

POLITICAL PAY OUTSIDE ATHENS

ACCORDING to two recent books, there is no evidence that political pay was given by any Greek city other than Athens; and one of them goes further and asserts positively that, 'lacking imperial resources, no other city imitated the Athenian pattern.'¹ Since the book from which the quotation has been made is likely to become a 'standard work', it is desirable to make two points clear. First, there is explicit evidence for political pay elsewhere than at Athens: at Rhodes, in the fourth century B.C. and perhaps for some centuries thereafter, and at Iasus in Caria in at any rate the third century B.C. And secondly, no careful reader of Aristotle's *Politics* can doubt that by at least the 330s B.C.² political pay, for attending the courts or the Assembly or both, had been introduced in quite a number of Greek democracies, even if Aristotle mentions specifically only Athens and Rhodes. (We can ignore pay for magistrates, which is politically unimportant, and for councillors, which certainly existed at Athens, very probably at Rhodes, and quite possibly in many other democratic states. The fact that pay for councillors is virtually disregarded by Aristotle in the *Politics* shows that it was much less significant than we might have been inclined to suppose: we must remember that in democracies the Council was never, like the Assembly and courts, a sovereign body.)

It is convenient to begin with the second point, the general one. There are seven different passages in Aristotle's *Politics* which are relevant: one of them refers to the payment of magistrates, courts, and Assembly; another to courts and Assembly; two to Assembly alone and two to courts alone; and one is quite general.

1. We can begin with *Pol.* 6. 2, 1317^b30–8, where Aristotle is explaining how best to run a democracy. Where there is not a sufficiency of pay for all, he says, the Council is the organ of State that is most useful to the lower classes (δημοτικώτατον); but where there is such a sufficiency, 'they deprive even this office of its power, for the populace, once it is provided with pay, takes all decisions into its own hands.' (The reference back which Aristotle proceeds to make at this point is to 4. 15, 1299^b38–1300^a4, a passage which will be discussed in § 4 below. Both statements refer to situations that have actually occurred.) Finally,³ Aristotle says, there is the system of pay (τὸ μισθοφορεῖν), which in its full form embraces all offices (Assembly, courts, and magistracies), but when it is less comprehensive extends to the magistrates, courts, Council, and the principal meetings of the Assembly (τὰς ἐκκλησίας τὰς κυρίας), or to those offices which involve eating at a common table. This does not reflect what we know of the Athenian situation, for (a) pay was given there for all meetings of the Assembly and not κυρία ἐκκλησία alone;⁴ and (b) the introduction of

¹ M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (London, 1973), 173 (from which the quotation comes); *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (London, 1973), 48.

² It is not possible to date the *Politics* in its present form more precisely than around the late 330s. (I intend to discuss this question

elsewhere.)

³ With ἐπειτα in 1317^b35, Aristotle returns to what he has been saying in lines 18–30.

⁴ This is so, even if in the late fourth century 1½ dr. were being paid for attending a κυρία ἐκκλησία and only 1 dr. for other assemblies: Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 62. 2.

assembly pay at Athens (only after 404/3: see Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 41. 3) did not result in any further democratization there, in the way Aristotle is clearly contemplating in 1317^b32–5 (as is shown by his reference back, cited above, to a passage in which he concentrates on assembly pay to the exclusion of dicastic), nor is there any suggestion anywhere in his work that Aristotle believed that such a development (a further democratization after the introduction of assembly pay) took place at Athens.

2. In another passage, *Pol.* 4. 13, 1297^a35–8, Aristotle refers to assembly pay and dicastic pay together in a way that certainly does not suggest he had in mind only one city, Athens. After speaking (in Barker's charming if somewhat intensified translation) of 'the devices adopted in *πολιτεῖαι* for fobbing the masses off with sham rights', he continues: 'In the democracies they have counter-devices, for they provide pay for the poor for attendance in Assembly and courts; but they do not fine the rich [for not attending].' Here Aristotle is explicitly describing what happens in practice, and only now does he go on to give advice on what should be done in order to fashion a judiciously mixed constitution.

We now come to two passages referring to the existence of assembly pay in Greek democracies of Aristotle's day.

3. First, there is *Pol.* 6. 5, 1320^a17–22,¹ which begins with the statement that 'extreme democracies have large populations and it is difficult for them to hold an assembly without pay'—a system which is hard on the notables, he says, unless the State is well furnished with money, for there will have to be levies (*εἰσφοραί*) and confiscations and sordid court cases: these, he goes on, 'have already been the ruin of many democracies'. Many democracies, then, had been overturned by revolutions due to excessive exactions from the rich to provide sufficient funds for assembly pay. Now it cannot be argued that Aristotle was thinking here merely of the oligarchic revolution at Athens in 411 and perhaps also that in 404, for assembly pay did not then exist there; and what he says is not even that democracies had *often* been overthrown in the circumstances he describes, but that *many* democracies had been so overthrown.

4. The other passage referring to assembly pay is *Pol.* 4. 15, 1299^b38–1300^a4. After mentioning the possible co-existence of a Council and Probouloi, the first a democratic and the latter an oligarchic element (1299^b30–8), Aristotle says that even the power of the Council is subverted in such democracies as those in which the populace assembles *en masse* and transacts all State business. This *usually* happens, he adds, whenever there is plenty of pay for those attending the Assembly, for then they have leisure to meet often and they decide everything themselves. Here again Aristotle is evidently thinking of something that had been happening in a number of Greek states. (Another couple of passages in the *Politics* which refer to giving assembly pay, namely 4. 14, 1298^b23–6, and 6. 5, 1320^b2–3, relate to hypothetical situations and need not be discussed here.)

There are two passages that refer to the practice of giving dicastic pay.

5. The first is *Pol.* 4. 9, 1294^a37–40. Aristotle is making recommendations for an ideal mixed constitution, and he wants to pay the poor for sitting in the

¹ In 1320^a22–6 Aristotle contemplates the giving of dicastic pay to the poor but not the rich; but this is a hypothetical situation.

courts and fine the rich for absenting themselves (1294^a36-^b1). Leading up to this, he gives examples of actual situations in the Greek world. In oligarchies, he says, the rich are fined if they do not sit in the courts but no pay is given to the poor, whereas in democracies pay is given to the poor but no penalty is exacted from the rich. Again, Aristotle purports to be speaking of dicastic pay as characteristic of democracies generally.

6. And in *Pol.* 4. 14, 1298^b18-19, Aristotle is advising democracies to institute compulsory attendance of the Assembly: this he likens to the compulsion applied by oligarchs to those of their members who are liable to serve as dicasts, and in this connection he remarks that democrats secure the same result by giving pay to the poor [for serving in the courts].

7. The last of the statements in the *Politics* which speaks of political pay as an existing institution is 4. 6, 1293^a1-10. In this passage Aristotle is describing the last of the four types of democracy which he discusses in 1292^b25-3^a10. (This classification is to be distinguished from the five-fold one which he sets out in 1291^b30-2^a7.) He believes that this fourth form of democracy arises owing to a great increase in population and the growth of a large revenue: all citizens then have a share in government 'because of the [numerical] preponderance of the masses, and they share in political activity because even the poor have the capacity for leisure through their receipt of pay'. A reference to Assembly and courts follows (1293^a8-9), and it can hardly be doubted that Aristotle had both in mind throughout this passage.

The evidence for political pay at Rhodes in the fourth century is in *Pol.* 5. 5, 1304^b27-31. Aristotle is giving examples of the overthrow of democracies: at Cos, he says, this happened when the notables rose against rascally demagogues; 'and in Rhodes the demagogues started to provide State pay (*μισθοφορά*) and to prevent the repayment of debts due to the trierarchs, who were driven by the lawsuits brought against them to combine and put down the democracy.' (The precise date of this event is irrelevant here.¹)

There are a few isolated scraps of evidence that political pay at Rhodes long continued, apparently in some form even into the Roman Principate.²

(a) Cicero, in an obscurely worded portion of his *De Republica* 3 (§ 48) in the midst of which the preserved text unfortunately breaks off, makes the younger Scipio and Mummius refer with approval to the Rhodian constitution. (The dramatic date is of course 129 B.C.: *De Rep.* 1. 14.) Scipio begins by speaking of this constitution as one in which all citizens were at times part of the *plebs* and at other times *senatores*, and in which there was a system of rotation according to which citizens fulfilled each role for certain months: 'omnes erant idem tum de plebe tum senatores, vicissitudinesque habebant quibus mensibus populari

¹ The most likely date of this overthrow of democracy at Rhodes is perhaps 391/0, but 358/7 is an obvious alternative (see W. L. Newman, *The Politics of Arist.*, iv [Oxford, 1902], 299-300), and there are other possibilities. For a useful epitome of Rhodian political history in the fourth century, see P. M. Fraser, 'Notes on Two Rhodian Institutions', in *B.S.A.* lxxvii (1972), 113-24,

at 122-3.

² The evidence has recently been reviewed by Fraser, *op. cit.*, 119-24. The only detailed account of the Rhodian constitution is still that of H. van Gelder, *Gesch. der alten Rhodier* (The Hague, 1900), 178-288: see esp. 242-5 on the *βουλά* and 245-9 on the *ἐκκλησία*.

munere fungerentur, quibus senatorio'—perhaps, as Fraser suggests,¹ a rather loose allusion to the known six-monthly tenure of office of the Rhodian Council. Scipio is then made to say that the Rhodians received pay in both these capacities: 'utrobique autem conventicium accipiebant.'² This must mean that pay was given for attending both the Assembly and the Council: *conventicium* will correspond to the Athenian *μισθός ἐκκλησιαστικός* and *βουλευτικός*. Scipio then refers to judicial procedure: 'et in theatro³ et in curia res capitalis et reliquas omnis iudicabant iidem.' (After a few more words the preserved text breaks off in the middle of a sentence.) There is nothing specific here about pay for these judicial sessions of Assembly or Council.⁴

(b) Reference to the Rhodian law-courts is also made by the author of Ps.-Sall., *Epist. ad Caes.* 2. 7. 12 (a work dating from some time between the last century B.C. and the second century of the Christian era),⁵ in the words 'rich and poor at random, according to the fortune of the lot, judge the greatest and smallest issues.'

(c) Dio Chrysostom (31. 102), in an address to the Rhodians written (whether actually delivered or not) probably at some time in the 70s or 80s of the first century of our era,⁶ speaks of disbursements made by the city then, as in earlier times, in a number of different ways: these include payments for judicial service and to members of the Council (*τοῖς δικάζουσι, τῇ βουλῇ*).

(d) Earlier in the same speech (31. 4) Dio refers to the Rhodians as deliberating daily (*βουλευόμενοι καθ' ἡμέραν*—presumably in the Assembly),⁷ 'and not, like others, reluctantly and at intervals and with only some citizens participating who are regarded as free' (*καὶ τῶν ἐλευθέρων τινὲς εἶναι δοκούντων*).

(e) A few small bronze plates (*pinakia*) have survived from Rhodes, ranging in date from perhaps as early as the third century B.C. down to the Roman Imperial period.⁸ Such objects always used to be accepted without question as 'jury-tickets', until a recent thorough examination by Kroll of the numerous *pinakia* from Athens and a few from other Greek cities (including Myrina, Sinope, Thasos, a Pamphylian town, and perhaps Halicis, as well as Rhodes) showed that some of the Athenian *pinakia* at any rate are unlikely to be dicastic in character.⁹ In view of the existence at Rhodes of an official known (at least in the late Hellenistic period) as *κλαρωτὰς δικαστῶν*,¹⁰ the Rhodian *pinakia* can be accepted with some confidence as 'jury-tickets'; and with the other evidence set out above they suggest that a jury-system involving allocation by lot

¹ Op. cit., 123 n. 72.

² I am grateful to Professor R. G. M. Nisbet for pointing out to me that the structure of the sentence (otherwise rambling) is improved if these four words are taken with what precedes rather than with what follows, and that editors are consequently mistaken in putting a semicolon after 'senatorio'.

³ The Rhodian Assembly met in the theatre: see e.g. Polyb. 15. 23. 2.

⁴ We know almost nothing of the Rhodian judicial system: see van Gelder, op. cit., 244.

⁵ It will be sufficient to refer to Fraser,

op. cit. (p. 50 n. 1 above), 123 n. 71.

⁶ Cf. A. Momigliano, in *J.R.S.* xli (1951), 149–53.

⁷ Dio could conceivably be referring to daily sessions of the Rhodian *βουλά*, recruited from the whole body of citizens, at least for certain periods.

⁸ See Fraser, loc. cit.; J. H. Kroll, *Athenian Bronze Allotment Plates* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), 268–9.

⁹ See Kroll, op. cit., 51–68 (esp. 55–6), 101–4.

¹⁰ See Fraser, op. cit. (p. 50 n. 1, above), 121–2 and n. 59.

continued to exist at Rhodes for perhaps some four or five centuries after its original institution, probably in 395 B.C., although of course the *pinakia* themselves do not provide direct evidence for political pay.

Rhodes, then, had a system of political pay in the fourth century B.C. and perhaps retained it for several centuries in some form or other, for the Council and for at least some sessions of the Assembly. The pay may of course have been limited, even in the fourth century B.C., to a restricted number of citizens on each occasion; and it is not impossible that the Rhodians took Aristotle's advice and at the same time made it obligatory upon richer citizens to attend the Council or the Assembly on certain occasions and fined them if they failed to do so.

For Iasus,¹ apparently the only evidence is an inscription (Michel, *R.I.G.* 466),² probably of the third century B.C., which refers to ἐκκλησιαστικόν (lines 6 and probably 1) in a context that shows it is pay for the Assembly, the regular sessions of which took place at Iasus monthly, on the sixth of each month.³ The institution of assembly pay at Iasus is surely likely to date back to the fourth century.

Iolybius (20. 6. 2), writing about the condition of Boeotia in the late third and early second centuries B.C., says that some of the Strategoi made μισθοδοσίαι to the poor from State funds. Just before this (§ 1) he had mentioned the suspension of the administration of justice in Boeotia in both private and public suits. It seems unlikely that by μισθοδοσίαι Polybius intended to refer to dicastic pay, or any other form of pay for political activities, although this possibility cannot be entirely excluded.

We may conclude that quite a number of Greek democracies made use of political pay, in the fifth and fourth centuries and later; and even if some passages in Aristotle's *Politics* strongly suggest that it was mainly the richer and more populous cities which did so, the example of little Iasus shows that they were not the only ones. We must not forget that our evidence for political pay at Athens is nearly all literary, despite the wealth of inscriptions from Athens; and since the literary evidence for other Greek democracies is so poor we have no right to expect any mention of political pay, even if it was quite a common democratic phenomenon.⁴

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¹ Iasus paid only 1 talent per year to Athens during the Empire, until the amount was raised to 3 talents (*A.T.L.* ii. 34, List 34 [421/0], Col. i, line 91; and perhaps ii. 36, List 39 [416/15], line 35), doubtless by the reassessment decree of 425. Although παλαιόπλουτος in 412, it was then sacked by the Peloponnesians (Thuc. 8. 28. 3). Strabo (14. 2. 21, p. 658) speaks of it as having poor soil and of the inhabitants as gaining their

livelihood mainly 'from the sea'.

² The inscription was originally published by B. Haussoullier in *B.C.H.* viii (1884), 218-22; cf. E. L. Hicks in *J.H.S.* viii (1887), 103-11; and see O. Schulthess in *R.E.* xv. 2 (1932), 2088.

³ See Michel, *R.I.G.* 466; also *C.I.G.* ii. 2673b, 2674, 2675b, 2677b.

⁴ I wish to thank Professor P. A. Brunt for his observations on a draft of this paper.