

THE CHRONOLOGY OF PEISANDER'S MISSION TO ATHENS

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IN THE WINTER OF 412/1 Athenians in the forward base at Samos began to concoct, in concert with Alcibiades, who was then in the camp of the Persian satrap Tissaphernes, a plot to overthrow democracy and establish oligarchic government in Athens. When the decision to go ahead was made, the oligarchic conspirators sent a delegation, led by the politician Peisander, to Athens to advance the plot at home. The timing of Peisander's sojourn in Athens is a matter of dispute. Some commentators posit discontinuity in Thucydides' narrative in order to justify their views. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the evidence concerning the timing of Peisander's sojourn in Athens and to suggest a chronology and sequence of events that accords with Thucydides' account as it stands. It is hoped that the discussion will contribute to the support of the integrity and validity of Thucydides' narrative in the eighth book (now widely regarded as gravely incomplete and open to doubt on many counts)¹ and will provide a firm chronological basis for a better understanding of the strategy employed by the oligarchic conspirators at the crucial assembly described by Thucydides at 53.1–54.3² (here called the Preliminary Assembly) at which the subject of a change in government from democracy to oligarchy appears to have been broached for the first time at a public meeting.

1. THE BEGINNING OF THE OLIGARCHIC CONSPIRACY

Chronological indications in Thucydides' text make it fairly certain that the events in the account of the inception of the oligarchic movement (chapters 47–49) transpired in November and early December of 412. Thucydides' summer ends soon after the battle of Miletus and the capture of Iasus by the Peloponnesians (28.5). The beginning of the winter season in Thucydides is not firmly established but it usually seems to occur in early November.³ Alcibiades' flight from the Peloponnesian camp to Tissaphernes took place

1. See for example the influential discussion by A. Andrewes in *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, by A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, and K. J. Dover, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1945–81), 5:369–75 (hereafter, *HCT*); for a defense of the account in the eighth book see, e.g., H. Erbse, *Thukydides-Interpretationen*, Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte, Band 33 (Berlin and New York, 1989), 1–67.

2. All references to the text of Thucydides without book numbers are to the eighth book.

3. For discussion of the evidence see Gomme, *HCT* 3: 706 and G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte bis zur Schlacht bei Chaeroneia*, Band 3, Teil 2: *Der Peloponnesische Krieg* (Gotha, 1904), pp. 680–82 and pp. 682–86, n. 1.

soon after the battle of Miletus (cf. 26.3), but the exact time is uncertain. The event is reported at 45.1, where Thucydides goes back in his account to report events that occurred before those recounted in 44. It is a matter of controversy how far in the past the events took place (see Andrewes, 93–94,⁴ for discussion of the problems raised by Thucydides' narrative at this point). If Alcibiades had left the Peloponnesian camp before the advent of winter—the marginally more likely possibility, despite the breach of Thucydides' normal practice of separating rigidly the events of each season—negotiations with the Athenians on Samos could have begun in early November. If, however, Alcibiades had fled after the beginning of Thucydides' winter—an interpretation that would require less dislocation in Thucydides' narrative—there would still have been time for him to establish himself with Tissaphernes and to put out feelers to Samos by the middle of November.

Other indications suggest that the oligarchic movement's first phase ended about the middle of December. A Lacedaemonian fleet of twenty-seven ships, commanded by Antisthenes, departed from the Peloponnese to Ionia about the time of the winter solstice (39.1), that is, within the period from about a week before to about a week after December 26.⁵ After encountering an Athenian squadron of ten ships at Melos, the Peloponnesians proceeded by way of Crete in order to avoid further contact with the enemy. The fleet found harbor in Asia Minor at Caunus and sent word of its arrival to the main force at Miletus (39.3–4). Astyochus, the Spartan commander at Miletus, sailed southward to join forces immediately on receipt of the news (41.1). The correspondence of the Athenian general Phrynichus with Astyochus (50–51), which followed the decision of the oligarchic conspirators to dispatch Peisander to Athens (49), occurred while the Peloponnesians were still at Miletus (50.2). On the evidence thus far cited, the Peloponnesians could have left their base any time between the first days of January and the third week of the month, according to the time when Antisthenes set out from Laconia, the amount of time consumed by the voyage (perhaps twelve to sixteen days),⁶ and the time needed to communicate with Astyo-

4. Andrewes, followed by a page number, refers to the commentary of A. Andrewes on Book 8 in *HCT* 5.

5. The winter solstice in Athens at about this time occurred early in the morning of December 26: see P. V. Neugebauer, *Hilfsstafeln zur Berechnung von Himmels-Erscheinungen* (Leipzig, 1925), 33–34 for the method of calculation. In the period immediately before 400, the time that elapsed between the winter and summer solstices was slightly more than 184½ days (ibid., 49–50). Therefore we can calculate that in the next year, 411 (not a leap year), the summer solstice occurred on the 179th day of the Julian year, or June 28: see also F. K. Ginzel, *Handbuch der Mathematischen und Technischen Chronologie*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1911), 578. For current conventions concerning the conversion of dates in ancient calendars into modern equivalents see n. 38 below.

6. The distance from Malea, the point of departure (39.3), to Caunus, via Melos, Crete (Heracleum for purposes of measurement), and the open sea south of Carpathos and east of Rhodes, is approximately 355 nautical miles. L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton, 1971), 292–96, has shown that an ancient war fleet sailed two to three knots with favorable winds and one to one and a half with unfavorable. Since the season was winter we estimate a low average of one and a half knots, assuming that there were following winds at some points during the journey. At this rate the voyage would have taken almost ten days (236.66 hours). The encounter at Melos would have consumed two days at the minimum. With these assumptions it appears that the trip would have taken at least twelve days. The maximum is harder to estimate; adverse weather could have prolonged the voyage considerably. Apart from that, it seems likely that

chus and for him to break camp (perhaps four to six days).⁷ The eighty days of inactivity reported by Thucydides (44.4) for the Peloponnesian fleet at Rhodes, terminating before the end of Thucydides' winter (60.2–3), suggests, if the figure is accepted, an early date for the withdrawal from Miletus (Andrewes, 186). Since there seems to be no decisive reason to reject the figure eighty (Andrewes, 93, 147–49), it seems that Astyochus left Miletus in early January, 411.⁸ If we allow two to three weeks for Phrynichus' machinations⁹ and assume that the Peloponnesian exodus from Miletus occurred soon after Alcibiades' second message to Samos concerning Phrynichus' treachery (51.2), then the decision to send Peisander and his companions to Athens should have been made in mid-December.

2. THE CONVENTIONAL CHRONOLOGY AND ITS PROBLEMS

In chapter 49 Thucydides does not mention explicitly the departure from Samos of Peisander's embassy,¹⁰ but on the basis of the statement that the conspirators "were making (or began making) preparations to send" (παρεσκευάζοντο πέμπειν) Peisander and others to Athens, it has been generally assumed that the group left soon after the decision was made to send it and that it arrived at its destination toward the end of December.¹¹ Thucydides' narrative implies—but does not specifically state—that the meeting of the Preliminary Assembly took place soon after the envoys reached Athens

the fleet would have pressed to make the Asian shore not only out of fear of meeting a superior Athenian force (cf. 41.3–4) but also because the reinforcements were eagerly awaited in Ionia (41.1) and the mission of Antisthenes and the eleven Spartan "advisers" (ξυμβουλοι) accompanying the fleet (to oversee arrangements in Ionia) was of some urgency (39.2; 41.1). Thus, barring heavy weather, the maximum would appear to be about fifteen or sixteen days.

7. The distance from Caunus to Miletus as the crow flies is about ninety-five miles. Antisthenes' message probably traveled by land, that being the safer route at this point. The trip should not have taken more than two days. When word arrived, Astyochus was about to sail to the aid of Chians (40.3–41.1) so that the ships were to a large degree prepared to depart.

8. This timetable is somewhat later than Andrewes' (93, 185–86). The events from Astyochus' departure from Miletus to the beaching of the fleet at Rhodes (41.2–44.4) need not, as Andrewes says (93), take long. One to two days would be needed for the voyage to Cos (about forty-five nautical miles); a day or two for the sack of Meropeis; part of a day for the crossing to Cnidus (arrival at night). The battle with the Athenian ships under Charminus took place the next morning and the meeting with Antisthenes' fleet the same afternoon (41.4). The quarrel with Tissaphernes may have consumed no more than two days; he appears to have been at Cnidus when the fleets united (43.2). The revolt of Rhodes would take longer, even if the "immediately" of 44.2 indicates that the Peloponnesians went to Rhodes directly after Tissaphernes' angry departure. The conference of the three cities of Rhodes could not have been called and held in less than seven days. If all these events transpired in about two weeks, then the eighty days would have begun about 22 January and ended about 11 April. The latter appears to have been unusually late to be included in Thucydides' winter, but if the eighty days are to stand, the end of Thucydides' winter this year is in any case late (cf. Andrewes, 147–48).

9. Cf. Busolt, *Peloponnesische Krieg*, p. 1470, n. 2.

10. The departure is mentioned when the envoys arrive at Athens at 53.1: οἱ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ Πεισανδρου πρέσβεις τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἀποσταλέντες ἐκ τῆς Σάμου καὶ ἀφικόμενοι ἐς τὰς Ἀθήνας. . . . The καί, found in a number of manuscripts (see critical apparatus to OCT), is omitted by most editors, but accepted by J. Classen, *Thukydides. Achter Band. Aches Buch*. Bearbeitet von J. Steup (1922; reprint, Dublin and Zürich, 1963), ad loc. and T. G. Tucker, *The Eighth Book of Thucydides* (London, 1892), 60, on the ground that the parallel construction here is more in accord with the absence in 49 of a definite statement concerning the departure. (See Andrewes, 123–24, for discussion of the passage.) The retention of the copulative offers some slight support for the view (to be argued here) that a substantial period intervened between the decision to send the envoys (recorded in 49) and their actual departure from Samos, since Thucydides, in taking up the story of the embassy, may be indicating to the reader that the departure itself had not been mentioned earlier.

11. See, e.g., Busolt, *Peloponnesische Krieg*, 1468 and 1470.

(53.1) and that Peisander, accompanied by ten men chosen by the assembly to treat with Tissaphernes and Alcibiades, left Athens not long after the meeting of the assembly (54.4).¹² Those dates, though reasonable in terms of Thucydides' account, have fallen afoul of a non-Thucydidean consideration: the chronological relationship between the Preliminary Assembly and the Aristophanic comedy produced at the Lenaea of 411. On the conventional chronology, the Preliminary Assembly would have been held long enough in advance of the celebration of the Lenaeon festival in the Attic month of Gamelion (for the approximate date in 411 see sec. 2.c below) to provoke comment in the comedies produced on that occasion. Two of Aristophanes' extant comedies are candidates for performance at the Lenaea, *Lysistrata* and *Thesmophoriazusae*. *Lysistrata* is securely dated by the first Hypothesis to the year of Callias, that is, 412/1. But the festival is not recorded.

2.a. The Date of *Thesmophoriazusae*

Thesmophoriazusae appears also to have been produced in 412/1, but the evidence on this issue is not conclusive.¹³ Two scholia to the play date it in relation to the years in which Euripides and the Athenian general Lamachus died;¹⁴ but neither year is certain. The tragedian is said to have perished in 407/6 (the Parian Chronicle, *FGrH* 239 A 63) and in 406/5 (Timaeus, *FGrH* 566 F 105; Eratosthenes, *FGrH* 241 F 12; Apollodorus, *FGrH* 244 F 35). Though the earlier date seems more probable,¹⁵ thus placing the play in 412/1, the later cannot be ruled out. Lamachus died in Sicily in the summer of 414 (Thuc. 6.101.6), but it is not known whether the event occurred before or after the beginning of the new Attic year.¹⁶ Another scholium reports that Euripides' *Andromeda* was produced "in the eighth year" before Aristophanes' *Frogs*, that is, in 412.¹⁷ If that date is correct—other indications support it¹⁸—then *Thesmophoriazusae* should be dated to 411 since there is reference in the comedy to "last year's" performance of *Andromeda* (lines 1060–61 and scholium to 1060).

12. For example, Busolt, *Peloponnesische Krieg*, 1471, dates the assembly to the end of January and the negotiations with Tissaphernes to the first half of February.

13. The most influential case for the performance of *Thesm.* in 411 at the City Dionysia (in March; see below) has been that of U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (*Aristoteles und Athen*, 2 vols. [Berlin, 1893], 2: 343–52). More recent discussions by A. H. Sommerstein, "Aristophanes and the Events of 411," in *JHS* 97 (1977): 112–26 and Andrewes, 184–93, have come to the same conclusion. Some commentators, notably B. B. Rogers, *The Thesmophoriazusae of Aristophanes* (London, 1920), xxxii–xlii and P. J. Rhodes, *The Athenian Boule* (Oxford, 1972), 185–86, 190, advocate production in 410.

14. Scholium to line 190: Euripides' life ended "in the sixth year" afterwards; scholium to line 841: Lamachus died "in the fourth year" previously.

15. See Jacoby's commentary to Apollodorus 244 F 35 and cf. his remarks on the other fragments that mention 406/5.

16. See Andrewes, *HCT* 4:7–8 and Dover, *HCT* 4:374.

17. Scholium to Aristophanes, *Frogs* 53; this play is securely dated to 405: see the first Hypothesis, toward the end.

18. Euripides' *Helen* was produced in the same year as *Andromeda* (scholium to *Thesm.* 1012) and in *Thesm.* (line 850) one of the characters refers to "the new *Helen*," implying that the play was recent. In addition, the scholiast to *Lys.* 963 claims that there is a parody of *Andromeda* at that point in the play.

Arguments based on specific passages in *Thesmophoriazusae* have also been adduced, but they too have not been decisive. The reference to the councilor who “last year” gave up his conciliar power (lines 808–9) has been cited by Rogers¹⁹ and Andrewes (185, 188) to support production in 410 and 411 respectively. In Rogers’ view the allusion is to the oligarchic takeover of the council-house in June, 411 (Thuc. 69–70), while Andrewes argues that the reference is to the alleged transfer of power from the council of 413/2 to the πρόβουλοι in the fall of 413. Neither argument can stand, however, because the lines concern the action of one man, not of the council as a whole.²⁰

A few lines earlier in the same passage (in which men are derogated in comparison to women), at line 804, Charminus is described as “weaker” (ἥττων) than Nausimache (“Battle at Sea”). The reference is generally acknowledged to be to the defeat of the Athenian general Charminus at the hands of the Peloponnesians in January, 411 (Thuc. 41.3–42.4; for the time cf. sec. 1 and n. 8 above). Rogers²¹ contends that this is strong evidence for production in 410. He doubts that news of the defeat could have reached Athens in time to be included in a comedy of 411; and if it had, he thinks that it is unlikely that Aristophanes would have referred flippantly to a fresh setback for Athenian arms. The latter point appears to have no force in the face of the license normally accorded to Athenian comedy; and the former falls on chronological grounds.²² Rhodes pointed out that two passages in *Thesmophoriazusae* (76–80 and 943–44) might be construed to indicate that the council at the time of the play’s presentation had more power than it had later. For this reason he tentatively suggested that production might have been in 410 when the Five Thousand were in power. In his view that regime was oligarchic in tone and therefore perhaps disposed to grant superior power to the council. Rhodes’ arguments are far from compelling, and if, as I hope to argue elsewhere, the government of the Five Thousand was essentially democratic, his case could not stand.²³ Our survey indicates that the evidence for the date of *Thesmophoriazusae* favors placing it in 411 with *Lysistrata*.

19. *Thesmophoriazusae*, xxxvii–xxxviii.

20. *Thesm.* 808–9: ἀλλ’ Εὐβούλης τῶν πέρυσιν τις βουλευτῆς ἐστὶν ἀμείνων / παραδοὺς ἐτέρῳ τὴν βουλείαν; οὐδ’ αὐτὸς τοῦτό γε φήσει. (φήσει: Kuster; φήσεις: MSS) “What councilor of those from last year is better than Euboule [‘Good Counsel’], he who handed over to another the office of councilor? Not even he will say this.” The singular masculine participle in line 809 shows that Aristophanes had an individual in mind, a view supported by the emended text, while the unemended version does not detract. (Both readings present difficulties: see the critical apparatus of J. van Leeuwen, *Aristophanis “Thesmophoriazusae”* [Leiden, 1904], ad loc.; for further comment see Sommerstein, “Aristophanes,” 117 and A. H. Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes*, vol. 8, “*Thesmophoriazusae*” [Warminster, 1994], 207). The view that Aristophanes in these lines refers to an individual accords with his express purpose in this section of the play (in lines 802–3 he says that names of individual men and women will be compared) and to his practice in lines 804–7 (see next paragraph).

21. *Thesmophoriazusae*, xxxiv–xxxvii.

22. See sec. 3.c below for arguments indicating that news of Charminus’ defeat may have reached Athens either with Peisander and his fellow envoys or shortly before their arrival; cf. Sommerstein, “Aristophanes,” 116.

23. Rhodes, *Athenian Boule*, 185–86, 190. See also P. J. Rhodes, “The Five Thousand in the Athenian Revolutions of 411 B.C.,” *JHS* 92 (1972): 115–27. Cf. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, “The Constitution of the Five Thousand,” *Historia* 5 (1956): 1–23.

2.b. Arguments for *Lysistrata* at the Lenaea and *Thesmophoriazusae* at the Dionysia

If that is the case, which of the plays was produced at the Lenaea?²⁴ The prevailing view assigns *Lysistrata* to the Lenaea and *Thesmophoriazusae* to the City Dionysia.²⁵ Some commentators prefer to reverse the assignments.²⁶ The strongest argument for the latter arrangement arises from the belief that Aristophanic comedies unassigned in the ancient sources to either festival (*Ecclesiazusae* and *Plutus* in addition to our two plays) can be classified according to their subject matter as Lenaeian or Dionysian. (The known Lenaeian comedies are *Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Wasps*, and *Frogs*; the Dionysian are *Clouds*, *Peace*, and *Birds*). On this theory *Lysistrata* with its “panhellenic” theme of general peace and concord among the Greek states would be more suitable for the international audience in attendance at the Dionysia (in the spring when the sea lanes would be open and travel easier), while the emphasis in *Thesmophoriazusae* on a local religious observance and on the parody of the dramas of Euripides, a native playwright, would accord with the “homier” atmosphere of the Lenaea (cf. *Ach.* 502–8). If this kind of argumentation were valid, one could argue with equal cogency that satire of Euripides, now at the height of his fame abroad (cf. Plutarch, *Nic.* 29.2–3), and a plot involving the Thesmophoria, a festival widely celebrated in the Greek world, were eminently suitable topics for the cosmopolitan audience of the Dionysia, just as the intense focus on local politics in *Lysistrata* would stamp it as Lenaeian.²⁷ This type of reasoning, however, is invalid for two reasons. First, brief summaries of plots can be tendentious, as we have just seen, and they do not in any case do justice to the richly varied contents of the plays. Second, the comedies whose festivals are known do not conform

24. Most scholars doubt that both plays could have been produced at the same festival (see, e.g., W. Schmid, *Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur*, part 1, vol. 4 [Munich, 1946], 204), but not all agree. C. Anti, *Teatri greci arcaici* (Padua, 1947), 219, 230–31, places both comedies at the Lenaea of 412; C. F. Russo, *Aristofane autore de teatro* (Florence, 1962), 11–12, 295–99, assigns both to the Dionysia of the same year. Both theories arise from the authors' contentions that there was a separate Lenaeian theater, located by Anti west of the Acropolis and by Russo in the Agora, and that the character of ancient comedies was dictated to a degree by the structure and nature of the theater in which they were performed. Those views have not found wide acceptance: see, e.g., A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, 2d ed., revised by J. Gould and D. Lewis (Oxford, 1968), with selected addenda (Oxford, 1988), 39–40; T. Gelzer, “Aristophanes (12) Der Komiker,” *RE*, supp. 12 (1971), 1513–14; and C. W. Dearden, *The Stage of Aristophanes* (London, 1976), 5–8. Yet certain areas of the Agora appear to have a “theatrical character,” and the suspicion persists that theatrical performances may have been staged there in the late fifth century and into the fourth: see R. E. Wycherley, *The Stones of Athens* (Princeton, 1978), 204–6. S. G. Miller, however, has argued that that evidence may pertain not to the classical marketplace but to an early agora located to the east, just north of the Acropolis: “Architecture as Evidence for the Identity of the Early Polis,” in *Sources for the Ancient Greek City-State*, ed. M. H. Hansen (Copenhagen, 1995), 210–44, Appendix B, 218–19 (I owe this reference to the journal's referee). However that may be, it remains doubtful that if comedies were presented in the classical Agora, the place of presentation can be determined by the form of the play.

25. For recent and thorough discussions of the evidence see Sommerstein, “Aristophanes”; Andrewes, 184–93; J. Henderson, *Aristophanes. “Lysistrata”* (Oxford, 1987), xv–xxv; cf. also P. Geissler, *Chronologie der Altattischen Komödie*, 2d ed. (Dublin and Zurich, 1969), 55–56.

26. Advocates of this view are Schmid, *Geschichte*, 204–5, cf. 306; and Gelzer, “Aristophanes,” 1467–69 and 1473–75. Sommerstein, “Aristophanes,” 120–22, has discussed Gelzer's arguments.

27. See Sommerstein, “Aristophanes,” 117–18, for discussion of this argument. On the Thesmophoria, see M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von Religiöser Bedeutung* (1906; reprint, Darmstadt, 1957), 313–16.

to the principle that plot and subject matter differ according to the festival. For example, Athenian politics figure significantly in *Acharnians*, *Knights* (both Lenaeae), and *Birds* (Dionysian). Again, Socrates, a homebody notoriously averse to foreign travel (Pl. *Cri.* 52b, 52e–53a; *Phdr.* 230c–d) and therefore scarcely known abroad, would be ill suited, if the theory held, for a starring role in the Dionysian *Clouds*.²⁸ Thus, the chief support for assigning *Thesmophoriazusae* to the Lenaea appears to collapse.²⁹

The alternative arrangement (*Lys.* at the Lenaea; *Thesm.* at the Dionysia), though much favored and frequently taken for granted, has also been questioned. The main argument here also rests on subject matter, but viewed from a different perspective. Though the women of Athens are prominent in both plays, the comedies are strikingly dissimilar in content and outlook. *Lysistrata*, with its presentation of women in revolt against men and war, is politically oriented. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, on the other hand, there is comparatively little political comment. The playwright focused instead on the literary and personal peccadilloes of Euripides. The difference has often been interpreted in terms of the political situation in Athens during the winter and early spring of 411.³⁰ At the time of the Lenaea, the argument goes, it was still possible to joke about politics and revolutions. Two months later, however, at the City Dionysia, the atmosphere had changed radically and politics were no longer a subject for banter. The playwright therefore re-treated into literary criticism.

The flaw in this view is the tacit assumption that composition and presentation of the plays were nearly contemporaneous so that the poet could conceive and compose plays under the conditions that obtained about the time of production. Almost surely composition of both plays began before the advent of the revolutionary movement with the result that the basic premise of neither play could have been due to rumors of revolutionary cabals or to fear instilled by a reign of terror. On general grounds it is hard to believe that the poet could contrive, complete, and produce a play in the short period of time required by the theory. More specifically there appears to be reason to regard *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Lysistrata* as a pair, devised and composed with reference to each other. The comic effect of both plays derives in part from the depiction of the women of Athens in the unaccustomed—and unfeminine—role of aggressors, against Euripides in *Thesmophoriazusae* and against men and war in *Lysistrata*. The spheres in which

28. Proponents of the theory tend to play down Socrates' part and to stress instead the international nature of the sophistic movement; but the stratagem does not obscure the centrality of Socrates' role in the comedy.

29. A different criterion for distinguishing between Lenaeae and Dionysian comedies has been advanced by Dearden, *Stage of Aristophanes*, 8. He suggests that the number of references to "otherwise unknown" Athenians might be significant on the ground that they would be more familiar to the Lenaeae audience than to the Dionysian. A large number of such allusions would indicate Lenaeae production, a small number Dionysian. According to this criterion both *Lys.* and *Thesm.* would have been presented at the Dionysia. Dearden's thesis founders, however, on the Dionysian *Birds*, which stands first (by his calculation) in the number of references to obscure individuals. Dearden attempts to account for this anomaly (p. 181, n. 21) by suggesting that the Dionysia of 414 was considered a domestic festival. There is no evidence to support that view. In addition, persons who seem obscure to us might have been better known to the contemporary audience.

30. See, e.g., Sommerstein, "Aristophanes," 119.

the aggression is displayed, however, are not only dissimilar but also complementary: public and political in one; private and religious in the other. The correlation suggests that the plays were conceived and composed together, in tandem, so to speak. Since Euripides' *Helen* and *Andromeda* provide a good portion of the material for the attack on their author in *Thesmophoriazusae*, it seems reasonable to assume³¹ that Aristophanes began planning that play soon after the production of the two tragedies at the dramatic festivals of 412. Thus it would appear that both plays were already taking shape in the summer of 412 (for *Lys.* see also secs. 3.b.5 and 3.b.v below), long before the birth of the conspiracy.³² In view of those considerations the argument from the difference in the political content of the plays cannot support the view that *Lysistrata* appeared at the Lenaea and *Thesmophoriazusae* at the Dionysia.

Strong evidence in support of the prevailing view, however, has been adduced by Andrewes (188–89),³³ who observed that the word “always” (ἀεί) in the allusion to the peculations of Peisander and “those in office” at *Lysistrata* 490–91 (ἵνα γὰρ Πείσανδρος ἔχοι κλέπτειν χοῖ ταῖς ἀρχαῖς ἐπέχοντες / ἀεί τινα κορκορυγὴν ἐκύκων) shows that the passage refers to long-established activities, not to a recent turn toward oligarchy. It is unlikely that the lines could have been written or allowed to remain in the text of the play at the initial performance if Peisander's advocacy of oligarchy was common knowledge in Athens. Since by any chronology his support of oligarchy was well known at the time of the City Dionysia, two months after the Lenaea, the passage could not have been in a play produced at the later festival. Therefore *Lysistrata* must have been performed at the Lenaea and, if the view that both plays were produced in 411 but at different festivals is correct, *Thesmophoriazusae* at the Dionysia. From this it follows that the Preliminary Assembly, during which Peisander's support of the oligarchic movement became manifest to all, must have been held after the Lenaea of 411.³⁴

2.c. The date of the Lenaea in 411: Mid-February

Our next task is to determine the date of the Lenaea more precisely. The Lenaeon festival was celebrated in the month of Gamelion, but there is no

31. See K. J. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (London, 1972), 170.

32. This is not to preclude alterations to the texts up to the moment of production (see Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy*, 170). Such changes were not only possible but virtually demanded by the topical nature of Attic comedy. The problem with acknowledging the possibility of last minute changes is the difficulty of proving that a particular line or passage was added or changed, or that something was removed at the final moment. Attempts to do so are generally inconclusive: see, e.g., Sommerstein, “Aristophanes,” 114 and n. 21.

33. See also Sommerstein, “Aristophanes,” 113–14.

34. The journal's referee points to a circularity in the argument. The Preliminary Assembly is dated by noting that there is no reference in *Lys.* to Peisander's oligarchic views, and at the same time *Lys.* is placed at the Lenaea on the grounds that Peisander is not connected in the play with the oligarchic movement. The flaw, however, seems not serious. The various pieces of evidence seem to support each other and to rule out the alternatives. The referee also brings up the possibility that Aristophanes knew when the *Lys.* was produced of Peisander's oligarchic ideas but chose not to mention them. That remains a possibility, but it seems unlikely on the following grounds: the depiction in lines 490–91 of Peisander as one of the old gang of politicians who plundered the democracy while in office would be jarringly out of date since the public's perception of Peisander's political stance would have changed recently; and the word “always” seems to bring the characterization to the present moment.

firm evidence concerning the length of the festival or its location within the month.³⁵ Deubner³⁶ suggested that one of the festival days was the twelfth, but his view has not been fully accepted (see Andrewes, 185). Support, however, for a date in the vicinity of the twelfth has come from Mikalson's study of the Athenian sacred and civil calendars. He shows that it was unusual for Athenians to hold meetings of the council and of the assembly on festive days and further that there are no attested meetings of either body in the period from the twelfth to the twenty-first of Gamelion.³⁷ On these grounds it is reasonable to assume that the festival was celebrated in the middle third of Gamelion.

We now turn to locating Gamelion, 411 in terms of the Julian calendar.³⁸ The main evidence for its location is the statement in Aristotle *Athenaion Politeia* 32.1 that the council of 411/0 was scheduled to enter office on the fourteenth of Skirophorion. At this period of Athenian history two calendars were commonly used. The normal Attic year (designated by modern scholars as the "archon's" or "festival" or "sacred" year) was about 354 days long and consisted of twelve lunar months. The year began in midsummer, near the solstice, Hekatombaion being the first month, Gamelion the seventh, and Skirophorion the twelfth. An additional month was intercalated (often, but not always, after the sixth month, Poseideon) with uncertain frequency—ideally there should have been seven intercalations every nineteen years—in order to bring the calendar into step with the solar year. A second calendar was used largely by the government for administrative purposes. The "council's" year (or "conciliar" or "prytany") consisted of 365 or 366 days divided into ten almost equal parts which coincided with the ten prytanies into which each year's council was partitioned. This calendar ran from the first day of Prytany I (also in midsummer) to the last day of Prytany X.³⁹

The datum in *Athenaion Politeia* 32.1 means that the council's year in 412/1 ended some sixteen or seventeen days—according to whether Skirophorion that year was "hollow" (twenty-nine days long) or "full" (thirty days)—before the last day of the archon's year 412/1. Since the council's year was fairly constant and usually began close to the summer solstice,⁴⁰ and since the archon's year was often out of phase with the sun, the discrepancy at the end of 412/1 indicates that at that point the archon's year

35. See L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (1932; reprint, Hildesheim, 1966), 123–25; J. D. Mikalson, *The Sacred and Civil Calendar of the Athenian Year* (Princeton, 1975), 109–10; H. W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (Ithaca, 1977), 104–6.

36. *Attische Feste*, 123–25.

37. Mikalson, *Sacred and Civil Calendar*, 3–7, 109–10, 201; charts on pp. 200 and 202. For the tendency to avoid public meetings on holidays, cf. also G. Busolt and H. Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde. Zweite Hälfte*, 3d ed. (Munich, 1926), 988.

38. Ancient dates are normally expressed in modern scholarship in terms of the calendar introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 (and not modified by the reforms of Pope Gregory XIII in A.D. 1582). For the difficulties and rewards of attempting calendric equations see Dover, *HCT* 4:264–70.

39. Many of the details regarding both calendars and Athenian calendric practices in general are open to dispute. For general accounts see E. J. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World* (Ithaca, 1968), 34–38; A. E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology. Calendars and Years in Classical Antiquity* (Munich, 1972), 57–64; for lucid accounts of modern controversies see Rhodes, *Athenian Boule*, 224–26 and P. J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian "Athenaion Politeia"* (Oxford, 1981), 406–7, 518–20.

40. The summer solstice in 411 was on June 28 (for the calculations see n. 5 above). Cf. also B. D. Meritt, *The Athenian Year* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961), table on p. 218, and "The Chronology of the Peloponnesian War," *PAPhS*, 115, 2 (1971): table on p. 114.

was “late” or behind the solar season. If we assume that the archon’s calendar had proceeded smoothly without intercalations or other disruptions from the sixth to the twelfth month,⁴¹ then Gamelion, which should commence about the middle of January if the calendar coincides with the sun, would also have been somewhat “late” in 411.⁴² These considerations suggest that Gamelion began about the first of February, 411 and that *Lysistrata* was performed about the middle of that month.

3. ALTERNATIVE THEORIES

3.a. Lang’s Views on the Departure of Peisander

Since we have argued that the production of *Lysistrata* preceded the Preliminary Assembly, the latter would seem to have been held in February. This date creates an uncomfortably long interval between the arrival in Athens of Peisander’s embassy (late in December, according to the conventional chronology) and the assembly, which Thucydides implies occurred soon afterward. M. Lang has attempted to lessen the span by postponing Peisander’s departure from Samos until “toward the end of February.”⁴³ In her view chapters 47–52 of Thucydides’ text are not narrated in strict chronological order. She dates the beginning of Alcibiades’ negotiations with Athenians on Samos (chapter 47) to before the winter solstice, but she believes that the talks continued into February so that the decision in chapter 49 to send the mission to Athens occurred late in that month. Meanwhile, in early January, Phrynichus’ correspondence with the Peloponnesian admiral Astyochus (chapters 50–51) took place. According to Lang, Thucydides departed from chronological sequence here in order to achieve greater literary effect. In support of her view she points to 52.1, where it is reported that Alcibiades “was preparing and persuading” Tissaphernes to be an ally of the Athenians at a time when the Peloponnesian fleet was at Rhodes, that is, after the third week of January (for our timetable see n. 8 above). She argues that 52.1 refers to Alcibiades’ activity in chapters 46–48 and that the passage shows that his negotiations with the Athenians on Samos were still in progress toward the end of January.

In principle Lang’s idea of setting Peisander’s departure in February may be correct (see sec. 3.c below) but the arguments adduced in its support are suspect because of the violence they do to Thucydides’ narrative.⁴⁴ First, chapter 52 does not look back to Alcibiades’ earlier activity; rather it picks up the narrative after the account of Phrynichus’ machinations (50–51) and looks forward to chapter 53 where the arrival in Athens of Peisander’s em-

41. A gratuitous assumption, since there is no evidence about the course of the calendar in the interval (cf. Andrewes, 185), but one that we make for the sake of the argument.

42. B. D. Meritt, *Athenian Financial Documents* (Ann Arbor, 1932), 179, sets the first day of Gamelion at January 27, 411; Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy*, 169, dates the Lenaea to early February; Andrewes, 185, thinks that Meritt’s date may be too early and places the festival “somewhere in February.”

43. See M. Lang, “Revolution of the 400: Chronology and Constitutions,” *AJPh* 88 (1967): 176–87, at 180–83.

44. Cf. Andrewes 186; Andrewes also objects (131) to Lang’s views on the ground that Peisander could not have known of the events described in 50–51 when he left Samos; for this point see sec. 3.c below.

bassy is described. The words Ἀλκιβιάδης μὲν at the beginning of 52.1 are repeated at the end of the chapter and answered by the words οἱ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ Πεισάνδρου πρέσβεις at the start of 53.1 (see Andrewes, 121). Second, two motives are mentioned by Thucydides for Phrynichus' decision to correspond with the enemy (50.1): i) He knew that there would be a "discussion" (λόγος) concerning Alcibiades' return to Athens and that the Athenians would accept the restoration. This motive presupposes the decision in 49 to send Peisander's mission to Athens; otherwise there could be no discussion in which the Athenians as a whole would be involved and at which they could ratify the restoration.⁴⁵ ii) Phrynichus feared that Alcibiades, if restored, would punish him for the opposition he had voiced to the oligarchs' plans to restore Alcibiades. This motive must follow Phrynichus' speech of opposition at 48.4–7, which occurred after the negotiations with Alcibiades were complete and the conspirators had announced their plans publicly. Thus Phrynichus' decision to consort with the enemy can only have been made after the events narrated in chapters 48 and 49. Third, Thucydides' narrative, as it is usually interpreted, is consistent both in general chronology and specifically in regard to Phrynichus' state of mind. Phrynichus first tried to dissuade his colleagues from accepting Alcibiades' proposals (48.4–7). He failed to do so (49). Only then did he resolve to try more dangerous methods (50–51). In Lang's version Phrynichus would have attempted treachery before persuasion.

3.b. Andrewes' Views

Andrewes (186–87) has proposed a solution that keeps the traditional date for Peisander's departure for Athens. His arguments may be summarized as follows.

1. Andrewes conjectures that Peisander did not reveal the oligarchic purpose of his mission immediately on arrival in Athens. Instead he spent some time consulting with potential allies prior to declaring his intention openly before the assembly.

2. Since some statement would have been necessary on arrival, Andrewes suggests that the charges against Phrynichus and Scironides (Thuc. 54.3) were leveled at that time, that the two were deposed, and that their successors, Leon and Diomedon, were then dispatched to the fleet (54.3; 55.1).

3. This involves some "telescoping" and transposition in Thucydides' account; but Andrewes regards that as acceptable because, "... Thucydides himself has tied the arrival of Peisandros to the solstice ... and his departure to the end of winter, so that the impression of a brief visit ... cannot be entirely right" (187).

4. Andrewes believes that Thucydides' source for Peisander's sojourn in Athens favored oligarchy and presented a highly colored account of events (cf. Andrewes, 125).

45. For the use of λόγος and forms of λέγειν to denote the discussions at the Preliminary Assembly see Thuc. 53.1–2.

5. The reference to Peisander at *Lysistrata* 490–91 (sec. 2.b above) seems to Andrewes to accord with his theory. He thinks it cannot have been coincidental that the poet at this particular moment depicted Peisander as a politician profiting from the war. To account for the allusion Andrewes conjectures a) that Peisander let it be known shortly after his arrival that he hoped to obtain money from the Persians, and b) that Aristophanes, still in the dark about Peisander's turn toward oligarchy, reacted by writing the lines in question.

6. Andrewes further suggests (131) that the deposition of Phrynichus for Alcibiades' sake (54.3) indicates that Peisander left Samos before the conclusion of Phrynichus' correspondence with Astyochus (51.3), which, according to Andrewes (117, 120), resulted in a gain of credit among the oligarchs for Phrynichus and a loss for Alcibiades. In Andrewes' view, if Peisander had known the outcome, he might not have persuaded the assembly to act in the interest of Alcibiades.

In answer to this hypothesis, the following points (keyed to Andrewes' arguments) may be made.

i. It seems unlikely that Peisander could have concealed the oligarchic aspect of his mission for any length of time. The other envoys may have maintained a discreet silence, but it is scarcely credible that the two-hundred-man crew of the ship that brought the embassy to Athens could have been similarly restrained. They were fully aware of the plan to change the government (48.2–3) and they could hardly have been quarantined from friends and family while Peisander negotiated with potential allies. With so many sources the news would have spread rapidly through the citizen body. This consideration (which Andrewes himself notes in another context [126]) makes it probable that the Preliminary Assembly was held very soon after the embassy's arrival in Athens (as suggested by Thucydides' narrative), since the euphemisms employed at the assembly (53.1 and 3: "not the same kind of democracy"; "more restrained government") would not have been possible had there been time for the less circumspect language of the Samian meetings (48.1 and 2: "no democracy") to be widely disseminated.

ii. The suggestion that the removal of Phrynichus and Scironides from office preceded the Preliminary Assembly is contrary to the sequence of events reported by Thucydides. The rejection of the received text is unnecessary since we shall see that the Thucydidean sequence of events can be justified. Andrewes' suggestion provides ample time for the voyage of Leon and Diomedon to Ionia, but a date for the deposition in the latter half of February also allows time for them to mount an attack on the beached ships at Rhodes before the end of winter (55.1). In any case, the phrase ἀφ' ὧν ἦδη in 55.1, used in connection with their arrival at Samos, seems to indicate that they left Athens soon after the appointment (cf. Andrewes, 131–32).

iii. Thucydides in chapter 49 does not mention Peisander's departure from Samos. He says only that the conspirators "were making (or began making) preparations to send" the embassy to Athens.⁴⁶ The imperfect tense

46. Cf. Busolt, *Peloponnesische Krieg*, 1470, n. 2; see sec. 2 above, at the beginning, for the Greek text.

allows the assumption that considerable time passed before the preparations were complete and the envoys departed. Also, the verbs in the imperfect tense at the beginning of 52.1 ("Alcibiades was preparing and persuading. . .") permit the passage of more than a little time between the end of Phrynichus' machinations and the arrival of Peisander's mission in Athens (cf. Andrewes, 121). Thus the arrival is not as closely connected to the solstice, mentioned in Thuc. 39.1, as Andrewes maintains. It is the decision in 49 to prepare to send the mission that is tied to the turn of the sun. We shall argue below that a significant span of time (unspecified by Thucydides) elapsed between the decision and the arrival. Peisander's departure from Athens after the Preliminary Assembly is directly connected with the end of Thucydides' winter; but that can be reconciled with the view that Peisander's stay in Athens was relatively brief (see sec. 4 below).

iv. Andrewes' suspicions concerning the biased nature of Thucydides' source for Peisander's visit arise from the account of the Preliminary Assembly (53.2–3), which Andrewes regards as "dramatized" (124–25). But the narrative can be regarded as more plausible than he concedes.⁴⁷ In any case it is hard to believe that Thucydides, whatever his methods of composition might have been, would have recorded uncritically a source's account that was so distorted by its partisan bias as to be visibly at odds with the normal range of procedures in the assembly.

v. Andrewes' reconstruction of the background of *Lysistrata* 490–91 is undermined by point (i) above. It is also hard to see how Peisander could have leaked information about a possible deal for Persian support without reference to Alcibiades, which would have raised questions concerning his status in Athens and his interest in acting as intermediary between Athens and Tissaphernes. Further, money and the state's finances are important topics in the first part of *Lysistrata*. In accord with these themes, an attack on the peculations from the public purse by prominent politicians can reasonably be supposed to have been part of the poet's original plan, not a late addition in response to recent developments. Money was in the forefront of public attention in the summer of 412 when the reserve fund, which had been preserved since the beginning of the war, was tapped (Thuc. 15.1). Finally, Peisander's prominence in Athenian political life prior to 411⁴⁸ permits the assumption that Aristophanes chose him as representative of profiteering politicians while he was still with the fleet at Samos.

vi. Andrewes appears to be mistaken in asserting that the episode in Thuc. 50–51, in which Phrynichus' letters to Astyochus were revealed to Alcibiades who reported them to the Athenian authorities at Samos, raised Phrynichus and damaged Alcibiades in the estimation of the conspirators.

47. I hope to discuss the Preliminary Assembly in greater detail elsewhere. Here we need only note that Thucydides' report is not contradictory either within itself or in relation to the surrounding narrative, and that the historian provides a reasonable account of a meeting with three distinct phases. First, Peisander's colleagues proposed Alcibiades' return and a change in government. The proposals provoked a storm of protest (53.1–2 middle). Then, Peisander came forward to take charge of the meeting and persuaded the demos to accept the proposals and to act on them (53.2–54.2). Finally, the generals Phrynichus and Scironides were deposed from office on charges brought by Peisander (54.3).

48. For discussion of Peisander's career see A. G. Woodhead, "Peisander," *AJP* 75 (1954): 131–46; cf. Andrewes, 116–17.

After sending a second message to Astyochus, Phrynichus warned the army at large (51.1: τῷ στρατεύματι) of the imminent danger of attack by the enemy. It was the troops in general whom he directed to fortify Samos and who did the job (51.1–2). At the end of 51.2 Alcibiades' second communication was received, with the charge that the camp was being betrayed by Phrynichus and the news that the enemy was about to attack. In 51.3 Thucydides says, "But it was thought that Alcibiades was untrustworthy and that, knowing in advance the plans from the enemy, he tried to attribute to Phrynichus the same information because of personal enmity. Accordingly Alcibiades did not harm Phrynichus, but instead he bore even greater witness in his support when he announced the same thing that Phrynichus had announced."⁴⁹ Since there is no change between 51.2 and 51.3 in regard to the arena in which the drama was being played out, the statement in the latter section about Alcibiades' lack of credibility appears to apply to the opinion of the army as a whole rather than to a small group within it. Therefore, according to Thucydides, Phrynichus gained credit and Alcibiades lost face among the forces in general, not among the conspirators specifically. Since Alcibiades' goodwill was necessary to the conspirators for access to Persian support, his public humiliation in the confrontation between his word and Phrynichus' constituted a setback for the conspirators' cause. One way of recovering from the loss would have been for the conspirators to divorce themselves from Phrynichus and to punish him for discrediting their ally. That is precisely what happened when Peisander persuaded the assembly to depose Phrynichus for Alcibiades' sake (54.3). Thus the motives behind Peisander's attack on Phrynichus become clearer and more compelling if we assume that Peisander was aware of the public aspects of the events narrated in 50–51 when he addressed the Athenian assembly.

As a result of the considerations noted above, Andrewes' hypothesis appears to fall.

3.c. A New Reconstruction: Delay at Samos

Here we shall argue that the delay necessary to reconcile Thucydides' narrative with the apparent dates of *Lysistrata* and the Preliminary Assembly took place not in Athens but at Samos. According to this view two months elapsed between the conspirators' decision in mid-December to send the mission and its actual departure for Athens about the middle of February. Sommerstein⁵⁰ briefly considered a similar possibility but rejected it out of hand on the ground that the preparations mentioned in chapter 49 were not likely to have consumed that amount of time. The theory, however, of a long delay at Samos is not as improbable as he supposed: it accords with a late date for the comedy and for the assembly; it does no violence to Thucydides' text; and it finds support in the historical narrative.⁵¹

49. 51.3: δόξας δὲ ὁ Ἀλκιβιάδης οὐ πιστὸς εἶναι, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν πολεμίων προειδὼς τῷ Φρυνίχῳ ὡς ξυνειδότη κατ' ἔχθραν ἀνατιθέναι, οὐδὲν ἔβλαπεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ξυνεμαρτύρησε μᾶλλον ταῦτα ἐσαγγείλας.

50. "Aristophanes," 115.

51. Plutarch (*Alc.* 26.1) places the departure of Peisander after Phrynichus' maneuvers. Since Plutarch's account at this point appears to depend heavily on Thucydides, the chronology has been attributed to Plutarch's

We begin with the chronological implications of the word *παρασκευάζειν*. In the middle form as employed by Thucydides in this passage, the word itself does not imply any particular duration for the preparations undertaken. Occasionally, however, it is used with an indication of the time involved. The period may be specific and short, as in 103.2, when the Athenians prepare for five days before a naval engagement, or it may be indefinite and longer, as in 3.2, when during the winter of 413/2 the Lacedaemonians prepare to wage war at the beginning of the spring. Most frequently, however, the word is used without a temporal expression. Sometimes the context indicates the duration, which can be very short (e.g., 20.1; 25.1) or very long, extending over many months (e.g., 46.1; 59 [Tissaphernes' protracted preparations to bring the Phoenician fleet into combat in the Aegean sea; cf. 87 for Thucydides' analysis of Tissaphernes' motives]).⁵² Thus Thucydidean usage does not preclude lengthy preparations after the decision of mid-December. The immediate context in this instance contains no indication of the duration of the preparations.

The standard assumption, based on probability more than on evidence, seems to be that the conspirators would have wished to dispatch the mission quickly, perhaps to take advantage of their success at Samos, or to catch the democracy at home off guard, or simply because there seemed to be no discernible benefit in delay. Haste, however, may not have been the primary consideration. Careful planning of the strategy to be employed in approaching the Athenian demos on such a potentially explosive subject (cf. Thucydides' comments at 68.4) would seem not only prudent but highly advisable. A sign of such planning may be the strategy adopted at the Preliminary Assembly (for a brief overview see n. 47 above). Also, further consultation with Alcibiades concerning future tactics may have been necessary before the embassy was prepared to leave. Such deliberations may have prolonged the preparations, but it is impossible to say to what length. In any event they need not have consumed more than two or three weeks before another factor impeding the departure of the envoys came into play. It should be remembered that the conspirators at Samos were motivated not only by the desire to take affairs of the city into their own hands but also by the wish to prevail over the enemy (Thuc. 48.1). Within two weeks of the decision to send the embassy to Athens, there began a series of moves by the enemy that seriously endangered the army at Samos and, since that force was Athens' main defense at that time, the city's ability to survive. In the face of that threat and

carelessness (see, e.g., E. Delebecque, *Thucydide et Alcibiade* [Aix-en-Provence, 1965], 88). Plutarch, however, had access to other sources for this event. He knew Phrynichus' deme (25.6), a datum not given by Thucydides. Therefore it is possible that in the matter of chronology Plutarch's version reflects a source that laid out the chronology of these events more clearly than did Thucydides.

52. The word can be used also of preparations that were begun but not completed, as is shown in Thuc. 5.83.4. There the historian says that the Athenians had prepared an expedition (*παρασκευασσάμενων αὐτὸν στρατιῶν*) against the Chalcidians in the Thracian area (probably in the summer of 417) that was abandoned (for interpretation see Andrewes *HCT* 4:154). The preparations may have advanced to the point that money was appropriated and paid out: see *IG* 1³. 370 (= R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.*, rev. ed. [Oxford, 1988], no. 77), lines 20–21; and, for discussion, Meiggs and Lewis, p. 235. If that was the case, the preparations may have consumed as much as two months before the project was aborted.

in view of the conspirators' will to win, it seems likely that they would have shelved the mission to Athens, which would have cost the imperiled fleet at least one ship, until the crisis was resolved.⁵³

The train of events that threatened the fleet and occupied its attention began in late December,⁵⁴ the first episode arising from Phrynichus' secret correspondence with Astyochus (50–51).⁵⁵ After the conspirators on Samos had decided to prepare to send a mission to Athens, Phrynichus, fearing for his safety if Alcibiades were restored, wrote to Astyochus, the Spartan commander of the Peloponnesian forces, that Alcibiades was betraying him by making Tissaphernes an ally of Athens. Astyochus went to Magnesia and revealed the contents of the letter to Tissaphernes and Alcibiades. The latter wrote to the authorities at Samos that Phrynichus was in contact with the enemy (50.1–4). Then Phrynichus, disturbed but undaunted, sent another letter to Astyochus saying that he was now prepared to betray the Athenian army, and supplied details on how that might be done.⁵⁶ Astyochus again disclosed the communication to Alcibiades, who sent a second epistle to

53. The journal's referee suggests that the dispatch of a single ship to Athens with Peisander and his associates would not have materially affected the capacity of the fleet to defend itself and Athens' interests in Ionia during the winter of 412/1. The Athenian fleet at Samos seems to have numbered something over seventy ships during the winter (the information supplied by Thucydides is inconsistent and probably incomplete: for discussion see Andrewes, 28–30, items 8–13). In view of the size of the Athenian fleet, the loss of one ship might not seem to make a difference, but other considerations suggest that every warship was needed at that time. The Peloponnesian fleet, especially after the arrival of the additional twenty-seven ships under the command of Antisthenes (39.1, 3), seems to have outnumbered the Athenians on all occasions. Furthermore, since the Athenian victory at Miletus in the summer of 412 (25) and the arrival of the Spartan Therimenes and fifty-five ships from the Peloponnese and Sicily immediately after the battle (26), the Athenians were reluctant to engage unless victory were assured. (In 27 Thucydides reports Phrynichus' arguments for caution, arguments that were accepted by his colleagues and praised by Thucydides [27.5].) It was not until the victory at Cynossema in the late summer of 411 (104–6) that the Athenians regained their confidence in naval warfare (106.4–5). Under these conditions it seems not unreasonable to assume that the Athenians at Samos would have hesitated to lessen their forces by even one ship in the face of a superior enemy.

54. See sec. 1 above. There, working back from the date of the Peloponnesians' departure from Miletus and allowing two to three weeks for the incidents described in 50–51, we arrived at mid-December for the date of the decision to send the mission. Here, working forward from that date and assuming that Phrynichus was aware (for discussion see n. 56 below) of Astyochus' second revelation to Alcibiades within two weeks of the conspirators' decision concerning the mission, we arrive at a date in late December for Phrynichus' warning that an attack by the enemy was imminent. This time schedule allows several days to a week for the events that occurred before the end of the incident, that is, the fortification of Samos, the arrival of Alcibiades' second message, and his loss of credibility in the army.

55. For discussions of this episode see H. D. Westlake, "Phrynichos and Astyochos (Thucydides VIII. 50–1)," in *JHS* 76 (1956): 99–104; Delebecque, *Thucydide et Alcibiade*, 86–89, 96–99; Andrewes, 117–21. Thucydides' source for the incident remains obscure. It has been rightly pointed out that none of the chief Greek actors would have wished to reveal his part. Astyochus was collaborating with Alcibiades after orders had been sent from Sparta to kill him (Thuc. 45.1). Phrynichus was working against the interests of his native land to protect himself politically and perhaps (see n. 56 below) offering to betray his comrades and country in order to extricate himself from a precarious situation. Alcibiades was outmaneuvered by Phrynichus and forced to lose face before the Athenian fleet. Only Tissaphernes had no incentive to hide the facts. It is hard to see, however, how information from him could have gotten to Thucydides. Delebecque, 98–99, and P. A. Brunt, "Thucydides and Alcibiades," in *REG* 65 (1952), 59–96, at 77 (cf. 95) point to Alcibiades, after his second exile, as the most likely source. Andrewes (120) suggests an associate of one of the Greek principals. I hope to argue elsewhere that Phrynichus' correspondence with Astyochus was publicly revealed in Athens during the former's posthumous trial for treason on information supplied by Alcibiades through Critias (cf. Lycurg., *Leoc.* 112–14). At that time Alcibiades, having been restored by both the fleet and the city, would have been willing to disclose his part in order to disgrace his dead enemy.

56. It is often argued that Phrynichus did not intend to betray the army at this point (see, e.g., Westlake, "Phrynichos and Astyochos," 101; Delebecque, *Thucydide et Alcibiade*, 88, 97–98). On that view he wrote the second letter, foreseeing the chain of events that followed, in order to disentangle himself from the perilous

Samos reporting that Phrynichus was betraying the camp and that an assault by the enemy was imminent. Phrynichus, however, became aware of Astyochus' actions and anticipated Alcibiades' letter by announcing to the army that the enemy was about to attack and by initiating measures to ward off the incursion. The announcement caused a flurry of activity: the town was fortified and the fleet, which had been dispersed, was presumably concentrated in the harbor (50.5–51.2). Once Phrynichus had sounded the alarm, it seems unlikely that the conspirators would have wished to dispatch the mission to Athens or that the authorities (insofar as they did not coincide with the conspirators) would have allowed a ship of the line to depart. The assault never materialized and, despite Alcibiades' assertion that it was impending, it may never have been planned. It seems inherently improbable that Astyochus would have acted at the suggestion of, and on information supplied by, Phrynichus, a man whom he had betrayed and who knew he had been betrayed.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, the state of alert on Samos seems not to have subsided quickly. The army, unaware of Phrynichus' machinations, took his warnings seriously. Alcibiades' letter reinforced the sense of peril: the Athenians were convinced that his statement was based on inside knowledge of Peloponnesian plans (50.3). Further, verisimilitude may have been added to the warnings of Phrynichus and of Alcibiades by Astyochus' decision, apparently made about this time, to sail to the aid of Pedaritus and the besieged Chians (40.3). If the fleet was preparing to leave Miletus for Chios, its goal may not have been apparent to uninformed observers and Athenian informers who could easily have communicated the activity to the Athenian camp.⁵⁸ Thus it seems probable that the Athenian forces remained ready for immediate action until they clearly perceived that there would be no threat from the Peloponnesians at Miletus, that is, until the enemy had left Miletus and was sailing south (in the first week of January, 411). By that time, however, another danger had appeared.

Toward the end of December, word arrived at Samos from the Athenian squadron stationed at Melos that a Peloponnesian fleet of twenty-seven ships was approaching Ionia (39.3, 41.4). The Athenians dispatched the general Charminus with twenty vessels to patrol the waters north of Rhodes in order to intercept the enemy (41.3–4). It is not certain precisely when news of the

situation caused by Astyochus' revelation of the first letter. It has, however, been pointed out (Westlake, p. 101, n. 17 and Andrewes, 119–20) that Thucydides' narrative indicates that Phrynichus moved to save the army only after he learned that Astyochus had for the second time disclosed to Alcibiades the contents of the message (50.5–51.1). As Andrewes has noted, we are not in a position to judge Phrynichus' actual intentions; but the report that he was later found guilty of treason on Samos (Craterus, *FGH* 342 F 17 = Scholium to *Ar., Lys.* 313) indicates that at the time of his trial it was commonly held in Athens that he had planned to betray the camp.

57. If the Peloponnesians did not in fact plan to challenge the Athenians at Samos, then Alcibiades' statement arose either from misinformation about the Peloponnesians' intentions (which may suggest that he was not as well informed as he claimed) or out of malice against Phrynichus; that is, Alcibiades added the warning because he wished to depict his foe not only as a traitor but as a successful and dangerous traitor.

58. The negotiations between Athenians at Samos and Alcibiades in the camp of Tissaphernes (Thuc. 47.1–48.1) and the communications described in chapters 50–51 show that travel between the hostile forces was not difficult or unusual.

enemy reinforcements reached Samos, but the following indications point to a time before the final resolution of the alarm arising from Phrynichus' warning (see sec. 1 above for the chronology followed here): (i) The Peloponnesians reached Melos soon after their departure from Malea; (ii) it should not have taken more than two days—and perhaps less if the swiftest ship was sent ahead at full speed—for the Athenians who survived the encounter with the Peloponnesians at Melos to relay the information to the base at Samos; and (iii) when Astyochus departed from Miletus in early January (foreclosing the possibility of an assault against Samos) Charminus was already on patrol off Syme (42.1). Accordingly, it seems clear that the Athenians on Samos were aware of the enemy reinforcements not long after the fleet sailed from the Peloponnese and before Astyochus learned of its arrival at Caunus, and thus before Phrynichus' alert subsided. If the Athenians at that time faced a double threat, from Miletus and from the new fleet, that would help to explain why Charminus was sent with only twenty ships to guard against a larger fleet (whose number would have been known to the Athenians who met it at Melos) when the Athenians at Samos had more than seventy war vessels (Andrewes, 28, item 8).⁵⁹ The appearance of additional enemy ships in Ionia would again have impeded dispatch of Peisander's mission to Athens.

The danger did not decrease. Charminus lost six ships in the encounter with Astyochus at Syme shortly after the latter left Miletus (41.2–42.4). The Athenians immediately sailed with all ships to Syme, opposite Cnidus, where the Peloponnesians were in harbor. Both sides, however, declined to engage and the Athenians returned to Samos (43.1). The Peloponnesian fleets united at Cnidus, creating a formidable armada of some ninety to one hundred ten ships (the exact number is uncertain: Andrewes, 29–30, item 12). The joint force constituted a grave menace to the Athenians and it is improbable that a warship could have been spared for the voyage to Athens under these circumstances.

Within the next few days the Peloponnesians quarreled with Tissaphernes and turned their attention to Rhodes (43.2–44.2; see n. 8 above for the chronology). By the third week of January, the Athenians learned of Rhodes' defection from the empire and they again sailed out from Samos in the hope of forestalling the revolution. It was too late, however, and they returned to the base. Afterward they established forward positions at Chalce and Cos from which they raided Rhodes (44.3). By the end of the third week of January, the Peloponnesians beached their fleet at Rhodes and began the stay of eighty days (44.4). We are not informed whether the Athenian raids were intermittent or continuous throughout the winter.⁶⁰ At any rate it seems likely

59. The engagement has been discussed by C. Falkner, "The Battle of Syme, 411 B.C. (Thuc. 8.42)," *AHB* 9 (1995): 117–24; Falkner notes that the dispatch of twenty ships was insufficient to deal with the larger fleet and proposes several conjectures to account for the decision.

60. At 55.1 Leon and Diomedon, who had replaced Phrynichus and Scironides at the Preliminary Assembly (54.3), led an attack on Rhodes, the purpose of which may have been to ascertain whether or not the Peloponnesian ships remained on shore. The Athenians retired to Chalce, where an Athenian contingent was still stationed at the end of Thucydides' winter (60.3).

that only a portion of the fleet (perhaps on a rotating basis) was detailed to keep watch in Rhodian waters.

As for Peisander's mission, only after the Peloponnesians had beached their fleet and the Athenians had had time to gauge the enemy's intentions would the situation have been settled enough to send a warship to Athens. If we allow a week for news to reach Samos that the Peloponnesians had drawn their ships onto land and another two weeks for observation before it could be safely assumed that they intended to remain there for some time, then the earliest date for Peisander's departure would be about the middle of February, some two months after the decision in mid-December. This date accords with the belief that *Lysistrata* was performed about the middle of February, that the Preliminary Assembly was held after the production of the play, and that the assembly took place soon after Peisander's arrival in Athens.

4. PEISANDER'S DEPARTURE FROM ATHENS AND RETURN TO SAMOS

Thucydides' account indicates that Peisander and the ten envoys chosen to negotiate with Tissaphernes and Alcibiades left Athens not long after the Preliminary Assembly (54.2 and 4; cf. Andrewes, 131). Assuming that the assembly was held before the end of February and allowing two weeks at the most for Peisander's discussions with the clubs (54.4), we calculate that the delegation left Athens no later than the middle of March. The location of the conference with Tissaphernes is not noted by Thucydides (56),⁶¹ but it was presumably within easy reach of the Ionian shore. The journey from Athens therefore need not have consumed much time. Nor was the conference itself drawn out: in the third session, the Athenians saw that further talks would be fruitless and, feeling deceived by Alcibiades, angrily walked out (56.4). Thus it seems likely that the envoys left for Samos toward the end of March, less than two weeks after their departure from Athens (five or six days for the voyage out; five or six days—perhaps fewer—for the negotiations). Peisander's delegation went directly from the meeting with Tissaphernes to Samos so that it would have arrived there about the end of March or the beginning of April, before the return of the Peloponnesian fleet to Miletus.

That chronology accords with Tissaphernes' movements. Immediately after the collapse of the conference he went to Caunus, summoned the Peloponnesians, and made an agreement to support their ships (57). Soon afterward, the Peloponnesian fleet, having rejected an invitation to aid Euboea, set sail for Miletus, arriving there at the end of Thucydides' winter (60.2–3). As noted above (n. 8), the eighty days of inactivity at Rhodes appear to have ended about April 11. The fleet would then have arrived at Miletus some two or three days later. Thucydides' winter would have come to a close about the

61. See D. M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* (Leiden, 1977), p. 103, n. 77, for suggestions concerning the location of the conference; cf. Andrewes 131. Andrewes' conjecture that Peisander stopped at Samos to confer with the conspirators in the camp before going on to meet Tissaphernes seems unnecessary.

middle of April.⁶² Accordingly, about two weeks (from late in March to early in the second week of April) would have been consumed by Tissaphernes' journey to Caunus, his negotiations with the Spartans, and the reactivation of the Peloponnesian fleet.⁶³

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62. The third treaty between the Spartans and their allies and the Persians, which Thucydides quotes in the context of the agreement reached at Caunus (58), is dated in Persian terms to the thirteenth year of the reign of Darius II, the advent of which was on March 29, 411 (R. A. Parker and W. H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.–A.D. 75* [Providence, 1956], 33). That datum has been introduced into the controversy concerning Thucydides' seasons, whether they began and ended according to a fixed astronomical phenomenon or whether the dates varied from year to year: see B. D. Meritt, "The End of Winter in Thucydides," *Hesperia* 33 (1964): 228–30; W. K. Pritchett, "The Thucydidean Summer of 411 B.C.," *CP* 60, 4 (1965): 256–59; B. D. Meritt, "A Persian Date in Thucydides," *CP* 61, 3 (1966): 182–84; Lang, "Revolution of the 400," p. 176, n. 1. Andrewes, however, following Wilamowitz, has pointed out (138–39, cf. 143, 147–48) that the text of the treaty locates it in "the plain of the Maeander" (58.1), not as one would expect from Thucydides (57.2), at Caunus. The difference between the location of the negotiations and of what is presumed to have been the formal confirmation implies a lapse of at the minimum several days—the time needed for Tissaphernes and the Spartans to travel from Caunus to the plain of the Maeander. But the difference may also (and more probably in our opinion) indicate a much longer span of time, especially if, as Andrewes suggests, the treaty was not ratified until it had been referred to the authorities at Sparta for approval. Once the treaty has been cut adrift from its chronological setting in Thucydides, there can be no guarantee that it was signed during Thucydides' winter, so that the Persian date loses its value for the discussion of Thucydidean chronological practice. If the meeting on the Maeander took place within a few days of the negotiations at Caunus, then the fleet may have awaited ratification before putting to sea. If the elapsed time was longer, then both sides would have had to implement the terms agreed upon at Caunus pending formal confirmation, for it seems improbable that the fleet would have sailed without funds from Tissaphernes in hand.

63. Thanks are due to the journal's referee for helpful comments and suggestions.