Love AMONG THE RUINS

The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens

VICTORIA WOHL

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THE EROTICS OF DEMOCRACY IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

Victoria Wohl

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For Erik

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PREFACE

The spirit of Athenian democracy is a familiar topic, but I hope in the course of this book to defamiliarize both of its key terms. The "spirit" I seek to understand is not the ineffable *Geist* of the democracy but its psyche or unconscious, its *psukhē*. The phrase "spirit of democracy" often implies a tautological doubling, in which "spirit" and "democracy" each means precisely the other: the demos is characterized by its democratic spirit and the democracy by the spirit of its demos. But when the *psukhē* is understood as the unconscious, the relationship between the two terms becomes more complex, and a new reading of "spirit" yields a new understanding of "Athenian democracy." Behind the well-known facade of Athenian democratic ideology lies a phantasmatic history of longings and terrors, perverse desires and untenable attachments. These fantasies constitute Athenian democracy as we recognize it: they are the psychic scaffolding of Athens's manifest political structure, holding aloft its political ideals and holding together its political relations. They can also, however, disrupt the smooth surface of Athenian ideology, exposing its impossible sutures, its dangerous gaps, and the forced labor of its erection. When they are uncovered, these fantasies show us a democracy often at odds with its own spirit and reveal both terms alike to be less familiar than we may have thought.

This study of the spirit of democracy is thus an analysis of the democratic psyche. What does it mean, though, to analyze the psyche of the Athenian democracy or of the Athenian demos? The unconscious is a notoriously elusive object, and all the more so when it belongs not to a living individual but to a long-dead community. First, I take "demos" not as a transcendental subject but as a discursive formation, a compendium of things the Athenians said (and did not say) about themselves as citizens. This figure might lack the commonsense organic unity of a human subject, but as a discourse it does have a certain internal consistency, a logic that governs both its expressions and its repressions. Available to us only through textual representations, this discourse is also itself textual: it is articulated through politically invested tropes and structured by ideologically inflected metaphors and metonymies. Like any discourse, it encompasses not only what it can and does say but also what it cannot say—its unspoken or unspeakable subtext—and hence is always marked by certain fundamental incoherences. Those incoherences are the locus of the democratic unconscious, which will appear not as a character within this "text" but as a distinctive quality of it: the shape of its silences and the

inconcinnity of its utterances. Beyond the proclamations of civic pride, beyond the laudations of Athenian egalitarianism and freedom, these qualities define the *psukhē* of Athenian democracy.

If Athens's political unconscious is a textual unconscious, it is also in a more concrete sense an intertextual unconscious. Thus, although I often pursue the Athenian psyche within the slips and fissures of specific fifth- and fourth-century literary texts, I also maintain that it always exceeds its articulation in any individual text or author. The democratic unconscious is a collective hallucination conjured by an entire discourse: it hovers over (or, better, beneath) our texts. Sometimes we glimpse it within the complexities of a single document; sometimes it emerges in the friction between documents. On the one hand, then, this discursive unconscious can never simply be equated with any given textual representation of it. On the other hand, it can never be recovered as a totality, not only because of the poverty of our sources but also because of the amplitude of the not-said of any discourse. This study, then, is necessarily and admittedly partial.

It may also strike some readers as schizophrenic. Some chapters (2, 3, and 5) move among a number of contemporaneous texts, trying to identify the civic imaginary that each taps into but none individually exhausts. Other chapters (1, 4) focus on a single text and trace in detail the way it works through a specific fantasy and addresses (or fails to address) its imagined ramifications. In these chapters, Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* is the privileged case study. This is not because I consider this text a transparent reflection of the Athenian unconscious: while Thucydides' account of Athenian history is particularly rich and compelling, his analysis is also in many ways idiosyncratic. But idiosyncrasy occurs within culturally determined bounds, and even as Thucydides offers his unique and often critical views on the democracy, he also (perhaps unwittingly) reproduces its underlying assumptions. We gain an especially clear vantage point on these assumptions by approaching the text from a direction it least expects. Thucydides' text does not, I think, ostensibly aim to produce an erotics of politics, but (if my reading is persuasive) it produces one nonetheless; in the process, it inscribes a cultural logic of desire and power that goes beyond its "conscious" intent. Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* is thus simultaneously a text with its own fantasies and desires and also an expression of a broader cultural imaginary that its author reproduces simply by virtue of composing in a particular time and place. These two aspects are hard to unravel, and perhaps it is unnecessary to unravel them: while I point out places where I think the text is being deliberately iconoclastic, I also maintain that such iconoclasm is not external to the discourse it attacks but is in fact an integral part of it. Thus the shift between the two parts of the book is one of perspective, not of object:

chapters 1 and 4 take a closeup view of specific textual dynamics that chapters 2, 3, and 5 situate within the larger psychic panorama of fifth-century Athens. I hope by this double approach to uncover both the topography of the Athenian unconscious and a few of its most conspicuous monuments.

The tools of this archaeology I borrow primarily from psychoanalysis. At the most general level, psychoanalysis is simply a hermeneutics of suspicion: a skepticism about the flatness of declarative statements and an unwillingness to take texts to mean only and exactly what they say. In this sense it is fully compatible with the post-Marxist critique of ideology that I deploy to highlight the political dimensions of the Athenian imaginary. While this book as a whole is inspired by psychoanalysis's interpretive skepticism, in places it engages with contemporary critical theory in a more explicit way, adapting the ideas of Freud and Lacan (among others) in order to elaborate its argument about Athenian democracy. Engaging with these authors requires using their language: this is not "jargon" bandied about for its own sake; it is a technical vocabulary, and philologists surely understand the potential for distortion that arises in translating one set of terms (implicated as they always are within a larger conceptual framework) into another. Thus I have not suppressed the theoretical discussions where I believe they help elucidate my readings of the ancient texts. Conversely, I have not felt the need to foreground the theoretical underpinnings of my argument in cases where I think a detailed explication of the theory adds little to the practice.

Like all books that attempt to speak to audiences both within and beyond their own disciplinary boundaries, this book runs the risk of exasperating each by turns. The theoretical exegesis may seem insufficient to some and excessive to others; the same fate likely awaits the historical and generic background, the bibliography, even the basic claims to expertise. This is an inevitable risk, I think, and one worth taking in order to participate in the dialogue between the ancient and the modern. Contemporary discussions of desire, subjectivity, and ideology help us illuminate ideas within the ancient texts that they themselves preferred to leave obscure (and to understand the reasons for that obscurity); by the same token, the erotics of Athenian politics allows us to see more clearly the fantasies that underpin democratic ideology in general, including our own. To me, the potential benefits of this dialogue for both its ancient and its modern interlocutors outweigh the anxiety that either will, like one of Socrates' frustrated auditors, get fed up and walk away.

A diverse audience poses a related pragmatic problem in the translation and transliteration of the Greek texts. My practice has been to transliterate in those cases where it will allow readers unfamiliar with Greek to notice parallels and verbal echoes in a way that quotations in Greek

would not. I do not transliterate longer passages, because I myself find that they are difficult for a Greek reader to unravel, especially when fine points of syntax are at issue. The result of these decisions may seem inconsistent, but my goal was to allow specialists to read without a text and nonspecialists to read without a translation. The translations throughout are my own: they are, admittedly, often inelegant (Thucydides in particular is terribly difficult to render both accurately and smoothly), but they are designed to accompany my interpretations of the passages without, I hope, prejudging them.

An earlier version of chapter 3 was published in article form as "The Eros of Alcibiades," *Classical Antiquity* 18.2 (1999), 349–85, and is reprinted here by permission of the University of California Press.

Lastly, I would like to thank those who have given me their advice and support as I was working on this project. June Allison, Nick Fisher, Leslie Kurke, Lori Marso, Tim McNiven, Kurt Raaflaub, Frisbee Sheffield, and Roger Travis have all read and offered valuable comments on various parts of the manuscript. Kate Gilhuly provided timely reassurance in the final stretch. James McGlew read virtually the whole manuscript in one form or another and gave me insightful suggestions and moral support far beyond the call of duty. The careful reading and detailed comments of Josiah Ober and the two other (anonymous) reviewers for Princeton University Press have likewise helped me in honing my argument and my ideas. I presented sections of the book orally before a number of different audiences: lively responses (and criticisms) at the University of Chicago and University of Southern California were especially useful. One chapter of the project was completed at the Center for Hellenic Studies: I am grateful to the directors, Kurt Raaflaub and Deborah Boedeker, and to the other fellows, especially Thomas Johansen and David Rosenbloom, for thought-provoking discussion. A Seed Grant from the Ohio State University allowed me time off to complete the manuscript, and my colleagues in the Department of Greek and Latin provided a supportive intellectual community within which to work. I am also thankful for the encouragement of my parents and sister, who were excited about my work even at times when I was not.

Lacan says that "to speak of love is in itself a *jouissance*." I have not always found this to be true in writing about love, but for what *jouissance* this project has offered, I thank Erik Gunderson, for whose active gift of his time and ideas this book is a small *anterōs*.

Love among the Ruins

Introduction

IDEOLOGICAL DESIRE

The Erotics of Democracy

Lover of the city, lover of the people: the metaphor of eros is remarkably common in the political discussions of classical Athens. Pericles urges the people to fall in love with Athens and its power, to become its "lovers." His successor Cleon reconfigures this love as a more intimate bond: he claims to be the people's "lover" and woos them with political gifts. Alcibiades loves the people and they love him back, even as they sentence him to death. Eros suffuses the political relationship between the demos and its leaders. International relations are also a love affair: Aristophanes tells of a Thracian king so enamored of the city that he went around writing "Athens is beautiful" on the walls, just as one would of a pretty young boy. And Athens is not only love object but also lover: Thucydides speaks of its pursuit of imperial power as a diseased passion and shows imperial politics, like democratic politics, driven by lust.

But what does it mean to be a lover of the people, or a lover of the city, or a lover of empire? Was this just a "dead metaphor," as we might say today "I love my country" and mean no more by it than an ill-defined sense of attachment? For Aristophanes and Thucydides, at any rate, the metaphor is clearly "alive": Aristophanes literalizes it to comic effect, imagining Cleon not just as a lover but as a prostitute to the people; Thucydides develops a complex imperial psychology around the notion of eros. If we can assume that the idiom was not meaningless, what did it mean? What was the erotics of Athenian democracy? What desire underpinned patriotism and bound the demos to its politicians and the polis? Conversely, what was the politics of eros in Athens? What political relations were implied by the citizen's sexual relations and what political fantasies were played out in his sexual fantasies? What desires propelled the thrust of Athenian ideology?

Politics and sexuality were mutually defining in democratic Athens. Because only men were citizens, citizenship was a sexual as well as a political category. To be an Athenian always also entailed to "be a man," with all the injunctions and prohibitions that implied. Likewise, if sexual relations in Athens were organized by issues of mastery and self-mastery (as many have argued), then every sex act was implicitly a political act: some sexual practices were appropriate for citizens and some were not. Moreover, eros

bound individuals together into a political community: eliciting love was a primary goal of anyone who would influence democratic politics. To the extent that democracy is the collective decisions of the citizen body, and those decisions are driven by desires—whether rational or irrational—then democratic politics can be described as the movement of desire. But more than binding citizens to one another and to their leaders and city, desire constituted the citizen as such. It was through a passionate attachment to certain ideals that the citizen was forged: the Athenian citizen-subject is coterminous with his political eros. Finally, desire was a suture between the fantasy life of the individual and the political structures of the polis, and this suture—an erotic cathexis with political implications—formed the basis of Athenian ideology.

The erotics of democracy is not merely a figure of speech then, but a dense point of convergence within Athenian social relations and subjectivity; it is what Jacques Lacan calls a "quilting point," a node that binds together the diverse and often contradictory layers of ideology. The language of political eros may be metaphorical, but the metaphor was more than a rhetorical trope to be manipulated by orators to their own ends. Although much name-calling and political jockeying went on, this is not a study of what sort of things one could accuse one's enemies of doing, being, or enjoying.[1] Far less is it a study of practice, an effort to recreate the sort of things Athenians actually did, were, and enjoyed. Instead, this study attempts to illuminate the erotic imaginary that underlay—supported and subverted—the Athenian political imaginary.

This attempt requires, on the one hand, taking eros seriously as a complex system in its own right: it is not a simple analogy employed to explain the more important and difficult realm of politics.[2] The Athenians had a philosophy of eros as sophisticated as their political philosophy, and as they theorized it, eros's domain was broad, encompassing not just "love" (romantic or otherwise) but also sex and sexuality, gender, desire, and pleasure.[3] Thus, although I draw on Foucault, I resist his impulse to reduce sexual relations to a special instance of power relations: power, as we will see, arouses eros but does not fully circumscribe it. On the other hand, this project involves accepting that the political, too, has an uncon-

[1] Scholtz 1997 examines erotic imagery in political contexts from a rhetorical perspective. His guiding question is: "What semantic or rhetorical work was this figure intended to perform, and how would audiences have responded?" (2).

[2] Monoson 1994 offers an insightful analysis in this vein, exploring the metaphor of eros in Pericles' Funeral Oration in order "to illuminate the Athenian understanding of the demands of democratic citizenship" (254).

[3] For the scope of the word, see Fischer 1973; Müller 1980; Carson 1986. Of course, Eros was also a god, who continued to be worshiped into the classical period: Rosenmeyer 1951; Vernant 1990b; Shapiro 1992.64–72; Calame 1999.

scious, that day-to-day political relations are only the most overt form of politics, which in its wider sense also includes citizen subjectivity and the citizen psyche. Today we are accustomed to think of sexual desire as the essential stuff of the human soul, and politics as epiphenomenal. For the Athenians perhaps the reverse is true, and man is first and foremost a political animal. But more important, I think, for the Athenians, the two are inseparable: love arises from power relations and implicates lovers in power relations. Politics is a form of ideological desire, a desire both governed by and directed toward ideology. Eros permeates the public life of the city and stokes the intimate political fantasies of the citizen.

At first blush, the political passions of the democratic citizen may seem relatively straightforward: he loved equality and freedom; he hated tyranny and enslavement. Our ancient sources proclaim such sentiments, and we tend to take them at their word: why would they lie? Such a naive view, pleasing though it may be, becomes untenable once we begin to take the erotic metaphor seriously. Although eros and politics do often run in tandem, sometimes they move in opposite directions, contesting rather than corroborating one another: one loves in ways citizens should not; one secretly desires what one professes to hate; one loves and hates at the same time. Eros is notoriously wayward, if not downright perverse, and it leads us into strange territory. Pursuing the metaphor of eros, we find political fantasies that contradict or complicate the simple declarations of love of the good Athenian citizen. Within such fantasies, the despised and repudiated (tyrants, effeminates, whores) become objects of desire. Illicit modes of being (excess, passivity, slavishness) become indistinguishable from legitimate masculinity. The normative and the perverse are intricately enmeshed, bound by confused and inadmissible desires. It is not a question, then, of bad faith—of "lying"—on the part of the ancient text or the modern exegesis. Instead it is a question of reading for a different sort of truth than those neat declaratives, the ambiguous truth of longings the Athenians would not or could not speak aloud, of desires that, as Freud says of the unconscious, they know but do not know they know.

"Just Love": The Origin of Democratic Eros

We begin with a foundation myth.[4] In 510 B.C.E., Athens was ruled by tyrants, the sons of Pisistratus, Hippias and Hipparchus. Hipparchus tried to seduce a young nobleman named Harmodius and, when his advances were rebuffed, insulted him by banning his sister from marching in the Panathenaic procession. Angered by the insult, Harmodius and his lover

[4] The narrative is recounted most fully at Thuc. 6.53–59 and Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 18. For a list of other ancient sources, see M. W. Taylor 1981.199–201.

Aristogiton assassinated the tyrant, an act hailed in the fifth century as the death of tyranny and the birth of democracy.

This tyrannicide not only inaugurated the democracy but also enshrined within democratic discourse a specific mode of male sexuality. Harmodius and Aristogiton were lovers as well as tyrant-slayers, and so from this founding moment the political and the erotic are inseparably entwined. Democratic freedom is sexual freedom, freedom from the sexual, as well as the political, domination of tyrants. The Athenian citizen is characterized by both his political and his erotic autonomy—he lives and loves as he wishes—and by his willingness to risk his life to preserve that autonomy. Democracy and democratic eros are coterminous.

The Harmodius and Aristogiton story gives us a familiar version—one might even say the "authorized version"—of love between well-born Athenian men and inserts that love into the very foundation myth of the democracy. Aristogiton is the adult lover of the noble young Harmodius. Their relationship is sexual and pederastic; the tyrannicides are never coevals, never "just friends." Although homosexual relations between an older man and a younger man had a long tradition in Greece, this myth makes such relations a defining feature of the Athenian character, as Athenian as hating a tyrant.

K. J. Dover in his classic 1978 study, *Greek Homosexuality*, traced the basic lineaments of this eros: an older gentleman (the *erastēs*, or lover) pursues a young boy (the *erōmenos*, beloved); the boy submits with a show of reluctance to the attentions of his lover and, in return, receives an education in civics, learning all the things a well-bred Athenian man needs to know. This sort of homosexual relationship was seen as beneficial—even essential—to the polis, constituting a form of social education and guaranteeing cultural continuity. "Just Argument" in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (961–83) gets rather overheated as he describes the decorous and delightful young boys whose seduction made Athens great. Phaedrus also waxes lyrical on this theme in Plato's *Symposium* when he pictures an army of lovers and beloveds, a productive, happy polity composed entirely of erastai and eromenoi (178e3–179b3). Harmodius and Aristogiton are the prototype for this socially productive erotics: Aeschines offers them as an example of *dikaios erōs*, "just love" (1.136), and as proof of the boons such love brings the city (1.132–40).

The democratic city in particular reaps the rewards of this eros: the tyrannicidal lovers were honored in cult in the fifth century as the liberators—practically the founders—of the democracy.[5] Fifth-century drinking

[5] On the tradition of Harmodius and Aristogiton as "founders of the democracy," see Thomas 1989.238–82. She illustrates the complexity of the fifth-century tradition of Athens's liberation from tyranny. The fact that the Athenians knew a variety of traditions (in-

songs toasted them for killing the tyrants and making Athens *isonomos*, egalitarian. Pausanias in Plato's *Symposium* even goes so far as to suggest that the pederastic relationship is in essence democratic, which explains why it was not practiced in monarchical Persia: "And our own tyrants here in Athens also learned this by experience," he says. "It was the love of Aristogiton and the loyal fondness of Harmodius that ended their rule" (182c4–7). The statues of the tyrannicides that stood in the Agora allude to this foundational democratic eros: a young (beardless) Harmodius and older (bearded) Aristogiton stand, weapons in hand, ready to strike down the tyrant; beneath them were probably inscribed the telling words: πατρίδα γε̄ν ἐθέτεν, "they established the fatherland."[6] These statues, as Andrew Stewart says, "not only placed the homoerotic bond at the core of Athenian political freedom, but asserted that it and the manly virtues (*aretai*) of courage, boldness, and self-sacrifice that it generated were the only guarantors of that freedom's continued existence."[7]

Now, it has been argued that the pederastic homosexuality enshrined in this myth was in practice largely an elite affair, and the extent to which it describes the sex life of "the average Athenian" is the subject of much debate.[8] Indeed, the literary sources for this eros are mostly elite and situ-

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cluding that in which the Spartans freed Athens) does not vitiate the tyrannicide legend as a foundation myth, as she points out (1989.251–52, 257–61). Such mythical traditions are not exclusive (cf. Dougherty 1996), nor do they require strict historiographical logic. On the tyrannicide legend, see further Ehrenberg 1950.531–33, 1956; Fornara 1968, 1970.159–70; Ostwald 1969.121–36; Buffière 1980.108–13; M. W. Taylor 1981; Fehr 1984; Lavelle 1993.50–58; Monoson 2000.21–50; Raaflaub forthcoming. See also Hdt. 6.109.3; Ar. *Knights* 786–87; Dem. 19.280, 20.159–62. On the public cult of the tyrannicides, see Vlastos 1953.339–44; Podlecki 1966.129; Fornara 1970.155–59; Brunnsåker 1971.120–21; M. W. Taylor 1981 ch. 1; Monoson 2000.26–27. Harmodius and Aristogiton were included in sacrifices for the war dead (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 58.1; Hyp. 6.39), and their descendants enjoyed special civic privileges (*IG* I^3 131.5–7; Dem. 19.280, 20.29, 20.159–62; Din. 4.101; Is. 5.47).

[6] The detail of the statues' facial hair, while it does not necessarily denote a pederastic relation, does emphasize the age difference between the two men; ancient viewers would surely have known—especially with this famous couple—what that implied. See Stewart 1997.73. On the statue group, see further Brunnsåker 1971.33–164; M. W. Taylor 1981 ch. 2; Fehr 1984; Hölscher 1998.158–160. On the inscription, Raaflaub forthcoming, with bibliography.

[7] Stewart 1997.73. He further suggests that in looking at these statues and reading their inscription, the viewer was drawn to identify, both erotically and politically, with the figures, and thus himself to become a tyrannicide. Cf. Monoson 2000.37–39.

[8] Dover 1964.36–39, 1978.149–50; Shapiro 1981, 1992; Halperin 1986a, 1990a.4; Winkler 1990b.60–62; Bremmer 1990; Thornton 1997.193–212; Hubbard 1998; Fisher 1998. By elite I mean all those who were considered (or considered themselves) superior to the masses (the definition of which is also part of elite self-positioning), whether by virtue of wealth, birth, cultural or moral attainment, or political influence. I leave the term deliberately vague, as its more precise definition will be the stakes in many of the discussions that follow. On the contested category of the elite in antiquity, see M. Finley 1973.45–68; de Ste.

ate it within a leisured life-style of athletics schools (*palaistrai*) and drinking parties (*symposia*). It seems to have been one component of the Athenian caricature of a comically outdated and implicitly antidemocratic elitism, if we are to judge by Aristophanes' boy-crazed "Just Argument" or the crusty old general in Aeschines' speech *Against Timarchus*.[9] But, in fact, this latter text shows just how important this brand of eros was to the demos, as well as to the elite: whereas his opponent, the general, lauds Harmodius and Aristogiton's as a specifically elite sort of love, Aeschines—in a move that he hopes will appeal to his democratic jury—offers the tyrannicides as the paradigm for a democratic eros that is prudent and just (*sōphrōn* and *dikaios*, 136–40). Even the blue-blood general extends this eros to the demos when he assumes that the jurors would want the benefits of a pederastic relationship for their own sons (133–34).[10] Similarly, the tyrannicide skolia, drinking songs that were staples of the upper-class symposium, are sung by the distinctly nonaristocratic old men in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* as they try to save the city from the "tyranny" of the women (631–35).

These democratic heroes clearly belonged not just to the elite but to the entire citizen populace, and their love, regardless of who actually practiced it, was part of the sexual ideology of the democracy as a whole. As a myth of origins—the origins not only of democracy but of democratic eros—the tyrannicide legend thus belongs to what Josiah Ober calls "democratic knowledge."[11] Circulating broadly throughout the fifth cen-

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Croix 1981.81–98; Ober 1989a.11–17, 192–205, 248–59. The word "demos" is similarly complex. In Athenian usage it can refer to the poor, largely urban, free population of Athens or to the Athenian citizenry as a whole. The slippage between the two meanings is ideologically invested, as is the attempt to distinguish them. My own usage reflects this ambivalence: at times the demos is contrasted to the elite; at other times it stands as a synonym for the citizen body.

[9] Cf. Ar. *Wasps* 1023–28; *Knights* 1384–87. In Aeschines (1.132), the general who defends pederasty is pictured strutting into court "as if into the palaistra to pass some time." On pederasty at the palaistra and symposium, see Bremmer 1990; Fisher 1998; Calame 1999.91–109. Hubbard 1998 argues that class resentment was the basis for a broad condemnation of pederasty on the part of the average Athenian. Fisher 1998, by contrast, emphasizes the extent to which the demos identified with and participated in the life-style of the elite. He sees pederasty as a potential mode of social advancement for a boy who was poor but handsome. Cf. Fehr 1984.27–33.

[10] Fisher 1998.100–101. Aeschines claims this love for democracy by articulating it to the distinction between free citizen and slave (138) and by bringing it within the purview of the law and Athens's original lawmakers (138–40). The generalization of pederastic eros to the demos as a whole is signaled by the fact that it was prohibited to slaves: slaves were banned from the palaistra, and a slave who acted as erastes to a free boy was subject to public whipping (Aesch. 1.138–39; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 152d, 751b, *Solon* 1.6). Later there was also a law against naming slaves Harmodius or Aristogiton (Aul. Gel. 9.2.10; Lib. *Decl.* 1.1.71). See Golden 1984 on the ways in which pederasty differentiated citizens from slaves.

[11] Ober 1994.103, 1998.33–36.

tury, the legend was part of the story the Athenians told about themselves.[12] Thucydides introduces his account of the legend by situating it within oral tradition: the demos knew the story from hearing about it (ἐπιστάμενος γὰρ ὁ δῆμος ἀκοῇ, Thuc. 6.53.3). Thucydides' version of the story is problematic, as we shall see, and leaves it unclear precisely what details the demos knew; but at least by the time of Aeschines' speech against Timarchus in the mid-fourth century the sexual relationship was common knowledge, and the tyrannicides could be cited casually by both sides of the case as a familiar example of *dikaios erōs*. Through the tyrannicide myth, then, the people could think about their own political identity. The qualities that characterize the tyrannicides—a passion for freedom, hatred of tyranny, "just love"—also define their political descendants, the Athenian citizens.

How did this sort of love—associated as it seems to have originally been with the elite—become so central to the Athenian democratic imagination? An odd detail in Thucydides' account may help explain the dynamics of identification at work here: "Harmodius was illustrious in the prime of his youth; Aristogiton, a citizen and man of middling social status, possessed him as his lover" (γενομένου δὲ Ἁρμοδίου ὥρᾳ ἡλικίας λαμπροῦ Ἀριστογείτων ἀνὴρ τῶν ἀστῶν, μέσος πολίτης, ἐραστὴς ὢν εἶχεν αὐτόν, 6.54.2). This introduction not only emphasizes the age difference between the two men (Aristogiton is an *anēr*, a man, and Harmodius a youth) but also hints at a class difference. While Herodotus makes both men members of the elite clan of Gephyraioi (5.57), in Thucydides' account, Harmodius is clearly well-born: he is "illustrious" (*lampros*, an adjective common for the aristocracy)[13] and belongs to that social class whose daughters were basket bearers in the Panathenaia. Aristogiton, on the other hand, is characterized as a "middling citizen."[14] Why does Thu-

[12] Jacoby 1949; Lang 1954; Fitzgerald 1957; Podlecki 1966; Fornara 1968; M. W. Taylor 1981.193; Thomas 1989.242–51; Lavelle 1993; Monoson 2000.28–42. On the dissemination of elite values and ideals within the democracy, see Fehr 1984.27–50; Ober 1989a.259–70; Fisher 1998.

[13] *Lampros* does not always carry class connotations; its basic meaning when used of individuals is "brilliant, illustrious, splendid." Here (modified by ὥρᾳ ἡλικίας) it also refers to Harmodius's physical magnificence (his "youthful bloom," as LSJ take it, III.1). We cannot separate the two denotations, however, as physical and social preeminence often went hand in hand for the Greeks (as in the case of *kalos*: beautiful, but also socially elevated). As P. Wilson 2000.138–43 suggests, the dazzle of *lamprotēs* helped mystify social inequality. In this passage there seems to be a double contrast (between youth and adulthood and between a superior and an average social position) in which the adjective *lampros* does double duty.

[14] Morris 1996 argues for the importance of the "middling citizen" and the "middling tradition" in the development of Athenian democracy. See also Lavelle 1986.320 and n.7; Rawlings 1981.103–5 (who translates *astos* as "a commoner" and sees in the phrase a

cydides go out of his way to draw attention to Aristogiton's middling social status—especially in contrast to his aristocratic young beloved?

As a *mesos politēs*, an average Athenian, Aristogiton becomes a figure with whom all Athenians, regardless of status, could identify. There is perhaps corroboration for this in the opening lines of Thucydides' digression (where he sets the tyrannicide legend against another version of Athens's liberation). The people knew, he writes, "that the tyranny had not been ended by themselves and Harmodius, but by the Spartans" (6.53.3). In the popular imagination of the tyrannicide, the Athenian demos takes the place of Aristogiton, fighting at Harmodius's side to end the tyranny.[15] The representation of Aristogiton as a middling citizen offers an easy conduit for the fantasied identification—one characterized, to be sure, by a good dose of wish fulfillment—of the demos as a whole with this foundational narrative. At the same time, his love for the aristocratic Harmodius makes the *mesos politēs* himself an aristocrat by association. Through this identification the demos can imagine itself as both an erotic and a political elite, lover of pretty aristocratic boys and slayer of tyrants.

In this way the tyrannicide narrative, a story about an elite love affair, provides a model for a particularly democratic mode of sexuality: every Athenian was an Aristogiton. The norm of adult male sexuality in Athens (as several recent studies have shown) was active, aggressive, dominant, and phallic; passivity was associated with foreigners, women, slaves, and children—noncitizens.[16] Homosexual relations between two adult men were treated with derision and disgust, as they required one man to play the passive role, and an Athenian citizen who submitted willingly to penetration risked charges of prostitution and the loss of citizen privileges.[17] The pederastic relation, with its distinction between active erastes and

strong slur against Aristogiton's social and political status); Neer 1998.236–49; and on the meaning of *astos*, E. Cohen 2000.50–63.

[15] Cf. skolion 894 (*PMG*), addressed to Harmodius; one wonders whether there were also songs addressed to Aristogiton. Cf. Ar. *Ecc*. 682–83, and contrast Ar. *Lys*. 631–35, where the old men are going to make their tyrannicidal stand next to Aristogiton. Loraux 2000.68 and n.7 comments on the prominence of Aristogiton in Thucydides' account. Of course, the demos did play an important role in the revolution that followed the assassination (Ober 1996.32–52) and in this sense earned the right to identify with the tyrannicides.

[16] Dover 1978; Foucault 1985; Keuls 1985; Winkler 1990b.39–40, 45–70; Halperin 1990a, 1990b.29–38, 1997; Cantarella 1992.17–53. Halperin characterizes Athenian sexuality as "a socio-sexual discourse structured by the presence or absence of its central term: the phallus" (1990b.35). But see the recent critique of E. Cohen 2000.155–91.

[17] It was the attempt on the part of one who had prostituted himself to address the Assembly that incurred loss of citizenship, but see Halperin 1986a.68 n.17: a man who sought out sexual passivity risked inquiry into his motives. Cf. Dover 1978.103–9; Keuls 1985.291–98; Halperin 1990a; D. Cohen 1991.171–202; Cantarella 1992.44–53; Calame 1999.134–41; Sissa 1999.156–62; E. Cohen 2000.156–59. Hubbard 1998 argues against this rigid dichotomy between active and passive; cf. Poster 1986.212–14.

passive eromenos, fits logically into this correlation between sexual dominance and democratic citizenship. Pederasty, then, no matter what the social status of its actual practitioners, becomes a neat metaphor for democratic sexuality. Through this homosexual relationship, the whole Athenian demos can be imagined as a polity of erastai: elite, active, and sexually potent, penetrating as they desire a variety of socially inferior eromenoi—boys, women, slaves. The eros of Harmodius and Aristogiton thus not only founds the democracy but also constitutes the democratic citizen as a dominant and active lover, an Aristogiton.

At the same time as it defines the ideal citizen-lover, though, the myth also adumbrates a shadow world of illegitimate others and illegitimate sexualities. The tyrant figures in this story as the antithesis of and a threat to the citizen. The lust and sexual license of tyrants were a common trope in the Athenian imagination of tyranny: absolute political power was thought to have its natural end in unbridled sexual aggression.[18] Given free reign, the tyrant becomes the sole erastes, monopolizing the sexual potency that in the democracy should belong equally to all Athenian men. And if the tyrant becomes the city's only erastes, he transforms the entire demos—youth and adult alike—into potential eromenoi.

Whereas the tyrant marks one excluded extreme of citizen sexuality, the other extreme is occupied by the figure of the *katapugōn* or *kinaidos*, the sexual degenerate. Lacking the manly self-control and moderation of the citizen-lover, the *kinaidos* is sexually profligate: morally lax, easily seduced, often effeminate, he will even take the passive role to satisfy his sexual "itch" (to borrow a Platonic metaphor).[19] Morally he is everything the citizen is not, and that ethical exclusion from the citizen body could become official if his self-humiliation was traced to prostitution. This figure, as Jack Winkler argues, haunts the citizen-lover as a "scare-image," an example of bad sexuality, just as Harmodius and Aristogiton are an example of good sexuality.[20] In Aristotle the tyrant Hipparchus, when his overtures are rejected, insults Harmodius, calling him *malakos*, "soft" (*Ath. Pol.* 18.2). Not man enough to defend himself against the tyrant's desire, Harmodius becomes passive, emasculated: the insult reiterates the sexual assault, and both demand immediate vengeance.

[18] Hdt. 3.80.5; Eur. *Suppl.* 452–54; Xen. *Hieron* 1.26; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 18.1–2, *Pol.* 1311a28-b23; Isoc. 2.29–31, 3.36–44. I return to this topos in chapter 5.

[19] Pl. *Gorg.* 494d–e. The shameful indulgence of the *kinaidos* is there presented as the *reductio ad stuprum* of the happy life of the man who scratches every itch; the metaphor of the "sexual itch" is thus my extrapolation. On the *kinaidos*, see Winkler 1990b.45–70; Gleason 1990; Richlin 1993; Thornton 1997.99–120. Davidson 1997.167–82 argues convincingly for a broader semantic range for the word.

[20] Winkler 1990b.46.

The tyrannicide legend thus defines *dikaios erōs* by eliminating its illegitimate alternatives: the sexual violence of the tyrant, the softness of the *kinaidos*. Between these two extremes stands Aristogiton, lover and tyrant-slayer, a model of democratic eros for all the citizens of Athens. This lover—elite yet democratic, authoritative, manly, and free—was the "dominant fiction" (in Kaja Silverman's term) of democratic Athens, an ideological fantasy in which the entire community could believe and which bound it together within a common reality.[21]

This book is a study of that fiction, and of its fictionality. Chapter 1, a reading of Pericles' Funeral Oration in Thucydides, looks in depth at one expression of the political and erotic ideal of the citizen-lover. Pericles urges the Athenians to become lovers of their city and of the noble men who died fighting for it. He formulates an ideal of citizenship and encourages his audience to both identify and fall in love with it. Through this bond of desire and identification, Pericles constructs not only a new polity, united around a shared "dominant fiction," but also a new citizen, for whom this fiction provides the basis of his subjectivity. This chapter traces the outlines of Athens's *dikaios erōs* and also shows how that norm structures the very being of the Athenian citizen-subject. In the process, it highlights the political implications of this erotic identification: when the people fall in love with a vision of themselves as elite lovers, they also subscribe to a broader elite hegemony. Pericles' speech, recapitulating the logic of the tyrannicide legend, makes an elite erastes into a democratic hero and a model for democratic citizenship, but it also offers Pericles himself as the ultimate lover and beloved. Love for the ideal thus becomes inseparable from love for Pericles. *Dikaios erōs* has a politics of its own.

Whereas chapter 1 analyzes the ways in which the "dominant fiction" was dominant, the chapters that follow emphasize the ways in which it was fictional. Taking the tyrannicides and Pericles' idealized lover as touchstones, they go on to explore the deviations from this norm, the parodies, perversions, and travesties of *dikaios erōs*. Chapters 2 and 3 treat different imaginations of the love affair between demos and demagogue. Chapter 2 looks at Cleon as a parodic revision of Pericles' noble lover and asks about the relationship between that parody and the Periclean ideal. Cleon is represented in Aristophanes' *Knights* as a whore, and prostitution is there the model for a debased politics, but in Cleon's pandering can we see not merely a failure of Periclean politics but an alternative to it, a different mode of democratic eros and democratic subjectivity? Alcibiades, the focus of chapter 3, likewise challenges the norms of *dikaios erōs* and the political relations predicated upon them. Both tyrant and *kinaidos*, Alcibiades arouses a perverse desire that makes the

[21] Silverman 1992.15–51.

demos long to be tyrannized by him. Embodying illegitimacy, he calls into question the relation between the normative and the perverse, exposing the complex desire that runs beneath, but not necessarily parallel to, Athens's manifest political desires.

From Alcibiades I turn to imperial politics. Chapter 4 focuses on Thucydides' narrative of the Athenian expedition against Sicily, an expedition he characterizes as a "morbid passion for what is absent" (6.13.1). In their empire, the Athenians seek the virility and autonomy enshrined in the tyrannicide legend and Funeral Oration. All they find in the end, though, is slavery, impotence, and castration. This imperial episode exposes the frailty of the ideal of *dikaios erōs* and the exorbitant cost of either attaining that ideal or failing to do so. But if Sicily betrays the futility of Athens's longing for an invulnerable mastery and absolute freedom, that longing persists in the democratic imagination of tyranny. Chapter 5 thus turns to the figure of the tyrant. From the tyrannicide on, all good Athenians hate a tyrant, yet tyrants are also objects of intense erotic investment, as democratic Athens imagines the pleasures of being a tyrannical lover or, more surprisingly, a tyrant's beloved. These fantasies always end reassuringly in murder, the tyrannicide that inaugurates democracy, but the dying tyrant leaves to Athens an ambiguous bequest: a dream of absolute power and of a joy, both political and erotic, beyond the bounds of *dikaios erōs*.

Throughout the challenge will be to approach these perversions and parodies not as failures of the ideal but as alternatives to it. Thucydides presents Pericles' reign as a moment of unique perfection in Athenian politics and everything that came after as a falling away from that acme. It is easy to reproduce Thucydides' judgment and to blame the demos for democracy's failures. Already in the mid-fifth century, one senses a certain disappointment with the demos: one can understand why it loved Pericles, but what did it see in the vulgar and buffoonish Cleon or the luxuriant and tyrannical Alcibiades? This bafflement often leads to (when it does not proceed from) an antidemocratic logic: the demos does not know what is good for it and cannot be trusted with its own desire. Rather than play yet another censorious parent to a love-struck and irresponsible demos, I would like to inquire about the demos's positive investment in "debased" figures like Cleon or Alcibiades. Yes, these figures certainly are different from Pericles, and yet the demos loved them. Why? What alternatives did they allow the Athenians to imagine—alternate political relations, but also masculinities and modes of citizen subjectivity? How does the demos's love for these demagogues (or for tyranny or empire) critique, not just fall short of, the ideal of *dikaios erōs*?

Taking the demos's love seriously and attending to its perversities as well as its normativities will, I hope, reveal the complexity both of that

democratic eros and of Athenian thought about it. The Athenians may have believed their myths—Pericles' address fails if they do not—but they did not believe them blindly. They could envision the possibilities (both terrifying and exhilarating) of "unjust love" and could speculate upon the challenges they posed to "just love." If we are reluctant ourselves to consider these challenges, perhaps we need to examine our own investment in the Athenian ideal of the elite citizen-lover and his virile, democratic eros.[22]

Normativity and Its Discontents

Until quite recently, the main focus of scholarship on ancient Greek sexuality has been on normativity, on what I have been calling the dominant fiction of *dikaios erōs*. Dover was the first to explicate these norms systematically, laying out the basic "rules" of homosexuality in Greece: the ideal of sexual dominance and the stigma against both passivity and excess; the generally positive attitude toward pederasty; the strong distinction between active (penetrating) lover and passive (penetrated) beloved. As a description of "homosexual behaviour and sentiment" (1978.vii) in Greece, it has been refined and debated but not surpassed, and the terms of the discussion today are still Dover's.[23]

Michel Foucault's *The Use of Pleasure*, the volume of *The History of Sexuality* dealing with classical Greece, places a similar emphasis on the norms of desire and expands those norms to cover the entire social field. Indeed, his original project in *The History of Sexuality* was "a history of the experience of sexuality, where experience is understood as the correlation between fields of knowledge, types of normativity, and forms of sub-

[22] Ironically, one of the few ancient critics to take the demos's desire seriously is the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, the so-called Old Oligarch. Unhampered by Platonic distinctions between real and apparent goods, he argues that the demos acts in accordance with its own advantage, condemnable though that may seem from the perspective of the elite (e.g., *Ath. Pol.* 1.8, 2.19–20). He thus posits—albeit in extremely pejorative terms—a sort of democratic pleasure principle, in which the aim of the demos is to satisfy its own desires, primarily the desires for freedom and power. It elects those politicians whom it believes will further that goal. See Ober 1998.14–27.

[23] This is emphasized by D. Cohen 1992.150–51; cf. Halperin 1990b.4–5. For reviews of Dover, see Demand 1980; Schnapp 1981. Heterosexuality, of course, was also a site of normalizing sexuality for the Athenian citizen. But because the predominant sexual dynamic underlying Athenian political discourse is homosexual, I treat heterosexual eros only glancingly. Even in cases where the love object is feminine (as in Pericles' injunction to the citizens to become lovers of the polis), an ostensibly heterosexual love turns out to be a conduit for homosocial relations. Likewise, women will get short shrift in my study. Politics was a male world in Athens and although Athenian women no doubt did have a libidinal relation to their polis, the nature of our sources makes it extremely difficult to reconstruct. Loraux (1993, 1995) explores the imaginary relation of Athenian women to the polis.

jectivity in a particular culture."[24] In *The Use of Pleasure*, Foucault situates *aphrodisia* within a broad moral discourse and asks about the elaborations of the self allowed by this discourse. For him the distinction between penetrator and penetrated was part of a larger moralization of the self: to be the penetrator meant being in control of oneself, taking up an active and masterful relation to the world; to be penetrated signaled an ethical failure, slavery to one's pleasures.[25] Sexuality, then, was part of a stylization of the individual as a *kaloskagathos*, a "good and noble man." The ethical man was one who practiced the moderation and moral virility of *dikaios erōs*.

Foucault's abstract philosophical study of moralized pleasures and the ethical subject is brought back to the practical experience and historical specifics of ancient Greece by David Halperin and Jack Winkler. Drawing on the work of both Foucault and Dover, these two scholars (independently and sometimes together) detailed the role of sexuality in the larger system of rules and norms that made up Greek culture. Winkler's focus is on recovering "the usually unspoken premises or protocols governing the force of public utterances"; these protocols, however arbitrary, were nonnegotiable and, in practice, he argues, were "both never seriously questioned and yet never taken literally."[26] As he explores the way they governed behavior in the "zero-sum competition" of men's lives, Winkler is always attentive to the artificiality of these norms: the fact that they were social, not natural; that they could be selectively applied; that practice was generally more fluid and nuanced than ideology.

Starting from the same protocols of masculine dominance, Halperin articulates these sexual norms to Athens's democratic ideology of a citizen-elite. In his important article "The Democratic Body: Prostitution and Citizenship in Classical Athens," he points out the isomorphism of sexual and social polarities, with the citizen (sexually dominant, politically powerful, personally inviolable) on one side and the noncitizen (politically

[24] Foucault 1985.4. Although in volume 2 he shifts from this original project toward a genealogy of desire focused around a hermeneutics of the self (1985.5–6), the linking of knowledge, normativity, and subjectivity persists throughout volumes 2 and 3. There is a tendency in critiques of Foucault to conflate volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality* with volumes 2 and 3 (the "ancient" volumes) and to take this project as typical of Foucaultian theory. But the final two volumes of *The History of Sexuality* are in many ways anomalous, as some readers have noted (Poster 1986; Cohen and Saller 1994.56–59; Black 1998). Later I deploy the theory of power in early Foucault (as elaborated by Judith Butler) against the normative ethics of later Foucault. See further the reviews and critiques by Lefkowitz 1985; Halperin 1986b; Golden 1991; Richlin 1991; Cohen and Saller 1994; Goldhill 1995, esp. 110–11, 146–61; Sissa 1999.148–53; Zeitlin 1999.55.

[25] Foucault 1985.63–93.

[26] Winkler 1990b.4–5.

disenfranchised and sexually subordinate) on the other.[27] Further, he argues that the privileges of the former depended on the subordination of the latter: the ideal of a free and manly citizen body required a class of noncitizens whom the citizen could dominate, both socially and sexually. The phallicism of the Athenians identified by Dover had not only an ethical dimension (as Foucault had argued) but also a politics; masculinity was a political as well as a sexual ideal.

Among them, these four scholars defined the study of ancient sexuality as a field of inquiry and set the terms of debate. Their work has been widely influential (not least on the present study). In its assumption of the systematicity of sexuality (i.e., its assumption that sexuality is a symbolic system, not just a matter of biological fact or individual urges), this scholarship has made it possible to analyze ancient sexuality in the first place. By linking sexuality as a system to other symbolic systems within Greek society (politics or ethics), it has made sexuality an integral part of the study of Greek culture. The focus on sexual norms and protocols has thus been extremely fruitful and now—a decade or, in Dover's case, a quarter century on—represents a status quo in the study of ancient sexuality.

The past decade, though, has seen some disenchantment with this description of the norms of Greek sexuality, a dissatisfaction with specific norms but also with the general theorization of normativity these foundational works offer. This critique has come from a number of directions. Winkler himself, working within an anthropological model, stressed the practical limitations on enforcement of and compliance with erotic protocols: "Simply knowing the protocols does not tell us how people behaved," he comments. "We must attempt to see through and beyond social prescriptions, however widely held and publicly unquestioned, to that usually unspoken fund of knowledge about their application, their bending, their observance 'in the breach,' and the hidden agenda they sometimes concealed."[28] Despite this proviso, Bruce Thornton attacks what he terms the "constructionist approach" of Foucault, Halperin, and Winkler from the standpoint of the humanist subject; their vision of power and sexuality, he charges, "does not recognize the complexity of human emotion and motive, the ways people can transcend political status and social restraints and create alternative meanings. This disregard of both the potential autonomy of individual subjects and their power of choice and

[27] Halperin 1990a, reprinted in 1990b.88–112. See also Halperin 1990b.29–38.

[28] Winkler 1990b.45. Hexter commends Winkler's "acute ear for evasion both devious and playful" (1991.148). D. Cohen 1991 likewise elaborates an anthropological theory of the practical relation of individuals to social norms. His reminder of the contradictory and conflictual nature of all norms is salutary (cf. D. Cohen 1987).

spontaneity vitiates the constructionist position."[29] Like Thornton, James Davidson charges Foucault and his followers with oversimplification: their emphasis on rigid polarities (active citizen vs. passive other; wife vs. prostitute; penetrator vs. penetrated) ignores the broad gray area between the poles. He brings to bear a huge weight of evidence to show that "what the Greeks said about pleasure is much messier and much more varied than what you would expect from Foucault."[30] Others have similarly criticized the inadequacy of the "protocols" to describe the lived experience of sexuality in antiquity, offering as qualifications to the schema of *dikaios erōs* those places where we hear about people doing (and often getting away with) precisely the things that the "rules" of eros seem to forbid.[31] Matthew Fox (1998) has wondered about the very enterprise of reconstructing social norms, not only because of the uncertain relation any norms we reconstruct would bear to psychic or social reality, but because,

[29] Thornton 1991.186. His attack is broad and scattershot. He accuses Foucault of confusing discourse with practice and of failing to clarify the ontological status of sex and of the subject; he accuses Halperin and Winkler of oversimplifying Foucault and failing to understand the philosophical contradictions inherent in his theories. The often perceptive critique of Foucault in the first half of the article devolves by the end into a familiar attack on theoretically informed scholarship in general: " 'Traditional philology' need not fear enemies such as these" (191). The limitations of a practice founded upon such an antitheoretical stance are clear in Thornton 1997, which aims "to get back to what the Greeks actually say without burying it in polysyllabic sludge" (xiii). There the Greeks are posited as "genuine" subjects who stood in a primary relation to nature and experienced the emotions of love more vividly than we (for whom its violence or madness is nothing more than a cliché); eros is meanwhile deified as a timeless, chaotic force that resists rational or cultural (not to mention interpretive) constraint.

[30] Davidson 1997.xxiv. Davidson presents himself as a critic of Foucault, but the very guiding principles of his book are Foucaultian, not only the emphasis on discourse (as he acknowledges, xxi–xxii) but also the idea of pleasure as a key element in the struggle for self-mastery within a culture that prized moderation (the entire book might well be titled, after Foucault, "The Moral Problematization of Pleasures"). This is a common phenomenon: the spirit of Foucault's work mobilized to critique the letter.

[31] Their most common target is the distinction between erastes and eromenos, which has been subject to a number of reappraisals: the age differences were not always so great; the line between active partner and passive was not always so rigid; there was more room for reciprocity, affection, and love than has been recognized; penetration was not the defining feature (or not the only one) of the relationship; the whole affair may have been the preserve of a small elite anyway. See, e.g., Demand 1980; Poster 1986.213–14; D. Cohen 1987, 1991.171–202; Hexter 1991; Thornton 1991.185–86, 1997.99–120; Cantarella 1992.17–53; Thorp 1992; Goldhill 1995.46–111; DeVries 1997; Davidson 1997.167–82; Kilmer 1997; Sissa 1999; E. Cohen 2000.155–91. Many of these qualifications are valid and important, but I do not think individually or cumulatively they serve to dismantle the basic opposition as an (idealized) norm. Instead, they remind us of the large gap that often exists between norms and practice: to the extent that no one can ever fully comply with all of a society's contradictory sexual protocols, practice is necessarily more diverse than the norms. This does not mean, though, that the norms did not exist: see D. Cohen 1991.

he suggests, in our pursuit of the symbolic system of normativity we necessarily sacrifice the (unsymbolizable) totality of the real.

From their diverse positions, all of these recent studies voice a discontent with what they perceive as the "standard line" on ancient sexuality.[32] Each senses that the usual description of the norms in some way fails to capture the variety of sexual experience in antiquity, the vast multiplicity of things that people were doing, thinking, saying, or desiring. Whether they wish to redefine the norms or to open them up to include other behaviors, all believe that there was a world of sexuality that lay outside of *dikaios erōs* as it is usually described: behavior that broke the rules, desires that contravened the protocols, predilections that fell between the polarized categories—in short, *adikos erōs*. I share their discomfort with the standard description of Athenian sexual norms—not so much with the specific norms that have been privileged as with the often exclusive focus on the normative as the essence of ancient sexuality. This focus, to my mind, underestimates the complexity of individuals' psychic relation to norms and fails to theorize adequately the interactions between the normative and the nonnormative. As a result, I think, it impoverishes eros and does not do justice to the Athenians' sophisticated thinking about it. Thus I purpose to attempt a reading that is attentive to perversity as well as normativity, to the psychic as well as the social, and to *adikos erōs* alongside *dikaios erōs*.

Normativity is a necessary starting point: when viewed as an open, heterogeneous, and always contested set of dispositions (not as a single set of rules), norms are the indispensable grounding for any discussion of eros, as David Cohen (1991) has most strongly asserted. Despite the insistence of Thornton and others on the "complexity of human emotion and motive" and the individual's "power of choice and spontaneity" (Thornton 1991.186), love is not ruleless, and its complexities follow some sort of logic (even if one does not think it is the logic Foucault et al. identify). By looking at the perverse, then, I am not advocating that we retreat from the theorization of desire to a meditation on the private stirrings of the individual heart. To do so would be to turn our back on all the advances made by the scholars of sexual normativity and to find

[32] My brief survey of the state of this ever expanding field is necessarily partial and selective: I discuss other works as they become relevant to my argument. Moreover, it should not be taken to imply that no interesting work has been done in languages other than English: this is far from true. Beside Foucault, one might cite, for example, Buffière 1980; Schnapp 1981, 1988; Rousselle 1988; Sissa 1990; Loraux 1990, 1993, 1995; Cantarella 1992; Calame 1999; and, of an earlier generation, Brandt 1934; Flacelière 1962. But the topic seems to have attracted particular attention in Anglophone scholarship, perhaps due to the influence of Halperin and Winkler. A geographically and temporally more extensive survey can be found in Halperin, Winkler, and Zeitlin 1990.7–16; see also Arthur-Katz 1989.

ourselves, ultimately, with nothing to say. Nor am I proposing to set against normativity the infinite permutations of practice, although I take it as a granted (and relatively uninteresting) fact that people then, as now, did and desired everything human ingenuity could devise.[33] Finally, my aim is not to take issue with the specific norms described by Dover and his followers: I provisionally accept, for example, a distinction between erastes and eromenos and the valorization of a sexually dominant masculinity, although I see these norms more as vital (and vulnerable) fictions than as social realities and hope in the end to complicate them.

Instead, I am trying to advance from these studies of normativity and open them up by asking about the tension between social norms and their elaboration within the Athenian unconscious. The guiding questions of my study are not about the Athenian citizen's practical relation to norms (did he obey them? did he disobey them?), or about his discursive relation to them (did they adequately describe his attitudes and beliefs?), but about his psychic relation to them. What are the unconscious figurations of *dikaios erōs*? What sort of fantasies did this eros arouse and what sort did it suppress? What investments (positive and negative, normative and perverse) did it encourage? What sort of civic imaginary did it structure?

To begin to answer these questions, I would like to return to the original premise of Halperin, Winkler, and Foucault: the implication of sexuality in a larger social and political matrix and the idea that power works in and through eros. For Foucault sexuality is shaped by power within a normative discursive framework. But power for him is never merely prohibitive. Instead it is always fertile: it operates through the proliferation of new discourses, new practices and desires, new subjects, even new perversities. Repression incites speech, norms generate perversions, prohibitions arouse desire.[34] Foucault's original emphasis on the productivity of

[33] Practice-oriented studies of antiquity often beg vital theoretical questions: on the one hand, they generally understand the subject as an autonomous and self-determining agent and thus fall into sheer voluntarism (we each love in our own way, rules be damned); on the other hand, even as they postulate a subtheoretical realm of practice (blissfully free or cannily forgetful of ideology), they hypostasize norms as something separate from the subject, existing outside of him, which he can freely choose to obey or disobey. These common problems are addressed by Bourdieu, whose theory of habitus solves "the paradoxes of objective meaning without subjective intention" (1990.62).

[34] Foucault 1978.17–49. His entire project, as he sets it out at the beginning of volume 1, is a study of this proliferation that takes place under the cloak of repression: "In short, I would like to disengage my analysis from the privileges generally accorded the economy of scarcity and the principles of rarefaction, to search instead for instances of discursive production (which also administer silences, to be sure), of the production of power (which sometimes have the function of prohibiting), of the propagation of knowledge (which often cause mistaken beliefs or systematic misconceptions to circulate); I would like to write the history of these instances and their transformations" (1978.12).

power has been developed by Judith Butler (1993), who argues that precisely because power is generative, it can generate results that it did not anticipate, results that have the potential to challenge or skew their own founding principles.

I return to Butler's theorization of power and pursue its implications for ancient erotics in chapter 3, where I trace the unsettling desires generated by the figure of Alcibiades. In that chapter, Butler's understanding of power provides the basis for a theory of the relation between normativity and perversion. What should be clear already, though, is that imagining norms as productive—and productive in unpredictable ways—allows us to accept the assumption of Foucault and his followers that norms are constitutive, without necessarily having to abandon (as Thornton and others fear) the "complexity of human emotion." Power shapes eros but does not predetermine its final contours and thus potentially allows for—creates and constrains but does not fully contain—perversity. A space is opened within the very architecture of *dikaios erōs* for an *adikos erōs* that, although produced by and dependent on social "protocols," is not reducible to them. Desire is generated and structured by power but, thanks to power's fertility, also always exceeds it.

For Butler it is when power takes on a "psychic life" within the individual that it becomes most unpredictably fertile.[35] Therefore, while returning (via Butler) to Foucault's idea of the fertility of power, I would like at the same time to pick up a lost thread in the current discussions of ancient sexuality: the unconscious. Foucault was notoriously hostile to psychoanalysis, which he characterized as a disciplinary apparatus "more servile with respect to the powers of order than amenable to the requirements of truth."[36] Foucault's "sexuality" is decidedly not Freud's:

> Sexuality must not be described as a stubborn drive, by nature alien and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely. It appears rather as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power. . . . Sexuality is not the most intractable element in power relations, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality: useful for the greatest number of maneuvers and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies. (Foucault 1978.103)

[35] Butler 1997.19–21.

[36] Foucault 1978.53–73, 111–13 (the quotation is on p. 54); a somewhat different view emerges from Foucault 1970.374–80. Black 1998 contains an intelligent discussion of (and bibliography on) Foucault's antipathy toward psychoanalysis; cf. Sissa 1999.148–50. On the need to read psychoanalysis and Foucault through one another, see Toews 1994; Butler 1997.83–105. DuBois 1988 offers a critique of psychoanalysis by way of a Foucaultian reading of ancient material (see esp. 1–36).

Joel Black even suggests that the impetus behind the last two volumes of *The History of Sexuality* was Foucault's attempt to conceptualize sexuality in terms other than those of psychoanalysis and, especially, to describe a nonpsychoanalytic subject of sexuality. But this attempt, Black argues, also accounts for the failings of these two volumes: Foucault pursued a "strategy of demystifying sexuality by eliminating all that is illusory, imaginary, and phantasmic about it, namely, sex. Yet the discourse of sexuality can only become intelligible precisely by attending to those representations, fantasies, and scenes in which sex itself appears to speak."[37]

For all their antagonism toward him, classical studies of ancient sexuality have tended to share Foucault's wariness of psychoanalysis. They have preferred to interrogate ancient sexuality as to its power relations and polarities, its normativities and their transgression, not its desires, fantasies, and perversities. Is it possible to ask about the desire of the Greeks without succumbing to the biologism and ahistoricism of the "stubborn drive"? Is it possible to analyze eros as "an especially dense transfer point for relations of power" without fully subordinating it to power (as Foucault often does) so that sexuality is stripped of desire? Can we engage with psychoanalytic theories of sexuality in such a way that they help us to exploit the more positive aspects of Foucault's notion of power, to theorize a desire that, if not "by nature alien and of necessity disobedient" to power, at least maintains a productive relation to it and thus offers a possibility not of escaping power but of rethinking its specific articulations?

With Freud, I view desire as perverse. By this I mean not the intractable drive Foucault ridicules but rather the productive resistance Butler posits. Desire exists within power, shaped by its norms. This implies, first, that perversity is not a timeless and ahistorical force of the unchanging human libido: because it has meaning only in relation to norms (which are always culturally specific), the shape it takes at any moment is deeply structured by larger cultural schemes. It also means that perversity often reaffirms normativity: if desire is perverse only in relation to norms, then by its very reference to those norms it in some sense reproduces them and attests to their potency.

But, at the same time, desire has the potential to disturb the norms that generate it. Over the course of this book, our sources will show us a manly Athenian demos falling in love with tyrants and *kinaidoi*, loving passively and embracing castration, fantasizing with longing about all that is excluded from *dikaios erōs*. Does this perversity merely reaffirm the proto-

[37] Black 1998.59. A similar double bind attends the effort to formulate a "hermeneutics of the self" that strips the self of the unconscious: one is left with a hollow fiction, a rational "ethicist" driven by a simple imperative to self-mastery, any deviation from which can only be considered a failure of will.

cols of sexuality? In a certain sense, of course, it does, and they persist. But I argue that these fantasies also pose a challenge to those protocols: by imagining alternate masculinities and modes of eros, they expose the artificiality and question the inevitable hegemony of existing norms. They do not thereby overturn these norms but instead displace them, shifting their emphasis and skewing their intent. Through such perverse fantasies, desire takes up an active relation to power: neither "by nature alien and of necessity disobedient" to it, nor merely instrumental ("an especially dense transfer point") for it, but instead productively engaged with it in a dialectic that may on occasion yield surprising results.

"Desire is the desire of the Other," writes Lacan. Desire comes to us from without, from the site of the Other (law, language, society) and takes its shape from forces we do not control. It is also other to us: we never fully own our desire, not only because its origins are outside us but because its locus within us is the unconscious, that "other scene" (as Freud called it) separate from and inaccessible to the self. Perverse desire, then, does not necessarily imply a "perverse" subject, a willful transgressor of protocols or rebel against sexual norms in the name of exotic pleasures (indeed, sometimes a cathexis to the norm can be perverse and, conversely, transgression can work in the service of normativity). Nor is perversion kinky. This is not pornography. Desire as I mean it is not primarily about sexual arousal: it is about libidinal attachments. Penetrator and penetrated, lover and beloved—those terms for me describe not sexual positions but psychic positions. Perversity describes a psychic relation to the law. Athens's fantasies are a figuration of its ideology, and in studying the former, we are necessarily studying the latter: desire is always ideological.

Symptomatic Reading

How are we to uncover these fantasies, though? Ancient texts are relatively forthcoming with norms: someone will always tell you what was *dikaios* and what was not. Weighing such statements, evaluating their meaning and force, reconciling them with others—this is difficult enough. But fantasy poses evidentiary problems of a different order, as it draws us inevitably away from the manifest level of the text—that which is spoken and acknowledged—to the unconscious, the unsaid, the unthought, the unthinkable. How does one read for what is not there?

Again, the tyrannicides may afford an inroad. The tyrannicide myth seems to have been much in people's minds in the years between 415 and 412, the years of Athens's great expedition against Sicily.[38] Thucydides traces this heightened interest in the story to a remarkable incident. Just

[38] M. W. Taylor 1981, ch. 6.

as the fleet was preparing to sail to Sicily, in a single night, all the Herms in the city were mutilated. These statues—rectangular blocks with a face and a phallus that stood at crossroads and in front of houses—had been cut about the face and, Aristophanes hints (*Lys*. 1093–94), castrated. This act of sacrilege caused great consternation: it was taken as a grave omen for the expedition just departing for Sicily and also, Thucydides says, as part of "a conspiracy plotting revolution and the overthrow of the democracy" (6.27.3). This vandalism had far-reaching consequences for both the Sicilian Expedition and the war against Sparta. Thucydides describes in some detail the panic that ensued and how suspicion came to rest on the general Alcibiades. The demos recalled Alcibiades from the war front to face charges; as a result, Thucydides suggests, it brought on defeat in Sicily and ultimately ruined the city (6.15.3–4).[39]

In the midst of this important discussion, though, Thucydides makes a strange and sudden digression. The mood in Athens after the mutilation of the Herms was one of frenzied suspicion, he says,

> ἐπιστάμενος γὰρ ὁ δῆμος ἀκοῇ τὴν Πεισιστράτου καὶ τῶν παίδων τυραννίδα χαλεπὴν τελευτῶσαν γενομένην καὶ προσέτι οὐδ' ὑφ' ἑαυτῶν καὶ 'Αρμοδίου καταλυθεῖσαν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐφοβεῖτο αἰεὶ καὶ πάντα ὑπόπτως ἐλάμβανεν.
>
> For the people had heard about the tyranny of Pisistratus and his sons and how harsh it became toward the end. They also knew that the tyranny had not been ended by themselves and Harmodius, but by the Spartans. They were thus always afraid and approached everything with suspicion. (6.53.3)

With this the historian launches into a lengthy excursus on the famed tyrannicide.

This digression is puzzling: why at this important juncture in his narrative does Thucydides turn aside to recount this familiar story? Why does he juxtapose the mutilation of the Herms and the tyrannicide, two seemingly unrelated events? The tyrannicide digression is remarkably long and detailed—so much so that it is more of an interruption than an explanation of contemporary affairs. Moreover, the motivations Thucydides himself offers for it are uncharacteristically vague. The tyrannicide story is first introduced to explain Athenian anxiety after the mutilation of the Herms: the demos knew that the tyrannicides had not ended the tyranny. A sentence later it becomes proof that "the Athenians are no more able than anyone else to speak accurately about their own tyrants and their

[39] On the mutilation of the Herms, see And. 1; Plut. *Alc*. 18.6–22.5; D.S. 13.2.3–4; Hatzfeld 1951.158–95; MacDowell 1962.192–93; Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.264–88; Marr 1971.337–38; Powell 1979.21–25; Keuls 1985.385–403; R. Osborne 1985.64–67; de Romilly 1995.101–8; Furley 1996, esp. 13–30; McGlew 1999; Munn 2000.103–6.

history" (6.54.1). By the end of the digression, Thucydides says only that the people "had this in mind and recalled the stories they knew about it" as they zealously prosecuted the conspirators (6.60.1). The weak motivation, surprising length and detail of the digression, and the odd tension between what the demos knew about the tyrannicide and what it did not know all beg further explanation.[40]

Scholars have proposed different justifications for the tyrannicide digression. Some have viewed the problem as merely editorial, an inconsistency between different periods in the composition of Thucydides' history.[41] Others have attributed it to the author's intellectual punctiliousness, his compulsion to correct a historical error, even at a cost to narrative cohesion.[42] More convincingly, many have argued that the digression reflects the contemporary situation in Athens, illustrating the daring of the Athenian character, democratic anxiety about tyranny, the often flawed nature of democratic decision making, and the conditions under which governments are (as that of Athens will soon be) overthrown.[43]

This is a suggestive line of inquiry and we pursue it further when we return to this crux within the context of Alcibiades' putative tyranny and the disastrous eros of Athenian imperialism. For the time being, though, I wish less to pose a solution to this problem than to view it precisely *as a problem*, and to let it exemplify a certain methodological approach. Why is the text so hazy about the motivations for this long digression and its significance for the surrounding narrative? Why do we have this crux here, at the junction of these two particular narratives? What is the connection between Herms and tyrannicides, and why does the text not spell

[40] I leave to one side the parody of the Mysteries that was exposed at this same time and is linked in Thucydides' account to the mutilation and the tyrannicide legend. I agree with R. Osborne 1985.67 that "in fact the two acts had very different implications, and if they become muddled in the ensuing witch-hunt that is no reason to suppose that they were muddled in the execution." This profanation does not speak to the sexual thematics of the tyrannicide legend (as I suggest the Herms do) but instead to the tension between public and private, sacred and profane. Thus it serves as a good reminder that no event has a single meaning. See also Furley 1996.41–48, who notes that Thucydides keeps the two acts of sacrilege separate, and they are only linked by Alcibiades' enemies in an attempt to implicate him in both (Thuc. 6.61.1; Plut. *Alc.* 20).

[41] Schwartz 1929.180–86; Hirsch 1926.139; Ziegler 1929.58–59; Jacoby 1949.158 n.47; Fitzgerald 1957.278–80.

[42] Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.329; cf. Lang 1954.398–99; Scanlon 1987.291–92; Thuc. 1.20.

[43] Münch 1935; Pearson 1949; Momigliano 1971; Parry 1972; M. W. Taylor 1981.161–75; Palmer 1982.106–9, 114–15; Forde 1989.33–57; Munn 2000.114–18. On the digression, see further Schadewaldt 1929.84–94; Jacoby 1949.158–64; Diesner 1959; H.-P. Stahl 1966.1–11; Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.317–29 (esp. 325–29); Hunter 1973–74; Connor 1977.107–9, 1984.176–80; Rawlings 1981.100–117; Ridley 1981.27–28; Allison 1989.98–101, 1997.182–86; Loraux 2000.65–82.

it out? If silence is an essential part of discourse (as Foucault shows), what is the quality of the silence at work in this moment? How is the text's refusal (or inability) to articulate a connection related to the Athenians' own uncertain knowledge of their past? In this inarticulate juxtaposition, what is not being spoken? What is the text resisting?

Perhaps it will seem that I am making too much of these few lines or else turning my own interpretive failure into Thucydides'. But in asking these questions I am not accusing Thucydides of sloppiness, caginess, or bad faith, but instead suggesting that the surface juxtaposition, with all its oddities, should be read as a symptom of something left unexpressed—and perhaps inexpressible—within the terms of the text; it is a manifestation at the conscious level of the text of a repressed connection, an unacknowledged association. The passage is interesting to me precisely for its obscurity, for its nonexplanation of its own motivation. Taking it at its surface meaning fails to address this obscurity: we may find a way to fill the gap left in the text, but we cannot explain the existence of the gap in the first place. But if we read it symptomatically, the passage opens up a space in the text between the said and the unsaid, between what the text can speak and what it cannot, between what the demos knows and what it does not. It exposes a resistance, both in the text (which does not make itself clear) and in the demos (which knows the story of the tyrannicides but does not know it accurately). This resistance suggests that there is something in the text more than the text, a textual unconscious, as it were.[44]

It is in this space, I think, that we can begin to look for the psychic elaborations of *dikaios erōs*. This historical moment brings together politics and eros in a particularly impacted way. Jack Winkler proposed reading the Herms as an idealized representation of the democratic male subject: their rigid stances and lack of differentiation symbolized the notional equality and individual autonomy of all citizens in the democracy; their erect phalloi represented the sexual dominance that was one marker of citizenship in Athens.[45] Stationed in public places throughout the city, the Herms symbolized, memorialized, and perpetuated the *dikaios erōs* of

[44] The point is not to uncover "the" hidden meaning of the passage or "the" one latent connection. As Žižek points out (1989.12–14), in Freud's interpretation of dreams, it is not the secret content of the dream that is crucial, but the dreamwork (the displacement, condensation, etc.) through which that content is expressed. Compare Foucault's project in *The Order of Things*: "to reveal a *positive unconscious* of knowledge: a level that eludes the consciousness of the scientist and yet is part of scientific discourse" (1970.xi). On symptomatic reading, now see also Kurke 1999.24–25, who aptly stresses the politics of textual silences. Cf. F. Jameson 1981.47–49.

[45] Winkler 1990a.35–36. Cf. R. Osborne 1985; Halperin 1990a.16–17; Humphreys 1999.129. On Herms: Lullies 1931; Crome 1935–36; Goldman 1942; Devambez 1968; Wrede 1985.

the Athenian citizen. Given this significance, the mutilation of the Herms becomes a serious attack on both the sexual and the political autonomy of the demos. In the sexual register it is a castration; in the political, a potential act of tyranny, but the political and erotic here are inseparable: if the Athenian citizen is, virtually by definition, sexually dominant, castration is political disenfranchisement.[46]

As a piece of political symbolism, then, this incident actively deploys the thematics of democratic eros. It speaks in the language of an eroticized politics that the demos immediately understood: an assault on the citizen body presaged a conspiracy to overthrow the democracy. But what does it mean to juxtapose this mutilation with the tyrannicide? What is the effect of placing a drama of civic castration next to the legend of *dikaios erōs*, an attack on the democracy next to the foundation of the democracy? In this juxtaposition we glimpse the dim psychic half-life of Athens's sexual and political normativity. The mutilation of the Herms is a tacit acknowledgment—both at the level of the text (which juxtaposes it with the tyrannicides) and of the demos (for which it evoked memories of the tyrannicide)—of the fragility of *dikaios erōs*. Murdered tyrants can return, their violent eros unmanning the demos. The citizens, those manly lovers, are never free from the terror of castration and their dominance is always vulnerable to attack. Indeed, the very ideal of *dikaios erōs* is secured by that vulnerability, for in Thucydides' account it is the mutilation that makes the demos look back to the tyrannicide, as if seeking a solid foundation upon which to reground its political and sexual dominance. The mutilation regenerates the ideal. It also taints it, as we shall see, revealing the mere fictionality of this dominant fiction.

In a sense, this book as a whole radiates from this murky textual moment, attempting to read its silences and repressed associations. In this inarticulate crux it finds written the love affair between the demos and its demagogues; the demos's paradoxical hatred of, love for, and identification with tyranny; the eros for imperialism and the mutilation that eros

[46] There are good reasons, I think, to associate the Herms with the Athenians as citizens (and not just residents of Attica). First, these statues were located in public (i.e., political) spaces of the city and in front of houses (generally only citizens owned property); they also stood as markers on the roads between the city and the demes, thus delineating "the city" (and hence the idea of "the civic"). Second, the Herms are thought to have originated at the end of the Pisistratid regime, which makes them temporally coterminous with the democracy (see my discussion in chapter 5). Winkler (1990a.36) further cites the Eion monument as evidence of the Herms' democratic ideology: three Herms erected in the Agora memorialize the victory of the Athenians over the Persians at Eion, but without mentioning the names of individual generals (cf. R. Osborne 1985.61). For the civic connotations of the Herms, see also McGlew 1999.17–19. This is not to say, of course, that this was the only significance of the Herms, or even that it would be the primary association in every context. R. Osborne 1985 charts the heterogeneous (religious, political, semiotic) significance of the Herms.

entails; the impossibility of living up to the ideal of citizen masculinity and the impossibility of failing to; the unspeakable kinship between the citizen-lover and the castrated Herm. If, as Winkler suggested, the Herm embodies Athenian masculinity and stands as a monument to the virility of the citizen body, the mutilated Herm represents the abject to that citizen-subject, all that he must repudiate in order to secure his own being: failed masculinity, compromised integrity, threatened autonomy.[47] That abject, as we shall see, is banished again and again in a reiterated gesture of exclusion that defines the margins of possibility and propriety for the citizen and consolidates the realm of his political and sexual normativities. But that exile can never be final—for the subject needs the abject as "its own founding repudiation"[48]—and the abject persists alongside the subject, like mutilated Herms alongside noble tyrannicides, in an obscure but intimate symbiosis. This persistence means that there is always an instability within *dikaios erōs*, a space of potential perversion or abjection that troubles this empire of legitimacy and its legitimate subjects. Norms (generative as they are) may generate this potential but do not fully determine it, and it abides as a vague unease, revealing itself obliquely in textual silences and inconsistencies.

Uncovering this intimacy between the citizen-lover and the castrated Herm is important not only for what it tells us about the psychic life of the Athenian citizen, but also because it is precisely in this tension between norms and their phantasmatic figuration that Athenian ideology takes shape. Ideology does not stand fully on the side of normativity (as a coercive ideal), but it arises in the space between norms and fantasy; nor is it wholly on the side of politics ("propaganda"), but it exists in the link between politics and eros or, more specifically, in the eros that binds the subject to the political. Slavoj Žižek defines ideology as an essentially imaginary entity—which does not mean that it does not "exist" or have material effects, but rather that its primary locus of operation is at the level of the unconscious.[49] Drawing on Althusser's famous dictum that

[47] On the abject, see Kristeva 1982.1–31; Butler 1993.3: "The abject designates here precisely those 'unlivable' and 'uninhabitable' zones of social life which are nevertheless densely populated by those who do not enjoy the status of the subject, but whose living under the sign of the 'unlivable' is required to circumscribe the domain of the subject."

[48] Butler 1993.3.

[49] See, e.g., Žižek 1989.11–53. I use the term "imaginary" throughout to refer to the register of fantasy. For the most part, I do not adopt the technical Lacanian meaning of the word, which limits it to images (the imago of the mirror stage being the prime example). The imaginary I trace is predominantly textual and therefore closer in some ways to the Lacanian symbolic. Further, because fantasy is an enactment of wish fulfillment, the imaginary will often figure as a space of unconscious desire (another feature of the symbolic in Lacanian theory). For discussion of these terms, see Laplanche and Pontalis 1973.210–11, 314–19. Compare Berlant's notion of the "National Symbolic," by which she means some-

"ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence,"[50] Žižek argues that "the fundamental level of ideology . . . is not of an illusion masking the real state of things but that of an (unconscious) fantasy structuring our social reality itself."[51] Ideology, in Althusser's model, reproduces itself through the constitution of subjects, whom it hails into being as subjects in and subject to ideology. The individual must answer ideology's call if he or she is to be a legitimate subject, but that assent takes place not at the conscious level but at the level of unconscious fantasy. Fantasy transforms ideology—a contingent and artificial, "fictional," set of social arrangements—into reality and grants it its material force. Fantasy covers over the logical inconsistencies of ideology and bridges the gap between the demands of normativity and the individual psyche.[52] For the subject (as Silverman stresses),[53] this ideological fantasy *is* reality, and ideological struggle is the struggle to define a society's reality through the medium of fantasy, by arousing and directing the communal libido. Ideology works, in other words, only if you fall in love with it.

Thus eros is not merely a metaphor for politics but also its object and arena and part of the mechanism of its operation. The study of democratic eros is a study of the ways in which citizens fell in love with Athens and the ideology that both incited that love and was perpetuated by it. Ober has argued eloquently that the basis of the Athenian democracy (and the reason for its remarkable stability over time) was not its constitution or institutions but a shared ideology.[54] Athens, he contends, was an "imagined community" built around the ideological principle (we might call it a dominant fiction) of Demos, the people as source of political authority and agent of political will.[55] The study of Demos's love-life supports his

thing close to what I designate the political "imaginary" (1991.5, 20–22). She elaborates on this notion in Berlant 1997, an analysis of sexuality, politics, and national fantasy in contemporary America.

[50] Althusser 1971.162.

[51] Žižek 1989.33. This is why, Žižek argues (1989.36–43), it makes no difference if one is cynical toward ideology or in what spirit one complies with its commands: to pray is to believe, he says (playing on Pascal's idiom) because that action materializes a prior *unconscious* belief. Thus ideology is not a matter of false consciousness, and Žižek reinterprets Marx's definition of ideology ("they don't know what they do, but they do it") in light of subjects' nonknowledge of the unconscious (they know, in Freud's phrase, but do not know they know).

[52] Žižek 1989.114–15, 127.

[53] Silverman 1992.16–35. On fantasy and the social, see further J. Rose 1996.1–15.

[54] Ober 1989a (esp. 293–339), 1989b, 1994.102–4. See also Meier 1990.140–54.

[55] Ober 1989b.332–33, 1994.109, 1996.117–20. His concept of Demos as an imaginary construct is useful so long as we remember that it was not a Platonic Form, but the object and product of ideological contestation (and hence might conceal as much as it reveals about the ways in which democratic ideology was constructed). For a theorization of the demos

claim and, I think, strengthens it by showing that it was not just shared ideas and values that united the polis but also shared fantasies and desires, and by stressing the location at the level of the imaginary of the ideology that formed this "imagined" community.[56] If ideology is an essentially phantasmatic structure—and thus the space of its emergence is not only political contest but the citizen psyche—then any account of Athenian ideology must include not just easily recognized and officially declared attachments (freedom, equality, the power of the demos) but also their unconscious refractions. Or, to put it differently, if democracy is based on the will of the demos and the demos's will in turn reflects its desire, then by giving that desire its full psychological valence—attending to its contradictions and repressions, its fixations and perversions—we will most fully understand democracy.

The site of this study—a difficult but fruitful terrain—is the Athenian unconscious. Butler proposes that the unconscious is precisely that which exceeds ideology: ideology hails the subject, but its demands are always exorbitant and its interpellation always constricting as well as enabling. Subjects assent to what they can; and what they cannot, they repress. That repressed remainder becomes the unconscious.[57] The "democratic unconscious," then, appears at and as the limit of democratic ideology.

Further, if with Butler we understand the unconscious as the remainder of ideology, then perhaps it will not seem strained to speak of the unconscious of an entire polis or people. When I refer to the "Athenian unconscious" or the "unconscious of the demos" I mean by this not the unconscious of the individual Athenian, for that is a truly unknown entity and will always elude our desire to know it, but that of his imaginary

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as collective agent, see Wolin 1996, and on the dangers of reifying the people, Lefort 1988.132–34.

[56] Ober takes this term from Benedict Anderson. For Anderson the imagined is not strictly imaginary: communities are "imagined" in that those who belong to them hold an image of them in mind (1983.6; "imagined community" and "national consciousness" seem to be synonymous). This image is fostered ("unselfconsciously," but never, as he presents it, unconsciously) through such symbolic means as language and commerce. Ober defines ideology as "the set of ideas about the public realm common to most citizens, sufficiently coherent to lead to action but less formally organized than theoretical principles" (1989b.327; cf. 1989a.38–40). This would seem to situate it firmly within the symbolic order of discourse and political relations, but his differentiation between a principle of equality and a social reality that often included practical inequalities suggests a more Althusserian notion of ideology, with ideology oriented in a more imaginary direction.

[57] Butler 1997.86: "The psyche is precisely what exceeds the imprisioning effects of the discursive demand to inhabit a coherent identity, to become a coherent subject. The psyche is what resists the regularization that Foucault ascribes to normalizing discourses." Cf. Žižek 1999.261–62 and n.18.

avatar "Demos." This figure is, of course, itself a fantasy, a figment produced by Athenian civic discourse: even when these terms—"Demos," "the polis," "Athens"—appear as the subject of a verb like "loves," we should not mistake these fictions for real human subjects.[58] That said, the line between the two is not absolute. Postmodern theory (not least psychoanalysis) has posited that the "real human subject" is in many ways itself a fictional character, as much a discursive construct as "Demos." Likewise if, as Lacan says, the unconscious is the speech of the Other (law, ideology) within the self, then the individual unconscious is already in essence transpersonal—"collective"—as well as fully discursive. To speak of a civic unconscious thus does not necessarily mean reifying an abstraction or imposing a mechanical analogy between individual and collective; instead, it means taking seriously the discursive nature of the unconscious ("individual" or "collective") and trying to delineate the repressed of Athenian discourse in both its ideological specificity and its psychological complexity.

Because the civic unconscious is discursive, it is difficult to distinguish from the unconscious of the text that is the site of its articulation.[59] Indeed, we can see this slippage already in Thucydides' digression, where the text's unspoken association between Herms and tyrannicides corresponds to the demos's own partial and uncertain knowledge of its past. Whose unconscious fantasies are we glimpsing in the symptomatic silences of a text? While it is important to be precise about the object of analysis, this question rests upon a false dichotomy between the text and the larger cultural discourse in which it participates. The relation between these two is not properly oppositional but synecdochic: the text is a part of that discourse and the discourse, in turn, nothing but the sum of its texts. Thus the democratic unconscious is inseparable from the text. It does not stand outside the text ("is this Thucydides' fantasy or the demos's?") but is immanent within it, both in its local equivocations and in its conversation with other texts. When I analyze the textual unconscious of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* (as I do often in the pages that follow) or other works, I also suggest that the fantasies we find there are not isolated utterances, but rather one enunciation of the language that is the Athenian unconscious—a language spoken only through such enunciations.

Inasmuch as this unconscious is both textual and cultural, our (psycho)-analysis will also be a literary analysis that seeks to uncover the text's

[58] As Loraux points out, however, in justification of her psychoanalysis of the civic psyche, the Greeks themselves analogized the city to an individual (1987.47–54).

[59] A textual unconscious is not the same as the author's unconscious, which, like that of the individual citizen, is off limits to us. Compare F. Jameson 1981, for whom the "political unconscious" is located within the formal structures of the text.

repressed and to read the displacements and condensations behind its metaphors and metonymies, and a historical analysis that attempts to reconstruct from the gaps and illogic of our records a history of what Nicole Loraux calls "imaginary Athens."[60] Finally and perhaps obviously, this analysis is hermeneutic, not therapeutic. It aims to "cure" neither the Athenians nor us. That said, we must always be alert to our transferential relation with the past, the cure we seek in returning to it.[61] Karen Bassi (1998) has recently argued that the study of ancient Greece is driven by a nostalgic desire for a hegemonic masculine subject. Likewise, part of the "erotics of democracy" is our eros for Athenian democracy and for the democratic citizen. What is the nature of our desire for Athens? The Athenians' fantasies still arouse us, but what is it we are responding to? Are we in love with *dikaios erōs* and the fiction of a noble, democratic citizen-lover? Or do we fantasize about a perverse Athens? We may not be able to answer fully these questions about our unconscious desires (any more than the Athenians could about their own), but we can at least seek that our love not be blind.

[60] E.g., Loraux 1986a.328–38.

[61] On historiographical transference, see LaCapra 1985.11, 40, 69, 72–73, 123–24.

Chapter I

PERICLES' LOVERS

In the funeral oration ascribed to him by Thucydides, Pericles urges the people to become lovers of the city (2.43.1). This speech is often taken as the quintessence of Athenian democracy: the city is at its most powerful, the demos at its most noble. In this most canonical of Athenian texts we would expect to find, too, a canonical Athenian eros, a perfect and perfectly democratic love and lover. And Thucydides (or perhaps Pericles) gives us what we desire: a manly pursuer of beauty and wisdom, an erastes willing to die for his beloved, a lover whose sensibilities are aristocratic but whose love object is the democratic city. Here we would seem to find, as iconic as if sculpted on the Parthenon frieze, the ideal eros of the democratic citizen.

While Thucydides' history is resolutely unsexy, eros runs like a subterranean current beneath its description of political affairs: sometimes acknowledged, more often denied, eros binds citizens to their city and the demos to its demagogues. Pleasure, the modality of eros, is a powerful force behind political relations; indeed, in Thucydides' synopsis of Athenian politics at the end of the fifth century, pleasure is the key term. Pericles led the people; he was not led by them and, as an orator, never catered to their pleasure (2.65.8). Later demagogues, however, competing with one another for power, "turned to pleasing the demos and relinquished affairs to it" (2.65.10). The falling away from the Periclean ideal is represented as a different relation between the citizens and their leaders, a different sort of political pleasure.

This chapter examines that pleasure and the politics it engenders. In the Funeral Oration, Pericles constructs an idealized Athenian subject as lover of the city. What is the nature of that lover and his love? What is the role of the demagogue in this patriotic love affair? Thucydides denies pleasure in the relation between Pericles and the demos: what is that denied pleasure and what is the economy of its disavowal? The speech, I argue, inculcates a narcissistic desire for an ideal self and, around that desire, constructs a democratic citizen-subject. But this ideal itself has a politics, as does the love for it: this chapter explores the politics of the speech's ideal, and the sort of political relations—both narcissistic and anaclitic—implied when the people are urged to become "lovers of the city." It is a theorization of, as well as a case study in, the erotics of poli-

tics, an attempt to unravel the threads of desire and identification that bind this patriotic passion.

The Funeral Oration offers Thucydides' vision of an ideal Athens and Athenian: the words we read in it are, for all intents and purposes, Thucydides'. They may correspond more or less closely to the oration actually delivered by Pericles in the winter of 431/30 (and scholars can argue over that "more or less"),[1] but the original speech is lost to us, and in the speech we have, Thucydides' voice and Pericles' are effectively inseparable; indeed, as I suggest at the end of the chapter, Thucydides goes to some effort to make the two indistinguishable. When I refer, then, to Pericles and the demos in this chapter, these must be understood as "Pericles" and "the demos," Thucydidean creations. The psychic dynamics here are first and foremost textual dynamics, one text's fantasy of democratic love.

And yet perhaps we are justified in making broader claims for that fantasy and reading this speech as one textual articulation of a larger cultural psyche (a psyche, as I suggested in the introduction, that exists only as the sum of such articulations). The words of this oration may be Thucydides' but they operate within a language that is not uniquely his own. Thucydides has a strong individual voice, often highly critical of the polis; frequently he sets himself in explicit opposition to what he identifies as democratic discourse.[2] But critique, as Pierre Bourdieu has argued, always operates within the practical logic of that which it critiques.[3] Thucydides' oppositional stance does not place him outside democratic discourse (of which he is as much a product as a critic), and even as he challenges many of the tenets of contemporary political thought, he simultaneously reinscribes the cultural assumptions and aspirations that inform them. His vision of the citizen-lover is without doubt part of his critique (especially of the post-Periclean democracy); that it also belongs to a broader cultural debate over the erotics of democracy is attested by Cleon's parody in Aristophanes' *Knights*. As we shall see in chapter 2, Aristophanes' Cleon cites—if only to pervert—the ideal of the citizen-

[1] The bibliography on Thucydides' speeches is vast: see, by way of example, Gomme 1937 (esp. 187–89); Strasburger 1958; Rohrer 1959; Andrewes 1962.64–71; de Romilly 1963.137; Adcock 1963.27–42; L. Strauss 1964.163–74; Egermann 1972; Kagan 1975; Macleod 1975.39–41; Cogan 1981.ix–xvi; Parry 1981.176–81; Ziolkowski 1981.1–12, 188–207; Hartog 1982.27–29; J. Wilson 1982; Loraux 1986a.190–92; Hornblower 1987.45–72; Farrar 1988.187–89; Hedrick 1993.32–37; Swain 1993; Sicking 1995; Crane 1996b.65–73; Rood 1998.46–48. Immerwahr finds the ideas in this speech especially close to those of Thucydides in the rest of the text (1973.26, 1960.284–89; contra L. Strauss 1964.151–53). On the authenticity of the Epitaphios in particular, see Yunis 1996.64–65.

[2] We return to one such case in chapter 3. On Thucydides as a critic of democracy, see esp. Roberts 1994.41–43, 54–58; Ober 1998.52–121.

[3] E.g., Bourdieu 1984.234–40, 1990.52–65. This is perhaps especially true in a democracy, which encourages and incorporates critique: see Ober 1998.39–41.

lover depicted by Thucydides' Pericles. Parody here really is the sincerest form of flattery: it indicates the hegemonic status within the contemporary imaginary of the ideal to which Thucydides (through Pericles) gives expression.[4] Thucydides' speech, then, is no mere idiolect but rather a fluent example of Athenian civic language.

Moreover, although Thucydides often takes an antagonistic stance toward Athenian civic discourse, in this particular speech, perhaps more than anywhere else in the history, he seems to align himself with that discourse. Thucydides presents his vision of an ideal Athens not *in propria persona*, but in the person of Athens's official representative at one of its most important civic occasions and in a highly conventional rhetorical form. Nicole Loraux, in her seminal book on the *epitaphios logos* or graveside oration, has reconstructed from the scattered examples a genre of remarkable consistency, in both form and content.[5] Her study deposes Thucydides' speech (or, as she prefers to call it, Pericles') from its unique, paradigmatic status by situating it within a civic genre and a civic imaginary that go beyond any individual text.[6] By expressing his vision of political eros within an *epitaphios*—and an *epitaphios*, moreover, that many of his readers will have heard and remember—Thucydides himself represents it as a part of Athenian democratic discourse. Thus although I refer to this as Thucydides' Epitaphios, that genitive never marks exclusive possession and the fantasies and desires that emerge within this text belong not only to its author but also to the Athenian psyche.

The Ideal

Thucydides' Funeral Oration, as all commentators have noted, is idealizing: it represents the Athenians not as they were, but as they wanted to be or to imagine they were. Indeed, the genre of the *epitaphios logos* as a whole was idealizing. Delivered annually by a prominent politician, these speeches linked the valor of those who had died in war that year to the ideals of Athens's past (mythic and historical) and of its innate national

[4] Of course, Aristophanes' reference may not be to Pericles' oration but to some other speech now lost; that would merely prove all the more the resonance of Thucydides' Epitaphios with the political discourse of late fifth-century Athens.

[5] Loraux 1986a. Thus many of the features of Thucydides' speech that I discuss are traditional topoi of the genre: the necessity for the right measure of praise, the "crown" of praise, the difficulty for the living to equal the dead. That they are generic does not, of course, prevent them from also having a particular rhetorical function within this speech.

[6] Loraux 1986a.11. Mills 1997.43–86 documents the many parallels between the *epitaphioi* and other contemporary literature. Thomas 1989.196–237 goes further in seeing the *epitaphios* as an "official tradition" ("the epitaphios forms a coherent expression of Athenian official 'ideology,' " 200).

character. Through praise of the dead—which is always also praise of the living and, above all, praise of the city—the Athenians imagined their history, delineated their difference from (and superiority to) other Greeks, and figured themselves as a unified and uniquely noble polity. In the *epitaphios logos*, as Loraux argues, the Athenians "invented Athens," producing for themselves "something like an ideality, well beyond the sum of concrete experiences that made up their political life."[7]

What is the politics of this ideality and the dynamics of identification through which citizens adopt it and make it their own? What ideal of citizenship, of masculinity, of democratic subjectivity does Pericles present and what are the political consequences—for the Athenians, but also for us—of embracing it? The answers to these questions suggest the intricate ways in which the political and the psychic structure one another: the subject crystallizes around an internalized political fantasy and his political stances originate in an intimate relation to himself.

Thucydides' Epitaphios presents a mirror in which the Athenians are shown a perfect image of themselves in the unmatchable excellence of the dead, and urges them to assume this image as their own. Through this idealized mirroring, the speech constructs a specific citizen subjectivity. While much of its vision of Athens purports to be and in fact is traditional and familiar to its audience, the speech encourages a certain relation to this vision, and it is that relation, above all, that defines the citizen-subject. This is not to suggest, of course, that this speech created a citizen where there was none before. The democratic citizen was not born in any single moment, like Athena from the head of Zeus, but was the product of an ongoing process of contestation and consolidation. In this perpetual "reinvention of Athens," Thucydides' speech claims for itself a paradigmatic role.

As a cultural mirror, the Epitaphios initiates a sort of "mirror stage" for the Athenian citizen-subject. In Lacan's mirror stage, an infant sees himself reflected in a mirror.[8] Although the child is unable to speak or control his body and is as yet unclearly differentiated from his environment, the mirror shows him an image of himself as whole and integrated, a discrete entity and a presence in the world. It is an image of himself as he will be, not as he is, and it is with jubilation that he takes on that image as his own. He incorporates this mirror image within himself as his ideal-ego (*Idealich*), the core of his incipient subjectivity.

[7] Loraux 1986a.328.

[8] Lacan 1977.1–7. The psychoanalytic subject, like the ancient Athenian political subject, is assumed to be male unless specified otherwise. My use of the masculine generic pronoun reflects that assumption on the part of my sources. The mirror stage is a parable for the first moment of subjectivity, but because it is always figured retrospectively (from the perspective

The Epitaphios presents just such an ideal-ego in its vision of the Athenian citizen. This citizen is free and master of himself, courageous in war but easy in his private life, a democrat with the manners of a gentleman, a manly warrior with a taste for the finer things in life. The perfection of this citizen is reflected in and proved by the perfection of Athens, which has left memorials of its power throughout the world, and whose daring spirit will be the wonder of future ages. And noble Athens is, in turn, embodied in the nobility of the men who fought and died for it: "The praises I have sung for the city have been adorned by the excellence of these men and others like them" (2.42.2). By praising the dead, the living will come to identify with them and the virtues they represent and, through this identification, will become the citizens Pericles describes. Like the child before the mirror, the living citizens adopt the dead as their ideal-ego and around that cathexis forms an Athenian subject.

But if the dead embody the citizen's *Idealich*, then that ideal is achieved only in death. The temporality of Lacan's mirror scene (an "internal thrust . . . from insufficiency to anticipation," 1977.4) is at work here, too, for just as the mirror image offers a vision of a future self, the dead represent what the demos will become if it heeds the exhortations of the speech. The *Idealich* has an inevitable quality and at the same time inculcates an immense labor. On the one hand, this funeral for the dead is also a proleptic funeral for the living audience, inasmuch as it is in the Athenians' nature to die heroically for their city. On the other hand, this anticipatory trajectory requires a terrible effort. Live up to the dead, Pericles urges the demos. Assume as your own their virtue and bravery, for only in this way will you preserve the greatness of the city that assures the greatness of its citizens. The circularity in the logic points to the stakes in the speech: if the glory of Athens and its citizens depends upon the valorous death of its soldiers, then it is only by his willingness to die that the individual can partake in that glory. In other words, he can truly become an Athenian citizen only by dying for Athens.

This paradox speaks to both the fictionality and the impossibility of the *Idealich*. Originating outside himself, the mirror image is a fiction that the child can only imperfectly, "asymptotically," approximate[9]—hence the concern in the Epitaphios about the measure of sufficient praise. This ideal is *so* ideal, that it may not be possible to praise it enough, even though sufficient praise is the mission of the genre (2.34.6). Can the perfection of these men's actions be matched in words (2.35.1)? Won't words always either fall short of the truth or exceed belief (2.35.2)? Peo-

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of the subject and the symbolic), it is better imagined as part of a continuous process of subjectification.

[9] Lacan 1977.2.

ple don't believe things that are beyond their own capabilities and respond with jealousy or incredulity when they hear them (2.35.2–3). The speech aims to make people believe precisely such things, and not only to believe but to identify. Even as it does so, though, it confesses that its ideal may be perceived as hyperbolic (*pleonazesthai*, 2.35.2) or impossible. And indeed it *is* impossible, for, as Lacan stresses, the anticipated identity between the ego and its ideal is always necessarily incomplete, asymptotic. The subject can come ever closer to his mirror image but can never finally reach it (because the image is, after all, only an image) or, in the case of the Athenians, can reach it only in death.[10]

Of course, this very impossibility has an advantage in the discipline it demands. The *Idealich* is, as Lacan puts it, orthopaedic (1977.4): it sets the direction for the subject's correct (*orthos*) development. The Epitaphios not only reflects an ideal but defines the Athenian subject as one who follows in the trajectory and teleology of that ideal. Within the world of the speech, the only Athenian is the man who identifies with and works toward identity with the reflection the speech shows him. Thus, to the extent that he accepts the speech's injunctions and undertakes the task of becoming a good man, he subjects himself to a self-discipline that is not just endless but also alienating, for it predicates his subjectivity on attaining an ideal imposed from without. The "jubilation" of an anticipated mastery that Lacan's child feels before the mirror cuts two ways, for at the same time as it predicts his mastery over himself and his reflection, it also subjects him to the orthopaedics of the image. The Athenian becomes a free man (*eleutheros*) by willingly enslaving himself to the ideal.

But what is the power that inheres in the speech? Who is served by the self-relationship it generates in its audience? This speech is often taken as the demos's imagination of itself. But although part of a civic ritual, the oration is not delivered by the demos, nor do we hear its reaction to it. Instead it is an interpellation from above, a hailing that takes its force from the gravity of the occasion and the authority of the orator and, beyond that, the authority of the historian. Cleon (ever the provocateur) accuses the Athenian people of judging their past experiences and future ventures based on the speeches of orators (Thuc. 3.38.4). Here their present, too, is mediated by oratory, as they are reflected to themselves by Pericles and Thucydides in a form that perhaps resembles those elite figures more than it does their subject. In this sense, the demos's *Idealich* is not its own, and when it sees itself in it, that recognition is a misrecognition. Whereas for Lacan the alienation of the mirror stage is existential—the tragedy of an ontologically split subject—in the Epitaphios the schism is, above all, so-

[10] Cf. Berlant 1997.59–60 on "dead citizenship," an abstract, idealized, timeless citizen identity toward which real citizens aim.

cial. The Epitaphios hails the Athenian demos as an elite. The entire aesthetic of the speech presupposes the leisure and breeding of "the few" (the *oligoi*) but generalizes those qualities to the *polloi*: they lead relaxed and easy lives, they love beauty and wisdom, their very excellence and freedom are bequests handed down from their noble ancestors.[11]

What does it mean for Pericles (or Thucydides) to represent the demos as an elite? Many have seen this as a strategy in Pericles' move toward radical democracy: his ennobled demos takes the place culturally and politically of the old elite and the democracy becomes an aristocracy in the root sense of the word, the rule of the best men, the *aristoi*.[12] Others take the aristocratization of the demos as an attempt to forge civic consensus in a polis where differences of birth and wealth existed side by side with an ideology of egalitarianism. Loraux argues along these lines: by suppressing difference, the Epitaphios "help[s] to transform democracy into a beautiful, harmonious whole" (1986a.198). *Aretē* (excellence) naturalizes social hierarchy, as the speech "makes an aristocratic democracy the very symbol of unity" (199). But this unity, Loraux notes, requires some remarkable occlusions: many of the defining features of democracy—including *isēgoria* (participation in public debate), *parrhēsia* (freedom of speech), *misthophoria* (payment for civic service), and even the demos—are never mentioned by Pericles. In the course of defining democracy, she shows, the speech transforms it into "the refuge of the pure aristocratic *principle*" (187).

The civic harmony forged through the aristocratization of the demos rests upon a slippage between *aristoi* in the moral and in the social sense—between the (morally) "best" men and the men composing the old elite, which justified its political dominance by its claim to innate superiority. The speech constructs the Athenians as *aristoi* in the former sense, but does it offer them the social prerogatives of the *aristoi* in the latter sense? Whereas the former appellation might be imagined as incentive to a certain moral labor, the latter could for a large percentage of the population mean nothing but disappointment: a cobbler might be a good man, but can he really be an *aristos*? For many in the audience, then, identification with the speech's ideal involves misrecognition in the very act of recognition.

[11] The aristocratic tenor of the speech is generally recognized. Loraux's discussion of the issue is particularly good (1986a.180–92). In Plato's *Menexenus*, Socrates jokes that as soon as he hears an *epitaphios logos*, he immediately feels more noble (*gennaioteros*), as well as taller and more handsome; this effect, he adds, often lasts three days or more (*Menex*. 235a1–b2).

[12] So Gomme 1956.126: "It is remarkable, this aristocratic ideal for the very democratic Athenians—ennobled *petits bourgeois*, a whole people of aristocrats." Pericles' enemies may have taken a more cynical view. Plutarch reports that Pericles ennobled the people as a means to his own political ends (*Per.* 11.3–4), and that many saw such measures not as

Take as an example the adjective *eleutheros*, a central term in Pericles' definition of the Athenians. The word refers to both the freedom of the citizen (as opposed to the noncitizen slave) and also a freedom from economic or other necessities.[13] While the former sense applies to all citizens *qua* citizens, the latter clearly pertains more to some than to others and most of all to those with leisure and money to spare. Necessity comes in many forms: not just the compulsion of slavery but also poverty, a force Pericles acknowledges, but which he does not allow to dim the aristocratic brilliance of the demos as a whole. The poor no less than the rich, he asserts, "govern liberally [*eleutherōs*, "nobly," "freely"] with respect to the common good" (ἐλευθέρως δὲ τά τε πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν πολιτεύομεν, 2.37.2). Thus the word conflates two different social hierarchies—that of citizen over slave and that of the leisured man over the working man—and makes them seem indistinguishable, when in practice they were identical for only a small subset of individuals. All free citizens become men of leisure, *eleutheroi*.[14]

But the misrecognition goes deeper, beyond class identity into individual subjectivity. The democratic subject is here constructed within an elite framework. The elite general Pericles reflects the citizens' ideal-ego to them, and (which perhaps amounts to the same thing) the elite author Thucydides reflects it to us. The mirror, as in Silverman's formulation, becomes a cultural screen,[15] and the democratic citizen sees himself as he is projected onto this screen. Thus the "aristocratic principle" (as Loraux calls it) is not only the guiding principle of the democracy in this speech but also the defining principle of the democratic subject. The citizen's self-relation is a class relation. The dynamic of the oration may be cohesive in that it creates a unified community out of disparate interests. It is also coercive, though, for to refuse to identify with the speech's elitism is to fail to be an Athenian. The speech forges a cathexis to an elite vision of Athens. When the demos is bound by that cathexis, how can it disentangle

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aristocratizing the people but as instilling bad habits and making them wanton and extravagant (9.1).

[13] On *eleutheria*, see Else 1954.154; de Ste. Croix 1981.116; Raaflaub 1985; Wood 1988.126–37, 1996.129–31; Meier 1990.169–70; Cartledge 1993a.118–51; Hansen 1996. Plato (*Rep*. 562b–c) makes *eleutheria* the defining feature of democracy, that which it values before all else; contrast Aristotle (*Rhet*. 1367a28–32), who restricts it to freedom from labor.

[14] Most scholars agree that the fifth century saw an assimilation of elite values to democratic, but there is debate over whether this represents the democratic appropriation of the terms and values of the elite (Ober 1989a) or the continuing cultural (and, by extension, political) influence of the elite within the democracy (Donlan 1980; Loraux 1986a; Wohl 1996). See also Farrar 1988.8–10, 28–30: "The Funeral Oration portrays the power and unity of the *polis* as the product of aristocratic values in a democratic context" (29).

[15] Silverman 1992.145–53; cf. 1996.9–37.

itself from the elite politics that subtends it? That is to say, if the citizens identify themselves as an elite, do they not also identify with the very idea of an elite, an idea that would seem to be antithetical to *dēmokratia*?

This identification is the basis of the speech's hegemonic force. Hegemony, as Antonio Gramsci defines it, is "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group."[16] To return to the terms of Lacan, hegemony is the ability of one group to project itself as the ideal-ego for the entire polity. Thus, as Silverman writes, "hegemony hinges upon identification; it comes into play when all members of a collectivity see themselves within the same reflecting surface,"[17] where the nature of that reflecting surface is the object of ideological struggle. This formulation suggests both the psychic investment of the individual in ideology and the political stakes of identification with an ideal. Interpellated as elite, encouraged to identify with an elite aesthetic and morality, Pericles' demos naturally, "spontaneously" subscribes to an elite world view that also implicitly encompasses elite political stances. The first-person plural that seems so natural in this speech—we love beauty, we are free and noble, we obey the law—engenders and conceals this hegemonic identification: because one's identity as a citizen depends on accepting this interpellation, on answering to this "we," it becomes difficult to accept one of its imperatives without subscribing to all, or to engage critically with the declaratives that constitute one's own political being.

Given this hegemonic dynamic, it is appropriate that the speech is an *epitaphios logos*. The democracy at Athens was built on oratory, the ideal of *parrhēsia* and the practice of free debate in the Assembly and lawcourts. But the *epitaphios* is not part of that democratic process. Delivered in the Kerameikos (the civic cemetery), not the Pnyx or Heliaia (home of the Assembly and courts), the *epitaphios* is an epideictic speech: it persuades by showing, not by arguing.[18] Rather than speak about past exploits that they all already know, Pericles proposes to show (δηλώσας) the audience "the habits, character, and constitution that have made them great" (2.36.4). The speech is spectacular, and its spectacle is the Athenians themselves. Rhetoric is bypassed: the *aretē* of the dead is displayed in their own deeds, not in the words of a single man (2.35.1). In the

[16] Gramsci 1971.12. Cf. Mouffe 1979.195: "A class is hegemonic when it has managed to articulate to its discourse the overwhelming majority of ideological elements characteristic of a given social formation, in particular the national-popular elements which allow it to become the class expressing the national interest."

[17] Silverman 1992.24. She also notes the necessary link between idealization and identification (1996.70).

[18] On the *epitaphios logos* as "mere" epideictic, see Loraux 1986a.221–30; Yunis 1996.81–82; cf. Kennedy 1963.54–66; Scholtz 1997.124–34.

constant play on *logos* and *ergon*, word and deed, the deed is its own epideictic, and the speech becomes manifest only through the deeds of the dead (2.43.1–3). These deeds, in turn, take their visibility from the city whose greatness they reflect: Athens is the *paradeigma* (2.37.1), the original of which everything else—the dead, the living, the *logos*—is an imitation. The spectacle creates the mirror, and epideictic becomes the only possible response to the wondrous sight, the *theama* and *thauma* (spectacle and marvel, 2.39.1, 4), of Athens.[19]

Epideictic also fits with the speech's hegemonic dynamic in that it allows no retort. This speech will have no formal answer or vote. In fact, there is not even an audience reaction; when it is over, the people just go home (2.34.7, 2.46.1). The genre is thus complicitous with the speech's hegemonic force; it seems to leave no space for refusal of its interpellations.[20] As we will see, there is, in fact, a space in which refusals might be made, but the genre itself grants these no legitimate status; they must remain latent and never (at least within the terms of Thucydides' text) achieve the status of a counterargument or an alternate democratic reality.

This oration's ideal fosters misrecognition and subjects the demos to elite hegemony. But it also grants the demos its very existence as a recognizable, coherent entity. The audience arrives at the funeral as individuals; it leaves as the Athenian demos. The speech's call (as in Althusser's model) both subjects and subjectifies in the same instant. It hails the demos by a name (*aristoi*, *eleutheroi*) that it accepts only through self-alienation and at the risk of subjection to that name (and to those who more fully possess it). But in that same gesture of naming, it also calls the demos into being ("we [noble, free] Athenians"). Thus the Epitaphios's ideal becomes (as Lacan says of the mirror image, 1977.4) the "armour of an alienating identity." On the one hand, it holds the civic body together by providing a unifying and defining exterior. On the other hand, it constrains the citizen

[19] On the Thucydidean antithesis between *logos* and *ergon*, see Immerwahr 1960.276–88; Hunter 1973; Parry 1981 (esp. 159–75 on its character in this speech); Allison 1997.16–18, 163–238; Ober 1998.56–60, 83–85. In this tension between the *erga* of the dead and the *logoi* of the living, action is placed on the side of the ideal-ego, and the ego itself is relegated to the role of reporter and laudator, trying to match the deeds with its words. Only by merging with the ideal does it come to participate in the "truth of deeds" (*ergōn . . . alētheia*, 2.41.2). Contrast Ober 1998.84: "By pointing out that his *logos* is not an *ergon*, Thucydides' Pericles alerts his audience to the element of idealization in his portrait of Athens."

[20] This is in contrast to Pericles' second speech. After that speech (2.65), the audience publicly follows his advice, but privately continues its class-specific grudge: the masses are upset at his insistence on abandoning the Attic countryside because they will be deprived of what little they have; the elite, because they will lose their country estates (2.65.2). On this sociological division and its meaning in Thucydides, see Ober 1998.92–94.

within an ideality not of his own making, an identity that alienates him from himself and subjects him to a law outside himself.[21]

The double nature of this call—its simultaneous subjectivization and subjection—is nowhere clearer than in Pericles' famous definition of democracy: "The name [of our constitution] is called democracy because it is government not for the few but for the majority" (καὶ ὄνομα μὲν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐς ὀλίγους ἀλλ' ἐς πλείονας οἰκεῖν δημοκρατία κέκληται, 2.37.1). It is easy to read this statement cynically, especially in light of Thucydides' famous dictum that Athens under Pericles was "a democracy in name but in fact rule by the first man" (2.65.9). Pericles seems to be saying that *dēmokratia* is nothing but a name, that the Athenian constitution is *called* a democracy, but is actually something else—the rule of "best" men, for example, an aristocracy in the modern sense.[22] In this reading the demos is truly subjected, for Pericles (or Thucydides) is imagined as offering it the ideal of elitism (under the name of *dēmokratia*) in order to conceal its true conditions of existence, that it is in fact ruled by others. That is not an impossible reading; however, we could also read the sentence in a more positive way. Speaking the word *dēmokratia* here for the first and only time in the speech, the sentence is cletic: it calls democracy into existence. What is this *politeia* that is so worth dying for, that is a *paradeigma* to others? It is democracy. Here and throughout, the Epitaphios engenders what it names. Urging the living citizens to emulate the dead, it transforms them into those objects of its praise; it creates the ideal Athenian by describing him and praising him. In the same way, it creates Athenian democracy: calling it by name, it defines it, denominates it, makes it real. Democracy may exist for its citizens every day, but it is in such paradigmatic instances that it crystallizes as an idea, an idea that coheres around its name: *dēmokratia*, the *kratos* of the demos.

The Epitaphios's mirroring, then, is both constitutive and hegemonic: it constructs simultaneously the self-relationship of the Athenian subject and the political relationships of the Athenian democracy and sets the two in complex interaction. The speech generates an ideal of Athenian citizenship and fixes that ideal within the individual. His psychic relation to that ideal is the kernel around which his subjectivity coalesces. This psychic self-relation, though, is also a political relation: the ideal that

[21] Butler 1997 is a study of this double bind of subjectification through subjection, a paradox contained in the French term *assujettissement*. See especially her rereading of Althusser, 1997.106–31.

[22] Plut. *Per.* 9.1 paraphrases Thucydides' "rule of the first man" as *aristokratikē politeia*; cf. Pl. *Menex*. 238c5–239a4. Ober suggests that the term *dēmokratia* has a derogatory sense for Thucydides, meaning "something like 'the lower classes possess the raw power that gives them the means to constrain the rest of us'" (1998.71–72); cf. Loraux 1987.41; Roberts 1994.43, 49. On the origins of the word, see Ehrenberg 1950.

grounds the subject's being is a political ideal with political ramifications. At the same time, the psyche is the wellspring of politics. Patriotism has its roots in narcissism; it is a passion for the ideal-ego as embodied in the polis, an extrapolation of the fantasy that intimately structures the Athenian subject.[23] Further, if the mirror stage is a template for all future relations (as Lacan says),[24] then the demos's love for its demagogues can also be imagined as a repetition of its desire for that original ideal: Pericles, I will suggest, is the demos's impossible mirror image brought to life.

The dynamics of idealization in the Epitaphios show us, first, the profound psychic investment of the individual in the political relations in which he participates. He does not merely endure a politics foisted upon him by others; nor does he enter freely into a politics that preexisted him. He actively creates his politics through a desire that emanates from the core of his being. In that sense, politics is a projection of the Athenian subject's psyche: a dream that he dreams. But, second, this speech also shows that that psyche is never apolitical or prepolitical. The subject's desires—even his most basic narcissistic desires—are always structured by the political relations within which he lives and the discourse through which he understands them. Politics is always subjective, then, and the subject, as Aristotle put it, is a political animal.

The Lover

Having theorized the nexus of the political and the subjective from which he is born, let us look more closely at this *politikon zōon*. Two interlocking sets of coordinates will help us define this creature. The first is gender: this lover of the city is distinguished by his masculinity, a masculinity that is inseparable from his subjectivity and citizenship. In this speech about military valor (*andreia*), manly virtue (*andreia*) is everywhere implicit and the citizen's masculinity is at issue in every detail of his existence. Likewise, his nobility also shows in everything he does: class is the other axis on which this figure lies. These two axes must be considered in conjunction. Class and gender go in tandem, and each entails the other: the ideal citizen in Thucydides' Epitaphios is both a man and a gentleman.

This citizen enjoys an easy, pleasurable, and aristocratic manliness. "We love beauty with frugality and we love wisdom without softness" (*philokaloumen te gar met' euteleias kai philosophoumen aneu malakias*,

[23] Loraux also speaks of narcissism in the *epitaphioi logoi*, but does not pursue the psychoanalytic consequences of the "narcissistic ecstasy" that the speeches induce in their audiences (1986a.266).

[24] Lacan 1988a.129–42; cf. Freud 1955 [1921].113, 1957 [1914].

2.40.1). The Athenian's loves are those elite staples, beauty and wisdom.[25] The straightforward declarative style of the statement suggests the naturalness of such desires; what it occludes is the social relations behind them. Taste is a direct reflection and product of social standing, as Pierre Bourdieu shows, and the purer the taste, the higher the standing.[26] What could be purer than this abstract and timeless love for beauty and wisdom?

The very abstraction naturalizes this desire and conceals the rules by which it is acquired. The appreciation of beauty and wisdom presupposes leisure and education, which in turn require wealth. It is no accident that the yoking of *kalos* and *sophos*—beautiful and wise—occurs most often in that circle of wealthy young men who idled away long afternoons discoursing with Socrates. Thus *philokalia* and *philosophia* may be imagined as the final terms in a long chain of conversions: wealth into leisure, leisure into education, education into good taste.[27] Through these conversions, material differences are euphemized: differences of wealth, education, and access to power are disguised under sweeping declaratives: "We love beauty and wisdom." Indeed, in Athens, where private income was difficult to gauge and ostentatious displays of wealth were antithetical to the democratic ideology of *isonomia* (equality under the law), such ineffables as taste and breeding were primary markers of the elite: the rich (*plousioi*) preferred to be known as the *kaloikagathoi*, those who are "good and beautiful" themselves and appreciate those qualities in others.

The declaration *philokaloumen kai philosophoumen* thus positions its subjects, the "we," as an elite. Beauty and wisdom are the prerogatives of the *eleutheroi* and of all Athenians in as much as they "govern liberally [*eleutherōs*] with respect to the common good" (ἐλευθέρως δὲ τά τε πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν πολιτεύομεν, 2.37.2). But again there is a certain slippage, for it is the man who is free from economic necessity, not just the man who is free from slavery, who knows and loves them best. The tragedian Achaeus put it succinctly: "There is no love of the beautiful in an empty

[25] On the elite associations of *philokalia*, see Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 1099a (where *hoi polloi* are opposed to *hoi philokaloi*) and 1179b8–9 (where *philokalia* is linked with *eugeneia*); Rusten 1985.17 n.19, 1989.153 ad 2.40.1. *Philosophia* seems to have a quasi-technical meaning at this period: philosophy, not just the generic love of wisdom. These two aestheticized loves evoke the quintessential eros of the elite, philosophical pederasty, in which the love of wisdom *is* the love of the beautiful, especially as embodied in a beautiful young boy.

[26] Bourdieu 1984.11–96. Arendt cites this Thucydidean phrase as the first instance of taste as a political faculty (1954.213–19).

[27] There can, of course, be further conversions, for example, of symbolic capital into gratitude or alliances, political or cultic positions, victories in court, or even hard cash. But, as Bourdieu shows, good taste is its own reward, and it would be a mistake (and a particularly bourgeois one) to assume that material profit is the end goal of all social advantage.

stomach" (fr. 6 Snell).[28] What, then, of the poor in the audience? Do they also love beauty and wisdom, and if they do not, can they still be Athenians?

Poverty is acknowledged in the speech, and it too is euphemized. Impoverishment is no bar to political participation (2.37.1); it is not considered shameful (*aiskhron*) in itself, but it is more shameful (*aiskhion*) not to escape it (τὸ πένεσθαι οὐχ ὁμολογεῖν τινὶ αἰσχρόν, ἀλλὰ μὴ διαφεύγειν ἔργῳ αἴσχιον, 2.40.1). *Aiskhron* is the opposite of *kalon* and *agathon*; the association of this adjective with poverty thus evokes the traditional moral-social hierarchy in which the well-off are by nature *kaloi k'agathoi*, and the poor are *aiskhroi* until proved otherwise. This equation is further naturalized by Pericles' emphasis on the morality of wealth: it is not wealth or poverty per se that is *kalon* or *aiskhron*, but its use. Wealth is to be used in a timely or appropriate manner (πλούτῳ τε ἔργου μᾶλλον καιρῷ ἢ λόγου κόμπῳ χρώμεθα, 2.40.1). Only when it is not escaped by action does poverty become shameful—or rather "more shameful" (*aiskhion*): the syntax of the sentence belies the content, suggesting that poverty is in fact shameful, even though we agree (*homologein*) that it is not.[29]

The ideal of *philokalia* and *philosophia* both occludes the fact of economic inequality and also subjects the poor to an ethic that even while it "ennobles" them will always find them (morally, as socially) *aiskhroi*. Social inequality is euphemized as moral inequality, or else is merely swept away with a wave of the hand—all of us Athenians love beauty and wisdom. The speech's grand inclusiveness (heightened by the civic occasion, on which all citizens are equal in the face of death) smoothes over the syllogism, so that rejecting *kalokagathia* becomes tantamount to giving up one's Athenian citizenship. How could one not "spontaneously," "jubilantly" identify with such a noble and appealing ideal? And yet if identification with the *Idealich* is, as Lacan says, "the anticipated seizure of mastery" (1988a.146), it is clear that while the better-off in the audience

[28] ἐν κενῇ γὰρ γαστρὶ τῶν καλῶν ἔρως οὐκ ἔστι. Achaeus is probably talking about the love of beautiful boys or women, since the fragment (which comes from a satyr play) continues: "Aphrodite is bitter for the hungry" (πεινῶσιν γὰρ ἡ Κύπρις πικρά). Even physical desire is an elite privilege.

[29] This moralization of wealth can also be read against the backdrop of Athenian imperialism. The empire for which Pericles is urging the Athenians to fight and die brought a great influx of wealth into the city, and to that extent the promise of escaping shameful poverty has some material basis (see M. Finley 1978). But there is a considerable difference between the tunny-fish and sausages imagined by the Aristophanic everyman as the rewards of empire and the morally and socially weighted language of the Epitaphios. The empire may have afforded financial benefits to the poorer Athenians, but it could not make them *kaloikagathoi*. On the meaning of poverty in classical Greek, see Markle 1985.267–71: he argues convincingly that *penia* referred not to utter destitution but to the necessity of full-time employment and a lack of leisure.

may anticipate seizing mastery, the poor will have a long wait, and in the end are more likely to be mastered by the very ideal they seek to master.

So far we have examined *philokaloumen kai philosophoumen* in isolation, but what of their qualifiers, *met' euteleias* (with frugality) and *aneu malakias* (without softness)? If the former terms interpellate the Athenians as aristocrats, the latter bring that aristocracy within the bounds of democratic ideology; while the former eliminate poverty and boorishness, the latter banish the specter of a luxuriant and effeminate elite. A love of beauty opens one to the charge of extravagance, *poluteleia*, and connotes the undemocratic expenditure of a character like Alcibiades. The elite in democratic Athens generally tried to minimize the resentment their advantages might arouse by ostentatiously spending their money on the city through liturgies, taxes, or other public services.[30] In this way they transformed their material advantages into symbolic capital, prestige, and the goodwill of the demos. Lavish expenditure on one's own person, showy luxuries like purple robes or horses or jewelry, were thought to display an antidemocratic or even tyrannical bent. That is not to say that those with money to spend did not spend it on themselves: Alcibiades did so gleefully and even went so far as to try to justify his personal indulgences as a public beneficence in that they brought glory to Athens as well as to himself (Thuc. 6.16.1–3). But this ostentation was later used against him: he was hounded out of Athens for (among other reasons) enjoying a lifestyle that seemed to smack of tyrannical ambitions. For the most part, the Athenian elite preferred to show their superiority in more civic-minded ways and to avoid the negative implications of excessive wealth.

Thus when Pericles draws the demos within an elite aesthetic, it is a specific elite aesthetic that he is presenting, that of a democratic—which is to say, legitimate—aristocracy. He excludes the figment of the extravagant and self-indulgent aristocrat so vigorously that he even risks going too far in the other direction, for *euteleia* usually carries a pejorative connotation, "cheapness" rather than "frugality."[31] Where he could have written *aneu poluteleias* (without extravagance), Thucydides opts for a more extreme (for many readers, too extreme) locution. In its harsh juxtaposition to *philokaloumen*, *euteleia* sounds defensive—better to be stingy than extravagant—and bespeaks the tension between the elite ideal and

[30] M. Finley 1973.150–54; Whitehead 1983; Ober 1989a.199–202, 226–33; Christ 1990.148–51; Kurke 1991.168–76, 225–39; P. Wilson 2000.109–97.

[31] Elsewhere in Thucydides *euteleia* refers primarily to Athenian economizing during the war (8.1.3, 8.4.1, 8.86.6); Wardman 1959 takes it in this way here. Gomme 1956.120 documents the pejorative meanings of *euteleia* and concludes that in this passage *euteleia* "in fact seems to be just the wrong word." J. Finley's reading (1963 [1942].147) is among the more euphemistic: "The phrase μετ' εὐτελείας, 'with simplicity,' means that beauty does not depend on monetary value and can be available to all." Cf. Rusten 1985.17.

the democratic realities that the speech as a whole tries to cover over. The Athenian love of beauty, as Pericles asserts somewhat too vehemently, is thoroughly democratic; the demos constitutes an elite, but it is a legitimate—a *democratic*—elite.

What is *to kalon* that the Athenians all love? Many have associated it with the physical beauty of the city (in particular Pericles' beautification of the Acropolis) and with the spectacular public festivals and beautiful private estates mentioned in 2.38.1.[32] There Pericles praises the Athenians for having contrived all sorts of recreation: "contests and sacrifices throughout the year and beautiful private estates, which every day drive away unhappiness with the delight they bring" (ἀγῶσι μέν γε καὶ θυσίαις διετησίοις νομίζοντες, ἰδίαις δὲ κατασκευαῖς εὐπρεπέσιν, ὧν καθ' ἡμέραν ἡ τέρψις τὸ λυπηρὸν ἐκπλήσσει, 2.38.1). Again here we find a tension between the *oligoi* and the *polloi*: the grammar of the sentence leaves unclear both the exact source of delight (both civic festivities and private estates or only the latter?) and its beneficiaries (the whole demos or only the owners of the estates?). Moreover, *kataskeuai euprepeis* (beautiful estates) are elsewhere linked with *poluteleia*, the extravagant wealth that is so rigorously denied in the awkward *philokaloumen met' euteleias*.[33] In this passage, the love of beauty would seem to be exclusive and expensive, as the demos takes delight in the private luxury of the nobility.

But in the rest of the speech, this class-specific delight is eschewed in favor of a more universal beauty: the *aretē* of the dead. The city and its buildings (public or private) are never in fact referred to as *kalos* in this oration, but the deeds of the slain soldiers are: danger and vengeance were to them most beautiful (*kalliston*, 2.42.4); their *aretē* was a "very beautiful contribution" to the city (*kalliston eranon*, 2.43.1); even the institution of praising them, the *epitaphios nomos* itself, is *kalos* (2.35.1). Thus the aristocratic associations of *philokaloumen* are mitigated first by the exclusion of extravagance and second by the direction of this love toward civic *aretē*, not elite luxury. What "we" love when "we" love beauty is our own democratic virtue, our own ideal-ego, and class resentment dissolves in the face of patriotic narcissism.

The result is not only a democratic elitism but also a democratic masculinity. If love of beauty brings with it the charge of extravagance, love of wisdom incurs the scandal of softness. Softness (*malakia*) is the inverse of manliness (a polarity to which we will return at length in chapter 4).

[32] Gomme 1956.119–20; cf. Wardman 1959.39; Monoson 1994.259–60. See also Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 2.9–10 on the collectivization of elite pleasures (baths, feasts, palaistrai) in Athens.

[33] Thuc. 1.10.2, 2.65.2 (*polutelesi kataskeuais*), 6.31.1 (*polutelestatē kai euprepestatē*, of the Sicilian Expedition).

The word embraces a whole range of qualities thought to be incompatible with manly strength: moral weakness, lack of self-control, susceptibility to the will of others, inconstancy—in short, effeminacy. In this speech *malakia* is less the weakness of a woman, though, than that of the effete aristocrat.[34] Wealth can breed softness, but the dead Athenians did not become soft (*emalakisthē*) through overvaluing wealth; they longed more for vengeance than for wealth and considered this the most beautiful of ventures (2.42.4).[35] Thus the denial of extravagance (*met' euteleias*) is simultaneously a denial of softness (*aneu malakias*). Moreover, softness suggests not only wealth but also Eastern profligacy and a possible antipathy to military duty and the other rigors of democratic life: it is an affront at once to the manliness and to the political sensibilities of the citizen body.

Philokaloumen te gar met' euteleias kai philosophoumen aneu malakias. The interpellation seems irresistible and natural: we Athenians are aesthetes and intellectuals but not snobs or pansies, our loves are refined but still manly, our tastes noble but not ostentatious; we are aristocrats but still democrats. The sentence both reflects to the demos an *Idealich* and facilitates identification with that idealized image by removing any negative associations and smoothing over the inevitable misrecognitions. How could we Athenians not respond with jubilation to this reflection and happily seize it as our own?

But as A. W. Gomme, Thucydides' greatest commentator, has confessed apropos of *philokaloumen met' euteleias*, "it is difficult to be happy about this clause" (1956.119), and the pleasure of recognition and anticipated mastery that the sentence as a whole should offer is clouded by the diction, which translated literally yields "we love beauty with cheapness." Whereas *philokaloumen kai philosophoumen* reflects the demos as it

[34] For the figure of the effeminate aristocrat, see Kurke 1992; Griffith 1995.84–85. If the phrase *philosophoumen aneu malakias* excludes the effeminate elite on one side, it eliminates on the other the hardness of a Spartan, who appreciates neither beauty nor wisdom. An implicit contrast with Sparta informs many of the formulations of Athenianness in this speech.

[35] The next clause of the sentence is problematic: ἐβουλήθησαν μετ' αὐτοῦ τοὺς μὲν τιμωρεῖσθαι, τῶν δὲ ἐφίεσθαι, "with that [most noble venture] they wanted on the one hand to get vengeance on the enemy, and on the other to desire those things [i.e., wealth and the escape from poverty]." In the previous sentence, wealth had been associated with weakness and contrasted to military courage; here, if the text is sound, desire for wealth seems to be reconciled with the desire for vengeance. Gomme objects that "it would be contradictory as well as tasteless, after asserting that both rich and poor have abjured the charms of wealth, to add that in their last fight it was still their aim" (1956.132 ad loc.). He supports Poppo's conjecture, ἀφίεσθαι: they renounce wealth rather than seek it. The excluded term—unmanly wealth—troubles not only Athenian *andreia* but the text itself. On the complexities of this passage, see Pearson 1943.399–404; Kakridis 1961.79; Rusten 1986.

might wish to be, the qualifications—jarring enough to make Gomme unhappy—remind us of the artificiality of that identification. They raise the very specter they seek to dispel, an antidemocratic elite, and the vehemence of their denial installs that specter in between the demos and its reflection. This repressed figure reminds us that the demos and the elite are not identical, that their identity here is forged only temporarily and with difficulty, and that the identification both contains and conceals a politics that the speech as a whole prefers to leave unspoken.

The gaps between *philokaloumen kai philosophoumen* and *met' euteleias kai aneu malakias* open a space of potential disidentification, the possibility that a reflection that should inspire jubilation will instead be met by unhappiness. The speech does its best to eliminate this possibility: as we have seen, it smoothes over class misrecognition by moralizing poverty, so that a poor man who dissociates himself from *kalokagathia* is automatically *kakos* and *aiskhros*. Articulating class identity so closely to civic identity, it leaves very little room for argument. Its very genre, I suggested, precludes debate.[36] This speech thus interpellates its audience from a position of unquestionable authority, issuing a command that can scarely be refused.

Yet despite its compelling force, the Epitaphios nonetheless leaves tenuous spaces in which an audience might resist interpellation or at least respond to it with something other than spontaneous joy.[37] The poor are taken care of—brought with some effort into the fold of the Athenian "we"—but there are two other audiences that stand in a more oblique relation to the speech's ideality. The first comprises those foreigners present at the ceremony. The praise of the dead is delivered before a throng of both citizens and foreigners and will be, Pericles declares, a boon for both to hear (2.36.4). But as Loraux has pointed out, one must wonder about the nature of the benefit foreigners will derive from hearing this speech, with its insistence upon Athens's superiority to all other Greeks and its justification of imperial hegemony on the basis of that superiority.[38] These foreigners are asked not to identify with Pericles' ideal but to submit to it, to recognize both its ideality and the impossibility that they might ever equal it. For them the speech is not a mirror but a barred door.

[36] Ober 1998.81 notes that Pericles is the only Athenian politician whose speeches are not paired by opposing speeches. So, too, Pouncey 1980.19: "Pericles is always allowed the last word."

[37] McGlew 2002, ch. 1, finds opposition to the ideas of Pericles' Funeral Oration in contemporary comedy. Plato's *Menexenus* is another critical response to this vision: see Monoson 2000.181–205.

[38] Loraux 1986a.77–131.

Such, too, is the case for women, mentioned briefly at the end of the oration (2.45.2). Are women part of the Athenian "we" or not?[39] Is its *Idealich* theirs? On the one hand, they join in the mourning for the dead; presumably they, too, can take pride in the city's power and pleasure in its civic festivals. On the other hand, how can they even begin to live up to the injunction to manliness when their nature is *malakē*, soft, and, Pericles stresses, their *aretē* is not to be worse than their nature? How can they participate in the speech's economy of praise and blame when their only glory is to be spoken of least, whether for praise or blame? While not fully excluded from the speech's community, they are not fully included either, but instead are included precisely as embedded outsiders. They exist within the Athens of the Epitaphios only insofar as they are reflected in its mirror, but their relation to that mirror will always be oblique, their alienation from its ideal particularly glaring, and their misrecognition particularly overt.

The presence of women and foreigners, subjects whose identification with the speech's ideal is extremely problematic, raises questions about the dynamics of identity for those more completely encompassed by its embrace. Whereas Lacan's mirror scene makes subjectivity dependent on identification, on the child assuming the idealized image as his own and incorporating it as the core of his developing subjectivity, Silverman's reformulation of the mirror as a cultural screen opens the possibility of a distance or disjunction between the individual and his projected image, filtered as it is through cultural or ideological forms. In that distance arises the possibility of "playing with the screen," assuming its images selectively or even subversively.[40] In these moments of overt exclusion—or in the unhappy tensions created by the conflation of demos and elite—do we find an opening for such resistance to the speech's interpellation? Does the oblique relation of women and foreigners offer Athenian men a model of subjectivity formulated within, but not fully captured by, the speech's ideal?

The next two chapters explore these possible disidentifications, seeing in Cleon and Alcibiades a resistance to the Periclean ideal. For the time being, though, I would like to emphasize the ways in which Thucydides' text attempts to foreclose such possibilities, to make its mirror/screen the only possible one in which the Athenian citizen can imagine himself. The potential gaps—opened by the awkward diction of *philokaloumen met'*

[39] On this question, see Patterson 1986, and on 2.45.2, Walcot 1973; Andersen 1987; Cartledge 1993b; Hardwick 1993; Kallet-Marx 1993b; Crane 1996b.75–92; Tyrrell and Bennett 1999; E. Cohen 2000.45 and n.206, 98. Holst-Warhaft 1992.114–26 discusses the *epitaphios nomos* as a male appropriation of the female rites of mourning.

[40] Silverman 1992.148–53; cf. 1996.31–36. Here Silverman's exegesis of Lacanian optics intersects with Butler's rereading of Althusser's interpellation and her argument for the possibility of subversive performances of mandated subjectivities (e.g., 1993.1–16).

euteleias, for example, or by the marginal presence of foreigners and women, or even by the fear Pericles expresses at the opening of the speech that all might not find its ideal plausible or bearable—are slight and are closed by the relentless force of the speech's praise, which makes it exceedingly hard to resist captation. So totalizing is this vision that even those who can see themselves only dimly in it must reach some uneasy accommodation to it: foreigners, women, even the poor may be unable ever to come close to the speech's ideal, but still they are offered no alternative. If being an Athenian means dying with manly courage for Athens, for instance, then women are failed Athenians. But inasmuch as no living person—man or woman, citizen or foreigner, rich or poor—can ever fully approximate this ideal, the presence of these others only illuminates the pathology inherent within the speech's identifications. Within the terms of the Epitaphios—and it admits of no other terms—there can be, strictly speaking, no living Athenians.[41]

Instead of acknowledging this impossibility and risking despair or disidentification, the speech emphasizes the ease with which a true Athenian performs his Athenianness. I suggested in the preceding section that the mirror scene sets in motion a labor of self-mastery, as the child struggles to approximate his image. Foucault (1985) has documented in detail the technologies of such self-mastery in classical Greece, describing a subject that in other respects closely resembles that of the Epitaphios. But here all labor is virtually invisible, and the fit between the Athenian ego and ideal-ego appears seamless. In Thucydides' text we find none of the rigorous self-examination that Foucaultian man endlessly exerts; there is no careful regulation of pleasures here, no regimen of moderation, no niggardly *enkrateia* (self-control). Instead, the Epitaphios emphasizes the ease of it all: this is a manliness that comes naturally, without effort.[42] The

[41] My reading thus differs from that of Ober (1998.83–89), who emphasizes the "self-subversive quality of the Funeral Oration" (86). While I agree that Pericles' praise of Athens is by no means simple and that many of its densest passages (like 2.37.1, perceptively read by Ober, 1998.86–88) have implications that might lead a critical reader to question the perfection of democracy as a political form, I do not think we are invited to pose those questions within the context of this ritual, nor do I agree that "Pericles' discussion of Athens' *politeia* as an ideal type is compromised by its location in a tremendously complex speech" (86). The speech is, of course, replete with ironies that will only become manifest as the war unfolds (notably with the plague, as Ober points out, 86); to say that this makes the speech self-subverting, though, is to collapse the temporal disclosure that is so key to Thucydides' historical narrative. But I do concur with Ober's conclusion, that "the great and stable Athens established by Pericles' Funeral Oration may prove to exist only in the idealizing discourse of the eulogistic speaker, and through a suspension of the disbelief encouraged by the Funeral Oration's own antithetical structure" (89).

[42] Loraux 1986a.151: "One is born into valor in being born an Athenian." She also links the theme of ease to the speech's representation of the Athenians as aristocrats. Her thesis

Spartans, Pericles says, pursue manly courage (*to andreion*) from youth onward by means of education and laborious discipline (καὶ ἐν ταῖς παιδείαις οἱ μὲν ἐπιπόνῳ ἀσκήσει εὐθὺς νέοι ὄντες τὸ ἀνδρεῖον μετέρχονται, 2.39.1). We Athenians, on the other hand, live a free and easy life (ἀνειμένως διαιτώμενοι, 2.39.1) but are no less brave for that.

> καίτοι εἰ ῥᾳθυμίᾳ μᾶλλον ἢ πόνων μελέτῃ καὶ μὴ μετὰ νόμων τὸ πλέον ἢ τρόπων ἀνδρείας ἐθέλομεν κινδυνεύειν, περιγίγνεται ἡμῖν τοῖς τε μέλλουσιν ἀλγεινοῖς μὴ προκάμνειν, καὶ ἐς αὐτὰ ἐλθοῦσι μὴ ἀτολμοτέρους τῶν αἰεὶ μοχθούντων φαίνεσθαι.
>
> If we are willing to undergo risks in a carefree manner rather than with laborious practice, and with a manly courage that derives from our character rather than being imposed by law, we have the advantage of not worrying about sufferings that are yet to come, and when we reach them, we face them no less bravely than those who are always laboring. (2.39.4)

Spartan masculinity is artificial, forced, labored; Athenian masculinity is natural, innate, effortless. We have already seen that this is far from true, that masculinity is constructed in this speech with great effort: the difficult welding together of aristocratic and democratic elements leaves traces of its labor in such awkward phrases as *philokaloumen met' euteleias*. The speech itself performs the education and laborious discipline that Athenian men supposedly do not require, but it disguises that effort, presenting the masculinity it constructs as a matter of *phusis*, not *nomos*—essence, not training.[43]

Ease is the prerogative of the *eleutheros*, and it both facilitates and naturalizes his distinction.[44] Accordingly, labor (*ponos*) is an ambiguous term: it is praised in the Athenians' ancestors (who built up Athens's territory through hard work, 2.36.2; cf. 2.62.3) but denigrated in Sparta's war preparations. There is no hint here of the virtuous *ponos* of the fourth-century nobleman, a Xenophontic Ischomachus or Cyrus energeti-

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is supported by the parallel between 2.39.1 (ἀνειμένως διαιτώμενοι) and 1.6.3 (ἀνειμένῃ τῇ διαίτῃ), describing the early Athenians' turn toward a more luxurious life-style. The idea of the Athenians' innate nobility is closely tied to the theme (prominent in all *epitaphioi*) of their noble ancestry (*eugeneia*), originating in the land itself: see Thomas 1989.217–21 and Pl. *Menex*. 237a–238c. See further Hesk 2000.26–39.

[43] Cf. 2.39.1: *paraskeuais* vs. *eupsukhōi*. On *paraskeuē* in Thucydides, see Allison 1989: she points out the conspicuous absence of the word in the Epitaphios (58–59, 133). For the Peloponnesian view on *ponos*, see Thuc. 1.123.1: "It is our tradition to attain *aretē* through *ponos*."

[44] Bourdieu 1984.53–56; cf. 68: "The ideology of natural taste . . . only recognizes as legitimate the relation to culture [which] . . . manifests by its ease and naturalness that true culture is nature."

cally working on his *kalokagathia*.[45] Instead, the Athenians are the carefree sons of hardworking fathers, living off their trust funds.

But this representation of Athenian masculinity as enjoyed naturally, not achieved laboriously, can be sustained only through an effort of its own, and again this shows in an awkward locution. In the passage cited above, we are told that the Athenians face dangers with ease (*rhathumia*) rather than with the practice of labor (*ponōn meletēi*). Clearly Thucydides means *rhathumia* to be a positive quality and *ponōn meletēi* to be a negative one.[46] But this is a forced use of the diction. When *rhathumia* and *ponos* are contrasted, it is most often the latter that is positive. Demosthenes, for example, charges his opponents with exercising *ponos* on their own behalf while advising *rhathumia* on behalf of the city (10.71) and contrasts the *ponos* of the past to the shameful *rhathumia* of the present (11.21–22). *Ponos* is a civic virtue, while *rhathumia* is the habit of a lazy and politically inactive elite; thus to labor when it is possible to take it easy is admirable (Xen. *Anab*. 2.6.5; Isoc. 1.9, 15.289). Pericles himself elsewhere employs this contrast between virtuous labor and negligent sloth, urging the Athenians to pursue honor and labor as the price of their imperial privilege (Thuc. 2.63.1).[47] "No man who is negligent becomes glorious, but labors breed a good reputation," writes Euripides (οὐδεὶς γὰρ ὢν ῥᾴθυμος εὐκλεὴς ἀνήρ, ἀλλ' οἱ πόνοι τίκτουσι τὴν εὐδοξίαν, fr. 237N; cf. fr. 238N). But in the Epitaphios, glory and good reputation come naturally, without *ponoi*. Here *ponos* is not a noble endeavor but the labor of an overanxious Spartan; here *rhathumia* is not negligence but the ease of entitlement. If the gods alone are *aponoi*, free from labor, then Athenian *andreia* would seem to be divine.

This is man as superman, supreme not only in his effortlessness but also in his self-sufficiency, for the Athenian is above all else *autarkēs*, self-sufficient. The citizen of a polis that is itself supremely *autarkēs* (*autarkestatēn*, 2.36.3), the Athenian is exemplary in his graceful self-possession.

> Ξυνελών τε λέγω τήν τε πᾶσαν πόλιν τῆς 'Ελλάδος παίδευσιν εἶναι καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον δοκεῖν ἄν μοι τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα παρ' ἡμῶν ἐπὶ πλεῖστ' ἂν εἴδη καὶ μετὰ χαρίτων μάλιστ' ἂν εὐτραπέλως τὸ σῶμα αὔταρκες παρέχεσθαι.

[45] Donlan 1980.172–73; Wood 1988.137–45; Johnstone 1994.

[46] Parry 1981.165: "ῥαθυμία is a particularly attractive word in this passage. Used vulgarly to mean laxity, . . . it here means that ease, grace, and creative leisure of the Athenians which allows freedom to the mind, but does not diminish action: a truly aristocratic ideal for the parent of democracies!" Cf. Huart 1968.373–76.

[47] Cf. Thuc. 1.70.8. Throughout Thucydides Athenian *ponos* and *polupragmosunē* are contrasted to Spartan *hēsukhia*. See also Eur. *Suppl*. 323–25, 576–77. Wood 1988.139 stresses that the denigration of labor was a class prejudice and represented a minority view in Athens; cf. Aymard 1943; Ober 1989a.272–79; E. Cohen 2000.142–43.

> In sum, I say that the entire city is a lesson for Greece and that in all respects, in my opinion, every single man among us shows himself in the most different activities and with the most grace and versatility the master of his own person [*to sōma autarkes*]. (2.41.1)

This sentence, which comes almost exactly halfway through the speech, marks the culmination of Thucydides' description of the Athenian subject, summing up everything he has said in one broad sweep. The citizen is self-sufficient: he owns himself and governs himself. The "anticipated mastery" of the mirror scene would seem to have been achieved, as the Athenian takes possession in his own person of the Periclean ideal of *eleutheria*.[48] Not only easy and versatile (*eutrapelōs*),[49] this mastery is also a source of *kharis*, grace, charm, pleasure. This word also marks the enjoyment of autarky as elite, for *kharis* is the currency of the elite economy of gifts and gratitude: it betokens the pleasure of favors freely given and obscures the economics of loans and debts that lies behind it, thus transforming economic superiority into innate charisma.[50] The profit from owning one's own body is elite freedom and easy generosity.

The *kharis* of self-mastery both justifies and euphemizes the realities of mastery over others. The only other occurrence of the word in the Epitaphios comes in the previous paragraph in a discussion of Athens's imperial relations. Manly toward others, the Athenians act rather than suffer, bestow favors rather than receive them, and through an aggressive policy of *kharis* keep others in their debt (2.40.4). Lest this economy seem too calculated or smack too much of the marketplace, though, the speaker adds that Athenians alone perform favors not with a calculation of the profits but generously and with the confidence of their *eleutheria* (καὶ μόνοι οὐ τοῦ ξυμφέροντος μᾶλλον λογισμῷ ἢ τῆς ἐλευθερίας τῷ πιστῷ ἀδεῶς τινὰ ὠφελοῦμεν, 2.40.5). Through the semantic ambiguity of *kharis*—financial debt and charming generosity—Athens's imperial he-

[48] This autarky is also linked to *philokaloumen kai philosophoumen* through a verbal repetition: neither wealth nor autarky is a "boast of words" (*kompos logōn*, 2.40.1, 2.41.2). Scanlon 1994.150–56 offers an exegesis of the meaning of autarky in this passage. A contrast with Sparta may be implied here too: in Sparta the body of the citizen is not *autarkes* but the property of the state.

[49] *Eutrapelōs* connotes speed, readiness, or cleverness and may refer here to the Athenian qualities of daring and innovation Thucydides describes at 1.70. Aristotle considers it a "virtue of the mean" between boorishness and buffoonery (*Nic. Eth.* 1108a23–26, 1128a4–b9) and lists it as a quality of the young (*Rhet.* 1389b11) and of the "free and proper man" (*epieikei kai eleutheriōi*, *Nic. Eth.* 1128a18); cf. Scanlon 1994.151–52. On this passage, see further Kakridis 1961.63; Bliss 1964.5–12; Scanlon 1994.

[50] On *kharis* in gift exchange, see Kurke 1991.103–6, and for its use here, Hooker 1974; MacLachlan 1993.151–52. See also Crane 1998.172–95 on *kharis* as a rejected principle of international relations in Thucydides.

gemony is represented as a favor it freely offers its "friends" and as the delight they derive from it; imperialism becomes a gentleman's largess. Moreover, one of the "favors" by which Athens—liberally and without thought of profit—subdues its allies is the beneficent example of its citizens' self-sufficient bodies, for it is this in particular that makes Athens an education to all Hellas. Athens becomes the ideal for all of Greece, a model to imitate and (as we shall see) an object to love. Mastery over self and mastery over others are bound together and both are charming: *kharis* converts autarky into hegemony.[51]

In their self-possession and freedom, the Athenians become virtual tyrants. Autarky is a trope often associated in Athenian literature with tyranny, for tyrants, like the gods, are complete in themselves and have no need of others.[52] For them *eleutheria* is autarky, freedom from all constraint or necessity. So in Herodotus, the tyrant Croesus tries to impress upon Solon his unequaled blessedness, showing him his great stores of wealth. But Solon warns him in gnomic terms: no man is self-sufficient (*autarkes*) in his own person (Ὣς δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα ἓν οὐδὲν αὔταρκές ἐστι, Hdt. 1.32.8); all are lacking in some respect, and therefore no man should be counted happy until he is dead. Ruling out the possibility of a *sōma autarkes*, Solon instead awards the prize of most blessed man to a humble Athenian who sounds remarkably like the citizen of the Epitaphios. Tellus the Athenian, whose sons were *kaloi te k'agathoi* and whose city was famous, died nobly fighting for his country, was buried at the public expense where he fell, and was honored greatly (Hdt. 1.30.4–5). Solon's laudation could be an Athenian *epitaphios*: the terms and diction are the same. But whereas Solon contrasts the honest citizen to the overreaching Eastern tyrant, Pericles collapses the two. His Athenians are both Tellus and Croesus, both the humble yet noble dead and the self-sufficient tyrant, seemingly beyond the reach of fate or disaster. Pericles contravenes the wisdom of Solon, the intellectual forefather of Athens, and declares the citizens tyrants, blessed beyond mere mortality.[53]

[51] Again the terms are elite, for *paideusis* often refers to "culture" or "breeding": the speech reflects everything in a mirror of distinction, and Athens becomes the elite reflection of Greece, just as the speech's noble citizen reflects the Athenian demos. For the notion of the Athenians as the aristocrats of Greece, see Mills 1997.63.

[52] McGlew (1993.187–90) sees in the Epitaphios's ideal of *eleutheria* the democratic inheritance of the tyrant's freedom. For a history of the concept of political autarky, see Raaflaub 1984.59–66. I return to this link between autarky and tyranny in chapter 4. Epicurus called freedom "the greatest fruit of autarky" (τῆς αὐταρκείας καρπὸς μέγιστος ἐλευθερία, fr. 77 Arrighetti).

[53] Solon's wisdom will turn out true for the Athenians, too, and soon: during the plague even the *sōmata autarkē* succumbed (2.51.3), and in his second speech Pericles' optimism is much more muted, as he advises the Athenians to face what the gods give with resignation (*anankaiōs*) and the enemy with courage (*andreiōs*, 2.64.2). There is a further echo of the

Democrat, aristocrat, tyrant, god. But—and this is the tragic paradox—the citizen becomes immortal only in death and finally takes control over his *sōma autarkes* only by dedicating it to his country. "Giving their bodies for the common good, for themselves they gained undying praise and a most conspicuous tomb" (κοινῇ γὰρ τὰ σώματα διδόντες ἰδίᾳ τὸν ἀγήρων ἔπαινον ἐλάμβανον καὶ τὸν τάφον ἐπισημότατον, 2.43.2).[54] As in the traditional Homeric choice, the soldiers trade their living bodies for immortal glory. Their *sōmata autarkē* are the objects of praise and also the coin with which it is bought. Pericles' words replace their bodies, and at this level—as words, not individuals—they conquer the division between words and deeds, between the speech and its referent. For if the *sōma autarkes* is the "truth of deeds, not a boast of words" (οὐ λόγων ἐν τῷ παρόντι κόμπος τάδε μᾶλλον ἢ ἔργων ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια, 2.41.2), the praise for which they trade that body is a sign that signifies beyond *logos*. Their "most significant tomb" (τάφον ἐπισημότατον) is the whole earth, and their glory is signified not only by the inscriptions on their tombs but by the unwritten memory that lives on in the minds of all men (2.43.3). With the unwritten memory of the dead, the speech attains its furthest reach, crossing time (αἰείμνηστος, 2.43.2) and space (πᾶσα γῆ, 2.43.3) to penetrate the minds of all. The Epitaphios conjures the Athenian *sōma autarkes* and then, by trading it to death, transforms it from a mere word into the truth. The universal signifier of Athenian superiority, the dead bodies also become the supreme signified, the reality (*ergon*) that grounds the speech's *logos* and, beyond that, the very *logos* of Thucydides' history, which is a "quest for truth" (ἡ ζήτησις τῆς ἀληθείας, 1.20.3) based upon the "most manifest signs" (ἐκ τῶν ἐπιφανεστάτων σημείων, 1.21.1).[55] The Epitaphios's ideal thus becomes the text's ultimate reality, the referent for all true deeds and fitting words, inescapable, unbounded, unforgettable.

Here, then, is the impossible ideal reflected to the Athenian citizen in the mirror of the Epitaphios: master of himself and of others, enjoying

Solon and Croesus episode in the πολυτρόποις ξυμφοραῖς of 2.44.1 (cf. Hdt. 1.32.4: οὕτω ὦν, ὦ Κροῖσε, πᾶν ἐστι ἄνθρωπος συμφορή), and in general in Pericles' consolation of the parents of the dead (2.44.1). Scanlon 1994 analyzes this Herodotean allusion in Thucydides. For a comparison of Pericles' political philosophy and Solon's, see Edmunds 1975.77–84, and on the *sōma autarkes*, Macleod 1983.151–52; Connor 1984.67 n.39.

[54] Cf. 2.42.4: "They escaped the shame of words and endured action with their bodies" (τὸ μὲν αἰσχρὸν τοῦ λόγου ἔφυγον, τὸ δ' ἔργον τῷ σώματι ὑπέμειναν); 1.70.6: "On behalf of the city they treat their bodies as if they belonged to another, but their intelligence as their most personal possession" (ἔτι δὲ τοῖς μὲν σώμασιν ἀλλοτριωτάτοις ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως χρῶνται, τῇ δὲ γνώμῃ οἰκειοτάτῃ ἐς τὸ πράσσειν τι ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς).

[55] Allison 1997.206–37 examines *alētheia* in Thucydides. Three of the eleven occurrences of the noun come in the Epitaphios. Loraux 1986b studies the text's self-authorizing strategies, by which the historian simultaneously asserts himself as author and effaces himself

the *kharis* of his own freedom and the beauty of his own manly courage, spending freely his inherited *aretē* but never seduced by the luxuries of wealth. Seeing this ideal, how could one resist captation? The image demands identification and arouses desire. And yet surely there is something pathological in the cathexis to such an ideal and in the subject formed around it, for while this ideal necessarily induces a permanent disappointment (for some more than others within the social spectrum), to desire it is to long for the perfection of death. And if that death is imagined as apotheosis to a state of divine freedom and autonomy, this is no less problematic, for, as Solon warns, this is not the lot of mortals. To be an Athenian within the Epitaphios's impossible ideality means to aim beyond *to anthrōpinon*, the human, and thus to court either failure or disaster.[56]

The Love

This is the man who is urged to become an erastes of the city. Eros drives the oration's dynamics of identification and helps this subject to become the man he is meant to be.

> Καὶ οἵδε μὲν προσηκόντως τῇ πόλει τοιοίδε ἐγένοντο· τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς χρὴ ἀσφαλεστέραν μὲν εὔχεσθαι, ἀτολμοτέραν δὲ μηδὲν ἀξιοῦν τὴν ἐς τοὺς πολεμίους διάνοιαν ἔχειν, σκοποῦντας μὴ λόγῳ μόνῳ τὴν ὠφελίαν, ἣν ἄν τις πρὸς οὐδὲν χεῖρον αὐτοὺς ὑμᾶς εἰδότας μηκύνοι, λέγων ὅσα ἐν τῷ τοὺς πολεμίους ἀμύνεσθαι ἀγαθὰ ἔνεστιν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ' ἡμέραν ἔργῳ θεωμένους καὶ ἐραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς, καὶ ὅταν ὑμῖν μεγάλη δόξῃ εἶναι, ἐνθυμουμένους ὅτι τολμῶντες καὶ γιγνώσκοντες τὰ δέοντα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις αἰσχυνόμενοι ἄνδρες αὐτὰ ἐκτήσαντο, καὶ ὁπότε καὶ πείρᾳ του σφαλεῖεν, οὐκ οὖν καὶ τὴν πόλιν γε τῆς σφετέρας ἀρετῆς ἀξιοῦντες στερίσκειν, κάλλιστον δὲ ἔρανον αὐτῇ προϊέμενοι.
>
> And these men were such as they should have been for the polis. As for the survivors, you should pray that your resolve be more secure but determine that it be no less daring against the enemy. Someone can tell you the advantages to be had from warding off the enemy, speaking at length what you yourselves know well enough. But you should judge the benefits not from

behind the truth of deeds (see esp. 149–52). See also Hartog 1982; Hedrick 1993.32–35; Crane 1996b.27–74, 247–58.

[56] The dynamic of identification here replicates that of another prominent contemporary artifact, the Parthenon frieze. There the entire citizen body is represented in the beautiful young bodies of its elite, and there, as here, the average citizen is invited to both fall in love with and recognize himself in this elite. Through this cathexis the demos becomes a virtual tyrant, memorialized on this costly monument in the company of the gods. See R. Osborne 1987.

> discussion alone, but more from gazing at the actual power of the city every day and becoming her lovers [*erastas*]. And when you see that she is great, realize that those who made her great were men who took risks and knew what was necessary and acted out of a sense of shame; and if ever they failed in some venture, they did not think it right also to deprive the city of their *aretē*, but gave it to her freely as their most beautiful contribution. (2.43.1)[57]

The identification of the mirror stage, as Lacan insists, takes place within the imaginary, the realm of fantasy, and before the subject's entrance into the symbolic order of law, language, and desire.[58] But in this instant, the Epitaphios's subject leaves the imaginary for the symbolic. Here, for the first time, the living are clearly distinguished from the dead (οἵδε μὲν . . . τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς). The speech, which had presented itself as a mere reflection of the deeds of the dead, is reestablished as speech (for the "someone" who might speak at length what the audience already knows is, of course, Pericles), and the identificatory cathexis of the first-person plural is broken, as the audience is addressed directly in the second person for the first time since the exordium (2.35.3). "I" and "you" are separated, now to be rejoined not by fantasied identity but through the medium of exhortations—and love.

Now the Athenian citizen takes up the romantic role that we might have imagined for him: an active and manly lover (erastes).[59] The word reiterates in an erotic idiom the qualities we have seen define the citizen-subject: in love, as in all else, he is dominant and free. And the city is a worthy love object: filled with magnificent estates, adorned by the glory

[57] Scholtz 1997.106–12 summarizes the scholarship on the erotic metaphor. His own approach to it is rhetorical, focusing on its purpose for the speaker and its impact for the audience. Forde 1989 takes a similarly functionalist approach: "Erotic passion, after all, may be the one thing capable of attaching the most individualistic of human beings to something outside themselves" (31; cf. Rothwell 1990.38–39). Monoson's (1994) approach is closer to my own. She also sees the metaphor as constructing a specific relation between the people and the polis, although she emphasizes more than I the reciprocal and mutual character of this relation. On the erastes metaphor, see further Gomme 1956.136–37; Orwin 1994.23; McGlew 2002, ch. 1.

[58] The division between the imaginary and the symbolic is never absolute, though: not only do imaginary dynamics recur within the symbolic, but the symbolic structures the imaginary (for it is the grammar of the symbolic that gives shape to the phantasmatic images of the imaginary). Even in the first instance, the imaginary scene before the mirror is already freighted with symbolic meaning; note, for example, the occlusion of the mother in favor of the mechanical support, marked as cultural and symbolic ("what, in France, we call a 'trotte-bébé,' " Lacan 1977.2).

[59] This is stressed by Monoson 1994.255–57: "Pericles' use of the term [erastes] unquestionably evokes an image of the erect, penetrating phallus and asserts the manliness of Athenian citizens. It effectively projects an image of active, energetic, controlling Athenian citizens" (257).

of the dead, she is *to kalon* that these noble lovers admire (*philokaloumen*), and admiration of which makes them noble.[60] But she is not only a beautiful woman but a powerful one. Becoming a lover of the polis means also becoming a lover of her power, and in fact *autēs*, the feminine pronoun that is the object of the citizens' love, could refer either to the polis or to her *dunamis* (power).[61] It is her power that they love in the city, a power that in the Epitaphios seems truly boundless. Erotic relations are, as always, power relations, and loving this powerful city, the citizens lay claim to her *dunamis* for themselves.

The power of the city is the power of those who made her great: watching her power day by day means reflecting upon those whose daring, duty, and sense of shame earned this greatness. Who are these but the dead honored in the Epitaphios, the citizens' own ideal-ego? The city's power, the city's very desirability, is the manifestation of this ideal, and to gaze desirously at the city's power is to gaze at and desire that same vision of themselves. Loving her entails looking beyond her, to her power and the dead men behind her power. This love binds the demos and its ideal as both the living and the dead join in offering Athens their *aretē*, their bodies (2.43.1), and their lives as a most beautiful *eranos* (contribution). An *eranos* originally referred to a feast to which many people contribute; it could also be a wedding banquet.[62] Living and dead come together at this feast—a wedding feast?—each contributing himself as a gift to the beautiful city. But if this communal feast is a wedding, it is a union not only of the citizens with their city but also of the living demos with its idealized dead. The medium and suture of this union, the polis becomes a conduit, as well as an end, of desire.

The gaze the city draws toward herself replicates the epideixis of the speech's mirrored ideal, reinforcing identification with desire. Desire for the city both reiterates the citizen's desire for his own idealized self and also intervenes at the center of that self-relationship. Glorious and powerful, *eleuthera* and *autarkestatē* (2.36.1–3), the city is a hypostasis of the ideal-ego; she gives form and substance to that imaginary identification.

[60] Cf. Eupolis *Demoi* (fr. 118 K-A), where the glorious city is linked (although the grammatical relation is obscure) to the desire (*pothos*) of the chorus. Probably there, as here, Pericles mediates this desire.

[61] Scholtz 1997.162–64 discusses the scholarship on this choice of referent and sensibly concludes that "it is . . . impossible to disambiguate the 'true' object of *erōs* in 2.43.1" (166); see also Pozzi 1983.226–28; Monoson 1994.259; and Adcock 1963.52: "the city embodies power." On the meaning of *dunamis* in Thucydides, see Woodhead 1970.37–40; Immerwahr 1973.16–21; Kallet-Marx 1993a.111–20; Crane 1998.317–21; Ober 1998.66.

[62] E.g., at Pind. *Pyth*. 12.14. Monoson 1994.267–68 stresses that the noun implies a reciprocal exchange; cf. Millett 1991.153–59. In fifth-century Greek, *eranos* most often denotes a loan raised by contributions: the return on this loan to the city will be the glory of being an Athenian citizen.

The demos's love for the city derives from that primary cathexis to the ideal: it is that ideal that it gazes upon when it gazes upon the city, and she becomes desirable as an instantiation of that earlier narcissistic passion. But if love for the city springs from love for the imaginary ideal, it also drives that fantasy of identification, for it is precisely by becoming lovers of the city that the men are to become worthy of her, to become, in other words, their own idealized image. The identification with the ideal becomes meaningful only when filtered through love for the city, because it is the city's greatness that gives meaning to the heroic sacrifices of the dead. The citizens love their ideal selves in the city and through love of the city they reach for the ideal she reflects to them.[63]

Pericles' exhortation to gaze upon the city and become her lovers is thus an injunction to reenact the spectation of the mirror stage, and it is in the reenactment that the citizens really come to see their reflection, and not only to identify with it but to desire it. This circuit of desire and identification that runs between the city and the ideal is described here as an optical circuit, the movement of the eye: one gazes at the city's power and falls in love at the same moment (*theōmenous kai erastas gignomenous*). The verb for this look (*theaomai*) is significant. *Theaomai* is related, first, to *thauma*, marvel: the city is "worth marveling at" (2.39.4), a reflection both to themselves and to other Greeks of the citizens' astonishing image, a vision to be approached with wonder and jubilation. The verb also evokes the spectation of theater and in this sense resonates with the speech's theatrical epideixis: the speech is a showpiece, not just a medium for the spectacular vision but a spectacle in itself; the epideictic, too, is something to gaze at with desire. Finally, *theaomai* is etymologically linked to *theōria*, contemplation or speculation. The love of the citizen for the city calls forth a theorization of that love: to gaze upon the city is to speculate upon the eros that draws one's eye irresistibly toward her.[64]

This circuit of desire cements identification, not only binding the citizens to the ideal but in fact transforming them into it, offering the promise that they will truly and fully become that mirror image. The Epitaphios ends with a promise that the city will raise the children of the dead until they reach adulthood (2.46). But what then? The city raises citizens only

[63] "It's one's own ego that one loves in love," Lacan writes, "one's own ego made real on the imaginary level" (1988a.142). Lacan's formulation implies a double directionality in the relation between these two beloveds: the first half of his sentence moves from the ideal-ego to the love object, while the second half reverses that trajectory. Desire moves in a constant circuit from the ego to the object and back. See Freud 1957 [1914] and Lacan 1988a.118–28.

[64] On Thucydides' use of *theaomai*, see Crane 1996b.236–47. P. Wilson 2000.141–43 links this verb to an aristocratic style of spectacular visibility within the civic gaze. Goldhill 1996.19 emphasizes the political connotations of the word. Cf. Goldhill 1990.

to send them to die.[65] In this way, the polis transforms the living into the dead, uniting living sons with their dead fathers.[66] The city's longing for the dead generates ideality; her mourning (embodied in the *epitaphios nomos*) apotheosizes the dead, transporting them beyond the merely mortal. In the mirror of her desire, her living citizens see, identify with, and desire the dead. It is no accident that their love for her is embedded within an exhortation to military bravery. Loving the city drives them to become like those she loved, those who made her great. Like Hector's son and Ajax's, the demos should pray to be luckier than these fathers, but no less brave (τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς χρὴ ἀσφαλεστέραν μὲν εὔχεσθαι, ἀτολμοτέραν δὲ μηδὲν ἀξιοῦν τὴν ἐς τοὺς πολεμίους διάνοιαν ἔχειν, 2.43.1). The sense of shame that drove these men (αἰσχυνόμενοι ἄνδρες, 2.43.1) is handed down to those who survive them and they can escape it only by giving their own bodies, as those predecessors gave theirs (2.42.4). The dead man's *aretē* urges his survivors to a rivalrous identification (οὓς νῦν ὑμεῖς ζηλώσαντες, 2.43.4) and his undying memory is an imperative to bravery and a manly death (2.43.6).

Being dead, however, these heroes are untouchable.

> παισὶ δ' αὖ ὅσοι τῶνδε πάρεστε ἢ ἀδελφοῖς ὁρῶ μέγαν τὸν ἀγῶνα (τὸν γὰρ οὐκ ὄντα ἅπας εἴωθεν ἐπαινεῖν), καὶ μόλις ἂν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἀρετῆς οὐχ μοῖοι, ἀλλ' ὀλίγῳ χείρους κριθεῖτε. φθόνος γὰρ τοῖς ζῶσι πρὸς τὸ ἀντίπαλον, τὸ δὲ μὴ ἐμποδὼν ἀνανταγωνίστῳ εὐνοίᾳ τετίμηται.
>
> For you in the audience who are sons or brothers of the dead, I foresee a great struggle. For everyone always praises those who are gone, and even if you excel in *aretē*, it will be difficult for you to be deemed equal to the dead, or even slightly inferior. For among the living, rivalry always creates jealousy, but the dead, since they are not present, are honored without ill will or hostility. (2.45.1)

The ideal both invites and refuses identification: always desired (and supported by the desire of the polis), it can never be attained by the living and is incorporated into the psyche precisely as an impossibility.[67] The glorious *aretē* of the dead man spurs his survivors on to greatness, turning their entire life into a "great struggle" (μέγαν τὸν ἀγῶνα) to equal or even

[65] Compare the complaint of Lysistrata at Ar. *Lys*. 588–90.

[66] The forefathers, like the dead men, "made Athens free through their *aretē*" and deserve the honor of eternal memory (2.36.1). Pericles is likened to Athens's father at Plut. *Per.* 34.4: during the plague, the people lash out at Pericles as mad men attack a physician or father. Crane 1996b.95–110 documents the pervasive presence of "the forefathers" in Thucydides.

[67] Ziolkowski 1981.157 comments that this theme is rare in the extant Athenian funeral orations; it is found elsewhere only in Plato's *Menexenus*, "however, without the pessimistic comment on the improbability of success."

come near his perfection. But that struggle is one the citizen can never win, as Pericles stresses: the living can never approximate the dead, or can do so only by joining him in death.

The polis mediates this process. First, she initiates it with her desire: her longing for the dead makes them desirable. Second, her desire supports the authority of the ideal. Those men of the past who made Athens great may have had their failures, but they never deprived the city of their *aretē* or failed in their most noble contribution to her: her love transforms their failure (σφαλεῖεν) into success and urges their descendants on to greater success (ἀσφαλεστέραν . . . διάνοιαν, 2.43.1).[68] Moreover, she holds out to her citizens the promise and guarantee of that filiation.

> Εἴρηται καὶ ἐμοὶ λόγῳ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὅσα εἶχον πρόσφορα, καὶ ἔργῳ οἱ θαπτόμενοι τὰ μὲν ἤδη κεκόσμηνται, τὰ δὲ αὐτῶν τοὺς παῖδας τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦδε δημοσίᾳ ἡ πόλις μέχρι ἥβης θρέψει, ὠφέλιμον στέφανον τοῖσδέ τε καὶ τοῖς λειπομένοις τῶν τοιῶνδε ἀγώνων προτιθεῖσα· ἆθλα γὰρ οἷς κεῖται ἀρετῆς μέγιστα, τοῖς δὲ καὶ ἄνδρες ἄριστοι πολιτεύουσιν.

> I have concluded my speech and said everything required in accordance with the custom. The dead have now been adorned with burial, and for the future the city will raise their children at public expense until they reach adulthood, offering this beneficial crown to the dead and their survivors for their ordeals. Where the rewards for *aretē* are greatest, there the best men govern the city. (2.46)

The speech, the burial, and the raising of war orphans seal the identification of ego with ideal. The speech presents the ideal; the burial transforms the living into the perfect dead: *logos* and *ergon* unite to replace bodies with ageless praise. Together the two constitute the "paternal law" (*patrios nomos*, 2.34.1) that governs the orthopaedics of the speech's ideality. But it is the city who acts as pedagogue (she is, after all, herself a *paideusis*). She rewards the citizens who obey this *patrios nomos* by raising the children of the dead. In a sense, the entire audience becomes orphans of the dead, raised by the city and nurtured by her love until they too are ready to trade their *sōma autarkes* for burial and praise. Through the institution of the funeral oration, she preserves the dead for the living; through the public support of the orphans, she preserves the living for the dead. This double bond is the *ōphelimos stephanos* (beneficial crown) with which she honors her citizens. With this crown—a "beneficial," dem-

[68] But only Pericles will make the city truly *asphalēs* (ἀσφαλῶς διεφύλαξεν, 2.65.5). On *sotēria* and *asphaleia* in Thucydides, see Allison 1997.54–61. Cf. also 2.42.3, where the flaws of the living are erased by death for the fatherland (*patridos*).

ocratic crown—she makes the living citizens, those left behind, the heirs apparent to the throne of their dead, now apotheosized, fathers.[69]

"Where the rewards for *aretē* are greatest, there the best men [*andres aristoi*] govern the city." The prize for virtue that the city hands out is precisely this promise that the living may approximate the dead, that the orphaned son can wear his father's crown. And the result of this promise is the aristocratic ideal that Pericles has so carefully laid out: the *aristoi* govern the polis. *Aristoi* preserves to the last the ambiguities and misrecognitions of the speech's hegemonic pressure. Are these "best citizens" the social elite or are they the moral elite? They are of course both, for Thucydides has made it impossible to separate them. Crowned with an *ōphelimos stephanos*, the demos has become a democratic king. The city herself helps consolidate the identification between the democratic and the aristocratic that the speech works to construct, smoothing over with her prizes and love the alienation within this identification, and holding out the promise of jubilant mastery to those who are willing to die for her.

Love of the city is thus the incentive to and the reward for attaining Pericles' impossible vision. Becoming lovers of the polis and its power, the Athenians become lovers of Pericles' vision of an elite demos that is free and noble, potent and manly, versatile and graceful. In short, they fall in love with their own *sōma autarkes*. Their very self-relationship is mediated by the polis: at the heart of their somatic autarky—the essence of their *eleutheria* and hence of Athenian subjectivity as this speech imagines it—is the polis. That this easy and pleasurable autarky is "the truth of deeds, not a boast of words, is signified by the power of the city, which we possess because of our character" (καὶ ὡς οὐ λόγων ἐν τῷ παρόντι κόμπος τάδε μᾶλλον ἢ ἔργων ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια, αὐτὴ ἡ δύναμις τῆς πόλεως, ἣν ἀπὸ τῶνδε τῶν τρόπων ἐκτησάμεθα, σημαίνει, 2.41.2). The power of the city, the object of the citizens' love, is both the effect and guarantee of the truth of their *sōma autarkes*. Powerful Athens is a signifier of truth: it is a sign of the truth of the eulogy (2.42.1), its own greatness securing the "appearance of the truth" of Pericles' praise (2.35.2). In the speech's attempt to match true *logoi* to the *erga* of the dead, the truth of the city's power stands against mere reputation and delightful poetry (2.41.4), against the mere "boast of words."[70]

[69] The crown is the signature image of praise poetry: see Kurke 1991.205–9, 1998. *Ōphelimos* is often used of the civic-minded elite; like the adjective *khrēstos*, it emphasizes the elite's desire and ability to benefit the state. It is also a quality Thucydides claims for his own history (1.22.4).

[70] At 2.43.1, the citizens are urged to look at and love Athens's *dunamis* every day "in deed" (*ergōi*). Warner (1954 ad loc.) translates "as she really is." Thus the fictionality of the ideal is denied and Athens is situated within the real.

The magnificent city is sign and surety of the truth of the dead men's actions and of Pericles' praise for them. But signifiers point always beyond themselves and derive their truth from a deferred source: so Athens signifies the truth of the citizen's *sōma autarkes* by referring it to its own idealized image, the "truth of deeds" of the war heroes. Love follows in the circular defiles of these signifiers, as the demos loves the city in itself and itself in the city. Athens's manly erastai are thus simultaneously their own eromenoi. Patriotism and narcissism collapse, as the autarky of the citizen becomes a closed circuit of desire.

The Beloved

Ultimately when the citizens fall in love with Pericles' vision of them, they fall in love with Pericles himself.[71] Pericles in Thucydides' description is himself the paragon of all the virtues he ascribes to the demos. By his own admission, he is second to none in "knowing what is necessary and interpreting it, a lover of the city, and superior to money" (ὃς οὐδενὸς ἥσσων οἴομαι εἶναι γνῶναί τε τὰ δέοντα καὶ ἑρμηνεῦσαι ταῦτα, φιλόπολίς τε καὶ χρημάτων κρείσσων, 2.60.5). The Athenians too "know what is necessary" (γιγνώσκοντες τὰ δέοντα, 2.43.1), and it was through precisely this quality that they made Athens such a worthy object of desire. Pericles' victory over money—his resistance to bribery (cf. 2.65.8)—recalls the *euteleia* of the Athenians (2.40.1) and the self-sacrifice of the soldiers, who "were not softened by preferring the enjoyment of wealth and the hope of escaping poverty and becoming rich" (2.42.4). Finally, his love of the polis (*philopolis*) reiterates his injunction to his audience to become lovers of the city.[72] He already is what he urges them to become: he is that idealized reflection of them, their "first man."

Is it any surprise, then, that looking at him, the demos falls in love? Pericles exhorted the citizens to love the city and, through her, those who made her great (μεγάλη, 2.43.1). For Thucydides it was Pericles above all who made her great (ἐγένετο ἐπ' ἐκείνου μεγίστη, 2.65.5). Thus when it gazes with desire at Athens's waxing power, the demos sees not just itself but especially Pericles. Now the first-person plural effect of Thucydides'

[71] Thucydides' emphasis on Pericles' intelligence (*gnōmē*, 2.65.8, 2.34.6) and foresight (*prognous*, 2.65.5) in general echoes Pericles' emphasis on the same qualities in the Athenians (2.40.2–3, 2.62.4, 2.62.5, 2.64.6). On the importance of *gnōmē*, both Pericles' and Athens's, in Thucydides, see Huart 1968.51–57, 158–62, 304–13; Edmunds 1975, esp. 7–88; Farrar 1988.158–77.

[72] *Philopolis* implies a different sort of love from *erastēs tēs poleōs*: *philia* (fondness, nearness) rather than the passion of eros. Both, however, indicate a strong attachment. Interestingly, *philopolis* is often used of a tyrant's unexpected patriotism: cf. Thuc. 6.92.2, 4 (in Alcibiades' self-defense before the Spartans); Pl. *Laws* 694c6; Isoc. 2.3; Xen. *Hieron* 5.3.

Epitaphios becomes supremely compelling: Pericles is the demos. In this grammatical and psychological syncresis, Pericles stands in for the demos as both lover and beloved. He represents the Athenians as the manly lover of the city (*philopolis*), dedicating his life to it. He also stands in for them as the object of emulation and exemplifies the ideal of citizenship that they love in the polis. Thus Pericles, too, exists within the charmed circle of the speech's eros; he is the Athenians' mirror image in the flesh, and to love themselves is to love him. Narcissism fuels the political cathexis of the demos to its demagogue.

Moreover, if the polis is a reflection of the demos, then Pericles' "love of the city" is implicitly a "love of the demos." The love, in other words, is mutual. But this eros remains pointedly unspoken, mediated and obscured by a mutual passion for the city. In fact, Thucydides goes to some lengths to deny any desire in Pericles' relation to the people.

> αἴτιον δ' ἦν ὅτι ἐκεῖνος μὲν δυνατὸς ὢν τῷ τε ἀξιώματι καὶ τῇ γνώμῃ χρημάτων τε διαφανῶς ἀδωρότατος γενόμενος κατεῖχε τὸ πλῆθος ἐλευθέρως, καὶ οὐκ ἤγετο μᾶλλον ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἢ αὐτὸς ἦγε, διὰ τὸ μὴ κτώμενος ἐξ οὐ προσηκόντων τὴν δύναμιν πρὸς ἡδονήν τι λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἔχων ἐπ' ἀξιώσει καὶ πρὸς ὀργήν τι ἀντειπεῖν.
>
> The reason [for Pericles' success] was that because of his prestigious position and intelligence and manifest indifference to bribes, he was powerful enough to restrain the majority liberally [*eleutherōs*]. He led it rather than being led by it, and he did so not by speaking to please (for he gained his power through no improper means, but held it because of his position) but by contradicting the people and even provoking them to anger. (2.65.8)

Pericles does not speak to please (*pros hēdonēn*): he does not cater to the desire of the demos.

What is this repudiated pleasure and refused desire? In a democracy, a politician gains power by pleasing the people, not only carrying out their will but satisfying their political desires. His power is both the proof and the result of the pleasure he has given them. It is also the pleasure they give him in return, the pleasure of prestige and authority. This mutual pleasure was problematic, though. What does it mean for a demagogue to "please" the demos? For the demos to be "pleased"—or "pleasured"—by its leaders? When this relation is imagined, as it often was, in sexual terms, the problems become glaring. In this affair of pleasure, who is on top? Who is active and who passive? What is the masculinity of a man who pleases another man? Or the masculinity of a man who receives—even requires—such satisfaction?[73] The ethics of sexuality in Athens, as

[73] Monoson asks a similar set of questions about the citizen's love affair with the city: by positioning citizen as erastes and city as eromenos, does the sexual metaphor at 2.43.1 "cast

we saw in the introduction, placed a premium on male sexual dominance and stigmatized passivity. But in the love affair between demos and demagogue, we would seem necessarily to have either a passive demagogue or a passive demos. These equally unappealing options are the subject of the next two chapters: Alcibiades is a charming seducer who "softens" the people with his words, making the demos passive even as he himself becomes its effeminate eromenos. Cleon wins the demos over by offering it pleasures of the most venal sort and turns the citizens into whores by acting the whore himself. These are the successors to Pericles who, Thucydides writes, "turned to pleasing the demos and relinquished affairs to it" (2.65.10).

When Thucydides denies pleasure in Pericles' relation to the people, he sidesteps the problems implicit in this political eros, the shame of passivity, the scandal of prostitution. Pericles is no whore to the people; he does not speak to please. But there is a certain disingenuousness to this claim, for what is the Epitaphios but a *logos pros hēdonēn*?[74] The Athenians, as Aristophanes points out, love to hear themselves praised and gape open-mouthed at any politician who sings their glories.[75] The Epitaphios consoles its audience but also seduces; it quietly performs a dynamic of desire between speaker and audience that it explicitly rejects. To draw on a Thucydidean dichotomy, the *logos* refuses eros, but the *ergon* of the speech reintroduces it and sets it in motion between demagogue and demos. Speaking in praise of the Athenians, urging his listeners to love the city—and both themselves and him as embodied in the city—Pericles becomes simultaneously the demos's lover and its ultimate love object.

And yet it is by refusing eros that Pericles wields his political power: he leads the people rather than being led by them precisely by *not* giving them pleasure. Pericles' power springs from his repudiation of *hēdonē*. Likewise, those politicians who do give *hēdonē* to the people also relin-

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the city in a potentially shameful, instead of valorized, position" (1994.260)? She argues that this possibility is avoided by the analogy to pederasty, which ideally (in her view) is a relationship of reciprocity and mutual respect, not domination. But domination would presumably come into play if the eromenos were an adult male, as in the relation between demos and demagogue. I do not see passivity as a problem in the love for the city, first, because the city is feminine and, second, because it is (for all the personification) inanimate. For those reasons, too, I do not see pederasty necessarily implied in the noun erastes, which is often used of eros outside a pederastic context.

[74] If praise is pleasing, the *epitaphios logos* is particularly seductive. Perhaps it is no surprise, then, that Socrates in Plato's *Menexenus* suggests that Aspasia actually wrote Pericles' Epitaphios, as well as one of her own (*Menex*. 236b5–6). There the *epitaphios logos* is called "sorcery" that bewitches its audience (235a2, b1).

[75] *Knights* 1115–20, 1340–44. Compare the implicit criticism of the Athenians at Thuc. 1.84.2. I return to this in the next chapter.

quish power to them (2.65.10); that is, they renounce power by embracing pleasure. Pleasure and power seem to move in opposite directions, but that is not quite the case. For what is Pericles' power but the materialization of the (denied) pleasure the demos derives from him?

There is clearly a pleasure in the denial of pleasure, and a desire aroused by the refusal of desire. We might even say that it is denial that keeps this pleasure alive between Pericles and the demos, allowing each to enjoy it without having to consider its propriety or implications. The desirous gaze of the citizen-lover upon the city invited theorization (*theaomai*, *theōria*). This love forbids it: the demos and Pericles can love one another because theirs is a love that does not speak its name. Instead what we hear about is love for the city. A problematic love affair between demos and demagogue is replaced by a sublime passion for the feminine polis. Heterosexual patriotism deflects the problems that surround the political relation but also keeps that relation alive under the banner of legitimacy, uniting the people and the politician in their mutual love for the beautiful and powerful city.[76]

This love affair between demos and demagogue can also remain unspoken because it has already been cemented at a subverbal, imaginary level. The narcissistic desire of the demos for its own ideal-ego is reiterated in its latent love for Pericles, the embodiment of that ideal at the level of political discourse. This correspondence between the demos's self-relationship and its relationship with Pericles—between phantasmatic identification and political desire—operates in two directions simultaneously. On the one hand, if the demos's love for Pericles is rooted in its identification with its own mirror image, then that love is necessary and inevitable. If the Athenians embrace their ideal-ego, how can they fail to embrace Pericles? All the desire that permeates this political relation (albeit under denial) seems to emanate from that internal cathexis, to well up from the private heart of the citizen's subjectivity. At the opening of the speech, Pericles promises that he will try to meet the expectations and wants of each member of the audience (χρὴ καὶ ἐμὲ ἑπόμενον τῷ νόμῳ πειρᾶσθαι ὑμῶν τῆς ἑκάστου βουλήσεώς τε καὶ δόξης τυχεῖν ὡς ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, 2.35.3). The entire Epitaphios, as Pericles represents it, originates in the demos's desire. Desire for Pericles becomes a mere by-product of the demos's relation to the ideal and Pericles' pleasing speech a transparent reflection of the "truth of deeds" of the glorious dead who embody that ideal. Pericles' eros, the pleasure he gives the people and the desire he

[76] Gunderson (forthcoming, ch. 5) examines a similar affirmation of homosexual desire via its negation in Roman declamation. Sedgwick 1985 studies the dynamic by which heterosexuality mediates male homosocial desire.

arouses, can thus be repudiated—there is no pleasure here—because its origins lie beneath repudiation.[77]

On the other hand, even as imaginary identification animates political desire, that desire fundamentally shapes the identification. If the demos's love for its own ideal image finds responsion in its love for Pericles, the reverse is also true: the ideal around which the demos's subjectivity coalesces *is* Pericles. In this speech, the historian creates an ideal in the orator's image and insinuates that ideal into the core of the democratic psyche. When he represents the Epitaphios as an emanation from the demos's own desire, he obscures the rhetorical force of the speech and the degree to which it creates what it seems merely to reflect. He occludes the possibility that the demos's narcissism is at base an internalization of its love for Pericles, a love secured precisely by this occlusion. He refuses to consider that the demos's ideal is not a fantasy that springs spontaneously from its psyche but instead one that is installed, along with all the politics it implies, within that psyche. If Pericles is the demos's ideal-ego, it is because Thucydides positions him as such and around that ideal generates an Athenian citizen subjectivity.

This eros works only under negation, for as soon as it is spoken, fissures open all around it. Dominant by reason of his prestige, intelligence, and incorruptibility, Pericles "restrained the majority liberally [*eleutherōs*] and he led it rather than being led by it" (κατεῖχε τὸ πλῆθος ἐλευθέρως, καὶ οὐκ ἤγετο μᾶλλον ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἢ αὐτὸς ἦγε, 2.65.8). In the Epitaphios, the citizens are constructed as active and manly lovers, pursuing *to kalon*, distributing *kharis* to others, offering their *aretē* to the beloved city. But here Thucydides depicts an active Pericles leading a passive throng. The demos's former graceful versatility (2.41.1) becomes dangerous volatility, as it careens between excessive, hubristic confidence and irrational fear (2.65.9). Pericles controls this erratic mob and imposes moderation (μετρίως ἐξηγεῖτο, 2.65.5) with a firm hand, now striking fear into it, now making it confident again (2.65.9). The constancy and serenity of the citizen-lover, the gentlemanly ease and unwavering courage, are now nowhere to be seen—or if they are in evidence, it is only in Pericles' dignified governance of a mob uncertain and unrestrained in its passions.

The dominance and manliness of the demos in relation to the city is belied by its passivity in relation to Pericles. Pericles stands for the citizens' ideal, but he also stands between them and it. His leadership, as Thucydides presents it, interrupts (even as it facilitates) the speech's circuit of

[77] Thus we should not accuse the demos of false consciousness or the elite of cynical manipulation: the political relations constituted in the speech are so potent because their roots are within the imaginary, entangled in the foundations of the citizen psyche. Žižek 1989.11–53 critiques the notion of false consciousness.

desire and identification. In the erotics of the Epitaphios, the demos gazes upon and falls in love with the city, seeing its own greatness reflected in Athens "when it is great" (2.43.1). But the city is greatest when it is governed not by the demos but by Pericles. After Pericles' death, when his successors "turned to pleasing the demos and relinquished affairs to it," Athens was ruined. When the citizens actually are the potent, masterful lovers that Pericles depicts—as Thucydides hints they are with his successors in a way that they are not with him—the city perishes.

Pericles "restrained the majority liberally" (*kateikhe to plēthos eleutherōs*, 2.65.8).[78] The phrase condenses the paradox of Thucydides' speech as a whole and the dynamic of identification it initiates. Pericles hails the Athenians as *eleutheroi* the better to control them; he masters them by declaring them masters of themselves and guarantees his autocracy by lauding their personal autarky. *Katekhein* often implies physical constraint and can also denote possession or mastery. It is used of bridling a horse, restraining one's temper, and ruling a country. At Thucydides 3.62.4, the Thebans describe their oligarchy, "the form of government most inimical to law and moderation and closest to tyranny" (3.62.3), in terms similar to those in this passage: the oligarchs hold down the people by force (*katekhontes iskhui to plēthos*). Herodotus uses the passive form of the verb for the Athenians under the tyranny of Pisistratus (Hdt. 1.59.1).

What does it mean to restrain someone *eleutherōs*? And who is the *eleutheros* here, Pericles or the majority? If we take the adverb as pointing to the majority, how can it be free and constrained at the same time? A free man is not held down. If the adverb is added to soften the connotations of the verb, it instead highlights them. What has happened to the "free citizens" of the Epitaphios, who "govern liberally [*eleutherōs*] with respect to the common good" (2.37.2)? What has happened to the *sōma autarkes* of the citizen body? Now *eleutheria* would seem to rest solely with Pericles, where it implies not so much freedom from constraint, but nobility. Gomme translates *eleutherōs* as " 'freely,' i.e. without hesitation, 'as a free man should.' "[79] But how should a free man hold down his fellow *eleutheroi*? The reading makes no sense if we take *eleutheros* in its broader meaning, for a free man—even the "first man"—has no authority to restrain the majority. The word becomes descriptive only when read in its narrower sense: "nobly," "as a noble man should."

[78] On this phrase, see de Romilly 1965.571–72; Edmunds 1975.56; Edmunds and Martin 1977.

[79] Gomme 1956.192 ad loc. Cf. J. Finley 1963 [1942].164, who sees evoked in the phrase "not only Pericles' qualities of effective leadership but the advantages of freedom that would have been forfeited had that leadership been absolute." Aristotle famously defines democ-

And, indeed, Pericles is supremely noble: a member of one of Athens's leading families, wealthy, articulate, powerful. Thucydides repeatedly characterizes him by his "intelligence and prestige" (2.34.6, 2.65.8), and the yoking of these two terms performs for Pericles the same naturalization of social advantage as innate ability that the speech as a whole performs for the demos. This "natural" elitism is the source of his power (δυνατὸς ὢν τῷ τε ἀξιώματι καὶ τῇ γνώμῃ, 2.65.8) and the means by which he "liberally" restrains the majority. Thus the dynamics of hegemony in the speech are reduplicated: the Athenians are the elite of Greece, but Pericles is the elite of Athens, and just as the Athenians are justified in ruling the rest of Greece, so Pericles is justified in ruling Athens. And while this analogic reasoning may be open to question—especially from citizens who pride themselves on their freedom—any skepticism is forestalled by the speech's interpellation of its audience as an elite. This free and democratic citizen body accepts the hegemony of the noble Pericles because it is already under the psychic hegemony of a noble ideal formed in Pericles' image.

Pericles' prestige also highlights the stakes involved for the demos in its own representation as elite, for that elitism is folded into the very definition of democracy.

> 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, ὡς ἕκαστος ἔν τῳ εὐδοκιμεῖ, οὐκ ἀπὸ μέρους τὸ πλέον ἐς τὰ κοινὰ ἢ ἀπ' ἀρετῆς προτιμᾶται, οὐδ' αὖ κατὰ πενίαν, ἔχων γέ τι ἀγαθὸν δρᾶσαι τὴν πόλιν, ἀξιώματος ἀφανείᾳ κεκώλυται. ἐλευθέρως δὲ τά τε πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν πολιτεύομεν . . .

> The name [of our constitution] is democracy because it is a government not for the few but for the majority. And while there is equality for all before the laws in private disputes, in regard to reputation [*axiōsin*] and the esteem each man holds in affairs, public honor is given not according to rank [*apo merous*] but according to *aretē*. Nor is anyone who has some service to offer the city prevented by poverty or lack of social standing [*axiōmatos*]. But we govern our city liberally with a view to the common good. (2.37.1–2)[80]

Loraux shows how this passage, while seeming to eliminate social standing as a criterion for public participation, actually works it back in under the guise of *aretē*.[81] The passage offers under the "name of democracy" a

racy as the regime in which the citizen governs and is governed in turn (*arkhein/arkhesthai*), but *arkhein* (to rule, to hold office) implies a far different power relation than *katekhein*.

[80] On the tangled antitheses in this passage, see Kakridis 1961.24–27; Grant 1971; Edmunds 1975.47–55; Rusten 1989.143–46; Harris 1992; Ober 1998.86–88.

[81] Loraux 1986a.180–83, 186–92. Cf. 183: "The democratic element is stated, but in a context that profoundly alters it. . . . It is all there, and yet, reading the text closely, we

constitution built upon private equality and public merit. *Axiōsis* is the key term here, but its meaning is opaque. Does it denote social status (as the related *axiōma* clearly does a few lines later) or a more neutral public reputation? The following clause, which ties *axiōsis* closely to *aretē*, would seem to suggest the latter, but again the precise sense is difficult to make out: *apo merous* could refer either to social rank (i.e., reputation depends not on rank but on the *aretē* of the people) or to the democratic appointment of political office in rotation (i.e., reputation depends not on sortition but on the *aretē* of the elite).[82] In this complex and elusive passage, public reputation (*axiōsis*) seems to be divorced from social inequality as it is from economic inequality (*ou kata penian*) and associated only with *aretē*. But the very obscurity of the passage and its key terms also leaves us with a sense that *axiōsis* is closely—if unclearly—tied to status, and thus the social divisions that seem to be excluded are slipped back in as defining features of democracy. Further, if *axiōsis* is central to the true definition of democracy, then Pericles, whose *axiōsis* is supreme, would be the supreme democrat.[83] But what is the relation between his prestige and that shared by all Athenians by virtue of their being Athenians?

Although the passage admits that not all Athenians have social standing, all do seem to gain a certain sort of *axiōsis* merely by "governing liberally": that is, all may not be "first rank" citizens but all are, minimally, "free" citizens and also, the speech suggests, "noble" citizens, *eleutheroi*. This brings us back to the "liberal restraint" that Pericles exercises over the people by virtue of his superior *axiōsis*. A lack of rank does not exclude the average Athenian from freedom, but the power that comes from rank (δυνατὸς ὢν τῷ τε ἀξιώματι, 2.65.8) does seem to grant greater freedom, the freedom to restrain others. The ambiguity between the two meanings of *eleutheros* that is so productive in the Epitaphios's conflation of citizen freedom with elite liberality here becomes a tension—an antagonism, even—between the "freedom" of the demos (the freedom from restraint, among other things) and the "nobility" of the man who holds it down. Democratic freedom blurs with nobless oblige.

The end result, as Thucydides famously says, is "a democracy in name, but in fact rule by the first man" (ἐγίγνετό τε λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἔργῳ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς ἀρχή, 2.65.9). In this summation, the happy

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realize that the orator is saying something quite different from what he seems to be saying." Cf. Oliver 1955; Vlastos 1973.196–98; Saxonhouse 1996.63.

[82] Thus Rusten 1989.145 ad loc.: "according to turn" (cf. Gomme 1956.108; Hornblower 1991.300); LSJ μέρος I2: "from considerations of rank or family" (cf. Loraux 1986a.188); Harris 1992.161: "from one section of society" (cf. 165–66).

[83] Edmunds and Martin 1977.192 read 2.65.8 with 2.37.1 and conclude "In 2.37.1, then, the Periclean praise of Athens . . . can be seen as Thucydides' praise of Pericles." Cf. Edmunds 1975.52–53.

misrecognition of the Epitaphios is undone. The demos and its leader are not a unified entity, as the speech's pervasive "we" implies. A wedge is driven between the democratic ego and the ideal-ego. The demos is not elite; its love of beauty is in reality compromised by the necessary economies of poverty (*met' euteleias*) and its love of wisdom by the hardness of a life of labor (*aneu malakias*). Instead Pericles himself, with the power of his social standing and intelligence, is the one who is superior to money, dominant, and supremely *eleutheros*. For all the speech's praise of the manliness and excellence of the Athenians, when the final hierarchy is drawn up, it is Pericles who is the *prōtos anēr*, the first man.

Or perhaps Thucydides, for if Pericles is the *prōtos anēr* and ultimate ideal within the world of the speech, it is Thucydides who makes it so. He, more than Pericles (2.60.5), more than the Athenians (2.43.1), knows and accomplishes what is necessary (*ta deonta*, 1.22.1). Pericles presents an ideal-ego in the form of the glorious dead, the noble living, and the powerful city, but it is Thucydides who adds Pericles to that list, attributing to him the same ideality that he has the politician create in the speech. Whereas in the Epitaphios Pericles largely effaces himself—he is merely adding superfluous *logoi* to the self-evident *erga* of the dead, following custom and the wishes of his audience (2.35.1–3)—Thucydides marks out his unique status and makes him as much a *paradeigma* as Pericles makes Athens. In this process, political contestation (the essence of democracy) is lost behind the flat authority of Thucydides' judgments: the "crowd" may have fluctuated in its feelings about Pericles ("as crowds are wont to do," 2.65.4), but Pericles' unchanging perfection is guaranteed by the seemingly objective and irrefutable pronouncements of the disembodied authorial voice: Athens was "a democracy in name [*logos*], but in fact [*ergon*] rule by the first man." Thucydides moves beyond the ambiguous *logos* he has put in the mouth of Pericles (*onoma . . . dēmokratia keklētai*) to the truth. As the one who controls this "cultural screen," he recognizes the fictionality of its images—the *logos* of democracy—and even as he exposes the *erga* behind Pericles' *logos*, he creates a new set of images and a new ideality, but this time one marked as truth at the highest level, the true ideality of the rule of the first man.[84]

Through Pericles, Thucydides creates an ideal Athenian and an ideal Athens. It is, to be sure, a fragile fantasy. Thucydides' placement of the plague (and Pericles' death) immediately following the Epitaphios shows just how precarious it is and how vulnerable to the vicissitudes of history: Pericles in the Epitaphios represents death as perfection; Thucydides

[84] Loraux 1986b. Cf. Ober 1998.94: under Pericles *dēmokratia* was a mere *logos* (masking the rule of one man), and it was only after his death that "*dēmokratia* as a political culture achieved the status of *ergon*"; cf. 119–20.

imagines perfection in Pericles and then consigns him to death. Nor does Thucydides appear to mistake this fantasy for "reality": in the remainder of the history, he shows us Athens failing again and again to live up to the standard Pericles set for it. Consequently, many readers have sensed a nostalgia at work in the Epitaphios, as if, after witnessing the events of the next thirty years, Thucydides composed this elegy for an ideal definitively lost. Thus Thucydides, too, is bound to this fantasy by desire and is himself—although no doubt in a different way than the audience of the Epitaphios—a lover of this perfect Athens. Through his desire, this ideal takes on the force of reality within the text. As the fantasy of an impossible perfection, the Epitaphios Logos governs the *erga* of Thucydides' text as a whole, for all subsequent history (as Thucydides indicates in his compressed synopsis at 2.65) must be judged in relation to it. Regardless of whether Thucydides thought it actually was realized under Pericles or could ever be realized, the vision of Athens Pericles articulates is the guiding vision for Thucydides' history of the fifth century, the focal point around which historical events fall into perspective.

This is the Athens that we, Thucydides' and Pericles' modern audience, have fallen in love with: Pericles' exhortation to gaze upon the city and fall in love with it is addressed to us as well and draws us within the speech's web of desire and identification.[85] We too have been seduced by the Epitaphios, becoming ardent and faithful lovers of Pericles' vision and of Pericles as the embodiment of that vision. And it is, indeed, a noble ideal, and a seductive one. But does succumbing to it commit us to more than we bargained for? Specifically, when we fall in love with Pericles' vision, are we in fact wedding ourselves to an antidemocratic politics? To the extent that appreciating this text shows our love of beauty and wisdom, we are also hailed as *aristoi*, and what *aristos* would condemn an *aristokratia* like the *monarkhia* of Pericles? When we answer to the speech's interpellation, then, are we also drawn under its hegemony and caught up in the misrecognitions of its elite mirroring?

For us, too, loving the ideal means loving Pericles, and for us, too, that love contains a repressed pleasure, the pleasure of epideictic repressed

[85] See Loraux 1980; Woodhead 1960.292–95 on the authority of Thucydides' judgments for our perception of Athenian democracy, and Jaeger 1945.408–10 for an enthusiastic endorsement of Thucydides' vision. Bassi remarks on the effect of the first-person speech: by collapsing author and speaker, it not only "functions to invest mediated speech with the persuasiveness of truth in the absence of an original speaker" but also acts "to disguise or compensate for the absence of these men [Pericles and Socrates] as speaking subjects, an absence to which the written record of their speeches necessarily attests" (1998.88). The impulse behind the presentation of the Epitaphios as a direct, first-person speech thus attests to a pervasive nostalgia for "the lost ideal of the masculine speaking ego," a "desire to preserve and inhabit the position of the masculine subject of antiquity" (1998.89), a desire with which Thucydides and his modern readers are equally complicit.

under the punishing rigor of Thucydides' Greek.[86] Thucydides, like Pericles, refuses to speak *pros hēdonēn*: he aims at truthfulness, not attractiveness (1.21.1) and eschews the delight of mythology in favor of the utility of knowledge (1.22.4; cf. 2.41.4). But through this very refusal, Thucydides offers us the jubilation of recognizing and mastering his ideal, the pleasure of a narcissistic eros for democracy when embodied in the elite demos, the glorious city, and a supremely powerful politician. Succumbing to the lure of this text, we also subscribe to the orthopaedics of its ideal. If, as Chantal Mouffe has proposed, full democracy is a vanishing point within democratic discourse, a point to which it tends but which it necessarily never reaches, the Epitaphios sets for us the fictional direction of an asymptotic progress toward one imaginary ideal of democracy.[87]

What is it we see when we look at the Athenians—and ourselves—in the idealizing mirror of the Epitaphios? How does its democratic ideal captivate us and hold us within its narcissistic embrace, binding us by an eros for both an imaginary Athenian demos and ourselves as that demos? And if love for this perfect Athens drives an attempt to approximate it ourselves, what do we leave by the wayside in our parabolic course toward that impossible ideal? Does Thucydides' Epitaphios function for us, as Lacan says of the image in the mirror, as the armor—and *amor*—of an alienating identity?

[86] Warner comments upon the difficult pleasure of translating Thucydides: "As for the pleasures of translation, it is sufficient to say that, if one loves one's author, one loves being in his company" (1954.33).

[87] Mouffe 1993.8, 85; cf. Laclau and Mouffe 1985.176–93.

Chapter II

PORNOS OF THE PEOPLE

Parodic Pericles

In his summation of Pericles' life and achievements, Thucydides draws a strong distinction between Pericles and all those who followed him (2.65). Under Pericles, Athens was at its mightiest; his strategies increased Athens's power and would have led to victory, had his successors only stuck to them. In his intelligence, integrity, and firm—almost monarchical—authority, Pericles represented a perfection within Athenian history never to be matched. By comparison, his successors fell far short: riven by political squabbling and motivated by personal ambition, they turned to courting the demos and led the polis to ruin.[1]

Thucydides' division is reiterated in other contemporary literature. In Eupolis's *Demoi*, for example, Pericles is included among the great statesmen of Athens's past (in the company of Solon, Aristides, and Miltiades), who are brought back from the dead to make up for the dearth of worthy modern politicians. A similar theme is hinted at in Aristophanes' *Knights*, where Athens's contemporary leaders in that post-Periclean era are represented as a succession of hucksters, each more degraded and dishonest than the last (128–44). It appears that the death of Pericles was experienced as a break in Athenian history, the end of one era and the beginning of another.[2] This division is often replicated in modern historiography. So, for example, W. R. Connor analyzes the difference between the political style of the "old" politicians (Pericles and his predecessors), who relied on the support of political allies, and that of the "new" (post-Periclean) politicians, who forged a more immediate bond with the demos.[3]

[1] For various assessments of Thucydides' division, see Woodhead 1960.294–95; M. Finley 1962; J. Finley 1963 [1942].156–57, 162–66; de Romilly 1965.560–68; Pouncey 1980.78–82; Hornblower 1987.173–78, 1991.346–47; Ober 1989a.84–95; Henderson 1990.279–84; Connor 1992 [1971].141–42, 1984.75–76; Yunis 1996.67–70; Rood 1998.133–58; Andrews 2000; Balot 2001.142–49, 159–78.

[2] Cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 28.1: "As long as Pericles was leading the demos, affairs of state went better, but when Pericles died, they became far worse"; 28.4: "From Cleon on, leadership was handed down in a continuous succession to those most willing to be brash and to gratify the majority, aiming only at short-term goals." Cf. Isoc. 8.126–27, 15.230–36; Lys. 30.28.

[3] Connor 1992 [1971]. It should be noted that while Connor follows Thucydides in locating a change in Athenian politics after Pericles' death, he does not adopt Thucydides' moral-

To Thucydides and many of those who echo his judgments, all politicians after Pericles are mere parodies of his greatness, poor imitations whose failings go to prove his superiority.[4] This is especially true of Cleon, his most immediate successor and surely one of the demagogues Thucydides had in mind when he spoke of personal profit, political in-fighting, and flattery of the demos (2.65.7–11).[5] Cleon is often represented as a debased, repulsive version of Pericles. Whereas Pericles was known for his personal dignity, Cleon is characterized as *bōmolokhos*, a vulgar buffoon.[6] Whereas Pericles guided the demos with a firm hand, Cleon catered to its every whim: he is represented in Aristophanes' *Knights* as Demos's slave, fawning on him, flattering him, sparing no humiliation in pleasing him. Thucydides depicts Pericles as a man of spotless integrity, above bribery and motivated only by the good of the polis; Aristophanes represents Cleon as the exact opposite: a fisherman on the lookout for the revenues that swim in from the empire (311–13), a voracious gull who snatches food from the mouth of the demos (956; cf. 205), a dog who steals from his master's table (1030–34).[7] As Mabel Lang (1972) puts it, Cleon is the anti-Pericles.

One might attribute this opposition between Pericles and Cleon to the genres in which they find their most memorable reflection. The serious and lofty Pericles finds expression in the serious and lofty prose of Thucydides; Cleon's vile and buffoonish persona belongs to the world of com-

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ization of the break. For him the change in political strategies does not necessarily point to a deterioration in democratic politics but to "apparently hopeful developments" (108): "These changes had something fresh and exciting about them, a sense of healthy innovation" (194, although he argues that their promise was not realized in fact, 196–98). He also points out the considerable overlap between Pericles and Cleon (119–36).

[4] Jaeger 1945.366–67; Wassermann 1956; Macleod 1978.68–69; Yunis 1996.59–116; Rood 1998.148–49.

[5] Andrewes 1962.77 suggests that Cleon stands for the typical post-Periclean demagogue in Thucydides; cf. J. Finley 1963 [1942].187; Pouncey 1980.20, 79–80; Connor 1992 [1971].118–19, 140–43; Andrews 2000. On Thucydides' "bias" against Cleon, see Woodhead 1960; Andrewes 1962.79–84; Gomme 1962; Adcock 1963.62–64; Wallace 1964.256; Westlake 1968.60–61, 83–85; Lang 1972; Hunter 1973.39–40; Tulli 1980–81; Marshall 1984; Hornblower 1987.166–68; Pope 1988.283–84; and (stressing Thucydides' gentleness toward Cleon) Plut. *de malig. Hdt.* 855b–c.

[6] Plut. *Nic.* 3.2; Ar. *Knights* 902 and 1194 (of the Sausage-seller). Modern scholarship has often shared this contempt for Cleon. See, e.g., Gomme 1951.78: "What was wrong with him was that he had a vulgar mind, acute in a second-rate manner, without intelligence or humanity." Woodhead 1960 strongly criticizes this view.

[7] Charges against Cleon of bribery, embezzlement, blackmail, and profit from false accusations and public confiscations are ubiquitous throughout *Knights*: see, e.g., 103–4, 258–63, 280–81, 402–3, 437–39, 716–18, 792–835, 995–96, 1218–24; cf. Dorey 1956. On the imagery, see Whitman 1964.90–92; Taillardat 1965.401–23, 180–84; Thiry 1975; Lind 1990.223–30.

edy. And if Thucydides' words and Pericles' are notoriously difficult to tell apart, so too Cleon's character always seems to take on the scurrility of the comic stage. Even within Thucydides Cleon elicits a comic idiom. Thucydides is not known for his levity, but he stages Cleon's taking the command at Pylos—the most fateful moment of his career—as sheer farce (4.27–28).[8] The siege at Pylos is dragging on; Cleon blames Nicias and boasts that he himself could end it easily, if he were in command (4.27.5). Nicias offers him the command on the spot, and, backed into a corner, Cleon proclaims that within twenty days he will either capture or kill the men on Pylos. At this, "laughter broke out among the Athenians at Cleon's frivolous claim" (τοῖς δὲ Ἀθηναίοις ἐνέπεσε μέν τι καὶ γέλωτος τῇ κουφολογίᾳ αὐτοῦ, 4.28.5). This is one of the only times in Thucydides that anyone laughs.[9] Cleon is a Thersites figure,[10] whose speech and bearing are a parody of those of the good warrior, and who elicits laughter even in the midst of war council. Not just in comedy but even within Thucydides' otherwise humorless narrative, Cleon plays Thersites to Pericles' Achilles.

In Aristophanes' *Knights*, Cleon's parodic relationship to Pericles is played out largely around the metaphor of eros. There Cleon directly echoes Pericles' erotic diction in the Epitaphios, describing himself as the erastes of Demos. Pericles' noble "love of the polis" becomes, in Cleon's debased enactment, political prostitution. No longer is Demos the proud lover of a beautiful city and its glorious dead; instead, he has become the eromenos, and a gluttonous and decrepit one at that. Promising himself to the politician who offers the greatest gifts, this unattractive eromenos also becomes a *pornos*, a whore. The people are the "many for an obol" (*Knights* 945), for sale to the highest bidder and dirt cheap. The leaders of the people are no better. Whereas Pericles was himself the supreme embodiment of the ideals he espoused, Cleon outdoes Demos in shamelessness: he, too, is for sale, gratifying Demos in exchange for political favor. In his adaptation of Pericles' erotic idiom, Cleon transforms love into prostitution and the noble erastes into a common whore.

Now, Thucydides' and Aristophanes' antipathy for Cleon was no secret, and perhaps at their hands Cleon found the treatment he deserved.

[8] On this scene, see de Romilly 1963.172 n.2; Cornford 1965 [1907].124–25; Westlake 1968.70–75; Pouncey 1980.79; Connor 1984.114–18 and n.12; Hunter 1988.22–23; Henderson 1990.283; Flower 1992; Yunis 1996.102–3. Woodhead 1960.313–15 points out that the ridicule of Cleon masks the recklessness both of Nicias (in handing over the command) and of the "wise and moderate men" (*sōphrones*) who approve that move.

[9] The only other occurrence of γέλως is at 6.35.1 (but cf. also 3.83.1). Hornblower 1996.188 ad 4.28.5 notes that laughter in Thucydides is "rare, and always unpleasant." Note that Pericles, too, never laughed (Plut. *Per.* 5.1).

[10] Cairns 1982; cf. Flower 1992.54–56.

But parody has a politics of its own. The parodic, as Butler has argued, does not merely and slavishly imitate its original, but also poses a potential challenge to it, exposing its grounding logic and the mechanisms by which it is maintained.[11] Cleon's "love of Demos" in Aristophanes' *Knights* is an astute commentary on Pericles' "love of the polis": it shows us in lurid detail the complexity of relations between demos and demagogue, a complexity that the Epitaphios, with its idealized narcissistic bond, fails (or refuses) to acknowledge. Whereas in the Epitaphios the citizens love Pericles as the embodiment of their ideal selves, in *Knights* the power relations implicit in such a love affair are brought to the fore: not only is this love pederastic (raising inevitable questions about who is "on top"), but it is also part of an undisguised economy of political and sexual exchanges. *Knights* demystifies the romance of the Epitaphios and reveals its latent costs and rewards. In the process, it also provides an exegesis—fuller than we may have wanted—on the Epitaphios's fantasy of an elite demos. In Aristophanes' play, the latent politics of that fantasy is laid bare, its misrecognitions and repressions exposed, and its exorbitant price—a fantasy of hegemony, I will suggest, bought at the price of real hegemony—demanded of the audience in hard cash.

If Cleon is a parody of Pericles, he makes it impossible to read the original straight. Viewed from the perspective of Cleon, Pericles himself becomes a whore, seducing Athens with persuasive words and beautiful monuments. Is Cleon a failed Pericles or Pericles a Cleon *avant la lettre*? This is a serious question, for when Thucydides (through Pericles) declared Athens a *paradeigma* to others rather than an imitation of others (2.37.1), he was thinking of Periclean Athens, not Cleontic Athens. At stake, then, is the nature of Athens as a paradigm, an original, and the challenge imitation may pose to that original. Further, because modern scholarship has by and large accepted Thucydides' judgment—recapitulating his nostalgia for the Periclean paradigm and his disgust with the Cleontic imitation—we must question the historiographic impulse to imagine history in terms of originals and copies, perfection and its failed imitation. What does it mean to view Cleon as a purely derivative and derisory figure, a parodic Pericles? What is excluded under the name of Cleon? And what is embraced in the figure of Pericles?

At issue is our own love affair with Athens. When we love a democratic Athens personified by Pericles, I suggested in the preceding chapter, we become the noble erastai Pericles praises. What would happen, then, if we were to fall in love with a Cleon—or rather, since his love is always impure, if we were to patronize him, become his "johns"? Cleon poses a

[11] Butler 1990 esp. 128–49; cf. 1993.12–16, 121–40.

problem of democratic desire, modern and ancient. Throughout Aristophanes we hear this refrain: how could the demos love Cleon? How could the same people who elected Pericles elect Cleon? And the inevitable corollary question: should a demos that elects Cleon be allowed to rule? If democracy crystallizes around the democratic libido, then Cleon would seem to represent a libidinal pathology within the democracy, a crisis of democratic desire and, ultimately, of democracy itself.

This problem is given fullest treatment in the political philosophy of Plato's *Gorgias*. Plato does not distinguish between Pericles and Cleon: as orators, both pander to the demos and do it harm by catering to its desires. Contrasted to the orator is the philosopher, the only true statesman: he improves the people rather than gratifying them; he speaks *pros to beltiston* (for the good), not *pros hēdonēn* (for pleasure). The difference between the orator and the philosopher is that between a pastry chef (*opsopoios*) and a doctor.[12] This dichotomy between pleasure and benefit—in which the two can apparently never cohere into a pleasing and educative political rhetoric—leaves the demos in a bad position, for its desire can only be perverse and false. The mob doesn't know what's good for it: seduced by flattery and pleasure, looking only to its gratification and not to its edification, it is weak, infantile, and sick. It needs a doctor to save it from itself and from its own morbid passions. Pseudo-Xenophon, the so-called Old Oligarch, treats the same problem from a different angle. He argues that the demos does know its own best interests, but those interests are base and narrowly class-bound, good for the vulgar mob (his definition of demos), but not for the polis as a whole, and especially not for its elite members. To him the demos's desire has a twisted rationality: the demos knows the difference between good men and bad, but it loves (*philousi*) the latter because they are more useful to itself (*Ath. Pol.* 2.19). For Pseudo-Xenophon as for Plato, the demos's libido is diseased. The disease is democracy itself, and it admits of no alleviation.

For Plato and Pseudo-Xenophon the pathology of the demos's desire is a problem of democratic politics in general (so that it applies to Pericles no less than to Cleon). For Thucydides and Aristophanes the problem is specifically Cleon and the demos's love for him. Aristophanes' *Knights* offers a variety of explanations for this love: stupidity, avarice, fear. Demos may not be stupid at home, but when he sits in the Assembly he

[12] Pl. *Gorg*. 462d–465e, 500b–503d, 513a–523a. For this distinction between pleasing the demos and improving it, cf. Dem. 3.3; Isoc. 8.3–5. For the figure of the *opsopoios* and the moralization of *opsa* (culinary delicacies), see Davidson 1997.3–35 (esp. 20–26). Hesk (2000.218) points out that Plato's characterization of deceptive rhetoric develops an anti-rhetorical critique already implicit within fifth-century democratic oratory. He discusses this Athenian "rhetoric of anti-rhetoric" at length (2000.202–91).

gapes moronically at Cleon's deceptions (755; cf. 396), greedily gobbles down his offerings, and gets into a flutter when a politician claims to be his lover (1340–44). Cleon's deceit is matched by Demos's gullibility, and the relationship strengthened by "necessity and need and jury payment" (804). Even if, as Aristophanes suggests (in a passage that recalls Pseudo-Xenophon), Demos favors such politicians through canny self-interest and not sheer stupidity—extracting what he wants from them, then fattening them up for the kill (1121–50)—he mistakes his true self-interest and sacrifices long-term prosperity for the immediate gratification of a good meal.[13] Cleon provokes disappointment in the demos and a loss of faith in its political will.

Cleon represents democratic desire in its most unromanticized form, as pure lust and uncontrolled appetite. For both Aristophanes and Thucydides attacks on Cleon are attempts to control this desire, to sublimate it and redirect its focus away from Cleon toward a loftier object. "Periclean Athens" is the effect of that sublimation. The base pleasure represented by Cleon is purified; in its place we find "love of beauty" and "love of wisdom," a passion for the beautiful city, an ardent cathexis to a politician who does not speak to please. These objects are preserved in their sublimity by Thucydides' strong divide between Pericles and his followers; this protects Pericles from the demos's vulgar lusts and forecloses questions about his relation with the people: was that, too, whorish? Upon the repudiated ground of Cleon's political pleasure Thucydides builds his vision of an ideal Athens—which is also largely our vision of Athens—as well as his history of it, a history that, like Pericles, refuses to pander to the demos's desire and does not speak to please. Much depends, then, for him and for us upon the repression of Cleon.

Whereas Thucydides shows us the costs of not repressing Cleon, Aristophanes reveals the costs of repressing him. In *Knights* he offers as an alternative to Cleon's lowly politics a fantasy of an elite demos that chimes remarkably with that in Pericles' Epitaphios. The play encourages its audience to fall in love with that fantasy and to repudiate its love for Cleon, but the price of that repudiation, I suggest, is nothing less than democracy and democratic subjectivity. Aristophanes seems willing to pay this price, but he does so with a great deal of irony, and leaves us wondering whether the new and glamorous object of our desire is really any better than the loathsome Cleon.

Is there a way to approach the demos's love for Cleon without merely reiterating Thucydides' despairing narrative of decline or Aristophanes'

[13] Landfester 1967.68–73. Brock (1986.23) and Scholtz (1997.269) suggest that Aristophanes' *Knights* was a response to Pseudo-Xenophon's antidemocratic treatise, while Lang bizarrely imagines that Cleon himself might have written it (1972.166).

disgusted outrage or Plato's and Pseudo-Xenophon's full-scale rejection of democratic politics? The antidemocratic sentiment that emerges so strongly whenever our sources treat Cleon has done an effective job of occluding his democratic appeal, making it difficult to read it positively. But if we take the demos's desire seriously, perverse though it may seem, Cleon's whorishness becomes not merely a repulsive travesty of Pericles' elite love but rather an alternate way of conceiving the erotics of democracy and the libidinal bond between demos and demagogue. Instead of condemning Cleon (and the citizens who loved him) on the authority of Aristophanes and Thucydides and using that condemnation to reaffirm the unique superiority of Pericles, this chapter rereads Thucydides and Aristophanes—and Pericles—through Cleon. What happens when Cleon is not repressed but brought to the fore? What happens to Pericles, whose authority rests upon the denial of Cleontic pleasure? What happens to Thucydides' and Aristophanes' texts, both of which use a critique of Cleon to define their own political projects and their relations to their audience? Finally, what happens to Athens, which we like to think of as Periclean Athens but, in a certain ineradicable way, is always also Cleontic? Looking at Cleon as more than just an obscene parody of a lost ideal and considering the demos's desire for him as something more—more positive and profound—than mere depravity, we may find an erotics at once more complex and more democratic than we had expected.

It should be stressed that I am not trying to recover a "real" Cleon behind the literary representations of him: he can exist for us only in the form of those representations. Instead, I am trying to reconstruct from those partial and biased accounts the broader set of problems that surrounded the figure of Cleon within the Athenian democratic imaginary. Those problems emerge not only within individual texts but, especially, in the dialogue between texts. The condemnation of Cleon crosses the boundaries of text and genre: we hear virtually the same complaints in Thucydides' history as we do in Aristophanes' comedy, although of course the tone in which they are couched is different, as are the solutions offered. At the same time as Cleon constitutes a problem that exceeds textual and generic boundaries, he also represents a problem spot within each text. In both Thucydides and Aristophanes, Cleon is a point of internal resistance to the arguments marshaled to contain him. He is both the evidence against and the evidence for a certain sort of democratic eros, a contradiction that neither text fully resolves. Tracing this Cleontic eros will thus involve reading Thucydides and Aristophanes against one another and also against themselves. In the friction such a reading produces we may hope to catch a glimmer of that ever elusive object, the democratic psyche.

Politics of the Open Mouth

In Thucydides the break between Pericles and his successors is marked by a changed relation between power, pleasure, and oratory. Pericles did not speak to please the demos (μὴ . . . πρὸς ἡδονήν τι λέγειν, 2.65.8). This refusal of oratorical pleasure was both the cause and the effect of his political power: his great probity meant he did not need to please the people, and as a result, Pericles led the majority, rather than being led by it. The repudiation of pleasing speech is yoked to political authority, and this combination in particular distinguishes Pericles from his successors. They, lacking his uncontested authority and competing among themselves, turned to pleasing the demos (ἐτράποντο καθ' ἡδονὰς τῷ δήμῳ, 2.65.10). And with that pleasure goes power: pleasing the demos means "relinquishing affairs" to it (τὰ πράγματα ἐνδιδόναι, 2.65.10).

These terms—pleasure, power, speech—are complexly interconnected throughout ancient discussions of democracy and demagogy. When a rhetor speaks to the demos, who gives pleasure and who receives it?[14] With Pericles, this question is pushed to one side: he "did not speak to please." It is with his successors, and in particular Cleon, that the issue of rhetorical pleasure becomes pressing. Cleon was famous for his oratorical style. Thucydides introduces him as "the most violent of citizens and by far the most persuasive to the demos at that time" (βιαιότατος τῶν πολιτῶν τῷ τε δήμῳ παρὰ πολὺ ἐν τῷ τότε πιθανώτατος, 3.36.6; cf. 4.21.3). Aristophanes comments frequently upon Cleon's rhetorical "violence." In *Knights* the Cleon character is first introduced as "the tanner Paphlagon, a thief and a screecher with a voice like the Cycloborus" ('Επιγίγνεται γὰρ βυρσοπώλης ὁ Παφλαγών, ἅρπαξ, κεκράκτης, Κυκλοβόρου φωνὴν ἔχων, 136–37). Cleon is a hyperbolic incarnation of the demagogue as voice: he does not speak but screeches, his voice as forceful, inarticulate, and unstoppable as Athens's winter torrent.[15] Likewise, his comic name in *Knights*, Paphlagon, even as it hints at his debased ancestry (by marking him as a foreign-born slave), also refers to his vehement oratory: he boils, blusters, and seethes (*paphlazein*; cf. 664, 919).[16] Aristotle even attributes to Cleon's

[14] For an extended discussion of the problems of rhetorical pleasure, see Gunderson 2000a.149–86.

[15] Cleon is also compared to the Cycloborus at Ar. *Ach*. 381. At *Wasps* 35–36 he is a voracious whale with the voice of a burned pig. *Krazein* is the sound a raven makes and is common in descriptions of Cleon's speech: *Knights* 256, 274, 304, 487, 863, 1018, 1403 (and cf. 285, 287, 642 of the Sausage-seller); *Wasps* 596; *Peace* 314; Arist. *Ath. Pol*. 28.3. In oratory, the verb is used only of an opponent's style (Dem. 18.132, 199; 25.47; Lys. 3.15; Aesch. 3.218). At Xen. *Cyr.* 1.3.10 it is used of a drunk, indicating that it is the sound of *akrasia*.

[16] Newiger 1957.13–14; Landfester 1967.16–17. On naming in Aristophanes, see Olson 1992.

indecorous style a general decline in political decorum: "He seems to have corrupted the demos most by his impulsiveness; he was the first to have screamed from the podium and yelled insults and addressed the Assembly all girded up, while the other speakers maintained decorum."[17]

Cleon's rhetoric is violent, loud, emotional. It "stirs up" the city.[18] It is not the controlled and measured style of Pericles.[19] And yet it was still persuasive: Cleon was *pithanōtatos* (most persuasive) as well as *biaiotatos* (most violent). Does Thucydides' hendiadys mean that Cleon's *peithō* (persuasion) was really a form of *bia* (violence), and that while Pericles "restrained the majority freely" (*eleutherōs*, 2.65.8) with his speech, Cleon's oratory was a kind of assault, a *hubris*, against his audience? Or is the reverse also true: that Cleon's persuasiveness consisted precisely in his vehement style, that he was *pithanōtatos* because he was *biaiotatos*?

The connection between persuasion and violence was clearly in the air at the time. Gorgias in his *Encomium to Helen* imagines *logos* and *bia* as analogous forces: *logos* has a physical presence that acts upon the mind of its listeners as *anankē*, compulsion, and forces them to obey (*Encomium* 12).[20] The persuasion of *logos* and the compulsion of *bia* become one and the same: for Gorgias "*biaiotatos* and *pithanōtatos*" is all but pleonastic. He also adds a third term, though: eros. Helen went to Troy either "seized by *bia*, persuaded by *logos*, or captivated by eros" (ἢ βίᾳ ἁρπασθεῖσα, ἢ λόγοις πεισθεῖσα, <ἢ ἔρωτι ἁλοῦσα>, *Encomium* 6).[21] Speech, force, and desire are collapsed. *Logos* is violent and sexual at

[17] *Ath. Pol.* 28.3. Cf. Plut. *Nic.* 8.3: "Cleon robbed the speakers' stand of its decorum: he was the first to shout [*anakragōn*] when he addressed the demos and to pull off his cloak and strike his thigh and to rush around while he was speaking. With this behavior he inspired in the other politicians a negligence and indifference to propriety that somewhat later confounded the entire state." Cf. Cic. *Brutus* 28; M. Finley 1962.16; Donlan 1980.172.

[18] *Knights* 66, 304–13, 431, 692, 867, 984. See Newiger 1957.27–30. Edmunds (1987a.14–15, 1987b.233–47) links Cleon's "disturbance" to the ship-of-state metaphor and *stasis*. The language of disturbance is familiar in attacks on sycophants: Christ 1998.51, 55.

[19] On Pericles' "gentleness," see Plut. *Per.* 2.4. At Plut. *Per.* 5.1, Pericles is described virtually as Cleon's negative: he is "devoid of vulgar and criminal *bōmolokhia*, his expression is severe and his bearing gentle, the order of his attire is never disturbed by passion when he speaks and the timbre of his voice is not boisterous."

[20] Worman 1997.176 emphasizes the physicality of *logos* in this text; cf. Segal 1962.105–6, 120–23. Gorgias first made a splash in Athens in 427, around the time of Cleon's rise to political prominence; the *Encomium to Helen* was probably composed around 416 (Buchheim 1989.160 n.2; Segal 1962.137 n.11). Buxton 1982.58–63 shows that violence and persuasion were more commonly perceived as opposites.

[21] The last phrase (ἔρωτι ἁλοῦσα) is a medieval conjecture based on the text that follows, which is organized around the three terms, violence, persuasion, and desire: MacDowell 1982 ad loc.; Buchheim 1989 ad loc.; Worman 1997.175 n.84.

once; it compels by arousing desire. In its implication with eros and *bia*, persuasion becomes virtual rape (*Encomium* 12).[22]

Athenian democracy was built upon *logos*: politicians were orators, and public speeches were the medium of democratic deliberation. What, then, were the effects of speech's violent eros on the democracy? Plato's *Gorgias* spells them out in the bleakest terms. By nature, Socrates argues, rhetoric aims at pleasure, not the good (*pros hēdonēn*, not *pros to beltiston*). All rhetoric is sheer flattery (463a–465b), as the orator tries to "woo" the demos as a lover would his beloved (481d5–482a2). His interlocutor Callicles does not object to the metaphor from pederasty nor to himself taking the role of the people's lover, for he imagines that his eros puts him in command of the impressionable demos. The orator may seem to be in the people's thrall, he says, but the day will come when he throws off his shackles and "standing up, the slave will reveal himself as master" (484a6). Winning power by pleasing them, he will be able to indulge his every whim and satisfy his every desire; he will become a tyrant. Socrates anticipates a different outcome. To spend one's life flattering the demos and attending to its pleasure, this to him is the life of a slave. And even if he did achieve his final goal—tyranny over the demos and a life of unadulterated enjoyment—the orator would be little better than a *kinaidos*, a degenerate, abasing himself before his beloved in the hope of receiving some relief for his endless "itch" for power (494c5–8, e3–5). This is the *hēdonē* he gains with his flattering oratory, a pleasure that renders him pathic and pathetic, a slave to his fickle, domineering beloved as well as to his own unmasterable appetites.[23]

Plato fears for the lover in this dangerous liaison, but there is also a risk to the beloved, the demos. The Greek diction of persuasion draws a connection between listening and submission: to be persuaded is to obey (*peithesthai*) and to listen is to be subordinate (*hupēkoos*). This language becomes problematic within democratic oratory, for it places the members of the demos—who listen to speakers—in a position of subservience quite out of keeping with the autonomy and hegemony of Athenian citizen masculinity.[24] When translated into an erotic idiom, the implications are stark. Gorgias equated persuasion by *logos*, compulsion by *bia*, and seduction by eros: a good speaker not only leaves the demos rapt, he rapes it. Those in the audience become slaves to the speaker and also (as Cleon

[22] Worman 1997.179: "In the force with which it overwhelms the audience, this impact [of speech] is akin to physical rapture." Cf. Segal 1962; de Romilly 1975.3–22; Buxton 1982.50–53; Rothwell 1990.26–43.

[23] Ober 1998.204–6 analyzes this passage. For the *kinaidos*, see my introduction, note 19.

[24] Griffith 1998.26.

will charge) to the pleasure of speech itself. Like the demagogue, they too become *kinaidoi*, endlessly scratching an insatiable itch.

Aristophanes literalizes Plato's metaphor of rhetoric as *kinaideia*. The politicians of *Knights*, like Plato's "pastry chefs," cater to Demos's desires; they speak only for pleasure, never for the good, and that pleasure is of the basest sort. The results are much as Socrates predicted: the rhetors are slaves to Demos. In an effort to wrest their master Demos from the influence of Paphlagon, his slaves Nicias and Demosthenes bring in a rival, the foul Sausage-seller. The play centers around this rivalry, as Paphlagon and the Sausage-seller seek to outdo one another in flatteries, gifts, and empty promises and to win the love of gullible Demos. In its staging of the mutually degrading eros and politics of demagoguery, *Knights* provides a gloss—highly sexualized, but not for that unfaithful—on Thucydides' terse comment that Pericles' successors turned to pleasing the demos and handed affairs over to it. But while Thucydides leaves unspoken the problems with this new pleasure, Aristophanes will speak them in graphic—even pornographic—detail, collecting them under the name of Cleon.

In *Knights* political oratory is a lewd orgy and the demos loves it. This is in keeping with the general ethics of Aristophanes' universe. The ideal of masculinity in Athens, as Foucault showed, lauded an ethics of self-mastery and self-control.[25] Through vigilant self-regulation, the ideal man mastered his bodily needs and freed himself from their tyranny, achieving by this virile restraint the *sōma autarkes* of Pericles' Epitaphios. Aristophanic man is neither self-controlled nor self-sufficient. Instead, he "gapes" (*khaskein*).[26] His orifices are always open, eager to receive all the pleasure they can. The ideal Athenian man moderated his bodily pleasures through a well-regulated economy of expenditure and enjoyment. Aristophanic man prefers an economy of glut. He eats and drinks until he is stuffed, then belches and farts. He seeks to maximize, not to control his enjoyment, culinary and sexual. Whatever his itch, he spends as much time as possible scratching.

Orators are the worst of the lot: for them *kinaideia* is not only an occupational hazard (as in Plato) but a professional requirement. The Sausage-seller is eligible for political office, in this play's inverted politics, thanks to his lowly birth, lack of education, poverty, and shamelessness (178–220), but his aptitude for the job is really proved by a particular youthful

[25] Foucault 1985.39–139.

[26] Taillardat 1965.264–67 details Aristophanes' use of this verb. Cf. Eur. *Suppl.* 412–16, where gaping and rhetorical pleasure are likewise linked as the quintessential markers of democracy. Plato's comparison of a man without self-control to a vessel full of holes (*Gorg.* 493d–494b) offers a vivid image of akratic gaping. On *khaskein* in erotic lyric, see Müller 1980.139 n.369.

exploit. He stole meat from a butcher and hid it between his legs, swearing on the gods that he had not taken it; an orator who saw him doing this remarked "there is no way this boy will not be a leader of the people" (425–26). The chorus finds this comment astute: "It's clear how he figured this out, because you swore false oaths and stole and your anus held meat" (ἀτὰρ δῆλόν γ' ἀφ' οὗ ξυνέγνω· ὁτιὴ 'πιώρκεις θ' ἡρπακὼς καὶ κρέας ὁ πρωκτὸς εἶχεν, 427–28).[27] A scholiast explains the joke: "In this way he shows his depravity and foulness, both that he stole the meat and hid it in his anus, and that he then ate it; or else he wants to cast aspersions on his licentiousness, since in his youth he was treated like a woman" (schol. Triclinii ad *Knights* 428). To be a politician is to be a liar and a thief but also a pathic. The willingness to "hold meat in his anus" becomes shorthand for the debasement of politicians, ready to do anything in the pursuit of political power (cf. 483–84).[28] So says Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians*: in Athens only cocksuckers and buggers are considered real men (λαικαστάς τε καὶ καταπύγονας, 78).[29]

Orators are by occupation *binoumenoi*, those who are fucked. When the Sausage-seller became an adult, he "sold sausages and was fucked" ('Ηλλαντοπώλουν καί τι καὶ βινεσκόμην, 1242), and that proves his claim to be the prophesied ruler of Athens. The logic here is easy enough to see. If gaining political authority in Athens means speaking so as to please the demos, then one's job is gratifying others. When the orator opens his mouth to speak, that open orifice renders all other orifices equally open

[27] Meat is a common euphemism for the genitals, male and female: see Ar. fr. 128.3 K-A; Taillardat 1965.59–60; Henderson 1975.68, 129; Stehle 1994.516–20. Hubbard 1991.68 reminds us that "the Sausage seller is in his very nature a purveyor of phallic material." Food and sex are linked throughout the play as primary media of political gratification. The rhetors compete to offer Demos cakes and other treats; they bribe the Boule with cheap fish and condiments; they feed Demos like a nurse feeding a baby (715–18); they even themselves become sacrificial victims and *opsa* for Demos to feast on (1125–40). Whitman 1964.92–96; Littlefield 1968.12–14; Hubbard 1991.68–70; Wilkins 1997.258–62.

[28] Paphlagon lists as one of his services to the city that he "put a stop to the buggers and removed Gryttus from the citizen lists" (877). Gryttus, the scholiast tells us, was one of those "slandered for effeminacy." Cleon's civic beneficence—his "butt surveillance," as the Sausage-seller puts it (*prōktotērein*, 878)—probably consisted of bringing a charge of prostitution that resulted in *atimia*, the loss of citizen rights. But the Sausage-seller hints at an ulterior motive: he put an end to the buggers because he was envious, and feared that they would become rival orators (Κοὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως ἐκείνους οὐχὶ φθονῶν ἔπαυσας, ἵνα μὴ ῥήτορες γένοιντο, 879–80).

[29] Cf. Ar. *Ecc.* 111–14: boys who are "pounded" (*spodountai*) the most make the best orators; therefore women should be the best orators of all. On the trope of politicians as pathics, see Dover 1978.142; Carey 1994.74; Scholtz 1996; Ludwig 1996.552–53; Davidson 1997.250–77; Hubbard 1998; and on *Knights* in particular, Henderson 1975.68–69, 209–13; Hubbard 1998.56–57. Hubbard rightly notes (1998.55–57) that in comedy the erastes receives no kinder treatment than the eromenos: both are degenerates.

and available for others' enjoyment. Like the *kinaidos*, the politician will submit to any humiliation to satisfy his "itch" for political power and, as a result, is reduced to a gaping mouth and a gaping anus. So Cleon, whose mouth is always open, screaming and haranguing, is represented with one foot in Pylos, one foot in the Ekklesia, and his ass in Chaos (i.e., gaping).[30]

The best qualification for political preeminence, according to this logic, is to already be a pathic, *binoumenos*. But like the *kinaidos*, the rhetor not only submits to sexual humiliation but likes it: *kinaideia* is the reward for, as well as the means to, a stellar political career. Demosthenes lists for the Sausage-seller the perks of being a rhetor:

> Τούτων ἁπάντων αὐτὸς ἀρχέλας ἔσει,
> καὶ τῆς ἀγορᾶς καὶ τῶν λιμένων καὶ τῆς πυκνός·
> βουλὴν πατήσεις καὶ στρατηγοὺς κλαστάσεις,
> δήσεις, φυλάξεις, ἐν πρυτανείῳ λαικάσεις.

> You will be commander of all these [people in the audience] and of the Agora and the harbors and the Pnyx. You will trample the Boule and prune the generals, you will bind and imprison, you will give head [*laikaseis*] in the Prytaneion. (164–67)

Laikazein probably refers to fellatio, although one ancient commentator links it to *lakkoprōktia*, the "cistern-ass" of a pathic.[31] Either way it is associated with prostitution: it refers to an act that a citizen would not willingly perform—indeed, that no one would perform unless paid to do so.[32] This is to be the reward of a political career: not eating in the Prytaneion (town hall), but sucking in the Prytaneion. From the orator's polluted mouth, speaking and sucking become indistinguishable gapings, and the orator's every word of flattery is a blowjob.[33]

[30] *Knights* 75–79: he also has a hand in Demand and his mind in Thievery. Cf. 375–81 where Cleon's gaping (mouth and anus) will be plugged by a *pettalos* (peg/penis). On the connection between fellatio and anal penetration, see, e.g., Cephisod. fr. 3.4–5 K-A; Ar. *Ach*. 73–79, and for this charge against politicians, Jocelyn 1980.26 (and nn.144, 145). Through the metaphor of *kinaideia*, the notion of orators' passivity becomes paradoxically compatible with that of their aggressive sexuality: their aggressive pursuit of pleasure drives them even to a passive sexual position.

[31] Gloss ad cod. Milan, Bibl. Ambros. L. 39 sup. (on which Jocelyn 1980.35). LSJ unhelpfully translate the verb "to wench." Dover 1978.142 n.12: "you'll fuck in the Town Hall" (cf. Henderson 1975.35, 153). Jocelyn's (1980) exhaustive study of the evidence shows that the word's most likely meaning was fellatio, not anal or other penetration, and that it was an extremely coarse and abusive term. On this particular passage, see Jocelyn 1980.34–36.

[32] So the scholion: λαικάσεις πορνεύσεις. Cf. Ar. *Ach*. 523–37 and schol. ad loc.; Suda sv. λαικαστής; Jocelyn 1980.15.

[33] Gunderson 2000a.178–80 discusses oratory as oral gratification (cf. 127–29). For *khaskein* connoting fellatio, see *Wasps* 1348–50: Philocleon is afraid that the flute girl will

In Aristophanes' economy of the open orifice, the citizens are also at risk. They, too, gape. Their response to the orator's open mouth is a mouth fallen slack in stupidity: when the Sausage-seller "gapes and shouts" at them (κἀναχανὼν μέγα ἀνέκραγον, 641–42), they "gape and cheer" at him (ἀνεκρότησαν καὶ πρὸς ἔμ' ἐκεχήνεσαν, 651; cf. 1119). They gape while the politicians cheat them (261); they gape as Paphlagon swallows down their food (824, 1032); they gape in the Ekklesia (755; cf. 804). The Athenaioi are *Kekhēnaioi*, Gapians (1264). And just as the orator's gaping mouth suggested a gaping asshole and the licentiousness of the *kinaidos*, the demos's gaping mouth likewise evokes penetrability. Demos is stirred and pounded by the pestle Paphlagon (984; cf. *Peace* 259–84), who claims that he can make him wide or narrow by his cleverness—a trick the Sausage-seller compares to his own control over his sphincter (719–21). The flatteries of its politicians make the demos soft: the Sausage-seller offers Demos a pillow, urging him to "sit softly," not chafing his rear as he did in the ships at Salamis (784–85). Between the pounding of Paphlagon and the effeminizing ministrations of the Sausage-seller, the once hardy Demos will end up with a "soft" bottom.[34] Moreover, this state of affairs is not solely of the politicians' making, for at one point Demos claims that he only pretends to be gullible and is really using his politicians to get what he wants (1121–50). This claim is dropped and the idea not developed, but the very suggestion implicates the demos's desire in the debased erotics of the play: like a *kinaidos*, the demos chooses passivity and humiliation. Gaping at those who gape at them, speakers and audience are mutually implicated in a vile economy of favors and services, one in which both are compromised and neither comes out on top.

Given the sort of acts it involves, it is little surprise that political *kinaideia* rapidly deteriorates into out-and-out prostitution. *Knights* parodies Pericles' exhortation that the citizen become erastes of the polis. But now the affair is a matter not of love but of money.

ΔΗ. Τίς, ὦ Παφλαγών, ἀδικεῖ σε; ΠΑ. Διὰ σὲ τύπτομαι
ὑπὸ τουτουὶ καὶ τῶν νεανίσκων. ΔΗ. Τιή;
ΠΑ. Ὁτιὴ φιλῶ σ', ὦ Δῆμ', ἐραστής τ' εἰμὶ σός.

laugh at him (*enkhanei*) rather than suck him, for she has "done this" (the referent is deliberately vague) with many others already. *Khaskein* may also imply fellatio at *Knights* 754–55, where Demos is described as "sitting on the Pnyx, gaping like he's chewing dried figs." Dried figs (as Hubbard points out, 1991.69 n.21) can connote the testes or phallus.

[34] Cf. 962–64. Paphlagon tells Demos if he believes the Sausage-seller, he will become a *molgos*, a leather purse ("i.e. well-worn anally," Henderson 1975.68). The Sausage-seller counters that if he believes Paphlagon, he will be stripped to the balls ("that is, a totally aggressive pederast, all hard-on," Henderson 1975.68).

ΔΗ. Σὺ δ' εἶ τίς ἐτεόν; ΑΛ. Ἀντεραστὴς τουτουί,
ἐρῶν πάλαι σου βουλόμενός τέ σ' εὖ ποιεῖν,
ἄλλοι τε πολλοὶ καὶ καλοί τε κἀγαθοί.
Ἀλλ' οὐχ οἷοί τ' ἐσμὲν διὰ τουτονί. Σὺ γὰρ
ὅμοιος εἶ τοῖς παισὶ τοῖς ἐρωμένοις·
τοὺς μὲν καλούς τε κἀγαθοὺς οὐ προσδέχει,
σαυτὸν δὲ λυχνοπώλαισι καὶ νευρορράφοις
καὶ σκυτοτόμοις καὶ βυρσοπώλαισιν δίδως.

DEMOS: Who is wronging you, Paphlagon?
PAPHLAGON: I am being beaten by this man and these youths, all because of you.
DEMOS: Why?
PAPHLAGON: Because I love you, Demos, and I am your erastes.
DEMOS: And you, who are you?
SAUSAGE-SELLER: I am this man's rival for your love. I've loved you for a long time and wanted to do you good, me and many other decent and well-born men. But we can't because of this man. You act like all boys do when someone loves them: you don't entertain decent and well-born men, but you give yourself to lamp-sellers and cobblers and shoemakers and tanners. (730–40)[35]

Pericles had urged the citizens to become lovers of the polis and its power. I suggested in the preceding chapter that this same love bound the demos to its demagogue Pericles, but that it was mediated through the feminine city and never made explicit. Aristophanes makes everything explicit, and his treatment shows precisely why Thucydides and Pericles preferred to leave the metaphor undeveloped. Here love of the beautiful city is transmuted into direct erotic intercourse between the demos and its leaders. Thucydides' abstract and elevated passion is brought down to the basest corporeal terms and the courtship imagined in all its sordid details.

In this passage, the demos is not a noble and manly lover; instead, it takes the role of eromenos, the role occupied in Pericles' metaphor by the feminine (and inanimate) city. Demos is like any other boy who is loved. For the moment he remains chaste, accepting his suitors' gifts but not putting out. But though he plays hard to get now, like all boys he will

[35] On this passage, see Landfester 1967.51–59. Scholtz 1997.182–86 surveys other scholarship. Monoson 1994.270 argues that whereas Pericles' model emphasized reciprocity between citizen and city, Cleon's use of the metaphor emphasized asymmetry between demos and demagogue. Connor 1992 [1971].98 reads the latter more positively as illustrating Cleon's tactic of making the people his *philoi*. Scholtz 1997.180–269 analyzes the tension between the metaphor of politician as *philos* to Demos (and thus his equal), as his erastes (hence his superior), and as his *kolax* (his inferior). The upshot of all this, he concludes, is a relation of mutual exploitation, "discreditable to either party" (266).

eventually "give himself" to one of his would-be erastai. What this entails is suggested by the verb *prosdexei* ("entertain," 738), a word used of female animals receiving the male.[36] Demos not only welcomes the politicians' attentions; he takes them lying down.

Now, the position of the eromenos was problematic to begin with because it required future citizens to take on a sexual role thought incompatible with citizenship.[37] This tension was negotiated through careful attention to age limits in pederasty. Superannuated eromenoi were objects of merciless scorn in Athenian literature because they extended the passivity of youth into adulthood. What explanation could there be for such behavior except that they enjoyed passivity?[38] A ridiculous, even repulsive figure in a culture that prized youthful beauty, the aged eromenos was easily assimilable to the *kinaidos* for the humiliation he willingly endured in order to satisfy his desire. Here the character Demos is not just an eromenos, but an old eromenos, decrepit and deaf. And if a senile beloved was a nauseating thought, one can imagine what that said about his lovers.

The willing degradation of the elderly eromenos also evokes the figure of the *pornos*, the whore who submits to sexual humiliation because he is paid.[39] Throughout *Knights* the scandal of prostitution lies close to the surface of the love affair between demos and demagogue, with each party occupying by turns the position of whore and john. Pederasty, as we saw in the introduction, was conceived as an elite sort of love, and to the extent that the masses participated imaginatively in it, they participated in it precisely as an elite erotics, themselves becoming aristocratic lovers. Prostitution, on the other hand, was the basest conceivable sort of eros.[40] But the line between these two diametrically opposed modes of love was not quite as clear as we might wish, and an eromenos who submitted too eagerly to his suitor's attentions, who entertained too many lovers or lovers of dubious reputation, who received too many or too magnificent gifts, opened himself to unwanted gossip and could even, in the extreme case, find himself in court on charges of prostitution.[41] Hence the great labor of legitima-

[36] Arist. *Hist. An.* 577b15, 575b17; cf. Hdt. 2.121ε2, where it is used of heterosexual intercourse. Neil 1909.105 ad 737–38; Landfester 1967.54.

[37] Golden 1984; Poster 1986.211; D. Cohen 1991.171–202.

[38] Halperin 1990a.3. On revulsion toward aged eromenoi, see Ps.-Lucian *Erotes* 25–26; Halperin 1990a.2–3 and n.6.

[39] While *pornē* seems to have been a relatively neutral way of referring to a female prostitute, *pornos*, by contrast, was "a term of violent abuse, even when applied to a self-confessed prostitute" (Jocelyn 1980.24).

[40] Dover 1978.20–23; Halperin 1990a.9–10; Davidson 1997.78–91.

[41] On the stigma against an overeager eromenos, see Pl. *Symp.* 182a1–3, 184a2–185b5; *Phdr.* 255a5–6; Xen. *Symp.* 8.18–19; Dover 1978.81–91; Halperin 1986a, 1990a.6, 1990b.130; D. Cohen 1991.195–202. The emphasis on this stigma has recently come under question: DeVries 1997. At *Phaedrus* 255a–56e, Plato represents the eromenos as feeling—

tion in Plato, the locus classicus of elite pederasty: the gifts are all intangible (*paideusis*, not cash); the lover is interested only in the boy's moral development and asks from him in return *philia* (friendship) and nothing more.

But whereas Plato goes to some effort to distance the beloved boy from his debased double, Aristophanes tends to blur the line between the most exclusive eros and the most promiscuous. In *Wealth* he goes so far as to suggest that pederasty is really just a euphemized form of prostitution. Corinthian courtesans ignore a poor man but eagerly show their asses to a wealthy man (149–52). "And they say that boys do the same thing—not for their lovers' sake, but for money" (153–54). The old man Chremulus objects that these are *pornoi*, not good boys (*khrēstoi*), since good boys don't ask for money but for things like a nice horse or hunting dogs (155–57). His slave knowingly responds that "they are probably ashamed to ask for money, and they wrap their depravity in a name" (158–59). The difference between a *pornos* and a *khrēstos* is a matter of semantics.

In the debased erotics of *Knights*, where the beloved is a bean-chewing rustic without even a winter cloak, and the suitors he prefers are not *kaloikagathoi* but lamp-sellers and tanners, pederasty always smacks of prostitution.[42] Gifts are in constant circulation, as nouveaux-riches "mongers" (Cleon always being the prototype) compete to buy Demos's love with sacrifices (652–62), coriander (681–82), and cheap sardines (642–51). Money, too, changes hands, as Paphlagon pays for Demos's favor with imperial revenues and jury subsidies.[43] The "many for an obol," Demos

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and struggling against—the same physical desires as the erastes. On the economics of pederastic gifts, see Koch-Harnack 1983.129–72.

[42] Halperin 1990a.12 and E. Cohen 2000.167–91 comment on the association between poverty and prostitution. Hubbard 1998 argues that comedy (as a populist genre) took a generally dim view of pederasty (which he believes was seen as an exclusively elite phenomenon) and grouped it "with other forms of upper-class antinomian self-gratification which contravene accepted ethical norms" (54; cf. Ehrenberg 1943.77–78; Donlan 1980.164–66). From this hostile standpoint, he suggests, "virtually all pederasty, at least as it was practiced in Athens during the classical period, could be seen as prostitution" (64; cf. 65–67).

[43] *Knights* 50–51, 255–57, 773–76, 797–800, 804, 904–5, 1019, 1066, 1359–60. For jury payment as Cleon's attempt to buy the demos, cf. Com. adesp. 740 K-A (= Pl. *Nic.* 2.3; *Mor.* 807a). *Wasps* 548–630 is an extended defense of jury payments, which give an impoverished old man the power of a king (548–49) and earn him respect from haughty politicians (552–58), as well as from his family (605–30). The power and income they bring put food on his table (300) and allow him to mock the wealthy (575); they also afford entertainment (562, 578). Philocleon brands opposition to the lawcourts antidemocratic (*misopolis*, 411; *turannis*, 417). Aside from raising the jury payment, Cleon may also have levied a tax on the wealthy for distribution to the poor: *Knights* 774–76; MacDowell 1995.109. On Aristophanes' representation of the jury system, see de Ste. Croix 1972.362, and for an interesting history of the antidemocratic critique of such subsidies, Wood 1988.5–41. Christ 1998.72–117 situates debates over the lawcourts within the larger context of class conflict in the democracy.

is, by his own admission, for sale (945). Far from Pericles' noble erastes, Demos is now a gigolo to be bought with sardines and a few coins.[44]

While Demos sells himself to the highest bidder, the demagogues are no less meretricious. Paphlagon, in particular, is a "bought man" (2). He compares himself to the famous courtesans Cynna and Salabaccho, but it is clear that he is more akin to a common whore.[45] He abuses the generals at Pylos by calling out to them like a prostitute calling out for customers (κασαλβάσω, 355),[46] and will ultimately end up drunkenly brawling with the *pornai* at the city gates (1400, 1403). The Sausage-seller, too, will become a prostitute when he becomes a politician: the culmination of his political career, as we saw, will be giving head in the Prytaneion. The oral gratification of the orator is indistinguishable from the oral virtuosity that is the prostitute's specialty. In this play's orgy of sexual positions, the distinction between erastes and eromenos loses all meaning, as demos and demagogue take turns buying and selling vile favors.

With Cleon as the lover, the erotics of democracy becomes hopelessly deranged. The allusion to pederastic love at 730–40 fleetingly suggests an idealized politics that is utterly impossible within this play's perverted political ethos. The demagogue is a lover who aims to educate and improve his beloved, to instill in him the virtues of moderation and manliness and to make him a *kaloskagathos* like himself. The demos gives its unstinting *kharis* in the form of political authority to this admirable lover and, under his tutelage, learns to desire what is good, not merely what is pleasing. This just and noble love describes a just and noble politics. But of course that politics has no place here, where shamelessness is the only guardian of politicians (325), and prostitution, that bottom margin of citizenship, has become the forum of democratic politics.[47] Around Cleon, then, Aristophanes constructs a nightmare politics, literalizing the metaphor of rhetorical gratification and pushing it to its hideous extreme, in

[44] It appears that in the fourth century the cheapest whore could be had for an obol (Philemon fr. 4; Halperin 1990b.107–12), less than either the daily wage for jury duty or the cost of admission to the comic theater. "If something was to be shown as exceptionally cheap, it was said that one could get 'ten for an obol'" (Ehrenberg 1943.165).

[45] *Knights* 763–66. Cf. *Wasps* 1032 (= *Peace* 755) for the connection between Cleon and Cynna. Her name is probably the basis for the comparison, as Cleon apparently referred to himself as the "watchdog" of the people: the watchdog becomes the dog star and a bitch. See Halperin 1990b.109–11; Davidson 1997.109–36; Kurke 1999.175–219 on the distinction between the courtesan (*hetaira*) and the common whore (*pornē*).

[46] Rogers 1910.51 ad loc. A κασαλβάς is a whore: Ar. *Ecc.* 1106, fr. 494 K-A.

[47] Bennett and Tyrrell 1990.242–44. Halperin 1990a argues that Solon's institution of "state brothels" helped to mark off the boundaries of citizenship and to safeguard those citizens whose poverty jeopardized their masculinity and personal autonomy. *Knights* supports his case with its insistent articulation of poverty to prostitution and both to the degradation of democracy.

which rhetoric is fellatio, the demos is for sale, and the entire polis gapes after foul pleasures.

Aristophanes' vision exposes the vital concerns behind Thucydides' insistence that Pericles, unlike his successors, did not speak *pros hēdonēn*. The downward slide that Aristophanes follows from rhetorical gratification to oral gratification is halted before it can begin by the preemptive rejection of pleasure. This denial is the precondition for Pericles' patriotic eros, for if, with Aristophanes, we see an inevitable link between oratory and sexual pleasure, then Pericles can formulate an eros without sex only because his is a rhetoric without pleasure. The only eros he allows is that chaste and lofty passion of the citizen for the city. Demos and demagogue share this passion but confess none for one another. In this mediated and sublimated erotics, there is love, but no one gets screwed.

Thucydides' division between Pericles and politicians like Cleon redeems the democracy as a whole by keeping Pericles pure of Cleontic pleasures. Aristophanes, too, glances nostalgically back at a time before Cleon, a time when demagogues were *kaloikagathoi* and their love improved the demos. Both present a narrative of before and after: before there was Pericles; after, Cleon. In this way, they figure Cleon as the origin of Athens's libidinal pathology, as if he alone corrupted the demos and contaminated its desire. But this narrative of decline also conceals an antidemocratic logic, for what it really attacks in Cleon is not a novel and isolated degradation of democratic desire, but democratic desire itself. By contrast to the sublimated pleasures of Pericles, Cleon represents the demos's desire at its most naked and unadorned, and seen in this light (as both Aristophanes and Thucydides imply) it is disgusting to behold: the filthy lust of an aging eromenos, the scabrous itch of a *kinaidos*, the cynical couplings of a boy-whore and his john. The periodization of rhetorical pleasure in Athens thus masks a more disturbing assumption on the part of these two authors: that the eros of democracy is always potentially impure, and democracy itself, inasmuch as it expresses the desire of the people, is always *kinaideia*.

This antidemocratic logic is clear in Thucydides' analysis of the fatal turn in politics after Pericles: "his successors, being more equal to one another and competing to be first, turned to pleasing the demos and relinquished affairs to it" (2.65.10). In a positive register, this sentence might stand as an apt description of democracy, the constitution under which the people control affairs of state and politicians compete to act in their interests. But of course Thucydides does not formulate this in a positive register. Pericles restrained both the demos's desire and its power and, in this way, ruled over a moderate and balanced democracy. But once indulged, democratic power and democratic desire both tend toward the same excesses—excesses Thucydides documents over the course of books

3–8. Gratifying the demos encourages within it the insatiable desire that we will see blossom in Sicily; relinquishing affairs to it will result in its tyranny. Behind the resistance to democratic eros, then, is a resistance to democratic rule, at least in its most "radical" form.[48]

In this equation of the demos's pleasure and power, democracy is noiselessly drawn away from *to beltiston* and into the realm of *hēdonē*. It is reduced to the itch of an insatiable citizen body. Aristophanes implies as much when he represents Cleon's democratic policies as mere flattery to seduce a reluctant Demos, the *opson* of an *opsopoios*. The payment for jury duty and distribution of imperial revenues, two policies that contributed significantly to the extension of democratic participation and did much to redress the inequality of wealth, are represented throughout *Knights* as nothing more than political blowjobs. Democracy itself becomes a sexual favor from demagogue to demos, the undesirable by-product of a debased demagoguery.

What recourse is there, then, short of an outright rejection of democracy?[49] Aristophanes pretends that getting rid of Cleon will close the "gaping" problems within democratic eros, although even he acknowledges that this is a false solution (a point to which we will return). Thucydides, meanwhile, tries to exile not just Cleon but the eros he represents, the *hēdonē* between the demos and its rhetors. Rhetorical pleasure is repressed and sublimated in the form of political authority: the pleasure Pericles refuses to give is transmuted into the authority that allows him to lead rather than be led. But sublimation does not eradicate desire; it only allows it to be satisfied under another guise. Cleon himself will expose this dynamic of sublimation and its failure, answering Pericles' denial of rhetorical pleasure with the truth that there can be no politics without eros.

Cleon's Turn

Aristophanes takes Cleon's "turn toward pleasure" and spins it out into a nightmare scenario of depravity, but that is not the only way to look at

[48] Compare Pseudo-Xenophon's *Athenaion Politeia*. He too objects to giving the demos power and satisfying its desire, but he also acknowledges that these are the defining features of democracy, and thus he thinks that the only solution to the problem of democratic desire is to abandon democracy. Reading his argument against Thucydides' suggests the fine line between the critique of a bad democracy and the critique of democracy *tout court*. See M. Finley 1962.8; Ober 1998.41–51 on the relation between Pseudo-Xenophon and Thucydides. That conflict among politicians is a necessity and a virtue in democracies is argued by M. Finley 1962.21; Mouffe 1993; Barber 1996. Contra, R. Knox 1985.

[49] Connor 1992 [1971].175–94 discusses the withdrawal from politics as one response to Cleontic democracy. Cf. R. Knox 1985.

it. Cleon himself—font of all foulness for Aristophanes—offers an alternate view of the pleasure of oratory. Commentators believe that the pederasty passage in *Knights*—"I am your erastes, Demos"—mocks language Cleon actually used in the Ekklesia. If that is true, and if we can see past Aristophanes' pejorative interpretation, then perhaps this formulation contains not just a travesty of Pericles' eros for the polis but, as W. R. Connor suggests, an attempt to adapt Pericles' idiom to articulate a new relation between demos and demagogue.[50] In contrast to Pericles, Cleon acknowledges the desire that inheres within his relation to the people, their desire and his own. With this acknowledgment, he opens the possibility of a democratic erotics that does not necessarily descend into *kinaideia*, a rhetorical pleasure that binds demos to demagogue in a relation of mutual desire without mutual degradation.

To explore this relationship we must leave Aristophanes and look to Cleon's speech against the Mytilenians in Thucydides (3.37–40). This is a complex speech in itself, and it is further complicated by the tense circumstances (the lives of the Mytilenians rest upon it) and Diodotus's (equally complex) answer. I concentrate on a single strand of Cleon's speech: the pleasure of oratory and the listener's response to it. Cleon personifies the pleasure of speech within Thucydides' text. He also theorizes it. In the Mytilenian speech, Thucydides has Cleon himself address the problems of rhetorical seduction that his oratory raised for contemporary critics. How can the demos listen to orators without falling under the *bia* and eros of their speech? How can one speak to the citizens and speak to please them, without turning them into *Kekhēnaioi*, gaping mindlessly at anyone who praises them? Can one speak *pros to beltiston* while also speaking *pros hēdonēn*?

At the start of this speech Thucydides introduces Cleon as *biaiotatos* and *pithanōtatos*, but the speech he puts in his mouth is a warning about *peithō* and its violence.[51] Charm, pleasure, and delight, Cleon proposes, are indigenous to oratory. Orators delight in speaking (τέρποντες λόγῳ, 3.40.3). The city enjoys listening (ἡσθεῖσα, 3.40.3). There is a pleasure in speeches (ἡδονῇ λόγων, 3.40.2) and a pleasure in hearing (ἀκοῆς ἡδονῇ,

[50] Connor 1992 [1971] sees Cleon as the originator of—or at least the first to employ—a new vocabulary of friendship that in turn articulated a new political relationship (91–98). "In his hands the new style of politics was perfected. It was he, I believe, who found political wisdom where others could see only madness" (118).

[51] Kagan 1975.82 sees justification of Thucydides' characterization in the violent policy Cleon advocates in the speech and in its "harsh, angry and cruel" tone (91, cf. 92–93). See also Andrewes 1962.76; de Wet 1962; Orwin 1984.486, 1994.114; Andrews 1994.26–27. Woodhead 1960.298 suggests the reverse, that these "smear words" influence the way we read the speech.

3.38.7). *Kharis* permeates the relation between speaker and audience (3.37.2, 3.40.4).[52] Succumbing to these delights, however, poses a danger to the listener. Cleon opens the speech with an exhortation to his audience not to be soft in the face of the Mytilenians' pleas: "When you are persuaded by their speeches to do the wrong thing or when you succumb to pity, you do not realize that by being soft [*malakizesthai*] you bring danger upon yourselves and give no pleasure [*kharin*] to your allies" (3.37.2; cf. 3.40.7). Being persuaded means succumbing to pity and both are equated with softness, *malakia*, and gratifying others. We are not far here from Aristophanes' Demos, "tongue-kissed into silence" by his orators and made to "sit softly [*malakōs*]" by their ministrations (*Knights* 352, 785).

If listening implies a softness harmful to the listener, the alternative Cleon poses is the hardness of the tyrant. It is not Athens that should listen and submit to Mytilene, but the allies that should listen to and obey Athens: "You do not realize that the empire you hold is a tyranny exercised over unwilling subjects who plot against you, and that they obey you ["listen to you," *akroōntai*] not because you gratify them [*kharizēsthe*]—harming yourselves in the process—but because you lead them, not by kindness but by strength" (3.37.2).[53] To the softness of listening, Cleon opposes the force and domination of speaking. Instead of being weak and passive spectators, the Athenians must compel the allies to listen and obey; they must be, like himself, forcefully persuasive, *pithanōtatos* and *biaiotatos*.

But while he advocates a rhetorical tyranny in the imperial realm, Cleon also draws a firm distinction between imperial and domestic politics (3.37.1–2). Within the democracy, not every member of the demos can be a speaker: that would lead to anarchy (3.37.4). Cleon condemns those who try to compete with their orators and, eager to show off their cleverness, feel that they are above the laws (3.37.4, 3.38.6). The rhetorical tyranny Cleon advocates in Athens's imperial relations, he condemns at home. But given that not everyone can be a speaker, the question is how to be a listener without being passive and subservient (*hupēkoos*). If being

[52] *Kharis* refers to a favor or kindness, anything that causes gratitude, but in its association with charm and beauty also bears a sense of delight or gratification (LSJ IV). In this context, surrounded by the vocabulary of pleasure, both meanings are in play. See MacLachlan 1993.3–12, and on erotic *kharis*, 56–72. Contrast Diodotus's speech, which mentions pleasure only once, to repudiate *kharis* as a factor in political oratory (3.42.6).

[53] I return to the issues of imperialism in this passage and the image of the tyrant city in chapter 4. Andrews 2000 poses the interesting suggestion that Cleon is here critiquing the kind of self-idealization of the city's imperial *kharis* that Pericles constructs in the Epitaphios (51–52).

persuaded implies softness and gratifying others, how can the demos listen to its orators without becoming subject to their tyranny?

In an attempt to answer these questions, Cleon proposes the model of an active listener who is not soft and submissive but strong, resistant, and authoritative. What this model entails becomes clear in his critique of the Athenians' current passivity as spectators. Rhetoric, he warns, can be specious and sophistic: often motivated by interests other than the public good, it can mislead its listeners, convincing them to believe the opposite of what they know (3.38.2). These are standard charges against rhetoric, but Cleon lays the blame not on manipulative orators but on the demos. Aristophanes accuses Cleon of flattering and pandering to his audience, but his picture of Athenian deliberation is far from flattering.[54] "You are to blame for being such bad judges [*agōnothetai*], you who are habitual spectators of speeches and listeners to deeds" (αἴτιοι δ' ὑμεῖς κακῶς ἀγωνοθετοῦντες, οἵτινες εἰώθατε θεαταὶ μὲν τῶν λόγων γίγνεσθαι, ἀκροαταὶ δὲ τῶν ἔργων, 3.38.4). Political deliberation has become mere spectacle, a series of theater pieces that are divorced from and displace reality, as the Athenians "listen to deeds" and judge their own experiences by the speeches made about them (3.38.4). No longer active participants in democratic debate, Cleon charges, the people have become passive spectators (*theatai*) of oratorical performances and "slaves of novelty" (δοῦλοι ὄντες τῶν αἰεὶ ἀτόπων, 3.38.5). "Simply put," he concludes, "you are conquered by the pleasure of listening and are more like the audience that sits around watching the sophists than like citizens deliberating the affairs of the city" (ἁπλῶς τε ἀκοῆς ἡδονῇ ἡσσώμενοι καὶ σοφιστῶν θεαταῖς ἐοικότες καθημένοις μᾶλλον ἢ περὶ πόλεως βουλευομένοις, 3.38.7). Defeated by the "pleasure of listening" (*akoēs hēdonēi*), the Athenians are slaves not only to individual speakers but to speech itself. Like Gorgias's Helen, they are overcome by force and seduced by desire when they are persuaded by speech. Speech rapes them, and they love it.

Hence the urgency of Cleon's warning: do not be soft, do not succumb to the Mytilenians' speech and gratify them. Do not let rhetoric make slaves or women of you. What Cleon is articulating here (though in a negative form) is a model of democratic citizenship through rhetorical manliness—a manliness not of the speaker but of the audience. This speech is often read as if Cleon were advocating passivity, as if by criticizing the demos for its passivity he were implying that this is all it is fit for.[55] But when Cleon says that the people are not contestants in these games

[54] Macleod 1978.74: "In fact, if anyone, it is Cleon . . . who dares openly to criticize and contradict the people, although he cannot control them and does not deserve to." Cf. Winnington-Ingram 1965.78; Andrews 2000.46.

[55] See, e.g., Lang 1972.163–64; D. Cohen 1984.46–49.

(3.37.4, 3.38.6), that is not because he wants to limit them to the role of mere spectators but because he has a more important function in mind: they are the *kritai* (judges, 3.37.4) and *agōnothetai*, the sponsors and producers of the games (3.38.4). The job of the *agōnothetēs* is not to compete, or merely to watch and enjoy, but to oversee the event and to act as judge over the competition as a whole. As *agōnothetēs*, the demos awards the crowns (3.38.3) and, if it does its job right, reaps the glory. By making the citizens *agōnothetai*, he not only extends to them the privileges usually enjoyed by an elite few. He makes them responsible for their own political culture, as sponsors, judges, and critical spectators.[56]

The audience can be a locus of power, then: it need not necessarily fall prey to passivity and slavishness, although those dangers are potential within the act of listening. This auditor's manliness requires no special cultivation: Cleon deliberately eschews the Periclean notion of an elite demos (a point to which I return in the next section). All it requires is an active stance, a strong and unyielding relation to speakers and the pleasures of speech. Cleon's model of the active listener is in this sense quite traditional: it builds on Athenian ideals of *enkrateia* and self-mastery, manly dominance and autonomy. But what is remarkable in Cleon's formulation is that these become the qualities of the Athenians specifically in their role as auditors. The position of power in this speech is not that of the rhetor (who is urged to be more like his audience, 3.37.5) but that of the listeners. These are neither *malakoi* (succumbing to allies' pleas) nor tyrants (overturning the laws in search of new pleasures), but democratic citizens. They can listen without becoming slaves; they can enjoy speeches without being seduced by their pleasure. They can be gaped at by politicians seeking to gratify them without themselves gaping back.

In this way, Thucydides' Cleon prevents the downward spiral of degradation that Aristophanes imagines, in which the whorish pleasures offered by the orator turn the audience, too, into whores. Cleon does not deny the pleasures of the oratorical relation, a relation, as he presents it, always characterized by *kharis* and *hēdonē*. Nor does he ask the demos

[56] Henderson 1990.280–81 reads it similarly. Cf. Arist. *Rhet*. 1391b: because all persuasive speeches aim at judgment, "he whom one must persuade is, simply speaking, a judge" (ὃν γὰρ δεῖ πεῖσαι, οὗτός ἐστιν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἁπλῶς κριτής, 1391b11–12). For the idea that the people are the best judges, cf. Thuc. 6.39.1; Arist. *Pol*. 1286a30–31; Pope 1988.285–86; Andrews 2000.55; and on the ideal of active spectatorship, Monoson 2000.61–62, 102–10. This insistence on critical spectatorship is not the same as advising that the demos stop listening to its orators altogether. Thus I disagree with those who argue that Cleon is advocating a retreat from democratic deliberation. See, e.g., J. Finley 1963 [1942].172–73; Macleod 1978.69–70; Orwin 1984.487; Andrews 1994.33, 39; Yunis 1996.87–92; and Andrewes 1962.75: "His phrases about sophistry are merely a way to put unreason over, using the plain man's prejudice against fancy thinking to prevent any thinking at all." Cf. Lang 1972.163; Connor 1984.84.

to refuse this pleasure, only to be manly in facing it, to be its master not its slave or *kinaidos*. There is, of course, an irony in all this, for if mastering rhetorical pleasure means being skeptical of its novelties and flatteries, then it also means being skeptical of speeches like this, and Cleon's project would seem to be contradictory, if not downright self-defeating. Even as he is urging the people to resist persuasion, he is trying to persuade them: to seduce them by warning them against seduction, and to soften them up by urging them to be hard. Then, too, there is the irony (often noted) of denouncing spectacular rhetoric in a speech that is conspicuously "rhetorical," full of Gorgianic tropes and verbal pyrotechnics.[57] This irony is usually attributed to Cleon's hypocrisy: he is doing precisely what he warns the demos against (just as in *Knights* Paphlagon cries foul when the Sausage-seller tries to do what he himself has made a career of), and thus any serious message he might be offering is considered void.

Thucydides may well be making a point about Cleon's personal hypocrisy, but a larger point is also at issue. All speech is "rhetorical"; all deliberative speech is seductive inasmuch as it seeks to persuade. One cannot critique these qualities of speech without reproducing them. With Pericles, Thucydides deals with this fact by denying it: Pericles' speech is not about pleasure. The pleasure that denial produces can then be enjoyed unexamined. With Cleon, Thucydides takes a different tack. Instead of denying speech's eros—its acoustic pleasures, its seduction, its effeminizing effect on its listeners, its enslaving promise of new experiences—he speaks its perils aloud. While Cleon does not come out and say, "My speech is the sort of thing I am warning you about," the elaborate Gorgianic style of the thing delivers the same message. It marks this rhetoric as deliberately and hyperbolically "rhetorical" and, at the level of style, extravagantly offers the *hēdonē* that, at the level of content, it warns against. The stylistic flourish is an acknowledgment that pleasure is always a part of oratory, and that there is even pleasure in denying pleasure or warning against it. Cleon's pleasing style is thus part of his theorization of rhetorical eros, not a sign of his cynicism or hypocrisy. Emphasizing rather than denying desire, he presents a Gorgianic *logos* with all of its *bia* and eros. It is up to his audience to resist being conquered by it.

Cleon's theorization of rhetorical desire challenges not only the claim that Pericles did not speak *pros hēdonēn* but the very distinction between speaking *pros hēdonēn* and speaking *pros to beltiston*. When Cleon gives a delightful speech warning against the delights of speech, is he speaking for pleasure or edification? His speech seems to support Thucydides' judg-

[57] Moraux 1954.7–15; Gomme 1956.304–7; Wassermann 1956.32–33; Winnington-Ingram 1965.73–74; Macleod 1978.71; Yunis 1996.90–92. Hesk (2000.250–55) rightly notes that Diodotus's speech is troubled by the same paradoxes.

ment that Pericles' successors turned to pleasing the people and handed affairs over to them, but it also transvalues the meaning of that turn. For Cleon the orator *should* gratify the demos and relinquish affairs to it. For him this does not spell the end of democracy but is the essence of the democratic process: orators please the demos—a task not incompatible with educating it—and the demos derives power from that pleasure. His formulation presupposes a certain faith in the demos's eros. The people can enjoy pleasure without becoming *kinaidoi* or whores. Masters over the pleasures of oratory, they become fit masters over their orators and also over the affairs of state handed to them along with *hēdonē*.

Significantly, Cleon fails to win this debate: the vote, though close, goes against him. The Mytilenian Debate is sometimes seen as confirming Cleon's critique of democratic deliberation and reflecting Thucydides' own view that "the citizen masses are unable to determine truth consistently and accurately or to determine congruity of interest by listening to speeches."[58] But inasmuch as they withstand Cleon's persuasive appeal to their emotions and vote to spare the Mytilenians, the Athenians seem less to justify Cleon's critique than to live up to his exhortations. Has Cleon taught the demos too well how to refuse his own seductions? Has he lost this debate but won the larger point, transforming the citizens into the resistant, manly listeners his speech urges them to be? If that is the case, Cleon's speech stands against the general thrust of Thucydides' text, not only asserting but also (by its failure) proving that the people are capable of responsible deliberation even without the leadership of Pericles. In this way, Cleon closes the gap Thucydides had opened between the demos and its leaders and suggests that democracy can work even when it is more than a mere name masking the rule of the first man. At the same time, he shows that gratifying the people and improving them are not necessarily incompatible and, in a pleasing speech that teaches his audience to resist pleasing speech, seems to marry *hēdonē* and *to beltiston*.

Thucydides famously denies the pleasure of his own *logos*, thereby aligning himself in advance with Pericles against Cleon and his flattering oratory.

> καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες αὐτῶν ἀτερπέστερον φανεῖται· ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἕξει. κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξύγκειται.

> Perhaps a narrative devoid of mythology will seem less delightful [*aterpesteron*] to listen to. But if anyone wants to consider lucidly [*to saphes*] events

[58] Ober 1998.78; cf. 94–104.

> that have happened and, human nature being what it is, will happen again in the same or a similar way, it will be enough if that person judge my text useful. For it is a possession for all time, not a showpiece [*agōnisma*] for listening to today. (Thuc. 1.22.4)

Thucydides' opposition between *to terpesteron* and *to saphes*—the delightful and the perspicuous—anticipates the opposition between Pericles and his successors, and places the historian firmly in the Periclean camp. Thucydides, like Pericles, does not speak to please, as any reader can attest. Combining intelligence with usefulness, the text aims to recover that lost Periclean ideal of an authoritative and beneficial *logos*. At stake, then, in Thucydides' denigration of rhetorical pleasure is the stern authority of his own text: because he does not pander to his audience, Thucydides, like Pericles, restrains his reader liberally (*eleutherōs*) and leads rather than being led.[59] This means, though, that Thucydides' text claims and secures its authority only through the continual suppression of Cleon and the reiterated denial of his rhetorical *terpsis* (delight). Thucydides' notorious "bias" against Cleon then can be seen as more than personal animosity or a blue-blood intellectual's distaste for a vulgar nouveau riche; it is a rhetorical necessity for his own text.

And yet Thucydides' text cannot fully repress Cleon, for the terms in which the historian describes his own project are the very terms he has Cleon employ in the Mytilenian Debate. Thucydides' scorn for readers who want a *logos* that is delightful to listen to chimes with Cleon's condemnation of the demos's submission to the "pleasure of listening." Intelligent judges are the required audience for Thucydides' text, as Cleon says they are for democratic debate.[60] Thucydides' parting shot at the immediate but short-lived acoustic contest (*agōnisma*) anticipates Cleon's critique of the *agōnes* of speech of which the Athenians are such avid but unthinking consumers. Cleon voices the problems not only of his own *logos* but also of Thucydides'—a false separation, of course, as Thucydides is the author of both. Cleon complains that in Athens deeds are replaced by words, and words become mere spectacle, their truth lost. What is Thucydides' history but the translation of deeds into words? Listening to these deeds and judging events both past and future based on speeches made about them, are Thucydides' readers the bad *agōnothetai* Cleon

[59] On Thucydides' relation to the pleasures of speech, see Kennedy 1963.51; Bliss 1964; de Romilly 1966; Hartog 1982.23; Hunter 1986.425–27; Loraux 1986b.158; Crane 1996b.215–35; and on 1.22.4 in particular, Flory 1990. Macleod 1978.68 n.17 points out that history could be considered a branch of epideictic oratory at this time.

[60] Connor 1984 makes this point forcefully (12–19, 232–33). See also Ober 1998.97; Andrews 2000.46.

condemns, mistaking for the truth of deeds the novel pleasures of Thucydides' historical *logos*?[61]

Thucydides approaches these problems with denial: my text is not a delightful and insubstantial *agōnisma*, not mere *terpsis* or *hēdonē*. But the problem of textual pleasure resurfaces in Cleon's speech, which reminds us to be the active and engaged critics that Thucydides requires for his history. Cleon's speech invites us to examine the pleasure of Thucydides' text as a whole, the *terpsis* contained in that denial of *terpsis*. In his refusal of the Cleontic—pleasing speech, gratifying *muthoi*—Thucydides adopts a style that might fairly be characterized as *biaiotatos kai pithanōtatos*. The text commits *hubris* against both syntax and the reader, and a good deal of its authority lies precisely in this *hubris*: its stylistic difficulty seems to reconfirm Thucydides' choice of truth over pleasure and thus to verify his claims of objectivity. But its violence is also the pleasure of this text. Reading Thucydides is hard. The text makes the same demand of its readers that Cleon makes of his audience: do not be soft. Is the *terpsis* that Thucydides refuses the violent rhetorical eros of Cleon? If so, it is Cleon himself who teaches us how to enjoy its forceful onslaught without becoming its slave.

Cleon thus plays a complex role within Thucydides' text. On the one hand, the text uses this despised character to address its own relation to pleasure: denunciation of Cleon legitimates the text's claims to educate and improve its audience, and the author's disapproval of Cleon's *hēdonē* proves that he, by contrast, speaks *pros to beltiston*. On the other hand, the speech Thucydides writes for Cleon exposes the disingenuousness of this claim, and its disquisition on the eros of oratory is also a critical lesson in how to read the refusal of that eros. Cleon stands as a point of contradiction or resistance within the text: the rhetorical desire that is repudiated through the condemnation of his character reasserts itself in the persuasive force of his oratory, eluding the text's control and challenging Thucydides' own rhetorical posturing.

Thucydides' repudiation of rhetorical *terpsis* protects not only his own *logos*, of course, but also Pericles'. By associating the problems of demagogic *hēdonē* with Cleon, Thucydides can maintain that Pericles, like himself, spoke only *pros to beltiston*. But Cleon's Mytilenian speech shows that there is a pleasure in all oratory, not just his own. What would we see in Pericles if we had not been expressly told *not* to look for pleasure? What would we find if we ignored Thucydides' divide and reread Pericles through Cleon? Thucydides, in fact, opens the way for such a rereading

[61] Note the verbal parallels between Thucydides' programmatic statement and Cleon's condemnation of oratory: τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων (1.22.4); τὰ μὲν μέλλοντα ἔργα ἀπὸ τῶν εὖ εἰπόντων σκοποῦντες . . . τὰ δὲ πεπραγμένα ἤδη (3.38.4).

with the numerous verbal echoes in Cleon's speech of Pericles' own words.[62] These echoes may well have been intended—as they have generally been taken—to show the degree to which Cleon falls short of Pericles' ideal. But these echoes also allow us to reverse the relation and ask not "How is Cleon unlike Pericles?" but "How is Pericles like Cleon?" How does Pericles, too, participate in the economy of pleasure that Cleon identifies within democratic oratory?

The Pericles we know from Thucydides is the opposite of Cleon in every way, but there was another Pericles, the comic—or we might even say Cleontic—Pericles. This is the Pericles Plutarch shows us, drawing on the fifth-century comic poets.[63] In their testimony we find, alongside Pericles as tyrant and thundering Zeus, Pericles as a lecher and lothario. This Pericles is the slave of his lusts as well as of his sexy mistress Aspasia.[64] He was rumored to seduce free women—luring them up to the Acropolis on the pretext of viewing the new monuments—and to have had an affair with the wife of a friend and fellow general (Plut. *Per.* 13.15). Such charges were no doubt as little true as those against Cleon. What is important about these slanders, of course, is not that they be true but that they could be leveled against Pericles at all.[65]

[62] E.g., the absence of fear in democracy (3.37.2; cf. 2.37.2, 2.39.1); empire as a tyranny (3.37.2; cf. 2.63.2); the claim of personal constancy (3.38.1; cf. 2.61.2); the contrast between the dangers of empire and a safe philanthropy (*andragathia*, 3.40.4; cf. 2.63.2–3). On these parallels, see Gomme 1937.186 n.1, 1956.177, 311; Wassermann 1956.31–33; de Romilly 1963.164–67; Westlake 1968.65; Lloyd-Jones 1971.139–40; Connor 1977.97 n.2, 1984.79 n.1; Macleod 1978.68–69; Cairns 1982; Andrews 1994; Crane 1996b.231–33; McGlew 1996.342–44; Saxonhouse 1996.72–79; Rood 1998.147–48; and Andrewes 1962.75: "In the order in which we read the speeches, Kleon is the imitator, taking up for violent and (in comparison) trivial purposes the phrases in which Perikles had displayed his steady insight into the largest issues." There is debate as to which Thucydides wrote first, Pericles' Epitaphios or Cleon's Mytilenian speech (Andrewes 1962.75–76): which is the original and which the copy?

[63] McGlew 2002, ch. 1 contrasts the comic poets' view of Pericles to Thucydides' representation. On Plutarch's Pericles, see Stadter 1973.111–13, 117–20; 1989.xxxviii–xliv; Ameling 1985; Henry 1995.67–74, and on the comic poets' Pericles, Schwarze 1971 (esp. 169–88); Cartledge 1993b.130–31; Scholtz 1997.235–41; Vickers 1997.9–11.

[64] The comic poets called Aspasia his Omphale, Deianira, or Hera, implying that he, like Heracles, was under the power of a woman (Plut. *Per.* 24.9). So Cratinus: "Lechery bore Aspasia as his Hera, a bitch-eyed whore" (fr. 259 K-A = Plut. *Per.* 24.9). On Heracles' legendary gluttony (sexual and culinary), see Loraux 1990.30–33. On Aspasia in comedy, see Schwarze 1971.15–16, 33–36, 57–60, 91–93, 169–70; Henry 1995.19–28. Athenaeus quotes Heracleides of Ponticus as saying that Pericles "lived for pleasure" (12.533c).

[65] Plutarch rejects the truth of these anecdotes, attributing them to the jealous prurience of the authors (*Per.* 13.16). For him the sexy Pericles poses a historiographical problem: the difficulty of tracking down the truth when contemporary accounts distort it through grudging ill-will or groveling flattery (*Per.* 13.16). Thus he aligns himself with Thucydides in aiming at (and associating his own historiographical project with) the "truth" of Pericles.

This Pericles also seduced the demos. Plutarch repeats Thucydides' judgment about the "aristocratic" nature of Pericles' rule but also relates a different tradition: "Others said, however, that the people were first led on by him with cleruchies and festival subsidies and distributions of payments, so that they got used to bad habits and became extravagant and uncontrolled through these policies instead of moderate and self-sufficient" (*Per.* 9.1).[66] "He bribed the majority with festival subsidies and jury payments and other grants and services" (*Per.* 9.3). He "gratified the many" (*kharisasthai tois pollois*, *Per.* 10.4). In short, during this period of his career, "Pericles loosened the reins to the people and governed with a view to their pleasure [*pros kharin*], always arranging for some festival pageant or feast or parade in the town, 'amusing the polis with cultivated pleasures [*hēdonais*]' " (διὸ καὶ τότε μάλιστα τῷ δήμῳ τὰς ἡνίας ἀνεὶς ὁ Περικλῆς ἐπολιτεύετο πρὸς χάριν, ἀεὶ μέν τινα θέαν πανηγυρικὴν ἢ ἑστίασιν ἢ πομπὴν εἶναι μηχανώμενος ἐν ἄστει, καὶ ʽδιαπαιδαγωγῶν οὐκ ἀμούσοις ἡδοναῖςʼ τὴν πόλιν, *Per.* 11.4).[67] Bribery, jury payments, *kharis*, *hēdonē*—this sounds scandalously like Cleon.

Plutarch has an explanation. This policy of pleasing the demos was one of expedience, a populism forced on Pericles against his inclination by his opponents' lock on the *kaloikagathoi* (*Per.* 9.2). In this way, Plutarch reconciles this early Pericles who flatters the demos with the severe Pericles of Thucydides' history. For after the ostracism of his elite opponent, Thucydides son of Melesias, Pericles "was no longer the same man."

> οὐκέθ᾽ ὁ αὐτὸς ἦν οὐδ᾽ ὁμοίως χειροήθης τῷ δήμῳ καὶ ῥᾴδιος ὑπείκειν καὶ συνενδιδόναι ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις ὥσπερ πνοαῖς τῶν πολλῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ τῆς ἀνειμένης ἐκείνης καὶ ὑποθρυπτομένης ἔνια δημαγωγίας ὥσπερ ἀνθηρᾶς καὶ μαλακῆς ἁρμονίας ἀριστοκρατικὴν καὶ βασιλικὴν ἐντεινάμενος πολιτείαν, καὶ χρώμενος αὐτῇ πρὸς τὸ βέλτιστον ὀρθῇ καὶ ἀνεγκλίτῳ, τὰ μὲν πολλὰ βουλόμενον ἦγε πείθων καὶ διδάσκων τὸν δῆμον.

[66] Plato brings a similar accusation in the *Gorgias*, that Pericles was said to have "corrupted" the Athenians (*diaphtharēnai*) and "to have made them lazy, cowardly, talkative, and greedy by establishing payment for civic services" (515e2–7). In Plato's view, Cleon's generation is wrongly blamed for policies initiated under Pericles. Cf. 518e1–519a4: "Entertaining the demos lavishly and feeding its desires, they [Pericles and the other politicians] left the city bloated and festering, filling it with harbors and shipyards and walls and tribute and other such nonsense without justice or moderation." See also Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 27.2–5; Yunis 1996.142–46.

[67] The source of the embedded iambic trimeter is unknown. In Plato's *Phaedrus* (240b2–3), ἡδονήν τινα οὐκ ἄμουσον is the pleasure offered by a flatterer. See Stadter 1989.137 on διαπαιδαγωγῶν: he takes it not as "entertaining, amusing" but "a more general word covering a gamut of activities by which the pedagogue controls his charge." In this way, Plutarch's Pericles comes to sound more like Thucydides', a *didaskalos* who educates the demos, not just entertains it. Cf. McGlew 2002, ch. 1: "Plutarch's Pericles lives his life as if the 'Funeral Oration' were a kind of personal script."

> He was not submissive to the demos and he no longer yielded easily, bending in the wind of the multitude's desires. In place of that slack and somewhat effeminate leadership—which was like a flowery and soft harmony—he exerted an aristocratic and royal governance, using it directly and unerringly for the good [*pros to beltiston*], and he governed a mostly willing demos by persuasion and education. (*Per.* 15.1)

Thus Pericles, freed from the need to gratify the demos, becomes the Pericles we know from Thucydides, the man who ruled not *pros hēdonēn* but *pros to beltiston*. Pericles becomes Pericles, in other words, only by casting off all that is Cleontic about him.

In Thucydides' narrative Cleon represents a fatal "turn" in fifth-century Athenian history, a turn away from the good and toward pleasure, away from leadership and toward flattery. In Plutarch the turn is reversed: Pericles is a turning away from Cleon.[68] But Plutarch's turn is a false moment. Plutarch presents the exile of Thucydides son of Melesias as a definitive turning point, but the chronology does not hold up. Thucydides was exiled around 443 or 442, but Cratinus's *Dionysalexandros*, produced not long after Pericles delivered his Funeral Oration, could still represent Pericles as Paris, lured into war by the promise of love.[69] Moreover, Plutarch's own narrative challenges this chronological divide. He introduces Pericles' establishment of the Panathenaic musical competitions after the exile of Thucydides son of Melesias (τότε πρῶτον, *Per.* 13.11); but how were these musical competitions different from the "cultivated pleasures" with which Pericles wooed the polis before his turn to the good?[70] Plutarch imagines Pericles turning away from demagogic pleasure, but, as his own narrative suggests, that turn is never complete. The false periodicity of Plutarch's narrative in turn draws under suspicion that in Thucydides: was Pericles already Cleontic and the democracy already oriented toward pleasure?[71]

[68] On this *metabolē* in Pericles' character and Plutarch's narrative, see Gomme 1945.65–67; Breebaart 1971; Stadter 1989.112; Sicking 1995.420–24.

[69] Schwarze 1971.6–24; R. M. Rosen 1988.49–55; Vickers 1997.193–95; McGlew 2002, ch. 1; and on the date of the play, Schwarze 1971.7 n.5 and 195; Vickers 1997.194. Cf. Plut. *Per.* 25.1: Pericles was accused of entering the war against Samos in 440–39 on Aspasia's urging.

[70] The chronology in Plutarch's narrative is confusing: the establishment of the Panathenaic competitions follows on a quotation from Cratinus that has Pericles wearing the Odeon like a crown, "now that the ostracism is over" (Cratinus fr. 73 K-A). This seems to suggest that Plutarch dates their establishment to after the ostracism, although Stadter (1989.175) argues that "τότε gives no real indication of date," and most scholars date the Panathenaic musical competitions to the early 440s. On the obscurity of the chronology in this section of the *Life*, see Andrewes 1978; Ameling 1985; Stadter 1989.xxxv–xxxvii, 130, 172.

[71] Another complication to Plutarch's chronology is the debate over the Acropolis building program. Plutarch recounts a story that Pericles answered his enemies' charge of extrava-

Thucydides' Pericles did not speak *pros hēdonēn*; what of this Pericles? This Pericles' voice was "sweet" and his tongue "facile and swift in discourse" (Plut. *Per.* 7.1). "Persuasion sat upon his lips; thus he beguiled and alone among orators left a barb in his listeners," wrote Eupolis (πειθώ τις ἐπεκάθιζεν ἐπὶ τοῖς χείλεσιν· οὕτως ἐκήλει καὶ μόνος τῶν ῥητόρων τὸ κέντρον ἐγκατέλειπε τοῖς ἀκροωμένοις, fr. 102 K-A; cf. Cratinus frs. 326–27 K-A). His words wield the spells and weapons of eros itself.[72] Thus there is some logic to Plato's startling idea that Aspasia wrote Pericles' Epitaphios (*Menex*. 236b5–6). Read back through Cleon, Pericles' oratory takes on a pleasing—even hetairic—quality. It becomes a love song and a seduction, an embodiment of the eros it arouses between the citizen-erastes and the beautiful city.[73]

And for Pericles, no less than Cleon, political eros quickly becomes prostitution in the mouth of a malicious enemy. The beauty of the city, which Pericles praises in the Epitaphios and urges all Athenians to love, is to his opponents the garish finery of a painted woman. The allies will surely be outraged, they say, "when they see us using money they have been forced to contribute for the war to trick out the city in gold and make her up like some showy woman, bedecked in precious stones and statues and extravagant temples" (Plut. *Per.* 12.2). Just as Cleon's prostituted eros turns Demos into a whore, Pericles' gratification of the demos—for the Acropolis project was a *hēdonē* he offered the Athenians (Plut. *Per.* 12.1)—turns the city into another Aspasia. Athens becomes an overdressed hetaira and the Epitaphios's "lover of the city" the satisfied customer who enjoys her charms.

This is what Thucydides protects us from with his narrative division between Pericles and Cleon. Pericles and his Athens are segregated from the corruptions of Cleon and his degraded eros. Plutarch's reversal of

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gance by offering to pay for the Acropolis buildings himself and have his name inscribed on them (*Per.* 14). Plutarch presents this offer as arising from the rivalry with Thucydides son of Melesias and leading directly to the ostracism, but this causality may be challenged by inscriptional evidence. *IG* I^3 49, which thanks Pericles for an offer of money, may refer to this incident: this inscription has been dated to the 430s (Stadter 1989.181–82). It would be interesting in this context to know the precise year in which Pericles instituted payment for public service, and whether it preceded Pericles' "turn," as Plutarch suggests (*Per.* 9.1): see Wade-Gery 1932.222–23; Rhodes 1981.339–40; Markle 1985.265 n.2.

[72] On love's magic and arrows, see, e.g., Eur. *Med.* 632–34; Müller 1980.39–41; Buxton 1982.190–91 n.25; Thornton 1997.19–21, 28–31. The "sorcery" of language is a commonplace in the rhetorical tradition; cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.6.13, where Socrates says that Pericles used spells to make the city love him (Οὐκ ἀλλ' ἤκουσα μὲν ὅτι Περικλῆς πολλὰς [ἐπῳδὰς] ἐπίσταιτο, ἃς ἐπᾴδων τῇ πόλει ἐποίει αὐτὴν φιλεῖν αὐτόν).

[73] Compare too the tradition that Aspasia taught Pericles to speak (Pl. *Menex*. 235e3–7; Callias fr. 21 K-A; Kahn 1994.97; Henry 1995.35).

Thucydides' "turn"—so that, in a sense, Pericles follows Cleon—shows both the artificiality and the urgency of Thucydides' trajectory. For if Pericles could be seen as having been Cleontic in his early career, then pleasure, as Cleon insists, inheres within politics (even Periclean politics) and the erotics of democracy (even Periclean democracy) was always about gratification. To that extent, then, Pericles, like Thucydides, can never escape Cleon. He can deny Cleontic pleasure or turn away from it, but neither gesture is ever final, for Pericles pleases even when he does not speak to please and gratifies the demos even after he has renounced gratification. Thucydides' "turn" makes politics *pros hēdonēn* a debased parody of politics *pros to beltiston*. Plutarch's "detourning" of Thucydides' turn makes *to beltiston* a rejection of *hēdonē*. But Cleon shows that the political good cannot be separated from political pleasure. Plutarch may praise Pericles as "pure of all vulgar and criminal buffoonery" (καθαρὸν ὀχλικῆς καὶ πανούργου βωμολοχίας, *Per.* 5.1), but it is not so easy as that to purge Pericles of Cleon and all he represents: the *kharis* between demos and demagogue, oratorical *terpsis*, democratic desire. Cleon's eros lingers on—if only in the form of a denial—at the very core of Pericles' rule, and Periclean Athens is always, at base, also Cleontic.

King Demos

When Aristophanes represents Cleon as a monster beyond the pale of legitimate politics and reduces all of his policies to the come-ons of a whore, he obscures the indispensable role Cleon plays within the political world of his comedies. There is a tradition among the ancient commentators that Aristophanes himself played the part of Paphlagon in *Knights*.[74] While most scholars doubt the veracity of this detail, it does point up the strange fraternity between these two enemies. Bridging the space between the Pnyx and the Theater of Dionysus (and taking in the lawcourts in between), their argument is not just personal but political, a debate over the nature of the demos and the democracy.[75]

In the parabasis of *Acharnians*, Aristophanes asks for the citizens' support against his critics. He deserves their help, says the chorus, because

[74] Schol. ad *Knights* 230; cf. second hypothesis and *vita Aristophanis*.

[75] On Aristophanes and Cleon, see *Wasps* 1284–86 (with MacDowell 1971.299), *Ach.* 377–82 (and schol. ad 378), 502–3, *Clouds* 549–50; Dorey 1956; Andrewes 1962.80–81; Edmunds 1987a; MacDowell 1995.42–45; McGlew 1996. R. M. Rosen 1988.59–82 argues that the feud was a literary convention deriving from comedy's origins in iambic blame poetry. For comic attacks on demagogues more generally, Ehrenberg 1943.249–55; Connor 1992 [1971].168–75; Lind 1990.245–52; Carey 1994; and cf. Hesk 2000.258–74 on Aristophanes' "anti-rhetoric" rhetoric. See also Goldhill 1991.206–11 on the complex relationship between the parodist and his subject.

"he has stopped you from being so deceived by outlandish speeches and enjoying being fawned on and being gaping citizens" (παύσας ὑμᾶς ξενικοῖσι λόγοις μὴ λίαν ἐξαπατᾶσθαι, μήθ᾽ ἥδεσθαι θωπευομένους, μήτ᾽ εἶναι χαυνοπολίτας, *Ach.* 634–35). The foe he enlists the demos's aid against is, not surprisingly, Cleon. Cleon's gaping has made the Athenians *khaunopolitai*, "gaping citizens." But Aristophanes has entered the fray to save them. As Cleon's political adversary, he will govern not by "flattering and bribing and conniving and committing all sorts of villainy and sprinkling the people with praise, but by teaching them what is best" (οὐ θωπεύων οὐδ᾽ ὑποτείνων μισθοὺς οὐδ᾽ ἐξαπατύλλων, οὐδὲ πανουργῶν οὐδὲ κατάρδων, ἀλλὰ τὰ βέλτιστα διδάσκων, *Ach.* 657–58).[76] The terms of Aristophanes' stump speech echo the dichotomy in Plato's *Gorgias* between the *kinaidos* orator and the true statesman. Like Socrates, Aristophanes declares that he alone improves the demos, and thus he is the only true statesman. Like Socrates' doctor, he will cure a demos bloated on the delicious but unhealthy *opson* of Cleon's flattery and will teach it to resist such harmful overindulgence in the future.

Knights would seem to be Aristophanes' delivery on that promise, with its vigorous exposé of the motives behind Cleon's fawning and the dangers to Demos of succumbing to it. But from the perspective of Cleon's Mytilenian speech, it is *Knights* that is the *opson*, and Cleon himself who offers the antidote. Cleon's attack on political spectacle and rhetorical novelty encompasses too the political comedy of Aristophanes, a poet who prides himself on his novelty and cleverness.[77] Even as *Knights* teaches us how to read the flattery of a politician like Cleon, Cleon's speech in Thucydides shows us how to read a play like *Knights*. His critique of political theater advises us to attend to the gap between *erga* and *logoi* and to the potential for misrepresentation and misrecognition that arises in that gap. It warns us to be wary of those who purvey political

[76] See Hubbard 1991.47–53 on this parabasis. Aristophanes himself becomes a politician in this ode: he is Athens's adviser (*sumboulon*, *Ach.* 651) who, by revealing the workings of democracy to the allies (*Ach.* 642), will bring about peace with Sparta (*Ach.* 652–53). Henderson 1990 argues persuasively that we should take this claim seriously (contra, Gomme 1938; Heath 1987.19).

[77] In *Clouds* the poet boasts: "I am always coming up with new ideas to bring you, none of them the same as any other and all clever" (547–48; cf. 520–22 and *Wasps* 1044, 1050–59; Lind 1990.230–34). One of the novel and clever ideas he lists is his attack on Cleon (*Clouds* 549–50). For various assessments of the "political" nature of Aristophanic comedy, see Croiset 1909 (esp. 61–88); Gomme 1938; de Ste. Croix 1972.355–71; Sutton 1980.1–15; Edmunds 1987a; Heath 1987, 1997; Lind 1990.11–23, 214–15; Henderson 1990, 1993; Halliwell 1993; Carey 1994; Schechter 1994.7–19; Konstan 1995.5–8; McGlew 1996.356–60 and 2002. Plato's *Gorgias* (502d) considers drama a type of *dēmēgoria* in that it seeks to flatter and persuade the demos.

fantasies in the place of political realities.[78] It also teaches us to be aware of the eros that inheres inevitably within such fantasies: what sort of *hēdonē* does the poet offer his listeners and what does it mean if they submit to his seduction?

Aristophanes' rivalry with Cleon is a contest for the demos's affection. We have seen in some detail already Aristophanes' view of the desire Cleon arouses in the demos: the love it feels for him is, in the poet's view, degrading and disgusting. As part of his project to "teach [the demos] what is best" (*Ach*. 658), Aristophanes attempts to educate its desire, to draw it away from Cleon and his foul pleasures toward a more worthy object. *Knights* offers its audience a new love object and encourages (even compels) its viewer to turn upon it the passion formerly monopolized by Cleon. That new love object is an elite democracy, a fantasy of Demos as tyrant. But since both Cleon and Aristophanes himself have advised us to be suspicious of flattering political fantasies, we must look critically at this new love. When democratic desire is directed away from Cleon and toward a fantasy of Demos enthroned, what is lost in the process? What sort of identification does this new desire demand (or foreclose) and what sort of subject does it create (or eliminate)? What is the politics of this new eros? These questions are directed toward the fantasy of an elite Demos that Aristophanes stages, but also toward the similar fantasy offered in the Epitaphios, which this play both parodies and reaffirms as the only viable alternative (if indeed it is viable or an alternative) to Cleon's vulgar gaping.

In this play Cleon's political *kinaideia* works in the service of an elite sociality.[79] The moral outrage we are expected to feel toward his vulgarity is the basis for a new identification, a new desire, and a new political community built on the coalition of a moral and social elite united by loathing for Cleon.[80] Cleon's vile sexuality is closely connected to both

[78] McGlew 1996.345: Cleon's "indictment of the Athenians' love of the unreal and their desire for 'anything else . . . than the circumstances in which we live' seems particularly fitting for Aristophanic comedy."

[79] Gomme, in his commentary on the Epitaphios, contrasts the nobility of Thucydides' vision to the base realities expressed in Aristophanes (1956.126), but Aristophanes' "realities" also work toward an ideality: the ignoble politics of sausage-sellers and tanners is the flip side of a political fantasy of a noble citizenry.

[80] The proper response to Cleon is not merely hatred (*miseō*) but visceral loathing or abomination (*bdeluttomai*): *Knights* 252, 1157; cf. Bdelukleon in *Wasps*. Of course, despite Aristophanes' slurs, Cleon was hardly lower class: his father may have been a self-made man, but Cleon's considerable wealth was inherited. Connor (1992 [1971].152 and n.32) even suggests that Cleon may have been a knight in his early career. On the status of Cleon and the new politicians, see further Ehrenberg 1943.91–92; Davies 1971.318–20; Bourriot 1982; Lind 1990.88–93; Henderson 1990.281; Connor 1992 [1971].151–63; MacDowell

moral and social degradation, so that it can stand as a shorthand for a whole debased social universe. In Paphlagon and his rival the Sausage-seller, social disadvantage (poverty, lack of education, ignoble parentage, a déclassé occupation) is fitted to immorality (theft, deceit, "shamelessness"), which in turn is linked to and symbolized by sexual baseness (*kinaideia* and prostitution). By articulating social *ponēria* (baseness), moral *ponēria*, and sexual *ponēria*, Aristophanes simultaneously constructs a seamless link among their opposites: sexual, moral, and social goodness all appear to be naturally conjoined. Thus the sexual horror of the gaping orifice, closely linked with economic degradation (such that a seller of sausages is "naturally" also a prostitute), naturalizes social hierarchy as moral hierarchy.

Around Cleon's gaping mouth Aristophanes consolidates a community of the upright. The Sausage-seller asks who will be his allies in his attack on Paphlagon. Demosthenes answers: "There are a thousand knights, good men, who hate him and will help you, and the good and noble [*kaloi te k'agathoi*] among the citizens, and anyone in the audience who is clever [*dexios*], and I myself along with them, and the god will also join in" ('Αλλ' εἰσὶν ἱππῆς ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ χίλιοι μισοῦντες αὐτόν, οἳ βοηθήσουσί σοι, καὶ τῶν πολιτῶν οἱ καλοί τε κἀγαθοί. καὶ τῶν θεατῶν ὅστις ἐστὶ δεξιός, κἀγὼ μετ' αὐτῶν χὡ θεὸς ξυλλήψεται, 225–29). Good men and clever men join the wealthy and well-heeled: the moral and the social elite converge here into a community of the right-thinking. This moral community ostensibly eschews class: rich and poor alike fear and loathe Paphlagon (223–24); knights ally themselves with a sausage-seller to defeat him. But this classless society is oriented heavily toward the social elite, the *kaloikagathoi* in the audience and their representatives on stage, the wealthy and well-bred Knights.[81] The "marriage of convenience" between the vulgar salesman and the Knights represents not an ideal democratic *concordia ordinum* but a dynamic we shall see at work throughout the play, in which the only valid morality, politics, and subject position is that offered under the auspices of the elite.[82]

1995.81, 110. Aristophanes' views on poverty and morality are discussed by Ehrenberg 1943.178–80; David 1984.5–14.

[81] So Ehrenberg 1943.73, 82–83; de Ste. Croix 1972.358–61, 371–76; contra, Heath 1987.29–38. On this passage in particular, de Ste. Croix 1972.374; Heath 1987.30.

[82] "Marriage of convenience" is Brock's term for the alliance between the Knights and the Sausage-seller (Brock 1986.20–21; cf. Ehrenberg 1943.35; Landfester 1967.91–92; Christ 1998.107). See also Hubbard 1991: "Together the upper class Knights and lower class Sausage seller form an effective synergism reflecting the use of a 'lower class' poetic medium, Comedy, to enact the antidemagogic program of a well-educated upper class poet like Aristophanes" (221).

The noble Knights are put forward as an alternative to the prostituted politics of Paphlagon. In the first parabasis, they sing a eulogy for their fathers, "men worthy of this land and the *peplos*" (566). These men did not calculate the number of their enemy, and unlike Cleon (whose public subsidy after the victory at Pylos is a topic of frequent comment in this play), they asked for nothing in return for their valor. The young Knights themselves continue this paternal tradition, nobly guarding the city for free (*proika gennaiōs*, 577). In this play's debased economy, where the city is governed by a succession of salesmen (128–44) and the people are "the many for an obol" (945), the Knights' gratuitous *kharis* stands apart. Alone in the play, they neither count their losses nor look to their profits.

But does this alliance with the Knights end up a more expensive deal for the democratic viewers than they bargained on? Contrast the Sausage-seller's gift of fish and relish for Demos, also a *kharis* offered for free (*proika k'akharizomēn*, 679). His "free" gift buys him political authority, as he gloatingly advertises: "I have bought the entire Boule for an obol of coriander!" (681–82). His crass *kharis* is a parody of the Knights' own, but it should also make us suspicious of such claims to gratuitous favors. Indeed, the Knights do ask a little something in return: "If ever there is peace and we get a rest from our labors, do not begrudge us our long hair and tiaras" (ἥν ποτ' εἰρήνη γένηται καὶ πόνων παυσώμεθα, μὴ φθονεῖθ' ἡμῖν κομῶσι μηδ' ἀπεστλεγγισμένοις, 579–80). Long hair was the badge of a wealthy and snobbish elite, associated with Spartan and oligarchical leanings.[83] The tiara marks an ostentatious, even tyrannical, superiority.[84] All the Knights ask, then, as their reward for defending the democratic city, is to be allowed to enjoy in peace their undemocratic life-style. Is their *kharis* really free (*proika*) if this is the cost?

One hidden cost the audience will pay for this gift is any alternative to the Knights and their political cause. The poet has already aligned himself with them: they will sing his parabasis because he hates who they hate and

[83] *Clouds* 14, 545, 1087–1101; *Wasps* 463–76, 1068–70, 1317; *Birds* 911, 1281–83; *Lys*. 561; Lysias 16.18; cf. Donlan 1980.161. The scholiast leaves no doubt about the meaning of the passage, glossing "wear long hair" (κομῶσι) as "luxuriate, be wealthy" (τρυφῶσι, πλουτοῦσι). He refers to a sumptuary law against long hair and luxuriant living, but nothing further is known of such a law.

[84] The last word of this sentence is disputed and can refer either to scraping with a strigil (*stlengis*) after bathing or to wearing a tiara (*stlengis*). Rogers 1910.84–85 and Neil 1909.87 suppose the former; Sommerstein 1981.176 ad loc prefers the latter because, as he says, anyone who bathed or exercised would clean himself with a strigil, "and it could not be regarded as something snobbish. To wear a gold tiara, on the other hand (cf. Xen. *Anab*. 1.2.10), would be blatant ostentatiousness." It makes little difference to my argument: clearly either meaning of the word is of a piece with the Knights' generally aristocratic demeanor. If, as Vickers argues (1997.106–10), the Knights represent Alcibiades, the tyrannical connotations would be that much stronger.

dares to speak justly (*dikaia*) and to join nobly (*gennaiōs*) in the attack on Cleon (509–11).[85] The audience is offered little choice, if it is to accept the appellation *dexios* (228), but to join in the fray. On the one side we have the Knights: wealthy, young, "good and beautiful" (*kaloikagathoi*), and morally upright. On the other we have an unappealing array: the stupid and dingy old Demos, the vulgar Sausage-seller, the loathsome Paphlagon. The good and beautiful exert a strong lure to begin with: who would choose to be a poor slob or a niggardly old man rather than a handsome and wealthy youth? Aristophanes makes that choice even more impossible by moralizing it: the wealthy and beautiful are good, whereas the poor and ugly are bad, and whatever doubts we *dexioi* in the audience might have about allowing the Knights their long hair and tiaras are buried under the weight of odium generated by their enemies. Thus the democratic viewers are asked to identify with and support the Knights, not Demos, who is presumably their embodiment. The play's moral dynamic demands that the demos become what it is not and not what it is. This identification is both the reward for and (as we shall see) the price of renouncing its love for Cleon.[86]

By throwing in its lot with the elite Knights, the democratic audience becomes *kaloikagathos*. So, too, Demos. When he accepts as his lover the Knights' man and commits himself to the Knights' politics (in the first instance by throwing over Paphlagon), he becomes, like them, an aristocrat and, even more, a king. The Sausage-seller prophesies that Demos will wear a spangled purple robe and a diadem and ride a golden chariot (967–69). This prophecy is realized when Demos appears, transformed by the Sausage-seller from wretched to beautiful (*kalon ex aiskhrou*, 1321).

ΧΟ. Ὦ ταὶ λιπαραὶ καὶ ἰοστέφανοι καὶ ἀριζήλωτοι Ἀθῆναι,
δείξατε τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἡμῖν καὶ τῆς γῆς τῆσδε μόναρχον.
ΑΛ. Ὅδ' ἐκεῖνος ὁρᾶν τεττιγοφόρος, τἀρχαίῳ σχήματι λαμπρός·
οὐ χοιρινῶν ὄζων, ἀλλὰ σπονδῶν, σμύρνῃ κατάλειπτος.
ΧΟ. Χαῖρ', ὦ βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἑλλήνων· καί σοι ξυγχαίρομεν ἡμεῖς·
τῆς γὰρ πόλεως ἄξια πράττεις καὶ τοῦ 'ν Μαραθῶνι τροπαίου.

CHORUS: Oh sleek, violet-crowned Athens, envy of all, welcome the monarch of Greece and of this land.
SAUSAGE-SELLER: Look at him, with his grasshopper brooch, shining in his ancient garb. He smells not of mussel shells but of peace, anointed with perfume.

[85] Croiset 1909.72–76; Whitman 1964.82; Hubbard 1991.61–63.
[86] On this identification, see Edmunds 1987a.39–41, 1987b.253–56; Hubbard 1991.78–83; McGlew 1996.347. Demos is not even the "hero" of this play, as Whitman remarks (1964.84–86).

CHORUS: Rejoice, King of the Greeks. We rejoice with you. For your actions are worthy of this city and its victory at Marathon. (1329–34)

Young, well-dressed, beautiful, and powerful, Demos has finally joined the *kaloikagathoi*. In this fantasy of Demos enthroned, the democratic viewers are offered a new love to replace the pleasing but degrading eros of Cleon. If only they will give up that foul passion, Aristophanes predicts, democratic politics too will become pure, and the demos will regain its rightful position—sovereign over all of Greece, sole ruler, a virtual god.[87]

And this is not the only advantage of this new love affair, for along with political rejuvenation comes sexual rejuvenation. No longer Paphlagon's eromenos and whore, Demos is promised that pansexual satisfaction every Aristophanic man dreams of: he will have a slave boy to use as a folding stool (1386) and two female "Peace Treaties" to "nail three times in a row" (1391).[88] As is often the case in Aristophanes, the prospect of heterosexual intercourse (embodied by a naked girl) represents a return to normalcy. Paphlagon, we are told, had been hiding the Peace Treaty girls. All it took was ousting him and now Demos, freed from the passivity of pederasty and the humiliation of prostitution, is restored to virility and sexual potency. From the most debased love object—superannuated eromenos, *kinaidos*, boy whore—Demos has become the most dominant of men, as noble and beautiful as Pericles' idealized lovers.

Paphlagon banished, Demos potent and enthroned, we seem—miraculously—to have a "happy ending," and so the play has often been read.[89] But Thucydides' Cleon warned us to be wary of such miracles. He urged the Athenians not to accept representations of experience in the place of experience itself, or to judge their conditions by what self-interested speakers say rather than what they themselves see and know to be true. And if we do not remember Cleon's warning, we have Aristophanes' own. The Sausage-seller's "miraculous" transformation of Demos is his bid for

[87] Landfester 1967.94–95 and Kleinknecht 1975 treat the language of epiphany in this passage.

[88] Landfester 1967.103–4; Schwinge 1975.196; Lind 1990.208. In his spangled robe and golden chariot, the Sausage-seller predicts, Demos will "pursue Smikythos and 'her' guardian" (969). This enigmatic prophecy is taken to refer to the prosecution of an effeminate for prostitution. Thus Demos will take over the *prōktotēria* that had been Paphlagon's preserve and will prosecute *binoumenoi* rather than be governed by them.

[89] So Yunis 1996.52: "A happy end to the farce is engineered by the miraculous transformation of both the Sausage-seller and Demos, in which they shed their vices and take on the political virtues of moderation, foresight, and prudence" (cf. 58). See further Schwinge 1975.192–98; Sommerstein 1981.2–3; Brock 1986.23; Bennett and Tyrrell 1990.248–49; Bowie 1993.72–77. The word "miraculous" figures prominently in these readings. Hesk, who also reads the play against Thucydides' Mytilenian Debate, takes a stance closer to my own (2000.257–58, cf. 273–74).

power over him and victory over Paphlagon. It is just as politically motivated and self-interested as Paphlagon's many gifts and flatteries, and the ascendancy of the Sausage-seller, beneath the rhetoric of rejuvenation, is a return to business as usual. As a solution to the play's problems, then, it must be viewed as highly ironic.[90]

Demos is sovereign at the end, but what is the nature of his rule? His costume offers a clue. The Sausage-seller's oracle sees him in a spangled purple robe and diadem: these are not the accoutrements of the average fifth-century Athenian *kaloskagathos* but the garish finery of a tyrant or the effeminate luxuries of a Persian despot.[91] Similarly, the "archaic garb" (1331; cf. 1323, 1327) in which he shines in the final scene makes Demos an aristocrat from the good old days of Marathon (1325, 1334).[92] Thucydides tells us of the luxuriant lives and habits of the archaic Athenians, who used to wear linen gowns and fasten their hair up with golden grasshoppers (1.6.3). No longer the fashion in Athens, where the wealthy now live for the most part as much as possible like everyone else, such luxuries are now associated with Ionia, Thucydides says (1.6.4–5), where they lingered on after the Athenians had abandoned them.

The Marathonian costume of the rejuvenated Demos is outdated and outlandish. Chalk that up, perhaps, to comedy's nostalgic conservatism,[93] or to the comic possibilities it affords: the poor can laugh at the pretensions of the well-to-do, the wealthy at this risible version of elitism as imagined by the poor.[94] But this costume is not only anachronistic and ridiculous; it is downright antidemocratic. The prosperous in contemporary Athens generally eschewed personal ostentation in favor of civic benefaction. Those who wore their wealth too conspicuously or flaunted

[90] While students of the play seem reluctant to read the ending ironically, some have expressed surprise and disappointment at the sudden reversal (Whitman 1964.101–2). On the "problem" of the ending for the play's unity, see Landfester 1967.10–11, 83–104; Littlefield 1968; Schwinge 1975; Brock 1986. But as Konstan 1995.5 aptly notes: "Unity is not an ideal quality of a text, but a product of its ideological labor."

[91] Purple robes are the attire of tyrants: Agamemnon attracted *phthonos* for walking on one, Alcibiades for wearing one as choregos (Aes. *Ag*. 904–74; Ath. 12.534c; P. Wilson 1997). Spangled robes are Eastern (Ath. 12.525d), ceremonial (Plut. *Mor.* 672a), theatrical (Luc. *Icarom*. 29), and offensive (Dem. 50.34). The *stephanē* was a woman's ceremonial headdress and suggests the effeminacy of the overall outfit (Hom. *Il*. 18.597; *h. Hom*. 6.7; Hes. *Th*. 578; Ar. *Ecc*. 1034). It is worth noting that this was also similar to the dress of rhapsodes and thus ties back into the problematic pleasures of speech in the play.

[92] His rejuvenation evokes the heroism of the elite Persian War-era generals Miltiades and Aristides (1325) and, in this, continues the offensive against Cleon, who takes as his model the naval commander Themistocles (812–18; cf. 884). On Cleon and Themistocles, see C. Anderson 1989.

[93] Heath 1987.24.

[94] The dominated classes reproduce their cultural domination in their imagination of an aristocratic life-style, as Bourdieu 1984 shows (see esp. 41, 318–71).

a glamorous life-style were suspected of harboring antidemocratic, even tyrannical tendencies. But this is precisely the sort of elite that Demos becomes. So strong are the associations of his costume with the tyrannical East, in fact, that Aristophanes goes out of his way to dispel them: the slave boy who is to bear Demos's stool (and his sexual advances) is "uncastrated" (1385)—that is, he is a Greek slave, not an Eastern eunuch.[95] Thus, even Demos's newfound sexual potency is suspect: is his the aggressive sexuality of an Athenian citizen or the lechery of a Persian despot?

Demos does become elite at the end but he does not become the kind of elite who held power in contemporary Athens, a well-born general or well-spoken orator. Instead, Demos becomes the most illegitimate type of aristocrat: luxuriant, ostentatious, effeminate, Eastern, tyrannical. This elitism is expressly excluded from Pericles' ideal Athens. "We love beauty with frugality and we love wisdom without softness" (Thuc. 2.40.1) defines a legitimate, democratic elite precisely through the repudiation of the sort of aristocrat that Demos, *kalos ex aiskhrou*, miraculously becomes. Not surprisingly, the power he gains with this transformation is also illegitimate. He becomes a king (*monarkhon*, 1330; *basileu*, 1333), a figure antithetical to the democracy.[96]

The play offers this costume monarchy as an alternative to the debased politics of Cleon and as a solution to the problems it posed for democracy. Through the moral identification it forges with the Knights and the loathing it incites toward Paphlagon, the play directs the audience's desire toward this fantasy. By embracing it, the viewers become those wise and moral men whom Aristophanes claims to address. But do they simultaneously become Cleon's "bad *agōnothetai*," who mistake clever *logoi* for the *erga* of their daily experience, enjoying the spectacle of the *agōn* so much that they forget to judge it critically? "Demos, you have a wonderful rule," says Aristophanes' chorus, "since all men fear you like a tyrant. But you are easily led astray and you take pleasure in being flattered and deceived, and you gape at every speaker!" (Ὦ Δῆμε, καλήν γ' ἔχεις ἀρχήν, ὅτε πάντες ἄνθρωποι δεδίασί σ' ὥσπερ ἄνδρα τύραννον. 'Αλλ' εὐπαράγωγος εἶ, θωπευόμενός τε χαίρεις κἀξαπατώμενος, πρὸς τόν τε λέγοντ' ἀεὶ κέχηνας, 1111–19). Aristophanes sets a tyranny of the demos against the gaping politics the play decries: it is this politics (associated with Cleon),

[95] So the scholion: ἐνόρχην· ἐπειδὴ παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις σπάδωνες, οὗτος ἐνόρχην δίδωσιν. Cf. Edmunds 1987b.259.

[96] On Aristophanes' use of these terms, see Landfester 1967.23–24, 97; Lenfant 1997. Of course, ostentatious beautification was generally legitimate for the city in a way that it was not for the elite individual (although cf. Plut. *Per.* 12.2). Part of the comic transgression here is the slippage between Demos as an embodiment of the city (rightful monarch of all Greece) and as a representative of the individual Athenian (whose dreams of monarchy are highly suspect).

he implies, that prevents Demos from exercising his rightful sovereignty. Here Demos's (and the demos's) pleasure (*khaireis*) is opposed to its power (*arkhēn*), and Demos is encouraged to choose the latter over the former. The end of the play would seem to enact that choice, with pleasing flattery banished (along with Paphlagon) and Demos restored to royal rule. But we have seen that this rule is an unlikely one within the terms of the contemporary democracy. In applauding this purple-robed fantasy, does the audience relinquish its real sovereign power? Aristophanes seems to stage an exchange of false pleasure for true power, but in this flattering image of an archaic tyranny does he in fact present the demos in the audience with pleasure (the "pleasure of words") at the price of democratic rule? And if we accept this ending as happy, do we too choose the pleasing spectacle of sovereign Demos over the political sovereignty of the demos?[97]

For by playing at being an aristocrat, Demos also commits himself to an antidemocratic politics: not simply to the politics and policies of the Knights (including the exile of Cleon) but also to the more general proposition that only *kaloikagathoi* can rule, not tanners, sausage-sellers, or bean-chewing rustics. This antidemocratic politics is even enacted into legislation at the end, when Demos bans youths from the Agora (1373) and forces those young men who sit around there and talk about oratory to take up hunting (1375–83). Democratic decrees are curtailed (1383); the pursuits that foster democratic orators and the people's ability to judge such orators are outlawed in favor of those that train and entertain a leisured aristocracy. In turning away from Cleon, Demos simultaneously turns away not only from the clever stylistic critiques that Cleon condemns in Thucydides but also from the sort of critical discourse about democratic oratory that he advocates. The play's choice of the Knights over Cleon is thus enacted into law and civic practice, as the Agora is transformed from the site of oratorical discussion and democratic legislation into a breeding ground for long-haired horsemen.

The cost of this choice is democracy itself. The rejuvenated Demos smells of peace libations, not of mussel shells (1332). Mussel shells evoke

[97] Thus I disagree with Henderson 1993 that the Sausage-seller's victory over Paphlagon represents a victory for the demos over the political elite. Yes, Demos is sovereign at the end, but what is the nature and cost of his sovereignty? I agree that Aristophanes' comedy "never attacks the constitutional structure of the democracy or questions the inherent rightness of the *dēmos*' rule" (Henderson 1990.310; cf. 1993.308; Ehrenberg 1943.241–42; Dover 1972.96; Schwinge 1975.182; Lind 1990.20), but I believe that it regrounds that rule by articulating it to an elite position. In other words, "standard populism" (as Henderson calls it, 1993.313) contains within it much class misrecognition. The debate over whether Aristophanes was an elitist (de Ste. Croix 1972.357–76) or a populist (Heath 1987.29–43; Henderson 1993) obscures the ways in which these two positions intersect and the fact that democratic ideology is articulated precisely through the struggle to define and control that intersection.

the lawcourts (where they were used as voting pieces)[98] and hence the jury payments with which Cleon "bribed" the people. Here and in other comedies (especially *Wasps*), Aristophanes uses the jury system as a symbol for the democracy at its most corrupt—the people misled by the promise of payment. But the court system also represents Athens at its most radically democratic, with the people sitting in judgment on their fellow citizens, their authority subsidized by payment so that social inequality could not restrict political equality. It was this sort of political participation that made the demos sovereign, if anything did. But not only is jury payment linked throughout the play to Paphlagon's prostitution; here it is contrasted to peace, an unarguable good in Aristophanes' world. So we have another choice that is no choice: youthful tyrant Demos or senile pauper Demos; rich and handsome Knights or vile and vulgar "mongers"; peace or jury payments. Salvation from Cleontic demagogy is bought at the price of democracy.

What happens to the democratic subject? Is he lost along with the democracy? Repeatedly throughout *Knights* the question is posed: can a real man come from the Agora? Near the beginning of the play, Demosthenes reveals to the Sausage-seller the oracle predicting that he will become a great man (ἀνὴρ μέγιστος, 178). "Tell me," he responds, "how will I, a sausage-seller, become a man?" (Εἰπέ μοι, καὶ πῶς ἐγὼ ἀλλαντοπώλης ὢν ἀνὴρ γενήσομαι; 178–79). Demosthenes replies that the Sausage-seller will become great precisely because he is "wretched and bold and from the Agora" (181). Real men come from the Agora (333) and are low-born and ill-bred, stupid and odious (185–94). The social inversion at work here suggests, of course, that we are meant to assume the opposite: that a real man is well-educated, well-born, and well-off. A real man is a *kaloskagathos*, a knight, not a sausage-seller or a tanner. Thus when the Sausage-seller does "become a man" at the end of the play, he does so only by joining forces with the *kaloikagathoi*: "Remember that you became a man thanks to me," say the Knights (καὶ μέμνησ' ὅτι ἀνὴρ γεγένησαι δι' ἐμέ, 1254–55).[99] What about the sausage-sellers and tanners in the audience? Do they too "become men" only by identifying with the Knights? Shedding his threadbare cloak for purple robes (and his democratic decrees for hunting), does Demos, too, finally become a man?

Can a sausage-seller be a man? The play allows virtually no standpoint from which to build a democratic subjectivity. There is no positive valua-

[98] *Wasps* 333, 349; Boegehold 1963.367 n.3, 1995.211. Demos is described at *Knights* 41 as a bean-chewer, a reference not only to his poverty but also to the beans that were used as voting pieces in elections (Neil 1909.12 ad loc.).

[99] There is debate as to who speaks these lines, but for my argument it makes little difference whether it is the elite politician Demosthenes or the elite chorus leader. Cf. 392: Paphla-

tion in this play (as for example in *Acharnians*) of the humble citizen, the average guy.[100] Here the average man is associated not with a peace-loving and pious agrarianism but with the vulgarity and deceit of the Agora; rural simplicity is here figured as rustic stupidity. Demos is decrepit and moronic. The democratic audience is asked to laugh at this character, not to identify with him, and to prove its cleverness (*dexios theatēs*) precisely by its ability to see what Demos does not. The same goes for the Sausage-seller, often considered the "hero" of the play; brash, vulgar, and morally despicable, he is little better than Paphlagon. This is a "comic everyman" no man would wish to identify with.[101] The Agora, too, offers no foothold for a democratic subjectivity. That cultural center of Athenian democracy is here associated only with drunken violence and filthy lucre, with prostitutes and loud-mouthed hucksters.[102] At the end of the play, the Sausage-seller's name is revealed to be Agorakritos because he was "raised on brawls in the Agora" (1257). This etymology displaces another, more positive one, "chosen by the people" or "distinguished in the public sphere."[103] There can be nothing positive about the Agora, and thus it is fitting that the rejuvenated Demos bans youths from the Agora and forces them to go hunting (1373).

To see more clearly the sort of subject that is lost in this closing of the Agora, we can compare the democratic citizen envisioned by Cleon in Thucydides' Mytilenian speech. He also imagines the demos as a tyrant, but only in an imperial guise. He draws a strong distinction between internal politics and imperial, even going so far as to suggest that democracy and imperialism are by nature incompatible. The license (*akrasia* and *akolasia*) of tyranny offers a foil for his vision of a lawful and moderate demo-

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gon "seems to be a man" because he has reaped another man's harvest (in claiming credit for Pylos).

[100] Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* refers to himself as a *politēs khrēstos* (595). See also the positive evaluation of the poor in *Wealth* (e.g. 567–71; cf. Heath 1987.30 n.58, 32–33), and on the *aretē* of the ordinary citizen, Ehrenberg 1943.56–73; Adkins 1960.226–32; Carter 1986.82–87; McGlew 2002, ch. 2.

[101] The Sausage-seller as "comic hero": Whitman 1964.21–58; Henderson 1993.309–11. As "everyman": McGlew 1996.350.

[102] On the Agora as the civic center of democratic Athens, see Loraux 1993.42–52 and for the various connotations of *agoraios*, Connor 1992 [1971].154–55. At *Peace* 750, Aristophanes defines his own comic art as "full of great words and plans and jokes that are not *agoraioi*" (σκώμμασιν οὐκ ἀγοραίοις). The Agora carries exclusively pejorative connotations in *Knights*. The Sausage-seller "has a foul voice, is low-born, and from the Agora" (218); cf. 293, 297, 636.

[103] See Neil 1909.165 ad *Knights* 1257. The *-kritos* ending of names generally means "approved by." The negative context (cf. 1242–48) suggests that *krinesthai* is here being taken as "to wrangle" (cf. *Clouds* 66), not "to judge, approve, distinguish." Ehrenberg 1943.34; Pohlenz 1965.541–42; Landfester 1967.99–100; and Schwinge 1975.195 read it positively ("tested in/approved by/chosen from the Agora"). Cf. Olson 1992.

cratic subjectivity. "Lack of education [*amathia*] coupled with moderation [*sōphrosunē*] is more useful than cleverness [*dexiotēs*] with lack of restraint [*akolasia*]; the more humble [*phauloteroi*] men for the most part govern cities better than those who are clever" (ἀμαθία τε μετὰ σωφροσύνης ὠφελιμώτερον ἢ δεξιότης μετὰ ἀκολασίας, οἵ τε φαυλότεροι τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τοὺς ξυνετωτέρους ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλέον ἄμεινον οἰκοῦσι τὰς πόλεις, Thuc. 3.37.3). *Dexiotēs*, cleverness, was the characteristic that in Aristophanes united the audience with the Knights against Paphlagon (225–29).[104] Aristophanes' audience hates Cleon because it is clever (*to gar theatron dexion*, 233). *Amathia* was the quality of the Sausage-seller in the play's social inversion: "Leading the people is no longer the job of an educated and good man but of an ignorant slob" ('Η δημαγωγία γὰρ οὐ πρὸς μουσικοῦ ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἀνδρὸς οὐδὲ χρηστοῦ τοὺς τρόπους, ἀλλ' εἰς ἀμαθῆ καὶ βδελυρόν, 191–93). *Sōphrosunē*, on the other hand, characterized the liberal education that was now cast aside (334), as well as the playwright himself (545). At Thucydides 4.28.5 it characterized Cleon's elite enemies.

Cleon's speech reverses the terms. For him *dexiotēs* means not the sagacity of an audience that identifies with the elite but the specious cleverness of sophistic orators, an intelligence accompanied by intemperance and immorality (*akolasia*). *Amathia* means not the vulgar ignorance of the lower classes but the common sense of the common people, those who do not feel wiser than the laws but who show the self-restraint and moderation (*sōphrosunē*) that is so vital to the democracy.[105] Just as Aristophanes articulated poverty, stupidity, and immorality on the one side, and wealth, education, and probity on the other, Thucydides' Cleon makes a similar connection between morality, education, and social status, deploying the demos's anti-intellectualism to formulate an antielite stance. The elite are clever (*dexioi, sunetōteroi*), but that cleverness is associated with *akolasia* (3.37.3) and contempt for the law (3.37.4).

[104] At 96 and 114 Demosthenes' plan is *dexios*. At 421 the Sausage-seller is sarcastically called a "most clever piece of meat." At 753 the *dexiotēs* of Demos at home is contrasted to his gaping in the Pnyx. Cleverness is a positive quality, then, but it describes the demos only in its nonpolitical functions. The oligarchic Pseudo-Xenophon comments that democracies find it more advantageous to foster politicians whose stupidity and wickedness (*amathia* and *poneria*) make them well-disposed to democracies than good and clever men (*dexiōtatoi* and *aristoi*) who are ill-disposed (*Ath. Pol.* 1.6–7). On Aristophanes' use of the word, Dover 1993.13–14.

[105] North 1966.96–115 shows that Thucydides and Aristophanes associated *sōphrosunē* with traditional morality and political stability (although she argues that they considered it an aristocratic or even oligarchic virtue). On *amathia* and *sōphrosunē* in the Mytilenian speech, see Andrews 2000.53–56. On the moral terminology of class, see further Adkins 1960.195–98, 209; de Ste. Croix 1972.371–76; Donlan 1980.126–30, 139–53; Connor 1992 [1971].88–89 and nn. 2, 3; R. Osborne 2000.

These men, with their lack of restraint and superiority to the laws, are more like the tyrants of Athenian imperial politics than the citizens who should govern democratic politics. They will destroy the city (3.37.4). Against these is ranged an uneducated (*amathēs*) and low-born (*phaulos*) but moderate (*sōphrōn*) and civic-minded (*ōphelimos*) citizenry. It is this temperate, conservative, and law-abiding demos that is best able to govern the polis.[106]

If Cleon is merely flattering his audience in this speech (as is often charged), *phauloteroi* is an odd word to have used. It more usually carries negative connotations: lower class, poor but also cheap, paltry, or common. It is not a term of praise; nor, for that matter, is *amathia*, which is generally used in the pejorative (stupid, ignorant, boorish). And yet for the comparison in this passage to make sense, both words must be read positively: they are yoked to the established virtue of *sōphrosunē* (against *akolasia*) and are said to be capable of governing cities. Whereas Aristophanes redefines *agoraios* and *agroikos* (two words that can be used neutrally) as negative characteristics, Thucydides' Cleon redefines the negative terms *amathia* and *phaulos* as positive. The ambiguity of the diction here speaks to the remarkable difficulty of articulating a subject position in expressly nonelite terms.[107]

Why, in a democracy, should all the qualities associated with the lower classes carry such negative connotations? The question goes beyond the social biases of two elite authors: throughout Athenian literature the poor are *kakoi*, *ponēroi*, *phauloi*, and *aiskhroi*; the elite are *kaloi*, *agathoi*, *khrēstoi*, and *beltistoi*.[108] This diction forces the same nonchoice as Aristophanes' *Knights*: one can identify either with the elite and be *kalos* or with the masses and be *kakos*. For Athens's tanners and sausage-sellers

[106] Donlan 1980.148–49 argues that this speech illustrates "the limit to which a popular leader in the fifth century could go in publicly asserting the superiority of lower class values" (148). He suggests that in making a virtue out of the demos's *amathia* and also claiming for it "the qualities claimed by the upper class" (149), Cleon is reproducing the terms of the elite's superiority. He sees "few indications of an attempt to establish a 'proletarian' ethic" (149). I see some faint intimations in that direction in Cleon's strained redefinition of terms.

[107] Donlan 1980.149–50; de Ste. Croix 1981.125. *Phaulos* is also used in a positive sense at Eur. *Bacch.* 430 (*to plēthos to phauloteron*), *Ion* 834–35, fr. 473. The relative paucity of positive terms to refer to the lower classes in Attic usage may also explain the many parallels between Cleon's characterization of the average Athenian and Archidamus's characterization of the Spartans at Thuc. 1.84. While Spartan society was also very hierarchical, the ideal of the citizen soldier (as well as the institutional mechanisms that produced him) provided a positive language in which to speak of the nonelite. Cleon echoes that language in his emphasis on the conservatism and anti-intellectualism of the average Athenian.

[108] This is not to say that there were no positive terms for the demos: *plēthos* and *hoi polloi*, for example, often bore a positive charge in democratic oratory; see also B. Strauss 1996 on the democratic virtues of the *thētes*. But when a speaker really wanted to praise the demos, the terms he used were all taken from an aristocratic register.

the former choice implies a class misrecognition and a hegemonic politics of the sort we have been tracing in *Knights*. But who, however lowly his occupation, would choose to be *aiskhros* rather than *agathos*, a hooker rather than a king? Resisting the pressure both of Athenian social diction and of Thucydides' elite text, Cleon's Mytilenian speech cuts a path between these two false alternatives. His citizen is not a Persian War-era aristocrat; he wears no purple robes. But neither is he necessarily a whore and a cheat merely because he works for a living. In this strained passage, Cleon is trying, I think, to articulate a way for a sausage-seller to be a man. And, after all, in a democracy there should be nothing so ridiculous about that.

In making that proposition seem not only ridiculous but morally reprehensible and politically ruinous, *Knights* reveals the tremendous costs of the fantasy of an elite demos. In the process, it casts light on that other fantasy of an aristocratic democracy, Pericles' Epitaphios. There, too, the citizens are offered a vision of themselves as an elite, a vision they cannot refuse. There, too, this democratic elite is forged through the articulation of social hierarchy to moral and aesthetic: poverty is no impediment to *kalokagathia*, Pericles announces. Pericles' lovers of beauty and wisdom are no less a fiction than Aristophanes' archaic tyrant, and the identification that speech forges requires no less misrecognition. Aristophanes' comic alliance between the Sausage-seller and the Knights and the miraculous transformation of Demos it effects are merely exaggerated versions of the hegemonic dynamics we traced in chapter 1 in the Epitaphios. Thucydides' text, too, leaves us wondering whether a sausage-seller can be a man.

Aristophanes' final scene thus exposes the misrecognitions and political costs behind the fantasy of an elite demos. It also reveals its pleasures. Thucydides denied the pleasure of Pericles' speech, as we saw, protecting it from the debased (and democratic) *hēdonē* of Cleon's politics. Aristophanes, too, claims to offer a turn away from pleasure and toward power: the final transformation, we might suppose, is the tyrannical *arkhē* Demos holds once he has been turned from the pleasure of flattery (1111–19). But of course that claim must be taken with a large grain of salt, for the final transformation is itself a piece of gratifying flattery. The Sausage-seller is different from Paphlagon only in that he is even more loathsome (*bdelurōteros*, 134), and there is no reason to think that he changes his nature with Demos's change of clothes. The rejuvenation is of a piece with all the obsequious offerings earlier in the play; it is no different from the cakes and sardines and cheap coriander with which Paphlagon and the Sausage-seller vie to woo Demos. Far from a miraculous transformation in democratic politics, then, the rejuvenation continues the political

prostitution and vulgar gratification the play condemns—and Aristophanes' *dexios theatēs*, if not the gullible Demos, should surely realize that.

What, then, of the pleasure of Aristophanes' play? This final vision is, after all, not only the Sausage-seller's flattering gift to Demos but also Aristophanes' flattering gift to the demos in the audience.[109] Is this scene the ultimate gratification, a piece of flattery designed, like the orators' declarations of love, to set the demos aflutter and to make it gape in pleasure? In the pleasure he gives the audience, does the poet trump both Paphlagon and the Sausage-seller as king of the gigolos? Or should this final scene be read rather as an object lesson (as promised in *Acharnians*) in the dangers of precisely such flattery? At stake in these questions is the relationship between the poet and his audience and both the pleasure and the good that inheres within it. Is this play the gift of a *kaloskagathos* suitor or the come-on of a whore?

For Aristophanes (as for Thucydides) Cleon's repudiated *hēdonē* is the foundation for the author's claim to speak *pros to beltiston*. Aristophanes educates his viewers, he does not give them blowjobs; he puts an end to the gaping that Cleon's open orifices prompted in them. Why, then, is it so difficult to differentiate the pleasure of his text from the pleasure he so reviles in Cleon? However we read the end, it is flattering to its audience: those leaving the theater go either as sovereign Demos (if they buy the transformation) or as clever Demos (if they don't). Thus Aristophanes is involved in the same sort of paradox we saw with Cleon in the Mytilenian speech (oddly never called "hypocrisy" in Aristophanes' case): he seduces by warning against seduction and educates by gratifying. It proves harder than Plato suggested, then, to tell a doctor from a pastry chef or an Aristophanes from a Cleon, for the critique of pleasure—as Cleon's speech showed—is always implicated in the pleasure it critiques. One can claim to speak *pros to beltiston*, but because that "good" is defined against pleasure it is always suffused with pleasure, even (or perhaps especially) when it expressly claims that it is not. Aristophanes, with his assault on Cleontic *hēdonē*, can escape that *hēdonē* no more than could Thucydides and Pericles. His poetics are as meretricious as Cleon's politics, and his purple-robed Demos (like Pericles' bejeweled Athens) is a hooker dressed in borrowed finery.

[109] Clearly the audience did take pleasure from Aristophanes' play, as evinced by its first-place prize (which indicates that at least the judges enjoyed it, and there is no reason to think that they were not representative viewers: MacDowell 1995.11–12). Aristophanes' plays are supposed to please their audience (see, e.g., *Clouds* 560–62, *Peace* 760–64). Unlike Thucydides, Aristophanes does not deny *hēdonē* and *terpsis*, a fact that makes all the more vital his differentiation of the pleasures of his *logos* from those of Cleon. Aristophanes' comic Muse is a good girl (who is approached by many but gratifies few, *Knights* 517), not a whore who gives everyone in the audience a go (505–6). Cf. *Wasps* 1025–28; *Clouds* 534–44.

Many have noted and puzzled over the fact that *Knights* won first place in 424, but Cleon was reelected as general only weeks later.[110] This paradox has sometimes been seen as validating the unflattering picture of democratic deliberation painted by Aristophanes: the Athenians really are, after all, slack-jawed morons. But this reversal attests, I think, not to the people's stupidity or fickleness but, instead, to the ultimate impossibility of segregating their desire for Cleon from their desire for the fantasy of an elite demos—the impossibility, that is, of Thucydides' and Aristophanes' project, as we have traced it in this chapter. Much as these authors would like to represent these two passions as mutually exclusive—the desire for the good and the desire for pleasure, love for Pericles and love for Cleon—the two are bound together within the democratic psyche as two coexistent imaginations of the eros between the demos and those who would lead it.

Pericles and Cleon are not only mutually intertwined, but the former exists only through the continual suppression of the latter. I have argued that Thucydides grounds both his own text and his ideal of Periclean Athens upon the denial of Cleontic pleasure; likewise, Aristophanes constructs a fantasy of a miraculously ennobled Demos through the rejection of Cleon as a suitor for the demos's love. Much rests upon the repudiation of Cleon's pleasure, but that repudiation is never complete, and the effort merely reinstalls the abominated Cleon at the heart of Periclean Athens. Pericles, but for a labor of repression, is Cleon, a fact that is encoded within the very act of repression. Reading Periclean Athens through Cleon undoes this vital repudiation and exposes the carefully hidden relation between the two. In the process, it challenges the narrative that presents the demos's desire for Cleon as a travesty of its desire for Pericles and that sees democratic pleasure and democratic power as yoked failings in Athenian politics. Far from Cleon being a parodic Pericles, then, Pericles is in a fundamental sense dependent on and derivative of Cleon. Cleon, not Pericles, is the *paradeigma*, albeit one that is reproduced only in the negative.

This means that much of what we take most seriously about classical Athens is at base a sublimated form of—a defense against or reaction to—that other (less acceptable, though perhaps more democratic) desire, the desire for Cleon. The stern veracity of Thucydides, the ennobling fantasy of an aristocratic demos, the very idea of Periclean Athens—all are grounded upon the pleasures of Cleon. When we fall in love with Periclean Athens—with its beautiful monuments, enlightening texts, or noble citizen-lovers—we recapitulate the repudiation of Cleon that we have seen at work in Thucydides and Aristophanes, never acknowledging the

[110] Heath 1987.12–13; Henderson 1990.298–307, 1998.272; Lind 1990.215; Carey 1994.74–75.

labor of denial that alone separates this glorious eros from depraved *kinaideia*. Like Aristophanes' Demos, we may desire the fantasy of an elite democracy and loathe the idea of whorish political pleasure, but we would do so, as Aristophanes shows, at a cost: that love is neither pure nor free. If we make that choice, then, do we too become Cleon's bad *agōnothetai*, so seduced by the novel and pleasing *logoi* about Athenian democracy that we neglect to inquire about the relation of those *logoi* to the political realities, past and future, of the positions they articulate? Slaves to the pleasure of Periclean Athens, would we trade for that beautiful name the *ergon* of radical democracy?

Knights ends with Cleon rejected, indeed, literally ejected. "What will become of Paphlagon now?" asks the rejuvenated Demos. "Nothing more than that he will take up my old profession," answers the Sausage-seller. "He'll sell sausages all alone at the gates, mixing dogs' meat with asses'. He'll have drunken arguments with the whores and drink water from the public baths" (1397–1401). In gratitude, Demos invites the Sausage-seller to dine in the Prytaneion, "to take the seat where this abomination [*pharmakos*] used to sit" (1404–5). Cleon is proclaimed a *pharmakos*, a ritual defilement that must be excised if the community is to prosper. And so the play closes with the assembled cast carrying him off stage.[111] But, of course, Cleon is not gone at all; he is merely reborn in the Sausage-seller, a new demagogue who is even more disgusting and whose flatteries—including the flattering vision of Demos enthroned—are even more whorish. This character is now called to dine—or to suck? (167)—in the Prytaneion where Paphlagon used to sit. The Cleontic is banished with great fanfare only to be reincorporated at the very center of the city.[112]

"As long as the Boule is alive, and the demos sits there with a moronic expression," says Paphlagon, "I am not afraid" (395–96). As long as there

[111] Schol. ad 1408: αἰρόμενος ἐκφέρεται ὁ Κλέων. For the politician as *pharmakos*, cf. Ar. *Frogs* 730–33, fr. 655 K-A, and *Wasps* 1043–45, where Aristophanes refers to himself as "purifier of the land." Bennett and Tyrrell 1990 analyze *Knights* as an example of a broader "*pharmakos* complex" in Greek culture, "a shared belief that the community could be saved from disaster by the loss of certain of its members" (236). Cf. Bowie 1993.74–77; Lind 1990.213 n.1; Christ 1998.51–55. Cornford's (1914) theory that comedy evolved out of *pharmakos* ritual is no longer given much credence: see Pickard-Cambridge 1927.329–49.

[112] There is a spatial shift at the end of the play. Throughout, the Agora had been associated with the poverty and prostitution of the Sausage-seller; all the jokes about the "best politicians" coming from the Agora situated this civic space at the margins of Athenian politics. But at the end, the Agora (now cleansed of politics, 1373–83) is brought back into the political center, and the margins of the city are reestablished beyond the city walls. When Cleon is banished to set up shop at the city gates (1398, 1247) where the Sausage-seller previously plied his trade, this becomes the new boundary of political respectability, beyond which exist only whores and bath attendants (1400–1401). Around Cleon, then, are established both the political "inside" of the city and the abjected political "outside." See Lind 1990.94–117, 170–92 on the topography.

is democracy, there will be a Cleon: he is a figment conjured by the people's desire. He gapes because they gape—not in stupidity or gluttony, as Aristophanes would have it, but in desire. Thucydides and Aristophanes both represent this desire as perverted and sick, the insatiable and humiliating "itch" of a *kinaidos*, a passion that will pollute political discourse, corrupt the relationship between demos and demagogue and, as it runs its violent course in pursuit of satisfaction, destroy the democracy. But this eros is not the ruination of democracy. It is democracy's very essence: the desire of the people as manifested in their political will. The attempt to redirect this eros, to "woo" the demos and win its love, is the democratic process at its most basic. Cleon, the embodiment of democratic desire, can be carried off the political stage, but he will only be conjured again in new form. He can be repressed and the demos's desire for him sublimated, but the democratic pleasure he represents cannot be done away with, and Pericles' noble lovers are always also Cleon's whores.

Chapter III

PERVERSE DESIRE: THE EROS OF ALCIBIADES

Theories of Perversion

Alcibiades was sexy. All the sources agree on that: he was charming and gorgeous and seductive. He aroused desire, and that desire was enmeshed with his political authority. He was said to have carried a shield emblazoned with a thunder-bearing Eros: a fitting symbol, for in him power and eros are never far apart. But what was his eros? A sexually aggressive youth, a sexually passive adult, a demagogue with the life-style of a tyrant, a Greek man with affinities for the female and the foreign, Alcibiades seems to transgress all the boundaries that bolstered Athenian masculinity and democratic citizenship. And still the demos loved him. While Cleon's debased erotics subverted the Periclean ideal of a noble lover of the city, Alcibiades' eros challenged the very notion of an ideal democratic masculinity. The eros of Alcibiades—the desire he represented and the desire he aroused—fits only uneasily within the norms of citizen sexuality and forces us to rethink not just those norms themselves but the very idea of sexual normativity, as well as the relation between the normative and the perverse.

In the study of ancient sexuality, as I noted in the introduction, much of the recent focus has been on the norms of eros, "the proper phallocentric protocols" and "Greek canons of sexual propriety."[1] Following Kenneth Dover's *Greek Homosexuality* and Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, scholars have traced the lineaments of legitimate eros and the legitimate erastes, documenting the subtle and often conflicting pressures on his sexual behavior, attitudes, positions, and longings. We have already seen the force of normativity at work in the Epitaphios, a speech that hails its audience as Athenians only to the extent that they comply, or at least attempt to comply, with certain ideals of masculinity, citizenship, and Athenianness. And even if such ideals were impossible to achieve in practice, Pericles' proposal that to aim for them is the highest goal of the citizen suggests the hold they had on the Athenian psyche. To the extent

[1] Halperin 1990b.23, 36n; cf. 1997.49. Winkler also starts from the idea of sexual "protocols" (1990b.4–5) but goes on to complicate them. Cf. Dover 1978.60–109; Foucault 1985; Winkler 1990a; Halperin 1990a, 1990b; Cantarella 1992.17–53 ("the etiquette of love"); and now Williams 1999. D. Cohen 1991.171–202 criticizes these scholars but also from the standpoint of laws and norms. See also the suggestive comments of Zeitlin 1999.58–64.

that he internalized such ideals and desired to live up to them, the citizen was normativity corporealized.

The analysis of normativity has made for many important insights into the sexual mores of ancient Athens; more important, it has rescued the study of ancient sexuality from the realm of pure empiricism, allowing it to be approached as a symbolic system with an internal logic (and politics or ideology) of its own. But within this pervasive system of sexual and political norms, what is the place of transgression or perversion? In studies of ancient Greek sexuality, the perverse is often treated as the "exception that proves the rule"—a temporary transgression that ultimately (by its very illegitimacy) serves to resecure the boundaries it crosses—or else as an example of Foucault's "perverse implantation," the idea that power does not prohibit but in fact incites and proliferates perversions as objects, surfaces of operation, and hence supports for its ever more penetrating and wide-reaching control.[2] Either way, perversity is generally seen as fully contained by the norms it apparently challenges. So, for example, Winkler views the *kinaidos* as a "scare-image" that helped enforce the protocols of citizen masculinity. Similarly, Halperin examines prostitution as a perverse implantation (although he does not use that term) of the Athenian democracy, a quasi-institutional prop to the phallicism of the democratic citizen; male prostitutes, he writes, "embody all the social liabilities from which the citizen himself, by virtue of being a citizen, had been freed."[3] Although both recognize that some individuals—whether through choice or necessity—occupied these ideologically debased positions, those positions always remain in a relation of strict subordination to Athenian laws, norms, and ideals, and the very transgressions that might seem to challenge the universality or hegemony of those norms are shown in fact to reaffirm them.[4] There would seem to be no way to act or to think beyond the normative and in a manner that is not fully subservient to it.[5]

[2] Foucault 1978.36–49: "The implantation of perversions is an instrument-effect: it is through the isolation, intensification, and consolidation of peripheral sexualities that the relations of power to sex and pleasure branched out and multiplied, measured the body, and penetrated modes of conduct" (48). Cf. Silverman 1992.186: "For Foucault . . . perversion has no subversive edge; it merely serves to extend the surface upon which power is exercised."

[3] Halperin 1990a.18, cf. 13–16; Winkler 1990b.46.

[4] Dover acknowledges that "we do not fall in love only with those whose specifications are in the pattern-book" (1978.80); however, he does not theorize the ways in which we do fall in love or what relation that love bears to the pattern-book. For him perversity is purely a matter of personal taste (see "Predilections and Fantasies," 1978.124–35). Davidson 1997 describes with great brio the "gray areas" between and around sexual norms, but does not offer a theory of these zones; he seems to view perversion as a failure of decorum (e.g., 1997.163).

[5] D. Cohen 1991 argues this point most vehemently. He posits that because every action refers to norms, even those that transgress them reinforce them: "Having to take into ac-

Alcibiades invites us to reconsider the relation between sexual norms and their transgression, for the very essence of Alcibiades' character for the authors who discussed him was *paranomia*, abnormality, transgression, illegality, perversion. What was the relation between Alcibiades' *paranomia* and the *nomoi* (laws, customs) he transgressed? Was Alcibiades a mere anomaly, an isolated exception to Athenian sexual norms who, by his very singularity, renaturalized the normative and reaffirmed its force and necessity? There is good ancient precedent for viewing him in this way, and up to a certain point it is surely valid to see Alcibiades' flirtations with the tyrannical, the feminine, and the foreign—all marked as *paranomia*—as clarifying the boundaries that defined the Athenian citizen. After all, it was largely because of his *paranomia* that Alcibiades was driven from Athens in 415 (Thuc. 6.15.4). We might think of Alcibiades, then, as a scapegoat who bears into exile with him all that was banished from the realm of legitimacy and who, through his sacrifice, resecures the hegemony of the normal.

And yet perhaps his role is not quite so straightforward, for after banishing him from Athens, the demos later begged him to return; it hates him but also "loves him . . . and wants to possess him" (as Aristophanes put it, *Frogs* 1425). Moreover, the demos seems to have loved Alcibiades for exactly the same reason it hated him: his *paranomia*. If Alcibiades is no more than a scapegoat of illegitimacy or a "perverse implantation" of normalizing power, what of the desire he aroused? Does Alcibiades' eros "break the rules" of Athenian citizen sexuality or does it reaffirm them?

Judith Butler offers a model that will help us to escape the reductive alternatives of normativity or transgression, of obeying the "rules" of sex or breaking them. Drawing on Foucault's notion of the productivity of power, she argues that power, by virtue of its fertility, can produce consequences that it did not anticipate and that exceed or even distort its original intent.[6] Sexual norms are regulatory ideals materialized over time through compelled performances: one has no choice but to comply with them if one is to live as a legitimate and intelligible subject.[7] However, because these normativizing ideals are themselves generative (of practices, of subjects, of desires), they can give rise to discontinuities and contradictions; and because they are impossible to comply with fully—so that, for example, one could never obey all the contradictory injunctions to mascu-

count the norm or normative expectations in formulating a strategy of, or excuse for, deviance shows the strength of the normative structure" (23).

[6] Butler 1990.42, 93; 1993.10, 94–95, 122; 1997.18. Now see also Žižek 1999.247–312.

[7] Butler 1990.139–41; 1993.1–2, 13–15, 94–95, 232. Cf. Silverman 1992.185–88.

linity or femininity—they open a space for miscompliance, performances that not only fail to live up to their demands but actually displace or contest those demands.[8] Perversity, within Butler's terms, is generated by norms and defined in relation to them but not, for that reason, completely determined by them.

Desire is a case in point. Foucault argued that prohibition creates desire: to that extent desire is merely a construct, even a modality, of power. But in Butler's rereading, not only does prohibition generate desire, but it may generate a desire that it did not expect and one that exceeds its grounding taboo.[9] Although desire is an effect of the norms that govern it, it always exists in a productive (rather than submissive) relation to those norms. This productive interaction allows us to move beyond the either-or logic of norms and their transgression to a logic of both-and, in which perversion is generated and constrained by norms but at the same time exceeds and challenges them. Following this logic, we might accept Alcibiades as an anomaly who reaffirms the sexual and political norms he transgresses and, at the same time, view the desire he arouses as a displacement of those same norms. This does not mean that the norms cease to exist—far from it—but that within their very working a space may be opened for *paranomia*. In this space, those objects that should (within the "protocols" of sex) be most despised can become invested with a desire that, if revealed, queers not merely the erotic norms but also the sexual and political subject who defines himself by them.

The eros of Alcibiades, I suggest, is such a case. Alcibiades was the wayward son of Athens's sexual and political *nomoi*. This scion of an illustrious family was adopted by Pericles and entered Athenian politics under his auspices. A skilled orator and general, wealthy and well-connected, handsome, charismatic, he was in many ways the perfect Athenian. But with these qualities most admired by the Athenians he combined many they most despised: the violence and extravagance of a tyrant, the passivity and depravity of a *kinaidos*. Born from the same norms that generated the Epitaphios's ideal citizen-lover, Alcibiades combines within himself the legitimate and the illegitimate and blurs the distinction between the two. This son of Athens does not reproduce faithfully the ideals of his parent; nor is his a childish rebellion firmly put down by paternal chastisement. His oedipality is of a different sort.[10] Aeschylus in Aristoph-

[8] Butler 1990.141–45; 1993.121–37, 230–42. Halperin approaches this view in his argument (derived from Foucault) that heterosexuality has produced homosexuality, but he does not pursue the positive possibilities, instead concluding that "homosexuals are, in this sense, casualties of the cultural construction of exclusive heterosexuality" (1990b.45).

[9] Butler 1993.97–99; 1997.55–61, 101–3.

[10] On Alcibiades as a disobedient son, see B. Strauss 1993.148–53. Plato hints at his rivalry with Pericles (Pl. *Alc.* 105b; cf. Plut. *Alc.* 6.4) and even suggests in the (probably spuri-

anes' *Frogs* compares him to a lion cub, which Athens raises to its ruin (Ar. *Frogs* 1431–32). The adorable lion cub becomes a ravaging lion. And while this development is hardly unexpected, it takes the Athenians by surprise: they cannot control their own creation. In his waywardness, Alcibiades calls into question the very genealogy that engendered him, the lineage by which just laws produce just citizens and an unmistakable mark distinguishes the law's legitimate heir from its bastard.

Not only did Alcibiades mix inseparably within himself the ideal and its inverse; he also infused this mixture with desire. The people loved him and he loved them, and theirs was a love, as we shall see, not easily assimilable to the *dikaios erōs* (just love) of Athens's erotic norms. Was Athens's romance with Alcibiades chaste and honorable or was it, too, *paranomos*? And what of the politics of this affair: what did it mean politically for the demos to love Alcibiades or to be loved by him? If Athenian sexuality was not quite so law-abiding (*dikaios*) and rule-bound as ancient authors liked to claim (and modern scholars like to believe), then how are we to reenvision the subject of this sexuality: what sort of democratic citizen is characterized by such perverse desire?[11]

This chapter tells three interlocking love stories. The first is the story of the man Athens loved to hate: it catalogs the transgressions that made Alcibiades such a popular object of outrage and seeks to understand their underlying logic. The second is the story of the man Athens hated to love but loved nonetheless. This is not a romance that turns out well for Athens, and its traumatic effects taint not only the city's present but also its past, revealing there too a demos that cannot resist what it most despises. A cure for this fatal passion will be offered from an unexpected quarter, Socratic philosophy, and this is our third Alcibiadean love story. Socrates, too, loved Alcibiades and his love promised a happier ending for both lover and beloved than that of the demos. But here too we will find that Alcibiades is easier to love than to hold, and in the end his eros eludes the embrace of philosophy no less than democracy.

These were among the stories the Athenians themselves told about Alcibiades, for they clearly took pleasure in thinking and talking about him.

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ous) *Second Alcibiades* that Alcibiades might take it into his head to kill Pericles (143c8–d1). Rivalry does turn murderous with Alcibiades' other surrogate father: Socrates was put to death for his supposed corruption of youths like Alcibiades. Forde 1989.95: "Alcibiades is a true son of the Athenian regime, but the city is not big enough for the both of them."

[11] I do not wish to prejudge the relation of perverse desire to the law (social or psychic). In psychoanalytic theory, although perversion is not necessarily subversive as a practice, it may raise subversive theoretical questions. See Miller 1996.311: by pressuring the notion of sexual normalcy, "perversion throws the very concept of sexuality into question." On the issue of perversion and the law, see further Freud 1953b [1905].149–72; Lacan 1992.191–203; Silverman 1992.185–88; Butler 1997.83–105; Žižek 1999.47–57; Gunderson forthcoming.

His bizarre behavior was the subject of contemporary discussion across genres—indeed, there was a whole subgenre of literature defending or, more often, reviling his various misdeeds—and remained an object of fascination for centuries afterward.[12] This tradition is remarkably consistent: Plutarch (always a problematic source for the fifth century)[13] embellishes, but clearly does not invent wholesale, anecdotes that we find already in Aristophanes and Thucydides. The proliferation of tales of transgression around Alcibiades attests to his tremendous fecundity as a topos of ancient thought. For the Athenians, as well as for us,[14] Alcibiades was a repository for fantasy: to think about him—and even more, to love him—was to reflect upon the desire that lay subjacent, but not necessarily parallel, to democratic politics. His manifold perversions, sexual and political, were one of the ways in which the Athenians thought through the force and extent, as well as the limits and exclusions, of their prevailing norms. The eros of Alcibiades, then, was more than just a naughty anthology of sexual improprieties: it offered a theory of sexual propriety and democratic normativity, a way of drawing the parameters around *nomos* and contemplating all that existed within those boundaries and beyond them.

Paranomia

Paranomia was the essence of Alcibiades' imagined biography.[15] In Thucydides first Alcibiades' enemies and later the demos as a whole fear his "undemocratic *paranomia*" (οὐ δημοτικὴν παρανομίαν, 6.28.2) and the

[12] There were speeches both for and against Alcibiades; there were philosophical treatises on him, comic lampoons, historical treatments, biographies. The defense or abuse of Alcibiades' behavior may even have been set as a school exercise in the fourth century, if theories about the composition of Pseudo-Andocides' *Against Alcibiades* are right (see note 44). Gribble 1999.30–43 offers a diachronic account of the Alcibiades tradition and discusses the problem of the sources (cf. 149–53 on the lost rhetorical works).

[13] Wade-Gery 1932; Stockton 1959; Stadter 1965.128–40; Wardman 1974.154–61; Andrewes 1978; Pelling 1979, 1992; Ameling 1985. On Plutarch's characterization of Alcibiades and sources for this characterization, see Stadter 1973.115–17; Russell 1995; Gribble 1999.263–82.

[14] For enthusiastic endorsements of Alcibiades' charm, see, e.g., Cornford 1965 [1907].188; Ellis 1989.18 ("His actions were outrageous, yes, but they were performed with panache"); Nussbaum 1986.165–99; de Romilly 1995.17–33. Brunt 1952.95 suggests that he even charmed Thucydides ("Thucydides' judgement may have been warped by the charm and brilliance of Alcibiades' personality"); cf. Delebecque 1965; Westlake 1968.259; Pouncey 1980.115: "Thucydides, like so many of his contemporaries, was caught up against his better judgment by the fascination of the maverick genius."

[15] Thuc. 6.15.4, 6.28.2; Plut. *Alc.* 2, 6, 16.2; Ps.-And. 4.10; Antiphon fr. 67 Thalheim. I say "imagined" to distance what was said about Alcibiades from what he actually did: the latter must always remain suspended in reading our gossipy and biased sources. My object here, then, is Alcibiades the discursive construct, not Alcibiades the man.

"magnitude of his *paranomia* with respect to his person" (τὸ μέγεθος τῆς τε κατὰ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα παρανομίας, 6.15.4). On the one hand, his transgressiveness is *kata to sōma*: somatic, personal, sensual.[16] On the other hand, it is political and, in particular, antidemocratic (*ou dēmotikē*): in both passages, the implication the Athenians draw from his *paranomia* is that Alcibiades is aiming at tyranny. These two aspects—the personal (specifically the sexual) and the political (specifically the antidemocratic)—are inseparable in Alcibiades. We may think of his shield with its thunder-bearing Eros: Zeus in his most authoritarian or even tyrannical form is conflated with Eros.[17] So Alcibiades' sex appeal carries with it political authority, even tyrannical power. By the same token, that authority is always imagined in sexual terms: his power makes him desirable and to desire him is to desire to be ruled by him. It is as Eros that he wields his political thunder.

At Olympia Alcibiades took first, second, and fourth place in the chariot races.[18] So, too, throughout his life he occupied all possible positions—legitimate and illegitimate—at once. And just as the Athenian ideal united norms of sexuality, ethnicity, and citizenship (so that a good Athenian is a good man and a good democrat), Alcibiades, in evoking one illegitimacy, summons them all: his sexual excess, for example, implies tyranny and foreignness, while his tyrannical leanings intimate an effeminate and un-Athenian luxury. His various *paranomiai* are indiscreet, then, in more senses than one. Hence the anecdotal exhaustiveness of the biographical tradition: it is impossible to tell just one anecdote about Alcibiades, because each one implies all the others in an always expandable litany of transgressions, a fertile discourse characterized by a logic of noncontradiction and a supplemental inclusiveness: not "either-or" but "both-and . . . and."

Let's start with sex. An adored eromenos courted by many powerful lovers, an erastes of legendary prowess, Alcibiades was also a whore, an effeminate, a *kinaidos*. In his youth, Alcibiades was a sexually aggressive eromenos. In the *Symposium*, he himself tells of his failed attempt as a boy to seduce Socrates: how he had first arranged to spend time alone with him, then to wrestle with him at the gym, and finally to sleep with him on the same couch—all to no avail; Socrates could not be induced to

[16] For Plutarch the phrase implied susceptibility to pleasure, πρὸς ἡδονὰς ἀγώγιμος (*Alc.* 6.2). Cf. Antiphon fr. 67 Thalheim, where *paranomia* is yoked to *akolasia*, profligacy or licentiousness. Antisthenes (fr. 29 Caizzi = Ath. 5.220c) called Alcibiades *paranomos* "both in relation to women and in the rest of his habits."

[17] Plut. *Alc.* 16.1–2; Ath. 12.534e. On this image, see B. Strauss 1993.149–50. Munn 2000.111 suggests that Alcibiades claimed Eros as his patron deity.

[18] Thuc. 6.16.2. Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 11.1–3; Isoc. 16.34; and the epinician written by Euripides for the occasion, quoted in Plut. *Alc.* 11.3 and discussed by Bowra 1960.

make a move. In his account—tongue in cheek and directed at a very specific audience—Alcibiades behaves more like the adult lover, and Socrates his young beloved (217c7–8).[19]

Such youthful aggressiveness opened Alcibiades to a variety of moralizing attacks. An overeager eromenos, as we saw in *Knights*, might evoke the figure of the boy-whore. Lysias, speaking against Alcibiades' son, paints the entire family with a broad brush as prostitutes (14.41) and imagines the son (imitating his father by showing himself a "most depraved young man") spending his youth lying under a cloak with his lover, drinking (14.25). In the *Symposium*, Socrates teases Alcibiades for offering his body in exchange for wisdom (218e2–219a1): intellectual enthusiasm becomes prostitution. And far from seeing him as a "scare-figure" who taught others to be good by his bad example, worried fathers feared Alcibiades' allure for their sons: in the first reference to him in extant literature (in Aristophanes' *Daitales*, performed when Alcibiades was about twenty-two), a father accuses his son of picking up his cheeky back talk from Alcibiades (Ar. fr. 205 K-A).[20] In the bad example he sets, Alcibiades seems not to resecure the line between charming precocity and juvenile delinquency but to shift it.

This wayward youth presages a lifetime of sexual *paranomia*, for Alcibiades continued to be a love object into adulthood. His beauty, says Plutarch, "flowered in every age and season of his physical development and as a boy, a youth, and a man made him adorable and sweet [*erasmion kai hēdun*]" (*Alc.* 1.4).[21] Plutarch considers such "autumnal beauty" rare and expends no little energy in explaining the anomaly.[22] The cause of

[19] This story works within a specifically Platonic erotics, to which we will return in the final section of this chapter. Its general point is backed up, though, by an anecdote related by Antiphon, where the young Alcibiades runs away from home to live with his lover (Antiphon fr. 66 Thalheim = Plut. *Alc.* 3.1).

[20] Pseudo-Andocides concurs: it is because of Alcibiades that boys today spend their time in the lawcourts, not in the gymnasia, and make speeches while the older men fight wars (4.22; cf. 39). Compare Pl. *Prt.* 320a, where Socrates says Pericles separated Alcibiades from his younger brother for fear that he would corrupt the boy. Cf. Eup. fr. 385 K-A; Lys. 14.26. B. Strauss 1993.148–53 views Alcibiades as a representative of the "new youth" lampooned in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, a boy who beats his parents, disregards traditional authority, and "pimps himself with his eyes" (Ar. *Clouds* 977–80; cf. 981–83, 998–99). Vickers 1993 argues more specifically that Alcibiades was the model for Aristophanes' Pheidippides; cf. Vickers 1997.22–58; Hatzfeld 1951.34–35.

[21] *Erasmion* and *hēdu* themselves describe a distinctly unmasculine appeal. At Aes. *Ag.* 605, Clytemnestra contemptuously calls Agamemnon *erasmion polei*, "the darling of the city." Ephorus uses the word of the boys in the Cretan pederastic seduction ritual of the *harpagē* (*FGrH* 70 F149.21). Cf. Plut. *Pomp.* 2.1.3; Lucian *Navig.* 43.1. In Orphic Hymn 58.1, Eros is *erasmion* and *hēdu*.

[22] At the opening of Plato's *Protagoras*, a friend notes to Socrates that his eromenos Alcibiades is growing a beard: he is now a *kalos anēr*, a beautiful man. Cf. Ath. 12.534c,

Alcibiades' enduring appeal, he conjectures, was his "good character and physical excellence" (δι' εὐφυΐαν καὶ ἀρετὴν τοῦ σώματος, *Alc.* 1.5); thus while other men were struck by his physical beauty, Socrates loved him for the *aretē* that he saw shining clearly in his face (*Alc.* 4.1). Socrates in the *First Alcibiades* (attributed to Plato) takes a similar tack: the true lover, he says, loves the soul, not the body of his beloved, and this is why he alone of Alcibiades' admirers continues to hang on even after Alcibiades has begun to lose the bloom of youth (131c–e). This moralization is an attempt to legitimate Alcibiades' sex appeal by leeching it of its sex, but in distinguishing so firmly between philosophical desire and common desire, it merely highlights the fact that Alcibiades was attractive to adult men in a way that adult men were not supposed to be.[23]

A comic lampoon of Alcibiades' son—and through him of Alcibiades himself—intimates the scandal of Alcibiades' "adorable sweetness." "He walks wantonly, dragging his robe, so that he may seem as much like his father as possible, and he holds his neck at a slant and lisps" (βαδίζει διακεχλιδώς, θοἰμάτιον ἕλκων, ὅπως ἐμφερὴς μάλιστα τῷ πατρὶ δόξειεν εἶναι, κλασαυχενεύεταί τε καὶ τραυλίζεται, Archippus fr. 48 K-A = Plut. *Alc.* 1.7). Each of these details cries out sexual impropriety. First, the wanton walk.[24] *Diakekhlidōs* (wantonly) is defined in Hesychius's lexicon as "leading a dissolute life through luxury" (διαρέων ὑπὸ τρυφῆς). Its root, *khlidē* (delicacy, luxury, effeminacy, wantonness), generally a pejorative term in classical Attic, describes the self-indulgence and softness that results from excessive wealth and its use for personal luxuries.[25] Artic-

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where Socrates' disciple Antisthenes is said to have commented upon Alcibiades' lifelong youth. In Thucydides, too, Alcibiades' youth is always an issue (5.43.2, 6.12.2–13.1, 6.17.1); cf. Pl. *Alc.* 123d4–7. De Romilly 1995.30 remarks that "Alcibiade n'a jamais été vieux."

[23] Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 24.5: "Alcibiades melted every disposition and captured every heart with the charm of his day-to-day company and conversation. Even for those who feared and envied him, being with him face-to-face provided pleasure and good cheer" (ταῖς δὲ καθ' ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ συσχολάζειν καὶ συνδιαιτᾶσθαι χάρισιν οὐδὲν ἦν ἄτεγκτον ἦθος οὐδὲ φύσις ἀνάλωτος, ἀλλὰ καὶ <τοῖς> δεδιόσι καὶ φθονοῦσιν ὅμως τὸ συγγενέσθαι καὶ προσιδεῖν ἐκεῖνον ἡδονήν τινα καὶ φιλοφροσύνην παρεῖχε). The metaphors are sexual: Eros itself is said to capture and melt hearts. Melting: Archil. fr. 196W; Sappho fr. 130 *PLF*; Alcman fr. 3 *PMG*; Carson 1986.7, 39–45, 115. Capturing: Pl. *Phdr.* 252c.

[24] On gait as a determinant of masculinity, see Bremmer 1991 (esp. 16–23); Gleason 1995.55–81, esp. 60–62; Gunderson 2000a.155 (cf. 59–86).

[25] Xenophon, for example, contrasts the boy who "revels in luxury and gives himself airs with daintiness" to one who shows "force, endurance, manliness, and modesty" (οὐχ ἁβρότητι χλιδαινομένου οὐδὲ μαλακίᾳ θρυπτομένου, ἀλλὰ πᾶσιν ἐπιδεικνυμένου ῥώμην τε καὶ καρτερίαν καὶ ἀνδρείαν καὶ σωφροσύνην, Xen. *Symp.* 8.8). *Khlidē* is often linked with *truphē* or *habrotēs* (Pl. *Symp.* 197d6–7); with expensive ornaments (Eur. *Ion* 26; *Rhes.* 960); and with insolence (Aes. *PV* 436; Soph. *OT* 888). See also Hdt. 6.127; Aes. *PV* 466; Eur. *Cycl.* 500 (of a hetaira); Ar. *Lys.* 640.

ulating bad sexuality to bad sociality, *khlidē* connotes the inverse of the hard and manly warrior we saw in the Epitaphios. There the Athenians "love beauty with frugality [*met' euteleias*] and love wisdom without softness [*aneu malakias*]." Alcibiades is notorious for both *malakia* (Plut. *Alc.* 16.1) and *poluteleia* (Plut. *Alc.* 16.1, 23.5; Ps.-And. 4.31; Thuc. 6.12.2) and Alcibiades *fils*, imitating Alcibiades *père*, combines these qualities in his wanton walk.[26]

Khlidē's effeminate luxury characterizes everything about the young man's bearing in this comic passage. He drags his robe behind him. Aristotle sees this as a sign of *malakia* and an enervating luxuriousness (*Nic. Eth.* 1150b1–5). In comedy it indicates both profligacy and affectation: the sort of man who drags his cloak is also liable to anoint his skin and be much admired by teenagers.[27] The poet is slandering the younger Alcibiades, but the father, too, was known to drag his robes behind him, and purple robes at that. This spectacle Plutarch offers as a sign not only of his extravagance but also of effeminacy (καὶ θηλύτητας ἐσθήτων ἁλουργῶν ἑλκομένων δι' ἀγορᾶς, καὶ πολυτέλειαν ὑπερήφανον, *Alc.* 16.1).[28] The younger Alcibiades also lisps, an affectation he gets from his father, whose own lisp, says Plutarch, "gave his speech a persuasion that brought pleasure" (*Alc.* 1.6).[29] And to hold one's neck at a slant—that is a sure sign of a *kinaidos*.[30]

[26] For another abusive comparison of the father and the son, see Lysias 14, composed in 395 against the younger Alcibiades. As a child, Lysias says (25), he imitated his father in drinking and partying until daybreak, causing such a scandal that he was even taken to task by his father, who himself taught such things to others (26). The son should have attempted to redeem the crimes of his father, not to rival them (29–30); he deserves the death penalty merely for being the son of Alcibiades (30). See Gribble 1999.93: Alcibiades Jr. is "presented in our texts as a facsimile, a rhetorical adjunct, of his father."

[27] Ephippus fr. 19 K-A; cf. Dem. 19.314. Eup. fr. 104 K-A, which parodies the trope, may refer to Alcibiades: "O Miltiades and Pericles, no longer allow those young buggers to rule, dragging the generalship around their ankles" (καὶ μηκέτ', ὦ Μιλτιάδη καὶ Περίκλεες, ἐάσατ' ἄρχειν μειράκια κινούμενα, ἐν τοῖν σφυροῖν ἕλκοντα τὴν στρατηγίαν).

[28] Cf. Lib. fr. 50b. Satyrus also speaks of him entering the theater as choregos in purple robes, "admired not only by men but even by women" (Ath. 12.534c, on which P. Wilson 1997.102).

[29] For this famous lisp, see Ar. *Wasps* 44–46; cf. Anon. schol. ad Arist. *Rhet.* 1412a28. Vickers believes Alcibiades' lisp was parodied throughout Aristophanic comedy (e.g., Vickers 1989a.47–50; 1989b.267–70; 1993.606–8; 1997.xvii–iii, 24–26). In antiquity lisps seem to have betokened age more than gender: children lisp (Anon. ad Arist. *Rhet.* 1404b15; cf. Arist. *Probl.* 902b16–29; *HA* 492b32–34, 536b5–8; *PA* 660a26–28; Callicles at Pl. *Gorg.* 485b7–c2 judges a grown man speaking like a child to be ridiculous and unmanly and deserving of a beating). Thus we can see his charming lisp as part of Alcibiades' role as eternal eromenos.

[30] Arist. *Phgn.* 808a12–13. Compare the unidentified comic fragment, Adespota 137 K-A: "I don't know in the least how to whisper or walk around like a degenerate, holding my neck at a slant like all those other *kinaidoi* I see around here in the city, smeared in pitch

When Alcibiades Jr. walks around with his robe trailing, lisping, and holding his neck aslant, he is reenacting within his own bodily hexis his father's entire sexual history, which united the two complimentary extremes of effeminate luxuriance and indiscriminate sexual voracity.[31] A comic poet cited by Athenaeus speaks to this combination, referring to "that dainty Alcibiades . . . whom Sparta wants for adultery" (ʼΑλκιβιάδην τὸν ἁβρὸν . . . ὃν ἡ Λακεδαίμων μοιχὸν ἐπιθυμεῖ λαβεῖν, Adespota 123 K-A = Ath. 13.574d). The joke is that Sparta simultaneously wants to capture this adulterer (who scandalously seduced the Spartan queen, Plut. *Alc.* 23.7) and wants to "take" for its own pleasure this "adorable and sweet" Athenian. Pherecrates pushes the paradox one step further in his pithy line: "Although he is not a man, Alcibiades, it seems, is now the man [husband] to many women" (οὐκ ὢν ἀνὴρ γὰρ ʼΑλκιβιάδης, ὡς δοκεῖ, ἀνὴρ ἁπασῶν τῶν γυναικῶν ἐστι νῦν, fr. 164 K-A). Aristophanes encapsulates this unsavory combination of passivity and depraved excess in a single word: Alcibiades is *euruprōktos*, a sexual degenerate (*Ach.* 716; cf. Eup. fr. 385.4 K-A).[32]

Luxuriance, extravagance, and incontinent pleasure associate Alcibiades not just with masculine excess but with the female, for it was women who were thought to be, as Plutarch says of Alcibiades, "easily swayed toward pleasures" (πρὸς ἡδονὰς ἀγώγιμος, *Alc.* 6.2).[33] Plutarch tells an anecdote about a wrestling match in which the young Alcibiades bit his opponent. This unsportsmanlike conduct his opponent called the behavior of a girl; Alcibiades responded that it was rather the act of a lion (*Alc.* 2.2–3). Around Alcibiades such distinctions collapse: is he a girl or a lion? Plutarch compares Alcibiades to Helen, not for his effeminate beauty and

[i.e., by angry husbands who caught them *in flagrante*]." See further Lucian *Rhet. Disc.* 11, where the guide on the easy road to rhetoric is said to have a wiggle in his walk and a slant in his neck (as well as a feminine look in his eye and a sweet voice). On this passage and the logic of "bent" and "straight" manliness in oratorical theory, see Gunderson 2000a.155–59. Further references to the effeminacy of a slanted neck are cited by Gleason 1995.63 nn.37, 38.

[31] Foucault 1985.47: "For a man, excess and passivity were the two main forms of immorality in the practice of the *aphrodisia*." Cf. Davidson 1997.167–82.

[32] For similar sentiments, see Eup. fr. 171 K-A (Ath. 12.535a–b): "A. Let Alcibiades come out from the women. B. Why don't you stop talking nonsense and go home and give your wife a workout" (A. ʼΑλκιβιάδης ἐκ τῶν γυναικῶν ἐξίτω. B. τί ληρεῖς; οὐκ οἴκαδ᾽ ἐλθὼν τὴν σεαυτοῦ γυμνάσεις δάμαρτα;); D.L. 4.49: "Bion blamed Alcibiades, saying that when he was a young man he led husbands away from their wives, and when he was older, he led wives away from their husbands" (τὸν ʼΑλκιβιάδην μεμφόμενος ἔλεγεν ὡς νέος μὲν ὢν τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀπάγοι τῶν γυναικῶν, νεανίσκος δὲ γενόμενος τὰς γυναῖκας τῶν ἀνδρῶν); Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.24: Alcibiades was chased by many haughty women for his beauty and ruined by many men for his power. Cf. Davidson 1997.165–66; Gribble 1999.73–79.

[33] Foucault 1985.83–86; Padel 1992.88–113; Davidson 1997.176.

desirability but for his changeable nature (*Alc.* 23.6).[34] Like Helen imitating the voices of their wives to lure the Greek soldiers out of the wooden horse (Homer *Od.* 4.277–79), Alcibiades can make himself a reflection of every man's desire: "When acting naturally was likely to upset those he happened to be with, he always put on an artificial exterior suited to them" (Plut. *Alc.* 23.5). Like a woman, Alcibiades hides his true nature behind a seductive but false exterior.[35] This cosmetic *kharis*, Plutarch says, was his greatest resource in his "hunt for men" (*Alc.* 23.4).

As this hunt crossed national boundaries, Alcibiades changed character. In Sparta he "conquered the people by his demagoguery and bewitched them by his Spartan life-style" (τοὺς πολλοὺς τότ' ἐδημαγώγει καὶ κατεγοήτευε τῇ διαίτῃ λακωνίζων, Plut. *Alc.* 23.3). The "spell" he exerts is not merely political but also sexual; the very next anecdote Plutarch relates has Alcibiades seducing the Spartan king's wife and fathering a child by her (*Alc.* 23.7; cf. Eup. fr. 385 K-A; Ath. 12.535b). His adoption of Spartanness is so alluring to the Spartans that he is even able to insinuate himself into their royal line. Likewise, in Persia Tissaphernes is so beguiled by Alcibiades' *kharis* that he names his garden resort after him, something Persian potentates usually do for their wives.[36]

Throughout his career Alcibiades shows an opportunistic ability to change ethnic identity, as if this were just another robe he trailed behind him. "In Sparta he was athletic, frugal and austere-looking; in Ionia he was sybaritic and relaxed; in Thrace, a heavy drinker; in Thessaly, an avid horseman; and when he was staying with the satrap Tissaphernes, he surpassed Persian magnificence with his pomp and extravagance" (Plut. *Alc.* 23.5; Athenaeus attributes the same sentiment to Satyrus, Ath. 12.534b). In the Epitaphios, Pericles posited certain characteristics—free-

[34] Germain 1972.268 n.43 suggests that Alcibiades was nicknamed Helen because of his beauty and morals. Vickers 1989a sees references to Alcibiades in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* and Euripides' *Helen* and argues that "when Aristophanes parodied *Helen* he probably . . . lampooned Alcibiades in the role of the heroine" (53). Cf. Munn 2000.133–34. On Helen's indeterminability, see Bergren 1983; Suzuki 1989.18–91; Bassi 1993; Austin 1994.83–89, 114–17; Worman 1997.

[35] On artificiality and femininity, see Bergren 1983; Zeitlin 1996.361–63, 375–416. Alcibiades was said to "change his *phusis* more than Proteus" (Lib. *Decl.* 12.42). Plutarch clearly feels some anxiety on the question of Alcibiades' *phusis*. He posits that the mutations are just a false front to suit changing circumstances; his *tropos* and *ēthos* do not change (*Alc.* 23.5). This would be more convincing, however, if the terms Plutarch uses for Alcibiades' essential nature did not also bespeak artificiality: he puts on his artificial appearance (*skhēma*) whenever he fears offending others with the nature that he uses (τῇ φύσει χρώμενος, 23.5). The contrast between his true essence and his adopted persona is lost, and his own "nature" becomes just another tool at his disposal.

[36] Plut. *Alc.* 24.5; Pl. *Alc.* 123b3–c3. Even as a youth, Alcibiades was sought by foreigners as well as citizens, all vying to please him (Plut. *Alc.* 4.1). Proclus (Pl. *Alc.* 114.14–17) says he was called the eromenos of all Greece.

dom, autarky, nobility—as inherent to the Athenian character: these are a birthright of *phusis*, as ineradicable for the Athenian as they are unattainable for the non-Athenian. But for Alcibiades the difference between Athenian and Spartan (or Ionian or Thracian or Thessalian or Persian) seems to have been one not of essence but of performance. If a man can so easily and persuasively imitate foreignness, can he equally imitate Athenianness?

Alcibiades' speech before the Spartans in Thucydides is illustrative.[37] There Alcibiades implies that, although he lived in Athens and was a prominent leader of the democracy, he was really a crypto-Laconian. His participation in the "acknowledged folly" of democracy, he claims, was simply a matter of conservatism (this was the constitution handed down to him, and one under which Athens had prospered) and pragmatism: "As the city was run democratically, it was necessary for the most part to conform to the prevailing circumstances" (6.89.4). In Plutarch's anecdotes, Alcibiades changes his habits and life-style to match those of his foreign hosts; in Thucydides, Alcibiades represents his Athenian identity as precisely the same sort of assimilation. Of course, the rhetoric here is manifestly self-serving; still, when read against the similar quick-change acts recounted by Plutarch, it calls into doubt the very idea of an essential national character.[38]

If "Athenian" is a matter of appearance, not essence, so too, it seems, is "democrat." Just as Alcibiades combined within himself both erastes and eromenos, both aggressive masculinity and effeminacy, both Athenian and foreigner, so too he was simultaneously democrat and tyrant. On the one hand, Alcibiades was a child of the democracy: he curried favor with the demos and longed for a political preeminence even beyond that of Pericles (Pl. *Alc.* 105b). In this, his ambition, while so avid as to arouse suspicion, still runs in democratic channels. On the other hand, we hear that from the first he was looking for a larger venue for his glory, taking as his rivals not the other Greek demagogues but the kings of Persia and Sparta (Pl. *Alc.* 105b5–c6; cf. Pl. *Alc. II*. 141). His enemies charged that he was aiming at tyranny (Thuc. 6.15.4; Plut. *Alc.* 16.2; Isoc. 16.38). But to the extent that his ultimate desire was, as Plato's Socrates says, "to

[37] On this speech, see Cogan 1981.113–19; Forde 1989.96–108.

[38] A fragment of Antiphon says the youthful Alcibiades learned *paranomia* and *aselgeia* (wantonness) in Abydus and brought these habits back with him to Athens (fr. 67 Thalheim): even his most native qualities are imported. Note, too, the jarring juxtaposition of the Athenian and the Spartan in the description of Alcibiades' influence in Sparta: "He conquered the people by his demagoguery . . . and by his Spartan life-style" (τοὺς πολλοὺς τότ' ἐδημαγώγει . . . τῇ διαίτῃ λακωνίζων, Plut. *Alc.* 23.3). He is simultaneously an Athenian demagogue and a Spartan. J. Hall 1997 addresses the issue of ethnic identity in the ancient world.

fill all men with his name and power" (Pl. *Alc.* 105c3–4), he was relatively indifferent to political forms. His enemy Phrynichus said (and Thucydides agrees) that Alcibiades did not care about either democracy or oligarchy (Thuc. 8.48.4; cf. Plut. *Alc.* 25.6). He was exiled by the democracy but, after its dissolution, was made no more welcome by the oligarchy (Thuc. 8.68.3); his aristocratic life-style alienated the demos, while his populist appeal antagonized the elite. Politically, as well as personally, he seems to have been *paranomos*, to have fit only ambiguously within the political forms of the day.[39]

Pseudo-Andocides complains that Alcibiades had the words of a demagogue and the deeds of a tyrant (4.27), and many of his political ventures might indeed be considered to show a tyrannical contempt for the laws of the city: his conducting state business as though it were his personal affairs, for example, or initiating private negotiations with Athens's enemies.[40] But more than his politics, it was his life-style that aroused animosity and opened him to charges of tyranny. His extravagance, effeminacy, sexual voracity, and foreign affiliations all chime with the Athenian imagination of the tyrant: self-indulgent and sybaritic, emptying state coffers to pay for his pleasures, making the polis an instrument of his own insatiable enjoyment.[41]

Paranomia in and of itself was a cause for concern. "The majority feared the magnitude of his *paranomia* in regard to his own person in his daily life and the state of mind in which he performed every single action he undertook; as a result they turned against him, thinking that he desired tyranny" (φοβηθέντες γὰρ αὐτοῦ οἱ πολλοὶ τὸ μέγεθος τῆς τε κατὰ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα παρανομίας ἐς τὴν δίαιταν καὶ τῆς διανοίας ὧν καθ' ἕν ἕκαστον ἐν ὅτῳ γίγνοιτο ἔπρασσεν, ὡς τυραννίδος ἐπιθυμοῦντι πολέμιοι καθέστασαν, Thuc. 6.15.4).[42] Alcibiades' personal *paranomia* itself seems to indicate tyranny, to be nondemocratic (*ou dēmotikēn paranomian*,

[39] Cf. Forde 1989.114, who argues that Alcibiades' political ambition was so pure, it was almost apolitical (cf. 198–99); contra, Pusey 1940; Hatzfeld 1951.135, 355–56. Such indifference to constitutional forms in itself opened him to the charge of tyranny, for only a tyrant is above politics.

[40] Thuc. 6.89.2; Plut. *Alc.* 14.2–3, 15.5. On Alcibiades' tyrannical leanings, see further Thuc. 6.15.4, 6.28.2; Isoc. 16.38; Pl. *Alc.* 105c; Ps.-And. 4.16, 23–24, 27–28; Plut. *Alc.* 16.2, 16.7; Seager 1967; Palmer 1982.121–24; Forde 1989.92–94, 184–87; Gribble 1999.140–41; Munn 2000.112–14. Cf. Lib. *Decl.* 12.51, addressing Alcibiades: τυραννίδος ἐραστὴς τυγχάνεις.

[41] On luxury, effeminacy, and tyranny, see Schmitt-Pantel 1979; Bushnell 1990.20–25; Kurke 1992; Griffith 1995.84–85. I return to this in chapter 5.

[42] Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 16.2: Alcibiades' prominent rivals fear "his contempt and *paranomia* as tyrannical and alien" (τὴν ὀλιγωρίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ παρανομίαν ὡς τυραννικὰ καὶ ἀλλόκοτα). On Thuc. 6.15.4, see Forde 1989.76–77; Peremens 1956. Paranomic desires characterize the tyrant in Plato's *Republic* (571b5).

6.28.2). If being an Athenian means conforming to certain norms of sexual and political behavior, then disregard for those norms signals not only bad masculinity but also a skewed relation to democracy. *Paranomia* is by nature *ou dēmotikē*, for only the tyrant lives beyond custom or law.

Alcibiades' *paranomia*, moreover, often took the form of *hubris*, contemptuous acts of violence against other citizens.[43] Pseudo-Andocides in the speech *Against Alcibiades* recounts with a certain relish the specifics of his innumerable crimes.[44] The oration opens with mock aporia: where to begin amid such a throng of adulteries and rapes and other acts of violence and *paranomia* (Ps.-And. 4.10)? The author manages to find a foothold and goes on to detail quite a number of prejudicial anecdotes. Alcibiades struck a rival choregos and then bribed the judges (Ps.-And. 4.20; Plut. *Alc.* 16.5; Dem. 21.147), imprisoned a famous painter in his house and forced him to paint it (Ps.-And. 4.17; Plut. *Alc.* 16.5; Dem. 21.147), won his Olympic victories in a chariot stolen from a fellow Athenian (Ps.-And. 4.25–27; Plut. *Alc.* 12.2–3), plotted the murder of his wealthy brother-in-law (Ps.-And. 4.15; Plut. *Alc.* 8.2–3).[45] What won't he do, Pseudo-Andocides asks in conclusion, "having shown the Greeks that they should not be surprised if he attacks one of them, because he does not treat his fellow citizens as equals, but robs from some, strikes others, imprisons some, and extorts money from others. He shows that democracy is worthless, practicing the words of a demagogue but the deeds of a tyrant" (Ps.-And. 4.27).

Not only is *hubris* in itself associated with tyrants, but Alcibiades' *hubrismata*, like those of the legendary tyrants, often took a particularly sexual cast.[46] We hear from Plutarch and Pseudo-Andocides about his

[43] Xenophon calls him "the most uncontrolled and violent man in the democracy" (τῶν ἐν τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ πάντων ἀκρατέστατός τε καὶ ὑβριστότατος, Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.12). On Alcibiades' *hubris*, see Fisher 1992.87–88, 97–98, 148–49.

[44] See also Dem. 21.143–51; Lys. 14.30, 37, 41. *Against Alcibiades* is almost certainly not by Andocides, but it is probably classical (fourth or even fifth century): Raubitschek 1948; Burn 1954; Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.287; Edwards 1995.131–36; Gribble 1997, 1999.154–58. Furley 1989 argues that it was composed in 415; Gribble (1997.386–89, 1999.34) places it in the late fourth century. Constructed as a debate over who should be ostracized in 415, Alcibiades, Nicias, or the speaker, the speech is widely considered to be a rhetorical exercise.

[45] Plutarch recounts all of the same crimes and also adds to the list: he struck a teacher (7.1), slew one of his attendants in a palaistra (3.1), struck his future father-in-law Hipponikos just for a laugh (ἐπὶ γέλωτι, 8.2). On the relation between Plutarch and Pseudo-Andocides, see Burn 1954; Gribble 1997.389–91. There is also a story told in the testimonia to Eupolis that Alcibiades, angered by the comic poet's portrayals of him, threw him into the ocean and killed him: see the testimonia to Eupolis's *Baptai* in *PCG*; Vickers 1997.xvii–iii.

[46] On tyranny and *hubris*, see, e.g., Soph. *OT* 873; Fisher 1992.27–31, 128–29, 328–42, 361–67; McGlew 1993.52–86. Aristotle (*Pol.* 1310a40–1313a17) makes sexual *hubris* a defining feature of tyranny.

disgraceful treatment of his many erastai and about the countless women, slave and free, he had debauched; when his long-suffering wife tried to sue for divorce, he abducted her from the archon's office and carried her through the streets.[47] He was even rumored to have had sex with his mother, sister, and daughter—a sexual proclivity often associated with tyrants.[48] Pseudo-Andocides is particularly outraged at his taking a Melian woman as a mistress and having a child by her after he had been responsible for the destruction of her island and the murder of all its male citizens (Ps.-And. 4.22–23; cf. Plut. *Alc.* 16.5). He begot a child whose mother he had enslaved, whose relatives he had killed and city he had destroyed, a child whose birth was more unnatural (*paranomōterōs*) than that of Aegisthus (Ps.-And. 4.22). The analogy is rather forced (Aegisthus was the product of incest), but it suits the author's bilious purpose, painting Alcibiades—vaguely but vividly—as a mythic tyrant, capable of any imaginable sexual horror, be it rape, incest, or even worse. "When you watch such things in tragedies you're horrified," he chides the Athenians, "but when you see them happening in the city, you think nothing of them" (Ps.-And. 4.23). His Alcibiades is a stage tyrant, a monster of illegality, insolent violence, and sexual aberration.

While for this author (probably writing after his death) Alcibiades is a figure from myth or tragedy, for his contemporaries his tyrannical aspirations had a more concrete political valence. David Gribble (1999) has argued in depth that Alcibiades' biography was essentially a story of the relation between the superlative individual and the democratic city and that the ambivalence the Athenians felt toward him reflected their general unease toward their "great men."[49] *Philotimia*, the thirst for honor that leads aristocrats to use their wealth for the good of the city, was a passion

[47] Plut. *Alc.* 8.4–5; Ps.-And. 4.14. Pseudo-Andocides considers this treatment of his loyal wife the most egregious *hubris*, but Plutarch excuses Alcibiades' behavior, speculating that the divorce law was designed for this purpose (*Alc.* 8.6; cf. Russell 1995.198–200). On Alcibiades' *hubris* toward his erastai, see Plut. *Alc.* 4.4–5, and on his sexual *hubris* more generally, Plut. *Alc.* 8.4; Littman 1970.

[48] Antisth. fr. 29 Caizzi (= Ath. 5.220c); Lys. *Pros Alcibiaden peri Oikias* (fr. 5 Thalheim); Lys. 14.28, 41. See also Pl. *Alc. II.* 138b, 143d, where Alcibiades is compared with Oedipus. Alcibiades was also rumored to have had an erotic relation with his uncle, who was also his fellow debaucher. He shared a hetaira with this same uncle and, when a daughter was born from the peculiar union, shared the daughter, too, each claiming the other was the father when he was with her (Lys. fr. 5 Thalheim = Ath. 12.535a); cf. Gribble 1999.76 n.207.

[49] Gribble 1999.29: "The key to understanding the presentation of Alcibiades lies in civic discourses about the relationship between individual and city, discourses which portrayed him as the sort of figure who could not be incorporated in the city, as 'outside' the city." Thus for Gribble, too, "the problem of Alcibiades" is a problem of the city's relation to what it perceives as exceeding its boundaries, although he conceives of those boundaries in purely political and sociological terms.

with Alcibiades and drove him to extravagances that evoked tyranny: horse breeding, lavish houses, Olympic victories.[50] In his speech in support of the Sicilian Expedition, he unabashedly argues for the public benefit derived from his quest for personal honor (Thuc. 6.16).[51] His exorbitant Olympic victory, he argues, brought glory to Athens as well as to himself and his family (Thuc. 6.16.1).[52] His opponent Nicias has a different interpretation: Alcibiades wants to glorify himself and raise money for his costly pleasures at the public expense, to "show off his personal brilliance to the detriment of the city," and to reap private benefit from disastrous public policies (Thuc. 6.12.2).[53]

Managing the hazy line between socially beneficial *philotimia* and personally aggrandizing *megaloprepeia* was a tricky business at the best of times. Alcibiades was imagined to live his life on this line, and on which side of it he falls at any given moment depends on whom you ask: Plutarch says that *philotimia* was a euphemism with which the Athenians excused Alcibiades' serious misdemeanors (*Alc*. 16.4). Meanwhile, many of the actions Plutarch attributes to *philotimia* Pseudo-Andocides sees as a profound insult to democracy.[54] And while his extravagant and hubristic life marked him as potentially tyrannical in the eyes of the people, no less disturbing to his elite rivals was his influence with the demos: why would a man of his status court the masses unless he were aiming at a populist tyranny?[55]

[50] Thuc. 6.12.2, 6.15.3; Isoc. 16.32–34; Xen. *Mem*. 1.2.12–14; Plut. *Alc*. 16.4. On Alcibiades' *philotimia*, see also P. Wilson 2000.152. *Philotimia* is one of the organizing principles of Plutarch's biography, a unifying thread in a life of constant change.

[51] On this speech and its negotiation of *megaloprepeia*, see Macleod 1975; Kohl 1977.83–108; Forde 1989.78–95; Yunis 1996.105–7; Ober 1998.110–11. Kurke 1991.171–77 points out how closely it skirts tyranny.

[52] He personally entered seven chariot teams (something never done before by king or private citizen, Plut. *Alc*. 11.1; cf. Thuc. 6.16.2) and won three of the top four prizes; although he competed as an individual, his personal tent was bigger than the state tent (Ps.-And. 4.30), and his success, Plutarch says, "outstripped in splendor and renown all the love of glory possible in these affairs" (*Alc*. 11.2). Further, his victory was underwritten by all the cities of Greece: the Ephesians equipped his tent, the Chians gave him animals, the Lesbians provided wine (Plut. *Alc*. 12.1). Athenaeus puts it bluntly: Alcibiades used the allied cities as though they were his slave girls (Ath. 12.534d).

[53] Thucydides implicitly endorses this evaluation when he offers only personal motives for Alcibiades' enthusiasm for the Sicilian Expedition: enmity for Nicias, desire for military command and glory, and the expectation of personal profit, both in wealth and reputation (6.15.2). Cf. Ar. *Frogs* 1429: Alcibiades is "resourceful for himself, but at a loss when it comes to the city." On Alcibiades' confusion of public interest and private, see Gribble 1999.55–89, 135–36; Balot 2001.166–68.

[54] Compare, for example, their two versions of the anecdote about Alcibiades' kidnapping of Agatharchus, Plut. *Alc*. 16.5; Ps.-And. 4.17.

[55] Thuc. 6.29.3; Isoc. 16.38. On this strategy for tyranny, see Arist. *Pol*. 1310b15–17; Andrewes 1956.100–115.

For the demos and elite alike, then, Alcibiades' *paranomia* seemed to point toward tyranny and it was for this that he was exiled. Alcibiades' name was linked to the affair of the Mysteries and the Herms in 415.[56] His enemies exploited this opportunity: at their instigation he was recalled from the war front; however, he fled rather than face a trial before the demos and was condemned in absentia (Thuc. 6.61). Whether or not he was actually involved in these crimes, his life-style made the association seem plausible, even irrefutable. A man who collapsed the public interest and the private, who used public utensils at his own table (Ps.-And. 4.29; Plut. *Alc.* 13.3) and made private treaties with Athens's enemies (Thuc. 5.43, 45; Plut. *Alc.* 14), who made a mockery of every canon of Athenian propriety—such a figure might well be thought to parody the Mysteries in his own home: this gesture occupies the same confused space between public and private, legality and transgression as Alcibiades' imagined behavior.[57] Likewise, a man whose constant *hubris* smacked of tyranny might justly be linked with the mutilation of the Herms: this act of public vandalism was taken by some as part of "a conspiracy plotting revolution and the overthrow of the democracy" (Thuc. 6.27.3), an "oligarchic or tyrannical conspiracy" (6.60.1). Others saw it as the drunken prank of youths coming from a symposium (Thuc. 6.28.1; Plut. *Alc.* 18.8, 19.1; And. 1.61): private pleasure-making results in public violence—another perfectly Alcibiadean trope.

[56] The connection between Alcibiades and the mutilation was forged in the Athenian imagination. The mutilation was seen as part of an antidemocratic conspiracy; in the search for the conspirators, it was discovered that certain individuals had also parodied the Mysteries, among whom Alcibiades was named (Thuc. 6.28.1). His enemies seized on this chance to get rid of him, and thus charged him with the mutilation as well, "offering as proof his otherwise undemocratic lawlessness in his daily life" (6.28.2). The demos, desperate for answers and already fearful of Alcibiades' *paranomia* and what it perceived as his desire for tyranny (6.15.3–4), was willing to credit his involvement in the affair. Although Thucydides is careful to distinguish the Mysteries (in which he thinks Alcibiades was involved, 6.61.1) and the Herms (in which case he reserves judgment as to Alcibiades' involvement), he suggests that the thinking of the demos—encouraged, of course, by Alcibiades' enemies—was not so clear. Thus some twenty years later Lysias can present the whole family as profaners of Mysteries and mutilators of Herms (14.41–42). On Alcibiades' implication in these two blasphemous acts, see And. 1.11–16 and MacDowell 1962 ad loc.; Isoc. 16.6–7; Lys. 14.41–42; Dem. 21.147; Plut. *Alc.* 19.1, 20.3, 22.3–4; Hatzfeld 1951.158–205; MacDowell 1962.192–93; McGregor 1965.34–36; Westlake 1968.221–22; Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.264–88; Marr 1971.328; Bloedow 1973.15–17; Palmer 1982.112–15; Rhodes 1985.11; Nussbaum 1986.171 n.17; Ellis 1989.58–62; de Romilly 1995.101–23; Gribble 1999.81–82; Munn 2000.95–126.

[57] Cf. And. 1.36; Plut. *Alc.* 20.4–5. McGlew 1999.2: "Both actions [the mutilation and the parody of the Mysteries] seem to cross—indeed, they seem designed to confound—distinctions between private and public that allowed the democracy to believe that its citizens could function as political equals despite the obvious economic and domestic disparities that divided them." Cf. Munn 2000.106–11.

But while his enemies cast Alcibiades as ringleader of an "oligarchic or tyrannical conspiracy" against the polis, others could cast him not as the tyrant but as the tyrannicide. In his speech before the Spartans after his exile from Athens, Alcibiades claims to come from a long line of tyrant haters and to be a democrat only inasmuch as "everything opposed to single rule is called 'demos' " (Thuc. 6.89.4). He is less prodemocratic, as he represents it, than antityrannical. Much later, the Athenian army at Samos elected him general and urged him to lead them to put down the tyranny of the Four Hundred (Plut. *Alc.* 26.3). Instead, he prevented them from marching on Athens and so saved the city (Thuc. 8.86.4; Dem. 21.145; Plut. *Alc.* 26.4), thus playing the tyrant-slayer to two tyrants (the tyrannical Four Hundred and the *turannos dēmos*) in a single episode. Thucydides further suggests that the popular analogy of Alcibiades to a tyrant was faulty and the cause of great suffering for Athens: fearing his tyrannical *paranomia*, the demos removed him from command, and so within a short while brought about the city's downfall (6.15.3–4). Was Alcibiades a tyrant, justly slain by the vigilant demos? Or was he, rather, one of those "useful" elite (*khrēstoi*) whom Thucydides says were unfairly condemned in the affair of the Mysteries and Herms (6.53.2)?

A democratic tyrant, an effeminate womanizer, a chameleon who played the role of Athenian as well as that of Spartan or Persian: all the paradoxical elements of Alcibiades' life come together in the fantastic story of his death. Plutarch narrates the scene (*Alc.* 39), which takes place in a village in Phrygia where Alcibiades was living with his hetaira Timandra. One night he dreamed that he was wearing his mistress' clothes and that she was making up his face; others say his dream was that his head was being cut off and his body burned. Soon after, his enemies attacked, burned down his house, and killed him. His dream came true when Timandra wrapped his body in her own clothes and buried him lavishly (*lamprōs kai philotimōs*).[58] This version of his death is a parodic replay of his life: the extravagance, effeminacy, luxury, and foreignness that had characterized him become in the end obscene and pathetic. Alcibiades lived his life along the boundaries of Athenian masculinity; in death he crosses those boundaries, becoming a foreigner and a woman. But Plutarch also gives an alternate account, in which it is not his Persian or Spartan enemies who kill him but the brothers of a noble girl he had debauched. It is typical of Alcibiades that politics and sexuality cannot be segregated even in his death: he dies first as a general, then as a libertine. In this latter version, Alcibiades becomes the tyrant, assassinated in revenge

[58] Even the hetaira's name, Timandra, speaks to Alcibiades' problems with *timē* and *andreia*. Nussbaum 1986.177 draws a further parallel between Timandra and the *Symposium*'s Diotima. On Alcibiades' death, see Perrin 1906; Littman 1970.269; Gribble 1999.281–82.

for a lawless act of sexual *hubris*. And if in this story he is a tyrant, in the other version he himself takes the place of the Herms he was accused of mutilating: he dreams of his own beheading.

In his death, as in his life, Alcibiades combines every sort of *paranomia*. He is imagined to transgress all the limits—sexual and gender, national, social, and political—that define Athenian citizenship. His behavior breaks all the "rules" of sexuality: the distinction between erastes and eromenos, the stigma against male passivity, the essential divide between masculine and feminine. Likewise, his political behavior blurs the line between democratic ambition and tyrannical aspirations. What are we to make of these multiple perversions?

The problem of Alcibiades' *paranomia* is not simple: one cannot understand him simply by dividing him down the middle, although this is often what the ancient biographical tradition tries to do, either defending his aristocratic splendor, political ambition, and bon-vivant high spirits, or reviling his sybaritic extravagance and tyrannical violence.[59] This bifurcation of Alcibiades' character in the speeches for and against him reflects the ambivalence of his contemporaries: when Timon the misanthrope said to Alcibiades, "You do well to grow, child, for you will grow to be a great pain to all the Athenians," some who heard laughed, others cursed, and some took it very much to heart (Plut. *Alc.* 16.9). Even Thucydides seems unable to resolve his contradictions. He presents Alcibiades now as the cause of Athens's downfall—the paradigm of the self-interested post-Periclean demagogue (2.65.10, 6.15.3)—now as Athens's would-be savior, if only the demos had let him lead (2.65.12, 6.15.4). Plutarch, too, is undecided and blames his uncertainty on Alcibiades himself: "Public opinion was so divided about Alcibiades because of the inconsistency of his own nature" (οὕτως ἄκριτος ἦν ἡ δόξα περὶ αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν τῆς φύσεως ἀνωμαλίαν, *Alc.* 16.9).[60] But although Alcibiades' behavior often provokes a split reaction—either praise or blame, condemnation or exculpation—this logic of either-or is in the end precisely what his biography resists. The problem with Alcibiades is that he is not tyrant *or* democrat, not active *or* passive, not Athenian *or* foreign, but both, and all, simulta-

[59] Gribble (1999) documents the ambivalence throughout the ancient discourse on Alcibiades: in the rhetorical tradition (117–43), in Thucydides (175–93), and in Plutarch (263–82).

[60] Compare Nepos *Alc.* 1.1, 4: "It is agreed by all who wrote his history that no one surpassed Alcibiades either in faults or in virtues . . . so that all marvelled that so inconsistent and diverse a nature existed in a single man" (*Constat enim inter omnes, qui de eo memoriae prodiderunt, nihil illo fuisse excellentius vel in vitiis vel in virtutibus . . . ut omnes admirarentur in uno homine tantam esse dissimilitudinem tamque diversam naturam*). Cf. Plut. *Nic.* 9.1: Alcibiades was a mixture of good and evil, like the Egyptian soil that produces both good and deadly drugs.

neously. It is this promiscuity—this logic of "both-and . . . and"—that defines his *paranomia* and leaves his biographers so baffled.

The spatial metaphor implicit in Alcibiades' *paranomia* can thus be reconfigured. It is not that he himself is beyond the law (after all, he can escape prosecution only by fleeing Athens); it is rather that he brings that beyond within and settles it uneasily alongside (*para*) the normative. He brings what should be marginal to the center of Athenian political life—no wonder that this ward of Pericles was also associated with Socrates and Timon, marginal figures who haunted the Agora as Athens's internal outsiders—and in this way sullies the center. In the process, he not only exposes the exclusionary logic that grounds the democratic subject but combines the legitimate and the illegitimate within his own person in a way that makes them impossible to disentangle. When the demos elects him general and grants him political power, for example, is it responding to his masterful oratory and civic munificence or his purple robes and seductive lisp? In his promiscuous mingling of categories, he neither fully obeys the norms of Athenian citizenship nor overthrows them. Instead, he exists to one side of them (*para*), referring to them, challenging them, and displacing them.

Dēmerastia

If Alcibiades contains within him the exclusions that ground the Athenian subject, then his banishment could be seen as a reiteration of that grounding repudiation. With his exile Athens would seem to have resecured its boundaries against illegitimacy, to have expelled the *paranomia* that he had embodied. But only ten years later, the demos wanted Alcibiades back and looked to him for salvation. The repressed returns, and returns not against the people's will, but precisely in compliance with their desire. What is the nature of this desire, and what are its implications for the democracy?

Dionysus in Aristophanes' *Frogs* voices the ambivalence the Athenians felt toward Alcibiades in 405. They "long for him and hate him and want to possess him" (*pothei men, ekhthairei de, bouletai d'ekhein*, *Frogs* 1425). They long for him: when he is absent from Athens, he seems like the city's only hope, but the verb comes from the realm of erotic lyric more than that of political deliberation. *Pothos* is the yearning desire for what is absent, for an elusive and perhaps unattainable object.[61] A scholiast tells us that this Aristophanic line parodies one from Ion's *Guards*, where it probably refers to Menelaus's feelings for Helen. Like Menelaus

[61] See, e.g., Pl. *Crat.* 420a and Ehrenberg 1947.66 for other references. Carson 1986 suggests that lack and distance are the essence of Greek desire and thus eros is, quintessentially, *pothos*.

"longing for Helen, across the sea" (πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας, Aes. *Ag.* 414), the Athenians yearn for Alcibiades.

They hate him: this hatred is the sharp edge of the blunt mass of jealousy and fear his *paranomia* inspired and that drove him into exile in the first place. But how do longing and hatred fit together? Are they coordinated around Alcibiades' absence or presence: he is here and hated, gone and desired? *Men . . . de* in Greek balances equal things, but its sense can be additive or adversative. They love him *and* they hate him; they love him *but* they hate him. Perhaps the additive is necessarily adversative with such contradictory sentiments. But does hatred really balance love? If, as Anne Carson has speculated, the ancient concept of eros encompassed the convergence of love and hate,[62] then *pothei men, ekhthairei de* is not so much a juxtaposition of opposites as the hendiadic expression of an always paradoxical desire.

A third term tips the balance: they want to possess him. *Bouletai d'ekhein* is desiderative without being erotic, a more reasoned emotion perhaps than the demos's longing hatred for Alcibiades.[63] But this wish reiterates and reinforces the demos's *pothos*. *Bouletai d'ekhein* reopens the pair love-hate and unbalances it, as if that ambivalent pair in itself generated this supplementary desire for possession, as if the Athenians' love-hate makes them want, despite all and above all, to "hold" him (*ekhein*). The logic of Alcibiades' *paranomia* is reiterated in the eros he arouses: not the closed set "either-or" but the endlessly open "both-and . . . and" (*men . . . de . . . de*).

Why are love and hate so hard to disentangle around Alcibiades? Plutarch tries to rationalize the demos's confused feelings by forcing love and hate apart, restoring the opposition "either-or." "His public donations, the choruses he sponsored, his extravagantly ambitious benevolence toward the city, the glory of his ancestors, the power of his oratory, his physical beauty and strength—all this, along with his experience and courage in warfare, made the Athenians forgive him everything and treat it all leniently; they always gave the gentlest of names to his crimes, attributing them to youth and ambition" (Plut. *Alc.* 16.4). He explains the Athenians' ambivalence by splitting its object: on one side is the lawless and tyrannical behavior that the Athenians hate; on the other, the undeniable advantages that they love. But this distinction collapses. It soon comes to seem that the demos loves Alcibiades not in spite of those *hubrismata* so feared by his rivals but precisely because of them. In Plu-

[62] Carson 1986.9: "Whether apprehended as a dilemma of sensation, action or value, eros prints as the same contradictory fact: love and hate converge within erotic desire." Cf. 75.

[63] Hyland 1968.39; cf. Cummins 1981.

tarch's very next anecdote, when Alcibiades has himself painted held in Nemea's arms, the prominent citizens are scandalized by this tyrannical lawlessness (*turannikois kai paranomois*), but the people are delighted (*khairontes*) and run to see the notorious painting (*Alc.* 16.5). Alcibiades' wantonness, effeminacy, and extravagance (with which Plutarch begins this section) do nothing to diminish their love and seem rather to inflame it. The demos seems to adore Alcibiades for the very *paranomia* that makes it detest—and ultimately exile—him. As in Aristophanes' taut formulation, love and hate do not cancel each other out but combine to produce more desire.[64]

Pseudo-Andocides, for one, simply cannot fathom the demos's love. His querulous perplexity goes to the heart of the paradox. What the orator cannot understand—and upbraids the Athenians bitterly for—is that they seem to love what they claim to hate. Alcibiades has committed every sort of crime, public or private (all of which Pseudo-Andocides documents at length), and yet he acts like the people's champion and calls others oligarchs and enemies of the demos. "And one whom you should have sentenced to death for his life-style instead you elect as prosecutor. He claims he is a guardian of the state, although he does not deign to consider himself only slightly superior—much less equal—to any other Athenian" (4.16). If anyone else did what he has done, Pseudo-Andocides continues, he would certainly be punished, but Alcibiades not only gets away with such crimes, he is rewarded for them. Outraged by this, Pseudo-Andocides blames the jury, accusing it of condoning such illegality: "You are to blame, since you do not punish those who commit *hubris* and, while you chastise those who do wrong in secret, you admire men who behave outrageously in broad daylight" (Αἴτιοι δ' ὑμεῖς, οὐ τιμωρούμενοι τοὺς ὑβρίζοντας, καὶ τοὺς μὲν λάθρᾳ ἀδικοῦντας κολάζοντες, τοὺς δὲ φανερῶς ἀσελγαίνοντας θαυμάζοντες, 4.21).

To be sure, Pseudo-Andocides is taking a time-honored rhetorical stance with this outrage. But his complaint arises from the same paradox that Aristophanes and Plutarch identify: Alcibiades represents everything the Athenians hate, and yet they still love him. Plutarch rationalizes this paradox (they really love him for the right reasons); Pseudo-Andocides presents it as a sort of false consciousness on the part of a jury that has not yet realized the threat Alcibiades poses. But instead of explaining away this perverse and paradoxical desire, perhaps we should let the para-

[64] Cf. Plutarch's comparison of Alcibiades and Coriolanus (*Sunkrisis* 3.6): "Even when they suffered harm because of Alcibiades, the citizens could not hate him." Plutarch seeks to explain the Athenians' ambivalence also by splitting its subject: the demos loved him; the elite loathed him. See Gribble 1999.277–82. Likewise, Xenophon (*Hell.* 1.4.13–17) divides the demos into those who love Alcibiades and think he was unjustly exiled and those who hate him and blame him for all the city's woes; cf. Canfora 1982.

dox stand and allow it to complicate our understanding of the eros that subtends democratic politics and of the relation, not always complementary, between the political conscious and the political unconscious. In the unconscious, of course, such paradoxes are standard fare: to "love and hate and want to possess" is perfectly comprehensible within its condensed syntax. In the demos's ambivalent love we see the eruption of an unconscious fantasy that runs beneath the surface of political life and that can, when it emerges, trouble that surface in unanticipated ways.

What does it mean for the demos to be in love with Alcibiades? In its desire to possess him (*bouletai d'ekhein*), the demos seems to be figured as lover to this eternal beloved. Tradition gives one of Alcibiades' first lovers the name Democrates (Antiphon fr. 66 Thalheim; Plut. *Alc*. 3.1), as if the democracy itself were Alcibiades' erastes. This imagination is played out in Alcibiades' first appearance on the political scene. Plutarch says that when he made his first contribution to the public revenue, the crowd was so enthusiastic—"shouting and clapping with pleasure"—that Alcibiades forgot about a quail he was carrying under his cloak and the bird flew away; members of the crowd hunted down the bird and returned it to him (Plut. *Alc*. 10.1). Jacqueline de Romilly connects this quail to the birds commonly given by erastai as gifts to their eromenoi.[65] In this anecdote, the entire Athenian assembly acts like an erastes to Alcibiades, chasing a quail to give to him.

Perhaps we might imagine this courtship as the enactment of Pericles' notion of the citizens as noble lovers: falling in love with and "possessing" this illustrious boy, the demos becomes the elite erastes Pericles had urged it to be. No longer the passive beloved of its demagogues (as Aristophanes figures it, to its degradation, in *Knights*), the demos is now the active lover, courting and possessing its aristocratic leaders. But not only is this arguably a perverse investment in itself—for why should a democracy fall in love with a scion of the aristocracy?—but it does not work out: its love does not put the demos in command. It can long for Alcibiades, but it cannot hold him.

Given their ambivalence toward Alcibiades, says Dionysus in *Frogs*, what are the Athenians to do about him? The character Aeschylus offers this enigmatic advice: "Do not raise a lion cub in the city. But if you do raise him, serve his every mood" (Οὐ χρὴ λέοντος σκύμνον ἐν πόλει τρέφειν. ἢν δ' ἐκτραφῇ τις, τοῖς τρόποις ὑπηρετεῖν, Ar. *Frogs* 1431–32). Aristophanes' allusion to the lion cub metaphor of Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* speaks to the seductive charm, effeminate luxury, and aristocratic

[65] De Romilly 1995.45–46; see, e.g., Ar. *Birds* 707.

hubris that characterize Alcibiades.[66] In *Agamemnon* the metaphor's immediate referent is Helen, who charms Menelaus with her seemingly innocent beauty but secretly harbors within herself the seeds of his destruction. In Alcibiades, too, bright-eyed charisma is inseparable from violence, and the people know this. They have been warned ("Do not raise a lion cub in the city"), but foster him anyway. This prohibition is no more proof against desire than hatred is against longing, and is followed immediately by Aeschylus's acknowledgment of its futility ("Do not . . . but if you do").[67] Alcibiades is a lion cub the Athenians want to raise (*pothei men*); he is also a lion they will raise to their own detriment (*ekhthairei de*); they know this, but still want to raise him (*bouletai d'ekhein*).

To raise Alcibiades is to serve him (*hupēretein*); to love him is to become his slave.[68] The force of desire encapsulated in these two compressed lines is illuminated by contrast with another lion simile. In Plato's *Gorgias*, Callicles, a self-proclaimed lover of the demos, figures himself as a lion cub, coddled by an unsuspecting demos.

> πλάττοντες τοὺς βελτίστους καὶ ἐρρωμενεστάτους ἡμῶν αὐτῶν, ἐκ νέων λαμβάνοντες, ὥσπερ λέοντας, κατεπᾴδοντές τε καὶ γοητεύοντες καταδουλούμεθα λέγοντες ὡς τὸ ἴσον χρὴ ἔχειν καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ δίκαιον. ἐὰν δέ γε οἶμαι φύσιν ἱκανὴν γένηται ἔχων ἀνήρ, πάντα ταῦτα ἀποσεισάμενος καὶ διαρρήξας καὶ διαφυγών, καταπατήσας τὰ ἡμέτερα γράμματα καὶ μαγγανεύματα καὶ ἐπῳδὰς καὶ νόμους τοὺς παρὰ φύσιν ἅπαντας, ἐπαναστὰς ἀνεφάνη δεσπότης ἡμέτερος ὁ δοῦλος, καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἐξέλαμψεν τὸ τῆς φύσεως δίκαιον.

> We Athenians mold the best and most vigorous among us, taking them when they are young, like lions. We charm them and enslave them with magic, telling them how equality is necessary and a good and just thing. But if there is a man of sufficient character, who will shake off all these things and break forth and escape, trampling on all our spells and charms and all the laws that we set up against nature, I believe that this man will stand up and show

[66] On this extended simile (Aes. *Ag.* 717–36), see B.M.W. Knox 1952. P. W. Rose (1992.199–202) sees the lion cub as a symbol of the aristocratic class, with its tendency toward tyranny. The lion was also the insignia of the Alcmaeonid clan, of which Alcibiades was a member through his mother's line.

[67] The sense of resignation is all the more marked if we accept Erbse's (1956) solution to the textual problem at 1431–32, where the manuscripts offer two different variants of the line. He suggests that both are original and that the first (οὐ χρὴ λέοντος σκύμνον ἐν πόλει τρέφειν) should be given to Euripides. In this reading, in answer to Euripides' warning not to raise a lion cub in the city, Aeschylus responds, "certainly, one mustn't raise a lion cub. But if one does . . . ."

[68] Moorton 1988.353–54 argues for a strong translation of *hupēretein* here: it implies "unswerving, perhaps abject obedience" (354).

> himself to be our master, not our slave, and from this point on, the natural state of affairs will shine forth in all its justice. (483e4–484b1)[69]

The people think they have tamed this lion, but really he is just waiting to break free, to show his true lion nature and become master over his former masters. In Callicles' formulation, the people raise this demagogic lion cub because they (mistakenly) believe they can domesticate him; they love him because they (misguidedly) think they are his masters. But Aristophanes' demos knows full well that Alcibiades is a lion—and still it wants him. It is not a question of the demos's ignorance or delusion (as in Plato) but of its desire, a desire that seems to run athwart its political interest. It is not simply that, as Marx said of false consciousness, "they do not know it, but they are doing it." Aeschylus's warning ("do not raise a lion cub") informs the Athenians of the danger of their desire but also acknowledges ("but if you do") that one cannot cure that desire merely by superadding knowledge.

If to be Alcibiades' erastes is to serve him, what happens when the demos becomes his eromenos, a position already potentially compromising (as we saw with Cleon) and all the more so when the lover is the violent, insatiable Alcibiades? Plato speaks to this question. In the *First Alcibiades*, Socrates says he will remain Alcibiades' lover only so long as he is not spoiled by the demos.

> τοῦτο γὰρ δὴ μάλιστα ἐγὼ φοβοῦμαι, μὴ δημεραστὴς ἡμῖν γενόμενος διαφθαρῇς· πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη καὶ ἀγαθοὶ αὐτὸ πεπόνθασιν ᾿Αθηναίων. εὐπρόσωπος γὰρ 'ὁ τοῦ μεγαλήτορος δῆμος ᾿Ερεχθέως' ἀλλ' ἀποδύντα χρὴ αὐτὸν θεάσασθαι.

> I fear most of all that you will be corrupted by becoming a lover of the demos [*dēmerastēs*]. This has already happened to many good Athenians. For the "demos of great-hearted Erechtheus" has a fair face, but you must look upon it naked. (132a2–6)[70]

In this passage, the demos plays the role of eromenos. Moreover, it seems to become the same sort of eromenos as Alcibiades himself, seducing its lover with a fine lineage and pretty face, its beauty a false front (*eupros-*

[69] On this passage, see Dodds 1959 ad loc.; Ober 1998.200–206; Newell 2000.12–17. Callicles' fond dream of the demagogue's liberation will be dispelled by Socrates who, in his own act of lion taming, proves that the demagogue is not the people's future master but their present and future slave.

[70] The embedded quotation is an adaptation of Homer *Iliad* 2.547. Athenaeus quotes this passage and explains "for the demos will be seen to be wrapped in the much-admired esteem of a beauty that is not true" (Ath. 11.506d). The authenticity of this dialogue is doubted (Croiset 1920.49–50; de Strycker 1942; Hatzfeld 1951.44; Bluck 1953; Clark 1955; Gribble 1999.260–62); the *Second Alcibiades* attributed to Plato is generally considered spurious (A. E. Taylor 1937 [1926].526–29; cf. Ath. 11.506e).

ōpos can mean specious as well as pretty) concealing its true ("naked") character. Alcibiades meanwhile takes the position of erastes and more specifically *dēmerastēs*.[71]

As Plato represents it, though, it is not the eromenos who stands to be corrupted but the erastes. In pederastic discourse, the verb *diaphtheirein* (to ruin or corrupt) generally refers to the potential threat a bad erastes poses to the reputation and morals of his vulnerable eromenos. In Xenophon's *Symposium*, for example, a father fears that his son will be corrupted by a lover trying to sleep next to him (4.54). Similarly, Plutarch contrasts Socrates' love for Alcibiades with the love of those who chased after "unmanly pleasures" (*Alc.* 4.3); unlike the latter, Socrates did not allow Alcibiades "like a plant in flower to drop its native fruit and become rotten" (*diaphtheiron*, *Alc.* 4.1). We may think, too, of the "corruption of the youth" for which Socrates was condemned, a charge that centered around Alcibiades and others like him. But here the demos is not in jeopardy, but its lover, Alcibiades—or, to put it differently, Alcibiades risks being corrupted not by the teachings of his erastes, Socrates, but by the guileful seduction of his eromenos, the demos. He is put in the same position as Socrates himself, who in Plato's *Symposium* must resist the advances of his fair-faced beloved—Alcibiades—and see through his superficial beauty to his naked soul.

Socrates may fear the effect of this *dēmerastia* on Alcibiades, but what of his beloved, the demos? What happens to it with Alcibiades as its lover? Plutarch spells out the disastrous implications for the Athenians in his narration of Alcibiades' triumphant return from exile (*Alc.* 32).[72] Alcibiades longs to see his country again, and so, never one to shrink from public attention, he stages an elaborate spectacle of his return. He sails into the Piraeus with a fleet of ships adorned with trophies of war and purple sails; a flute player and a tragic actor, both in lavish attire, mark the time for the rowers (Plut. *Alc.* 32.2; cf. Ath. 12.535c–d). Alcibiades stages a drama of his own tyranny so explicit and theatrical that Plutarch rejects the narrative altogether: he finds it unlikely that Alcibiades would

[71] This unusual word was probably coined by this dialogue on the model of *paiderastēs* and, like *paiderastēs*, it seems to denote a durable proclivity, not an incidental passion; it is opposed throughout the dialogue to the love of wisdom, *philosophia* (an opposition to which we return in the next section). In general, compounded forms of erastes are rare. There are adjectival and prepositional compounds (*duserastēs*, *anterastēs*) and the occasional neologism (*oinerastēs*, *khruserastēs*, *andrerastēs*), but the only common nominal compound is *paiderastēs*.

[72] In this scene and the next, Plutarch is drawing on Xenophon (*Hell.* 1.4.18–20). While the erotic diction is absent in Xenophon's account, the dynamics and details of the episodes are remarkably close. Given the eros that surrounds Alcibiades in other fifth-century sources (e.g., Ar. *Frogs*), Plutarch's elaboration of these scenes in erotic terms can be seen not as the author's invention but as a logical extrapolation of a classical discourse.

vaunt himself so (*entruphēsai*) before the Athenians after his long exile and prefers to imagine that Alcibiades really returned diffident and fearful (*Alc.* 32.2). Plutarch wants Alcibiades to be the modest eromenos of a manly Athenian demos, waiting coyly to be invited ashore. Instead, the citizens prostrate themselves like a sycophantic chorus before a tragic tyrant: they rush to greet him, embracing and crowning him, counting off the favors he had done them and their misfortunes during his absence. The "fair-faced demos of great-hearted Erechtheus" is Alcibiades' eromenos, and the same sort of eromenos that Alcibiades himself was, shamelessly pursuing its erastes.[73]

The political ramifications of this relationship become clear two sections later in Plutarch's narrative. Alcibiades reinstates the procession that began the Eleusinian Mysteries and, under heavy guard, himself escorts the statue of Iacchus to Eleusis (a gesture not without its irony, of course, as it was for profaning the Mysteries that Alcibiades had been exiled in the first place).

> θέαμα σεμνὸν καὶ θεοπρεπὲς τὴν στρατηγίαν ἐκείνην ἐπιδεικνύμενος, ὑπὸ τῶν μὴ φθονούντων ἱεροφαντίαν καὶ μυσταγωγίαν προσαγορευομένην. μηδενὸς δὲ τῶν πολεμίων ἐπιθέσθαι τολμήσαντος, ἀσφαλῶς ἀπαγαγὼν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, ἤρθη μὲν αὐτὸς τῷ φρονήματι, καὶ τὴν στρατιὰν ἐπῆρεν ὡς ἄμαχον καὶ ἀήττητον οὖσαν ἐκείνου στρατηγοῦντος, τοὺς δὲ φορτικοὺς καὶ πένητας οὕτως ἐδημαγώγησεν, ὥστ' ἐρᾶν ἔρωτα θαυμαστὸν ὑπ' ἐκείνου τυραννεῖσθαι, καὶ λέγειν ἐνίους καὶ προσιέναι παρακελευομένους, ὅπως τοῦ φθόνου κρείττων γενόμενος καὶ καταβαλὼν ψηφίσματα καὶ νόμους καὶ φλυάρους ἀπολλύντας τὴν πόλιν ὡς ἂν πράξῃ καὶ χρήσηται τοῖς πράγμασι, μὴ δεδιὼς τοὺς συκοφάντας.
>
> He made so devout and solemn a spectacle of this expedition that those who were not jealous of him proclaimed him both an initiate and hierophant. None of the enemy dared attack, and he led the procession safely back to the city. This raised his own spirits and roused the army, which felt invincible with him in command. As for the common and poor folk, he so swayed them that they lusted with an amazing desire to be ruled by him as a tyrant [*erān erōta thaumaston hup' ekeinou turanneisthai*]. Some even proposed this and went up to urge him to place himself above envy, abolish decrees and laws, and get rid of the fools who were destroying the city; then he could act and manage affairs without fear of denouncers. (*Alc.* 34.6–7)

Here the results of Alcibiades' dangerous seductiveness are taken to their extreme. The demos's response to his charisma is an amazing lust to be ruled by him as a tyrant, *erān erōta thaumaston hup' ekeinou turannei-*

[73] See Hatzfeld 1951.302; Bloedow 1973.67–71; de Romilly 1995.197–205; Munn 2000.166 and n.39 on this incident. Compare Xen. *Hell.* 1.4.20: upon disembarking, Alcibiades went before the Boule and Ekklesia and cleared his name and (as the Ekklesia had

sthai. Alcibiades inspires in the citizens an unwholesome and passive desire, a politically masochistic desire. The beloveds of a tyrant, they happily abrogate their political authority for Alcibiades' love, submitting at once to his sexy *dēmerastia* and to his tyranny.

No doubt we should be suspicious about the political agenda behind this representation of passive eros. The authors who write of it are elite, and we can imagine the interest *hoi agathoi* might have had in representing the demos as "in love with" its elite leaders. Yet the demos voted to reinstate Alcibiades, and source after source—from Plato to the comic poets—tells us of its love for him. We have seen already the unpredictable fertility of that love, which itself generates supplementary desires: the people long for Alcibiades and hate him and want to possess him—and lust to be dominated by him. Their contradictory love eventually produces this ultimate contradiction: democratic citizens who long for tyranny.

How could the Athenian demos—by nature *autarkēs* and *eleutheros*—long to be dominated by Alcibiades? This question troubled the Athenians, and they sought answers by looking to their past, to the legend of the democracy's foundation with the tyrannicide of Harmodius and Aristogiton. Thucydides documents this contemporary connection and himself pursues it as a way of working through the problem of Alcibiades' *dēmerastia*. The mutilation of the Herms and profanation of the Mysteries, he tells us, evoked memories of this ancient story: the Athenians prosecuted these crimes with particular zeal "for they had heard about the tyranny of Pisistratus and his sons and how harsh it became toward the end. They also knew that the tyranny had not been ended by themselves and Harmodius but by the Spartans. They were thus always afraid and approached everything with suspicion" (ἐπιστάμενος γὰρ ὁ δῆμος ἀκοῇ τὴν Πεισιστράτου καὶ τῶν παίδων τυραννίδα χαλεπὴν τελευτῶσαν γενομένην καὶ προσέτι οὐδ' ὑφ' ἑαυτῶν καὶ 'Αρμοδίου καταλυθεῖσαν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐφοβεῖτο αἰεὶ καὶ πάντα ὑπόπτως ἐλάμβανεν, 6.53.3).[74]

Thucydides does not spell out the links between the civic traumas of 415 and 510: he does not explain why the demos made the association

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forbidden opposition) he was immediately proclaimed *hapantōn hēgemōn autokratōr*. Cf. Plut. *Alc*. 33.2–3; D.S. 13.69.1–3.

[74] Cf. 6.60.1: the Athenians "had this in mind and recalled the stories they knew about it and as a result were suspicious toward those who were charged in the affair of the Mysteries and the whole thing seemed to them part of an oligarchic or tyrannical conspiracy" (Ὧν ἐνθυμούμενος ὁ δῆμος τῶν 'Αθηναίων, καὶ μιμνῃσκόμενος ὅσα ἀκοῇ περὶ αὐτῶν ἠπίστατο, χαλεπὸς ἦν τότε καὶ ὑπόπτης ἐς τοὺς περὶ τῶν μυστικῶν τὴν αἰτίαν λαβόντας, καὶ πάντα αὐτοῖς ἐδόκει ἐπὶ ξυνωμοσίᾳ ὀλιγαρχικῇ καὶ τυραννικῇ πεπρᾶχθαι). This assertion is supported by the prominence of the tyrannicide legend in the years between 422 and 411: Brunnsåker 1971.123; M. W. Taylor 1981 ch. 6; and, by way of example, Ar. *Wasps* 488–502.

or why he himself does. We return to this peculiar silence in the next chapter, but it is clear that one condensation point between the two events is Alcibiades. In the silent gap between the tyrannicide and the mutilation, his is the name that is (not) spoken the loudest. Many scholars have viewed Thucydides' tyrannicide digression as a commentary on the problem of Alcibiades, although there is by no means consensus on the precise connection. Some take the digression as a warning to the demos of the perils of a "tyrant" like Alcibiades. Dover paraphrases the logic: "Beware, men of Athens, of the would-be tyrant; for nothing is easier than to give yourselves into the hands of a tyrant, but nothing harder than to escape him again. *Why, not even the tyrannicides. . . .*"[75] Others take the opposite approach and argue that in both the prosecution of Alcibiades and the assassination of Hipparchus the demos rejected good leadership out of an irrational fear of tyranny.[76] These divergent interpretations of the intent and meaning of the digression point up the hermeneutic usefulness of this story, both for the demos and for Thucydides. In this historical drama, Alcibiades could be cast in multiple roles and a variety of different explanatory scenarios played out.[77]

It must have been all too easy to picture Alcibiades in the part of Hipparchus. Hipparchus was not a political tyrant (he was not, Thucydides emphasizes, the ruling Pisistratid).[78] Instead he, like Alcibiades, is characterized by his life-style: Aristotle calls him "fond of amusement and love affairs and poetry" (παιδιώδης καὶ ἐρωτικὸς καὶ φιλόμουσος, *Ath. Pol.* 18.1). This sybaritic, licentious tyrant prefigures (or rather retrojects) Alcibiades, whose *paranomia*, attacks on fellow citizens, and sexual and political *hubrismata* we have seen so amply documented by his enemies and biographers alike. The legend illustrates the dangers such a tyranny posed to the demos, and the potential results it imagines are similar to

[75] Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.329.

[76] Rawlings 1981.112: "Thucydides' political point is clearly the same in both cases: members of the lower or middle classes, acting on personal and private motives and suspicious impulses, murder Athenian aristocrats of the highest quality, thus causing a bitter reaction among members of the upper class that will result in disastrous public consequences for the state as a whole." Cf. H.-P. Stahl 1966.1–11; M. W. Taylor 1981.161–75; Palmer 1982; Forde 1989.33–37.

[77] See further Münch 1935; Pearson 1949; Liebeschuetz 1968b.304–5; Momigliano 1971; Parry 1972; Connor 1984.176–80; Barceló 1990.407; Orwin 1994.125–26; Vickers 1995; Rood 1998.180–82; Gribble 1999.192–93; Monoson 2000.46–49.

[78] Thuc. 6.54.2, 54.6–55.4; cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 18.1. Thucydides claims to be correcting public misapprehension in this digression (6.54.1). Some have suggested that he is merely asserting that, although the demos believed Hipparchus to be the older brother (and ruling tyrant), it was in fact Hippias. This seems like a minor point, but if that is what he is saying, then there is perhaps a veiled reference to Alcibiades: the threat to democracy comes not only from those who govern tyrannically but from those who live tyrannically.

those we find in Plutarch's account of the demos's subjection to Alcibiades. Hipparchus (or in Aristotle's version, the violent brother Thettalus) makes advances toward Harmodius, and when the boy refuses him, he insults him. He prevents his sister from marching in the Panathenaic procession and thereby casts aspersions upon Harmodius's ability to protect her purity or his family's honor. In Aristotle's version of the episode, the tyrant encapsulates both the insult and the assault in a single word: he calls Harmodius "soft" (*malakos*, *Ath. Pol.* 18.2). The tyrant's violent and vindictive desire threatens to transform good citizens into *malakoi*.

This is precisely what Alcibiades' enemies feared: that the demos would be "soft" for him (ὅτε δῆμος μὴ μαλακίζηται, 6.29.3). And they had reason for concern: the demos *is* "soft" for Alcibiades. It longs to possess him, but also to be possessed by him, to be ruled by him as a tyrant. Harmodius and Aristogiton responded to the tyrant's emasculating attention with tyrannicide, and this definitive refutation of the charge of softness becomes the founding gesture of the democracy, an assertion of political agency figured as a defense of erotic autonomy and masculine integrity, *dikaios erōs*. But faced once more with a tyrant's love, the demos submits. No longer a population of vigorous and virile Aristogitons, fighting for its love and liberty, the demos now plays the part of Harmodius, a tyrant's love object, and a Harmodius, moreover, who willingly succumbs to the charm of this sexy Hipparchus. And it not only submits to his tyranny; it lusts for it: *erān erōta thaumaston hup' ekeinou turanneisthai*.

It is perhaps no wonder, then, that Alcibiades was associated with the mutilation of the Herms; his love castrates. If, as Jack Winkler suggested, these statues represented the Athenian citizen in all his sexual dominance and political autonomy, then their mutilation is a civic castration, a violation of the idealized *sōma autarkes* of the democracy.[79] Plutarch's imaginative reconstruction of the disastrous effects of Alcibiades' eros is here expressed with mute eloquence in the contemporary language of political violence. Simultaneously a political assault on the free and egalitarian

[79] Winkler 1990a.35–36 and see my discussion in the introduction. The precise target of the attack is debated: Thucydides says only that the Herms were "cut about the faces" (περιεκόπησαν τὰ πρόσωπα, 6.27.1; cf. Plut. *Alc.* 18.6: ἀκρωτηριασθέντων τὰ πρόσωπα), but Ar. *Lys.* 1093–94 suggests that their phalloi were cut off. See Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.288–89 and Furley 1996.28 on this debate. The literal target makes little difference: either way, the citizen body is mutilated. It is in this sense that I use the term "castration." Castration is not just the amputation of the "pound of flesh" (as Lacan calls it). Instead, it is an exposure of the gap between the penis (as a piece of flesh) and the phallus (the signifier of power and presence), of the fact that the former cannot secure the latter. Castration is thus the realization of the illusory nature of (masculine) authority and the fictionality of the phallus. Lacan 1977.281–91; Butler 1993.57–91; Silverman 1992.42–46.

demos (hence seen as part of a tyrannical or oligarchic conspiracy) and a sexual assault on the masculinity and sexual autonomy of the citizen body, this incident recapitulates in one striking gesture the broader effect of Alcibiades upon the Athenians. His eros makes them "soft," willing subjects of his tyranny, broken Herms.

Faced with this civic trauma, the demos seeks to assuage the anxiety of the present by recourse to a legend of Athens's heroic past. Thucydides tells us that the mutilation put the demos in mind of the tyrannicide. One might thus imagine the tyrannicide legend as a defensive fantasy, a way for the Athenians to reassert their virility and freedom in the face of this threat. In that fantasy, the demos faces the same threat but with a radically more positive outcome.[80] There the citizen resists tyrannical seduction and defends his erotic freedom; there the citizen, far from being "cut about" by tyrannical conspirators, instead straps on his sword and valiantly kills the tyrant. From its debilitating love-hate for Alcibiades, Athens's eros is returned to a simple purity: the citizen loves his beautiful young eromenos (an eromenos who bears a striking resemblance to Alcibiades)[81] and hates a tyrant. Athenian eros, so perverse in regard to Alcibiades, is redeemed as democratic, manly, tyrannicidal, *dikaios*.

We might imagine that this was the story a worried demos told. It is not, however, the story Thucydides tells. First of all, in his account, Harmodius and Aristogiton do not in fact overthrow the tyranny, and Thucydides introduces the story by pointing this out: the Athenians were suspicious after the mutilation of the Herms because they "knew that the tyranny had not been ended by themselves and Harmodius, but by the Spartans" (6.53.3). Motivated not by democratic sentiment but (Thucydides emphasizes) by personal animus, the lovers make a mess of the whole deal. Their first attack (aimed against the reigning tyrant Hippias) fails, and they kill his brother Hipparchus by default. Moreover, far from ending the tyranny with their abortive attempt, the lovers exacerbate it, turning Hippias, who had previously been a fair and legitimate ruler, into a harsh and suspicious dictator. Thucydides sums up:

> Τοιούτῳ μὲν τρόπῳ δι᾽ ἐρωτικὴν λύπην ἥ τε ἀρχὴ τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς καὶ ἡ ἀλόγιστος τόλμα ἐκ τοῦ παραχρῆμα περιδεοῦς Ἁρμοδίῳ καὶ Ἀριστογείτονι ἐγένετο. τοῖς δ᾽ Ἀθηναίοις χαλεπωτέρα μετὰ τοῦτο ἡ τυραννὶς κατέστη.

[80] McGlew 1993.155 argues that the tyrannicide myth was a way for the Athenians to deny their passivity in the face of tyranny by presenting themselves as their own liberators and thus laying claim to the power formerly held by the tyrants.

[81] Harmodius is "illustrious in the prime of youth" (ὥρᾳ ἡλικίας λαμπροῦ, Thuc. 6.54.2). Alcibiades is characterized by "the illustriousness of his youth" (λαμπρότητα τῆς ὥρας, Plut. *Alc.* 4.1; cf. Ath. 12.534c).

> Thus the plot of Harmodius and Aristogiton grew out of an erotic grievance, and their reckless daring originated in a moment of panic. But after this the tyranny became more burdensome for the Athenians. (6.59.1–2)

This is hardly a resounding endorsement of the lovers and the love that were supposed to have liberated Athens.[82] In the tyrannicide legend the demos may have sought a potent democratic masculinity to set against those mutilated Herms, the pristine memory of a manly and tyrannicidal eros. But instead of a cure for civic castration, Thucydides' tyrannicide myth tells the story of a people assaulted by tyranny and unable to defend themselves. Aristogiton, that model of freedom-loving virility, now becomes a lover who cannot protect his beloved and a tyrannicide who fails to end the tyranny. The demos is shown to be *malakos* not only in the present crisis but even in its most glorious moment.

Thucydides' narrative, rather than saving the demos from its perverse desire for Alcibiades, rediscovers that perversity at the very origin of democracy and democratic eros. Thucydides' disenchanting account is deliberately tendentious, of course, and he himself contrasts his version of the legend to the standard accounts (6.54.1–2; cf. 1.20.2). But on one point, he asserts, he and the demos agree: the tyrannicide failed to end the tyranny (6.53.3). Thucydides thus represents his debunking narrative as a clarification and amplification (ἐπὶ πλέον διηγησάμενος ἀποφανῶ, 6.54.1) of a truth the Athenians know (ἐπιστάμενος γὰρ ὁ δῆμος, 6.53.3) but do not articulate clearly in their own tellings of the story (ἀκριβὲς οὐδὲν λέγοντας, 6.54.1). For the demos, too, Thucydides implies, and not just for the cynical historian, the uncertainties of the present have contaminated the past.[83]

Both the mutilation and Thucydides' tale of tyrannicidal failure operate within the imaginative space opened by Alcibiades: both reenact the trauma of his eros and, in so doing, reveal its full dimensions. The story they tell is one of perverse desire, the perversion not only of Alcibiades' eros but of Athens's own. They suggest that beneath the manifest passions of the democracy lie other unspeakable longings, unconscious fantasies

[82] Rawlings 1981.105: "In Thucydides' eyes the tyrannicide was not, as fifth-century Athenians believed, an heroic deed planned and carried out by two young, freedom-loving aristocrats. It was an audacious act (τόλμημα), plotted by a commoner crazed with sexual jealousy and fear and perpetrated against one of Athens' greatest and most beneficent families." Cf. H.-P. Stahl 1966.1–11; Monoson 2000.42–49.

[83] Munn 2000.114–18 has recently argued that the oral source (*akoēi*) from which the demos knew about the tyrannicide legend was Herodotus's histories. Rawlings 1981.102–3, 115–17 stresses the demos's ignorance in regard to both the tyrannicide and the Herms affair; see also Schadewaldt 1929.86: "Hinter dem scheinbaren Widerspruch im Logos des Thukydides greifen wir einen wirklichen Widerspruch im geschichtlichen Bewußtsein der Athener."

that run counter to the political fantasies that sustained Athenian ideology, complicating both that ideology and its subjects. Its love for Alcibiades shows that the demos is, like him, *paranomos* in its desires. The tyrannicide legend adds that it had always been so, and that that *paranomia* is not exterior to the democracy (*para*) but coterminous with it. Thus although Alcibiades' allure may have brought out a *paranomia* implicit within the erotics of democracy, it cannot be blamed for causing it. It was not Alcibiades' *paranomia* that perverted the demos's desire, but instead the demos that conjured a *paranomos* Alcibiades as the perfect object of its own perverse love. Plutarch compared Alcibiades with Helen (*Alc.* 23.6), a phantasm who bears the projection of every man's desire. If Alcibiades is *paranomos*, it is because the demos's desire made him so.[84] This means that the "problem of Alcibiades" is in essence insoluble, for Athens can banish Alcibiades but not its own desire for him. That desire, as the tyrannicide legend shows, is as old as democracy itself and at any moment may erupt again within politics. Whether it will erupt as tyrannicide or castration is an open question.

The Athenians know this. Hence their panicked invocation of the law in prosecuting the mutilation of the Herms and profanation of the Mysteries: perhaps *nomos* can save them from the *paranomia* not only of Alcibiades but of their own desire, present and past. In this turn to the law—both to the *nomoi* of the city and the *dikaios erōs* of legend—normative ideals are called into being, generated out of *paranomia*. The *dikaios erōs* of the tyrannicides and their heirs, the ideal of a virile and autonomous citizen body—these are fantasies of a demos faced with the terrifying prospect of its own perversity. And if this means that *paranomia* is a prop to the normative, that perversion is the final bastion of the law, it also means that there is something perverse within the very structure of that law. Alcibiades' eros generates a norm of *dikaios erōs* but, in the process, exposes it as purely phantasmatic, an illusion that, when scrutinized, evanesces. The *dikaios erōs* of the tyrannicides cannot save the demos from Alcibiades' *paranomia* or its own because that eros too (as Thucydides shows) is already *paranomos*. And if *dikaios erōs* is just a fantasy conjured by the demos's troubled longings, is normativity itself a perverse fixation?

The tyrannicide myth as it is usually told presents the demos's desire as exquisitely simple: the Athenian citizen desires freedom; he hates tyranny. These are the founding sentiments of the democracy. But Alcibiades' *paranomia* has made it impossible to tell or to believe such a reassuring tale.

[84] The soul of the lover, as Plutarch says, lives within the beloved (Plut. *Ant.* 66.7). On the symbiosis between Alcibiades and Athens, see S. Rosen 1968.297; Arrowsmith 1973; Orwin 1994.123; Wolin 1996.82–83; Mitchell 1993.175: "He is the soul of the city in one man."

The *dēmerastia* of Alcibiades has shown that this legendary image of the democratic citizen as lover and tyrannicide was only part of the picture; that, if Athenians hated tyrants, they also desired them; that if they were noble and manly lovers, they were also a tyrant's eromenoi; that faced with the seduction of a Hipparchus or Alcibiades, they might again and always prove "soft." The eros of Alcibiades challenges the very notion of democratic desire, showing ambivalence where there should be simple certainties, mutilated Herms where there should be noble tyrannicides, and *paranomia* where *nomos* should reign.

Socrates' Boyfriend

Even as he was indulging in the sort of *paranomia* that made him a suspect in the profanation of the Mysteries, Alcibiades was also being initiated into a Mystery of another sort: Socratic love. While the demos was working through the traumatic consequences of its desire for Alcibiades, philosophy was carrying on a love affair of its own, and for it, too, his eros was as problematic as it was irresistible. Whereas the democracy banished Alcibiades for his transgressions, though, philosophy sought to incorporate his *paranomia* and upon it ground a new set of *nomoi*, itself situated in an oblique and exterior relation to those of the democratic polis. Within this new normativity, Alcibiades' eros—so devastating in the democratic sphere—becomes the foundation of a new ethics and erotics in which to long for him is to enter the path toward philosophical truth. But if philosophy makes Alcibiades' *paranomia* its norm, does it for that reason contain it, succeeding where the democracy failed, or does Alcibiades exceed these parameters too? In the Mystery of Socratic eros, will Alcibiades be icon or iconoclast?

Like the democracy, philosophy had reason to hate as well as to love Alcibiades. With his natural talent and prominent political position, Alcibiades could have been Socrates' greatest success, an opportunity to put into practice his theories of good statecraft and to prove that philosophy is better at governing the city than democracy. This tyrant could have been the first philosopher-king.[85] But, of course, this is not how it turned out. Far from being Socrates' most conspicuous success, Alcibiades becomes his most damaging failure: at best he suggested philosophy's inability to put its precepts into practice; at worst he seemed to embody the

[85] In antiquity the *First Alcibiades* was the traditional starting point for students of Socratic philosophy: through the person of Alcibiades, it argues for philosophical inquiry—self-knowledge and attention to one's soul—as the indispensable prerequisite for a political career. See Gribble 1999.221: "The depiction of such a great individual preferring the intensity of philosophical enquiry to the ultimate prizes of honour in the city is the supreme advertisement for philosophy."

antisocial and corrupting influence for which in 399 the demos condemned Socrates to death. To the extent that Plato's and Xenophon's Socratic writings are largely an apologetic response to Socrates' condemnation, and Socrates' condemnation resulted in part from his relationship to youths like Alcibiades, "the problem of Alcibiades" is one that these philosophers can never escape. Why, despite Socrates' teachings, did he go bad? [86]

The demos laid Alcibiades' *paranomia* at Socrates' door, blaming him for transforming their lion cub into a tyrannical lion. Philosophy returns the charge, arguing that it was not Socrates but the demos that corrupted Alcibiades.[87] This contest of influence is played out as an erotic competition. Alcibiades' democratic lovers, says Socrates, want him only for his beauty (Pl. *Alc.* 131c–e; Plut. *Alc.* 4.1) and will corrupt him with their flatteries and favors (*diaphtharēis*, Pl. *Alc.* 132a1, 3; cf. Plut. *Alc.* 4.1). Socrates, by contrast, is Alcibiades' only true lover (Pl. *Alc.* 131e1–4), the only one who can improve him and help him to achieve his ambitions (Pl. *Alc.* 105d–e; Pl. *Symp.* 216a8–b3, 218c7–d5; Plut. *Alc.* 4.2–3). Only philosophy offers a charm (*alexipharmaka*, Pl. *Alc.* 132b2) against the baleful spell of the "fair-faced demos of Erechtheus." In language reminiscent of Socrates' trial, philosophy does battle against Alcibiades' democratic lovers. And for a while at least Socrates seems to gain the upper hand. In the *First Alcibiades*, so convinced is the boy of the advantages of Socrates' love that he declares himself from that point forward Socrates' slave (135d7–e5). But the dialogue's final line strikes a more hesitant note: Socrates expresses faith in Alcibiades' character but fear lest the force of the polis overwhelm them both (ὀρρωδῶ δέ, οὔ τι τῇ σῇ φύσει ἀπιστῶν, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῆς πόλεως ὁρῶν ῥώμην, μὴ ἐμοῦ τε καὶ σοῦ κρατήσῃ, Pl. *Alc.* 135e6–8). Hence the ardor of the battle: the outcome is by no means secure.

At stake in this contest is more than just the love of a boy, even a boy as prominent as Alcibiades. The struggle over Alcibiades is a struggle over

[86] Nussbaum 1986.166: "His [Alcibiades'] story is, in the end, a story of waste and loss, of the failure of practical reason to shape a life"; cf. S. Rosen 1968.203; Gagarin 1977.33–37; Euben 1997.213. Many scholars have noted the awkward fact that Socrates in the dialogues seems never to convince his interlocutors of anything: no one ever goes away vowing to adopt a life of self-reflection, and although many are forced to admit their ignorance, few seem inclined to do anything about it. For various explanations, see Vlastos 1971; Gagarin 1977.35–37; Nehamas 1992; Yunis 1996.156–61; Euben 1997.221–22.

[87] Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.12–48: Alcibiades and Critias were moderate and self-controlled while they were with Socrates and only went bad when they turned away from him to pursue public affairs. Cf. Isoc. 11.5; Ps.-Dem. *Erot.* 45; Proclus *Alc.* 86–90; Brickhouse and Smith 1989.71–87.

Athens itself.[88] As the ward of Pericles and his likely eventual successor, the young Alcibiades represented Athens's future; as the most popular demagogue of his day, he offered, as David Gribble puts it (1999.216), "a way of propelling Socratic philosophy overtly on to the political stage." Alcibiades thus becomes the terrain on which philosophy asserts its will to power and its superiority over democracy. This contest recalls the dichotomy in Plato's *Gorgias* (touched on in the last chapter) between the demagogue, who corrupts the citizens with his flattery, and the philosopher, who improves the citizens and therefore alone deserves to be considered a true statesman.[89] The same dichotomy between the corrosive seduction of *dēmerastia* and the beneficial love of philosophy is played out around Alcibiades. He is not just the charge against philosophy, then, but philosophy's offensive in response to that charge. To the demos's accusation that Socrates corrupted the youth, his followers reply: not only did he not corrupt Alcibiades, but he was the sole person who could have saved him from the demos's corruption and, what's more, he could have saved the city, too.[90]

The contest between philosophy and democracy over Alcibiades is above all a contest over his eros and, through him, the eros of Athens. These ardent suitors vie to be his lover, to teach him, to mold him. But what each most wishes to mold is his desire, to direct it toward himself and thus become his eromenos as well as his erastes. Will Alcibiades' love be *dēmerastia* or *philosophia*? In Plato's *Gorgias*, Socrates loves Alcibiades and philosophy, whereas Callicles loves the boy Demos and the demos (*Gorg*. 481d3–5): love of philosophy and love of the demos represent mutually exclusive objects of desire and modes of desiring, and Alcibiades must choose between them.[91] By his own love Socrates attempts to

[88] In Plato's *Symposium*, Alcibiades enters the party crowned with violets. The crown of violets (as Nussbaum remarks, 1986.193) is a symbol of Athens: see Pindar fr. 76 Maehler; Ar. *Ach*. 637; *Knights* 1323, 1329.

[89] *Gorg*. 502e–3e, 521a–b, 521d–e. For the connection between Alcibiades and the *Gorgias*, see Hatzfeld 1951.47–50; Gribble 1999.231–45. In the *First Alcibiades*, when Alcibiades hesitates to present an argument, Socrates tells him to imagine that he, Socrates, is the demos and to persuade him as he would it (114b). In the *Symposium*, Socrates is said to be a more effective orator than Pericles (215e4–7). Socrates thus replaces both demos and demagogue.

[90] Euben (1994, 1996, and 1997 chs. 2, 8) finds Socrates' claims plausible and sees his philosophy as a political education for the democracy (cf. Ober 1998.206). Barber 1996 argues strongly against Euben's notion of a democratic Socrates; he believes that there is a basic epistemological difference between philosophy's discourse of truth and the provisional and uncertain truths of democracy. On the argument between Socratic-Platonic philosophy and democracy, see further Saxonhouse 1996.87–114; Ober 1998.156–247; Monoson 2000.113–238.

[91] Mutually exclusive but not equally weighted. First, the abstract *philosophia* is ranked against the concrete noun, demos; this gives philosophy the advantage of abstraction and

change the direction of Alcibiades' eros, shifting it, as Proclus said, "from power to the knowledge that will make use of power" (*Alc.* 155.7–8). And the dream of a philosophical Alcibiades is also the dream of a philosophical city: through the supremely desiderative Alcibiades, philosophy seeks an inroad against the desire of the polis, attempting through him to redirect this desire toward wisdom. Socrates' love for Alcibiades is more than a salacious old man's lust for a beautiful boy: it represents philosophy's effort to articulate an ethics and an erotics to set against and over that of the democracy.[92] That this effort fails—and Socrates' execution is a measure of its failure—perhaps says less about the supremacy of democracy over philosophy, though, than it does about the perils of staking a claim to political legitimacy on such unstable soil.

Plato's *Symposium* illustrates these perils.[93] This dialogue is set in 416, just one year before the launching of the Sicilian Expedition and those ill-omened events, the profanation of the Mysteries and mutilation of the Herms. The party itself takes place just before things broke for Alcibiades, but the framing discussion is set many years later, after Alcibiades had been charged in the conspiracy and sentenced to death, after Sicily had been lost and Athens was in the grip of the Thirty.[94] This framing adds an ironic overlay to Alcibiades' scenes at the party, for as much as the other symposiasts may enjoy the clever speeches of this charming bon vivant, those who recount these speeches know that he was held responsible for the fall of Athens—and Socrates was held responsible for him. The question, Who lost Alcibiades? is very much in the air.

At Agathon's house, we would seem to be at ground zero of Alcibiades' *paranomia*: indeed, it was at symposia much like this one that Alcibiades was said to have parodied the Mysteries and from which the mutilators

protects it from the literal language of domination later applied to Callicles' relationship with the demos. Second, the desire for wisdom is doubly marked: it is a love (eros) for a love (*philia*) for wisdom (*sophia*). Note also the lack of parallelism at 481e. Callicles says whatever his loves, the demos and Demos, say; likewise Socrates says whatever his beloved philosophy says. But Socrates does not, apparently, say whatever Alcibiades says. Alcibiades, a less consistent love than philosophy (482a6–b1), is left suspended and, with him, the troubling question of what it would mean if the analogy were completed and Socrates, like Callicles, obeyed both his loves. On Callicles' eros, see Newell 2000.9–41.

[92] Cf. Gribble 1999.237: "*Eros* functions as a metaphor for Socrates' quasi-political involvement in the city . . . ; it covers the sort of activity on which Socrates bases his claim to be the true *politikos*." See also Kahn 1994.93; Newell 2000; Monoson 2000.181–205; Burch 2000.19–75.

[93] I am grateful to Frisbee Sheffield for sharing with me her ideas on eros in the *Symposium*. Conversations with her have helped me substantially refine the views I expressed in Wohl 1999.

[94] There is dispute as to the dramatic date of the conversation that frames the dialogue. Bury 1932.lxvi puts it around 400, but Nussbaum 1986.168–71 argues that it should be imagined as 404, just before Alcibiades' death and during the debate (dramatized in *Frogs*)

were rumored to have set out.[95] But while the demos repudiated Alcibiades' *paranomia*, the *Symposium* attempts to incorporate it into the philosophical community and around it to build a new *nomos*, one significantly removed from—if not overtly hostile to—that of the democracy.[96] Under this new jurisprudence, Plato restages Socrates' trial with the symposiasts as jurors (219c5–6), and, as we might expect, the "corruption of Alcibiades" is the primary charge.[97] The case picks up where the *First Alcibiades*' apology left off: Alcibiades himself now takes the stand to testify that Socrates is the only lover who can improve him (218c7–d5), that Socrates—far from corrupting him—refused his sexual advances and taught him to feel shame ("a feeling no one ever thought was in me," 216a8–b3). As in the *First Alcibiades*, if anyone "corrupted" Alcibiades, it was the demos, which distracted him from the proper pursuit of wisdom and, with the lure of the mob's honor (216b5), made him run away from Socrates and his beneficent teachings.

Alcibiades, too, is on trial in this dialogue, as is his eros. In the midst of recounting his youthful attempt to seduce Socrates, Alcibiades stops short. The tale he is about to tell, he warns, is not for all ears, but only for those who, like himself, have been bitten by the snake of philosophy and share his mania (217e1–218b4). He begs the forbearance of the symposiasts and sends away the slaves and the vulgar and uninitiated (βέβηλός τε καὶ ἄγροικος, 218b6). He acknowledges that his "behavior then and words now" may require forgiveness (218b4–5). He acknowledges, that is, the *paranomia* of his story. But around that *paranomia* is consolidated a new community, a union of holy initiates joined by the sacred Mystery and mania of philosophy.

That Mystery was revealed just before Alcibiades' entrance in the reported speech of Diotima, the priestess who initiated Socrates himself

over his recall. On the relation between Alcibiades in the *Symposium* and the mutilation and profanation, see further S. Rosen 1968.285–86; Steiner 1996.100–105.

[95] Thuc. 6.28.1; And. 1.61; Plut. *Alc.* 18.8; McGlew 1999. Members of Socrates' circle were among those accused of the profanation of the Mysteries: Phaedrus (And. 1.15), Charmides (And. 1.47), and Acumenos (possibly the father of Eryximachos, And. 1.18). On public suspicion toward elite symposia and symposiasts during this period, see Murray 1990.

[96] A good example of this nomic shift is Pausanias's speech: noting the complexity of Athenian *nomos* on the question of the beloved's reciprocation of love, he calls for laws that are more internally consistent and more in line with philosophical common sense. This speech, with its proposal of new *nomoi*, offers a theoretical justification for Alcibiades' aggressive pursuit of Socrates, even as it acknowledges the *paranomia* of his behavior under the current democratic laws. Monoson 2000 is a nuanced discussion of philosophy's engagement with Athens's cultural and political *nomoi*: see esp. 113–53.

[97] On the apologetic purpose of the dialogue and Alcibiades' speech, see, e.g., Bury 1932.lii, lxiv–lxv; Hatzfeld 1951.50–53; Bacon 1959; Dover 1980.164–65.

into the Mysteries of *ta erōtika* (210a1, e2–5). One begins as a youth with the love of a single beautiful individual; one then notices that the beauty of this individual beloved is akin to the beauty of all other bodies and, hence, becomes a lover of physical beauty in general; from love of all physical beauty, one graduates to a love of beauty in the soul, and in institutions and activities, morals and sciences; from there one goes on to gaze upon and appreciate beauty in general, "the great sea of beauty" (210d4). This progression is the right way to love: it is *orthos*, proper, correct, true (210a2, 4, 6, e3; 211b5, 7). To pursue its straight (*orthos*), ascending path is to become initiated into the highest and most sacred Mysteries of eros: eternal contemplation of absolute Beauty and eternal reproduction in the Good.[98]

Just after Diotima's speech ends, Alcibiades bursts upon the scene, diverting the path of the narrative.[99] Alcibiades' entrance is conspicuously disruptive: drunk when the others are sober, he shifts the rules of the game they have been playing, praising not Love but Socrates. Will Alcibiades' eros likewise disrupt the theory of desire Diotima has just set forth? As Bury shows (1932.lx–lxiv), there are many verbal parallels between Alcibiades' speech and Diotima's theory of erotic ascent. Are these echoes ironic, or do they suggest that in Alcibiades Diotima's theory finds its first example? Will Alcibiades profane these Mysteries, too, as he did the Eleusinian Mysteries? Or will he instead become the hierophant of the philosophical Mysteries that Diotima describes and into which the text as a whole initiates its attentive readers?

Alcibiades tells of his youthful love of Socrates and his unsuccessful attempt to seduce him. The story illustrates in a nutshell the sexual *paranomia* that the demos found so unnerving and, finally, intolerable in Alcibiades. Socrates is called Alcibiades' erastes (218c7; cf. 213d1–6). But when they are alone together, instead of Socrates taking the part of erastes and "speaking to him those things that a lover says to his beloved when they are alone" (217b4–5), it is Alcibiades who plays the role of seducer, behaving, he confesses, "just like a lover plotting against his beloved" (217c7–8). Meanwhile, Socrates becomes more like the eromenos: he pretends to be the erastes, says Alcibiades, but is really the *paidika* (222b3–4). Moreover, Alcibiades is still pursuing Socrates as an adult: when he finishes his tale of the failed seduction, the symposiasts laugh, "since he still seemed to be erotically disposed toward Socrates" (222c2–3). Here

[98] This speech is, of course, much discussed. See, e.g., Buchner 1965; S. Rosen 1968.197–277; Moravcsik 1971; Vlastos 1973; Halperin 1985; Newell 2000.76–86. Halperin 1985 includes further bibliography.

[99] On Alcibiades' entrance, see S. Rosen 1968.283–90; Nussbaum 1986.192–93; Gribble 1999.250–52; P. Wilson 1999.90. He also brings with him the flute girls who were banished at the beginning of the party (176e6–9, 212d6).

as in the democratic sphere, Alcibiades blurs the line between erastes and eromenos, and here too his sexual aggression evokes the depravity of a *pornos*, as Socrates himself points out when he accuses Alcibiades of attempting to trade sex for wisdom, a trade, Socrates adds, of bronze for gold (218e3–219a1).

But while the vulgar and uninitiated might condemn such behavior, the symposiasts merely laugh (222c1). This laugh constitutes the philosophical community. Not everyone at this party has shown himself able to understand love; not everyone understood Diotima's speech. But they all know how to read Alcibiades' story, and in their reading his eros is not perverse but normal, even exemplary.[100] When Alcibiades offers his body in exchange for knowledge, the guests do not hear in this deal insinuations of corruption or sophistry, the sale of wisdom for sex at a profit. This exchange is not taken as a whorish debasement of the dialogue's elite economy, which scorns wealth and beauty as valueless commodities (κτήματα, 216e3). Instead it points to the truth that within this economy Socrates himself is the gold standard. Alcibiades' love confirms this supreme value, and his speech reveals the truth of Socrates' worth: Socrates looks like a Silenus on the outside but contains within him an inner divinity (τὰ ἐντὸς ἀγάλματα, 216e6), a hidden treasure that is "holy, golden, all-beautiful, and wondrous" (θεῖα καὶ χρυσᾶ εἶναι καὶ πάγκαλα καὶ θαυμαστά, 216e7–217a1; cf. 221d7–222a6). Moreover, when one sees that wondrous treasure, Alcibiades says, one has no choice but to obey Socrates (217a1–2).[101] Within the democratic imagination Alcibiades' hubristic desire "softened" the demos, transforming citizen-lovers into passive eromenoi, longing to submit to his tyranny. Alcibiades' aggressive eros turns Socrates, too, into an eromenos, but with Socrates it is different, for being the object of desire merely confirms his dominance. To love Socrates, as Bury says, "is to love the Ideal."[102] It is to align oneself, however provi-

[100] The importance of a correct reading of Alcibiades' behavior can be seen in Dover's commentary. Of the "bronze for gold" trade, he says: "The analogy will not stand up to detailed scrutiny" (Dover 1980.171 ad 219a1). Why not? Because if pressed too hard, the metaphor raises accusations against Socrates, Alcibiades, and the relationship between them that the dialogue as a whole seeks to deny. Thus the *parrhēsia* (freedom of speech, 222c2) at which the symposiasts laugh is not that of a democratic orator taking the stand to charge Socrates, but an appropriation of that democratic freedom for the new philosophical community. Stehle 1997 (ch. 5) discusses the relation between sexual banter and masculine self-presentation at symposia.

[101] *Symp*. 215e6–7, 216b5–6, 219e3–5; cf. Plut. *Alc*. 4.3, 6.1–5; Pl. *Alc*. 135c–d. At *Symp*. 184b6–c7, Pausanias comments that only two types of slavery are not shameful: that of a lover to his beloved and that undertaken in the name of *aretē*.

[102] Bury 1932.li. See Kahn 1990.293–94; Goldhill 1998.120–22 on the depiction of Socrates as a love object. Whereas in the democratic sphere Alcibiades makes those who love him "soft" (Thuc. 6.29.3), in the *Symposium* it is Socrates who makes his lovers "soft":

sionally, with the erotic trajectory of his philosophy and to submit to his didactic authority. As *dēmerastēs* Alcibiades was a potential tyrant, but as *erastēs Socratous* he is a slave.

If Alcibiades' pursuit of Socrates is a pursuit of wisdom, the love he inspires seems no less *orthos*. When he enters the room adorned with ivy and violets, the audience, having just heard Diotima's speech, is prepared to see the Beauty behind his beauty.[103] Where other lovers cared only for Alcibiades' wealth and good looks, Socrates saw in his external charms the signs of a good and virtuous nature (τῆς πρὸς ἀρετὴν εὐφυΐας, Plut. *Alc*. 4.1). So says Plutarch, and Alcibiades' seduction story seems to confirm it: Socrates remains unmoved by Alcibiades' physical beauty and sleeps through the night next to him like a father or older brother. Socrates' chaste love legitimates Alcibiades as a love object. Whereas the demos responded to something suspect within Alcibiades—purple robes and a charming lisp—Socrates sees deeper and suggests that there is more there to love than a sexy and dominating *kharis*. And loved in the right way, Alcibiades himself becomes a spur toward philosophical ascent: he embodies the beauty that on the abstract plane is the proper object of the lover's desire. Thus the text offers another way to love Alcibiades, a love that does not end inevitably in tyranny and castration but is the first step on the upward path of *orthos erōs*.

Alcibiades' eros is redeemed by philosophy. His desire, no longer tyrannical, now marks an incipient *philia* for wisdom; the desire for him, no longer emasculating, now opens a vista onto absolute Beauty. Even the confusion of erastes and eromenos, which branded him a potential *kinaidos* in the demos's eyes, in this setting becomes legitimate and productive. The lover seeks wisdom, and the successful erastes, as in the case of Socrates, in turn becomes the ideal eromenos.[104] Likewise, the eromenos who inspires his erastes to ascend to higher forms of love may himself be inspired to follow in his footsteps, as Socrates hopes Alcibiades will be. Lover and beloved alike are caught up in the ascendant sweep of philosophical desire, and the distinction between them no longer matters.[105]

Apollodorus, a recent convert, bears the nickname *malakos* and is said to be hard on everyone except Socrates (173d7–10).

[103] S. Rosen 1968.288; Nussbaum 1986.184–85. This is emphasized by a verbal parallel: the sudden vision of the Beautiful and the sudden entrance of Alcibiades are both described by the same adverb (ἐξαίφνης, 210e4, 212c6). Bury 1932 ad 210e4 associates the adverb with the sudden appearance of a light out of darkness in the final stage of the Mysteries.

[104] Gagarin 1977.28: because Socrates has reached the end of his own ascent, "it seems clear that the beautiful and wise Socrates is no longer a lover/philosopher, but must be a wise man and consequently an object of love." Cf. S. Rosen 1968.288; Halperin 1986a.68 and n.21.

[105] Halperin 1986a.75 makes this point and argues strongly for the reciprocity of the relation between erastes and eromenos: "the genius of Plato's analysis is that it eliminates

This is why the symposiasts smile, for in Alcibiades' tale of sexual precocity they see not a mutilating lust and tyrannical disregard for the law but the playful revelation of a higher philosophical truth.

Such would seem to be the verdict in this trial: that philosophy has brought Alcibiades under its control, turned his tyrannical ambition toward wisdom, transformed his perverse love into *orthos erōs*, and made his *paranomia* a testament to Socrates' pedagogy. But, of course, this is only part of the picture: Plato's text (and Alcibiades' role in it) is much more ambiguous. The text may exculpate Socrates, but the juridical diction in and of itself insinuates those negative charges into this philosophical community: the whole ending of the dialogue is, in this sense, a response to the "problem of Alcibiades" and thus an acknowledgment that Alcibiades was a problem for Socratic philosophy.

To begin with, Alcibiades is only a very imperfect lover of Socrates.[106] He values Socrates, but it is never clear that he does so for the right reasons. Unlike Aristodemus, Socrates' barefoot lover (173b1–4) and the source of information about this party, Alcibiades does not seem to change his life-style through love of Socrates: we meet him not barefoot but adorned in his party best. His drunkenness is a far cry from Socrates' *enkrateia* (214a3–5, 220a1–6), and his violence of emotion, as Martha Nussbaum argues, presages the *hubris* that will implicate him in the mutilation of the Herms barely a year later.[107] His speech is extravagant in its praise of Socrates, but it is also, he says, his vengeance upon the philosopher (214e2–3), and Socrates fears that it will be mockery in disguise (214e4–5). Indeed, the encomium has often been read as veiled criticism, an attack on Socrates' arrogance, coldness, and lack of humanity, on his indifference to mortal concerns, on his ignorance of true love for another human being.[108]

Further, while Alcibiades calls himself Socrates' slave, he also confesses that he often runs away. He tells of Socrates' effect on him: the way his words overpower him, disturb his soul, and compel him to recognize his ignorant and slavish condition. But he also tells of his resistance to those words. When Socrates points out his deficiencies and chides him for ne-

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passivity altogether: according to Socrates, both members of the relationship become active, desiring lovers; neither remains a merely passive object of desire" (1986a.68 = 1990b.132).

[106] Schein 1974; Gagarin 1977.34–35; C. Osborne 1994.100; Newell 2000.86. See also Gribble 1999.247, who views Alcibiades' "dangerous and unfulfillable sort of *eros*" as a "foil" to Socratic eros.

[107] Nussbaum 1986.171. On Alcibiades' *hubris* in the *Symposium*, see further S. Rosen 1968.280–82, 294–320; Gagarin 1977. Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.2.16) comments that, given the choice, both Alcibiades and Critias would rather die than live like Socrates.

[108] S. Rosen 1968.278–327; Gagarin 1977; Nussbaum 1986.

glecting himself, Alcibiades stops up his ears, as if against the song of Sirens, and flees.

> σύνοιδα γὰρ ἐμαυτῷ ἀντιλέγειν μὲν οὐ δυναμένῳ ὡς οὐ δεῖ ποιεῖν ἃ οὗτος κελεύει, ἐπειδὰν δὲ ἀπέλθω, ἡττημένῳ τῆς τιμῆς τῆς ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν. δραπετεύω οὖν αὐτὸν καὶ φεύγω, καὶ ὅταν ἴδω, αἰσχύνομαι τὰ ὡμολογημένα. καὶ πολλάκις μὲν ἡδέως ἂν ἴδοιμι αὐτὸν μὴ ὄντα ἐν ἀνθρώποις· εἰ δ᾽ αὖ τοῦτο γένοιτο, εὖ οἶδα ὅτι πολὺ μεῖζον ἂν ἀχθοίμην, ὥστε οὐκ ἔχω ὅτι χρήσωμαι τούτῳ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ.

> I am aware that I cannot argue against Socrates and prove that I should not do what he commands, but when I am away from him I am overcome by the honor of the masses. Then I flee him like a runaway slave and when I see him, I am ashamed to remember our agreements. And often I would rather he didn't exist at all. But if this were the case, I know well that I would be much more unhappy. In short, I don't know what to do about this man! (216b3–c3)

If Diotima's eros is a straight line leading directly to love of the Good, Alcibiades' eros describes a meandering path, full of delays and detours. Recalcitrant and divided, this runaway is hardly an *orthos erastēs*.

When philosophy masters Alcibiades, Plato argues, it improves him: it makes him feel shame and acknowledge his failings, tempers his tyrannical ambition, and directs his passion from *philotimia* to *philosophia*. But ultimately philosophy cannot master Alcibiades. He is lured by Socrates' siren song but not completely caught. As his seduction story shows, Alcibiades wants to possess Socratic wisdom but does not wish to come by it the hard way, through self-scrutiny and a life of philosophical inquiry. Instead he hopes to trade his body for Socrates' knowledge (217a2–5), although we were alerted at the very beginning of the dialogue that one cannot gain wisdom merely by touching the wise (175c6–d7). Diotima's speech warns that the ascent to true wisdom is arduous and long. Alcibiades at the crossroads is attracted by the steep path; he wants to climb it and promises that he will; but in the end it is the short and easy path he takes, and that path (in philosophy's moral topography) leads nowhere.

Perhaps the image of Alcibiades as a runaway slave indicates the difficulty of following in practice Diotima's abstract theory of eros. To that extent, Alcibiades' failure merely reaffirms the validity of the theory and the superiority of Socrates, the one man who is able to live by its precepts. Or perhaps, with the philosophers, we should blame the democracy, with its empty honors and specious beauty, for turning Alcibiades away from the right path. But was Alcibiades ever even on the right path? We have read Alcibiades' speech as a living enactment of Diotima's erotic theory, but it can equally be seen as a critique of that theory. This is Martha

Nussbaum's (1986) argument: Diotima's eros is abstract and universal; it disregards the physical and emotional needs of the individual. Alcibiades represents a return of the repressed: corporeality, emotion, irrational need, physical desire, human particularity. From the rarified (and, she suggests, impossible) eros of the ascent passage, with Alcibiades' arrival, "we are suddenly, with an abrupt jolt, returned to the world we inhabit and invited . . . to see this vision, too, as a dawning and a revelation" (1986.184–85). Alcibiades, she argues, loves Socrates not as an example of the Beautiful (and thus as a preliminary stage of his own ascent) but as a unique individual; his is an eros very different from—and irreconcilable with—Diotima's.[109] This Alcibiades is no hierophant for the priestess from Mantinea: he is a profaner of the Mysteries and a smasher of that statue of the god he finds within Socrates.[110]

Philosophy blames democracy for corrupting Alcibiades, just as democracy blames philosophy. In this way, each can deny that Alcibiades is a lion cub raised in its own house, nourished by its own love. Alcibiades does not represent a threat from without—a promising philosopher until the demos corrupted him, a good democrat until Socrates corrupted him—but an intrinsic instability within the very structures that produce him. In the *Symposium*, Alcibiades' eros is the product of Diotima's theory of desire: not only is he Socrates' student (and so heir to the wisdom Socrates gained from Diotima), but his desire for the physically ugly but spiritually beautiful Socrates is indirectly informed by the hierarchy of objects established in Diotima's speech. But if Alcibiades' eros is shaped and trained by this theory, it is not completely circumscribed by it. In place of the straight trajectory of *orthos erōs*, Alcibiades' eros—even within the *Symposium*—is wayward, erratic, recalcitrant. It does not proceed directly but doubles back and malingers; it returns to previously shunned objects; it runs away. Diotima's speech, in other words, produces a desire that then eludes it, that not merely diverges from the path of *orthos erōs* but also forces us to question its direction and rectitude. Within the laws of philosophy as within the democracy, Alcibiades' na-

[109] "With his claims that a story tells the truth and that his goal is to open up and to know, he [Alcibiades] suggests that the lover's knowledge of the particular other, gained through an intimacy both bodily and intellectual, is itself a unique and uniquely valuable *kind* of practical understanding, and one that we risk losing if we take the first step up the Socratic ladder" (Nussbaum 1986.190). See also Vlastos 1971.16–17 on this "failure of love."

[110] On the stoniness of Socrates, see Nussbaum 1986.195–98 and Steiner 1996.100–105, who argues that Alcibiades' mutilation of the Herms is a response to his frustration when faced with the stony (self-sufficient, impenetrable) Socrates: the mutilation, she further suggests, "takes one step further and 'physicalises' the challenge [to Diotima's theory of desire] issued by Alcibiades' words" (111 n.85).

ture is *paranomos*: he is not simply an example of Socratic eros or simply an exception to it but (as the contradictory readings of his speech suggest) both at once.[111]

Through their rivalry for Alcibiades, democracy and philosophy both attempt to unravel the paradox of their desire for him, for even as each longs for him and competes to possess him, it lays upon the other its hatred for him and the fact that despite that hatred, it loves him still. Each credits the other's corruption for what is *paranomos* in him and in that way obscures the fact that his *paranomia* is intrinsic, as is the desire it arouses. And while both try to contain Alcibiades' *paranomia*, in the end he eludes both democracy and philosophy. When he is not driven out, he runs away; either way, he always stands to one side of the position designated for him. And, from there, he poses a challenge to the norms that produced him, the norms of democratic sexuality or of Socratic eros, of citizen subjectivity or philosophical self-knowledge. Xenophon tells a story about Alcibiades using Socratic technique to interrogate Pericles on the meaning of *nomos*: for how, he asks, can a man be law-abiding if he doesn't know what law is? Alcibiades then proceeds to show that Pericles himself does not understand the meaning of *nomos* (Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.40–46). This precocious display expresses perfectly Alcibiades' role throughout his life: his *paranomia* asks, What is *nomos*? and forces both democracy and philosophy to concede that they are no longer certain.

From the fifth century on, Alcibiades has been treated as an anomaly, an impossible figure whose individual transgressions ultimately served to resecure the boundaries he crossed, the exception that reconfirmed the rules. The fifth-century general Archestratus supposedly said that Greece could not bear two Alcibiades (Plut. *Alc.* 16.8). For Archestratus, as for many of his biographers (ancient and modern), Alcibiades was an anomaly, unique and uniquely dangerous. But I have argued that Alcibiades was no anomaly but rather was central to the Athenian imagination, and that his manifold perversions and illegitimacies were not exceptional but endemic. Alcibiades represents the potential for *paranomia* within normativity. For even if we were to agree with Archestratus that Greece could not bear two Alcibiades—that he was the exception that proved the "rules" of sex, a "perverse implantation" created by, contained within, and subject to the rules—this aberrant figure aroused a desire that displaced those rules. His eros generates a dissonance within the eroticized

[111] Halperin 1992 notes the indeterminacy of the *Symposium* even on its most fundamental points: "The *Symposium* exhibits a series of alternating doctrinal and counter-doctrinal pressures, and interpreters of the Dialogue need to remain sensitive to each set of pressures" (118).

relations between the demos and its leader, a *dēmerastia* that exposes, beneath the patriotic passions of the democracy, a substratum of paranomic political fantasy. In the saturated locus of desire and fantasy (both "normal" and "perverse") that Alcibiades embodies, we glimpse the complex interrelatedness of normativity and *paranomia*, of desire and its governing protocols, their mutual dependence and also the potential challenge they pose to one another. The eros of Alcibiades thus invites us to rethink the eros of the Athenian democracy and of the democratic citizen. It invites us also to rethink our own desire for that fiction of the masterful and self-mastering citizen-lover, a fiction that we "love and hate and want to possess." Is that desire, too, perverse?

Chapter IV

THE EROTICS OF EMPIRE

In 415, Thucydides reports, a delegation from Egesta came to Athens to ask for support in the Egestaeans' struggle against Syracuse. The Athenians (spurred on by Alcibiades) were eager to send out a force, hoping that this might open the way for them to take the entire island of Sicily. But Nicias, who was to be one of the generals, stood up in the Ekklesia to speak against the expedition. He warned against haste in such a momentous decision and advised the Athenians not to risk what they had for an uncertain return, taking on another enemy abroad while they were fighting the Peloponnesians at home. He capped his speech with a plea to the older Athenians:

> Οὓς ἐγὼ ὁρῶν νῦν ἐνθάδε τῷ αὐτῷ ἀνδρὶ παρακελευστοὺς καθημένους φοβοῦμαι, καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις ἀντιπαρακελεύομαι μὴ καταισχυνθῆναι, εἴ τῴ τις παρακάθηται τῶνδε, ὅπως μὴ δόξει, ἐὰν μὴ ψηφίζηται πολεμεῖν, μαλακὸς εἶναι, μηδ', ὅπερ ἂν αὐτοὶ πάθοιεν, δυσέρωτας εἶναι τῶν ἀπόντων.
>
> I am fearful seeing those young men sitting here at the bidding of Alcibiades and I urge the older men not to feel ashamed, if they are sitting next to one of them, that they will seem soft [*malakos*] if they vote against war, nor to suffer what these men suffer and fall morbidly in love with what is distant [*duserōtas einai tōn apontōn*]. (6.13.1)

The expedition to Sicily, in Nicias's speech, is a matter of desire, the object not just of eros but of *duserōs*, a fatal or diseased passion. Indeed, throughout his discussion of this ambitious expedition, Thucydides speaks in the language of love. The Sicilian Expedition is a *duserōs* for what is distant, a lust to sail, a longing to see new sights, an excessive passion that afflicts the entire population (6.24.2–4). Empire is the object of eros, and eros the mechanism of empire. But what is this eros? What does it mean to "fall morbidly in love" with a distant conquest?

The metaphor of eros is often taken as Thucydides' commentary on the nature of Athenian imperialism.[1] Eros is the irrational passion that drives

[1] Ehrenberg 1947.51; de Romilly 1963.77–79; Cornford 1965 [1907].201–20; Immerwahr 1973.27–28; Forde 1989.16–17, 32–37, 148–49. Arrowsmith 1973 speaks of an erotic politics of imperialism: "a politics that refuses all the old modalities and that, deliberately and passionately, coolly and erotically, risks everything it has in the hope of winning more. In short, the politics of insatiable greed—of *pleonexia*—in a world where world-conquest, or something like it, lay within shooting distance" (130).

Athens on, insatiably, to ever more ambitious conquests. In Thucydides' dichotomy between *pronoia* and *tukhē* (foresight and chance), eros leads astray the best-laid plans and makes the Athenians act against their own best interests. Thus Francis Cornford, for example, argued that the narrative of the Sicilian Expedition is more tragic than strictly historical, with eros as a sort of *atē* (madness) driving Athens on to *hubris* and, inevitably, disaster.[2] Eros, in this reading, is shorthand for the murky psychology that drives the empire and fuels Athens's ruinous overexpansion.

Without contesting this reading of eros as a metaphor for empire, this chapter reverses the equation and reads empire as a metaphor for eros. By this I do not mean empire as a metaphor for eros in general, although one could certainly pursue the similarities between these two notoriously insatiable tyrants. Instead, I examine Thucydides' discourse of imperialism as part of a discussion of the eros specific to democracy and the democratic subject. This may seem a surprising connection, but we have seen that this eros was a topic the Athenians often approached obliquely: the complexities of democracy's erotics were worked through in debates about political oratory, for example, or in the ambiguous responses evoked by a purple robe and persuasive lisp. Athens's imperial discourse offered theories of power, of course, but it also provided a forum for the contemplation of Athenian masculinity, its logic, costs, and consequences. Cleon claimed that democracy and imperialism were fundamentally incompatible (Thuc. 3.37.1–2), but we will see that the logic of Athenian imperialism is an extrapolation of the logic of democratic masculinity, and that the *duserōs* of empire is less a special historical instance of the eros of democracy than that eros pushed to its logical conclusion.

After the wide-ranging discussions of the two preceding chapters, this chapter returns to Thucydides and the ideal of citizenship he encapsulates in Pericles' Epitaphios. I have been taking that ideal (as, indeed, it presents itself) as paradigmatic, a canonical expression of a canonical ideal of citizen sexuality. In chapters 2 and 3, I looked at two responses to it in the cultural discourse attached to the names Cleon and Alcibiades. Here I trace another critical reaction, this time within Thucydides' own text. The Sicilian Expedition, in this reading, represents not a historical falling-away from Pericles' perfection under his successors (a notion I contested in chapter 2) but instead a historiographic working-through of a problem inherent within that Periclean ideal. Of course, by focusing on a single text in this way, we get only a partial picture: as I will indicate, Thucydides' is merely one possible way of understanding the erotics of empire and there is much that he excludes. What we lose in breadth, however, we gain in

[2] Cornford 1965 [1907].79–250; cf. de Romilly 1963.322–29; Liebeschuetz 1968a; Connor 1984.167–68.

the opportunity to mine in depth one particular—and particularly rich—vein of Athenian thought.

This chapter proceeds as a gloss on Nicias's objection to the Sicilian mission and the double fear it expresses: softness (*malakia*) and morbid passion (*duserōs*). What prohibitions, and what corresponding prescriptions, lie behind the fear of "softness"? In their imperial ventures, I suggest, the Athenians pursue an elusive ideal of masculine "hardness," the same ideal we saw canonized in Pericles' vision of the Athenian citizen as *eleutheros*, free and noble, a manly lover of the city and its power, and master of his own person (*to sōma autarkes*, 2.41.1). Nicias's fear of softness evokes this ideal and also the polar logic that sustains it: the Athenian is hard, not soft; master, not slave; free, not constrained. In the preceding chapter we saw a critique of such polar logic from the direction of its exclusions: Alcibiades' confusion of the legitimate and the illegitimate, I argued, posed a fundamental challenge to the polarities that ground Athenian subjectivity. Thucydides' imperial discourse offers a critique of that same logic, not by reintroducing what it excludes but by taking it to an extreme at which its fissures and impossibilities become painfully apparent. Within the psychology of empire, hardness means domination over others and *eleutheria* takes the form of tyranny. The pursuit of their ideal then involves the Athenians in a tragic dialectic in which the master is dependent on and haunted by those he dominates, and the very quest for freedom entails an enslaving necessity.

The first half of this chapter focuses on the shame of softness; the second half turns to Nicias's other fear, Athens's diseased longing for what is absent (*duserōs tōn apontōn*). The absent object of this longing, I argue, is not just Sicily, not just imperial hegemony, but that very ideal of an unimpeachable masculinity and unmediated mastery. Sicily promises to satiate Athens's desire by securing once and for all the freedom and hardness of the Athenian citizen. But that promise is empty, and all the Athenians ultimately find in Sicily is debilitation and the endless deferrals of a longing for an impossible ideal. The westward path by which Athens seeks to satisfy its morbid eros leads inevitably toward death in a Sicilian prison pit. *Duserōs tōn apontōn* will thus turn out to be the logic not only of empire but of Athens's entire existence.

It is also the logic of the history of that existence. The Sicilian venture ends with the utter devastation of Athens's forces: men, ships, everything is lost. Nevertheless, both the war and the text continue. How does history overcome such trauma? Thucydides transforms Athens's devastation into historical narrative, a useful prognosis for the future and a "possession for all time" (1.22.4). But in that very transformation, does his text reproduce the trauma it describes? If Athens's imperial eros is a sickness, *duserōs*, is the historiography of the empire a symptom or a cure? Is any

history of Athens's imperial passion—the present one included—itself necessarily a *duserōs tōn apontōn*?[3]

Hard on Empire

In Thucydides 6.13.1, Nicias urges the old men not to feel ashamed if they appear soft, *malakos*, if they vote against the expedition to Sicily. To vote against sailing might seem "soft," or at least might open an old man to charges of "softness" from the expedition's young supporters. Conversely, voting for Sicily is, by implication, not soft: it is strong, courageous, "hard." And because the debate over Sicily is a debate over Athens's imperial policy more broadly, we could extrapolate from here: limiting the empire is "soft"; imperial expansion, "hard."

This language of hardness and softness recurs throughout Thucydides' discussion of Athenian imperialism; in the speeches of Athenians and Peloponnesians alike it is recognized as the idiom of empire. To fail to free Greece from the tyranny of Athens's growing empire, say the Corinthians in book 1, would be stupidity, negligence, or softness (ἀξυνεσίας ἢ μαλακίας ἢ ἀμελείας, 1.122.4); it would show the Peloponnesians to be cowards and deserving of shameful slavery. The Spartan king Archidamus is accused of softness for not pursuing war enthusiastically (δοκῶν . . . μαλακὸς εἶναι . . . οὐ παραινῶν προθύμως πολεμεῖν, 2.18.3): dovishness carries with it the appearance of softness, and that appearance alone can be reason enough for a general to be exiled from Sparta (φεύγειν ἐκ Σπάρτης δόξαντας μαλακισθῆναι, 5.72.1). Pericles condemns equally those who through softness (μαλακίᾳ) fail to live up to their reputations and those who through boldness (θρασύτητι) grasp at what does not belong to them (2.61.4): the failure of softness and aggressive appropriation are contrasted as two equally detestable stances. Cleon, urging the Athenians to exact harsh punishment from their rebellious subjects in Mytilene, warns that to be soft toward the Mytilenians (μαλακίζεσθαι) would be dangerous for Athens and would win no gratitude from the allies (3.37.2). Here softness is explicitly linked to a loss of Athenian imperial hegemony, for Cleon goes on to argue that such softness toward Mytilene would pose a long-term threat to the empire as a whole. Softness is the scourge of empire: it is shameful and condemnable. Imperialism would seem to be a stage for the performance of hardness, or (to put it in Thucydides' negative terms) a way of erasing softness.

[3] The ideas in this chapter owe a great deal to Gunderson 2000b. Reading Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* through Hegel (as well as Derrida and Freud), he shows how the desire for mastery destabilizes both Roman *ingenium* and Sallust's history of it, as Sallust's own historiographical *ingenium* is drawn within the *lubido* he tries to master in his material.

What exactly is this "softness," though? We might be tempted to translate *malakia* (as many commentators do) simply as "cowardice." After all, imperialism was a military enterprise, and obviously no one wants a cowardly soldier.[4] But the semantic scope of the word is broader than this. The lexicons list a range of meanings: not just soft but dainty, gentle, delicate, feeble, morally weak, sickly, and effeminate.[5] *Malakia*'s antonym is not just hardness or strength but *andreia*, manly valor. And just as *andreia* conflates manliness in general with military prowess, so *malakia*, in imputing cowardice, implies a broader failure of masculinity. *Malakia* is unmanliness.

The welding of imperial aggression and manly hardness perhaps does not surprise us. We are familiar with those early fifth-century vases depicting a naked Greek man stabbing a fallen Amazon—dressed suspiciously like a Persian—in the thigh or breast. The message of such images is clear: the defeated enemy is a woman, *malakos*; defeat feminizes the defeated and allows the resultant femininity to be figured as the essence that made defeat inevitable.[6] One of the most famous examples of this mapping of foreign relations by sexual coordinates is the so-called Eurymedon vase, which shows a man dressed in foreign garb bending over to receive the man who strides purposefully toward him, penis in hand. The inscription reads "I am Eurymedon; I stand bent over." Although the interpretation of this scene is debated, Dover for one reads it as an expression of patriotic fervor after the Persian Wars: "This expresses the exultation of the 'manly' Athenians at their victory over the 'womanish' Persians at the river Eurymedon in the early 460s; it proclaims, 'We've buggered the Persians!' "[7] If his reading is right, the vase shows us in

[4] *Malakia* loses battles (Thuc. 2.85.2) and shames generals (5.7.2, 5.72.1) and armies (6.78.4). In battle after battle, commanders exhort their troops not to be *malakos* in fighting the enemy (5.9.10, 7.68.3, 7.77.7). Because Thucydides figures the Peloponnesian Wars largely as wars over Athens's growing imperial power, one cannot make a strict separation of the military and the imperial.

[5] Aristotle yokes *malakia* with *akolasia* and *truphē* (licentiousness and luxury) and defines it as "a failure to resist or be strong in the face of things that most men are able to resist" (*Nic. Eth.* 1150b1–2); its opposite is *karteria*, fortitude (*Nic. Eth.* 1116a14, 1150a31–b19; cf. Eur. *Suppl.* 882–85, where *to malthakon biou* is contrasted to *t'andreion*). Demosthenes (11.22) and Lysias (10.11) associate it with *rhathumia* (laxity); Herodotus, with femininity (7.153.4; cf. Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 1150b15); Xenophon, with *habrotēs*, luxuriousness (*Symp.* 8.8). See also Hdt. 3.51.2, 6.11.2; Ar. *Wasps* 1455; Pl. *Phdr.* 239c5–d7. Cf. Huart 1968.373–76 on *malakia* and related terms in Thucydides.

[6] Lysias's Funeral Oration plays on the female *phusis* acquired by defeat: the Amazons were considered men for their warlike spirits, but when they were defeated in battle by real men (i.e., Athenians), they "took on a character that was like their sex . . . and they seemed to be women more because of their perils than because of their bodies" (5–6).

[7] Dover 1978.105. This interpretation has recently come under attack. See Pinney 1984; Smith 1999; and the clever reading by Davidson (1997.182), who reconstructs the experi-

almost cartoonish clarity the string of equations so common in fifth-century literature: military victory = machismo = sexual dominance. The schematics of sexual and military mastery on the Eurymedon vase would seem to dovetail perfectly with the dichotomy between hardness and softness within Thucydides' imperial discourse. If eros drives the Athenians to attack Sicily, it would seem preliminarily to be this same eros of sexual domination, the eros that makes a Greek man with an incipient erection approach a cowed and defeated foreigner.

Imperialism is a referendum on Athens's manliness and a proof that it is hard, not soft. But it is not just masculinity that is at stake in Athens's imperial aggression, but also Athenianness itself. To be an Athenian, as we have seen, is to be a man and manly.[8] Thucydides' Epitaphios offers an ideal of cultured masculinity in which the love of beauty and wisdom is itself virile (*philokaloumen te gar met' euteleias kai philosophoumen aneu malakias*, 2.40.1).[9] That virility, moreover, comes naturally to the Athenians: their *andreia*, as we saw, is a matter of character, not law; of nature, not training (2.39.4). To soften, then, would be for the Athenians to betray their true selves, as Cleon suggests when he urges the demos not to weaken against Mytilene: "Do not become traitors to yourselves . . . now pay them back without softening [*malakisthentes*]" (Μὴ οὖν προδόται γένησθε ὑμῶν αὐτῶν . . . νῦν ἀνταπόδοτε μὴ μαλακισθέντες, 3.40.7). An Athenian is hard: that is the citizen's essence and the truth of his being.

But this essence and being are attained at a cost, for although Pericles presents effortless hardness as part of Athens's unalienable nature, he also uses *malakia* as a goad toward that nature. The glorious dead, Pericles says, did not soften (*emalakisthē*, 2.42.4) in the face of death, but understood that "for a man of spirit, cowardice with softness [*malakisthēnai*] is more grievous than an unforeseen death accompanied by strength and communal hope" (ἀλγεινοτέρα γὰρ ἀνδρί γε φρόνημα ἔχοντι ἡ μετὰ τοῦ [ἐν τῷ] μαλακισθῆναι κάκωσις ἢ ὁ μετὰ ῥώμης καὶ κοινῆς ἐλπίδος ἅμα

ence of the Athenian drinker at a symposium, looking at the vase's figures and reading its inscription aloud: "*He's* Eurymedon and he's been had." The traditional interpretation is supported by Cartledge 1999.56–57.

[8] See the section "Just Love" in my introduction.

[9] The clause *philosophoumen aneu malakias* does not contrast the effete intellectualism of a thinker with the virile courage of a fighter (as Gomme 1956.120–21 suggests), so much as it tries to synthesize the two. Cf. Wardman 1959.40, who sees a contrast between democratic deliberation and bravery (not a vision of "aesthetes and metaphysicians buckling on hoplite armour," 41). So, too, Kakridis 1961.51–52; Orwin 1994.17. Cartledge reminds us that the ideal Athenian of the Epitaphios was a hoplite, not the *thētes* who powered the Athenian navy (Cartledge 1999.61–65; cf. B. Strauss 1996); I argued in chapter 1, though, that part of the hegemonic force of that ideal is its claim to describe all Athenians, regardless of their status.

γιγνόμενος ἀναίσθητος θάνατος, 2.43.6). This dense sentence aligns on one side masculinity, spirit (*phronēma*: the word also connotes mental resolve, will, and courage), and strength (*rhōmē*); added to this is *elpis* (hope), a force that figures prominently in the discourse of empire and, along with eros, drives the imperial juggernaut. Arrayed against this optimistic, spirited manliness is *kakōsis* (suffering or ill-treatment, but the adjective *kakos*—base, cowardly—is surely to be heard behind the abstract noun), accompanied by softness. Masculinity, spirit, hope, strength versus base ill-treatment and softness. But there is a final term on each side. Manly courage is aligned with death; softness, on the other hand, is associated with pain (*algeinotera*) but also, by inference, life. Pericles perhaps alludes here to the traditional Homeric choice between a long, obscure life and death with eternal glory. In Pericles' version of this alternative, the choice is between death and softness. Life itself is soft, and manliness means death. The Athenian may be hard by nature, but he can attain that nature only by dying. Hardness is thus glorious but deathly, and the Periclean ideal mortifying.

The Epitaphios, at the same time as it offers the Athenians an idealized vision of themselves, also predicts inevitable shame and failure, a life more grievous (*algeinotera*) than death itself.[10] *Malakia* is the name given to that life of shame. *Malakia* haunts our hardy Athenian as a scandal that must always be overcome, an accusation that must be denied with every act, but can finally be denied only by dying on the battlefield. This negativity holds the ideal aloft. It is significant that Thucydides does not offer an antonym for softness: apart from this passage (in which *malakia* is the opposite of death, with all its force and hope), we do not find this negative term paired with a positive term, "strength" or "hardness" or even "bravery." Hardness—which I have been extrapolating from *malakia*—is, in fact, a figment, a phantasmatic notion that has no literal presence in the text.[11] Thus the ideal of manliness comes to appear less an innate characteristic of the Athenians than a desperate projection, a fantasy born of shame and failure.

In Thucydides this phantasmatic hardness drives the machine of empire. This was not, of course, the only way to imagine the sexuality of

[10] A similar point is suggested in Pericles' second speech: look to your future glory and your unshameful present (ἔς τε τὸ μέλλον καλὸν προγνόντες ἔς τε τὸ αὐτίκα μὴ αἰσχρὸν, 2.64.6). The future will be glorious. The present, though, is at best not shameful.

[11] *Andreia*, which might be taken as the antonym of *malakia*, is used more often of Athens's enemies than of Athens in Thucydides: of Spartans (2.39.1; 2.87.3, 4; 2.89.2; 4.120.3; 4.126.5, 6; 5.9.9; 5.72.2), of Syracusans (6.69.1; 6.72.2, 4). Only Pericles uses it of Athenians (2.39.4, 2.64.2). For Aristotle only death in battle proves *andreia* (*Nic. Eth.* 1115a25–b6), but he discounts the *andreia* of the citizen-soldier, because his courage is motivated by honor (1116a16–b4).

imperialism. Indeed, elsewhere imperial power is viewed as the source of an enervating and "softening" luxury. In the final section of Herodotus's *History*, for example, Cyrus rejects Artembares' proposal that the Persians capitalize on their power to seize more fertile land, saying that if they did so, they should be prepared to be subjects instead of rulers: "For soft men tend to come from soft land" (9.122.3). Empire is associated with a luxury that breeds softness; that softness in turn transforms rulers into slaves (*douleuein*, 9.122.4).[12] Pseudo-Xenophon implies something similar when he condemns the promiscuous mingling of cultures and luxuries empire has caused (διὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς θαλάττης πρῶτον μὲν τρόπους εὐωχιῶν ἐξηῦρον ἐπιμισγόμενοι ἄλλῃ ἄλλοις, *Ath. Pol.* 2.7). Whatever is pleasurable anywhere in the world is brought to Athens, he complains (2.7), and the result is a city where slaves and free men are indistinguishable in their extravagant luxuries (τοὺς δούλους τρυφᾶν αὐτόθι καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς διαιτᾶσθαι ἐνίους, 1.11) and "it is necessary for financial reasons to be slaves to the slaves" (ἀπὸ χρημάτων ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἀνδραπόδοις δουλεύειν, 1.11).[13]

Isocrates develops these ideas in an overtly sexual idiom when he represents empire as a seduction that men of sense and moderation must resist.[14] In his speech *On the Peace*, he offers the Spartans as a monitory example of the corruption of imperialism: they attained their naval empire due to their land hegemony and the self-discipline they cultivated during it (8.102); they lost that same empire due to the license (*akolasia*) this hegemony bred.

> Οὐ γὰρ ἔτι τοὺς νόμους ἐφύλαττον οὓς παρὰ τῶν προγόνων παρέλαβον, οὐδ' ἐν τοῖς ἤθεσιν ἔμενον οἷς πρότερον εἶχον, ἀλλ' ὑπολαβόντες ἐξεῖναι ποιεῖν αὑτοῖς ὅ τι ἂν βουληθῶσιν, εἰς πολλὴν ταραχὴν κατέστησαν. Οὐ γὰρ ᾔδεσαν τὴν ἐξουσίαν, ἧς πάντες εὔχονται τυχεῖν, ὡς δύσχρηστός ἐστιν, οὐδ' ὡς παραφρονεῖν ποιεῖ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας αὐτήν, οὐδ' ὅτι τὴν φύσιν ὁμοίαν ἔχει ταῖς ἑταίραις ταῖς ἐρᾶν μὲν αὑτῶν ποιούσαις, τοὺς δὲ χρωμένους ἀπολλυούσαις.

> For they no longer preserved the laws that they inherited from their ancestors or kept to the customs they had held in the past, but they decided they had the license to do whatever they wanted and so fell into disorder. For they did not see that this license that all men pray for is hard to manage and drives

[12] On imperial greed in Herodotus, see Balot 2001.99–135. Compare Eur. *Tr.* 991–97, where Hecuba imagines Helen coming to Troy dazzled by Paris's wealth and splendor. The lure of empire is a feminine love of finery.

[13] On this passage and the concept of "imported luxuries," see Bliss 1964; Braund 1994. See also Plato, for whom empire's wealth breeds a lazy and indulgent demos (*Gorg.* 515e, 518e–519a; cf. Plut. *Per.* 11.4, 12.5).

[14] Davidson 1990. C. H. Wilson 1966 contrasts Isocrates' vision of empire to Thucydides'. On the trope of empire as seduction, see also Spurr 1993.173–77.

> those who prize it mad, and that it is similar in nature to those hetairai who make men fall in love with them, but destroy any who are intimate with them. (8.102–3)

For Isocrates, as for Thucydides, empire is an object of eros. But Isocrates articulates that eros within an ethics of self-mastery. Empire is sexy, but it is a lure to be resisted, a courtesan who will corrupt the morals of the unwary young man. The key terms for him are not *malakia* and its antonyms but rather *sōphrosunē* and *akrasia*, moderation versus licentiousness. For Isocrates empire is not a proof of strength, but an indication of weakness: it is a failure of self-control, an effeminate yielding to pleasure, softness.[15]

We hear echoes of empire's siren song in Thucydides. The Egestaeans' request for aid and promise of money are characterized as "untrue enticements" (ἐπαγωγὰ καὶ οὐκ ἀληθῆ, 6.8.2). For the demos the enticement is primarily financial: the prospect of immediate pay and long-term employment (6.24.3).[16] This income underwrites the beautification of the city and aristocratization of the masses of which Pericles boasts in the Epitaphios. Pericles goes to some lengths to legitimate this wealth, as we saw, and to draw it within an ethics of hardy frugality (*met' euteleias . . . aneu malakias*) and patriotic sacrifice. The harvest of empire, as he represents it, is not luxury but *dunamis*, the vigorous force that makes Athens an object of love for its citizens and emulation for the rest of Greece. But if in Pericles' speech Thucydides imagines imperial wealth as a show of power, in the figure of Alcibiades he presents it as a submission to pleasure. For Alcibiades the profit of rule (his own and Athens's) will be self-aggrandizement and the indulgence of his extravagant aristocratic pastimes (6.12.2). So says his enemy Nicias, but Thucydides seconds the opinion: in Alcibiades, the desire for empire is a desire for personal wealth and glory (6.15.2–3).[17]

[15] Davidson 1990.25–29: "Isocrates brings his discussion of imperialism firmly within the context of conventional Greek morality, especially that part of morality which stresses the necessity of self-control" (26). Pericles' enemies drew on the same associations when they compared Pericles' beautified Athens to a boastful woman (*alazona gunaika*) tricked out with expensive monuments and statues paid for by the allies (Plut. *Per.* 12.2–3). While Isocrates represents the Athenians as young men corrupted by the seductress Empire, Pericles' enemies represent them as henpecked husbands, spending money they don't have on jewelry and cosmetics for a pampered wife or mistress.

[16] Munn 2000.99–101 suggests that part of the conservative opposition to the Sicilian Expedition was based on the income (and status) it promised the lower classes. On the economics of the empire more generally, see, e.g., de Romilly 1963.71–77; M. Finley 1973.156–63, 172–73; 1978; Carter 1986.26–38; Wood 1988.122–25; Kallet-Marx 1993a, esp. 11–20, 198–202; Crane 1998.148–71.

[17] On Alcibiades' *pleonexia*, see Balot 2001.166–72, and on "desire for more" as the motive for the Sicilian Expedition in Thucydides, 163–78. Cf. Huart 1968.388–403.

This is the desire Nicias calls a *duserōs*, and against it he tries to forge a stance of energetic resistance. To the Athenians' pleonectic ambitions he opposes a policy of *sōphrosunē* (*sōphronoumen*, 6.11.7). He urges the Athenians to secure their present holdings before reaching for more (6.10.5), to control their rebellious allies before attacking rebels whom they would be unable to control even after defeating them (6.10.5–11.1), to derive confidence from their mastery over the intentions of the enemy (6.11.6) and respect from their refusal to engage (6.11.4). In this ethics of imperial *enkrateia*, the good citizen is one who takes care of his own body and property (6.9.2), who husbands his resources, and manages his own and the city's affairs with caution and restraint.[18]

In this way, Nicias seeks to disentangle imperial aggression from citizen masculinity and to discover a strength in staying home to counterbalance the charge of *malakia*. And yet, although he urges the older Athenians not to be ashamed lest they appear soft for voting against the expedition, he does not explicitly refute the accusation. He does not say that softness is not shameful, or that a vote against Sicily might not seem soft, or even that it is not soft. His policy of nonengagement implicitly draws on a traditional ethics of self-mastery, but he does not elaborate this policy as a theory of masculinity to set against that of his opponent. Moreover, as he himself anticipates, his *logos* is weak against the passionate character of the Athenians (καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς τρόπους τοὺς ὑμετέρους ἀσθενὴς ἄν μου ὁ λόγος εἴη, 6.9.3). He fails to convince them and loses the debate to Alcibiades, for whom any retreat from Athens's imperial destiny is a fatal failure of spirit.

With Nicias's defeat is lost any viable alternative to the equation between masculine hardness and imperial aggression: empire becomes an occasion not for self-mastery but for the mastery of others. Thus the logic of empire in Thucydides reiterates the polar logic of Athenian manhood, with its strong division between erastes and eromenos and between the active, aggressive sexuality of the citizen and the putative passivity of the noncitizen. But this opposition is pushed further in imperial discourse: at its extreme, it becomes a polarity not just between lover and beloved but between master and slave. The Melian Dialogue, which scripts the theoretical principles to be enacted in the Sicilian Expedition, reduces imperial relations to an essential dialectic of antagonism in which the positions of

[18] Contrast Thuc. 1.76.2, where the Athenians themselves confess to having been "conquered" by honor, fear, and profit in their drive toward empire; as Balot 2001.152 comments, this is the moral diction of *akrasia*. Note also that in Thucydides war is a *kinēsis*, a movement or disturbance (1.1.1; cf. 1.93.3, 5.10.5, 6.34.4, 6.36.2, 8.15.1) and thus inimical to the placidity of *enkrateia*.

ruler and ruled are rigidly fixed and mutually exclusive.[19] The Melians want to remain neutral (5.84.2, 5.94, 5.112.3), but Athens binds them within this polarity: either you are the stronger or the weaker, the ruler or the ruled. Within this dialectic, "justice is determined by an equal necessity on each side, and the stronger do what they can and the weak submit" (δίκαια μὲν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπείῳ λόγῳ ἀπὸ τῆς ἴσης ἀνάγκης κρίνεται, δυνατὰ δὲ οἱ προύχοντες πράσσουσι καὶ οἱ ἀσθενεῖς ξυγχωροῦσιν, 5.89).[20] In the Melian Dialogue, this law is stated without justification and is accepted without much argument. But as Gomme comments,[21] this was not the accustomed way to speak about relations between two Greek states (even if it was the underlying principle in practice), and by speaking this way the Athenians are assimilating their relations with Melos to those between master and slave, between whom "equal necessity" takes the form of unequal power.

Throughout Thucydides the subject states refer to themselves as slaves and use this word as a rallying cry against Athenian hegemony.[22] Athens does not dispute this language, but only argues for its necessity. Athens must enslave the subject states or become a slave itself (2.63.1, 2.63.3, 6.20.2). Pericles in the Epitaphios declared the Athenians *eleutheroi* by nature and represented empire as a manifestation of that nature, the gratuitous beneficence (*kharis*) of free and noble men toward their friends and allies (2.40.4): "We alone benefit others generously, not with a calculation of the profits but with the confidence of our *eleutheria*" (καὶ μόνοι οὐ τοῦ ξυμφέροντος μᾶλλον λογισμῷ ἢ τῆς ἐλευθερίας τῷ πιστῷ ἀδεῶς τινὰ ὠφελοῦμεν, 2.40.5). Its imperial expansion, as Athens represents it, is merely the extension of *eleutheria* to all Greece.[23] But at Melos the dy-

[19] Cf. Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 1.14: "The ruler is necessarily hated by the ruled" (μισεῖσθαι μὲν ἀνάγκη τὸν ἄρχοντα ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀρχομένου). The Melian Dialogue simplifies a power relation that elsewhere in Thucydides is shown to be much more complex: see, e.g., 1.8.3, where Thucydides says that weaker states tolerated slavery out of desire for profit. One of the effects of the war is this hardening of positions.

[20] Compare the similar sentiment voiced by Hermocrates at 4.61.5: "It is human nature in every case to rule over what yields and to defend against what attacks" (πέφυκε γὰρ τὸ ἀνθρώπειον διὰ παντὸς ἄρχειν μὲν τοῦ εἴκοντος, φυλάσσεσθαι δὲ τὸ ἐπιόν). Bruell 1974.16–17; Luginbill 1999.28–30.

[21] Gomme with the addenda and comments of Andrewes in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.162–64; cf. Crane 1998.236–57. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*de Thuc.* 39) deems Athens's speech appropriate for a foreign king, not for a polis speaking to Greeks whom it itself had freed from the Persians.

[22] See, e.g., 1.121.5, 1.122.3, 1.124.3, 3.10.3–4, 3.63.3, 4.86.1, 4.86.4, 4.92.4, 4.92.7, 5.9.9, 5.86.1, 5.92, 5.100.1, 6.76.2, 6.76.4, 6.80.5, 7.66.2. On the trope of slavery for empire, see de Romilly 1963.80–82; cf. Cartledge 1993a.150–51. The popularity or unpopularity of the empire is discussed by de Ste. Croix 1954; Bradeen 1960; Quinn 1964.

[23] The empire had its beginnings in Athens's claim to have liberated Greece from Persia; later, this same love of liberty requires the expansion of the empire to insure for Athens and

namic shifts: Athenian freedom no longer merely justifies empire; it requires empire.[24] If one is either the ruler or the ruled, then domination is not only the highest form of liberty but, in fact, the only form of liberty. Alcibiades makes this clear in his arguments in favor of the expedition against Sicily: we cannot limit our empire as we wish, he argues, "because we are in danger of being ruled by others if we do not rule over others" (διὰ τὸ ἀρχθῆναι ἂν ὑφ' ἑτέρων αὐτοῖς κίνδυνον εἶναι, εἰ μὴ αὐτοὶ ἄλλων ἄρχοιμεν, 6.18.3).[25]

The antonym of slavery is no longer freedom but rule, and contrary to what Pericles says, it is not because Athens is *eleutheros* that it rules but because it rules that it is *eleutheros*. More than just its power, then, what is at risk in Athens's empire is its *eleutheria* and, because freedom is vital to the definition of Athens, its very being. This is why in the Melian Dialogue Athens insists that it, too, is fighting for its life: the Melians face slavery or death, but the Athenians risk losing their empire, and if rule is freedom and freedom is what it means to be Athenian, then they too face slavery and death.

Athenian imperialism thus becomes a Hegelian dialectic in which master and slave are locked in a life-and-death struggle for recognition and being.[26] The master in Hegel's dialectic is master only insofar as he is recognized by the slave. This leaves him in a weak position, though: he cannot destroy the slave (for without him he would not be master), but as long as the slave exists, the master's being is dependent and mediated, and mediated by a mere slave, whose opinion is worthless. Alexandre Kojève calls this situation the "tragedy" of the master: seeking the truth of his being from a slave, unable ever to negate or supersede the slave, the

its allies freedom from Sparta. See, e.g., 1.73.4; cf. 5.89, 6.83.2; Strasburger 1958.23–30; de Romilly 1963.244–50; Raaflaub 1984.51–59; Wood 1988.135. Sparta makes a similar claim based on its history of freeing Greek states from tyrants. On the passion for freedom as a force behind Athenian imperialism, see also Galpin 1983–84; Forde 1989.28–40.

[24] Raaflaub 1984 examines the tension between rule as the precondition for freedom and freedom as the justification for rule and analyzes the Athenian notion "daß wirklich und vollständig frei nur der sein könne, der über andere herrsche, daß 'Macht' somit eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung für 'Freiheit' sei" (46). Cf. de Romilly 1963.80: "The act of ruling was really considered as the perfect expression of both internal and external freedom, and, in fact, as a superior freedom." See further Galpin 1983–84.109; Euben 1986. Rosenbloom 1995 studies the imperial dialectic between freedom and domination within Aeschylean tragedy.

[25] This logic is reiterated in Sicily by Euphemos: "We affirm that we rule in Greece so as not to be subject to others and we are liberating the Sicilians in order not to be harmed by them" (φαμὲν γὰρ ἄρχειν μὲν τῶν ἐκεῖ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπακούωμεν ἄλλου, ἐλευθεροῦν δὲ τὰ ἐνθάδε, ὅπως μὴ ὑπ' αὐτῶν βλαπτώμεθα, 6.87.2). Compare, too, Pericles' second speech in book 2, where *arkhē* is the essence of Athenian glory and in failing to pursue that *arkhē*, the Athenians are weak in their resolve and slaves to the reversals of fortune (2.61.2–3).

[26] Hegel 1977 [1807] §§166–96 with Kojève 1969.3–30.

master is in the end the truly dependent consciousness.[27] He is dependent, moreover, not only upon the slave but upon the very logic of the dialectic, the necessity to rule or be ruled. The tragedy of the master is his subjection to the dialectic itself, to a struggle which he can neither win nor escape.[28]

The mastery of the master is thus constrained by necessity. It is this same necessity (*anankē*) that powers Athens's imperial aggression and drives it against Sicily.[29]

> καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ταμιεύεσθαι ἐς ὅσον βουλόμεθα ἄρχειν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀνάγκη, ἐπειδήπερ ἐν τῷδε καθέσταμεν, τοῖς μὲν ἐπιβουλεύειν, τοὺς δὲ μὴ ἀνιέναι, διὰ τὸ ἀρχθῆναι ἂν ὑφ᾽ ἑτέρων αὐτοῖς κίνδυνον εἶναι, εἰ μὴ αὐτοὶ ἄλλων ἄρχοιμεν. καὶ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπισκεπτέον ὑμῖν τοῖς ἄλλοις τὸ ἥσυχον, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἐς τὸ ὁμοῖον μεταλήψεσθε.
>
> It is not up to us how much we want to husband our empire, but it is necessary [*anankē*], because we are in this position, to plot against some and not to let go of others, since we run the risk of being ruled if we do not ourselves rule over others. And you must not think about quietism in the same way as others do, unless you are also going to change your way of life so that it is like theirs. (6.18.3)

Nicias had presented the Sicilian Expedition as a matter of desire, something longed for, albeit with a diseased longing (*duserōs*). Alcibiades in this passage represents it as a matter of necessity. The Athenians might want to stay at home, but they do not have that option. Necessity (ἀνάγκη, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν) is set as a limiting factor on desire (βουλόμεθα). With this psychic husbandry (ταμιεύεσθαι), what Athens wants becomes what it needs; desire becomes desperation.

Empire may be an object of longing, but that longing itself is implicated in necessity. The history of Athens's imperial expansion is a history of *anankē*. From the moment Athens assumed hegemony at the end of the Persian Wars, "we were compelled [*katānankasthēmen*] to expand our power to the present point, compelled first by fear, then by honor, and finally by advantage" (1.75.3). Had the Spartans been in their position, they would have been subject to a similar *anankē* (*anankasthentas*, 1.76.1). The necessity that governs this imperial expansion is none other

[27] Kojève 1969.19, 46–47; Hegel 1977 [1807] §192.

[28] Kojève 1969.29: "As long as the Master lives, he himself is always enslaved by the World of which he is the Master." Cf. 22: "The Master is fixed in his Mastery . . . Mastery is the supreme given value for him, beyond which he cannot go."

[29] On *anankē* in Thucydides, see Schreckenberg 1964; de Romilly 1971; Kohl 1977.131; Cogan 1981.112; Ostwald 1988; Luginbill 1999.46–48. The tension between necessity and justice in Athens's empire is one of the central focuses of Straussian work on Thucydides: e.g., L. Strauss 1964.174–92; Bruell 1974; Orwin 1984, 1994.38–56; see further Woodhead 1970.3–28.

than the dialectic of mastery and slavery that is stated so baldly in the Melian Dialogue, the "necessary fact of nature" and eternal law that men rule wherever they can (διὰ παντὸς ὑπὸ φύσεως ἀναγκαίας, οὗ ἂν κρατῇ, ἄρχειν, 5.105.2).[30] Men rule—Athenians rule—not because they want to but because they must.

The Athenian ideal of *eleutheria* consequently becomes a desperate servitude to that ideal and to the endless struggle it entails. This construction of foreign relations is not, of course, inevitable and there are many questions we might put to it. Why should there be only two options, with no room left for an independence that is neither dominating nor servile (as the Melians want) or for the mutual recognition of equals? Why must masculinity be articulated so closely to mastery and the only alternative to mastery be servitude? These questions are rarely asked in Thucydides' text, and when they are, as in the Melian Dialogue, the answer merely reasserts the deontology of the schema: it is a universal and inescapable fact of nature.[31] Indeed, the fact that such assertions of this law's universality are clearly self-interested means that the very utterance—asserted by the stronger party in its own interest—reaffirms the truth of the utterance, that the strong do what they want. Athens's word is law, and the law it speaks is the law of the stronger. But within the terms of this logic, freedom breeds its own necessity, and Athens, in pursuing freedom, becomes enslaved to that necessity.

This paradoxical imbrication of freedom and slavery is encapsulated in the metaphor of imperial tyranny.[32] In Thucydides Athens's empire is

[30] Cf. 6.87.2; de Romilly 1963.56–57; Ostwald 1988.38–42.

[31] Crane 1998.264 suggests that although the Melians lose the debate, their position constitutes an alternative to and critique of the Athenians' "calculus of power": "But if the Melians are liquidated, their resistance and refusal to accept Athens's logic remain inscribed in Thucydides' 'possession for all time' "; cf. 289–93.

[32] Tuplin 1985.349–61 collects all the relevant passages in Thucydides and elsewhere (cf. de Romilly 1963.125–27). Much has been written on this trope. For almost all scholars the question is, as Connor puts it: "Why would an Athenian speaker use such a comparison? It seems to concede too much to the opposition" (1977.98). Connor's answer is not dissimilar to my own in that it posits an ambivalence in the Athenian mind toward tyranny, although his conclusions about the comparison in Thucydides ("its main effect is to stress the blessedness of Athens' situation," 1977.104) seem to me too optimistic. Raaflaub (forthcoming), arguing against Connor, goes to the opposite extreme in stating that "Clearly, the tyranny metaphor has the purpose of prompting fear, not happy feelings"; it is "a stick . . . intended to force the citizens to accept an unwelcome reality!" He allows for a more positive evaluation in 1984.74–76, suggesting that the subtext here might be "Gewiß, wir herrschen wie ein Tyrann, aber bedenkt doch, wie herrlich und beneidenswert die Herrschaft eines Tyrannen ist!" (76). On the metaphor, see further B.M.W. Knox 1954.100–1; Strasburger 1958.38–40; Lloyd-Jones 1971.138–44; Hunter 1973–74; Forrest 1975.26–28; Schuller 1978; Raaflaub 1979; Cogan 1981.163–64; Connor 1984.180, 184, 234–35; Tuplin 1985; Scanlon 1987; Farrar 1988.8, 144–52; Barceló 1990.419–24; Davidson 1990.31–32; Munn 2000.118–20.

imagined as a tyranny over the allies but also as a tyranny over the Athenians themselves, and in this double aspect the tyrant embodies both the lure of absolute mastery and its fatal *anankē*. From the tyrannicide on, the tyrant is represented as antithetical to Athenian democracy, a monster of illegality who must be killed before democracy can emerge. But looked at differently, the tyrant is not so much the opposite of the democratic citizen as he is his logical extreme (as we shall see in the next chapter). The Athenian citizen is masterful and free, politically autonomous and sexually dominant. The tyrant is all of these things but infinitely more so: not just enfranchised and autonomous but all-powerful and autocratic, not just sexually potent but sexually omnipotent. The freest of men, the tyrant represents the perfect autarky of which each Athenian dreams.[33]

If in theory the autocratic tyrant is an extrapolation (as well as the antithesis) of the autonomous Athenian citizen, in practice the line between the two was strictly policed, as the fate of Alcibiades shows. But what was forbidden within the democracy was possible in the empire. In that realm Athens takes up the illicit role of the tyrant and imagines both the pleasures and the dangers of such extreme power and potency. And both power and potency are, in fact, at issue, for the tyrant state is imagined as both supremely powerful and supremely "hard."[34] Cleon in the Mytilenian Debate makes explicit the connection between imperial tyranny and dominating masculinity.

> οὐκ ἐπικινδύνως ἡγεῖσθε ἐς ὑμᾶς καὶ οὐκ ἐς τὴν τῶν ξυμμάχων χάριν μαλακίζεσθαι, οὐ σκοποῦντες ὅτι τυραννίδα ἔχετε τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ πρὸς ἐπιβουλεύοντας αὐτοὺς καὶ ἄκοντας ἀρχομένους, οἳ οὐκ ἐξ ὧν ἂν χαρίζησθε βλαπτόμενοι αὐτοὶ ἀκροῶνται ὑμῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐξ ὧν ἂν ἰσχύι μᾶλλον ἢ τῇ ἐκείνων εὐνοίᾳ περιγένησθε.

> You do not see that by being soft [*malakizesthai*] you bring danger upon yourselves and give no pleasure [*kharin*] to your allies. You do not realize that the empire you hold is a tyranny exercised over unwilling subjects who plot against you. They do not obey you because you gratify [*kharizēsthe*] them—harming yourselves in the process—but because you lead them, not by kindness but by strength. (3.37.2)

Yielding to the allies, giving them pleasure or doing them favors (*kharizēsthe*), is for Cleon not only *malakia* but, as we saw in chapter 2, *kinaideia*:

[33] On the tyrant as the paradigmatic *eleutheros*, see McGlew 1993.183–212, who argues that the freedom of the individual Athenian citizen preserves (even as it negates) the legendary freedom of the tyrant.

[34] Again, Thucydides' schema is not the only possible one: tyrants could also be notoriously "soft," associated with effeminizing and Eastern luxury. But just as Thucydides rejects the representation of empire as a softening seduction, he also ignores the tyrant's softness

gratifying others by one's own passivity and to one's own detriment. The opposite of this gratifying softness is tyranny. If in this passage's sexual idiom imperial weakness is the passivity of a pathic, imperial tyranny is rape.

Moreover, it is rape, not gratification, that gives pleasure. Being soft to gratify the Mytilenians harms Athens and ultimately gives no satisfaction to the allies either. Strength, not kindness, will make them listen and submit. Through its tyranny, Athens will both dominate and gratify. Cleon thus imagines an erotics of domination in which tyranny is the ultimate hardness and power the only turn-on. And this is not a mere statement of fact but an exhortation. To be soft, as Cleon says at the end of the speech, is to betray their nature as Athenians (3.40.7). They will be themselves only by being tyrants. In this metaphor of the *turannos polis* the theme of empire as a proof against softness and the theme of empire as a dialectic of mastery come together in the imagination of a tyrannical power that is supremely free, masterful, and hard.

Thus to be a tyrant, it appears, is to win once and for all in the seemingly interminable contest of master and slave; it is to realize at the level of imperial relations the Epitaphios's dream of the citizen body as *sōma autarkes*: a fully self-sufficient, self-possessed subject. But if the tyrant represents this dream of perfect mastery, he also embodies the tragedy of that mastery, for at the same time as he is the freest man in the world, he is also the least free. The misery of tyrants was a favorite theme in classical Athenian literature.[35] Tragedy staged annually the cycle of *hubris* and *atē* that drove tyrants toward their inevitable downfalls. Plato develops this tragic psychology of tyranny when he imagines the tyrannical man ruled by an internal tyrant, Eros, who, with madness as his bodyguard, drives the tyrannical man on to *hubris*, murder, and eventually out-and-out tyranny (*Rep*. 573a–79e). Tyrannized by his own uncontrolled desires, the tyrannical man is afraid of everyone, the least satisfied and least free of all men, a slave (*Rep*. 577d7–9). Isocrates puts this idea in the service of a specifically imperial argument in *On the Peace*. Athens's empire is a tyranny not an *arkhē* (91), a rule of injustice rather than justice. As such, he argues, it is not only morally corrupt but also ultimately unprofitable: tyrants all suffer reversals; their seemingly blessed lives are really beset by fear, suspicion, and loneliness and end in murder by a parent, son, brother, or wife (111–13).

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in his equation of empire with tyranny. In both cases, softness lurks as an unspoken possibility, but one that Thucydides does not allow to emerge at the level of his text's articulation.

[35] Ar. *Wealth* 124–27; Eur. *Hipp*. 1019–20, *Suppl*. 444–46, *Ion* 621–32; Pl. *Theaet*. 174d, *Laws* 832c, *Rep*. 579b, *Alc. II* 141d; Xen. *Hieron*; Dem. 20.16; Arist. *Pol*. 1311a18–20, 1313b29–32.

The tyrant is thus imagined as tyrannized—and tormented—by the *anankē* of his mastery: being a tyrant itself imposes the necessity of increasing tyranny, as the tyrant is forced to behave more and more tyrannically in order to maintain his power. As soon as the leader of the people has tasted bloodshed and illegality, Plato says, it is necessary (*anankē*) for him either to be murdered by his enemies or to become a tyrant (*Rep*. 566a2–4; cf. 565d10, 566a5).[36] Tyranny traps the tyrant within its own *anankē*. As Solon put it, "Tyranny is a fine place, but there's no way out of it" (καλὸν μὲν εἶναι τὴν τυραννίδα χωρίον, οὐκ ἔχειν δ'ἀπόβασιν, Plut. *Solon* 14.8). The ultimate master is the ultimate slave, and a slave, moreover, to the very principle of his mastery.

In this complex sense tyranny functions as a metaphor for Athenian imperialism. The tyrant seems to offer an imagination of an ultimate freedom, mastery, and hardness, an escape from the dependency of the imperial dialectic. But, as Pericles makes clear, there can be no escape.

> μηδὲ νομίσαι περὶ ἑνὸς μόνου, δουλείας ἀντ' ἐλευθερίας, ἀγωνίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀρχῆς στερήσεως καὶ κινδύνου ὧν ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ ἀπήχθεσθε. ἧς οὐδ' ἐκστῆναι ἔτι ὑμῖν ἔστιν, εἴ τις καὶ τόδε ἐν τῷ παρόντι δεδιὼς ἀπραγμοσύνῃ ἀνδραγαθίζεται· ὡς τυραννίδα γὰρ ἤδη ἔχετε αὐτήν, ἣν λαβεῖν μὲν ἄδικον δοκεῖ εἶναι, ἀφεῖναι δὲ ἐπικίνδυνον.
>
> Do not think that you are fighting for one thing only, slavery or freedom. The stakes are also the loss of your empire and the danger you face from those who hated you under it. And if anyone fears this fact about our present situation and thinks to sit quietly at home like a virtuous man, know that it is no longer possible for you to stand away from your empire. For already you exercise it like a tyranny, which it seems unjust to have taken, but it is dangerous to let go. (2.63.1–2)

Like Plato's tyrant, Pericles' Athens can neither enjoy its power nor secure it nor lay it aside. In achieving freedom through domination, Athens gives up both freedom and domination. On the other hand, to renounce its tyranny is to return to that dialectic in which the absence of rule is slavery: Athens must choose, Pericles says later, between the misery of the master and the safe subjection of the slave (ἀσφαλῶς δουλεύειν, 2.63.3).

The trope of tyranny is a commentary not only on Athens's empire but on the logic of mastery that rules Athens both at home and abroad. The ideal Athenian is dominant and autonomous, *eleutheros* and *autarkēs*; he is in this sense a democratic tyrant. But such tyranny has its own cruel *anankē*, an inescapable and escalating domination. Imperial necessity—

[36] On *anankē* and tyranny, see further Pl. *Rep*. 567a8, 567c2, 567c8, 567d1. Forms of *anankē* occur six times in *Hieron* 4.9–11, where Xenophon stresses the misery of the tyrant.

rule or be ruled—exposes the desperation behind the norm of Athenian masculinity and its polar logic. Be the penetrator or else you will be penetrated; be manly or else you will be effeminate, pathic, a *kinaidos*—in short, be hard or else you will be soft. Nicias's suggestion that a failure to sail to Sicily might be perceived as shameful *malakia* thus condenses a broader set of commands and prohibitions. It also reveals the pathology of these injunctions to manliness. The easy masculinity of the Epitaphios is gone. Instead we find the Athenian subject locked in a never-ending struggle for his being. In this struggle, *malakia* is not just a piece of political rhetoric, a slogan employed by those in favor of war. It is part of the very psyche of imperial Athens, for if the master is master only so long as he has a slave, then hardness is always bound to and predicated on softness. The negative term is installed as a permanent threat of failure, and a failure that is not potential but actual, for to be alive is to be soft. Athenian imperialism and Athenian subjectivity are driven by an ineradicable terror, the terror of slavery, of softness, and ultimately of death itself, the loss of being where being is intimately tied to hardness, mastery, and freedom.

This terror and its inescapable necessity subtend Athens's ideal of imperial mastery and subjective autarky. This mortifying ideal itself—the *eleutheria* found only in death—is the absolute master. The discourse of imperial hardness is thus a way of imagining the consequences of living within the ideality of Athenian masculinity. "You cannot stand away from [or "outside of," *ekstēnai*] your empire," Pericles says (2.63.2). If the life-and-death struggle of imperialism is also the *anankē* of Athenian masculinity, then the logic of imperialism becomes a psychic law that has no exterior and affords no possible *ekstasis*. What would it mean to be an Athenian man outside of this empire of manliness? Imperialism's language of mastery and slavery, hardness and softness, tyranny and necessity reveals the cruelty of that law and the price at which it is obeyed. It reveals the pathology inherent in becoming—or, necessarily, failing to become—the Periclean ideal: an *eleutheria* always predicated on the enslavement of others and of oneself, a hardness always shadowed by *malakia*, a mastery driven by fear and necessity, a negativity at the heart of the subject's very being.

Duserōs tōn apontōn

Don't be soft, Nicias urged the old men, and don't, like the young men, become morbid lovers of what is absent (*duserōtas tōn apontōn*, 6.13.1). What is this *duserōs*? *Duserōs* is a rare word in classical Greek. It denotes a wrong or mistaken desire, a painful, excessive, or diseased love, or a

love for something impossible (Plutarch fr. 150 likens it to a mania).[37] Excess, passion, delusion: the prefix *dus*- (bad, diseased, ill-fated) emphasizes the element of pathology always inherent in the Greek conception of eros. Even at its best love is a disease that afflicts the lover.[38] In Thucydides eros is not only potentially baneful, it is a full-blown epidemic. It infects a suffering population (ἐνέπεσε, 6.24.3; πάθοιεν, 6.13.1) and requires a doctor (ἰατρὸς, 6.14.1). As a disease, it is tied to *tukhē*, the blows of fortune that interrupt the best-laid plans and make a mockery of any attempt at foresight. So here erotic disease disrupts rational planning, making the Sicilian Expedition less a piece of sound foreign policy than an irruption of passion, irrationality, mania.[39]

Yet the object of this feverish love, Sicily, is extremely obscure. Indeed, Thucydides begins the book by documenting at length how little the Athenians knew about this beloved: "That same winter the Athenians decided to sail against Sicily with a larger force than that with Laches and Eurymedon and to conquer it, if they were able. Most of them were ignorant about the size of the island and the number of its inhabitants, both Greek and barbarian, and did not realize that they were taking on a war not much smaller than that against the Peloponnesians" (6.1.1). The decision to sail to Sicily, the will to conquer it, and ignorance about it are all here combined, and throughout the book the goal of this expedition is left similarly vague. The more immediate goal, of course, is to help the Egestaeans, but this is presented as a specious pretext concealing a desire "for all of Sicily" (τῆς Σικελίας ἁπάσης, μεγάλου ἔργου, ἐφίεσθαι, 6.8.4). The desire for Sicily is a desire to conquer (καταστρέψασθαι, 6.1.1) and to rule (ἄρξαι, 6.6.1). An acquisitive and destructive desire, it seeks to master and overcome its object.

This object is not the final one either, though, but again a pretext for a greater desire. Gylippus and Alcibiades both give the ultimate goal of the mission as domination over not just all of Sicily but also Italy, Carthage, the Peloponnese, and finally the whole Greek world (τοῦ ξύμπαντος ‘Ελληνικοῦ ἄρξειν, 6.90.3; cf. 7.66.2, 6.90.2).[40] These accounts are no doubt

[37] At Xen. *Oec.* 12.13, *duserōntes* are included (along with alcoholics and the lazy) among those who cannot be taught to be good caretakers. The Suda glosses the word as "someone who is in an extremely bad state of love or one who loves a bad object" (ὁ σφόδρα κακῶς ἐρῶν, ἢ ὁ ἐπὶ κακῷ ἐρῶν). It is used throughout the Greek Anthology of painfully strong desire (e.g., 5.116.4, 12.125.7) and perhaps also at Eur. *Hipp.* 193 (Barrett 1964 ad loc.: "unreasonably strong" desire). On the word, see further Kohl 1977.72–73.

[38] For references, see Fischer 1973.53–54; Müller 1980.90–130; Thornton 1997.33–35 and nn.46–52.

[39] On medical metaphors for politics, de Romilly 1976.

[40] Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 17.2: such were his hopes that Alcibiades considered Sicily the beginning, not the end, of the mission. Alcibiades also voices his expectation that after Sicily Athens will rule all of Greece at Thuc. 6.18.4. Cf. Plut. *Nic.* 12.2. On Athens's vague goals in Sicily,

tendentious (Gylippus is the Spartan commander and Alcibiades is pleading his case against the Athenians in Sparta), but they reaffirm a sense of the vagueness of Athens's goals in Sicily, a sense that there is always a further goal beyond the immediate one. Thus a certain supplementarity is at work in Athens's desire, as its object constantly recedes before its grasp, and imperial desire is always a desire for *tōn apontōn*, absent things. This supplementarity is even written into the vote the Athenians take in favor of sailing: they vote to help the Egestaeans, to reestablish Leontini, and, "if things went well for them in the war, to accomplish anything else in Sicily that seemed best for the interests of the Athenians" (καὶ τἆλλα τὰ ἐν τῇ Σικελίᾳ πρᾶξαι ὅπῃ ἂν γιγνώσκωσιν ἄριστα Ἀθηναίοις, 6.8.2). The mandate not only allows for infinite expansion of the mission; it actually precludes completion: room is left for "anything else," and there will always be something else. Thus Athens's desire in Sicily is always deferred; its objects, one after another, fail to satisfy that desire, but instead pass it on and keep it going interminably.[41]

This incurable love is coordinated in Nicias's speech with the shame of *malakia*. Do not be ashamed of appearing soft, and do not become fatal lovers of what is absent. Shameful softness and *duserōs tōn apontōn* are put under the same prohibition, as the negative and positive motivations driving the Athenians toward Sicily. Whether the Athenian men actually are soft is left open (they are only urged not to feel ashamed to *seem* soft), but shame and desire are coordinated in such a way as to bring together the hardness the Athenians are ashamed to seem not to have and the absent objects of their diseased desire. Sicily, in other words, is both the object of desire and the proof of hardness. Hardness itself is the object of Athens's imperial *duserōs*.

The Sicilian Expedition, I have been suggesting, plays out to its logical conclusions the pathology of Athenian masculinity: the necessity that drives Athens to rule others or be ruled itself, the cruel binarism that translates any failure of mastery into slavery. This cruelty is implicit al-

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cf. Thuc. 4.65.4 (on which Westlake 1960); Strasburger 1958.29; Allison 1989.74–80; Balot 2001.163. See also Ober 1998.116–17: the Athenians "have created an imaginary Sicily as an opponent for the imagined Demos."

[41] Aristophanes, in his parody of Athenian imperial ambition in *Birds*, imagines as the final goal of this ambition supremacy not only over the entire Mediterranean but over the entire cosmos, usurping the rule of the gods. See Arrowsmith 1973.130: "But the hunger for world conquest conceals a galactic, and ultimately, a universal hunger. It has, as Thucydides' Alcibiades effectively says, no terminus; it must always expand. If the horizon always recedes, the hope of overreaching it never dies." Compare the first stasimon of Euripides' *Iphigeneia among the Taurians* on the insatiability of imperial desire (esp. 408–21). Greene 1999 traces a similar dynamic in the sixteenth-century colonization of the Americas: in that discourse, the explorer is figured as a lover and the New World as the elusive object of an unrequited colonial desire: see, e.g., 77–134.

ready in the Funeral Oration, which holds out an ideal of Athenian manliness, freedom, and self-sufficiency but makes death the only way to achieve that ideal. The dynamic established there sees its fruits here in the restless striving for hardness that impels Athens to Sicily. The ideal it seeks there can never be reached. The master is always haunted by the slave; hardness always consolidates around the shame of softness. Athenian masculinity is thus endlessly deferred, even as it is pursued. Sicily itself is just one link in this chain of deferrals: it promises to secure Athenian masculinity—a masculinity always already lost, *tōn apontōn*—but from the very beginning it is not enough, and the Athenians are already looking beyond it. This is the erotics of empire, the morbid longing for an ever receding masculinity and an always elusive mastery.

Eros, which fuels the tense dialectic of mastery, also pushes beyond that dialectic. The same desire that makes the master seek the surety of his being in relation to the slave renders that guarantee insufficient and sends the master off on a further quest.[42] The closed pair of master and slave is perpetually reopened through the supplementary logic of desire. Athens's desire is not extinguished by Sicily but only further inflamed: Sicily is pure *pleonexia* (greed), "an excessive desire for more" (τὴν ἄγαν τῶν πλεόνων ἐπιθυμίαν, 6.24.4; cf. 6.9.3, 6.10.5). If Athens's love is a disease, Sicily is its *pharmakon*, but it is a *pharmakon* in Derrida's sense, a cure that is also poison, an object that insinuates itself in the place of desire but never satisfies or fulfills that desire.[43]

It is fitting, then, that the *pharmakos* (scapegoat) for this insatiable longing should be the insatiable Alcibiades. His eros, as many scholars have noted, is the libidinal force behind Athenian imperialism.[44] The vocabulary in which Sicily is discussed is taken from his lexicon—softness, tyranny, *hubris*, *pleonexia*, eros—and the driving spirit of the expedition is his pleonectic and paranomic desire, his supplemental logic of more (*pleon*) and beyond (*para*). The most vehement proponent of the Sicilian Expedition, Alcibiades is also its perfect symbol. On the one hand, Sicily, like Alcibiades, is an elusive object that the Athenians try in vain to grasp:

[42] This move from the dialectic of desire (two subjects each seeking recognition at the expense of the other) to the supplementarity or *différance* of desire (desire eternally deferred from one object to another) is the fundamental post-structuralist turn. On the post-structural critique of Hegel, see Butler 1987.175–238, esp. 182–86.

[43] The notion of the supplement is developed most fully in Derrida 1974.141–64. On the *pharmakon* as supplement, see Derrida 1981.70, 95–117.

[44] Forde 1989 reads Alcibiades as a personification of the forces driving the Sicilian Expedition: "Alcibiades stands practically as the incarnation of all those qualities in the Athenian character that triumphed at the moment of the decision to sail for Sicily" (58). Cf. Ober 1998.114–15; Balot 2001.166–72.

in their *duserōs*, they "long for it and hate it and want to possess it."[45] On the other hand, imperial longing turns the whole demos into an Alcibiadean lover. Even before Sicily, the Athenians are characterized by their pleonectic desire: as the Corinthians say, they are incapable of keeping quiet or of enjoying what they have because they are always reaching for more (1.70.8–9).[46] Now they are also infected by Alcibiades' erotic disease and, like him (Pl. *Alc.* 105a4–6), would rather die than fail to satisfy their longings.

> καὶ ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ πρεσβυτέροις ὡς ἢ καταστρεψομένοις ἐφ' ἃ ἔπλεον ἢ οὐδὲν ἂν σφαλεῖσαν μεγάλην δύναμιν, τοῖς δ' ἐν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ τῆς τε ἀπούσης πόθῳ ὄψεως καὶ θεωρίας, καὶ εὐέλπιδες ὄντες σωθήσεσθαι·
>
> And a passion to sail fell upon them all alike. For the older men believed that they would conquer those they were sailing against or at least that such a great force could not fail. The young longed for distant sights and spectacles and were confident that they would be safe. (6.24.3)

In this passage, the historian confirms in his own voice Nicias's charge that the young men are *duserōtes tōn apontōn*. But here the absent object of their desire (*tēs te apousēs pothōi*) is specified: they long for a spectacle, a staging of Athens's great power. Cornford suggested that the narrative of Thucydides' history follows the pattern of tragedy.[47] The Sicilian Expedition is not only tragic in its themes (eros, *pleonexia*, *hubris*, *atē*) and its overall structure (*peripeteia*, the fall of the mighty); it is itself a performance the Athenians long to watch.[48] When Thucydides describes the fleet

[45] Note, too, Alcibiades' association with the phantom Helen, a symbol for Athens's Sicilian longings in contemporary drama and "the ultimate love-object of imperial *pleonexia*" (Arrowsmith 1973.133 and n.5). Helen appears as a figure for empire in Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* and Euripides' *Hecuba*, *Trojan Women*, and *Helen*. See also Maxwell-Stuart 1973; Rosenbloom 1995.

[46] Wolin 1996.82. On *polupragmosunē* (and its related terms: *pleonexia, hubris*, and *eros*) as the essence of the Athenian character, see Ehrenberg 1947; Huart 1968.385–86; Arrowsmith 1973.129; Balot 2001.154–59. Ehrenberg 1947.47 comments: "To Thucydides πολυπραγμοσύνη was something particularly Athenian, the quality of which the Athenians themselves were proud and for which they were blamed by others." But Allison 1979.12–13 rightly points out that the issue here is not *polupragmosunē* but *apragmosunē*. Cf. Huart 1968.370–73; Kohl 1977.15–17; Allison 1979; Carter 1986 (esp. 26–51); Forde 1989.17–40; Crane 1992; and on the Athenian national character more generally, Luginbill 1999.134–72.

[47] Cornford 1965 [1907].79–250. Cf. de Romilly 1963.322–39; Macleod 1983.141–46; Mittelstadt 1985.

[48] Cf. 6.31.1 (*thean, opsei*), 6.31.6 (*opseōs*). At 6.11.4–5 Nicias urges the Athenians to hold off from a show of power in Sicily, "because we all know that things are admired when they are furthest away and offer least opportunity for their reputations to be tested." Even

setting out from the Piraeus, he stages the scene precisely as a spectacle. The entire population of Athens, residents and foreigners, went down to the Piraeus at dawn to see the fleet off. Now that they were about to send away their friends and loved ones, the magnitude of the mission finally hit home. "Nevertheless they took courage in the sight of the force before them, cheered by the abundance of each thing they saw" (ὅμως δὲ τῇ παρούσῃ ῥώμῃ, διὰ τὸ πλῆθος ἑκάστων ὧν ἑώρων, τῇ ὄψει ἀνεθάρσουν, 6.31.1). The vision of Athenian strength gives the Athenians strength. Athenian might (τῇ παρούσῃ ῥώμῃ) and the spectacle of that might (τῇ ὄψει) are collapsed such that the performance of the thing predicts and even seems to equal the thing itself. This drama is a *mimēsis* of the *praxis* of Athenian imperial power, and for the audience, seeing is believing.

This is the performance the young men lust to see, the sight and spectacle of Athenian power. In Sicily, they will watch Athens's greatness in action and participate in it. Sight thus promises to undo the lack and absence of desire, placing distant, longed-for victory before the Athenians' very eyes. Vision is reinforced by hope, which also mediates between these amorous young men and the object of their desire: they are hopeful that they will be safe (*euelpides sōthēsesthai*). Hope, like vision, bridges the gap of *pothos*, bringing near what is distant and making present what is absent. In imperial psychology, hope joins forces with desire: "Hope and love cause the most harm in everything," says Diodotus, "love leading and hope following; love thinking up schemes and hope providing the means of success—they are invisible but more powerful than many visible dangers" (3.45.5).[49] In hope, too, the Sicilian Expedition is unparalleled: "This mission was famous not only for its amazing daring and brilliant spectacle, not only for the great superiority of the army over its opponents, but also because it was the longest voyage from home and undertaken with the greatest hope for the future in comparison with the present conditions" (6.31.6). For these young Athenians, then, *elpis* and eros unite to overcome absence, to make glorious victory not a distant object (*tōn apontōn*) but immediately visible and tangible. In their impe-

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the eros that "falls upon" the Athenians here is tragic: cf. Aes. *Ag.* 341, Soph. *Ant.* 781–86; in both passages eros is connected to wealth or profit, suggesting the idiom of empire. If Sicily is a tragedy, the young soldiers are to be its chorus, gaining through this suffering a new knowledge of Athens's might and glory. Winkler 1990c argues for a tragic chorus of young citizens and for tragedy as a form of civic education. See also Goldhill 1990.

[49] On this passage, see Scholtz 1997.62–66; Luginbill 1999.65–81; and on *elpis* as a force in Athenian imperialism, de Romilly 1963.77–78, 291; Cornford 1965 [1907].184–85, 206; Arrowsmith 1973. Vickers (1989b.268–70, 277–78) has argued that the name of the protagonist in Aristophanes' *Birds*, Euelpides, is an allusion to Alcibiades (cf. B. Strauss 1993.165; Arrowsmith 1973.128–29; Munn 2000.125–26 and n.66). Certainly *elpis* is part of his eros here. But note that the Athenians, too, are by nature *euelpides* (1.70.3).

rial speculation (*theōrias*, 6.24.3), Sicily is a sure bet, and to contemplate the far-off island is already to hold victory in hand.[50]

While the young men look forward to the vision of a glory soon to be theirs, the old men long to recapture the glory of their past. The debate over Sicily, as Barry Strauss has shown, is staged as a generational conflict, a contest between the caution of age (represented by Nicias) and the passion of youth (personified by Alcibiades).[51] In his speech against the mission, Nicias depicts maturity as a source of prudence, a counterweight of good sense against the reckless enthusiasm of youth. The *presbuteroi* (older men) are to bring to bear *pronoia* (foresight) against the young men's *epithumia* (desire) and to resist their sickness in the knowledge that "*epithumia* brings the least success and *pronoia* the most" (6.13.1). But the *presbuteroi* Nicias addresses are not wise and authoritative counselors, nor are they, like the *patres* Pericles praises in the Epitaphios, heroes who forged Athens's greatness by trading their bodies for "a praise that does not age" (τὸν ἀγήρων ἔπαινον, 2.43.2). Instead, these are fearful and feeble old men. "Seeing these young men sitting here at the bidding of Alcibiades, I am afraid" (φοβοῦμαι, 6.13.1). This old man fears the young and what will happen to the *presbuteroi* sitting next to these vigorous youths. He fears that the old men will become infected with the sickness of the young. And while the youth, fortified by hope, may be able to resist the fatal effects of this illness, in the older men the disease will take on its full virulence, leaving the *presbuteroi* "soft" in the presence of these ardent young lovers.

To these men Sicily offers a cure for a flaccid senescence; it promises the restoration of their lost potency and a renewed confidence in the potency of Athens itself. The expedition offers the prospect of unquestion-

[50] Against the spectacle of the fleet's departure Thucydides sets the vision of its ultimate defeat at Syracuse (7.71.3). The Athenian army watches from the shore as its navy engages with the enemy in the harbor: some look at a part of the fray where the battle is equal, and their mood vacillates with the changing fortunes of the soldiers; others look at a place where the Athenians are winning and the sight gives them courage; others still look toward where the Athenians are losing and these men lament and "are more enslaved in spirit by the vision of what was being enacted than those who were in the act itself" (καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν δρωμένων τῆς ὄψεως καὶ τὴν γνώμην μᾶλλον τῶν ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ ἐδουλοῦντο, 7.71.3). The sight of this drama enslaves its audience: *mimēsis* and *praxis* are again collapsed, for the upshot of this battle—in the realm of both seeing and being—will be slavery. On the visual dynamics of this episode, see Plut. *de glor. Ath.* 347a; Walker 1993.

[51] B. Strauss 1993.130–211, esp. 141–43. The 420s, he argues, were the "hour of the son" (personified by Alcibiades, "the symbol of youth, of the liberated son ascendant," 150), but the Sicilian Expedition represented a turning point in father-son relations, and the period after the Sicilian disaster saw a "return of the father." On the Sicilian Debate as a generational conflict, see also Plut. *Nic.* 11.3. Plato lists the inversion of relations between old and young as one characteristic of extreme democracy (*Rep.* 563a6–b2).

able victory and of a power so great it cannot fail (οὐδὲν ἂν σφαλεῖσαν μεγάλην δύναμιν, 6.24.3).[52] Sicily erases shame with its promise of certain success. It undoes impotence, closing the gap between intention and effect: the old men will conquer that which they set out to conquer (καταστρεψομένοις ἐφ' ἃ ἔπλεον). To them, too, the expedition holds out hope, not only hope of safety but hope of rejuvenation and of salvation (*euelpides sōthēsesthai*) from the softness and shame of old age. Joining with the *neōteroi*, they, too, become lovers and abandon cautious *pronoia* for the vigor and excitement of *epithumia*. Doubt, fear, and failure are precluded as the infallible power of Athens becomes also that of its elder citizens, who once again cheat death by trading their aged bodies for the hope of victory and its unaging praise.

Young and old thus join in love for Sicily and longing—the one in anticipation, the other in nostalgia—for all it promises.[53] To both Sicily extends the hope of salvation (*euelpides sōthēsesthai*). This desperate hope—that Sicily will overcome longing and debility, that it will secure or resecure Athens's mastery—arises within the logic of empire that we traced in the preceding section, the binding necessity of freedom. Maybe Sicily can save the Athenians once and for all from the exhausting struggle of their imperial tyranny.

The dialectic of recognition and mastery, as Hegel stresses (1977 [1807] §194), is an existential struggle that unfolds under the auspices of the absolute master, death. Nicias and Alcibiades each, in very different ways, recognizes that Sicily is a battle to the death and that the wager in this mission is Athens's very existence. For Nicias it is the pursuit of Sicily that threatens that existence: the longing for Sicily is a sickness (*duserōs*) that will further debilitate a polis only recently recovered from the plague (6.12.1). He calls upon the president of the Assembly to act as a doctor (*iatros*, 6.14) to the city and put the mission to another vote. The cure he himself prescribes for a suffering Athens is *hēsukhia* (6.10.2), rest, inactivity: only by staying at home and doing nothing will Athens be safe (6.10.5).[54] For him Athens's well-being lies in keeping still, and the feverish activity of Sicily is a drive toward death.

[52] The diction in this line recalls that in the praise of the *patres* in the Epitaphios, whom shame drove to make Athens a great power (*dunamis megalē*), and who, if they ever failed (*sphaleien*) in any attempt nonetheless did not deprive the city of their valor (2.43.1).

[53] On this cooperation of the young and old, see de Romilly 1976. Ober 1994.117 argues that in this *epithumia* is realized (with tragic results) the Epitaphios's ideal of a unified demos.

[54] *Hēsukhia* seems to be the medical term for restorative rest: Hipp. *de prisc. med.* 11.7, *de fracturis* 11.26, *de ulceribus* 1.14. At Hipp. *de aer., aqu., loc.* 23.20, however, it denotes an unhealthy lassitude (Alcibiades' definition of the word).

Alcibiades offers a different diagnosis, with a different prescription. Whereas Nicias represents Athens's imperial eros as a disease, Alcibiades sees in it the very principle of Athens's vitality, its life instinct or pleasure principle. The pleasure principle, in Freud's formulation, is the fundamental governing principle of the subject as a living organism. It reduces excess tension by satisfying urges, fulfilling want, overcoming frustration and lack. In the process, it helps maintain homeostatic balance within the organism and also, through its repeated diminution of want, holds out the promise of mastery.[55] Thus we might view the pleasure principle as the psychic mechanism driving the Hegelian struggle for recognition. If, as Hegel says, "self-consciousness is Desire in general,"[56] it is the pleasure principle that governs that desire and guides the master's quest to affirm his being by negating the slave. For Freud, though, as for Hegel, this drive toward being does not proceed without struggle. To the pleasure principle's promise of presence and satisfaction Freud counterposes the death drive, an "instinct to return to the inanimate state," an entropy built into the structure of all living organisms.[57] And while the relation between the pleasure principle and the death drive is, as we shall see momentarily, far from straightforward, initially at least Freud opposes the two under the polarity of life instincts and death instincts, Eros and Thanatos.[58]

For Alcibiades imperial longing is Athens's lifeblood. The youthful vigor, the hope and eros of the mission, allows Athens to grow and thrive. Against the vitality of Athens's imperial eros, he sets *thanatos*, the *hēsukhia* of old age, which draws Athens toward debility and death.

> καὶ τὴν πόλιν, ἐὰν μὲν ἡσυχάζῃ, τρίψεσθαί τε αὐτὴν περὶ αὐτὴν ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλο τι, καὶ πάντων τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἐγγηράσεσθαι, ἀγωνιζομένην δὲ αἰεὶ προσλήψεσθαί τε τὴν ἐμπειρίαν καὶ τὸ ἀμύνεσθαι οὐ λόγῳ ἀλλ᾽ ἔργῳ μᾶλλον ξύνηθες ἕξειν. παράπαν τε γιγνώσκω πόλιν μὴ ἀπράγμονα τάχιστ᾽ ἄν μοι δοκεῖν ἀπραγμοσύνης μεταβολῇ διαφθαρῆναι, καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλέστατα τούτους οἰκεῖν οἳ ἂν τοῖς παροῦσιν ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις, ἢν καὶ χείρω ᾖ, ἥκιστα διαφόρως πολιτεύωσιν.

> Consider that this city, like anything else, will wear itself away of its own accord if it remains quiet [*hēsukhazēi*] and that its knowledge in all areas will grow old, but through struggle it will always add to its experience and become more accustomed to defend itself in action and not just in speeches. On the whole, it seems to me that an active city will be destroyed most quickly

[55] Freud 1955 [1920].12–17. On mastery as the essence of the pleasure principle, see Derrida 1987.281, 317, 392, 403–5.

[56] Hegel 1977 [1807] §167; cf. §§ 174–75; Kojève 1969.4–5, 38–39; Butler 1987.7.

[57] Freud 1955 [1920].38; cf. 36: "an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things." Lacan 1988b.81 elaborates on the idea of the death instinct as entropy.

[58] Freud 1955 [1920].44–61.

> by a change to inactivity, and that those men live most safely who govern their cities most in accord with their existing characters and laws, even if they happen to be inferior. (6.18.6)

For Alcibiades competition, struggle, and activity keep Athens alive. Imperial longing is not a sickness eating at the civic body; instead it is the pulsating force of Athens's existence. Imperial *pleonexia* is not the fatal flaw of a doomed tyrant but the vitality that staves off stagnation. Here Alcibiades cuts directly to the heart of the "desire for what is absent": for him that desire and the life-and-death struggle it entails are the distillation of Athens's life instinct, the principle that governs not only its pleasure but its very being. Like himself, Athens will wither if it does not acquire more: this is its nature and to change it would be fatal. *Hēsukhia*, on the other hand, is a premature death, a senescence of the polis (ἐγγηράσεσθαι). Athens will be worn out not by moving and expanding and striving but by staying still: it will be rubbed away by an entropy at work within it (αὐτὴν περὶ αὑτὴν) and within all things. It will become as impotent and shamefully feeble as those soft old men.

Nicias represents Athens's imperial eros as a fever that will kill the polis. Alcibiades sees it as the force that keeps Athens alive. When Alcibiades wins this debate, it would seem to be a victory of eros and hope over *thanatos* and senescence, of Athens's life instincts over its death drive. But as the narrative progresses, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate the one from the other: the death drive seems to unfold precisely within the workings of the pleasure principle. We see a hint of that already in Alcibiades' exhortation: entropy is not an extraneous threat but an internal necessity, a grinding force at work within the Athenian character, and one staved off only by incessant action. In a sense, then, Alcibiades is motivated by the same terror that Nicias imputes to the older men: fear of the debilitating softness of old age. The eros of the young men is thus built upon and around death: its necessity is compelled forward by a fear of inactivity and entropy. Senescence is not the opposite of eros but immanent to it. Death is not "beyond the pleasure principle" of Athens's *duserōs tōn apontōn* but within it. It operates through it and, as Derrida puts it, "hollows it out" from within.[59]

In Athens's *duserōs* for Sicily, the pleasure principle and the death drive run in tandem: in the process of fulfilling their pleasure the Athenians are

[59] Derrida 1987.304; cf. 285, 323. I am indebted throughout this section to Derrida's reading of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Derrida 1987.257–409). For him the death drive is not the opposite of the pleasure principle but its supplement, both completing and supplanting it, deferring the mastery and presence it seems to guarantee: it "hollows it out with a testamentary writing '*en abyme*' originally, at the origin of the origin" (304). Being itself is the endless repetition of presence and absence, desire and satisfaction, "life-death."

rushing toward their downfall. The satisfying of desire now seems, as Freud says of the pleasure principle, "actually to serve the death instincts."[60] For as the expedition wears on, the *duserōs* of imperialism blossoms into full-blown disease (*nosos*) as Nicias's metaphoric language of illness is corporealized within his own afflicted body. Nicias suffers from nephritis, and his ailment, mentioned repeatedly in book 7, comes to stand as a synecdoche for the debility of the army as a whole. Nicias details their suffering and his own in a letter written from Sicily to the Athenians. The mission that was "in its prime" (ἤκμαζε, 7.12.3) when it sailed, with solid ships and robust crews, has now itself become debilitated: the ships are rotting and their crews are wasted (7.12.3). Nicias begs the Athenians to recall not only himself, incapacitated by nephritis (ὡς ἀδύνατός εἰμι διὰ νόσον νεφρῖτιν), but the whole expedition (7.15.1). But the Athenians refuse, and after the defeat at Epipolae, the entire Athenian army becomes sick (νόσῳ τε γὰρ ἐπιέζοντο, 7.47.2). While Thucydides attributes this *nosos* to a sickly time of year and location, Plutarch lays the blame on Nicias himself for not joining enthusiastically in the mission after his opposing vote failed: his reluctance to fight and his policy of nonengagement "made the vigor of the men's hope grow old" (ἐγγηρᾶσαι μὲν αὐτῶν τὴν ἀκμὴν τῆς ἐλπίδος, Plut. *Nic.* 14.4).[61]

Alcibiades' prediction that inactivity will bring senescence (ἐγγηράσεσθαι, 6.18.6) seems to have come true under Nicias's command, as Nicias's own debility infects the army. In the Sicilian Debate's conflicting epidemiologies, neither the enfeeblement of *hēsukhia* nor the fever of *duserōs* ultimately kills Athens. Instead the two join together in ravaging the polis. Desire and disease become inseparable. *Thanatos* lurks within eros, and even as the Athenians set off to fulfill their *pothos*, they court their own disaster. The activity that keeps them alive moves them inevitably toward death.

Sicily is an attempt to forestall senescence and *malakia*, but these are, in the end, its only fruits. In the final stages of defeat, after the catastrophe at Syracuse, Nicias tries still to encourage his troops, with a line of reasoning familiar from Alcibiades.

[60] Freud 1955 [1920].63. The pleasure principle, by reducing excitation, seems to yield a state not so different from the equilibrium of death and, by allowing the organism to proceed uninterrupted on its path toward its own termination, works together with the death instincts (55–56).

[61] Plutarch extrapolates from Thucydides' account and vividly describes the "pathetic spectacle" (*oiktroteron theama*, Plut. *Nic.* 26.4) of Nicias after the battle of Syracuse, paralyzed by weakness, starving and lacking all the basic necessities for treating his disease, crying with shame and humiliation. Nicias's disease is discussed at Plut. *Nic.* 17.3, 18.1, 19.10, 22.1–2, 5; see Stadter 1973.114–15; Thompson 1971.141–49; and Pouncey 1980, who speaks of "the catatonic atmosphere that Nicias engenders" (41) and his "almost shameful passivity which is somehow un-Athenian" (120).

Τό τε ξύμπαν γνῶτε, ὦ ἄνδρες στρατιῶται, ἀναγκαῖόν τε ὂν ὑμῖν ἀνδράσιν ἀγαθοῖς γίγνεσθαι ὡς μὴ ὄντος χωρίου ἐγγὺς ὅποι ἂν μαλακισθέντες σωθείητε καί, ἢν νῦν διαφύγητε τοὺς πολεμίους, οἵ τε ἄλλοι τευξόμενοι ὧν ἐπιθυμεῖτέ που ἐπιδεῖν καὶ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὴν μεγάλην δύναμιν τῆς πόλεως καίπερ πεπτωκυῖαν ἐπανορθώσοντες· ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις, καὶ οὐ τείχη οὐδὲ νῆες ἀνδρῶν κεναί.

Know this, soldiers: you must of necessity [*anankaion*] be brave, since there is no place here where, being soft [*malakisthentes*], you might find salvation. Moreover, if you escape the enemy now, the rest of you will live to see the sights you long for, and you Athenians will raise up again the great power of the city, although it now lies low. For the city is its men, not walls or ships empty of men. (7.77.7)

The necessity that binds the Athenians in their quest for hardness here reaches its desperate end: act or be ground down. The ideal of civic and military virtue (*andrasin agathois*) has become a matter of necessity (*anankaion*), not desire. The narcissistic passion of the Epitaphios has ossified into a crushing duty. The *anankē* of the Athenian ideal holds until the very end and is all that binds them to their hopes of victory. The softness (*malakisthentes*) that had been an object of shame before the expedition now becomes a luxury of peace: there is no room for it here.[62]

Softness and salvation are mutually exclusive, but in the end hardness will not save Athens either, for the soldiers fight bravely and still are destroyed. Whether they are *malakoi* or not, the salvation they had anticipated in Sicily is withheld. The desire for new sights that had impelled the young men to sail is now only a desire to see their homes again. The *megalē dunamis* of Athens, which the old men had thought infallible, is now in ruins, and the suggestion that they might escape to make it rise again rings cruelly hollow. As Pericles had commanded in the Funeral Oration, the Athenian soldiers here obtain their final proof against *malakia* on the battlefield, dying for Athens. And yet, even as certain formal requirements of the Periclean ideal are met, Sicily is a nightmare, not a democratic dream come true. Here the Athenians find not the hardness of a free and masterful masculinity but the hardness of hardship, the hardiness of a slave, for whom softness is not an option. A sort of hardness is achieved in the end, then, but it is the hardness of rigor mortis.

This final speech, delivered even as the Athenians are retreating, brings together many of the themes of Thucydides' imperial discourse—necessity,

[62] The thought is conventional—war is no place for *malakia*—but also vaguely wistful. There is almost a nostalgia for softness, a longing for the safeness of cowardice (*malakisthentes sōtheiēte*) in the face of this doomed struggle for salvation. On this speech, see Orwin 1994.136–68. The sentiment that the city is its men is likewise a cliché, as Connor

hardness, salvation, desire, power—and echoes them only to mock them. Nicias talks in the beginning of this speech about Athenian piety and the hope this should bring ("for men have been saved from worse situations than this," 7.77.1). But in Nicias's mouth and in such dire straits, this hope seems vain. We are reminded of the Melian Dialogue and the Athenians' contention that hope and faith in the gods are the placebo of the weak (5.103). And, indeed, this hope does turn out futile: this is the last speech before the utter destruction of the Athenian forces.

Not only the desire and necessity of imperialism are mocked in Sicily, moreover, but the very ideal that subtends it. Right before the final battle at Syracuse, Nicias, panicking as he realizes the import of this engagement, goes around frantically addressing the troops (7.69.2). This exhortation—reported in indirect discourse—reads like a faded and pathetic reiteration of Pericles' Epitaphios. Nicias begs each man not to betray his personal glory and the excellence of his ancestors. He reminds each one that he fights for the freest fatherland (πατρίδος τε τῆς ἐλευθερωτάτης), a polis that ensures freedom of life-style for all. He does not care, says Thucydides, whether these things seem hackneyed or anachronistic (ἀρχαιολογεῖν) but speaks such words as men speak in a crisis, referring to wives, children, paternal gods. The glorious ideals of the Epitaphios have become hollow words. They have aged (ἀρχαιολογεῖν) before our eyes.[63]

But, of course, in a sense these words were always hollow. We cannot localize the *nosos* of the Athenian ideal within the Sicilian Expedition, because disease is already latent within the Epitaphios itself, which Thucydides positions as a prologue to that most devastating of all *nosoi*, the plague. Pericles' ideal is immediately undercut by the plague, as the *sōma autarkes* of the citizens succumbs to disease (σῶμά τε αὔταρκες ὂν οὐδὲν διεφάνη πρὸς αὐτὸ ἰσχύος πέρι ἢ ἀσθενείας, 2.51.3). "Conquered by disaster" (2.47.4), the Athenians become dispirited and hopeless (ἀνέλπιστον, 2.51.4), and their depression only further fuels their sickness. The sense of shame, the piety and lawfulness that had characterized the Athenians in the Epitaphios disintegrate: honor, law, and decency yield to the pleasure of the moment and, ultimately, to death (2.53).[64]

points out (1984.202): cf. Alc. fr. 112.10 L-P; Soph. *OT* 56–57; Hdt. 8.61.2; Eur. fr. 828N. Compare also Thuc. 1.143.5 (on which Macleod 1983.143–44).

[63] On the meaning of ἀρχαιολογεῖν, see Lateiner 1985.204–7. De Romilly 1963.202 n.1 identifies "Periclean accents" in this speech; also Rawlings 1981.154–61; Macleod 1983.145; Lateiner 1985.205–6; Rood 1998.193–96. Lateiner comments: "No other report [in Thucydides] is so completely void of perceptive observations and generalizations" (1985.201); he speaks of the "impotence" of this speech (207) and in general criticizes Nicias's "caution, clumsiness, and lack of original vision" as an orator (202); cf. Pouncey 1980.127; and on Nicias's quietism, Edmunds 1975.109–42; Carter 1986.99–103.

[64] The link between the plague and the Epitaphios is widely noted: see, e.g., Konishi 1980; Allison 1983; Connor 1984.64; Orwin 1994.182–83; and Pouncey 1980.31–33: "The

Already there, then, the ideals of the Epitaphios begin to decay: the speech's pleasure principle—the civic pleasure and virtuous desire it inculcates, its optimistic guarantee of mastery and being—is hollowed out by the plague. Indeed, to the extent that the Epitaphios urges the citizens on an asymptotic course toward an impossible ideal, the speech's pleasure principle does seem, as Freud puts it, "actually to serve the death instincts." It encourages the Athenians to seek their pleasure along a course that will necessarily culminate in death. And it achieves that end, although in a way it did not anticipate: it sends its listeners off not to a glorious death on the battlefield but to the ravages of disease. The Epitaphios is thus multiply dead: death calls it into being (as a memorial for dead soldiers); death informs its contents (in its exhortation to the living to emulate the dead); and death follows it (as both its audience and its speaker succumb to the plague). Sicily's *nosos* therefore only brings to the surface a morbidity that lies dormant within the civic body even at its strongest, and its *duserōs* is just a mutation of the Epitaphios's lethal patriotic eros.[65] Sicily promises salvation, but it cannot save the Athenian ideal from disease or debilitation because that ideal was always already consigned to death.

And so Athens's *nosos* runs its course. Near the end of book 7, the Athenians, retreating under heavy attack by the Syracusans, rush toward the river Assinarus, partly for strategic reasons and partly out of exhaustion and their desire for water (τοῦ πιεῖν ἐπιθυμίᾳ, 7.84.2). When they reach it, they fall into utter disorder: crowded together, they trample one another, drinking eagerly (πίνοντάς τε τοὺς πολλοὺς ἀσμένους, 7.84.4) as the enemy first rains down arrows from the riverbanks, then descends into the river and slaughters them. "The water immediately became putrid," writes Thucydides, "but they drank it nonetheless, even though it was bloody and full of mire, and they fought for it among themselves" (καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ εὐθὺς διέφθαρτο, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἧσσον ἐπίνετό τε ὁμοῦ τῷ πηλῷ ᾑματωμένον καὶ περιμάχητον ἦν τοῖς πολλοῖς, 7.84.5).

This scene brings together in a particularly gruesome way the death drive and the pleasure principle. Desire and death commingle as the Athenians' desire for water (*epithumia*) leads them to their slaughter, and even as they are killed they drink eagerly (with pleasure, *asmenous*) the

blight of the Plague retrospectively infects, as it were, the reader's view of the Funeral Oration, tainting euphoria with its pessimism" (32).

[65] See Plut. *Per.* 20.4: under Pericles, "many were already possessed by that *duserōs* and ill-fated passion for Sicily that the orators like Alcibiades later enflamed." Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 17.1. While Nicias adduces their recent recovery from the plague as an argument against testing their strength in Sicily (6.12.1), the Athenians see their recovery as all the more reason to sail: fifteen years after that disaster, they have the necessary resources, both human and financial (6.26.2). The optimism of the expedition is thus buoyed by the false belief that they have overcome the plague.

water mixed with their own blood. The chaos and claustrophobia of the setting replicate the closed circuit of a deadly erotic *nosos* that begins and ends in the Athenians themselves, a consuming passion that drives them to consume their own blood.

The captured Athenians are imprisoned in stone quarries, and it is with this nightmarish vision that book 7 closes. Many of them are packed close into a narrow pit, where they are left exposed to the heat of the sun and the chill of the autumn evenings (7.87.1). The change of temperature weakens them, but worse suffering comes—as in the scene at the river—from the constraint of space and their close-packed conditions.

> πάντα τε ποιούντων αὐτῶν διὰ στενοχωρίαν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ προσέτι τῶν νεκρῶν ὁμοῦ ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις ξυννενημένων, οἳ ἔκ τε τῶν τραυμάτων καὶ διὰ τὴν μεταβολὴν καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀπέθνῃσκον, καὶ ὀσμαὶ ἦσαν οὐκ ἀνεκτοί, καὶ λιμῷ ἅμα καὶ δίψῃ ἐπιέζοντο (ἐδίδοσαν γὰρ αὐτῶν ἑκάστῳ ἐπὶ ὀκτὼ μῆνας κοτύλην ὕδατος καὶ δύο κοτύλας σίτου), ἄλλα τε ὅσα εἰκὸς ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ χωρίῳ ἐμπεπτωκότας κακοπαθῆσαι, οὐδὲν ὅτι οὐκ ἐπεγένετο αὐτοῖς·

> Because of the narrowness of the space, they were forced to do everything in one place. There were corpses heaped together on top of one another, those who had died from their wounds or from the change of temperature or other such things. The smell was unbearable and they were pressed by hunger and thirst (for they each got only a *kotulē* of water and two of grain daily for eight months). And whatever else it is likely that men should suffer who had fallen into such a spot, none of it did these men not suffer. (7.87.2)

This scene reiterates that in the river in its depiction of the crush and confinement, the promiscuous mingling of bodies, living and dead. Again, too, the description is remarkably visceral: while the episode at the river turns upon the nauseating taste of water mixed with blood and mire, this scene evokes the smell of rotting corpses: both appeal directly to the senses in a way that is rare in Thucydides' battle narratives. They provoke not only an intellectual response (as in the commentary on the magnitude of the Athenian losses that follows the second scene, 7.87.6) but a physical response. It is as if the horror breaks right through the text, extruding as a stomach-turning smell or taste. And around it the text breaks down. The scene is indescribable and Thucydides resorts to ellipses ("other such things," "whatever else it is likely that men should suffer"). The last sentence of the passage forecloses further description: these men did not fail to suffer anything that is likely in such situations. But what is likely in such a uniquely dire situation? The text gives up and refuses to describe the suffering. But what Thucydides refuses to say is what the reader already knows. The pleasure principle has run its course, returning the Athenians to an almost organic inertia. All that lies "beyond the pleasure

principle" for Athens—beyond the struggle for mastery and the necessity of hardness—is this unspeakable death in a pit.

Athens sought its being in this beyond: absolute freedom and tyrannical autarky. Instead it discovers that there is no "beyond" to the *duserōs* of imperialism. As Pericles and Alcibiades both recognize, the truth of Athens's being lies not beyond empire but precisely within empire, within its necessity and desire and life-and-death struggle. As Alcibiades suggests, it is not victory in the struggle but the struggle itself that keeps Athens alive (ἀγωνιζομένην, 6.18.6). The desire for what is absent, then, is not a quest for being: it *is* being. In Sicily, Athens hopes to find those absent objects of its *duserōs*, objects that always recede before its expanding reach. But Athens's existence lies not in those elusive objects—hardness, freedom, mastery—but in the search for them, in the eros itself. Athens *is* the longing for what is absent, *duserōs tōn apontōn*.[66]

Working through the Symptom

Sicily ends with death in a pit, the taste of bloody water, and the smell of rotting corpses. Athens's defeat in Sicily is total: "They were defeated in everything and in every way; they suffered terribly, and it all came to nothing—total defeat, as they say. Troops, ships—there was nothing that was not destroyed, and few returned home from so many. These were the events in Sicily" (7.87.6).[67] How can Athens respond to and recover from such devastation, a face-to-face confrontation with death? At the opening of book 8, Thucydides describes the Athenian reaction to the news of the final defeat in Sicily (8.1.1–2). The event is a trauma so enormous that it is indigestible. The Athenians cannot believe that they are "so utterly and entirely defeated" (οὕτω γε ἄγαν πανσυδὶ διεφθάρθαι).[68] Their only reaction is disbelief (ἠπίστουν). Reports are brought "from the very event

[66] Wolin 1996.74: "The demos exists as striving, but that drive may be directed not at assuring duration to its existence but at challenging its own finitude. The tangible expression of that problematic would be the leap from polis to empire."

[67] κατὰ πάντα γὰρ πάντως νικηθέντες καὶ οὐδὲν ὀλίγον ἐς οὐδὲν κακοπαθήσαντες πανωλεθρίᾳ δὴ τὸ λεγόμενον καὶ πεζὸς καὶ νῆες καὶ οὐδὲν ὅτι οὐκ ἀπώλετο, καὶ ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπ᾽ οἴκου ἀπενόστησαν. ταῦτα μὲν τὰ περὶ Σικελίαν γενόμενα. The first sentence is extremely emphatic: note the repetition of οὐδὲν and πάντα, the strong πανωλεθρίᾳ (used only here in Thucydides), and the pathetic juxtaposition of ὀλίγοι and πολλῶν.

[68] The collocation is again very emphatic. This is the only occurrence of the strong adverb πανσυδὶ in Thucydides and, indeed, in extant classical Greek (but cf. Eur. *Tr.* 797–98; Xen. *Cyr.* 1.4.18, *Hell.* 4.4.9, *Ages.* 2.19). In later Greek, it is often found with διαφθείρω: Cassius Dio *Hist. R.* 74.13.4; Dio Chrys. *Orat.* 5.21, *Ant. R.* 5.39.3. Note also in 8.1.2 the phrase κατάπληξις μεγίστη δή: this is the only time Thucydides ends a sentence with an emphatic δή.

itself" (ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἔργου); their message is clear (σαφῶς ἀγγέλλουσι), but they are met with incredulity: they fail to signify.

When disbelief does yield to comprehension (ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἔγνωσαν), the Athenians blame the generals for the expedition, "as if they themselves had not voted for it." They blame the soothsayers and prophets for making them hope that they would take Sicily. They refuse to acknowledge their own responsibility for the mission, that it was driven by their own native hope and desire. They cannot think of the expedition's causes, only its results: grief on all sides (πάντα δὲ πανταχόθεν αὐτοὺς ἐλύπει). "The event is enfolded in fear and the most tremendous panic" (περιειστήκει ἐπὶ τῷ γεγενημένῳ φόβος τε καὶ κατάπληξις μεγίστη δή). The truth of Sicily is comprehended only to be immediately wrapped around again with dumb terror. If Sicily is a tragedy, its suffering affords no *anagnōrisis*, no tragic recognition, but only grief and fear. The only knowledge the Athenians gain is of their overwhelming losses: cavalry, infantry, ships, an entire generation of Athens's youth are lost. The hope of salvation (*euelpides sōthēsesthai*, 6.24.3) that had driven the mission dissolves, and the Athenians are left "without a hope of salvation" (*anelpistoi . . . sōthēsethai*, 8.1.2).

Nevertheless (*homōs de*), they decide to fight on: "Nevertheless, under the prevailing circumstances it seemed to be necessary not to give up" (ὅμως δὲ ὡς ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ἐδόκει χρῆναι μὴ ἐνδιδόναι, 8.1.3). What is this turn? Given the utter defeat that Thucydides has so emphatically detailed, how can the Athenians simply decide to go on? We are given no insight into the psychology behind that "nevertheless" or the politics behind the vote (ἐδόκει); the necessity (χρῆναι) of not surrendering remains opaque. Is this the famous Athenian resilience, the resourcefulness that makes good any failure with new endeavors (1.70.7, 2.65.12)? Or is it, rather, a failure to face the truth of Sicily as Thucydides starkly states it at the end of book 7? The trauma of Sicily cannot be comprehended. The Athenians respond with disbelief, terror, and grief, and then (*homōs de*) turn and go on. In this elliptical "nevertheless," Sicily's suffering is repressed so that the war may continue.

But this repressed returns in the form of a mysterious act of violence, the mutilation of the Herms. I looked at this incident in some detail in the preceding chapter. There I considered it as a symbolic enactment of the eros of Alcibiades, a representation of the fragility of the idealized Athenian citizen and his vulnerability to castrating desire. Without repeating that discussion, I would like to consider the mutilation again within the context of the Sicilian Expedition and, in particular, Thucydides' narrative of that expedition. In this context it raises the question, How is trauma turned into history? How does Thucydides narrativize the raw experience of Sicily and transform that unspeakable death into a *ktēma es*

aiei, a "possession for all time" (1.22.4)? To what extent is the historical narrative itself implicated in the dynamics it analyzes? What eros—or *duserōs*—drives Thucydides to Sicily?

Thucydides prides himself on his useful prognostication: "If anyone wants to consider lucidly events that have happened and, human nature being what it is, will happen again in the same or a similar way, it will be enough if that person judge my text useful" (1.22.4).[69] Thus, for example, he describes the symptoms of the plague in detail "so that if it should ever break out again, one might look at its symptoms and recognize it in advance and know about it" (2.48.3). Is his discussion of Sicily similarly a doctor's prognosis, a dispassionate analysis of Athens's imperial passion and useful reference for future treatment? Or does the narrative itself become infected with the same disease it describes and fall under the spell of the same insatiable desire? More generally, can history transcend the trauma of the past, or is it doomed to repeat that trauma in the very effort to get beyond it? Can history's lordship ever fully free itself from the bondage of the Real?[70]

The vandalization of the Herms occurs just as the Athenians are preparing to launch the expedition and is deeply entwined with Sicily in Thucydides' account, not only chronologically but also causally (for by forcing the recall of Alcibiades the mutilation contributed to the defeat in Sicily, 6.15.4) and narratively (with the mutilation interrupting the account of the expedition at 6.27, and the expedition in turn interrupting the account of the vandalism and its prosecution at 6.29.3–30.1). The imbrication of the mutilation with the history of Sicily draws that gesture into the pathology of Athens's imperial desire and invites us to read it within the terms of the same *duserōs tōn apontōn*.

If Athens's imperial eros is, as Nicias implies, a sickness, the mutilation of the Herms is its most urgent symptom. Thucydides himself points the way for such a reading in suggesting a symbolic link between the mutilation and the expedition: the Athenians, he says, took the gesture seriously because it "seemed to be an omen for the expedition" (6.27.3). As an

[69] On this claim, see, e.g., Parry 1969; de Ste. Croix 1972.30–33; Connor 1984.26–30, 243–48; Flory 1990.202–8; Lendle 1990; Hedrick 1993.36–37; Ober 1994.107–8, 1998.60–61.

[70] Fox 1998.16–18 argues that the Real "confirms the partial quality of all discourse" (18) and thus represents the limits of historical analysis. See also Hedrick 1993 and F. Jameson 1981.102: "History is what hurts, it is what refuses desire and sets inexorable limits to individual as well as collective praxis, which its 'ruses' turn into grisly and ironic reversals of their overt intention. But this History can be apprehended only through its effects, and never directly as some reified force. This is indeed the ultimate sense in which History as ground and untranscendable horizon needs no particular theoretical justification: we may be sure that its alienating necessities will not forget us, however much we might prefer to ignore them."

omen, the mutilation is a metaphor for the expedition, which is to express in poetic terms the same relation expressed in psychological terms by the symptom.[71] Symptoms are metaphors from the unconscious, symbolic manifestations at the conscious level of repressed, unconscious material.[72] They are a somatic expression of the psychic, the language of the unconscious spoken through the body. Like metaphors, they are modes of expression or signification whose meaning derives from elsewhere and must be "carried over" (*metapherein*). On their surface, though, symptoms are opaque, sealed envelopes. Indeed, their opacity is the condition of their emergence, for to understand a symptom—to open it and read the message inside—is to eliminate it.[73] The symptom (again like the omen) thus occupies a peculiar epistemological position: a fragment of the unconscious that signifies mutely within consciousness.

The mutilation of the Herms, I am suggesting, is a symptom of the *duserōs* and *nosos* of Sicily: it condenses in one symbolic gesture the whole inexpressible trauma of Sicily and "carries it over" from Sicily to Athens, from the realm of traumatic experience to that of signification.[74] Everything the Athenians seek in Sicily—masculine hardness, the autonomy and freedom of a civic *sōma autarkes*, presence and being—is embodied in the rigid, erect figures of the Herms: they are Athenian "hardness" monumentalized as a seemingly inviolable fixture of the Athenian psychic

[71] The mutilation is doubly metaphorized in Thucydides' text: it is said to be, literally, a "bird" for the mission (6.27.3). As we shall see momentarily, any expression of the symptom reiterates it; one metaphor breeds another. Powell 1979 discusses the role of omens and prophecies in the expedition; cf. Furley 1996.93–101.

[72] Freud 1957 [1915].154. Lacan stresses that symptoms are signifiers and that they function like a language: 1977.59, 69, 81–82, 175; 1988b.320. On the symptom as a metaphor see Lacan 1977.166: "The double-triggered mechanism of metaphor is the very mechanism by which the symptom, in the analytic sense, is determined. Between the enigmatic signifier of the sexual trauma and the term that is substituted for it in an actual signifying chain there passes the spark that fixes in a symptom the signification inaccessible to the conscious subject in which that symptom may be resolved—a symptom being a metaphor in which flesh or function is taken as a signifying element."

[73] See, e.g., Freud 1953a [1905].18. Žižek thus defines the symptom as "a formation whose very consistency implies a certain non-knowledge on the part of the subject" (1989.21).

[74] Freud insists that symptoms are always overdetermined: they bear more than one meaning. Thus in linking the Herms to the *duserōs* of Sicily, I am not excluding the various other significances that have been attributed to the mutilation: a response to the eros of Alcibiades (as I suggested in the preceding chapter); a disturbance in the relationship between men and gods (Furley 1996.20–30); a renegotiation of the relation between public and private, household and city, or individual and collective (R. Osborne 1985; McGlew 1999); a pacifist protest on the part of Athens's women against masculine militarism (Keuls 1985.383–403); an attack upon Hermes as god of commerce, travel, and boundaries (Powell 1979.22; R. Osborne 1985.66–67; Furley 1996.19–30); or the significance the Athenians themselves assign: an antidemocratic conspiracy.

and civic landscape.[75] And if the Herms' stony bodies seem to make present and permanent those distant objects of Athens's *duserōs*, there could be no clearer symbol of the futility of that longing than their castration. Even as the expedition seeks to guarantee the Athenians' mastery and freedom—even as Athenian soldiers are dying to prove themselves hard—the mutilation predicts the ultimate failure of the mission and anticipates the dire conclusions the Athenians will reach in Sicily: the ideal they seek, the object of their imperial eros, is a mere illusion, always absent because ultimately unreal and unrealizable. No icon can secure it.

The truths that could not be faced in Sicily are brought home in the mutilation, vividly reenacted at the very center of the city in a metaphor that represents those truths without speaking them directly. A sudden obtrusion upon the Athenian consciousness, an act without clear motive or obvious perpetrators, the mutilation sits undigested in Thucydides' text, its effects spreading widely through the narrative, but its meaning never fully revealed. Thucydides never tells us what this symbolic act signifies; nor does he spell out the logic that branded it part of a tyrannical or oligarchical conspiracy (6.60.1). Indeed, instead of elucidating the act and its meaning, the text further obscures it through a series of deflections.[76] The act generates a crisis of knowledge for the Athenians: they do not know who did it (6.27.2; cf. 6.60.2) and are eager for clear answers (6.60.4). When information is brought forward, though, it is not about the Herms but about the defacement of other, less significant statues (6.28.1). Attention is then diverted to the profanation of the Mysteries and from there to Alcibiades and his life-style (6.28.2). That in turn prompts the most striking deflection, the tyrannicide digression, to which we return later. It is as if neither the Athenian demos nor Thucydides' text can face the mutilation head on. Instead of clear knowledge of its meaning, this gesture prompts a series of confused nonexplanations. Like a sealed envelope, it is passed on unopened. But in the very process of transmission—and the nonreading that accompanies it—its hidden message is repeated. Suddenly we hear of other mutilations. While the Athenians treat the symptom but not the underlying disease, other symptoms proliferate, and the treatment itself only hastens their proliferation.

[75] See the discussion of the Herms as icons of the citizen body in the introduction and chapter 3.

[76] There may be a deflection in the very description of the mutilation. Thucydides says the statues were "cut about the face" and does not mention actual castration. This may, of course, reflect historical truth, and it does not change the symbolic import of the act: as I suggested in the preceding chapter, if these statues as a whole represent the idealized citizen body, their mutilation, wherever aimed, is a symbolic castration. However, if the Herms were actually castrated, then Thucydides' shift from the phallus to the face would represent a displacement of the gesture's most vivid threat to the phallic integrity of the citizen.

In this context we might consider a bizarre incident that, according to Plutarch, happened at the same time as the mutilation and, with it, was taken as an obvious omen for the expedition. "Suddenly a man jumped onto the altar of the Twelve Gods and, standing astride it, castrated himself with a stone" (Plut. *Nic.* 13.4). Plutarch offers no explanation of this striking gesture, but clearly it participates in the same symbolism as the mutilation of the Herms: an act of sacrilege, associated with the Sicilian mission and perpetrated on a central civic monument, aimed against the sanctity and, specifically, the virility of the citizen's own body.[77] This anecdote, not recounted in contemporary texts nor attributed to a reliable source by Plutarch, reads like a later gloss upon the mutilation of the Herms. But if it is a gloss, it does not reveal the latent meaning of its original text but instead merely reproduces its surface effects. This act is no more legible than the mutilation of the Herms; indeed, we might say of the similarities between the incidents that they bear the same illegibility. As in the Athenians' investigation of the mutilation, the symptom's message is passed on unread, and its effects spread in the process.

The opacity of the symptom and its resistance to interpretation arise from an epistemological paradox: the symptom can be understood only in relation to the unconscious, but the unconscious can be known only through its effects—that is, its symptoms. In other words, the symptom is itself the key to that which unlocks it. Slavoj Žižek expresses this circularity in the form of a temporal paradox: symptoms, he writes, are traces from the future, effects that precede their cause (1989.56). A symptom generates a quest after its meaning, but that meaning is constituted only in retrospect through a reconstruction of its troubled genealogy.[78] So in Freud's case studies the patient comes in with a seemingly random or senseless symptom—Dora's aphonia and nervous cough, for instance, or the Wolfman's animal phobia and religious obsessions—and from that external symptom is reconstructed a complex case history that shows the symptom, in fact, to signify profoundly and precisely within the thematics of that narrative. In this way, the symptom not only precedes but generates the case history that explains it.

[77] The Altar of the Twelve Gods was imagined as the precise geographical center of the city. McGlew comments on the connection between this scene and the mutilation: "Acting synecdochically for the entire *dēmos*, he may be said to repeat the mutilation of the herms, where Athenians damage themselves by disrupting their relations to the gods—but he also completes and confirms it: responding to the political aporia into which the mutilation of the herms forces his life, the *dēmos*, as the story suggests, renders itself politically impotent" (1999.20 n.57).

[78] Žižek 1989.55–57. Cf. Lacan 1988a.159; Fink 1996.90–91 on this temporality. It should be said that this dynamic describes only neurotic symptoms. Psychosis is characterized in part by its failure to produce a coherent symbolic system (and hence by its particularly chaotic symptoms): see Freud 1958 [1911] and Lacan 1993.

Here we may seem to have reached the limit of the psychoanalytic analogy: the confused temporality of the symptom may be acceptable within analysis, but history, both as an epistemology and as a disciplinary practice, is predicated upon causes preceding their effects, not vice versa. What does it mean, then, to speak of a historical symptom? What does it mean in a historical context for an effect to precede its cause? Thucydides indicates a possible approach to these questions when he says that the Athenians took the mutilation as an omen for Sicily, for omens operate within the same inverted temporality as symptoms. Like symptoms, they work in the future perfect tense: they *will have been* true, but only after the events they predict have occurred. And they are not innocent in the unfolding of those events. We might think, for example, of the omen in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*. The prophecy that Oedipus will kill his father and marry his mother not only predicts Oedipus's history but generates it: it impels him to the chain of actions that will make its prediction come about. All his actions are an attempt to prove that the omen will not have been true, but in the end they lead to the conclusion that it is true and had been all along. The omen is both cause and effect of Oedipus's life story: it creates that story and takes its meaning from it.

Like Oedipus's omen, the mutilation of the Herms generates the narrative that will unlock its meaning. More than simply presaging the unspeakable events in Sicily, the mutilation actually allows those events to be narrated. The figure of the mutilated Herm opens the imaginative space and establishes the symbolic framework within which the thematics of Sicily will unfold. This image turns a tale of imperial misadventure into a saga of civic debilitation, literalizing the language of *malakia* and *duserōs* in a blow to the civic body. Thus it generates the narrative that will turn out to be its own generating cause. But the mutilation does more than allow the Sicilian trauma to be told: it demands that it be told. Setting out under the symbolic auspices of these mutilated icons, the entire expedition becomes an attempt to explicate the meaning of that mutilation and to ensure—in the retrospective temporality of the symptom—that it will not in the end have signified civic annihilation. Both knowing and not knowing what the mutilation means, the Athenians go to Sicily to force its meaning. Like Oedipus, they set out to prove the omen wrong but, in the process, only prove it right.

In Sicily the Athenians seek to recover the hardness and integrity of the Herms, to undo their violation and restore to those icons of citizenship their wholeness and rock-solid virility. But instead of restoring the Herms, Sicily becomes another story of civic debilitation. The symptom sets in motion the history that will explain it and establishes the symbolic coordinates within which that history will be emplotted. It also predicts its re-

sults: the symptom itself. This story can have no conclusion but the mutilation of the Herms, and that is, in fact, its final chapter. Sicily ends with the Athenians as corpses: in death they truly become mutilated Herms. What is repressed in the mutilation thus returns in the narrative of Sicily, as the obscure significance of those broken stone icons is discovered in the broken corpses of the Athenian soldiers, piled in a Sicilian quarry. This quarry retroactively supplies the stone from which mutilated Herms are hewn. The narrative produced by the symptom is doomed to repeat it, spreading its effects where it most hopes to find their cure.

And it does not end there. Žižek writes that "in working through the symptom we are precisely 'bringing about the past'—we are producing the symbolic reality of past, long-forgotten traumatic events" (1989.56–57). In working through the mutilation of the Herms, Thucydides produces not only the narrative of Sicily (hardly "long-forgotten" but, I suggested, repressed). He also produces another symptomatic history: the tyrannicide legend. This narrative is generated quite literally by the mutilation of the Herms, both for the Athenians, who remembered the tyrannicide as they prosecuted the mutilation, and for Thucydides, whose tyrannicide digression emerges directly out of his discussion of the mutilation and the panic it caused. Again, because I discussed this digression at length in the preceding chapter, here I wish only to situate the narrative within the symptomatology of Sicily. Thucydides presents the tyrannicide digression as an example of his historiographic precision, a corrective to the Athenians' ignorance about their own past (6.54.1) and a call for critical evaluation of historical evidence (1.20.1–2). But the narrative he actually produces is obscure and often incoherent. First, this digression is unable to account for itself: it is unable to specify the exact relation between tyrannicides and Herms, between past and present. Then, the obscurity of the digression's motivation is mirrored by an obscurity of motivation within the digression. The story of the tyrannicide is broken awkwardly by an extended discussion of the relative ages of Pisistratus's sons. This digression within a digression produces a certain incoherence within the narrative: Hipparchus insults the lovers but their revenge is aimed at Hippias; when that attack fails, they murder Hipparchus. In place of an object lesson on the value of clear knowledge of the past for prognosis of the future (1.22.4), Thucydides gives us a nonexplanation of the present by way of an incoherent account of the past.

The unexplained connection between the Herms and the tyrannicides mirrors that between Sicily and the Herms: the tyrannicide legend bears a message to the Athenians concerning the Herms and Sicily, but again it is a message that cannot be read. Thucydides' text marks the symbolic association but is unable or unwilling to excavate its meaning. The text's

nonconnection is reiterated in the demos's nonknowledge: it knows the story (ἐπιστάμενος, 6.53.3; ἠπίστατο, 6.60.1), but does not tell it clearly (ἀκριβὲς οὐδὲν λέγοντας, 6.54.1). The historian cannot account for his history; the people both know and don't know their own past: we are back on the terrain of the symptom, with its unspeakable associations and obscure eloquence.[79]

And this narrative is likewise drawn within the pathology of Sicily: a tale of democratic eros becomes a tragedy of *duserōs*. In this legend the Athenians seek the same ideals for which they sail to Sicily. Freedom, mastery, autonomy, and virility are here asserted as the essence of Athenian citizenship and the origin of Athenian democracy. This story would thus seem to offer a cure for the *duserōs* of Sicily and the debility of the Herms, a secure icon of an idealized democratic past to set against those mutilated icons of the present. Moreover, at the same time as it reasserts the citizen's masculine hardness, this legend promises to reground Athens's imperial *arkhē*, since it was in part by being tyrannicides at home that the Athenians justified being tyrants abroad. Here, then, at the very moment of democracy's inception, we would seem to find the distant object of Athens's imperial longing: a moment when Athens really was masterful and free.

But this object, too, recedes, and Athens's desire remains a *duserōs tōn apontōn*. Rather than a cure for civic castration and morbid longing, Thucydides' narrative becomes yet another symptom, for (as we saw in the preceding chapter) his tyrannicides fail to end the tyranny and instead are blamed for turning a fair monarch into a harsh dictator. Furthermore, if it was Sparta and not the tyrannicides who liberated Athens from tyranny (as Thucydides asserts, 6.53.3), maybe Sparta is justified in its claims to be liberating Greece from the tyranny of the Athenian Empire; perhaps this tyrant, too, will fall.

The tyrannicide legend seems to promise a pristine origin and secure foundation for democratic masculinity. It looks to the distant past for that same object that the Athenians, *duserōtes tōn apontōn*, seek in Sicily, and hopes to find there a time when Athenians really were what Pericles urges them to be: free and manly, autonomous and hard, masters over themselves and others. But just as the mastery sought in Sicily dissipates into

[79] Freud lists as one of the symptoms of hysteria the patient's inability to produce a coherent autobiographical narrative: hysterics' accounts of themselves are filled with gaps and logical inconsistencies, and "the connections—even the ostensible ones—are for the most part incoherent, and the sequence of different events is uncertain" (1953a [1905].16). The patients' "inability to give an ordered history of their life in so far as it coincides with the history of their illness" (10) allows the symptom to blossom by repressing its roots in a broader pathology. We might characterize this section of Thucydides' text, with all of its narrative obscurities and partial knowledge, as hysterical.

disease and defeat, so too this legend of Athenian masculinity fails to hold. In trying to work through the mutilation of the Herms, the Athenians produce a version of their past that promises to defend them against that horrifying symptom. But the past generated by this symptom is profoundly implicated in its pathology, and the working through of the symptom only reproduces that symptom in the form of historical narrative. All of Athenian history, in the retrospective light of the mutilation, becomes one long narrative of failure, softness, castration. The mutilation of the Herms is a story that Thucydides can tell only incompletely: he is unable to identify the perpetrators or to explicate fully its significance. But in a sense, he can tell no story *but* the mutilation: Sicily becomes a tale of mutilated Herms, as does the tyrannicide. Generated by its symptoms, every history becomes a case history.

Thucydides' Sicilian narrative is thus a reiterated rewriting of Athens's *duserōs tōn apontōn*: Sicily, Herms, tyrannicide.[80] In translating Sicily's trauma, carrying it across (*metapherein*) from one narrative to the next, the text simultaneously represses it and expresses it. In each of its reiterations, the trauma is signified, but in a form in which it is unable to be understood, displaced from the context that gave it meaning, obscurely linked to its underlying cause. The problem is repressed by deflection. In a sense, it is the mutilation at the beginning of the expedition that enables that *homōs* at the end, the repression of Sicily's trauma and decision to continue the war "nevertheless." But at the same time as Thucydides' symptomatic history represses the trauma of Sicily, it also keeps that fatal eros alive, if only in an unrecognizable form. Each new narrative provides a new surface for the expansion of that eros, and stories that might offer a cure instead become part of the disease. Like Athens's desire, the symptom is pleonectic: it is always proliferating, always reaching for more; it is never terminated, only deferred.

To say this is to suggest that *duserōs* is not just the topic of Thucydides' Sicilian narrative but also its modality and driving force. In the discourse of imperialism not only is Athens's mastery at stake but also Thucydides' own. Book 6 opens with a test of the historian's rigor, a detailed and masterful history of the early inhabitants of Sicily. While the Athenians long for an object and a conquest about which they know almost nothing (ἄπειροι οἱ πολλοὶ ὄντες, 6.1.1), Thucydides (a general as well as a historian) knows Sicily and controls it, displaying from the start his superior

[80] Parry 1970.20: "The broken symmetry, the variation and the difficulty of Thucydides' style are always repeating his final message: that the most splendid vision of civilization ever recorded—Athens of the Funeral Speech—can be reduced to the survivors of the Sicilian Expedition in a rock-pit in Syracuse, with half a pint of water, and a pint of meal, each day."

knowledge of and command over this narrative expedition.[81] Thus he declares his mastery as a historian, even where such a historical digression might seem uncalled for and out of place. Likewise, in the tyrannicide digression Thucydides claims to be correcting the demos's misconceptions and offers the digression as proof of his superior understanding of Athens's past (6.54.1).[82] Again, this display of mastery is included at the cost of narrative coherence—so much so, in fact, that Dover accused Thucydides of succumbing to "the temptation before which all historians and commentators are by their very nature weak, the temptation to correct historical error wherever they find it, regardless of its relevance to their immediate purpose."[83] Sicily provokes in the author a similar response to that shown by the Athenians: it poses a test of mastery, a challenge to know it, possess it, and bring it under control. And that test sends him, like the Athenians, from one place to another, from Athens to Sicily, from Herms to tyrannicides, in search of a satisfaction that always eludes him.

To a certain extent, Thucydides of course succeeds in this quest: his descriptions of the Athenian defeat in Sicily—those scenes in the riverbed and the stone quarry—are masterpieces of historical narrative and the Sicilian saga as a whole has an architectural and poetic quality that has raised comparisons with tragedy. Like Hegel's master, Thucydides' text lifts itself up through the negation of its material: it transforms the trauma of Sicily into a *ktēma es aiei* and, in that form, achieves its own unimpeachable authority and lasting presence. But I have argued that in that very process, Thucydides' history is itself drawn within the Athenians' morbid desire. The writing of Athens's imperial *duserōs* does not cure that disease—we should not seek in history a "cure" for the past—but instead reproduces its dynamics and becomes its most obvious and persistent (*es aiei*) symptom. Thucydides' narrative both transcends the trauma of Sicily and, in Hegelian fashion, simultaneously preserves it. It negates the raw datum of experience, transforming contingent suffering into a "possession for all time"; but it does so only by incorporating that trauma and keeping it alive within itself. That negated trauma erupts in the text's own symptoms: in the moments of incoherence, the unexplained associations, the compulsive reiteration of a *malakia* and *duserōs* that seem impossible to overcome. To emphasize these features is not to criticize Thu-

[81] Ober 1994.111, 1998.106. Ober reads Thucydides' whole analysis of Sicily as a contest between Thucydides' historical way of knowing and "democratic knowledge" (1994.111–18, 1998.104–21; cf. 1998.53–63). Cf. H.-P. Stahl 1973.70–71, and on Thucydides' mastery over both his material and his reader, Loraux 1986b.155.

[82] Ober 1994.105; Crane 1998.39–40. Cf. Loraux 2000.65–82.

[83] Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970.329.

cydides or to charge him with failure as a historian; instead it is to suggest that such symptomatic moments are what history is all about.[84]

What of our own relation to the past? To what extent do our own histories of Athens replicate this same erotic symptomatology? When we tell the story of Athens—of the miracle of Periclean democracy, of the indomitable masculinity of the Athenian citizen—are we, too, trying to replace lack and weakness, the Athenians' and our own, with a "possession for all time"? Do we seek in Athens what the Athenians sought both in Sicily and in the tyrannicide legend, a secure and masterful masculinity, a free and autonomous subject, a cure for contemporary anxieties? If so, Thucydides' narrative alerts us to the workings of the death drive within such a quest. Athens is itself a distant and elusive object: it recedes before our grasp and cannot save us from our own debilities. If Athens is our Sicily, our love for it (and our writing of it) will always be a *duserōs tōn apontōn*.

[84] Compare the discussion of historical trauma in Silverman 1992.55–62. Drawing on Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, she sees two different (but inseparable) forms of repetition compulsion at work: one (associated with the death drive) threatens the stability of the subject by repeating the trauma; the other (associated with mastery) overcomes trauma through symbolic reiteration.

Chapter V

WHAT DOES THE TYRANT WANT?

Hipparchus's Herms

The Herm stood as an icon of Athenian citizen masculinity, a symbol of the citizen's virility, integrity, and autonomy. But these tokens of democratic citizenship were also reminders of Athens's tyrannical past and of the citizen's continuing relation to that past. Tradition traced the Herms' origins to the Pisistratid regime.[1] The pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Hipparchus*, the key literary evidence for this tradition, credits Hipparchus with erecting the Herms. Unlike the Hipparchus we meet elsewhere in Athenian literature, the tyrant in this text is a beneficent leader and sage educator of his people. For their edification, he set up these statues along the roadsides and inscribed them in elegiac couplets with his own wise sayings. These words, moreover, bespeak the benevolence of the tyrant; the inscriptions read: "The memorial [*mnēma*] of Hipparchus: go with just thoughts" and "The memorial of Hipparchus: do not deceive a friend" (Pl. *Hipparch*. 229a4–b1). This Hipparchus is no sexual predator, making unwanted advances upon his people. Instead, he sponsors the iconic figuration of the citizen body. In these ithyphallic monuments, the democratic phallus is erected, as it were, by the tyrant. And while this treatise is clearly tendentious (Hipparchus bears a suspicious resemblance to Socrates, for one thing), archaeological evidence makes plausible its association of the Herms with the Pisistratid tyranny.[2] Even as they embody an ideal of democratic citizenship, then, the Herms also memorialize the tyrant who underwrote this representation of the citizen body and inscribed his *mnēma* upon it.

We might understand this origin as the telescoping of a historical progression. As democracy replaces tyranny, the tyrant's marker is trans-

[1] Pl. *Hipparch*. 228b–229d. Harpocration (s.v. Hermai) says old comedy also attributed the Herms to Hipparchus: ὅτι δὲ ἐκαλοῦντό τινες καὶ ʽΙππάρχειοι ʽΕρμαῖ ἀπὸ ʽΙππάρχου τοῦ Πεισιστράτου εἴρηται ἔν τε τῇ ἀρχαίᾳ κωμῳδίᾳ καὶ παρὰ Πλάτωνι ἐν τῷ ʽΙππάρχῳ. Plato's *Hipparchus* is generally considered spurious but still thought to be classical: see H. Leisengang *RE* s.v. Platon 2367; Friedländer 1964.127–28; Fornara 1968.419 n.71.

[2] The earliest surviving Herms date from the late sixth century, as do the earliest representations of Herms on vases: see Crome 1935–36; Kirchner and Dow 1937; R. Osborne 1985.48 and n.11; Wrede 1985.5–8. On the origins of the Herms, see further, Lullies 1931;

formed into the symbol of the "masculine egalitarianism that accompanied the consolidation of the democracy at Athens," and the power that had belonged to him alone is now distributed to all citizens equally.[3] Thus we might see the Herms as a monument celebrating democracy's victory over tyranny and the birth of the democratic citizen from that victory. But if the Herms memorialize the defeat of tyranny and secure for the citizen the potency of the tyrant, they do not erase that tyrannical origin. Instead, they establish the tyrant within the democratic city—indeed, within the democratic citizen himself—fixing him within Athens's psychic as well as physical landscape. To look at these representations of the citizen is to see the tyrant, too, and to see him both as a part of the city's past and as a lingering presence (*mnēma*) within the democracy.

Perhaps Pseudo-Plato's account is too idiosyncratic to bear much weight. But we can supplement this scene with another, in which the Herm not only inscribes the citizen body with tyrannical power but also suffuses the tyrannical body with civic desire. The first Herm depicted in Athenian art (on a red-figure kylix by Epictetus)[4] bears the inscription *Hiparkhos kalos* (Hipparchus is beautiful). On this cup an artisan is carving a small Herm; he holds it cradled in one arm, their heads roughly on the same level, and applies his chisel to the statue's abdomen, right above the (finished) phallus. The inscription runs around the side of the scene. Although the Hipparchus in the inscription is probably not the tyrant (for by the time he had erected the Herms, he would have been too old to be the object of a pederastic *kalos* vase), given the association of the tyrant's name with the Herms, it is tempting to see some identification, perhaps a clever play on the name of a younger Hipparchus, linking him with the achievements of his more famous eponym.[5]

Goldman 1942; Devambez 1968; Lavelle 1985; R. Osborne 1985.47–51; Shapiro 1989.125–32.

[3] So R. Osborne 1985.64–66; Winkler 1990a.36 and n.21; Halperin 1990a.17. The quotation is from Halperin 1990a.17. McGlew 1993 examines the demos's appropriation of the power of the tyrant: see esp. 183–212.

[4] Copenhagen NM 119 (*ARV*[2] 75.59).

[5] Boardman 1975.58, 213 believes it was the husband of the tyrant's niece. Shapiro suggests that it was his grand-nephew (1989.120, 126) and comments "but of course no Athenian could have read the inscription and looked at the scene without thinking of the herms of Hipparchos" (126). A Hipparchus is named on sixteen other vases dating from around the same period (c. 520–490), twelve by Epictetus (*ARV*[2] 1584). Hipparchus appears to be a relatively uncommon name in Attica during this period; beside the tyrant and the dedicatee on these vases (if they are two different people), there seems to be only one other man by the name (see M. J. Osborne and Byrne 1994.236). The identity of the boy is further discussed by Robinson and Fluck 1937.117–19. On the conventions of *kalos* vases, see Shapiro 1983; Lissarrague 1999.

If we do make that identification, seeing the tyrant's presence behind the beautiful boy, then we find in this scene a startling intermixture of tyrannical eros and democratic. The scene depicts the construction of citizen sexuality, but encircles that construction with a proclamation of the tyrant's beauty. The tyrant's desirability frames the manufacture of Athenian masculinity. Moreover, if (as may well have been the case) the boy's admirer commissioned the cup, then Hipparchus's beauty literally generates the scene: it is because Hipparchus is beautiful that Epictetus created the cup, and the artisan on the cup creates the Herm.[6] In this erotic fantasy, "Hipparchus"—sexy tyrant, erector of Herms—is inserted into a circuit of pederastic courtship as a token between the donor of the cup and the beautiful boy who is perhaps the tyrant's namesake. The tyrant's beauty and the citizen's virility are thus brought together under the banner of *dikaios erōs*, the "just love" of a (wealthy and tasteful) older man for a beautiful young boy. In this condensed phantasmatic scenario, the eros of the tyrant imbues the scene of the construction of democratic masculinity: it is not only the tyrant's wise words that are inscribed on this Herm but the tyrant's desirability. The citizen body is sculpted from the love of a tyrant.

This final chapter explores the ways in which the tyrant's memory inhabits the Athenian citizen body and his eros shapes the citizen's sexual and political being. Tyranny has been a recurring leitmotif throughout earlier chapters. Empire is a tyranny: in imperial discourse, the tyrant represents absolute mastery and inviolable hardness but also the tragic necessity that reduces the master to softness and slavery. Alcibiades flaunted the life-style of a tyrant and was suspected of aiming at tyranny: for this the demos hated him but also loved him, sentenced him to death but also longed for his seductive rule. In his autarky and *eleutheria*, Pericles' idealized citizen becomes a virtual tyrant; Aristophanes' vision of Demos dressed in the costume of an archaic tyrant lets us appreciate the appeal of this fantasy, even as we may suspect the motives of the demagogues who fed it. Finally, a tyrant presides over the founding moment of the democracy: in the tyrannicide myth, equality, individual freedom, and *dikaios erōs* all have their origin in a tyrant's lust and are instituted over his dead body.

A figure surcharged with both political and erotic meaning, the tyrant stands precisely at the point where eros and democratic politics intersect.

[6] The links are tighter still if, as Boardman (1975.58) suggests, the Hipparchus named is the artist's own beloved. On the assimilation of artists into the world (and erotics) of the elite, see Neer 1998.121–98. Note, too, that this vase reverses pederastic roles as the (larger, higher) beardless boy works on the bearded man (held at the level of his own phallus): the beautiful young Hipparchus has an erotic hold on the adult citizen.

All sexual and political power is condensed within his person. In the significatory fields of Athenian sexuality and politics, the tyrant is the master signifier: he is the phallus. As such, he has a double function. On the one hand, the tyrant is a phantasmatic reference point: whether he is imagined as a benefactor or a threat—erector of Herms or mutilator of Herms—he is constitutive for the democratic subject, the denied origin of both his identity and his desire. The signifier of potency and plenitude, his presence organizes the Athenian discourse of law and politics, desire and sexuality. On the other hand, the tyrant, like the phallus, is important as an absence, a symbol of the impossibility of the very potency he seems to guarantee.[7] Thus there is a tension in the discourse of tyranny between the tyrant as a figure of plenitude and the tyrant as a pure embodiment of lack, a miserable, accursed nothing. In these two aspects, the tyrant represents both an exorbitant power and the impossibility that such power could ever be claimed by one individual.

It is in this latter figuration—as lack—that the tyrant plays his most vital role for democracy. By figuring the impossibility that absolute potency can ever be vested in an individual, an impossibility as much ontological as political, the tyrant makes that imagined power available to the demos as a whole. Political theorist Claude Lefort has described democracy as a constitution characterized by a pervasive indeterminacy; within democracies, he argues, "the locus of power becomes *an empty place*" as power is disembodied and distributed over the entire community.[8] Supposing Lefort's formulation holds true for ancient democracy as well as modern, it explains why tyrannicide—be it Harmodius and Aristogiton's assassination of Hipparchus or the Athenian defeat of Persia at Marathon and Salamis—was the master narrative of the Athenian democracy. Tyrannicide empties out the center of power, transforming the tyrant into a defining absence and distributing to the citizens all that he is shown to lack. The narratives of tyranny that the Athenians never tired of telling reiterate this process: they imagine the tyrant's plenitude only to transform it into the constitutive emptiness at the center of democracy. Thus if the democratic citizen *has* the phallus—as the Herms at least proclaim—

[7] Lacan 1977.288: the phallus "can play its role only when veiled." On the phallus as signifier, see Lacan 1977.285, and cf. Silverman 1983.182–91; Butler 1993.57–91. For an (at times reductive) analogy between monarch and phallus, see Goux 1990.9–63.

[8] Lefort 1988.17–19 (the quotation is on 17); cf. 27: "Power becomes and remains democratic when it proves to belong to no one." See further 1986.279–80, 303–4. One could object that in Athenian democracy the central place is occupied by *nomos*; but because that *nomos* is articulated within an ideology of *isonomia*, it is again a power shared over the entire polis, rather than a centralized authority: see Ostwald 1969.96–136. On *nomos* as the tyrant's replacement, see McGlew 1993.107–11, 119–21: he characterizes *nomos* as "a sovereign who did not exist" (121).

it is because the tyrant *is* the phallus, the figure both of an impossible potency and of its impossibility.[9]

Every good Athenian hated tyranny. This animosity was manifested in numerous modes (literary, institutional, cultic, artistic) and amounted, as Kurt Raaflaub argues, to something of an "official" ideology.[10] The Ekklesia opened with an imprecation against all would-be tyrants; laws called down harsh punishments against any who attempted to establish a tyranny; the tyrannicides were honored by public cults.[11] This execration far from exhausts the Athenians' thinking on tyranny, however, as a number of scholars have stressed. Karen Bassi studies the Athenians' equivocal representation of their role in Pisistratus's rise to power and their suspicion that they were complicit in the tyrant's regime, rendered passive by his spectacular performances of his own autocracy.[12] James McGlew likewise emphasizes the complex dialectic between Athens and its tyrannical past, arguing that the democratic city, even as it destroyed the tyrant's power, simultaneously preserved it in the ideal of the citizens' individual freedom and the city's political agency.[13] These studies complicate the picture of Athens's "official ideology" concerning tyranny, revealing an ambiguous and dynamic attitude toward the tyrant, one characterized not simply by hostility but also by competition and complicity.

The picture becomes more complicated still when we extend ideology in the direction of the imaginary. Raaflaub contrasts the city's "official" ideology to the private attitudes of individual Athenians toward tyrants; whereas the former was thoroughly negative, he argues, the latter may have been more ambivalent.[14] To draw this distinction is to imagine ideol-

[9] Needless to say, I can only scratch the surface of the immensely complicated and extensive Athenian discourse on tyranny. A full study would need to take into account the tense intimacy of tyrant and philosopher; the peculiar relation of tyrants to money, signification, and optics; the role of tyranny in tragedy and in epinician poetry. Here I limit myself to the question of the tyrant's relation to and role within democratic eros.

[10] Raaflaub forthcoming. He takes issue with Connor's (1977) suggestion that the classical attitude toward tyranny was ambivalent, arguing instead that the Athenian view of tyranny was "overwhelmingly negative." Cf. Barceló 1990.412–13; Parker 1998.170–72; Monoson 2000.32–37.

[11] The evidence for these laws and practices is collected by Rosivach 1988.45–46 and Raaflaub forthcoming. See also Swoboda 1979 [1912].25–26 and notes; McGlew 1993.185–87.

[12] Bassi 1998.144–91. Cf. Lavelle 1993.13, 22–26 on Athens's revisionism in its history of the tyrants.

[13] McGlew 1993, esp. 124–56, 183–212.

[14] Raaflaub forthcoming: "Personally and privately, the average Athenian might have thought of tyrants admiringly and with envy," he writes, although he doubts that such "private" thoughts were "enough to balance the official and deeply ingrained ideology and to create an ambivalence of attitudes in political contexts as well."

ogy as radically external to the citizen's psyche and the individual psyche as radically unideological. I argued in the introduction for a different understanding of ideology. Following Althusser and Žižek, I proposed there that ideology is not something external or opposed to the psychic life of the citizen but instead that its primary level of operation—the site of its articulation, reproduction, and material effect—is the unconscious of the citizens who live within it.[15] The tyrant is a case study in this theory of the "psychic life" of ideology. The tyrant is a saturated locus of fantasy, both positive and negative: the narratives of tyranny not only warn of the tyrant's violent threat to democracy; they also tell of his seductive charm, his enviable power and wealth, his godlike happiness, his exorbitant pleasure. These fantasies refract "official" pronouncements about tyranny but do not merely reproduce them. Thus, for example, we find stories in which tyrannical excess is rejected in favor of the moderation of civic life, but only after that excess is imagined and, even as it is refused, vicariously enjoyed. What is hated at the level of "official" policy, in other words, may appear in fantasy in the form of identification and desire.

In fantasy, the tyrant was a supremely erotic being. From its first occurrence, the word "tyranny" is linked to desire, even if only in the form of a (suspiciously) vehement denial: "I do not love great tyranny," declares the speaker in Archilochus fragment 19W.[16] Eros himself is a tyrant, lording it over the poor lover and enslaving him to his violent passions.[17] At the same time, tyranny is the object of eros. In Herodotus, Deioces is in love with tyranny and woos rule (ἐρασθεὶς τυραννίδος, Hdt. 1.96.2); Pausanias likewise "harbors a passion for becoming tyrant of Greece" (ἔρωτα σχὼν τῆς Ἑλλάδος τύραννος γενέσθαι, Hdt. 5.32). Indeed, tyranny has many lovers (πολλοὶ δὲ αὐτῆς ἐρασταί εἰσι, Hdt. 3.53.4).[18] Not only the object of desire, tyranny is also, as Euripides puts it, "struck from all sides by terrible desires" (ἡ γὰρ τυραννὶς πάντοθεν τοξεύεται δεινοῖς ἔρωσιν, Eur. fr. 850N). Excessive and insatiable in his desire, indiscriminate as to his objects, the tyrant is eros as pure drive. Plato expands on

[15] Althusser 1971; Žižek 1989.33. Cf. Butler 1997.1–30 and Žižek 1999.247–312.

[16] Hippias of Elis says Archilochus was the first to use the word (*FGrH* 6 F6) and Euphorion says it was first applied to Gyges (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.21.117.9). See Parker 1998.150–52. Campbell 1967.148 notes that *turannos* may occur earlier at *H. H. Ares* 5. On the word *turannos*, see White 1955.1–4; Andrewes 1956.20–30; Ferrill 1978; Parker 1998. It seems to be of non-Greek origin (Parker 1998.145–49).

[17] Archil. fr. 23.20W; Eur. fr. 136N, *Hipp.* 538–44; Pl. *Rep.* 329c, 572e4–573b7, 573d4, 574d–575a. On the metaphor, see Thornton 1997.45–46.

[18] Hartog 1988.330 points out that the word eros is applied only to kings and tyrants in Herodotus's *History*: "They alone experience this excessive desire." For the "love of tyranny," cf. Eur. *Rhes.* 166; Benardete 1969.137–38.

this idea: he imagines Eros ruling as a tyrant within the tyrannical man (Ἔρως τύραννος ἔνδον οἰκῶν διακυβερνᾷ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἅπαντα, *Rep.* 573d4). Tyrannized by this internal tyrant (τυραννευθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ Ἔρωτος, *Rep.* 574e2), the tyrannical man is driven to violence, murder, and eventually out and out tyranny. For Plato Eros is both the origin and the essence of tyranny. "It is for this reason," he writes (*Rep.* 573b6–7), "that Eros has long been called a tyrant."

The sexual lives of tyrants were the subject of endless fascination for the Athenians. Whom does a tyrant love? How does he love? Is his eros qualitatively or only quantitatively different from normal men's? The tyrant, as Callicles notes with envy in Plato's *Gorgias*, lives the perfect life, his exorbitant desire matched by exorbitant resources for satisfaction (491e–492c). Apart from everything else, says Simonides in Xenophon's *Hieron*, "*ta aphrodisia* alone would make one desire tyranny" (1.26). Whether his pleasures make him happy, whether his desires are ultimately satiable, whether he is able to truly love are all questions raised again and again in Athenian literature. Tyranny comes to stand for a mode of desire as much as a mode of politics.

Or, rather, tyranny represents a mode of desire within politics: politics as libido. The difference between the tyrant and the monarch, says Aristotle, is pleasure: "Tyranny aims at what is pleasurable; monarchy at what is good" (ἔστι δὲ σκοπὸς τυραννικὸς μὲν τὸ ἡδύ, βασιλικὸς δὲ τὸ καλόν, *Pol.* 1311a4–5). If, with Lefort, we imagine democracy as a constitution structured around an empty space, the tyrant fills that space and fills it, as Aristotle indicates, not only with power but with pleasure: the political field becomes coterminous with the tyrant's own body, and that is a body devoted to enjoyment. Thus it is impossible to segregate the tyrant's sexuality from his political power: each symbolizes the other. His notorious perversions (adultery, bigamy, rape, incest, sadism, necrophilia—all documented often and with a certain fervor)[19] are the sexual manifestation of his extraordinary relation to the laws and norms of the polis. He exercises his rule in the form of sexual power.[20]

Even the great taxonomer Aristotle cannot separate the tyrant's sexuality from his political authority. In his discussion of the reasons tyrannies fall, he says that most plots against tyrants are attempts to avenge a ty-

[19] Necrophilia: Hdt. 5.92η (Periander). Incest: Hdt. 3.31 (Cambyses and his sisters); D.L. 1.96 (Periander with his mother); and, of course, Oedipus: see further Vernant 1982; Ameling 1986. Bigamy: Plut. *Dion* 3; D.S. 14.44.5–45.1; and Gernet 1981. See also Bremmer 1987.50–51; Hartog 1988.330 and Holt 1998 for other examples of tyrants' illegitimate desires and transgressive behavior.

[20] Hartog 1988.330: the tyrant's "despotic power has *hubris* as its mainspring and *eros* as its vocation."

rant's *hubris* (1311a32–36); of the historical examples he then lists, the majority are sexual.[21] At the end of his discussion, Aristotle proposes that the tyrant might break this link between power and libido, renouncing some pleasure the better to preserve his power: "He must be seen to commit *hubris* against none of his citizens, neither young boys nor girls, and the same goes for those around him. . . . He must be moderate in his physical pleasures or, if not, at least avoid being seen by others" (*Pol.* 1314b23–34). If pleasure characterizes the tyrant's rule, a tyrant can seem less tyrannical by controlling his pleasures. But again it proves difficult to segregate pleasure from power, for Aristotle's emphasis on seeming and deception suggests that the tyrannical libido is not staunched but merely forced underground.[22] The link between pleasure and power is not broken, and beneath the surface of a moderate and conciliatory power, pleasure continues unabated. Whether it is the opportunity for indulgence or its disguise, the tyrant's political power is always libidinous. There is an ineradicable pleasure within the exercise of his tyranny, and the polis is the instrument of that pleasure.

The Athenians imagined tyrannical eros to be exercised at the expense of the democratic citizen. But viewed differently this same eros mobilizes vital fantasies that support and sustain the democratic psyche. In text after text, the tyrant's desire appears to the citizen not only as a command to be obeyed but as a question to be answered: "What does the tyrant want?"[23] In thinking through that question, I argue, and contemplating the tyrant's desire, the Athenians formulated their own desire. I trace this process in Herodotus's encounter between Solon and Croesus, where the Athenian lawmaker articulates his civic philosophy as a response to the tyrant. That philosophy is predicated on the law that no man is self-sufficient, but the tyrant challenges this law in his supreme blessedness. Thus

[21] Aside from the story of Harmodius and Aristogiton, Aristotle tells, for instance, of plots against Periander, who insulted his eromenos by asking if he was pregnant yet (1311a39–b1); Archelaus, who "used the youth" of Hellanocrates, then showed that the affair was based on *hubris*, not eros, when he refused to restore him from exile (1311b17–20); and Cotys, who castrated Adamas when he was a boy (1311b22–23). The case of Crateas's revolt against Archelaus is particularly instructive, for here Aristotle lists both an erotic and a political motive for the attack, but gives primacy to the erotic (1311b8–17). Cf. Buffière 1980.107–21.

[22] Cf. 1315a22–23: the tyrant should seem to associate with the youth out of desire, not power. All in all, he is urged to preserve his tyrannical power by playing the role of a monarch (τὰ δ' ἄλλα τὰ μὲν ποιεῖν τὰ δὲ δοκεῖν ὑποκρινόμενον τὸν βασιλικὸν καλῶς, 1314a39–40). On tyrants and deception, see Bushnell 1990.17–20; Steiner 1994.161–63.

[23] This question is meant to evoke Freud's famous query "*Was will das Weib?*" For Freud and his followers, the enigma of woman's wants opened onto fundamental questions about desire, pleasure, and the constitution of the subject. The tyrant's imperious desire, I think, raised similar questions for the Athenians.

behind the question, What does the tyrant want? lies another: Does the tyrant want? In Herodotus, and even more clearly in Xenophon's *Hieron*, we find a fantasy of tyrannical plenitude, a pleasure without limit that psychoanalysis terms *jouissance*. That fantasy is exhilarating, for it offers an escape from the desperate logic of desire that we traced in the preceding chapter, the logic of *duserōs tōn apontōn*. At the same time, though, tyrannical joy is imagined as annihilating, both for the tyrant and for the citizen. The blessing of tyranny is in fact a curse, and the tyrant is suffocated by his own surfeit. Behind a facade of superabundance, a profound lack is discovered evacuating the tyrant's plenitude. The narratives of tyranny (here Oedipus will be our paradigm) empty out the tyrant's joy and reduce him to nothing, an embodiment of lack.

This lack—the lack that lets one ask, What does the tyrant want?—is filled by fantasy. And it is in this democratic fantasy of the tyrant's longings that Athenian ideology takes shape. Žižek argues that the subject responds to lack in the Other, "the unbearable enigma of the desire of the Other," with fantasy, an imagined scenario that "provides the co-ordinates of our desire" and defines us as subjects of that desire.[24] Žižek further proposes that this same dynamic describes the formation of ideology and the definition of the ideological subject. Starting from Althusser's scene of interpellation, he imagines the individual confronted with an ideological mandate: society (the symbolic order) hails the subject, makes some demand, but what does it really want? The fantasy with which the subject answers this question constitutes ideology, the subject's imaginary relation to the conditions of his existence and his imaginary answer to their mystifying demands.

Democratic ideology is the Athenians' answer to the desire of the tyrant. The hole punctured in the tyrant's joy—a hole created only to be filled—provides the space for the fundamental fantasies of the Athenian democracy: civic prosperity, individual freedom, erotic autonomy. Fantasies of the tyrant's joy and lack not only trouble the "official ideology" of tyranny in Athens, revealing, where we might expect simple hatred, a more ambiguous—and libidinous—relation. They also raise questions about the very nature of democratic ideology. If democratic ideology is a fantasy that emerges by way of speculation upon a tyrant's desire, then what the Athenians considered most unique and particular to themselves—the desires that defined them and ideals that united them—is also a point of otherness within the democratic polis. Democratic ideology is a tyrant's *mnēma*, as it were, inscribed within the body politic.

[24] Žižek 1989.118.

Desire of the Other

The tyrant is often described as the "Other" of Athenian democracy. Pauline Schmitt-Pantel, for example, argues that the civic discourse of classical Athens situated the tyrant at the margins, and by imagining those margins, defined the center, the democratic polis.[25] Rebecca Bushnell argues similarly that the tyrant in classical and Renaissance political thought "draws to himself everything that does not fit quite properly into the Western tradition of rationality."[26] Within the Greek ethic of self-mastery, she shows, the tyrant indulges his desires without moderation. Thus he is assimilated to all those other Others to the ideal Athenian man. In his uncontrollable appetite, his love of finery, his tendency toward deception and artifice, he is like a woman; the ostentation and autocracy of his power equates him with an Eastern despot; in thrall to the demands of his own pleasure and the necessities of his rule, he becomes a slave.[27] Plato takes this logic the furthest: not only a slave (*Rep.* 577d7–9) and a woman (*Rep.* 579b3–c2), the tyrant is also an animal, a lycanthrope who, once he has tasted blood, is condemned to a life of murder (*Rep.* 565d4–566a4). The tyrant's excessive eros thus renders him nonmale, non-Greek, nonfree, even nonhuman; as Bushnell puts it, he is a "double Other."[28]

But if the tyrant is the Other to the democratic Athenian, that polarity is neither absolute nor fixed, and the boundary between the two is crisscrossed by desire and identification. Solon's biography illustrates this unstable alterity. Solon is in many ways the founding figure of Athenian democracy: he established the rule of law in Athens and guaranteed all citizens equal protection under that law; his economic and social reforms mitigated class inequality and, as Aristotle puts it, "liberated the demos" from the bondage of debt slavery.[29] In his promotion of equality and emphasis on *nomos*, Solon is the antitype to the tyrant, and so it is not sur-

[25] Schmitt-Pantel 1979. She emphasizes that the tyrant, while marginal to it, is not excluded from civic discourse: he is not an "absolute Other" but an Other who exists in a privileged relation with the city (224).

[26] Bushnell 1990.9.

[27] On the connection between tyrants and barbarians, see Hartog 1988.324–25, 338–39; E. Hall 1989.208–9. Tyrants and women: Arist. *Pol.* 1312a1–2, 1313b32–38; Bushnell 1990.20–25; Griffith 1995.84–85. Tyrants and slaves: Solon fr. 9W; Xen. *Hieron* 6.3; Arist. *Pol.* 1313b32–38. Tyrants are also not infrequently associated with eunuchs: Arist. *Pol.* 1311b4–5; Hdt. 3.48–50 (on which Schmitt-Pantel 1979.223).

[28] Bushnell 1990.20. McNiven 2000 likewise argues that the gestures of tyrants in Attic vase painting display a cowardice and lack of self-control that puts them in a category of male Others (barbarians, boys, old men, etc.) who were assimilable to women. See also Cartledge 1993a.60–61, 104–6, 146.

[29] Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 6.1: δῆμον ἠλευθέρωσε.

prising that the tradition about his life makes much of his personal opposition to tyranny. He is characterized as the man who could be king but chose not to be. In Plutarch's account, Solon is importuned from all sides to establish himself as a tyrant but adamantly refuses to do so.[30] After rejecting the tyranny for himself, he fights against the tyranny of Pisistratus. Alone of the Athenians, he sees through Pisistratus's ruses and upbraids the Athenians for their stupidity and cowardice in allowing Pisistratus to seize power.[31] He even urges tyrannicide, although he is too old and frail to attempt it himself (*Solon* 30.6). In Solon, Athens's characteristic antipathy toward tyrants is projected back into the city's past and figured as part of the founding spirit of the city's egalitarian and lawful *politeia*.

But at the same time as Solon is represented as the "anti-Pisistratus,"[32] he was apparently not immune to the tyrant's charms. On the contrary, Plutarch tells us, he was in love with Pisistratus:

> τὴν δὲ μητέρα τοῦ Σόλωνος Ἡρακλείδης ὁ Ποντικὸς ἱστορεῖ τῆς Πεισιστράτου μητρὸς ἀνεψιὰν γενέσθαι, καὶ φιλία τὸ πρῶτον ἦν αὐτοῖς πολλὴ μὲν διὰ τὴν συγγένειαν, πολλὴ δὲ διὰ τὴν εὐφυΐαν καὶ ὥραν, ὡς ἔνιοί φασιν ἐρωτικῶς τὸν Πεισίστρατον ἀσπαζομένου τοῦ Σόλωνος. ὅθεν ὕστερον ὡς ἔοικεν εἰς διαφορὰν αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ καταστάντων, οὐδὲν ἤνεγκεν ἡ ἔχθρα σκληρὸν οὐδ' ἄγριον πάθος, ἀλλὰ παρέμεινεν ἐκεῖνα τὰ δίκαια ταῖς ψυχαῖς καὶ παρεφύλαξε 'τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα,' τὴν ἐρωτικὴν μνήμην καὶ χάριν.
>
> Heraclides of Ponticus records that Solon's mother was the cousin of Pisistratus's mother and in the beginning there was a great bond between them both because of this kinship and because of Pisistratus's youth and good looks, since some say Solon was erotically involved with Pisistratus. This seems to be the reason why later, when they came to disagree on political matters, their antagonism brought no harshness or bad feelings, but these just relations persisted in their souls and preserved, "smoldering, the live blaze of Zeus's fire," the memory and mutual affection of their love. (*Solon* 1.3–5)

Tyrant and lawmaker are united not only by kinship in this anecdote but also by eros, more specifically by the lawmaker's eros for a beautiful young tyrant. This love lingered throughout their lives and despite their political differences, that is, despite Solon's absolute hostility to tyranny. Plutarch will later suggest that Solon saw great potential buried beneath Pisistratus's tyrannical ambitions and that he tried to soften Pisistratus and advise him (*Solon* 29.5), but this hardly mitigates the peculiarity of

[30] Plut. *Solon* 14.4–15.1; Solon frs. 32–34W; cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 6.3, 11.2; D.L. 1.49, 67.

[31] Plut. *Solon* 29–30; see also Bassi 1998.161–71.

[32] Bassi 1998.186.

this relationship, which was known already to Aristotle.[33] Why should the father of democracy be in love with a tyrant? How can he continue to love that tyrant despite his abomination of tyranny?

Furthermore, from this surprising intimacy come Athens's laws on homosexuality, the very laws that delineate the realm of *dikaios erōs* in classical Athens. As evidence that Solon was not insensible to passion (and therefore not impervious to Pisistratus's youthful beauty), Plutarch adduces Solon's poetry and his laws, and particularly the law that forbade slaves from engaging in pederastic relations. This law, Plutarch says, "placed this matter [i.e., pederasty] into the category of noble and honorable practices by inviting worthy men to do the same things from which it banned the unworthy" (*Solon* 1.6). Aeschines credits this same law with establishing a distinction between noble love (the love of good and moderate men) and shameful love (associated with prostitution, corruption, and violence).[34] This distinction both defines and legitimates the erotic norm, the prime example of which is the "proper and lawful" relationship between Harmodius and Aristogiton (1.140). David Halperin likewise sees in Solon's social legislation the origins of the "democratic body." Solon's prohibition against debt slavery and the prostitution of citizens constituted the citizen body as sacrosanct, free from "economic, physical, or sexual violence," "the site and guarantee of personal and political independence."[35]

In Plutarch's biography of Solon, these same laws that define the citizen body and *dikaios erōs* are taken as testimony to the lawmaker's love for Pisistratus. The eros that Aeschines associates with the tyrannicides and that Plato's Pausanias declares by nature incompatible with tyranny

[33] Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 17.2. On the connection between Solon and Pisistratus, see further Rhodes 1981.201–2, 224; Rihill 1989. An imagined connection may also be hinted in the fragment of philosophical dialogue (perhaps from as early as the fourth century) contained in P. Oxy. 664. Diogenes Laertius (1.53–54, 66–67) quotes letters supposedly written between Solon and Pisistratus. McGlew 1993.87–123 offers a complementary examination of the relation between lawgiver and tyrant. In his role as reformer, he argues, Solon assumed the power of a tyrant, but he did so only to alienate that power from his own person and vest it instead in his laws. In the process, Solon both transformed the power of the tyrant and also preserved it, thereby facilitating Pisistratus's rise to power. McGlew thus elucidates in political terms the complicity between Solon and Pisistratus that I am framing in erotic terms.

[34] Aesch. 1.137–39. In this passage he does not ascribe this law to Solon but to an unnamed *nomothetēs*. Elsewhere, though, he attributes to Solon laws that protect the *sōphrosunē* and *eukosmia* of both boys and women (1.6, 183).

[35] Halperin 1990a.9, 11. At the same time, Halperin suggests, his institution of subsidized state brothels created a sexual subclass that supported the prerogatives of the citizen: "By insuring that there would always be a category of persons for every citizen to dominate, both socially and sexually, Solon underwrote the manhood of the Athenian citizen body" (1990a.13).

(*Symp.* 182c4–7) for Plutarch has its origin in a love affair between the democratic statesman and a tyrant.[36] And while we might have good reason to mistrust the details of Plutarch's account, nonetheless we are left with the jarring contradiction between the tradition of Solon as the sponsor of democratic eros and the tradition of Solon as a tyrant's erastes. We might dismiss this problem by pointing to the "democratic" nature of Pisistratus's tyranny. Aristotle calls his regime more "political" than "tyrannical" and praises the peaceful and philanthropic personality of this "most populist" (*dēmotikōtatos*) of tyrants (*Ath. Pol.* 13–16).[37] But Aristotle also suggests that this populism is a mere pretense (*Ath. Pol.* 13.4, 14.1; cf. Plut. *Solon* 29.4), which Solon saw through in his opposition to the tyranny.

It is hard to explain away this paradox: the original democrat hates tyranny but loves a tyrant, and from that ambivalent love affair is born the eros of the democratic citizen and the democratic city. The point is not, of course, the historical veracity of this liaison. Aristotle already doubts that on chronological grounds.[38] The point is rather that when the democratic city imagines its own origins, the fantasy includes not only antipathy to tyranny but also, more surprisingly, love of tyranny. As in the kylix by Epictetus, desire for a beautiful tyrant animates the citizen body and mobilizes democratic eros.

It is not just the democrat's desire for a tyrant that is productive for Athens but also the tyrant's own desire.[39] In reiterated stagings, the Athenian is confronted with a tyrant's desire. Looking into his treasure cham-

[36] Another tradition makes Laius the "inventor" of homosexuality when he raped Chrysippus, the son of Pelops. In some versions, the birth of Oedipus is the punishment for this rape. This mythic tradition finds the origins of "just" love in the violent and incestuous sexuality of the tyrant. See Peisandros *FGrH* 16 F10; Eur. *Chrys.* (fr. 839–44N); Hyg. fab. 85. That this origin myth continued to resonate within homoerotic discourse is perhaps suggested by the tradition that Euripides wrote a play about Chrysippus for Agathon, the quintessential eromenos.

[37] According to Aristotle, many considered the rule of Pisistratus a golden age: Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 16; cf. Hdt. 1.59.6; Thuc. 6.54.5–6; Pl. *Hipparch.* 229b7; White 1955.15–18; Pleket 1969.29–31, 44–48; Shapiro 1989.1–17; Lavelle 1993.121–24. Pisistratus was also sometimes included among the Seven Sages (D.L. 1.122).

[38] Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 17.2. Frost 1985 and Lavelle 1993.59–85 evaluate the sources for the Pisistratid regime.

[39] These two possibilities are united within Lacan's enigmatic precept, "Man's desire is the desire of the Other" (*le désir de l'homme, c'est le désir de l'Autre*). Man's desire is a desire for the Other (as in Solon and Pisistratus's case). Man's desire is also shaped by the Other's desire, in response to the Other's demands. Later we will see a third meaning of the phrase: man's desire is other to him, never fully his own. Lacan 1977.58, 288–89, 312; 1981.214–15, 235; 1988a.146–48, 170–72, 176–79. For an exegesis of the phrase and its various meanings, see Fink 1996; see also Žižek 1989.110–28 on the question, What does the Other want?

ber, the citizen sees what the tyrant values and is prompted by that encounter to define his own values. The question, What does the tyrant want (value, desire, love)? prompts another: What do we Athenians want? The answer to the challenge of the tyrant's desire is a formulation of democratic desire and, ultimately, democratic ideology. This dynamic is evident from the very first literary encounter between the Greek self and a tyrant, Archilochus's fragment 19W. This fragment is neither Athenian nor democratic but, in its iconic simplicity, reads like a script for later confrontations between Greeks and Eastern despots. The speaker (Aristotle tells us, *Rhet.* 1418b30) is a carpenter named Charon.

> "οὔ μοι τὰ Γύγεω τοῦ πολυχρύσου μέλει,
> οὐδ' εἷλέ πώ με ζῆλος, οὐδ' ἀγαίομαι
> θεῶν ἔργα, μεγάλης δ' οὐκ ἐρέω τυραννίδος·
> ἀπόπροθεν γάρ ἐστιν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐμῶν."

> "Not for me, the things of golden Gyges;
> I'm not in the grip of envy, nor do I resent
> the works of the gods, and I do not love great tyranny.
> For this is far from my eyes." (Archilochus fr. 19W)

Vincent Farenga, in his important article "The Paradigmatic Tyrant" (1981), sees in this poem the emergence of a discourse of the self within a structural relation of difference with a tyrannical Other. The word "I" is first spoken out of a desire for difference from the tyrant, who is also named here for the first time. This "I" delineates itself against the illegitimate power and improper desires of the tyrant. In this way "it attempts to open up some breathing room for selfhood in the possibility of property not in the tyrant's possession and of desire not in imitation of the tyrant's desire."[40]

In Archilochus's fragment, the Greek self appears to emerge in and as a difference from the tyrant, through a negation not only of the tyrant himself but also of his desire. On the surface of it, this fragment seems to repudiate all desire. It begins with denial, and reiterates that denial three more times within four lines. But for every denial there is an affirmation: interest (μέλει), envy (ζῆλος), and finally love: μεγάλης δ' οὐκ ἐρέω τυραν-

[40] Farenga 1981.3. But the difference thus established, Farenga stresses, is unstable—more Derridean *différance* in his reading than clear-cut opposition—for in the very process of defining himself against the tyrant, the subject preserves this Other within himself as an internal site of alienation, doubleness, and impropriety. "From the start, difference as simple negation harbors within itself the identity it repudiates, making of the poor Charon, in his difference from the wealthy Gyges, a tyrant deferred. Archilochus' lyric voice thus demonstrates that the weak 'Self,' from the moment it can speak, is always already the 'differance' of the powerful 'Other,' and vice-versa" (1981.4).

νίδος. Every repudiation of desire is a tacit confession of desire, for even as the negation declares love of tyranny nonexistent, the very naming of that (non)love brings it into existence. The negation suspends but does not obliterate the desire, which it contemplates and speaks four times over, if only to deny. We might even say that the self is formed as a defense against this eros, as itself a negative added to this inadmissible desire for the Other.[41]

This is not desire for a tyrant, though, as in the affair of Solon and Pisistratus. It is not Gyges himself who is (not) loved, golden though he may be, but his "things."[42] The animating force behind this scene is thus Gyges' own desire, for this is what makes his unspecified "things" a matter of potential concern and envy, that draws the eye irresistibly toward them. This desire is imagined as already and always satisfied: it is laden with gold, enviable, favored by the gods. The lure of this satiated tyrannical desire is encapsulated within the words "great tyranny": tyranny crystallizes the desire of the tyrant. The desire of the Other reified in this strange, un-Greek noun lies at the center of the fragment, the thing it shields its eyes against and wards off with denial.[43] The subject emerges in this fragment less in his opposition to or negation of the tyrannical Other than as a response to the Other's desire, less through a desire for difference (in Farenga's terms) than through a denied desire for identity. By imagining (and imagining desiring) the things of Gyges, the speaker imagines and articulates his own (oppositional, nontyrannical, proper) desire and, in the process, names himself as subject of that desire.

Archilochus was a Parian nobleman, of course, not an Athenian democrat, but the words he puts into the mouth of this humble craftsman find direct responsion in the Athenian discourse of tyranny, starting with

[41] I think this is implicit in Farenga's argument, but it is not brought out in his condensed discussion. See, e.g., 1981.4, where he implies that difference from the Other is a defense against the possibility of mimetic desire.

[42] Perhaps this is to make too fine a distinction, since the adjective *polukhrusos* (literally, "of much gold") might more properly describe Gyges' possessions than himself: Gyges is as golden as the gold that makes him wealthy. Compare Anacreontea fr. 8.1–4W: Οὔ μοι μέλει τὰ Γύγεω / τοῦ Σαρδίων ἄνακτος, / οὔθ' αἱρέει με χρυσός, / οὐ δὲ φθονῶ τυράννοις. This poem clearly differentiates gold from the tyrant; Archilochus's collapses them. At *H.H. Aphrodite* 1, Aphrodite herself is *polukhrusos*; cf. Hes. *Erga* 521, fr. 143.3.

[43] I return to the quality and necessity of this negation in the next section. For a similar denial of the desire for tyranny, see Anacreontea fr. 8W; Solon fr. 33, 34.7–8W; Soph. *OT* 601 (Creon: ἀλλ' οὔτ' ἐραστὴς τῆσδε τῆς γνώμης ἔφυν, where the *gnōmē* referred to is tyranny); Xen. *Hieron* 1. This is not to say that we do not find direct expressions of envy of tyrants or desire for tyranny in Greek literature: we do (see McGlew 1993.28–35 for examples). But in virtually every case, that desire is negated. Thus, for example, the whole of Plato's *Republic* can be read as a process of adding negation to the desire for tyranny (Benoist 1975.123–47). Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and Xenophon's *Hieron*, discussed later, are other prime examples of the dynamic.

Solon himself. The dynamics of negated desire and averted gaze of Archilochus's poem are painted on a larger canvas in the encounter between Solon and Croesus in Herodotus's *History*. This story occupies a privileged place in Herodotus's text. First, the chronological impossibility of the meeting makes the story less a historical account than a dramatization of important themes and ideas. Second, this incident is part of a larger narrative that begins with Gyges' murder of Candaules and ascension to the Lydian throne and ends with the fall of Croesus (as the punishment for the crime of Gyges five generations earlier) and the rise of Persia. This narrative, which fills most of the first ninety-one chapters of Herodotus's *History*, stands in a synecdochic relation to the *History* as a whole: Croesus is the first barbarian tyrant to enslave Greeks, Herodotus says (1.6.2–3), and while his fall ushers in the period of Persian supremacy, it also predicts the eventual defeat of the Persian tyranny at the hands of the Greeks. Thus the scene is important not only in itself but as an encapsulation of the moral trajectory of the overall narrative.[44]

The encounter between Solon and Croesus begins with a tyrant's desire; it ends with an articulation of democratic subjectivity, democratic desire, even what we might call a democratic metaphysics. Solon has come to Sardis in the course of a ten-year absence from Athens: the pretext for his journey, says Herodotus, was to see the world, but the true reason was so that he would not be forced to change the laws which he had just established in Athens, "for the Athenians were not able to do this themselves" (1.29.1). Athenian law is held in a strange suspension during this scene: the Athenians are not yet masters of their own law; the law is both fixed and unstable, it has been established (ἔθετο) but could still be dissolved (λῦσαι). The Athenian lawmaker's encounter with the foreign tyrant is thus staged as a decisive moment within the development of *nomos* at Athens. The law (and the *politeia* built upon it) must await the outcome of this meeting with the Lydian tyrant.

Like Archilochus's fragment ("this is far from my eyes"), this scene is structured by a movement of the gaze. Solon is traveling ostensibly for the sake of "sightseeing" (*theōria*, 1.29.1, 1.30.1, 1.30.2). Croesus arrests his vision and directs it toward the spectacle of his own blessedness, inviting Solon to gaze upon and desire his wealth.

[44] Croesus is the first man to be called a tyrant in the text. On the vocabulary of monarchy in Herodotus, see Ferrill 1978; Lévy 1993; Parker 1998.161–64, and for various views on Herodotus's moralization of tyranny, Waters 1971; Ferrill 1978.391–97; M. Stahl 1983; Hartog 1988.336–37; Lateiner 1989.170–85; Gray 1996; Holt 1998.239–41; Dewald forthcoming. On the Croesus episode as an introduction to Herodotus's text and method, see Benardete 1969.16–19; Lateiner 1989.38–39.

> "Ξεῖνε Ἀθηναῖε, παρ' ἡμέας γὰρ περὶ σέο λόγος ἀπῖκται πολλὸς καὶ σοφίης [εἵνεκεν] τῆς σῆς καὶ πλάνης, ὡς φιλοσοφέων γῆν πολλὴν θεωρίης εἵνεκεν ἐπελήλυθας· νῦν ὦν ἵμερος ἐπειρέσθαι μοι ἐπῆλθέ σε εἴ τινα ἤδη πάντων εἶδες ὀλβιώτατον." Ὁ μὲν ἐλπίζων εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ὀλβιώτατος ταῦτα ἐπειρώτα, Σόλων δὲ οὐδὲν ὑποθωπεύσας, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐόντι χρησάμενος, λέγει· "Ὦ βασιλεῦ, Τέλλον Ἀθηναῖον."

> "Athenian guest, many reports have reached me about you and your wisdom and your voyages: that you have traveled many lands in your pursuit of wisdom and for the sake of seeing everything. Now a desire [*himeros*] has come over me to ask you if anyone among all those you've seen is most blessed." He asked this question because he expected to be the most blessed of mortals, but Solon did not flatter him, but answered truthfully: "King, Tellus the Athenian." (Hdt. 1.30.2–3)

This scene replays the dynamic of Archilochus's fragment but starts from an earlier point. Whereas Archilochus begins with repudiation, Herodotus poses the question that provokes repudiation. Croesus in effect asks, "Do you not want my things? Do you not envy me? Do you not love my great tyranny?" By setting up the scene in this way, Herodotus gives us a brief glimpse of what Archilochus's Charon keeps far from his (and our) eyes. We enter the *thēsauros* (treasure chamber) with Solon and, in the moment before his answer, we can glimpse "all the great and rich things" within (1.30.1). We are allowed to imagine, if only for an instant, those "things" of the tyrant that are refused to us in Archilochus, the allure of tyranny that demands immediate denial.

Beyond that, we are allowed to see the tyrant's desire, for it is Croesus's *himeros* that motivates the question and the scene. The "things" of Croesus are already *olbia*, rich, prosperous, blessed. But Croesus wants Solon to bear witness to this prosperity and validate it. Through the recognition of this Greek sage, he hopes to insert himself into the Greek hierarchy of values, to be declared superlative (*olbiōtatos*) by Solon and in this way (from Herodotus's Hellenizing perspective) to actually be superlative (ἐλπίζων εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ὀλβιώτατος).[45] Even as Croesus desires all the "great and blessed things" of his tyranny, he also wants to have that desire mirrored in Solon's admiration: he wants Solon to desire what he desires.

This tyrannical *himeros* drives the scene. Solon, like Charon, refuses the desire of the tyrant. Faced with the tyrant's wealth and happiness,

[45] Thus one could understand this scene in the Hegelian terms employed in the preceding chapter: the tyrant, like Hegel's subject, longs for a recognition that is never fully forthcoming. See Bloomer 1993 on the structuring force of the superlative in Herodotus's *History.* The meaning of *olbios* is obviously highly contested in this scene: see Konstan 1983.16–17; Crane 1996a.61–63, 71–84; Kurke 1999.147–48.

he is able to look upon those things (θεησάμενον δέ μιν τὰ πάντα καὶ σκεψάμενον, 1.30.2) and then put them far from his eyes.[46] Thus, as Farenga argues for Archilochus, Solon carves out a realm of propriety (for the self, for Greece, for democratic Athens) in opposition to the improper wealth and power of the barbarian tyrant. Moreover, his answer, Herodotus says (1.30.3), is not fawning (ὑποθωπεύσας) but true (τῷ ἐόντι χρησάμενος λέγει). This antithesis between flattery and truth is a recurring trope in encounters between a (Greek) wise man and a (foreign) tyrant.[47] It encapsulates neatly a whole range of vital oppositions (being vs. seeming; freedom vs. slavishness, etc.) and places truth, wisdom, free speech, and political autonomy on the side of the Greek. But here it goes further, for Herodotus himself asserts the truth of Solon's words. At issue in this scene is not only the Greeks' association with truth but truth itself, and Herodotus's intervention marks the critical nature of the contest. What will be truth for the Athenians? The superlative blessedness of the tyrant or the democratic ideals that Solon poses in its place? As in Archilochus's fragment, the encounter with the tyrant is a contest over the nature of the subject's desire and the truth of his being. Contemplating the tyrant's wealth and speculating upon his desire (*theōria*, 1.29.1, 1.30.1, 1.30.2), the Athenian lawgiver will theorize the truth of the Greek subject.

If in Archilochus the turn away from the wealth of Gyges is a paradigmatic moment in the Western discourse of the self, in Herodotus Solon's turn away from the wealth of Croesus defines a specifically Athenian, democratic self. Against Croesus's blessedness Solon places that of Tellus the Athenian, a pious but ordinary man who dies for his country (Hdt. 1.30.4–5). I alluded in chapter 1 to similarities between this Tellus and the ideal citizens of Pericles' Funeral Oration. Tellus's happiness is from the outset placed in the context of his city's glory (Hdt. 1.30.4), a motif taken from the democratic polis (compare, e.g., Thuc. 2.60.2–3; Soph. *Ant.* 188–90). Tellus's sons, however, are *kaloi te k'agathoi* (Hdt. 1.30.4). This reiterates the surprising idiom of the Epitaphios, where Pericles praises the Athenians as aristocratic democrats. Tellus's most illustrious and noble death (τελευτὴ τοῦ βίου λαμπροτάτη, ἀπέθανε κάλλιστα, Hdt. 1.30.4–5) and

[46] The verbs here are significant. While θεησάμενον, cognate with *thauma*, implies a certain complicity of the lawgiver's eye with the spectacle of Croesus's marvelous wealth, σκεψάμενον suggests a more critical, even skeptical look; θεησάμενον is the admiring gaze of a dramatic audience watching a tyrant on the tragic stage; σκεψάμενον, the contemplation of a philosopher. Solon's viewing is further specified as "proper" or "appropriate" (ὥς οἱ κατὰ καιρὸν ἦν, 1.30.2). He can look upon the tyrant's wealth without being drawn into an excessive or improper desire for it. On Herodotus's philosophy of spectation, see Konstan 1987; Travis 2000, and, on Solon's *theōria*, Ker 2000, esp. 311–15.

[47] On this subgenre, see Lattimore 1939 and Gray 1986, who takes Solon and Croesus as the model.

his public burial (δημοσίῃ τε ἔθαψαν) further recall the civic ritual of the Epitaphios (δημοσίᾳ ταφὰς ἐποιήσαντο, Thuc. 2.34.1) and the beautiful (κάλλιστον, Thuc. 2.42.4, 2.43.1) and conspicuous (ἐπισημότατον, ἐπιφανῶν, Thuc. 2.43.2–3) valor of the dead it honored.[48]

Thucydides' Pericles represents his praise of the Athenians as just a matter of matching words to their innate excellence; his vision of Athens, as he presents it, is grounded in the "truth of deeds" of the Athenians themselves (Thuc. 2.41.2). Here we find a similar vision, but it arises not as a spontaneous reaction to the autochthonous excellence of the Athenians but as an answer to the question of an Eastern despot: Tellus is a vision summoned by a tyrant's *himeros*. Moreover, from this tyrant's desire is generated not only a civic ideal and its happy subject but also a civic ontology. Whereas Charon the carpenter merely adds a negative to the lure of tyranny, Solon develops an elaborate moral philosophy in order to negate the tyrant. This philosophy is a familiar one and constitutes what we might consider a traditional Greek wisdom: the gods are jealous and all-powerful; human existence is pure chance (*sumphora*) and uncertainty; therefore lead a moderate, virtuous life, and count no man happy until he is dead. What is remarkable in this scene is not so much the content of Solon's wisdom, but the fact that it is voiced—as if for the first time—in answer to a tyrant's query.

The central precepts of Greek moral philosophy—an entire ontology and a corresponding ethics—seem to originate in the *thēsauros* of the Lydian tyrant and to be formulated specifically as a response to his *himeros*.[49] This ontology and ethics are not only recognizably Greek but also specifically civic, even democratic. With his minute calculation of a human life-span, Solon constructs an egalitarian economy of blessedness in which every man has an equal wealth of minutes, hours, and days, and an equal debit of potential suffering. The reforms that were consolidated in Athens during the lawmaker's absence are here established as a universal law: good fortune is portioned out fairly (*isonomia*) and the debt of misfortune made to fall equally upon all. Within this reformed economy,

[48] Cleobis and Biton, who are awarded the prize as second most blessed, are also eulogized with civic praise: in death they "become good men" and are honored by their polis (see Kurke 1999.147). This story not only distances prosperity from wealth but also binds it to a morality that emphasizes both piety and civic honor. The tale of Cleobis and Biton, while less markedly Athenian, is thus important to the redefinition of *olbios* and, hence, to the repudiation of the tyrant's happiness.

[49] We might contrast epinician, which, rather than setting traditional wisdom in opposition to the tyrant, works to situate the tyrant within a traditional (aristocratic) ethics. The difference no doubt stems from the fact that epinician, unlike Solon, does not speak directly to or for democracy. For Croesus in epinician, see Segal 1971; Crane 1996a; Kurke 1999.131–42.

autarky—the fantasy that makes Athens's citizens into tyrants and its empire into a tyranny—is strictly ruled out: "no individual person is self-sufficient [*autarkes*]" (Ὡς δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα ἓν οὐδὲν αὔταρκές ἐστι, 1.32.8). The elimination of self-sufficiency not only precludes the tyrant (who is quintessentially autarkic). It also grounds Solon's metaphysics within the polis, for, as Leslie Kurke argues, it is precisely the impossibility of individual autarky in an uncertain and contingent universe that comprises the theoretical necessity of the polis in Greek political thought; thus "Solon's model of cosmic inscrutability endorses and subtends the egalitarian ideology of the city."[50] But again, I would like to stress that this entire vision of cosmic and civic order is prompted by the tyrant's *himeros*. Croesus's desire provokes Solon to articulate *Athens*'s desire. The virtuous citizen, a civic ethics of moderation, an egalitarian universe: the very fabric of Athens's symbolic order is here woven around the tyrant, as an answer to his question, a repudiation of his happiness, and a response to his desire.

The interview with the tyrant is a twice-told tale. The scene between Solon and Croesus is a seminal moment in the larger narrative of Croesus's rise and fall (Hdt. 1.6–91), and that narrative itself begins with a tyrant's desire. Candaules, the tyrant of Sardis, "fell in love with his own wife" (ἠράσθη τῆς ἑωυτοῦ γυναικός, 1.8). I cannot do justice here to the richness and strangeness of the scene that follows, but even the most superficial reading reveals the parallels with the encounter between Solon and Croesus. Candaules, like Croesus, is in love with what he has; his desire draws (indeed, demands) the gaze of Gyges, just as Croesus's did that of Solon. But whereas Solon averted his eyes—he "viewed and contemplated everything" (θεησάμενον . . . τὰ πάντα καὶ σκεψάμενον, 1.30.2) and then looked away—Gyges cannot refuse to look (θεήσεαι, θεήσασθαι, σκοπέειν, 1.8.2–4).[51] Offered by the queen a choice of death or tyranny, he chooses the latter. Gyges sees through the tyrant's eyes, chooses (albeit against his will) what the tyrant desires, and as a result becomes (on pain of death) what the tyrant is. It is no coincidence, then, that Herodotus ends the tale of Gyges and Candaules with a reference to Archilochus's poem (1.12.2). This episode stages the prehistory, as it were, of that poem, and in that prehistory anticipates the dynamics of the poem. Gyges himself

[50] Kurke 1999.148–50 (the quotation is on 148). She further notes that Solon uses the (civic) language of *dikē* here for the first time. Contrast the alternate version recounted in Diogenes, that to Croesus's question whether Solon had ever seen anything more beautiful than his wealth, Solon replied: "Cocks and peacocks and pheasants, which are adorned with a natural bloom that is more beautiful by far" (D.L. 1.51). There Solon's wisdom works in the service of nature against the artifice of the tyrant.

[51] See Travis 2000, esp. 354–56 on the interplay of desire, law, and spectation in the Gyges and Solon scenes.

was once in the same position as Charon: faced with the desire of the tyrannical Other, he had to state his own desire. But Gyges does not negate the Other's desire; instead he affirms it and in the affirmation becomes that Other, assuming as his own Candaules' wife and tyranny.

Gyges' reluctant assent to the tyrant's desire exposes the stakes of Solon's imagined encounter with tyranny: refusal is by no means automatic or inevitable. But although Gyges says yes to the things of golden Candaules, the text adds its own negation. In Herodotus's text, Gyges' assent is negated first by Solon's response to Croesus and then by Croesus himself, whose fall is punishment for Gyges' choice (1.13.2, 1.91.1). On the pyre, Croesus adds the definitive "not" to any possible love of tyranny. In the moment before his death, he recognizes the truth of Solon's words, that no man is blessed while he is alive (1.86.3). When Solon rejected the happiness of Croesus, Herodotus said he spoke the truth (1.30.3). Croesus on the pyre reconfirms that truth and also passes it on: not only does he transmit it directly to his captor Cyrus (1.86.6) but he says he would give a great fortune to have other tyrants know it as well (1.86.4). The choice between Solonic wisdom and tyrannical wealth is replayed; now Croesus must choose, and he chooses Solon. In a coup that we will see repeated in Xenophon's *Hieron*, the tyrant himself is made to repudiate his own desire, to proclaim, "Not for me the things of golden Gyges," and to pass that message on to other tyrants.

The lure of tyranny is negated over the course of five generations; this negation in turn predicts another, for what are the Persian Wars but a negation of tyrannical Persia's desire to dominate Greece? Just as Charon finds his voice in opposition to the things of Gyges, and Solon delineates a democratic subject and egalitarian ethics in opposition to the tyrant's happiness, so too Greece lays claim to national identity and political presence in opposition to the tyrannical power of Persia. Herodotus's Greek reader is invited to imagine the tyrant's desire—from Candaules' eros for his wife, to Croesus's *himeros* to be most blessed, to the will that drives first Darius, then Xerxes against Greece—and to repeat, along with Solon and the Greek soldiers at Marathon and Salamis, "I do not love great tyranny." Indeed, for Herodotus's audience that negation is part of the syntax of this relation from the beginning, for by the time the *History* was in circulation Persia had long been defeated and Greece (and Athens in particular) had already claimed the title of tyrannicide.

In its victory over Persia, Greece seems to replicate the dynamic of Archilochus fragment 19W: a Greek self is defined through opposition to and victory over a tyrannical Other. But this negative relation does not exhaust the complex interaction between the two, for the subject emerges not simply from the negation of the tyrant's desire but in the space between that desire and its negation. Solon answers Croesus's *himeros* not

with a flat refusal but with a democratic fantasy, in which the greatest fortune is not tyrannical riches but a life of moderate pleasures and a glorious death. Likewise, Persia's imperial desire prompts Greece to define, as well as to defend, its own desire for political autonomy and freedom. From this phantasmatic, libidinous interaction—and not just through negation—the Athenian subject emerges in his difference from the tyrant. Be it Tellus or the heroes who died at Marathon, the Athenian subject is conjured as an answer to the question of the tyrant's desire and as the subject of a desire that takes shape through the fantasy of the Other's desire. This imagined bond between the tyrant and the democratic subject can be denied ("Not for me the things of golden Gyges") but it is not for that erased: Solon repudiates Croesus's desire but still harbors a lifelong affection for another tyrant, Pisistratus. Athens's desire is the desire of its tyrannical Other: the desire both for the tyrant and of the tyrant.

Tyrannical Ecstasy

What does the tyrant want? Behind that question lurks a prior question: *does* the tyrant want? If longing is the essence of desire, and the tyrant has everything he or anyone else could want, can the tyrant really be said to desire? And if the tyrant does not desire, what happens to the democratic subject who, I argued, emerges in response to this desire of the tyrannical Other?

Athens's *duserōs* for Sicily, as we saw in the preceding chapter, revealed lack as the motor of eros. Sicily held out an illusory promise of mastery and freedom. But Sicily was an always receding object that only deferred the satisfaction it seemed to offer. The Sicilian Expedition illustrated what Lacan terms the metonymic nature of desire: desire is always a desire "for something else," something it will always be lacking.[52] This desire-in-lack is for Lacan at the heart of the pleasure principle, which in its reduction of stimulus defers but never satiates the subject's desire. Lacan builds from a scene Freud describes in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: a child throws a spool from his crib, crying "*fort!*" (away), then makes it reappear with a delighted "*da!*" (there).[53] In Freud this game of *fort-da* illustrates both the pleasure principle's reduction of unpleasure and its impulse toward mastery, as the child attempts to overcome absence and its unpleasure by deliberately recreating and controlling it. For Lacan, on the other hand, the scene encapsulates the condition of the subject within the symbolic,

[52] Lacan 1977.167, 286, 311–12. See also Copjec 1994.148.

[53] Freud 1955 [1920].14–16.

alienated from both his desire and his self by the signifier, *fort-da*. Henceforth, his being (*da*) is defined by absence (*fort*) and his pleasure by lack.[54]

This is the dynamic we saw at work in Athens's quest for Sicily, in which any hope of presence (mastery, being) was undercut by absence (loss, disease, death). This interplay of *fort* and *da* is revealed in Sicily as the essence of Athens's pleasure principle: this restless striving, as Alcibiades proclaimed (Thuc. 6.18.6), keeps Athens alive. The Athenians' experience in Sicily suggested, moreover, that there was nothing beyond this desire, nothing "beyond the pleasure principle." "You cannot stand outside [*ekstēnai*] of your empire," Pericles told the Athenians (ἧς οὐδ' ἐκστῆναι ἔτι ὑμῖν ἔστιν, Thuc. 2.63.2). Empire's *duserōs tōn apontōn* is a symbolic order with no exterior.

And yet the Athenians were able to imagine a beyond and dreamed of precisely the *ekstasis* that Pericles says is impossible. I argued in the preceding chapter that within the discourse of empire the tyrant figures the tragic constraint of the struggle for mastery. But the tyrant also opens a vista onto an existence beyond this enslaving dialectic. Tyrannical desire is notoriously insatiable: it respects no limits in seeking satisfaction, yet every satisfaction merely piques it the more.[55] In his pleonectic desire, the tyrant embodies the logic of the pleasure principle, in which every hope of presence and mastery (*da*) is predicated on an irremediable absence (*fort*). But alongside this imagination is another in which the tyrant is pure *da*: absolute presence, mastery, being-in-itself. In this fantasy, the tyrant lacks lack. He stands not only outside of the political economy of classical Athens—above law or constitution—but also outside its psychic economy of desire and deferred satisfaction, *ekstatic* to the pleasure principle and its logic of lack.

From this exorbitant position, the tyrant represents a dream of absolute fulfillment and limitless joy, a pleasure beyond principle that Lacan terms *jouissance*. *Jouissance* is the impossible enjoyment toward which desire tends but which it can never reach, a joy taken from the subject as the price of his subjectivity. When the individual enters the symbolic order, he takes on meaning—language, signification, subjectivity—but does so only by sacrificing the wholeness of his being: unmediated access to his body and drives, oneness with the maternal body and the external world,

[54] "Thus the symbol manifests itself first of all as the murder of the thing, and this death constitutes in the subject the eternalization of his desire," Lacan 1977.104. The scene for him illustrates that "the moment in which desire becomes human is also that in which the child is born into language" (103). Cf. 1981.62–63, 239; Silverman 1983.167–70.

[55] On tyrants' *pleonexia*, see, e.g., Pl. *Rep.* 573a–575d; Xen. *Hieron* 8.10; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 6.3, *Pol.* 1311a5–6. Aristotle (*Pol.* 1277a23–25) quotes the tyrant Jason of Pherae as saying that whenever he isn't a tyrant he feels hungry. See Balot 2001.53–55.

the real.[56] *Jouissance* represents this lost, sacrificed being. Barred to the subject as such, excluded from the symbolic, *jouissance* is attributed in fantasy to the Other.[57] But it leaves its trace within the symbolic in the form of the subject's desire, for it is this fantasied wholeness that desire seeks (but necessarily fails) to recapture. *Da* without *fort*, love without lack, *jouissance* is thus beyond the pleasure principle and a challenge to its homeostatic logic but also its grounding fantasy.[58]

For the Athenians it was the tyrant above all who gave form to this fantasy, but a form that is difficult to grasp. Tyrannical *jouissance* is elusive, no sooner conjured than denied: in narrative after narrative, the tyrant's joy is imagined only to be revealed as hollow and as always having been so; lack is always rediscovered in the midst of his plenitude. The Athenians seem able to think about the tyrant's bliss only in conjunction with his misery. In order to approach that bliss, then, we will need to pry apart momentarily two things that were in fact conceptually inseparable, to look beyond the texts' negation (I do not envy, I do not love) to those shadowy "things of golden Gyges." In this section, I try to trace the outlines of the tyrant's *jouissance*, separating it from his lack but all the while bearing in mind that the two cannot really be separated. The lack that haunts the tyrant's joy is not a contingent addition but an intrinsic feature, an anamorphosis that comes from trying to conceive of the extra-symbolic within symbolic terms and that limits in advance the threat tyrannical ecstasy poses to the symbolic order. *Jouissance* is thinkable only under negation, and in some ways the negation itself is the most important thing, for it is only once the tyrant has been shown to want that one

[56] Lacan illustrates this exchange with the line "Your money or your life!": "If I choose the money, I lose both. If I choose life, I have life without the money, namely, a life deprived of something" (1981.212). Being without meaning is nonexistence: "If we choose being, the subject disappears, it eludes us, it falls into non-meaning" (1981.211). If we choose meaning, on the other hand, we become subject to a world of lack and castration, divided in ourselves and cut off from our being. Silverman 1992.35 glosses this choice as "the unavoidable castration which every subject must experience upon entering the order of language or signification, its inauguration into a regime of lack." Copjec formulates it as a choice between desire and *jouissance* (1994.182–83). For an excellent discussion of Lacanian *jouissance* in a classical context, see Janan 1994.

[57] Lacan 1977.318–24. "But we must insist that *jouissance* is forbidden to him who speaks as such, although it can only be said between the lines for whoever is subject of the Law, since the Law is grounded in this very prohibition" (319; cf. 1998.24: "the signifier is what brings *jouissance* to a halt"). On the *jouissance* of the Other, see J. Rose in Lacan 1982.44–57; Irigaray 1985a.86–105; Žižek 1989.121–23; Lacan 1998.64–77.

[58] Lacan 1977.322, 1981.183–84. On the difference between *jouissance* and pleasure, see Alan Sheridan's note in Lacan 1977.x. *Jouissance* is not necessarily "pleasurable": its ecstasy rather approaches terror, evoking a morbid undifferentiation and dissolution of the subject. Janan 1994.30: "*Jouissance*, in its strange yoking of ecstasy, pain, and death, menaces the Symbolic as the symptom of what cannot enter into the logic of signification."

can ask what he wants and find in his emptied fullness the ground for democratic fantasy.

To get a sense of the tyrant's ecstatic relation to the symbolic order, let us look back at the encounter between Solon and Croesus. Solon elaborates an ethics and metaphysics—we might call it a pleasure principle—built upon lack: "No individual person is self-sufficient, for he possesses one thing but lacks another" (Ὡς δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα ἓν οὐδὲν αὔταρκές ἐστι· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἔχει, ἄλλου δὲ ἐνδεές ἐστι, Hdt. 1.32.8). For Solon as for Freud, pleasure is largely an absence of unpleasure (the happiest man is the one who "is not lame, is not sick, does not suffer evils, has good children and good health" and dies a happy death, 1.32.6–7) within a cosmic order in which the *fort-da* of good fortune is universal law. This principle, as we saw, is the theoretical foundation for Solon's entire moral philosophy of moderation. To this the tyrant's satisfaction poses a potential threat. Croesus believes he lacks for nothing, that his happiness is not only supreme but immutable: he cannot even conceive of its diminution or loss, and responds to Solon as to a madman (1.33). If he were right (which we are reassured throughout he is not), his joy would rip a hole in the weave of Solon's ethics of moderation and metaphysics of lack. In Croesus's supreme *olbos* rests the (denied) possibility of everything Solon excludes from his symbolic order: self-sufficiency, immutable good fortune, a happiness counted in the moment and not only in retrospect, a human existence beyond the vicissitudes of divine favor and chance reversals, a life not defined by its telos in death. If the tyrant truly were *olbiōtatos*, then there would be no necessary limit on pleasure and no corresponding imperative toward moderation; the *sōphrosunē* and civic *aretē* of a Tellus would lose their meaning in the dazzle of the tyrant's ecstatic being. From the perspective of Solon's ontology, then, the tyrant's happiness is impossible and the symbolic order is structured around its impossibility.

In Solon's encounter with Croesus, the tyrant's *jouissance* is annulled as soon as it is imagined and the threat it might pose to Solon's philosophy is both preempted in advance (by the curse of Gyges, which shows Croesus's *olbos* vulnerable, and the *himeros* for Solon, which shows it incomplete) and eliminated in hindsight (by Croesus's epiphany on the pyre). An entire metaphysics is elaborated to obscure the tyrant's blessings from view. For a clearer view of these, we can turn to an anecdote from later in Herodotus's *History*, a story about Polycrates, the ruler of Samos and, as Herodotus says, the single most magnificent Greek tyrant (3.125.2).[59]

[59] Barceló 1990.405 points out that Polycrates is the first ruler named as a tyrant in Thucydides' history of early Greece (1.13.6). On Polycrates in Herodotus, see Immerwahr 1956–57; Benardete 1969.81–82; Waters 1971.25–29; Kurke 1999.101–29.

Polycrates enjoyed unadulterated prosperity, succeeding completely in everything he undertook (3.39). His guest-friend, the Egyptian king Amasis, fears that his friend's good fortune will arouse the gods' resentment and warns him of the dangers of such excessive good luck:

> Καί κως βούλομαι καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ τῶν ἂν κήδωμαι τὸ μέν τι εὐτυχέειν τῶν πρηγμάτων, τὸ δὲ προσπταίειν, καὶ οὕτω διαφέρειν τὸν αἰῶνα ἐναλλὰξ πρήσσων ἢ εὐτυχέειν τὰ πάντα· οὐδένα γάρ κω λόγῳ οἶδα ἀκούσας ὅστις ἐς τέλος οὐ κακῶς ἐτελεύτησε πρόρριζος, εὐτυχέων τὰ πάντα.

> For myself and those I care about, I wish success in some affairs and failure in others, and to live out life alternating in this way, rather than to be successful in everything. For I have never heard of anyone who was successful in everything who in the end did not wind up utterly ruined.(3.40.2–3)

Human life is an inevitable mixture of blessings and evils: we have seen this as the guiding principle of Solon's ontology, and it is one of the oldest tenets of Greek moral philosophy.[60] But Polycrates escapes this law: his life is unalloyed blessing. Amasis tries to return the tyrant to the normal economy of human happiness. He tries to bring him within the pleasure principle, with its alternation of want and satisfaction (*enallax*, 3.40.3, 4) and its deferral of complete fulfillment (*diapherein*, 3.40.2).[61] As in the encounter between Solon and Croesus, the tyrant poses a possible challenge to the principle of human pleasure, a challenge met by a reaffirmation of that principle under the gods' jealous eyes.

Amasis tries to regulate Polycrates' excessive happiness, advising him to throw away his most precious possession. Polycrates tries to follow this advice, but it turns out to be impossible: the tyrant cannot lose what he has, he cannot lack.[62] Polycrates chooses as his most valuable posses-

[60] The locus classicus is *Iliad* 24.527–33, where Zeus distributes mortal fortunes from his jars of good and evil. In Hesiod's stories of Prometheus and Pandora, it is established as the defining feature of human existence from its very inception (Hes. *Theog*. 507–616, *Erga* 42–105 and the discussion in Vernant 1990a.183–201).

[61] *Diapherein* means to bear through or live out one's life, but it also denotes difference and deferral. Thus it encapsulates the entire dynamic of the pleasure principle, as Derrida describes it (1987.259–409): life is a deferral of being where being always contains that which differs from it, nonbeing. Kurke 1999.105 links the verb to the "complete breakdown of distinctions or discriminations" characteristic of Polycrates. Immerwahr 1956–57.318–19 notes the parallels between Amasis's advice and Solon's wisdom at Hdt. 1.32.

[62] We get a hint of this even from the start of the story, as Polycrates "ponders which of his possessions it would grieve his heart most to lose" (ἐδίζητο ἐπ' ᾧ ἂν μάλιστα τὴν ψυχὴν ἀσηθείη ἀπολομένῳ τῶν κειμηλίων, Hdt. 3.41.1). This sentence repeats Amasis's advice almost verbatim, with only a change in the verb: Amasis had used ἀλγέω (to grieve, 3.40.4); Polycrates uses ἀσάω, which means to be vexed or disgusted, but also, in its root sense, to glut oneself to the point of nausea. The tyrant cannot even consider lack without evoking excess: for him the grief of loss is indistinguishable from the nausea of surfeit.

sion a signet ring. This ring, fabricated by the artisan Theodoros ("gift of the gods"), symbolizes the divine blessing of the tyrant's success; it is also a *sphragis*, a personal seal, and thus a symbol of the tyrant's own self.[63] Throwing away this ring, he will not only diminish his wealth and blessing but will also alienate a part of himself. He will introduce lack into his being. But this is precisely what Polycrates cannot do, for he throws the ring into the sea only to have it return to him in the belly of a fish. Hearing this, Herodotus concludes, Amasis "realized that it is impossible for one man to save another from what is to come and that Polycrates, successful in everything, was not going to end his life well, since he finds even what he throws away" (ἔμαθε ὅτι ἐκκομίσαι τε ἀδύνατον εἴη ἀνθρώπῳ ἄνθρωπον ἐκ τοῦ μέλλοντος γίνεσθαι πρήγματος καὶ ὅτι οὐκ εὖ τελευτήσειν μέλλοι Πολυκράτης εὐτυχέων τὰ πάντα, ὃς καὶ τὰ ἀποβάλλοι εὑρίσκοι, Hdt. 3.43.1).

The tyrant is the man who finds even what he throws away: he cannot alienate his own property or bear loss within himself; he is not subject to the pleasure principle with its alternation (*enallax*) of happiness and unhappiness. Every loss is his gain, every lack a surfeit. This surfeit, like Croesus's *olbos*, is negated by being contained within a larger framework of moral retribution. Polycrates' success will be balanced by his tragic end, and he is led to that end by his "great desire [*himeros*] for money" (3.123.1).[64] Desire is put in the place of plenitude and the end result confirms the initial warning of Amasis, that unadulterated success spells inevitable ruin (3.125.4). The tyrant's excessive joy thus becomes proof of the impossibility (and undesirability) of life without lack. And yet in order to be refused, that *jouissance* must be imagined, and with it the possibility of a pleasure beyond lack, a life that admits of no absence, loss, or alienation.

That possibility is considered at greater length in Xenophon's *Hieron*. In this text the gap between imagining the tyrant's joy and negating it is particularly large. The end point is the same—the tyrant is shown to be most miserable, not most blessed of men—but it takes longer to get there, and the logic of the trajectory is laid out in unusual clarity. *Hieron* begins from an assumption that the tyrant's pleasures are superior to those of normal men. Simonides (the poet, but here standing in for the philosopher in the traditional encounter between philosopher and tyrant)[65] ap-

[63] Kurke 1999.107. Rings may also carry talismanic power for tyrants: it is a magical ring that in Plato transforms the shepherd Gyges into a tyrant (*Rep*. 359b6–360d7).

[64] Indeed, there is a sort of lack built into this very anecdote: because of the miraculous return of his ring, Polycrates loses his alliance with Amasis. Again, plenitude is contained from the first within lack and only in this way becomes thinkable.

[65] On the choice of Simonides as interlocutor, see Gray 1986. It is perhaps noteworthy, too, that the tyrant is Sicilian: as in Athens's imperial fantasies, Sicily is a land of desires satisfied.

proaches the tyrant Hieron of Syracuse with a question: since Hieron has been both a private citizen and a tyrant, how does he rate the two in terms of happiness (*euphrosunē*) and unhappiness (*lupē*, 1.2)? From the first, tyranny poses the question of pleasure: the difference between the tyrant and the individual citizen is to be measured not in terms of power and freedom or virtue and vice, but in terms of pleasure.[66] Moreover, there is from the beginning something exorbitant about this pleasure, in that it exceeds the wisdom of the wise man: it is the one thing the tyrant knows better than the sage (1.1).[67]

The tyrant is distinguished by pleasure. His pleasures are greater than those of private citizens (1.17–19); they last longer (1.19–20) and are more intense (1.21); his pleasures are simply more pleasurable. It is even suggested, though only to be denied, that the tyrant might have a qualitatively different pleasure than the average citizen, another sense or another source of sensual pleasure. Simonides begins the discussion by listing the pleasures available to normal men: those through the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, those that derive from sex ("through what organ we all know," 1.4), those that affect the whole body and the soul, and those that come in dreams. Hieron responds, "Well, I could not say that the tyrant has any perception outside of these which you have mentioned, so as far as this goes, I don't know if the tyrannical life differs at all from private life" ('Εγὼ μὲν τοίνυν, ἔφη, ὦ Σιμωνίδη, ἔξω τούτων ὧν εἴρηκας σύγε οὐδ' ὅπως ἂν αἴσθοιτό τινος ἄλλου ὁ τύραννος ἔχοιμ' ἂν εἰπεῖν, ὥστε μέχρι γε τούτου οὐκ οἶδ' εἴ τινι διαφέρει ὁ τυραννικὸς βίος τοῦ ἰδιωτικοῦ βίου, 1.7). Hieron rejects the idea that the tyrant enjoys qualitatively different pleasures from the average person, but in so doing, he raises the possibility that the tyrant *might* in fact experience sensations beyond (*exō*) those of normal men: the tyrant *might* (but does not) exceed even the body's physical limitations on pleasure. Ecstasy is imagined, if only in the form of an *adunaton*.

The dialogue proceeds in the space opened by that potential sensual excess, shifting from excessive pleasures to the tyrant's excess in pleasure, from qualitative difference to quantitative.[68] If the tyrant does not experi-

[66] L. Strauss 1963.37.

[67] Gray 1986.115–16 rightly emphasizes Simonides' ironic stance in this treatise; cf. L. Strauss 1963.37–40. Compare Socrates' claim that eros is all he knows (*Symp*. 177d7–8).

[68] The comparison is now one of quantity (πολλαπλάσια, μείω, 1.8) and the discussion becomes a calculation (λογιζόμενος, 1.11). Tyrannical *pleonexia* is parsed literally and subjected to a strict accountancy (e.g., 1.13–14). This is the same mathematical impulse in the face of the tyrant's happiness that we saw at Hdt. 1.32.2–4. See also Pl. *Rep*. 587d12–588a2: the tyrant is exactly 729 times more miserable than the private citizen. On the tyrant's attempt to quantify his own happiness, see Konstan 1983.16–17 (and cf. 1987). On the problem of an economic calculation of *jouissance*, see Goux 1990.198–212.

ence a different sort of pleasure from the average man, Simonides goes on, at least this is clear: he gets many times more pleasure from everything than the average man and correspondingly less pain (πολλαπλάσια μὲν δι' ἑκάστου τούτων εὐφραίνεται, πολὺ δὲ μείω τὰ λυπηρὰ ἔχει, 1.8). Hieron then proceeds to prove that the reverse is in fact true, that for every sense, the tyrant enjoys his pleasures less than "private citizens who live moderately" (τῶν μετρίως διαγόντων ἰδιωτῶν, 1.8). This is all familiar stuff, a moralizing validation of moderation over excess. But as he enumerates the tyrant's sensual disadvantages—he cannot travel to see spectacles, he cannot enjoy the sound of praise freely given, his jaded taste buds make him scorn even the most delicious food—it becomes clear that the tyrant does exist within a different economy of pleasure from the normal man: the tyrant does not lack.

Hieron concedes that most men think tyrants enjoy their food more than average men because they know that they would prefer to eat a tyrant's meal than their own.

> τὸ γὰρ τὰ εἰωθότα ὑπερβάλλον, τοῦτο παρέχει τὰς ἡδονάς. διὸ καὶ πάντες ἄνθρωποι ἡδέως προσδέχονται τὰς ἑορτὰς πλὴν οἱ τύραννοι· ἔκπλεῳ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἀεὶ παρεσκευασμέναι οὐδεμίαν ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς ἔχουσιν αἱ τράπεζαι αὐτῶν ἐπίδοσιν· ὥστε ταύτῃ πρῶτον τῇ εὐφροσύνῃ τῆς ἐλπίδος μειονεκτοῦσι τῶν ἰδιωτῶν. ἔπειτα δ', ἔφη, ἐκεῖνο εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι καὶ σὺ ἔμπειρος εἶ ὅτι ὅσῳ ἂν πλείω τις παραθῆται τὰ περιττὰ τῶν ἱκανῶν, τοσούτῳ καὶ θᾶττον κόρος ἐμπίπτει τῆς ἐδωδῆς· ὥστε καὶ τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς ἡδονῆς μειονεκτεῖ ὁ παρατιθέμενος πολλὰ τῶν μετρίως διαιτωμένων.

> For what exceeds the usual, that is what provides pleasure. That's why all men look forward eagerly to festivals except tyrants: their tables are always full, so they can hold no more during festivals. The upshot is that tyrants are at a disadvantage compared with private citizens when it comes to the delight of expectation. Then, too, he said, I know that even you have experienced this, that the more someone is served beyond what is sufficient, the quicker he reaches satiety for eating, so that in the duration of his pleasure, too, the man who is served a lot enjoys less pleasure than those who live moderately. (1.17–19)

The tyrant's excess is so great that he cannot experience excess, for the extraordinary is ordinary for him. He lives at the theoretical maximum of pleasure. In this passage the tyrant is excluded from precisely that economy of desire that characterizes the Athenians in Sicily: desire as hope, reaching for more, *pleonexia*. The tyrant does not participate in this eros, because he already has everything: there is nothing more to long for. Average citizens can look to tyrants to imagine "what exceeds the ordinary." But the tyrant has no tyrant to look to, no imagined excess to serve as a

limit on his pleasure or a spur toward desire.[69] He is sufficient in himself and wants for nothing.

The tyrant's being is articulated within an economy that makes his pleasure meaningless, though. In Xenophon's text lack is reconfigured as hope, and the desire for pleasure is in itself a form of pleasure. If the human condition within the pleasure principle is an alternation of presence and absence and all desire entails lack, this passage redefines that fact not as the inevitable tragedy of human existence but as the wellspring of pleasure. Pleasure is associated not with having but with not having, with absence (*fort*), not with presence (*da*): "He who always has every kind of food takes nothing with desire; it is the man who lacks for something who takes his fill of it with delight whenever it appears before him" (Οὕτω μέντοι, ἔφη ὁ Ἱέρων, καὶ τῶν σίτων ὁ μὲν ἔχων παντοδαπὰ ἀεὶ οὐδὲν μετὰ πόθου αὐτῶν λαμβάνει· ὁ δὲ σπανίσας τινός, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μετὰ χαρᾶς πιμπλάμενος, ὅταν αὐτῷ προφανῇ τι, 1.25). Pleasure is found in the principle of its own limitation.

Plenitude, in turn, is transvalued as *koros*, glut. *Koros* means both "enough" and "too much." But enough is always too much: satiety kills desire and with it pleasure. Living with superabundance, with "that which exceeds the ordinary," the tyrant enjoys a surfeit that smothers enjoyment. His taste buds become jaded so that he is no longer able to experience any pleasure: all the unnatural contrivances devised for his pleasure make his soul "effeminate and weak" (1.22–23). Again, the language of moderation and glut is traditional, stretching back to the moralizing of Hesiod, and *koros* is a common trope in the stories of the tyrant's downfall. But here the issue is not moral but existential. What would it mean to live without lack? Can there be desire without lack or pleasure without desire? Is frustration a bar to satisfaction or its necessary precondition? Is plenitude a state of absolute fulfillment or a suffocating surfeit?

These questions come to the fore when Simonides turns to sex. Sex alone usually makes men desire tyranny, he says, because tyrants can "be with whomever they find most beautiful" (ἐν γὰρ τούτῳ ἔξεστιν ὑμῖν ὅ τι ἂν κάλλιστον ἴδητε τούτῳ συνεῖναι, 1.26). With sexual pleasure as with culinary, the tyrant does not lack: for him attraction (ὅ τι ἂν κάλλιστον ἴδητε) and satisfaction (τούτῳ συνεῖναι) are simultaneous and the intermediate stage of desire is ellipsed. But while it is possible to eat without being hungry, Hieron wonders whether there can even be love without lack.

[69] Cf. 1.24: the perfumes with which the tyrant anoints himself offer more *hēdonē* to those near him than they do to him himself; likewise, the excess of the tyrant's pleasure offers *hēdonē* to those who imagine it but not to the tyrant.

ὅτι <μὲν> γὰρ τὰ μετ᾽ ἔρωτος ἀφροδίσια πολὺ διαφερόντως εὐφραίνει πάντες δήπου ἐπιστάμεθα· ὁ δὲ ἔρως πολὺ αὖ ἐθέλει ἥκιστα τῷ τυράννῳ ἐγγίγνεσθαι. οὐ γὰρ τῶν ἑτοίμων ἥδεται <ὁ> ἔρως ἐφιέμενος, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἐλπιζομένων. ὥσπερ οὖν [εἴ] τις ἄπειρος ὢν δίψους τοῦ πιεῖν οὐκ ἂν ἀπολαύοι, οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἄπειρος ὢν ἔρωτος ἄπειρός ἐστι τῶν ἡδίστων ἀφροδισίων.

We all know that sex accompanied by love gives much greater delight. But love is least likely to occur in tyrants, for love enjoys desiring not what is to hand but what is hoped for. If someone has never experienced thirst, he would not enjoy drinking; similarly, if someone has never experienced love, he has never experienced the sweetest sex. (1.29–30)

Sexual pleasure requires eros. Eros in turn requires lack: it exists not where its object is present but where it is absent. Eros is defined as pure longing, a thirst, absence spanned by hope, *pothos*. Sexual pleasure, then, lies not in the having but in the wanting, and a tyrant never wants, because everything is immediately available to him. Simonides laughs and points out that, despite his claim that tyrants cannot love, Hieron is the lover to a beautiful boy: the tyrant even possesses that which he claims to lack. But again Hieron finds a hole within his plenitude, for although he gets whatever he asks from the boy, he wants to get it with affection and willingness (1.35). His very power to command what he wants makes him uncertain whether it is given willingly, and if it is unwilling, he says, it is not sex but banditry (1.36).[70]

Having becomes not having, and lack is reintroduced into the tyrant's plenitude. Indeed, his plenitude itself becomes a source of want: in his satisfaction, Hieron longs for lack. The tyrant's excessive pleasure spurs a tragic economy in which having everything means having nothing: the more he has, the more he needs; the more he needs, the more he gets; the more he gets, the more he lacks. Plenitude then becomes a morbid surfeit that chokes off desire and leaves the tyrant finally with nothing to hope for but death (7.13). The tyrant's plenitude thus reopens the question of the pleasure principle and the possibility of a pleasure beyond it. That question is answered emphatically: there can be no pleasure without lack. A life without lack is shown to be not worth living. Plenitude, figured as the suffocation of all desire and ultimately of the subject himself, is refused, and lack is reinscribed as not only the necessary but also the preferable mode of human desire and human existence. The modest pleasures

[70] Hieron treats marriage as well as pederastic love. In marrying, he says, the tyrant is at a disadvantage because, being supreme, he can only ever marry beneath him. Thus he is deprived of the honor and pleasure of marrying well (1.27–28) and also of the care of a proud woman, which is much more pleasing than that of a slave (1.28). Hieron sees in tyrannical matrimony the "tragedy of the master": the master receives recognition only from those whose recognition is worthless.

of the average citizen are redeemed against the exorbitant joys of tyranny: in Xenophon's treatise, it is the tyrant himself who is made to proclaim "I do not love great tyranny" and to show how worthless are the things of golden Gyges.

This encounter between the tyrant and the wise man replays that between Croesus and Solon but reverses the roles. Now the philosopher-poet proposes that the tyrant is *olbiōtatos*, and the tyrant—more like Croesus on the pyre than in the *thēsauros*—exposes the misery of tyranny in comparison with the happiness of moderation. In both encounters tyrannical bliss is curtailed, but with a significant difference. Solon argues that the superlative, unshakable *olbos* Croesus thinks he enjoys is in fact an existential impossibility: the nature of the cosmos, with its jealous gods and shifting fortune, precludes such happiness. No man is *autarkēs*: this apparently immutable law leaves no place for the tyrant. Indeed, even before Solon's law is in place, lack is introduced as the principle of pleasure, as I suggested, for Croesus's desire for Solon's recognition implies that lack exists even within tyrannical plenitude. Tyrannical *jouissance* is thus impossible from the beginning and, precisely as an impossibility, helps to secure the boundaries of the cosmic order Solon describes.

In *Hieron*, by contrast, tyrannical plenitude is not impossible—Hieron himself attests to that. Hieron's argument is not about the impossibility of such fulfillment but about its undesirability. This text counters the tyrant's happiness not by constructing an existential order from which that happiness is wholly excluded but instead by provisionally positing that such happiness is achievable, and then exposing its inherent logical flaws. *Jouissance* is not impossible, just problematic: it cannot make you happy. And although this is a foregone conclusion (it is Hieron's position from the start), something in the text resists it. The treatise (at least the first two-thirds of it) is organized around a dialectical tension: for every instance of tyrannical pleasure Simonides raises, Hieron has an objection; in answer to Hieron's objections, Simonides introduces new instances of pleasure. This back-and-forth dramatizes a *fort-da* in which the tyrant's *jouissance* is repeatedly denied (repetition being the essence of the pleasure principle) only to repeatedly reassert itself. This dialectic delays the inevitable conclusion that the tyrant's plenitude is lack. That conclusion is no less inevitable for the delay, and to a certain extent the deferral merely heightens the impact of that moment when Hieron despairingly proclaims a tyrant's life unlivable. Yet to look to the end in this way is to miss the text's dilatory progress in reaching that end, in which the tyrant's joy is lingered over, imagined in its every dimension, and questioned as to its every pleasure.[71]

[71] Of course, Simonides may be being disingenuous, but even if he is playing devil's advocate (with the intention of driving Hieron to despair), it is still significant that the tyrant's

Even negated, the tyrant's *jouissance* troubles the symbolic order structured around its exclusion. Solon grounds his entire philosophy upon the impossibility of the tyrant's autarkic joy. Croesus's *olbos* poses a potential challenge to this philosophy at once ethical and ontological: ethical, because the virtues of a Tellus—*sōphrosunē*, piety, patriotism—are predicated on the assumption that happiness is fleeting, fate uncertain, and no man self-sufficient; ontological, because if his *olbos* really were (as he believes) immutable, he would be an exception to laws that purport to be universal and exist beyond a logic that wants to constitute itself as boundless. The double threat posed by the tyrant in this scene is echoed throughout Greek moral philosophy. It is a problem that Plato, for instance, returns to repeatedly, as Socrates' interlocutors defy him to defend a life of moderation against the exorbitant pleasures of the tyrant. The *Republic* begins with the ethical challenge of tyranny—Why be just when it is more pleasurable to be unjust?—and that question reverberates throughout the text until the tyrant's final punishment in Tartarus (615c–616a). Callicles in the *Gorgias* poses a similar choice: in his view, the happiest life is one of great desires greatly satisfied (491e–492c); compared with this tyrannical fulfillment, the encratic life Socrates praises offers the happiness of a stone or a corpse (492e5–6). Tyranny or death: is a life of wisdom without pleasure really worth living? Given a choice between philosophical wisdom and tyrannical joy, why not choose joy?[72]

The tyrant's *jouissance* thus opens the possibility of an impossible choice—impossible for the moral order but also for the subject. What would it mean to enjoy the exorbitant bliss of a tyrant? Solon himself imagines an answer in these sarcastic trimeters:

> "οὐκ ἔφυ Σόλων βαθύφρων οὐδὲ βουλήεις ἀνήρ·
> ἐσθλὰ γὰρ θεοῦ διδόντος αὐτὸς οὐκ ἐδέξατο·
> περιβαλὼν δ' ἄγρην ἀγασθεὶς οὐκ ἐπέσπασεν μέγα
> δίκτυον, θυμοῦ θ' ἁμαρτῆι καὶ φρενῶν ἀποσφαλείς·
> ἤθελον γάρ κεν κρατήσας, πλοῦτον ἄφθονον λαβὼν
> καὶ τυραννεύσας 'Αθην<έω>ν μοῦνον ἡμέρην μίαν,
> ἀσκὸς ὕστερον δεδάρθαι κἀπιτετρίφθαι γένος."

happiness *has* an advocate in the text. The textual effect offsets the philosopher's putative intent.

[72] Benoist 1975 pursues these questions in his excellent study of the tyrant within Platonic philosophy. For him the tyrant is the Other of the philosopher, "son inverse et son complémentaire" (22), a figure of difference and duplicity who troubles philosophy's claim to truth and self-knowledge. The Platonic project, as Benoist sees it, is the attempt to overcome this tyrannical Other, who insinuates himself between *logos* and the truth and between desire and the good.

> "Solon was not a wise or thoughtful man. For the god offered him riches and he didn't accept. He threw out a great net but in his amazement did not draw in his catch, showing a failure of heart and of judgment. For if I could have power and limitless wealth and be tyrant over the Athenians for one day only, I would be willing to be flayed into a wineskin and to have my bloodline utterly erased." (Solon fr. 33W)

Here the *jouissance* of tyranny is envisioned not as a joy beyond lack but as a void beyond meaning, the dissolution of the subject. For one mere day of being (power, wealth, tyranny), the interlocutor will throw away everything that gives him meaning as a subject: his identity and shape are stripped away, he is reduced to an inert skin (*askos*), all memory of him—his entire bloodline—is rubbed away. Plato's Callicles deemed the life of tyrannical fulfillment the only real life and opposed it to the necrotic existence of a stone or a corpse. Solon's fragment stages a similar choice but places death on the opposite side: *jouissance* is the annihilation of the subject. The speaker knows this—Solon has told him before and tells him again now—and still he would choose tyranny. Thus even as this fragment asserts the morbidity of the tyrant's ecstasy for the subject, it also attests to its intransigence as a fantasy, its lure even in the face of death.

I argued in the preceding section that the desire of the Other is constitutive for the subject: the question, What does the tyrant want? requires the subject to define his own desire and to posit himself as the subject of desire. But the tyrant in his *jouissance* wants for nothing: everything is already and inalienably his. He has no desire because he has no lack. In *Hieron* the tyrant himself is suffocated by this superabundance. Like Midas, who starves to death in the midst of all his gold, the tyrant is choked by his own plenitude.[73] In Solon fragment 33W it is the democratic subject who is reduced to nothing. Tyrannical *himeros* generates fantasy, desire, a desiring subject, a civic ontology; tyrannical *jouissance* chokes off fantasy and leaves the subject nothing to wish for but death. Solon's horrific vision of *Liebestod* illustrates why the tyrant's plenitude is always conceived within a framework of lack and viewed only through a veil of negation. Lack not only brings the tyrant within the pleasure principle and subjects him to the laws of the symbolic order he exceeded in his ecstasy; it also reopens a space for the subject. Lack—the tyrant's misery and his inevitable downfall—is what makes his *jouissance* thinkable.

And yet there is something in this *jouissance* that exceeds even the negation designed to contain it. Polycrates tries to diminish his plenitude, but it returns to him even against his will; Hieron enumerates his miseries

[73] On Midas, see Arist. *Pol.* 1257b14–17 and Carson 1986.136: "Midas is an image of someone stranded in his own desire. . . . Perfect desire is perfect impasse. What does the desirer want from desire? Candidly, he wants to keep on desiring. Midas' golden touch

but, in the process, enumerates his joys; Solon's interlocutor in fragment 33W knows that tyranny means his destruction and would choose it nonetheless. *Jouissance* is prohibited, but a remainder always reappears on the far side of that prohibition. Indeed, that irreducible remainder is carried in the negation itself. If *jouissance* can be thought within the symbolic only under the sign of negation, then it is in a sense the negation that keeps *jouissance* alive, even as it forbids it.[74] The prohibition, then, is never final but must be reiterated over and over, and *jouissance* persists not in spite of but in the very form of that prohibition, an ineradicable fragment of the tyrannical Other within the democratic self.

All or Nothing

In his joy, the tyrant smothers the subject and challenges the cosmic and moral order. The possibility of his autarky insinuates that lack (and the ethics of moderation predicated on it) is not inevitable; the surfeit of his pleasure staunches all desire. Once that joy is negated, however, once lack is discovered within the tyrant's fulfillment, he becomes a testament to the universality and necessity of the symbolic laws that he had seemed to break: far from an exception to the law of lack, he becomes its very embodiment. Croesus in the *thēsauros* is an apparent blind spot in Solon's metaphysics; Croesus on the pyre is a prophet for that same metaphysics, his life brought within its bounds and thus made a witness to its boundlessness.

The transformation of the tyrant from threatening plenitude into reassuring lack—a symbolic tyrannicide—is at the very heart of the Athenian imagination of tyranny. In this section I focus briefly on one (arguably *the*) paradigmatic example of this transformation: Oedipus. Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* stages the transformation of the tyrant from the bearer of impossible potency to the bearer of utter lack (a lack that, as with Hieron and Croesus, will turn out to have been there all along). In his plenitude, Oedipus is a plague upon the polis and a threat to the authority of Zeus himself; in his miserable blindness, he is the keystone of the cosmic and political order. Oedipus transgressed the law and claimed as his own what it prohibited; but that *jouissance* is curtailed, and Oedipus is not only brought within the bounds of law but made to bear its mark upon his body: his blinded figure becomes the paradigm for

would be a powerful symbol of perfect, self-extinguishing, self-perpetuating desire." I would call this desire *jouissance*.

[74] See Butler 1997.55: libido that is repressed is not eliminated but instead displaced onto the repression itself. "In other words, prohibition becomes the displaced site of satisfaction for the 'instinct' or desire that is prohibited, an occasion for reliving the instinct under the rubric of the condemning law."

a human existence defined precisely by the impossibility of *jouissance*. Oedipus's tragedy follows the same trajectory from all to nothing that we traced with Hieron and Croesus, and it raises that narrative to the level of universal law. It also stages that narrative within a specifically civic setting, inviting the Athenians—like Solon—to gaze upon the tyrant's *olbos* and find within it both the necessity of lack and the font of their own, democratic desire.

Why is Sophocles' Oedipus *turannos*?[75] It is not that he rules harshly or against the people's will: indeed, Sophocles emphasizes the justice of his reign, which was a gift of the people (*OT* 383–84) and is shared with Creon and Jocasta (579–81). Instead, the word bespeaks a certain relation to law and pleasure, being and meaning, a tyrannical *ekstasis* thematized in the play by parricide and incest. Parricide and incest are the two tyrannical crimes par excellence, and they recur (literally or figuratively) throughout the literature on tyranny.[76] For Plato, for instance, parricide finally turns the tyrannical man into an out-and-out tyrant (*Rep*. 569b6–8); in the lawless indulgence that follows this murder, maternal incest stands for the ultimate license (571c9–d3). This combination recurs not just because it offers lurid testimony to the tyrant's monstrous perversion, but also because it encapsulates quite precisely the tyrant's position in respect to the symbolic order. Parricide figures the tyrant's externality to the law: not only his disruption of the laws of the polis but his refusal of the symbolic laws governing human existence and of the prohibitions they place on pleasure and being. Incest is the corollary to this refusal; it is a return to all the enjoyment cut off with the individual's subjection to the symbolic order. The maternal body symbolizes the wholeness, potency, and unmediated being of *jouissance*. Together parricide and maternal incest represent the tyrant's rejection of lack and his lawless joy.

[75] Oedipus is *ho turannos Oidipous* (514, 925) and his rule is referred to as a *turannis* (380, 408, 535, 541; cf. 584–602). This word is often greeted with embarrassment, for, as B.M.W. Knox puts it (1954.99), "Oedipus is not a figure which conforms to the pattern of the *turannos*." Some argue that Sophocles (and tragedy in general) uses the word with no pejorative connotations (see, e.g., Andrewes 1956.20–23; Parker 1998.158). But even if a negative sense is only secondary (White 1955.3; Parker 1998.158–61), the word needs explaining in Oedipus's case. See further Bowra 1944.186–90; B.M.W. Knox 1957.53–66; Vernant 1988.127; McGlew 1993.201: "Oedipus's tyrannical power appears only in a refracted shape in his moral character; it is most apparent in the play's narrative structure."

[76] I cannot rehearse all the instances here, but merely point to two conspicuous examples. In Plato's *Republic*, Gyges derives his tyrannical power from a magic ring found inside the body of a dead man within a womblike cave; with the invisibility the ring gives him, he kills the king and commits adultery with the queen (*Rep*. 359b6–360d7), thus reenacting these crimes (if only in a figurative sense) twice over. In Herodotus (1.107–30), Cyrus, a child with a privileged relation to the maternal body (in Astyages' dreams, he is figured as a virtual excretion of maternal fertility, 1.107.1, 108.1), grows up to depose his royal grandfather

Thus the relation to paternal law and the maternal body that psychoanalysis terms the "Oedipus complex" might more fitly be called the "tyrant complex" and Oedipus taken as its exemplary case study. Oedipus becomes tyrant within a power vacuum, but the empty position he comes to fill turns out to have been emptied by his own hand through a regicide that is also a parricide. This parricide is literal but also metaphoric, as the chorus indicates in the second stasimon (863–910). It is not only the murder of his own father but an assault on paternal law at the highest level. This ode follows a scene that reveals the details of Laius's death and Oedipus's violent encounter on the road to Thebes; the episode ends with a strong suspicion that Oedipus is Laius's murderer. The chorus responds with an anxious reaffirmation of paternal authority.

> Εἴ μοι ξυνείη φέροντι μοῖρα τὰν
> εὔσεπτον ἁγνείαν λόγων
> ἔργων τε πάντων, ὧν νόμοι πρόκεινται
> ὑψίποδες, οὐρανίᾳ 'ν
> αἰθέρι τεκνωθέντες, ὧν Ὄλυμπος
> πατὴρ μόνος, οὐδέ νιν
> θνατὰ φύσις ἀνέρων
> ἔτικτεν, οὐδὲ μήποτε λά-
> θα κατακοιμάσῃ·
> μέγας ἐν τούτοις θεός, οὐδὲ γηράσκει.

May fate always be with me as I practice pious reverence in all words and deeds. For this there are sublime laws [*nomoi*] established, children born in the heavenly aether whose only father is Olympus. No human generation of mortal men was their parent, nor will oblivion ever lull them to sleep. For the divinity is great within them, and it never grows old. (863–72)

In this opening strophe of the ode, the chorus reasserts the law of Zeus precisely as a paternal law: *nomoi* (mentioned here for the only time in the play) are the children of Olympian Zeus, and their unaging strength attests to the "great divinity" of this "only father." The crisis of authority within Thebes—the murder of the legitimate king and the emerging suspicion that the current king was the perpetrator—is answered in the chorus's hopeful prayer by an appeal to paternal law at the cosmic level. In Zeus, at least, paternal and royal authority would seem to be safe.[77]

But it is precisely this authority that is in jeopardy, the authority of Zeus as king, father, and guarantor of cosmic order. For against this noble

(thanks in part to a pregnant message sown into the belly of a hare). Other examples of tyrannical incest are cited in note 19. See also Bremmer 1987.51; Zeitlin 1990.149.

[77] Pucci 1992 provides a sophisticated analysis of the paternal function in this play. See esp. 85–87 on this ode.

lineage—father Zeus and his *nomoi*—is set another: mother Hubris and her son, the tyrant. "Hubris breeds a tyrant" (Ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον, 873).[78] The tyrant is not the child of Zeus and bears no filiation with *nomos*: he is of another lineage, a competing house. *Hubris* (which, like *nomos*, appears only here in the play) is vague in this ode: without referring specifically to anything Oedipus has done, it marshals a whole discourse of tyrannical violence and uses it to magnify the murder of Laius into a vision of cosmic chaos. This tyrannical *hubris* is glutted with needless surfeit (874–75); going too far in its ill-fated luxury and quest for unjust profit (888–89), it falls into sheer necessity (877), disregarding Dikē and dishonoring the gods (885–86). Hubris is thus matriarch over a large clan of tyrannical transgressions and her unjust *genos* threatens to topple the patriline of legitimacy, Zeus-*nomos*. Zeus's sons are not lulled by oblivion (*latha*, 870), but Zeus himself, the chorus fears, may be oblivious (*lathoi*, 904) to the crimes of Hubris and her son. And if this is so—if *hubris* prevails and the murderer of Laius goes unpunished—then why worship the gods? Why heed the oracles of Apollo? Why worship Zeus at Olympia? Why even dance in honor of Dionysus at the City Dionysia (895–96)? The tyrant is thus not only genealogically separate from *nomos*; he is a threat to *nomos* in its broadest theological dimensions: Zeus's royal rule is in doubt, Apollo's honor fades, and "all religion perishes" (ἔρρει δὲ τὰ θεῖα, 910).

While the chorus's vision of violent and rapacious tyranny may not seem to describe Oedipus's benevolent rule, this ode points up an antinomy that runs throughout the play between Oedipus's tyranny and the cosmic order governed by Zeus. Oedipus's power and pleasure are won at the expense of paternal authority: in literal terms, he took his tyranny and his wife from his dead father. Moreover, his being is maintained at the cost of Zeus's supreme rule. Oedipus is no Croesus gloating over his *olbos* or a Hieron suffocating amid surfeit; Oedipus does lack (a cure for the plague, an answer to the mystery of Laius's death and his own identity). But like those other tyrants, Oedipus exists in an antithetical relation

[78] There has been much speculation as to the specific nature of this *hubris*: some have suggested it consists in Oedipus's excessive faith in his own intelligence (Winnington-Ingram 1980.203; Goux 1993.107–8); others that it refers to crimes he has committed in the play (B.M.W. Knox 1957.57–58; contra, Dodds 1966). See further Bowra 1944.165–66; B.M.W. Knox 1957.99–106; Winnington-Ingram 1980.188–97, 201–4; Saxonhouse 1988.1263–64, 1267; Fisher 1992.329–42. The obscurity has led some editors to reverse the direction of the sentiment, printing instead ὕβριν φυτεύει τυραννίς ("tyranny begets *hubris*"): see Dawe 1982.182–83 ad 872. But in this taut phrase, tyranny and *hubris* each finds its meaning in the other, as the rest of the strophe makes clear: the tyrant is *hubris* embodied; *hubris* is the essence of tyranny. On the tyrant's connection with *hubris* and *dikē*, see McGlew 1993.52–86 and 196–200.

to the symbolic laws of the text's universe. In Herodotus, if Croesus really is *olbiōtatos*, Solon's cosmic order crumbles. So, too, in Sophocles' play Oedipus's being—his rule, his happiness, his life—is wagered against the meaning of the cosmos. If the oracles prove true, then the will of the gods is reaffirmed—Apollo and Zeus do, as the chorus says, "understand and know the affairs of mortals" (498–99)—but at the cost of Oedipus's life and prosperity. If Oedipus escapes his fate, on the other hand, the oracles are false and the gods who issue them are fallible or malevolent—another parricide. So long as Oedipus is tyrant, then, the truth of the oracles remains in jeopardy: a man can apparently escape his fate, and the will of Zeus is not final or ineluctable. The antinomy between Oedipus's tyrannical being and the meaning of the symbolic order is maintained until the end: when he recognizes the truth of the oracles, he himself will become nothing.[79]

This antinomy is played out in the inverse relation between Oedipus's prosperity and his knowledge. At the beginning of the play, Oedipus enjoys a life of extraordinary pleasures and power—his father's tyranny, the forbidden union with his mother, almost divine stature (31). But that existence is predicated on his nonknowledge of his true identity. Oedipus may be the man who knows (*oida*), who became tyrant by solving the riddle of the Sphinx, and who will save the city by solving the riddle of the plague. But this knowledge, as Tiresias insinuates, is incomplete, for he does not know the most important things about himself and, for all his intelligence, cannot make sense of the oracles or of his own past. He has eyes, as Tiresias says, but cannot see the truth about himself (413–15). His plenitude and power seem to preclude full knowledge. Conversely, knowledge will come only with a sacrifice of plenitude: it is one of the ironies of the play that Oedipus's search for knowledge will expose a truth that destroys him. The blind prophet Tiresias himself prefigures Oedipus's future: the tyrant will gain knowledge but only through the diminution of his wholeness, the loss of his eyes.[80]

The play stages Oedipus's gradual exchange of being for knowledge, as he searches for the truth of his identity. But against that drive toward

[79] Thus the truth of the oracles seems to die with the father: Laius's death seems to Jocasta to disprove the oracle that he would be killed by his own son (707–25); Polybus's death seems to Oedipus to disprove the oracle that he would kill his father (964–72): the oracles "lie in the grave with Polybus, worthless" (972). Of course, in the end, the truth of the oracles will be resuscitated along with the paternal law. Bushnell 1988.67–85 discusses the conflict between Oedipus and the divine oracles; see also B.M.W. Knox 1957.42–47; Segal 1981.236–41; Pucci 1992.16–29.

[80] On Oedipus's knowledge and nonknowledge, see B.M.W. Knox 1957.18–20, 116–38; Saxonhouse 1988; Segal 1994. On the riddle of Oedipus's name and identity, see Hay 1979.21–22, 27–35; Segal 1981.207–48; Vernant 1988.123–25; Pucci 1992.66–78.

alētheia, there is the inert pull of *lēthē*, embodied by Jocasta. If Tiresias represents truth at the cost of wholeness, Jocasta stands at the other extreme: she is pure being. She urges Oedipus not to seek knowledge, not to investigate his past (1057, 1060–61, 1068). “What does a man have to fear, for whom chance [*tukhē*] rules and there is no clear foreknowledge of anything? Best to live at random, however one can” (Τί δ’ ἂν φοβοῖτ’ ἄνθρωπος, ᾧ τὰ τῆς τύχης κρατεῖ, πρόνοια δ’ ἐστὶν οὐδενὸς σαφής; εἰκῆ κράτιστον ζῆν, ὅπως δύναιτό τις, 977–79). The word of the oracles is set at nothing; human intelligence is useless. Meaning becomes meaningless. All that matters is life, an existence lived without plan or purpose in the drift of *tukhē*.

At the core of this pure ontology is the maternal body. Jocasta dismisses the oracles and Oedipus’s fears that they may prove true: “For many men have slept with their mother before in dreams as well. But the man for whom this means nothing bears his life most easily” (πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη κἀν ὀνείρασιν βροτῶν μητρὶ ξυνηυνάσθησαν· ἀλλὰ ταῦθ’ ὅτῳ παρ’ οὐδέν ἐστι, ῥᾷστα τὸν βίον φέρει, 981–83). Around the thought of incest meaning breaks down; the oracles are no more than dreams, and dreams mean nothing. And life means no more, for although Jocasta distinguishes between the life of dreams (a life, as she represents it, of *jouissance*) and that of waking reality, her comparison in fact collapses the two. “Many men have slept with their mother before in dreams *as well*.” “As well” (*kai*) as what?[81] As well as in oracles? As well as in Oedipus’s life? Incest in dreams, incest in oracles, incest in deed: life becomes indistinguishable from meaningless dreams and meaningless oracles. In contrast to the *alētheia* of Zeus’s paternal *nomos* (870–71), the maternal body is wrapped in *lēthē*. Thus Tiresias charges Oedipus: “I say that you are oblivious [*lelēthenai*] that you are living most shamefully with your dearest ones” (Λεληθέναι σέ φημι σὺν τοῖς φιλτάτοις αἴσχισθ’ ὁμιλοῦντ’, 366–67).

Oedipus searches for the truth of his identity and the meaning of the oracles but at the height of that quest he abandons himself to the oblivion of being. And in that abandon he finds *jouissance*. At the very moment

[81] See Dawe 1982.196 ad 981: “The only meaning to be extracted from the Greek that is even faintly plausible for the context is ‘in dreams too <as you have been warned you will do by this oracle>, plenty of men have slept with their mothers.’ It is not easy to make the necessary mental supplement, for at first sight the words mean ‘in dreams too <as in real life>’—as if Jocasta was casually assuring Oedipus that incest was quite an ordinary occurrence.” Translating *kai* as “even” makes matters no clearer. Dawe suggests the possibility of a manuscript error. But this is one of many places in the play where a character’s speech exceeds his or her conscious intent. Jocasta knows, but does not know she knows: her words bespeak the *lēthē* of the unconscious. Irigaray (1985b.307–10) argues that maternal *lēthē* is the underpinning of paternal *alētheia*.

when he is about to discover his identity—just as he is about to himself acknowledge what the audience has long known: that he killed his father and married his mother—he surrenders himself to a manic joy.

> Ὁποῖα χρῄζει ῥηγνύτω· τοὐμὸν δ' ἐγώ,
> κεἰ σμικρόν ἐστι, σπέρμ' ἰδεῖν βουλήσομαι.
> Αὕτη δ' ἴσως, φρονεῖ γὰρ ὡς γυνὴ μέγα,
> τὴν δυσγένειαν τὴν ἐμὴν αἰσχύνεται.
> Ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαυτὸν παῖδα τῆς Τύχης νέμων
> τῆς εὖ διδούσης, οὐκ ἀτιμασθήσομαι.
> Τῆς γὰρ πέφυκα μητρός· οἱ δὲ συγγενεῖς
> μῆνές με μικρὸν καὶ μέγαν διώρισαν.
> Τοιόσδε δ' ἐκφὺς οὐκ ἂν ἐξέλθοιμ' ἔτι
> ποτ' ἄλλος, ὥστε μὴ 'κμαθεῖν τοὐμὸν γένος.

> Let break what may. But I want to know my origin [*sperma*], even if it is humble. Perhaps Jocasta is ashamed of my lowly birth: it is like a woman to be proud. But I consider myself the child of Tukhē, giver of blessings, and I will not be dishonored. For I was born from a (this) mother. The months, my brothers, have marked me out, now small, now great. Such is my nature, and I would never become different, so as to not discover my birth. (1076–85)

In this moment, Oedipus returns imaginatively to the moment of his inception: he will see the very seed (σπέρμ') from which he was born. This seed of his (τοὐμὸν) is also his father's: it ties him physically to his father, even as it situates him within the impacted incestuous patriline in which the father's seed and the son's commingle (cf. 260, 1246, 1405). But he repudiates this lineage and rejects his father's small (σμικρόν) and lowly seed as his origin. "I was born from a mother" (Τῆς γὰρ πέφυκα μητρός, 1082). In this mother he finds the origin of his *phusis* (πέφυκα), his birth, nature, being. From her bountiful body (εὖ διδούσης) he traces another genealogy (τοὐμὸν γένος), one that will make him not only a tyrant but a demigod: brother of the months, child of Fate.

In the second stasimon (which immediately precedes this episode) the chorus had counterposed the tyrant, son of Hubris, and the laws, the sons of Zeus. Oedipus recapitulates this genealogical contrast. He rejects a paternal origin in favor of a maternal *phusis*, giving himself over not to the tyrannical violence of *hubris* but to the ecstatic oblivion of *tukhē*—chance, fate, the raw flux of existence. Because *tukhē* governs the affairs of men, Jocasta said, foresight is impossible, and it is best to live life at random (977–79): in her ontology of *lēthē*, where living and dreaming merge, *tukhē* rules (τὰ τῆς τύχης κρατεῖ). Although it will ultimately be aligned with the purposeful trajectory of the gods' will (since every obscure blow of *tukhē* in the play moves the plot toward its telos), from the

human perspective, *tukhē* erupts as meaninglessness within existence, the randomness of events that human intelligence can neither control nor escape.[82] Submitting to this randomness, declaring himself the child of Tukhē, Oedipus throws everything to the wind: his royal status and noble paternity, the famous intelligence with which he sought to shape his fate and resist his own tragedy. He abandons himself to his maternal *phusis* and even as he asserts his identity (ἐγὼ, 1076, 1080), he is submerged within the cosmos ruled by Chance, his life absorbed into the natural cycle of the waxing and waning months. His birth is an ecstatic bursting forth (ἐκφὺς . . . ἐξέλθοιμ', 1084), in which Oedipus trades his meaning—the *oida* of Oidipous—for an inarticulate and elemental being.

But what "breaks" (ῥηγνύτω) in the following scene is not the ecstasy of Tukhē's maternal embrace, but Jocasta's suicide and Oedipus's *anagnōrisis* and bloody self-blinding: "Such suffering has broken [ἔρρωγεν]," concludes the messenger, "not for him alone but mixed suffering for husband and wife" (1280–81). Oedipus comes to know his past and his identity and with that knowledge he is destroyed. Knowledge replaces *jouissance*, cutting it off absolutely. Now Oedipus trades his eyes for true vision: he gives up a portion of his being and registers the record of this trade upon his body. At the same time, he also cuts off that body from pleasure: there is nothing sweet left for him to see, no loving greeting for him to hear with pleasure (1334–39; cf. 1375–76). If he could, he would block his ears too, he says, and "close off my whole wretched body" (1386–90).[83] He who formerly possessed the one pleasure other men only dream of, renounces all pleasure. He would curtail his very being: he wishes he had died on the mountainside (1349–55, 1391–93); he begs to be hidden or killed or hurled into the ocean where he cannot be seen (1411–12). Being is surrendered in an access of meaning, and the tyrant who had everything becomes nothing.

Now he submits to the paternal law. I argued earlier that Oedipus's tyranny is a threat to the play's entire symbolic order. So long as he prospers, the truth of the oracles remains in doubt and the authority of the gods in jeopardy; if the child of Hubris escapes his fate, then Zeus's paternal law is consigned to *lēthē* and "all religion perishes" (910). The parricidal dynamic of the second stasimon is translated into an ocular idiom by Jocasta, who remarks that Polybus's death frees Oedipus from his prophesied fate: "Your father's grave is a great boon [literally, "eye"]"

[82] On *tukhē* in the play, see B.M.W. Knox 1957.165–84; Pucci 1992.30–41. See also Segal 1981.211: "To be a child of Chance can also signify to live below, not above, the human condition, to live as the beasts of the field, without order or limit."

[83] Later, however, he begs to be allowed to touch his daughters (1466–70), and doing so gives him pleasure (1477).

(Καὶ μὴν μέγας ⟨γ'⟩ ὀφθαλμὸς οἱ πατρὸς τάφοι, 987). Oedipus's eyes—and all they represent—are synonymous with the death of his father. Conversely, his blinding dramatizes his recognition of and subjection to the law. "How did you dare to destroy your eyes?" the chorus asks, "What demon drove you?" (1327–28). "This was Apollo," he answers, "Apollo, friends, who accomplished these terrible terrible sufferings of mine. But no one struck me but myself with my own miserable hand" ('Απόλλων τάδ' ἦν, 'Απόλλων, φίλοι, ὁ κακὰ κακὰ τελῶν ἐμὰ τάδ' ἐμὰ πάθεα. Ἔπαισε δ' αὐτόχειρ νιν οὔτις, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τλάμων, 1329–32). Apollo has brought his prophecies to completion: now, as Creon says, even Oedipus must have faith in the god (1445). Oedipus blinds himself and acknowledges Apollo's supreme authority in the same instant: his own hand becomes the instrument of paternal law and his body bears its inscription.

With his blinding, Oedipus takes lack upon himself and accepts it as the price of his existence. This one violent act negates his tyrannical being: his pleasure and wholeness, his exorbitant potency and *ekstasis* to the symbolic law. The gesture is dramatic, but in a sense it merely reenacts a prior lack, the limp that Oedipus has carried since his exposure on the mountain.[84] This connection between his blindness and his limp is emphasized at 1270, where the messenger reports that Oedipus has struck at the "joints" (*arthra*) of his eyes: it is the pierced joints (*arthra*) of his feet, the legacy of his past, that make him limp (718, 1032). When he blinds himself, then, Oedipus embraces a lack that was there all along: he makes himself limp all over again, as he feels his way with his cane. In his story the lack that is gradually revealed was, in fact, there from the start, from the moment the actor limped on stage, from the moment he said his name, *Oidi-pous* (swollen foot), and even before, because the audience already knows how his story must end. Thus with Oedipus (as with Croesus and Hieron) lack is both imposed on the tyrant's plenitude and discovered within it, and the tyrant's tragic fate demonstrates not only that his *jouissance* is now impossible but that it always was, even in the midst of his greatest prosperity.

Limping and blind, Oedipus becomes the paradigm for human existence within the symbolic order.

[84] Limps recur throughout the literature on tyranny, along with stutters (vocal limps). In the family saga of the Battiads, the first Battus stammers (hence his name, Hdt. 4.155) and a later Battus is lame (4.161.1). Cypselus's mother is the lame Labda (whose very name may indicate lameness, Hdt. 5.92β1) and his story, as Vernant 1982 shows, bears certain resemblances to that of Oedipus. In Oedipus's genealogy, Labdacus ("lame") gives birth to Laius ("sinister, gauche"), whose son is "swollen foot." Vernant traces the parallels and sees in these impediments a metaphor for "all forms of behavior which seem unbalanced, deviated, slowed down or blocked" (1982.20). Cf. Lévi-Strauss 1963.213–16; Hay 1979.27–35; M. Jameson 1986.

Ἰὼ γενεαὶ βροτῶν,
ὡς ὑμᾶς ἴσα καὶ τὸ μη-
δὲν ζώσας ἐναριθμῶ.
Τίς γάρ, τίς ἀνὴρ πλέον
τᾶς εὐδαιμονίας φέρει
ἢ τοσοῦτον ὅσον δοκεῖν
καὶ δόξαντ' ἀποκλῖναι;
Τὸν σόν τοι παράδειγμ' ἔχων,
τὸν σὸν δαίμονα, τὸν σόν, ὦ
τλᾶμον Οἰδιπόδα, βροτῶν
οὐδὲν μακαρίζω·

> Oh generations of men, how I count your lives equal to nothing. For who, what man bears more happiness than merely to seem happy and, in this seeming, to evanesce. I take you as an example, your fate, yours, wretched Oedipus, and I count nothing happy in the lives of mortals. (1186–96)

Oedipus's fate has rendered all men equal to nothing; it has rendered life itself equal to nothing (τὸ μηδὲν): by the mere fact of their existence (ζώσας), mortals are subject to an accountancy in which their being is set at nil (οὐδὲν). Happiness is reduced to mere illusion—Jocasta's incestuous dream life—and that illusion fades in the light of Oedipus's story: his fate resecures the distinction between dreaming and waking and places all happiness on the far side. Freud took Oedipus the tyrant as paradigmatic, the Oedipus who does what other men only dream of, who kills his father and sleeps with his mother, who breaks the paternal law and returns to the polymorphous pleasures of the maternal embrace. But in this ode it is not Oedipus *turannos* who is paradigmatic but Oedipus *anēr*: Oedipus as mere man, subject to the law, barred from *jouissance*, lacking in the very kernel of his being.

As a man, Oedipus becomes the prophet for the symbolic laws he had resisted as tyrant. As tyrant, Oedipus was the apparent exception to the law, the one man who could escape his fate; a parricide, he existed beyond the law and testified to the fact that the law has a beyond, that it is not limitless. Oedipus's exorbitant *olbos*, like Croesus's, threatened to unbalance the careful calculus of human existence, but that *olbos* too is shown to be illusory and subjected to the same accountancy as Croesus's. Indeed, the play's final lines (if they are genuine) have a distinctly Solonic timbre: behold Oedipus, once so powerful and envied, now submerged by disaster; look to the end and count no man happy until he is dead.[85] Like

[85] Dawe 1982.247 ad 1524–30 deems these lines "demented balbutience" and points to 1186ff. for the "authentic verdict" of the play on Oedipus's fate. He also cites more detailed bibliography on the question. In place of this dubious finale, we might interpolate our own,

Croesus on the pyre, Oedipus is made to exemplify the truth of this precept and to himself proclaim it: Croesus on the pyre groans "Solon"; Oedipus, blinded, cries "Apollo." Brought within the bounds of the symbolic order, the tyrant is fated to live on as a testament to its authority and as a paradigm of human existence within it: a life of limited, insecure pleasures under the jealous gaze of inscrutable gods.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud suggests in passing that tragedy is an adult game of *fort-da*: a reiterated performance of unpleasure that transforms it, through repetition and mastery, into pleasure.[86] Every year tragedy staged the fall of tyrants, their transformation from all to nothing: this is the quintessential tragic plot, as Aristotle recognized.[87] Like Solon in Croesus's *thēsauros*, the Athenians gaze upon the tyrant's *olbos* (*theaomai*, one verb Herodotus uses for Solon's gaze, is the word for tragic spectation). They allow themselves to imagine, if only for a moment and with the knowledge of what must come, the tyrant's ecstatic *jouissance*. This fantasy is held open just long enough to imagine not only its joys but also its threat, the peril the tyrant's ecstasy poses to the symbolic order. And from that peril comes the necessity of its negation: *jouissance* is evoked only to be prohibited—to the tyrant and to all mortals—a prohibition that grounds the symbolic order. Here we have tragedy's fear and pity: the fearful *jouissance* of the tyrant before his fall; the pitiable existence of mortals ("Oh generations of men, how I count your lives equal to nothing") that his fall guarantees.

But if tragedy plays *fort-da* with the tyrant's *jouissance*, it also situates that existential alternation within a specifically civic context. The symbolic order the tyrant exceeds is the civic order of Athens; the law that prohibits his ecstasy is the law of the polis. Oedipus's tyranny, I have been suggesting, represents a metaphysical position, an illegal relation to being and power, but we should not forget that *turannos* is also a word with specific political resonances for democratic Athens. While Sophocles' play hints at the ramifications of tyranny's *hubris* for the cosmic order and divine authority, the most pressing crisis is civic: the polis is suffering (4–5, 22–30, 179). Oedipus's tyranny is a plague for the city: Thebes wastes away while he is unharmed and will only be cured with his fall.

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borrowing the final lines of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: "What we cannot reach flying we must reach limping. . . . The Book tells us it is no sin to limp" (Freud 1955 [1920].64). By staging Oedipus's vertiginous flight, *Oedipus Tyrannus* teaches us to limp.

[86] Freud 1955 [1920].17. Compare the etiology in *Totem and Taboo* (1955 [1913].155–56), where tragedy is a guilt-ridden compensation for the murder of the primal father.

[87] Aristotle characterizes tragic action in terms of happiness and unhappiness (*eudaimonia* and *kakodaimonia*, *Poet.* 1450a16–20; cf. 1451a13–14: *eutukhia*, *dustukhia*). The transformation of a reasonably good man from good fortune to bad is the basic tragic plot (1453a7–23).

Thebes's suffering is brought home to Athens in the chorus's metatheatrical reference: if *hubris* is not punished, "Why should I dance?" (τί δεῖ με χορεύειν; 896).[88] The chorus, dancing as it sings this line, implicates its own activity in the play's crisis of cosmic order. Tragedy itself is at stake in the tyrant's *jouissance*, and its ritual chorus forms the link between the cosmic *nomoi* of Zeus and the *nomoi* of democratic Athens. The chorus's plaint suggests that not only the order of the cosmos but tragedy, too, requires the tyrant's fall. Tragedy is grounded, no less than the truth of the oracles and the will of Zeus, on the tyrant's lack. When it stages that lack over and over again, then, it stages the conditions of its own possibility—and those of the polis, which is healed only when the tyrant is reduced to nothing. The tyrant's being must be refused—the tyrant himself must disavow it—in order to make way for political meaning, a meaning that emerges, as we shall see, within the hole torn in the tyrant's *jouissance*.

The Tyrant's Lack and Democratic Fantasy

What does the tyrant want? Sophocles returns to this question at the end of his life in his *Oedipus at Colonus*. The scene has shifted now from Thebes to Athens—a shift, as Froma Zeitlin (1990) argues, from the city of intractable crises (and tyranny, *OC* 851, 1338) to that of political resolution. In Thebes Oedipus's tyranny created political and cosmic aporia, a city withering with plague, divine authority in doubt. There that crisis can be ended only through a traumatic tyrannicide: the transformation of Oedipus from king into nothing. But precisely as nothing Oedipus becomes a source of political potency in Athens. The tyrant's barred *jouissance* opens a space for Athenian fantasy, a fantasy of political prosperity and civic *eudaimonia* anchored by the body of a dead and blinded tyrant. The lack discovered within the tyrant's plenitude becomes the fertile ground for democratic ideology.

Oedipus at Colonus opens with Oedipus blind and exiled, a mere shadow (110), a slave (105), a nothing (393). As such, he is proof that no man can escape his destiny (252–54) and an exemplar for the uncertainty of human existence (566–68). Whereas Oedipus the tyrant challenged the laws of Zeus and the oracles of Apollo, now his prophecies for his sons will prove that "Zeus is still Zeus and his son Phoebus is manifest" (623;

[88] On the self-referentiality of this line, see Henrichs 1994–95; cf. B.M.W. Knox 1957.47; Segal 1981.235–36. Zeitlin 1990 examines Thebes as the "anti-Athens," an imagined place of insoluble problems; cf. Vidal-Naquet 1988; McGlew 1993.204–6; J. P. Wilson 1997.91–130. B.M.W. Knox 1957.78–106 argues for the specifically Athenian character of this play's action, which resembles a court case.

cf. 792–93). The parricide is now reconciled with paternal law at the cosmic level and at the human: if his father were alive, he speculates, he himself would confirm that Oedipus had committed his crimes in innocence (998–99). In this city of *dikē* and *nomos* (913–14), Oedipus is no longer the hubristic cousin to Zeus's filial *nomoi*; his crimes, he insists, were done unwittingly and he himself is "pure in the sight of the law" (νόμῳ δὲ καθαρός, 548).[89] The gods that formerly destroyed him now "set him straight" (ὀρθοῦσι, 394), and Apollo, having blinded him (*OT* 1329–30), now guides him (*OC* 665). Now that he is nothing, as he says, he is a man (῞Οτ' οὐκέτ' εἰμί, τηνικαῦτ' ἄρ' εἴμ' ἀνήρ; 393).

The chorus of *Oedipus at Colonus*, like that in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, takes miserable Oedipus as the paradigmatic man. Looking upon him, it too counts the lives of men equal to nothing. In the third stasimon, it elaborates a calculus of human life reminiscent of Solon's: mortals live a brief and measured span; death sets an insurmountable limit on being (1211–23). The tyrant, as we have seen, places pressure on this calculus: his *jouissance* challenges the necessity and universality of this compromised existence and its ethics of moderation. Oedipus *turannos*, in his excess of being, undermined all meaning. At Colonus he again challenges meaning but now from the direction not of being but of nonbeing. Looking at his fate—the labor and suffering of life, the misery of old age, the inevitable terminus of death—the chorus of Attic elders concludes that it is best never to be born at all: "Not to be born conquers all calculation" (Μὴ φῦναι τὸν ἅπαντα νικᾷ λόγον, 1224–25). Meaning (*logos*) is overwhelmed by nonbeing, and life becomes an unfortunate detour on the way to death (1226–27). Himself reduced to nothing, Oedipus becomes the paradigm of nonbeing: not the inevitable loss that comes with entry into the symbolic, not the diminution of pleasure and wholeness, but nonexistence, sheer death drive (θάνατος ἐς τελευτάν, 1223), nothingness.[90]

In that nothingness, however, Oedipus becomes a boon to Athens. The chorus articulates its philosophy of nonbeing against the backdrop of a desire (*khrēizei*) for more life (τοῦ πλέονος μέρους χρῄζει τοῦ μετρίου

[89] Thus even as Oedipus reiterates his former crimes, trespassing upon a forbidden female space (155–69) and cutting off his patriline (in his curse on his sons), he argues for the justice and legality of his original transgressions: see, e.g., 270–74, 962–99; Lefcowitz 1967; Winnington-Ingram 1980.261–63; Slatkin 1986.214–15; Zeitlin 1990.155–58; Edmunds 1996.134–38; J. P. Wilson 1997.145–53.

[90] Loraux 1988. See Travis 1999.52–63 on this ode, which he reads as an allegory for the separation of the individual from the maternal body, as well as for the relation between the chorus and Oedipus: "The problems of existence that this choral allegory addresses revolve around the way in which we are all allegories of Oedipus, the way we all suffer as he has" (62). Midas was said to have been offered this same wisdom—the best thing for mortals is not to be born—by Silenus (Arist. fr. 44 Rose): again, superabundant tyrannical *olbos* is answered by nonbeing.

παρεὶς, 1211–12; cf. 1219). This is a pleonectic, even tyrannical desire, but it is not Oedipus's.[91] What does Oedipus want? He wants to die in Athens (*khrēizō*, 574; cf. 643, 1705, 1713). This desire seems to be a direct expression of his nonbeing, a lack that points toward annihilation. But his desire also has a positive content:

ΟΙ. ὥστ' ἐστί μοι τὸ λοιπὸν οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν
εἰπεῖν ἃ χρῄζω, χὠ λόγος διοίχεται.
ΘΗ. Τοῦτ' αὐτὸ νῦν δίδασχ', ὅπως ἂν ἐκμάθω.
ΟΙ. Δώσων ἱκάνω τοὐμὸν ἄθλιον δέμας
σοὶ, δῶρον οὐ σπουδαῖον εἰς ὄψιν· τὰ δὲ
κέρδη παρ' αὐτοῦ κρείσσον' ἢ μορφὴ καλή.

OEDIPUS: There is nothing left for me to do but to tell you what I want, and then our conversation is over.
THESEUS: Then tell me, so that I might know.
OEDIPUS: I have come to give you my own wretched body—a gift that isn't much to look at, but the profit from it will be greater than a beautiful appearance. (573–78)[92]

Oedipus wants to die in Athens and he wants to benefit Athens. His nihilistic desire will be a positive boon for the city; his lack becomes a gift (72, 92, 288, 577–79, 647, 1489, 1498).

And the gift is precisely his lack. Oedipus offers his "wretched body" to Athens, but it is not his body—as object of veneration, as cult site or numinous tomb—that is the gift but instead that body's absence. The gift he leaves behind for the Athenians is the space where his body once was, the secret place where he disappeared.[93] There is a power vested in this place, but it derives not from a presence but from an absence, nonbe-

[91] This *pleonexia* recalls the "empty surfeit" and overreaching of *hubris* (*OT* 873–79) as well as Oedipus's own hyperbolic success (*OT* 1197–1203). Although the chorus does not explicitly mark it as tyrannical, it perhaps hints at the association when it calls such a desire *skaiosunē* (folly): this rare adjective is derived from *skaios*, left-handed, and may be an allusion to Laius, whose name also seems to mean left-handed.

[92] The dichotomy here between "beautiful appearance" and true (civic) benefit replicates that in the Solon and Croesus scene: the good citizen knows to look away from the false *opsis* of tyrannical wealth and find his profit elsewhere, in the polis. Theseus's redirected gaze, like Solon's, guides that of the Athenian audience.

[93] On Oedipus's grave, see Segal 1981.369–70; Edmunds 1996.95–100 (and his suggestive remarks on *différance* in the play, 149–61); J.P. Wilson 1997.184–86. A "holy tomb" is mentioned (θήκην ἱερὰν, 1763; ἱερὸν τύμβον, 1545; cf. 1756), but contrast 1732: "He fell unburied far from everyone" (ἄταφος ἔπιτνε δίχα τε παντός). On the question of "hero cult" in *Oedipus at Colonus*, see Farnell 1921.332–34; Méautis 1940; Edmunds 1981; Lardinois 1992.322–27.

ing through apotheosis. The death itself is enigmatic. The messenger withdraws and when he turns around, he sees Oedipus no longer there (ἐξαπείδομεν τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν μὲν οὐδαμοῦ παρόντ᾽ ἔτι, 1648–49); only Theseus was present, but even he shaded his eyes, as if against something unbearable to watch (1650–52). No one but Theseus can say how Oedipus died (1656–57), and no one but he can know where this miraculous event occurred, a place "which it is not right to want to see nor to hear others speak of" (1641–42). What Oedipus gives to Athens is an empty space, a space that must always be kept empty: he enjoins Theseus to keep the place a secret and hand down the secret to his successor (1518–32). No mortal is to go near the holy spot nor to speak of it (1760–63), and as long as the secret—and the site—are preserved, Athens will prosper.

Thus the blinded tyrant is incorporated into Athens in the form of a lack, a space to be kept perpetually empty. And from that space emerges democratic fantasy. "Oh dearest of friends," Oedipus addresses Theseus in his final direct words, "may you and this land and your attendants be happy [*eudaimones*] and in your success [*eupraxia*] may you remember my death and enjoy good luck [*eutukheis*] for ever" (1552–55). The tyrant's barred *jouissance* is transmuted into a fantasy of civic prosperity, a fantasy that claims for the polis what was forbidden to the tyrant: eternal *eudaimonia*, *eupraxia*, and *eutukhia*. *Oedipus Tyrannus* staged the tyrant's fall from *eudaimonia* (*OT* 1189–90, 1197); *Oedipus at Colonus* distributes that tyrannical blessedness to the people of Athens. The maternal embrace of beneficent Tukhē that is lost to Oedipus is rediscovered here in love for the *matropolis* Athens (*OC* 707) and the "child-nourishing" (701) fertility of the Attic land.[94] Theseus asks, "What does Oedipus want?" (Τί δῆτα χρῄζεις; 643). In answering the question of the tyrant's desire, he speaks Athens's own desire, a desire that constitutes the polis as the site of a longed-for *jouissance*—a political *jouissance*. The tyrant's plenitude is emptied out, and the space of his lack filled by democratic fantasy, a fantasy that in war-ravaged Athens in 401 must have seemed particularly compelling and particularly unreal.[95]

[94] The description of Athens as *euhippon*, *eupōlon*, *euthalasson* ("blessed in horses, blessed in colts, blessed in the sea," 711) anticipates the triple *eu-* in 1554–55. This ode to Colonus and Attica is filled with maternal imagery: Colonus is inhabited by that most maternal bird, the nightingale (672–73) and by Dionysus and his divine nurses (680). Demeter and Persephone are evoked along with the "beautiful blossomed narcissus" (681–85). The rivers flow swiftly (ὠκυτόκος, literally "giving swift birth," 689) over the plains of the broad-breasted earth (στερνούχου, 691). On the maternal imagery here and of the grove of the Semnai Theai, see Lefcowitz 1967.79–81; Travis 1999.69–73, 185–90. That the ode to Colonus also contains death imagery (McDevitt 1972; Segal 1981.373–75) speaks to the double nature of *jouissance*, the fullness of being that annihilates the individual as a subject.

[95] B.M.W. Knox 1964.143–44, 155. On tragedy as a fantasy of *jouissance*, see Travis 1999.18: "Through drama's performance of fantasy . . . we recover an earlier relation to the

Oedipus's story is paradigmatic but not unique. The dynamic that is so clear in his story—the tyrant's *jouissance* imagined only to be found lacking, that lack filled with political fantasy—can be seen in a more compressed form in other narratives of tyranny. We might think of Croesus, who even in the midst of his supreme *olbos* expresses desire for Solon's approval: in a single moment, Herodotus evokes tyrannical plenitude, tyrannical lack, and a fantasy in which the Athenian lawgiver is the supreme arbiter of human happiness. But rather than further belabor that moment in the *thēsauros*, let us return to Hieron, whose tragic lack of lack set us on the path to tyrannical *jouissance*. Xenophon's text documents Hieron's increasing despair as he enumerates all the miseries of tyranny. Every pleasure he might be imagined to enjoy is hollowed out, shown to be a source of disappointment and frustration. So wretched is his existence, what is left for him but to take his own life? "If anyone profits from hanging himself, Simonides, know that it is the tyrant who profits the most from doing so, as I myself have discovered. For he alone does not profit whether he keeps or lays aside the evils of his life" (ἀλλ' εἴπερ τῳ ἄλλῳ, ὦ Σιμωνίδη, λυσιτελεῖ ἀπάγξασθαι, ἴσθι, ἔφη, ὅτι τυράννῳ ἔγωγε εὑρίσκω μάλιστα τοῦτο λυσιτελοῦν ποιῆσαι. μόνῳ γὰρ αὐτῷ οὔτε ἔχειν οὔτε καταθέσθαι τὰ κακὰ λυσιτελεῖ, 7.13). Driven to the point of suicide, Hieron fully acknowledges his lack: like Oedipus at Colonus, he becomes lack embodied, the only man whose life offers him nothing and whose only advantage lies in death. Hieron finally comes to understand what the Athenians discovered in Sicily: all that lies beyond the pleasure principle is death.

But in the space of the tyrant's lack—a space carved out gradually as the text builds to this suicidal *cri du coeur*—emerges a political fantasy. Once the tyrant is shown to be nothing but lack, one can then ask: What does the tyrant want? In the final sections of the treatise Simonides answers that question: what the tyrant really wants is to be loved by his people (ἐπιθυμῶν φιλεῖσθαι ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων, 8.1; cf. 11.8). Simonides insists that this wish is not incompatible with tyranny: "Far from preventing you from being loved, tyranny gives you the advantage over private citizens" (τὸ ἄρχειν οὐδὲν ἀποκωλύει τοῦ φιλεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ πλεονεκτεῖ γε τῆς ἰδιωτείας, 8.1). Whereas Hieron found lack in the midst of his own surfeit, Simonides finds surplus (*pleonektei*) in his lack: the more the tyrant possesses, he goes on to explain, the more he has to give away (8.7). By alienating some of his power and pleasure and distributing it to the

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world, one based on fullness and maternal care." His paradigm text is *Oedipus at Colonus*. Although he does not specify this fantasy as political, he does see the play allegorizing Athens as a maternal body (83–84). Slatkin 1986.216–17 argues that the play's concept of *eudaimonia* is specifically democratic.

people in the form of honors, benefits, and gifts, the tyrant will replace his hollow overabundance with true satisfaction. His private tyrannical riches will be converted into civic prosperity (11.1), which will in turn bring him security and happiness. "If you do all these things," Simonides advises Hieron, "know well that you will possess that most beautiful and blessed possession of all those available to men: to be happy without being resented" (κἂν ταῦτα πάντα ποιῇς, εὖ ἴσθι, πάντων τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις κάλλιστον καὶ μακαριώτατον κτῆμα κεκτήσει· εὐδαιμονῶν γὰρ οὐ φθονηθήσῃ, 11.15). Through the teachings of this Solon, Hieron will become a new Croesus, a tyrant who really is *olbiōtatos*, because his *thēsauros* is the wealth of his friends and goodwill of his citizens (11.12–14).

The tyrant's lack thus becomes the wellspring for a new political plenitude, and *jouissance* is rediscovered, not in the autarkic surfeit of tyranny, but in the relationship between the ruler and his people, a relationship at once political and erotic. By giving *kharis* to his people, he will receive *kharis* and *philia* in return: the *fort-da* of the pleasure principle is enforced in the form of a reciprocal economy of *kharis*, as the tyrant comes to experience precisely the reciprocal desire he so missed in his self-sufficiency. In this way, not only will he be liked by his people; he will be loved (ὥστε οὐ μόνον φιλοῖο ἄν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐρῷο ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων, 11.11). Now—in a striking reversal—instead of him trying to seduce his people, they will make advances on him (καὶ τοὺς καλοὺς οὐ πειρᾶν, ἀλλὰ πειρώμενον ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀνέχεσθαι ἄν σε δέοι, 11.11). They will desire to serve him (ἐπιθυμούντων ὑπηρετεῖν, 11.10) and, when they are away, will desire to see him (ἐπιθυμοίη ἂν ἰδεῖν σε, 11.11). The tyrant's insatiable desire will find satisfaction in the desire of his citizens: lack in the Other is filled by desire in the subject, as the citizens, no longer mere objects of the tyrant's violent lust, become his lovers. The tyrant's desire, in other words, turns his citizens into desiring subjects.

This erotic fantasy of reciprocal love is also a specifically political fantasy. To be sure, it is not a democracy that Simonides proposes at the end of the treatise: Hieron is to rule on as an autocratic, though benevolent, leader. But while it is not democratic, the state Xenophon imagines *is* political. At the beginning of the text the tyrant's plenitude precludes politics, for the entire polis—the good of the people, the prosperity of the state, all authority, legitimacy, and enjoyment—is vested within the person of the tyrant. At the end this is reversed: the tyrant and the political are still coterminous, but now the tyrant is subsumed within the polis: his house is the city (11.2), his body the citizen body (11.3), his land the citizens' land (11.4), and his honor the citizens' honor (11.5). He rediscovers happiness—a reason for living—in the happiness of the city, as reciprocal eros becomes an ecstatic vision of political union (11.14). At the same time, the polis itself now becomes a tyrant, taking the pleasure,

power, and profit that were formerly Hieron's own: now the citizens as a whole will enjoy beautiful houses, horse racing, productive property, and splendid armor (11.1–5).[96] We saw in Aristotle that the tyrant fills the central space of power with his own excessive pleasure. With Hieron that central space is emptied, and its negated *jouissance* distributed to the citizens in a glorious fantasy of political eros and civic *eudaimonia*. Hieron replicates within himself the secret tomb of Oedipus: the site where tyrannical plenitude once was but is no more, a tomb that is a boon for the polis. Here, then, is the empty place that Lefort argues defines democracy, the place of the tyrant's barred joy.

This transformation of tyrannical bliss into democratic eros brings us back to the point from which we started this chapter (and this book): Athens's own tyrants and tyrannicide. This legend, the foundation legend for the democracy, begins with a tyrant's desire, Hipparchus's desire for the beautiful young Harmodius. That desire generates a fantasy in which the Athenians discover and defend their own desires: the freedom and autonomy of the citizen, the inviolability and virility of the body politic, the *dikaios erōs* of the Athenian democracy and the democratic citizen as *dikaios erastēs*. The tyrant's lust is imagined as devastating for the citizen; turning a good Athenian boy into a potential *malakos* (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 18.2), his desire takes the form of a *hubris* against the citizen body. But in that very act of *hubris*, the tyrant's desire also, paradoxically, generates the citizen body, for it is this threat that prompts the first democratic act, the act that (as the inscription on the tyrannicides' statue proclaims) "established the fatherland."

There is a *hysteron proteron* quality to this narrative in that the citizen rights of autonomy and equality that the tyrant infringes and the tyrannicides defend do not yet exist. The story rests, that is, upon tenets of democratic ideology before the democracy existed: Aristogiton, the "middling citizen" who resents tyrannical *hubris* and dies to preserve his freedom, is a democratic citizen before democracy or citizenship. In part this is, of course, merely retrojection on the part of the fifth-century Athenians who told this story; in part it has to do with the problem of political origins (for nothing is created ex nihilo). But this democracy-before-democracy also points to the mobilizing force of the tyrant's desire. What does Hipparchus want? He wants what all tyrants seem to want: like Croesus (who desires Solon's approval) or Hieron (who longs for his citizens' love), Hipparchus wants the eros of the democratic citi-

[96] This is the state of affairs that the Old Oligarch so decries in Athens (see, e.g., *Ath. Pol.* 2.9–10). This parallel suggests the extent to which the political fantasy at the end of *Hieron*, even though it prescribes monarchical rule, is actually modeled on Athenian ideals of civic prosperity.

zen. And his want constitutes its object: faced with the tyrant's lust, Harmodius and Aristogiton affirm their political and erotic freedom and thus declare themselves democratic citizens and democratic lovers. The tyrant's eros generates the citizen-erastes. Moreover, inasmuch as the tyrannicides' self-constitution is also the ultimate act of political constitution ("they established the fatherland"), Athenian democracy itself has its origin in the tyrant's desire.

This desire is formulated in fantasy: fantasy bridges the gap between a tyrant's come-on and tyrannicide, and transforms this private encounter into the inaugural moment of the democracy. In Thucydides' account of the scene, the tyrant's desire is ellipsed, folded into an assault that itself is compressed and vague: "Harmodius had an attempt made on him by Hipparchus and was not persuaded" (πειραθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἁρμόδιος ὑπὸ Ἱππάρχου τοῦ Πεισιστράτου καὶ οὐ πεισθεὶς, 6.54.3).[97] This nondescript act assumes its force in the anxious imagination of Aristogiton: "Aristogiton, lovesick and fearing Hipparchus's power, that he would take Harmodius by force, straightaway plotted (at least insofar as his status allowed) to overthrow the tyranny" (ὁ δὲ ἐρωτικῶς περιαλγήσας καὶ φοβηθεὶς τὴν Ἱππάρχου δύναμιν μὴ βίᾳ προσαγάγηται αὐτόν, ἐπιβουλεύει εὐθὺς ὡς ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπαρχούσης ἀξιώσεως κατάλυσιν τῇ τυραννίδι, Thuc. 6.54.3). Aristogiton's fearful imagination gives meaning to Hipparchus's act and fills in the logical gap between Hipparchus's "attempt" and the attempted assassination of Hippias.[98] The tyrant's desire—what precisely does he want?—takes shape within the citizen's fantasy, molded by fear and sexual anxiety (ἐρωτικῶς περιαλγήσας καὶ φοβηθεὶς), as does the necessary response to that desire: tyrannicide. This fantasy is passed down along with the anecdote itself, and through this imaginary supplement the anecdote gains its power as a story not just about a particular tyrant's lust but about democratic freedom in the face of tyrannical desire. Fantasy, in other words, converts the tyrant's want into democratic ideology.

In order to secure both democratic ideology and democratic desire, the tyrant must die. The tyrannicide myth curtails the tyrant's dangerous

[97] Note how the passive voice elides the tyrant's desire. Contrast Aristotle (*Ath. Pol.* 18.2). Thettalos, he says, "fell in love with Harmodius and, when his affection toward him was unsuccessful, he did not restrain his anger" (ἐρασθεὶς γὰρ τοῦ Ἁρμοδίου καὶ διαμαρτάνων τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν φιλίας, οὐ κατεῖχε τὴν ὀργήν). His insults to Harmodius's family and manhood led Harmodius and Aristogiton to do the deed. The actions and motivations of the tyrant are foregrounded here, whereas in Thucydides they are subordinated to the fears of Aristogiton.

[98] As H.-P. Stahl 1966.3–4 emphasizes, Aristogiton starts to contemplate tyrannicide even before Hipparchus (frustrated in a second "attempt") insults Harmodius (Thuc. 6.54.4, 6.56.1). The vagueness in Thucydides' account of Hipparchus's action and the connection between it and Hippias's attempted murder means that the reader must replicate for him or

longing, in one valiant act cutting short his reign, his lust, and his life. It enforces the ban upon the tyrant's *jouissance* and distributes that *jouissance* to the citizens in the form of political mastery and erotic freedom. In the process, tyrannical eros is both negated and preserved, for even as the myth celebrates the victory of democratic eros, it also recalls the prior threat that enabled this victory, the imagined threat of a tyrant's desire. To retell the story—as the Athenians did throughout the fifth and fourth centuries—is to imagine again and again the love of a tyrant. The story cuts off the tyrant's desire but not the democratic fantasy of that desire, the fearful and lovesick imagination of a tyrant's lust for a supremely desirable citizen body.

The tyrannicide narrative is thus a reiterated prohibition upon tyrannical *jouissance* that, in the very form of a prohibition, keeps that ecstasy alive and installs it within the Athenian psyche.[99] The tyrant's joy is barred but not annihilated: it lingers on as a vanishing point within the democracy, an ideal of plenitude and potency—political and erotic—toward which the polis reaches but which it necessarily never attains. This means that at the heart of the democracy, there is an irreducible point of otherness, a point that orients Athens's desire and its politics. This otherness surfaces in the city's most fundamental fantasies. In Pericles' Epitaphios, the Athenians are urged to fall in love with themselves in the guise of tyrants: the *sōma autarkes* that Solon banished from the civic order along with tyrannical *olbos* there reappears as the defining feature of the democratic citizen, the core of his political identity and his psychic self-relation. In its imperial longing, a longing (as Pericles and Alcibiades assert) that is Athens's lifeblood, the city reaches for the mastery and freedom of a tyrant: the pleasure principle of the democratic city is a fatal (because unfulfillable) longing for tyrannical *jouissance*. An otherness within the subject, an inaccessible space that is barred but never eliminated, the source of a desire that can barely be expressed, much less satisfied, but that in its insatiability generates essential political fantasies: the tyrant is the purest embodiment of the democratic unconscious. Remember Hipparchus's Herms: the citizen body contains within it—its repressed origin and hidden meaning—the tyrant's *mnēma*, the message of the Other within the democratic self.

If democracy is structured around an empty space, as Claude Lefort suggests, in Athens that empty space is the tyrant's lack. The tyrant's plenitude is imagined only to be hollowed out—a tyrannicide performed

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herself the anxious logic of Aristogiton, moving from erotic overture to tyrannicide, filling in the gaps with a fantasy of the tyrant's wants.

[99] Butler 1997.56: "The 'afterlife' of prohibited desire is in the prohibition itself."

over and over again—and the hole of the tyrant's desire filled by a fantasy that constitutes Athens's democratic ideology and democratic citizen. In this fantasy, tyrannical *jouissance* is distributed to the entire polis in the form of erotic dominance and political freedom; from the tyrant's barred potency is born the ideology of the citizen-lover. And within that ideology, the prohibited joy of the tyrant lives on: Athenian ideology is suffused with that lingering enjoyment and is invigorated by the desire that reaches always for it. Democracy not only has an erotics, then; it is itself an erotics, as Athens fills the empty space at its center with an ideology built upon forbidden ecstasies and animated by fantasies of tyrannical desire.

Conclusion

An interpretation, however, is generally effective only
when it visibly or even violently rewrites the surface
appearance of the text, that is, when the restoration of
the "deep structure" alters our initial reception
of the sentences themselves.
(F. Jameson 1988.19-20)

THIS BOOK HAS SOUGHT to rewrite the surface appearance of both the texts of democratic Athens and the "text" of Athenian democracy. The ground it covers is well known: Pericles, Thucydides, Athens. But I hope to have made this terrain look unfamiliar: to have revealed these texts as alien to us and our usual understanding of them, but also, and perhaps more importantly, as alien to themselves.

All interpretations rewrite the text's "surface appearance," including (or perhaps especially) those that claim to be only faithful replications of that surface. Such readings perform a violence upon the text by grinding away everything that would disrupt the smoothness of its surface: they obtain a text stable enough to reduplicate and lucid enough to paraphrase only by erasing all marks of instability or opacity. In flattening out the text's surface, these readings also produce a spurious depth: the blandly legible Athens that appears as the product of this process is itself the violent overwriting of a more complex and disturbing history. While some interpretations rewrite through paraphrastic reduction, others rewrite through addition, forcibly imposing a modern gloss on the text of antiquity. Positing a modern apparatus as the deep structure beneath the text, they also find that same apparatus at its surface. As a result antiquity is rendered both familiar and one-dimensional.

My own reading has attempted to avoid both of these sorts of hermeneutic violence, that of erasure and that of superimposition. I have sought neither to produce a self-explanatory surface whose still waters betoken untroubled depths, nor to posit a familiar underlying structure in order to refind a familiar surface. Instead, I have tried to restore the complexity and strangeness of both the surface appearance and the deep structure and to set these two in a productive relation. In the process, I hoped to expose the text's unconscious, a deep structure of fantasy and desire that exists within the very sentences of the text's surface. In the movement of the textual unconscious, structure and surface inform and transform one

another: the deep structure wells up to trouble the surface, and the obscurities upon that surface force a constant return to the depths. Through this circuit of transformative interaction, the text writes and rewrites itself.

My reading has aimed to facilitate this internal rewriting. There are many barriers to communication between the text's surface and its deep structure. Some are thrown up by the text itself and by the various strategies of obliteration and obfuscation through which it forges a legible surface in the first place. Other barriers have been added by a long history of scholarship, which, alongside many useful observations about the texts, has also necessarily institutionalized certain blind spots, occlusions, and persistently unasked questions. I have aimed to remove some of these obstacles: to uncover buried connections between surface and deep structure and to attend to the mutual interference between the two levels, as well as the text's stake in obscuring that interference. In this way, I have sought to rewrite the texts of Athenian democracy by allowing them to rewrite themselves. If this mediation also has its violence, it is the violence of breaking through the text's resistance and opening a path by which its repressed can return and reassert itself within "the sentences themselves," rendering the text strange both to itself and to us.

The unconscious is a point of strangeness within any structure, an "other scene," as Freud put it. In the individual, it is the repressed content that orients consciousness but is radically inaccessible to it; in discourse, it is a supplement that always reinsinuates itself within the text that excludes it and that is built upon its exclusion. Thus the unconscious defers closure and precludes totalization; it disrupts the possibility of a secure and lucid *gnōthi seauton*, appearing always as an amorphous stain at the periphery of an individual's or a text's self-knowledge. We have witnessed the unconscious at work within our texts, even in a text so ostensibly self-knowing and masterfully in control of its meaning as Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*: in the difficulty of segregating the obscene pleasure of a Cleon from the sublime patriotism of Pericles or the sublime rigor of the text itself; in the ambivalent representation of Alcibiades; in the obscure relation between Sicily, Herms, and tyrannicides. These moments constitute an unruly subtext that cannot be separated out and stored somewhere safely outside or beneath the text. In other words, if the surface of the text has long seemed untroubled, that is only because we have ourselves chosen to ignore the smudges and erasures upon it, forgetting that these constitute an integral part of that surface and its history.

If every text—"even" Thucydides—has an unconscious, an internal other that rewrites it from within, then clearly we must rethink the standard methodological questions of historiographic source criticism. One cannot simply take a text at its word, of course. But the problem is not one of accuracy or inaccuracy, bias or objectivity, whether or not the text

is "telling the truth." Instead, one needs to ask what it would mean for a text to "tell the truth" and inquire about the *lēthē*—the necessary repressions and amnesias—that subtend a text's *alētheia*. While the fantasy of a fully self-knowing and transparently "conscious" text holds out the illusory promise of totalizing hermeneutic mastery, attention to the textual unconscious shifts us into a different order of knowledge, in which the text knows but does not know it knows; knows but does not wish to know; knows but can speak that knowledge only in the form of incoherent assertions or inopportune silences. What would it mean, then, to take a text at its word, when its word is so often contradictory and nontransparent? Its *alētheia* is on the order of a negation, and if we read only for the "surface appearance" of that truth without inquiring about the "deep structure" of *lēthē* beneath it, we merely reiterate the negation without understanding it or the ruses of forgetfulness by which it constitutes itself.

I suggested in chapter 4 the sort of historiography that results from reading for the text's unconscious: history as case history. There I argued that Thucydides' history is itself implicated in the dynamic it seeks to describe, driven by the same impossible longings that it diagnoses in the Athenians. In its symptomatic writing—its odd displacements and jarring condensations, its inexplicable connections and nonconnections—it endlessly reopens the historical wound it hopes to cauterize through its writing. Reading history in this way obviously means bracketing questions about objectivity and understanding historiographic truth in terms less of deliberate representation than of compulsive repetition. If Thucydides' history is in some sense "true," that is not a function of some accurate transcription of "the truth" about Athens in the late fifth century, but rather because Thucydides' text recapitulates in both its form and its content—even perhaps against its will—the traumatic historicity of fifth-century Athenian experience. Thus one might rework Hobbes's statement, apropos of Thucydides, that truth is the soul of history: the soul (*psukhē*) is the truth of history.

The history I offer is a study of such psychic repetitions and reverberations. This kind of history is not a quest for some kernel of the real outside the text—there is no "outside the text," as Derrida famously asserts[1]—but a study of the symptoms of that inaccessible real within discourse. The goal of such an inquiry, though, is not to trace those textual symptoms back to a single source or originary trauma; it is not to "solve" the text, to decode it so that it becomes nothing more than an empty cipher concealing a single secret meaning. That unitary meaning does not exist, and if it did, it probably would not be worth decoding and, at any rate,

[1] Derrida 1974.158. That is to say, there is no transcendental referent to which the text refers and the discovery of which will explain the text.

the text that contained it would no longer be worth reading. The point is not to uncover a buried truth but instead to excavate the text's practices of truth making, the ways in which it forgets, then forgets it has forgotten—*alētheia* as a dynamic process, not as a dead and encrypted object.[2]

The internal alterity of the unconscious is at work within all discourse. Public ideology, too, has an unconscious, a subterranean realm of contradictory fantasy beneath its manifest declarations. I have argued throughout that a study of Athenian ideology must include not only those political ideals and beliefs to which all Athenians would happily confess but also the psychic half-life of those ideals and beliefs: the fantasies that sutured subjects to them, the exclusions that maintained them, the perverse attachments they could inspire and the unforeseen scenarios they could set in motion within the citizen psyche. At times that "deep structure" of fantasy sustains the "surface appearance" of Athenian ideology. This was the case, for example, in Pericles' Epitaphios, where the fundamental tenets of Athenian civic ideology are rooted within the psyche of the individual citizen, so that patriotism becomes narcissism and the citizen's self-relation both reflects and reinforces political relations. In that speech, the scene of Athenian politics and the "other scene" of the civic imaginary stage complementary and mutually sustaining dramas.

At other times, civic fantasy can trouble—"rewrite"—the text of Athenian ideology, creating a palimpsest of love and hate, the obscene and the sublime, the perverse and the normative. The eros of Alcibiades illustrated the complex ways in which fantasy can disrupt politics, revealing both the nonexclusionary logic of ideological desire and the contradictory trace it can leave on the surface of politics. But the desire for Alcibiades showed more than fantasy's potential to shake the edifice of ideology; it also suggested the interiority of fantasy to ideology. Perversion does not stand outside or alongside (*para*) the normative but within it: around Alcibiades *nomos* and *paranomia* became entangled and normativity itself came to look like a perverse fixation. Likewise, the phantasmatic refractions of ideology are not private and peripheral phenomena, marginalia added to an ideological document already complete in itself. Instead, they exist within the very syntax of that document, rewriting it constantly from within. And the text of ideology taken in its fullest sense is nothing but such continual and contentious rewritings.

This means that ideology can never be bounded or closed. The object and arena of political contest, it is also always potentially in conflict with

[2] With dreams, forgetting is part of the meaning: see Lacan 1988b.124–26. Lacan at one point defines the unconscious as "the memory of those things [the subject] forgets" (1992.231–32). On *lēthē* and *alētheia*, see Heidegger 1996 [1953].28–30, 201–5; Irigaray 1985b.243–364 (esp. 253, 262–65, 267).

itself. Even such seemingly straightforward utterances as "I do not love great tyranny" conceal endlessly complex narratives of terror and longing; they generate new desires with every refusal and new fantasies with every denial. Thus I argued in the fifth chapter that Athenian ideology is oriented around a fundamental alterity: the most recognizable desires of the democracy—freedom, equality, autarky, civic prosperity, even the citizen-erastes himself—had their origin in an inadmissible fantasy of tyrannical desire. Radiating from a point of otherness, spun out through fantasies whose meanings necessarily remain obscure, and sustained by desires that will always fail to hit their mark because they cannot know that mark, ideology can never fully know itself or describe itself to us in its totality. Athenian ideology functions like a dream fulfilling wishes the Athenians did not even know they had. The political unconscious is everywhere at work within political consciousness and to read Athenian ideology only for the latter is to miss what is most alive and passionate about it: its very soul, its *psukhē*.

If this is so, then psychoanalysis offers not only a possible reading of ancient discourse but a necessary reading. A psychoanalytic "rewriting" of ancient texts may have a sinister ring for those who already think of psychoanalysis as a forced reinscription of every text, in violence to all cultural or historical difference, with the same tediously familiar narrative.[3] Some psychoanalytic readings, of course, do just that; but the best of them produce not sameness but difference. They do not impose answers on the text but ask it questions it was unwilling or unable to ask of itself. The goal of such readings is not to "cure" the text, complacently applying modern solutions to resolve ancient confusions; nor is it to level out a text's contradictions in order to produce a docile, lobotomized object. Instead, it is to help us hear those contradictions more acutely and locate them more precisely within the text's particular rhetorical and symbolic fabric. Indeed, one of the virtues of psychoanalysis is its emphasis on the local particularity of psychic dynamics, on the unique ways in which an event (real or imagined) is elaborated within one individual's psychic structure, translated into his or her individual vocabulary and syntax, worked through the idiosyncratic machinery of his or her own fantasy. If the unconscious is structured like a language, as Lacan says, then its rewriting of the surface text is also a translation—a translation not into our terms, but into the text's own root language. Psychoanalysis is a lexicon for reading this strange new language and, through it, for finding a core of strangeness within the familiar.

[3] See esp. Deleuze and Guattari 1983, who view the Oedipal triangle "daddy-mommy-me" as the reductive and oppressive master-narrative of capitalism.

The questions I have put to the ancient texts are prompted by modern concerns—inevitably, I think, but also appropriately, for otherwise historical study becomes mere antiquarianism. I have tried to listen carefully to the texts' answers, to hear the accent of their historicity, and thus to prevent the dialogue between ancient and modern from becoming a monologue. But if (as I hope) modern questions have been able to prompt ancient answers, what does the ancient bring to the conversation? What can a reading of these ancient democratic texts contribute to a reading of the text of modern democracy? What can the study of the erotics of Athenian politics teach us about the desire at work within our own contemporary political scene? Modern American democracy is shot through with eros, from the metaphoric (the people are said to have a "love affair" with a popular leader; a politician will express his political manliness by promising to be "hard" on terrorism or drugs) to the most literal speculations about the sexual proclivities of our political leaders. I offer here only one particularly obvious modern example of the very ancient problematic of democratic desire. In doing so, I wish not to blur the differences between ancient Athens and modern America but to suggest how the study of antiquity might help us locate and interpret the deep structure of fantasy beneath the surface appearance of our own contemporary political discourse.[4]

It is hard to imagine a more vivid enactment of the themes of this book than the Monica Lewinsky scandal that riveted national attention throughout 1998 and much of 1999, preoccupying both the machinery of government and the national imagination. More than just prurient scandal mongering (although that accusation had a potent politics of its own), the affair prompted a public debate over the relation between sex and power, democracy and elitism, morality and politics, legitimate and illegitimate pleasure. Questions of sexual propriety—including what counts as sex and how we should talk about it—became urgent political issues and for a moment national identity seemed to be condensed within the fascinating and repelling thought of the presidential phallus.[5]

Bill Clinton came to office on a platform of youthful populism. The first "baby boomer" president, a product of the sexual revolution, he

[4] I focus here exclusively on American democracy. The relation between eros and politics plays out quite differently in Europe, as was brought home to Americans vividly in 1996 at the death of former French president Mitterand, when his wife and long-term mistress were photographed side by side at his funeral. Even as our president was being pilloried (and ultimately impeached) for adulterous affairs, the French seemed to be unfazed by complexity in their leaders' sex lives—an observation that occasioned much handwringing about American puritanism and provincialism.

[5] For an assortment of insightful views on the affair, see the recent collection of essays edited by Lauren Berlant and Lisa Duggan, *Our Monica, Ourselves: The Clinton Affair and the National Interest* (2001).

brought (or claimed to bring) to the office the sexual energy of an Elvis Presley; within the heterosexual framework of modern politics, his erotic appeal was signaled by his overwhelming support from female voters. Those cultural and generational conflicts that produced Clinton continued to be waged during his presidency, and his sexuality was a primary arena.[6] The rhetoric of immorality, adultery, even perversion brought to bear by his political opponents sought to deny the legitimacy of his sexual and political stance. As with Cleon or Alcibiades, sexual propriety was deployed as a weapon in the war of political positions: as in the case of Alcibiades, sexual *paranomia* (from adultery and workplace sexual harassment to oral sex and the notorious cigar) was adduced as a sign of political unfitness; as with Cleon, an implicit class discourse (Clinton's poor Southern—read "white trash"—background and his low-brow taste in girlfriends)[7] informed and reinforced judgments about political (and sexual) legitimacy. And for Clinton, as for Alcibiades, the charge of inappropriate sexual behavior was eventually parlayed into charges of antidemocratic, even tyrannical, inclinations: the trump card in the impeachment process was not sex, but perjury and obstruction of justice.[8]

But while Clinton's opponents represented him as both sexually and politically corrupt, from a different perspective his particular mingling of eros and power is so well established within American politics as to be virtually normative. After all, one of the things the whole business proved was the sexiness of power and, more specifically, the masculinity of power. From this perspective, the affair can be seen as a redemption of the phallic nature of power in an era of feminism (among other threats). The husband of a powerful wife, a man whose vaunted sensitivity ("I feel your pain") and unrestrained bodily desires (for bad food as well as quick sex) associated him with the female, was reaffirmed as "a real man" after all.[9] Beneath the charges of immorality, moreover, lay the open secret of other presidential infidelities, and the assumption (fondly held if never openly aired) that desire follows in the footsteps of power.

[6] Zaretsky 2001. One can only note with irony that Clinton's defeated old-style political adversary and World War II veteran, Bob Dole, would go on to do Viagra commercials.

[7] McElya 2001. As she points out, race was also at issue in the charge of "white trash" promiscuity. If Clinton was a trashy Pericles, Monica Lewinsky was his Aspasia: her Judaism stereotyped her as simultaneously an exotic seductress and a social-climbing "Jewish American Princess." See Garber 2001.

[8] There was also a foreign policy dimension to the affair in the bombings on Iraq that were seen by many at the time as a displacement of sexual energy, a distraction from the sexual scandal, and a compensatory display of righteous, patriotic masculine dominance. These bombings were also Clinton's answer to the Gulf War of his predecessor, itself the acting out of a highly sexualized fantasy of national morality, imperial desire, and militarized manliness. On the gendering of the Gulf War, see Boose 1993.

[9] Nelson and Curtain 2001 discuss the masculinity of the presidential body.

Around this erotic drama were mobilized a complex set of national fantasies. Polls at the time showed that Americans were morally troubled by Clinton's adultery, yet his approval rating went up over the course of the affair: like the Athenian demos with Alcibiades, we apparently loved Clinton and hated him at the same time, an ambivalence that bespeaks our complicated investment—moral and political, but also libidinal and identificatory—in his person.[10] What sort of fantasies of power and pleasure circulated within that ambivalence? On the one hand, Clinton offered a dream of supreme power, sexual and political, and seemed to make that dream available to all American citizens. Like Cleon, he opened an imaginative space for the average citizen within the elite spaces of power: amid the blue-bloods and millionaires of Capitol Hill, he seemed to represent the aspirations and appetites of the "common" American, the dream that any citizen could become president. He was our Demos enthroned, and like Aristophanes' Demos, he enjoyed his political power in the form of plebian pleasures: hamburgers and blowjobs. Through him, democracy became the reign of the democratic libido: the desire of the people converted directly into political authority.

On the other hand, though, even as Clinton offered a conduit of identification for the ordinary citizen, he also reaffirmed the elite nature of power within our democracy. By segregating the ethical failings of Clinton the man from the political performance of Clinton the president (which is one way of reading the ambivalence of the polls), we reasserted our national faith in the pristine power of the presidency. Clinton's failure to live up to the presidential ideal of a patrician and paternal leader—master of his own appetites and of ours, morally upright, sexually continent, and psychologically uncomplex—merely reaffirmed that figure as the ideal. If Clinton played the role of Cleon, he did so only to reassert the Periclean fantasy of the "rule of the first man," a democracy governed not by the common citizen and his common wants, but by a democratic monarch who embodies in his own sublime body the ideal of an aristocratic demos.[11] If Clinton's affair challenged that ideal by bringing dirty sex into the halls of power (staining the spotless "White" House), the prolonged spectacle of confession, apology, prayer, and impeachment that followed resecured it as a fundamental national fantasy. At the same time, the attention focused on the sexual perversion of the individual allowed us not to

[10] This ambivalence marked the affair all the way to its bizarre denouement, in which Clinton was impeached but not removed from office.

[11] See Nelson and Curtain 2001, who view "presidentialism" (the overinvestment in the figure of the president) as an abdication of democratic political agency. "The president of the U.S. is only ever a figment of our antidemocratic imagination. But our clinging to that figment *really* keeps us from taking democratic power for ourselves" (49).

ask about the perversity of the ideal.[12] Why should a nation of democrats fall in love with power in the person of an elite and manly monarch? This question needs to be asked of our own democracy no less than of the democracy of "Periclean" Athens: is our democracy's own ideal-ego antidemocratic?

This brings us back to one of the leading queries of this book: what does it mean to be a lover of the polis? Monica Lewinsky allowed contemporary America to ponder this question by literalizing the metaphor: her sexual intimacy with the president physicalized the metaphoric eros that binds citizens to the power of the state. This intimacy occasioned a good deal of discomfort. Many saw Monica not as lover but as unwilling (or deluded) beloved, the victim of sexual exploitation masquerading as love. Many of these commentators wanted the affair to play out like a modern version of the Athenian tyrannicide: a violent and lustful tyrant assaults the democratic citizen; she resists and, with the help of the American people (her valiant Aristogiton), slays the tyrant. Tyrannicide is, after all, part of our own democratic tradition, and for us, as for the Athenians, tyrants must be killed again and again in a reiterated regrounding of our democratic principles. From this perspective, the impeachment process shored up the democracy, resecuring the purity of the citizen's sexuality and the sanctity of monogamous heterosexual marriage, our version of *dikaios erōs*.

But tyrannicide, as we saw in Athens, is not a simple matter, and the fantasy of a tyrant's lust can be mobilizing as well as threatening for democracy. When Hipparchus insulted Harmodius, he abrogated the sexual and political autonomy of the democratic citizen-lover but also, I argued, constituted him as a desirable and a desiring subject. Likewise in this drama, Monica represented the citizen not just as sexual object but also as sexual subject. One of the most surprising things about the Lewinsky tapes for those who wanted to see this as a cut-and-dry case of sexual harassment or abuse of power was Monica's own active and exuberant desire. She does not come across as Clinton's victim; in fact, she set out deliberately to seduce him.[13] Her sexual power over Clinton—which made him risk his position and prestige for a few moments of pleasure—was itself a sort of tyrannicide. Her interviews after the affair exposed the

[12] It also allowed us not to ask about Clinton's conservative politics. His shift of the Democratic Party toward the political center resulted in such conservative legislation as the Defense of Marriage Act, the "don't ask/don't tell" policy for gays in the military, and the dismantling of welfare.

[13] This does not mean that the issue of sexual harassment is moot, of course. There was still an inequality in power, and Clinton was still her employer. But it does show how questions of desire can complicate dynamics of power. For different positions on this issue, see the essays by Gallop, Lumby, and Smith in Berlant and Duggan 2001. I follow that collection in referring to Lewinsky, as the press did at the time, simply as "Monica."

president as needy and lacking: like Hieron, the man who had everything wanted only to be loved by his citizens. She met his need with her own dream of power: not only her ambition for plum jobs in Washington but her notion—which seemed touchingly naive when it was revealed in her taped conversations, but is in fact a fundamental tenet of democratic ideology—that her personal opinions were shaping policy decisions. As in Athens, democratic fantasy filled the void of the tyrannical Other's desire. And if this affair deposed the tyrant and distributed his power—imaginatively, if not actually—to the people as a whole, it also kept his pleasure alive. The sexual desire that was beaten out of him through forced apologies and public prayer lived on in her *jouissance*, the unique enjoyment that she claimed (publicly and often) from the affair and preserved throughout its embarrassing exposure. For all its naivité, her manifest pleasure transformed a simple narrative of tyrannicide into a much more equivocal and fertile fantasy of active democratic desire and a welcome intimacy—erotic and political, personal and public—between the individual citizen and the power of the state.

Perhaps as interesting as the national discussion of the affair was the discussion of the discussion of the affair. Sex was presumed to have a place in politics but not in political discourse, and Clinton was reviled as much for sullying political debate as for sullying the Oval Office. How to speak about sex and politics, separately and together, became a pressing question as reporters blushingly read from the sexually explicit (some called it pornographic) Starr Report. Conservatives and liberals blamed one another (and both blamed Clinton) for blurring the boundaries between public and private and turning sex into a political issue. Meanwhile, both sides enjoyed the furtive pleasure of speaking and thinking about sex: as we have seen, denunciation and renunciation have an eros of their own. In the contemporary debate, this pleasure of repudiation is lent an additional furtiveness by the ubiquitous assumption that sex and politics should properly be segregated, that desire is not, or should not be, a political matter. But if the Athenian texts have shown us anything, it is that eros and politics cannot—and should not—be separated. Public debates over definitions of sexuality are themselves a form of politics: sex is a token in democratic political contest (as Cleon and Alcibiades, as well as Clinton, discovered) and a key term in the open discussions of civic identity and power relations that define any democracy. But more than that, desire is a vital modality of political participation. Wondering about a president's sex life is just the most overt form of a profound phantasmatic involvement of the citizen in the state. Such fantasies and the desires they act out are not symptoms of a degenerate political sensibility but a way of bridging the psychic space between the individual and the polis and, hence, of transforming individuals into citizens.

The role of desire within democratic politics is perhaps even more apparent today than it was in fifth-century Athens. Although the size of the nation and the representative nature of our democracy makes the relation between the people and its leaders a long-distance love affair, the media creates an ersatz intimacy: not only do our leaders appeal directly and personally for our affection, coming into our living rooms to woo us, but thanks to constant polling, they also know our every wish. And yet if eros circulates freely within the machinery of democratic politics, within our political discourse one can often detect a certain unease with the demos's desire. Polls are a case in point: capturing the democratic libido in a unitary, comprehensible form, polls reduce the ambivalence of the democratic unconscious to clear-cut numbers ("30 percent of Athenians love Alcibiades; 30 percent hate him; 30 percent want to possess him—and 10 percent are undecided"). To that extent, polls already perform a defensive reification of the demos's unruly and contradictory longings. But even so, there is contempt for politicians who "pander to the polls." We still seem to share Thucydides' opinion that the true democratic politician should lead the demos, not be led by it, restrain the majority liberally, and never speak to please. Taking seriously the demos's desire still makes a politician a whore.

We saw in the case of Cleon the antidemocratic logic behind the distaste for democratic desire. This logic—in classical Athens and contemporary America—takes many forms. On the one hand, there is the position most virulently argued by Pseudo-Xenophon, the Old Oligarch. For him democracy is nothing but the expression of the demos's libido, which he construes as the narrow, class-bound, material self-interest of the lower classes. The people want material pleasures and political power; democracy is a machine for satisfying those desires and is, for that reason, repugnant to men of sense. We hear echoes of this view in some modern discussions of populism. Elite critics see a democracy predicated on the material interests of the demos (here specifically imagined as the lower-class masses) either as a tyranny of labor unions and "special interests" or as a regime of isolationism, racism, and xenophobia (depending upon the particular fantasy of "the people" and the political orientation of the critic). In this line of reasoning, democratic desire becomes a coarse bodily appetite, which, if left unchecked, will drag down the entire polity to the level of its own vulgar materiality. The noble desires and ideals (and, implicitly, social status) of the Founding Fathers are often invoked in defense: their lofty vision, their "city upon a hill," has no room for the base and ravenous libido of the mob.[14]

[14] Indeed, this tradition can be traced in the very first documents of American history. For example, John Winthrop's 1630 sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity," one of the

While the Old Oligarch figured the democratic libido as perversely rational, Plato saw it as perversely irrational. The people do not know what they want; they do not know true pleasures from false; they do not know—or, if they do, do not want—what is good for them. This was the complaint of Cleon's and Alcibiades' opponents as they pondered how to cure the demos of its dangerous desire for these dangerous figures. The same language can be heard today expressing political despair on both the left and the right: how can the demos be in love with Clinton or with Bush? ask his opponents. Are the people so seduced by his slick appeal (Clinton) or boyish charm (Bush), that they cannot see the true danger he poses for the state? How can their desires be so irrational, and if they truly are so irrational, what hope is there for democracy? At its most extreme, this line of argument sees the people's desire as an antisocial force, an aggressivity that expresses itself ultimately in the fatal charisma of fascism. The "solution" is a sort of Straussian oligarchy within democracy, philosophers and gentlemen steering a ship rowed by the people and named for them, but not truly theirs.

Why should the demos's desire so often be viewed as antithetical to democracy? Why should the thought of democratic eros provoke despair over democratic politics? Is there a way to speak of democratic desire within an explicitly prodemocratic discourse, to harness the demos's libido to a progressive—fuller and more inclusive—democratic politics? Athens may not be able to answer these questions, but perhaps it can point a direction for inquiry. In Athens, I have suggested, eros operated as an ideological suture. The ideal of the citizen-lover was a "quilting point" that brought together a number of different ideological elements (masculinity, freedom, equality, elitism, personal autonomy, sexual dominance, national superiority, civic belonging); the desire this fiction aroused smoothed over its inevitable contradictions and misrecognitions and joined the citizen seamlessly to it. This phantasmatic suturing could at

guiding articulations of American colonialism, contains remarkable echoes of Pericles' Epitaphios. Like Pericles, Winthrop calls upon the colonists to make their city a paradigm for others: "wee shall be as a Citty vpon a Hill, the eies of all people are vppon us; . . . wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world" (Winthrop 1931.295). For Winthrop as for Pericles, eros is the means to that end: Winthrop urges the colonists to love one another and "delight in eache other" (294) as Eve did in Adam (291). Love is for him the mechanism of communal sentiment, the "fulfilling of the lawe" (288), the "ligament" of the perfected civic body (288–89). The conceit of the "City upon a Hill" has become something of a mantra for the New Right, starting with Reagan's address to the first Conservative Political Action Conference in 1974 (entitled "We Will Be a City upon a Hill") and continuing at least until his Farewell Address in 1989. The image links modern conservatives to the Thucydidean view in which the only valid democracy is that of an aristocratic demos firmly led by its "first man." But note that John F. Kennedy, too, evoked the image in a campaign speech in 1961, in which he also quotes the *paradeigma* passage of the Epitaphios.

times become oppressively rigid—a morbid libidinal fixation. This was all too clear in Sicily, where eros became a paralyzing obsession: the love of freedom hardened into disastrous imperial aggression and a drive toward death. Eros could work as a petrifying force within the polis, generating immutable positions, stagnant normativities, and alienating attachments, a dead and deadening cathexis to the polis.

But eros could (and can) also work differently within politics. I have stressed throughout this study the fertility of desire, its ability to light up unexpected objects and create surprising attachments, its nonexclusive logic and potential for perversity. The productivity of desire and of the phantasmatic dramas it inspires guarantees that any ideological fixation will only ever be partial and provisional, and therefore will be open to the political rearticulation that, as Laclau and Mouffe argue, is the essence of democratic politics.[15] If desire is always the desire for "something else," then ideology must always be in motion. As Cleon and Alcibiades showed, even the most paradigmatic fixations are available for reimagination: the connection between masculinity, democratic citizenship, power, and pleasure forged at the nodal point of the citizen-lover could be reconfigured and the various components recombined in new ways, serving different political interests and generating different political fantasies.

Even as eros creates the "passionate attachments" that constitute ideology and bind the citizen to it, then, it also guarantees the lability of those attachments.[16] Even as it works within the bounds of the normative, reinforcing its abjections and exclusions, eros can also reembrace and recathect the excluded, its supplementary logic (both-and . . . and, not either-or) making eros always potentially inclusive. Within our own democracy, this supplementarity creates a possible space of emergence for legitimate minority and female hegemony: as the Athenians show, figures who are marginal to the political structure may be central to the political imaginary, objects of a fascination and desire that, under the right circumstances, can be converted into real political authority. As a suture point, then, eros marks a permanent site of potential openness and transforma-

[15] Laclau and Mouffe 1985.93–194. They propose that "this moment of tension, of openness, which gives the social its essentially incomplete and precarious character, is what every project for radical democracy should set out to institutionalize" (190). See also Mouffe 1993.52–53, 75–78, 114. Plato says that one advantage of a philosopher governing the city is that, because the philosopher is a lover of wisdom, not of political power, under his rule there will be no conflict among "rival lovers" (*Rep.* 521b4–5). Political desire and political contestation are eliminated together from his city.

[16] On the "passionate attachment" of the subject to power, see Butler 1997.1–30; Žižek 1999.247–312. Cf. Silverman 1996, who theorizes love as an idealization, a "lighting up," of the culturally abjected Other (39–81). Eros thus becomes for her the basis for a more inclusive politics.

tion within politics, which is to say that eros is—or at least can be—what is most democratic about democracy. The democratic unconscious, the site of this fertile and contradictory eros, is not an unfortunate blight upon democracy, not a sickness to be cured by "the rule of the first man." Instead, it is the potential—if always unreachable—horizon of a fully inclusive democratic politics.[17]

In her recent work on sexuality and citizenship, Lauren Berlant writes about "dead citizenship," an abstract, nostalgic identity frozen in time; this monumentalized national identity, she argues, suppresses ideological contestation and political struggle, crushing democratic debate beneath the dead weight of its iconicity.[18] *Love among the Ruins* took as its starting point a fetish of "dead citizenship" within democratic Athens, the idealized citizen-lover. It traced the hegemonic politics buried within that tomb, the elite values it encrypts within the democracy, the identification it demands with those values, the way it refuses alternate identifications and resists contest. It highlighted the exclusions required to keep this icon intact, the panic inspired by threats to its integrity, and the mortiferous lengths to which the Athenians themselves had to go to maintain their belief in it. It also hinted at our modern nostalgia for the Athenian citizen in his sublime monumentality, serenely laid out upon his bier, a memorial to a democratic nobility and beauty (*kalokagathia*) now apparently lost.

But the greater burden of this study has been to reanimate Athenian citizenship, to bring dead citizens back to life, in all their erotic complexity and political perversity. In the shadow of the iconic citizen-lover, I have summoned the ghosts (*psukhai*) of repudiated others—sexy tyrants, mutilated Herms, prostitutes, and pathics—and tried to show the ways in which these spirits not only menace but also invigorate the fiction of the democratic citizen, making it (in all senses of the word) vital. By excavating love among the ruins of Athens, I have tried to repopulate that ancient polis with the silent phantoms of its repressed and to resuscitate those civic fantasies that haunted the political scene of the classical democracy and that, in similar and different manifestations, haunt us still today. For it is in those fantasies—the desires and dreams of the democratic unconscious—that we most clearly recover the living soul and animating spirit, the *psukhē*, of Athenian democracy.

[17] Mouffe 1993.8: a truly pluralist democracy will "always be a democracy 'to come,' as conflict and antagonism are at the same time its condition of possibility and the condition of impossibility of its full realization."

[18] Berlant 1997.59–60.

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