

THRASYBOULOS' THRACIAN SUPPORT

There has never been any doubt that an important part of Thrasybulos' forces in his campaign at Phyle and in the Peiraieus was non-Athenian.¹ Lysias in his funeral oration, 2. 66 ff., gives fulsome praise to the *xenoi* who fought and died for the return of the democracy. Other honours paid to the living are recorded by Aeschines, 3. 187 f., and in the inscription I.G. II. 210, a decree followed by a list of names grouped by Athenian tribes, some of which are certainly non-Athenian.² However, little has been said about who these people were, or why they chose to help the return.

Metics, resident aliens, had long been actively encouraged to participate in the Athenian state;³ indeed they were expected to meet obligations both military and financial in return for their right to stay in Athens.⁴ Their reward had been a reasonable degree of protection under Athenian law,⁵ but they had only the most limited access to the *politeia* with no realistic prospect of more, since the Athenians did not accept that citizenship could be given to non-Athenians as a matter of course but only for exceptional services and under very special circumstances.⁶ Each case was decided individually and never on the basis of residence alone. (Non-resident foreigners had still fewer rights, but they too were expected to obey the laws of Athens.⁷)

In this paper I shall suggest the identification, among the metics and *xenoi*, of one national group who seem to have fought with the democrats, and I shall consider what their reasons were for lending their support to Thrasybulos.

It has often been assumed⁸ that after the march from Phyle Thrasybulos chose to make his stand against the forces of the oligarchs at Munychia because it was the best and strongest defensive position in the Peiraieus. Undoubtedly it was.⁹ However, insufficient attention has been given to the details of Xenophon's account,¹⁰ in which it is said that the first move made by the men from Phyle was not to assume a defensive position but to try to check the oligarchs on the road. It was only when they realised that numerically they were not strong enough to resist them there that they decided to fall back on Munychia.

I suggest that this choice was made not only because of Munychia's suitability for

¹ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 2, 5, 10, 25.

² See P. Krenz, *Phoenix* 34 (1980), 298–306; cf. D. Hereward, *BSA* 47 (1952), 102 f.; Tod, *GHI* II. 100, p. 8 f.

³ D. Whitehead, 'The Ideology of the Athenian Metic', *PCPhS* (1977) suppl. Vol. 4; M. Clerc, *Les métèques athéniens* (Paris, 1893); P. Gauthier, *Symbola: les étrangers et la justice dans les cités grecques* (Nancy, 1972), pp. 107 f.; M. I. Finley, *Studies in land and credit in Ancient Athens, 500–200 BC* (New Brunswick, 1952), p. 77; Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 505–8 (metics are bran among the citizens; they are superior to *xenoi*, who presumably are chaff to be discarded).

⁴ Aristoph. *Byz.* fr. 38 (Nauck); Pollux 3. 55; Dem. 29. 3; 57. 55; Lysias 12; Lysias 31. 9; 22. 5+13. On military service see Thuk. 4. 90. 1; 6. 43; 7. 63. 3; cf. Thuk. 1. 143. 1–2.

⁵ *Ath. Pol.* 58. 2; D. M. MacDowell, *Athenian Homicide Law in the Age of the Orators* (Manchester, 1963), pp. 18 f., 69 f.; A. R. W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens* I (Oxford, 1968), pp. 187–99; Whitehead, *op. cit.* 74 f., 81 f.

⁶ Tod, *GHI* II. 97, p. 1 f.

⁷ Dem. 24. 131; 57. 31, 34; 59. 16.

⁸ J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte* III (Strassburg and Berlin, 1912–23), p. 10; J. K. Anderson, *Military theory and practice in the age of Xenophon* (U. Cal. Press, 1970), pp. 176–7, 191.

⁹ Diod. Sic. 14. 33. 1 f.

¹⁰ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 11.

defensive purposes but also in the knowledge that reinforcements were available near by. This is substantiated by Xenophon, who speaks of large numbers of light-armed troops, *peltophoroï*, *akontistai* and *petroboloi*, who supported the hoplites from Phyle in their resistance to the advance of the oligarchic forces.¹¹ They were numerous precisely because they came from there.¹² The presence of additional troops who had not served at Phyle is suggested by Thrasybulos in his address to his men, when he speaks of the need to instruct some and to remind others of what had happened in earlier fighting.¹³ Confirmation is provided in the description of the rest of the Peiraieus campaign by the fact that it was necessary for some to make weapons to arm themselves, while others got them where they could,¹⁴ arguably because they had not participated in the earlier struggle. The emphasis put on the style of fighting used by a particular group in Thrasybulos' forces¹⁵ gives a first indication that among the mixture of people¹⁶ who made up the democratic army there was a notable number of Thracians, since Thracians are known to have been armed in this way and indeed to have been used earlier by Athens.¹⁷

In the speech Thrasybulos makes an appeal to a goddess. The ambiguity, no doubt deliberate, also implies the presence of Thracians, or at any rate worshippers of Bendis,¹⁸ since it enabled those who so wished to assume that it was addressed to Artemis, while others might think that it was addressed to Bendis,¹⁹ as both deities, who were often closely associated,²⁰ had sanctuaries near by.²¹ The situation of the Bendideion, the goddess's temple or shrine, in the region of Munychia makes it tempting to suggest that this part of the Peiraieus was an area where Thracians²² who had settled in Athens might gather in much the same way as the Plataeans did elsewhere,²³ even if their residence was not concentrated there.

Further evidence for the presence of Thracians is provided by the names of some of the non-Athenians honoured after the democratic restoration.²⁴ The total number of names inscribed is a matter of continuing debate. Most recently Krenz has suggested very large numbers.²⁵ However, Krenz himself points out firstly that his own figures are controversial, secondly that other estimates have been far smaller.²⁶ Yet if any of

¹¹ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 12.

¹² Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 12.

¹³ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 13.

¹⁴ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 19, 25.

¹⁵ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 12, 15, 25, 33. See J. G. P. Best, *Thracian Peltasts and their influence on Greek Warfare* (Groningen, 1969).

¹⁶ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 25.

¹⁷ A. Hagemann, *Griechische Panzerung*, pp. 44 f., 142–5, up-dated and improved by Lyuba Ogdenova, 'Les cuirasses de bronze trouvées en Thrace', *BCH* 85 (1961), 501–38, and by J. K. Anderson, *Military theory and practice in the age of Xenophon*, pp. 226 n. 43, 36, 113.

¹⁸ Thuk. 7. 27, 29; Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 148 f.

¹⁹ The increasing importance of this deity in Athens in the second half of the fifth century is discussed below.

²⁰ Jacoby, *FGH* suppl. 368 F 6b; schol. Plat. *Resp.* 327a; Hesych. s.v. Bendis, Pheraia, Bousbaton.

²¹ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 11. Near by there was also a sanctuary to the nymphs, who were associated with the worship of Bendis.

²² Thracians of course were not one people, but several tribes living over a large geographical area, who sometimes fought against each other, especially earlier in their history. Fifth-century kings, notably Teres and then Sitalkes, who succeeded to Teres' throne over the Odrysian Thracians, fashioned larger kingdoms by extending their rule over their neighbours. Herodotos 4. 92 and 5. 3 discusses the Thracian tribes and their potential power. Cf. Thuk. 2. 96. 3; Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* II (Oxford, 1945–81), pp. 242 ff.

²³ Lysias 23. 2 f., 6 f.

²⁴ *IG* 2.² 10 records the names and occupations of honorands. Foreigners from all walks of life must have been alienated by the Thirty.

²⁵ He speaks of c. 300 on face A alone and 900 on face B (op. cit., p. 305).

²⁶ *ibid.* note 26.

these are correct, our examples are strikingly few but they are interesting. It remains a valid exercise to note their possible places of origin.²⁷ The name Gerys is certainly Thracian.²⁸ One or two others, Blepon, Egersis and Epiktas, which otherwise cannot be placed, may also be. Egersis particularly is a most unusual name.²⁹ It has been correctly pointed out³⁰ that the name Dexios, which appears on two tombstones at the end of the fifth century³¹ and on another from the middle of the fourth,³² is also the name of a worshipper of Bendis on an inscription of 329–8 B.C.³³ However, the name is by no means necessarily Thracian, as examples are certainly known elsewhere, at Chios, Pamphylia, Delos, Chalkis and Crete, as well as in Athens itself.³⁴ However, the most interesting example is the name Bendiphanes, an open statement of an association with the goddess. Miss Hereward is confident that he came from Thrace or the Thraceward region, since that is where names with that root are to be found.³⁵ Although insufficient in themselves to prove the presence of a significant group among the democratic forces in the Peiraieus, these names do confirm that individual Thracians were involved and that they had served well enough to have earned rewards.³⁶

A combination of the evidence from names with the known location of the Bendideion and the certainty that a style of fighting compatible with Thracians was employed by some of Thrasyboulos' troops makes stronger the possibility of such a Thracian group.

This is all the more understandable if one considers that relationships had existed between Athenians and Thracians for much of the fifth century and particularly from the 440s B.C.

Individual Athenian families had close ties in these northern regions. Miltiades, father of Kimon, had ruled over a large area of the Thracian Chersonese and had married a Thracian princess, Hegesipyle.³⁷ Thukydides Olorou, the historian, owned property there.³⁸ A certain Diitrephes escorted home Thracian mercenaries in 413,³⁹ a potentially delicate command which may have required a special relationship with Thracians, since the Athenians had not used the services of these troops. Several instances of the name occur in the last quarter of the fifth century, some of which refer to the same man, who had military experience, if not familial connections, in the north. Diitrephes may also have been the general of 414/13 and 412/11 B.C.,⁴⁰ or perhaps the oligarchic figure who was chosen to take charge of affairs in the Thracian area

²⁷ Hereward, *BSA* 47 (1952), 114 f., discussed by Krenz, loc. cit.

²⁸ A. Diller, *Race Mixture among the Greeks before Alexander* (Urbana, 1937), p. 143.

²⁹ Hereward says that 'it seems almost like a woman's name' (op. cit. 116).

³⁰ *ibid.* p. 115.

³¹ *JG* 2.² 11057.

³² *JG* 2.² 11058.

³³ *JG* 2.² 1256.

³⁴ Hereward, *BSA* 47 (1952), 115; Pape Benseler s.v. Dexios.

³⁵ Hereward, op. cit. 117 and n. 129.

³⁶ It is still a matter of debate whether citizenship, *isoteleia* or other lesser honours were involved.

³⁷ Herodotos 6. 39, 40; J. Kirchner, *Prosopographia Attica* (Berlin, 1901–3), 10212.

³⁸ Thuk. 4. 104. 4–105. 1.

³⁹ Thuk. 7. 29. 1. Nikostratos, a general of the Peloponnesian War who died at Mantinea, also led Thracians and is known to have named his son Diitrephes (Kirchner, *PA* 11011; Thuk. 4. 129. 1). W. R. Connor has therefore not only associated them, but has been tempted to suggest that their family had a special interest or competence in the area (*The New Politicians of Fifth Century Athens* (Princeton, 1971), p. 156).

⁴⁰ Kirchner, *PA* 3755.

in 411 B.C.⁴¹ Further identification with the proposer of a decree to honour a man from Skiathos in 408/7 B.C. may seem unlikely.⁴²

The *polis* too had good reasons to establish friendly relations with Thracian states and Thracian kings, whenever possible, since the region could supply her need for timber for oars and triremes vital to her war effort, if the supply from Macedonia was ever uncertain.⁴³ The Thracian territories occupied an important place on the Black Sea corn route, which became critical for Athens' survival in the final years of the Peloponnesian War. Thracian troops, mercenaries, light-armed peltasts for the most part, were also used in the Athenian war effort, most notably on the expedition to Sicily.⁴⁴ There is clear evidence of her early military activity in Thrace,⁴⁵ as she made more than one attempt to secure a position for herself. Later she undoubtedly watched with interest, if not with concern, the rise to power of the Odrysian king Sitalkes during 450–435 B.C. However, it may have been with his consent, or with the cooperation or at least acquiescence of other Thracian peoples, that she was able to found Amphipolis in 437/6 B.C., which had a direct effect on relations between Athenians, Macedonians and Thracians.⁴⁶ As a result of a deterioration in their relationship with the Macedonians⁴⁷ and after the revolt of Samos and Byzantion the Athenians made concessions to Sitalkes, which developed into an alliance in the first years of the Peloponnesian War⁴⁸ and persisted thereafter with only one or two interruptions. It was certainly well established by the time of the first performance of *Acharnians*, since Aristophanes makes jokes about how strongly pro-Athenian Sitalkes is.⁴⁹ An immediate benefit from the alliance in addition to material aid was the handing over to the Athenians by Sitalkes' son, Sadokos, who had been made an Athenian citizen, of Peloponnesian envoys en route to the Persian king.⁵⁰ Further, the possibility was raised of combined action with the Thracians against Perdikkas of Macedonia, though when an opportunity presented itself the Athenians gave it little support.⁵¹

This important external relationship, which helped Athens in her war effort and later contributed to her survival at the end of the war, was not their only contact. Thracians too took advantage of the alliance. A Thracian community had earlier settled in the midst of the Athenians, who not only accommodated them but seem to have treated them with some favour, even when other Thracians massacred the Athenians from Amphipolis⁵² or joined in the revolts which took place in the 420s because of Brasidas' presence in the north.⁵³ Special permission had been given to them to found and to own a sanctuary in Athens,⁵⁴ although the privilege of *enktesis*

⁴¹ Thuk. 8. 64. 2. A. Andrewes, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* v (Oxford, 1981), pp. 156–7, explores possible identifications.

⁴² *IG* 1.² 118; Meiggs and Lewis 90. 6; Andrewes, loc. cit.

⁴³ J. W. Cole, 'Perdikkas and Athens', *Pheonix* 28 (1974), 58 f., 63, shows clearly how precarious these supplies might be and how, because of them, Athens was sometimes involved in the political disputes between the states in the region, and occasionally tried to play one state off against another. Cf. Hammond and Griffith, *A History of Macedonia*. Vol. 2, 550–336 B.C., pp. 115 f.

⁴⁴ Thuk. 7. 27, 29.

⁴⁵ *ATL* 3. 59–63. Thracian cities appear on the tribute lists, and Athenian naval squadrons are mentioned at Eion and Tenedos.

⁴⁶ So Cole, loc. cit., who follows Nesselhauf, *Klio* 30 (1933), 58.

⁴⁷ Cole, loc. cit., F. Lepper, *JHS* 82 (1962), 35–8.

⁴⁸ Through the agency of Nymphodoros of Abdera (Thuk. 2. 29. 1).

⁴⁹ *Acharnians* 136–50.

⁵⁰ Thuk. 3. 67 f.

⁵¹ Thuk. 2. 95. 1–101. 5.

⁵² There is no record of reprisals in Athens.

⁵³ Thuk. 6. 7. 4.

⁵⁴ *IG* 1.² 52. See Sokolowski, *Lois Sacrées des citées Grecques*, suppl. (1962), pp. 81–5.

was rarely awarded to metics individually or collectively. In this way they were able to establish a cult of their peculiarly Thracian deity, Bendis, even before any formal alliance had been concluded with Sitalkes,⁵⁵ though it may have been given new emphasis after that date.⁵⁶ It had certainly acquired a state and public nature by 429–8 B.C.,⁵⁷ revealed in the opening scenes of Plato's *Republic*,⁵⁸ and confirmed by the Boule's supervision of its administration.⁵⁹ There appear also to have been separate associations in the Peiraieus and in the city for the worship of Bendis,⁶⁰ at whose festival, the Bendideia, different roles were performed by citizens and by Thracians.⁶¹ The prosperity of the cult, which continued through and beyond the fourth century, suggests that the Thracian community and its influence remained strong in Athens without serious interruption,⁶² apart from the dislocations which affected all residents of Athens.

This is paralleled and no doubt was supported by the maintenance of friendly relations between Athens and the home Thracian territories, which persisted or were strengthened even after Athens' disastrous expedition to Sicily. In January 409 B.C. a decree was introduced in Athens in honour of Neapolis.⁶³ The accounts for 409/8 B.C. show that Skaptesytle in Thrace provided gold at a time when Athenian finances were severely depressed,⁶⁴ and there is no reason to doubt that supplies of timber continued almost until the end of the war. The importance of the Thracian territories to the Athenians is shown even after Aegospotamoi, 405 B.C., firstly by Lysander's dispatch of Eteonikos with ten ships to the Thraceward area,⁶⁵ secondly by his own voyage there, which is thought to have taken place no later than the autumn of 404 B.C.⁶⁶ Sparta may have had general interests in the northern area, but the existence of a pro-Athenian party at Thasos and the rough treatment meted out to it⁶⁷ suggest that such loyalties perhaps remained strong among similarly minded Thracians. The passing of a number of honorary decrees at Athens and the conclusion of more than one alliance with a Thracian king⁶⁸ suggest that Athenian–Thracian relations continued or were resumed after the war.

The considerable contact which Thrasyboulos is known to have had with Thrace and with Thracians is of particular importance. It provides chronological continuity from 411 B.C., when we first hear of his military activities in the north,⁶⁹ until as late as 390/389 B.C., the year of his death, when he made a journey to the area.⁷⁰ There is a strong possibility, even though there is no evidence, that Thrasyboulos knew members of the Thracian community in Athens, to whom he may have turned for

⁵⁵ Ferguson, *Hesperia* Suppl. 8 (1949), 131–62; J. Pečírka, *The Formula for the Grant of Enktesis in Attic Inscriptions* (Prague, 1966). ⁵⁶ Cole, op. cit. 59.

⁵⁷ See accounts of the Treasurers of the Other Gods for 429/8.

⁵⁸ *Republic* 327a.

⁵⁹ *SEG* x. 64b from circa 430 B.C.; cf. *SEG* 17. 5; 19. 19; 21. 52, 23.

⁶⁰ Ferguson, *The Attic Orgeones*, pp. 86 f.

⁶¹ *ibid.* 104 f.; *FGH* 368 F 6.

⁶² Sokolowski, loc. cit.; cf. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens* (London, 1911), pp. 216–17.

⁶³ *IG* 1.² 108.

⁶⁴ *IG* 1.² 301 lines 114–20.

⁶⁵ *Xen. Hell.* 2. 2. 5.

⁶⁶ Andrewes, *Phoenix* 25 (1971), 217 f. See *Plut. Lysander* 20. 7; *Paus.* 3. 18. 3.

⁶⁷ Polyainos 1. 45. 4; cf. *Nepos, Lys.* 2. 2. Andrewes, *Phoenix* 25 (1971), 217 n. 20, expresses some surprise at Thasian loyalty in the light of Thuk. 8. 64. 3–5, but says that it was probably likely after Thrasyboulos' recovery of Thasos, *Xen. Hell.* 1. 4. 9.

⁶⁸ *IG* 2.² 17; *Tod, GHI* II, 117; *Xen. Hell.* 4. 8. 26; *Diod. Sic.* 14. 94. 2; *Xen. Anabasis* 7. 2. 31; cf. *Diod. Sic.* 18. 18. 4.

⁶⁹ *Xen. Hell.* 1. 1. 12, 32; 1. 4. 9; *Diod. Sic.* 13 and 14 passim; cf. Andrewes, *JHS* 73 (1953), 2 f.

⁷⁰ *Xen. Hell.* 4. 8. 25. His death at Aspendos was completely unrelated to his journey to Thrace.

support when faced with a pressing need for manpower. Although he may have relied on his personal contacts in his appeal to them, it remains to ask why they were prepared to risk their lives to fight for the Athenian *demos* against the oligarchs. Athenian–Thracian relationships provide part of the answer. The Thracians who fought had every reason to believe that they were acting in their own interests. Firstly their treatment under the democracy had been particularly favourable, while oligarchic rule had certainly disrupted their lives as much as that of any Athenian democrat. Secondly, many may have been inspired by Thrasybulos' promise, perhaps first made at Phyle, but certainly in the Peiraieus,⁷¹ that those who fought with him who were not Athenian would receive as their reward after the democracy had been restored some or all the rights of citizens.⁷² This promise, which was not unprecedented,⁷³ was not an empty one, even though after the restoration Thrasybulos was prevented from fulfilling it.⁷⁴ For those who had already chosen Athens as their home it must have seemed attractive.

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⁷¹ Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 11.

⁷² Xen. *Hell.* 2. 4. 25.

⁷³ cf. Diod. Sic. 13. 97. 1; *Ath. Pol.* 34. 3; *FGH* 323 A 25; Aristophanes, *Frogs* 190–1, 693–4; Justin 5. 6. 5 f.

⁷⁴ *Ath. Pol.* 40. 2.