

AGORA OSTRAKON P. 9945—TWO POSSIBILITIES

Agora ostrakon P. 9945 as restored by A. Raubitschek¹ offers a less than complimentary opinion of the hero of Plataea. Describing the victim of the ostrakophoria of 483/2 as Ἀριστ[είδεν] | τὸν Δά[τιδος] | ἀδελφ[όν], the inscription is generally interpreted as accusing Aristеides of pro-Persian sympathies.² P.J. Bicknell, in the course of an examination of the role of Aristеides in the Marathon campaign,³ has affirmed the traditional interpretation of the ostrakon and links Aristеides with the medising policy pursued by the Alkmeonidai in 490. Furthermore, Bicknell regards Agora ostrakon P. 5978, which describes Aristеides as [hoc τὸ]ς ηικέτας | [ἀπέο]σεν, as a clear reference to the sacrilege of the Alkmeonidai in the suppression of the Kylonian conspiracy⁴ and as confirmation that the hetairos of Kleisthenes⁵ had not changed his political allegiances.

Bicknell goes on to suggest that Aristеides and his tribal contingent from Antiochis were left on the Marathon battlefield to guard the booty⁶ because the loyalty of the strategos was suspect.⁷ By not returning immediately to Athens they would be denied the opportunity of betraying the city to the Persians. In my view, however, Aristеides' stewardship of the booty after the battle by no means convicts him of traitorous intentions or leanings. Certainly, if the tribesmen of Antiochis did not return to the city, two other demotai of Alopeke, both known medisers, would have been forced to remain with Aristеides and the plunder. Megakles Hippokratous was an Alkmeonid who was ostracised for his associations with the family of Hippias who guided the Persians to Marathon,⁸ while Kallias Kratiou, a leading candidate in an early ostrakophoria if not the victim of 486/5,⁹ is described as 'the Mede' on four Kerameikos ostraka¹⁰ and caricatured in Persian garb on a fifth.¹¹ But if the aim of the exercise was to frustrate the threat to the security of the city posed by the medisers and friends of the tyrants among the Athenian aristocracy, we are compelled to explain why two other pro-Persian sympathisers, neither of them tribesmen of Antiochis, were permitted to return to Athens with the other nine tribes. Hipparchos Charmou of Kollytos, the ostracism victim of 488/7, was συγγενής of Peisistratos,¹² while Kallixenos Aristonymou, the Alkmeonid from Xypete,¹³ was dubbed ὁ προδότης by one voter in an ostrakophoria of the 480's.¹⁴

Bicknell's case for Aristеides' medism would appear to be considerably strengthened by the inscription on Agora ostrakon P. 9945. I am, however, not convinced that the now canonical restoration is the correct one and I offer the following two restorations as further possibilities, neither of which lends any further support to the extraordinary charge of medism laid against Aristеides.

I.

Ἄριστ[είδεν] | τὸν Δα[μάσιου] | ἀδελφ[όν]

The Damasias referred to is, of course, Damasias ὁ δευτερος, the eponymous archon of 582/1 who illegally remained in office for two years and two months and when deposed was replaced by a junta of ten archons who held power until the end of 580/79.¹⁵

Plutarch records that Aristeides sponsored legislation that would enable all classes of Athenian citizens to be eligible for the archonship.¹⁶ Hignett,¹⁷ however, regards this piece of information as a fiction on the grounds that the zeugitai only became eligible for the archonship in 457/6.¹⁸ But Hignett overlooks the fact that Plutarch merely wrote γράφει ψήφισμα κοινὴν εἶναι τὴν πολιτείαν and the verb γράφω by no means implies that the proposed legislation was actually enacted.

A far more serious difficulty exists in the chronology of the legislation since Plutarch places Aristeides' proposal after the battle of Plataea, while Agora ostrakon P. 9945 was found in a sealed deposit containing potsherd ballots from an ostrakophoria of the 480's.¹⁹ Many possibilities exist. Plutarch could simply be wrong on the timing of Aristeides' proposed legislation, not an unknown phenomenon, in which case it would perhaps belong to the year 487/6 as an unsuccessful rider to the enactment which brought about election by lot for the archonship.²⁰ Or, perhaps, Aristeides made two unsuccessful attempts to open the magistracy to all citizens, once in 487/6 and again after Plataea. Even if we accept Plutarch's chronology as it stands, it should be remembered that many authorities have seen the legislation which instituted sortition for the archonship as the work of Aristeides.²¹ In either case, the intention of the voter who inscribed Agora ostrakon P. 9945 is clear. Damasias was remembered chiefly because of his failure to observe constitutional niceties as archon. To describe Aristeides as his brother was to do no more than express bleak disapproval of the part he played in initiating or supporting legislation concerning the magistracy. If this legislation also aimed at broadening the franchise of those eligible for the office, the criticism could scarcely have been more pertinent. When Damasias was finally removed, the eponymous archonship was handed over to a commission of ten for the remainder of 480/79.²² This commission comprised five εὐπατρίδαι, three ἄγροικοι, and two δημιουργοί,²³ in other words, representatives from all classes of Athenian citizens.

II.

[Καλλίχσενον] | Ἄριστ[ονύμο] | τὸν Δά[τιδος] | ἀδελφ[όν]

The intended victim, Kallixenos Aristonymou of Xypete, a perennial favourite with the voters, has his name recorded on over 260 ostraka cast at various ostrakophoriai of the 480's. Stamires and Vanderpool²⁴ have quite properly identified Kallixenos as an Alkmeonid on the evidence of his patronymic as well

as the restored gentilician on ostrakon Inv. No. 15, 799. They also drew attention to another ostrakon²⁵ which describes Kallixenos as *ho prodotes*, an epithet which accords well with the usual accusations of medism and disloyalty cast against the Alkmeonidai. It was noted that a passage from the orator Lykourgos,²⁶ on any reasonable interpretation, suggests that the term *prodotes* and the charge of *prodosia* were political slogans in the 480's. More recently, Bicknell²⁷ has even identified Kallixenos as the man who flashed the shield signal to the Persians after Marathon.²⁸

My proposed restoration of Kallixenos' name on Agora ostrakon P. 9945 is simply further confirmation of Kallixenos' medism, a political aberration which was not the exclusive property of the Alkmeonidai from Alopeke.

NOTES

1. A.E. Raubitschek, *Charites: Studien zur Altertumswissenschaft*, 1957, 240-2. Agora Inv. P. 9945 = SEG 19, 36a.
2. For example by R. Meiggs and D.M. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, Oxford 1969, 42.
3. P.J. Bicknell, *AC* 39 (1970) 427-442.
4. Thuc. 1.126.11; Plut. *Sol.* 12; etc.
5. Plut. *Arist.* 2.1; *Moralia* 791a, 805 f.
6. Plut. *Arist.* 5.5.
7. In a frequently neglected passage, *Comp. Aristidis et Catonis* 2.1, Plutarch clearly indicates that Aristeides was strategos in 490/89. I am surprised that this should ever have been doubted.
8. *Ath. Pol.* 22.5.
9. P.J. Bicknell, *Studies in Athenian Politics and Genealogy*, *Historia Einzelschriften* 19, 1972, 64-5.
10. G. Daux, *BCH* 92 (1968) 732.
11. M. Ervin, *AJA* 71 (1967) 295.
12. *Ath. Pol.* 22.4; Plut. *Nik.* 11.8; etc. J.K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families*, Oxford 1971, 451-2, canvasses the nature of the relationship.
13. G. Stamires and E. Vanderpool, *Hesperia* 19 (1950) 376-390.
14. Agora Inv. P. 3786.
15. *Ath. Pol.* 13.2. For a full discussion of the chronology and constitutional problems surrounding Damasias' tenure of his magistracy see T.J. Cadoux, *JHS* 68 (1948) 102-3.
16. Plut. *Arist.* 22.1.
17. C. Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution*, Oxford 1952, 174-5.
18. *Ath. Pol.* 26.2.
19. The deposit is known as Hands Group C (A.R. Hands, *JHS* 79 (1959) 77) and was first reported in *Hesperia* Suppl. 4 (1940) 33. The distribution is Themistokles 18; Hippokrates Alkmeonidou 7; Kallixemos Aristonymou 9; Aristeides 5.
20. *Ath. Pol.* 22.5.
21. For example, D.W. Knight, *Some Studies in Athenian Politics in the Fifth Century BC*, *Historia Einzelschriften* 13, 1970, 29.
22. *Ath. Pol.* 13.2.
23. *Ath. Pol.* fr. 3.
24. G. Stamires and E. Vanderpool, *op. cit.* 376-390.
25. Inv. No. P. 3786.
26. Lykourgos, *contra Leocr.* 117.
27. P.J. Bicknell, *AC* 39 (1970) 434 n. 57.
28. *Hdt.* 5.115, 121.

TERENCE T. RAPKE

University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg

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