

TWO PASSAGES IN THUCYDIDES¹

4. 86. 4-5 [B]² οὐ γὰρ ξυστασιάσων ἤκω, οὐδὲ ἂν σαφῇ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν νομίζω ἐπιφέρειν, εἰ τὸ πάτριον παρεῖς τὸ πλεόν τοῖς ὀλίγοις ἢ τὸ ἔλασσον τοῖς πᾶσι δουλώσαιμι. χαλεπωτέρα γὰρ ἂν τῆς ἀλλοφύλου ἀρχῆς εἴη . . .

8. 48. 5 [P] οὐ γὰρ βουλήσεσθαι αὐτοὺς μετ' ὀλιγαρχίας ἢ δημοκρατίας δουλεύειν μᾶλλον ἢ μεθ' ὁποτέρου ἂν τύχωσι τούτων ἐλευθέρους εἶναι.

THE historical value of these two passages is offset by the extreme difficulties of their interpretation, and these raise in their turn questions not only of Thucydides' style, but also of his historical methods and aims. Three points in common should, however, be immediately apparent, and illustrate the scope of the analysis that follows. In the first place both passages contain fairly explicit judgements on the comparative desirability for a state of its internal and external political freedom.³ While the existence of party struggle in the majority of Greek cities at this time pervades contemporary literature and is generally accepted by most historians as a historical fact (the *locus classicus* is of course Thuc. 3. 82-3), the strength of this political feeling and its practical effect can only with difficulty be inferred from events. Appreciation of it relies therefore in no small part on such passages of Thucydides as these two being considered here.⁴

Secondly, the internal politics of Greek cities has an obvious bearing on the now classic controversy over the basis and popularity of the fifth-century Athenian Empire. While I do not propose to open this here, it is fair to point out that these two passages together bear directly on the central question of allied feelings towards Athens and are of especial significance in view of Thucydides' general silence on the subject itself.⁵ [P] could in particular be

¹ To Prof. A. Andrewes and Mr. G. E. M. de Ste Croix are owed my warmest thanks for their patience and invaluable criticisms of early drafts of this somewhat involved paper.

² Throughout I shall for convenience refer to these two passages as [B] and [P] respectively; the question of *authorship*, be it Brasidas and Phrynichus or Thucydides, will be considered below.

³ This is most immediately apparent from the terminology; internal politics indicated in [B] by ξυστασιάσων, ὀλίγοι/πάντες, τὸ ἔλασσον/ τὸ πλεόν (μετ' ὀλιγαρχίας ἢ δημοκρατίας of [P] is less specific), and external shown by ἐλευθερία, ἀλλοφύλος ἀρχή [B] and δουλεύειν, ἐλευθέρους εἶναι [P]. On the technical terms of Greek inter-state politics, including the rather controversial *αὐτονομία*, see Gomme, *HCT* i. 384-5; Ste Croix, *Historia*, iii (1954), 21; Bickerman, *Rev. Int. des Droits de l'Ant.* v (1958), 313-44. The more commonplace terminology of internal party

politics is scattered throughout literature (cf. esp. Thuc. 3. 82-3 and [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* passim, written, as I believe, at the outbreak of the Archidamian War).

⁴ Also 8. 64. 4-5 (Thasian secession 411, on which see further below); 8. 91. 3 (priorities of the Athenian oligarchs later in 411); 3. 82. 1 (war enabling and justifying internal *στάσις*). More often however external factors cloud the political spectrum as at Acanthus, where fear for crops was probably the operative cause for secession (4. 84. 2, and repeated at 88. 1).

⁵ Silence, impartiality, or inconsistency? Contrast 3. 82. 1, 8 with 2. 8. 4-5 for example. The invocation of Thucydides' own political views on this question seems a trifle unwise as he can write as sympathetically of Thasian oligarchic secession (8. 64. 5) as of the democratic ideals of Athens (2. 35 ff.), and even his more specific political judgements have not escaped fierce historical debate (2. 65. 7-11; 8. 97. 2).

used to support the view that the allies were prepared to overlook their partisan interests in internal government in an all-out desire to free themselves from Athens, so unpopular was the Empire by 411.¹ The force of this interpretation is strengthened, rather than weakened, by the fact that it contradicts what Thucydides (or Brasidas) had said was the normal political feeling of Greek cities (which put internal politics before external freedom). Other interpretations, more favourable to the Athenian Empire, are possible and, I hope to show, preferable.

The problems of interpretation lie in the generalized form of [P], and this is the third feature it has in common with [B]. Both are entirely general comments on political feeling, and yet in neither is the complete generalization applicable to the immediate context in which it appears. This obviously raises two important questions—why the generalized form? and what validity resides in the generalization as a whole? Though related, these questions are not simply another way of asking whether Thucydides invented or carefully reproduced his speeches from originals,² as even if Thucydides composed them himself there remains the additional problem of his concept of historical truth.

Thus 1. 22 is by no means the only approach to the central problems of Thucydides, even if it is the most direct. My immediate concern, however, is historical, and I shall not attempt here an examination of Thucydides' speeches or aims except to insist that they are related subjects and that they apply to (and should always be kept in mind with) any use, historical or otherwise, that is made of what Thucydides wrote. In what follows I shall concentrate on elucidating and removing the ambiguities of [P] by means of a close analysis of the Greek text and by comparison with the parallel, and more straightforward, passage [B]. My conclusion is that it is possible to distinguish the historical *context* of both passages (Acanthian democrats in 424 and allied oligarchs reacting to the offer of universal oligarchy in 411) from their actual *content* (completely general political priorities given in [B] but restricted to Athenian allies in [P]). The reasons for Thucydides' combining these two, and the historical validity of the second, will then be briefly considered.

Criticism that this is to make unnecessarily difficult the derivation of fact from Thucydides' text cannot I feel be sustained. Thucydides is a difficult source, nor is this difficulty without its merits and interest. In answer to the charge that my method imposes too strict a logical rigour on the texts, I should point to the variation in interpretations possible for the second passage [P] and argue that for sound historical deductions to be made from what Thucydides wrote it is essential to decide precisely what this was and to analyse its historical implications. This is so, however imprecise or however un-historical Thucydides himself might be thought to have been.

¹ Thus, for example, Brunt (*New English Library*) translates: 'The allies did not wish to be slaves under democracy or oligarchy so much as to enjoy freedom under either form of government', and Ste Croix implies as much in saying that this passage contradicts the statement of Brasidas (*Historia*, iii [1954], 29 and n. 4; not surprisingly he prefers Brasidas' version).

² Both passages purport to be speeches,

even though [P] occurs in a synopsis in *oratio obliqua* of what Phrynichus is supposed to have argued at the Samos debate. Whether this is because Thucydides had yet to write up Book 8 or had in fact changed his practice from the earlier Books, I hope at least to show that the generalized form of [P] (and for similar reasons of [B] also) are entirely due to Thucydides' own composition of these passages.

I

Brasidas' generalization is made as part of an argument to allay individuals' fears of the consequences of Spartan control of Acanthus (put by Brasidas as an alliance with Sparta). This argument first dealt with the city as a whole (4. 85. 6–86. 2) and then turned to individuals (86. 3, *εἴ τις ἰδίᾳ*). The same pattern was repeated at Torone, but for this only a summary is given (4. 114. 3, *ἔλεξε τοῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀκάνθῳ παραπλήσια, ὅτι . . .*). Nevertheless there is still the same division, *οὔτε πόλιν οὔτε ἰδιώτην*.¹ The fear was basically just the same. Spartan-backed oligarchies were the notorious instrument of Spartan control of the Peloponnese as well as outside it.² Because this method relied on using existing internal political factions (and oligarchies were better as more easily controlled), its effect on the state was along political lines, and members of one party could anticipate (and fear) the result of their political opponents' gaining the upper hand. So at Acanthus the fear is not simply of *ad hoc* confiscation, but of systematic victimization by the group that might be put into power. Brasidas is quite explicit—*μὴ ἐγὼ τισι προσθῶ τὴν πόλιν* followed by the political terminology and groupings of [B] itself *τὸ ἔλασσον/ τὸ πλεόν, ὀλίγοι/ πάντες, ἐλευθερία/δουλεία*. The evidence for the political situation at Acanthus itself is slight, but some form of democracy is indicated by the form of Brasidas' whole argument as by his audience, the Acanthian *δῆμος* which then deliberated and acted on the matters Brasidas raised.³ There was also some form of opposition, and *στάσις* is in evidence⁴ apart from the hypothetical *ξυστασίδων* of [B]. The nature of the Acanthian democracy, and even its historical antiquity, cannot, however, be more precisely assessed.⁵

Brasidas' offer to the Acanthians is therefore quite clear—they may continue with their existing democracy but be free of Athenian imperialism, *αὐτονομία* and *ἐλευθερία* bounded only by the terms of the *ξύμμαχία* with Sparta. Nor can there be much doubt about the particular argument [B]. Having himself introduced the subject of internal politics, Brasidas here promises not to interfere in them, for if he were to, the result of his favouring one side rather than another would be worse for the unfavoured side than the rule of a foreign power. From what has been said it will be clear that the force of this argument is a promise not to alter the existing democratic constitution (as it was feared that he, a Spartan, might well do), based on the realization that the people

¹ A similar speech was also made by Brasidas at Scione (4. 120. 3), but no summary is given that can be compared with the speeches at Acanthus and Torone.

² Thuc. 1. 19, 144. 2; 5. 81. 2, etc.

³ 4. 84. 2, 87. 6, 88. 1. The very fears that Brasidas was seeking to allay also imply a democracy in view of Sparta's record.

⁴ 4. 84. 2.

⁵ *Τὸ πάτριον*, which I take with Steup and most commentators to refer to the Acanthian *πάτριος πολιτεία*, is thereby too much a piece of political propaganda for historical inferences (cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 35. 2). It has also been suggested, however, that 'Spartan tradition' is meant here (thus Brunt in his translation, and followed by Andrewes). More indicative may be the unique variant

πάντες, instead of the usual *οἱ πολλοί*, for *τὸ πλεόν* which would appear to imply a particularly broad-based democracy (cf. 6. 39. 1, Athenagoras). To contrast internal changes (where the Acanthians feared a Spartan oligarchy) with external rule (where secession from the Athenian Empire was Brasidas' avowed objective) must imply that this external rule did not itself involve any imposition of internal government (always supposing what I think there are grounds for doubting, namely that these *specific* references can be maintained for the generalization [B]). Gomme certainly felt that the Acanthian democracy was independent of Athens (*More Essays in Greek History*, 168). This would be a most interesting admission if in fact made by a Spartan.

of Acanthus would prefer to remain inside the Athenian Empire than be subject (Brasidas says 'enslaved') to Acanthian oligarchs.

Although the generalization [B] makes sense, it is reasonable to ask why it should appear here in Brasidas' argument where there was no possibility (or likelihood in view of the Spartan record) of any *oligarchy* being ousted in favour of a puppet democracy. Three reasons are possible. The first, that Brasidas wished by generalizing to cover up the fact of the popularity of Athenian political control as contrasted with the Spartan alternative (involving imposed oligarchy),¹ is suitably subtle, though undermined by the specific references to Athens and Sparta in what follows. A second reason for the gratuitous generalization could be sought in the somewhat elaborate style of the whole of Brasidas' speech. Thucydides himself was aware of the paradox of an articulate Spartan, but his comment that Brasidas was *οὐδὲ ἀδύνατος ὡς Λακεδαιμόνιος εἰπεῖν* lacks conviction.² Gomme, who pointed out several rhetorical phrases in the same area of the speech as [B], is probably nearer the truth in noting ideas 'more Athenian than Spartan—Thucydidean/Athenian that is'.³ In assigning the speech to Thucydides I am inclined therefore to favour a wider explanation for the generalized form that concerns neither Brasidas' eloquence nor the immediate historical context. The remark is in fact an entirely general comment on the priorities of Greek politics and closely compares with 3. 82, a passage of clearly independent editorial comment. A similar conclusion can also be drawn for [P], the second of the two generalizations under consideration.

II

In 8. 48 Thucydides summarizes Phrynichus' arguments against a proposal, originating from Alcibiades (*τῶν ἀπ' Ἀλκιβιάδου*, 8. 48. 7), to set up an oligarchy at Athens (to gain the support of Persia) and in all allied cities (to secure their allegiance to the newly oligarchic Athens). We are here concerned mainly with why Phrynichus felt the latter part of this scheme to be misconceived, and [P] constitutes his reason for believing that the offer of oligarchy to allied cities would not be sufficient to keep them in the Empire. I have already mentioned above that widely differing interpretations can be offered for this passage, whether it be construed as historical comment or not. The problems begin, and end, with the generalizations in which it is expressed. These are brought out clearly by the interpretation that I hope to establish for [P], which I should translate as follows:

In each allied city [*first generalization*], neither political party, oligarchic or democratic [*second generalization*], wishes to remain in a condition of subservience to Athens (as an ally) with their internal constitution, be it oligarchy or democracy [*third generalization*], imposed by Athens; instead, both parties [*second generalization continued*] would prefer to be free of Athenian rule with whichever form of internal government they can on their own achieve [*fourth generalization that amounts to the same as the second on my view*].

¹ See the latter part of p. 64 n. 5 above.

² 4. 84. 2. Thucydides is similarly apologetic about the speech he attributes to the Spartan envoys at Athens in 4. 17. 2, although Archidamos needed no such

excuses at 1. 79. 2 ff. etc. Despite Brasidas' eloquence, fear for the crops and lack of support from Athens were the deciding factors at Acanthus.

³ Gomme, *HCT* iii. 554.

The *first generalization*, that the argument holds for all allied cities in 411, is obvious and not an important obstacle. This subject, *ξυμμαχίδας πόλεις*, however, turns into the anacolouthon *αὐτοὺς* in [P] (OCT line 20) and ought to warn us that this passage is about the views of people within these cities and not simply about the attitudes of the cities as a whole.¹ The *second generalization* which I should like to isolate covers those elements of political opinion within allied cities that appear woven together in the intricate [P]. These are I believe the independent attitudes of oligarchs and democrats just as in [B], though now only the oligarchic have any factual substance. This point is far from being generally accepted, and will have to be justified at length.

In the section that follows our passage, 8. 48. 6, these same allies are said to prefer the *δῆμος* to *οἱ καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ ὀνομαζόμενοι*. It is usually assumed that the reference is to Athens, as the possibility of an oligarchy at Athens underlies the whole argument (*ὅτι δὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐ δημοκρατήσονται*),² but as it is also proposed to impose oligarchies on the allies it could be argued that *allied δῆμος* and *καλοὶ κάγαθοί* are meant.³ On this view a third group of allied citizens, describable neither as *καλοὶ κάγαθοί* nor as *δῆμος*, must be the subject of *αὐτοὺς νομίζειν* and indeed of the whole section from *οὐ γὰρ βουλήσεσθαι* to *σωφρονιστήν*. Phrynichus on this interpretation would be arguing that these a-political allied citizens were not so much interested in the internal government they might have (though democracy might if anything have been preferable) as in their cities' freedom from the Empire. That this point was made against a proposal designed to secure the allegiance of the allies in general would guarantee considerable significance and size for this group of a-political citizens, as would the reference to them as *ξυμμαχίδας πόλεις* with no further qualification. [P] would emerge therefore as strong proof of majority dissatisfaction in 411 with the Athenian Empire.

This interpretation breaks down, however, at all points. In the first place the *δῆμος* must be Athenian. "*δῆμος*" unqualified is too broad a term to be restricted, as on this view it would have to be, to the *προστάται* and opposed to a politically apathetic allied *πλῆθος*. From Thucydides' use of the word in his description of the Samian revolution at 8. 73. 2 it is clear that it extends *from* the wider *πλῆθος* to its particular representatives, rather than the reverse. The Samian revolutionaries are only called *δῆμος* (*καὶ ὄντες δῆμος*) when acting as such an extension of the broader mass. Moreover, to understand by *δῆμος* an isolated group of extremists is to make nonsense of Phrynichus' argument, for how, unless *δῆμος* is broad-based, is there any real difference between it and the equally closed group of oligarchs? In particular it is difficult to see how the point about the lawcourts could apply. Finally, where Thucydides does refer to leaders of allied democracies in 3. 82. 1, he calls

¹ Thucydides has written this passage with some care (though the nominative *ἄκριτοι* I take as an anacolouthon, rather than MS. error as Steup), and we return to the allied *cities* only with Phrynichus' conclusions in 48. 7 (OCT line 28).

² Thus Steup 'τὰ κακά . . . namentlich gegen die Bundesgenossen' (i.e. as a whole), also Brunt and most commentators.

³ This would appear to have been Gomme's interpretation of the passage, as he says of 8. 48. 6 that 'Phrynichus is arguing . . . not to trust to the oligarchs in the allied cities', *CQ* n.s. iii (1953), 66. Of earlier commentators Mitford comes close to this, though his paraphrase generalizes the whole passage into a defence of the institution of democracy.

them οἱ τῶν δῆμων προστάται; δῆμος in the singular and unqualified by context or place can only be that of Athens, *the δῆμος*.¹

To a certain extent it follows from this that the *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ ὀνομαζόμενοι* cannot be the allied, but must be the Athenian upper classes. Both *δῆμος* and *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ* are equally removed from the people whose views are being given. Moreover, to suppose these *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ* to be the *allied* upper classes would exclude from the subject of the whole argument (*ξύμμαχιδες πόλεις*) just that section of allied opinion that was most relevant; for the proposal against which Phrynichus is arguing was presumably based on the premiss that allied *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ* would respond favourably to the idea of the setting up of allied oligarchies. Athenian *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ* are anyway in themselves more likely from the details given in 8. 48. 6 itself. τὰ ἔργα (OCT line 28) are wide-ranging and not particularly explicit,² but we do know that at least in the case of Mytilene there was a debate in the Athenian Assembly (while under the absolute control of the *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ*, with no *δῆμος*, the allies feared that there would be no opportunity for trial—ἄκριτοι),³ and the connection of the protective role of the *δῆμος* with the death penalty (*βιαιότερον ἀποθνήσκειν*) recalls the judicial arrangements of the Athenian Empire where such cases were referred to Athenian courts.⁴ The sarcastic reference (*ὀνομαζόμενοι*) to what I am arguing to be Athenian upper classes may seem surprising in the mouth of one who was to be the most enthusiastic supporter of the Four Hundred; but it must be remembered that the reason for this enthusiasm was Phrynichus' opposition to Alcibiades, whose proposal is here under consideration and whose dissociation from the Athenian oligarchic movement is still to take place.⁵ Finally, the unsolicited support shown in 8. 48. 6 for the Athenian democracy (*καταφυγὴν εἶναι καὶ ἐκείνων σωφρονιστὴν*) is no argument for rearranging the passage, even if it does cast a somewhat favourable light on the Empire.⁶

Not only can the *δῆμος* and *καλοὶ κάγαθοὶ* of 8. 48. 6 not be allied, but the

¹ The internal politics of Athens are of course bound up with the whole argument (*οὔτε δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐ δημοκρατήσονται*). In 8. 49 it is true that even the Athenian *δῆμος* is qualified, *τοῦ ἐκεῖ δήμου*, but there only to distinguish it from the *δῆμος* of the place where the debate was taking place, Samos, and for which a similar fate was being planned (8. 48. 2-3, 63. 3). The decisions taken by the conference (8. 49) are disconnected from the *oratio obliqua* account of Phrynichus' objections, and no inconsistency exists in the *δῆμος* being qualified now though not earlier. "*δῆμος*" is anyway, it would appear, a localized term: the *δῆμος* of Athens is *in* Athens (*ἐκεῖ*), not just an Athenian part of a general Greek *δῆμος* (put differently, "*δῆμος*" is not a universal), just as the plural was used for the lower-class sections of several states in 3. 82. 1.

² The reference is to τὰ κακά of OCT line 24; *ἐσηγητάς* I take closely with τῷ δήμῳ, translating 'being the people who devised and proposed to the Athenian Assembly measures injurious to the allies'

(to take τὰ κακά with τῷ δήμῳ on the other hand does not do justice to *ἐσηγητάς* and raises the awkward question of aristocratic advantages at the expense of the Athenian *δῆμος* where extremely few can be imagined).

³ It was this debate that, despite Thucydides' presentation, proved decisive (cf. 3. 36. 4, a mass reaction).

⁴ See Ste Croix, *CQ* n.s. ix (1961), esp. 268-80.

⁵ Phrynichus, 8. 68. 3; the split with Alcibiades is described at length, 8. 50-1, 54. 3. Phrynichus' murder may even be connected (according to Thucydides it was by an Argive, 8. 92. 2, cf. 86. 9, though this conflicts with the varying accounts of this obscure event that later emerged, cf. Lysias 13. 71; Lyc. c. *Leocr.* 112; Meiggs and Lewis, 85); perhaps Thucydides had still to clear up this point in his own mind.

⁶ That it is a comparison of evils (*οὐκ ἐλάσσω*) does not detract from the strikingness of the terms used (*καταφυγή* and *σωφρονιστής*).

subject of the whole section 8. 48. 5-6 cannot possibly be either that third group of a-political allies that the suggested interpretation would require. Although the existence of such a group is indeed indicated by Thucydides elsewhere (the unfortunate τὰ μέσα τῶν πολιτῶν of 3. 82. 8), it was inactive (οἳ οὐ ξυνηγωνίζοντο, 3. 82. 8) and surely was never significantly large enough to be thought of as the whole of a city. No doubt there was a large a-political element in every city, but this is not Thucydides' τὰ μέσα and it never plays a significant historical role.¹

Of course it remains logically possible that Thucydides did not intend [P] to be anything more precise than a description of general allied feeling. In view of the degree of Greek internal στάσεις, shown *inter alia* by such passages as [B] considered above, any analysis based on such a level of generalization cannot be historically interesting. Yet, far from this, [P] gives every indication of being a precise and penetrating analysis of internal allied political thinking. It would be very short-sighted to discount it simply because of the difficulties of discerning the precise details of the argument. Both in content and context [P] in fact relates directly, if differently, to the internal politics of allied cities. Contemporary Athenian opinion thought, rightly or wrongly, that the problem of the allies in 411 concerned their internal politics (for altering these was the proposed solution). This does not mean that internal politics was the *cause* of allied disaffection, but simply that a *remedy* for it could be seen in altering the system of internal government. This is important, but it also leads on to Phrynichus' argument itself, which is that this proposed remedy will be ineffectual. In [P] he refers explicitly to internal allied politics;² and, with the precedent set by the generalization used by Brasidas, there should be no difficulty in understanding that the argument applies independently to each of the two usual political factions in the allied cities being considered. Whether [P], also like [B], properly relates only to the views of one of these factions is best left till the whole of Phrynichus' generalization has been disentangled.

The real confusion in [P] surrounds the relation of the two μετά-phrases (OCT lines 20 and 21) to the whole argument. These phrases contain the options open to the allies and their relative desirability. In bringing internal government into relation with external rule (here Athenian only), they closely parallel the historical content of [B] as shown above. Two further generalizations can usefully be isolated.

One of these, the *third generalization*, is contained in μετ' ὀλιγαρχίας ἢ δημοκρατίας δουλεύειν and is not in itself problematical. It relates to the possibility of remaining in the Athenian Empire (technical δουλεία, though perhaps rather more than technical in this argument), *either* with the imposed oligarchy that Athens is offering *or* with democracies. It is not immediately apparent

¹ Apathetic or a-political, this third group has no written history. The varied and sometimes detailed evidence we have of city στάσεις gives no part to uncommitted groups other than the protagonists (Megara, 4. 71. 1). Thus at Thasos the στάσεις, which exemplifies the present argument of Phrynichus, involves only ὀλίγοι and ἐναντιωσόμενος δῆμος, and there is no mention of any third party or group of individuals. Moderates there were of course on

many issues: these are Thucydides' τὰ μέσα, but their separate existence depended upon the issue; they were not a third political group any more than are the 'don't knows' of today.

² Oligarchy or democracy inside (δουλεύειν) or outside (ἐλευθέρους εἶναι) the control of an oligarchic Athens. Despite Brasidas' δουλώσαιμι, δουλεία and ἐλευθερία are terms more properly of inter-state relations (see above, p. 62 n. 3).

what force this democratic alternative has, for *only* oligarchy is being offered. For the present, however, we are not concerned with more than the *sense* of [P]; the practical relevance will be discussed later.

A *fourth generalization* is ostensibly produced by the next clause, μᾶλλον ἢ μεθ' ὁποτέρου ἂν τύχῃσι τούτων ἐλευθέρους εἶναι. In so far as this is what the allies actually wanted, it is perhaps the most important part (historically) of Phrynichus' argument. It is also, however, the most obscurely expressed. Moreover, if the disjunction (oligarchy or democracy) implied by μεθ' ὁποτέρου . . . τούτων in fact introduces another genuine alternative, and if the sense of ἂν τύχῃσι is that the option was entirely open or left to chance, then there is again room for the interpretation (already discussed in one form above) of allied hostility to Athens being in 411 sufficient to override the normal priorities of internal party politics. This threat is, I believe, entirely illusory.

Certainly this second μετά-phrase is to be sharply distinguished from the first. It is apparently a generalization (μεθ' ὁποτέρου), but ἂν τύχῃσι adds an element of chance or openness in the disjunction oligarchy/democracy that is totally different from the possibility of which of the two Athens might impose (that produced the third generalization). Not only is the condition of the allies when independent of Athens (ἐλευθέρους εἶναι) independent likewise of whatever constitution Athens was proposing to impose on them inside the Empire, but their choice of internal constitution is now also much freer (indicated by the indefinite, *not* generalizing, ἂν). The openness of the μεθ' ὁποτέρου clause, while therefore independent of the third generalization μετ' ὀλιγαρχίας ἢ δημοκρατίας, that can be reduced to an *actual* offer of imposed oligarchy, could itself conceivably be similarly reduced to the *actual* variations in existing allied constitutions by translating 'with whichever of the two they happen to have at the present'. Apart from the linguistic difficulties of having to understand a participle such as πολιτευόμενοι and the double-duty served by μεθ' ὁποτέρου,¹ the problem with this interpretation is that it removes just that element of indefiniteness that I have argued distinguishes this μετά-phrase from the earlier. Virtually all the Athenian allies at the time, and certainly all those to which oligarchy was being offered on the argument that Phrynichus is here refuting, were officially in the hands of democracies. On the other hand, the required degree of indefiniteness can certainly be obtained by translating 'with whichever of the two (*n'importe laquelle*) it might happen that they find themselves with'. Attraction of the impersonal τύχῃ to the subject of the main verb (here the allies) is not without parallels in Thucydides.² This interpretation, however, is in my opinion too far removed from the actual wishes of the allies that are here in [P] for the first time personalized (οὐ γὰρ βουλήσεσθαι αὐτούς), and could have been conveyed by the simple μεθ' ὁποτέρου ἐλευθέρους εἶναι alone (rather as ὁποτεροισούν in the decree cited at 5. 41. 2). A more straightforward way of retaining the required openness while avoiding these linguistic difficulties is to take τυγχάνω here in the sense of 'to gain, to succeed in trying to get, to get'. With a personal subject the verb then suits the context of the wishes of allied parties and the genitive of aim this sense requires can easily have been attracted into μεθ' ὁποτέρου while the position of τούτων

¹ LSJ s.v. τυγχάνω II. 2 only cites examples of the participle ὦν omitted, and ὄντες (μετ' ὀλιγαρχίας ἢ δημοκρατίας) is ugly, and unparallelled in the sense needed here

(contrast 3. 56. 4, οἶδε μετ' αὐτοῦ ἦσαν).

² 3. 43. 5 πρὸς ὄργην ἦντινα τύχητε (and see Gomme's note, *HCT* ad loc.).

after *τύχῳσι* to a certain extent acts as confirmation. Although certainty is perhaps not attainable here on linguistic grounds alone, I feel that the probability is in favour of this last interpretation and should translate 'with whichever of the two they can on their own achieve'.

I have already argued that the subject of *τύχῳσι* is allied oligarchs and democrats *independently*. On the tolerably obvious grounds that oligarchs will try 'on their own to achieve' oligarchy (and democrats democracy), it is now possible to see that this fourth generalization reproduces exactly the same options (oligarchy and democracy) as the subject of the whole of [P], or, in other words, the second generalization. This simplification, with the fourth equalling the second generalization, need not in itself be at all remarkable, and the confusion has clearly been produced by the extreme compression with which Thucydides, typically, has written the passage.

Some sort of confirmation for this interpretation can be found in the *general* historical context of [P]. Moreover, to the extent that the historical relevance of the passage is a justification for its elucidation, this context provides what amounts to a further proof of the interpretation itself.

Alcibiades' proposal is not described in any detail by Thucydides and instead we are given only Phrynichus' objections to it and a description of the (unsuccessful) outcome. The similarity between these two, and not simply that Phrynichus was right in thinking that the proposal would fail but that he correctly analysed the reasons for this failure, is brought out by Thucydides' account of the events at Samos, but more typically at Thasos, in 8. 63. 3-64.¹ That Thucydides endorses Phrynichus' analysis can hardly be disputed. Apart from favourable comments on Phrynichus' judgement in other matters,² Thucydides permits him here the claim *σαφῶς αὐτὸς εἰδέναι* (8. 48. 7) and has written the whole of 8. 64 with the arguments of 8. 48 in mind.³ Both passages moreover refer to what the allies wanted (*οὐ γὰρ βουλήσεσθαι*, 8. 48. 5; *ἀ ἐβούλοντο*, 8. 64. 4), so it would seem reasonable to expect these later events to conform in a positive way to [P].

What happened at Thasos is quite clear. The *δῆμος* was removed by Diectrephes in accordance with the oligarchic plan and an oligarchy was set up. After two months of oligarchic partnership with Athens (*ἡ μετ' Ἀθηναίων ἀριστοκρατία*) the Thasians seceded from the Empire. The result was what they had most wanted, independent oligarchy—*τὴν πόλιν τε ἀκινδύνως ὀρθοῦσθαι καὶ τὸν ἐναντιωσόμενον δῆμον καταλελύσθαι*. 'The Thasians' (8. 64. 3) must here refer to the oligarchic party set in power by Diectrephes; it would be invidious to postulate oligarchic *coup* and counter-*coup*, for the result of the Athenian initiative was quite clearly that the oligarchs took advantage of it

¹ 8. 64. 5 *καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις πολλοῖς τῶν ὑπηκόων*; the case of Samos was exceptional (see further below).

² Such as Phrynichus' assessment of Alcibiades' motives *ὅπερ καὶ ἦν* (8. 48. 4), or more generally *οὐκ ἀξύνετος* (8. 27. 5)—a commendation used elsewhere by Thucydides only for Themistocles (1. 138. 3), Brasidas (4. 81. 2), the Peisistratids (6. 54. 5), and Hermocrates (6. 72. 2). *φερεγγυώτατος* (8. 68. 3), however, is that sort of reliability most needed on the battlefield,

and not in political analysis.

³ With *πάναντία τοῖς τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν καθιστάσιν τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἐγένετο* (8. 64. 5) the reader is necessarily referred back to 8. 48, the only place where the oligarchic plans have been indicated; and there are further echoes—of structure (Alcibiades, the war, and the allies), of general subject-matter (internal allied politics), and even of the terminology of political propaganda (compare esp. 8. 48. 6 with 64. 3, 5).

to gain political control,¹ and then profited from the over-all situation to secede. The contemporary weakness of the Athenians that made this possible,² may have influenced 'the Thasians' in their choice of when to secede and enabled them to do it *ἀκινδύνως*; but it clearly has no bearing upon their actual wishes which, as [P] says, were for independent oligarchy from the outset.

The events at Samos were very different. Not only was the oligarchy set up there closely related to the Athenian oligarchic movement as a whole,³ and therefore an allowable exception to the argument in [P], but it quickly succumbed to a democratic counter-revolution. Clearly the wishes of the Athenian-backed oligarchs are no longer able to decide the question of whether Samos should remain in the Empire; but equally clearly the democratic revolution and its subsequent association with the Athenian fleet amount to secession from the oligarchic Athens that is envisaged by [P] and was then in being (the Four Hundred).

Obviously the truth of [P] can only be tested as far as the oligarchic proposal was actually put into operation. Thucydides mentions Thasos and ἄλλοι πολλοὶ τῶν ὑπηκόων without naming them. In all of these he believed oligarchies were set up by Athens and then seceded.⁴ Even the possible exception of Samos can, for the reasons just given, be said to be covered by [P]. Thus Phrynichus' analysis, and [P] in particular, proved correct: internal political rivalry (far from irrelevant or left to chance) played in all areas a decisive part, in that oligarchs would rather set up their oligarchy outside the Empire than within it, and democrats would rather leave the Empire than have an oligarchy (local) control them. In view of the similarity between these events and [P] itself, and in so far as there is no evidence of allies in 411 preferring the rule of their political opponents to remaining in the Empire (indeed quite the reverse),⁵ there can be no justification for any interpretation of [P] that might allow this inference.

Although, however, the Samian democratic counter-revolution provides historical *content* for the democratic half of the second/fourth generalization of [P], it is to be noted that this historical content is not logically justified by the *context* of Phrynichus' argument. Phrynichus was correct in producing a generalization for all allied cities as the proposal he was attacking was for the *universal* imposition of oligarchy.⁶ This first generalization is therefore

¹ οὐδὲν ἔτι προσδεόμενοι (8. 64. 3); the ἔτι is important, and no change of subject is apparent before and after the appearance of οἱ Θάσιοι in this sentence.

² ἄδεια (8. 64. 5, cf. 4. 108. 4).

³ It was possibly from personal contacts with those Samian democrats who were subsequently prepared to turn oligarchic that Peisandros and his associates believed Alcibiades' proposal would be generally successful (8. 21, 63. 3, 73. 1-2).

⁴ That Thucydides should be guessing here on a matter of *fact* (δοκεῖν δέ μοι, 8. 64. 5) is surprising, and can only indicate that his researches were as yet not completed when this passage, as much of Book 8, was written (cf. 8. 56. 3, 94. 2 εἰκός δέ, and

p. 63 n. 2 and p. 67 n. 5 above). *Value judgements*, as 7. 87. 5 or 8. 86. 4, are quite another matter.

⁵ At Samos the continued loyalty of democrats to the *democratic* Athenian Empire was rewarded not so much by the honorific IG ii.2 1 (Σαμίους Ἀθηναίους εἶναι) as by the absence of oligarchy at Samos in the meantime. Political trouble at Thasos did not end with its secession, but continued till the island was returned, democratic, to Athens by 407 (Ste Croix, *Historia*, iii [1954], 7 and n. 9).

⁶ All ξυνμαχίδες πόλεις, both defected and those hesitating, are implied in 8. 48. The fact that the only directive given subsequently to Dietrephes was to impose

legitimate. For the same reason, however, it is only relevant for Phrynichus to discuss whether this proposal of *oligarchy* would be successful. While an offer of democracy might be historically feasible (if only in the form of continued democracy), it is logically irrelevant. This reduces the third generalization. Finally, as the offer of oligarchy was aimed presumably at securing the positive support of allied oligarchs, it is only the dissatisfaction with this offer as felt by these same allied oligarchs that is at all significant for an argument against the proposal. That allied *democrats* would not think much of the scheme would be merely obvious or a truism (itself unlikely from Phrynichus); and also, as a negation of the very grounds that had led to the proposal's being made in the first place, it would be irrelevant. A subsidiary argument that the proposers were using was moreover that something would be gained from the oligarchic conformity that would ensue (*ὅτι δὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐ δημοκρατήσονται*). The objections of Phrynichus lose most of their point if they are not about the feelings of these same allied oligarchs. The objections are surely parallel to the arguments of the proposers, thus 'the offer is not attractive enough to allied oligarchs, and anyway these see less than nothing to be gained from conformity to an Athenian oligarchy'. It is difficult to construct a similarly related argument for allied democratic parties (and impossible to make them the subject of Phrynichus' first objection while understanding the oligarchs in the second). Thus the democratic alternative to the second/fourth generalization is hardly more relevant to Phrynichus' argument than to the third.

It is reasonable, therefore, to ask why [P] is so generalized when *the greater part of the generalization is irrelevant* both for Phrynichus' argument and for the immediate historical context of his arguing it. Precisely the same problem arose with [B], but rhetorical expression, which might have explained the earlier passage, is out of the question here. Not only is this careful, *oratio obliqua* synopsis by Thucydides unlikely to contain any such extravagances, but also from Phrynichus' own reputation for intelligent political thinking it is clear that the illogical generalizations of [P] are some way removed from what Phrynichus can actually have argued. Nor is it possible to dismiss both passages as entirely artificial literary compositions by Thucydides. The tendency to gratuitous generalization is admittedly marked in fifth-century Greek (found in the Old Oligarch and Euripides or parodied by Aristophanes and Housman), but Thucydides is a historian, and neither of these passages is without relevance to the broader historical contexts in which they are set, 424 and 411. It has already been shown that a fundamental role of [P] in Book 8 of Thucydides was to give a completely general description of allied feeling, and similarly [B] is a completely general comment about all Greek states (Acanthus only by context, Athenian allies only by implication). The only difference between these passages and the editorial 3. 82, for example, is that they are attributed to historical speakers on historical occasions.¹

oligarchies in such cities *αἷς ἂν προσχωσιν* (8. 64. 1) again implies that no distinction was to be made. But even if the universality is doubted, my argument is valid, as Phrynichus' remarks cover the reactions of just those cities, in which oligarchy was to be imposed (*αἷς ὑπεσχησθαι δὴ σφᾶς ὀλιγαρχίαν*, 8. 48. 5).

¹ As soon as one starts looking it becomes clear that Thucydides' text abounds in generalizations, from the off-hand *οἷον ὄχλος φιλεῖ ποιεῖν* (4. 28. 3) to more involved, positive comments, of which one is *τῶν τε γενομένων . . . καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίον εἶσεσθαι* (1. 22. 4) and another *τό τε θείον*

This need not in itself be surprising if the speeches of Thucydides are, as many believe, fairly free compositions, but it is difficult to explain the immediate irrelevances of [P] in particular on any view of τὰ δέοντα, if this is what Thucydides is claiming to give us (1. 22. 1). As the effect of the foregoing analysis is to suggest that the generalization forms an important part of Thucydides' 'historical' technique, it would be interesting to pursue the extent to which the emphasis should in 1. 22. 1 be placed on τὰ αἰεὶ παρόντα, if these can possibly be 'generalizations' as opposed to the usual translation as 'particular occasions'.¹ The belief that the more general truth is somehow truer would not be foreign to Thucydides' more philosophical contemporaries,² and the seeking after its historical counterpart, significance, if this was one of Thucydides' aims, would make him a better historian even if, as this analysis has shown, it makes him a more difficult source.

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δόξῃ τὸ ἀνθρώπειόν τε σαφῶς διὰ παντὸς ὑπὸ φύσεως ἀναγκαίας, οὗ ἂν κρατῇ, ἄρχειν (5. 105. 2). There is no real preference for either speech or narrative.

¹ Translating: '(In view of the difficulties of precisely reporting speeches) my practice has been, while keeping as close as possible to the general sense of what was actually said, to make my speakers say what seemed to me to be most relevant to the general historical situation.' While αἰεὶ is of course

ambiguous ('always' as well as 'at the particular time in question'), ἕκαστος is used of τὰ ἔργα in the particularizing sense in the passage that follows and that ends with the well-known κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ.

² Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 29, *Theaet.* 173 e-174 a (though rather hard on an idea that had played a significant part in many of the philosophical problems on which he himself wrote).