A L K I B I A D E S

by

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ABSTRACT

Principal events in the life of Alkibiades son of Kleinias, of the deme Skambonidai

451/0 B.C.	Winter	Birth of Alkibiades.
446	Spring	Death of his father, Kleinias, at Koroneia.
433/2		Comes of age.
432/1		Takes part in campaign at Poteidaia.
424		Marriage. Olympic victory. Takes part in campaign at Delion.
420	Spring	First election to *strategia*.
	Summer	Promotes Quadruple Alliance.
419	Summer	*Strategos* in northern Peloponnese.
418	Summer	*Strategos*, but sent to Mantineia as *Presbeutes*. Allies defeated at Mantineia. Argos joins Spartan bloc.
417	Spring	Alkibiades not elected to *strategia*. Helps democrats in Argos. Birth of the younger Alkibiades

416	Spring	Elected to fourth *strategia*. Ostracism of Hyperbolos. New Argive alliance signed.
	Summer	Olympic victory of Alkibiades.
	Winter	Fall of Melos. Sicilian Expedition proposed.
415	Spring	Debate over Sicilian Expedition.
	Summer	Alkibiades, Nikias and Lamachos appointed as joint commanders of Expedition.
	June	Mutilation of the Hermai; Alkibiades accused.
	Mid-summer	Fleet sails to Sicily.
	Late summer	Alkibiades recalled to stand trial. Flees to Thourioi and thence to Argos.
	Autumn	Forced to leave Argos; goes to Sparta.
	Winter	Debate in Sparta. Alkibiades acts as adviser to the Spartans.
414	Spring	Spartans take his advice and send Gylippos to Sparta.

413	Spring	Spartans under Agis invade Attica and fortify Dekeleia.
	Summer	Destruction of Athenian Expedition to Sicily.
412	Spring	Alkibiades sent to Ionia with Spartan force to promote revolt of the Athenian allies and Spartan alliance with Persia.
	Winter	Flees to court of Tissaphernes and becomes adviser to the Persians.
411	Spring	Plots with Athenian oligarchs for his recall, but breaks with them and plots with the democrats instead.
	Summer	The Four Hundred establish themselves at Athens. Democratic coup in Samos. Alkibiades recalled by democrats in Samos. The Five Thousand succeed the Four Hundred at Athens and vote recall of Alkibiades.
	Autumn	Defeat of Peloponnesian fleet near Kyzikos.

411	Winter	Alkibiades temporarily imprisoned by Tissaphernes. Escapes and takes part in second Athenian victory at Kyzikos.
410	Summer	Restoration of democracy at Athens and reunion of the two governments. Alkibiades occupied in fund-raising.
409	Winter	Peloponnesians defeated at Abydos.
408		Agreement with Pharnabazos. Capture of Chalkedon and Byzantion.
407	Spring	Alkibiades elected strategos at Athens. Returns to city with the fleet.
	Summer	Appointed commander-in-chief.
	Autumn	Procession of the Mysteries to Eleusis. Alkibiades leaves Athens.
	Winter	Failure of expedition to Andros.

406	Spring	Alkibiades' subordinate Antiochos defeated and killed at battle of Notion. Alkibiades goes into exile in Thrace.
	Summer	Athenian victory at Arginousai. Trial of the generals. Alkibiades in Thrace.
405	Summer	Athenians utterly defeated at Aigospotamoi.
	Autumn	Collapse of Athenian empire.
	Winter	Siege of Athens.
404	Spring	Fall of Athens and establishment of the Thirty Tyrants. Alkibiades flees to court of Pharnabazos.
	Summer	Flight of Alkibiades to Phrygia.
	Autumn (?)	Murdered at Melissa by Pharnabazos' agents at request of Spartans.

INTRODUCTION

AUTHORITIES

1. Primary. Thucydides is my major historical source; often he is the only source available, but I have supplemented him wherever possible by reference to epigraphy and to his literary contemporaries and near-contemporaries. Of the latter, I have placed most reliance upon the speeches of Andokides, Lysias and Isokrates, although each should be treated as a partisan of one side or the other. The same caution applies to the comic playwrights, with the proviso that the identification of historical personages in their work is highly speculative; the tragedians I have hardly touched upon. The dialogues of Plato, Xenophon and Aischines I view as works of literary rather than historical value; historical data should never be accepted from them without confirmation or extreme scepticism. It should further be borne in mind that it was their intention to play down the influence of Sokrates upon Alkibiades. Hardly any reliance at all should be placed upon the works falsely attributed to Plato and Andokides, whose date and authorship are alike uncertain. Where the narrative of Thucydides breaks off

I have subjected Xenophon's Hellenika to similar treatment, but he is a far less reliable historian than Thucydides. In addition, there are the fragmentary remains of the other Greek historians as they appear in Plutarch and other secondary sources; where they are identifiable I have so stated, but it should be recalled that most of these are themselves of comparatively late date.

2. Secondary. These are mainly of value where they supplement the primary sources. Plutarch, of course, is full of personal anecdote found nowhere else, often of great value because of the light he sheds upon the narrative of the primary sources. He is, however, only as reliable as his sources, and these, regrettably, are often late and romantically-inclined. Diodoros seems careless and inaccurate, but the access his sources evidently had to Spartan and Sicilian records is of some value as a check upon the work of Thucydides and Xenophon; his major source appears to have been Ephoros, but we cannot be sure how accurately Diodoros has abstracted his work. In the same category as Diodoros I place the commentaries of the scholiasts; like the curate's egg they are good in parts. They are generally our only means of identifying historical events and personages in the plays of the comic dramatists and

are the source of many fragments of otherwise unknown works, but some were less sceptical than they should have been. Little reliance can be placed upon Athenaios and Nepos as independent sources.

3. Modern. The most recent, accurate and compendious study of the life and times of Alkibiades is that of Hatzfeld; I have nothing but praise for his work, which supersedes all earlier studies. If he has a fault it is that he sometimes permits the historical background to obscure the character and activities of Alkibiades, and it is this imbalance that the present study is intended to correct. I have consulted the work of many other modern scholars, but have only quoted their articles and books when they have examined some problem not dealt with by Hatzfeld, or have differed significiantly from him.

A full bibliography, both ancient and modern, is appended, listing all works that I have consulted.

SPELLING

I have adopted the Greek spelling of names rather than the Latin with a few exceptions; these are names whose Latin form is used almost universally.

They are: Aegean, Attica, Cyprus, Macedonian, Phoenician, Rhodes, Sicily, Socratic, Syracuse, Thrace and Thucydides (to distinguish the historian from the son of Melesias I have used Greek spelling for the latter).

TRANSLATIONS

All translations are my own, with the exception of translations of the fragments of Attic Comedy, which are those of J.M.Edmonds.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY YEARS

Alkibiades son of Kleinias claimed descent on his father's side from Eurysakes son of Aias and thus belonged to the family of Eupatridai;[1] through his mother, Deinomache daughter of Megakles, he could claim the Alkmeonidai as collaterals[2] but was not technically

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1. Thucydides, V,43,2; Isokrates, 16,25; [Plato], Alkibiades, 1,121A; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 1,1. Wade-Gery (Class.Quart., XXV [1931], pp.1, 4-5) has shown that Eupatrid meant both a family and a "nobility of birth", and Hammond (J.H.S., LXXXI [1961], pp. 77-78) has demonstrated that it had a third, specialised meaning: the "priestly families who provided officials not only for phratries and tribes but also for state ritual." The most exclusive sense seems to apply here, that of a single genos. Wade-Gery (op.cit., pp. 82-86) points out that Alkibiades belonged to the οἰκίη of the Alkmeonidai within the genos Salaminioi; the term genos covering a "religious corporation" in which "kinship was, in historic times, fictional".

2. Isokrates, 16,25; [Plato], Alkibiades, 1, 105D, 123C; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 1,1.

a member of that family since descent in a genos was valid only in the male line.

His father, Kleinias, son of Alkibiades, the proposer of an important financial decree in 447 B.C.,[3] was killed at the battle of Koroneia in the spring of 446 B.C.[4] Herodotos tells of a Kleinias son of Alkibiades who won the award for valour as commander of a trireme at the battle of Artemision in 480 B.C.,[5] and Plutarch thinks that this man and the father of Alkibiades were one and the same.[6]

His paternal grandfather, Alkibiades II, is alleged to have suffered ostracism twice;[7] some doubt

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3. A.T.L., II, D7.

4. Isokrates, 16,28; [Plato], Alkibiades, 1, 112C; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 1,1. For the date see A.T.L., III, p.300.

5. VIII, 17.

6. Alkibiades, 1,1; but see below, pp. 4-5.

7. Lysias, 14,39; [Andokides], 4,34. Hatzfeld (Alcibiade, pp. 14-15) believes that Alkibiades II was one of the φίλοι τῶν τυράννων exiled between 487/6 and 483/2 B.C. (see Aristotle, Ath. Pol., 22,6, and Beloch, Gr. Gesch., II, 2, p. 139).

has been cast upon this double ostracism, which is mentioned only by Lysias and Pseudo-Andokides. We know from ostraka that there was an attempt to ostracize Alkibiades of Skambonidai about 460 B.C., although we do not know the outcome; we possess no ostraka bearing his name that can be dated to the period 500 to 480 B.C.[8]

We know from Isokrates that Alkibiades III's great-grandfather, Alkibiades I, helped Kleisthenes to expel the tyrants in 511/0 B.C.[9] He appears to have been roughly the same age as Kleisthenes and so would

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8. Vanderpool (Hesp.,XXI [1952], pp.1-8) lists nine ostraka bearing the name Alkibiades; three come from the last quarter of the fifth century and belong, presumably, to Alkibiades III. The remaining six are all probably post- 480 B.C., and within the second quarter of the century; they therefore relate to an earlier Alkibiades who was a candidate for ostracism in the 460's. There is no proof of an ostracism then, as Hands (J.H S., LXXIX [1959], pp.69-79) points out; merely the possibility of one.

9. 16,26.

have been born probably about 570 B.C.[10] When Peisistratos, at the commencement of his final tyranny, exiled the Alkmeonidai and their friends, this Alkibiades may have been one of the exiles.[11]

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10. I accept McGregor's date for the marriage of Kleisthenes' parents (T.A.P.A., LXXII [1941], p.287): autumn of 575 B.C. This date cannot be far wrong, if at all. Kleisthenes was probably the first male child of this union.

11. Herodotos, I,64; Aristotle, Ath.Pol., 15,3. The date is very much in dispute: until recently the chronology proposed by Adcock (Class.Quart., XVIII [1924], pp.174-181) was generally accepted; this dated Peisistratos' return after the battle of Pallene to 546 B.C. Sumner (Class.Quart.,LV [1961], pp.37-48) rejects this date in favour of 541 or 540 B.C. His examination of the problems is more convincing than Adcock's, but his chronological suggestions fail to take adequate note of Herodotos' synchronism of the fall of Kroisos with the final tyranny of Peisistratos; the problem is not central to the present work and it will suffice to date Alkibiades I's exile to the late 540's.

Alkibiades I had sons, the first of whom may have been that Kleinias who fought at Artemision and was named, as was the custom, after his paternal grandfather, Kleinias I, who probably flourished in the time of Solon. A younger son may have been named Alkibiades after his father, and could thus be the man thought to have been ostracized between 486 and 482 B.C., and who was involved in an ostrakophoria about 460 B.C.(see the stemma below).

If the Kleinias who fought at Artemision was the son of Alkibiades I he is unlikely to have been the man who died at Koroneia; he was probably born about 530 B.C. If this is so, Kleinias, the father of Alkibiades III, would have been the son of Alkibiades II, the man alleged to have suffered ostracism twice.[12] Hatzfeld argues that Lysias, deliberately or otherwise, confused Alkibiades I and II so that the "second" ostracism was, in fact, the banishment of Alkibiades I by Peisistratos; that is, if Alkibiades I ever was exiled by the tyrant. But we have no evidence of this, and can only suggest that, as the friend of Kleisthenes, he may have shared his exile.[13]

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12. See Dittenberger (Hermes, XXXVII [1902], pp.1-13).

13. Op.cit., pp.20-22; he gives the date as 543 B.C., and follows the chronology of Adcock (see note 11 above).

It is equally possible that Lysias means not two ostracisms but two ostrakophoriai, if that of the 480's can be accepted despite the lack of archaeological or direct literary evidence. Inflation of the truth by Lysias is perhaps unlikely, since such an assertion would have been sure of rebuttal unless it were somewhere close to the facts.

Alkibiades' other grandfather, Megakles, is also alleged to have been ostracized twice.[14] Once again we are on dubious ground; we know that Megakles son of Hippokrates was ostracized in 487/6 B.C.,[15] and Hatzfeld believes that Lysias may have confused this man with the earlier Megakles II who was banished by Peisistratos.[16] Again, it is possible that Lysias is mistaken but not that he deliberately inflated the truth.

Megakles I was active in the second half of the seventh century, and his son Alkmeon commanded Athenian troops in the 590's.[17] Alkmeon's son, Megakles II, married

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14. Lysias, 14,39; [Andokides], 4,34.

15. Aristotle, Ath.Pol.,22,5.

16. Op.cit., pp.20-22; see Plutarch, Solon, 30,6.

17. Herodotos, VI,125; Pindar, Pythians, 7,13 (with scholia); Isokrates, 16,25; Plutarch, Solon, 11,2.

Agariste, the daughter of the tyrant, Kleisthenes of Sikyon,[18] and was exiled in the late 540's. His daughter, Koisyra, was married to Peisistratos when he returned for the second time, but the marriage was never properly consummated.[19] Megakles II had several sons, of whom Kleisthenes and Hippokrates are of concern here.

Kleisthenes the reformer was born about 570 B.C. and was named after his grandfather, the tyrant of Sikyon; he is alleged to have been the maternal grandfather of Alkibiades the statesman.[20]

We know that Alkibiades' mother was Deinomache, daughter of Megakles son of Hippokrates,[21] and I follow Hatzfeld in thinking that this Hippokrates was the

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18. Herodotos, VI,126-130.

19. Herodotos,I,60; for her name see Shear, Phoenix,XVII (1963), pp.99-112.

20. Isokrates, 16,26.

21. Aristotle, Ath.Pol.,22,5, says that Megakles was the son of Hippokrates; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 1,1, calls Deinomache daughter of Megakles; I have conflated the two references.

brother of Kleisthenes.[22] If this is so, Megakles must have married Kleisthenes' daughter, also called Koisyra, his first cousin[23]; this is not impossible, and it solves two other problems connected with this genealogy: Agariste, the mother of Perikles, was the daughter of Hippokrates and thus the aunt of Deinomache[24], and Kleisthenes was the grandfather of Deinomache.

When Kleinias III died the closest male relatives were his brother, Axiochos, and Deinomache's brother, Megakles VI; both were probably considered too young for the task of guardian for Kleinias' children,

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22. Op.cit., p.20. Kirchner (P.A.,II,p.53,stemma) shows another Megakles, the son of Kleisthenes, as the father of Deinomache; one would expect, in this case, that the ancient authors would have commented upon his ostracism as the son of Kleisthenes. That we do not possess such comment is not proof that it never existed, but I think Kirchner is wrong in this instance.

23. Shear, op.cit.,pp.107-112.

24. Herodotos, VI,131,2.

and Axiochos' character was not the best.[25] The task fell upon Perikles and his brother Ariphron, the next closest relatives.[26] Hatzfeld suggests that Perikles was chosen because of his political eminence.[27]

By a later quirk of fate Alkibiades III married the half-sister of Perikles' sons, since Perikles' wife, after her divorce, married Hipponikos; the result of this union was Hipparete, who married Alkibiades.[28]

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25. In Plato's Euthydemos (271A-B) Axiochos' son Kleinias V is still a boy; the dramatic date is between 411 and 405 B.C. Of course, very little reliance can be put upon Plato as an historical source, but the journey of Axiochos and Alkibiades to Abydos in the late 430's implies that the two were not far apart in age. See Antiphon, frag.C,1 (Maidment).

26. Plato, Protagoras, 320A; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 1,2.

27. Op.cit., pp.28-29.

28. Plato, Protagoras, 314E-315A. This probably accounts for the remark of Diodoros (XII,38) that Alkibiades was the nephew of Perikles, and that of Nepos (Alcibiades,2,1) that some sources considered him to be the son, by a former marriage, of Perikles' wife. Plutarch (Perikles,24,5) says that Perikles' wife was first the wife of Hipponikos and bore him Kallias, and then married Perikles. After she

Thucydides tells us that the name Alkibiades was not Athenian but Lakonian in origin; it was a family name of the Spartan ephor, Endios, a friend of Alkibiades and his family.[29] The name at Athens may have resulted from the Spartan proxeny forsworn by Alkibiades II soon after 462 B.C., that Alkibiades III tried to revive after 425 B.C.[30] Whether this proxeny had its origin in the sixth century, when we know of

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had borne him two sons, he divorced her by mutual consent, and she married a third man. In this case, who was the mother of Hipparete, who was surely younger than Perikles' sons Xanthippos and Paralos? We do not know Plutarch's source for his information, and Plato merely mentions that Kallias and Paralos were half-brothers. On the other hand, we know that Kallias was still hale and hearty in 371 B.C. (Xenophon, Hell., VI, 3,2), so that it is not unreasonable to suggest, in the absence of information to the contrary, that he was born after Xanthippos and Paralos; we know, too, that Xanthippos died a married man in 430 B.C. (Plutarch, Perikles, 36,3).

29. VIII, 6,3.

30. Thucydides, V,43,2; VI, 89,2. See Hatzfeld, op.cit., p.16.

close ties of friendship between Athenians and Spartans,[31] or had earlier beginnings, we cannot say. Perhaps Kleinias I or an earlier member of the family married a woman of Endios' family and established the proxeny thereby.

If Kleinias III died in the spring of 446 B.C. leaving at least two children,[32] Alkibiades III, the eldest, cannot have been born later than the winter of 449 B.C., In fact, since there is no reason to doubt that he took part in the campaign and battle of Poteidaia in 432 B.C.,[33] he must have been over eighteen

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31. Aristotle(Ath.Pol., 19,4), for instance, mentions ties of hospitality between the Spartans and the Peisistratidai.

32. Plato (Protagoras, 320A) mentions a νεώτερος ἀδελφός, Kleinias; [Plato] (Alkibiades, I,118E) gives the name of the younger son as Kleinias; Athenaios (V,220C) repeats the slander of Antisthenes that Alkibiades III committed incest with his mother, daughter and sister, but we do not hear of a sister from any other sources.

33. Plato, Symposion, 219E; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 7,2. For the date see Gomme (Commentary, I,pp.222-224 and 421-425) and Thucydides, I, 56-65.

in the spring of that year in order to be formally enrolled as a citizen; this would put his birth in the winter of 451/0 B.C. at the latest. We have no definite evidence for the existence of the ephebia in the fifth century, but it does not seem to have been the practice to send ephebes, whose military training was only beginning, on foreign expeditions.[34] Reinmuth states that "the date of a young man's entrance into the official status of ephebe at eighteen years of age was the date used to determine his eligibility for any office or duty for which a specific age was prescribed." This rule certainly applied in the early part of the fourth century, and Reinmuth believes it also applied in the fifth.[35] He concludes that "ephebic service was confined to the season for making war, spring and summer, over a period of two years," and that this accounts for the freedom of young men in the rest of the year. Alkibiades served at Poteidaia during the winter so that, if Reinmuth's statement is correct, Alkibiades was not an ephebe in 432 B.C.[36]

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34. Gomme, Commentary, II, p.37.

35. T.A.P.A., LXXXIII (1952), p.40.

36. Op.cit., p.37; see Plato, Symposion, 220A, and Isokrates, 16,29.

His first election to the *strategia* ought to be a more accurate means of dating his birth, since this office could not be held by anyone under the age of thirty;[37] unfortunately, there is conflict over the date of his first term as *strategos*: he was certainly general in 419/8 and may have been general in 420/19 B.C.[38] This would date his birth to the winter of 451/0 B.C., at the latest; the probability is that it was yet earlier. We do not know whether he stood for election as soon as he became eligible, or whether his first candidacy was successful; what we know of his character implies that he would have stood for election as soon as he was of age to do so.

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37. I accept the contention of Hignett (*A History of the Athenian Constitution*, pp.224 and 244-251) that membership of the *strategia*, like that of the *dikasteria* and the *Boule*, was limited to thoseover thirty.

38. Plutarch, *Alkibiades*, 15,1; *Nikias*, 10,8. I discuss the problem of Alkibiades' *strategia* in Chapter Three; it will be sufficient to state here that, in the absence of definite proof either way, Plutarch is the best evidence we have for a *strategia* in 420/19 B.C., and should be accepted as such.

In the Socratic dialogue Alkibiades, 1, attributed to Plato, Alkibiades is represented as being barely twenty years old; Perikles' sons are dead, but Perikles himself is in full possession of his power in the city.[39] Since Perikles was fined and dismissed from the strategia in 430 B.C., recalled in the spring of 429, and died in the autumn of the same year, the setting of this dialogue must be between spring and autumn of 429 B.C., for Perikles' sons died of the plague in 430 B.C. while he was out of office.[40]

This would make it impossible for Alkibiades to have been born before 450/49 B.C., as he would have fought at Poteidaia before he was eighteen, which seems hardly credible. The dialogue, if it is by Plato, is a late work, but is probably spurious.[41] Any criticisms

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39. 104B; 118E; 123D.

40. Thucydides, II,65, 3-6; Plutarch, Perikles, 35,4 and 36.

41. Hatzfeld (op.cit.,pp.39-41) provides a useful resume of the arguments for and against the authenticity of this dialogue, and Taylor (Philosophical Studies, p.17) believes that the Alkibiades of Aeschines was in large part the model for the Alkibiades of [Plato]. The dialogue is usually dated to the middle of the fourth century.

that may be levelled at Plato as an historical source apply even more to the Alkibiades. It must be discounted as evidence, and the previously mentioned sources, which point to Alkibiades' birth in 451 or 450 B.C., accepted. For my own part, I believe that he was born late in 451 B.C.

Of the early life of Alkibiades little or nothing is known for certain; Plutarch is our main authority. If he is recording gossip that circulated in Alkibiades' lifetime, or soon after his death, he provides a valuable means of judging Alkibiades' character, and perhaps gives some clue to the events that led to his eventual downfall.

Thucydides, although he does deliver occasional judgments of character, is generally content to let men's actions speak for them; his approval or disapproval is sometimes apparent, but he ignores the gossip and small-talk that pervades so much of Plutarch's biographies. In Alkibiades' case, he merely mentions the general lawlessness of his life and the effects it had upon his contemporaries.[42]

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42. VI, 15,3-4; 28,2; he does, however, comment upon Nikias' character in Book VII (86,5) at the time of his death.

Plutarch quotes Antisthenes' remark that Alkibiades had, as his childhood nurse, a Spartan woman, Amykla;[43] his tutor, Zopyros, according to [Plato], was the oldest and most useless of Perikles' slaves and came from Thrace.[44] Perikles seems to have taken on all the duties of guardian,[45] while his brother did very little; Ariphron is said to have kept the younger boy, Kleinias, in his house for six months to remove him from the corrupting influence of Alkibiades, but soon found him unbearable and sent him back to Perikles.[46]

Plutarch, though he quotes Antiphon's story that Alkibiades ran away from Perikles to the house of

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43. Alkibiades, 1,2; she may have derived her name from the fortress of Amykle, whose capture the Spartans considered one of the cornerstones of the Dorian conquest of Lakonia and where they set up a great shrine to their adviser Apollo (Pindar, Isthmians, 7,14-15).

44. Alkibiades, 1, 122B.

45. Isokrates, 16,28.

46. Plato, Protagoras, 320A; the danger of relying upon Plato as an historical source must again be emphasized.

one of his lovers, Demokrates, adds the rider that the story is "unworthy of belief, coming as it does from someone who admits that he hated Alkibiades and abused him accordingly"; Perikles is said to have refused Ariphon's plea that the boy be proclaimed a castaway, on the grounds that his reputation was destroyed in any case, and he was as good as dead. Antiphon, in the same passage, says that Alkibiades struck dead one of his attendants when he was a boy in Sibyrtios' school.[47] We do not know whether Antiphon the orator or Antiphon the philosopher or some other man of that name was the author of these calumnies; elsewhere, one of Alkibiades' teachers is said to have been Antiphon, but we do not know whether he and the calumniator were one and the same man.[48]

Perikles' term as guardian lasted until Alkibiades came of age; this was probably in 434/3 B.C., though it is not certain. Antiphon, the orator, remarks that Alkibiades and his uncle Axiochos went off to

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47. Alkibiades, 3.

48. Plutarch, Vit.X.Orat.,1(Mor.,832C).

Abydos together as soon as Alkibiades came of age and gained control of his inheritance;[49] if Reinmuth is correct, this could have been in Alkibiades' first year as an ephebe, since young men were free from service during the winter.[50]

It is unlikely that Perikles personally paid much attention to the welfare of his ward; from what is known of his private life he was distant and severe towards his own family, except Aspasia, and certainly did little for his two legitimate sons, Xanthippos and Paralos, regarding them, towards the end of his life, as worthless.[51] Affairs of state probably occupied all his time; perhaps significantly, the only anecdotes we possess that show the statesman and his ward together deal with political matters.[52]

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49. Frag.C,1 (Maidment).

50. Op.cit., p.37.

51. Plutarch, Perikles, 35-36.

52. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 7,2; Diodoros, XII, 2-4; see Ephoros, frag.119 (Jacoby). Plutarch's version is set in the period just before Poteidaia: Perikles' servants refused to admit Alkibiades when he came to the house, because the great man was busy with his accounts; this implies that Alkibiades was already living on his own after coming into his inheritance. Diodoros sets the

While still a young boy Alkibiades received lessons in flute-playing from the great virtuoso Pronomos.[53] The study was not to his liking and he refused to continue it because it spoiled his appearance and prevented him from talking. Other boys followed his lead and flute-playing disappeared from the curriculum. He also was taught to play the lyre.[54]

He seems to have been reasonably attentive at school, and developed a great love for Homer; he

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conversation soon after 454 B.C., which is certainly wrong. His strongly anti-Periklean source says that Perikles took Alkibiades' advice: "not to seek ways of rendering accounts but ways of not rendering them," by involving Athens in a major conflict. Xenophon (Memorabilia, I, 2,39-46) reports a probably imaginary conversation on the nature of law between Perikles and Alkibiades, set at the time of the latter's coming-of-age.

53. Athenaios, IV, 183D; his source is Douris.

54. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 2, 4-6. There is no other evidence that flute-playing was part of the curriculum at any time.

rebuked one of his teachers for not having a copy of Homer in his library and praised another who had produced an edition of the poems, saying that he ought, as a reward for his scholarship, to teach young men, instead of boys.[55]

Out of school he was impulsive, with a flair for the dramatic; once, when he was playing knuckle-bones with some friends in the street, a heavy waggon came by. Alkibiades asked the driver to wait until the throw had been gathered up, but he refused and drove on; Alkibiades' reaction was to throw himself in front of the waggon and dare the driver to run over him. Plutarch and others see this as evidence of Alkibiades' love of pre-eminence and rivalry;[56] it seems to me, rather, evidence that from an early age he had a liking for calculated risks as well as for dramatic gestures.

Another story illustrates his impulsiveness and his unscrupulous opportunism: in a wrestling-match, because he could not break loose in any other way, he

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55. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 7,1.

56. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 2, 1-3.

bit his opponent's arm. He was accused of biting like a woman, but retorted, "Not I; but as lions do."[57]

If these anecdotes are true, and, significantly, all are found in late descriptions of his life, Alkibiades exhibited as a child these same qualities for which he became notorious as an adult: impulsiveness, which was, in fact, opportunism; a liking for calculated risks and a greater ability than most for making up his mind quickly; a love of dramatic gestures; intense competitiveness; and finally, contempt for convention.

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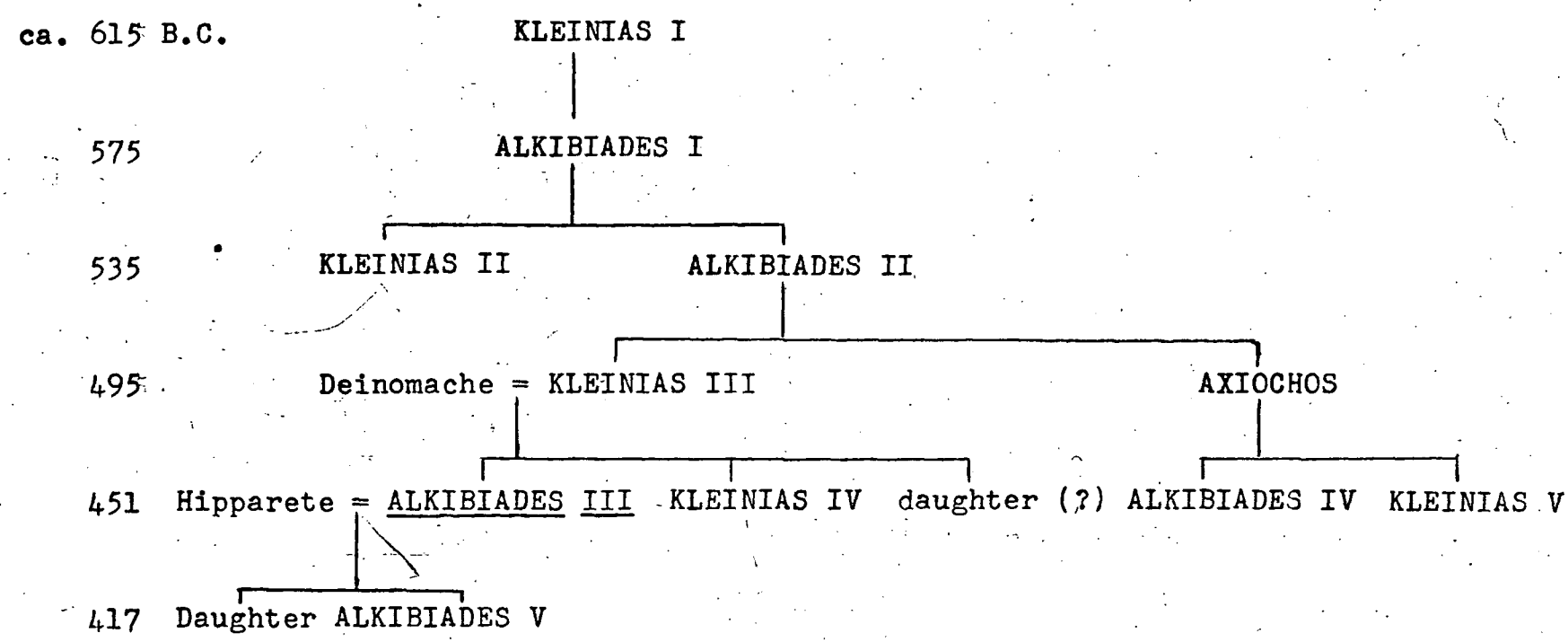
57. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 2,2.

STEMMA I.

Family of ALKIBIADES.



STEMMA II.

Family of DEINOMACHE.

Birth-date.

ca. 660 MEGAKLES I

630 KLEISTHENES (of Sikyon) ALKMEON = Koisyra (of Eretria)

595 AGARISTE = MEGAKLES II HIPPOKRATES I

570 KLEISTHENES MEGAKLES III HIPPOKRATES II Koisyra II = PEISISTRATOS

535 MEGAKLES IV(?) Koisyra III = MEGAKLES V Agariste = XANTHIPPOS

495 KLEINIAS III = Deinomache MEGAKLES VI PERIKLES ARIPHRON

CHAPTER TWO

THE INFLUENCE OF SOKRATES

Alkibiades probably came of age in the winter of 434/3 B.C. According to Isokrates he was enrolled in the deme of Skambonidai,[1] although his property lay in the deme of Erchia and amounted to a little less than 300 plethra of land.[2] Of his other wealth we do not know the details, apart from the information given in a fragmentary inscription listing his household goods that were sold at a public auction in 414/3 B.C.[3]; the only other indication of his wealth is a reference to clothes owned by his mother that are valued at fifty minai. This, at least, shows that his family was wealthy, since a drachma, one hundredth part of a mna, represented one day's pay.[4]

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1. 16,25. We know from I.G.,I^2, 328, line 6, that his grandfather, Alkibiades I, was of the deme Skambonidai, as we do from ostraka (see Vanderpool, Hesp., XXI [1952], pp. 1-8).

2. [Plato], Alkibiades, 1, 123C.

3. I.G.,I^2, 330; this list includes twelve beds, suggesting a sizable house (see Pritchett, Hesp.,XXII [1953], pp.225-299).

4. [Plato], Alkibiades, 1,123C; a drachma a day was paid to the builder of the Parthenon; see Stanier, J.H.S.,LXXIII (1953), pp.73-76; Dinsmoor, A.J.A.,XVII(1913),pp.74-75.

According to Antiphon,[5] Alkibiades, as soon as he had been presented to his deme by his guardians, went to Abydos on the Hellespont with his uncle Axiochos to "learn from the women of Abydos the sort of behaviour that suited his natural wildness and viciousness.". Antiphon was confessedly a violent opponent of Alkibiades and may be expected to have overstated the case. It is surely not unusual for a young man who has just come into money to sow a few wild oats, and neither Alkibiades' upbringing nor his temperament would have inclined him towards puritanical behaviour. Athenaios has a variant of this story; he states that Axiochos was the lover of Alkibiades, and the two shared the favours of an hetaira, Medontis.[6]

Alkibiades returned to Athens early in 433 B.C. and during that year, apparently in the autumn or winter, began his affair with Sokrates. This, as Alkibiades himself relates it in the Symposion of Plato, was a frustrating experience for him; he had a high opinion of his own charms and was irked to find that Sokrates was not interested and

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5. Fragment C,1 (Maidment),quoted in Athenaios,XII,525B.

6. XII, 574E.

ignored him, however forward his behaviour.[7]

Later, both Alkibiades and Sokrates were sent to Poteidaia; the story in the Symposion suggests that they arrived with the relief force sent out in the autumn of 432 B.C. under Phormion's command, after the death of Kallias, the commander of the original force.[8] This is confirmed by Isokrates.[9]

Plato, in the Charmides, mentions Sokrates' presence in a battle that resulted in the deaths of many Athenians, but does not record that Alkibiades was involved.[10] Sokrates is represented as having just returned to Athens, evidently soon after the battle, since news of it had only just reached the city. In the Symposion Alkibiades talks of a battle in which he himself was awarded a decoration for valour;[11] this

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7. 217A-219E.

8. 219E-220E. For the date of the expedition see Thucydides, I, 56-65, and Gomme, Comm., I, pp.222-224, 421-425.

9. 16,29.

10. 153A-C.

11. 220E.

decoration, he says, should have been awarded to Sokrates, who had saved him when he was wounded and, single-handed, had brought him out of the battle, armour and all; however, because of family connexions, the award went to Alkibiades instead.

It would appear that Sokrates was involved in at least two engagements. Plutarch expands one of these into a fierce skirmish and adds that, "when the generals, because of Alkibiades' rank, wanted to give him the glory, Sokrates, wishing to fire his pupil's noble ambitions, was the first to bear witness to his courage and asked that the crown and full outfit of armour be given to him."[12]

Diogenes Laertios says that Sokrates was actually awarded the prize of valour but resigned it to Alkibiades because of the tender affection that he felt for him.[13]

The narrative of the Symposion does not mention a battle before the winter of 432/1 B.C.; winter evidently began almost as soon as Alkibiades and Sokrates arrived in

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12. Alkibiades, 7,3.

13. Lives of the Great Philosophers, 2,21-23. His source is the fourth book of Aristippos' treatise On the Luxury of the Ancients, a work of the fourth century B.C.

Poteidaia. The engagement in which Alkibiades won his decoration is described later in the same passage; although there is nothing in the wording to indicate the chronology, it would appear that the order of the text corresponds with the sequence of events, and that the battle followed the winter.[14]

By Athenaios' time the story had become confused. One of his characters is able to question Sokrates' presence at Poteidaia, citing the absence of any mention of him in either Thucydides or Isokrates.[15] He remarks too that "Plato's Sokrates says that he was present at Poteidaia and resigned the prize for the bravest to Alkibiades."[16]

The nature of Sokrates' affection for Alkibiades, if the Protagoras is any guide, seems to have altered after Poteidaia; in this dialogue Sokrates takes a frankly physical delight in Alkibiades, quoting Homer's words on the charm of a youth with his first growth of beard, and pursuing him all over the city.[17] If this episode is not just a product of Plato's imagination, its dramatic setting

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14. 219E-220E.

15. V, 215E.

16. V, 216C.

17. 309 A-B.

must be the year before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, that is, 431 B.C.. However, an exact dating, on Plato's word alone, is impossible.[18]

In the first Alkibiades Sokrates confesses that he has loved Alkibiades for many years and only now has his daemon allowed him to speak to the young man.[19] This makes Sokrates the lover, rather than the beloved, and clashes with the Symposion, whose dramatic date is very similar.

However, the Alkibiades, which is almost certainly spurious, is even less historically reliable than Plato's genuine dialogues; in passing, I mention the remark of Sokrates that Alkibiades was shortly to present himself before the Assembly to prove to the people that he was more worthy than Perikles, or anyone else who ever lived, to be honoured by the people; an

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18. For instance, note Protagoras, 327D: a play of Pherekrates, the Ἄγριοι, which was produced at the Lenaia in 420 B.C., is referred to as if it had already taken place; yet elsewhere in the dialogue Perikles and his sons are still alive (314E-315A), the war has not begun, and Alkibiades' brother, Kleinias, is still Perikles' ward (320A). (For the date of Pherekrates' play, the archonship of Aristion, see Athenaios, V, 218D).

19. 103A-104E.

extraordinary statement if Alkibiades at this point was barely twenty.[20]

If there is any possibility that the Alkibiades is correct in saying that Sokrates was the first of Alkibiades' lovers, it must be set beside Antiphon's accusations that Alkibiades had lovers before he came of age and actually ran away to the house of one of them. In fact, the story in the Alkibiades may be based on Antiphon's remarks, and we know from Plutarch how biased Antiphon was.[21]

The version given in the Symposion is likely to be the nearest to the truth; however, as Athenaios remarks,[22] none of the comic playwrights mentions the affair. In fact, the association of the pair as lovers appears in literature only after the death of Sokrates, and I am tempted to see in the various stories attempts to play down Sokrates' political influence upon Alkibiades, this being the burden of the posthumous charges laid

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20. 105A-B.

21. [Plato], Alkibiades, I, 103A; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 3 (quoting a lost work of Antiphon).

22. 219 A-B (In this, at least, Athenaios seems to be correct).

against him. It was impossible to deny a connexion between Sokrates and Alkibiades; but Sokrates' apologists sought to show that his influence upon Alkibiades was weakest in its political and strongest in its amatory aspects. Antiphon, for instance, does not mention Sokrates as one of Alkibiades' lovers.

I do not deny that the affair existed; but I doubt if it was as intense as Plato has represented it, or as long-lived. That Sokrates and Alkibiades met and conversed frequently in the period between 431 B.C. and the departure of Alkibiades for Sicily in 415 B.C. is not, I think, in doubt; nor can their friendship, even, at one point, their mutual attraction, be gainsaid. The only documentation that we have regarding this relationship is that of Sokrates' own circle of partisans, particularly Plato, Xenophon and Aischines of Sphettos. Other literary references are much later and almost certainly based on these three and other members of the circle, such as Antisthenes, or the accusations made after Sokrates' death by Polykrates. Anytos' accusations at the time of Sokrates' trial do not mention Alkibiades at all.

If there is any factual basis for the Symposion, the affair between Alkibiades and Sokrates lasted until 415 B.C.. However, the nature of the relationship was profoundly changed by then; Alkibiades was resentful of Sokrates' presence, and jealous of his attentions to other beauties. There also seems to be an element of guilt, since Alkibiades' political activities ran counter to all that Sokrates had tried to teach him.

As a literary portrait, Plato's Alkibiades is brilliant; but is this a true image of the man? Certainly the devil-may care attitude and the disarming frankness are characteristics of the Alkibiades we have been conditioned to expect;[23] but has Plato let his dramatic instincts run away with the facts?

If it is true that Alkibiades in 415 B.C. resented Sokrates' presence because he felt guilty about his own political aberrations, it is very unlikely that the affair lasted much longer. The events of 415-408 B.C. would have immeasurably increased both Alkibiades' feelings of guilt and Sokrates' sense of failure. In any case, we know nothing of their relationship subsequent to 415 B.C. and should be unwise to conjecture its continuance.

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23. 213C-216B.

The few stories outside Plato's dialogues that have come down to us concerning this friendship must belong to the period 432 to 416/5 B.C. It is impossible to suggest a date for most of them; they are anecdotes, frequently illustrative of Sokrates' character rather than of Alkibiades'. Two such anecdotes occur in Diogenes Laertios and are much more illustrative of Sokrates' method of question and answer to break down careless statements than of any trait in Alkibiades' character.[24]

Diogenes' third anecdote refers to the ransoming of the philosopher Phaidon, who had been a slave when he first joined the Socratic circle. Sokrates is said to have persuaded Alkibiades, or perhaps Kriton and his friends, to buy Phaidon's freedom in order that he might study philosophy as became a free man.[25] Once more the naming of Alkibiades is arbitrary; he was well known as a rich member of the circle, and so was likely to have been concerned in the ransoming.

Athenaios has an anecdote involving Sokrates' wife, Xanthippe, evidently based on the notion that Xanthippe resented Alkibiades' relations with her husband; it hardly

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24. Lives of the Great Philosophers, 2,24; 36-37.

25. Lives of the Great Philosophers, 2, 105.

affords any guide to Alkibiades' character.[26]

In another anecdote in Athenaios, Aspasia, the mistress of Perikles, appears both as poetess and as Sokrates' teacher in rhetoric. She seems delighted at the affair between Sokrates and Alkibiades and advises Sokrates to conquer Alkibiades' heart by the aid of the Muse. Sokrates, employing Aspasia as his mentor in love, goes hunting after Alkibiades, but becomes himself the prey, caught in Alkibiades' net. Aspasia consoles Sokrates by promising to tame Alkibiades.[27]

The suggestion that Aspasia could "tame" Alkibiades is intriguing; the story, if true, would belong to the years 433-432 B.C., if not earlier. We have no means of estimating Aspasia's influence upon Alkibiades while he was living in Perikles' house, but the question has exercised the minds of both scholars and gossips from Alkibiades' time onwards.

The story may be the basis for the hypothesis of the novelist P.M. Green, who supposes that Alkibiades was expelled from Perikles' house because of a love-

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26. XII, 643F: Xanthippe trampled on a cake sent to Sokrates by Alkibiades, because she was angry with them both.

27. V, 219C-F.

-affair between himself and Aspasia.[28]

Green's theory is that this hypothetical love-affair led to the blackballing of Alkibiades by Perikles when Alkibiades came of age and applied for enrollment in the cavalry; he was consequently enrolled as an infantryman, despite his wealth.[29] Whether this hypothesis can be upheld is doubtful, but we are told by Plato and Plutarch that Alkibiades served at Delion in 424 B.C. as a cavalryman and as an infantryman at Poteidaia in 432 B.C.[30]; Plato, as I have suggested, is suspect as an historical source.

Athenaios rounds off his story with a reference to Plato's Protagoras, which has its dramatic setting in 431 B.C. However, Athenaios says that Alkibiades was little short of thirty years old at the time, which is absurd if the dramatic dating of the Protagoras is correct. In any case, to suggest that a man's first beard grows when he is nearly thirty[31] is surely rather far-fetched.

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28. Achilles his Armour, pp.43-51.

29. Op.cit., pp.56-57.

30. Plato, Symposion, 221A; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 7,4 (see also Chapter Three below).

31. V,219 F; Plato, Protagoras, 309 A-B.

In another of Athenaios' anecdotes he draws on Aristophanes, who represents the Megarians as kidnapping two of Aspasia's harlots in revenge for the abduction of the Megarian harlot, Simaitha. The result, according to Aristophanes, was the Megarian Decree of 432 B.C., which popular opinion, but not that of Thucydides, considered to be the cause of the Peloponnesian War. A scholion to Aristophanes says that one of the drunken Kottabos-players who abducted Simaitha was Alkibiades, who was enamoured of her.[32]

Alkibiades' part in the episode is the conjecture of the scholiast, who is unlikely to have worked before the third century B.C. It probably represents the scholarly passion for fitting names to events, rather than a true relation of facts.

Aischines of Sphettos, was a member of Sokrates' circle; we have only fragments of his work. Like Plato and Xenophon, he probably wrote after the

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32. XIII, 569C-570A; see Aristophanes, Acharnians, 524-537 and scholion. Thucydides says that the causes of the decree were the cultivation of consecrated land and of land that did not belong to them by the Megarians, and the harbouring of escaped slaves from Athens (I,139,1-2).

death of Sokrates and is thought to have been born about the same time as Xenophon.[33]

In the Alkibiades of Aischines Sokrates remarks that his passion for Alkibiades was akin to divine possession; by his companionship he hoped to improve Alkibiades' character.[34]

The aim of this dialogue seems to be to defend Sokrates from any charge of having corrupted Alkibiades. According to Taylor, Aischines, "like Plato but unlike Xenophon, ascribed to him a very special relation to Alcibiades, going back to the boyhood of the latter, and, in the earlier years of the headstrong youth, at any rate, a very marked influence

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33. Diogenes Laertios (Lives of the Great Philosophers, 2,61-63) says that Aischines defended the father of Phaiax the general; if this is the Phaiax who was Alkibiades' political rival, Aischines' birth-date must be set much earlier than 430 B.C. However, Diogenes also says that Aischines was in Sicily until 355 B.C. His creative period seems to have begun after 400 B.C., which makes a birth-date before 430 B.C. unlikely, though not impossible. We have fragments of his Alkibiades, which Diogenes says was based upon Antisthenes' work of the same name.

34. Fragment 4 (Krauss), quoted by Taylor, Philosophical Studies, pp. 1-27.

over him, an influence which Socrates hoped to use for the moral betterment of a youth of such brilliant promise. The strength of this influence was indicated in the dialogue, as we learn from Aristides, by the effect of Socrates' account of Themistocles on the lad. He drove him to lay his head on his knees and shed tears of despair at the contrast between his own 'preparation' for public life and that of his prototype."[35]

Taylor suggests that Aischines' work was "the model for the Alcibiades Maior attributed to Plato."[36]

Xenophon, like Plato, was considerably younger than Alkibiades; his birth can hardly be placed before 430 B.C.[37]. He wrote the Memorabilia at least partly in order to defend Sokrates' memory from the charge that he had influenced Alkibiades and Kritias by his teaching and that his influence was the cause of their excesses.

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35. Philosophical Studies, pp. 14-15.

36. Op.cit., p.17.

37. See Xenophon, Anabasis, III, 1,25, where Xenophon implied that in 401 B.C. he was well under age for the post of general.

He has no intention, he says, of excusing these men, but explains that they came to Sokrates in order to learn his dialectical methods; once they thought they had learned these they left him to pursue their political ambitions.[38]

Alkibiades, having left Sokrates, had his head turned by the attentions paid to him and neglected Sokrates' advice. Xenophon implies that Sokrates should be praised for restraining Alkibiades and Kritias for so long, rather than blamed for corrupting them.[39]

Xenophon points out that even while they were with Sokrates, Alkibiades and Kritias had their minds set on politics, and tells how Alkibiades, while still under twenty, managed to outwit Perikles in a discussion on the nature of law, thus proving to his own satisfaction his superiority over the leading politician of his day. This convinced Alkibiades that he had learned enough from Sokrates, and he left him for a life of politics. "Politics drew them [Alkibiades and Kritias] to Sokrates, and it was for politics that they left him."[40]

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38. I, 2,12-18.

39. I, 2,24-26.

40. I, 2,39-47.

Plutarch viewed the love of Sokrates for Alkibiades as contributing not a little to his fame; others were drawn by his beauty, but Sokrates by his innate virtues, which he alone could perceive. He sought to offset the flattery heaped upon Alkibiades by guiding and training him in the right path, and the boy responded, devoting himself entirely to Sokrates, exercising with him, sharing a tent with him and casting off his other lovers.[41]

This evidently relates to the early days of the relationship; it is likely that it is based on Plato's Symposion and Xenophon's Memorabilia, along with other sources no longer extant. Both Plato and Xenophon, as I have said, had the definite aim of cleansing Sokrates of any taint of having corrupted Alkibiades. Neither work is truly contemporary to the events it describes.

If there is any truth in Plutarch's story, it suggests a long period of acclimatisation during Alkibiades' late boyhood or early manhood in which he gradually and insensibly fell under the spell of Sokrates' personality; however, we have other evidence that implies

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41. Alkibiades, 4, 1-4.

a different sequence of events: in the year in which he came of age Alkibiades visited Abydos with his uncle Axiochos.[42] The nature of this voyage was such that, if Sokrates had had any influence over Alkibiades, I think he would have used this influence to prevent the boy from going to Abydos. Consequently, I believe that, if the visit to Abydos did take place, it must have occurred before Alkibiades became involved with Sokrates. I would therefore date the beginning of this friendship to 433 B.C. or later.

The story of Anytos is found in Plutarch.[43] He was one of Alkibiades' lovers, evidently an unsuccessful one. Alkibiades refused a dinner invitation to his house, but after drinking heavily with his friends at home, went riotously to the house of Anytos and ordered his slaves to carry off half of Anytos' gold plate. Then, according to Athenaios,[44] he gave this to a poor member of his clique, Thrasylos, who may be the general of 410 B.C., and went home.

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42. Antiphon, frag. C,1(Maidment); see note 5 above.

43. Alkibiades, 4,5.

44. XII, 534 E.

Anytos' only comment was, "He behaved reasonably and humanely. He could have taken it all, but he has left us half." Plutarch does not say whether Anytos' remark was sarcastic or fatuous, but implies the latter. Could even an unrequited lover act in so besotted a manner? If so, he deserved Alkibiades' treatment of him.

If this episode really took place it must be dated after Alkibiades' majority, since he is portrayed in possession of his own house and slaves. It probably belongs to the period immediately after his return from Abydos, when he was not yet alive to the political dangers of such an action. The novelist P.M. Green has it that the purpose of this exploit was to enrich Thrasylos.[45]

This, then, is the literary evidence for Sokrates' relationship with Alkibiades: none of the references can be dated before the death of Sokrates, thirty years after the affair was supposed to be at its height. Despite the ample opportunities it should have afforded Aristophanes and the other comic playwrights, there is not the slightest reference to the affair in any

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45. Op.cit., pp.60-61.

of their extant works. The earliest reference by any comic poet to Alkibiades seems datable to 427 B.C.[46], and reference is made merely to Alkibiades' manner, not to his love-affairs. Sokrates is a frequent butt of Aristophanes' wit, but the target is always his sophistry and his odd appearance.

It must then be concluded, in the absence of truly contemporary references, that the affair, if it took place at all, was minor, short-lived and, by the standards of the day, conventional. Its extravagant features are for the most part the invention of Sokrates' apologists, who may have sought, by pointing up the erotic aspects of the affair, to remove any taint of political influence by Sokrates upon Alkibiades. Later writers, such as Plutarch, regarding these accounts as eye-witness reports, have accepted them as true and have added to them fragments of gossip and the conjectures and constructions of other writers, who themselves were using Plato, Aischines and Xenophon, and the abuse of Antiphon, Pseudo-Andokides, Lysias and others who sought to revile Alkibiades or Sokrates and their memory.

It is perhaps not surprising that Xenophon and Plato differ from one another; Xenophon, to judge by his Agesilaos, was extremely intolerant of any display of

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46. Aristophanes, Δαιταλεῖς, frag.198 (Edmonds, pp.628-629).

passion, even where affection was involved.[47] It is thus to be expected that he would gloss over any such behaviour on the part of his master, Sokrates, if it occurred. If it did not occur, there is no reason at all why Xenophon should follow Aischines and Plato in portraying Sokrates in the grip of a violent passion for Alkibiades.

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47. 5,4.

CHAPTER THREE

YOUNG MANHOOD

The first datable contemporary reference to Alkibiades is a passage in Aristophanes' lost comedy Daitaleis, in which Alkibiades' habit of making up new words is ridiculed. The play is thought to have been produced at the Lenaia in 427 B.C.[1] Another fragment of the same play describes a man whom Edmonds considers to be Alkibiades; he is "plucked smooth as any eel, to boot and sporting golden curls."[2] The chorus of the play is composed of those who had dined at the temple of Herakles;[3] Athenaios quotes a decree moved by Alkibiades that relates to such παράσιτοι ,[4] but gives the name of the secretary for the session in which this decree was passed as Stephanos son of Thoukydides of the deme Alopeke. The only man of this name recorded in this period was born about 427 B.C.;[5] if they are

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1. Frag. 198(Edmonds, pp.628-629).
2. Frag. 218(Edmonds, pp.636-637); the translation is that of Edmonds.
3. Edmonds, F.A.C., I,p.627.
4. VI, 234D-E.
5. Kirchner, P.A.,II, p.269,no.12884; see note 6 below.

one and the same man the decree is not likely to have been passed until the beginning of the fourth century, and must, therefore, relate to some other Alkibiades, if it is correctly reported by Athenaios. Hatzfeld dates the decree to 407 B.C. and identifies Stephanos as the son of Thoukydides son of Melesias, the adversary of Perikles.[6]

A fragment of the comic poet Pherekrates, if it is to be taken literally, must be even earlier: "For Alkibiades, though not a man, as it seems, is now a man for all the ladies."[7] If this refers to Alkibiades' age, it must be dated before 432 B.C., if manhood be reckoned as beginning at the age of twenty, or 434 B.C., if a young man became formally a man when he attained his

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6. Alcibiade, p.301; if his identification is correct (and we know of no other Stephanos son of Thoukydides in this era), it follows that this man must have been born not later than 438/7 B.C., since the secretary of the Boule must himself have been a member of that body, and therefore over the age of thirty.

7. Quoted by Athenaios (XII, 535B):

οὐκ ὤν ἀνὴρ γὰρ Ἀλκιβιάδης, ὡς δοκεῖν,
ἀνὴρ ἁπασῶν τῶν γυναικῶν ἐστι νῦν.

majority at the age of eighteen.[8] It is possible, however, that in this case it is the appearance rather than the age of Alkibiades that is being ridiculed; if so, the fragment could be of considerably later date, since Pherekrates is known to have been active until 410 B.C. In support of this opinion I quote a fragment of the Kolakes of Eupolis, a play produced at the Dionysia in 421 B.C., in the archonship of Alkaios.[9] In this, to the invocation, "Let Alkibiades be no longer a woman," Alkibiades replies, "What's come over you? You go straight home and exercise your wife, or else I'll do it for you."

If Alkibiades' effeminate appearance is the object of this ridicule it would allow Pherekrates' fragment to be dated to the same period as that of Eupolis. Perhaps Alkibiades, like Achilles, after whom he was nick-named, was reputed to have posed as a woman at

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8. See Reinmuth, T.A.P.A., LXXXIII [1952],p.40, for the latter view.

9. Frag. 158 (Edmonds, pp.374-375); for the date see Edmonds, F.A.C.,I,p.369.

some time.[10]

Nothing is known of his activities in the years following Poteidaia. He may have fought in the disastrous Athenian campaign at Delion in 424/3 B.C.; for this information we have to trust Plato.[11] If it is true, this report raises an interesting problem: Alkibiades apparently fought at Poteidaia as a hoplite and at Delion as a cavalryman; his wealth should have qualified him for the latter force on both occasions. However, as we do not know enough about the system of recruiting for the cavalry to conjecture, the problem must remain unanswered.

Presumably Alkibiades occupied himself during these early years with the management of his inherited estates, though this task may have been difficult or impossible whenever a Spartan invasion was taking place. At these times he probably served in the militia in and around the city and no doubt did his share of other military duties. No mention survives

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10. See Strattis, frag.36 (Edmonds,pp.824-825); the play was the Myrmidons, and the troops of Alkibiades at Byzantion in 408 B.C. are its chorus, Edmonds believes; from this the identification of Alkibiades as Achilles follows naturally.

11. Symposion, 221A, the source of Plutarch,Alkibiades,7,4.

of his activities, and it is pointless to conjecture whether or not he visited Sicily at this time,[12] or took part in any specific campaign. Such gibes as the comic poets direct at him suggest that he did not emerge as a public figure until late in the 420's.

Aristophanes wrote the Acharnians in 425 B.C. Apart from the incident of the Megarian girls whose abduction was laid at Alkibiades' door,[13] there is a direct reference to the "son of Kleinias," who could be Alkibiades or his brother.[14] There is little doubt in my mind that this man, who is referred to as an

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12. This is suggested by Green (Achilles his Armour, p.328) to explain Alkibiades' later interest in Sicily.

13. 524, with scholion.

14. 716:...εὐρύπρωκτος καὶ λάλος. The word εὐρύπρωκτος is translated by Liddell-Scott-Jones as "lewd, obscene," and also as a noun, "adulterer." It could as easily mean "broad in the beam." In any case, since we know next to nothing about Kleinias, we cannot exclude him, though we can speculate that Alkibiades, whose reputation as an orator is known to us, was the person described in this verse as λάλος.

adulterer and a chatter-box, is Alkibiades. He is suggested as being the best man to levy accusations against the young men; perhaps Alkibiades was beginning to acquire a reputation as a speaker.

As far as his "babbling" is concerned, we have the testimony of Theophrastos and Demosthenes that Alkibiades was renowned as a most able speaker, very skilful at learning the facts of a case, but, because of a somewhat limited vocabulary, given to pausing while he searched for the right word or phrase.[15]

Alkibiades is reproved for his adulteries by Aischines of Sphettos in a fragment of his Axiochos preserved in Athenaios.[16] We cannot, of course, be sure whether Aischines is referring to Alkibiades' activities at the time when the Acharnians was produced.

At some unknown date he married Hipparete the daughter of the extremely wealthy Hipponikos.[17]

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15. Theophrastos is quoted by Plutarch, Alkibiades, 10,2; see also Demosthenes, 21,145.

16. V,220C.

17. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 8,2; [Andokides], 4,13-14 (see stemma below).

Pseudo-Andokides says that Hipponikos died in 424 B.C. while serving as a general at Delion,[18] but this is not supported by the evidence of any other writer. We possess a reference in Athenaios to the Kolakes of Eupolis, a play produced in 422/1 B.C., in which it is implied that Kallias, the son of Hipponikos, has just come into his inheritance at the time of the play's production,[19] and Plutarch quotes sources which say that it was Kallias who gave Hipparete in marriage to Alkibiades,[20] as if Hipponikos were already dead. Possibly Pseudo-Andokides has confused Hipponikos with Hippokrates, who was a general and was killed at Delion,[21] but in any case we can, I think, assume that the marriage took place in the period 424 to 422 B.C., just before or just after the death of Hipponikos; I incline to the earlier date since I believe that Alkibiades employed Hipparete's dowry to finance his entry in the chariot-race at the Olympic Games in 424 B.C.[22]

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18. 4,13.

19. V,220C.

20. Alkibiades, 8,2.

21. Thucydides, IV, 101,2.

22. See Chapter Four below.

Under the terms of the marriage-contract Hipparete brought a dowry of ten talents, and a like amount was to be paid when she bore Alkibiades a child; this was claimed when a daughter was born, but Alkibiades had to take his brother-in-law Kallias into court to obtain his money.[23]

Isokrates is very vague about the marriage, implying that it took place soon after the campaign at Poteidaia,[24] which is perhaps too early. The circumstances that led to the marriage are strange: Alkibiades is said to have gone up to Hipponikos and to have struck him for a bet; afterwards he apparently went to Hipponikos' house, stripped, and asked him to punish him in any way he liked. Instead, Hipponikos forgave him and later gave him Hipparete as wife.[25]

Hipparete had had many suitors on account of her dowry and reputation;[26] for Alkibiades her attractiveness probably resided in her father's wealth:

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23. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 8,2; [Andokides],4,13.

24. 16, 31.

25. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 8, 1-2.

26. Isokrates, 16, 31; her family was that of the Kerykes.

the family of Hipponikos was a noble one and politically important, but the need to replenish his cash-box may have outweighed any other considerations in Alkibiades' mind.[27] The political alliance, if there was one, did not last long. Neither did the marriage, for Hipparete sued Alkibiades for divorce a few years later.

She was, says Plutarch, a seemly and loving wife, but a marriage made for financial or political reasons is not likely to have exercised much hold on a man of Alkibiades' temperament; he continued to consort with harlots, both Athenian and foreign,[28] and, according to Pseudo-Andokides, even brought these women into the house.[29]

Hipparete eventually left Alkibiades and returned to her brother, unhindered by her husband, who continued his dissolute ways. She entered a plea for divorce and appeared, as was the law, in person before the Archon to plead her cause. Alkibiades came to the market-place with his friends and abducted her by force.

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27. Alkibiades, 8,2.

28. Alkibiades, 8,3.

29. 4, 14.

Plutarch thinks that the law contained some provision about the plaintiff's personal appearance in order to permit the husband to abduct his wife and take her back to his house.[30] If this is so, and we do not know enough about Athenian marriage-laws to settle the problem, it would explain the lack of any attempt on the part of the spectators to prevent the abduction. If not, then it would be another example of Alkibiades' high-handedness and love of dramatic gestures, and his popularity, or the fear of his vengeance, that prevented anyone from stopping him. Probably the truth lies between these two views. Perhaps, on the other hand, his zeal to recover his wife may be explained by the requirement that the dowry should be repaid if Hipparete divorced him.

After this abortive attempt to obtain a divorce, Hipparete returned to Alkibiades' house and lived with him on apparently amicable terms until her death a few months later while he was absent on a trip to Ephesos, probably in 416/5 B.C., not very long after

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30. Alkibiades, 8, 3-5.

the birth of the younger Alkibiades.[31]

Any political alliance that may have existed between Kallias and Alkibiades did not last very long; as we have seen, Alkibiades sued Kallias for the additional ten talents of the marriage-settlement, and Kallias seems to have been so terrified of an assassination-plot that he publicly deeded all his property to the state in the event of his death without a lineal heir.[32]

Ironically enough, in later years Alkibiades' daughter was married to Kallias' son, Hipponikos the younger, who soon after the marriage accused her of incest with her brother, a thoroughly dissolute and worthless character.[33]

There is a possibility that the alleged kidnapping of the painter Agatharchos took place in the same period as the marriage of Alkibiades. Pseudo-

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31. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 8,4; for the age of the younger Alkibiades see Lysias, 14, in which he seems to have come of age in 395 B.C. However, Isokrates, 26, 45 may be evidence for a birth-date in 419/8 B.C.

32. [Andokides], 4,15; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 8,2.

33. Lysias, 14, 28.

Andokides, ready as always to accuse Alkibiades of every vice, tells how Alkibiades asked the painter to do a portrait of him, and brought him to his house by force when he pleaded that he was too busy with other commissions. There he kept him prisoner for three months. When Agatharchos finally made his escape Alkibiades so threatened him that he was afraid to lay charges.[34] The story, if there is even a shred of truth in it, may have arisen out of some joking remark of Alkibiades when the painter turned down his commission.

During these early years Alkibiades was competing as a choregos, and Pseudo-Andokides charges that he included a non-Athenian singer in his chorus and forcibly resisted the attempts of his rival Taureas to eject this singer. The judges were more impressed with the excellent chorus of Alkibiades, to whom they awarded

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34. 4,17; Plutarch (Alkibiades, 16,4) is less severe upon Alkibiades: in this version Alkibiades paid the painter well for his pains when he released him upon completion of the portrait.

the prize, than with the legality of Taureas' claims.[35] Isokrates mentions Alkibiades' super-eminence as choregos, gymnasiarch and trierarch,[36] an eminence owing not a little to his intense competitiveness.

Before the capture of Sphakteria in 425 B.C., Athens was in dire financial straits; the tribute of the allied states was reassessed soon after the victory had restored Athenian prestige and authority. According to Pseudo-Andokides, one of the ten assessors who "doubled" the tribute paid by the allies was Alkibiades.[37] However, he was surely too young at this time for the post;[38]

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35. 4,20. This Taureas was probably the owner of a wrestling-school (see Plato, Charmides, 153A); he was later wrongly accused of implication in the mutilation of the Hermai in 415 B.C. (Andokides, 1,47 and 68). Plutarch (Alkibiades, 16,4) suggests that Alkibiades actually assaulted Taureas.

36. 16, 35.

37. 4, 11. For the date see Wade-Gery and Meritt, A.J.P., LVII (1936),pp.377-394.

38. West (T.A.P.A., LVII [1926], pp.64-70) holds that he was too young to be a τάκτης in 425 and must have held the post in 418/7 B.C., but this theory is adequately disposed of by Meritt, Wade-Gery and McGregor (A.T.L., III, pp. 350-351).

if he ever was an assessor it must have been on a much later occasion. However, as the authors of The Athenian Tribute Lists have pointed out,[39] there is no evidence of any change in 418/7 from the reduced figure set in 422/1 B.C.; the figure that came into force when the peace of Nikias had been concluded. By the time of the next assessment, 414/3, when, in any case, no tribute was assessed at all, Alkibiades was in exile. Pseudo-Andokides is "simply wrong."[40]

Before the capture of Sphakteria relieved her of her embarrassments, Athens was forced to raise money by means of voluntary contributions on the part of citizens, or so it appears from the account of Plutarch; Alkibiades, when he came forward and made a contribution himself, now made his first entry into public life. The crowd applauded, and, in the commotion, a pet quail escaped from his pocket and ran among them. It was recaptured by a seaman, Antiochos, who became a close friend of Alkibiades thereafter.[41]

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39. A.T.L., III,pp.350-351.

40. A.T.L., III,pp.347-358, especially p. 351.

41. Alkibiades, 10,1.

The incident, if true, is yet another instance of Alkibiades' gift for dramatic and opportune gestures, and is likely to have been planned in advance as a means of drawing attention to himself as a man with the good of the city at heart.

A fragment of Eupolis, from the Poleis, which is thought to have been produced in 422 B.C., may refer to this incident.[42] The keeping of quails as pets possibly became fashionable after this episode. We do not know the context of the fragment.

Timon the misanthrope once saw Alkibiades, after he had spoken well in the Assembly, with a following of well-wishers. Instead of avoiding or ignoring him he remarked: "It's a good thing you're growing up, little boy. Soon you'll be big enough to destroy all these fools." This remark, which Plutarch reports, was received with varying response by the crowd: some regarded it seriously,

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42. Poleis, fragment 214 (Edmonds, pp.390-391); Edmonds' translation reads:

"A. Have you ever kept quails?

"B. Yes; some little ones: what of it?"

some were amused or angry.[43] At any event, the meeting occurred while Alkibiades was still only a rising young politician, perhaps in 425 B.C. or a little later.

Aristophanes produced the Acharnians in 425 B.C.. In it the older men, veterans of the Persian War, grumble about the νεάνισκοι who put them to ridicule and bring legal actions against them; their accusations are directed especially at a young man who has made himself the chief accuser, contriving with rounded speeches and word-traps to outwit and confuse them.[44] It is tempting to see in this the Alkibiades of Xenophon's Memorabilia, who outwits and confuses Perikles.[45]

At the end of the Acharnians the chorus invokes a curse upon a rival choregos, who is to be attacked by a drunken Orestes roaming about the streets; in defending himself against Orestes, he is to strike the poet Kratinos instead.[46] It is just possible that this is a veiled reference to Alkibiades, whose family traced its descent back to Orestes, and who presumably was active as a choregos

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43. Alkibiades, 16,6.

44. 680-688.

45. I,2,40-46.

46. 1165-1173.

at this time, though we have no record of any comedy produced by him.

There are some who would date the story of Alkibiades and the tax-farmers to the same period as that of his contribution to the war-chest.[47] The ground upon which they base their argument is the likelihood that when the state was financially embarrassed tax-farmers would be particularly active; it seems to me that the episode is an example more of Alkibiades' hubris than of his love for publicity, and would belong to a slightly later period in his career, when he was the leading politician in Athens; that is, shortly before the Sicilian Expedition.

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47. See Hatzfeld, op.cit., pp. 71-72. He suggests that the recipient of Alkibiades' favours might have been Poulytion, the metic whose house was the scene of the alleged profanation of the mysteries. For this story see Plutarch (Alkibiades, 5, 1-3): a lover of Alkibiades was forced by him to bid for the tax-concession because of some private grudge Alkibiades had against the tax-farmers. Alkibiades stood surety, and the tax-farmers were forced to buy off Alkibiades' man for 100 talents.

Another episode that surely belongs in his early manhood is the story of his dog. This was an exceedingly fine and expensive animal with a long and beautiful tail; Alkibiades cut off the dog's tail because he wished, as he said, to divert the attention of the people of Athens from other more serious goings-on by giving them something minor to talk about.[48]

In 424 B.C. Aristophanes brought out his Knights, which is an attack on Kleon and his imperialistic policies. The only passage in this play that could be considered a reference to Alkibiades is the plea to the audience not to criticize the manners of the Knights or their way of cutting their hair.[49] If Alkibiades was by now enrolled as a Knight this reference might be applied to him. Otherwise there is no reference to him, which is not altogether surprising, since at this time he was apparently still ignored as a political force because of his youth and inexperience.[50]

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48. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 9,1.

49. 580.

50. Thucydides, V, 43,2; it may be recalled that he was alleged to have fought at Delion as a cavalryman (see Plato, Symposion, 221A).

The first version of Aristophanes' Clouds appeared in 423 B.C. at the Dionysia. The target for Aristophanes' ridicule is the Sophists, and Sokrates in particular. Here, Alkibiades may be young Pheidippides, who, after a youth spent in the delights of horse-racing is brought by his father to learn how to talk cunningly at the school of Sokrates. He takes to sophistry like a duck to water; learns new and clever doctrines; scorns the established laws; and remarks that "when all my care was for horses I couldn't utter three words without a mistake; now this man [Sokrates] has halted me in this course and I use now airy arguments and speeches."[51] Xenophon's description of Alkibiades' motives for going to Sokrates come to mind: he went to Sokrates to learn to be completely proficient in the art of speaking.[52] In a slightly earlier passage in the same play, Pheidippides' father complains, when his son has threatened to beat him, that he has brought him up and understood his "lisping talk and indulged his every whim," only to have this happen to him.[53]

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51. 1399-1404.

52. Memorabilia, I,2,16.

53. 1380-1386.

Probably the phrase "lisping talk" refers only to the speech of a child, but it may be a reference to Alkibiades' lisp. Alkibiades, even at this late date, is seen as no more than a young man about town, a frequenter of discussion-groups rather than a political force. Pheidippides is more a type than a portrait of a specific person.

Similarly, in the Wasps, produced in 422 B.C., Alkibiades, though here he is mentioned by name, is ridiculed for his speech rather than for his behaviour in the political field. True, the pun on κόραξ (crow) and κόλαξ (informer) is made with reference to a debate in the assembly, and may well be an actual quotation; the occasion, however, is trivial.[54] Elsewhere the young knight, Philokleon, who may possibly be Alkibiades, is ridiculed for his foppery and his garlanded hems and uncut hair; he is also ridiculed as the partisan of the Spartan general, Brasidas, which may be a reference to Alkibiades' philo-Spartan tendencies and his proxeny.[55]

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54. 45.

55. 475-476.

Eupolis is thought to have produced The Golden Race in 423 B.C.; there is one possible reference to Alkibiades' appearance and philo-Spartan tendencies ; someone remarks, "Scissors in hand the barber then will clip / The annual output of his upper lip."[56] To shave the upper lip only was apparently a Spartan habit. Another fragment, whose meaning is obscene, is perhaps a reference to Alkibiades' appearance.[57]

If the subject of these fragments is Alkibiades, we have evidence of his growing, but still slight, political importance. He does not seem to have emerged as a force until after Kleon's death in 422 B.C., and the comic poets are faithful mirrors of his obscurity: if they refer to him at all it is with gentle ridicule rather than with the virulence they reserve for the established politicians.

In the winter of 422/1 B.C. Nikias, who had been active in negotiations for the peace that came to

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56. Fragment 278 (Edmonds, pp. 410-411).

57. Fragment 278A (Edmonds, pp.410-413):

καὶ καρατμὴς ὡς[ἔ]μ'ἦλθες
ἐξυρημενος σαβύττους.

bear his name, was within sight of success, despite the opposition of Alkibiades, whose pride had been hurt by the failure of his efforts to revive his Spartan proxeny and who seems, in fact, to have made a complete about-face, though he managed to conceal this from the Spartans themselves.

In the early spring of 421 B.C., the peace of Nikias came into being.[58] Nikias' desire for an end to the toil and labour engendered by war was shared by the majority of Athenians, and the summer of 421 B.C. was passed in peace, with mutual intercourse between Athens and Sparta.[59]

The respite was brief; suspicions grew and multiplied, and Alkibiades and his faction did their best to promote them. The Spartans found that they could neither control their allies nor bind them to the terms of the peace. Argos, in particular, now that the thirty-year truce of 451 B.C. was about to expire, urged

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58. Thucydides, V, 19, 1;20,1 (ἄρχει δὲ τῶν σπονδῶν... Ἀρτεμισίου μηνὸς τετάρτῃ φθίνοντος εν δὲ Ἀθήναις ἄρχων Ἀλκαῖος Ἐλαφηβολιῶνος μηνὸς ἕκτῃ φθίνοντος ...τελευτῶντος τοῦ χειμῶνος ἅμα ἦρι ἐκ Διονυσίων εὐθὺς τῶν ἀστικῶν).

59. Thucydides, V,35,8.

on by the Korinthians, who had refused to accept the terms of the peace, which they considered unfair to themselves, began to look for other alliances outside the Spartan hegemony. Recognising the trend of affairs, the Spartans concluded a fifty-year truce with Athens, in the hope of forestalling an Athenian entente with Argos. The terms included a clause binding either side to go to the aid of the other in the event of an attack by a third party.[60]

When the truce between Argos and Sparta expired in 421 B.C., Argos refused to renew it. Instead she persuaded Mantineia and Elis to leave the Spartan alliance and join an Argive one. Korinth also made an alliance with Argos, but, having failed to persuade Tegea, and thus the rest of the Peloponnese, to leave the Spartan bloc, became somewhat hesitant herself. The Boiotians were likewise reluctant to join the Argives. This background of tensions within the Spartan hegemony provided Alkibiades with the opportunity to sabotage the peace and gain control of the radical democrats at Athens.

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60. Thucydides, V,22-24.

In Sparta, too, men were coming to power who were hostile to the peace; they obtained control of the ephorate in 421/0 B.C. Subsequently, the Boiotians were encouraged to join the Argive alliance in order to entice the Argives back into the Spartan fold. It was hinted that Sparta would support such an alignment even if the peace with Athens was destroyed thereby.[61]

Sparta's attempt to bring Argos back into the fold was at first a failure; the Boiotians, who were still technically at war with Athens, made a pact with Sparta and undertook to hand over to her the Athenians they held prisoner as well as the fortress of Panakton. Sparta intended to use these as bargaining counters to win back Pylos from the Athenians. However, before handing over Panakton to the Spartans, the Boiotians razed its walls so that it was useless to either side. Not unexpectedly, Argos was alarmed at these developments, and so was Athens.[62]

Argos felt herself isolated and feared that she might end by fighting Sparta, the Boiotians and the Athenians all at once; accordingly, she sent envoys to

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61. Thucydides, V, 36.

62. Thucydides, V, 39; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 14, 4.

Sparta to seek an alliance, an outcome that the Spartans had desired, but that they had expected to achieve by other means.[63]

Athens was outraged at the transfer of Panakton and accused Sparta of bad faith. Alkibiades, sensing his opportunity, sent a private message to Argos, urging an alliance among Athens, Argos, Elis and Mantineia, which, he said, he would promote by every means at his disposal.[64]

This overture had the effect of turning Argos, Elis and Mantineia away from Sparta, since the move towards a Spartan alliance had been made only because they felt themselves isolated; ambassadors were sent at once to Athens, and reached the city at the same time that Endios, with other Spartans thought to be favourable to Athens, arrived as an official embassy. These latter represented themselves as having full negotiating powers, and said that they were charged to discuss and settle all matters in dispute between Athens and Sparta, in particular to bring about the exchange of Pylos for Panakton.[65]

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63. Thucydides, V, 40.

64. Thucydides, V, 43.

65. Thucydides, V, 44-45; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 14, 6.

The presence of both the Spartan and the Argive delegations at the same time was acutely embarrassing to Alkibiades, and he feared that Nikias might persuade the Athenians to reject the Argive alliance if it was realised that the Spartan envoys were plenipotentiary. Accordingly he used his friendship with Endios to trick the Spartans into concealing this, offering to work for the return to Sparta of Pylos if they would deny in the assembly that they were plenipotentiary. His plan worked, and the Athenians lost patience with the Spartans, believing them to be completely untrustworthy. Instead, they listened to Alkibiades' proposals for an Argive alliance and were on the point of voting for it when an earthquake cut short proceedings for the day.[66]

The trick practised by Alkibiades upon the Spartans deserves examination: why did Endios, who may well have been the leader of the delegation, remain on friendly terms with Alkibiades after the failure of his mission?

The aim of this mission was primarily to win back Pylos; before the change of government, Sparta had been willing to exchange Amphipolis for Pylos, but now,

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66. Thucydides, V, 45; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 14, 6-9.

apparently, she was prepared merely to exchange Panakton, useless in its dismantled state, for Pylos, a most dangerous enclave of Athenian power at the spot where it could do most harm to Sparta. Were their "full powers" only, in fact, authority to bring about this exchange? It seems probable. If so, Alkibiades did not trick the Spartans into admitting what was untrue, but rather forced them to admit the truth.

The Spartans, aware, as, perhaps, the mass of Athenians were not, of the impending treaty between Athens, Argos, Elis and Mantineia, hoped to trick Athens into handing back Pylos before hostilities were resumed; Alkibiades realised this, and forced Endios to admit the fact that all he was empowered to do was to negotiate for the return of Pylos. Thus, Endios had no cause to feel resentment because he had been tricked, but rather formed a healthy respect for a resourceful political opponent.

Plutarch fills in some of the background of Thucydides' rather bare account; Alkibiades attacked Nikias, accusing him of seeking favour with the Spartans in 425 B.C. by refusing to capture their men who were cut off at Sphakteria, and by later releasing these men after their capture. These and other accusations

confounded Nikias, and he was unable to reply effectively.[67]

On the following day deliberations were resumed, and Nikias continued to insist that it was better to stay friends with Sparta than to break off relations. He persuaded the Assembly to send an embassy, of which he was to be a member, to Sparta to ask for the return of Panakton intact and of Amphipolis, as well as an end to the Spartan alliance with the Boiotians. The embassy also told the Spartans that Athens would enter an alliance with Argos unless the Boiotian alliance was broken off. The Spartans refused to give up their alliance with Boiotia, and Nikias returned to Athens without any results save the renewal of the oaths of his peace.[68]

This was Alkibiades' chance: the envoys of the Argives and their allies were brought in, and a hundred-year alliance was concluded among Athens, Argos, Elis and Mantineia.[69] The Spartan treaty was allowed to stand, though its days were now numbered.

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67. Nikias, 10, 6; Alkibiades, 14, 4-5.

68. Thucydides, V, 46, 1-4.

69. I.G., I^2,86 (Tod, Gr.Hist.Inscr., I^2, p.175, # 72).

Korinth, for her part, refused to be drawn into any offensive alliance against Sparta and remained neutral.[70]

Why was Alkibiades so opposed to the peace? His motives were surely more than just envy of Nikias" success, or pique at his own failure, after Sphakteria, to be taken seriously. I think that, to his mind, the peace was no more than a breathing-space: it conferred no strategic advantage upon Athens and could not in any sense be termed a conclusion to the war. The object of that war, as Alkibiades, the true political heir of Perikles, was well aware, was to preserve and expand the empire of Athens.

The empire was a naval hegemony, one of whose bases was trade; Sparta was not concerned with trade, nor did she maintain a fleet of any significance. However, some of her Peloponnesian and Sicilian allies, notably Korinth, were deeply involved in maritime trade, and thus represented a major threat to the aspirations

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70. Thucydides, V, 46, 5; Plutarch, Nikias, 10, 6 and 8.

of Athens. It is notable that all the incidents that preceded and led up to the outbreak of war involved Korinth or her interests. Sparta, as the major power in Greece, apart from Athens, was dangerous not because of what she was, but because of what she might become at the prompting of her Sicilian allies and Korinth.

No war to preserve or expand the empire could be considered successful if the power of Korinth continued unchecked; the hidden objective of the Argive alliance of 420 B.C. was to separate Korinth from Sparta, and, at the same time, to pose a threat to Sparta on her own borders that would prevent her from turning her attention elsewhere; and "elsewhere" surely meant Sicily.

The Sicilian expedition of a few years later was, I believe, intended to neutralise the naval and mercantile threat posed by the Dorian states of Sicily, notably Syracuse, and to pave the way for the western expansion of the empire. It also placed Athens in a position to cut off the Peloponnesian states from the granaries of Sicily.

Whether Perikles had intended to extend the empire to the West we cannot tell; however, the

expedition of Laches in 427/6 B.C., was, if not a major venture, at least a reconnaissance in force in this area, and it was by no means Athens' first penetration of the West. It would be dangerous to assume that Laches' expedition was part of Perikles' political bequest to his successors, but it should be noted that Athenian interest in Sicily and Italy dated from the early 450's, and lasted throughout Perikles' tenure of office.[71]

If the expansion of the empire to the west and the neutralisation of Korinth and Sicily were part of the strategy of Perikles, it would be natural for Alkibiades, brought up in Perikles' home, to have become a proponent of that strategy; it was also in keeping with his own bold and impetuous nature. At the same time, it was entirely opposite to the aims and inclinations of the cautious Nikias and his supporters.

Nikias represented the conservative wing of the Athenian democrats; he had once been in a position to fill Perikles' place, but had neither the personality

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71. See Chapter Four below, notes 48 to 51.

nor the power to exploit his advantage. He had none of Perikles' ability as a demagogue, nor had he the skill to outwit orators of Kleon's type, who had been no match in debate for Perikles, who, as the Funeral Oration shows, had combined a lofty manner with a wealth of popular sentiments and clichés that a Kleon could not match.[72]

Nikias was an honest man, too honest to be a successful politician; moreover, he had always been cautious, and this characteristic grew in him as he became older. The flamboyance and recklessness of Alkibiades, and his youth and undoubted brilliance, must have been irresistible when confronted by "that good grey man," Nikias.

Throughout the course of Nikias' peace Alkibiades remained an active opponent of both the peace and Nikias himself. In 419 B.C. he was elected to the strategia and devoted his energies to strengthening the Argive alliance. Plutarch suggests that he was already a general when the alliance was

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72. Thucydides, II, 35-46 (I do not doubt that Thucydides' version is very close to Perikles' own words).

concluded;[73] Thucydides states, "In the same summer 419 B.C. Alkibiades son of Kleinias, who was one of the generals at Athens, with the support of the Argives and of the Allies, went into the Peloponnese with a few Athenian hoplites and archers."[74] We do not know Plutarch's source for his information about a strategia in 420/19 B.C., and there was little military activity that year to occupy the generals, whoever they were. All that Thucydides says of Alkibiades in 420/19 B.C. is that he had reached a position of importance because of his family's reputation.[75] It would be straining

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73. Alkibiades, 15, 1; Nikias, 10, 6 and 8.

74. V, 52, 2; Isokrates, 16, 15, says "with 200 hoplites."

75. V, 43,2. Wade-Gery (Class.Quart., XXIV [1930], p.34) is one of those who accept his strategia in 420/19 B.C.; Mayor (J.H.S., LIX [1939], pp. 49-50) disagrees, arguing that only after the discomfiture of Nikias and the Spartan embassy was Alkibiades able to stand for election; he asserts that the Argives, Mantineians and Eleians were present in Athens in a purely private capacity upon the invitation of Alkibiades, and that, consequently, when Alkibiades introduced them to the Assembly he did so

the sense of his words to read this as election to the *strategia*, but in the absence of definite proof either way Plutarch's statement must stand; Alkibiades' election to the *strategia* of 420/19 B.C. should be accepted as probable.

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as *proxenos* of Argos; had they been an official delegation their introduction should have been performed by a *strategos*, which Alkibiades was not. We know that Alkibiades suggested their visit, but Thucydides also tells us that they came expressly to negotiate a treaty with Athens, which surely implies that they were an official delegation. This disposes of Mayor's thesis. Pritchett (*A.J.P.*, LXI [1940], p.473) accepts Plutarch as the best evidence available, and casts valid doubts upon Mayor's theories about the time for election of the generals. A further argument in favour of Alkibiades' *strategia* in 420/19 B.C. is that leadership of the war-party, which he had assumed upon Kleon's death in 422 B.C., was probably best exercised by a man holding the *strategia*; he would surely take the first opportunity of standing for election, that is, the spring of 420 B.C., if not earlier.

Alkibiades and his army marched through the Peloponnese, confirming various details of the alliance, and arrived at Patrai, in the north-western tip of the peninsula. Here the citizens were persuaded to build long walls similar to those at Athens in order to provide safe access to the harbour from the city. Alkibiades intended to build a fort at Rhion, near Patrai, but the Korinthians and Sikyonians opposed this plan and sent an army to prevent him.[76] After this he retired again to the Isthmos.

Meanwhile, Argos, upon a flimsy pretext, had declared war on Epidauros, hoping, by the capture of the city, both to divert the Korinthians from other projects and to shorten the Athenian supply-lines. One may suspect that Alkibiades was the instigator of this plan. The Spartans were hesitant about coming to the aid of Epidauros, as were their allies.[77]

Athens now called a conference at Mantineia, as a result of which representatives were sent to try to bring about peace between Argos and Epidauros. The

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76. Thucydides, V,52,2; Isokrates, 16,15.

77. Thucydides, V,53-54; Diodoros, XII, 78,1-2, says the city attacked was Troizen.

Argives retired, but after the failure of the conference to achieve a lasting truce and resolve their dispute with the Epidaurians, they again invaded the territories of Epidauros and ravaged a part of them. Alkibiades arrived with one thousand Athenian hoplites, in case the Spartans should decide to march to the assistance of Epidauros. The Spartans, after receiving unfavourable oracles, decided to let things be; both the Argives and Alkibiades withdrew as the year came to an end.[78]

During the winter of 419/8 B.C. the Spartans reinforced Epidauros by sea; the Argives complained to the Athenians that this contravened the terms of their alliance, and that neither side should permit an enemy to pass through its territories to attack the other. They demanded that the Athenians send a force of Messenians and disaffected helots to Pylos to harass the Spartans, and this was done on the advice of Alkibiades.[79]

Alkibiades in his various schemes to destroy the peace of Nikias seems to have had a substantial

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78. Thucydides, V, 55.

79. Thucydides, V, 56, 1-4.

portion of Athenian public opinion on his side; the peace satisfied Nikias and the mercantile interests; it was also satisfying to rural interests, as the prevailing mood of Aristophanes' comedy, Peace, produced in 421 B.C., signifies. However, Alkibiades' eloquence and scheming, and the support he received from the radical democrats and the young people in the city, gradually destroyed the stability of the peace and brought the city close to open war with Sparta once again.

There is very likely an element of truth in Thucydides' assertion that Alkibiades was offended because no one paid him any attention in 425 B.C. when he was emphasizing his ties with the Spartans and their usefulness to Athens.[80] Plutarch implies that he was envious of Nikias and preferred that there should be no peace rather than one that bore Nikias' name and not his own; when the peace did come into effect, "he was disturbed out of all proportion and in his envy planned to have the treaty broken."[81]

Envy and offended pride were probably factors in Alkibiades' conduct at this time; but I am sure that

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80. V,43,2; Plutarch, Nikias, 10,3.

81. Alkibiades, 14,2.

this is not the whole story: was the peace as advantageous to Athens as Nikias thought, or was it merely an opportunity for Nikias to rest on the laurels of his hitherto successful career as a general? Thucydides seems to imply this when he says that Nikias wished to "find immediate respite from toil and trouble for himself and the citizens and to leave behind him for the future a reputation for never having failed in his service to the city". He thought that this could be achieved only by the avoidance of all risks, and placing as little reliance upon chance as possible; risks could be avoided only in time of peace."[82]

Alkibiades, on the other hand, had inherited the mantle of Kleon, who had been the most ardent proponent of war _à l'outrance_; to retain control of Kleon's partisans, Alkibiades had to be at least as belligerent as Kleon had been. Moreover, as I have earlier suggested, as the true political heir of Perikles he was not content with a peace that brought no advantage to Athens and was dangerous to the empire because it left Korinth unimpaired.[83]

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82. V, 16, 1.

83. See pp.73-74 above.

Thus, I believe that his overtures to Sparta in 425 B.C. were aimed at a tactical truce, to allow Athens time to regroup her forces, not a long-term peace. The success of Nikias in establishing what was, on the face of it, a lasting peace thwarted this ambition, and Alkibiades henceforth bent all his efforts towards destroying the peace and resuming Athens' expansion.

The peace of Nikias was virtually a dead letter by the beginning of 418 B.C. That summer the Spartans were finally spurred into decisive action and invaded Argos with their whole force, along with contingents from the other Peloponnesian states and from Boiotia and Korinth. The Argives, trusting in the imminent arrival of an Athenian force, might well have suffered a crushing defeat had not two of their commanders secretly come to an agreement with the Spartan king, Agis. Agis withdrew his forces and a temporary truce was arranged, to the great annoyance of the rank and file on both sides, each considering that a fine opportunity had been thrown away. At this point the Athenians arrived to reinforce the Argives.[84]

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84. Thucydides, V,57, 1-61,1.

Despite their annoyance at the conclusion of this treaty, the Argives were reluctant to jeopardise it by admitting the Athenian force to the city. They tried to send the Athenians away, but the Mantineian and Eleian contingents protested and compelled them to permit Alkibiades to speak before the Argive assembly. He had accompanied the army in a semi-official capacity as a πρεσβευτής , and now urged that, since the treaty had been made without the consent or knowledge of their allies, it was illegal and should be abandoned; besides, the presence of the Athenian force gave them an additional advantage. His arguments were convincing and the whole force set out for Orchomenos. The Argives, who had voted for Alkibiades' proposal, hung back at first from joining the march on Orchomenos, but followed later and joined in the siege. Orchomenos quickly surrendered and joined the alliance, and preparations were now made for an attack on Tegea, despite the departure of the Eleians, who had hoped that Lepreon would be the next objective.[85]

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85. Thucydides, V, 61,2-62,2; Diodoros, XII, 79,1.

The Spartans were infuriated by the collapse of the truce and blamed Agis. When news came of the imminent surrender of Tegea, Agis led out the whole Spartan and allied force; the Korinthians and Boiotians were bidden to join them at Mantineia, along with other northern allies. This time a board of advisers went along with Agis to supervise his activities.

The Spartans and their Arkadian allies invaded the territories of Mantineia and prepared to give battle; the Argives were drawn up in a strong position and might have inflicted heavy casualties had not Agis been persuaded to withdraw. He now directed the Spartans to make a diversion which drew the Argives down out of their hill-position into the plain, where they formed up for battle on the following day. The Spartan line was quickly formed and the battle of Mantineia began.[86]

The battle was fought with great ferocity, but its result was never really in doubt; the Argives were routed with heavy losses, and the Athenians lost both their generals and 200 men. Despite their victory, in a battle which Thucydides considers the greatest that had hitherto occurred between Greek states,[87] the

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86. Thucydides, V, 63-67.

87. V,74.

Spartans achieved no lasting benefit from it. However, Alkibiades' schemes had thrown the whole of the Peloponnese into turmoil, and, had the Spartans been defeated, the results for them might have been catastrophic.[88]

After the battle the Spartans returned home, dismissed their allies and celebrated the Karneian festival. The allies of the Argives, on the other hand, brought up reinforcements and marched on Epidauros, where they began to build a wall around the city, partly as a reprisal for an Epidaurian invasion of Argos while the Argives were occupied at Mantineia. In the work of building the wall the Athenians were especially prominent; when the Athenian section, round Cape Heraion, was complete, the allies went home, after detailing detachments for garrison-duties. So ended the summer of 418 B.C.[89]

In Argos the oligarchic faction, with Spartan encouragement, immediately began scheming to overthrow the democratic faction. After the Karneian festival, at

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88. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 15,1.

89. Thucydides, V,75.

the beginning of winter, the Spartans marched to Tegea, and sent Lichas, the Argive proxenos at Sparta, to make certain proposals: one covered the future course of the war, if it continued; another dealt with events should peace be concluded. Alkibiades "happened" to be in Argos at the time and joined in the protracted discussions that followed. Eventually the pro-Spartan faction gained the upper hand and a truce was arranged. One of the provisions was that Epidauros was to be evacuated; moreover, if the Athenians objected or refused to go, they were to be treated as enemies of both Argos and Sparta. Soon after this settlement the alliance among Argos, Athens, Elis and Mantineia was unilaterally abandoned by the Argives and a treaty of peace and alliance was made by them with Sparta. By this the Athenians were to be driven out of the Peloponnese and refused permission to send heralds or embassies unless they removed all their outposts in the Peloponnese; evidently Athenian oratory, perhaps that of Alkibiades, was deeply feared.[90]

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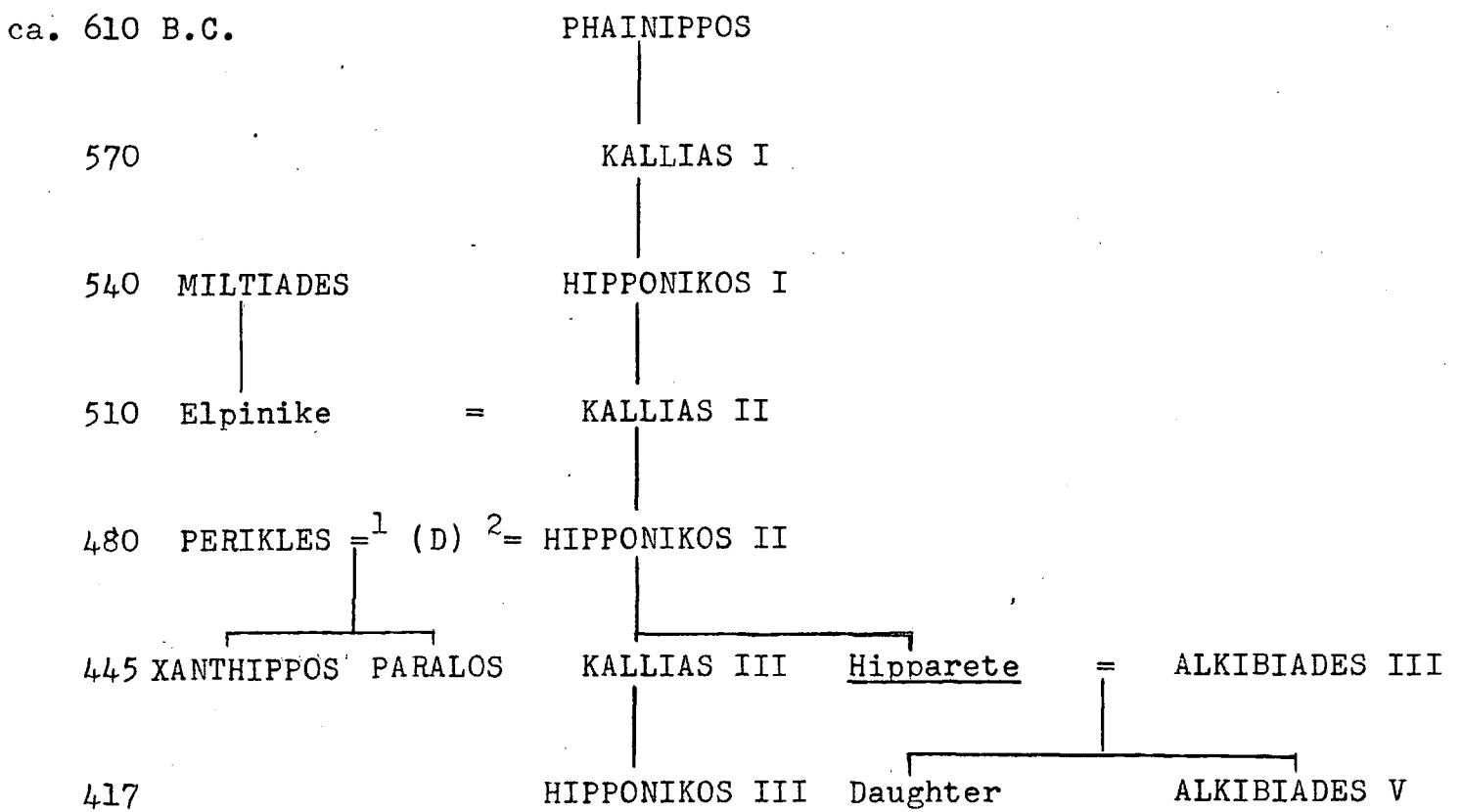
90. Thucydides, V, 76-80,1. Thucydides' use of the word ἔτυχε does not imply that Alkibiades was in Argos "by chance," but merely indicates coincidence of events (for a similar usage see I, 104,2).

All Alkibiades' schemes and plots thus seemed to have collapsed, and it might be expected that he would have been eclipsed. Had he been a lesser man this might have been so.

STEMMA III.

Family of HIPPARETE.



CHAPTER FOUR

MANTINEIA TO SICILY, 418-415 B.C.

The battle of Mantineia should have heralded a decline in Alkibiades' fortunes; his plans for a union of Athens and Argos, which would place a stranglehold upon Spartan expansion to the north and cut communications between Boiotia and the Peloponnese, seemed to have been utterly thwarted. However, two things combined to save him: his own energy and inventiveness, and Spartan conservatism.

After Mantineia the Spartans assisted the oligarchs in Argos to accomplish their coup d'état, but did not remain within reach to forestall the subsequent democratic uprising. Consequently, although the oligarchic faction at Argos at first abandoned the quadruple alliance with Athens and formed closer ties with Sparta, the democrats were able, in the summer of 417 B.C., to reorganise and overthrow them. A Spartan force advanced as far as Tegea, but turned back when it received news of the oligarchs' defeat, in order to celebrate the festival of the Gymnopaideia at Sparta.[1]

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1. Thucydides, V, 82, 2-4. It is not, unfortunately, possible to date these events more accurately since the exact date of the Gymnopaideia is not known.

The Argive democrats were afraid that the Spartans would return and began to make fresh overtures to Athens; meanwhile, the Spartans and their allies decided to march to Argos to punish the democrats, but kept putting off the expedition. Consequently, the democrats had time to build long walls down to the sea to give free access to the port of Argos.[2] Plutarch says that the guiding spirit in this was Alkibiades, who made the democratic victory secure and persuaded the Argives to build the walls; he brought masons and carpenters from Athens and acted with great vigour and enthusiasm so that his own and his city's reputation gained by his activities.[3] This work lasted to the end of the summer of 417 B.C.

The Spartans finally acted and marched against Argos, where they destroyed the newly-built walls and killed a number of supporters of the democracy. However, their expedition was a failure, since they received no support from within the city itself; they soon withdrew and returned home.[4] Far from furthering their own cause

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2. Thucydides, V, 82, 5-6.

3. Alkibiades, 15, 2-3.

4. Thucydides, V, 83, 1-3.

the Spartans actually strengthened the Argive democrats by being too slow in protecting their own partisans.

At first sight, Alkibiades' attempt to split the Peloponnese appears to have failed; certainly, this may have seemed to be the case at the time. However, Mantineia, as we have seen, did not bring the Spartans any lasting advantage; had they been defeated, the danger to Sparta would have been very great.

Alkibiades saw the opportunity that awaited Athens and grasped at it; his opponents saw only the risks and shrank from them. In the event, Alkibiades and Athens suffered no lasting damage; indeed, it may be taken as vindication of his policies that in 416 B.C. a fifty-year truce was signed between Athens and Argos,[5]

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5. I.G., I^2, 96, of which the proposer may have been Alkibiades himself. Geerlings (Class.Phil., XXIV [1929], pp. 239-244) attempts to show that in 418/7 and 417/6 B.C. the civil and prytany years overlapped, so that Aiantis, the tribe in prytany when the Argive treaty was ratified, was, in fact, holding the last prytany of the prytany-year 418/7 though the civil year 417/6 and the archonship of Euphemos had already begun. We know from I.G., I^2, 302 and from Thucydides (V,84) that funds were voted for the Melian expedition in the latter part of 417/6 B.C. when

and that, as a result, an Argive detachment accompanied the expedition to Sicily in 415 B.C.[6]

Aiantis was in prytany; thus, the same tribe was apparently in prytany twice within the same civil year. On historical grounds it seems unlikely that the treaty was made in 417 B.C., since Athens made no attempt to provide military assistance to Argos when the Spartans attacked at the end of the summer, even though the terms of the treaty called upon each party to defend the other in case of attack by the Lakedaimonians. We cannot certainly date the democrats' return by the Spartan festival of the Gymnopaideia, since this cannot be fixed in relation to the Athenian calendar; however, Meritt (A.J.P., LVII [1936], pp. 180-182) has shown that Aigeis held the tenth prytany in 418/7 B.C., using the evidence of I.G., I^2, 94 and 302. Thus Geerlings' hypothesis collapses. The date of the treaty is therefore firmly established as the spring of 416 B.C., as other commentators have suspected. See also Kolbe (Class.Phil., XXV [1930], pp. 105-116) and Meritt (Class. Phil., XXVI [1931], pp. 70-84; Hesp., XIV [1945], pp. 122-127).

6. Thucydides, VI, 29,3; 43; 61,5.

During this period we know very little of Alkibiades' activities in Athens. He was elected strategos in 419 B.C. and possibly in 420 B.C., but at first sight does not appear to have been a member of the board of generals in 418/7 or 417/6 B.C., although he seems to have held a roving ambassadorship and turned up as adviser to the Athenians and Argives on several occasions. Whether he was a general in 417/6 B.C. is not clear; Thucydides does not tell us, and Plutarch is ambiguous. Diodoros states unequivocally that he was elected general in the archonship of Euphemos, that is, in the spring of 416 B.C., since the archon-year began in mid-summer, whereas the election to the strategia took place in the early spring; thus the election mentioned by Diodoros must be dated to the end of Euphemos' archonship.[7]

What about the year 418/7 B.C.? Although the evidence of Thucydides and Plutarch seems to imply that Alkibiades was not a general in this year, we possess an inscription recording payments by the Treasurers of Athena to Alkibiades of Skambonidai and Autokles as

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7. Diodoros, XII, 81, 1-3. For the date of the election see Aristotle, Ath. Pol., 44,4.

generals in the archonship of Antiphon.[8] The name Alkibiades is a restoration, but no other name of contemporary significance fits the available space. Although the actual date cannot be ascertained, we know that these payments were made before the ninth prytany, so that Alkibiades' *strategia* must have been that of 418/7 B.C., the year of Antiphon's archonship. Why, then, is Alkibiades not referred to as a general at the battle of Mantineia? Wade-Gery suggests that Nikostratos, who was killed in the battle, belonged to the same tribe, Leontis, as Alkibiades, and that the latter was elected to complete his term after the battle. He cannot, however, offer proof that Nikostratos was of the tribe Leontis.[9]

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8. *I.G.*, I^2, 302; see Meritt (*A.J.A.*, XXXIV [1930], p. 150) and Tod (*Gr. Hist. Inscr.*, I^2, pp. 186 and 189-190).

9. *Class. Quart.*, XXIV (1930), p.34. Analysis of the name Nikostratos in Kirchner (*P.A.*, II, pp.143-147 and *Addenda*) discloses that it is found nine times in the fifth and twenty-three times in the fourth century; in the fifth century it occurs twice in the tribe Leontis, but no connexion can be established with the general killed at Mantineia. It is found twice in the tribe

In any case, as the author of the Argive alliance, Alkibiades is not likely to have been elected general

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Hippothontis, once each in Aigeis, Akamantis and Erechtheis, and twice without tribal ascription. In the fourth century Leontis has two ascriptions, Akamantis six, and Aigeis and Oeneis four each. Only Kekropis is entirely unrepresented in either century. These findings suggest that the name belonged to a family in the tribe Akamantis, and that the other occurrences may be the result of intermarriage or emulation, but they cannot be taken as proof. They provide some very slight statistical support for West's contention (A.J.P., XLV [1924], pp. 151-153) that the general Nikostratos belonged to the tribe Akamantis, or, at any rate, for the view that Nikostratos did not come from the tribe Leontis. Both Wade-Gery and West believe that up to about 411 B.C. it was the rule that no tribe had more than one representative at a time on the board of generals (though, in exceptional cases, such as that of Perikles, when an eleventh general seems to have been elected ἐξ ἁπάντων , there might be double representation; such was apparently not the case in 418/7 B.C. See Jameson, T.A.P.A., LXXXVI [1955], pp. 63-87, and Lewis, J.H.S., LXXXI [1961], pp. 118-123).

in the year after the failure of that alliance at Mantineia.

Plutarch's narrative does not necessarily imply that Alkibiades was strategos when he helped the Argive democrats in the summer of 417 B.C.;[10] no other writer mentions his strategia in 417/6 B.C., and it is perhaps safer to assume that he went through a period of political obscurity at this time. As the situation in Argos improved, so did his own.

Between 417 and 415 B.C., as the result of a temporary alliance between the partisans of Nikias and Alkibiades, the ostracism of Hyperbolos took place. Both the date and the circumstances are in dispute,[11]

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10. Alkibiades, 15, 2-3.

11. Ferguson (C.A.H.,V,pp.276-277) and Hatzfeld (Alcibiade, pp. 108-118) wish to date this ostracism to the spring of 417 B.C., linking it with Alkibiades' supposed eclipse after the battle of Mantineia. Raubitschek (T.A.P.A., LXXIX [1948], pp.191-210) suggests the spring of 415 B.C. Woodhead, who argues from the text of I.G.,I^2, 95 (Hesp., XVIII [1949], pp.78-83), rejects 417 B.C. and suggests the spring of 416 B.C.; this is supported by McGregor (Phoenix, XIX [1965], pp. 40-43).

but the main events may be accepted as Plutarch relates them. The rivalry of Nikias and Alkibiades, as leaders of the two major factions in Athens, was becoming dangerous; this made possible the emergence of Hyperbolos, a demagogue of the worst character, who, in order to further his own plans, incited the people against both Nikias and Alkibiades. Accordingly, these two, probably on the initiative of Alkibiades, made common cause and brought about the ostracism of Hyperbolos. Plutarch cites Theophrastos and other sources, who name Phaiax as the rival of Alkibiades on this occasion;[12] these sources apparently derive from Pseudo-Andokides.[13] Plutarch rejects this version, and, indeed, it is hard to envision Phaiax rather than Nikias as the direct rival of Alkibiades.

Phaiax was somewhat older than Alkibiades but of the same generation; he had been an ambassador in Sicily in 423/2 B.C., and so was politically prominent at that time.[14] The comic poet, Eupolis, describes him

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12. Nikias, 11, 1-5; Alkibiades, 13,2; Aristeides, 7,3.

13. 4, 2-3.

14. Thucydides, V, 4-5.

as "excellent at babbling but most incapable of public speaking,"[15] a judgement that does not accord with the scholia to Aristophanes or with Pseudo-Andokides.[16]

At the time of the ostracism Phaiax may have been, as Hatzfeld thinks, the leader of a moderate group, at first urged by Alkibiades to join him, but soon abandoned because he had insufficient influence.[17] Or, again, he may have been formerly in opposition to both Nikias and Alkibiades, as Hyperbolos was, but later joined their alliance to remove Hyperbolos.

In view of the probable late date of Pseudo-Andokides' speech and the consequent likelihood that events of several different years were telescoped by its author,[18] it is worth considering whether, in fact,

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15. Demoi, frag.91 (Edmonds, pp. 338-339).

16. Knights, 1377-1380; he is described as a shrewd speaker who, although condemned to death, managed to avoid the judgement. [Andokides], 4, 35 suggests that he was tried and acquitted four times.

17. Op.cit., pp. 114-116.

18. Raubitschek (op.cit., pp.206-207) believes in the authenticity of this speech and dates it early in 415 B.C., but his arguments are not convincing.

the rivalry of Phaiax and Alkibiades belongs to an earlier time; if Phaiax was involved in the ostrakophoria that led to Hyperbolos' exile, it can only have been as a very minor figure. Plutarch reports that the quarrel between Phaiax and Alkibiades arose while the latter was still very young;[19] perhaps Phaiax after his return from Sicily had hopes of becoming the champion of western expansion, and so ran foul of Alkibiades. The Eryxias, attributed to Plato, demonstrates the interest shown by Phaiax and his family towards Sicily and the west.[20] It is possible, too, that rivalry between Phaiax and Alkibiades led to the threat of ostracism in 420 B.C. or thereabouts, when the peace bearing Nikias' name was collapsing and Nikias was in disfavour, thus permitting the emergence of other moderate conservatives; Alkibiades' concentration upon affairs with Argos may have been the point at issue. For my own part, I consider Phaiax' involvement in the ostracism of Hyperbolos unlikely, and feel that the rivalry between Phaiax and Alkibiades rendered any collusion between them highly suspect; far more probable is a temporary alliance between Phaiax and Nikias, the latter employing Phaiax to draw off the

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19. Alkibiades, 13, 1.

20. 392 B.C.

opposition when danger threatened, but soon abandoning him when Hyperbolos emerged as a suitable victim.

Perhaps, as Plutarch suggests, the coalition of Nikias and Alkibiades, and possibly Phaiax, was the idea of Alkibiades.[21] In any case, Hyperbolos, who was no doubt waiting to gather the fragments of their factions, can have had little foreboding of what was in store for him; ostracism was usually a fate reserved for prominent statesmen or would-be tyrants. In the event, the use of ostracism to remove so worthless a man as Hyperbolos destroyed the institution; ostrakophoriai were never afterwards employed at Athens.[22]

Although Plutarch disparages Hyperbolos, and Thucydides considers him worthless,[23] he undoubtedly had ability and a sizable following; he had emerged from

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21. Alkibiades, 13, 4-5.

22. Plutarch, Nikias, 11,3-4; Alkibiades, 13,5; Aristeides, 7,3.

23. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 13,5; Thucydides (VIII, 73,3) calls him μοχθηρὸς ἄνθρωπος , adding that it was not through fear of his power and worth that he was ostracized but through the wretchedness and shame of the city.

obscurity during Kleon's last years and was a member of the Council despite alleged irregularity in his birth.[24] To judge from Eupolis, he seems to have opposed Nikias and may even have accused him of treason at some time.[25] After his ostracism he made his home in Samos and was there murdered in 411 after six years of exile.[26] Upon this latter

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24. Platon Komikos, Hyperbolos, frags. 166, 168, 170 (Edmonds, pp. 538-541). This play was produced in 421 B.C., so that Hyperbolos was probably a member of the Council in 422/1 B.C.

25. Marikas, frag. 181 (Edmonds, pp. 380-381). This play, too, was produced in 421 B.C.

26. Thucydides (VIII, 73,3) reports the murder of Hyperbolos in 411 B.C.; Theopompos (frag. 96B, [Jacoby]) says that the Athenians ostracised him for six years. This would date the ostracism to 417 B.C., which many scholars have considered to be the ideal date for an attempt to ostracise Alkibiades, on the ground that his influence was at its lowest at this time; this view is supported by Hatzfeld (op.cit., p.116). Neumann (Klio,XI [1936], pp. 36-49) would like to date the ostracism to 418 B.C. Woodhead (Hesp., XVIII [1949], pp. 78-83) dates I.G.,I^2,95, a decree to which Hyperbolos moved an

event depends the dating of his ostracism.

By the spring of 416 B.C. the Argive alliance (I.G., I^2, 96) had recovered for Alkibiades the ground

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amendment, to the tenth prytany of 418/7 B.C. by restoring the archon's name as Antiphon (ἐπὶ Ἀντιφ[ῶντος ἄρχοντος]). McGregor (Phoenix, XIX [1965], pp.40-43) supports this restoration and offers epigraphical evidence that renders it almost certain. This means that Hyperbolos was in Athens in 417 B.C., well after the time for an ostrakophoria had passed. We do not know of any other Hyperbolos who was politically prominent at this time. Raubitschek, who had seen a manuscript of Woodhead's paper, accepts his view that 416 B.C. was the earliest possible date for the ostracism (T.A.P.A., LXXIX [1948], pp. 192-193), but prefers the spring of 415 B.C.; however Theopompos counted years this conflicts with his statement. Theopompos, of course, may have blundered, or his copyist may be in error. The only date that does not conflict with the evidence of Thucydides, Theopompos (assuming that the latter counted inclusively) and the inscription is the spring of 416 B.C., at the time when Alkibiades was certainly the chief rival of Nikias.

that may have been lost during his eclipse, and he was once more elected to the strategia. He was given twenty ships and sent to Argos, where he seized three hundred Argive citizens who were suspected of philo-Spartan sentiments and transported them to nearby island that were under Athenian control. He then returned to Athens.[27]

Immediately after his return from Argos in 416 B.C., to judge from its placing in Thucydides' account,[28] there occurred the attack upon Melos. Alkibiades, as a member of the board of generals, must have been involved in the planning and political manoeuvres that preceded this, even though there is no record of his presence in the expeditionary force. His presence seems likely, however, since Pseudo-Andokides charges that Alkibiades, after recommending that the Melians be enslaved, purchased a woman from among the prisoners and later had a son by her.[29] The subjugation of Melos took place in the winter of 416/5 B.C.

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27. Thucydides, V, 84,1; Andokides, 3, 8-9.

28. V, 84-116.

29. 4,22.

Plutarch reports that it was upon the advice of Alkibiades that the adult males were slaughtered and the women and children enslaved;[30] this, too, seems to suggest that he was present at the final subjugation of the island or immediately after it. Certainly, the events of 416 B.C. bear the marks of Alkibiades' shaping; to consolidate the empire, to smoke out or win over the neutrals, and to attack the Spartans indirectly through their allies and sympathizers and so to isolate and expose them was ever his policy. He had always seen that what the Spartans most feared was a direct assault upon their homeland, or any outside venture that would risk the loss of precious Spartiates. The battle of Mantineia had been an example of this; even though the Spartans won the battle they were sensible of the enormous risks it involved and were correspondingly cautious afterwards. So with Melos; as the Athenians told the Melians,[31] the Spartans would not risk coming to their help. Thus they not only lost

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30. Alkibiades, 16, 5.

31. Thucydides, V, 105, 3-4.

sympathizers but also became yet more exposed to direct Athenian attack, and the faith of their remaining island allies was shaken.

While Melos was under attack the opportunity arose for Alkibiades to make one of the dramatic gestures of which he was so fond - the occasion was the Olympic Games of 416 B.C.

Isokrates remarks that Alkibiades, "though inferior to none in natural gifts and bodily strength, scorned the gymnastic competitions, since he knew that some of the athletes were of low birth, citizens of minor states, and poorly educated; instead, he turned to the breeding of race-horses, and excelled everyone else who had ever won the victory before".[32] It is not clear from Isokrates' account when this took place; he implies that it was at about the same time as Alkibiades' marriage, but he may be compressing the events of several Olympiads into one. Thucydides, in a speech that he reports as Alkibiades', says that Alkibiades participated in the games at a time when the rest of the Greeks considered Athens to have been ruined by the war, and that Alkibiades, by the splendid

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32. 16, 32-33.

display he made as the Athenian representative, convinced them that Athens was even greater than was the fact.[33] This implies that his participation in

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33. VI, 16,2; Bowra (Historia, IX [1960], pp. 68-79) believes that this passage refers to the games of 416, an event that would still be fresh in men's minds in 415 B.C.; however, the speaker is Alkibiades himself, a man of immense vanity. For him, to recall the games of 424 B.C. would be perfectly natural, and he would expect his hearers to recall them with equal clarity; his various extravagant memorials to himself come to mind: the paintings on display showing him crowned by with the Olympic and Pythian crowns and seated in the arms of Nemea (Athenaios, XII, 534D; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 16), the picture in the Propylaia of him with his horses, in commemoration of his Nemean victory (Pausanias, I, 22, 6), and the statue of him in his four-horsed chariot (Pliny, N.H., XXXIV, 80). Bowra experiences some difficulty in reconciling Euripides' disgust over the Athenian assault upon Melos with the poet's praise of Alkibiades (in the Epinikian Ode, written to celebrate the Olympic victory; see Plutarch, Alkibiades, 11, 2) but rejects 424 B.C. as

the games took place when Athens was in decline, and suggests not so much 416 as 424 B.C., when Athens, despite the victory at Pylos in the previous year, was still impoverished by the ravages of the Spartan invasion and the plague. 420 B.C. can be discounted since Thucydides tells us that a Spartan won the chariot race in the games of that year.[34]

The year 424 B.C. is also consistent with Isokrates' remarks, since this seems to have been the year of Alkibiades' marriage to Hipparete and the acquisition of her huge dowry, which could have financed his entry for the games. Isokrates mentions that "his generosity at the sacrifices and in the other expenses relating to the festival was so great and so splendid that the public funds of all the other states

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the date of the victory and the ode because he believes that the battle of Delion would have prevented Alkibiades from attending the games in that year; however, the games always took place in the period between the end of July and the beginning of September, whereas the battle occurred in November (see Thucydides, IV, 89-101, and Gomme, Comm., III, p. 558), so there is no real conflict of dates.

34. V, 50, 4.

were plainly less than the private means of Alkibiades on his own."[35]

Thucydides, too, remarks upon the splendour of Alkibiades' display, but the context of his remark suggests that he is referring to the games of 424 B.C.[36] However, he does not mention the games of 424 when he discusses Alkibiades' political activities prior to 421 B.C., probably because there is no particular reason why he should mention the games of 424 B.C. in this context.[37]

If we assume Alkibiades' participation in at least two Olympiads, the conflict within Isokrates' speech, and the disparity between his evidence and that of Thucydides and other sources, disappears.

The major disparity concerns the petty squabble with Teisias[38] (or Diomedes[39]) over the ownership of a

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35. 16, 34 (see Chapter Three above).

36. VI, 16,2.

37. V, 43.

38. Isokrates, 16, 1.

39. [Andokides], 4, 26; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 12. The confusion between Teisias and Diomedes may have arisen out of some sort of joint ownership, of which Teisias was the sole survivor in 397 B.C. Plutarch's use of Diomedes may come from an error in his source, Ephoros.

racing-chariot, a squabble that does not seem to stem from 424 B.C. If it had arisen then, it is strange that no action was brought against Alkibiades at the time or in 417/6 B.C., when he may have suffered political eclipse; why did Teisias wait until 397 B.C., when Alkibiades himself was long dead, and his son, the younger Alkibiades, had come of age? It must be that this episode belongs in 416 B.C. when Alkibiades was too powerful to be attacked. If this date be accepted the other charges of Pseudo-Andokides fall into place; only in 416 B.C. did Alkibiades have enough influence to persuade the leaders of the Athenian delegation to lend him the city's processional vessels for him to use in a celebration of his victory on the day before the sacrifice; only at the time of the games in 416 B.C. was he so obviously the man of the hour that the people of Ephesos gave him a Persian tent twice the size of the official Athenian pavilion; the people of Chios provided him with sacrificial beasts and fodder for his horses, and the Lesbians supplied his food and wine.[40] In this connexion it may be significant that

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40. 4, 29-30; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 12, 1.

he was on a journey to Ephesos when his wife died, probably in 416 B.C.,[41] a journey that may have some bearing on the honours given him by the Ephesians.

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41. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 8,4. Raubitschek (Gr., Rom. & Byz.St., V [1964], pp. 156-157) tentatively dates the treaty between Athens and Persia negotiated by Epilykos (Andokides, 3,29) to just before the Sicilian Expedition, and suggests that Alkibiades was behind this treaty, which was abandoned after his disgrace, and that it was in connexion with this treaty that Alkibiades made his first acquaintance with Tissaphernes. Raubitschek's chronology is attractive, and I wonder whether Alkibiades' journey to Ephesos was related to this treaty. The end of 416 or the beginning of 415 B.C., when the Sicilian Expedition was being mooted at Athens, would be a suitable date for this treaty, designed to ensure against Persian incursions into the Aegean while the main force of Athens was involved in the West; it would also prevent any rapprochement between Sparta and the Persians. That such a rapprochement was feared by Alkibiades is, I think, demonstrated by his attempts, after Athens had exiled him, to take Sparta into alliance with the Persians, and it is significant that his approaches on Sparta's behalf were made to Tissaphernes rather than to Pharnabazos (see Chapter Six, note 41).

Alkibiades was obviously now at the height of his power and influence. This may have been the time when the comic poet, Hegemon of Thasos, appealed for aid to Alkibiades, though there is a possibility that the incident took place in 407 B.C. The story in Athenaios tells how "at the time when the Athenians controlled the sea and legal cases were brought to Athens from the islands, an indictment was brought against Hegemon, who came to Athens in the company of the actors' guild; he appealed for help to Alkibiades, who told him not to worry and told them all to follow him to the Metroon, where the indictments were filed. There he erased Hegemon's name from the tablet with a wetted finger. This annoyed the clerk and the archon, but, because of Alkibiades' presence, they took no action; the plaintiff meanwhile left Athens for fear of what might happen to him."[42]

Hegemon is known to have been in Athens in 413 B.C. when his play Gigantomachia was produced[43] Perhaps his case was a δίκη ἀπὸ συμβολῶν involving

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42. IX, 406B-C.

43. Athenaios, IX, 407A.

an Athenian citizen; in some circumstances especially privileged foreigners could have their cases tried at Athens as if they had themselves been citizens, but in civil cases Athens does not seem to have superseded the local courts of her allies if both plaintiff and defendant were foreigners.[44]

Pseudo-Andokides complains, apparently with reference to the years before the Sicilian Expedition, that Alkibiades did not have to render account for the money he received from the allies or for any of his public duties;[45] the speech was probably written

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44. See Aristotle, Ath.Pol., 58, 2-3, and de Sainte-Croix (Class.Quart., LV [1961], pp. 94-101).

45. 4,31; this speech tends to telescope and transpose events and does not seem to be contemporary with the happenings it describes, but to have been written at some later date, perhaps after the death of Alkibiades, as late as 396 B.C. Raubitschek (T.A.P.A., LXXIX [1948], pp. 191-210) is alone in his contention that it is a genuine work of Andokides and written early in 415 B.C. See Gernet (Rev.de Phil., LVII [1931], pp.308-326) and Burn (Class.Quart. XLVIII [1954], pp. 138-142) for the date 397/6 B.C.

early in the fourth century and refers, in fact, to the events of 408/6 B.C.

In the winter of 416/5 B.C., the Athenians decided to make a second assault upon Sicily. Their ostensible motive was to assist their kinsmen and newly-acquired allies there. A delegation from Egesta arrived at Athens, seeking aid in their dispute with Selinous and Syracuse. They stressed the danger of a Syracusan hegemony on the island; the Syracusans would be sympathetic to the Spartans and might eventually give them active support in the war with Athens. The Athenians, aided by the wealth of Egesta, should strike now, while they still had allies in the island, to curb the Syracusans. After considerable debate in the Assembly it was decided to send a delegation to look into the financial state of Egesta and the situation in the war with Selinous.[46]

According to Thucydides and Plutarch, Alkibiades was the chief proponent of the Sicilian expedition and did all he could to arouse the latent Athenian desire for a Sicilian empire. He viewed Sicily not as an end in itself but as a stepping-stone

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46. Thucydides, VI, 1 and 6.

to the conquest of Carthage and Libya and, after that, of Italy and the Peloponnese.[47]

Hatzfeld[48] ascribes the strategic view of Alkibiades, that Sicily was to be the hinge upon which would turn the conquest of the entire Mediterranean, to Hyperbolos, who had evidently urged an assault upon Carthage in 424 B.C. However, Athens had been interested in the West since at least the middle of the fifth century; the treaty with Egesta in 458 B.C.[49], the renewal of the treaties with Rhegion and Leontinoi in 433/2[50] and the new treaty with Halikyai, probably connected with the reconnaissance in force of Laches in 427/6 B.C.[51], are evidence of continuing and, indeed,

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47. VI, 90, 2-4; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 17, 2-3 (see Chapter Three above, pp. 73-74).

48. Op.cit., p.144.

49. I.G., I^2, 19, dated by the archon Habron (see Raubitschek, T.A.P.A., LXXV [1944], pp. 10-12, and Meritt, B.C.H., LXXXVIII [1964], pp. 268-269).

50. I.G., I^2, 51 and 52; these treaties were first drawn in 448 B.C. (see Meritt, Class.Quart., XL [1946], p.91).

51. I.G., I^2, 20; see Raubitschek (Op.cit., pp. 10-12) and Woodhead (Hesp., XVII [1948], pp. 59-60).

growing interest in Sicily and the West.

Perikles, until near the end of his life, seems to have held this desire for western expansion in check. Nikias may have done likewise, though the venture in 427/6 B.C. was of considerable scope and perhaps should be rated as more than just a reconnaissance, despite its meagre results. By 424 B.C., when Aristophanes produced his Knights, not only the politicians but also commercial circles had developed an interest in the conquest of Sicily and Carthage[52]; these were probably the forces behind Hyperbolos' scheme. However, this interest was commercial, not military, and it is almost certainly Alkibiades who must be credited with the strategic vision which saw Sicily with its wheat, Carthage with its wealth and commerce, and Italy with its forests, as interlocking pieces in an Athenian hegemony in the Mediterranean. Beyond this he may have thought of Spain as a reservoir of manpower; he was well aware of the capabilities of Spanish

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52. Aristophanes, Knights, 173-174; 1303-1304.

mercenaries.[53]

Whether Alkibiades' strategic vision was sound cannot be judged; it is always unwise to imagine the course of events had history turned out differently. Hatzfeld is probably unsound in attempting to assess Carthage's ability to withstand an Athenian attack by reference to her strength in the sixth and third centuries.[54] Not the least of the imponderables involved is the extent to which the Greek states of Sicily would have co-operated with Athens had she moved on from the conquest of the Greek

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53. Thucydides, VI, 90,3. It is clear from Kratinos, Malthakoi, frag. 101 (Edmonds, pp.54-55), that some interest had already been shown in Spanish mercenaries. Later in the war they were used by Aristarchos; see Thucydides, VIII, 98,1 and Aristophanes, fragments 550-551 (Edmonds, pp. 722-723). There is no suggestion here that this was the first time Iberian archers had been employed by Athens. For a discussion of Alkibiades' strategic genius see McGregor (Phoenix, XIX [1965], pp.24-40).

54. Op.cit., p.145.

Syracuse to an assault upon the barbarian Carthage. However, it is safe to assume that Carthage would have been a most difficult opponent; Alkibiades was no doubt aware of this too.

The return of the delegation brought confirmation of Egesta's ability to pay for an Athenian expedition. Accompanying the delegates came an embassy from Egesta with sixty talents of silver as fee for the sixty ships for which the Sicilian city had asked. The Athenian delegates told of the vast quantities of money possessed by Egesta, persuading the Assembly to vote in favour of the expedition.[55]

We possess a severely mutilated inscription in which the decree of the Assembly is recorded. Sixty ships are mentioned, but the people is left to decide whether to appoint one general or three. The decree directs the commander(s) to do as much harm to the enemy as possible and especially to ravage hostile territory.[56]

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55. Thucydides, VI, 8, 1-2.

56. I.G., I^2, 98, lines 1-10; see also I.G., I^2, 302, lines 40-55, recording the payments made to the commanders early in 415 B.C.

At the second meeting of the Assembly, after a protracted debate, Alkibiades, Lamachos and Nikias were made joint commanders with full powers. Nikias was reluctant to be involved as commander, partly because of his desire for peace and quiet, but mainly because of his distrust of Alkibiades. Very few supported him openly in his opposition to the venture; the rich were afraid to seem to be shrinking from their obligations, especially the trierarchia, and so kept silent, while commercial interests and the young supported the expedition openly. However, Nikias' caution was thought to be a good foil to Alkibiades' recklessness, and Lamachos, though he was felt to be as rash as Alkibiades, was chosen as arbiter.[57]

Nikias' reluctance to be involved in this expedition was demonstrated when he spoke in the second debate, five days after the first. He attempted to convince the Assembly that the city was making a mistake in aiming at the conquest of the whole of Sicily. The task was far

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57. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 18,1. West (A.J.P.,XLV [1924], p.145) calls Lamachos "a well-disciplined subordinate ready to answer his country's call at a moment's notice;" he was a man of little wealth and no apparent political bias.

greater than was appreciated; the war in Greece was far from over. The Chalkidians were in revolt in Thrace and other allies gave only grudging obedience; conquest of Sicily would involve huge problems of administration and control of the captured cities. Accordingly, he advocated a policy of retrenchment and consolidation in Greece and the prohibition of costly and dangerous outside ventures. It was the young and foolish who hoped for an easy victory; the old supported him and would oppose the expedition.[58]

The majority of speakers after Nikias supported the venture, especially Alkibiades. Thucydides analyses his motives as a desire to oppose Nikias, and ambition for command, honour and wealth. His expenditures vastly exceeded his resources, and he needed some new source of income to support his enthusiasm for horse-racing and his other extravagances, such as his participation in the Olympic games.[59]

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58. Thucydides, VI, 9-14.

59. VI, 15; Thucydides, as has been shown by McGregor (Phoenix, X [1956], pp. 93-102) had a strongly oligarchic bias, despite his admiration for Perikles; his opinion of Perikles' successors is tinged by this bias and a certain sympathy for the misfortunes of Nikias.

Thucydides is perhaps allowing his personal bias to control his judgement.

Alkibiades, in his reply to Nikias, defended his extravagances on the ground that they enhanced the reputation of Athens; his handling of public affairs had brought about the coalition of Athens with the most important of the Peloponnesian states without great danger or expense, and had put the Spartans permanently off-balance. Sicily itself was by no means as formidable as Nikias suggested; its peoples were mixed and at odds one with another; the non-Greeks would assist Athens; the Athenian fleet could control Athens' enemies in Greece; Athens had a duty to defend her allies; to win and keep her empire she must keep her obligations to these allies; the empire was at the stage where inactivity would destroy it; the expedition would not only discourage the Spartans now but also could be withdrawn at will, thanks to the fleet, and would lay the foundations of a later attack upon the Peloponnese. In sum, the expedition was in every way advantageous, and everyone, young or old, should combine to share in and ensure its success.[60]

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60. Thucydides, VI, 16-18.

This speech had the desired effect; Nikias, realising how opinion was tending, began now to emphasize the size of the force that would be needed to carry out Alkibiades' plan; he hoped, by exaggerating the project, to frighten the Athenians into changing their minds. However, the opposite took place; the Assembly voted all that he asked for and took his advice as assurance that the expedition would be a success.[61] The enthusiasm was immense; old and young alike were filled with confidence and expectation of success, and the wrestling-grounds and colonnades were crowded with loungers who drew maps of Sicily, Carthage and Libya in the dust.[62] The three generals were given full powers with regard to the army and the expedition,[63] and the city embarked upon a frenzy of preparation.

Thus far, as McGregor remarks,[64] Alkibiades had always "initiated the events that were shaping his

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61. Thucydides, VI, 19-26; Diodoros, XII, 84.

62. Thucydides, VI, 24,3; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 17,3; Nikias, 12, 1-2.

63. Thucydides, VI, 26,1; I.G., I^2,99.

64. Phoenix, XIX (1965), p.31.

career." Despite momentary set-backs and the opposition of a considerable body of opinion, his career had been a rising curve of success and honour. He was constantly in the public eye, had a large and enthusiastic following of young men, was courted by allies and foreigners, and was apparently unable to put a foot wrong. The Sicilian command must surely have seemed the latest in that succession of dramatic events of which he liked to be both the initiator and the central figure. In his own eyes he was experiencing action and success and becoming identified with Athens' own fame; in the eyes of his enemies, a far larger and more formidable body than he realised, and in the eyes of many ordinary Athenians as well, he was poised on the brink of tyranny; he was not about to become the embodiment of Athens but its master. Of this, his first and major miscalculation, he was as yet unaware, nor did its implications ever fully penetrate his mind.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SICILIAN EXPEDITION AND THE DISGRACE OF ALKIBIADES

Following the votes in the Assembly in the spring of 415 B.C., the preparations for the expedition began and messages were sent to the allies. The generals, as a paradoxical result of Nikias' attempts to prevent the expedition, had full powers with regard to the size of the army and the conduct of the expedition. The peace had enabled great wealth to be amassed and a whole generation had come to manhood since the ravages of the Plague.[1] Athens was probably richer and more powerful now than she had been for many years. Despite massive popular enthusiasm for the expedition, there was a considerable body of opinion that opposed it.

The priestly families, and most of those who served the gods, opposed the expedition, on what specific grounds it is not clear, though one of them, Kallias, the brother-in-law of Alkibiades, had ample reason to fear and dislike him. Adverse oracles were produced and divinations that may have administered a temporary set-back; however, Alkibiades found other

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1. Thucydides, VI, 26, 1-3.

priests and diviners, and discovered an ancient oracle that prophesied great fame to come to Athens from Sicily. Envoys who had been sent to Libya to consult the shrine of Ammon came back with an oracle declaring that the Athenians would capture all the Syracusans. Plutarch reports that there were less favourable oracles as well from this shrine, but that the envoys concealed these because popular opinion was so much in favour of the expedition.[2]

There was other more serious opposition; Nikias and his followers continued their attempts to halt the preparations and accused Alkibiades of forcing the city into dire peril overseas to satisfy his own greed and ambition.[3] The expedition was too great an enterprise, they said, to be entrusted to so young a man.[4]

Other enemies were the demagogues, the successors of Kleon and Hyperbolos, notably Androkles, who had been active throughout the war but had never

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2. Nikias, 13, 1-2.

3. Plutarch, Nikias, 12,3.

4. Thucydides, VI, 12,2.

quite achieved leadership of the pack. This man was the deadly enemy of Alkibiades[5] and was later murdered by the oligarchs in their hope of pleasing Alkibiades.[6] Another large body of opposition was the oligarchic faction, of which the foremost member was Kritias; this remained very much in the background, manipulating the other groups rather than coming out into the open; fear of an oligarchy or a tyranny was still a potent force in Athenian politics. Overlapping these groups was the intimate circle of Sokrates; the sympathies of this group lay, in the main, with the oligarchs and many were philo-Spartan. They foresaw danger to the city if the expedition went forward,[7] and seem to have looked upon Alkibiades as a potential tyrant. Their friendship towards Sparta was based in part upon their idealistic view of its constitution, but also derived from their oligarchic bias.

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5. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 19,2.
6. Thucydides, VIII, 65,2.
7. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 17,4; Nikias, 13,4.

Despite the efforts of these groups the expedition was not postponed or cancelled, nor was Alkibiades removed from the triumvirate of command. It was on the point of departure; Alkibiades was as firmly in the saddle as ever. At this point, a few days before the fleet was to sail, someone decided to take more desperate measures; the Athenians awoke one morning in mid-June to discover that nearly all the stone Hermai in the city had been multilated.[8]

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8. Thucydides, VI, 27, 1-2. The date is still very much in dispute owing, in part, to the fragmentary condition of I.G., I^2, 302, which records the payments made to the generals for the conduct of the expedition. Thucydides gives the day of departure as θέρους μεσοῦντος ἤδη (VI,30,1), which must be translated as "it was already mid-summer"; this date must have been very soon after the last payment to the generals. As Meritt remarks (A.J.A., XXXIV [1930], p.133), "whatever the day of the prytany on which the payment was made, the prytany itself must have been the tenth, or final, prytany of the senatorial year 416/5." His restoration of line 56 of this inscription is Pryt.X,20, which he equates with June 18 in our calendar. This

The mutilation was looked upon as sacrilege

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date seems generally acceptable and was the day upon which Pythonikos accused Alkibiades of sacrilege, possibly even before the money for the generals had been voted. Piganiol (R.E.G., L [1937], pp.1-8), relying upon Plutarch's reference to the wailing of the women in the Adonaia at the time of the debate (Alkibiades, 18,3), delays the departure of the fleet until July 22; he believes that the mutilation of the Hermai took place on June 23, the day of the full moon, and that this caused the departure of the fleet to be postponed. He thus rejects Andokides (1,38), who is our only authority for the information that Diokleides perjured himself when he claimed to have seen the mutilators by the light of the moon at a time when there was, in fact, no moon; he says (pp.5-6), "Il nous semble inimaginable que Diocleides ait pu assigner à la mutilation une date fausse sans se trahir aussitôt," without taking into account the panic that prevailed in the city and the paralysis that overcame sensible men. His choice of July 20 as the date of the Adonaia depends upon late Roman practice and cannot safely be applied to fifth-century Athens; in any case, as Hatzfeld (R.E.G., L [1937], pp. 291-303) has shown,

of the worst kind: the practice of setting up Hermai was a survival from an earlier age and of more primitive superstitions, but they were looked upon as guardians in a very real sense of homes and temples and of the well-being of the state, perhaps because of the antiquity of the superstition. To mutilate them was to deprive the city of the protection of its most

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Plutarch corrupts for dramatic purposes a passage in the Lysistrata of Aristophanes (389-394) that refers to the wailing of the women when the despatch of auxiliary forces to Sicily was being discussed in the Assembly. (The troops in question, from Zakynthos, were raised by Demosthenes in 413 B.C.; see Thucydides, VII, 31,2.) In balance, Meritt's dates seem most reasonable, so that June 21, or a few days later, must be taken as the date of departure; this allows a period of some three months for the operations of the fleet up to the battle at the Olympeion in Syracuse, at the beginning of October or the end of September (Thucydides, VI, 70,1); Piganiol's hypothesis would reduce this to just over two months, which is too short a time. The mutilation probably took place on the night of the new moon, June 7/8.

ancient gods and damn the expedition before it began. The mutilation was also suspected as the start of an oligarchic and tyrannous plot to overthrow the democracy.[9]

Although strenuous attempts were later made to implicate Alkibiades in the affair of the Hermai, it is difficult to see any benefit that the mutilation might have brought him; if it was not merely a drunken prank, its object must surely have been to destroy Athenian faith in the success of the expedition and so, perhaps, bring about its cancellation. This was entirely contrary to Alkibiades' intentions.

Rewards were offered for information leading to the discovery of the perpetrators, and immunity was granted to anyone, citizen, alien or slave, who knew of any other act of sacrilege that had been committed and would come forward to lay information.[10]

As a result certain metics and slaves laid information regarding other recent incidents, involving the defacement of statues by young men who had drunk too

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9. Thucydides, VI, 27,3; Plutarch, Nikias, 13,2.

10. Thucydides, VI, 27,2.

much, or mock celebrations of the Mysteries in private houses. One of those accused was Alkibiades.[11]

Alkibiades, as soon as these charges were laid, offered to stand trial before sailing with the expedition; this, it was feared, would result in his acquittal and triumphant vindication, because of his popularity with the navy, the enthusiasm of the demos for the Expedition, and popular support for him as a result of his successful negotiations with the Argives and Mantineians. Accordingly, other speakers were induced to come forward and demand that he sail at once with the fleet to Sicily and stand trial when he returned. The plan was to bring more serious charges against him while he was out of the city and then have him brought back to stand trial unsupported by the fleet.[12]

It was now midsummer;[13] if the fleet was to accomplish anything this year it must sail at once.

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11. Thucydides, VI, 28, 1; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 19,1.
12. Thucydides, VI, 29; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 19, 3-4.
13. Thucydides, VI, 30, 1.

All was ready; the final preparations had been made and the generals had received, perhaps a day or two after the mutilation of the Hermai took place, the last instalment of funds due to them.[14] The assembly was persuaded by the "other speakers", and Alkibiades was ordered to set sail with the fleet. At dawn, on or about midsummer's day, the fleet put out to sea amidst the tears and prayers of almost the entire population. Alkibiades had departed, but his enemies, open or concealed, remained.

The various elements of the fleet came together at Rhegion on the toe of Italy, and, since entry to the city was forbidden, encamped outside while negotiations went forward to induce Rhegion to come over to the Athenian side. These failed, and the Athenians sat down to await the return of the three ships they had sent to Egesta to investigate whether the sums of money promised to them by that city existed or not. The ships soon returned with the news that Egesta refused to pay more than thirty talents. This did not surprise Nikias, but Alkibiades and Lamachos were taken aback by the revelation that the Egestaians had tricked them into believing that

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14. I.G., I^2, 302; see also Meritt, op.cit., p.133.

their resources were far greater than, in fact, they were. A council of war followed.[15]

Nikias urged that the whole fleet sail to Selinous and, if the Egestaians refused, they should demand the supplies originally promised for sixty ships and ensure that Egesta and Selinous settle their dispute. After this they should sail along the coast showing the flag and, if opportunity arose, assist Leontinoi and also bring other cities over to the Athenian side. They should then sail home.[16]

Against this Alkibiades urged that so great an expedition should not return home empty-handed; the cities of Sicily and the native population should be urged to come over to the Athenians; Messina, the gateway to Sicily, should be secured. Finally, when they knew for certain who was for them and who was against them, they should attack Selinous and Syracuse, unless Selinous settled her dispute with Egesta and the Syracusans permitted the restoration of Leontinoi.[17]

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15. Thucydides, VI, 44, 46.

16. Thucydides, VI, 47.

17. Thucydides, VI, 48.

Lamachos at first urged a surprise attack upon Syracuse, but later came round to Alkibiades' viewpoint. Alkibiades made an unsuccessful attempt on his own to win over Messina, and after this sixty ships were sent to Naxos, where they had a favourable reception, and thence to Katane, where the philo-Syracusan faction at first denied them admittance.[18] Diodoros, probably quoting Ephoros, says that the generals were permitted to put the Athenian case before the Assembly; while Alkibiades was speaking Athenian soldiers rushed into the city. In the circumstances the Katanaians bowed to force and made an alliance with Athens against Syracuse.[19] On the following day the fleet moved on to Syracuse and a proclamation was made to the effect that the Athenians had come to restore the people of Leontinoi to their own lands under the terms of their alliance with them; any citizen of Leontinoi was invited to join them. After this, having reconnoitred the harbour, they sailed back to Katane.[20]

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18. Thucydides, VI, 49-50, 3.

19. XIII, 4,4-5.

20. Thucydides, VI, 50, 3-5.

At Katane Alkibiades found the state-trireme, the Salaminia, waiting for him with orders that he return to stand trial in Athens, along with certain others who had been accused of being concerned in the parody of the Mysteries or the mutilation of the Hermai. He was not put under arrest but was asked to return voluntarily so as to avoid any disturbance that might lead to trouble with the army or the defection of the Mantineian and Argive contingents. Accordingly, he embarked on his own ship, the trireme that, we are told, had had its decks cut away so that he could sleep comfortably in a hammock rather than on the hard deck.[21] The two warships sailed in company as far as Thourioi, where Alkibiades and those accused with him left their ship and went into hiding.[22]

The remaining two generals sailed on to Selinous and Egesta. On the way they put in at Himera, but the citizens refused to admit them and so they went on to Hykkara, which was at war with Egesta. They captured this place and enslaved its inhabitants; then the fleet went on while the army returned to Katane.

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21. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 16,1.

22. Thucydides, VI, 61,6-7.

Nikias put in at Egesta to sell off the slaves and collect funds from the Egestaians; then he rejoined the main body of the fleet and took part in an unsuccessful assault on Hybla in the territory of Gela. Now, as winter began, the Athenians tricked the Syracusans into sending their army away from the city and, in its absence, sailed in and made a landing near the city; then they began to fortify their bridgehead. A battle followed, in which the Syracusans were defeated, but the Athenians decided to withdraw to Katane, feeling that, with the approach of winter, the beachhead was untenable, and that the Syracusans, having seen what they were up against, would be more disposed to make terms and join the alliance.[23] So ended that season's campaign.

It is now necessary to go back in time to the days before the expedition set sail and to attempt to disentangle the confused and obscure sequence of events that led to the recall and flight of Alkibiades. By blending the different extant accounts we can shed some light upon the personalities and motives behind the various accusations and counter-accusations.

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23. Thucydides, VI, 62-71.

The first offer of reward, 1,000 drachmai, was increased to 10,000 by Peisandros,[24] who saw that Alkibiades was likely to be falsely accused of the mutilation unless informers could be induced to come forward with the truth. Immunity was granted to anyone who would lay information about any other act of sacrilege, so that it was now possible for the parody of the Mysteries, in which it is almost certain that Alkibiades was involved, to be brought out into the open and linked with the mutilation, in which he surely had taken no part. This, perhaps, was Nikias' doing, through the agency of Pythonikos, who accused Alkibiades of the parody, and brought Andromachos to testify that he had witnessed it.[25]

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24. Andokides, 1,27. Woodhead (A.J.P., LXXV [1954], pp. 131-137) believes that Peisandros was both an ardent democrat and the most loyal of Alkibiades' friends; his aim during the sittings of the commission of enquiry of which he and Androkles were members was to counter all the latter's attempts to implicate Alkibiades. I believe that Woodhead is partially right, but that the situation was far more complex than he thinks.

25. Andokides, 1, 11.

Nikias' motives, according to Miss Allen,[26] were to increase the confusion and horror that the people already felt over the mutilations, and offer them in their wrath a victim, Alkibiades, who was otherwise untouchable. Moreover, not only would the ordinary citizens be outraged but so would the conservatives, the sacred families and the initiates.

If Nikias could have Alkibiades brought to trial at once, the expedition might be postponed and, without its guiding spirit, might even be cancelled altogether. At worst, Alkibiades, for whom Nikias probably felt by now a strong personal hatred as well as political enmity, would be removed from power. Not for the first time Nikias' vanity and political naïvete were to betray him.

Androkles and the demagogues, "those who were most hostile to him [Alkibiades] because he hindered them from obtaining control of the leadership of the people, and who believed that if they could expel him they would be supreme," linked the parody and the mutilation, as Nikias had hoped, and cried

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26. Umpublished dissertation, The Mutilation of the Herms, p. 143; I base my examination of the various accusations upon her work.

out that a plot was in the making to destroy the democracy.[27] Alkibiades demanded an immediate trial,[28] trusting to the support of the citizens in the army and the fleet. Nikias thought he had nothing to fear and took no action; others of Alkibiades' enemies, this time probably the oligarchs who had hitherto hidden behind Nikias and the demagogues, saw in his possible acquittal an acute danger to themselves and made every effort to postpone the trial. Speakers, no doubt carefully selected for their unblemished records, urged that the fleet should sail at once with all its generals; Alkibiades could be tried later when the war was over. They won over the assembly and when the fleet sailed Alkibiades went with it.[29] Once more Nikias had failed to see all the consequences of his actions; what he wished least of all, that is, the continuance of the expedition, had taken place, not so much in despite as in consequence of his efforts to prevent it.

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27. Thucydides, VI, 28,2.

28. Thucydides, VI, 29, 1-2.

29. Thucydides, VI, 29,3.

Once Alkibiades was out of the way, together with the main body of his supporters, his enemies went to work in earnest. Androkles, whom Thucydides regards as the man responsible for Alkibiades' exile,[30] was probably the most active of these. The attack emphasized Alkibiades' involvement in both parody and mutilation;[31] no doubt it aired his previous record of extravagances, such as his trailing purple robes, his generally effeminate manner of dressing, his golden shield decorated with a representation of Eros bearing a thunderbolt, his drunkenness and love-affairs, and his scornful and lawless manner.[32]

Alkibiades' friends were most concerned to keep the parody and the mutilation separate; they produced a second informer, the metic Teukros, who offered, from the safety of Megara, to tell what he knew of both affairs. He produced two completely different lists, one of profaners, including himself and also Diognetos, the brother of Nikias, from whom Nikias may first have learned of the profanation,[33] and

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30. VIII, 65,2.

31. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 20,3.

32. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 16, 1-2.

33. Andokides, 1, 15.

one of mutilators.[34]

All those named by Teukros either fled the country or were executed. Miss Allen shows that the list of mutilators, which was later confirmed and amplified by Andokides' accusation, contained the names of many known enemies of Alkibiades, some of whom, to judge by the alarm among the oligarchic faction, were themselves oligarchs. She concludes that oligarchs were concerned in the mutilation and that the senior oligarchs knew of this. She suggests very plausibly that the escapade was the aftermath of a drunken party, involving a group of young bloods, members of the oligarchic clubs, who lacked political significance.[35]

A third accusation followed, that of Agariste, the wife of Alkmeonides, who had previously

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34. Andokides, 1, 35.

35. Op.cit., p.151; MacDowell, the most recent editor (1962) of Andokides, 1, takes the opposite view, that the mutilation was a "pledge" to secure the loyalty of the members of the oligarchic group to one another, having as its further aim the cancellation of the Sicilian Expedition (pp. 192-193).

been married to Damon, Perikles' music-teacher. Her accusation concerned a parody of the Mysteries, involving Alkibiades, Axiochos and Adeimantos, at the house of Charmides.[36] Miss Allen sees Agariste, with her connexions with Perikles and the Alkmeonids, as the spokeswoman of the democrats rather than of the oligarchs. Alkibiades was, of course, her prime target.[37] Charmides and Axiochos fled the country at once; Adeimantos was with Alkibiades on the way to Sicily.[38]

Alkibiades' friends were faced again with the necessity of minimising Alkibiades' role in the parody and involving oligarchs in the accusation. They now produced another informer, Lydos, a slave, who gave a list of persons who had celebrated the Mysteries at the house of his master Pherekles. Alkibiades was not named, but there is evidence, from the inclusion of members of the family of Andokides, that the net was being widened to include connexions of the Alkmeonidai, of Nikias and of

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36. Andokides, 1, 16.

37. Op.cit. pp. 158-9.

38. Andokides, 1, 16.

Kallias.[39]

The four accusations were the source of great confusion in the Assembly: Teukros and Lydos had managed to implicate members of almost all the groups hostile to Alkibiades; Andromachos and Agariste had thrown suspicion on a small group centred round him. Thus fears of both oligarchy and tyranny beset the people.[40]

Peisandros, as a member of the commission of enquiry, maintained that the mutilation was not the work of a small group of miscreants but an organized attempt to overthrow the government. To confirm the impression of an oligarchic conspiracy Diokleides came forward; he had, he said, seen a large body of men, some three hundred in all, by the light of the moon on the night of the mutilation. Of these he had recognised the faces of the majority,

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39. Andokides, 1, 17; Woodhead (op.cit., p.137) believes that Lydos was produced after Diokleides' evidence was shown to be perjured.

40. Thucydides, VI, 60, 1.

and he gave the names of forty-two. After the mutilation came to light he had sought out Euphemos, one of those whom he named, and had offered, for a price, to keep silent about what he had seen. The conspirators had agreed to pay him, he said, but had failed to keep their promise; so he had come forward to seek the state's reward for his information. Those whom he accused were thrown into prison or went into exile. Diokleides was rewarded and given a public banquet for his services.[41]

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41. Andokides, 1, 36-44; MacDowell (op.cit., pp. 182-183) believes that Andokides laid two informations: one, at the behest of Charmides (1, 48), involving four persons only; the other, involving the eighteen persons on Teukros' list (Plutarch, Alkibiades, 21, 4-6), at the behest of Timaios; this, MacDowell believes, took place after an interval of time sufficient for a friendship to ripen between Timaios andAndokides. This may well be so, but I am not convinced by MacDowell's argument that the accusations of Agariste and Lydos were later than that of Diokleides and the first accusation of Andokides. He believes that Agariste and Lydos came

Diokleides' accusation, as was later proved, caused the imprisonment of a large number of innocent citizens[42] and was a complete fabrication, full of uncertainties and anomalies that caused thoughtful persons to wonder. However, the demos was past reason; anyone who was denounced was thrown into prison.[43]

Andokides, who was definitely involved in the mutilation and had been denounced by Diokleides, was persuaded to turn "King's evidence" and reveal the truth about the mutilation. He named the eighteen persons on Teukros' list, plus four others. Diokleides, as a result, was accused of, and admitted to, perjury; he named Alkibiades of Phegous and Amiantos of Aigina as the men who had urged him to make the false accusation. Both these men fled at

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forward as part of a series of denunciations for profanation of the Mysteries that continued after the affair of the Hermai was closed and was the basis of Thessalos' impeachment of Alkibiades (Plutarch, Alkibiades, 22,3). This impeachment, I believe, was based upon but did not immediately follow the accusations of Agariste, Lydos and others (see below, note 48).

42. Thucydides, VI, 53,2.

43. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 20,5.

once, and Diokleides was executed.[44]

The truth about the mutilation had apparently finally been revealed. Alkibiades had been cleared of complicity; the question of the parody of the Mysteries remained, and the oligarchs, though many of their number had been destroyed as a result of their involvement in the mutilation, were now able to concentrate upon his impeachment for sacrilege, which, they suggested, was part of an overall conspiracy against the democracy. It happened that a small force of Spartans had made a brief foray as far as the Isthmos while the investigations were going on; though this move by the Spartans had no connexion at all with events at Athens, rumours were spread about that they had come to the Isthmos as a result of a plot between them and Alkibiades to betray the city. Alkibiades' friends in Argos were suspected of a plot to betray the democracy there, and the Argive oligarchs, whom the Athenians had been holding in the islands,[45] were handed back to the democrats for execution. Thus Alkibiades was enmeshed in suspicions

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44. Andokides, 1, 48-66.

45. Thucydides, V, 84,1.

on all sides and orders were issued for his recall and trial.[46] Plutarch mentions in two places the impeachment of Alkibiades by Thessalos; in one he implies that the impeachment was moved as soon as Andromachos had made his accusation, before Alkibiades sailed for Sicily.[47] Later he quotes the full text of the impeachment in a context that leaves no doubt that it was moved after the affair of the mutilation had been cleared up and that it resulted in Alkibiades' recall.[48] Thessalos was the son of Kimon and thus came of a family noted for its philo-Spartanism; as Miss Allen points out, "rare indeed was the Spartan sympathizer who was not an oligarch as well."[49] Thus, the blame for Alkibiades' exile, she thinks, must be laid upon the oligarchs as well as upon Androkles, whom Thucydides names as one of the chief instruments.[50]

In view of the later course of events there can be little doubt that the scheming of the oligarchs

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46. Thucydides, VI, 61, 1-4.

47. Alkibiades, 19,2.

48. Alkibiades, 22,3.

49. Op.cit., p.168.

50. VIII, 65,2.

was the underlying cause of Alkibiades' downfall, and that the demagogues, pursuing their own essentially short-term objectives, were merely one set of tools employed for this purpose. Alkibiades, a demagogue himself, was the one man of real ability opposed to the oligarchs, and his ambition was limitless. While he survived as a force in Athenian politics an oligarchic coup was almost impossible.[51]

The exile may have had a secondary purpose: to forge a relentless and implacable hostility between Alkibiades and the democrats, whose susceptibility to the exhortations of demagogues had made his condemnation possible. If he could be brought to realise the weakness of democracy as a foundation for power, he might be drawn into the oligarchic fold. It was the fate of all his opponents to underestimate his understanding of them, his foresight, and his ability to do them harm, just as he tended to overestimate his ability to control the various elements in the city. It was never clear to either who was the rider and who the tiger.

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51. See Isokrates, 16, 5-8.

Alkibiades and those accused with him fled into exile; understandably, they put little faith in justice when it was in the hands of a demos so confused and disturbed as was the Athenian.[52] Before he left Sicily, perhaps from motives of revenge and spite, but more probably because he was already planning to go to Sparta and recognised the need for some gesture that would earn him Spartan goodwill, he betrayed to the people of Messina a plot, of which he had been the principal, to hand over the city to the Athenians; Athens was thus denied Messina as a winter base.[53] From Thourioi he crossed over to the Peloponnese, probably to Kyllene in Elis,[54] and thence to Argos. Isokrates and Plutarch both mention a stay, which was probably brief, in Argos; Thucydides omits it from his account.[55] Nepos says that Alkibiades went to Thebes, which is highly unlikely at this time.[56] In this interval, before the Athenians condemned him to death and declared him an outlaw, he must have needed a

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52. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 22,2.

53. Thucydides, VI, 74,1; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 22,1.

54. Thucydides, VI, 61,7; 88,9.

55. Isokrates, 16, 9; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 23,1.

56. Alcibiades, 11, 3-4.

resting-place in some neutral state not openly favourable to Sparta or hostile to Athens. Elis and Argos, with their personal ties of friendship with Alkibiades, were the most likely choices. However, once he had been condemned and exiled, fear of betrayal, and the arrival of envoys from Athens who demanded his surrender, drove him to Sparta,[57] where he had received assurances of a safe conduct.[58] Reconciliation with the present Athenian government was no longer even remotely possible.

After his condemnation, and while he was still deciding what to do, his property was confiscated to be sold by auction.[59] His name was

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57. Isokrates, 16, 9; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 23,1.

58. Thucydides, VI, 88,9.

59. Thucydides, VI, 61,7. I.G., I^2, 330 records the sale of the confiscated property of the profaners of the Mysteries and of the mutilators of the Hermai. Alkibiades' name appears in Stele I, lines 12-13, and Stele IV, lines 27-28, but the part of Stele I beginning at line 231 is identified from a passage in Pollux (X,36) as applying to Alkibiades as well. If, as

publicly cursed by all priests and priestesses.[60]

Plutarch says that the initiative for Alkibiades' move to Sparta was his own, and that he

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seems likely (though not provable), Stele II is a continuation of Stele I an interesting point arises: over 100 empty Panathenaic prize-amphorai are listed, apparently the property of one man. Amyx (Hesp.,XXVII [1958], pp. 178-186) examines the problem and suggests that the vases were part of the prize awarded to Alkibiades for a victory in the main chariot-race at the Panathenaia. He points out (p.184, note 60) that Alkibiades was also a victor at the Olympic and Isthmian games in this event and that "he was just the sort of person who would have preserved, for display, so great a mass of empty Panathenaic amphoras." The date of the victory, he suggests, was 418 B.C. The evidence presented by Amyx is cumulative and I think it is probable that he is right. The eleven Stelai of I.G.,I^2, 330 are fully discussed by Pritchett (Hesp., XXII [1953], pp.225-299; XXV [1956], pp.178-317; XXVII [1958], pp.307-310) and Amyx (Hesp.,XXVII [1958], pp. 163-310).

60. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 22,4.

asked the Spartans to receive him,[61] but this may be a misunderstanding of Thucydides, VI, 88,9, in which it is clear that the Spartans invited him, but that he refused to come until he received guarantees of his safety. Plutarch has telescoped these events into one.

It remains to examine the nature of the profanation of the Mysteries that led to Alkibiades' exile. It is clear from the different accusations that there were several incidents; Andromachos mentioned Poulytion's house as the scene and told of the presence of several slaves.[62] Poulytion was certainly involved and was named in the impeachment of Alkibiades, along with Theodoros, but in this instance Alkibiades' house was the venue.[63] Agariste's accusation set the profanation in the house of Charmides, near the Olympieion.[64] Finally, Lydos charged that Mysteries were celebrated at the house of Pherekles.[65] Andokides, who is the source for these

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61. Alkibiades, 23,1.

62. Andokides, 1, 12.

63. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 22,3.

64. Andokides, 1,16.

65. Andokides, 1, 17.

details, denies that he took any part in the profanations, but indicates that the ceremony made mock of Demeter and Kore, the two goddesses of the Eleusinian cult.[66]

If these accusations contain any truth, it is obvious that profanations took place upon at least four occasions. This makes it difficult to suggest that the profanation was a drunken "rag" of the same sort as the mutilation. Rather, the involvement of so many foreigners, both slave and metic, and the frequency of the profanations, argue the presence of an organized Mystery-religion of foreign origin.

There is evidence from the comic playwrights that about this time the worship of the Thracian goddess, Kotys, was introduced into Athens, perhaps by way of Korinth. Her worship involved noise and uproar and initiation by immersion, and this seems to be the object of the satire in Eupolis' play Baptai, in which Alkibiades is one of the characters.[67]

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66. 1,29-33.

67. Edmonds, pp. 330-337. See also Pherekrates, Ἰπνός (or Παννυχίς), probably staged early in 413 B.C. (Edmonds, pp. 228-231).

Eupolis was said to have been thrown into the sea by Alkibiades while both were on the way to Sicily, with the remark, "Dip me among the altars of Dionysos and I shall drown you in more bitter waters by dipping you in the waves of the sea."[68]

Eupolis' play was probably written in 416/5 B.C. and first performed not long before the departure of the expedition. If the ducking did take place, which is unlikely, Eupolis survived it to go on writing plays at least until 410 B.C..

Was the profanation, therefore, not a parody of the Eleusinian Mysteries but the celebration in private houses of a new religious cult, one sufficiently tainted by its associations with Thrace and Korinth to arouse hostility not only in religious but in political circles? The ritual of Kotys must have had many points of similarity with that of the Eleusinian Mysteries. That Eupolis was able to satirise it before the furore caused by the Mutilation of the Hermai suggests that it was not taken very seriously until later, when the whole affair was blown up into a cause célèbre for political purposes.

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68. Scholiast on Aristeides, 3,444D (Edmonds, pp.330-331).

CHAPTER SIX

THE FIRST EXILE

After the arrival of the Athenian expediton in Sicily in 415 B.C., envoys were sent from Syracuse to Korinth to seek help; the Korinthians agreed at once and sent their own envoys with the Syracusans to Sparta to urge the Spartans to more drastic action against the Athenians. They arrived in Sparta early in 414 B.C. at the same time as did Alkibiades. Both he and they had the same aim: to persuade Sparta to send military assistance to Sicily.[1]

The Spartans, though willing to send ambassadors to Syracuse to head off any reconciliation between the Athenians and Syracusans, were at first reluctant to send military assistance. It was now Alkibiades' turn to speak; first, by somewhat specious arguments, he tried to demonstrate how unreasonable were any prejudices that the Spartans might feel against him, and to mitigate or remove these prejudices. Second, he outlined the strategy that he had developed for the Sicilian campaign and its aftermath; this, if

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1. Thucydides, VI, 88, 7-10.

Thucydides is reporting his actual statements, is our only source for the details of this strategy, which Alkibiades had not explained to the Athenian assembly and which was no doubt unknown to the Spartans. If Sparta did not help Syracuse Sicily would fall to the Athenians, and, after that, Italy and Carthage. At the same time he insisted that Sparta must tie down the Athenian reserves in Greece itself, and a Spartan commander must be sent to Sicily. Finally, Dekeleia in Attica must be fortified by the Spartans; by its loss Athens would also be deprived of the surrounding country and the revenues of the silver-mines at Laureion, and the confidence of her allies would be shaken so that they would be more reluctant to pay their tribute.[2]

Finally, Alkibiades claimed that he should not be blamed for this apparent betrayal of his country; it was not Athens herself that he was attacking but the present government. The man who truly loved his country would shrink from nothing in his attempts to return to it when he had been unjustly exiled.[3] As far as the Spartans were concerned they

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2. Thucydides, VI, 89-91.

3. Thucydides, VI, 92.

might rest assured that his services to them would far outweigh the harm he had done them as an enemy.[4]

The Spartans appear to have been convinced by his arguments; what he suggested coincided with their own strategy, though they had been hesitant to carry it out. After all, so far the Athenian commanders had shown no sign of any grand strategy of conquest and expansion based upon Sicily, such as Alkibiades had outlined; their vacillation and indecision were in sharp contrast to the clearly-drawn plan of campaign that he had revealed and of which he left little doubt that he was the author and mainspring. The confused actions of the remaining Athenian commanders in Sicily must have proved to the Spartans the truth of what Alkibiades said and his own importance to the scheme. Whether they fully believed his apology for his actions may be doubted; for the present, it suited them to use him and there did not seem to be any danger involved in doing what he advised. Accordingly, Gylippos was ordered to sail for Sicily with two ships in order to take command of the Syracusan forces, and to consult with the Syracusans and Korinthians on the best way to

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4. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 23, 1-2.

reinforce Sicily.[5]

On Alkibiades' advice the Spartans forced a breach of the treaty between themselves and the Athenians in 414 B.C. by invading Argos. The Athenians then sent thirty ships which made landings at various points in Lakonia, devastated the surrounding areas, and put out to sea again. The Spartans thus had some justification for claiming that their subsequent actions were taken in self-defence.[6]

This, of course, was Alkibiades' strategy for the years 420-416 B.C. all over again; however, this time the enemy who was being attacked through the gaps in the hedge of allies was not Sparta but Athens. The decision to fortify Dekeleia was long-delayed; it was not until the spring of 413 B.C. that King Agis invaded Attica and seized the fort.[7]

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5. Thucydides, VI, 93; Diodoros, XIII, 7, 1-2.

6. Thucydides, VI, 105; Diodoros, XIII, 8,8.

7. Thucydides, VII, 18,1. Salmon (Class.Rev., LX[1946], pp.13-14) points out that the Spartans from pre-historic times had held Dekeleia in special honour; this explains their delay-- it also explains why the Athenians did not fortify it: they expected the Spartans to leave it alone.

Gylippos arrived in Syracuse in the nick of time; as it was, if Lamachos had not been killed in a skirmish and if Nikias had been more energetic, he might have been too late. The Syracusans were heartened and drove the Athenians back into their beach-head; the initiative passed to Gylippos and was never afterwards lost by him.[8]

Alkibiades remained in Sparta where he was held in high public esteem and much admired. He flattered the Spartans by letting his hair grow untrimmed, taking cold baths, eating their coarse bread and black gruel; he became a whole-hearted proponent of their way of life, of physical training and of the simple existence; he cultivated a grave and serious manner; no trace remained of the effete and luxury-loving Athenian aristocrat, so that the Spartans began to doubt whether the tales of his extravagance and dissipation were true after all. Plutarch aptly compares his ability to take on local colour to that of a chameleon.[9]

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8. Thucydides, VII, 1-6; Diodoros, XIII, 7-8.

9. Alkibiades, 23, 3-5. Alkibiades' adaptability is mentioned by a number of writers (Plutarch, Moralia, 52E; Athenaios, XII, 534B; Nepos, Alcibiades, 11,2; Aelian,

The Athenian playwrights devised a number of names for him: he is called Kallaischros,[10] ἀμφιπτολεμοπηδησίστρατος and "the man as full of changes as an octopus,"[11] and, perhaps, Ikaros,[12] as a result of his various activities; though his defection must have caused mixed feelings at Athens, most people probably felt relieved to be rid of him. This would be especially true of the demagogues and the oligarchs.

Aristophanes, in his Birds, gives us another view of an Athens where the ordinary man is tired to

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V.H., IV, 15) and it is thought by Westlake (J.H.S., LVIII [1938], pp. 30-31) that they derive from a common source, probably the Hellenika of Theopompos.

10. Theopompos Komikos, Kallaischros, frags. 21-23 (Edmonds, pp. 856-857). The title is translated by Edmonds as "Fair-Gone-Foul." The play was produced in 414 B.C.

11. Eupolis, Demoi, frags. 93, 129A (Edmonds, pp.338-339, 364-365) The play was produced in 411 B.C.; one of the characters is Alkibiades.

12. Aristophanes, Daidalos, frags. 187,188 (Edmonds, pp. 624-625) produced in 414 B.C.

death of the bickering and faction. It is a fantasy of escapism, first produced in 414 B.C.: the heroes decide to found a new city but shun any city by the sea lest the Salaminia, the Athenian state-trireme, find them out and arrive with a summons to appear in court;[13] this is perhaps a reference to Alkibiades, as also may be the suggestion, rejected by other characters, that the town they found be called Lakedaimonian Sparta.[14] Aristophanes pokes fun at most of the groups active in Athens; at the oligarchs,[15] at the followers of Sokrates and the Sophists,[16] at Kallias[17] and Nikias[18], but there is no reference made directly to Alkibiades or his exile; however, Aristophanes' other play for this year, Daidalos, in which Alkibiades may be represented as Ikaros, is perhaps foreshadowed by certain passages in the Birds.[19]

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13. 145-147.

14. 813-815.

15. 1583-1585.

16. 1553-1555.

17. 283-286.

18. 362-363.

19. See note 12 above; especially refer to Birds, 976-979, 986-988.

Alkibiades was not wholly trusted by the Spartans, though his advice was taken, albeit reluctantly; he himself was kept in Sparta, presumably under the care of his friend Endios. Diodoros implies that he accompanied Agis in the spring of 413 B.C. when the latter fortified Dekeleia,[20] but, if that were the case, it is strange that Lysias, while blaming him for the advice he gave the Spartans, does not mention his

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20. XIII, 9,1. Westlake (op.cit., pp.31-40), on the strength of the references to Thessaly and Thebes in Satyros (quoted by Athenaios, XII, 534-B), thinks that Alkibiades and Agis planned to induce the Boiotians to hand back Herakleia on the Malian Gulf, to establish control over the Macedonian supply of timber and to attach Thessaly to the Spartan cause. Therefore, Alkibiades was sent to Thebes and thence to Thessaly in the summer of 413 B.C., and Agis followed with the army in the autumn. The failure of these projects, because of Alkibiades' miscalculation of the influence of the Aleuadai in Thessaly, led to the enmity between Agis and Alkibiades. Westlake accepts Diodoros' statement, which he believes derived from Ephoros, that Alkibiades went to Dekeleia with the Spartans.

presence at Dekeleia.[21]

He was thus left to his own devices in Sparta itself, and soon became bored with his inactivity. While Agis was either away from the city or was engaged in affairs that kept him away from his wife, Timaia, Alkibiades is said to have embarked upon a love-affair with her.[22] His motives, as always, are unclear; he was bored and idle and it was not to be expected that a man of his temperament, despite his superficial adapation to the Spartan way of life, would refrain entirely

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21. 14,30.

22. Plutarch, Agesilaos, 3,1; Alkibiades, 23,7. Luria (Klio, XXI [1927], pp.404-412) argues that the story was a fabrication to explain the antagonism of Agis for Alkibiades. The claim that Leotychides was not the son of Agis was put forward by Lysandros, who had ample reason for wishing to remove Leotychides from the kingship; Xenophon makes no reference to Alkibiades as the lover of Timaia when he mentions the ejection of Leotychides from the kingship (Hellenika, III, 31, 1-4). Alkibiades' reputation made him particularly vulnerable to slander, as is shown by the case of the Hermokopidai.

from love-affairs. His reputation as a womaniser would have made it likely that, even in Sparta, there would be women interested in him, and even ready to offer themselves to him. Sparta was on a war-footing; there were many grass-widows whom he might have consoled. Why did he run the enormous risk of an affair with the king's wife? Was this a genuine love-affair on his part, or merely another of those flamboyant and defiant gestures to which he had such a partiality? Or was it a calculated move to ensure that, when Sparta became disenchanted with him, he might have someone to speak for him and perhaps tell him what was happening behind the scenes? For my own part, I feel that all three motives would have impelled him, if the affair did take place at all.

Plutarch reports that Alkibiades himself "said that he wished his descendants to be kings of Sparta, and that he had approached Timaia for this purpose and not as a result of wanton passion". She, for her part, was infatuated, and, after the child was born, though naming him Leotychides in public, whispered to her friends and her Helot maids that his name was Alkibiades. Agis refused to

recognise the child as his son until many years later; he had been absent from his wife's bed for ten months before the child was born, because of an earthquake that he regarded as an omen of pollution.[23]

One version of the story reports Alkibiades as the man who was driven out of Timaia's room by the earthquake, thus betraying himself as an adulterer.[24] The Athenian playwrights, as might be expected, had great fun with the story; his enemy, Eupolis, comments on his numerous adulteries in Sparta and implies that he used wine as an aid to seduction;[25] Pliny may

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23. Plutarch, Agesilaös, 3, 2-5; Alkibiades, 23, 7-8; his source here is Douris, the author of many romantic stories about Alkibiades and one to be regarded with considerable skepticism.

24. Xenophon (Hellenika, III, 3,2) does not name Timaia's lover; Douris, quoted by Plutarch (Agesilaös, 3,2), says he was Alkibiades.

25. Frag. 351 (Edmonds, pp.430-431). Another fragment, perhaps from a play of Eupolis, quoted by Athenaios (XIII, 574D), mentions Alkibiades in the role of adulterer in Sparta. Westlake (op.cit., p.40, note 17) conjectures that this may be the source of the story of the adultery of Timaia and Alkibiades; he believes that it is a

have had this in mind when he remarked that the Greeks ascribed the custom of drinking when hungry or before meals to Alkibiades.[26] Platon Komikos is thought to have written his Menelaos in 413 B.C.; in it Agis and Alkibiades may have been portrayed as Menelaos and Paris, but little is known of the play beyond the title.[27] His Xantriai, ascribed to 412 B.C., tells of Herakles' stay with Omphale of Lydia, where he put on women's clothes and carded wool. Alkibiades and Timaia may be portrayed as Herakles and Omphale, though it is also quite possible that the play deals with Alkibiades' flight to Persia. The Kerkopes in this play may be Nikias and Demosthenes whom Herakles-

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figurative reference to "the transference of Alcibiades' political affections from Sparta to Persia, and that some historian, as often happened when comedy was used as an authority, made the mistake of too literal interpretation."

26. Naturalis Historia, XIV, 143.

27. Frags. 74-76 (Edmonds, pp. 512-515).

Alkibiades undid in Sicily.[28] The same poet's Paidarion may feature Alkibiades' bastard, Leotychides.[29] In one of Diokles' plays there is a pun upon the word τιμαῖος , meaning "highly-priced" or "expensive", and the name Timaia.[30] Not one of these references can be certainly applied to Alkibiades; from the absence of definite contemporary evidence I feel that, at the least, the affair should be regarded with extreme skepticism, and that, probably, it should be relegated to the realm of myth.

In the spring of 413 B.C. the Spartans invaded Attica and seized Dekeleia; perhaps they carried out Alkibiades' advice at this juncture because they wished to prevent the Athenians from reinforcing Sicily. They had been reluctant hitherto, apparently being unwilling to break the truce, but now saw a chance of involving Athens in a war on two fronts. At the same time, the many

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28. Frags. 88-90 (Edmonds, pp. 518-519); the play was alternatively titled Kerkopes.

29. Frags. 91-93 (Edmonds, pp. 518-521).

30. Frag. 18 (Edmonds, pp. 900-901).

provocations they had received caused them to feel justified in acting as they did.[31]

Dekeleia is about fourteen miles from Athens and is visible from the city; the Spartan fort thus served a double purpose: to cut off the Athenians from the surrounding country, and to be a permanent reminder of Spartan strength. Its seizure caused great consternation at Athens, and measures seem to have been considered against the family of Alkibiades, who were still in the city. Isokrates mentions that the younger Alkibiades, when not yet four years old, was in great peril as a result of his father's exile.[32]

Throughout 414 B.C. and the first part of 413 B.C., the Athenian position in Sicily grew steadily worse; sickness and a series of defeats, even after the arrival of Demosthenes with massive reinforcements, had sapped Nikias' initiative. Despite Demosthenes' pleas he remained inactive, refusing either to break the siege and withdraw to Katane and Thapsos, or to abandon the venture

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31. Thucydides, VII, 18.

32. 26,45; the boy's birth could be dated, on this evidence, anywhere between 419 and 415 B.C.

entirely and return to Athens. Not without reason, he feared the consequences if he returned empty-handed to Athens. Sickness increased in the camp, and eventually Nikias made up his mind that the position was untenable. In the midst of preparations for a withdrawal an eclipse of the moon took place. Nikias took this as an omen and forbade any move for a month. Possibly he was waiting for a good omen, or for written authority for withdrawal to arrive from Athens.

The Syracusans, aware of the Athenian plan to depart, increased their pressure; first the Athenian fleet was defeated and the harbour blockaded; then they prepared to cut off all escape by land. The Athenians tried to break the harbour blockade but were turned back and driven from the sea. Even then they delayed their departure by land until too late; when they did make the attempt, Gylippos and the Syracusans were ready for them. The Athenians and their allies, in two divisions, made their way as far as the Assinaros River, half-way to Katane. There they were surrounded and butchered. After great slaughter the survivors were permitted to surrender.[33]

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33. Thucydides, VII, 21-26; 42-56; 59-85.

A debate took place among the victors to determine the fate of the prisoners. Some favoured the execution of the generals and the enslavement of the troops; though Diodoros thinks otherwise,[34] these were probably the Syracusans, who had most cause to hate Athens. Gylippos, wishing to show them off in Sparta as his captives, wanted to keep Nikias and Demosthenes alive. It was reasoned that the instigator of the attack on Sicily, Alkibiades, was still alive and, because he was honoured in Sparta, could not be punished: why should innocent men suffer? However, the Syracusan view prevailed, despite Gylippos' pleas, and the generals were executed and the troops enslaved.[35] It is tempting to see in the Syracusan intransigeance a desire to compromise Alkibiades as deeply as possible in the eyes of his countrymen so that he could never go back to Athens, but it is more likely that their rage was aimed at Athens herself and that they wished to do her the utmost harm. Possibly, too, Gylippos' motives were less humane than they seemed; if he could serve the Athenians he would make a truce between Athens and

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34. Diodoros, XIII, 19-33.

35. Thucydides, VII, 86-87; Plutarch, Nikias, 28,2.

Sparta more possible, since the Athenians would wish to ransom their men, and also feel obligated to Sparta for their preservation. He may also have wished to exhibit the generals in Sparta as a foil to Alkibiades.

Is it fair to blame Alkibiades for the Sicilian catastrophe? It was by his advice that the Spartans intervened and sent Gylippos as commander to Sicily; their choice of Gylippos does not seem to have been prompted by Alkibiades, though we have no record of the closed debates and discussions in which Alkibiades may well have been involved. Whether any other Spartan commander could have matched Gylippos' accomplishment is an open question. Undoubtedly the Spartans were contemplating what Alkibiades advised; even without his advice they might have done what they did in the end. Though his speech did not contain any advice that was new to the Spartans, the presence of the erstwhile Athenian commander, the instigator of the whole scheme, and his revelation of the long-term aims of the expedition, may have been the final spur necessary to confirm their vague intentions. For this he must take the full blame.

As a result of the Sicilian disaster many states that had been neutral declared for Sparta; those that were subject to or allied with Athens contemplated rebellion or secession; and the Spartans themselves entered the renewed war wholeheartedly because they saw the chance of completely destroying the Athenian hegemony and of taking over the leadership of Greece themselves.[36]

In the winter of 413/2 B.C. Alkibiades saw that his usefulness to Sparta was dwindling; he was popular among the Spartan people, but, for that very reason, the most influential and ambitious of the Spartans had grown envious of him. Agis, the King, disliked and distrusted him, quite apart from the matter of his liaison with Timaia, and his friend, Endios, may have found it difficult to support his continued presence in Sparta.[37]

The allies of Athens in the Aegean, chiefly Euboia, Chios and Lesbos, together with Kyzikos in the Propontis, sent embassies to Agis in Dekeleia to discuss their revolt from Athens. Agis decided to help Lesbos first, urged to this by the

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36. Thucydides, VIII, 2.

37. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 24, 1-2.

Boiotians, and to leave Euboia till later. The home government was not involved in these negotiations.[38]

While Agis was dealing with Lesbos, Chios and Erythrai made a direct approach to Sparta for aid; with their envoys came one from Tissaphernes, the Persian satrap of Lydia, who was anxious for Spartan intervention in Ionia and promised to provide funds to maintain an army. He hoped by encouraging Sparta to weaken or discourage the Athenians, and, further, by means of a Spartan alliance, to crush the rebellion of Amorges in Karia. Pharnabazos, satrap of the northern province of Phrygia, sent envoys as well, with aims similar to, but in rivalry with, those of Tissaphernes. There was much lobbying by the various delegations, but, in the main, Spartan sympathies lay with Chios and Tissaphernes. On the surface, Alkibiades, too, supported this side. Accordingly, the Spartans sent a representative to find out whether the Chians had the resources they claimed to have; when he returned with a favourable report the alliance was ratified and a fleet was made ready in

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38. Thucydides, VIII, 5,1-3; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 24,1.

the winter of 413/2 B.C.[39]

In the early summer of 412 B.C. the Chians sent urgent messages for help before the Athenians became aware of the negotiations; the fleet was enlarged, the allies were brought into harness, and the ships Agis had prepared for the Lesbian venture were added. Agis fell in with the plans and put Lesbos on one side. These plans called for the expedition to go first of all to Chios, thence to Lesbos, and finally to the Hellespont, thus satisfying all parties. The expedition was delayed at the insistence of Korinth until after the Isthmian festival had been held, and in the course of this delay the Athenians got wind of what was going on and sent a representative to demand that Chios show good faith by sending a contingent to the Athenian fleet. The oligarchic faction in Chios had evidently been the only party involved in the negotiations with Sparta; for fear of arousing the

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39. Thucydides, VIII, 5,4-6,5; Alkibiades may have had previous dealings with Tissaphernes (see Chapter Four, note 41); it is also very likely that he was laying the foundations of his next move, hoping to profit by his acquaintance with Tissaphernes, or even thinking of advantages to the Athenians.

populace, they complied with the Athenian request.[40]

The Athenians meanwhile had their suspicions confirmed, and when the Peloponnesian fleet set sail they defeated it and blockaded the survivors at Speiraion in the Argolid. The Spartans, who had been on the point of sending a second force, which would include Alkibiades, were discouraged and seemed likely to give up the whole venture, which was not at all to Alkibiades' liking. He used his influence with Endios and the other Ephors, presumably against Agis, to swing opinion back again. If he were sent to Ionia he would easily persuade the cities there to revolt; he was the man most able to persuade them of the weakness of Athens and the active policy of Sparta and most likely to be believed. To Endios he offered the prospect of increased power and influence if he, rather than Agis, promoted an Ionian revolt and an alliance with the King of Persia. As on a political level with Argos and Sparta, so on a personal level with Endios and Agis, Alkibiades sought to isolate the stronger party by attaching the weaker to himself and his projects. His persuasiveness bore

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40. Thucydides, VIII, 7-9.

fruit; the Ephors despatched him with the second fleet to Chios.[41]

Secrecy was so well maintained that the fleet was able to sail into Chios before the philo-Athenian party realised what was happening; the oligarchs arranged for the council to be in session when the Spartans arrived and both Chalkideus, the Spartan admiral, and Alkibiades spoke before it. The Chians, who had not yet heard of the defeat of the first fleet, were given to believe that this force was on its way; they were persuaded to revolt, and Erythrai, and later Klazomenai, followed suit. These cities now began to prepare actively for war against Athens.[42] Thus Isokrates and Lysias are quite justified in blaming Alkibiades for the revolt of the islands.[43]

Undoubtedly Alkibiades wished to leave Sparta when he did because his position there was becoming untenable; by going to Chios he now became actively and openly involved in operations against

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41. Thucydides, VIII, 10-12.

42. Thucydides, VIII, 14.

43. Isokrates, 16,10; Lysias, 14,30.

his own city, whereas formerly he had remained in the background,[44] presumably in the hope that political events in Athens would create conditions favourable to his recall. The oligarchs who had engineered his removal had been active in the past three years, but the Athenian democracy still seemed secure; neither party had any reason to wish for his return, and conditions in Athens were not yet bad enough for an oligarchic coup to succeed. It seems evident from his later actions that Alkibiades saw in the reaction to the excesses of an oligarchic regime the only means of accomplishing his voluntary recall by the demos. The only other way by which he could return was in the company of a Spartan army; this must have seemed a remote possibility so long as Agis was King in Sparta. Accordingly, he promoted an Ionian revolt, hoping not only to detach Athens' screen of allies, but also ultimately to cut her off from the granaries of the Black Sea. Deprived of her allies and their tribute and starved for grain, Athens would soon be plunged into the sort of stasis that would bring the oligarchs to the top. At the same time, it was necessary to

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44. But Diodoros (XIII, 9,1) may be right in saying he was at Dekeleia in 413 B.C.; see note 20 above.

proceed with this plan step by step: Tissaphernes was probably known already to Alkibiades; Pharnabazos just as probably was not. Spartan support for the latter might have initiated a chain of events that Alkibiades could not control. I believe that he always had in mind his recall to Athens, and always, in these years, tried to ensure that the Athenians were aware of the possible outcome of his manoeuvres and had time and opportunity to reflect upon the services that he could still perform for them if he were recalled. Thus, a revolt in Ionia would reveal to Athens the danger to her corn supply, and the fact that Alkibiades was in a position to remove that danger.

There was one other factor in his choice of Ionia as his next base of operations: the material aid given to him by certain Ionian cities at the time of the Olympic Games of 416 B.C. is evidence of his great popularity there.[45] Ionia was thus the only place where he could still be actively of use to the Spartans; elsewhere he had nothing to offer and few

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45. [Andokides], 4, 30, mentions Ephesos, Chios and Lesbos. See also Plutarch, Alkibiades, 12,1.

contacts to boast of, apart from Lesbos and perhaps Kyzikos.[46]

The Athenians made a desperate effort to reverse the trend of events; a fleet was sent out to Samos and thence to Teos. The Spartans were already on their way to Teos and the Athenian fleet, finding itself outnumbered, fled back to Samos. Teos joined in the revolt. The Spartans and Alkibiades went on to Miletos, where the latter had many friends, to promote a revolt there. Thucydides remarks that Alkibiades wished the credit for this to go to himself, the Chians, Chalkideus the Spartan admiral, and Endios, the patron of the expedition; accordingly he did not wait for reinforcements to come from the Peloponnese and Agis. Miletos joined the revolt and refused entry to the Athenians, and an alliance was concluded between Sparta and Persia by Chalkideus and the satrap, Tissaphernes. Under its terms the Persians were granted title to all territories that were, or had been, under their control;

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46. Athenaios, XII, 534D, quoting Satyros, says Kyzikos contributed to Alkibiades' upkeep at Olympia. Hatzfeld Alcibiade, p.217, note 2) thinks that this city crept into the lists because of the victory of 410 B.C.

Athens was to be prevented from receiving the tribute of her empire by the active alliance of Persia and Sparta; this alliance could not be broken unilaterally; whoever rebelled from Persia was to be regarded as the enemy of Sparta, and vice versa.[47] The treaty was never ratified by the Spartan government and was, in fact, disowned later by its commissioners, but it seems at first to have been regarded as in effect.[48]

Sparta thus contracted to deliver the cities of Ionia into Persian hands, as well as most of Greece, since the Persians had held mainland Greece north of Boiotia during the invasion of 480 B.C. Understandably the terms of the treaty were kept secret for the time being for fear that they would deter the Ionians from revolting from Athens, who, so far at least, had managed to keep them out of Persian control.

Is the hand of Alkibiades discernible in all this? If he was already planning to go over to the Persians a treaty that was so obviously favourable to Persian interests, and of which he had been the

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47. Thucydides, VIII, 15-18.

48. Thucydides, VIII, 43,3.

instigator, would be a very effective bargaining counter. There may be a yet deeper purpose; once the terms of the treaty were made public and the cynicism and opportunism of the Spartans made plain the Ionians would become just as hostile to Sparta as they had been to Athens. If Alkibiades was planning his eventual recall to Athens it would be in his interests to plant the seeds of counter-rebellion now while he was still ostensibly working for Sparta. When the terms were published he could, in effect, say that he had tricked the Spartans into giving these terms, and was thus working for Athens all the time. All this, of course, is conjecture, but a conjecture that does justice to the subtlety of Alkibiades' mind.

During the summer the Spartans increased their strength in Ionia; Astyochos was given overall command in the area. Athens also increased her forces and made a partial recovery. In Samos a democratic coup made the island secure for Athens, and the Athenians in gratitude gave the Samians their independence; Chios, however, was actively engaged in promoting revolt elsewhere, feeling that there was safety in numbers.

The Athenians were reinforced and sailed to Lesbos where they defeated a Chian fleet and seized the city, thwarting the plans of Astyochos for a northward move on the Hellespont. He withdrew temporarily to Chios. The Athenians recovered Klaxomenai and made a landing at Miletos, where Alkibiades' ally, the Spartan, Chalkideus, was killed in a skirmish. They then withdrew to their base on the island of Lade in order to continue blockading the harbour of Miletos.[49]

There followed a series of Chian defeats at the hands of the Athenians, resulting in the isolation and discomfort of Chios: this gave rise to second thoughts about the wisdom of the revolt and a conspiracy was instituted with the aim of handing the island back to the Athenians. The government in power and Astyochos were aware of this but as yet took no overt action.[50]

Meanwhile Alkibiades was at Miletos, ingratiating himself with Tissaphernes; the Athenians, with substantial reinforcements from the Argives and

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49. Thucydides, VIII, 24, 2-6.

50. Thucydides, VIII, 24, 2-6.

other allies, landed again at Miletos and were attacked by a mixed force of Milesians, Spartans and Persians, among whom were Alkibiades and Tissaphernes. The Athenians drove the Milesians back within their walls and began to besiege the city in the belief that its capture would bring the other Ionians back into the Athenian fold. This was Alkibiades' belief as well, and it did not suit his purposes that the Ionians should return to the Athenians yet; therefore, on this occasion, he fought with the Milesians and Tissaphernes against the Athenians and his erstwhile Argive friends. He now rode across country to bring news of the battle to the Spartans who had broken out of the blockade that had kept their first fleet tied up in Speiraion in the Argolid and were on their way to Miletos with a large fleet of Peloponnesian and Sicilian ships. He warned them that unless they wished to lose all Ionia they must relieve Miletos at once.

The Athenians knew very well that this fleet was in the offing, and Phrynichos, their commander, very sensibly declined to risk an encounter. If his fleet was defeated Athens herself might be endangered; the Athenian fleet withdrew to Samos. The next day the

Peloponnesian fleet arrived. Tissaphernes soon persuaded this to attack Iasos which had been held by his enemy, Amorges, an ally of the Athenians. Iasos was captured and the army was augmented by a large force of mercenaries who had been serving Amorges. So ended the summer of 412 B.C.[51]

Alkibiades must have been painfully aware that Spartan hopes for an hegemony in Ionia had gone very much awry; after the initial successes at Chios, Erythrai and Klazomenai, the accession of Miletos and the alliance with Tissaphernes, the Spartans, far from acquiring the rest of Ionia and the Hellespont without effort, were faced with an apparently rejuvenated Athens. She was once more mistress of the sea, having won back Klazomenai and established a firm base at Samos. The bluff had failed, if it were a bluff, and Alkibiades was now faced with the imminent necessity of escape from the Spartan camp. Agis was strongly antagonistic and had been so for a long time, but, more seriously, Endios, if he was not removed from the board of ephors in the autumn of 412 B.C., as Hatzfeld thinks he may have been,[52] had at any rate

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51. Thucydides, VIII, 25-28.

52. Op.cit.,p. 226.

found his power greatly reduced as a result of Alkibiades' failure to produce what he had promised. Orders were sent from Sparta to Astyochos, soon after the death of Chalkideus and the battle of Miletos, for the execution of Alkibiades.[53] Alkibiades was warned of this,[54] the source of the warning being perhaps Endios or Timaia,[55] though the latter is probably romantic speculation. At any rate he fled before the order could be carried out and took refuge with Tissaphernes. He became the latter's adviser as he had been the adviser of the Spartans.

The first advice he gave to Tissaphernes was to cut down the sum of money to be paid to the Spartan fleet under the terms of the offer made in the spring of 412 B.C.[56] Tissaphernes paid over a month's wages at the agreed rate but said that future payments would be at a reduced rate, unless the King authorised more; the Syracusans protested, and it was agreed that

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53. Thucydides, VIII, 45,1. From this time on Alkibiades was under suspicion at Sparta.

54. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 24,3.

55. Justin, V,2.

56. Thucydides, VIII, 5,5.

a slight upward adjustment would be made.[57] Thucydides says that the commanders of the other elements in the fleet were bribed on the advice of Alkibiades so that they did not complain about the drop in the pay-rate.[58]

When Astyochos had returned to Miletos the agreement with Tissaphernes had been redrafted; the Spartans felt themselves cheated by the original terms and now included a clause by which the King agreed to pay the expenses of all troops stationed at his request in territories to which he laid claim; the Spartans abandoned all claims to a tribute from any city that now belonged to the King or had belonged to him or his ancestors. These clauses, though they did not explicitly recognise the Persian claim to Ionia and Northern Greece, disguised within themselves the implication that the Spartans were even now in the King's territories on his sufferance, and, in effect, handed over financial direction of the war to Persia.[59]

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57. Thucydides, VIII, 29.

58. VIII, 45,3.

59. Thucydides, VIII, 36-37.

It is possible that the revised and more subtle wording of the agreement was the work of Alkibiades, as Hatzfeld thinks;[60] at any rate, the way was left open for his later manipulation of Tissaphernes and deception of the Spartans.

Alkibiades had ingratiated himself with Tissaphernes long before his actual defection; his position as de facto commander of the Peloponnesian detachment in Miletos after Chalkideus' death had given him ample excuse and opportunity to seek Tissaphernes' company; he had no doubt adopted some Persian habits in the relaxed atmosphere of Miletos where Spartan severity was laughed at. Now he became more Persian than the Persians with his usual chameleon-like ability to take on the colour of whatever country he was in.[61] Tissaphernes was delighted with his company and fell, or professed to have fallen, completely under his spell, admiring his supple mind and grace of behaviour and conversation. As Plutarch remarks, even those who feared and hated him succumbed to his charm when they were in his presence. Tissaphernes is even said to have named his

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60. Op.cit. p.230.

61. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 23,5.

finest pleasure-park after Alkibiades as a mark of his favour.[62] There is some suggestion that he and Alkibiades were lovers.[63]

Acting in Tissaphernes' name he brusquely dismissed the representatives of the Ionian cities who came asking for money and told the Chians that, as the richest of the Greek cities, they had no right to ask that other people should risk their lives or money for them. Moreover, Tissaphernes, he said, was paying for the war out of his own pocket at present; when the king sent more funds he would be more generous to both the allied forces and the cities of Ionia.[64]

He advised Tissaphernes not to be too eager to bring the war to an end, nor to bring up the Phoenician fleet that he was fitting out in the south, nor to take more Greeks into his service; it was more desirable to play off Athens and Sparta against each other, to let them exhaust themselves, and use the weaker to undermine the stronger lest either should

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62. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 24, 4-5.

63. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 25,2:

δῆλος ἦν ἀγαπῶν καὶ θαυμάζων.

64. Thucydides, VIII, 45, 4-6.

become supreme. He further advised that Persia should look to Athens rather than to Sparta for permanent alliance, since Athens, as a sea-power, had no ambitions for a land-empire that might conflict with that of Persia. The Spartans, who had come as liberators, were more dangerous than the Athenians, who had come to establish an empire; it was always possible to establish spheres of influence between empires, whereas liberators would not stop until all the Greek cities were free.[65]

Tissaphernes took his advice and held up the pay of the Spartan forces; he advised the Spartans not to fight a battle at sea until his Phoenician fleet arrived when they could fight with all the advantages on their side, and thus kept them inactive so that morale and efficiency in their fleet declined.[66]

Thucydides states flatly that Alkibiades gave this advice to the Persians not only because it suited the Persians but also because he was looking for a means of being recalled by Athens. The best course for him to adopt seemed to be to show the Athenians that he was on the best of terms with Tissaphernes, and

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65. Thucydides, VIII, 46, 1-4.

66. Thucydides, VIII, 46,5.

this turned out to be so later on.[67] I see no reason to contradict this verdict.

At the beginning of 411 B.C. the Spartans sent out to Ionia the fleet that had been prepared under the terms of the agreement with Pharnabazos made early in 412 B.C. With it came a body of eleven commissioners to advise Astyochos who was now under suspicion as a result of correspondence between himself and the Chians in which the Chians had reproached him for refusing to help them. He, for his part, blamed the Chians for not being co-operative enough in their own cause, and, as a result, Chios continued to be besieged by the Athenians.

Astyochos went out to meet the new Spartan fleet and, after a minor victory over the Athenians who were on the watch for the newcomers, joined up with them at Knidos. There they were also joined by Tissaphernes.[68]

The commissioners saw through the implications of the agreements that had been made with Tissaphernes and proposed that a new treaty be made;

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67. VIII, 47,1.

68. Thucydides, VIII, 39-43,2.

to take Persian wages under the terms of the previous agreements was impossible for the Spartans, who had come as liberators not enslavers of the Greeks. Tissaphernes put on a show of rage and left without settling anything about either the treaty or the future conduct of the war,[69] which, of course, was just what Alkibiades wanted.

In the first months of 411 B.C. the Spartans sailed to Rhodes, persuaded the island to revolt, despite the efforts of the Athenians to forestall them, and were able to extract a contribution from the Rhodians for the furtherance of the war. The Athenians sailed back again to Samos empty-handed.[70]

The Athenians could not fail to see that Alkibiades was now Tissaphernes' adviser and occasional deputy. No doubt he took pains to make this known to them, and to make known his ability to assist them in Ionia. The situation was one well-suited to his devious talents; the Persians must be encouraged only so far as was necessary to dislodge the Spartans and render an Athenian return possible -- yet, the Athenians must not be allowed to return except under

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69. Thucydides, VIII, 43, 3-4.

70. Thucydides, VIII, 44.

circumstances that made it clear that Alkibiades was the means of their return. In addition, the government at Athens must be purged in order to create a climate of opinion favourable to Alkibiades' own return to the city. He had two aids: the presence in Samos of a large Athenian fleet, whose crews were both rabid democrats and his long-time partisans, but whose captains were strongly in favour of an oligarchy, and the rivalry between the two Persian satraps, Tissaphernes and Pharnabazos.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE RETURN

At the end of 412 B.C. or in the first months of 411 B.C., Alkibiades was in contact with members of the Athenian fleet in Samos. He had made sure that they knew of his influence over Tissaphernes, who, because of the Phoenician fleet that he had at his disposal, was an object of fear and speculation to them. In messages to their leaders he hinted that this influence could be used to the advantage of Athens if the Athenians acquired an oligarchic government instead of the corrupted democracy that had exiled him. Representatives were sent from Samos to Alkibiades to receive confirmation of this impression, and the oligarchic elements formed a club and began to plot the removal of the democracy.[1]

Among the leaders of this movement was Peisandros, the erstwhile democrat who had laboured so long and with such ingenuity to disentangle Alkibiades from the charge of mutilating the Hermai in 415 B.C. It is likely that he had been in

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1. Thucydides, VIII, 47, 2-48,1; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 25, 3-4.

communication with Alkibiades throughout the latter's exile, and was now still acting as his agent. It is impossible to say whether his change of political heart came about by his own initiative or because Alkibiades advised it; however, it would have been obvious to both that the return of Alkibiades was impossible under the present democracy. If it fell, Alkibiades could expect either of two possible outcomes: the oligarchs would invite him to return at once, or they would hesitate and be forced by the military situation and their own inclinations to adopt measures of ever-increasing stringency, which might eventually lead to the return of a democracy championed by Alkibiades.

There was one substantial obstacle to this scheme: the general Phrynichos, apparently at this time a democrat by preference,[2] was keenly aware that

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2. Lysias, 25,9; "Did not Phrynichos, Peisandros and the demagogues of their party, when they had committed many offences against you, in fear of subsequent punishment, establish the first oligarchy?" This is a piece of special pleading on behalf of Lysias' client and the motives for the actions of Phrynichos and Peisandros expressed here are open to doubt. Woodhead

Alkibiades was indifferent to both oligarchy and democracy so long as he could engineer his own recall as a result of the changes in the existing form of government at Athens. Thucydides remarks that Phrynichos was perfectly correct in his assessment of

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(A.J.P., LXXV [1954], pp. 138-140) holds that Peisandros adopted an oligarchic standpoint because he had become uneasy about the effectiveness of the democratic constitution in the prevailing situation; not merely a desire to maintain his political prominence but also genuine patriotism prompted his change of heart, a change that demanded more courage than Peisandros has usually been credited with by the comedians and others. To this may be added a desire to see the war carried on with greater efficiency, coupled with a conviction that Alkibiades alone could save Athens but would never return while the democracy that had banished him remained in power. Once Peisandros had joined the oligarchic group, his natural gifts made him one of the leaders. I believe that loyalty to Alkibiades was at least as strong a motive as his patriotism, but in other respects I agree with Woodhead's views. As for Phrynichos, his later actions showed very clearly that he was motivated primarily by his enmity towards Alkibiades.

Alkibiades' motives, and goes on to report Phrynichos' view that it was essential for Athens to retain a stable government; revolution at this time would destroy not only the constitution but the empire and perhaps Athens herself.

Phrynichos was one voice among many; his opponents, Thucydides says, were men of the most powerful class, on whom the burden of the war fell most heavily; Alkibiades had fostered the hope that the Persians would provide the funds for the war, and this seemed desirable to the men of the fleet as well. Phrynichos was outvoted, and it was resolved to send Peisandros and others to Athens to commence negotiations that would lead to the overthrow of the democracy, the recall of Alkibiades, and an entente with Persia.[3]

Phrynichos saw that the recall of Alkibiades would certainly be proposed, and that the Athenians would agree to it; his own downfall would follow. Therefore, to prevent this he sent a secret message to the Spartan admiral, Astyochos, at Miletos, warning him of the negotiations. Astyochos, who was no longer in a position to harm Alkibiades directly,

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3. Thucydides, VIII, 48, 2-49.

went to Magnesia and showed Phrynichos' letter to Alkibiades and Tissaphernes. Rumour had it that he had for some time been in the pay of Tissaphernes. Alkibiades' reaction was to inform the Athenians in Samos of the letter, asking that Phrynichos be put to death. Great indignation was aroused against Phrynichos, who became thoroughly alarmed and wrote again to the Spartan, giving details of the forces in Samos and the island's undefended condition, and advising Astyochos to attack at once. This letter, too, was passed on to Alkibiades.[4]

Phrynichos seems to have expected the reaction of Astyochos, or to have learned of it before the arrival in Samos of Alkibiades' second letter. He announced that an attack was imminent and issued orders that the island be fortified. Alkibiades' second letter arrived soon after and was treated as further evidence of his unreliability; it was thought that the information about Phrynichos was false, inspired by the ill-will Alkibiades felt towards him, and Phrynichos was thus strengthened in his position.[5] Alkibiades, as a

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4. Thucydides, VIII, 50.

5. Thucydides, VIII, 50,5-51; Plutarch, Alkibiades,25,5-9. Westlake (J.H.S., LXXVI [1956], pp.99-104) believes that

result, was temporarily discredited and his connexion with Sparta was emphasized.

Alkibiades continued to urge Tissaphernes to befriend the Athenians. Tissaphernes, now that the Spartan commissioners had asked for the treaty to be redrafted, was, according to Thucydides, in a mood to be persuaded, even though the numerical superiority of the Spartan fleet made him cautious.[6] Since the Spartan fleet owed its superiority to Persian subsidies, it is to be wondered whether

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Phrynichos acted as he did out of motives of patriotism: he wished to discredit Alkibiades and foil his hopes of returning, to speed the fortification of Samos and entice the Spartans into a naval battle in which the Athenians would have the advantage, and to betray Alkibiades' manoeuvres to the Peloponnesians; all this because of his conviction that Alkibiades had his own and not Athens' interests at heart. I believe that Westlake places undue emphasis upon Phrynichos' patriotism; he was soon to change sides and show himself as ardent an oligarch as he had been formerly a democrat.

6. VIII, 52; Marsh (Class. Journ., XXVIII [1932], pp.12-21) was the first to point out the probable reasons for Tissaphernes' hesitation.

Thucydides is correct here; the truth probably is that Tissaphernes was not a free agent: he was, in the last resort, answerable to his King, and it was official Persian policy to support Sparta; he would be very reluctant to change the status quo without authority.

Meanwhile Peisandros and his delegation reached Athens and addressed the Assembly. His proposals met with violent opposition: personal enemies and the religious elements opposed Alkibiades' recall on legal and religious grounds, while the demagogues naturally opposed any change in the constitution. Peisandros forced each group of opponents to admit that they had no faith in an Athenian victory now unless the Persians changed sides; unless the government was put into fewer, more reliable hands, the Persians would never trust Athens. Survival was more important than the form of the constitution, which could always be changed again later, if it was so desired. Alkibiades must be recalled because he was the only person capable of making the Persians change sides.[7]

His argument was effective: the Assembly

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7. Thucydides, VIII, 53.

voted to send Peisandros and ten others to make whatever arrangement seemed best with Tissaphernes and Alkibiades; Phrynichos, whom Peisandros had denounced, was relieved of his command.[8]

When the delegates arrived at Tissaphernes' court Alkibiades was in a quandary. It is evident that his claims to be able to make the Persians change sides were ill-founded, if not an actual bluff. Tissaphernes still feared the Spartans more than he feared Athens and wished to carry out the advice Alkibiades himself had given him: to play off one side against the other; nor, in Thucydides' opinion, did he really want an agreement with the Athenians, on account of his fear of the Spartans; it must also be remembered that he was not as much a free agent as Alkibiades had implied him to be, and was subject to the over-all policy of the King. In consequence, Alkibiades, alarmed at the ready acceptance by the delegates of all his terms and realising that Tissaphernes would not make an agreement any way, sought to cast the blame on the Athenians for the failure of the negotiations by making extravagant claims on behalf of Tissaphernes, which the delegation

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8. Thucydides, VIII, 54.

had no choice but to reject, since they not only involved the abandonment of Ionia and the coastal islands to the Persians, but also conferred on the Persians the right to build as large a fleet as they wished and sail with it wherever they wanted. This last provision was rejected, even though it seems a reasonable safeguard for Persian interests in the Aegean; the delegates departed for Samos in indignation, bitterly accusing Alkibiades of deceiving them.[9] One wonders whether Peisandros was surprised.

Tissaphernes decided to appease the Spartans by giving them their pay and a third treaty, under which Asia alone was claimed as Persian territory and the Spartans were to be paid under the existing arrangements until the Persian fleet arrived, and after that by a loan from Tissaphernes, to be repaid at the end of the war. So ended the winter of 412/1 B.C.[10]

On the surface, it looks as if Alkibiades gave up his hopes of being recalled by an oligarchy once Peisandros and his delegation arrived at Tissaphernes' court. Thucydides makes it clear that he never had entertained such hopes seriously, but

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9. Thucydides, VIII, 56.

10. Thucydides, VIII, 57-58.

implies that he became alarmed when it became likely that he would have to confess his inability to bring Tissaphernes into the Athenian camp; I feel that his alarm was caused as much by his discovery of the extent of the opposition to his return and of the extravagant faith placed in him by his partisans at Athens, as by his awareness that he could not produce what he had promised. Until this time he may have believed that there was an outside chance that he could engineer his successful return, even though he can hardly have put much trust in the oligarchs, who had been the major, if hidden, cause of his downfall; he must have realised too, not only that there was little he could do at once to relieve Athens' present ills but also that public opinion would soon turn against him if he tried and failed. However, part of his genius lay in his ability to envisage several different courses of action at the same time, and to react more swiftly than most men to sudden changes of fortune. If the opportunity arose, he had a plan of action to be put into effect when he returned to Athens, but Peisandros' information convinced him that the Athenians were in no state to carry this plan out successfully, and so he abandoned it. Moreover, he was too little trusted at Athens to

have any hope of a command whereby he could actively influence the course of events. It was much safer, therefore, to let events take their course; the oligarchs could take the blame if anything else went wrong, and in the meantime he could work towards their overthrow and his recall at the hands of a suitably chastened democracy.

When Peisandros and the delegates returned to Samos it was decided to abandon all hope of getting Alkibiades to join them; he did not seem to be the right sort of person to be involved in an oligarchy in any case. However, they were now too deeply committed to give up their other plans; instead, approaches were made to potential oligarchs in Samos with a view to setting up an oligarchy there, and it was resolved to press on with the plans for an oligarchy at Athens and to try to set up oligarchies in the other states of the Empire.[11]

The results were other than they had anticipated; a number of states, including Thasos, as soon as the new oligarchic governments were in control, went over to the Spartans.[12]

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11. Thucydides, VIII, 63, 3-64,1.

12. Thucydides, VIII, 64, 3-5; it is clear from the

Peisandros and his companions arrived in Athens with a force of hoplites; the oligarchic faction had already set the stage by murdering Androkles, the foremost of the demagogues opposed to Alkibiades, under the impression that this would be an acceptable sacrifice to Alkibiades' anger and resentment. They were not yet aware that Alkibiades had decided to do without them. There were other political murders at the same time in Athens and Samos, including that of Hyperbolos. They had put forward a plan for a "limited democracy" of five thousand voting citizens, although they actually intended to set up a true oligarchy behind this facade. The Assembly and the Boule continued to meet, but completely under the domination of the oligarchs; no one dared oppose them for fear of being murdered, and Athens was in the grip of terror.[13]

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account of Thucydides that this historian believed that Alkibiades wanted an oligarchy to be set up, but without his involvement, so that any subsequent government would be at once favourably disposed to his recall and suitably chastened by the experience of oligarchic rule.

13. Thucydides, VIII, 66-67; 73,3.

When Peisandros arrived a meeting was held; as a result a body of Four Hundred was formed. The chief promoters of this plan were Peisandros, Antiphon and Theramenes. Phrynichos, too, spoke strongly in favour of the oligarchy because of his fear of Alkibiades; he believed that Alkibiades would never be recalled by the oligarchy and so supported it to save his own life. The next day the Boule was dismissed and the Four Hundred took over. This was shortly before midsummer, 411 B.C.[14]

Neither Alkibiades nor any other exile was recalled, and a few political executions and banishments took place. Agis led the Spartan army right up to the city walls in an attempt to profit by events in Athens but he was firmly repulsed and formed considerable respect for the Four Hundred. As a result he advised them to send representatives to Sparta to negotiate a settlement. All this was to the liking of Alkibiades. If his influence over Peisandros was still strong, it is possible that he even used him to control events at Athens so as to create conditions favourable to a return of the

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14. Thucydides, VIII, 67-69; Aristotle, Ath.Pol.,32,2; scholiast on Aristophanes, Lysistrata, 421.

democracy.[15]

In Samos the democratic revolution was threatened by the oligarchs whom Peisandros had encouraged to prepare a coup d'état; the democrats became aware of their danger and warned certain of the Athenians who were democratically inclined. These sounded out individuals in the fleet and a squadron of ships was detached to protect Samos from the oligarchs. When the coup took place the crews of these ships thwarted it and confirmed the democrats in power. Messages were sent to Athens to announce the failure of the coup since the news that the Four Hundred were in power there had not yet reached Samos. Exaggerated reports of the revolt at Athens later filtered back and served to confirm the democrats in their resolve.[16]

There was great indignation in the fleet at the news from Athens and an oath to uphold democracy was administered to all the men of the fleet and all Samians of military age. The Four Hundred were to be treated as enemies and no relations were to be

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15. Thucydides, VIII, 69-71; Aristotle, Ath.Pol., 32,3.

16. Thucydides, VIII, 72-74.

maintained with them.[17]

At an assembly Thrasyboulos and Thrasylos were elected generals and the previous board was dismissed, along with any officers who were suspected of oligarchic tendencies. Speakers urged that a new government be formed at Samos for the prosecution of the war; it could collect the tribute by means of the fleet and act independently of Athens. Alkibiades, too, could be invited to return; with him he would bring the Persian alliance. The delegates of the Four Hundred heard of these proceedings and wisely remained where they were in Delos.[18]

If Thrasylos is the same person to whom Alkibiades gave the gold plate he is said to have seized from Anytos,[19] it is possible that he was another of Alkibiades' allies, performing services similar to those that Peisandros had performed until he compromised himself too deeply with the Four Hundred.

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17. Thucydides, VIII, 75.

18. Thucydides, VIII, 76-77.

19. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 4,5; Athenaios, XII, 534E.

These upheavals at Samos and Athens could have been disastrous to the Athenian cause; that they were not is due to the troubles of the Spartans and their allies. Astyochos and Tissaphernes played an elaborate diplomatic game, in which Astyochos refused to move without Persian naval support, and Tissaphernes continued to promise the approach of his Phoenician fleet, which was by no means as large as he said it was and which he had no intention of moving from its base at Aspendos; moreover, by delays and inconsistencies in paying the Peloponnesians, he was breaking down their morale and efficiency. After much delay a conference was held and the fleet sailed to Mykale to attack the Athenians stationed there; the Athenians, however, were aware of its approach and withdrew to Samos. The stalemate continued.[20]

In view of Alkibiades' influence over Tissaphernes and the latter's reported subversion of Astyochos, there can be little doubt that the failure of the Peloponnesian forces to seize their opportunities in 411 B.C. was his achievement. Was he also behind events in Samos? It seems likely; it was suggested at

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20. Thucydides, VIII, 78-79.

the first assembly of the fleet that he be recalled -- the idea had been put into the men's minds long before by Peisandros and had been one of the planks of the oligarchic programme as well. I believe that his initial support of the oligarchs was a smoke-screen, designed to tempt them into committing themselves; he or his agents behind the scenes were laying the foundations for the democratic coup at Samos even before the conspiracy of the Four Hundred had developed.

The Peloponnesians, still lacking confidence in their ability to match the Athenians, now sent a fleet to the Hellespont, at the request of the other Persian satrap, Pharnabazos. When part of this fleet arrived Byzantion revolted from Athens.[21]

Thrasyboulos was an especially ardent supporter of Alkibiades, and seems to have used the news of the Byzantine revolt to frighten the Assembly at Samos into passing the decree for his recall. Alkibiades was sent for and arrived full of promises of help from Tissaphernes and exaggerated stories of his own influence with the Persian, his aims being to discomfort the oligarchs at Athens, to build up credit

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21. Thucydides, VIII, 80.

for himself, and to increase the confidence of the Athenians on Samos. He further promised that Tissaphernes would send his Phoenician fleet to help the Athenians.[22]

The fleet received him enthusiastically and he was elected to the board of generals. It was suggested that they sail to Peiraieus and oust the Four Hundred, but Alkibiades advised them not to leave their immediate enemies behind them while they sailed to Peiraieus. Instead, he would first visit Tissaphernes and confer with him. Immediately after the Assembly adjourned he sailed off to visit Tissaphernes so as to demonstrate how close was the bond between himself and the Persian, and also in the hope that Tissaphernes would set more value upon him now that he was a general.[23]

Alkibiades, in fact, was bluffing; perhaps more than at any point in his career. He knew perfectly well that his position vis-à-vis Tissaphernes was by no

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22. Thucydides, VIII, 81; this last promise was probably a bluff: the Phoenician fleet was the instrument of the King's policy, not Tissaphernes', and was committed to help the Peloponnesians, if it helped anyone.

23. Thucydides, VIII, 82.

means as secure as the Athenians thought, and that Tissaphernes himself was far less powerful than he seemed to be, and, moreover, embroiled in a bitter rivalry with his fellow-satrap Pharnabazos. He knew also that the Athenians, however enthusiastically they acclaimed him now, would tolerate him only so long as he brought them victory; though he had little hope that Tissaphernes would help the Athenians, his aim was to use the prospect of this help as long as possible until he could, by generalship or diplomacy, bring about a radical change in the Athenian naval position. Thus a counter-revolution to topple the oligarchic government at Athens now was useless to his purposes, however much the democrats desired it; he could look forward to permanent recall from exile only if he brought victory with him. A democratic coup could be engineered later, after the oligarchs had made themselves so hated by the people that, once they were driven out, their return would be impossible. This Thucydides realised, and his assessment of Alkibiades' actions is perfectly correct: that Alkibiades was using the Athenians to frighten Tissaphernes, and Tissaphernes to frighten the Athenians.[24]

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24. Thucydides, VIII, 82,3.

Another result of the recall of Alkibiades, one that he had probably foreseen, was that the Peloponnesians experienced a further slump in morale and became more embittered against Astyochos and Tissaphernes. Astyochos was replaced by Mindaros and returned to Sparta, after a narrow escape from stoning at the hands of his own troops.[25]

Alkibiades returned from his visit to Tissaphernes and confronted the delegates of the Four Hundred at a meeting of the Assembly in Samos. The men of the fleet refused to listen to the arguments of the delegation and wanted to sail at once against Peiraieus; Alkibiades rendered what Thucydides considers his first outstanding service to Athens by preventing this move, which would have caused the loss of Ionia and the Hellespont, as well as weakening his own position.[26]

He saved the delegates from violence at the hands of the mob, and sent them back to Athens with a demand that the Four Hundred be replaced by the original Boule of Five Hundred; he urged the Athenian government

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25. Thucydides, VIII, 83-85.

26. VIII, 86, 1-4: καὶ δοκεῖ Ἀλκιβιάδης πρῶτον [B;πρῶτος cett.] τότε καὶ οὐδενὸς ἔλασσον τὴν πόλιν ὠφελῆσαι.

and people to hold out against the Spartans and make no concessions; he had great hopes, both of reconciling the government at Athens with the army, and of victory over the Peloponnesians. Delegates also arrived from Argos offering support for the democrats in Samos, and Alkibiades sent these back to Argos with instructions to wait until he sent for them.[27]

The comings and goings of this summer continued; Tissaphernes, leaving a deputy to placate the Peloponnesians, sailed off to Aspendos to collect his Phoenician fleet, inviting the Spartan commissioner Lichas to accompany him. However, he did not return with the fleet, which, had it been employed to assist the Peloponnesians, was large enough to destroy the Athenians. Thucydides feels that his motive was to wear down both sides by keeping affairs in suspense, but reports other theories: that Tissaphernes wished to weaken the Peloponnesians; that he wanted to make money by demanding a fee from the Phoenician crews as a condition of their discharge; or that he wished to prove to the Spartans that he really did have this fleet to bring to their assistance. He said that he had not brought up the fleet from Aspendos because

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27. Thucydides, VIII, 86, 5-9.

there were fewer ships than had been ordered; Thucydides considers that these were enough to destroy the Athenians, if that was what Tissaphernes really wanted, and that this was just a face-saving excuse.

In any case, the Peloponnesians expected that the fleet would now join them, and prepared accordingly, while Alkibiades, who probably knew all along that it would never arrive, went to Aspendos himself with a small fleet, telling the Athenians that he would induce Tissaphernes either to hand the fleet over to Athens or not to give it to the Peloponnesians. Either way, he said he would do Athens a great service.[28]

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28. Thucydides, VIII, 87-88. Lewis (Historia, VII [1958], pp. 392-397), examining the accounts of Thucydides (VIII, 87-109) and Diodoros (XIII, 37-46) in the light of evidence from papyrological sources, concludes that before Tissaphernes made up his mind about the Phoenician fleet "a revolt broke out both in Lower and Upper Egypt... This seemed potentially so dangerous that the fleet was removed from Tissaphernes' command and returned to Phoenicia, where it might be needed in operations against the rebels. Alternatively, but perhaps rather

This, I think, may provide a clue to Tissaphernes' motives; he never intended to bring the fleet beyond Aspendos, and his course of action had either been suggested by Alkibiades at their meeting earlier in the summer, or had already been determined by events in Egypt. Alkibiades was to be given the means of appearing to do the Athenians a great service by depriving the Peloponnesians of the use of the fleet; the Peloponnesians would be further frustrated and would think that Tissaphernes was now favouring Athens; and the uneasy balance would be preserved until Athens was strong enough to destroy it.

The opposition to the Four Hundred at Athens now began to group itself around some of those who were actually members of the oligarchy, such as Theramenes and Aristokrates, men who wished to modify

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less probably, Tissaphernes decided that he did not want the fleet, but used the Egyptian revolt as a plausible excuse for the Spartans" (p.396). The revolt in Egypt, of which Thucydides was probably unaware since it came to nothing, seems to me the clue to the whole problem; Alkibiades, of course, would see no reason to mention it.

rather than abandon the oligarchy. These feared the forces in Samos and mistrusted the delegates who had been sent to Sparta; they had a well-founded fear of Alkibiades and felt that the oligarchy would not last. When it fell, Thucydides says, they wished, as much because of ambition as of fear, to be identified as leaders of the popular opposition.[29]

The extremists among the oligarchs were aware of the increasing disaffection and sent another delegation to Sparta to make peace on virtually any terms. They were determined to keep power whatever the cost.[30]

Matters came to a head with the assassination of Phrynichos, now, with the zeal customary to a convert, the most extreme of the oligarchs; at the same time the Peloponnesian fleet occupied Aigina. There was panic both at Peiraieus and in Athens, since the true state of affairs was not known, and the soldiers at Peiraieus put their general under arrest; Theramenes went down to talk with them with the permission of the Four Hundred.[31]

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29. Thucydides, VIII, 89.

30. Thucydides, VIII, 90-92,1.

31. Thucydides, VIII, 92, 2-8.

When he arrived the panic had subsided; Theramenes placated the soldiers, secured the release of their general and evidently promised that the names of the Five Thousand would be published; the soldiers were unaware that this body was merely a pretext for Theramenes and his friends.[32]

The next day the soldiers from Peiraieus marched up to Athens; representatives of the Four Hundred met them and promised to publish the names of the Five Thousand. The soldiers agreed to dismiss and a day was set for an assembly at which all their differences would be resolved.

When this assembly met news came that the Peloponnesian fleet was cruising near Peiraieus. The assembly broke up and they all rushed down to Peiraieus to man the walls. However, the enemy fleet sailed on round Attica to attack Euboia. A hastily-prepared fleet was sent after them, but this met with a severe defeat. As a result Euboia revolted and joined the Peloponnesians, a disaster that the Athenians regarded in as desperate a light as that in Sicily. Again there was panic in the city, and the enemy fleet was

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32. Thucydides, VIII, 92, 9-11.

momentarily expected in the now virtually undefended harbour of Peiraieus. Fortunately for Athens, Spartan caution prevailed; the victory in Euboia was not followed up.[33]

The Athenians met again in assembly and deposed the Four Hundred in favour of a body of Five Thousand, and a new constitution was drafted at subsequent meetings. Among other measures the recall of Alkibiades and other exiles was voted, and it seems likely that his strategia was confirmed; an appeal was sent to him and to the forces in Samos urging them to take their full part in the war. The extreme oligarchs left the city at once and went to Dekeleia; another group went to Oinoe and handed it over to the enemy.[34]

In the Aegean, meanwhile, the Peloponnesians had become completely disillusioned about Tissaphernes; Mindaros and his fleet left Miletos to join Pharnabazos in the Hellespont. Thrasylos followed with an Athenian fleet, joined on the way by Thrasyboulos with reinforcements. The Peloponnesians sailed as far as Abydos on

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33. Thucydides, VIII, 93-96.

34. Thucydides, VIII, 97-98. Aristotle, Ath.Pol., 33.

the Hellespont and the Athenian fleet followed.[35]

Both sides were eager for a battle and after a few days met not far from Abydos. The Peloponnesians were routed and put to flight. Although losses on both sides were slight and about equal, the victory had a great effect on Athenian morale, and the Athenians at home, despite the disaster in Euboia, were heartened and recovered their confidence in final victory.[36]

Alkibiades seems to have sent messages to the fleet a few days later with the news that he had persuaded Tissaphernes not to bring up the Phoenician fleet to join the Peloponnesians and that the Persian was better disposed towards Athens than he had been before. He had also increased the size of his squadron to twenty-two and had fortified the island of Kos after

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35. Thucydides, VIII, 99-103.

36. Thucydides, VIII, 104-106; Diodoros (XIII, 40,4-41,4), misunderstanding the tactics of the battle, is fuller and more circumstantial but less credible. Plutarch (Alkibiades, 27, 2-3) evidently confuses this battle with the later engagement at Abydos and gives Alkibiades the main rôle. It is evident from both Thucydides and Diodoros that Alkibiades was not there at all.

forcing the people of Halikarnassos to contribute funds. He had then appointed a governor for Kos and, since it was now the end of summer, sailed back to Samos.[37]

The Athenians now controlled the channel of the Hellespont; they refitted their ships hurriedly after the battle and sailed on to Kyzikos, which they recaptured along with some Byzantine ships; the people of Kyzikos were fined for their attempt at revolt.[38]

Not long after this battle and the arrival of Athenian reinforcements there was a second battle, in which the Peloponnesians were victorious; they do not seem to have gained any advantage.[39] Mindaros now sent orders for the Peloponnesian fleet in Euboia to join him in the Hellespont; however, this fleet was caught in a storm off Athos and completely destroyed.[40] Another Peloponnesian fleet, coming up from Rhodes, was attacked and forced onto the shore of the Troad; because enemy troops came up to help, the Athenians

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37. Thucydides, VIII, 108, 1-2.

38. Thucydides, VIII, 107.

39. Xenophon, Hell., I, 1,1.

40. Diodoros, XIII, 41, 1-3.

were unable to capture these ships and sailed away. Mindaros put out from Abydos to give assistance and the Athenians returned. A battle followed and lasted throughout the day. The turning-point was the arrival of Alkibiades with eighteen ships, which Plutarch ascribes to an earlier battle.[41] Diodoros implies that Alkibiades just happened to be passing by when the battle took place; however, the Athenians were aware that the fleet from Rhodes was on the way and had probably sent word to him. At first the Peloponnesians thought his squadron was friendly: when he was close at hand he ran up a purple flag, which had been agreed upon as a mark of identification among the Athenians. He attacked and the Peloponnesians fled towards land in the midst of a squall and lost thirty ships; the crews were saved by the action of the Persian Pharnabazos, who arrived with a force of cavalry and infantry and kept off the Athenians. After this battle, which took place in the winter of 411/0 B.C., the Athenians split up their fleet, sending a part of it outside the Hellespont to collect money from the various subject states. Thrasylos went back to Athens to report events and ask for more troops and

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41. Alkibiades, 27, 2-3.

ships.[42]

Tissaphernes seems to have been greatly alarmed by the alliance between Pharnabazos and the Peloponnesians; probably he had for some time been disenchanted with Alkibiades, but there is also a report that the Spartans had been carrying tales to the King, perhaps encouraged by his rival Pharnabazos. He came up to the Hellespont and Alkibiades went to meet him. Accounts vary about what actually happened; Xenophon says that Alkibiades took a single trireme bearing gifts of friendship, but Plutarch tells of a retinue befitting a general. Diodoros does not mention this meeting at all. Both Xenophon and Plutarch agree that Tissaphernes arrested Alkibiades and took him as his prisoner to Sardis. According to Xenophon

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42. Xenophon, Hell. I, 1,2-8; Diodoros, XIII, 45-46. See also fragment 58 of the Στρατιῶται of Hermippos (Edmonds, pp. 302-303), a play produced perhaps in 411 or 410 B.C.; this seems to celebrate the return home of the στράτευμα διαπόντιον in whose company "the boy from Abydos has become a man"; this may refer to Alkibiades, the scene of whose youthful dissolution had now become the scene of his glory.

Tissaphernes excused himself on the ground that the King had ordered him to make war on Athens. This was probably the truth; satraps were not quite so independent as the Greek authors imply. Plutarch feels that Tissaphernes was embarrassed by the King's interest in events and wished to make a gesture of support for the Spartans to allay suspicions. This view seems plausible; Alkibiades, after a month of captivity, was able to escape to Klazomenai and, when he was safe and sound, spread the story that the satrap had connived at his escape.[43] If this is so, the satrap wished to demonstrate that he had no personal ill-feelings towards Alkibiades but was obliged to oppose him for political reasons, whereas Alkibiades, seeing no further use to which his friendship with Tissaphernes could be put, had no scruples about making trouble for the satrap, if, by so doing, he could further his own cause. It puts Tissaphernes in an oddly pathetic light.

Why did Alkibiades visit Tissaphernes? We do not know on what terms they had parted in the summer, and Alkibiades may have believed that he could

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43. Xenophon, Hell.,I, 1,9-10; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 27, 4-28,1.

continue to use Tissaphernes. The Athenians were, as usual, short of funds, as the dispersal of their fleet on fund-raising ventures throughout the Aegean demonstrates; Alkibiades may have hoped that Tissaphernes would give money to offset the help Pharnabazos was giving to the Peloponnesians, or he may have felt the need to show the Athenians once more that he had influence among the Persians. Plutarch thinks he was merely anxious to show Tissaphernes how well he was getting on,[44] perhaps with a view to impressing him with his power and that of Athens, perhaps for reasons of personal vanity.

Whatever hopes or illusions Alkibiades may have entertained were destroyed by his arrest. From now on he ceased to dangle the prospect of Persian aid before the Athenians.

After the expulsion of the Four Hundred from Athens in 411 B.C. a new board of generals had been appointed, among them Theramenes; this board had not met with any military success -- in fact, one of its number had been defeated off Euboia just before the second battle of Abydos.[45] The successes of the

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44. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 27,4.

45. Xenophon, Hell., I, 1,1.

generals in the Hellespont, among them Thrasyboulos, Thrasylos and Alkibiades, were a constant reproach to Theramenes and the generals at Athens. Theramenes suffered further embarrassment when he failed to prevent the building of a causeway between Euboia and Boiotia: he was probably glad of the opportunity to leave Athens, ostensibly to collect funds by fining the leaders of such of the allies as had established oligarchies. While he was engaged in this work and laying waste what enemy territory he could in the spring of 410 B.C., he was summoned to the Hellespont by Alkibiades.[46]

The Athenian fleet in the Hellespont had withdrawn to Kardia, because of the imminence of an attack by the Peloponnesians, and was there joined by Alkibiades. When he heard that the enemy had sailed

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46. Diodoros, XIII, 47, 6-8; Hatzfeld (Alcibiade, pp. 266-267) believes that Theramenes' departure took place at the moment of the re-establishment of the democratic regime as soon as the generals for 410/09 B.C., of whom he was one, had been elected; Diodoros' account suggests a slightly later date for his departure and a much later date for the re-establishment of the full democracy.

for Kyzikos, he gave orders for the fleet to follow. They were joined by Theramenes, coming from Makedonia, and by Thrasyboulos, who had been in Thasos. The whole fleet, under Alkibiades' command, now sailed to the Hellespont and sought out the enemy at Kyzikos. On Alkibiades' orders precautions were taken to prevent news of their arrival reaching the enemy and they arrived off Kyzikos under cover of a heavy rainstorm. The rain stopped when they were close to the harbour, and the enemy ships, which had been out on a training cruise, found the Athenians between themselves and their base. Accordingly, the Peloponnesians moved their ships close to the shore in tight formation. Alkibiades, with twenty ships, got behind them and landed; Mindaros was forced to do likewise. A battle followed, and, after considerable fighting, Mindaros was killed; the crews of his ships abandoned their vessels and fled by land, and the Athenians captured the entire fleet of sixty ships, with the exception of the Syracusan ships, which their crews had burned before fleeing.[47]

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47. Xenophon, Hell., I, 11-18. The account of Diodoros, (XIII, 49, 2-51,8), with whom Plutarch (Alkibiades, 28, 3-7) agrees, is fuller and more circumstantial than

On the following day the Athenians sailed to Kyzikos, which the enemy had evacuated. The citizens let them in and they spent three weeks in the city. After extracting a large sum of money from Kyzikos they went on to Perinthos and Selymbria; the former admitted them, the latter gave them money. After this they fortified Chrysopolis in Chalkedonia and established a custom-house there, where duty could be levied on all ships sailing out of the Black Sea. Theramenes and Eumachos

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that of Xenophon; it contains overtones of epic, and may in part be influenced by a desire to build up the Spartan involvement in the battle. We do not know who Diodoros' source is in this instance; his accounts of battles are generally inaccurate and tend to be expanded into set-pieces, often influenced by literary comparisons. In this case the influence may be that of Homer. It should be borne in mind that Alkibiades may have acquired the nickname "Achilles" as a result of his exploits in the Hellespont (see Strattis, Troïlos, frag. 41[Edmonds, pp. 826-827]). Xenophon's account should be accepted in the absence of any other genuinely contemporary version.

were put in charge of this and were given thirty ships.[48]

Pharnabazos gave the Peloponnesians two months' food and clothing for the sailors and set them to act as coastguards. Then he held an assembly of the commanders, gave them money and supplies to build new ships, and departed to Chalkedon to supervise measures for its recovery.[49]

Pharnabazos' assistance was crucial to the Peloponnesians; without it they would have been driven out of the Hellespont and Ionia. Athens, too, was crippled by lack of money and was forced to melt down gold and silver objects from the temples to make coinage. The garrison at Chrysopolis was placed there primarily for financial reasons and frequent raids were made on the coasts of Thrace and Asia Minor to obtain money.

In the summer of 410 B.C. the governments at Athens and Samos were merged and gave way to a fully democratic Athenian government; before this took place, a Spartan embassy, led by Alkibiades' old friend Endios, arrived to make overtures for peace. Any inclination

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48. Xenophon, Hell., I, 1,18-22.

49. Xenophon, Hell., I, 23-26.

that the Athenians might have had to put an end to the war were destroyed by the demagogue Kleophon with a bellicose and patriotic speech to the Assembly. The embassy returned empty-handed to Sparta.[50]

Thrasylos had apparently remained in Athens during 410 B.C.; while he was there Agis made a foray out of Dekeleia and came close up to the walls of the city. Thrasylos, who held the appointment of general under the democracy at Samos but had no official position at Athens, led out the forces of the city and drove off the Spartans. When full democracy was restored he was elected to the strategia and voted a substantial force of men and ships as a result of this

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50. Diodoros, XIII, 2-53,4; see also Androtion, frag.44 (Jacoby) and Philochoros, frags. 139 and 140 (Jacoby). We know from I.G., I^2, 304, that one of the generals for 410/09 B.C. was Pasiphon, of the same tribe as Alkibiades, and Andrewes (J.H.S., LXXIII [1953], p.3) takes this as evidence that the restored democracy had held "fresh elections, cancelling or passing over any appointments the 5000 had made," including Alkibiades. He believes that the extreme democrats were responsible for this.

exploit, and sent off to reinforce Alkibiades in the Hellespont. It is not clear when Agis' foray took place, but Thrasylos' departure was evidently late in 410 B.C. During 409 B.C. he cruised the Aegean and raided the Asiatic coast for booty.[51]

During the winter of 410/09 B.C. ships of the Spartan allies, under a Spartan commander, sailed to the Hellespont and, after a skirmish with the Athenian guardships, made their way to Byzantion.[52]

Early in the summer of 409 B.C. Thrasylos sailed to Samos and thence to Pygela, which he attacked. A relieving force from Miletos was badly cut up by the Athenians, who went on to receive the allegiance of Kolophon and to raid Persian territory in Lydia. Thrasylos then withdrew to prepare an assault on Ephesos. He was beaten off from Ephesos by Tissaphernes, who had rallied the local forces together with their Sicilian allies, and sailed for the Hellespont. On the way he met a Syracusan squadron; four ships were captured and the rest of the Syracusans fled back to Ephesos. Among the captives was an Athenian exile, Alkibiades the son of Axiochos, the cousin of the general. This man Thrasylos put to death. Then he

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51. Xenophon, Hell., I, 1,33-34; 2, 1-2; Diodoros, XIII, 52,1.

52. Xenophon, Hell., I, 1,36.

joined the rest of the fleet at Sestos. As winter came on the entire Athenian force moved to Lampsakos under the command of Alkibiades, and began to fortify it. Because of jealousies between Thrasylos' contingent and the rest Alkibiades found it impossible to weld the force into one unit.[53]

There are two curious features in this account of Thrasylos' expedition: why did he go off on his own to attack the coast of Asia Minor, and why did he have Axiochos' son stoned to death? Possibly the purpose of the expedition was to provide the home government with some success to offset the reputation of Alkibiades. Hatzfeld thinks that Alkibiades condoned it in the hope that its lack of success would prove both to Thrasylos and to the government at home that success in Asia Minor was possible only by the concerted action of all the Athenian forces. Thrasylos, for his part, forced to accept the truth of this after Ephesos, wished to prove his goodwill towards Alkibiades by his severity towards one who had contributed to the confusion of 415/4 B.C., when he had been the instigator of

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53. Xenophon, Hell., I, 2, 1-15: Diodoros, XIII, 64, 1-2.

Diokleides' false accusation.[54]

It is unlikely that Alkibiades was much influenced by the latter consideration; more probably, Thrasylos was merely punishing Axiochos' son for throwing in his lot with the enemy, though the irony of the situation may not have entirely escaped him.

Theramenes had been left behind in Chrysopolis with a force of thirty ships;[55] in 409 B.C. he besieged both Chalkedon and Byzantion, while

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54. Op.cit., p. 279. Andrewes (op.cit., p.4) suggests that Thrasylos' expedition was originally intended for the Hellespont, but was diverted to Ionia, in an effort to dispense with the generals in the Hellespontine area, including Alkibiades (the identification of Alkibiades son of Axiochos with Alkibiades of Phegous is not certain but is very likely). If the home government was in competition with the generals in the Hellespont, the failure of the latter to follow up the victory of Kyzikos by attacking enemy bases in the area is explained; because they were cut off from whatever Athenian funds were available, they were forced to find their own, and so frittered away their advantage.

55. Xenophon, Hell., I, 1,22.

Thrasyboulos was apparently sent to Thrace with thirty ships where he brought over to the Athenians the cities of the coast before rejoining Alkibiades in a foray through the territory held by Pharnabazos; large quantities of booty resulted from this exploit, the proceeds of which, in part, were used to lessen the property-tax imposed at Athens for the prosecution of the war.[56]

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56. Diodoros, XIII, 64, 2-4. There is editorial confusion over Diodoros' account of these events; this is resolved if Diodoros' own carelessness is appreciated. He names Thrasyboulos instead of Thrasylos as commander of the abortive attack on Ephesos in the summer of 409 B.C., and places the establishment of Theramenes in Chrysopolis in the same period. He also gives Theramenes fifty ships in this passage and later increases his force to seventy at the end of 409 B.C. (XIII, 66,1); Xenophon does not mention this increase in the force, nor does he mention Thrasyboulos' foray along the Thracian coast and his subsequent joint attack with Alkibiades on the territories of Pharnabazos. Diodoros' editor, Oldfather (pp. 299, note 4, and 300-301, note 3), adds to the confusion by deciding that all references to

It is difficult, as Hatzfeld remarks,[57] to see why Alkibiades remained so inactive during the period 410 to 408 B.C., almost eighteen months. Why did he not return to Athens after the victory at Kyzikos? There seem to be several answers: Alkibiades felt unsure of his reception at Athens, perhaps because of his earlier involvement with the oligarchs; the treasury, both at Athens and in Samos, was in a desperate condition, as no one knew better than he -- the prestige of the Athenian fleet, and of Alkibiades as the chief architect of its victory, was necessary to extract funds from the allies and fence-sitters in the Aegean; thirdly, despite the victory at Kyzikos the Athenian position in the Hellespont was by no means secure, and the alienation of the Persians made it vital for the Athenian forces in the area to be kept out of action until they could

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Thrasyboulos should be read as references to Thrasylos. It is clear from Xenophon's account that Thrasylos and Thrasyboulos were acting in independent commands, the one along the coast of Asia Minor, the other in Thrace, and that they came together at Lampsakos as winter drew on.

57. Op.cit., p.278.

be built up into an overwhelming force; finally, as I have suggested, the home government appears to have rejected the Hellespontine generals in favour of its own board, and gave them no support, so he was forced to remain inactive while the Peloponnesians recouped their losses. Hatzfeld suggests in the same passage that Alkibiades, uncertain of his eventual reception at Athens, was already preparing for his next move, should the public temper turn against him, by establishing contact with the Thracians and building up his personal finances at the same time as he was restoring the public treasury. This may well be so and is certainly in keeping with Alkibiades' character; moreover, no one knew better than he how fickle was the Athenian demos.

During the winter of 409/8 B.C. Alkibiades made an expedition to Abydos with a joint force drawn from his veterans and those of Thrasylos. Pharnabazos came to the relief of the town and was beaten off with ignominy. As a result the two forces came into harmony one with the other, and Alkibiades had no more trouble with disunity.[58]

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58. Xenophon, Hell., I, 2, 16-17.

Hatzfeld speculates, probably correctly, that the coolness between Alkibiades' veterans and the troops of Thrasylos was inspired by Alkibiades' wish to prove to Thrasylos and to the Athenian government that he, Alkibiades, was the generalissimo in the Hellespont without whose leadership nothing could be accomplished.[59]

More expeditions were made throughout the winter into the interior to lay waste Persian territory, which further exacerbated relations with the Persians, to whom it was now obvious that there was no profit in any alliance with Alkibiades or the Athenians.[60] At the same time Alkibiades evidently tried to detach Persian subjects from their allegiance and to spread the impression that Athens would be clement towards her former allies if they returned. For instance, when some priests and priestesses were captured he let them go without ransom in the hope that they would be kindly disposed towards him in the future and perhaps be able to do him and the Athenians some service.[61]

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59. Op.cit., p.280.

60. Xenophon, Hell., I, 2,17.

61. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 29,3.

At the beginning of 408 B.C. Alkibiades led the whole force in an assault upon Chalkedon and Byzantion. The people of Chalkedon deposited all their movable property with the neighbouring Bithynian Thracians for safekeeping, but Alkibiades, with a force of cavalry and a few hoplites and the support of the fleet, threatened war upon the Bithynians unless they gave up these goods. Accordingly, they surrendered them and made a treaty with the Athenians. The siege of Chalkedon now began.[62]

The first stage of the siege was the building of a wooden stockade across the neck of the promontory upon which Chalkedon stood; the Spartan commander in the city, Hippokrates, led out his troops for battle within this stockade while Pharnabazos and the Persians tried to break through from outside it with infantry and cavalry. Alkibiades brought up the Athenian cavalry to help Thrasylos and his hoplites, and Hippokrates was killed; the remainder of his force fled back into the city while

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62. Xenophon, Hell., I, 3, 1-4; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 29,3.

Pharnabazos withdrew to his camp nearby.[63]

With Chalkedon under siege and its defenders in confusion, Alkibiades went off to the Hellespont and the Chersonese to collect money.[64] This seems to have been his major preoccupation during these months: the government at Athens, hard-pressed in every direction, was in no position to contribute, and the morale of the huge force that he had now assembled in the Hellespont was in constant jeopardy from shortages of money and supplies; until the fleet had an almost overwhelming superiority in numbers it was too much of a risk to tie it up in long and costly military ventures. Instead, it was used in short forays to raise funds and otherwise kept idle. The arrival of Thrasylos' force gave him a sufficiently large force to make a quick victory seem possible, but it also meant additional problems of finance.

Fortunately for Alkibiades, his enemies were in no better position; the Syracusan contingent seems

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63. Xenophon, Hell., I, 3, 4-7; Diodoros, XIII, 66,1-2; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 30,1.

64. Xenophon, Hell., I, 3,8.

to have been withdrawn to meet the Carthaginian threat in Sicily sometime in 408 B.C. -- at any rate, Xenophon ceases to mention it after its defeat in 409 B.C. at Ephesos.[65] At the same time the Spartans were fully occupied in mainland Greece and were acutely embarrassed for funds to prosecute the war in the Aegean, and Pharnabazos, quite apart from the huge expenditure of rebuilding the Peloponnesian fleet and re-equipping its personnel, had suffered as well from the depredations of Alkibiades and his privateers; the King of Persia, now beginning to be personally involved in the struggle, was probably also short of funds as a result of the recent rebellion of the Medes.[66]

Alkibiades now made an assault on Selymbria, a city on the north shore of the Propontis, where the need for haste caused him to take risks that Plutarch thinks unwarrantable; a group within the city offered to betray it at night, but gave the signal for the Athenians to enter the city before all was ready. As a result Alkibiades with about thirty men rushed in, leaving orders for the rest of the army to follow. With magnificent aplomb he ordered a trumpeter to blow

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65. Xenophon, Hell., I, 2, 12.

66. Xenophon, Hell., I, 2,19.

the signal for silence, then had a formal proclamation made that Selymbria must not take up arms against Athens. The bluff worked: some of the Selymbrians were convinced that a far larger force was already inside the city and lost heart; some began to hope for a peaceful settlement. While the talk was going on the main Athenian force entered and consolidated the fait accompli. Alkibiades won the goodwill of the inhabitants by sending away his Thracian irregulars, who seem to have been his personal troops, thus saving the city from plundering. Then he extracted an indemnity from the citizens, placed a garrison in the city and sailed away.[67]

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67. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 30, 2-5; in Diodoros (XIII, 66, 4) the capture of Selymbria is placed after the fall of Chalkedon. It seems clear, however, that negotiations for the surrender of Chalkedon had not begun when Alkibiades sailed off to Selymbria, though they were concluded by Theramenes while he was still absent. Diodoros mentions also that, in addition to the Thracian irregulars, Alkibiades had also taken into his army the inhabitants of the Chersonese πανδημεί . Diodoros omits all detail of the capture of Selymbria, except the fact that it was betrayed; Plutarch's story may be the result of romantic speculation; we do not know its source. Xenophon

While Alkibiades was away Theramenes and Pharnabazos began negotiations for the surrender of Chalkedon; it may be that Pharnabazos was the instigator of this move -- or else Alkibiades set things in motion and then judged it wise to be absent while the negotiations were in progress. However, the former course seems more likely from Xenophon's account; Pharnabazos was reluctant to enter any arrangement to which Alkibiades was not a party. The agreement as it then stood involved payment to the Athenians of twenty talents, and safe conduct for Athenian ambassadors to the court of the Persian King in exchange for the sparing of Pharnabazos' territories and of Chalkedon until these ambassadors returned. In addition Pharnabazos swore that the Chalkedonians would resume the payment of their accustomed tribute to the Athenians and would pay the arrears as well.

Alkibiades returned from Selymbria with a large force, and demanded, when Pharnabazos requested his oath and signature on the agreement, that

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(Hell., I, 3, 10) merely remarks that Alkibiades captured Selymbria, while the negotiations with Pharnabazos were being concluded.

Pharnabazos should take a similar oath. This was done by each in the presence of the accredited representatives of the other, and personal tokens were exchanged; then Pharnabazos went away, leaving word for the Athenian ambassadors to the King to meet him at Kyzikos. The Athenians found embarrassing company, an embassy of Spartans and Syracusans, but had no alternative but to go on.[68]

Alkibiades now laid siege to Byzantion, which was held by a Peloponnesian garrison commanded by a Spartan, Klearchos. Klearchos' rule was harsh and unpopular with the Byzantines; a plot was laid to betray the city to the Athenians while Klearchos was absent on a visit to Pharnabazos. The plot entailed the departure of the Athenian fleet, apparently to quell a disturbance in Ionia. Alkibiades returned during the night and disembarked secretly with his infantry close to the city walls, while the fleet sailed into the harbour and induced panic among the enemy. The traitors within opened their city's gates and Alkibiades and his force entered. The naval attack was beaten off and there was a fierce battle between the Peloponnesians and Alkibiades' troops before the latter prevailed with the aid of

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68. Xenophon, Hell., I, 3,8-13; Plutarch, Alkibiades,31,1-2.

Theramenes' troops. The city was captured and the Peloponnesian prisoners were shipped off to Athens; no punishment was enforced against the city, which was made an ally of Athens. It was now winter, 408/7 B.C.[69]

The way was open for Alkibiades' return to Athens; early in the spring of 407 B.C. the whole fleet began to move towards the mainland and Athens.

The spring elections at Athens seemed to have been delayed in 407 B.C.; at any rate, Alkibiades sailed from the Hellespont without having heard the results. He first put in at Samos, them, with a part of his force, sailed to the coast of Karia, where he extracted one hundred talents from the coast towns, while Thrasyboulos with another squadron sailed along the Thracian coast winning back those states, especially Thasos, that had revolted. The rest of the fleet, with Thrasylos in command, sailed directly to Athens, where they received news of Alkibiades' election to the strategia. His hesitations suggest that he had not

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69. Xenophon, Hell., I, 3, 14-22; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 31, 2-6. Diodoros, XIII, 66, 5-67,7.

been elected general at Athens in 408/7 B.C.[70]

When Alkibiades returned from Karia the elections had still not been held, and he went first of all to Paros and thence to Gytheion, where the Spartans were said to be building a fleet. He must have been in constant touch with his friends in Athens, and it was here that news of his election reached him. He also received the assurances of popular support for which he had been waiting, and this decided him to return late in May or early in June of 407 B.C. On the day of the festival of the Plynteria he sailed into the harbour of Peiraieus with his squadron, the ships dressed overall, the crews in their best equipment, towing the ships captured from the enemy and displaying the beaks of the ships they had sunk, proof of more than two hundred triremes captured or destroyed since Alkibiades' return to Samos.[71]

The wheel had turned full circle; Alkibiades was once more supreme in the city as he had seemed to be in 415 B.C. And yet, as on the previous occasion, his enemies waited in the shadows to bring him down.

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70. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4,8-11; see Andrewes, op.cit.,p.3.

71. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4-8-12; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 32,1; Diodoros, XIII, 68, 1-3.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LAST YEARS

The scene in May, 407 B.C., as Alkibiades sailed into the harbour of Peiraieus was one well-suited to his taste for drama: the crowd thronging the quayside, slaves jostling with free men and foreigners, was so large that Athens seemed deserted; after the rest of the fleet had entered the harbour, Alkibiades did not immediately follow it and disembark, but stood upon his quarter-deck trying to gauge the temper of the crowd. Douris of Samos, who claimed to be a descendant of Alkibiades, related that when his ship entered harbour it was fitted with a purple sail, that Chrysogonos, the Pythian victor, played the flute, and that Kallipides, the tragic actor, uttered the rhythmic cry to which the oarsmen kept time; both artists wore the long tunics and flowing robes of their calling. It is a charming picture, but Douris has no support from other authors; as Plutarch remarks, if historians contemporaneous with Alkibiades himself do not mention these details, we should not place much faith in the later writings of Douris. Besides, Alkibiades would hardly exhibit such ostentation on his return from a long exile to a city of whose temper

he was still not sure. Both Xenophon and Plutarch mention his reluctance to leave his ship until he had recognised his friends and relatives in the crowd at the quayside.[1]

Xenophon summarises the various emotions that the name of Alkibiades aroused in the minds of the Athenians; some looked upon him as a man unjustly banished and denied the right to trial for the offences of which he had been accused, who had been forced by circumstances to act as he had acted, but who had all the time had the real interests of Athens at heart. Others blamed him for all the past ills of the state and for those yet to come;[2] by 407 B.C. the latter were in the minority.

The comic playwrights were probably quick to portray Alkibiades' return; we possess a number of fragments and titles of plays of uncertain date that deal with the return of Odysseus, paralleling that of Alkibiades. Alkibiades, under the guise of Odysseus, may be the subject of these plays, which would thus

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1. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4, 13; 18-19; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 32, 2-3 (quoting as his sources Xenophon, Ephoros, Theopompos and Douris); Diodoros, XIII, 68,3.
2. Hell., I, 4, 13-18.

be dated to about 407/6 B.C.[3]

After disembarking he went up to Athens, surrounded by his friends, who were armed and ready to defend him if he were attacked; he appeared before the Boule and the Assembly and defended his conduct in the past years on the ground that he had been unjustly accused. Lysias, in a speech made in 395 B.C., does not specifically charge Alkibiades with the mutilation or the parody, preferring to associate him

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3. Theopompos, Odysseus (Edmonds, pp. 860-863); Penelope (Edmonds, pp. 866-867); Sirens (Edmonds, pp. 866-867); Polyzelos, Niptra (Edmonds, pp. 878-879; this may be a parody of Sophokles' play of the same name, which was alternatively entitled Odysseus and the Thorn Bush); Sophokles' Philoktetes, produced in 409 B.C., is thought by many to refer to Alkibiades' exile and recall, and Jameson (Class.Phil., LI [1956], pp.217-227) concludes that Alkibiades may be represented, not by Philoktetes or Neoptolemos, but by Odysseus in this play; Philyllios, Helen and Nausikaa (Edmonds, pp. 900-901; the former play may date to the time of Alkibiades' sojourn in Sparta, ca.413 B.C., as may Sophokles' Ixion).

with the perpetrators rather than accuse him outright;[4] it thus seems likely that Alkibiades was able to clear himself completely of these charges in 407 B.C.

As a result of his speech to the Assembly the stele upon which his conviction was inscribed was solemnly cast into the sea, and he was fully reinstated.[5] This is not entirely surprising; the assembly was filled with his partisans and dissenting voices were not tolerated. Another result was that he was appointed commander-in-chief with absolute powers.

Other writers add a little detail; the Assembly not only made him commander-in-chief but revoked the previous decrees that had taken away his property and also ordered the Eumolpidai and the Kerykes to revoke the curses put upon him after the affair of the Mysteries and the mutilation of the Hermai. Theodoros, the Hierophant, demurred, saying that his curse would be effective only if Alkibiades did harm to the city.[6]

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4. 14,41.

5. Diodoros, XIII, 69; Nepos, Alcibiades, 6,5.

6. Isokrates, 16,46; Diodoros, XIII, 69; Nepos, Alcibiades, 7,1; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 33, 2-3.

Between his appointment as commander-in-chief and the celebration of the Mysteries, some months passed. In this time he used the powers conferred upon him to raise a force of cavalry, one hundred ships and fifteen hundred hoplites, for service against the island of Andros, which was in revolt.[7] We know that he was involved in the political and religious life of the city, for we possess decrees of this year of which he was the proposer. One confirms and amends the treaty that he made after the capture of Selymbria in 408 B.C., giving the Athenian proxeny to two men, presumably those who opened the gates and let in the Athenian troops during the siege.[8] Another ratifies a treaty made by the popular Assembly in Samos with the Klazomenians who held Daphnous; this treaty had brought that city back into the Empire.[9] The wording of both these decrees indicates that the Assembly and Boule were operating normally at this time. Another decree is preserved for us in Athenaios.[10] This was

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7. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4,21.

8. I.G., I^2, 116.

9. I.G.,I^2,117 (I.G.,II^2, 99, which may be part of I.G.,I^2,117, contains the name Ἀλκι[βιάδης] as the proposer).

10. VI, 234E; see Chapter Three, notes 5 and 6, above.

moved by Alkibiades and regulated the cult of Herakles at Kynosarges outside the walls of Athens.[11]

Shortly before his departure from the city, in the autumn of 407 B.C., Alkibiades enabled the Mysteries to be celebrated in full, ordering the army to guard the route while the initiates, led by himself, marched down to Eleusis in the company of the same Eumolpidai and Kerykes who had been so reluctant to revoke their curses against him a few months previously. This was the first occasion since 413 B.C. on which the procession had been able to go by land; everything went without a hitch; the Spartans made no move and Alkibiades must have felt that his rehabilitation was complete.[12] Even the sour note that had been struck at his return, when Athena herself seemed to the superstitious to be avoiding the sight of him because her statues were all veiled for the festival of the Plynteria,[13] was forgotten: Alkibiades was

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11. See Hatzfeld, Alcibiade, p. 301: he suggests that the rites of this cult had been in abeyance because of the presence of the Spartans in Dekeleia.

12. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4, 20-21.

13. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 34, 1-2.

plainly shown to be one who favoured and was favoured by the gods.

He apparently delayed his departure for Andros in order to take part in the Mysteries. The propaganda-value of the celebration, both to Alkibiades personally and to the city, was vast; the Spartans in Dekeleia would be humbled if they made no attempt to interfere, and would be committing a great sacrilege if they did interfere. Alkibiades himself was greatly exalted in the eyes of the army and the people, who came to think that they would be invincible with him as their leader. Some hailed him as Mystagogue and Hierophant, and among the poorest classes there was talk of setting him up as a tyrant.[14]

The celebration of the full rite was also a sign that Athens had returned to something like normal; it is possible that Alkibiades viewed the matter in another more mystical light: the dark days of his exile and Athens' disgrace were themselves paralleled by the darkness and confusion that seem to have formed the first part of the ceremony of the Mysteries. Alkibiades' triumphant return, Athens' present glory and, above all, the panoply of the fully-restored rites were the

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14. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 34, 5-6.

counterpart of the blaze of torchlight that revealed the culmination of the Mysteries. Such high drama is in keeping with Alkibiades' own tastes, and it is to be wondered whether his hesitation to return to Athens during the winter of 408/7 B.C. was prompted partly by a desire to be there at the time when the Mysteries were celebrated; he was aware that he would not be able to remain in the city very long before there were demands that he go out and justify the trust that was placed in him.

It cannot be judged whether he gave any thought to establishing a tyranny. The prospect had a certain short-term charm, but he was surely too experienced in the whims of the demos to entertain the idea for long; any attempt to establish a tyranny would have alienated the men of the fleet, whose enthusiasm for Alkibiades was equalled only by their support for democracy. (It is to be recalled that he was also suspected in 415 B.C. of intending to make himself a tyrant.)

It is clear that an influential body of citizens firmly opposing the idea of a tyranny and fearing that Alkibiades might attempt a coup, wished to rid the city of his presence as soon as possible.

Thus it was in their interests to give him all the military power he wanted and send him away with it. He was allowed to pick his own colleagues for the expedition to Andros, and chose Adeimantos and Aristokrates.[15] These men were already members of the board of generals, chosen for service on land, but now were attached to the fleet.[16] So independent was the command given to Alkibiades that no accounts were demanded of him for the moneys he employed; later he was accused of embezzling more than two hundred talents.[17] The people who wished to send him away from the city may have arranged that he be given this financial freedom so that they could later bring a charge against him; in the absence of any accounts he would have found it very difficult to defend himself.

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15. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4,21; Plutarch, Alkibiades,35,1; Adeimantos was a member of Alkibiades' own tribe, but the latter had been appointed ἁπάντων ἡγεμὼν αὐτοκράτωρ (Xenophon, Hell., I, 4,20). Thus eleven generals were initially appointed for 407/6 B.C.

16. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4, 21-23.

17. Lysias, 14, 37-38.

The comic poets continued to be active; we have fragments of a play by Aristophanes poking fun at a lecherous man-about-town who may be Alkibiades;[18] we also possess a fragment of Theopompos, in which one character is named Euarchidas: Edmonds thinks this person is Alkibiades returned from abroad with a Spartan accent. The play deals with Spartan overtures for peace in 407 B.C.[19]

The expedition to Andros must be regarded as a failure: a "victory" was won over the Andrians, but the expedition failed to capture the city.

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18. Τριφάλης (Edmonds, pp. 718-723). Edmonds thinks that fragments 549-551 date the play to 410 B.C., since they mention Theramenes and Aristarchos and the end of the rule of the Four Hundred. There is a reference also (fragment 546) to Persian dress, perhaps made by Alkibiades himself. However, if Alkibiades is Triphales, I feel it more likely that the play was performed when he was in Athens or soon after his second departure, in 407 or 406 B.C., when his love-affairs would be fresh in men's minds.

19. Peace [?], frags. 5A,B,E (Edmonds, pp.952-953).

Alkibiades, realising that a siege would be long and costly, erected a trophy and departed leaving a small force on the island,[20] perhaps sending a confident announcement to Athens before news of the real state of affairs reached the city. He must have realised how vitally important it was that nothing should disturb the confidence of the Athenian demos. Not only did his own career hang in the balance; the Athenian war-chest was as depleted as ever and more means of filling it had to be found quickly before the whole enterprise ground to a halt for lack of funds.

The Spartans had now appointed Lysandros to be their admiral in the Aegean; soon after his arrival in Ephesos he visted Kyros, the younger son of the Persian King, who had been appointed viceroy for Lydia, Phrygia and Kappadokia. Kyros' appointment marked a new development: the King himself was beginning to take a hand in affairs, instead of relying upon his satraps, Tissaphernes and Pharnabazos. The Athenians were at first unaware of the arrival of Kyros, since their envoys, who had gone with Pharnabazos to Gordion, were being held there incommunicado in order to prevent

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20. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4,22-23.

the news of Kyros' arrival leaking out. The Spartans were under no such disability.[21]

Lysandros revealed to Kyros all that Tissaphernes had done to harm the Peloponnesians and sought his aid. Kyros promised to help with all the resources at his command and, on Lysandros' advice, agreed to pay the sailors at a higher rate than was paid to the men of the Athenian fleet; it was hoped that there would be desertions from the Athenian navy because of this differential in pay. Tissaphernes was rebuffed when he appealed to Kyros to revoke this arrangement on behalf of the Athenians.[22]

Time was running out for Alkibiades; during the winter of 407/6 B.C. the Peloponnesians, well-paid by Kyros, were able to keep their ships out of the water at Ephesos,[23] while the Athenians scattered in search of booty with which to provide funds.[24] Kos and Rhodes were ravaged for this purpose.[25] Plutarch adds

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21. Xenophon, Hell., I, 4, 1-7; 5,1.

22. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5, 2-9.

23. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5, 10.

24. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35,3.

25. Diodoros, XIII, 69,5.

that Lysandros' actions brought about, as had been hoped, desertions in the Athenian fleet;[26] indiscipline was increasing: in Aristophanes' Frogs the sailors are said "to dispute with the captains...now they argue and the ship swings this way and that with no steerage-way";[27] admittedly, this was written in 405 B.C. and may not be relevant to conditions in 406 B.C.

Alkibiades was constantly on the move: he made another voyage to Karia to raise funds, leaving his deputy Antiochos in charge,[28] though the latter had no official position: evidently he was disenchanted with Adeimantos and Aristokrates, or else they were busy elsewhere. After this he returned to Notion, where he wished to concentrate his forces against Lysandros and the Peloponnesians in Ephesos. The enemy had been reinforced by levies from Rhodes and Chios and now disposed a fleet approximately equal in size to that of the Athenians. Early in 406 B.C. Alkibiades departed again, leaving the fleet under Antiochos' command, with strict instructions that no battle was to be risked until he returned. Sailing north, he joined Thrasyboulos

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26. Lysandros, 4.

27. 1072, 1076.

28. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35,4.

and the squadron from the Hellespont in the siege of Phokaia.[29]

While Alkibiades was absent his deputy chafed at the restraints put upon him: Antichos was a former ship's pilot, who had been Alkibiades' boon companion since 426 B.C.[30] He had none of Alkibiades' strategic flair and was bold beyond measure. The inactivity of the Peloponnesian fleet irked him and he tried to provoke them by sailing into the harbour of Ephesos with two ships and trading insults.[31] Lysandros put out with a few ships

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29. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5, 11; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35, 4-5; Lysandros, 5,1; Diodoros (XIII, 71,1) says that he sailed not to Phokaia but to Klazomenai, to aid that city against its exiles who were besieging it. He may be confusing events in 406 with an earlier siege in 412 B.C., when a settlement was made allowing the exiles from Klazomenai to live in Daphnous and become allies of Athens (see I.G.,I,^{2}, 117 and note 9 above).

30. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 10,1.

31. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5,12; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35,5; Lysandros, 5,1. In Diodoros, XIII, 71,3, Antiochos is said to have taken ten ships.

and gave chase, sinking Antiochos' vessel and killing him.[32] The rest of the Athenian fleet came to the rescue in confused fashion, and Lysandros called out his whole fleet. In the battle that followed the Athenians lost several ships and fled to Samos.[33]

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32. Diodoros, XIII, 71,3.

33. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5,13-14; Diodoros, XIII, 71,4; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35,6; Lysandros, 5,2. The inconsistencies between the versions of Xenophon and Plutarch on the one hand and Diodoros on the other are several: Diodoros gives a figure of ten ships that accompanied Antiochos, has a fuller and more circumstantial account of the battle, and gives twenty-two as the total of ships lost; Xenophon starts the battle with two ships, has a briefer account of the battle itself, and gives the total loss as fifteen ships. His version shows a complete lack of any plan in Antiochos' action, which appears a mere act of bravado, whereas in Diodoros Antiochos had at least a vague plan. Hatzfeld (op.cit.,p.312, note 5) suggests, I think correctly, that Diodoros' version is based on an official report issued by the Boule after an enquiry, whereas Xenophon takes Alkibiades' own report published immediately after the battle, which would naturally play down the losses. He is right also to reject the possibility that Xenophon's version is drawn from a Spartan source.

Before Alkibiades could return Lysandros had set up a trophy at Notion and returned to Ephesos. There he stayed, despite Alkibiades' efforts to tempt him out again, and eventually the latter drew off his ships and sailed off to Samos,[34] where he resumed his privateering expeditions in search of funds, attacking Kyme on a trumped-up pretext; he sustained an embarrassing defeat here and was unable to capture the city. Finally he sailed off to Mytilene, while Kyme sent an indignant protest to the government in Athens.[35]

Alkibiades' lack of success had already encouraged his enemies to attack him; the defeat at Notion gave them the opportunity they needed. The appointment of Antiochos over the heads of Adeimantos and Aristokrates aroused resentment in the fleet; Hatzfeld suggests that desertions and indiscipline among the sailors had made Alkibiades doubt the ability of his subordinates.[36]

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34. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5,15; Diodoros, XIII, 71,4; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35,6.

35. Diodoros, XIII, 73, 3-5.

36. Op.cit., p.311.

One of those in the camp at Notion who hated Alkibiades was Thrasyboulos, the son of Thason; this man, who was no relation of the general Thrasyboulos, sailed at once to Athens with news of the defeat and spread rumours about the city of Alkibiades' neglect of duty and dissolute behaviour. He said, for example, that Alkibiades had handed over his duties to boon companions whose only qualifications were a taste for heavy drinking and tall stories, while he himself sailed off to collect money and enjoy the ladies of Abydos and Ionia. He was also accused of fortifying Bisanthe in Thrace to serve as a refuge in case he was unable to return to Athens.[37]

Why this Thrasyboulos was so hostile to Alkibiades is not known, but it is probable that he was an agent of Alkibiades' enemies at Athens and had been placed with the fleet in order to retail any information that might do harm to Alkibiades. When the elections were held in the spring of 406 B.C. a new board of generals was chosen, headed by Konon and excluding Adeimantos, Thrasyboulos and Alkibiades.

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37. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36, 1-3.

A special decree authorized Konon to replace Alkibiades as commander-in-chief at once instead of at midsummer as was the usual practice.[38]

Apart from the accusations of Thrasyboulos son of Thason, Alkibiades was accused by others of his enemies in Samos of favouring the Spartans and carrying on secret negotiations with Pharnabazos, in order to gain the latter's help in setting up a tyranny in Athens after the war was over.[39] The delegation from Kyme arrived and complained about the unprovoked attack made upon their city by Alkibiades.[40]

The general unpopularity of Alkibiades at this time encouraged other attacks upon him; various law-suits were filed, including probably that of Diomedes in the matter of the four-horse chariot team that Alkibiades was alleged to have stolen from him at the time of the Olympic Games in 416 B.C. This involved the sum of eight talents.[41] It seems to be the same case as that lodged by Teisias against

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38. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5, 16-18.

39. Diodoros, XIII, 73,6.

40. Diodoros, XIII, 73,6.

41. Diodoros, XIII, 74,3.

Alkibiades' son in 397 B.C. in which Isokrates prepared the defence.[42]

Deciding that the opposition to him at Athens was too strong to be faced, Alkibiades sailed off with one ship to Paktye in Thrace, before his successor arrived; this place was near Bisanthe, where he had been accused of acquiring a fort for himself in 408 B.C. His withdrawal lent credence to the accusation.[43]

Why did all this opposition to Alkibiades arise and why was it so successful? The answer seems to lie in his own character and circumstances. He had returned to Athens loaded down with glory; the demos, dazzled by this and believing his assurance of further victories, had not bothered to enquire into the means: the name of Alkibiades was enough. When he failed to achieve instant success or failed in anything he attempted, he was suspected of treachery: men refused to believe him incapable of anything that

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42. Isokrates, 16; [Andokides], 4,26; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 13 (see Chapter Four, note 39 above).
43. Xenophon, Hell., I, 5,18; Diodoros, XIII, 74,2; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36,2.

he desired. No account was taken of the need for money;[44] in this, as in all other matters, Alkibiades was assumed to be superhumanly self-sufficient.

It is said that Thrasyboulos, the informer whose accusations led to Alkibiades' replacement as commander, was a democrat and the tool of Kleophon; Kleophon is believed to have brought an accusation against Alkibiades at this time.[45] The board of generals elected in 406 B.C. was made up of political nondescripts, such as Konon, who was to become prominent a decade later, or of strong democrats such as Thrasylos. Alkibiades' partisans were kept out and some of his oligarchic friends, such as Kritias, who had been the mover of the decree for his recall in 411 B.C.,[46] may actually have been exiled. At any rate they stayed out of the city for the present.[47]

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44. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 35, 2-3.

45. Himerios, XXXVI, 16, in Photios, Bibl. 377, 18-19; quoted by Swoboda, P.W.R.E., XI (1922), s.v. Kleophon, 793,58.

46. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 33,1.

47. Xenophon, Hell., II, 3,36. Kritias was in Thessaly in 406 B.C.; according to Aristotle (Rhet., I, 1375B, 30) he was accused by Kleophon.

It was thus mainly the democratic faction that brought about Alkibiades' second exile. Kallias, his brother-in-law and long his bitter enemy, was eponymous archon in 406/5 B.C. and may be expected to have taken an active part in the opposition to Alkibiades; the priestly families probably still resented being forced to reinstate him and may have worked against him as well. The vehemence of the attacks that the Thirty made on his name in 404 B.C. suggest that the extreme oligarchs also opposed him in 406 B.C.

Undoubtedly Alkibiades had given consideration to the possibility of a reverse and had made plans accordingly. When he was campaigning in Thrace in 408 B.C. he had obtained Thracian mercenaries for his campaigns and had been on very friendly terms with the King of Thrace and his deputies;[48] he probably obtained Bisanthe at this time. Lysias mentions Ornoi, also in the Thracian Chersonese, as belonging to Alkibiades,[49] and Nepos says that he landed at Paktye after his departure from Samos and had three forts nearby, Bisanthe, Ornoi and Neon-Teichos.[50] Xenophon

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48. Xenophon, Hell., I, 3,10; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 30, 4-5.

49. 14, 26.

50. Alcibiades, 7,4.

merely mentions " a fort in the Chersonese".[51] That Bisanthe itself, a sizable town that was assessed in 425/4, 421/0 and 410/09 B.C. as a tributary of the Athenian empire,[52] actually belonged to Alkibiades is unlikely; however, Plutarch does not say "at Bisanthe" but "in the neighbourhood of Bisanthe".[53] Diodoros mentions his landing at Paktye and implies that his fort was there,[54] but this is some fifteen miles from Aigospotamoi, surely too far away for the anchorage at Aigospotamoi to be clearly visible from Alkibiades' fort. Perhaps Paktye was merely a staging-post for him.

Did Alkibiades intend to build himself a kingdom in Thrace? He had the example of Miltiades, who about 516 B.C. had founded a small kingdom in the Chersonese;[55] perhaps the disintegration of the Thracian empire at the time of the death of Seuthes I gave him

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51. Hell., I,5,17; II, 1,25.

52. See A.T.L., I, p.247, under A9, A10 and A13.

53. Alkibiades, 36,2: περὶ Βισάνθην.

54. XIII, 74,2; for the closeness of Bisanthe to Aigospotamoi see Xenophon, Hell., II, 1,25: κατιδὼν ἐκ τῶν τειχῶν τοὺς μὲν Ἀθηναίους.

55. Herodotos, VI, 34-41.

the idea.[56] He had his forts, access to the Thracian mercenaries and, if the charge of Lysias that he had embezzled two hundred talents is anywhere near correct,[57] he had ample funds.

The influence he had with the Thracians, and the prestige he had gained during his operations from 411 to 407 B.C. may have encouraged him but for the moment the problem was to extend his bases and build up his prestige as their leader. He obtained mercenaries and employed these "to wage a war on his own account against those Thracians who acknowledge no king",[58] that is, presumably those who objected to the pretensions of Seuthes II and his co-adjutor Medokos. Probably he was acting on behalf of Seuthes and Medokos, since he later claimed them as his friends;[59] his aim must have been

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56. The date is uncertain; we know from Xenophon, Anabasis, VII, 2, 32-34, that Seuthes I had died several years before Xenophon's arrival in Thrace in 399 B.C. and before his death had been in exile for a while.

57. 14, 37.

58. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36,3.

59. Diodoros, XIII, 105,3.

to obtain formal recognition of his position from them. He was able to collect much money from his prisoners, and to protect, no doubt for a price, the Greek cities in the area from barbarian incursions.[60]

No formal sentence of exile seems to have been passed against him until 404 B.C., so that his exile was self-imposed; as Lysias says, he refused to return to present the accounts of his strategia. He no doubt feared the present temper of the Athenians but expected that his friends, who were active on his behalf, would be able to change the climate of opinion in his favour. In this hope he was disappointed.[61]

While Alkibiades was thus campaigning in Thrace, awaiting his recall to Athens, the Athenian fleet, under its new commander, Konon, was, despite two defeats in the summer of 406 B.C., gradually put into shape.[62] In the autumn of that year, a heavy defeat was inflicted upon the Peloponnesian fleet at Arginousai. After the battle stormy weather prevented the rescue of the crews of the sunken ships, and they

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60. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36,3.

61. 14,38.

62. Xenophon, Hell., I,5,20; 6, 17 and 23; Diodoros, XIII, 77,1; 78, 3-4.

were left to drown.[63] For this six generals were tried and executed; the rest fled to escape trial.[64] Among the new appointees to the board of generals after Arginousai was Alkibiades' friend, Adeimantos.[65]

Theramenes, Thrasyboulos and Thrasylos were all involved in the affair at Arginousai: the former two should have been the first accused since they had been detailed as trierarchs to pick up the crews of the sunken ships.[66] However, Theramenes, with his usual adroitness, brought in an accusation against the generals when his own rôle was questioned and so survived along with his colleague, Thrasyboulos.[67] Thrasylos, one of the generals accused, was not so lucky. Hatzfeld is probably right in thinking that Alkibiades' partisans, if they were faced with a choice between

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63. Xenophon, Hell., I, 6,33-35; Diodoros, XIII, 99-100,4.

64. Xenophon, Hell., I, 7,34; Lysias, 12,36; Diodoros, XIII, 101-102.

65. Xenophon, Hell., I, 7,1.

66. Xenophon, Hell., I, 6, 35.

67. Xenophon, Hell., I, 7,4,8; Diodoros, XIII, 101, 2-4,7; see also Aristophanes, Frogs, 968-970.

Theramenes and Thrasyboulos or Thrasylos, had no hesitation in condemning the latter, who had never shown himself very partial to Alkibiades.[68] Of course, this is not to suggest that Alkibiades had any part in the accusations, but it would have been in his interests for the disgrace and condemnation of those who might be useful to him to be prevented.

One of Alkibiades' friends, to judge by Lysias,[69] may have been the demagogue, Archedemos; at the trial of the generals he tried to limit the accusations to those against one man, Erasinades. Another friend of Alkibiades was Euryptolemos, who attempted to have each general tried separately.[70] Their efforts were in vain. Hatzfeld is perhaps going too far when he suggests that they were acting on Alkibiades' behalf and trying to save those of the generals who were his friends.[71]

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68. Op.cit., p.327.

69. 14,25. This man was the lover of Alkibiades' son, which is not proof that he was the friend of the elder Alkibiades, as Hatzfeld would have it (op.cit.,p.328).

70. Xenophon, Hell., I, 7,2.

71. Op.cit., p. 328.

That the trial of the generals was unpopular in some circles we have the evidence of Aristophanes; in the Frogs, produced in 405 B.C., he complains that "the state has shown the same regard for her fine and noble citizens as for her ancient coinage" since both are out of fashion.[72] There is also clear evidence that the return of Alkibiades was desired by many:

"Dionysos. First of all, how does each of you feel about Alkibiades' return? For the city is having trouble bringing its thoughts about him to birth.

Euripides. What opinion does the city hold?

Dionysos. What? Some yearn for him, some hate him, some desire to have him back. Now you two say what you think of him.

Euripides. I hate the citizen who is slow to help his country but swift to do it great harm; who helps himself but not his city.

Dionysos. Well said, by Poseidon. And you, what do you say?

Aischylos. You should not rear a lion-cub in the city, but if one has been reared, you must cater to its nature.

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72. 718-724.

Dionysos. By Zeus, it's hard to judge. One has spoken wisely, the other plainly."[73]

Aischylos has delivered judgment σοφῶς : that is to say, if Alkibiades is to be recalled the city must accept the possible consequences, including the danger that he may set himself up as a tyrant. Euripides' tone is more moral, but less realistic, in view of the city's plight.

Another passage makes it plain that Alkibiades return was expected: Kleophon, the demagogue, is said to be full of anxiety because "a Thracian swallow" has perched on his lips and sung of his destruction.[74] This clearly refers to Kleophon's mortal enemy, Alkibiades, now in Thrace.

Elsewhere it is suggested that the citizens whom Athens now trusts are to be mistrusted, and those whom she does not employ are to be employed henceforth, so that the city be saved;[75] clearly this refers to some person out of favour at the time of the play, probably Alkibiades, though in another passage there is a plea

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73. 1422-1434.

74. 682-685.

75. 1446-1450.

for the return of those who became involved with Phrynichos and the oligarchy of 411 B.C.[76] Though Phrynichos was bitterly opposed to it, it must be recalled that Alkibiades' return was one of the objectives of the coup in 411 B.C.. In the same passage a change of policy is called for, involving a return to that of Perikles, to carry the war into enemy waters and build up the fleet;[77] the policy, in fact, of Alkibiades. All in all, the Frogs seems to reflect a growing desire at Athens for the rehabilitation of Alkibiades, coupled with a realisation and acceptance of the possible consequences.

In 405 B.C. the war moved north again to the Hellespont, and Alkibiades was in the centre of the war zone in his Thracian castle. Until the Athenian fleet came to Aigospotamoi, he took no part, as far as can be judged, in events; now, however, since Aigospotamoi was only a few miles away, he could see the Athenian dispositions from his castle walls.[78]

There had been no attempt throughout the summer to recall him; the board of generals for

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76. 688-705.

77. 1463-1465; see also the scholia on 1463 and 1465.

78. Xenophon, Hell., II, 1,25.

405/4 B.C. contained only one man known to be a friend of his, Adeimantos, and two at least of the others, Tydeus and Menandros, were actively hostile to him.

The course of the war, until the battle of Aigospotamoi, was inconclusive: both sides built up their forces and made minor forays in Asia Minor, but the Peloponnesians had one major advantage in their commander-in-chief, Lysandros, who had been restored to this post after the battle of Arginousai. None of the Athenians possessed his ability or authority.

Lysandros moved north to the Hellespont in the late summer of 405 B.C. when the wheat-ships would be setting out for Athens from the Black Sea; his presence in the straits with a large fleet would prevent these supplies from reaching Athens, and the prime objective of the Athenian generals was to dislodge him and render him harmless. Accordingly they followed him and found him already in possession of Lampsakos on the southern shore of the Hellespont.[79]

Lysandros kept his crews at battle-stations when the Athenians appeared but made no move to leave

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79. Xenophon, Hell., II, 1,17-21; Diodoros, XIII, 105, 1-2; Plutarch, Lysandros, 9,4.

harbour, even when the Athenians formed in line-of-battle and sailed across from Aigospotamoi to challenge him. All day they waited outside while Lysandros' fleet lay at anchor; when it grew late they sailed back to Aigospotamoi and disembarked. For the next three days the Athenians followed the same pattern while Lysandros observed and took note of it.[80]

In particular Lysandros noted the growing carelessness and indiscipline among the Athenians when they had disembarked; they were anchored at a point far from any city and had to scatter up and down the Chersonese to obtain their provisions. Taking Lysandros' inactivity for cowardice they did this in a haphazard manner, without taking proper precautions against attack.[81]

Alkibiades could see from his castle that the anchorage at Aigospotamoi was a bad one, with an open beach and no roadstead; he could also see the

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80. Xenophon, Hell., II, 1, 22-24; Plutarch, Lysandros, 10, 1-3.

81. Xenophon, Hell., II, 1,27; Nepos, Alcibiades, 8, 5-6. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36, 4-5; Lysandros, 10, 3 and 11,4.

Peloponnesians in Lampsakos and was well aware of the danger to the Athenians. His own survival was ultimately dependent upon the Athenian presence in the Hellespont, and this may have motivated his visit to the Athenian camp. He may also have been prompted by patriotism, friendship for Adeimantos, or ambition and personal pride. Probably his motives were a combination of all these feelings. In any case, he rode down to the camp and sought an interview with the generals. From the various accounts we know that these were Konon, Philokles, Tydeus, Menandros and Adeimantos, and that command of the whole venture rotated among them on a daily basis.[82]

According to Xenophon, Alkibiades warned them of their danger and advised them to move further down the Hellespont to Sestos, where they would have the advantage of a good harbour and a city to furnish supplies; here they could fight as and when they pleased.[83] This ignores the fact that Lysandros could

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82. Xenophon, Hell., II, 1,25-26 and 30; Diodoros, XIII, 106, 1-6; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36, 4-5; Lysandros, 10, 4-5; 11, 3 and 13,1.

83. Hell., II, 1,25; see also Plutarch, Alkibiades, 36,5, and Lysandros, 10, 4-5.

blockade the straits, while the Athenians lay to the west of him, and prevent the passage of any grain-ships; only at Aigospotamoi could they seal him off from access to the straits, and no doubt this was the reason for their choice of this site. Plutarch agrees with Xenophon here.

Diodoros and Nepos add that Alkibiades offered the Athenians the assistance of his Thracian friends, whom Nepos names as King Seuthes and his followers, while Diodoros names Medokos as well. With a large Thracian army he could force the Peloponnesians to accept a battle by land or sea. Diodoros does not mention Alkibiades' advice about Sestos, but says that Alkibiades, as a condition of his assistance, demanded a share of the command.[84]

It appears that Diodoros is using some other source than Xenophon, while Nepos and Plutarch base their accounts in the main on Xenophon. It is likely that Alkibiades did offer the use of his Thracians to force the Peloponnesians to give battle while, at the same time, advising the Athenians to

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84. Diodoros, XIII, 105,3 (this is indirectly confirmed by Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37,2); Nepos, Alcibiades, 8, 2-3.

move to Sestos; neither move on its own would be particularly effective. Moreover, if his Thracians were to be involved he would surely expect some share of the command?

To some extent this hypothesis explains the reaction of the Athenian generals to Alkibiades' offer: Tydeus and Menandros offensively told Alkibiades to mind his own business and leave them alone;[85] Diodoros adds that they were afraid that if Alkibiades' plan were successful he would gain all the glory while, if it failed, they would be blamed, not he.[86]

Alkibiades departed, suspecting that there was treachery afoot, and told the friends who escorted him out of the camp that he could have forced a battle within a few days with his Thracians if the generals had not insulted and rejected him; the Athenians blithely continued the pattern of the previous days. On the fifth day, when they returned to their camp, Lysandros set out with his whole fleet, waited until the crews were ashore and scattered, and then swept in upon the undefended ships. Konon

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85. Xenophon, Hell.,II, 1,26; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37,1; Lysandros, 10,5.

86. XIII, 105,4.

escaped with nine ships while the rest of the fleet was captured on the beach. Nearly two hundred ships and three thousand men fell into the hands of the enemy.[87] The Peloponnesians and their allies ordered all the Athenians, except for Adeimantos, who had been the only man to oppose Philokles' policy of frightfulness, to be executed.[88] Lysias accuses him of conspiring with Alkibiades to surrender the ships at Aigospotamoi to Lysandros; his escape from the mass-execution probably gave rise to this rumour, which Lysias, ever ready to grasp any stick with which to beat Alkibiades, incorporated into his speech against the younger Alkibiades.[89]

Lysandros moved on Athens at the end of 405 B.C. and began to besiege it by sea, while Agis came down from Dekeleia and attacked it by land. The city held out for a while as the empire fell apart, but

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87. Xenophon, Hell.,II, 1,27-29; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37, 1-3; Lysandros, 11, 5-6; the account of Diodoros (XIII, 106, 1-8) is fuller but less credible.

88. Xenophon, Hell.,II, 1,31-32; Diodoros, XIII, 106,7; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37,3; Lysandros, 13, 1-2.

89. Lysias, 14,38.

food-supplies were dwindling and famine set in. In April of 404 B.C. Athens surrendered; despite the demands of Korinth, Thebes and other states, Sparta refused to mete out to the Athenians the treatment they had given to Melos. Instead, the walls were razed, the fleet was surrendered, and all exiles were recalled. The oligarchs now set up a provisional government of thirty men who were to draft a new constitution based on the ancestral laws. Theramenes, who headed the moderate faction, was a member of the Thirty, as was Kritias, who had suffered exile for his extreme views.[90]

Alkibiades' position was now desperate: as long as Athens had survived he had some hope that he could return. Meanwhile he was tolerated in the Hellespont. Now that the Spartans were supreme he could not hope to survive long there.

According to Lysias he sent, probably before Aigospotamoi, for his son, the younger Alkibiades,

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90. Xenophon, Hell., II, 2-3 and 11; Andokides, 1,73-79; Lysias, 12, 72-73; Aristotle, Ath.Pol., 34,3; Diodoros, XIII, 107, 1-5; XIV, 3, 1-4; Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37,3; 38,1; Lysandros, 13, 2-15,5; I.G.,I^2, 126; II^2, 1.

because he was alarmed by reports of the boy's bad reputation at Athens. However, when the younger Alkibiades arrived, he conspired to betray his father's fort at Ornoi to a certain Theotimos. The elder Alkibiades was so shaken by his betrayal that he disowned him completely and swore that if his son were killed he would not even try to recover his bones.[91]

We cannot be sure when the younger Alkibiades left Athens: Isokrates[92] says he was banished by the Thirty, and Hatzfeld[93] takes this as proof that he did not leave the city until after their accession to power in April, 404,B.C.. However, his banishment could have been decreed in his absence and, in any case, was more likely because he was the elder Alkibiades' son than because of anything he himself had done; the Thirty were concerned to rid themselves of all members of the democratic faction as soon as possible,[94] and apparently passed a special law barring the elder

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91. 14, 26-27.

92. 16, 45.

93. Op.cit., p.338, notes 1 and 6.

94. Isokrates, 16, 37.

Alkibiades from Athens,[95] and perhaps from all Greece within the Spartan hegemony.[96]

The younger Alkibiades was only twelve or thirteen; that he would conspire at this age to betray his father is unlikely, though it is possible that he was an innocent dupe. No other author mentions this incident, and there is a further puzzling feature in Lysias' speech: he refers to his own long-standing opinion that the younger Alkibiades is worthless, an opinion now reinforced by injury he has suffered at his hands, and to a previous feud between his father and the elder Alkibiades.[97] Yet Lysias was almost the same age as the elder Alkibiades, and according to tradition, was in Thourioi from 446 to 412 B.C.; the same tradition places Kephalos' death in 446 B.C., which makes a feud between him and the elder Alkibiades unlikely.[98] If the manuscripts of Lysias

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95. Xenophon, Hell., II, 3,42.

96. Isokrates, 16, 40. See Hatzfeld, op.cit.,p.338,note 3.

97. 14,2.

98. Plutarch, Vit. X Orat. (Mor., 835C-D); Lysias was born in the archonship of Philokles, 459/8 B.C. The tradition may be at fault, since Plato makes Kephalos a character in the Republic (328E); the dramatic date of this

are at fault here and if Lysias' feud was actually with the elder Alkibiades there is the difficulty of finding a date for it: either the feud began before 440 B.C., when both were boys in Athens, or it could date to 415 B.C., when Alkibiades stayed briefly in Thourioi at the start of his exile. It has been suggested that Alkibiades was in Sicily in the period 430-425 B.C.[99], but this is entirely

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dialogue is 421 B.C. If Plato is correct, although I have emphasized (Chapter Two) his unreliability as an historical source, it is possible that the tradition reported by Plutarch is incorrect in dating Kephalos' death to 446 B.C., and equally incorrect in dating Lysias' departure for Thourioi to the same year. In this case a feud could well have arisen between the elder Alkibiades and Kephalos or Lysias in the 420's. All that we know for certain is that Lysias returned to Athens in 413 or 412 B.C. and that his latest extant speech can be dated to about 380 B.C., just before his death.

99. See Green (Achilles his Armour, p.312), who attempts to explain Alkibiades' later interest in Sicily by this visit.

undocumented. Otherwise the feud must be dated to the four months of 407 B.C. when Alkibiades and Lysias were both in Athens.

Whatever the truth of Lysias' allegations, Alkibiades could no longer stay in the Chersonese after the fall of Athens. Some time in 404 B.C., leaving his son to the tender mercies of Theotimos, who apparently had imprisoned him in Ornoi,[100] he travelled into Bithynia, taking with him what he could of his movable property and valuables. The Thracians of Bithynia robbed him and he threw himself upon the mercy of the Persian satrap of Phrygia, Pharnabazos.[101]

From the time of Aigospotamioi on we have no sure information about Alkibiades, except that he left Thrace and was murdered in Asia Minor, where the Emperor Hadrian set up a monument to him at Melissa and instituted annual sacrifices in his memory.[102]

Lysias and Isokrates, the one seeking to vilify Alkibiades' name, the other to embellish it, give

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100. Lysias, 14, 26-27.

101. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37, 3-4; Nepos merely gives super Propontidem as the site of the robbery (Alcibiades 9,4).

102. Athenaios, XIII, 574 F.

hardly any information about his death, and it is to later tradition and romance that we must turn for the record of the last months of his life. These accounts should be viewed with extreme scepticism; any conclusions drawn from them must remain speculative. With this proviso I shall attempt to describe the end of Alkibiades.

As he had done throughout his career, Alkibiades, when he was forced to move, took with him a plan of which he was to be the essential part. King Dareios died in 405/4 B.C., and his successor, Artaxerxes, bore no love for his younger brother, Kyros, whom Dareios had appointed viceroy in the west. Since Kyros favoured the Spartans and especially Lysandros, it was logical for Alkibiades to attempt to join Artaxerxes and perhaps to obtain some assistance for Athens as well as for himself. Pharnabazos had no particular reason to be friendly towards Kyros, and the secret negotiations that Alkibiades had carried on with him in 408 B.C. may have led to a personal accord between the two men, which would be entirely in keeping with Alkibiades' character. At any rate, Pharnabazos received him at his court and showed him honour.[103]

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103. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 37,4.

According to Diodoros, Alkibiades learned of a plot between Kyros and the Spartans to make war on Artaxerxes and revealed the details of it to Pharnabazos, hoping that the latter would give him an introduction to the King so that he could pass on this information personally and be rewarded for it. Pharnabazos detained Alkibiades and sent his own messengers to the capital to reveal the plot as if he himself had been its discoverer.[104]

Plutarch may hint at this when he calls the Spartans the common enemy of the King and of Athens.[105] It is true that Kyros later used his Spartan contacts to raise an army of Greek mercenaries for revolt against the King, but Xenophon specifically remarks that the revolt came as a surprise to the satraps in 401 B.C. If it was known in 404 B.C., why was no move made then to crush it?[106]

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104. XIV, 11, 2-3, quoting from Ephoros, XVII, frag.70 (Jacoby).

105. Alkibiades, 37,4.

106. Xenophon, Anabasis, I, 1,8 and 2,4.

However, Alkibiades may have guessed Kyros' likely reactions to the accession of Artaxerxes and manufactured a "plot" out of whole cloth, hoping to use it to gain access to the King and trusting to his charm to win him a permanent place at the Persian court.

Plutarch remarks that Alkibiades entertained some hopes that he might have as much success with Artaxerxes as Themistokles had had with an earlier Artaxerxes; though Themistokles, he says, had joined the Persians in order to harm his fellow-countrymen, whereas Alkibiades wished to help them and enlist the King's help against Sparta.[107]

Nepos' version is deeply influenced by the story of Themistokles; he was by no means the first to compare Themistokles and Alkibiades, but he, or his sources, try to force this comparison by inventing details in Alkibiades' career to parallel those of Themistokles'. He says that Pharnabazos considered Alkibiades his best friend and gave him the fort of Gryneion as his fief, together with an income from taxes of five hundred talents.[108] This figure is absurd:

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107. Alkibiades, 37,4.

108. Alcibiades, 9,2.

in any case, Gryneion, as we know from Xenophon,[109] had been the property of Gongylos of Eretria for many years and was still in his possession in 399 B.C..

So long as Alkibiades was alive there were those at Athens who feared his return and those who hoped that somehow he could help them; the demos now regretted his second rejection, while the Thirty anxiously followed his every move. Thrasyboulos, always friendly towards Alkibiades, had gone into exile in Thebes, and there were other exiles in Megara and Argos; the Thirty no doubt feared that these men would establish contact with Alkibiades and bring him back to Greece; at least, Theramenes, one of the Thirty, opposed the decree of exile against Alkibiades for fear of an alliance between Thrasyboulos and Alkibiades.[110]

Finally, Kritias pointed out to Lysandros that the oligarchy would not be secure until Alkibiades was dead. Lysandros took no action at first, but was forced to move when the Spartan government sent him a message ordering Alkibiades' death. Whether the

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109. Hell., III, 1,6.

110. Xenophon, Hell., II, 3,42.

authorities in Sparta actually feared Alkibiades, on the ground that he alone was able to revive the Athenian democracy, or merely wished to please King Agis, Plutarch is not sure.[111] No doubt they had also received requests from the Thirty for his removal.

Lysandros now wrote to Pharnabazos demanding the execution of Alkibiades.[112] We do not know how reluctantly the satrap ordered the execution of his guest; Ephoros' story suggests that Pharnabazos was afraid that Alkibiades would make trouble for him with the King and had an uneasy conscience over the plot that he had reported to the King without giving credit to Alkibiades as its discoverer.[113] Whether Lysandros was able to apply any pressure to Pharnabazos is uncertain; if he did it was presumably by the threat of his own physical presence and that of the Spartan fleet that had been operating in the vicinity of Samos at the end of the summer of 404 B.C.[114] Diodoros' account places Alkibiades' death

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111. Alkibiades, 38, 4.

112. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 39,1.

113. Diodoros, XIV, 11,3 = Ephoros, frag. 70 (Jacoby).

114. Xenophon, Hell., II, 3,7 and 9.

squarely in 404 B.C., the year of the Olympic Games. The murder must have occurred while the Thirty were still in full control, since the restored democracy of 403 B.C. would probably as one of its first actions have debated his recall had he been alive. If Ephoros' version, as reported by Diodoros, is true, Pharnabazos was able to justify his actions by the Spartan request;[115] however, it is not possible to date the murder by Lysandros' presence in the Aegean, as Hatzfeld would like to do,[116] unless Ephoros be completely rejected. All that can be stated with certainty is that Alkibiades was killed in the latter part of 404 B.C.

Pharnabazos did not have Alkibiades murdered at his court in Daskyleion. When the satrap had failed to show any sign of wanting to send him on to see the King, Alkibiades left Pharnabazos' court and set out on his own. According to Ephoros he was heading for Paphlagonia, to enlist the aid of its satrap.[117] However, he was murdered in a village in

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115. XIV, 11, 1 and 5.

116. Op.cit., p.341.

117. Diodoros, XIV, 11,3 = Ephoros, frag.70 (Jacoby).

Phrygia,[118] identified by Athenaios[119] as Melissa, and situated on the road from the north to Metropolis, where it joined the main east-west road from Ephesos to the capital. Thus he apparently travelled a very roundabout route, going south-west instead of due east into Paphlagonia. If he had doubts about Pharnabazos' intentions, he may well have tried to throw him off the scent by travelling to the south-west first, hoping to join the main road to Sousa at Metropolis.

Pharnabazos entrusted the task of Alkibiades' murder to two kinsmen, his brother, Magaios, and his uncle, Sousamithres. Alkibiades was sleeping in a house in the village when the assassins came upon him; they surrounded the house and set it on fire. When the flames awakened him he threw clothes and bedding on the fire to try to smother it, seized his sword and cloak and rushed out of the house. The assassins kept their distance and shot at him with arrows or threw spears at him until he fell. A courtesan, Timandra, was in the house with him, and after his death she wrapped his body in her own clothes and gave it the best and most

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118. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 39,1.

119. XIII, 574 E-F.

honourable burial she could provide.[120]

Plutarch notes that all the authorities have the essentials of this story. He adds, however, that some writers, while they agree in other details with what he has written, say that Alkibiades was killed by his own fault, since he had corrupted the daughter of a well-known family and had taken her with him on his travels; the brothers of this girl, seeking to avenge the family honour, were his assassins.[121]

This version has the earmarks of a romantic fiction. Nepos says that the assassins cut off Alkibiades' head and took it to Pharnabazos,[122] which is reasonable enough since presumably Pharnabazos would want confirmation that his orders had been carried out. This Plutarch does not report directly; instead, he has two versions of a dream that Alkibiades is said to have had shortly before his death. In one version he saw Timandra holding his head in her arms and painting it like a woman's while his body was covered with her clothes; in the other he saw assassins cutting off his head and

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120. Plutarch, Alkibiades, 39, 2-4.

121. Alkibiades, 39,5.

122. Alcibiades 10,6; his source seems to be Theopompos.

his body being burnt.[123]

There are other inconsistencies, probably the result of romantic speculations: the woman with Alkibiades is named as Timandra by Plutarch, but Athenaios calls her Timandra or Damasandra and names another woman, Theodote of Athens,[124] while Nepos, mentioning only a woman whom he does not name, says that Alkibiades was accompanied on his travels by an Arkadian hospes, and that this man refused to leave him and was killed with him.[125]

All these versions are the work of late authorities; that of Ephoros, quoted by Diodoros, mentions none of these companions nor the assassins by name, and it is probable that their names too are added to the story as "orthodox Persian names"[126]

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123. Alkibiades, 39,2.

124. XII, 535C; XII, 574 E-F.

125. Alcibiades, 10,6.

126. Perrin, T.A.P.A., XXXVIII (1907), p.32; Xenophon mentions Bagaios as the half-brother of Pharnabazos (Hell., III, 4,13). Miss Perrin ascribes most of the stories about Alkibiades' death to Ephoros, who, she believes, fabricated them (p.30).

in order to give it an authentic flavour, although in a matter of considerable political importance such as this Pharnabazos may have judged it prudent to entrust the assassination to only his own kinsmen. All that we know for certain is that Alkibiades was murdered by Pharnabazos' command somewhere in Asia Minor in the latter part of 404 B.C. The mystery and inconsistency surrounding the details of his death are a fitting conclusion to a life that was filled with episodes of brilliance and of darkness.

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I have included in this index all names of historical significance, including the titles of literary works named in the text. I have omitted the names of authors, except where they were themselves involved in the events described. I have also omitted the names of Alkibiades III, the Athenians, the Spartans and the Persians, since these occur with such frequency in the text. Footnotes are not indexed, nor have I indexed separately the names of states and their citizens.

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