

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Philochoros, gifts of grain and the scrutiny of citizens in classical Athens

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Abstract

According to an account that Felix Jacoby published as Philochoros (*FGrH* 328) F119, a gift of 30,000 *medimnoi* of grain was sent by Psammetichos from Egypt to Athens in the archonship of Lysimachides (445/4). When for its distribution a scrutiny (*diapsēphisis*) was held to check the citizen status of the claimants, 4,760 individuals appeared to be illegally listed as citizens, while 14,240 Athenians received a portion of grain. Brought together in this fragment, the events feature as a significant historical fact in studies of Pericles' Citizenship Law, Athenian demography and the Athenian grain supply. However, in this article I argue that the account in F119 is not correct as it stands, but a conflation of historically disparate events into one episode. This confusing amalgam is not Philochoros' mistake, but, with several possible causes, it must originate in the tradition between him and Plutarch, who incorporated it into his *Life of Pericles* (37). The most likely source of this conflated report for Plutarch's version is the Alexandrian scholar Didymos. A major element in the confusion is the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5, when all male citizens scrutinized each other on their civic status, a one-off event that deeply affected Athenian society and its historical traditions.

Keywords: Philochoros; Felix Jacoby; *diapsēphisis*; grain supply; citizenship

1. Introduction

In the archonship of Lysimachides, Psammetichos sent a gift of 30,000 *medimnoi* of grain from Egypt to Athens. When a scrutiny (*diapsēphisis*) was held for its distribution to check the citizen status of the claimants, 4,760 individuals were found to be illegally listed as citizens, while 14,240 Athenians received a portion of grain.

The account of these events derives from the work of Philochoros (ca. 320–260), the Atthidographer esteemed most highly for his reliability; fragments of this account were put together by Felix Jacoby as Philochoros F119 (*FGrH* 328).¹ Dated to 445/4, the year Lysimachides was archon, the gift of grain and the concomitant scrutiny feature as solid historical facts in debates on Pericles' Citizenship Law, Athenian demography and the Athenian grain supply.² Since the mid-19th century, however, nearly every facet of this account has been called into question by scholars who have revealed its inconsistencies

¹ On Philochoros, see Thomas (2023); (2019) 341–53; Harding (2008). All dates are BCE, unless indicated otherwise.

² A selection: on the grain supply, see Isager and Hansen (1975) 24; Keen (2000) 65; Braund (2007) 43; Engels (2000) 118–19 (dating the events to 446/5); Gernet (1909) 376; Moreno (2007) 236, 300; Bissa (2009) 164–65; Fantasia (2010) 67. On Pericles' Citizenship Law: Whitehead (1986) 98–100; Fantasia and Carusi (2004) 206–08; Coşkun (2014)

and contradictions with other evidence.³ Yet historians' trust in the credibility of this account seems undiminished; even scholars noting that the evidence is questionable rarely discard it altogether. One reason for this trust may be Philochoros' reputation of reliability, reinforced by the authority of Jacoby. But the overriding reason might well be that the philological and historical knots of this account still need to be fully disentangled.

Clearing up at least some of the puzzling elements is the aim of this article and its companion piece in this volume by Nino Luraghi on the Egyptian side of the case.⁴ Here, discussing the Athenian side, I argue that the conventional account ascribed to Philochoros is erroneous; more specifically, that it is a conflation of historically disparate events into one episode. The origin of this error is not Philochoros but must be situated in the tradition between him and Plutarch, in whose *Life of Pericles* (37) the conflation is firmly entrenched; its most likely source is the Alexandrian scholar Didymos. A major event involved in this conflation is the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5, when all male citizens scrutinized each other's civic status. Unravelling the case reveals how citizenship regulated access to grain, with dire consequences for those without this status, and sheds new light on Athenian citizenship policies more broadly.

The analysis requires deconstructing all facets of the case in seven sections, leading to a conclusion. After this Introduction (section I), an examination (II) of the main textual sources and the coherence, if any, between them, is followed by an attempt (III) to determine the number of citizens involved. Next (IV), a brief survey of the Athenian grain supply and its distribution leads us to *diapsēphisis* (V), what it was, and was not, and to its alleged connections to Pericles' Citizenship Law (VI). From these results, we turn to the great *diapsēphisis* of 346/5 (VII). Trying to tell how the conflation between the *diapsēphisis* and the gift of grain could have come about (VIII), the possibility that events from two years with the same archon name were confused, is explored, but rejected as less plausible based on Luraghi's findings. Other evidence suggests that the misunderstanding arose in the textual tradition in a different way. The results allow us to identify what went wrong in the traditional account and why, even if it appears impossible to put all the elements back into their correct place. Finally (IX), we can set straight some important historical records, notably on Pericles' Citizenship Law.

II. The main sources: *Wasps*, scholia, Philochoros and Plutarch

Philochoros' account appears in the scholia to Aristophanes' *Wasps*, produced at the Lenaia of 422. At this point in the play, Bdelycleon tells Philocleon he could be powerful and rich, thanks to the allies, but instead the prominent Athenians give him the run around:

1. Ar. *Vesp.* ll. 715–18

ἀλλ' ὁπόταν μὲν δεισῶσ' αὐτοί, τὴν Εὐβοίαν διδῶσιν
 ὑμῖν, καὶ σῖτον ὑφίστανται κατὰ πεντήκοντα μεδίμνους
 ποριεῖν· ἔδοσαν δ' οὐπώποτε σοι· πλὴν πρῶην πέντε μεδίμνους,
 καὶ ταῦτα μόλις ξενίας φεύγων, ἔλαβες κατὰ χοῖνικα κριθῶν.

But whenever they're scared themselves, they promise you Euboea and get set to supply you with 50-bushel (*medimnoi*) rations of grain (σῖτον). But they never give it to you, not counting just recently (πρῶην), when you got five bushels (*medimnoi*), but

15–17; Dmitriev (2017) 194–200; Hampus Lyttkens and Gerding (2018); Valdés Guía (2019–2020). On demography: Akrigg (2019) 67; Hansen (1986) 45–47.

³ See Harding (2008) 114–15 for a summary of the problem.

⁴ Luraghi (2005) in this volume.

only after narrowly escaping a charge of *xenia*, and then it was barley in one-quart instalments. (tr. Henderson (1998), modified)

Several points are alluded to in this passage. At this time, Euboea was an important factor in Athens' policies, supplying grain that the Athenians expected in substantial amounts. Shortly before the production of *Wasps*, so probably in late 423, only a modest supply of barley had been distributed.⁵ Since only Athenian citizens qualified for this distribution, a scrutiny as to citizen status had taken place, with the risk of being charged with *xenia* (being a foreigner pretending to be an Athenian citizen).

The scholia to this passage of *Wasps* provide crucial background information.

2. Schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 718a:⁶

ξενίας φεύγων: τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν [τὸ “ξενίας φεύγων” φησὶν], παρόσον [ἐν] ταῖς διανομαῖς τῶν πυρῶν ἐξητάζοντο πικρῶς οἱ [τότε] [αὐτόχθονες] πολῖται καὶ μὴ [οἱ ξένοι], ὥστε δοκεῖν ξενίας φεύγειν εἰς κρίσιν καθισταμένους. φησὶν οὖν ὁ Φιλόχορος αὐθὶς ποτε ,δψξ’ ὀφθῆναι παρεγγράφους, [here something is missing]⁷ καθάπερ ἐν τῇ προκειμένη λέξει δεδήλωται. <τὰ> περὶ τὴν Εὐβοίαν δύναται καὶ αὐτὰ συνάδειν ταῖς Διδασκαλίαις.⁸ πέρυσι γὰρ ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἰσάρχου ἐστράτευσαν ἐπ’ αὐτήν, ὡς Φιλόχορος. μήποτε δὲ περὶ τῆς ἐξ Αἰγύπτου δωρεᾶς λέγει, ἣν Φιλόχορος φησὶ [Ψαμμίτιχον] Ψαμμήτιχον πέμψαι τῷ δήμῳ ἐπὶ Λυσιμαχίδου μυριάδας τρεῖς—πλὴν τὰ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ οὐδαμῶς συμφωνεῖ—, ἐκάστῳ δὲ Ἀθηναίων [Ἀθηναίῳ] πέντε μεδίμνους· τοὺς γὰρ λαβόντας γενέσθαι μυρίους ,δ διακοσίους μ’.

‘Being charged with *xenia*’: Such is the extent to which citizens and non-citizens were examined sharply in the distributions of grain, that they seemed to be defendants on a charge of non-citizenship when they were brought up for judgement. So, it is Philochoros again who says that once 4,760 were found to be illegally enrolled ... just as has been shown in the passage cited. And even the reference to Euboea can agree with the *Didaskaliai*. For the year before, in the archonship of Isarchos, they made a campaign against it (sc. Euboea), as Philochoros says. Perhaps he is referring to the gift of 30,000 *medimnoi* of grain from Egypt, which Philochoros says Psammetichos sent to the people in the archonship of Lysimachides (except that the numbers are totally inconsistent) 5 *medimnoi* for each of the Athenians. Those who received (the grain) were 14,240. (tr. Harding (2008), modified).

Scholia 718b and 718c offer a few different elements:

3. Schol. Ar. *Vespae* 718b–c:

σιτοδείας [γὰρ] ποτὲ γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀττικῇ [Ψαμμίτιχος] Ψαμμήτιχος, ὁ τῆς Λιβύης βασιλεὺς, ἀπέστειλε σῖτον τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις αἰτήσασιν αὐτόν. τῆς δὲ διανομῆς γενομένης τοῦ σίτου ξηνηλασίαν ἐποίησαν Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ ἐν τῷ διακρίνειν τοὺς αὐθιγενεῖς εὖρον καὶ ἐτέρους· ,δψξ’ ξένους παρεγγεγραμμένους. τοῦτο οὖν φησιν,

⁵ Jacoby in *FGH* 2.373 suggests that Aristophanes himself invented the amount of 5 *medimnoi*. Although this claim cannot be verified, the message of this passage in *Wasps* is clear.

⁶ Ed. Koster (1978) 116–17. The *scholia vetera* appear in three MSS and the Aldinus; relevant alternatives to the reading presented here transmitted in the manuscripts are indicated between square brackets.

⁷ Koster (1978) *ad loc.* notes that a reference to the text of *Wasps* is missing here but not indicated by the scribe. Jacoby used the edition by G. Dindorf (1838; Harding (1994) 139), which does not indicate a lacuna here.

⁸ Writing *Διδασκαλῖαι* with a capital Δ, Koster apparently reads this noun as the *Didaskaliai* attributed to Aristotle; in Jacoby’s F119, based on Dindorf’s edition, the lower-case δ of *διδασκαλῖαι* seems to refer to the inscribed lists of information on the drama performances in Athens.

ὅτι καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐρευνᾶσθαι [αὐτός] μόλις ἔλαβε πέντε μεδίμνους ἐγκαλούμενος ὡς ξένος, καὶ τούτους οὐδὲ [οὐχ] ὕφ' ἐν ἐν συντομίᾳ [φησὶν ἔλαβες,] ἀλλὰ κατὰ μέρος [κατὰ χοίνικα ἕνα.] κριθῶν δὲ εἶπεν ὡς οὐδὲν διαφέροντος τοῦ σίτου κριθῶν. ὡς κακοῦ σίτου διανεμηθέντος. [διὰ τὸ εὐτελεῖ εἶναι αὐτόν].
(718c) ὡς λιμοῦ γενομένου καὶ τῶν ξένων διακριθέντων, τουτέστι δοκιμαζομένων, εἰ πολίτης εἴη ἢ μή.

Since once there was a scarcity of grain in Attica, Psammetichos, the king of Libya, sent grain to the Athenians who had asked him to do so. When the distribution of the grain took place, the Athenians held a *xenēlasia* (expulsion of *xenoi*) and in the scrutiny distinguishing between those of genuine birth and the others, 4,760 *xenoi* appeared to be incorrectly inscribed. And he (Bdelycleon) says this, that in the scrutiny he himself (Philocleon) scarcely got the 5 *medimnoi* while being accused of being a *xenos*, and these *medimnoi* he did not get all in one quota [he says] but in instalments [one *choinix* at a time] of barley, as if barley were not at all different from grain.

Because a lowly type of grain was distributed. [because it was cheap].

(718c): because there was a famine and the *xenoi* were sought out, that is the same as being scrutinized, whether they were a citizen or not. (tr. Harding (2008))

Jacoby reconstructed F119 of Philochoros from scholion 718a:

4. Philochoros (FGrH 328) F119

[ξενίας φεύγων] τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν παρόσον ἐν ταῖς διανομαῖς τῶν πυρῶν ἐξητάζοντο πικρῶς οἱ τε πολῖται καὶ μή, ὥστε δοκεῖν ξενίας φεύγειν εἰς κρίσιν καθισταμένους. φησὶν οὖν ὁ Φιλόχορος αὐθὶς ποτε τετρακισχίλους ἑπτακοσίους ζ' ὀφθῆναι παρεγγράφους, καθάπερ ἐν τῇ προκειμένη λέξει δεδήλωται. τὰ περὶ τὴν Εὐβοίαν δύναται καὶ αὐτὰ συναιδεῖν ταῖς διδασκαλίαις· πέρυσι γὰρ ἐπὶ ἄρχοντος Ἰσάρχου (424/3) ἐστράτευσαν ἐπ' αὐτήν, ὡς Φιλόχορος (F130). μήποτε δὲ περὶ τῆς ἐξ Αἰγύπτου δωρεᾶς λέγει, ἣν Φιλόχορος φησι Ψαμμήτιχον πέμψαι τῷ δήμῳ ἐπὶ Λυσιμαχίδου (445/4) μυριάδας τρεῖς [[πλὴν τὰ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ οὐδαμῶς συμφωνεῖ]], πέντε ἐκάστῳ δὲ Ἀθηναίων μεδίμνους· τοὺς γὰρ λαβόντας γενέσθαι μυρίους τετρακισχίλους διακοσίους μ'.

('being charged with *xenia*'): Such is the extent to which citizens and non-citizens were examined sharply in the distributions of grain that they seemed to be defendants on a charge of non-citizenship when they were brought up for judgement. So, it is Philochoros again who says that once 4,760 were found to be illegally enrolled, just as has been shown in the passage cited. And even the reference to Euboea can agree with the *didaskaliai*. For the year before, in the archonship of Isarchos (424/3), they made a campaign against it (sc. Euboea), as Philochoros says (F130). Perhaps he is referring to the gift of 30,000 *medimnoi* of grain from Egypt, which Philochoros says Psammetichos sent to the people in the archonship of Lysimachides (445/4) [except that the numbers are totally inconsistent], 5 *medimnoi* for each of the Athenians. Those who received (the grain) were 14,240. (tr. Harding (2008), modified)

Let us first look at scholion 718a. It offers five items of information, here listed in order of appearance and with 'Ph' indicating what is explicitly derived from Philochoros:

- a) when grain was distributed, a scrutiny of citizen status took place;
- b) at some point, 4,760 Athenians were illegally enrolled as citizens (Ph);
- c) in the archonship of Isarchos the Athenians invaded Euboea (Ph);

- d) in the archonship of Lysimachides, Psammetichos sent 30,000 *medimnoi* of grain (Ph);
- e) 14,240 Athenians received (a portion).

Philochoros, then, is the source of b), c) and d). Concerning e), in this sentence the infinitive γενέσθαι is governed presumably by an unwritten φησι, the subject of which is of course also not mentioned. The most plausible inference, derived from b) and d), is that the subject is Philochoros and the portions are grain; the most cautious option is that both the subject and the kind of portions are unknown.⁹ So, Philochoros is the likely source for e), too, but not conclusively so.¹⁰

Even less clear is whether b), d) and e) together belong to *one single report* about a scrutiny of citizens held when Psammetichos gifted his grain in the year of Lysimachides. In Jacoby's edition of F119, however, these three items appear as three elements of one and the same fragment of Philochoros, that is, as belonging to *one report on one event*. How did Jacoby arrive at this point of view? And what should we think of the numbers 'that are totally inconsistent'?

Jacoby saw good reasons for his reconstruction.¹¹ He first traced the thoughts of the scholiast looking in Philochoros for information. For the distribution of grain discussed in this passage of *Wasps*, the scholiast acted on 'they promise you Euboea' (l. 715) and found the expedition to the island in the year of Isarchos (424/3). But since no distribution was mentioned in that year, the scholiast looked for such an event at an earlier moment (πρώην) and found the distribution of grain from Egypt in the year of Lysimachides. Jacoby did not doubt that this archonship was that of 445/4, because all these events were closely associated in Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*:¹²

5. Plut. *Per.* 37.3–4

ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Αἰγυπτίων δωρεὰν τῷ δήμῳ πέμψαντος τετρακισμυρίου πυρῶν μεδίμνους ἔδει διανεμέσθαι τοὺς πολίτας, πολλοὶ μὲν ἀνεφύοντο δίκαι τοῖς νόθοις ἐκ τοῦ γράμματος ἐκείνου τέως διαλανθάνουσι καὶ παρορωμένοις, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ συκοφαντήμασι περιέπιπτον. ἀπεκρίθησαν* οὖν ἄλόντες ὀλίγῳ πεντακισχιλίων ἐλάττους, οἱ δὲ μείναντες ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ καὶ κριθέντες Ἀθηναῖοι μύριοι καὶ τετρακισχίλιοι καὶ τεσσαράκοντα τὸ πλῆθος ἐξήτάσθησαν.

* other MSS: ἐπράθησαν

(Following the passage on Pericles' Citizenship Law) When the king of Egypt sent a gift to the people of forty thousand measures of wheat, and this had to be divided up among the citizens, there was a great crop of prosecutions of citizens of illegal birth (*nothoi*) by the law of Pericles, who had up to that time escaped notice and been overlooked, and many of them also suffered at the hands of informers (sycophants). As a result, a little fewer than five thousand were convicted and sold into slavery and those who retained their citizenship and were adjudged to be Athenians were found, as a result of this scrutiny, to be fourteen thousand and forty in number. (tr. Perrin (1916) modified)

In this passage, Plutarch reflects on the Citizenship Law hitting Pericles hard following the death of his legitimate sons, having previously brought devastation to others.

⁹ For the possibility that the 'portions' are money, notably *theōrika*, see below.

¹⁰ How exactly b), d) and e) are connected to c) is further obscured by the fact that a part of the text is missing according to Koster; see above.

¹¹ For extensive discussion of the problems and the reasons for his choices, see *FGrH* 1.462–82 and 2.372–88.

¹² Cf. Beloch (1886) 75–81; Busolt (1897) 500–04.

To explain how this came about, Plutarch recounts the story of the gift of grain, albeit with details that differ somewhat from the scholia. He does not mention Psammetichos, but instead ‘the king of Egypt’ as the supplier of the gift. And the numbers vary slightly: the amount of wheat is now 40,000 *medimnoi*, the illegal citizens are ‘nearly 5,000’ and the number of those judged true Athenians 14,040. Plutarch does not specify when all of this happened: Pericles had introduced the Citizenship Law ‘many years before’ the death of his sons (*Per.* 37.3), and the gift of grain with its scrutiny took place after the law. He also adds information lacking in the scholia: following this scrutiny, there were numerous prosecutions of citizens who by the standards of Pericles’ Citizenship Law were of illegal birth, and many were the victims of informers. They were exposed as *nothoi*, according to Plutarch, not *xenoi* as the scholia contend, and, according to some MSS, were sold into slavery. For this account, Plutarch clearly relied on an authoritative source, but he does not mention Philochoros.

Plutarch’s *Life* thus explicitly associates Pericles’ Citizenship Law with the gift of grain from Egypt and the scrutiny of the citizens. Although Jacoby accepted the year 445/4 for this event, he suspected that at some point in the tradition a lighter check on citizen status connected with grain distribution had been conflated with a full *diapsēphisis* following on Pericles’ Law (see below).¹³ In the margin of F119, Jacoby therefore added a reference to Philochoros F35, a fragment about polis subgroups.¹⁴ The fragment lacks a book number, but since Jacoby thought it was connected to Pericles’ law he assigned it to book 4 of the *Atthis*, which presumably began ca. 460.¹⁵ Philochoros’ account of the grain distribution and the scrutiny, together F119, dealt with events of 445/4 and thus followed Philochoros’ F118 (Schol. Ar. *Nub.* 213) about Pericles’ campaign against Euboea in 446/5 and the ensuing settlement of Athenian *klērouchoi* on land confiscated from Hestiaia.¹⁶ Fittingly, Jacoby also assigned F119 to book 4, although the scholion does not mention a book number. In sum, for Jacoby, reading the scholia through the lens of Plutarch, there was a coherent link between Philochoros’ account of a *diapsēphisis* and of the gift of grain in the year of Lysimachides in 445/4, although he was mistaken concerning the scrutiny.

Nonetheless, it will not do. In a critical assessment of Jacoby’s reconstruction, Giuseppe Nenci argued that, contrary to Jacoby’s reading, the scholiast was aware of discrepancies between the reported facts about 423 and 445/4.¹⁷ The grain distribution and the scrutiny of which Bdelycleon speaks took place *πρῶην* (‘just recently’), an adverb that cannot refer to an event of more than 20 years before, since which the Athenians had lived through the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War and the plague, no less. Furthermore, the gift from Egypt was wheat, whereas in 423 the Athenians received only common barley, a difference observed by scholion 718b. Finally, the target of *Wasps* was Cleon, not Pericles. In sum, there were two grain distributions with scrutinies, one in 445/4 and one in 423, both after campaigns in Euboea, and the scholiast duly noted this.¹⁸ In his edition of F119, however, Jacoby obscured this fact, by putting the reflection in scholion 718a on the inconsistency of

¹³ *FGrH* 1.468–70.

¹⁴ *FGrH* 328 F35a = Phot. *Sud.* s.v. ὀργεῶνες, stating that the phratries were obliged to accept as members the *orgeōnes* and the *homogalaktes* also known as *gennētai*.

¹⁵ On F35: Andrewes (1961); Lambert (1998) 45–49; Theodoridis (2002) argues that it belonged to book 3, and Ismard (2010) 104–06 situates the fragment in the context of Cleisthenes’ reconfiguration of the *dēmos*.

¹⁶ For Pericles’ campaign, Thuc. 1.114.

¹⁷ Nenci (1964). He erroneously assigns (p. 175) to Isarchos the archon year 425/4, instead of 424/3 (cf. Develin (1989)), and therefore dates the distribution of grain with its scrutiny to 424/3. I have adjusted Nenci’s argument to the correct years.

¹⁸ For similar conclusions: Beloch (1886) 75–79; Schenkl (1880); (1883); Gernet (1909) 308–09 and 376.

the numbers between brackets and attributing it to a different author, and by omitting scholion 718b altogether.¹⁹

Although I agree with Nenci on the elisions in Jacoby's edition of F119, his observations do not solve all our problems. Scholion 718a presents material from Philochoros in an arrangement of shorthand notes and summaries which may now be identified as three separate fragments:

119a: at some point in time, 4,760 Athenians were found to be illegally enrolled as citizens;

119b: in the archonship of Isarchos, the Athenians invaded Euboea;

119c: in the archonship of Lysimachides, Psammetichos sent 30,000 *medimnoi* of grain.

And we have two references of uncertain origin:

- 1) when grain was distributed, a scrutiny of citizen status took place;
- 2) 14,240 Athenians received (a portion).

If, or how, the three fragments of Philochoros were connected, and how they relate to references 1) and 2) is still unclear. We now need to add a few questions. What do the numbers of citizens refer to, and do they belong to 445/4 or 423 or to some other historical context? Do all the components of the accounts on gifts of grain and scrutiny of citizens belong to Philochoros' *Atthis* and if so, where? Answers to these questions would inform us about the impact of scrutinies, and why and when they took place.

III. The riddle of the numbers

The scholiast was of course right that 14,240 rations of 5 *medimnoi* do not yield the 30,000 *medimnoi* of Philochoros, or for that matter the 40,000 of Plutarch, but instead 71,200. But these inconsistent numbers are not the only puzzle. The 4,760 illegal citizens and the 14,240 citizens receiving grain together make 19,000, a round figure that is too neat to be true and, worse, incompatible with the number of Athenian citizens that scholars estimate for these years. Such estimates concern the demography of citizens and metics on the eve of the Peloponnesian War (431), appraised between 30,000 and 60,000 adult male citizens.²⁰ An increase of between 10,000 and 30,000 citizens in less than 15 years can be ruled out. Observing that either 4,760 or 14,240 must have been simply deducted from 19,000, scholars have wondered which of these figures came first, what the 19,000 might relate to, and how a sensible historian like Philochoros could seem so wide of the mark. A consensus emerged that the number of recipients (14,240) must be correct, because it might have been available to Philochoros from archival sources, while 19,000 would represent not the entire legitimate citizen population, as Plutarch

¹⁹ Jacoby explained the brackets with 'zusatz eines anderen scholiasten oder eines lesers'. Koster interpreted this clause in the same manner as Nenci. Jacoby further made the first part of the fragment resemble the second part by changing the numerals ,δψξ' to τετρακισχιλίους ἑπτακοσίους ξ', just as μυρίους ,δ διακοσίους μ', thus further amalgamating the different versions into one text.

²⁰ Estimates for the late fifth century are based on figures for the Athenian land forces in 431 (Thuc. 2.13.6–9; Diod. Sic. 12.40.4) and extrapolation from the inscribed ephebe lists and the census by Demetrius of Phaleron (Ath. VI 272C) of the late fourth century, arguing backwards in time; cf. Akrigg (2019) 67–84. For the 440s, after heavy losses of manpower in the First Peloponnesian War (460–445; cf. Blok (2009) 154–56, especially n.56), numbers must have been lower, but 19,000 (that is, only half or a third of the numbers of a decade later) is implausible.

erroneously supposed, but only those presenting themselves as in need of grain.²¹ Access for Philochoros to the correct number of illegal citizens was deemed less plausible.²²

But why would Philochoros have had recourse to archival sources for the number 14,240, and not for 4,760? While we should perhaps be suspicious of both figures, the number of 4,760 illegal citizens derives explicitly from Philochoros, unlike that of the recipients of grain; the figure of 4,760 thus has better credentials. In addition, such precise numbers of counted citizens, rounded off to the nearest tens, and high numbers at that, are extremely rare in our records; usually, Athenians used round figures for large numbers and worked with estimates.²³ One must ask, moreover, how the polis kept records of 14,240 citizens receiving grain, given the practicalities of its distribution.²⁴ Against this background, these figures suggest a singular event, and 14,240 appears to be the result of deducting 4,760 from 19,000, rather than the other way round. Where the round figure 19,000, obviously an estimate, derives from and what it refers to, can only be conjectured:²⁵ perhaps the number of *thētes*,²⁶ or those who received food from the state.²⁷

In any case, the number of people who fell victim to the scrutiny was high, as is confirmed by a source used by Plutarch, reporting that sycophants were active in the *diapsēphisis*, with a mass of court cases as a result. Considering that the scrutiny and its aftermath must have created upheaval whose effects were felt for years, it is remarkable that the gift of grain in the year of Lysimachides and particularly its sequel, a *diapsēphisis* that removed an estimated 15 per cent of the Athenians from the citizen lists, do not figure in other sources.²⁸ Of course, silence can never be decisive, but the *diapsēphisis* and its effects on manpower and citizen numbers would have been of interest to Thucydides and the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*. In Diodorus' account of the year of Lysimachides (445/4; 12.22.1), the event would have fit his report on the 1,000 Athenian *klērouchoi* settled on the land of Hestiaia. But none of these sources mentions a gift of grain or a momentous scrutiny.

²¹ Beloch (1886) 77–79 conjectured an error in the numerals in the MS. Busolt (1897) 502–03 suggested that Philochoros perhaps projected the roughly 20,000 citizens of his own time back onto the fifth century. The number is too high to be credible for a grain distribution, but Busolt did not doubt 'dass eine allgemeine, ausserordentliche Revision der Gemeindebürgerbücher mittels Diapsephisis stattfand'.

²² Harding (2008) 115; Busolt (1897) 502–03; Gomme (1933) 16: it was less probable 'that the exact number of men struck off the citizen roll, or the exact number of lawsuits, was recorded'. Jones (2016) points out that the numbers of citizens could only derive from the deme registers, which neither Philochoros nor his source could have consulted in their entirety; instead, the accounts probably refer to 'the on-the-spot disqualification of persons, not necessarily all putative citizens, deemed ineligible to receive a portion of the Egyptian grain'.

²³ The selection of hundreds of male citizens for jury service or thousands for military contingents took place in regulated contexts with established units, and in the case of polis office with selection tools (lots); for details, see Malkin and Blok (2024).

²⁴ *FGrH* 1.465–67, 2.376 observes that neither the figure of 19,000 nor previous interpretations of the numbers make much sense for grain distribution: 'because the number of the recipients to be expected was *not known* the distribution could not take place at one time and in such a way as to give his whole share to each claimant at once; they had to come at least twice' (2.376; emphasis original).

²⁵ Harding (2008) 115: it is 'anyone's guess'.

²⁶ Gomme (1933) 16–17: the recipients were mostly *thētes*, but also some *zeugitai* in need.

²⁷ Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 24 says that from the time of Aristides well into the Peloponnesian War, the polis provided food for over 20,000 citizens. The figures in [*Ath. Pol.*] 24 add up to 15,750, to which the *prutaneis* plus guests, orphans and wardens should be added. Was the total estimated as 19,000 in some sources and rounded up in [*Ath. Pol.*] to 20,000?

²⁸ 4,760 = roughly 12 per cent of 40,000 and 16 per cent of 30,000.

IV. Grain distribution in Athens

The scrutiny of citizen status was applied, according to *Wasps* and the scholia, to Athenians keen to receive a ration in the grain distribution. To feed its rapidly growing population, Athens needed to import grain to supplement its own produce.²⁹ In the fifth century, the city did so from several regions, but its chief supplier was Euboea.³⁰ In 446 the Euboeans revolted, but after a successful campaign Pericles removed the population of Hestiaia and distributed their lands among Athenian klerouchs (Thuc. 1.113–14; see above, section II). In 411, however, Athens lost Euboea and so had to find new resources. The Black Sea region and notably the kingdom of the Bosporos became important suppliers.³¹

Providing the Athenians with affordable grain was not only a matter of supply, but also of some price control. While the external market had its own mechanisms, the polis regulated the market at home with a series of laws.³² Grain was bought in bulk and imported by merchants (*emporoi*), off-loaded in Piraeus and brought to Athens. The grain was sold as soon as possible by the *sitopōlai*, at a price supervised by the *sitophulakes*, namely at a profit of one obol per *medimnos* (Lys. 22.8–9, 12).³³

These arrangements normally allowed Athens to secure supplies of affordable grain for its population, unless weather fluctuations, warfare, piracy or other problems created scarcity, which meant high prices. Scarcity needs to be distinguished, where possible, from famine, both *sitodeia* in Greek.³⁴ In the fifth century, no real grain shortage is apparent in Athens, and nothing suggests a grain shortage in 445/4, for instance due to the short-lived revolt in Euboea.³⁵ In the Archidamian War, Spartan raids ravaged harvests in Attica, but this loss was compensated by supplies from Euboea, exemplified by the episode in *Wasps* (422).³⁶

After the loss of Euboea, Athens became more dependent on the wider market and faced greater risk of shortages than before.³⁷ Responding to these difficulties, the city created a protected ‘internal market’ with the Grain Tax Law of 374/3, and in 329/8 with a decree on the produce collected under the First-Fruits Decree.³⁸ Such measures provided the people with a substantial amount of affordable grain, the price of which was set by the assembly.

Athens rarely distributed grain for free. The grain distribution discussed in *Wasps* is apparently a gift (no purchase is mentioned) by an anonymous ‘they’ who must be leading Athenians and in this case was possibly the council.³⁹ As Johannes Engels rightly underlines, we should not imagine that Athens, or any other polis, arranged a welfare policy for the entire (free) population.⁴⁰ Grain was perhaps distributed for free when the city received it as a gift, but not every gift was distributed for free. It was distributed and sold cheaply in Piraeus for the citizens living there, and for all others in the city. Only citizens qualified for the distributions of free grain, as *Wasps* and the scholia make overtly

²⁹ See also Appendix 1, Supplementary Material.

³⁰ Moreno (2007) 339–40.

³¹ Braund (2007); Moreno (2007) 144–208.

³² Overview with all relevant sources: Engels (2000) 97–102; Moreno (2007) 334–36.

³³ The profits for millers and bread-sellers were likewise fixed (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 51.3).

³⁴ Pazdera (2006) 41: *sitodeia* = ‘Versorgungskrise’; Garnsey (1988) 3–7, 17: ‘genuine famines are much rarer than mere shortages’.

³⁵ Garnsey (1988) 125–27, who discusses the evidence on Psammetichos’ gift in some detail, voicing scepticism about the episode, *pace* Labarbe (1961). As Luraghi (2025) argues this volume, grain may have been given to Athens in this year not because Athens needed it, but because the giver thought it did or expected the gift to strengthen relations with Athens.

³⁶ Garnsey (1988) 133 voices doubts about 424/3.

³⁷ Garnsey (1988) 146–64; Pazdera (2006) 237–320; Moreno (2007) 311 n.7.

³⁸ IG II² 1672/I.Eleusis 177, ll. 283, 287.

³⁹ Ar. *Vesp.* 717: ἔδοσαν δ’ οὐπώποτέ σοι (‘they never give it to you, except recently’).

⁴⁰ Engels (2000) 117, 124.

clear, and the same rule very likely applied to the low prices set by the people in the ‘internal market’.⁴¹ To benefit, every individual’s citizen status was checked. Was this check a *diapsēphisis*?

V. *Diapsēphisis* in Athens

Diapsēphisis is the procedure and the result of casting votes in a ‘secret ballot’ with tokens (*psēphoi*).⁴² Such a secret ballot was the proper way of voting when a decision was made regarding an individual, for instance in the courts. The semantic value of δια- in διαψηφίζομαι seems to be ‘asunder’, signifying the split into ‘yes or no’ by the vote.⁴³ *Diapsēphizesthai* and *diapsēphisis* were used in particular for voting on citizen status, as the lexicographer Harpocration explained:

Harp. 4.50

Διαψηφίσις· ιδίως λέγεται ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς δήμοις ἐξετάσεων (scrutiny), αἱ γίνονται περὶ ἐκάστου τῶν δημοτευομένων, εἰ τῷ ὄντι πολίτης καὶ δημότης ἐστὶν ἢ παρεγγεγραπταί ξένος ὢν· Αἰσχίνης Κατὰ Τιμάρχου. ἐντελέστατα δὲ διείλεται περὶ τῶν διαψηφίσεων, ὡς γεγόνασιν ἐπὶ Ἀρχίου ἄρχοντος, Ἀνδροτίων ἐν τῇ Ἀτθίδι καὶ Φιλόχορος ἐν ζ΄ τῆς Ἀτθίδος.

Diapsēphisis: this is the specific term used for the scrutinies in the demes, which are held about every member of the deme, to see if he is really a citizen and demesman or a *xenos* who is illegally inscribed on the list. (See) Aeschines *Against Timarchos*. It refers most particularly to the *diapsēphiseis* as they took place in the archonship of Archias (346/5), (for which see) Androton in the *Atthis* (FGrH 324 F52) and Philochoros in book 6 of the *Atthis* (FGrH 328 F52).⁴⁴

The first round of voting (*diaphēsizesthai*) every male citizen had to face was the assessment of his admittance to the deme (*dokimasia*), to check that he was 18 years of age, of free status and born of two Athenian parents.⁴⁵ But *diapsēphiseis* could also be applied to current deme members. Euxitheos, one of the victims of the great *diapsēphisis* of 346/5, told the court of appeal (Dem. 57.62):

I point out to you that on four previous occasions, when they gave their votes (ἐψηφίσαντο) in accordance with their oaths without entering into a conspiracy, they voted that both I and my father were their fellow-demesmen: first, when my father passed the *dokimasia*, secondly, when I did so; then, in the former revision (ἐν τῇ προτέρᾳ διαψηφίσει), after these men had made away with the register; and finally, when they nominated me among the noblest-born and voted that I should draw lots for the priesthood of Herakles. (tr. Murray (1939))

⁴¹ Migeotte (2010) 37.

⁴² See also Appendix 2, Supplementary Material.

⁴³ LSJ D II. I thank Nino Luraghi for this suggestion.

⁴⁴ Cf. Poll. *Onom.* 8.19 and 8.64: αἱ δ’ ἐν τοῖς δήμοις αὐταὶ κρίσεις ἐκαλοῦντο διαψηφίσεις ... διαψηφίσις δ’ ἦν τὸ τοὺς δημότας τὴν ψῆφον ὑπὲρ τῶν παρεγγεγράφθαι δοκούντων ἐνεγκεῖν (‘The judgements which are made in the demes are called *diapsēphiseis*. [...] A *diapsēphisis* is when the demesmen carry out a vote about the people they think are illegally on the list of citizens’).

⁴⁵ Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 42.1: ὅταν δ’ ἐγγράφωνται διαψηφίζονται περὶ αὐτῶν ὁμόσαντες οἱ δημόται (‘when they are entered on the lists after the demesmen voting about them on oath’). Such voting is only attested in the fourth century; Diller (1932; 1935) argues that the procedure was caused by the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5, but Dem. 57.62 renders this suggestion unconvincing.

The ‘former revision’, according to Euxitheos, took place when ‘the demesmen had of necessity to hold a *diapsēphisis* (διαψηφίσεις ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἐγένοντο τοῖς δημόταις), after binding themselves by solemn oaths, when their voting-register was lost during the *dēmarchia* of Antiphilos, the father of Euboulides, and they expelled some of their members’ (Dem. 57.26).⁴⁶ Later in this speech, Euxitheos tells the court that on this previous occasion the deme expelled ten men, nine of whom were restored to their citizen status on their appeal to the courts (Dem. 57.60).

Whether it was undertaken for a regular *dokimasia* of young citizens or for a full scrutiny of the citizen lists to sift out illegal members, a *diapsēphisis* on the citizen status of an individual was carried out in the demes, with oaths taken on sacrificial animals and a secret ballot by all demesmen.⁴⁷ For the procedure, the demesmen were to assemble in their deme of origin, regardless of where they actually lived at the time. A full *diapsēphisis*, when not only a few young men, but all demesmen were scrutinized, was quite an enterprise. In 346/5, in Euxitheos’ deme, Halimous, where 73 men were to be scrutinized one by one, many of whom lived in the city, the procedure took two days (Dem. 57.9–13).⁴⁸ Halimous was a relatively small deme, represented by three men in the council; in larger demes such as Phrearrhoi (nine men), Lower Paiania (11) or Aphidna (16) this part of the procedure must have taken at least a week. Men rejected by their fellow demesmen could appeal to a magistrate and to a jury court; the procedure could take months, if not years, to reach a final verdict.

We can now draw a preliminary conclusion: the check on citizen status of those claiming their portion of grain cannot have been a full *diapsēphisis*. A *diapsēphisis* took place in the demes, grain distribution took place in the city. For such a distribution, only Athenians who wanted grain presented themselves.⁴⁹ Only these claimants were checked, not all adult demesmen as in a full *diapsēphisis*. Finally, the scale and duration of a *diapsēphisis* were incompatible with the rapid distribution of grain that was customary in Athens and expected, especially when citizens were in need. For this very reason, Jacoby rightly doubted that ‘the ponderous apparatus’ of a *diapsēphisis* was set in motion for the grain distribution of 445/4.⁵⁰ But if it was not a *diapsēphisis*, what form did the check on the claimants’ citizen status take?

A fitting solution was offered by Anthony Raubitschek over half a century ago.⁵¹ Archaeological, epigraphical and literary evidence shows that in the fifth century male citizens were required to line up in the Agora to enter specific areas designated for each *phulē* and *trittus* to vote in an ostracism or for grain distribution.⁵² Similar arrangements were made for grain distribution in Piraeus, with *horoi* designating the areas for the polis subgroups.⁵³ At the entrance of each designated area of the Agora was a gate, at which the archon (or *grammateus*) and the *bouleutai* of the *phulē* in question checked the citizens’ identity:

⁴⁶ Tr. Murray (1939), modified.

⁴⁷ For the deme as ‘guardian’ of citizenship, see Kierstead (2019).

⁴⁸ According to Euxitheos, his adversary Euboulides deliberately caused delays to create the proper situation to oust him. Be that as it may, the entire procedure, including tracking from the city and elsewhere in Attica to the deme and back again, could hardly be finished within a day. For the problematic proceedings, see below.

⁴⁹ Wilamowitz (1893) 2.209: we should not envisage Cleon, Sophocles or the members of the Areopagos standing in line to get their *medimnoi* of barley. Beloch (1886) 76, with earlier attempts to explain the numbers, holds that only the *thētes* were allowed to present themselves.

⁵⁰ FGrH 1.468.

⁵¹ Raubitschek (1956).

⁵² Ar. Eq. 855–57; schol. ad Ar. Eq. 857; IG I³ 1117–26 (the relevant IG numbers are adjusted here to the latest edition).

⁵³ IG I³ 1127–31.

Considering the fact that the [*bouleutai* of each *phulē*] were representatives of most if not all the demes, one does not have to assume that they used a written register to check on every single voter; most of them will have entered unchallenged, others will have been known to at least one member of the council, and only a few may have been required to identify themselves.⁵⁴

What applied to the voters also applied to the claimants of grain.⁵⁵ This analogy is no coincidence: both the right to vote, in the assembly and for ostracism, and eligibility to receive cheap or free grain were prerogatives of the male Athenian citizen. Individuals suspected of falsely claiming citizen status were charged with *xenia* before the *nautodikai*, as the scene in *Wasps* exemplifies.⁵⁶ The scrutiny was sharp, but charges were probably few.

Now that a full *diapsēphisis* can be ruled out for a distribution of grain, when and why did a *diapsēphisis* that caused perhaps thousands of citizens to be removed from the lists take place? The most likely occasion, according to Jacoby and others, came in the wake of Pericles' Citizenship Law.

VI. *Diapsēphisis* after Pericles' Citizenship Law?

Disconnected from the gift of grain, there is no longer any reason to date the *diapsēphisis* to 445/4, unless we suppose that the two events happened to take place in the same year. But assuming that the scrutiny was held around this date, just a few years after Pericles' law of 451/0, what might its purpose have been?⁵⁷

Pericles' Citizenship Law (PCL) laid down that only those who had an Athenian father and an Athenian mother were Athenian citizens (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 26.3–4).⁵⁸ For Jacoby, who was convinced that Athenian political life was shaped by party strife between aristocrats and democrats, Pericles proposed his law to remove citizenship from his rival Kimon, whose mother was not Athenian.⁵⁹ PCL could only work as such a weapon if it was retroactive, excluding from citizenship Kimon and all other Athenians who in 451/0 had a non-Athenian parent. Jacoby ascribed this retroactive force to PCL because he compared it to the racist legislation enacted in 1933 by the Nazis, which defined as Jewish and excluded from citizenship all Germans whose grandparents were Jewish.⁶⁰ This law indeed applied a retroactive birth criterion to rob Jewish German citizens of their rights. However, a similar effect of PCL is incompatible with the fact that Kimon died on campaign as an Athenian general, so with full citizen status, shortly after PCL (Thuc. 1.112).⁶¹ Nonetheless, scholars have tried to find ways around this fact with variations on this theme, arguing that PCL

⁵⁴ Raubitschek (1956) 280. He calls the section of each *phulē* in the council *prutaneis*, but the common usage of this term today is for the (section of the) *phulē* holding the prytany.

⁵⁵ Raubitschek (1956) 280.

⁵⁶ Cratinus fr. 251 KA; Ar. fr. 237 KA; Krateros *FGrH* 324 F4; Poll. *Onom.* 8.126; Harp. Suda, s.v. *nautodikai*; cf. Erdas (2021); see also below.

⁵⁷ See also Appendix 2, Supplementary Material.

⁵⁸ For the evidence and a reconstruction of PCL, Blok (2009).

⁵⁹ *FGrH* 1.477–81. Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 27.2–4 contends that Pericles introduced *misthophoria* for the jury courts to compete with Kimon's generosity towards his own demesmen. For the implausibility of this account, Blok (2009) 148 n.23.

⁶⁰ *FGrH* 1.474, doing his utmost to describe the Nazi laws in neutral terms, as if he were not a victim of these same laws: 'Even the German legislation of 1933 A.D., in defining its fundamental concept, went no further than the grandparents (on both sides), or where special purity of race was required, to a certain year (1800 A.D. I think it was).'

⁶¹ Cf. Rhodes, CAAP, 332–35, who calls Jacoby's view 'eccentric', and see Harding (1994) 13–19; (2008) 4–6 (summaries of earlier publications) for a solid refutation of Jacoby's reading of the Atthidographers as reflecting the alleged party strife in Athens.

enabled the removal of people who had a non-Athenian parent or who had fraudulently made their way into the citizen *dēmos*, within a few years of its enactment.⁶² But this view is unconvincing, for several reasons.

The first reason is the nature of Athenian laws: they were never retroactive. Such a force would be extremely unjust, especially when it concerned citizen status. PCL was no exception to the rule, as the case of Kimon confirms, but instead prescribed rules of citizenship to be valid from the archon year following its enactment. In the mid-fifth century, PCL meant that for citizen status two Athenian parents were required for those born after 451/0. Individuals' citizenship would be checked for legitimacy when necessary: for girls upon being given in marriage, for young men in their *dokimasia* when they were 18 years of age (i.e., from 433/2 onwards).

The second reason combines social reality and political expediency. In 451/0, an unknown number of Athenians had one non-Athenian parent, often the mother, or were married to a non-Athenian. If PCL were retroactive, it would declare all these people and their present offspring forfeit of their citizen status. For Pericles to propose a law that would make him deeply unpopular with many Athenians (and yet have it miraculously accepted somehow) would have been immensely stupid, which Pericles certainly was not.

The very idea that PCL was (meant to be) an instrument to weed out foreigners illegally registered as citizens or to cut off *mētroxenoí* such as Kimon and his sons, is simply mistaken. Disconnected from the reputed gift of grain of 445/4, holding a full scrutiny (*diapsēphisis*) five years after Pericles' Law does not seem to make any sense.⁶³ Indeed, if we heed the deafening silence of all other sources, it does not appear to have taken place.

VII. The *diapsēphisis* of 346/5

On closer inspection, our sources mention just one *diapsēphisis* in the sense of a full-scale scrutiny of all male citizens in the demes.⁶⁴ It took place on a decree proposed by a certain Demophilos in the archonship of Archias (346/5), probably late in 346.⁶⁵ Voting in the demes was by majority, and those rejected by the deme could bring their case to a *dikastērion* presided by the *thesmothetai*. The *diapsēphisis* features in several sources, principally Androtion and Philochoros (short quotes, above), Aeschines' *Against Timarchos* with its scholia, Demosthenes 57 and Isaeus 12.⁶⁶ Even if we allow for the special pleading typical of court speeches, the disconcerting picture emerging from all the sources together is clear and consistent: the *diapsēphisis* was the moment *par excellence* for demesmen to settle old scores, rake up neighbourhood gossip and gather friends to harm common enemies. Such quarrels were occasionally a factor in *dokimasiai*, but the *diapsēphisis* exacerbated long-standing animosities, creating a vicious climate in which numerous

⁶² Coşkun (2014); Hampus Lyttkens and Gerding (2018); Valdés Guía (2019–2020). Fantasia and Carusi (2004) 207 affirm that PCL was not retroactive but suppose it was applied nonetheless in the *graphai xenias*.

⁶³ Coşkun (2014) proposes down-dating Pericles' law because the time gap after 451/0 makes no sense, and since for him the *diapsēphisis* of 445/4 is a fact, PCL must date to that year, despite the year listed for it in Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 26.3–5 and Diod. Sic. 11.91.1.

⁶⁴ On this *diapsēphisis*, Fantasia and Carusi (2004); Fisher (2023). On the alleged *diapsēphismos* after the fall of the tyrants (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 13.5), see below.

⁶⁵ Aeschin. 1.77–78, 114–15 speaks of the procedure as largely finished, and since Fisher (2001) 6–8 thinks the *diapsēphisis* 'is likely to have lasted a matter of some months', he tentatively suggests Timarchos' trial took place early in 345.

⁶⁶ Aeschin. 1.77, 86, 114 plus scholia; Androtion *FGrH* 324 F52 = Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F52 = Harp. (4.50) s.v. διαφήρισις; Dem. 57 (*contra Euboulides*) 2–16, with Lib. *Hypothesis in Demosthenis* 27; Isae. 12 (*Euphiletus*) with Dion. Hal. Isoc. 16: an appeal trial against the demesmen of Erchia who had rejected a man in the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5. Isaeus' Lost Speech 7, *Against Boiotos in an appeal against the decision of the demesmen*, is also connected to the *diapsēphisis* by Forster (1927) and by Edwards (2007) 195 (as Lost Speech 6) but this connection cannot be verified.

people were voted out, perhaps some rightly but many more wrongly (Aeschin. 1.114, 2.182; Isae. 12).

Consequently, many rejected citizens brought their cases to court. Euxitheos' speech (Dem. 57) concerns one such case of *epheis* ('appeal'). Even if he was not the simple innocent victim he pretends to be, his picture of the long-standing animosity within his deme leading to his expulsion was evocative and held claims that the court could verify.⁶⁷ Yet the courts were not lenient, on the contrary. Euxitheos projects onto the *dikastai* he faces an image of them as 'severe but just', implying that he expects them to be severe in the first place.⁶⁸ He claims he was given no chance to defend himself against the unproven allegations of his deme, a claim unexpectedly confirmed by Aeschines, who, for different reasons of his own, draws a scathing picture of both the scrutiny and the following trials as unjust and prejudiced (Aeschin. 1.77–78).⁶⁹

γεγόνασι διαψηφίσεις ἐν τοῖς δήμοις, καὶ ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ψῆφον δέδωκε περὶ τοῦ σώματος, ὅστις Ἀθηναῖος ὄντως ἐστὶ καὶ ὅστις μὴ. καὶ ἔγωγε ἐπειδὴν προσστῶ πρὸς τὸ δικαστήριον καὶ ἀκροάσωμαι τῶν ἀγωνιζομένων, ὁρῶ ὅτι αἰεὶ τὸ αὐτὸ παρ' ὑμῖν ἰσχύει. ἐπειδὴν γὰρ εἶπη ὁ κατήγορος· “ἄνδρες δικασταί, τουτοὺ κατεψηφίσαντο οἱ δημόται ὁμόσαντες, οὐδενὸς ἀνθρώπων οὔτε κατηγορήσαντος οὔτε καταμαρτυρήσαντος, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ συνειδότες,” εὐθὺς οἷμαι θορυβεῖτε ὑμεῖς ὥς οὐ μετὸν τῷ κρινομένῳ τῆς πόλεως· οὐδὲν γὰρ οἷμαι δοκεῖ προσδεῖσθαι ὑμῖν λόγου οὐδὲ μαρτυρίας, ὅσα τις σαφῶς οἶδεν αὐτός.

We have been having revisions of the citizen lists in the demes, and each one of us has submitted to a vote regarding himself to determine whether he is a genuine citizen or not. Now whenever I am in the court-room listening to the pleas, I see that the same argument always prevails with you: when the prosecutor says 'Gentlemen of the jury, the men of the deme have under oath excluded this man on their own personal knowledge, although nobody brought accusation or gave testimony against him', you immediately applaud, assuming that the man who is before the court has no claim to citizenship. For I suppose you are of the opinion that when one knows a thing perfectly of his own knowledge, he does not need argument or testimony in addition. (tr. Adams (1919))

According to the defendants in these cases, their accusers acted out of malice, but also because they could do so because they risked nothing in attacking their victims, with or without arguments, unless they could be convicted of perjury, whereas the rejected citizens had to mount a solid defence and risked losing their status forever, if not worse.⁷⁰ The climate of distrust and malice in the *diapsēphisis* depicted in the speeches matches the

⁶⁷ Dem. 57.58: 'Of brothers born of the same mother and the same father, they have expelled some and retained others, and they have expelled elderly men of slender means, while they have left their sons on the list of demesmen ...' (tr. Murray (1939)).

⁶⁸ Dem. 57.2: τὸν καιρὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ παρωξύνθαι τὴν πόλιν πρὸς τὰς ἀποψηφίσεις φοβεῖσθαι ('the occasion and the exasperation the polis shows towards those who were voted out fill me with fear').

⁶⁹ Cf. Aeschin. 1.114. See also Dem. 57.11–13; likewise in Isae. 12.5–11, the speaker presents a range of witnesses, but claims that the accusers brought no evidence to prove their case; his claim could be easily verified, since this case had been before the *diakritai* twice.

⁷⁰ Isae. 12.8–9; Dem. 57.4–5. For the rejected citizens of the *diapsēphisis* the stakes of their appeals were high, since, on the conventional interpretation of Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 42.1, anyone who lost this appeal in a case of *xenia* or rejected *dokimasia* was to be sold as a slave. However, Gomme (1933) questioned this reading, arguing that this penalty only applied to those who were found out to be slaves, instead of freemen, an argument supported by Jacoby, *FGH* 1.463; cf. Stadter (1989) 338 on differences in the MSS here.

situation depicted in the first lines of the scholion to *Wasps*.⁷¹ Besides being driven by enmity, accusers could also act from greed, since the property of a convicted ‘foreigner’ was to be sold: a conviction provided an excellent way of purchasing the land of one’s neighbour.

How many citizens were voted out of their demes and took their cases to court, and how long did it take the polis to sort out this mess? All of our sources report large numbers of rejected citizens and subsequent trials.⁷² That these were not merely rhetorical exaggerations can be inferred from Euxitheos’ account of the previous *diapsēphisis* in the deme of Halimous, when ten out of around 70 deme members were rejected, nine of whom later had their citizenship restored by the courts (as some Athenians must have remembered). If, by analogy, in the great *diapsēphisis* roughly one-seventh of all male Athenians (ca. 30,000) were voted out, a staggering 4,287 were rejected, in other words a number not a million miles from Philochoros’ 4,760.⁷³

We can now draw several conclusions. First, I am inclined to think that Philochoros found the number 4,760 somewhere in the archives, whether or not it was the exact number of cases involved. Second, this number does not indicate that the number of illegal citizens was very high in reality, as some scholars believe, but instead reflects the lengths to which the Athenians could go when acting out their malice against each other with impunity.⁷⁴ Third, the *dikastēria*, where the appeals were heard, met between 175 and 225 days a year; given that they also had other cases to deal with, the *dikastai* could handle, say, around 200 cases of alleged *xenia* a year.⁷⁵ If around 4,000 rejected citizens took their cases to court, it could take the polis 20 years to decide all the cases arising from the *diapsēphisis*.⁷⁶ And all this time the accused would have been ‘in limbo’ concerning their status. In 338, after the Battle of Chaironea, their numbers were still so high that Hypereides mentioned them explicitly in his proposal to include all non-citizens in the army to defend the city.⁷⁷ Did the polis decide at some point to terminate the endless court cases? There is no evidence to tell.

Why this *diapsēphisis* took place has not been fully clarified.⁷⁸ Most historians, including myself, have assumed that existing concerns about civic status were aggravated by the tension created by the aggression of Philip of Macedon, although the peace of Philokrates of 346 might have brought some measure of calm. However, a scholion to Aeschines’ *Timarchos* (1.77) offers a glimpse of a more immediate cause of this invasive scrutiny:

⁷¹ Schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 718a (above). Dem. 57.2: πολλῶν γὰρ ἐξεληλαμένων δικαίως ἐκ πάντων τῶν δήμων, συγκεκρικινωθήκαμεν τῆς δόξης ταύτης οἱ κατεστασιασμένοι, καὶ πρὸς τὴν κατ’ ἐκείνων αἰτίαν, οὐ πρὸς τὸ καθ’ αὐτὸν ἕκαστος ἀγωνιζόμεθα (‘for while many have with justice been expelled from all the demes, we who have been the victims of political rivalry are involved in the prejudice felt toward them and have to combat the charge brought against them, and not merely defend each his own case’) (tr. Murray (1939)).

⁷² Dem. 57.2–3, 57; Plut. *Per.* 37.3–4; Aeschin. 1.77 implies that many court cases are ongoing.

⁷³ Euxitheos suggests that animosity and therefore unjust rejection would be less severe in the larger demes (Dem. 57.57).

⁷⁴ I cannot help being reminded of the malice, insults and even death threats that a surprising number of people, safely hiding behind an alias, vent on social media against those they dislike or disagree with.

⁷⁵ For data on the *dikastēria*, Hansen (1991) 186–87.

⁷⁶ Isae. 12.11–12 was at least two years after the *diapsēphisis*; the exact date of Dem. 57 is unknown.

⁷⁷ Hyp. fr. 29 Jensen: ὅπως πρῶτον μὲν μυριάδας πλείους ἢ ἰε΄ τοὺς <δούλους τοὺς> ἐκ τῶν ἔργων τῶν ἀργυρείων καὶ τοὺς κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην χώραν, ἔπειτα τοὺς ὀφείλοντας τῷ δημοσίῳ καὶ τοὺς ἀτίμους καὶ τοὺς ἀπεψηφισμένους καὶ τοὺς μετοίκους.

⁷⁸ Fantasia and Carusi (2004) assess several propositions, none of which are fully convincing. Scholars by and large suppose that the norms for citizenship were unevenly applied (for example, Whitehead (1986) 90–92) or that illegal interlopers were creating anxieties about civic status; Fisher (2023).

Schol. vet. in Aeschin. 1.77

αἱ δοκιμασίαι. διαψήφισις δέ ἐστιν, ὁπηνίκα στάσεως δημοτικῆς γενομένης συνέρχονται ἅπαντες οἱ ἐκ τῶν δήμων καὶ σκοποῦσι τίς τε ἐστὶ πολίτης καὶ τίς ξένος. καὶ ἐὰν εὕρωσι ξένον, τοῦτον διώκουσιν, ὡς ἐξ αὐτοῦ γενομένης τῆς στάσεως. ἔλεγον δὲ ἐκ πολίτου μὴ γενέσθαι τι τοιοῦτον. Δημόφιλος δὲ τις εἰσηγήσατο διαψήφισις τῶν ἀστῶν ἐν τοῖς δήμοις, ὥστε τοὺς δημότας περὶ ἐκάστου τῶν ἀναγραφόμενων διδόναι ψῆφον ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀστός, μηδενὸς κατηγοροῦντος μηδὲ ἀπολογουμένου, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς συνιστορήσεως, καὶ ἴσχυον αἱ διαψήφισις τῶν δημοτῶν.

The *dokimasiai*. There is a *diapsēphisis* when, as a *stasis* has arisen among the *dēmos*, all men from the demes come together to investigate who is a citizen and who a *xenos*. And when they find a *xenos*, they prosecute this man, because they think that the *stasis* occurred because of him. They always held that a citizen would not be the cause of such a thing. A certain Demophilos proposed to hold a *diapsēphisis* of the *astoi* in the demes, so that the demesmen would cast a vote with *psēphoi* about each man on the list, whether he was an *astos*, while no one was (openly) charged nor defended, but (judged) by complicity, and the majority in the *diapsēphiseis* of the demesmen prevailed.

According to this account, which surfaces only in this scholion, the *diapsēphisis* was a response to a *stasis*, a conflict within the polis for which furtive *xenoi* were held responsible. Most foreigners were indistinguishable from Athenians, so they had to be rooted out by a thorough scrutiny.

Meagre though it is, this account seems plausible. The same Demophilos who proposed the *diapsēphisis* had previously proposed a measure (*politeuma*) to investigate alleged attempts to bribe the assembly and the courts, setting off a series of court cases against men charged with this crime that was still ongoing when Aeschines was speaking against Timarchos (Aeschin. 1.86–87).⁷⁹ Apparently, Demophilos was inclined to see subversive elements everywhere and was not averse to inciting the *dēmos* against them. Was the charge that *xenoi* were the source of *stasis* a classic case of scapegoating outsiders in times of political and social anxiety? Certainly, as the scholion shows clearly, but perhaps not only that.

From the 380s, *sitodeiai* were increasingly frequent. In Greece more widely, recurrent warfare and, in the mid-fourth century, Macedonian aggression made the procurement of regular supplies more difficult. Threatening grain shortage created tensions, which led to the targeting of foreigners, as happened in Sparta (Schol. Ar. Av. 1013 = Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F178):

περὶ τῆς ἐν Λακεδαίμονι ξενηλασίας Θεόπομπος φησιν ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ καὶ τριακοστῇ. ποτὲ γὰρ ἐκέισε σιτοδείας γενομένης ξενηλασία γέγονεν, ὡς Θεόπομπος ἐν τῇ τριακοστῇ ζ' φησίν.

Theopompus speaks about the *xenēlasia* (driving out foreigners) in Sparta in book 33. Since there was at some point a *sitodeia* there, a *xenēlasia* took place, as Theopompus says in book 36.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Demophilos, as a speaking name of a populist orator, seems too apt to be true; was this an alias? But in Athens over 60 Demophiloi are known (cf. <http://www.seangb.org/>), so perhaps it is just a coincidence. In this accusation, Demophilos was later backed by a certain Nikostratos (Aeschin. 1.86).

⁸⁰ Jacoby thought that book 31 began with the peace of Philokrates (346), so books 33 and 36 should be some years later.

In Athens, too, grain prices were rising despite the polis' measures to keep prices artificially low. The year 346 is not known to have been particularly difficult, but the continuous anxiety about supplies in this period is manifest.⁸¹ With grain supplies scarce or insecure, non-Athenians, on a rough estimate numbering one-fifth of the free inhabitants, faced even more serious problems: free grain distributions benefited only citizens and so, probably, did the grain sold at low prices in the 'internal market'.⁸² With recurrent periods of this staple becoming unaffordable or unavailable, non-Athenians might have become desperate and angry. This was probably the origin of the smouldering unrest due to 'foreigners' reported in the scholion. The *xenoi* were an internal, unrecognizable enemy whom Demophilos therefore meant to weed out, calling for a *diapsēphisis*.

This reconstruction explains why an account of grain distribution could be attached to an account of a full *diapsēphisis*, which normally had no connection to such distributions. Perhaps the short quote from Philochoros derived from a much longer account by him of these events that had shocked the polis profoundly. But how did a conflated and confused version of his and other accounts of these mid-fourth-century affairs appear in Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*?

VIII. Shifting archons, years, events

The passage from Theopompos about the *xenēlasia* derives from a scholion to Aristophanes' *Birds*, produced in 414, where the protagonist Peisetairos tells Meton that the chaos in the city resembles Sparta: 'they're expelling foreigners, and punches have started flying pretty thick and fast all over town' (ὥσπερ ἐν Λακεδαίμονι | ξενηλατοῦσι καὶ κεκίνηται τινες, 1013).⁸³ Here, the scholiast explains a word of the later fifth century with reference to a situation of the late fourth, about 70 years later. In terms of historical order, this reference is quite typical of scholiasts' work: they used snippets of historical information for textual and lexical clarification (not the other way round, as we are wont to do). The chronological frame mattered to them only when the text required it. For instance, in *Wasps* two events of the 440s appear without any indication that they happened 20 years before. For the audience of 422, for whom the events were shared memories, such indications were unnecessary, but for later readers the references were confusing and needed clarification.⁸⁴ Likewise, for the passage on the grain distribution (l. 718), the scholiast wonders if Aristophanes/Bdelycleon refers here to a gift of grain that the scholiast had found in Philochoros, although the interval of 20 years does not fit the adverb *πρῶην*.

Although scholiasts culled much information from the Attidographers, whose framework of the annual eponymous archons provided a chronological mooring, the historical frame was secondary to and embedded in their textual interests; so, things could easily go wrong. When trying to explain such errors, we can usually do no more than speculate about their causes. In our present case, two causes of potential confusion may have played a role, perhaps also reinforcing each other: the occurrence of two eponymous

⁸¹ In 347/6, Athens awarded special honours to Spartokos and Pairisades, who in 349 had succeeded their father Leukon as rulers of the Bosphoros, to continue the king's commitment to send grain to Athens (*IG* II² 1.298).

⁸² Migeotte (2010) 36–37. In the 330s, when the market price of grain had risen to 16 drachmae, the speaker of Dem. 34.39 provided 10,000 *medimnoi* of wheat sold at five drachmae. How much of this grain was available to non-Athenians is unclear. The same speaker gave a talent to the polis to buy free grain for the people; such a gift was for Athenians alone.

⁸³ Tr. Henderson (2000).

⁸⁴ Ar. Vesp. 283 refers to the revolt of Samos in 440, and l. 947 to the trial of Thucydides, the son of Melesias, in 444/3, both events during the career of Pericles. With four known Athenians named Thucydides, identification was a problem, for which the scholia drew on Philochoros (F120), Androtion (F37) and Theopompos (*FGrHist* 115 F91).

archons with the same name, and historical digressions referring back to the more distant past, which seem to have been common in Philochoros' work.

The first potential cause of confusion concerned different years with the same archon name; when the reported events also resembled each other to some extent, misperception could easily arise. Ancient authors had only the archon names to go by, not an independent chronology against which to check them.⁸⁵ Such double names occurred in the archonships of Lysimachides (445/4 and 339/8) and Archias (419/8 and 346/5). If in the year of Lysimachides (339/8) Athens had received a gift of grain from Egypt, it could be associated with the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5, since in 339/8 there were still numerous 'illegal' citizens.⁸⁶ However, such a gift in 339/8 is quite unlikely, as Luraghi shows, rendering this source of confusion improbable in this case. Instead, the scholion to *Wasps* revolves around the association between a gift of grain and citizen scrutiny, which may have connected Philochoros' account of the great *diapsēphisis* with the gift of grain from Egypt in the year of Lysimachides (445/4). Likewise, as we just saw, the association of food troubles and foreigners being cast out aligned events at Sparta some years after the second Archias (346/5) with similar events some years after the first Archias (419/8), when *Birds* was produced (414). In sum, there were possibilities aplenty to associate the grain distributions and scrutinies of the fifth and fourth centuries.

A second possible cause is the historical digressions in the Atthidographers, notably Philochoros. David Roselli makes a strong case that incidental subsidies for visiting the theatre and festivals in Pericles' time have unjustifiably been dismissed because references in Old Comedy to *θεωρικά* were mistaken by ancient commentators and modern scholars alike for the structural institution of the *theōrika* fund, which was only instituted in the mid-fourth century.⁸⁷ Following Jacoby, Roselli argues that Philochoros mentioned the first (incidental) *theōrika* in the mid-fifth century in book 3 (F33), but provided a much longer history of this subsidy in book 6 on the mid-fourth century, when it became a structural fund.⁸⁸ This fund, too, was open only to citizens. The *theōrika* itself is unlikely to have been the cause of the *diapsēphisis*, because the theatre fund required just the conventional light check on citizen status, and its institution does not fit the account of a threatening *stasis* discussed above.⁸⁹ But it is likely that, just as for the *theōrika*, Philochoros looked back in his account of the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5 and its aftermath, which was still an issue in 338, to the history of citizens' scrutinies, with a telescoping effect that confused later readers.

The full conflation of the mid-fifth and mid-fourth centuries apparent in Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* 37 must have been mediated by an authoritative source. For telling details, he often made use of Aristophanes, whether the protagonists of the *Lives* were contemporary with the playwright (Nicias, Alcibiades) or not (Themistocles, Pericles, Kimon, Demetrius).⁹⁰ In *Pericles* he quotes Aristophanes (twice), other comedy writers (Cratinus, Eupolis, Plato) and many other authors.⁹¹ By his time, readers needed

⁸⁵ Mattingly (1981): between 486/5 and 323/2, 11 of the commonly established archon names occurred twice, one three times, 135 names just once.

⁸⁶ For the possibility that the two years of Lysimachides were confused, see Schenkl (1883) 74–82; cf. Schenkl (1880) 170, but disparaged by Wachsmuth (1885), with reply from Schenkl (1885). Mattingly (1981) argued that the name of the first Lysimachides might in fact be Lysimachos, but this suggestion does not solve our problem.

⁸⁷ Roselli (2009).

⁸⁸ Roselli (2009) 13; Harp. s.v. *θεωρικά*; Jacoby *ad FGrH* 328 F33, 1.319; 1.247 with II n.7; cf. Harding (2008) 112.

⁸⁹ *Contra* Fantasia and Carusi (2004) 202–06; nonetheless, the number 14,240 from fragment e) could refer to Athenians who received this subsidy the first time when the fund was instituted.

⁹⁰ Ar. *Lys.* 1138 in *Cim.* 16.8; *Eq.* 815 in *Them.* 19.4; *Vesp.* 44 in *Alc.* 1.7; *Ran.* 1425 in *Alc.* 16.2–3; *Eq.* 358 in *Nic.* 4.7; Av. 639 in *Nic.* 8.3; *Eq.* 382 in *Dem.* 12.1; Av. 1549; *Lys.* 809 in *Ant.* 70.1 about Timon of Athens.

⁹¹ Plut. *Per.* 26.4 (*Babylonians*), 30.4 (*Acharnians*); Stadter (1989) lxiv–lxix. Plutarch refers directly to Didymos only once, in his treatise on the *axones* of Solon (*Sol.* 1.1).

commentaries to understand Old Comedy.⁹² Likewise, the language and background of Demosthenes' speeches needed clarification. For all of this, Plutarch consulted, among other works, the commentaries by Didymos, the Alexandrian scholar who flourished in the second half of the first century BCE and into the first century CE.⁹³ Famous for his learning and incomparable in his productivity, Didymos was highly respected, and the scholiasts on Archaic and Classical poetry as well as lexicographers drew extensively on his writings, from which many extant quotes from the historians derive.⁹⁴ His commentary on Aristophanes was a compilation of earlier philological and lexicographical work by Alexandrian scholars (Euphronios, Aristophanes of Byzantium, Callimachos and others).⁹⁵ Such commentaries often juxtaposed information from various episodes and years in the way described above. Didymos' commentary on Demosthenes likewise drew on previous commentaries, probably combined with readings of his own in the Attidographers and other historians.⁹⁶ In sum, Didymos' authoritative commentaries combined information collected from the works of others and notes made by himself and his assistants, and not always in the correct historical framework, as the numerous inaccuracies in his work show.⁹⁷

In our main sources, this information probably culled from Didymos appears in ways fitting the genres of scholion and moral essay. In the scholion to *Wasps* 718a, the five individual references are still discernible behind the stitches. Plutarch's *Lives* are philosophical-moral essays, in which the chronology is subservient to painting character and drawing moral lessons.⁹⁸ For the account of the scrutiny, Plutarch probably used Didymos' commentary on Aristophanes and that on Dem. 57, with information from Demosthenes, Aeschines and Isaeus on the *diapsēphisis*. Closely associated in Didymos, the moral mould of Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* 37 worked all the details on illegal citizens, grain distribution and Athenians receiving benefits into a single assessment of Pericles.

IX. Conclusions

Perhaps an Egyptian leader sent a gift of grain to Athens in 445/4. Such grain distributions benefited only Athenians, whose status as citizens was quickly checked when they claimed their portion in the Agora or the Piraeus. Only one full *diapsēphisis*, when all male Athenians voted on each other's citizen status in the demes, is known in our sources: the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5. It was a unique event, which allowed Athenians to act on resentments and suspicions of their fellows to an unprecedented degree.⁹⁹ For this scrutiny, there were no legal procedures, nor fair opportunities for defence. Thousands were cast out from their demes. The appeals took years to complete, if they ever were completed, and the damage done to the city's social fabric must have been enormous.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the impact may have been such that it left traces in the

⁹² Stadter (1989) lxiv–lxix.

⁹³ Harding (2008) 115–16; Harding (1994) 142; Dickey (2007) 29, 51–52.

⁹⁴ For Didymos, especially on Demosthenes, Harding (2006).

⁹⁵ Dickey (2007) 29; Benuzzi (2020).

⁹⁶ Dickey (2007) 51–52; Montana (2020).

⁹⁷ See West (1970) for a hypercritical picture of Didymos' historical methods, Montana (2020) for a milder assessment.

⁹⁸ Duff (1999) 312–13; Schmitt-Pantel (2009); Azoulay (2010) 12–20.

⁹⁹ The uniqueness of this event raises questions about the legal status of Demophilos' proposal that launched it. This issue was debated by Diller (1932), Gomme (1933) and again Diller (1935), contending that a proposal could only be overridden with a *graphē paranomōn* if it conflicted with existing laws, and that this proposal did not do so. Without getting into this debate here, the question certainly needs further investigation.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Fantasia and Carusi (2004) 192; Whitehead (1986) 106–08.

Athenian consciousness long after the event.¹⁰¹ The ill-judged proposal to launch this scrutiny was prompted by a deep-felt unrest widespread in the city due to the pressure of Macedon and recurrent shortages of grain. Non-Athenians were excluded from many relief measures; for them, the situation must have been particularly difficult, and they may have played a role in the discontent. ‘Secretive foreigners’ were blamed for the hostile climate in the city.

This disconcerting episode in the life of a polis that in better times took the rule of law seriously also allows some positive inferences. *Diapsēphisis* in this extreme form was *not* a regular feature of Athenian citizenship policies. Pericles’ Citizenship Law, which was *not* retroactive, did *not* spark an expulsion of *mētroxenoí*, *nothoi* and foreigners. These ghosts of an erroneous historical transmission can now finally be laid to rest.

Supplementary material. To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426925000047>

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¹⁰¹ Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 13.5 uses the noun *diapsēphismos* for an enigmatic scrutiny the Athenians reportedly held after the fall of the tyrants, which cannot have been a ‘real’ *diapsēphisis* (Poddighe (2010); Blok (2017) 118), but the choice of words probably reflects the traumatic impact of the *diapsēphisis* of 346/5 projected back onto the late sixth century. This issue, too, deserves a discussion of its own that exceeds the scope of this article.

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