

J. R. GRANT

καὶ ὄνομα μὲν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐς ὀλίγους ἀλλ' ἐς πλείονας οἰκεῖν δημοκρατία κέκληται, μέτεστι δὲ κατὰ μὲν τοὺς νόμους πρὸς τὰ ἴδια διάφορα πᾶσι τὸ ἴσον, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀξίωσιν, ὥς ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ εὐδοκίμῳ, οὐκ ἀπὸ μέρους τὸ πλεον ἐς τὰ κοινὰ ἢ ἀπ' ἀρετῆς προτιμᾶται, οὐδ' αὖ κατὰ πέναν, ἔχων δὲ τι ἀγαθὸν δρᾶσαι τὴν πόλιν, ἀξιωματος ἀφανείᾳ κεκώλυται.

And in name, because it is founded not on the few but on the many, it is called a democracy, but there is, with respect to the laws, equal justice for all in private disputes, and, with respect to public esteem, political advancement depends on an individual's distinction in any field, class-affiliation not outweighing quality, nor again, as regards poverty, is anyone, provided he can serve the state in some way, prevented by obscurity of station.

THIS SENTENCE introduces Pericles' superbly sure denial that Athens was a democracy of the vulgar sort, but, in spite of the attention it has received from the long succession of Thucydidean commentators and students of the Funeral Speech, unanimity as to its exact meaning has not yet been achieved. Gomme, in particular, in his great *Commentary*, and in an earlier article (CQ 42 [1948] 10 f.), advances an interpretation which, because of its author's influence, should not go unchallenged. It is, I think, quite wrong, thanks to three interdependent mistakes.

First, he refuses to accept the plain sense of καὶ ὄνομα μὲν ... κέκληται, as translated and expounded by Kakridis: "Die athenische Staatsverfassung beruht nicht auf der Minderheit der Bürger, sondern auf ihrer Mehrzahl (... μὴ ἐς ὀλίγους, ἀλλ' ἐς πλείονας); deshalb ist ihr Name Demokratie.¹ Das Wort scheint ziemlich neu geprägt zu sein—wir begegnen ihm neben δημοκρατεῖσθαι zum erstenmal bei Herodot—und ist immer noch etymologisch durchsichtig (Siehe A. Debrunner, *Δημοκρατία, Festschrift für E. Tièche* [1947] 21 f.). Die Demokratie gibt das κράτος, die Macht dem Demos, den πλείονες; ihr Name beweist, dass die Gleichheit aller Bürger nicht zu ihrer Programm gehört. Zu vergleichen ist, was der Verfasser der Ps.-Xenoph. *Ἀθηναίων Πολιτεία* schon am Anfang seiner Schrift programmatisch ausspricht, dass nämlich der Demos ἄμεινον πράττει (bzw. πλεον ἔχει) τῶν γενομένων."²

¹Or does it mean: "Our constitution is named a democracy because it is government in the interest of the many, not of the few"? Cf. J. G. Sheppard and L. Evans, *Notes on Thucydides* (London 1889). Not of critical importance for the present discussion.

²J. T. Kakridis, *Der Thukydideische Epitaphios* (Munich 1961) 25. Gomme (1956) cites the earlier Greek version, Περικλέους Ἐπιτάφιος (Thessalonike 1937), which I have not been able to see.

Gomme rejects such Periclean spade-calling, and, in spite of ἐς πλείονας rather than ἐς πάντας, prefers to believe that δῆμος is here used with the meaning of “*the whole people, the state*,” not “*the masses*, in effect, *the poor*” (*Commentary* 107), and that “... there is no reason to suppose that δημοκρατία was a word first created by the opponents of democratic government ... or that Perikles in his use of it ‘is on the defensive’ ” (*Commentary* 110). It follows that there is no antithesis between κατὰ μὲν τοὺς νόμους ... πᾶσι τὸ ἴσον and ὄνομα μὲν κ.τ.λ.: “there can be no ‘but’ between the statements ‘Athens is in name a democracy’ and ‘there is equality for all before the law.’ Nor does Thucydides put one there” (*art. cit.* 10); the only antithesis is between κατὰ μὲν τοὺς νόμους κ.τ.λ. and κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀξίωσιν κ.τ.λ.

Gomme would seem to be almost alone in the first of these contentions but to have the company of most scholars in seeing a substantial (and edifying) antithesis between νόμους κ.τ.λ. and ἀξίωσιν κ.τ.λ. He and they fail to recognize that the structure of the sentence demands a strong antithesis between μέτεστι δὲ and what follows down to προτιμᾶται, and the preceding ὄνομα μὲν clause, but little if any between κατὰ μὲν τοὺς νόμους κ.τ.λ. and κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἀξίωσιν κ.τ.λ.; μέτεστι δὲ brings forward and comprehends two qualifications of democracy, as it was commonly understood, introduced by μὲν and δέ (which here have practically the force of τε—καί). Both qualifications are directly relevant to the leading assertion, and are of roughly equal weight: considerations of class play no part either in the administration of law or in the choice of the executive (cf. the importance Aristotle, in considering constitutions, attaches to the origin of the executive). Denniston supports this view: “The strength of the antithesis varies within wide limits. Sometimes μὲν ... δέ conveys little more than τε ... καί. ... This is particularly the case when the same word is repeated before μὲν and δέ (the figure of anaphora, exceedingly common throughout Greek literature, verse and prose),”³ and he cites three Thucydidean passages, 1.85.2, 1.126.12, 6.20.4, which admirably illustrate the truth of his dictum. Denniston himself, it should be noted, does not utilize this principle in his reading of the sentence: “At 2.37.1 (μέτεστι ... προτιμᾶται),” he says, “two antitheses are telescoped into one” (*OCD*, s.v. “Thucydides”). This, however, is a concept difficult not only for English, but even, I think, for Greek. The Athenian constitution is, to be sure, a δημοκρατία, but Pericles insists⁴ that there is both equality before the law, and equality of opportunity for political advancement and public service. The structure and meaning of the

³J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford 1934) 370.

⁴“Often, on the other hand, the antithesis carries an idea of strong contrast, so that in English we should make one of the clauses concessively dependent on the other. In such cases the weight is far more frequently on the δέ clause ...” (Denniston, *loc. cit.*).

sentence would have emerged more clearly if Thucydides had written τὸ προτιμᾶσθαι, but, as Croiset notes, there is anacolouthon.⁵

Gomme's third mistake is his understanding of ἀπὸ μέρους as "in rotation," election by lot. He is much too casual in concluding that ἀπὸ μέρους can mean the same thing as κατὰ μέρος or ἐν μέρει.⁶ What drives him to this unlikely conclusion is his assumption, along with most others, including a scholiast, that, if μέρος is taken as meaning "a part of the population," a well-attested meaning (cf. 6.39.1 [βίς]), it must refer to the "privileged class," and this, he quite properly finds, given his understanding of δημοκρατία, leads to a logical absurdity: "No one would write 'It is in name a democracy, *but* office-holding is not confined to a class'" (*Commentary* 108), or, more clearly (*art. cit.*), "We are called a democracy, *but* we do not choose our leaders from a privileged class." The context, however, as interpreted above (one of two qualifications of δημοκρατία as commonly understood), makes it quite clear that μέρος here refers to the πλείονες.⁷ This may well be authentic Periclean allusion to current politics—"the Periclean opposition"⁸ (and ἀπ' ἀρετῆς would be a bit of self-assertion in the manner of 2.60.5-7), or, if not that exciting, it is at least consonant with Thucydidean doctrine (2.65.8 ff.; cf. Hignett, *op. cit.* 249-252). Or Pericles may, in more general terms, be controverting the sort of criticism of democracy we find in the "Old Oligarch" at 1.6-9 and 2.19. It is possible that Plato at *Resp.* 558b is,

⁵"προτιμᾶται: Après μέρεστι, placé en tête, on attendrait plutôt, pour la symétrie, τὸ προτιμᾶσθαι; il y a anacoluthie. Cf. 1.16" (A. Croiset, *Thucydide: Livres I-II* [Paris 1886]).

⁶It is not perfectly clear to me that the "Oxyrhynchos commentator," invoked by Kakridis and Gomme, supports their interpretation of ἀπὸ μέρους. His comment, οὐ κατὰ τὸ μέρος τὸ ἐπιβάλλον ἴσον αὐτῷ τῆς πολιτείας πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν τιμᾶται, need not refer to rotation or sortition; if, thinking of the preceding lines, he understood ἀπὸ μέρους as "from share," he might naturally have glossed: "not in accordance with, or owing to, the equal share he enjoys in the constitution, or government, is a man publicly honoured." But, whatever the sense of his comment, it is not decisive for the meaning of ἀπὸ μέρους (the text printed in Gomme's *Commentary* omits the τὸ before ἐπιβάλλον).

It is also worth observing that if ἀπὸ μέρους is understood as referring to the technique of sortition and rotation it strikes a discordant note: Pericles is moving on a plane well above details of governmental machinery.

Kakridis (*op. cit.* 27 n.2) cites Gomme and H. Herter (*Studi in onore di Gino Funaioli* [1955] 136 f.) as agreeing with his view of ἀπὸ μέρους; I have noticed T. A. Sinclair (*A History of Greek Political Thought* [London 1951] 101), and P. A. Brunt (*Thucydides* [New York 1963] *ad loc.*).

⁷Kakridis (*op. cit.* 27), while recognizing that μέρος can mean a part of the population, insists that ἀπὸ μέρους cannot in isolation, by itself, signify a political class; but it is not in isolation here: πᾶσι is found immediately preceding, and ὀλίγους and πλείονας a little earlier.

⁸Cf. C. Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution* (Oxford 1952) ch. 10, esp. 259 f.

in his turn, contradicting the Periclean claim: ἀλλὰ τιμῆ [sc. ἡ δημοκρατία] ἐὰν φῇ μόνον εὖνους εἶναι τῷ πλῆθει. Certainly the Funeral Speech is prominent in his thought at this point of his work. οὐδ' αὖ κατὰ πενίαν κ.τ.λ. is added to make equality of opportunity complete, to take care of people like Lamachus, who couldn't afford to buy his own boots (Plut. *Nic.* 15.1), ἀπὸ μέρους referring primarily to the politically active πλείονες.

Pericles rounds off this initial stage of his delineation of democracy Athenian-style in similar vein: there is freedom in public and private life at Athens, but it is freedom under the law—no “democratic” licence.

VICTORIA COLLEGE, TORONTO