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# TYCHE

Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte  
Papyrologie und Epigraphik

HOLZHAUSEN  
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# **T Y C H E**

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Papyrologie und Epigraphik**

**Band 30**

**2015**

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Di(e)itrephes\*

Dieitrephes, or Diitrephes, belonged to a distinguished Athenian family whose prominence stretched throughout the fifth century, and whose members enjoyed the privilege of featuring in the narratives of Herodotus and Thucydides, albeit sometimes portrayed as controversial figures. The spelling of Dieitrephes' name is disputed. Dunbar has argued for Διαιτρέφης on metrical grounds, citing Elmsley and epigraphic evidence.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Lang has assembled all the relevant evidence which clearly shows that the spelling was Διαιτρέφης.<sup>2</sup> It is important that in all four *ostraca* examined in her study the εἰ is not a product of restoration but can actually be read on the surface of the pottery shred (serial numbers 98–101 in the study).<sup>3</sup> *OCT* also supports the spelling with εἰ at Thuc. 7.29.1 and 8.64.2, and Dover, *HCT* 4 at Thuc. 7.29.1, followed suit, but Hornblower has opted for the ι spelling.<sup>4</sup> It would, then, be better if we followed the epigraphic evidence.

Nor is there consensus among scholars about who his father was. Vanderpool favored Hermolycos II, one of the two sons of Dieitrephes I, because he was the elder,<sup>5</sup> followed by Raubitschek.<sup>6</sup> Develin<sup>7</sup>, Sealey<sup>8</sup>, Ruschenbusch<sup>9</sup>, who registers Dieitrephes as Phlyeus, and Wade-Gery<sup>10</sup> believe the younger brother Nicostratos was the father, and so does the *LGN* II, which registers our Dieitrephes under number 8. Dunbar, *Birds* (note 1) 484 has even proposed an unknown sister, daughter of Dieitrephes I, as a possible parent. G. Grossi remained uncommitted.<sup>11</sup> I believe that in the absence of any decisive clues the question should remain open.

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\* I am grateful to the journal's anonymous referees for their suggestions. I would also like to thank Olivier Gengler, whose comments have made this a better paper.

<sup>1</sup> N. Dunbar (ed.), *Aristophanes Birds*, Oxford 1995, 327.

<sup>2</sup> M. Lang, *Ostraka* (The Athenian Agora 25), Princeton 1990, 42–43.

<sup>3</sup> See M. Lang, *Writing and Spelling*, in: *Studies in Attic epigraphy, history and topography presented to Eugene Vanderpool* (Hesperia Supplements 19), Princeton 1982, 79 on the two different Thetas, the first with a crossbar, the second dotted, in the names Dieitrephes Euthoinou.

<sup>4</sup> S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides vol. 3. Books 5.25–8.109*, Oxford 2008, 597.

<sup>5</sup> E. Vanderpool, *New Ostraka from the Athenian Agora*, Hesperia 37 (1968) 119.

<sup>6</sup> A. Raubitschek, *Dedications from the Athenian Akropolis*, Chicago 1949, 143.

<sup>7</sup> R. Develin, *The Athenian Officials 684–321 B. C.*, Cambridge 1989, 163.

<sup>8</sup> R. Sealey, *Essays in Greek Politics*, New York 1967, 91.

<sup>9</sup> E. Ruschenbusch, *Athenische Innenpolitik im 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr.: Ideologie oder Pragmatismus?*, Bamberg 1979, 20.

<sup>10</sup> H. Wade-Gery, *The Year of the Armistice 423 B. C.*, *CQ* 24.1 (1930) 34.

<sup>11</sup> G. Grossi, *Dietreffe e l'oligarchia a Taso*, *CS* 21 (1984) 520.

Notwithstanding this controversy, the fact is that Diitrephes was born into a politically prominent family. Nicostratos, his father or uncle, was elected general in 427/6 (Thuc. 3.75.1), 424/3 (Thuc. 4.119.2), 423/2 (Thuc. 4.129.2; Diod. 12.72.8; Plut. Nic. 6.4), 418/7 (Thuc. 5.61, 65, 69; Androtion *FGrHist* 324F41; Diod. 12.79), in which year he died fighting at the battle of Mantinea.<sup>12</sup> Aristophanes calls him φιλοθύτην ‘fond of sacrifices’ and φιλόξενον ‘hospitable’ or ‘fond of foreigners’<sup>13</sup> (*Wasps* 81, see below), a fact that has prompted G. Gilbert to assume an amicable relationship between him and Nicias.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Nicostratos’ peak time coincides with that of the famous Nicias, since they co-operated in at least two campaigns against Cythera (Thuc. 4.53.1) and against Mende and Scione (4.129.2), having both been elected as generals. In view of both men’s hostility towards the *oikos* of Alcibiades, one should not rule out an alliance between the two, although not necessarily on ideological grounds. Nicostratos seems to have been a successful general and it must have been his military skills, apart from his pedigree, which secured him the office all these years down to 418.<sup>15</sup> During the civil war in Corcyra Nicostratos showed his clemency and skill as mediator. After failing to assure the Corcyrean oligarchs, afraid of reprisals on the part of their opponents, to board the five Corcyrean ships which were to escort him with his five Athenian ships to Naupactos, Nicostratos persuaded the democrats on the island not to slaughter their political opponents who had sought refuge as suppliants in a temple (Thuc. 3.75). Later on, Nicostratos displayed his military and leadership skills by effectively engaging a far superior Peloponnesian fleet off Corcyra (3.76–8).<sup>16</sup>

Nicostratos’ rival for the office of *strategia* was none other than the notorious Alcibiades, if his deme was Scambonidai (we shall return to this later). It has been

<sup>12</sup> A certain Nicostratos (*PAA* 717800) is depicted on a series of red figured vases dated to the 490s or 480s (J. Beazley, *Red Figured Vase Painters*, Oxford 1963, 207 no 139 line 1; 1635 no 185 line 2; 298 no 1 line 1; 361 no 7 line 1; 1603 no 6 line 1; 337 no 26 lines 1–2; 257 no 6 line 1; 1635 no 185 line 1). If this individual belongs to the family, he must have been an ancestor of Hermolycos I (see below), but the name is very common in Attica.

<sup>13</sup> M. Sears, *Athens, Thrace, and the Shaping of Athenian Leadership*, Cambridge 2013, 83.

<sup>14</sup> G. Gilbert, *Beiträge zur innern Geschichte Athens im Zeitalter des peloponnesischen Krieges*, Leipzig 1877, 144.

<sup>15</sup> W. Starkie, *The Wasps of Aristophanes*, Amsterdam 1968, 123–124, remarks that Nicias was Nicostratos’ friend and that they had a similar character, in that they both were modest and superstitious. In any case Nicostratos’ record and achievements in the 420s is impressive, and we would be justified in assuming that the whole family must have taken pride in their distinguished member and acquired enormous prestige at the time. If D. MacDowell’s suggestion (*Aristophanes Wasps*, Oxford 1971, 140–141) that line 82 in Aristophanes’ *Wasps* implies that Nicostratos was strikingly hospitable at sacrifices has some basis, then we could draw a picture of Nicostratos not only being a successful and highly popular general but a public figure, a politician, who took great pains to build up a positive image and engage himself in what D. Whitehead has called ‘competitive outlay’ (*Competitive Outlay and Community Profit: Philotimia in Democratic Athens*, C&M 34 [1983] 55–74).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. A. Gomme, *The Greek Attitude to Poetry and History*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1954, 144–148, who points out that Thucydides’ narrative of the events alludes to his appreciation and approval of his tactics and conduct at Corcyra.



noted that the two men held the *strategia* for the Leontis tribe on almost alternate seasons.<sup>17</sup> This being the case, it would be legitimate to assume a tension, if not outright hostility, between the two families, which had to compete each year for this highly prestigious office; this negative sentiment may have carried some weight in Diitrephes' decision to join the ranks of the oligarchs in 411.<sup>18</sup> It may then not have been a coincidence that Diitrephes was assigned the important mission to Thasos soon after Peisander had returned from the negotiations with Tissaphernes to Samos. It was perhaps when it had been made known that Alcibiades was not to be trusted any more that Diitrephes joined the movement, no doubt because the latter resented Alcibiades.<sup>19</sup> Nicostratos is also mentioned in Aristophanes' *Wasps* 81 as a member of the audience at the official performance of the play. It should be noted that, unlike Amynias who is accused of gambling, Aristophanes does not reproach Nicostratos but treats him gently. Is this a sign of respect for the general or an indication that Nicostratos pursued conservative politics? The passage provides us with an important nugget of information, namely his deme, Scambonidai.<sup>20</sup>

Diitrephes' distinguished lineage stretches back two generations. His grandfather's brother was Hermolycos I, son of Euthoinos, a pankratiast, who fought and distinguished himself at the battle of Mycale in 479 B.C., and died at Carystos a few years later.<sup>21</sup> Pausanias (1.23.10) also reported a statue of Hermolycos as a pankratiast.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Wade-Gery, *Armistice* (note 10) 34 and no 2.

<sup>18</sup> K. Singh has suggested that the rivalry between Alcibiades' and Nicostratos' families may originate in different political outlooks, Nicostratos being a more moderate democrat (than Alcibiades) whereas Diitrephes a right wing politician (*The Impact of Family Relationships on Athenian Politics 594–322 BC*, PhD Diss. Wisconsin University 1971, 76–77). This is not improbable in itself, but we would be at great pains if we tried to establish Alcibiades' political position throughout his career. The presumed rivalry could well be attributed to clashing interests and conflicting personal ambitions only.

<sup>19</sup> Thuc. 8.63.3–64.2. Sears seems to have overlooked this important detail (*Athens, Thrace*, [note 13] 85); he conjectures a friendly relationship between the two aristocratic *oikoi*, but I believe the evidence suggests otherwise.

<sup>20</sup> The identification of Σκαμβωνίδης in line 81 with Nicostratos the general has been disputed on grounds of this being a common name in Athens (see D. MacDowell, *Nikostratos*, CQ 15 [1965] 41 and notes 1, 2 for references), but MacDowell in his ingenious article has striven to prove it. He concludes that although the evidence from the tribal affiliation of the board of generals for the year 424/3 is inconclusive, theatrical considerations require that Sosias, the slave who is walking to and fro at the edge of the stage, gets suggestions from the spectators who are sitting in the first one or two rows and passes them on to Xanthias, who occupies the centre of the scene. MacDowell contends that since it was the high officials whom these seats were usually reserved for, the persons mentioned in lines 74–81 must have been such people, a consideration which makes the identification of Σκαμβωνίδης with the general highly likely (p. 49–51). That having been said, MacDowell does not explain how Aristophanes knew beforehand who among the high officials and magistrates would be present at the performance of the play. Should we assume a degree of improvisation in these lines? For the identification argues also C. Fornara (*ΝΙΚΟΣΤΡΑΤΟΣ ΔΙΕΙΤΡΕΦΟΥΣ ΣΚΑΜΒΩΝΙΔΗΣ*, CQ 20.1 [1970] 41).

<sup>21</sup> Hdt. 9.105: Ἐν δὲ ταύτῃ τῇ μάχῃ Ἑλλήνων ἠρίστευσαν Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ Ἀθηναίων Ἑρμόλυκος ὁ Εὐθόινου, ἀνὴρ παγκράτιον ἐπασκήσας, 'in this battle the Athenians were the

Hermolycos' I brother, Dietrephes I, was a candidate for ostracism probably in the 460s. Lang, *Ostraka* (note 2) 43 maintains that the context in which the *ostraca* were found suggests either 461 when Cimon was ostracized,<sup>23</sup> or 460 when Alcibiades the Elder may have received the most votes.<sup>24</sup> Initially the patronymic was mistakenly restored as [Νι]κος[τράτο] by W. B. Dinsmoor, but Vanderpool<sup>25</sup> corrected it to [E]ῦθο[ίνο].

A dedication on the Acropolis (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 883*) formerly dated to either 440 B.C.,<sup>26</sup> or around the mid-fifth century<sup>27</sup> was made by a family member named Hermolykos. On the base of the monument we can read: *ἡρμόλυκος Διετρήφορ ἀπαρχέν. Κρεσίλας ἐπόεσεν*. Raubitschek suggested that the stone bearing the inscription served as a base

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bravest among the Greeks, and among the Athenians Hermolykos the son of Euthenos, who trained in the pankration.'

<sup>22</sup> τὰ δὲ ἐς Ἑρμόλυκον τὸν παγκρατιαστὴν καὶ Φορμίωνα τὸν Ἀσωπίχου γραψάντων ἑτέρων παρήμι. 'since others have written about Hermolykos the pankration athlete and Phormion the son of Asopichos, I will pass over.'

<sup>23</sup> The deposit was found at the southeast part of the Agora and contained four *ostraca*: two of Alcibiades the Elder and two of Dietrephes, son of Euthoinos. Outside the Agora three more *ostraca* have been found in the great Kerameikos deposit (R. Thomsen, *The Origin of Ostracism: A Synthesis*, Copenhagen 1972, 84 and no. 214). Thomsen has been more conservative, assigning these *ostraca* to the second quarter of the fifth century. St. Brenne does not exclude the possibility that the *ostraca* date back to the 470s (*Ostrakismos und Prominenz in Athen: Attische Bürger des 5. Jhs. v. Chr. auf den Ostraka*, Vienna 2001, 134).

<sup>24</sup> H. Mattingly opts for Cimon's ostracism as the background in which the Dietrephes and Alcibiades *ostraca* were woven. Alcibiades may have been closely associated with Cimon and probably opposed the democratic reforms recently introduced by Ephialtes. Against the former six *ostraca* have been found (three in the Kerameikos 1966–8 finds and three in the Agora), whereas against the latter fourteen (six in the Kerameikos 1966–8 finds and eight in the Agora). Mattingly dismisses the evidence of Lys. 14.39 and [And.] 4.34, namely that Alcibiades the Elder had been twice ostracised on the grounds of the few *ostraca* found in Kerameikos and Agora shreds bearing Alcibiades' name (*The Practice of Ostracism at Athens*, Antichthon 25 [1991] 13). It is characteristic that at the ostracism of Cimon there seem to have been two main rivals, namely Cimon and Menon Menekleidou Gargettios, who received 762 and 562 *ostraca* respectively. In view of the very small number of *ostraca* for Alcibiades and Dietrephes it would not be inconceivable that the persons who cast their votes against those two men did so in reaction to a dispute of personal nature between the two distinguished *demotai* of Scambonidai. It may be coincidental, but it seems that members of the families of Alcibiades and Dietrephes contested against one another for two successive generations: Alcibiades the Elder against Dietrephes I in an ostracism, and Alcibiades against Nicostratos for the *strategia*. It does not follow, of course, that because Alcibiades the Elder, denouncing Athens' alliance with Sparta, proposed an alliance with Argos (Thuc. 5.43.2; 6.89.2; A. Gomme, A. Andrewes and K. Dover, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides vols. 1–5*, Oxford 1945–1981, vol. 4, 49, 361) we should assume that Dietrephes I pursued conservative politics, that is, he was a supporter of Cimon. Perhaps it would make more sense if we attributed this controversy to personal dispute and conflicting interests, since both men were probably the main rivals in the deme Scambonidai.

<sup>25</sup> W. B. Dinsmoor, *Observations on the Hephaestion*, *Hesperia Supplements* 5 (1941) 163; Vanderpool, *New Ostraka* (note 5) 119.

<sup>26</sup> Vanderpool, *New Ostraka* (note 5) 119.

<sup>27</sup> Raubitschek, *Dedications* (note 6) 142.

for a statue of Dietrephes, the father of the dedicator, a figure falling backwards, resembling, thus, the *volneratus deficiens* of Cresilas.<sup>28</sup> Pausanias mentioned a statue of Dietrephes, observing that there were arrows sticking out of it; he probably associated them erroneously with the fight at Mycalessos,<sup>29</sup> and Raubitschek assumed that this man is Dietrephes' grandfather who may have been killed during the expedition in Egypt, serving perhaps as a general. However, in a recent study the inscription was dated to the end of the fifth century, in which case the depicted dying man should be our Dietrephes and not his grandfather, Dietrephes I, as hitherto believed. If the new dating is accepted, then Dietrephes may have met his death in a military encounter; if the proposer of the decree inscribed on *IG I<sup>3</sup> 110* (see below) is identical with the oligarch, the event must have occurred after 409, the year the honorary decree was moved (see C. M. Keesling, *The Hermolykos/Kresilas Base and the Date of Kresilas of Kydonia*, *ZPE* 147 [2004] 79–91).

We first hear of Dietrephes the oligarch in Thucydides, book 7. The reinforcements for Sicily, headed by Demosthenes, had just embarked on their mission when a corps of 1300 Thracian mercenaries arrived in Attica (27.1), their task being to conduct operations against the recently fortified Deceleia. The Athenians thought it would have been too expensive to keep the Thracians in Attica for long, since they were paid a drachma a day (27.2), while the public treasury was running empty. At this point Dietrephes was appointed to escort them back home, and was given instructions to raid the enemy territory on their way and do any harm they could (27.2). These orders they followed, and after landing at a Boeotian coast they marched inland and reached a tiny, obscure settlement. There:

ἔσπεσόντες δὲ οἱ Θρᾶκες ἐς τὴν Μυκαλησσὸν τὰς τε οἰκίας καὶ τὰ ἱερά ἐπόρθου  
καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐφόνεον φειδόμενοι οὔτε πρεσβυτέρας οὔτε νεωτέρας ἡλικίας,  
ἀλλὰ πάντας ἐξῆς, ὄτω ἐντύχοιεν, καὶ παῖδας καὶ γυναῖκας κτείνοντες, καὶ προσέτι  
καὶ ὑποζύγια καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα ἔμψυχα ἴδοιεν· τὸ γὰρ γένος τὸ τῶν Θρακῶν ὁμοῖα τοῖς  
μάλιστα τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἂν θαρσῆσι, φονικώτατόν ἐστιν. καὶ τότε ἄλλη τε  
ταραχὴ οὐκ ὀλίγη καὶ ἰδέα πᾶσα καθειστήκει ὀλέθρου, καὶ ἐπιπεσόντες διδασκαλείῳ  
παίδων, ὅπερ μέγιστον ἦν αὐτόθι καὶ ἄρτι ἔτυχον οἱ παῖδες ἐσεληλυθότες, κατέκοψαν  
πάντας· καὶ ξυμφορὰ τῇ πόλει πάση οὐδεμιᾶς ἦσσαν μᾶλλον ἐτέρας ἀδόκητός τε  
ἐπέπεσεν αὕτη καὶ δεινὴ. (Thuc. 7.29.4–5)

<sup>28</sup> Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 34.74: *Cresilas volneratum deficientem, in quo possit intellegi quantum restet animae*. 'Cresilas did a man fainting from wounds, the expression of which indicates how little life remains' (translated by H. Rackham).

<sup>29</sup> 1.23.3f.: πλησίον δέ ἐστι Διτρέφους χαλκοῦς ἀνδριάς οἰστοῖς βεβλημένος. Οὗτος ὁ Διτρέφης ἄλλα τε ἔπραξεν ὅποσα λέγουσιν Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ Θρᾶκας μισθωτοὺς ἀφικόμενους ὕστερον ἢ Δημοσθένους ἐς Συρακοῦσας ἐξέπλευσε, τούτους, ὡς ὑστέρησαν, ὁ Διτρέφης ἀπήγεν ὀπίσω. 'Nearby stands a bronze statue of Dietrephes hit by arrows. Among the acts of this Dietrephes reported by the Athenians, the mercenaries from Thrace, who arrived after Demosthenes had set sail for Syracuse — these (mercenaries), when they came later, were escorted back home by Dietrephes.'

‘They [the Thracians] stormed Mycalessos and sacked its houses and its temples, killing every human being. They spared neither young nor old but killed everyone they met, women and children alike and even the pack animals and every living thing they saw. For these Thracians, like most other barbarians, are most bloodthirsty when they are confident. There was there, then, a terrible confusion and every form of death: in particular, they attacked a school — the largest in the town — where the children had just come in and butchered every one of them. This whole city suffered a catastrophe second to no other in its unexpectedness and horror.’ (translated by D. Grene)

This passage is embedded in the narrative of the Sicilian expedition and directly follows an excursus on how the occupation of Deceleia had badly affected the Athenians and on the introduction of a 5 per cent tax on incoming as well as outgoing trade conducted at harbors across the Athenian *arche* (7.28.4). Scholars have not failed to notice that Athens was plunging into financial troubles at that time, and that this somehow led to the massacre at Mycalessos.<sup>30</sup> The narrative is vivid and direct and Thucydides abstains from any comment, expression of feelings or appeal to the readers’ emotions.<sup>31</sup> Grene discerns a kind of detached humanity on the part of the historian and points out that this passage deals with events which are peculiarly within the realm of chance rather than in that of necessity.<sup>32</sup> Price stresses the fact that Mycalessos was distant from the war, both physically and psychologically.<sup>33</sup> The incident also caught Thucydides’ attention because of the place in which it happened, the violence of the war spreading to all parts of the Hellenic world, engulfing it in the same way as stasis engulfs first the warring factions in a city and then the entire population. He concludes that the Athenians were complicit in the atrocity perpetrated by barbarians but somehow orchestrated by the former.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> D. Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*, Cornell 1981, 293–294; S. Hornblower, *Commentary* (note 4) 596. See especially L. Kallet, *The Diseased Body Politic, Athenian Public Finance, and the Massacre at Mykalessos (Thucydides 7.27.29)*, *AJP* 120.2 (1999) 223–244, where, in addition, she argues that Thucydides here uses vocabulary with medical connotations in a fiscal and economic context (Athens’ financial hardship) and stresses its clustering and frequency (229). By doing so, Thucydides, Kallet argues, links Athens lack of funds with disease. The Athenians, having to face the consequences of an overextension they themselves had caused, become the victims of their own passion, they resemble a diseased body politic which hastily takes irrational decisions. Thus, the moral responsibility of the massacre at Mycalessos is, according to Kallet, somewhat removed, as Thucydides does not explicitly blame Dicitrephes or the Athenians for the bloodshed.

<sup>31</sup> T. Quinn, *Thucydides and the Massacre at Mykalessos*, *Mnemosyne* 48.5 (1995) 572.

<sup>32</sup> *Man in His Pride: A Study in the Political Philosophy of Thucydides and Plato*, Chicago 1950, 70, 75.

<sup>33</sup> I. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, Cambridge 2001, 215–216.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Euripides’ *Hecuba* where the Thracian king Polymestor murders his Trojan ward Polydorus and is depicted as cruel and greedy, thus conforming to the established stereotype of the Thracian as savage and bloodthirsty. See also Z. Archibald, *The Odrysian Kingdom of Thrace: Orpheus Unmasked*, Oxford 1998, 98–102; K. Zacharia, *The Rock of the Nightingale: Sophocles’ Tereus and Kinship Diplomacy*, in: F. Budelmann and P. Michelakis (ed.), *Homer*,

What was Diitrephes' authority when he led the Thracians back home? Develin lists him as general for the year 414/3. The only evidence is Aristophanes, *Birds* 798–800,<sup>35</sup> but the exact text at 799 remains uncertain. The tradition is divided between εἶθ' and ὄστ' before ἐξ οὐδενός, the former reading implying that Diitrephes had been recently elected as general for 414/3. Both readings are intelligible and a decision between the two rests on how we interpret *μεγάλα πράττει*. But, as Dunbar *Birds* (note 1) 486 notes, it is more likely for εἶθ' to have inadvertently replaced ὄστ' than to have been replaced by it (note that there is one more εἶτα at 796). A more pressing question though is the extent to which Diitrephes was responsible for the massacre. Did he personally give the order to kill, or did the situation simply get out of hand, in which case he may be accused of mere incompetence and lack of authority? As we have already noted above, Thucydides does not make any comments, or openly attribute any responsibility. But it has been suggested that as the historian uses the third person singular ten times in his narrative from 7.29.2–3 line 5, just before the massacre starts, with Diitrephes as the subject, he, thus, keeps him firmly in view and implicitly makes him responsible for what follows.<sup>36</sup> Then, almost without noticing, Diitrephes disappears from the scene only to appear again in Book 8 in the context of the preparations for the oligarchic revolution in 411.<sup>37</sup>

The next time we hear of Diitrephes is in the spring of 411. After the fiasco with Alcibiades, the oligarchic conspirators decided to go on with the plan to abolish the democracy in Athens, even without the man who had conceived it in the first place. Setting out from Samos, Peisander and other fellow-oligarchs called at some islands on their way to Athens, with the intent to abolish the local democracies and set up oligarchies instead.<sup>38</sup> To the same end the conspirators

καὶ Διειτρέφῃ ὄντα περὶ Χίον, ἡρημένον δὲ ἐς τὰ ἐπὶ Θράκης ἄρχειν, ἀπέστελλον ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρχήν. καὶ ἀφικόμενος ἐς τὴν Θάσον τὸν δῆμον κατέλυσεν. καὶ ἀπελθόντος αὐτοῦ οἱ Θάσιοι δευτέρῳ μῆνι μάλιστα τὴν πόλιν ἐτείχιζον, ὡς τῆς μὲν μετ' Ἀθηναίων ἀριστοκρατίας οὐδὲν ἔτι προσδεόμενοι, τὴν δ' ἀπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων ἐλευθερίαν ὁσημέραι προσδεχόμενοι· καὶ γὰρ καὶ φυγὴ αὐτῶν ἕξω ἦν ὑπὸ τῶν

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*Tragedy and Beyond: Essays in Honour of P. E. Easterling*, London 2001, 97–99; E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford 1989.

<sup>35</sup> ὡς Διειτρέφης γε πτυναῖα μόνον ἔχων πτερὰ ἡρέθη φύλαρχος, εἶθ' ἵππαρχος, ὄστ' ἐξ οὐδενός *μεγάλα πράττει* κάστ'ι νυνὶ ξουθός ἵππαλεκτρῶν 'Look at Diitrephes! His wings were only wicker-work ones, and yet he got himself chosen Phylarch and then Hipparch; from being nobody, [800] he has risen to be famous; he's now the finest gilded cock of his tribe' (translated by E. O'Neill).

<sup>36</sup> Compare 3.75.1–4 where Thucydides also uses third person singular and adds emphasis by repeating the name Nicostratos three times to positively appraise his conduct in Corcyra and stress his skilful handling of the affair.

<sup>37</sup> Hornblower, *Commentary* (note 4) 798.

<sup>38</sup> A. Lintott, *Violence, Civil Strife and Revolution in the Classical City 750–330 B. C.*, Baltimore 1982, 118 believes that Peisander's group seems to have stopped at Andros, Tenos, Carystos, and Paros, but the oligarchy they set up there seceded. Eretria is another likely stopping place, and they may have unwittingly contributed to the secession of Eretria later that summer.

Ἀθηναίων παρὰ τοῖς Πελοποννησίοις, καὶ αὐτὴ μετὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει ἐπιτηδείων κατὰ κράτος ἔπρασσε ναῦς τε κομίσαι καὶ τὴν Θάσον ἀποστήσαι. ξυνέβη οὖν αὐτοῖς μάλιστα ἃ ἐβούλοντο, τὴν πόλιν τε ἀκινδύνως ὀρθοῦσθαι καὶ τὸν ἐναντιωσόμενον δῆμον καταλεύσθαι. (Thuc. 8.64.2–4)

‘... also sent Diitrephes, who had been elected to command in the Thracian district but who was then in the neighborhood of Chios, to his command. When he arrived at Thasos, he overthrew the democracy. Within two months of his departure, however, the Thasians began to wall their city on the grounds that they no longer wanted aristocracy in association with the Athenians and that they were in daily expectation of freedom coming from the Lacedaemonians. They felt this way because a group of Thasians, exiled by the Athenians, were in the Peloponnese and were, in collaboration with their friends in the city, exerting every effort to send ships and effect the revolution of Thasos. Thus, these Thasians realized the goal they most desired: the establishment of their state on a proper foundation with no danger and the destruction of the democracy which would have opposed them.’ (translated by H. Avery)

This passage has been taken as evidence that the Athenian generals assumed office soon after their election, and did not have to wait until the beginning of the Athenian archon year which began mid-summer, but this view has been convincingly refuted.<sup>39</sup> Fornara observes that Diitrephes had been elected to govern Thrace, it having become thus a regular *arche*. He goes on to remark that this may signal the beginning of a new era in which the establishment of separate commands hardened gradually into a system because of the regularization of duties foreshadowed in the Peloponnesian war.<sup>40</sup> Develin, *Athenian Officials* (note 7) 160 is sceptical, and Jordan pedantically denies that Diitrephes was a general on the grounds that Thucydides does not call him as such.<sup>41</sup> He assigns Diitrephes the title *archon epi Thrakes*, but there is no evidence that such office existed in classical Athens.<sup>42</sup> We do not know if the Four Hundred reaffirmed Diitrephes’ generalship, or if they removed him from office, but his mission to Thasos may point to him retaining the office. Kagan’s assumption that the Four Hundred may have not trusted Diitrephes because he had been elected under the democracy pays little heed to the fact that Diitrephes was

<sup>39</sup> H. Mayor, *The Strategi at Athens in the Fifth Century. When Did They Enter Office?*, JHS 59 (1939) 45–64.

<sup>40</sup> Develin, *Athenian Officials* (note 7) 80.

<sup>41</sup> B. Jordan, *A Note on the Athenian Strategia*, TAPhA 101 (1970) 234.

<sup>42</sup> H. Heftner has drawn my attention to a piece of epigraphic evidence where the title ἄρχων τῷ ναυτικῷ occurs (*SEG* 21.131, ll. 12–13 and 15–16 dated to 409 B.C.). Although in the inscription the title bears no geographical specification, this case could constitute an analogy; contra D. Hamel (*Athenian Generals: Military Authority in the Classical Period*, Leiden 1998, 194 n. 4) who argues that phrases such as Thuc. 8.54.3 (στρατηγὸς ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς) and Xen. *Hell.* 1.5.18 (Κόνων ... ἔπλευσεν ἐπὶ τὸ ναυτικόν) should not be taken as predicative.

entrusted a very important mission, the outcome of which the entire oligarchic scheme depended on.<sup>43</sup>

What were Diitrephes' movements when he reached Thasos?<sup>44</sup> On arrival, he probably came into contact with members of the local elite who were pro-oligarchic and on whose loyalty and discretion he could count.<sup>45</sup> It is also possible that the Athenian officer knew these people via connections through commerce (see below). The takeover must have been smooth (Thucydides does not mention any opposition), and the Athenian oligarchs' wishful calculations that the local oligarchs would support their scheme seemed to have proved right at the time.<sup>46</sup> But once in power, it

<sup>43</sup> D. Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire*, Cornell 1987, 162 n. 14.

<sup>44</sup> H. Avery, *The Three Hundred at Thasos 411 B.C.*, CP 74.3 (1979) 237 n. 12 places Diitrephes' arrival in Thasos in April 411. A. Andrewes (*The Generals in the Hellespont 410–407 B. C.*, JHS 73 [1953] 6) favoured May, and in the commentary on Thucydides (Gomme, Andrewes and Dover, *Commentary* [note 24] vol. 5, 157) he proposed the first half of May. Kagan, *Fall* (note 43) 164 proposed middle of May. E. Meyer (*Geschichte des Altertums 7: Das Perserreich und die Griechen*, Essen 1952–1958, 554) favoured also May, adding that the secession which Thucydides does not report took place in the autumn (554 and n. 1), but see H. Heftner (*Der oligarchische Umsturz des Jahres 411 v. Chr. und die Herrschaft der Vierhundert in Athen: quellenkritische und historische Untersuchungen*, Vienna 2001, 222 and n. 44) who warns us that "allerdings stellen beide Datierungen (April and May) bloße Schätzwerte dar, die mit vielen Unwägbarkeiten behaftet sind." B. Bleckmann (*Athens Weg in die Niederlage: Die letzten Jahre des peloponnesischen Kriegs*, Leipzig 1998, 218) dates the arrival of Diitrephes in Thasos between February and June 411, remarking that his staying at Thasos cannot have exceeded one month, since he was on his way to Thrace and had undertaken other duties as well. For the events at Thasos between 411 and 407 B.C., see G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte bis zur Schlacht bei Chaeroneia vol. 3.1*, Gotha 1904, 1474 and n. 3; R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, Oxford 1972, 574–578; L. Losada, *The Fifth Column in the Peloponnesian War*, Leiden 1972, 87–90; T. Quinn, *Thucydides and the Unpopularity of the Athenian Empire*, *Historia* 13 (1964) 257–266; H. Pleket, *Thasos and the Popularity of the Athenian Empire*, *Historia* 12 (1963) 70–77; Grossi, *Dietrefe* (note 11) 517–534; H.-J. Gehrke, *Abfall und Stasis. Zur Interdependenz von innerer und äußerer Politik in einigen Seebundstaaten*, in: J. Balcer, H.-J. Gehrke, K. Raaflaub, W. Schuller (ed.), *Studien zum Attischen Seebund* (Xenia 8), Konstanz 1984, 31–44; Bleckmann, *Athens Weg* (note 44) 216–229.

<sup>45</sup> Gehrke, *Abfall* (note 44) 40; Gehrke also notes that pro-Athenian oligarchies could not survive long and that this was a widespread phenomenon. Either they collapsed in the initial phase as it happened in Samos, which was democratic and pro-Athenian, or they changed their foreign policy and became oligarchic and anti-Athenian. With this policy the Athenian oligarchs had driven a wedge between the democratic leaders and their supporters in the subject states and in this way the Thasian oligarchic exiles were able to rid themselves of the Athenian domination so easily (note 44, 41); cf. Grossi, *Dietrefe* (note 11) 518.

<sup>46</sup> Meiggs, *Empire* (note 44) 574 points out that when the Athenian oligarchs at Samos developed their plans for revolution they hoped to capitalise on the general negative feeling toward Athenian democracy by establishing oligarchies in the allied cities. He cites the developments in the Peloponnesian war, the successes of Brasidas in Chalcidice and Amphipolis and the radical reassessment of the tribute in 425 from 30 to probably 60 talents (but see *ATL* 3 p. 349 on probable causes of the allies' disenchantment with Athens). Kagan, *Fall* (note 43) 140–141 holds that Diitrephes' mission to Thasos and the abolishment of the local democracy constitutes a part of a greater scheme designed and carried out by the oligarchs to support the oligarchic coup and make the establishment of the oligarchy in Athens possible. The other parts were namely securing

took the Thasian oligarchs only two months to organize and effect the defection of the island from the Athenian Empire, thus vindicating Phrynichos, whose advice to the oligarchic conspirators had been not to put too much faith in the loyalty of the subjects of the Empire to an oligarchically governed Athens.<sup>47</sup> The reason why the Athenian conspirators decided to abolish the democracies throughout the *arche* and replace them with oligarchies may have been the existence on Samos of a staunch pro Athenian activist group which was not prepared to compromise Samos' loyalty to Athens. At the time of Dieitrephes' mission to Thasos the Athenian oligarchs were still resolute to carry on fighting Sparta and the Samian activists may have given them the false impression that what happened on Samos (overthrow of democracy) could happen elsewhere in the Empire.<sup>48</sup> Since, however, Thucydides confirms that the oligarchs' plans to establish oligarchies throughout the Athenian *arche* completely backfired, other cities defecting en masse, one cannot hold Dieitrephes responsible for the failure on Thasos. Since the date of Dieitrephes' arrival in Thasos has yet to be agreed upon, it is not possible to establish when exactly the Four Hundred got the news about Thasos' defection, if they were still in power, and what effect this news had on Dieitrephes. Did he lose face among his fellow conspirators? Was he deposed from office? If, as it seems probable, news from Thasos' defection reached Athens towards the end of July, it may have had relatively little impact on the oligarchic regime and on Dieitrephes in particular in the light of the avalanche of events that followed, developments that precipitated the abrupt end of the Four Hundred and their short-lived reign.<sup>49</sup>

Dieitrephes was also a likely butt of the comic poets. However, the image that emerges from the references in contemporary comic plays is controversial, and seems to be at odds with the epigraphic evidence. Connor noticed the discrepancy between the two types of evidence and warned against generalizations concerning the background and public image of an individual who attracts the attention of the comic poets.<sup>50</sup> In Aristophanes, *Birds* 800 Dieitrephes is pictured as ξουθὸς ἵππαλεκτρυών, a horse-cock, a mythical winged creature. Aristophanes may have got the phrase from

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support of the Athenian army in Samos and bringing Athens itself under control. One of the reasons why the Thasian oligarchs did away with Athenian domination so resolutely may have been the presence on the island of estates belonging to Athenian citizens. Those Athenian landowners would have most probably appropriated property that had belonged to local farmers, thus causing resentment among the Thasians. *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 426, dated to 414 B.C., testifies to the existence of two such estates (lines 45 and 144).

<sup>47</sup> Thuc. 8.48.5–7.

<sup>48</sup> I owe this point to H. Heftner who kindly read and commented on an earlier draft of this paper.

<sup>49</sup> We do not know if Thasos was the first to revolt or if other cities had managed to break away within the two months from May to July 411 B.C. (Thuc. 8.64.5). If Thasos only followed the general trend, the news of its revolt should not have done too much harm to Dieitrephes, since he could argue that the policy of implementing oligarchies in the Empire was flawed in the first place.

<sup>50</sup> W. Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth Century Athens*, Indianapolis 1971, 156–158 (cf. Dunbar, *Birds* [note 1] 494).



Aeschylus, *Myrmidons* fr. 134 = schol. Ar. *Peace* 1177a;<sup>51</sup> in the *Peace* 1175–1177 Aristophanes used it to picture the cowardly taxiarch who, terrified at the prospect of facing the enemy, evades fight and deserts the ranks.<sup>52</sup> This parallel passage, combined with *Birds*, lines 1439–1443, where Dieitrephes is portrayed enticing youths into joining the cavalry or taking part in horse racing,<sup>53</sup> may be an indication of Aristophanes' contempt for the seemingly promising, but in reality ostentatious and cowardly military officer, who, despite his distinguished background, is only interested in luxurious living. But, although we should be fairly confident about Dieitrephes' relationship with the cavalry (see above), the statement of schol. 798b made by Euphronios, that Dieitrephes owned a workshop manufacturing wicker flasks, that is, wine containers, should be treated with cautiousness.<sup>54</sup> A second ancient commentator alerts us that this fact was not attested, thus possibly a mere inference from Aristophanes' text.<sup>55</sup> In addition, in cases of mocked politicians, almost invariably radical democrats, the comic poets do not fail to scornfully and repeatedly stress their humble occupation: Cleon is a tanner (Ar. *Knights* 136 and passim); Hyperbolos a lamp maker; Cleophon a lyre maker (Cratinus K-A 209; Ar. *Peace* 690; schol. on Ar. *Knights* 739); Lysicles is a sheep dealer and Eurcates a hemp seller (Ar. *Knights* 132, 129).<sup>56</sup> This is not the case with Dieitrephes, to whose occupation there is only one equivocal allusion in Aristophanes' text, not a likely treatment on the part of the poet when it came to ridiculing a target. But Dieitrephes never attained prominence equivalent to that of the above-mentioned demagogues. The young aristocrat attracts Aristophanes' scorn perhaps not because of him being a nouveau riche, a tradesman or a craftsman, as in the aforesaid cases. Rather it is his

<sup>51</sup> Dunbar, *Birds* (note 1) 486.

<sup>52</sup> ἦν δέ που δέη μάχεσθ' ἔχοντα τὴν φοινικίδα, τῆνκαυτ' αὐτὸς βέβαπται βάμμα Κυζικηνικόν· κῆτα φεύγει πρῶτος ὥσπερ ξουθὸς ἰππαλεκτρῶν τοὺς λόφους σείων· 'though if by any chance he has to fight wearing that cloak, then he himself gets dyed Cyzicene colour! And then he's the first to run away, shaking his crests like a tawny horsecock' (translated by A. Sommerstein).

<sup>53</sup> οὐκ ἀκήκοας, ὅταν λέγωσιν οἱ πατέρες ἐκάστοτε τῶν μειρακίων ἐν τοῖσι κουρείοις ταδί; "δεινῶς γέ μου τὸ μειράκιον Διειτρέφης λέγων ἀνεπτέρωκεν ὥσθ' ἰππηλατεῖν". 'Have you not often heard the father say to young men in the barbers' shops, "It's astonishing how Dieitrephes' advice has made my son fly to horse-riding."' (translated by E. O'Neill).

<sup>54</sup> J. Edmonds (*The Fragments of Attic Comedy I*, Leiden 1957, 107) has suggested that the Dieitrephes mentioned in Ar. *Heroes* fr. 3, produced in 419 B.C., and the one mentioned in *Birds* 798 are two different men. Although we cannot exclude the possibility of two namesakes living and being active at the same period, the odds are that all references to Dieitrephes pertain to one individual only.

<sup>55</sup> Dunbar, *Birds* (note 1) 484. Sears, *Athens, Thrace* (note 13) 160, contents that the scholiast did not understand Aristophanes' humour here.

<sup>56</sup> S. Lape makes an important observation as she points out that Old Comedy identifies politicians and rival poets by their occupation rather than ancestry in an effort to endow them with servile origins as well as foreign. A slave in classical Athens was identified by his name and occupation as they lacked kinship or group affiliations. "Hence, to refer to a citizen as "X" "the lamp maker" was a backhanded way of naming him a slave." (S. Lape, *Race and Citizen Identity in the Classical Athenian Democracy*, Cambridge 2010, 66).

extravagant life-style of a spoilt, arrogant and vainglorious, wealthy offspring of an old, distinguished Athenian family who leads a luxurious life and cares about horse racing only, which is loathsome to the comic poet.

Alternatively, if Euphronios used an independent source, and his statement that Dieitrephes owned a workshop making wine containers was not a mere inference from Aristophanes' text,<sup>57</sup> it is conceivable that Dieitrephes' family at some point during the war decided to go into the manufacturing business, and that this business did pretty well, for the scholiast calls Dieitrephes νεόπλουτος, nouveau riche, and πολυπράγμων, meddlesome (cf. schol. Ar. *Birds* 1442).<sup>58</sup> Probably the family's decision to enter this particular business was anything but random. They might have carefully considered the opportunities the family connections with northern Greece and in particular with Thrace could offer. Connor, *New Politicians* (note 50) 156 n. 45 has noted that both Dieitrephes and Nicostratos commanded Thracian troops and this fact may indicate a special interest or competence in the area. To this we may add Dieitrephes' mission to Thasos and the relative ease with which he accomplished it. Could it be that Dieitrephes had trade partners in Thasos, an area renowned for its wine, and that he contacted them first on arrival? If the information given by the scholiast is not without substance, then the case of Dieitrephes' family is of great importance, since it shows how an old, aristocratic Athenian family coped with the financial strains the Peloponnesian war had imposed on them, and what kind of strategies they employed in order to maintain an acceptable standard of living and high social status accompanied with considerable wealth.<sup>59</sup>

Dieitrephes was also mocked as a foreigner by Plato in his *Festivals*. The quotation comes from the scholia to Aristophanes, *Birds* 798b: Πλάτων δὲ ἐν Ἑορταῖς καὶ ξένον τὸν μαινόμενον, τὸν Κρήτα, τὸν μόγις Ἀττικόν. It is a well-known fact that contemporary politicians, especially those after Cleon, were frequently mocked as

<sup>57</sup> Euphronios, a contemporary of Callimachos and one of the teachers of Aristophanes of Byzantium, was the first Alexandrian scholar to write a commentary on Aristophanes. His notes elucidate the meaning of words and sometimes provide prosopographical data (notes on the *Birds* lines 1378, 1379 and 1536) (J. White, *The Scholia on the Aves of Aristophanes*, Boston and London 1914, xvii).

<sup>58</sup> Schol. Ar. *Birds* 798b, d. Grossi's supposition (*Dietrefe* [note 11] 523) that we should interpret the epithets ἄρπαξ, πονηρός and πολυπράγμων, attributed to Dieitrephes by the scholiast, in a narrowly political sense, i.e., as common accusations directed against members of the democratic party, should not be met without reservations. A. Sommerstein has conveniently classified the different types of personae which attracted the venomous libel of the comic poets. Taking all the available evidence into consideration, we should place Dieitrephes into his 'idol of the market category', that is practitioners and tradesmen, rather than 'idol of the tribe', that is politicians (*How to Avoid Being a Komodoumenos*, CQ 46.2 [1996] 327–356).

<sup>59</sup> Perhaps we could explain the scholia at 798c οὗτος θάλλινα ποιῶν ἀγγεῖα ἐπλούτησε καὶ ἱππάρχησε καὶ ἐφυλάρχησεν as an attempt on the part of the scholiast to connect the two pieces of information, namely Dieitrephes running the workshop and his rising to high military offices as a consequence, taking probably no heed of the long history of his family (cf. schol. Ar. *Birds* 1442).

foreigners, so we should not expect that Plato's libel bears any substance.<sup>60</sup> However, there are other possible interpretations of the passage. Grossi, *Dietrefe* (note 11) 521 has drawn attention to the use of the definite article in front of the three epithets, suggesting that the character was already well-known to the Athenian public when the play was produced. He goes on to remark that the attributes hardly Attic and Cretan may denote not ethnic origin but a kind of behaviour. The verb κρητίζω signifies the deceiver, the liar and these characteristics, Grossi argues, are compatible with people having business activity of the sort Dietrephes had. The verse, then, would be a negative commentary on Dietrephes' social behaviour. Alternatively, one may connect the label 'Cretan' with Dietrephes being the commander of Thrasians, renowned for their skill in archery just like the Cretans, but I find this interpretation somewhat strained.<sup>61</sup> In Cratinus (K-A 251)<sup>62</sup> Dietrephes is presented as a shameless brute, summoned to appear before the naval court, which in Athens also tried commercial cases as well as those of usurpation of civic rights by aliens. The fragment can be read as an allusion to Dietrephes being a foreigner (similar to Plato's mocking him as a Cretan), and a reproach of his anti-social, hubristic behaviour.

A decree, *IG I<sup>3</sup> 110, 6 = ML 90*, dated to 408/7 B.C., moved by a certain Dietrephes proposed that an individual, Oiniades, from Sciathos and his descendants be granted the title of *proxenos* and benefactor of Athens on the island. This is the only decree conferring the title of *proxenos* that survives intact, but the identification of its author is disputed. The *Persons of Ancient Athens* argues for a possible identification with the *strategos*; the *LGPN* is more confident since it asserts the proposer with the oligarch and the κωμωδούμενος by the comic poets (see above) under the same individual. Dinsmoor<sup>63</sup> and Connor, *New Politicians* (note 50) 156 and n. 41 believe the proposer, the *archon* (see below) and the *strategos* to be the same person. Dunbar, *Birds* (note 1) 484, followed Sommerstein,<sup>64</sup> thinks it is unlikely that the oligarch and the proposer were the same person on grounds of the former's activities in 411. Andrewes raised the possibility that the proposer may belong to the family from Scambonidai, but in reality he is only a namesake of the oligarch.<sup>65</sup> Sciathos is situated in the Northern Sporades and was a convenient intermediate trade station for those who travelled by ship to Thrace and the Hellespont. Thasos and Thrace were renowned for their wine and Dietrephes' family is likely to have owned a manu-

<sup>60</sup> See Connor, *New Politicians* (note 50) 169–171, where he explains how Old Comedy intended to politically discredit and disqualify the target as a political leader by denying his membership in the Athenian citizenry. Lape, *Race* (note 56) 64 stresses the democratic ideology of birth and blood on which the comic poets drew to undermine demagogues and rival poets.

<sup>61</sup> Sears, *Athens, Thrace* (note 13) 161.

<sup>62</sup> καὶ πρῶτον μὲν παρὰ ναυτοδικῶν ἀπάγω τρία κνώδαλ' ἀναιδῆ Πεισίαν, Ὀσφύωνα, Διειτρέφη. 'first I will bring before the judges of the admiralty court three shameless brutes, Peisias, Osphyon and Dietrephes.'

<sup>63</sup> W. Dinsmoor, *Observations on the Hephaisteion* (Hesperia Suppl. 5), Athens 1941, 164.

<sup>64</sup> A. Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes 6. Birds*, Warminster 1987, 249.

<sup>65</sup> Gomme, Andrewes and Dover, *Commentary* (note 24) vol. 5, 157.

facture producing wine flasks.<sup>66</sup> Dietrephes' election, probably as *strategos*, with special authority on Thrace, his involvement in the overthrow of the Thasian democracy and his earlier command of the Thracian mercenaries strongly suggest acquaintance with the northern regions of the Athenian *arche*, acquaintance, we may surmise, arising from his business activities and connections with this region. In the light of the evidence provided by the scholia to Ar. *Birds* 798, I would follow Grossi, *Dietrephes* (note 11) 523 and the first group of scholars in accepting the identification of the decree proposer with the oligarch. If the identification is correct, it means that not only did Dietrephes escape banishment and retain his civil rights after the restoration of the radical democracy in 410 B.C., but that he continued to play a role of some importance in Athenian politics in the last decade of the century.

A Dietrephes, who belonged to the Cecropis tribe, is included in a casualty list perhaps of 412/1. The inscription *IG I<sup>3</sup> 1190* bears the names of the deceased in three columns, and the editors of the *IG* maintained that the first two include names of those Athenians who died in a naval engagement that year, whereas the third, that of Dietrephes, includes names of Athenians fallen in a land engagement, thus making it possible, but not certain, that this Dietrephes was of hoplite status.<sup>67</sup> The modern view is, however, that the Athenians listed all their dead, *hoplites* and *thetes*, according to their tribal affiliations.<sup>68</sup> It is possible that he was a distant relative of the general, bearing in mind that the name is not very common (it appears though in the fourth century in Aigeis, Acamantis and Leontis tribes *PAA* 323800, 323805 and 323810 respectively). A Dietrephes was the *eponymos archon* in Athens in 384/3 B.C., (*PAA* 323780).<sup>69</sup> Unfortunately we do not know his tribal affiliation, so the identification with the general is not certain. If he is the same man he must have been very old when he became an archon.

### Conclusion

Dietrephes' story is exceedingly interesting in that it allows us to catch a glimpse of the workings of Athenian politics throughout the fifth century. An illustrious, historic, prominent and aristocratic family such as Dietrephes' seems to have faced

<sup>66</sup> The wine market on Thasos was quite sophisticated. For example, *IG XII suppl.* 347 I and II, dated to 425–415 B.C., are copies of laws establishing controls over Thasos' wine industry. These laws attempted to encourage wine production on the island and through quality checks to boost exports to other markets while at the same time reducing costs. See P. Stanley, *Two Thasian Wine Laws: A Reexamination*, *AncW* 3 (1980) 88–93.

<sup>67</sup> D. Bradeen, *The Athenian Casualty Lists*, *CQ* 19.1 (1969) 148 and n. 1. The casualty, of course, could have been a member of the light infantry.

<sup>68</sup> Bradeen, *Casualty Lists* (note 67) 153.

<sup>69</sup> *SEG* 18.69, l. 3; *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1407*, l. 4; *Diod.* 15.14.1; *FGrHist* 244 F 38b = *Dion. Hal. Ad Amm.* 3–5: ἐγενήθη δὲ (Ἀριστοτέλης) κατὰ τὴν ἐνενηκοστὴν καὶ ἐνάτην ὀλυμπιάδα, Διειτρέφους Ἀθήνησιν ἄρχοντας, τρισὶν ἔτεσι Δημοσθένους πρεσβύτερος 'Aristotle was born during the ninety-ninth Olympiad when Dietrephes was archon in Athens'; *FGrHist* 328 F 223 = *Philochorus Vit. Aristot. Marc.*: Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ τεχθεὶς ἐπὶ Διοτρέφους καὶ βιοῦς ἔτη ζγ τελευτῶ ἐπὶ Φιλοκλέους 'Aristotle was born in the year of Dietrephes' archonship; he lived sixty-three years and died in the archonship of Philocles'.

difficulties of two kinds in the closing decades of the fifth century. First, Alcibiades' ascendancy together with the death in action of its most outstanding member, Nicostratos, threatened to throw Dieitrephes' *oikos* into oblivion. Thus, Dieitrephes' decision to get involved in the oligarchic coup may in all probability be best explained as driven by personal motives, that is, animosity towards the rival *oikos* of Alcibiades. Second, financial stringencies seem to have forced the family to occupy themselves with the lowly trade of wicker flask manufacturing. Dieitrephes undoubtedly had the pedigree necessary to launch him into a career in politics but he seems to have lacked the ability. For the comic poets he was their favourite butt and he is portrayed as a superfluous, vainglorious person. He was entrusted important tasks under both democracy and oligarchy but his performance was mediocre at best. As a member of the Four Hundred he remained, to the best of our knowledge, inactive. He seems, however, to have survived the purges that followed the downfall of the Four Hundred oligarchy, since he was able to move a decree under the restored democracy.

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