti-tyrannical or pro-aristocratic points, the first signs of a struggle may have manifested themselves among the nobility. Cleisthenes and Isagoras were the leaders of two opposing "blocks", each with their *hetaireia*.²

interested in the magistracies and in the councils (Areopagus, Council of 400/300); it would have meant political suicide if they really had decided "to push out" (*ἀπωσμένον*: Hdt. V, 69) the *plēthos* literally. Opposition against Cleisthenes' later democratic reforms does not entail an earlier and complete abolition of that little bit of democracy that started with Solon and survived the Pisistratids.

¹ *Talanta* I(1969), 58-60. Cf. now also D. W. Knight, *op. cit.*, 15 ("Kleisthenes—would probably have had to condone such an event") and 24 ("Kleisthenes does not oppose this revision"). C. W. Fornara, *The Diapsēphismos of Ath. Pol.* 13, 5, Cl. Phil. LXV(1970), 243-246 accepts the *diapsēphismos* as a fact but denies any connection between it and Cleisthenes' later extension of the citizen-body in 508/7 B.C. His main argument, namely that the foreigners and slaves who had been introduced by Cleisthenes (*Arist. Polit.* 1275) cannot be identified with the 'poor and impure' who were expelled in 510 B.C. does not seem very convincing: see my remarks in *Talanta* I(1969), 58/60. Nor is the absence of any implication in *Ath. Pol.* that "the later action was a reaction to the earlier or that Cleisthenes' extension of the franchise to slaves and aliens was a reflex of some prior purge of them from the citizenrolls" a very compelling argument: we must allow Aristotle to work without using 'cross-references'.

² The following is based on Ostwald's careful chronology of the events in the period 510/507 B.C. Fornara *art.cit.* (cf. note 1 above), announces a study

During the archonship of Lysagoras (509/8) the rivalry between the two leaders came to a head. In the beginning of 508 B.C. Isagoras was elected archon for the year 508/7; for the moment Cleisthenes had lost the struggle but he came back thanks to a magnificent device: he decided to expand his existing hetaireia by "taking the people into partnership" (*προσεταιρίζεσθαι τὸν δῆμον*). This political 'salto-mortale' probably took place after Isagoras' election, i.e. in the beginning of 508 B.C. Cl. proposed his tribal reforms to the ekklēsia and managed to get it accepted in the teeth of the archon (designatus or in office) Isagoras. It has been argued that Cleisthenes could not have brought such reforms before the Assembly as a private citizen. Accordingly it has been denied that Cleisthenes carried through his proposals in the period when Isagoras was actually archon, h.e. after July 508 B.C. Quite apart from the fact that our knowledge of the constitutional niceties in this period is extremely scanty and that anyhow in a revolutionary situation things can happen in mass-meetings which should not happen according to both constitutional theory and traditional practice, it may perhaps be said¹ that Cleisthenes, being a member of the Areopagus, was not just a private citizen ("Is it unreasonable to assume that members of the Areopagus... retained powers and influences, perhaps similar to those retained by consulares in Roman politics?") and that Cleisthenes possibly had a follower who held an official position and who could have put to the vote Cleisthenes' proposals. We may add that, if Cleisthenes put to the vote his proposals between spring 508 B.C. (time of Isagoras' election) and July 508 B.C.

in which he proposes to show that the struggle between Cl. and Is. did not take place prior to 508/7 B.C. I agree with him, if he means to say that *initially* the Athenian aristocrats were a (more or less) united front but I doubt whether one can avoid the conclusion, on the basis of Ostwald's careful chronology, that as early as the beginning of 508 B.C. the struggle had become manifest. As I wrote in the text, I find it conceivable that sometime before Isagoras' electoral victory Cleisthenes already showed symptoms of considering a new policy: admittedly this cannot be strictly proved but I do not see how it can be disproved on chronological grounds. See now also D. W. Knight, *op. cit.* 20: "This [h.e. "the closing stages of the struggle with Isagoras"] could have been the time when he worked out his plans for gaining popular support in the event of defeat at the elections of 508 B.C. and his proposed reforms could well have been formulated to a considerable degree at the time of Isagoras' election".

¹ With D. W. Knight, *op. cit.*, 19-20.

(when I. took up his office), Lysagoras (archon from July 509—July 508 B.C.) could have brought the reforms before the Assembly¹. After Isagoras' election (or after his taking up office) the intervention of Cleomenes, invited by Isagoras, took place. Cleisthenes and 700 families left Athens temporarily. They returned quickly after the failure of Isagoras and Cleomenes and began to implement the reforms which were accepted under Isagoras' archonship.

How did Cleisthenes succeed in winning over the people? The answer has been provided by Lewis and Ostwald: by his tribal reforms and by submitting his program to the *ekklēsia*. He may well have crowned this action with the intriguing "slogan" *isonomia* which he could have picked up in contacts with people who knew the Samian *isonomia*. The essential point is that, if he did use the word *isonomia*, he undoubtedly *re-interpreted* this term which before had had a rather vague predominantly negative, anti-tyrannical meaning. Cleisthenes made *isonomia* concrete: as to recruitment for the *boulē* all Athenians were equal. Solon's *boulē*, if it existed, and the *Areopagus* had nothing to do with this kind of *isonomia*; by presenting his reforms to the *ekklēsia* he showed that "putting things in the middle" was not a mere slogan but a concrete program. The *dēmos* was not only going to *use* the right which Solon had given, but it was going to use it for a discussion of a new program. Aristotle was right when he said that Cleisthenes "turned the state over to the common people" (O., 143, 150).

Within this context of bitter rivalry between two aristocratic leaders and their following the *skolia* 10 and 13 in my view may well have functioned in a propaganda-fight. We happen to have a short note from Pliny the Elder (N.H. 34, 17) in which we are told that Antenor's statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were erected in Athens "eodem anno quo et Romae reges pulsi", viz. in 509 B.C. This sounds like a dangerous synchronism, too neat to be quite acceptable. Accordingly, some have rejected this peace of evidence out of hand²; after all, Pliny made many more mistakes and there is a certain method in classical scholarship which for some strange reason focusses on an author's blemishes and consequently rejects a piece of information whenever it fits a preconceived theory. Others,

¹ Cf. for this also P. J. Bicknell, *op. cit.*, 41, note 158.

² See most recently, with full bibliography, M. Moggi, *art. cit.*, 19/20.

however, tend to be less suspicious about Pliny's statement.¹ Antenor seems to have been active in the last quarter of the 6th century and this is sufficient reason for Ostwald to believe that "Pliny's date is at least approximately correct" (133) and that "Antenor's statues were in fact erected—soon after the expulsion of Hippias" (*ibidem*). Ultimately Ostwald, following the art-historian Becatti, holds a date soon after 507 B.C. to be more probable than the period between 510 and 507 B.C.; the former date belongs to a period of consolidation in internal politics and apparently such periods are regarded as more conducive to the achievements of a sculptor than periods of turbulent friction. I submit that we assume that Pliny's date is not only approximately correct but exactly correct. From the foregoing chronological survey of the rivalry between Cl. and I. it appears that during the archonship of Lysagoras (509–508 B.C.) a climax was reached. When Cleisthenes was losing [έσσούμενος (Herod.) ; ήττώμενος (Ath. Pol.) : note the durative aspect!] he decided to add the *dēmos* to his *hetaireia*. Some scholars argue that Cleisthenes' defeat coincided with the election of Isagoras as archon (for 508/7 B.C.) in the beginning of 508 B.C. After the defeat he began to talk in terms of isonomia and there by to win over the people.

This means that it was still under Lysagoras' archonship, before Isagoras in the summer of 508 took over the job, that Cleisthenes began his flirtation with the *dēmos* and with isonomia. My hypothesis is that Cleisthenes' opponents on their part launched a propagandistic counter move: they erected the statues of the *tyrannoktonoi* and "published" the *skolia* in which H. and A. were celebrated as the founders of 'Αθῆναι ισονόμοι.² How precisely Cl.'

¹ Cf. e.g. C. W. Fornara, *Philologus* 114 (1970), 157, with note 19; Brunnssäker, *op. cit.*, 98.

² Brunnssäker takes it that the *unanimous* Athenian aristocrats (Cl. included) produced *skolia* 10 and 13 and erected the statues of H. and A. in the period of co-operation shortly after 510 B.C. This possibility—I admit—cannot be excluded, though Ostwald's chronological paragraph and Pliny's date of the erection of the statues in my view slightly turn the scales in favour of the interpretation, offered in the text. If B.'s theory were right, this would in my view not necessarily entail the further theory that after the break between Athens' aristocrats Cleisthenes would have continued to use H. and A. and their isonomia as his paragons. For it was Cleisthenes who caused the break and offered a political reform, i.e. a *new* kind of isonomia; and

opponents interpreted their version of isonomia to the assembly we do not know nor shall we ever know, unless new evidence comes to light.¹ There was hardly an alternative available to them: eunomia by now had a distinct archaic, oldfashioned smell and isomoiria, of course, was entirely impossible for real aristocrats (Cleisthenes included!).²

Podelecki has recently argued that "it is easy to exaggerate the importance of claim and counterclaim to the honor of ending the tyranny in the fight between Cleisthenes and Isagoras"³; in his view the *dēmos* was hardly eager to get rid of the Peisistratid house and no sensible politician would have cherished the idea of presenting himself as the *tyrannoktonos* or the supporter of *tyrannoktonoi* to a *dēmos* which had appreciated the rule of the tyrants. Consequently he dates the erection of the statue-group to the time of Themistocles. But Podelecki seems to forget (a) that Hippias' rather tough regime may well have generated feelings of though the propaganda-value of "martyrs" was (and is) great, I doubt whether Cleisthenes after his political *salto-mortale* and his announcement of new isonomia, could and would have appropriated the 'old' isonomia for his case. For whatever the contents of the latter may have been, it was undoubtedly a different, 'aristocratic' kind of isonomia, which in Cl.'s view had nothing to do with his new product. True, *mundus vult decipi*, but a certain subtlety of deceit seems desirable, especially in politics.

Brunnsäker, *op. cit.*, 25 has a special reason to think that Cleisthenes continued to foster the memory of H. and A.: "if Cl. had been averse to them, why should the democrats later choose them as symbol of their policy". Answer: a) because the two "martyrs-heroes" turned out to appeal strongly to the people. b) The role of Cleisthenes and the Alcmaeonids in subsequent years may have been less democratic than B. assumes, or may have held by many Athenians to have been less democratic. This would have made it advisable for later democrats to minimize the importance of H. and A., if Cl. actually had advocated their importance; if not, this would have provided an additional reason for later democrats to choose the tyrannicides as their champions.

¹ There is no point in saying that, since Isagoras was a friend of the tyrants (*Ath. Pol.* 20, 1) and bent on restoring the tyranny for himself, he could not possibly have decided to erect the statues of the *tyrant-slayers*. Moggi, *art. cit.*, 27, after many others once again pointed out that the charge of *tyrannophily* against Isagoras may well have been the product of Alcmaeonid propaganda.

² B. Borecky, *art. cit.*, 24 who points out that the aristocracy "die Gleichheit durch das Gesetz nach ihren eigenen Ansichten auslegen konnte ohne von dem Gedanken abzuweichen, dasz dem Volke die Beteiligung an der Staatsverwaltung gebühre".

³ *Historia*, 15(1966), 133.

discomfort among many Athenians (b) that somebody must have been responsible for the erection of the statues of "the Tyrannoktonoi" (c) that this "somebody" must have been completely out of his mind if he had celebrated the merits of H. and A. among an exclusively tyrannophile *dēmos* and (d) that crowds easily change their political allegiance when attractive alternatives present themselves.

Cleisthenes apparently managed to present such an alternative in the shape of a program in which isonomia was materialized in a new and concrete way. I do not see any valid objection to the assumption that Cleisthenes' message to the *dēmos inter alia* was that he offered the *dēmos* something which the tyrants systematically had withhold, viz. the right to vote in the *ekklēsia* on matters of importance, and the equality of the citizens with respect to membership of the new *boulē* and the *prytanies*. Within that context he may well have prided himself on the fact that thanks to his initiative the last tyrant was expelled; within the same context the counter-move of his opponents makes excellent sense. Pliny perhaps knew that under Lysagoras' archonship the statues of H. and A. had been erected. Since the date of L. is 509/8 B.C. he chose 509 as the year of the erection, because of the welcome coincidence with the year of the foundation of the Roman Republic. In actual fact the erection took place in that portion of L.'s year which belonged to 508 B.C. However, when we emphasize the durative aspect of ἐστούμενος it is possible to argue that, some time before the actual election of Isagoras for the next year, Cleisthenes must have felt that he was losing his grip on the situation and that he had to develop a new strategy. Did he begin to play with the idea of isonomia at the end of 509 B.C.? Before he formulated his *detailed* proposals, Cleisthenes perhaps tried out the general idea with a few allusions to the concrete shape of isonomia he had in mind. If this is acceptable, we may consider Pliny's date as exactly right. It was in 509 B.C., at the end, that Cleisthenes' opponents launched their propaganda-offensive. It seems to have been successfull at least temporarily, for Isagoras won the archonship. But the vagueness of Isagoras' isonomia soon lost ground in favour of Cleisthenes' clear-cut ideas about isonomia and the function of the *dēmos* in 'Αθῆναι ισονόμοι.¹

¹ After careful study of the evidence and the "ambiance" of 510-508 B.C. Moggi, *art. cit.*, 30-34 denies that Isagoras could possibly have been the

Ostwald propounds the interesting theory that Cleisthenes, before turning to the *dēmos* had hopes that he could persuade his fellow-nobles of the merits of his program. He reads this idea into Herodotus 5, 69, 2 where he contrasts Cleisthenes' initial contempt of the *dēmos* with a supposedly more positive attitude of his towards the political nobility. Ostwald will not be impressed by the fact that the context of 69, 2 (esp. ch. 66) merely suggests bitter strife between the two leaders in the Athenian *stasis* and does not mention any attempt to reconcile the opponents, for he simply *assumes* that Cleisthenes launched his isonomia-program, i.e. turned to the *dēmos* in order "*to eliminate from Athenian politics the dynastic feuds* which had in the past helped to bring Peisistratus to power and which had erupted again after the overthrow of the tyranny" (156). The idea that Cleisthenes wanted to improve Athenian politics and that he *wanted to bring about this improvement by talking to the political nobility* about the possibility of unanimously presenting a sole, unifying political program admittedly fits in beautifully with this assumption. But I doubt whether the assumption is more than gratuitous. Herodotus clearly says that Cleisthenes turned to the *dēmos*, i.e. unfolded his political program to the people of Athens, because otherwise he was going to lose the fight against Isagoras and his supporters. In such an atmosphere of bitter, unrelenting strife Cleisthenes' propaganda-offensive against the *dēmos* had the function of a "secret weapon", of a surprise-attack. It was his idea and it is only a far too ethical and modernistic attitude which would make us believe that he was happy to share his idea with other members of the political nobility in order to eliminate dynastic feuds. He surely wanted to do the latter but

auctor behind the erection of the statues of H. and A. and behind the skolia which celebrate H. and A. as the creators of *isonomous Athēnas*. But he seems to underestimate the propaganda-value of H. and A. (and of any "martyrs" for that matter) and especially the extent to which these "martyrs" might reasonably have been supposed by Isagoras to appeal to the *plēthos*. If Cleisthenes began to play with isonomia, Isagoras could hardly counter effectively by saying (as Moggi would have it): "but I am the true liberator of Athens". This will not do in a propaganda-war. Isagoras was more subtle than that and preferred to operate with two magnificent counter-champions of isonomia. By doing so he did not so much obscure his own role in the liberation of Athens—so Moggi—as implicitly present himself as the heir of H. and A.'s "ideology".

his main reason was that he would otherwise get the worst of it. "Ostwald's" Cleisthenes is a man who cherished lofty, humanitarian ideals and who wanted to persuade his fellow-nobles of the beneficial influence of these ideals on Athenian political life. "My" Cleisthenes is a man who started off as a "fürstliche Herr" who, supported by a gentilician clientela, wanted to beat his "fürstliche" opponents who were equally supported by their 'Gefolg-schaften'. When he was on the verge of losing the battle, Cleisthenes launched a magnificent 'slogan': *isonomia*, accompanied by some magnificent ideas (*phylai*, *boulē*).¹ There is no doubt that these ideas were going to have a beneficial influence on Athenian political life, but there is some doubt as to whether Cleisthenes started this propaganda-offensive precisely for that reason.² At best Cleisthenes wanted both to secure his own position and to improve the political climate of Athens. At the worst his program merely was a means to an end; the latter was his victory over his political opponents, the former aimed at vastly increasing his *clientela*. He made the people into his political partners, he included them in his *hetaireia* and as a *quid pro quo* he offered them, not economic privileges—for Peisistratus had done that³—but possibly an in-

¹ On p. 75 above I wrote that Cleisthenes succeeded in winning over the people by submitting his program to the *ekklēsia*. In his recent and stimulating book on *The new politicians of Fifth-Century Athens* (Princeton 1971), p. 90-91 with note 5, W. R. Connor suggests "that Cleisthenes brought the *dēmos* over to his side by quite informal means, by promising to treat them as his *hetairoi*, to look after their interests, to give them a say in political decisions". The tribal reforms—so he argues—were the result rather than the cause of his good standing with the *dēmos*. However, if one distinguishes between the implementation of the reforms and the first general and possibly even vague introduction of the *idea* of a new *boulē* in the *ekklēsia*, the difference between Connor's and other scholars' approach rapidly vanishes. I quite agree with Connor's view that in the first instance Cleisthenes presumably made the *dēmos* his *hetairoi* by informal and preferably rather *vague* means. The implementation of the *idea* of a *boulē*-reform took Cleisthenes several years.

² H. F. Bornitz, *Herodot-Studien* (Berlin 1968), 49 also emphasizes the "machtspolitische Interessen" of Cleisthenes. H. Immerwahr, *AJP* 90 (1969), 471 points out that Herodotus' narrative "stresses heavily the aristocratic aspect of the revolution and is thus not a product of radical democratic theory".

³ Cf. *Talanta* I (1969), 60/61. The Peisistratids had access to the Pangaiion goldmines; consequently they had *mobile* capital at their disposal, with which they could hire mercenaries and possibly support poor commoners (Ath.).

triguing and highly stimulating watch-word, which was definitely followed up by and taking concrete shape in an important reform. There is no point in denying that the boulē-reform was truly egalitarian in that there were no census- or birth criteria for membership, but, however (over?) subtle it may seem, the new boulē may have been viewed by Cleisthenes as his instrument against that bulwark of the traditional nobility, his former friends and enemies, the Areopagus, rather than as a consciously chosen means to further Athenian democracy. What is anti-aristocratic, is not necessarily pro-democratic. In the boulē the Athenians probably learned how to practice *isēgoria*,¹ but the course of events in 510-508/7 B.C. does not make it a priori certain, to put it mildly, that the ideal of free public speech for all Athenian male citizens was *thé* driving force behind Cleisthenes' policy. The *dēmos* started as part of Cleisthenes' clientela; it soon developed into the sovereign Athenian people thanks to the measures taken by Cleisthenes in order to reward his supporters.²

Pol. 16,2: the loans for poor farmers). H. F. Bornitz, *op. cit.*, 36-44 showed that the Alcmaeonids also could avail themselves of mobile capital, with which they persuaded Delphi (Herod. V, 62, 3; VI, 121) to influence Sparta and on the basis of which they signed a contract for the rebuilding of the Delphian temple. But they had presumably deposited the money outside Attica and spent most of it in the years 514/510 B.C.

¹ Cf. A. G. Woodhead, ΣΗΓΟΡΙΑ and the Council of 500, *Historia* 16(1967), 129 ff.

² Cf. A. French, *The growth of the Athenian Economy* (London 1964), 171: "In the sixth century it was the aristocrats who used their rural following in a struggle for power: by the second half of the fifth century it was the urban populace which was using the aristocrats".