THUCYDIDES ON HARMODIUS AND ARISTOGEITON, TYRANNY, AND HISTORY*

The Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton 'digression' or 'excursus' in Thucydides Book 6 is one of the most unusual passages in the entire work. Older scholarly incomprehension or denigration of its importance[1] has been gradually replaced by the growing perception that it plays a crucial role in explaining – something[2] – in Thucydides' history. The unexpected veer into a sketch of the story at 1.20 and the surprise of its lengthy presentation later (6.53–9), in the midst of a narrative devoted to something else entirely (or so it would seem), single out the excursus as especially worthy of close attention and suggest that Thucydides intended as much. Here previous scholarly analyses of the excursus are briefly surveyed. The episode will then be given another close reading (I), compared to its two frames, Thucydides' narrative of the Athenian response to the mutilation of the herms and the profanation of the Mysteries, and the Sicilian Expedition and its failure (II), and then all three – episode and two frames – examined in relationship to the famous Thucydidean statement on method (1.20–2) with which the episode is – uniquely – closely related (III).[3] Parallels in language at all levels suggest, first, that the excursus marks the moment in its larger framing narrative at which the Athenians truly became tyrannical, how this tyranny is defined, and why it happened at this moment; why – second – the Athenians made the bad decisions about Sicily that they did; and, third, what the relationship between evidence, clarity, contemplation, understanding, and decision should have been, all also of crucial concern in 1.20–2. The emphatic association of the Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton story with Thucydides' statement of historical method and historical ambition in 1.20–2 suggests strongly that his presentation of Harmodius and Aristogeiton is a paradigmatic demonstration of how to establish the facts, but also of how the correct assessment of evidence permits precision ($\dot{\alpha}\kappa\rho\acute{\iota}\beta\epsilon\iota\alpha$), which in turn leads to clarity ($\tau\grave{o}\ \sigma\alpha\phi\acute{\epsilon}s$) – the 'useful' contribution Thucydides wanted his work, above all, to make – so that his historical ambition, that through careful scrutiny the past would have correct meaning(s) for readers in the present, would be fulfilled.

One strand of scholarship on the purpose of the digression denied that Thucydides intended to draw a connection between 514, when the tyrant Hippias' brother

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[1] Included only to correct misconceptions, e.g., P. Corssen, 'Das Verhältniss der aristotelischen zu der thukydideischen Darstellung des Tyrannenmords', *RhM* 51 (1896), 226–39, at 231 and 237; M. Hirsch, 'Die athenischen Tyrannenmörder in Geschichtsschreibung und Volklegende', *Klio* 20 (1926), 129–67, at 133 and 140; J.B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York, 1908/1958), 89; K.J. Dover, *HCT* 4.317–29, at 329; or its inclusion a sign that Thucydides had not finished his work, E. Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* (Bonn, 1929²) 180–6, with others, e.g. Hirsch (131–8), T.R. Fitzgerald, 'The murder of Hipparchus: a reply', *Historia* 6 (1957), 275–86 at 275–80, and even A.W. Gomme, *HCT* 1.137. For some recent bibliography on the excursus, see V. Wohl, 'The eros of Alcibiades', *CA* 18 (1999), 349–85, at 350–1, n. 2.

[2] J.H. Finley, *Three Essays on Thucydides* (Cambridge MA, 1967), 168; J. de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism* (trans. P. Thody, Oxford, 1963), 208, n. 3.

[3] The other misconceptions in 1.20 (votes of Spartan kings and Pitanate *lochos*), are not referred to again.

Hipparchus was murdered by Harmodius and Aristogeiton, and 415, year of the mutilation of the herms, the profanation of the Mysteries, and the departure of the Sicilian Expedition. It has seen instead significance only in Thucydides' polemic against historical ignorance with which the excursus begins[4] – and thus in the poor judgment the Athenians exercise in ignorance of their own past.[5] Another strand of scholarship, however, sees clear and intentional parallels.[6] This tradition began with Wolfgang Schadewalt in 1929, who argued that in both 514 and 415 acts of political folly, perpetrated by the 'middle of the demos', change government for the worse, cost citizen lives, and drive leaders (Hippias and Alcibiades) to treason.[7] Other parallels have also been identified and explored: between the two episodes of political terror (Pearson);[8] between the tyrants and Alcibiades (Liebeschuetz);[9] between the function of the Pausanias/Themistocles excursus of Book 1 and that of the Peisistratid excursus of Book 6 (Rawlings);[10] between the dynamic of boldness and repression in both excursus and frame, leading to the semblance of tyranny (Connor);[11] between

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[4] H. Münch, *Studien zu den Exkursen des Thukydides* (Heidelberg, 1935), 72–5; F. Jacoby, *Atthis. The Local Chronicles of Ancient Athens* (Oxford, 1949), 158–61 (against Hellanicus); H. Diesner, 'Peisistratidenexkurs und Peisistratidenbild bei Thukydides', *Historia* 8 (1959), 12–22, at 13; Dover, *HCT* 4.274, 317; K. Kinzl, 'Zu Thukydides über die Peisistratidai', *Historia* 22 (1973), 504–7, at 506, and also his 'Thucydides 6.54.9 Again', *RhM* 116 (1973), 91–5, at 94; I. Calabi Limentani, 'Armodio e Aristogitone gli uccisi dal tiranno', *Acme* 29 (1976) 9–27, at 26 (against Athenians and foreigners); B.M. Lavelle, *The Sorrow and the Pity. A Prolegomenon to a History of Athens Under the Peisistratids, c. 560–510 B.C., Historia Einzelschriften 80* (Stuttgart, 1993), 63; A. Tsakmakis, 'Thukydides VI.54.1 und Herodot', *Philologus* 140 (1996), 201–13, at 210–13 (against Herodotus).

[5] E.g., M. Lang, 'The murder of Hipparchus', *Historia* 3 (1954), 395–407, at 398; F. Adcock, *Thucydides and his History* (Cambridge, 1963), 25; H.-P. Stahl, *Thucydides. Man's Place in History* (Swansea, 2003; transl. of *Thukydides. Die Stellung des Menschen im geschichtlichen Prozess*, Munich, 1966), 1–11, at 7; Dover, *HCT* 4.328–9; A. Parry, 'Thucydides' historical perspective', *YCS* 22 (1972), 47–61, at 50, n. 7; R. Vattuone, 'L'*Excursus* nel VI libro delle *Storie* di Tucidide', *RSA* 5 (1975), 173–84; K. Kinzl, 'Mehr zu Thukydides über die Peisistratidai', *Historia* 25 (1976), 478–80; R.T. Ridley, 'Exegesis and audience in Thucydides', *Hermes* 109 (1981), 25–46, at 27–8; M. Palmer, 'Alcibiades and the question of tyranny in Thucydides', *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique* 15 (1982), 103–24, at 115 and 121, and also his *Love of Glory and the Common Good. Aspects of the Thought of Thucydides* (Lanham, MD, 1992), 79–89.

[6] Several critiqued by A. Tsakmakis, *Thukydides über die Vergangenheit*, *Classica Monacensia* 11 (Tübingen, 1995), 208–14.

[7] W. Schadewalt, *Die Geschichtsschreibung des Thukydides: Ein Versuch* (Berlin, 1929), 84–94, at 92; his observations developed by others: folly, Münch (n. 4), 71–2; class tensions, H.R. Rawlings III, *The Structure of Thucydides' History* (Princeton, 1981), 101–10, 112; driving to treason, Rawlings 103, 110–13; C. Farrar, *The Origins of Democratic Thinking. The Invention of Politics in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 1988), 146–8 follows Rawlings in many particulars. Diesner (n. 4), 20–1 argued for only a general parallelism.

[8] L. Pearson, 'Note on a digression of Thucydides (VI.54-59)', *AJP* 70 (1949), 186–9.

[9] W. Liebeschuetz, 'Thucydides and the Sicilian expedition', *Historia* 17 (1968), 289–306, at 304–5; also A. Momigliano, 'L'Excursus di Tucidide in VI, 54–59', in *Studi di storiographia antica in memoria di Leonardo Ferrero* (Turin, 1971), 31–5, at 32.

[10] Rawlings (n. 7), 91–100, 117; he also notes (110) that a 'tyranny in name' became a 'tyranny in fact' thanks to the assassination, a point previously made but not emphasised by Hirsch (n. 1), 129. Details of Rawlings's analogies are criticised by Tsakmakis (n. 6), 212–13.

[11] W.R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton, 1984), 179–80. Some of his brief and unargued observations ('in general the careful repetitions of language [unspecified] closely link the story of Harmodius and Aritogeiton to the situation in 415 B.C.'; 'further thematic affinities appear' once the reader looks beneath the surface; Athens comes to resemble the tyrants 'whose effects are felt not so much by its subjects as by its own citizens'; Athens is losing its special quality of the avoidance of suspicion) will be further developed here.

the *eros* and daring of the tyrannicides and those of the Athenians, set on the conquest of Sicily (Forde);[12] and in the parallel movement of events from the private realm to the public (Münch, Pearson, Stahl, Connor, and Forde, again).[13] Yet others have focussed on apparent parallels that disappoint or fail, like that between Alcibiades and the Peisistratids Hippias and Hipparchus (Vickers),[14] or between democratic and tyrannicidal sexual politics (Wohl).[15] Many of these readings can be layered on top of each other, especially if ignorance and misapprehension on the part of participants are seen as motivating action in the excursus *and* its various frames. What follows, then, by no means excludes most of the previous readings – it is, indeed, to some extent dependent on them. But I wish to focus on elements only previously hinted at, or not previously demonstrated through parallel language, in building up an interpretation of excursus and frames that has a different emphasis; and the connection to 1.20–2, key to motivating the excursus in the first place, has not been fully exploited (to my knowledge) before.[16]

In particular, emphasis will be placed (in section I) on what Thucydides may have thought of the actions and reactions (of Aristogeiton, of Hipparchus, of Harmodius, of Hippias; of the Athenian people), of their motivations, and of the violence perpetrated. Was Thucydides really implying that '[t]he "tyrannicide", who acts out of jealousy, is no better than Hipparchos, whose vanity is wounded by the refusal of his advances'?[17] In II, parallels for Aristogeiton, Hipparchus, Harmodius, and Hippias in the surrounding frames will be suggested, but emphasised in particular will be the way in which the Athenians change after 'taking [the events of the excursus] to heart' (ἐνθυμούμενος, 6.60.1), and what it means for suspicion and haste to overwhelm their judgment. Only then will the fuller connections to 1.20–2, and the implications of the excursus for Thucydides' historical ambitions, be explored (III).

I. THE EXCURSUS

The first act in the narrative of the excursus itself is that Harmodius 'was attempted' (πειραθείς) – an attempted seduction – by Hipparchus, 'was not persuaded' (οὐ πεισθείς), and then 'denounced' him (καταγορεύει) to Aristogeiton (6.54.3). This last seems like a strong word in its context, as it is the only other time it is used in Thucydides, when the pro-Athenian conspiracy within Megara in 425 is denounced by one of its members to the other Megarians. Perhaps the intent here is, distantly, to call to mind a citadel under siege and invest the excursus, already, with an undertone of betrayal and harsh competition. The result at Megara was that a plan to betray the city was foiled, not least through the restraint of the pro-Spartan Megarians, who prevented the opening of the city gates but otherwise did not let on that they knew anything about the conspiracy (4.68.6). By contrast, when Harmodius made his denunication, Aristogeiton was 'erotically cut to the quick' and 'made fearful' (ἐρωτικῶς περιαλγήσας καὶ φοβηθείς), and immediately started to plot the

[12] S. Forde, *The Ambition to Rule. Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides* (Ithaca, NY, 1989), 35, 33.

[13] Münch (n. 4), 71–2; Pearson (n. 8), 187; Stahl (n. 5), 3, 6; Connor (n. 11), 179; Forde (n. 12), 34–6, 95; see also J.W. Allison, *Power and Preparedness in Thucydides* (Baltimore, 1989), 101.

[14] M. Vickers, 'Thucydides 6.53.3–59: not a "digression"', *DHA* 21 (1995), 193–200, at 195.

[15] Wohl (n. 1), 351, 352, 364.

[16] Although it has been noted: see especially Rawlings (n. 7), 254–9 and T.F. Scanlon, 'Thucydides and tyranny', *Classical Antiquity* 6 (1987), 286–301.

[17] Stahl (n. 5), 3.

destruction of the tyranny, κατάλυσιν τῇ τυραννίδι (6.54.3). Περιαλγήσας is another strong word, otherwise used in Thucydides only of the Spartan reaction to the disaster (περιαλγοῦντες τῷ πάθει) when their men on Sphacteria were first cut off (4.14.2). The consequence there was that the Spartans rushed into the sea wearing their armour, each man trying to drag back the Spartans' own empty ships by hand; Aristogeiton's reaction was similarly unthinking, dangerous, and excessive. His was not an appropriate response and put him in an unnatural position, immediately plotting to destroy the tyranny 'to the extent that his worth allowed it' (ἐπιβουλεύει εὐθὺς ὡς ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπαρχούσης ἀξιώσεως κατάλυσιν τῇ τυραννίδι, 6.54.3) – just as the Spartans in 4.14.2 find themselves fighting a land-battle on the sea, a reverse of the natural order and of what they would have wanted.[18] Indeed, what Aristogeiton most feared, that the power (δύναμιν) of Hipparchus would compel Harmodius by force (βίᾳ), is specifically noted not to have taken place, even after Hipparchus made a second attempt and, for the second time, failed to persuade (πειράσας οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἔπειθε…βίαιον μὲν οὐδὲν ἐβούλετο δρᾶν, 6.54.4).[19] As Thucydides later summarised, Aristogeiton acted 'out of erotic rage', δι᾽ ὀργῆς…ἐρωτικῆς (6.57.3), and ὀργή is rarely a rational emotion, usually leading to rash, heedless, and excessive action.[20]

Hipparchus was a man of δύναμις, of power (6.54.3). After Harmodius' second refusal (subsequently characterised as firm: ἀπαρνηθέντα, 6.56.1), Hipparchus, rather than letting the matter go or using force, chose a third option: he 'prepared to insult [Harmodius] in some invisible way' (ἐν τρόπῳ δέ τινι ἀφανεῖ…παρεσκευάζετο προπηλακιῶν αὐτόν, 6.54.4). Hipparchus has so far acted like the model would-be *erastes*: pursuing after a first refusal, and not using tricks or political pressure or violence.[21] Pausanias, in Plato's *Symposium*, stated as a fact that, although an *eromenos* should not be easily caught, if an *erastes* cannot catch him it is 'shameful' (182D–183C):[22] Hipparchus too may have felt shamed by Harmodius' refusals. Hipparchus' subsequent desire to take some compensating vengeance is therefore well within the world of Greek popular morality – whereas the fear and fury of an *erastes* (Aristogeiton) on behalf of his *eromenos* (Harmodius) is not, as Thucydides' language has suggested. And Hipparchus does have δύναμις, and demonstrates that power not just by insulting Harmodius, but by carefully *preparing* to insult Harmodius.[23] Thucydides' language suggests that Hipparchus' preparation of an invisible insult was a calculated and reasonable option on the part of a very powerful man, since Hipparchus was avoiding the violence Aristogeiton assumed he could have used, and may have been inclined to non-violent options as a matter of general principle (βίαιον μὲν οὐδὲν ἐβούλετο δρᾶν, 'he wished to do nothing violent' can be read both specifically and generically, 6.54.4) – just as the tyranny in general rested lightly on the people, without creating odium (ἀνεπιφθόνως), a situation explicated in the

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[18] As Stahl (n. 5), 3 notes; Forde (n. 12), 34 claims that Thucydides considered Aristogeiton's agitation what one 'would expect of a lover', but offers no basis for this conclusion.

[19] Stahl (n. 5), 3.

[20] On *orge*, J.E. Lendon, 'Homeric vengeance and the outbreak of Greek wars', in H. van Wees (ed.), *War and Violence in Ancient Greece* (London, 2000), 1–30, at 18–20.

[21] An *erastes*' persistence after refusal was seen as creditable, at least by fourth-century standards, see K.J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (New York, 1980), 82–3.

[22] Dover (n. 21), 81–91 discusses this passage in the context of fourth-century behaviour, but thinks it of possibly wider chronological value.

[23] Allison (n. 13), 133 notes that in Thucydides 'the exercise of power is synonymous with a demonstration of one's state of preparation'.

paragraphs that follow but connected to Hipparchus' actions by an explanatory γάρ.[24] Since this statement about the tyranny is also connected to the statement that the tyrants practised (ἐπετήδευσαν) 'virtue and intelligence', ἀρετὴν καὶ ξύνεσιν, towards the people (6.54.5), the implication is that Hipparchus, as a member of this family, even now was acting in an acceptable and possibly even virtuous way. Moreover, this description of the virtues of the tyranny in these terms is another strong and unusual statement – the only other entity praised in both these terms at once in Thucydides' work is the Spartan Brasidas (4.81.2).[25] The overall impression, therefore, is that Hipparchus' choice among the options was an understandable, prudent, and restrained one.[26]

He chose to insult – 'spatter with mud' (προπηλακιῶν and προυπηλάκισεν, only here at 6.54.4 and 6.56.1 in all of Thucydides) – Harmodius in an 'invisible' way (ἐν τρόπῳ δέ τινι ἀφανεῖ): an arresting paradox, apparently, since insults must be perceptible, and perceived, to have their intended impact.[27] He did so by humiliating Harmodius' sister. In what the insult consisted – she was summoned to serve as a basket-bearer in a procession, then sent away after being told that she had never been summoned at all because she 'was not worthy' (διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀξίαν εἶναι) – has been debated.[28] It was, however, an indirect insult, an attack on the sister as a way of insulting the brother. Hipparchus also made this insult happen in an indirect way, for the subject of the second part of the sentence has changed: 'they summoned', 'they sent her away, saying…' (ἐπαγγείλαντες, ἀπήλασαν; 6.56.1). Who? Hipparchus had a hand in arranging the procession of the Great Panathenaea on the day on which it was to occur (6.57.1), but has hidden himself within a larger group of people. This is another way in which an insult is inflicted 'in an invisible way': not only because its direct object is not its direct target, but because the true instigator remains invisible, suspected but not clearly revealed.[29] Harmodius is humiliated but neither directly harmed nor taken by force; Hipparchus' own sense of shame is relieved, his δύναμις demonstrated.

This insult Harmodius bore 'badly' or 'harshly' (χαλεπῶς), although Thucydides emphasises its effect on Aristogeiton more: 'by that much more, for his [Harmodius'] sake, was Aristogeiton goaded on' (πολλῷ δὴ μᾶλλον δι' ἐκεῖνον καὶ ὁ Ἀριστογείτων, παρωξύνετο 6.56.1-2). Παροξύνω is another strong verb, used of what their allies were attempting to do to the Spartans in Book 1 (1.67.5) – to which, Archidamus says, Spartans do not respond; it is a sign of the Spartans' strength that they are not goaded by accusations (ἤν τις ἄρα ξὺν κατηγορίᾳ παροξύνῃ,

[24] Stahl (n. 5), 3.

[25] Also Rawlings (n. 7), 106; see Palmer (n. 5, 1992), 82 for others praised with one or the other of these terms.

[26] Diesner (n. 4), 14 and 18 noted that Thucydides drew a strong distinction between the emotionally motivated tyrannicides and the tyrants' ἀρετὴν καὶ ξύνεσιν.

[27] Noted by Dover HCT 4.329.

[28] Most people believe that this was the cause of the assassination, Plat. Hipparchus 229B–C, Aelian VH 11.8. Was the family too insignificant (Dover HCT 4.334; Rawlings [n. 7], 106–7) or too foreign? B.M. Lavelle, 'The nature of Hipparchos' insult to Harmodios', AJP 107 (1986), 318–31, at 319–20, n. 5 suggests instead that the insult was personal and sexual in nature (not a virgin?); this questioned by H. Schlange-Schöningen, 'Harmodius und Aristogeiton, die Tyrannenmörder von 514 v.Chr.', in A. Demandt (ed.), Das Attentat in der Geschichte (Cologne, 1996), 15–37, at 27; Lavelle (n. 4), 119 later argued for tyrannical sexual misconduct as a folk motif, inserted into the story to justify Hipparchus' death.

[29] Another possibility: ἀφανεῖ meant 'in such a manner that the reason for the insult would not be apparent to people in general', K.J. Dover, Thucydides Book VI (Oxford, 1965), 62.

οὐδέν…ἀνεπείσθημεν, 1.84.2). Yet Spartans *are* goaded to action, both in Book 1 and later, when Alcibiades goads them (6.88.10) to send assistance to the Syracusans; and goaded people do rash things, as the Athenians tell the Melians (5.99). So in responding to accusation, in being severely harmed, in allowing himself to be goaded, Aristogeiton is like a weak opponent of the Athenians pricked by necessity into unsustainable opposition, or a Spartan acting against what his king says is a Spartan's true nature. Thucydides' language again emphasises that Aristogeiton's responses are consistently more than what the situation demands.

Harmodius had for a long time been the more restrained of the two future 'tyranni-cides', contenting himself with firm refusal until the insult.[30] Then he took it badly, and became a clear member of the conspiracy, acting with Aristogeiton to bring about the downfall, κατάλυσις, of the tyranny. Thucydides' summary of Harmodius' motivation was that he now acted because he was ὑβρισμένος, had been treated with contumely and outrage. So both Harmodius and Aristogeiton, when deprived by their own misunderstanding of the greater target of the tyrant himself (they panicked on seeing one of the conspirators talking with Hippias) and suspecting (ὑποπτήσαντες, 1.20.2), fearing (ἔδεισαν, 6.57.2), and judging that they had been betrayed (ἐνόμισαν μεμνῦσθαι), hastened at the Great Panathenaea to avenge themselves on the man who had hurt them (τὸν λυπήσαντα, 6.57.3). Hipparchus had insulted Harmodius' sister to get at Harmodius; Harmodius and Aristogeiton had planned to kill Hipparchus' brother in response to actions undertaken by Hipparchus; and now circumstances force the principals to meet face to face instead. To kill in response to *hybris* happens, especially in Homer, but was seen by Athenians of Thucydides' day more as part of their ancestral past than of their condoned present (except under a few clearly defined exceptional circumstances).[31] Indeed, it was probably so in Harmodius' time too, since the Athenians by then no longer carried swords as an everyday matter (1.6.3), and carrying weapons would have aroused 'suspicion' on any day but that of the Great Panathenaea, as Thucydides notes (ἐν ᾗ μόνον ἡμέρα οὐχ ὕποπτον ἐγίγνετο, 6.56.2).[32] It may be, therefore, that the import of Thucydides' language is that Harmodius acted in (at best) an old-fashioned way; certainly Aristogeiton, who feels himself harmed when he has not been, and who is motivated by erotic ὀργή, is acting more inappropriately, but both are acting ἀπερισκέπτως, 'without circumspection' (6.57.3).[33] Hipparchus, who acted with restraint, seems to have earned Thucydides' clearest endorsement. The strongest contrast in Thucydides' account is between Hipparchus and Aristogeiton, the first enamoured but careful, the second wildly emotional and given to extreme actions, a contrast heightened by the parallels drawn with Spartans. Hipparchus and the Peisistratids in general are like Brasidas, a good

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[30] J. Miller, 'Die Erzählungen von den Tyrannenmördern', *Philologus* n.s. 6 (1893), 573–6; Lavelle (n. 28), 318–19; N. Loraux, 'Enquête sur la construction d'un meurtre en histoire', *L'Écrit du temps* 10 (1985), 3–21.

[31] N.R.E. Fisher, *Hybris. A Study in the Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece* (Warminster, 1992), 68–81 argues that a *graphe hybreos* existed as early as Solon, which would indicate, with Lendon (n. 20), 12–13, that expectations about the propriety of private vengeance had already changed.

[32] For no longer wearing weapons (dated to *c.* 650 B.C.), H. van Wees, 'Greeks bearing arms. The state, the leisure class, and the display of weapons in Archaic Greece', in N. Fisher and H. van Wees (edd.), *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence* (London, 1998), 333–78, at 347, 352, 367–9.

[33] Thucydides emphasises the differences between Aristogeiton and Harmodius, as Loraux (n. 30), 6, 14 and esp. 3–4, n. 3 notes, by having verbs like παρωξύνετο in the singular, applying to Aristogeiton alone, when, by contrast, at [Ar.] *AP* 18.2 that verb is in the dual (παροξυνθέντα).

Spartan who earns Thucydides' highest praise; Aristogeiton is like the bad Spartans who can be manipulated, goaded in the heat of the moment to make unwise decisions that violate their own best nature. Harmodius is merely the beautiful youth, acted upon rather than acting until driven too far. Hippias is a late actor in the excursus but performs appropriately and shrewdly after he is introduced, arranging (διεκόσμει, 6.57.1) how the procession was to go, being accessible to everyone (ἦν δὲ πᾶσιν εὐπρόσοδος, 6.57.2), and responding with insight and calculation when he receives the news of his brother's assassination (6.58.1-2). His coolness is, again, a contrast to the ὀργή of the 'tyrannicides'.[34]

At the end of the excursus, Thucydides glosses the terms with which he began it, expressing conclusions with words that will be used again, as will be seen, in the frames. The origin of the conspiracy, an ἐρωτικὴν ξυντυχίαν, an act of erotic chance,[35] has proved to be an ἐρωτικὴν λύπην, an act of erotic hurt (6.54.1, 6.59.1); the τόλμημα itself has proved to be an unreasoned act of daring, an ἀλόγιστος τόλμα (6.54.1; 6.59.1); but Aristogeiton's φόβος has become τὸ περιδεές of the tyrannicides – a kind of intellectual apprehension (rather than emotional fear) that can, sometimes, have a good outcome (6.54.3, 6.59.1).[36] And the consequence of it all was that the tyranny became harsher, χαλεπωτέρα, since Hippias, who had acted so coolly in crisis, subsequently acted out of fear, executing people and searching for safe havens abroad; he was deposed in the fourth year by the Spartans and the Alcmeonids (6.59.2–4).

II. THE FRAMES

The immediate framing story of the Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton excursus is that of the Athenians' tumult over the mutilation of the herms and the profanation of the Mysteries, and Alcibiades' recall to Athens. Right before the excursus began, Thucydides' narrative had the Athenians sending the *Salaminia* for Alcibiades and others, for after the fleet had sailed the Athenians had continued their investigation into the matter of the Mysteries and the herms, 'not subjecting the informers to examination, but accepting all (information) suspiciously, they arrested and imprisoned very good citizens trusting in lowly men, thinking that it was more useful to investigate and make discoveries about the matter than to let go unexamined an accused but seemingly good person because of some lowliness of the informer' (οὐ δοκιμάζοντες τοὺς μηνυτάς, ἀλλὰ πάντα ὑπόπτως ἀποδεχόμενοι, διὰ πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων πίστιν πάνυ χρηστοὺς τῶν πολιτῶν ξυλλαμβάνοντες κατέδουν, χρησιμώτερον ἡγούμενοι εἶναι βασανίσαι τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ εὑρεῖν ἢ διὰ μηνυτοῦ πονηρίαν τινὰ καὶ χρηστὸν δοκοῦντα εἶναι αἰτιαθέντα ἀνέλεγκτον διαφυγεῖν, 6.53.2). Rawlings has already pointed out the πονηρός/χρηστός opposition within the Athenian *polis*, to which he argued the lower status of Aristogeiton and the good (and aristocratic) character of the tyrants and Hipparchus with them were parallel.[37] Of equal interest is the Athenian inclination at this moment to 'receive information

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[34] Münch (n. 4), 71; Diesner (n. 4).

[35] L. Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides* (Cambridge MA, 1975), 194–5 emphasises the compounds of τύχη in the excursus (συντυχία, περιέτυχον [1.20.2, 6.57.3], δυστυξία [6.55.4]) and their connection to the passions

[36] The distinction first noted by J. de Romilly, 'La Crainte dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide', *C&M* 17 (1956), 119–27, at 120; for discussion of περιδεές as 'deep apprehension', see V. Hunter, 'Thucydides, Gorgias, and mass psychology', *Hermes* 114 (1986), 412–29, at 415, n. 10.

[37] Rawlings (n. 7), 101–2, 108–11.

suspiciously'. They received information 'in a suspicious temper', Thucydides explains, only because (γάρ) of what they had heard: that the tyranny of Peisistratus and his sons had become harsh (χαλεπὴν…γενομένην) before it ended, and that it had ended through the actions not of the People and Harmodius, but of the Spartans. 'For learning this by oral tradition…the people were always fearful and took everything suspiciously', ἐπιστάμενος γὰρ ὁ δῆμος ἀκοῇ…ἐφοβεῖτο αἰεὶ καὶ πάντα ὑπόπτως ἐλάμβανεν (6.53.3). Fear they have in common with Aristogeiton[38] (and Hippias subsequent to the assassination of his brother), fear and suspicion with the conspirators of 514 (when given reason to suspect and fear that they had been betrayed), and suspicion alone with the Athenians of that time, who were suspicious of anyone carrying weapons not on the day of the Great Panathenaea.

When the narrative resumes after the excursus, Thucydides depicts the Athenians as 'harsh now, and suspicious' (χαλεπὸς ἦν τότε καὶ ὑπόπτης): in the matter of the Mysteries in particular, 'all the things that had occurred seemed to them part of an oligarchic and tyrannical conspiracy', καὶ πάντα αὐτοῖς ἐδόκει ἐπὶ ξυνωμοσίᾳ ὀλιγαρχικῇ καὶ τυραννικῇ πεπρᾶχθαι (6.60.1). They were enraged (ὀργιζομένων),[39] and gave themselves over to greater wildness (ἀγριώτερον) day by day. A man was convinced to inform, not least to free the *polis* of its suspicions; and the *demos*, overjoyed (ἄσμενος) and thinking it had got 'clarity' (τὸ σαφές, 6.60.4 – but whether the evidence laid was τὸ σαφές no one then or now knows, 6.60.2), tried and executed those it found guilty, granting itself – ἡ…ἄλλη πόλις, 'the rest of the city', accusers and those not executed – very clear advantage or relief (περιφανῶς ὠφέλητο; 6.60.2–5).

The Athenians bore a harsh (χαλεπῶς) opinion of Alcibiades, too, since they thought they had come to a 'clarity' about the Herms, ᾤοντο σαφὲς ἔχειν, and that this understanding explained the profanation of the Mysteries in which he was implicated: 'it had occurred for the same reason, and was a conspiracy against the democracy' (μετὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγου καὶ τῆς ξυνωμοσίας ἐπὶ τῷ δήμῳ ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἐδόκει πραχθῆναι, 6.61.1). When a Spartan army appeared on the Isthmus, the Athenians, alarmed, slept armed in the temple of Theseus (6.61.2). They themselves thought the Spartan presence a threat to the city brought about by collusion with the now absent Alcibiades (6.61.2), and in consequence of this event, and in combination with an incident at Argos, 'from everywhere suspicion came to surround Alcibiades' (πανταχόθεν τε περιειστήκει ὑποψία ἐς τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην, 6.61.4). So achieving 'clarity' had not banished suspicion from the city after all; and when Alcibiades did not reappear in Athens after his summons, they sentenced him to death (6.61.7).

Shifts in the attitude of the *demos* over time show the significant consequences of 'taking' the story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton 'to heart' (ἐνθυμούμενος).[40] The *demos* had been aware of the story before, and this knowledge made them take a suspicious stance; after, 'remembering' this and more, they became united in their harshness and their suspicions of fellow-citizens, are suspicious for the wrong reasons,

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[38] Wohl (n. 1), 358 takes Aristogeiton, as a *mesos politês*, as 'representative' of all of the *astoi*; I argue below that the parallel intended is with only a part of the Athenian population.

[39] Or had men in prison because they had been enraged for some time – but even if this were the case, Thucydides' first mention of the ὀργή of the people in connection with this incident comes here, after the excursus, not before it.

[40] ἐνθυμεῖσθαι is well represented in Book 6, see Loraux (n. 30), 18, n. 44; Athenians are different after they take the story to heart and recollect: H. Erbse, 'Über eine Eigenheit der Thukydideischen Geschichtsbetrachtung', *RhM* 96 (1953), 38–62, at 52; *contra*, Stahl (n. 5), 7.

and in their willingness to act violently (and without due consideration) on their suspicions and fears became true tyrants themselves. For Thucydides, their 'taking to heart' and 'remembering' were specific historical events with very significant historical consequences.

For although a certain proportion of the Athenian population was violently hostile to Alcibiades as early as 6.28, not all of them were: his enemies are distinguished in 6.28-9, and are clearly not the same as the entire *demos*. These enemies, at that earlier moment 'aggrieved' ($\dot{a}\chi\theta\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu o\iota$) with Alcibiades, magnify the business of the Mysteries the moment that Alcibiades' involvement is suggested: like Aristogeiton after Hipparchus' first approach to Harmodius, they react quickly, immoderately, and – here, it is specified – for obviously self-serving reasons, for they thought that if they drove him out, they would be the $\pi\rho\hat{\omega}\tau o\iota$, 'first men', in the city (6.28.2). The rest of the Athenians – the *demos* – are not yet fully and emotionally involved, although they are pursuing their inquiries. Like Harmodius, although something has been attempted, they have yet to be convinced that they have been outraged. Those who were alleged to have parodied the Mysteries treated the rites with *hybris*, to be sure ($\pi o\iota\epsilon\hat{\iota}\tau a\iota\ldots\dot{\epsilon}\phi'\ \ddot{v}\beta\rho\epsilon\iota$), but Thucydides notes that this was *hybris* within homes ($\dot{\epsilon}\nu$ $o\dot{\iota}\kappa\acute{\iota}a\iota s$, 6.28.1), not an act the Athenians could see, at least not as clearly as they could see the mutilation of the herms, for information on which a large reward had been immediately offered publicly ($\delta\eta\mu o\sigma\acute{\iota}a$, 6.27.2). This act of *hybris* – at first a matter reported only by metics and slaves – was thus, initially, $\dot{a}\phi a\nu\epsilon\hat{\iota}$, its true instigator hidden within a larger group; only after recalling the tyranny did the Athenians complete the false parallel and also deem its immediate object (the goddess's Mysteries) not its direct target (which they decided was the democracy instead).[41] But in the earliest moments of the debacle the *demos* as a whole was not consumed by a rigid and outraged sense of being $\dot{v}\beta\rho\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu o s$, for Alcibiades' hardened enemies feared the people would 'become soft' ($\mu a\lambda a\kappa\acute{\iota}\zeta\eta\tau a\iota$) if he were accused right away (6.29.3); the people's enraged and unified response to the parodying of the Mysteries comes only *after* the memory of the Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton story has been 'taken to heart'. After that, however, like Aristogeiton and Harmodius after the $\dot{a}\phi a\nu\epsilon\hat{\iota}$ insult, the *demos* acts as one, $\dot{o}\rho\gamma\iota\zeta o\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\nu$ or 'consumed with $\dot{o}\rho\gamma\acute{\eta}$'.

The suspicion that became passionate anger and harshness is a suspicion that the Athenians feel for each other as well as for Alcibiades. Suspicion is not something that Athenians usually feel for one of their own: to be suspicious of fellow citizens (not outsiders),[42] and to act on those suspicions, is not characteristic of the Athenians before 415 (but will be by 411).[43] Their suspicions (especially of leaders) could be aroused, to be sure; but previously they could also be allayed, as in the cases of Pericles and Cleon.[44] The catalyst here in 415 is recollection of the tyranny; after it the Athenians' suspicions cannot be allayed until someone has confessed and executions

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[41] Tsakmakis (n. 6), 216–17 argues for a number of other false analogies made by the Athenians as well.

[42] 1.56.2 (excited by Corinthians); 1.75.4, 5.25.2, 5.35.2, 4 (Spartans; book 5 references are to the period after the Peace of Nikias); 4.51.1 (Chios), 4.103.4 (Argilus – both suspected of plotting revolution).

[43] 8.63.2, 76.2 (Athenians suspicious of each other at Samos); 8.66.5 (commons mistrust each other in Athens); 8.68.1 (Antiphon suspected by the masses because of his reputation for cleverness); 8.92.4 (after many suspicions, they take action).

[44] Pericles, 2.13.1; Cleon, 4.27.3.

have occurred.[45] And their suspicion is not only of unusual targets (each other), but of more usual targets (leaders – here, Alcibiades) for the wrong reasons. As Pericles himself said in the Funeral Oration, the Athenians were praiseworthy precisely because they did not harbour suspicions of other Athenians for what they did in private: 'as for the suspicion ($\hat{\upsilon}\pi o\psi\hat{\iota}a\nu$) of one another (which can arise) from the $\hat{\epsilon}\pi\iota\tau\eta\delta\epsilon\upsilon\mu\acute{a}\tau\omega\nu$ done every day, if our neighbour does something as he pleases, we do not react with anger ($\delta\iota$' $\mathring{o}\rho\gamma\hat{\eta}s$ $\tau\grave{o}\nu$ $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\lambda as\dots\mathring{\epsilon}\chi o\nu\tau\epsilon s$)…although in private matters ($\tau\grave{a}$ $\mathring{\iota}\delta\iota a$) we associate without being offended, in public matters ($\tau\grave{a}$ $\delta\eta\mu\acute{o}\sigma\iota a$) we do not violate the law ($\pi a\rho a\nu o\mu o\hat{\upsilon}\mu\epsilon\nu$) because, especially, of fear: we are always obedient to those holding office and to the laws…' (2.37.2–3). Yet this is exactly how the Athenians proceed in the matter of Alcibiades. Suspicion of him was sparked not by any one specific action (as with Pericles and Cleon), but because of 'the greatness of his lawlessness with regard to his own body' ($\tau\grave{o}$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\theta os$ $\tau\hat{\eta}s$ $\tau\epsilon$ $\kappa a\tau\grave{a}$ $\tau\grave{o}$ $\acute{\epsilon}a\upsilon\tau o\hat{\upsilon}$ $\sigma\hat{\omega}\mu a$ $\pi a\rho a\nu o\mu\acute{\iota}as$), in his 'way of living' ($\delta\acute{\iota}a\iota\tau a\nu$), and (the greatness of) 'his intention' ($\tau\hat{\eta}s$ $\delta\iota a\nu o\acute{\iota}as$; all 6.15.4): because of what Athenians believed about him as a result of his personal qualities and his exercise of them, not anything specific that he had done. His public ($\delta\eta\mu o\sigma\acute{\iota}a$) conduct of the war was excellent, but his habits in private ($\acute{\iota}\delta\acute{\iota}a\dots\tau o\hat{\iota}s$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\tau\eta\delta\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu a\sigma\iota\nu$) gave offence.[46] For an Athenian to be suspected for his habits in private is, however, counter to best Athenian practice: if 6.15.4 and 2.37.2–3 are set side by side,[47] the shared vocabulary is striking; the earlier passage sets the context to which the latter must be compared.

Obedience to the laws did not keep Alcibiades from $\pi a\rho a\nu o\mu\acute{\iota}a$ in matters of his body, but the Athenians also did not refrain from developing suspicions of him based on his $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\tau\eta\delta\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu a\tau a$ in private and acting accordingly, entrusting command to other men, 'by which', as Thucydides says prospectively, 'they not very much later ruined the city' (6.15.4). The Athenians after 'taking to heart' do not try to prove Alcibiades guilty, although Alcibiades' vices are specifically said not to have affected his performance in the public realm; it was the Athenians who extrapolated, against their better nature as Pericles had described it, from the private to the public.[48]

When they do so, they 'take things harshly' and are 'harsh', as the tyranny had become harsh after the death of Hipparchus,[49] and act with precipitate violence. It is after the excursus of 6.54–9 that the Athenians are depicted, most strikingly, as not acting with $\mathring{a}\rho\epsilon\tau\grave{\eta}\nu$ $\kappa a\grave{\iota}$ $\xi\acute{\upsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu$, as acting swiftly on suspicions, fuelled by $\mathring{o}\rho\gamma\acute{\eta}$, and indeed as executing their own citizens or condemning them to death as the

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[45] Variants of the word $\hat{\upsilon}\pi o\psi\acute{\iota}a$ are featured prominently in 6.60–1, after the excursus has ended; whereas in 6.53.1–2 suspicion had merely been adverbial, a state of mind in which the Athenians received information, in 6.60.1 suspicion is adjectival (the *demos* <u>is</u> $\hat{\upsilon}\pi\acute{o}\pi\tau\eta s$) and has consequences, making arrests and condemnations happen, and eventually coming (as a noun) to settle on the city first, and then on Alcibiades (6.60.3, 6.61.4).

[46] Later authors close the circle that Thucydides carefully leaves open, identifying Alcibiades as 'the most hybristic' (Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.12) and detailing his violence against others and his $\pi a\rho a\nu o\mu\acute{\iota}a$, see Fisher (n. 31), 87–8, 98, 108, 148–9.

[47] Connor (n. 11), 180 noted that the Athenians in 415 were developing suspicions that they had not had, or did not have in an ideal world, but does not connect 2.37.2-3 and 6.15.4 specifically.

[48] D. Gribble, *Alcibiades and Athens. A Study in Literary Presentation* (Oxford, 1999), 190, 192–3 therefore judges this the point of the excursus.

[49] Connor (n. 11), 179–80 remarks that at this point the Athenians resemble their tyrants in the latter's final days, which leads to repression; also Gribble (n. 48), 193, n. 91. Verbal parallels of harshness and fear noted but not followed out entirely by T. Rood, *Thucydides. Narrative and Explanation* (Oxford, 1998), 180–1.

post-assassination Hippias had. They inflict legal violence on their own citizens, moving swiftly: trials and executions are noted in the same clause of a seven-clause sentence (τοὺς δὲ καταιτιαθέντας κρίσεις ποιήσαντες τοὺς μὲν ἀπέκτειναν, 6.60.4). Violence by the powerful suggests tyranny (even if delivered through the courts); it was βία towards the allies that had caused the Spartans to suspect that Pausanias was acting more like a tyrant than a general (βιαίου, βιάζηται, 1.95.1–2, 3). It had been βία from Hipparchus that Aristogeiton had feared, but which was not inflicted: the Peisistratids were, in fact, less 'tyrannical' than their label 'tyrant' would suggest, while others, like the regent Pausanias, were more. That the Athenians, inspired by their distorted memories of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, are now inflicting violence on their own citizens is therefore a significant and terrible shift, and associates the frenzied activities of 415 and those who inflict them with other observations in Thucydides about Athens and tyranny.

The idea that the fifth-century Athenian *polis* was a tyranny had been building since Book 1. The Athenians at the height of their power possessed a great navy and great wealth, just as the tyrants in the Archaeology had,[50] although merely being a wealthy naval power was not sufficient to make a person (or, indeed, a city) a tyrant.[51] But the Corinthians towards the end of Book 1 appeal to the idea that public opinion would blame Peloponnesian allies and the Spartans if they allowed the establishment of a τύραννον πόλιν (1.122.3, 1.124.3); Pericles then told the Athenians that they held ἀρχήν 'like a tyranny' (ὡς τυραννίδα, 2.63.2), as Cleon did (τυραννίδα ἔχετε τὴν ἀρχήν, 3.37.2), with their subjects disaffected plotters; and Euphemus told the Camarinaeans that it was characteristic of tyrannical men and cities holding ἀρχή that both considered the advantageous 'not unreasonable' (ἀνδρὶ δὲ τυράννῳ ἢ πόλει ἀρχὴν ἐχούσῃ οὐδὲν ἄλογον ὅτι ξυμφέρον, 6.85.1). Inch by inch, closer and closer, Thucydides' speakers have argued that Athens is tyrannical – the non-Athenians because she *is* a tyrant city, some Athenians because of the way she *exercises* her rule. But tyranny should not be located merely, or chiefly, in others' opinions or in relations of empire. Even Pausanias, the details of whose behaviour look more tyrannical than those of the Athenian tyrants (for he eventually became, unlike the pre-assassination Hippias, 'difficult of access', and exhibited 'a harsh passion', δυσπρόσοδόν τε…καὶ τῇ ὀργῇ οὕτω χαλεπῇ, 1.130.2), was acquitted of all serious charges (the first time) by the Spartans, because accused of acts of violence and injustice (a μίμησις…τυραννίδος) only *against the allies* (1.95.1,3,6).[52] When did Athens become truly tyrannical?[53]

[50] Wealth and navies: 1.13.1, 1.13.6 and 3.104.2 (Polycrates), 1.14.2 (Sicilian tyrants a little slow to acquire triremes); other tyrants identified merely by the name, 1.18.1 (tyrannies in Greece), 1.126.3 (Theagenes of Megara), 2.30.1 (Evarchus of Astacus), 6.4.2, 6.5.3, 6.94.1 (Gelon), 6.4.6 (Anaxilas of Rhegium).

[51] W.R. Connor, 'Tyrannis Polis', in J. D'Arms and J.W. Eadie (edd.), *Ancient and Modern. Essays in Honor of Gerald. F. Else* (Ann Arbor, 1977), 95–109, at 105–6 stresses the ways in which the imperial Athenians and Thucydides' characterisation of the archaic tyrants differ.

[52] He was censured only for τῶν μὲν ἰδίᾳ πρός τινας ἀδικημάτων 'injustices in private against some' (1.95.5, later summarised as ἀπελύθη μὴ ἀδικεῖν, 1.128.3). Although mysterious, this must mean that all the acts of violence and injustice against the allies, which were necessarily public, were ignored.

[53] V. Hunter, 'Athens *Tyrannis*: a new approach to Thucydides', *CJ* 69 (1973–4), 120–6, at 124 argues that Athens was a mild tyrant over her allies before Sphacteria, a harsher one after; but as Scanlon (n. 16), 293 and Rood (n. 49), 180, n. 86 note, for Thucydides Athens' attitude toward her subjects has been harsh and greedy from the beginning. Connor (n. 51), 108–9 argues that, despite the parallels between the Athenians of 415 and Hippias after the assassination,

True tyrannies are above all unjust and lawless.[54] The tyranny at Athens became unjust – a real tyranny – only after the death of Hipparchus, a state of affairs that a stele on the Acropolis proclaimed retrospectively (6.55.1).[55] It is thus a significant observation of Thucydides' that the Athenians in the post-recollection frenzy of 415 may have punished men unjustly: 'and in this matter it was unclear whether those who had suffered had been punished unjustly' (κἂν τούτῳ οἱ μὲν παθόντες ἄδηλον ἦν εἰ ἀδίκως ἐτετιμώρηντο), but the rest of the city received a modicum of relief (6.60.5). Because no one ever knew who was responsible, no one can ever know for certain whether these men were punished justly or not (6.60.2). But the sense seems to be that what mattered most was the relief their punishment brought to the city, not justice. The Athenians have internalised the values of the tyrant – the advantageous is reasonable, relief of personal pain is better than justice[56] – and act accordingly, with no distinctions drawn between enemies, subjects, and citizens. For although the Athenians do *act* tyrannically towards the Melians, such behaviour is merely part of the long practice of ἀρχή that can make such behaviour familiar and ease its acceptance;[57] to *be* truly tyrannical they must become tyrants and indeed act the tyrant *over their own*, not merely act reprehensibly towards their enemies and allies. Fear, harshness, the deaths of citizens, and injustice characterised the last, truly tyrannical phase of the Peisistratid tyranny in Athens, when Hippias became the tyrant that others only assumed he was before; harshness, suspicion, anger, the death of citizens, and (quite possibly) injustice characterised the united Athenian *demos* only after they had internalised the story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton.[58] It was not just that by acting on misapprehensions the Athenians brought about what they had sought to avoid – 'oligarchic conspiracy, treason, and Spartan intervention'.[59] Thucydides' ways of drawing the parallels between Hippias after the murder of Hipparchus and the *demos* after the excursus suggest that in acting harshly and quickly the Athenians became what they most feared, tyrants themselves: a tyrant city not because of their naval empire or even their harsh treatment of allies, but because they came to oppress their own citizens, acting unjustly in order to achieve a measure of relief for themselves.[60]

'Thucydides does not immediately explore the analogy to tyranny', and notes that it is at 8.1 that the Athenians are harsh (χαλεποί) to each other: it is only at this point, then, that for him 'the tyranny has come home'.

[54] Sources demonstrating these points are gathered by R. Seager, 'Alcibiades and the charge of aiming at tyranny', *Historia* 16 (1967), 6–18, at 6; C. Tuplin, 'Imperial tyranny: some reflections on a Classical Greek political metaphor', in P. Cartledge and F.D. Harvey (edd.), *Crux. Essays Presented to G. E. M. de Ste. Croix on his 75th Birthday* (Sidmouth, 1985), 348–75, at 350 n. 13 collects references on 'the suppression of leading citizens [as] a characteristic of tyrannical rule'. Tyrannies are also called unjust by Athenagoras, 6.38.3; but the Peisistratids are specifically said to have maintained the laws of the city, 6.54.6.

[55] Thucydides cites 'the stele about the injustice of the tyrant' on the acropolis, ἡ στήλη περὶ τῆς τῶν τυράννων ἀδικίας (6.55.1). This may have just been a general statement, Dover (n. 29), 65; see also B.M. Lavelle, 'Thucydides vi.55.1 and adikia', *ZPE* 54 (1984), 17–19, who argues that ἀδικία denoted the guilt for the crime, not the crime itself.

[56] Also Thuc.1.17.1, with Gribble (n. 48), 70 and n. 169, on the connection between the pleasures of the body and tyranny.

[57] Rood (n. 49), 181.

[58] Pearson (n. 8), 187 saw parallel reigns of terror, but thought them chiefly characterised by increased severity and fear of revolution, with the details left unclarified. Momigliano (n. 9), 32 saw a parallel too, but one founded on 'l'inacerbirsi dei sospetti'.

[59] Farrar (n. 7), 146–8 (quotation 148).

[60] Cf. Connor (n. 11), 179–80; Palmer (n. 5, 1982), 122.

Within the immediate frame of the story of 415, Thucydides' language drew parallels between Aristogeiton and the enemies of Alcibiades, Harmodius and the *demos* before they had recollected the story of the fall of the tyranny, and then, finally, between Hippias after the murder and the united Athenian people after they had taken their recollections of the tyranny to heart. But the resonances and parallels work within an even larger frame as well. The entire Sicilian Expedition and its terrible ending, with its *eros* and daring, its fears, its hopes, and its misapprehensions, all find their analogues in the excursus on Harmodius and Aristogeiton. Many have rightly emphasised the importance of Thucydides' insistence that the Athenians dared the Sicilian Expedition out of *eros*: an ἔρως fell upon them in 6.24.3, as a consequence of which they then dared an endeavour far greater than anything they had previously attempted (6.31.6) – an expedition famed for 'the amazement of its daring' and 'the splendor of its appearance' (τόλμης τε θάμβει καὶ ὄψεως λαμπρότητι περιβόητος).[61] This language points again to Aristogeiton, the *erastes* whose *eros* prompts him to dare, and Harmodius, the beloved 'splendid in his season of youth' (ὥρᾳ ἡλικίας λαμπροῦ) – both as Thucydides had described them before Hipparchus' insult. The conspirators' reliance on the hope that others would join them also finds parallels in the Athenians' attitudes towards the Sicilians.[62] The enamoured Athenians dare all, thinking that they would succeed and embarking without thought for the potential cost, but then, after setbacks, become irrationally fearful, which drives them towards unproductive violence.[63] Reversals of regular order, like Aristogeiton's attempt to overthrow the tyranny and its verbal link to the Spartans at Pylos, find their echo in the paradoxical Athenian defeat at sea, at Syracuse;[64] in the end, the Athenians suffer terrible deaths, tortured and lingering (after an initial escape), like Aristogeiton, or immediate, like Harmodius. Erotic λύπη is the verdict at the end of the terrible story, as it had been in the excursus, and the τόλμημα in retrospect looks only ἀλόγιστον; even the Athenians' emotional fear (φόβος) on the Epipolae heights has transformed itself, by the end of the horrified stock-taking in response to the news of the disaster (8.1), into περιδεές.[65] The erotically maddened create tyranny in themselves, as Cornford noted, so in that sense the *eros* that falls upon the Athenians is also one of the causes of the tyrannical soul that grows in them.[66] And daring, hope, fear, even *eros* itself, were all based on misapprehensions:[67] Aristogeiton's, that Hipparchus would use violence (6.54.3); the conspirators', that daring would inspire others (6.56.3); the Athenians', in 415, that

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[61] F.M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (Philadelphia, 1907/1971), 209–20; Connor (n. 11), 178-9; Forde (n. 12), 33.

[62] H.C. Avery, 'Themes in Thucydides' account of the Sicilian expedition', *Hermes* 101 (1973), 1–13, at 1–6 (hope), 6–8 (daring); although he does not make the connection with 6.56.3, where 'the conspirators hoped' to acquire more supporters 'if they dared so great an act' (ἤλπιζον…εἰ…τολμήσειαν).

[63] Fear and *eros*, see Allison (n. 13), 99–101; and especially in the night battle on Epipolae (φόβον, 7.44.7).

[64] Rood (n. 49), 7–8 (with further bibliography).

[65] The end, in both cases, was λύπη, hurt (6.59.1; 7.87.1, of the prisoners in Sicily, who must also labour harshly, χαλεπῶς, in the quarries; and 8.1.1, the Athenians are harsh, χαλεποί, when they finally accept the news from Sicily, ὠργίζοντο, and πάντα πανταξόθεν αὐτοῖς ἐλύπει); and they felt fear and astonishment (φόβος τε καὶ κατάπληξις μεγίστη, 8.1.2), later to be transformed into περιδεές (8.1.4).

[66] Cornford (n. 61), 207–9.

[67] Diesner (n. 4), 14–15 thought that the first two were actually reasonable expectations, since Thucydides did not specifically say that they were not.

they were facing an 'oligarchic and tyrannical conspiracy' (6.60.1); and the Athenians', earlier in that fateful year, that Sicily was small and would be easily captured (6.1.1).

III. METHOD AND MEANING

Misunderstanding and misinterpretation are prominent themes in both the excursus and its wider and narrower frames. Misunderstanding is also a prominent element of the argumentative, polemical hook[68] that Thucydides uses to introduce the Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton excursus at 6.54.1: their act of daring happened as a consequence of an erotic incident 'that I will explicate extensively, making clear that neither others nor the Athenians themselves say anything accurate about their own tyrants or about what happened' (ἣν ἐγὼ ἐπὶ πλέον διηγησάμενος ἀποφανῶ οὔτε τοὺς ἄλλους οὔτε αὐτοὺς Ἀθηναίους περὶ τῶν σφετέρων τυράννων οὐδὲ περὶ τοῦ γενομένου ἀκριβὲς οὐδὲν λέγοντας). Misunderstanding is, therefore, at work not just in the excursus and not just in the frames, but also within Thucydides' audience, certainly that of his contemporaries (including Athenians) and possibly also that of his eventual readership. All these misunderstandings must be corrected, or demonstrated and thereby corrected.[69]

That this – the exploration and correction of misunderstanding – would be an important element of the justification for the excursus had already been signalled prominently (and again argumentatively and polemically)[70] in 1.20.1, where it was noted that the Athenians accept oral tradition (τὰς ἀκοάς) from each other without testing it (ἀβασανίστως), and that their flawed understanding of the 'tyrannicides' is a particularly good example of this. Misunderstandings lead to terrible decisions, as excursus and frames show. But why bother to correct misunderstandings that have already occurred, and whose effects have already done their damage? Why, indeed, read an historical work? The two questions are related, as 1.20–2 makes clear. For in these chapters Thucydides moves from (1) what makes him different from others (contemporaries and authors), to (2) some of his (quite different) methods,[71] and finally to (3) some of his (quite lofty) goals, in a discussion set off from what goes before and what follows.[72] Each assertion is justified by the next: method explains difference and Thucydides' ambitions – useful and profound consequences for the reader – explain his method. A demonstration of what makes Thucydides different from his contemporaries and how Thucydides writes better history – which is what the later excursus on Harmodius and Aristogeiton in Book 6 is – should therefore also be a demonstration of the third related element in 1.20–2: it should make clear, on a small scale, Thucydides' goals in writing and Thucydides' historical achievement –

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[68] Forensic language is used here: in 6.54.1, διηγησάμενος and ἀποφανῶ are both also found in Antiphon, the first unique and therefore very marked in Thucydides, pointed out first by Loraux (n. 30), 15 n. 32 and 17 n. 40, who notes that the object of the first in Antiphon (1.13) is ἀλήθεια, of the second (6.13) λόγους...εἰκότας. Tsakmakis (n. 6), 218 characterised the excursus as a rhetorical 'ἔλεγχος of the people's misconceptions', and 6.55.1 as a sophisticated ἐπίδειξις.

[69] That he corrects by telling his version of events, rather than refuting the common understanding directly, is noted by most commentators, see, e.g., Rawlings (n. 7), 115–17.

[70] Forensic language, argument, and proof in 1.20–2: I.M. Plant, 'The influence of forensic oratory on Thucydides' principles of method', *CQ* 49 (1999), 62–73.

[71] Not every scholar sees 1.22 as a statement of *historical* method: see G. Shrimpton, 'Accuracy in Thucydides', *AHB* 12 (1998), 71–82, who interprets 1.22 as Thucydides' explanation of *narrative* method (his year-by-year accounting) instead.

[72] Rawlings (n. 7), 261.

why the work is a κτῆμα…ἐς αἰεί (1.22.4). Verbal parallels between 1.20–2 and 6.53–9 help to demonstrate all three facets of Thucydides 1.20–2 at work in the excursus, and thereby also suggest just how Thucydides' claim to be different, his explication of method, and his assertion of his own achievement are related in practice, a matter that 1.22 left frustratingly inexplicit.

The first point of 1.20–2 – that Thucydides is different from his contemporaries who have, seemingly, no standards and will accept, seemingly, anything – is stated clearly in both the early passage and the excursus, and in language that is shared by both. In 1.20 Thucydides tells us how others approach the past: 'they accept from one another oral traditions about what has happened, even if native to them, all alike equally without testing' (τὰς ἀκοὰς τῶν προγεγενημένων, καὶ ἢν ἐπιχώρια σφίσιν ᾖ, ὁμοίως ἀβασανίστως παρ' ἀλλήλων δέχονται, 1.20.1). In 1.20.2, he lays out the mistakes the Athenians make about the assassination of Hipparchus. In 1.20.3, Thucydides concludes that 'for many, the ζήτησις for truth is ἀταλαίπωρος, 'lax and unrigorous'. Ἀκοή and ἀβασανίστως as well as ζήτησις are all words found in the excursus or its surrounding frame (ἀκοή in 6.55.1 and 6.60.1; βασανίζειν and ζήτησις in 6.53.2),[73] and all of them pertain to the Athenians' (non-)pursuit of exact knowledge in 415, either knowledge of the end of the tyranny or knowledge of the 'conspiracies' of 415. The Athenians, in short, know nothing precise (ἀκριβὲς οὐδέν, 6.54.1) about their own history or what is happening to them in 415, whereas Thucydides will use ἀκρίβεια as one of the words to describe what he does right in 1.22.3. The contrast must be intentional, indeed obvious. Thucydides is different, and better, because of his methods.

The second point, Thucydides' discussion of method, lays out some of the testing that allows him to achieve the ἀκρίβεια that eludes the Athenians themselves. In 1.21 and 1.22, Thucydides tells his readers that they should believe what he has told them (τοιαῦτα) about ancient times from the proofs he has given (ἐκ δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων τεκμηρίων, 1.21.1, reprising 1.20.1) – that he has proceeded 'from the most apparent signs' (ἐκ τῶν ἐπιφανεστάτων σημείων, even though so much of what he has shown is in a past so distant that it has been transformed into stories, ἐπὶ τὸ μυθῶδες (1.21.1). He then moves directly into the present, discussing the basis on which he 'set forth' (εἴρηται) what people had said and the basis on which he 'wrote' (γράφειν) the deeds of the war, applying or aiming for precision, ἀκρίβεια (1.22.1, 2),[74] and including nothing μυθῶδες that would delight his audience (1.22.4). It was difficult for both him and his sources to remember or report precisely (1.22.1, 2), which therefore made it difficult to establish the ἀκρίβεια (precision) that he so values ('I really went through the events with as much ἀκρίβεια as possible about each', ὅσον δυνατὸν ἀκριβείᾳ περὶ ἑκάστου ἐπεξελθών).[75] Thucydides did not write down events 'from the first person he happened to encounter' (οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ παρατυχόντος πυνθανόμενος ἠξίωσα γράφειν, 1.22.2), an intentional contrast with 'the many' who settle for what is ready to hand (καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἑτοῖμα μᾶλλον τρέπονται, 1.21.3). By concentrating on how difficult the process was –

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[73] Parallels frequently noted, see (e.g.) Rawlings (n. 7), 102–3, 257–8 and Scanlon (n. 16), 291–2; at 115 Rawlings returns to ἀκοή and mentions τὸ σαφές (see below nn. 92 and 95) as well: all words 'meant to remind…of his methodological section in Book 1'.

[74] Precision: D. Kurz, Akribeia: Das Ideal der Exaktheit bei den Griechen bis Aristoteles (Göppingen, 1970), 40–61; M. Trédé, 'Akribeia chez Thucydide', Mélanges Edouard Delebecque (Aix-en-Provence, 1983), 407–15; G. Crane, The Blinded Eye. Thucydides and the New Written Word (Lanham MD, 1996), 35, 50–65; or 'lack of confusion', Shrimpton (n. 71), 80–2.

[75] ἀκριβείᾳ can be either a dative of purpose or an instrumental use of the dative, P. Bicknell, 'Thucydides, 1.22: a provocation', L'Antiquité Classique 59 (1990), 172–8, at 177–8.

and thus, again, on how exceptional he is – Thucydides leaves readers in the dark about what 'really to go through the events with as much ἀκρίβεια as possible' would specifically mean, but the Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton excursus and, especially, its frames show this more clearly.

For although Thucydides and the Athenians must both perforce use ἀκοή, bad outcomes in the frames make clear that ἀκοή by itself is a dangerously misleading source of information. The Athenians' understanding of the end of the tyranny before the excursus is not, as Thucydides reports it, entirely wrong: 'they had learned by oral tradition how oppressive the tyranny of Peisistratus and his sons had become before it ended, and further that [Hippias'] tyranny had been put down not by themselves and Harmodius, but by the Spartans' (ἐπιστάμενος γὰρ ὁ δῆμος ἀκοῇ τὴν Πεισιστράτου καὶ τῶν παίδων τυραννίδα χαλεπὴν τελευτῶσαν γενομένην καὶ προσέτι οὐδ' ὑφ' ἑαυτῶν καὶ Ἁρμοδίου καταλυθεῖσαν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων) – elements of the story that Thucydides himself relates, and thus endorses as correct, in the excursus (6.59.2, 4). But other elements of the story, learned and remembered (ἐπιστάμενος and μιμνησκόμενος, 6.53.3 and 6.60.1) and coming to them also ἀκοῇ, 'by oral tradition' – an aural category that could include song, like the Harmodius scholion, but also rumour – were not right but the Athenians believed them too; the results were bad, and the excursus in part served to show this, and in part to correct the mistakes themselves.[76]

Ἀκοή is similarly important in the story of the genesis of the Sicilian expedition, for most of the Athenians were ignorant (ἄπειροι, 6.1.1) of Sicily before they made their decision to invade it; they were persuaded to undertake the expedition – to the extent that they needed persuading – by listening (ἀκούοντες) to speeches from the Egestans and their supporters (6.6.3; 6.8.2), as well as from many Athenians and from Alcibiades himself. In their one attempt to ascertain the truth of what the Egestans claimed, the Athenians were totally bamboozled: their envoys reported all sorts of things that were 'attractive and untrue' (τά τε ἄλλα ἐπαγωγὰ καὶ οὐκ ἀληθῆ, 6.8.2) upon their return, dazzled by the sight of silver dedications (6.46.3–4), their one piece of non-aural information sixty talents of silver of the Egestans. Even this report was false: when the Athenians later went to Egesta, 'it appeared' (φαίνεται) that the Egestans had only thirty talents, which made Nicias' two colleagues 'speechless' (ἀλογώτερα, 6.46.1-2). Wrong conclusions had been drawn from what had been spoken and seen, and what had been reported was untrue, but a crucial decision had been made on that basis.

In the excursus itself, when Thucydides himself does strongly assert (ἰσχυρίζομαι)[77] something ἀκοῇ he first insists that he has received information more precise (ἀκριβέστερον) than that of others (6.55.1);[78] the Athenians, by pointed

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[76] Oral tradition as a shared, and reprehensible, basis for action, noted by Rawlings (n. 7), 102–3 and 115–16; Connor (n. 11), 178.

[77] A strong verb, used by Diodotus of Cleon (3.44.3), of the Athenians insisting on meticulous observance of an armistice (4.23), of pro-Spartan Megarians preventing the taking of Megara (4.68.6), of very strong insistence on oracles (5.26.3), and of Nicias insisting to the other generals (7.49.1, 7.49.4); see J.F. Thorburn, 'Thucydides 5.26.3–5: the verb ἰσχυρίζεσθαι and a contrast in methodology', CQ 49 (1999), 439–44.

[78] Corssen (n. 1), 237–8 interpreted ἀκοῇ in this sentence as applying to others, not Thucydides ('more accurate than those who insist on the basis of ἀκοῇ'); Loraux (n. 30), 8 suggested that Thucydides was 'combatting tradition on its own ground'; S. Hornblower, Thucydides (Baltimore, 1987), 77 and 84 that Thucydides spoke to members of Peisistratus' family on Chios.

contrast, have already been introduced as saying (and presumably knowing) 'nothing precise' (ἀκριβὲς οὐδέν) about the tyranny (6.54.1). Thucydides' positive arguments against three of the points the Athenian *demos* got wrong (1.20.2) – that Hippias was in fact the eldest son and the tyrant at the time of the murder, that Hipparchus and Thessalus were in fact his brothers, and that only as an end-stage tyrant did Hippias actually look to his own safety (in typical tyrannical fashion) with what would become Athens' greatest enemy, Persia – are, in pointed contrast, based on proofs that are not aural at all, but visual. Two inscriptions attest to the first fact, the second of these inscriptions also attests to the second fact, while a third inscription makes clear that Hippias sought to arrange for refuge in the East only after the death of Hipparchus. Thus one way in which Thucydides establishes facts is to take what he has learned by a 'more precise' type of ἀκοή and then look for other and better types of evidence to confirm it.[79] He does not accept oral tradition, even if 'more precise', without examination. Evidence that can be seen, although it must still be investigated, is better than evidence that is only heard, especially if it is heard without proper understanding, and (at least) two kinds of evidence on the same point are best of all. The establishment of these facts as the most plausible[80] then forces a totally different retelling of the story – for if Hipparchus was not the tyrant, *his* death must be explained and *its* consequences assessed.

The Athenians in 415 have no appreciation of how to test ἀκοή properly or how to gather or use the better kinds of evidence, whether it is in the matter of the 'tyrannicides', the matter of Sicily, or the matter of the herms and the Mysteries.[81] For although in this last matter the Athenians are (Thucydides judges) initially unrigorous (οὐ δοκιμάζοντες, 6.53.2) in their pursuit (ζήτησιν) of 'things done' in the matters of the herms and the Mysteries, accepting any information laid – given verbally – by anyone, they do think their willingness to overlook class distinctions in informants constitutes 'investigating the matter' (βασανίσαι τὸ πρᾶγμα). After 'taking' the story of the tyrannicides 'to heart', however, they cease even what little investigating they might have been doing, accepting the word of one of the accused without further pursuit of any corroborating evidence.[82] This slide from inadequate to reprehensible attitudes towards facts and evidence came about because the Athenians, 'taking these things', the story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, 'to heart', *also* 'remembered all the things (lit. "as much as") they had learned about these events through oral tradition' (ὧν ἐνθυμούμενος ὁ δῆμος ὁ τῶν Ἀθηναίων, καὶ μιμνησκόμενος ὅσα ἀκοῇ περὶ αὐτῶν ἠπίστατο, 6.60.1), and as a consequence became harsh and suspicious, rushing to convict people without testing the testimony. What was known and taken to heart was extended by memory

[79] C. Zizza, 'Tucidide e il tirannicido: il buon uso del materiale epigrafico', *Annali della facoltà di lettere e filosofia* 20 (1999), 1–22 concludes (16–17) that Thucydides uses epigraphic evidence to confirm oral information in 'a decisive and determinative way' and to question the tradition itself (since one oral tradition cannot be demolished merely by another, 22).

[80] As C.W. Fornara, 'The "tradition" about the murder of Hipparchus', *Historia* 17 (1968), 400–24, at 410–11 points out, τοιούτῳ μὲν τρόπῳ at 6.59.1, rather than τούτῳ, suggests that Thucydides knew that his results were still inferential.

[81] Their dependence on aural/oral arguments is a theme throughout; see also, especially, Cleon (3.38.4–6), 'trusting what you hear more than what you saw done' – and this, he says, affects even their view of the past, discussed by J. Allison, *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, American Philological Association/American Classical Studies 41 (Atlanta, 1997), 198–206.

[82] Rawlings (n. 7), 103.

embellished with further hearsay, with dire results. As Thucydides had said in
1.22.3, memory ($\mu\nu\dot\eta\mu\eta$) is an uncertain basis for establishing $\tauo\hat{\iota}\varsigma$ $\ddot{\epsilon}\rho\gammao\iota\varsigma$. Memory
is faulty, to be sure. But the context in 415 also suggests that it is faulty not least
because it is emotional and people become set on their own version of events – a
gloss on, or demonstration of, 1.22.3, where people said conflicting things even
about events at which they had been present because of $\epsilon\dot{\upsilon}\nuo\dot\iota\alpha\varsigma$ and $\mu\nu\dot\eta\mu\eta\varsigma$,
'partiality and memory'.[83] The Athenians have rushed to (wrong) judgment on the
basis of (at best) inadequate evidence, evidence that was inadequate not only
because it came from only one person, but also because it was not tested, was of the
wrong type, and was tainted by memory. To rely only on unexamined, uncorro-
borated, and remembered $\dot{\alpha}\kappao\dot\eta$ is wrong; one must not only test but also be able
to see.[84]

The results are, again, terrible. Alcibiades is caught in the trap of the Athenians'
anger and quick, unreasoning reliance on bad and uncorroborated oral evidence,
the greatness of his $\pi\alpha\rhoa\nuo\mu\dot\iota\alpha$ serving to confirm the most extravagant of
unchecked suspicions. The Athenians have made him into a false parallel: they
thought he was aiming at tyranny (but he was not);[85] they drove him away and made
him into an enemy of Athens (like the tyrant Hippias), but he was neither like the
tyranny before the assassination, acting with $\dot{\alpha}\rho\epsilon\tau\dot{\eta}\nu$ $\kappa\alpha\dot\iota$ $\xi\dot{\upsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu$, nor like Hippias
after the assassination, acting with harshness and fear. Indeed, the closest parallel
for *what happened to him* was with Themistocles, also driven out swiftly and on the
basis of oral report and innuendo, not Hippias.[86] A closer parallel to *what he was
like* and *how he should have been treated* was, however, Themistocles' opposite,
Pausanias: he and Alcibiades were the only two men whose $\pi\alpha\rhoa\nuo\mu\dot\iota\alpha$ is singled out
by Thucydides.[87] The Spartans had heard of Pausanias' $\pi\alpha\rhoa\nuo\mu\dot\iota\alpha$ – which roused
great suspicions in them (1.132.2) – as well as, earlier, his violence towards the allies,
his imitation of the barbarians, and his outrageous behaviour, but spoken
complaints were not enough to convict him, and Pausanias was merely censured for
the injustices he inflicted $\dot{\iota}\delta\dot\iota\alpha$ (1.95.5) – the first time. Pausanias' lawlessness had
even been practised openly: on, and in the presence of, allies. More complaints,
especially of treasonous medism, subsequently prompted the Spartans to recall him
a second time. Having no 'clear sign' ($\phi\alpha\nu\epsilon\rho\dot{o}\nu$ $\mu\dot{\epsilon}\nu$ $\epsilon\hat{\iota}\chi o\nu$ $o\dot{\upsilon}\delta\dot{\epsilon}\nu\ldots\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\hat{\iota}o\nu$, 1.132.1),
they took a most careful series of steps in order to ascertain whether or not he was
actually guilty, starting with a recollection of the inscription he had put up in
Delphi at the end of the Persian Wars, and ending with their hearing and seeing his

[83] As Loraux (n. 30), 7–8 notes, memory is keeping 'bad company' here; see also M. Detienne,
The Creation of Mythology (trans. M. Cook, Chicago, 1986), 53–5, and M. Simondon, *La
Mémoire et l'oubli dans la pensée grecque jusqu'à la fin du Ve siècle av. J.-C. Psychologie archaïque,
mythes et doctrines* (Paris, 1982), 266–73.

[84] Thus J. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge, 1997),
63–9 notes that seeing was the oldest, and thought the most reliable, source of knowledge, oral
report second; he also notes (67–8) that Thucydides does not privilege seeing as clearly as
Herodotus did, and instead Thucydides insists that both autopsy and reports must be subjected
to 'a process of accuracy' ($\dot{\alpha}\kappa\rho\dot\iota\beta\epsilon\iota\alpha$).

[85] Seager (n. 54), 8, n. 32.

[86] Rawlings (n. 7), 95–8, following Schwartz (n. 1), 161–2, argues that the more obvious
parallels are between Themistocles in Book 1 and the later career of Alcibiades; noted also by
Palmer (n. 5, 1982), 115–18; the parallel of what happened to both noted but not developed by
Connor (n. 11), 177 n. 48.

[87] Parallels between Pausanias and Alcibiades – and Themistocles – are discussed in Scanlon
(n. 16), 298–9 and Gribble (n. 48), 4, 60-1, 69–70 (uncontrollable $\delta\iota\dot{\alpha}\nuo\iota\alpha$, and $\pi\alpha\rhoa\nuo\mu\dot\iota\alpha$).

betrayal of the city with their own ears *and* eyes.[88] In a different city, and under different circumstances, this is how Alcibiades would have been examined; but not in Athens in 415. The Athenians' fateful reliance on uncorroborated speech, and the misconceptions that quickly sprang from it, made them fearful and angry, and terrible consequences followed: 'they turned over the city to others and soon ruined it' (καὶ ἄλλοις ἐπιτρέψαντες οὐ διὰ μακροῦ ἔσφηλαν τὴν πόλιν, 6.15.4). But the focus of the comparisons is not so much the individuals involved as it is the two *poleis* and their ways of understanding and coming to decisions. Individuals are never perfect parallels for each other: Thucydides' treatment of the fates of the four men – Alcibiades, Hippias, Themistocles, and Pausanias – seems designed above all to illuminate the important differences between their cities in their respect for, and assessment of, evidence, and in how the decisions that followed were made; and the Athenians do not come off well in the comparison.[89]

Thucydides thus uses the Harmodius-and-Aristogeiton excursus as a way of showing some of the right ways of establishing facts, and also, in its frames, some of the costs of misunderstanding for the Athenians of 415 when they do not pause to establish facts in what Thucydides believes is the correct way. This correct way is demonstrated in the excursus, complete with Thucydides' own explication of how he buttressed his 'more precise oral tradition': untested ἀκοή is unreliable; it can be tested by looking for other and better sources of information (especially visible ones); and it should be subjected to the test of partiality and memory, both of which distort any subsequent appreciation of an event. The Athenians of 415, relying on ἀκοή and memory, go terribly wrong in their grasp of both past and present, because they did not test what they were told and did not look beyond what they heard.

Yet there is more, as the relentless emphasis on the cost of misunderstanding suggests. When excursus, frames, and 1.20–2 are juxtaposed, not only can Thucydides be seen to be demonstrating his better way of doing things and thus being much more explicit about what this means, but the intent of the later excursus and its connection to Thucydides' historical ambitions, the third element of 1.20–2, also become much clearer. For the past is not just facts, although it is necessary to get these right; the past has meaning for the present. The Athenians show this connection quite starkly, since the excursus is placed at the crucial moment when they 'take' the past of the excursus 'to heart', 'remember' in addition what they had learned through ἀκοή, think they comprehend, and act – disastrously – on that understanding.[90] It is not just some of the facts they have got wrong: they have misunderstood the meaning of the story of

[88] Schwartz (n. 1), 160–1. The Spartans have a hierarchy of proofs, preferring evidence they can see, touch, hear, and feel to perception or report, see E.A. Meyer, 'The outbreak of the Peloponnesian War after twenty-five years', in C.D. Hamilton and P. Krentz (edd.), Polis *and* Polemos. *Essays on Politics, War, and History in Ancient Greece in Honor of Donald Kagan* (Claremont CA, 1997), 23–54, at 42–6.

[89] D.J. Stewart, 'Thucydides, Pausanias, and Alcibiades', *CJ* 61 (1966), 145–52, at 146–50 first drew the comparison between the Spartans' treatment of Pausanias and the Athenians' treatment of Alcibiades, and makes the city comparison as well (150); see also C. Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides* (Princeton, 1994), 76, n. 14.

[90] For 'the way people in the present read the past suggests plots for the future', see Rood (n. 49), 61–130 (quotation at 129); also D. Shanske, *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History* (Cambridge, 2007), 69–118, for whom 'the past that plays a role in the future' (123) is part of the 'tragic temporality' that makes Thucydides' work a text that founds a whole new world of seeing and interpretation (152–3).

Harmodius and Aristogeiton entirely.[91] Historical facts and historical meaning are intertwined, with mistakes in one generating mistakes in the other. But meaning can be misprised even if most of the facts are correct: and here is where Thucydides, in including this excursus, is intent on demonstrating what a difference this can make.

How does a precise historical account convey a correct and discernible historical meaning? In 1.22.4 the connection of thought is: I aim for precision, and work very hard to achieve it. This makes my history less enjoyable, but something else much more important is achieved, for this precision permits or provides 'clarity' or 'clear certainty', τὸ σαφές, to those who wish to look for it.[92] For that is what historical inquirers should want: not to enjoy τὸ μυθῶδες, but 'to look at' or 'consider what is clear about what has happened and what will happen' (βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων, 1.22.4). Σκοπεῖν is, again, a word from the world of seeing and looking, contemplating in a considered rather than hasty fashion; σκοπεῖν sees, and draws the meaning out of, τὸ σαφές.[93] This faculty was employed neither by the 'tyrannicides', who acted in haste[94] and out of 'the deep apprehension of the moment' (ἐκ τοῦ παραχρῆμα περιδεοῦς, 6.59.1), nor the Athenians in 415, who after their inspiration by the past moved too quickly. Before it they had been pursuing their inquiries 'since the fleet sailed' (6.53.2, referring to 6.32.2), but after it they instantly 'accepted what they thought was clear information happily' from an informant (ἄσμενος λαβών, ὡς ᾤετο, τὸ σαφές) when it was offered, set him and others free 'right away' (εὐθύς), tried those they thought were guilty, and executed them (6.60.4). They did not consider, they merely accepted; and they did not have τὸ σαφές.[95] Indeed, Thucydides says that neither then nor now has anyone been able to say τὸ σαφές about who had done the deed (τὸ δὲ σαφὲς οὐδεὶς οὔτε τότε οὔτε ὕστερον ἔχει εἰπεῖν περὶ τῶν δρασάντων τὸ ἔργον, 6.60.2), and himself ventures no opinions on the matter. The Athenians act this way because of the conclusions they have speedily and incorrectly drawn as a consequence of their taking the excursus to heart and remembering more of what they had learned through ἀκοή: not only do they not test or look, they do not see.

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[91] Rawlings (n. 7), 103.

[92] See Edmunds (n. 35), 155–8; at 155, 'factual accuracy' was 'the necessary condition for τὸ σαφές', and at 158, 'the contrast between ἀκρίβεια and τὸ σαφές, and the transcendence of the former by the latter, is at the heart of Thucydides' method'; with this T.F. Scanlon, '"The clear truth" in Thucydides 1.22.4', Historia 51 (2002), 131–48, at 146–7 agrees: 'ἀκρίβεια is then the tool by which the author arrives at the product of τὸ σαφές', which he then defines as 'clear certainty'.

[93] J. Moles, 'Truth and untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides', in C. Gill and T.P. Wiseman (edd.), Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World (Exeter, 1993), 88–121, at 110; N. Loraux, 'Thucydide a écrit la guerre du Péloponnèse', Métis 1 (1986), 139–61, at 154, n. 25 noted that σκοπεῖν in Thucydides often takes no object, reinforcing the idea of σκοπεῖν as an intellectual activity; J. Moles, 'Anathema kai Ktema: the inscriptional inheritance of ancient historiography', Histos 1999 (http://www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos/1999/moles.html, accessed 3 October 2006) at nn. 5 and 29 emphasises the importance of sight in σκοπεῖν.

[94] This is also emphasised by the concentrated use of εὐθύς in the excursus (6.54.3, 6.56.2, 6.57.3), and also τὸ αὐτίκα for Aristogeiton's temporary escape (6.57.4): noted by Stahl (n. 5), 6 and Tsakmakis (n. 6), 195.

[95] Stahl (n. 5), 9–10, Edmunds (n. 35), 157, and Rawlings (n. 7), 116 and 258 all note Thucydides' heavy use of τὸ σαφές in 60.2–61.1 – when the Athenians thought they had achieved clarity (which Rawlings translates as 'clear truth') but had not. K. Ziegler, 'Der Ursprung der Exkurse im Thukydides', RhM 78 (1929), 58–67 had also noted that all excursuses were part of τὸ σαφές.

The past is important because people, like the Athenians in 415, act on their understanding of it in the present. They became inspired by the story of Harmodius and Aritogeiton, remembered their past, concluded that they had 'an oligarchic and tyrannical conspiracy' on their hands, did not elicit clarity about this conspiracy or contemplate the value of the confession they had welcomed, drew false parallels, became truly tyrannical, exiled Alcibiades, and brought ruin upon their city. At the beginning of Book 8 they could not accept the news about Sicily even from τοῖς... σαφῶς ἀγγέλλουσι (8.1.1). Their lack of precision, clarity, and considered judgment put both accurate knowledge and true understanding of the past out of reach for them. Had they looked for this accurate knowledge, the chances were better that they could have achieved clarity, would have considered more thoughtfully, and would have come to a truer understanding of the meaning of their remembered past, the danger that erotic daring born of passionate over-reaction and misapprehension creates true tyranny in the powerful. The implied hope is that they then would have acted differently, although Thucydides is more confident that inadequate knowledge and flawed understanding lead to disaster.

So what should the reader take away? In 1.22.4 Thucydides has claimed that if you wish, it is possible τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν both of events in the past and of what is to come (τῶν μελλόντων) – that past and future are in some way, as a consequence of τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, close (παραπλησίων) to each other, and therefore that to τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν of past events, in this case his accurate history of the war, will be 'sufficiently advantageous' (ὠφέλιμα...ἀρκούντως).[96] That there is a connection between past and present would seem uncontroversial to his audience, at least to his Athenians of 415 who acted without any hesitation on this assumption. And it is because there is a connection between past and future that his work can be a possession for all time rather than 'a contest-piece to be listened to in the present' (μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν, 1.22.4): actions or activities or arguments[97] listened to rather than seen or contemplated, and undertaken 'for the moment', as the 'tyrannicides' undertook theirs 'in the deep apprehension of the moment', rarely have a good outcome.[98] But the limit of the historian's contribution is the provision of τὸ σαφές for the discerning reader to consider in an unhurried manner; Thucydides cannot make the reader understand or act wisely, although it is part of his ambition that the reader do so.

Thucydides, through his excursus on Harmodius and Aristogeiton, established a more accurate version of events, a clear meaning to those events, and a clear

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[96] Scanlon (n. 92), 132 judges that the argument on method stops here: he claims that τὸ σαφές is 'reliably clear certainty about human actions based on a careful analysis of particular events but offering general paradigms of use for the future'.

[97] M. Gagarin, *Antiphon. The Speeches* (Cambridge, 1997), 195: 'in forensic oratory... [ἀγώνισμα] means an argument or proof'. So perhaps another meaning of Thucydides' phrase here – a secondary target? – is 'argument heard in an instant', like what the Athenians acted in consequence of in 415.

[98] Of the eighteen uses of παραχρῆμα in Thucydides, four are in the excursus itself (6.55.3, 56.3, 57.4, 59.1), two are in the discussion of method (1.20.2, specifically again about the 'tyrannicides'; and 1.22.4), one, in 8.1.4, is a direct echo of 6.59.1 (in both cases with περιδεές, possibly offering the hope of a better outcome than any event conclusively characterised by φόβος), and two in the closely related Themistocles/Pausanias excursus (1.134.3, 1.138.3) – so nine, or half, associated. The other uses are either neutral (1.141.6, 2.6.2, 4.7, 4.15.1, 5.15.2, 8.44.3) or seem to predict gloomy consequences (2.17.1; 2.51.6; 7.75.5; 8.92.2).

connection between past and present that could and should have been drawn.[99] He was different from all his contemporaries, he had better methods and more exacting standards, and he had greater ambitions for his own work intimately tied up with his wider vision of the role history played in influencing people's decisions and actions. In 1.20–2 these three concepts were presented generally; in 6.54–9 they were demonstrated concretely, and for those who wished to see would explain what he had meant in 1.20–2. It was for the reader to take the final and most important step, and connect the past, or Thucydides' past, to the reader's present.[100]

The excursus is, then, one of the most significant passages in Thucydides, for it explains through demonstration how history should be written (with its twin goals of ἀκρίβεια and τὸ σαφές), and why (not merely that) the past is significant and 'useful' for the present. The excursus is the written history of a past genuinely beyond individual experience as well, not yet mythologised but its specific speeches (for example) beyond the recall of any individual, and so in itself also a great challenge, triumphantly met. The excursus takes the generalities and arguments of 1.20–2, themselves simultaneously clear and baffling to generations of readers, and puts them into practice, thus explicating in a specific way what had been left too generic to be properly understood. The verbal links between the excursus and 1.20–2 show that 1.20–2 was not meant to be read on its own, a dead insect pinned to the corkboard and examined with a magnifying glass, but was to be perceived and understood in action, a beautiful butterfly observed and, as it were, filmed and studied in flight.

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[99] Rawlings (n. 7), 116–17, '…he provides us with the clear truth of the tyrannicide, as he sees it. But note that the reader must do his part too. He must scrutinise the clear truth in order to understand its general applicability'; and see also 257–9; Farrar (n. 7), 132 agrees.

[100] A final stage of historical knowledge might be possible, but must remain speculative: as three references to ἀλήθεια in 1.20–3 follow upon a reference to σαφῶς in 1.1.3, so too might a reader perceive or find ἀλήθεια once τὸ σαφές had been laid out. Ἀλήθεια is dependent on τὸ σαφές and is, according to Allison (n. 81), 'the desired *telos* of historical investigation' (222), but is not an event or a thing (*contra* Loraux [n. 93], 148–50), and has no existence separate from intellection (207, 211, 220); it can only be perceived or found (6.2.2 and implied at 1.21.1 and 1.22.2). So the most 'useful' thing Thucydides could do was lay out τὸ σαφές for that reader; the reader would then have to discover ἀλήθεια for him- or herself, even if Thucydides already knew what it was. Therefore ἀλήθεια cannot be *demonstrated in* the excursus, since it is what the reader takes *away from* the excursus to apply to his or her situation as the future becomes the reader's present and then past.