

Thucydides 7.13.2 and the Crews of Athenian Triremes

A. J. Graham
University of Pennsylvania

διὰ τὸδε ἐφθάρη τε ἡμῖν καὶ ἔτι νῦν φθείρεται, τῶν ναυτῶν
[τῶν] μὲν διὰ φρυγανισμὸν καὶ ἀρπαγὴν καὶ ὑδρεῖαν μακρὰν 25
ὑπὸ τῶν ἱππέων ἀπολλυμένων· οἱ δὲ θεράποντες, ἐπειδὴ ἐς
ἀντίπαλα καθεστήκαμεν, αὐτομολοῦσι, καὶ οἱ ξένοι οἱ μὲν
ἀναγκαστοὶ ἐσβάντες εὐθύς κατὰ τὰς πόλεις ἀποχωροῦσιν,
οἱ δὲ ὑπὸ μεγάλου μισθοῦ τὸ πρῶτον ἐπαρθέντες καὶ οἰόμενοι
χρηματιεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ μαχεῖσθαι, ἐπειδὴ παρὰ γνώμην
ναυτικόν τε δὴ καὶ τᾶλλα ἀπὸ τῶν πολέμιων ἀνθεστῶτα
ὀρώσιν, οἱ μὲν ἐπ' αὐτομολίας προφάσει ἀπέρχονται, οἱ δὲ 5
ὥς ἕκαστοι δύνανται (πολλὴ δ' ἡ Σικελία), εἰσὶ δ' οἱ καὶ
αὐτοὶ ἐμπορευόμενοι ἀνδράποδα Ὑκκαρικὰ ἀντεμβιβᾶσαι ὑπὲρ
σφῶν πείσαντες τοὺς τριηράρχους τὴν ἀκριβείαν τοῦ ναυτικοῦ
ἀφῆρηνται.

Thuc. 7.13.2; text and line numbers from *OCT*.

Nicias' letter to the Athenians contains, at Thuc. 7.13.2, two passages where scholars have questioned the manuscript tradition. The first of these, τῶν ναυτῶν [τῶν] (lines 25–6 in the *OCT*), always figures in the frequent discussions of the role of slaves in the crews of Athenian triremes; the second, ἐπ' αὐτομολίας προφάσει (line 4), also seems to bear on the same question, but it has not been so used, because it is generally misunderstood. The contention of this paper is that the transmitted text is perfectly sound (the minor variations on ἀρπαγὴν...μακρὰν [line 26] and αὐτοὶ [line 6] are not my concern), and that the two passages taken together give us very clear and important evidence about the men who rowed the Athenian warships and the part played by slaves among them.

In the first passage, Poppo's conjectural exclusion of τῶν has been adopted by many editors and commentators. Poppo himself argued that the θεράποντες could not be part of the ναῦται, because in that case they too would have been destroyed by the Syracusan cavalry (393).¹ That argument was dealt with by Kolbe, who rightly saw that Thucydides does not distinguish those lost by death into separate categories (546).

¹Full references for works cited by author's last name are given at the end.

However, Poppo's attempt to exclude the *θεράποντες* from the *ναῦται* has been adopted by others for a different reason, which is exemplified in Dover's comment that the use of "slaves as rowers...at Athens is not attested before 406/5 (X. *HG* 1.6.24), and the enfranchisement of the slaves who fought in that year suggests that the measure was new and exceptional...Poppo's deletion of the second *τῶν* is therefore inescapable on historical grounds" (*HCT ad loc.*). But whatever view is taken about the presence of slaves as rowers, this correction cannot be right. Thucydides' composition here is perfectly clear. Nicias is explaining why his naval force has declined. He begins at 12.3, *τὸ γὰρ ναυτικὸν ἡμῶν*, and deals first with the deterioration of the ships (12.3–13.1). They cannot be dried out, because they all have to be in constant service. At 13.2, *τὰ δὲ πληρώματα*, he turns to the crews, the reasons for whose decline take up the rest of the chapter. This passage was well analyzed long ago by Kolbe (545–47). The first category of *nautai* are some of the sailors lost because of attacks by Syracusan cavalry; the second are the slaves who desert; and the third the foreigners. These last are subdivided: those conscripted, who immediately dispersed among the cities (of Sicily),² and those who volunteered for the sake of pay. Three reasons are given for the loss of the latter: they made an excuse to get away; they left as opportunity offered (Sicily being large); while some, turning to trade themselves, persuaded the trierarchs to accept slaves from Hykkara in their stead. Thucydides follows a characteristic mode of analysis. The first category of loss is general.³ He then moves to reasons which affected specific groups among the sailors. It is, therefore, clear from this passage that all the people mentioned formed part of the original crews. It is not possible to detach the slaves, on the argument, for instance, that they represent the personal servants of members of the land forces,⁴ because they are firmly embedded in the discussion of the crews of the

²That "the cities" means the Greek cities of Sicily seems clear from the use of the similar term at 7.25.9, where the meaning is certain.

³As Classen–Steup note *ad loc.* The Athenian citizens among the rowers were only lost through enemy action; other reasons for losses also affected other groups. Cf. e.g. Longo 42, who thinks that the *xenoi* and *therapontes* would not be sent foraging, because they were more likely to desert. But since slaves and foreigners could well have been sent out accompanied by loyal Athenian citizens, while all the citizens lost may have been included in the category *τῶν μὲν*, it is unlikely that it consisted exclusively of them.

⁴As M. Amit, *Athens and the Sea*, Collection Latomus LXXIV (Brussels 1965) 32 ff.; Garland 39, who strangely seems to imagine that the personal servants of the hoplites in the land army could also have served as rowers on the ships; a similar confusion by Sargent 275 ff. Longo 37, 50 has the extraordinary idea that all the slaves among the rowers were servants of the Athenian hoplites in the land army. All such ideas are well refuted by Welwei 93. How could the same slaves be both personal servants and baggage-carriers of the hoplites on land and oarsmen on the ships?

warships. No simple emendation or choice of punctuation can alter this. The phrase καὶ οἱ ξένοι...ἑσβάντες, to mention only the first category, formally proves that οἱ...θεράποντες were part of the crews. So those scholars are right who have not accepted Poppo's suggested deletion of τῶν,⁵ and a close translation of the early sentences of 7.13.2 should run thus: "Our crews have been ruined and are still being ruined because of the following. Of the sailors, some have been killed by the cavalry owing to the distance from which firewood has to be fetched, supplies seized and water brought; the slaves, since we are now on terms of equality, desert; and, as to the foreigners, those who embarked as conscripts take the first opportunity to depart to the cities, etc."

We must conclude, therefore, that there were slaves among the original crews of the Athenian warships in Sicily. It has also been properly pointed out that these must have been competent oarsmen, since they are distinguished (together with the other original members of the crews) from the slaves from Hykkara whom the trierarchs were persuaded to accept as substitutes for some of the foreign volunteers.⁶ Thucydides' evidence about the crews in Sicily is in harmony with the natural inference from his statement at 8.73.5, referring to the Athenian force at Samos in 411, that the crew of the state trireme Paralos consisted entirely of Athenians and free men. Dover's suggestions that Thucydides' statement is partly to be explained because he was writing for a Panhellenic audience, and mainly because he wished to emphasize the strong democratic sentiments of the citizen crew (*HCT ad loc.*), are special pleading designed to evade that natural inference. In any case, Thucydides is well aware that slaves served as oarsmen on the warships of his time.⁷ The theory that the Athenian triremes were exceptional in this respect has been based (apart from ideas about Arginusae) on arguments from silence, whose weakness was well exposed by Welwei in a fundamental and detailed discussion (91–93).

It has been duly recognized by some scholars that the Thucydidean evidence proves that, before Arginusae, there were slaves on board Athenian triremes.⁸ However, some of those who do recognize that fact qualify it by suggesting that the slaves consisted of personal servants of the hoplite marines (*epibatai*) and the officers (*hyperesia*) of the ships, and even that they were not

⁵E.g. Classen–Steup; de Romilly, who prints the manuscript text and notes nothing in the apparatus; Kolbe 546; Longo 54 n. 16; Welwei 94 n. 107.

⁶Welwei 94 ff.; Morrison and Coates 118.

⁷See 1.55.1 (Corcyra), 2.103.1 (Peloponnesians), 8.15.2 (Chios), 84.2 (Syracuse and Thurii; a striking passage).

⁸This is the conclusion of Welwei, who provides the fullest discussion; see especially 91–5. See also the sane statement of Morrison and Coates 117 ff.; Garland 35; Casson 322 ff. Of the older treatments the most thorough and useful is that of Kolbe 545–47.

regular members of the crew.⁹ We may readily accept that these personal servants were indeed present, on the general grounds that it was normal in ancient warfare for anyone who could afford it to be accompanied by his personal servant, who was inevitably a slave.¹⁰ The point is also proved quite specifically by the inscription *IG* II/III² 1951, to be considered below. However, the idea that the slaves on the ships were confined to the personal servants of the Athenian marines and the officers is thrown into doubt by the correct interpretation of the second disputed passage in *Thuc.* 7.13.2.

The words ἐπ' αὐτομολίας προφάσει have been suspected on the grounds that they suggest the nonsensical idea that a rower could approach his captain and ask for leave of absence for the reason that he intended to desert. Faced by this apparent nonsense, scholars have resorted to desperate remedies: either very contorted grammar, or far-fetched interpretations, or, finally, emendation. In the first case it was suggested that ἐπ' goes with αὐτομολίας, understood as an accusative plural, and προφάσει stands on its own. The resulting translation would be: they go away with a view to desertions with an excuse.¹¹ This offends against the natural interpretation of the Greek word order and fails to provide a good contrast with the antithetical clause that follows. Against it is also the fact that later Greek writers use the combination πρόφασις and αὐτομολία (*J. BJ* 5.424; *D. C.* 2.27). Common far-fetched interpretations have been to take προφάσει as meaning 'motive' or 'opportunity': they go away with the motive, or from the opportunity, of desertion.¹² But there are no convincing parallels for πρόφασις with these senses.¹³ Of the many emendations that have been suggested for αὐτομολίας,

⁹Casson; similarly Garlan.

¹⁰See the works cited of Sargent, Garlan, and Welwei *passim*. As Welwei acutely pointed out (88 ff.), the slave's duties as a servant would be performed especially on land; while on board he would be free to function as a normal oarsman.

¹¹See F. Goeller, *Thucydides de Bello Peloponnesiaco Libri Octo* (Leipzig 1826); S. T. Bloomfield, *The History of the Peloponnesian War by Thucydides* (London 1830); Poppo *ad loc.* It was strange that S. Widman offered the same grammatical interpretation in 1907 with no reference to previous suggestions of the same solution; see "Endliche Lösung einer Thukydides-Schwierigkeit (VII.13.2)," *Wochenschrift für Klassische Philologie* 24 (1907) 1099–1100.

¹²See e.g. Welwei 94 n. 108; L. Pearson, "The *prophasis* of desertion," *CQ* 36 (1986) 262–3. Pearson seems to be unaware that his proposal ('opportunity') is an old idea; it is already in Valla's translation of 1452. However, his short, recent, paper is useful as a witness of the modern failure to interpret the phrase, and includes references to other far-fetched interpretations.

¹³Although Welwei wrongly claims that the sense 'motive' is found in LSJ's article on the word; see *ibid.*, where no Greek passage is cited.

the most popular has been αὐτονομίας,¹⁴ but the picture of the sailors asking to leave on the grounds that their home states possessed autonomy seems far removed from the realities of war (Welwei 94, rightly).

There is a powerful general objection to emendation here in the unanimity of the manuscript tradition, which reveals no sign of any difficulty in the phrase. Ergo, for hundreds of years native speakers of Greek found the words easily intelligible. The nonsensical meaning cannot have occurred to them. So it is our task to find its easily intelligible meaning.

Curiously enough, that was discovered long ago by Bétant in his *Lexicon Thucydideum*. The excuse that was offered by the crew member was that his slave had run away. Bétant gives this explanation under both αὐτομολία and πρόφασις: “ut servos suos fugitivos quaerant,” to quote his Latin. Although there is no exact parallel in extant Greek writers,¹⁵ I have no doubt that Bétant was right. Thucydides has just used the word αὐτομόλουσι of slaves. The verb αὐτομολέω and noun αὐτόμολος can be used of the desertion of free men (e.g. Thuc. 4.118.7), but the verb is above all the *vox propria* for slave flight. One recalls the beautiful scene at the beginning of the *Knights*, where the slaves Demosthenes and Nicias discuss what they are to do to escape the tyrannical rule of Cleon. With great trepidation and hesitation they finally pronounce the sweet but dreaded word αὐτομολῶμεν ‘let’s run away’ (Eq. 21–26). The literal translation of Thucydides’ phrase, οἱ μὲν ἐπ’ αὐτομολίας προφάσει ἀπέρχονται, should therefore be: “some go away on the excuse of slave flight.” Such an excuse would not only be entirely intelligible and acceptable in a slave society, it would be the owner’s duty to his captain not to allow his slave to desert the ship and to recover him if he tried to do so. Thus, by dishonestly telling their captain that they were going to seek their slaves, who had already deserted, these foreign oarsmen found a plausible excuse to leave the ship themselves.

It is an oddity of classical scholarship that Bétant’s beautifully convincing solution has been ignored by subsequent students of Thucydides. I suppose one reason may be that Poppo had already rejected the first suggestion known to me of an interpretation along similar lines. This was made by Lindau in 1817,

¹⁴See e.g. OCT apparatus; Dover, *HCT ad loc.*; de Romilly, note complémentaire, 167, though she finally admits *aporia* and prints the manuscript text, in spite of finding it very obscure. Lindau 12–13 was already able to discuss several suggested emendations.

¹⁵The noun αὐτομολία occurs three times in Thucydides: 1.142.4, 7.13.2, 8.40.2. Otherwise it does not occur among extant writers of the fifth and fourth centuries B. C. In later Greek writers the word means either *desertion* in general or specifically *slave flight*. The latter is the meaning in all the Thucydidean passages. I rely on an ‘all Greek’ search of the TLG texts by Ibycus computer.

who said that the text might be defended on the interpretation that the sailors left on the pretext that they were seeking those who had deserted (12–13). He himself rejected the explanation on the grounds that the brevity was too ambiguous and it would be strange if individuals said that they would recover deserters from the enemy's forces and other cities of Sicily, and if their leaders believed them. Poppo simply stated that αὐτομολίας does not mean 'seeking deserters' but 'desertion' (394). None of these objections seem to rule out Bétant's solution, which made the great improvement of understanding αὐτομολίας as slave flight. Since Bétant, so far as I have been able to discover, among published authors only two people have followed a similar interpretation, though neither referred to Bétant's *Lexicon*. Widman took ἐπ' αὐτομολίας (accusative plural) as meaning 'in pursuit of deserters', but he tortured the grammar, did not think of slaves and made no reference to previous treatments (above, n. 11). H. Richards alone offered precisely the same solution as Bétant, and rightly noted Thucydides' immediately antecedent statement about slaves' desertion, but he did not know that he had been anticipated,¹⁶ and his suggestion was casually dismissed by Dover, on the grounds that the proposal to look for a slave in enemy territory would be an unconvincing excuse (*HCT ad loc.*). Needless to say, the aim would be to apprehend the slave before he reached enemy territory.¹⁷

If we accept Bétant's solution, we find that the slaves are by no means confined to the personal servants of the Athenian marines and ships' officers. Just as in other walks of life, the oarsman who owned a slave could use that slave not merely as a servant, but also to earn him money. We are seeing the same circumstances well attested elsewhere, in which even a poor man, who worked for a wage, would, if he could, have a slave or slaves working beside him.¹⁸ This is the world in which the Old Oligarch said that the Athenians *and*

¹⁶"Has it been suggested that αὐτομολίας may refer not to the men themselves...but to their slaves?" See "Thucydidea. Part II, Miscellaneous Emendations," *CQ* 8 (1914) 73–85: 79 ff.

¹⁷Remarks in published literature (e.g. Dover's), and comments by my readers (to whom I am grateful for helpful suggestions), show that there is a widespread misconception that it would have been a simple matter for a deserter to walk through the very numerous Athenian forces into the Syracusan lines. A moment's thought should show that this would have been a desperately dangerous and most likely fatal procedure. So the deserter would have to use circuitous routes through the Sicilian countryside, which was not closely held by the Syracusans. We know that the Sicel population largely favoured the Athenian cause (Thuc. 7.57.11). So the pursuit of a slave would not necessarily be a hopeless enterprise, and the excuse offered was plausible.

¹⁸The best evidence for this remain the Erechtheum building accounts; see L. D. Caskey, "The Inscriptions," in J. M. Paton ed., *The Erechtheum* (Cambridge, MA 1927) 277–422 (*JG* 1³ 474–9); A. E. Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*, 5th edition, revised (London 1952) 261–5; R. H. Randall, Jr., "The Erechtheum Workmen," *AJA* 57 (1953) 199–210 (though he

their servants automatically became experienced in oarsmanship,¹⁹ and also the world in which the same author says that slaves earn money in a sea-power.²⁰ It is not necessary to argue away the latter statement, by saying that it could easily apply only to work in the shipyards and docks, and need not refer to rowing in the warships.²¹ Thucydides' evidence shows that, just as on land, so on board the triremes, citizens, foreigners and slaves worked together.²² We must thus reject Casson's view that the slaves were confined to the personal servants of officers and marines, who, though they may have pulled an oar from time to time, were in no sense regular members of the crew (323).²³

This evidence from Thucydides is important for the interpretation of the sadly incomplete and inevitably enigmatic naval catalogue inscription, which we must still, regrettably, refer to as *IG II/III*² 1951. It is to appear as *IG I*³ 1032, according to the re-arrangement of the fragments by Donald R. Laing Jr.²⁴ The inscription seems to have listed complete complements of Athenian triremes according to rank and category: first the two trierarchs, then the ten marines, then the officers of the *hyperesia* and, finally, the crew in three

wrongly imagines, 203, that metics took a minor part, and slaves none at all, in the Sicilian Expedition). Clear examples of owners working with their slaves are provided by the metic Simias and the citizen Phalakros; see Caskey, XVII. col. 1. 42–7; 70–74 = *IG I*³ 476.200–205; 227–231.

¹⁹Ps.-X., *Ath. Pol.* 1.19: Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις διὰ τὴν κτήσιν τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὑπερορίοις καὶ διὰ τὰς ἀρχὰς τὰς εἰς τὴν ὑπερορίαν λελήθασι μανθάνοντες ἐλαύνειν τῇ κώπῃ αὐτοὶ τε καὶ οἱ ἀκόλουθοι· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἄνθρωπον πολλάκις πλέοντα κώπῃ λαβεῖν καὶ αὐτὸν καὶ τὸν οἰκέτην καὶ ὀνόματα μαθεῖν τὰ ἐν τῇ ναυτικῇ.

²⁰1.11: ὅπου γὰρ ναυτικὴ δύναμις ἐστίν, ἀπὸ χρημάτων ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἀνδραπόδοις δουλεύειν, ἵνα λαμβάνων μὲν πράττῃ τὰς ἀποφορὰς, καὶ ἐλευθέρους ἀφιέναι. The exact interpretation of this sentence has been endlessly disputed and may be beyond certain solution. Of the discussions known to me, that by K. I. Geltzer, *Die Schrift vom Staate der Athener*, *Hermes Einzelschr.* 3 (Berlin 1937) 110–22, seems most useful. He was not refuted by E. Rupprecht, *Die Schrift vom Staate der Athener, Interpretationen (Klio, Beiheft XLIV, Neue Folge 31, 1939)* 60–78, so Bowersock seems to have been wrong to have followed Rupprecht's line in his translation in the Loeb Xenophon, vol. VII.

²¹As e.g. Welwei 91; Sargent 272 n. 3.

²²To this extent Jordan was right, esp. 262–4. But his idea that Athens possessed large numbers of public slaves, who could be used as rowers, was totally unconvincing, and is refuted in detail by Welwei 67–70. Cf. also Kolbe 547.

²³Casson expressed the same idea in his earlier paper, "Galley Slaves," *TAPA* 97 (1966) 35–44.

²⁴"A new interpretation of the Athenian Naval Catalogue, *IG II*² 1951," Diss. Cincinnati, 1965. See Lewis' note in Lewis and Stroud 186 n. 7; *SEG* 29.149. Since Laing's dissertation is easily available, and has been taken into account by all serious writers on the subject since 1965, I treat it as equivalent to a published work.

categories: citizens (ναῦται ἄστοί), foreigners (ξένοι)²⁵ and slaves (θεράποντες). (Although under a single heading, metics and other foreigners are distinguished by their different descriptions, deme of residence for metics, ethnic for foreigners).

The loss of any general heading makes both the date and the intent of the inscription unclear, especially as we have no other example of a list of this kind. Since the epigraphical criteria seem to point to a date in the late fifth or early fourth centuries, many have wanted to take the inscription for a casualty list for Arginusae, which would, it is thought, explain the presence of numerous slaves.²⁶ However, the objections to understanding the document as a casualty list are very strong.²⁷ If, as seems likely, we have the complete complements of several triremes, it can hardly be a casualty list. Even at Arginusae complete complements were not lost.²⁸ Secondly, all the fragments have been found on or very near the Acropolis (as Welwei 82, following earlier commentators), which must tell against identification as a casualty list. Thirdly, casualty lists were normally arranged by tribes.²⁹ Finally, and to my mind decisively, both trierarchs are named for each ship. It is known that, in a syntrierarchy, only one trierarch commanded the ship. Each exercised command for half a year.³⁰ Jordan's suggestion that it was a list of crews subject to rapid call-up is without analogy and improbable (263). For we know that such lists of those liable for military service were not inscribed on stone, but written on perishable material.³¹ The suggestion that the stone honours the officers and crews of certain triremes seems more persuasive. The

²⁵Although this term is not certainly attested on our fragments, Laing plausibly restores [ξένο]ι in line 205 and [ξένο]ι in line 441.

²⁶See, e.g. A. Körte, "Eine Verlustliste aus der Schlacht bei den Arginusen?" *Philologische Wochenschrift* 52 (1932) 1027–32 (also numbered separately as part of the Poland Festschrift in the same volume, cols. 83–8), who gives references to earlier holders of the same opinion; W. Pilz, "Zu IG ed. min. II/III Pars II Fasc. 2 Nr. 1951," *Phil. Woch.* 53 (1933) 732–4; Casson 323; Morrison and Coates 118 n. 14; Funke 168 ff. Even those who do not see the inscription as a casualty list for Arginusae think that the composition of the crews reflects the conditions of the last years of the Peloponnesian War, as Welwei 86.

²⁷It is noteworthy that D. W. Bradeen thought the inscription "can hardly be a casualty list;" "The Athenian Casualty List of 464 B.C.," *Hesperia* 36 (1967) 321–8, at 326 n. 22.

²⁸Xenophon expressly says a few escaped to land even from ships lost with their crews (*HG* 1.6.34).

²⁹Welwei. The argument is strengthened by the appearance of trierarchs in a casualty list organized by tribes; see *SEG* 19.42, col. II line 33, Col. III line 30. However, the restoration κῶβρον[ε]τες in col. II line 34 looks hazardous.

³⁰The point is proved by [Dem.] 50.68; see Jordan 72 ff.

³¹Compare Lysias 16.6 ff., 13; *ML* 23 lines 27–9.

arrangement by rank and function is like that of other honorary lists.³² However, powerful objections have been made to Laing's proposal (esp. 107–19) that the stone honoured the officers and crews of the eight triremes that escaped from Aegospotami with Conon, and was erected after the Battle of Cnidus,³³ while Welwei's idea that the honoured ships were those which escaped back to Athens from Aegospotami (86), although it avoids some of the weaknesses which attracted criticism in Laing's, is also entirely hypothetical. It seems basically improbable that those who successfully fled from a disastrous defeat would be honoured. Compare Herodotus' story (5.87) of the gruesome fate of the single Athenian survivor from Aegina.

There is no internal evidence for dating the inscription at all closely. We have only a *terminus ante quem* for the introduction of the syntrierarchy,³⁴ and the appearance of the ethnic 'Ρόδιος need not indicate a date after the synoecism of Rhodes in 408.³⁵ The origins of the foreign crewmen have been thought to exclude the period from 412 (revolt of Chios) to 394 (Battle of Cnidus),³⁶ but that too is vulnerable to the objection that foreign rowers need not have been recruited only from formal allies. The epigraphical criteria do

³²E.g. lists of archons, as *IG II/III*² 1706; of a college with secretaries and under-secretary, 1711; of archons plus *kerux*, *auletes*, *leitourgos*, 1721 ff.; of priests and other religious officials, 1941, 1944. It is also worth recalling Pope's idea that the list was put up by the tribe Erechtheis, to which belonged the first in each preserved pair of trierarchs; see H. Pope, *Non-Athenians in Attic Inscriptions* (New York, 1935) 16–23; "Erechtheus and the Erechtheids," *Studies presented to David Moore Robinson*, Vol. II (St. Louis, 1953) 1044–51.

³³Laing's hypothesis is damagingly criticized by Welwei 84 ff., who points out (1) that it is not certain that the eight triremes which were with Conon (*X. HG* 2.1.28–9) stayed in Euagoras' service; (2) that the members of the Athenian élite recognized by Laing among officers and marines would hardly have stayed away and served Euagoras for twelve years; (3) that, even if the eight triremes stayed in Euagoras' service, their personnel would inevitably have changed over the twelve years between Aegospotami and Conon's return to Athens; and (4) that, since Athens sent reinforcements to Conon in the 390s (*Hell. Ox.* VI.1–VII.1 [Bartolletti, Teubner]), which took part in the victory at Cnidus, it is unlikely that the crews of 406/5 shared the honours for Conon and Euagoras in 393. There is a less thorough criticism by Funke 166, who employs dubious *argumenta e silentio* and does not refer to Welwei.

³⁴Garlan 38 uses this argument to date the inscription after 411. Lysias 32.24 shows that the syntrierarchy existed by 409–405 (or, just possibly, 409–400), but to assume that it was introduced then or shortly before, on the grounds that we only hear of single trierarchies before that time, is to apply an inadmissible argument from silence. For we know from the naval lists of the fourth century that single trierarchies occurred side-by-side with syntrierarchies; see Jordan 72.

³⁵As Funke 168. But Thucydides (3.8.1) calls Dorieus 'Ρόδιος when referring to the Olympiad of 428. Cf. also F. Cordano, "ΡΟΔΑΟΣ prima del synecismo e ΡΟΔΙΟΙ fondatori di coloni," *PP* 29 (1974) 179–82.

³⁶F. Hiller von Gaertringen, "Rhodos," *RE Suppl.* V (1931) 731–839, at 772; Jordan 71 ff.

not permit really close dating.³⁷ So there was always a danger of circularity in arguing that the composition of the crews suits the time of Arginusae (or Aegospotami) and deducing a date from that.

If we compare the information from the inscription with that from Thucydides, we note that two of Thucydides' categories, the *xenoi* (probably) and the *therapontes*, appear on the inscription under the same terms. The inscription also tells us about the ownership of the slaves. Each slave name in the nominative is followed by a name in the genitive, which has been recognized as that of his master.³⁸ Many of the masters' names recur among the trierarchs, marines and officers (Laing 126–30). It is particularly on the basis of these connections, combined with the belief that officers' slaves and masters would serve on the same ship, that Laing created his new arrangement of the fragments, which has been accepted by several other students of the inscription.³⁹ Laing and his predecessors confined their search for slaves' masters to these officers. The proper interpretation of Thuc. 7.13.2 shows that we must also look among the crew. I have found three possible slave masters among the preserved names of citizen sailors and four among the foreigners and metics.⁴⁰

There are about 30 attested names of citizen oarsmen on the inscription and about 40 of metics and foreigners. So, on the basis of the very limited evidence we have, we find about ten per cent of the free oarsmen may have had their slaves with them. This figure is in marked contrast to the 22 possible

³⁷Lewis tried to narrow the period indicated by epigraphical criteria, when he suggested that the inscription is in the same hand as the Erechtheum account for 408/7 and the third hand of *IG* I³ 101 (?407 B.C.); 186 n. 7. But the point is hardly decisive, since the working life of a stone-cutter could be long.

³⁸The same way of designating slaves is found *passim* on the Erechtheum building inscriptions; see above n. 18.

³⁹E.g. Lewis; Garlan 37 ff.; Funke 164; Welwei 83 ff., but with reservations in detail.

⁴⁰In the table that follows, the readings (though not the expansions) and line numbers are those of Laing's publication of the inscription on the two foldouts between pages 55 and 56. In brackets are the line numbers of *IG* II/III² 1951.

<u>Slave</u>		<u>Putative Master</u>	
342/3 (363/4)	Ἀριστόδημος] Λυσιστράτ[ο]	244 (265)	Λυσίστρατος Π(ειραιεύς)
401 (423)	Ἀγάθων Εὐδί(κο)	250 (271)	Εὐδικος Μαραθ(ώνιος)
399 (421)	Εὐαρχος Λυσίπ(πο)	269 (290)	Λύσιππο[ς – –] (in a list of citizen sailors)
147 (134)	Εὐφρων Εὐφρονίο	129 (116)	Εὐφρόνιος ἐπὶ Σου(νίφ)
151 (138)	Θράξ Νικοβόλο	451 (207)	Νικόβολος ἐγ Με(λίτης)
85 (72)	Τιμαγόρας Ἀρχεδ(ήμο)	219 (243)	Ἀρχέδημος Πεπ(αρήθιος)
194 (176)	Εὐβιος Φαν[– – –]	222 (246)	[Φ]ανόστρατος Κύ(θνιος)

masters among the 32 attested names of trierarchs, marines and officers, some of whom had more than one slave on board (Laing 126–30). Such a discrepancy is, however, only what we should expect in a society where wealth was very unequally divided. The surprise may rather be that some citizen oarsmen, whom we may surely take for *thetes*, and some of the metics and foreigners, who are unlikely to have belonged to a higher economic stratum, had a slave to take to sea.⁴¹ In any case, the evidence from the inscription again agrees with that from Thucydides, and shows that rowers on the triremes could have their slaves with them. This comparison shows that the presence of slaves on the inscription should not in itself be regarded as exceptional. Their presence alone does not, therefore, link this inscription with Arginusae. That conclusion requires us to look again at the recruitment of the crews for Arginusae.

We now know that it was not the recruitment of slaves as such that was dramatically different. Xenophon, as is often pointed out, may have felt that the presence of knights among the rowers was more worthy of remark than that of the slaves.⁴² Aristophanes, on the other hand, was impressed by the general emancipation of the slaves and their attainment of citizenship with Plataean status (*Ra.* 693–94).⁴³ It is this which seems to offer the key.

It seems fair to assume that in normal circumstances there was no general promise of freedom for slaves taken to war. They remained the property of their master, and the proper understanding of Thuc. 7.13.2 shows that the master had not only a financial interest, but also a duty recognized by his commanding officer, in preventing desertion. If, however, there was a general call-up of every fit slave of military age, there must have been many owners, who were unable through age or health, or for other reasons, themselves to serve on the expedition.

We can obtain some insight into these issues from the recruitment of slaves by Antimenes of Rhodes at the time of Alexander. In this instance the owners were allowed to register their value, and, if the slave was lost, received that money in compensation.⁴⁴ We know that, because it was provided that, if the slave deserted, his commanding officer had to pay compensation to the

⁴¹Compare, however, Lysias 24.6, where the cripple, who claims to need his disability grant, hopes to acquire a slave to take over his work.

⁴²X. *HG* 1.6.24. See e.g. Welwei 95 ff.; Jacoby, *FGH Commentary* to 323a F 25–26; Jordan 262.

⁴³See Welwei, *ibid.* Garlan's pedantic doubts about our evidence for the grant of freedom are misplaced (36 ff.). For a good treatment, see Jacoby, *ibid.*

⁴⁴Ps.-Arist. *Econ.* II 34b. Cf. Van Groningen's commentary *ad loc.* and Garlan 32.

owner, unless he succeeded in recovering the slave. The owners paid a small annual sum to the state, which we should regard as an insurance premium in case the slave was lost by death or disablement, when the state would presumably pay the owner compensation. Note that there is no question here of general emancipation. We do not know if the owners were compensated at Arginusae, but it seems improbable, given the desperate state of Athenian finances.⁴⁵ Presumably the levy was regarded as a tax on slave-owners at a moment of great emergency, just as Diaeus' demand for 12,000 slaves for the Achaean army in 146 B. C. has been regarded as a tax on the rich.⁴⁶

In any case, if there were large numbers of slaves on board the triremes at Arginusae, whose masters were not present, some way of insuring their loyalty was needed. Hence the promise of freedom and hence the special prominence of Arginusae in the ancient sources about slaves as rowers on Athenian triremes. In the light of this conclusion we may revert to the naval catalogue inscription.

While the actual presence of substantial numbers of slaves in the crews of these triremes may not be exceptional, in Laing's arrangement of the fragments at least two of the four complements partially preserved contain so many slaves that it would have been impossible for all their masters to have served on the same ship.⁴⁷ So, if Laing's arrangement is correct, the naval catalogue inscription would still appear to reflect exceptional circumstances. For the historical interpretation of the inscription, therefore, the correctness of Laing's arrangement becomes crucial.

No one should pronounce on difficult epigraphical questions without personally examining the inscription itself, which I have not yet had the opportunity to do. The identifications of possible slave masters among the crew, however, (identifications not noted by Laing), are relevant to the question of the arrangement of the fragments. Of the seven possible connections that I have found, in only two cases would the slave and his master

⁴⁵Cf. W. E. Thompson, "The golden Nikai and the coinage of Athens," *Num. Chron.* 10 (1970) 1-6.

⁴⁶Plb. 38.15.3-4; cf. Walbank, *Commentary ad loc.*

⁴⁷See Laing 88-93. He proposes 136 slaves for Trireme I; see 89 and 90 n. 19 (with a small discrepancy); for Trireme II at most 54 and more than 40; see 89; for Trireme III a minimum of 104 and possibly a similar figure to that of Trireme I; see 90; for Trireme IV 94 or more; see 91. While it is easily possible for all the masters to be on board Trireme II, and just conceivable on Trireme IV, Laing is right to say that it would be impossible on Triremes I and III; see 136 ff.

have served on the same trireme, according to Laing's arrangement.⁴⁸ This could mean any of three things:

- 1) The coincidence of master's name and sailor's name is in the five other cases a mere coincidence and does not indicate the same individual. Given the prevalence of homonyms in ancient Greek onomastics, this is possible.⁴⁹
- 2) It was not the rule for slave and master to serve on the same ship.
- 3) Laing's arrangement is incorrect.

It may be that only the discovery of further fragments of the inscription will allow a decisive choice among these possibilities, and that we must, therefore, admit uncertainty until new evidence appears. Nevertheless, the questions we must ask about this important and tantalizing document are more clearly defined by a proper understanding of the passage Thuc. 7.13.2. In contrast to the inscription, the import of that passage is happily not in doubt. Slaves regularly formed part of the mixed band of oarsmen who rowed the Athenian triremes, and their masters included fellow oarsmen.⁵⁰

⁴⁸See above, n. 40. Euphron, slave of Euphronios and Euphronios, living at Sunium, are both on Trireme II, according to Laing. Timagoras, slave of Archedemos and Archedemos of Peparethos are both on Trireme I, according to Laing.

⁴⁹For Athens, cf. W. E. Thompson, "Tot Atheniensibus idem nomen erat...", *Φόρος. Tribute to Benjamin Meritt*, ed. D. W. Bradeen and M. F. McGregor (New York 1974) 144–9.

⁵⁰I am very grateful to my friend and colleague, Professor Martin Ostwald, for kindly reading an earlier draft of this paper and making many helpful suggestions for its improvement, and to my students, Mr. Rob Rice and Mr. Karl Maurer, for advice and encouragement.

Works Cited by Author's Last Name

- Casson, L. *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*, reprinted with Addenda and Corrigenda (Princeton 1986).
- Classen, J. and J. Steup, *Thukydides, Siebenter Band, Siebentes Buch*, fifth edition (Dublin/Zurich 1967).
- de Romilly, J. *Thucydide. La Guerre de Peloponnèse, Livres VI et VII*, Texte établi et traduit par Louis Bodin et J. de Romilly (Paris 1955).
- Dover, K. J. in *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, by A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes and K. J. Dover, Vol. IV (Oxford 1970).
- Funke, P. "Konons Rückkehr nach Athen im Spiegel epigraphischer Zeugnisse," *ZPE* 53 (1983) 149–89.
- Garlan, Y. "Les esclaves grecs en temps de guerre," *Actes du Colloque d'Histoire Sociale 1970. Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Besançon* 128 (1972) 29–62.
- Jordan, B. *The Athenian Navy in the Classical Period* (Berkeley 1975).
- Kolbe, W. "De Atheniensium re navali quaestiones selectae," *Philologus* 58 (1899) 503–52.
- Laing, D. R., Jr. "A new interpretation of the Athenian Naval Catalogue, *IG II²* 1951," Diss. Cincinnati, 1965.
- Lewis D. M. and R. S. Stroud. "Athens honors King Euagoras of Salamis," *Hesperia* 48 (1979) 180–93.
- Lindau, A. F. *Spicilegium criticum in Thucydidem et Livium* (Bratislava 1817).
- Longo, O. "Le ciurme della spedizione ateniese in Sicilia," *Quaderni di Storia* 10 (1984) 29–56.
- Morrison, J. S. and J. F. Coates, *The Athenian Trireme* (Cambridge 1986).
- Poppo, E. F. *Thucydidis de bello Peloponnesiaco Libri Octo*, Pars III, Vol. IV (Leipzig 1838).
- Sargent, R. L. "The Use of Slaves by the Athenians in Warfare, I and II," *CP* 22 (1927) 201–12, 264–79.
- Welwei, K.-W. *Unfreie im antiken Kriegsdienst, I, Athen und Sparta = Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei*, ed. J. Vogt and H. U. Instinsky, Vol. 5 (Wiesbaden 1974).