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NOT JUST A RETURN TO THE *PATRIOS POLITEIA*  
– OR HOW TO TURN TEN INTO TWELVE:  
RESPONSE TO ILIAS ARNAOUTOGLU

In considering the restoration of the democratic constitution of Athens prompted by Demetrios Poliorketes in 307 BC after the expulsion of Kassandros and the termination of the semi-oligarchic regime of Demetrios of Phaleron, one of the most striking features in the course of these events is the tribal reform which consisted in the addition of two new *phylai* – named Antigonis and Demetrias – to the already existing ten tribes of Athens, described by Plutarch in his “Life of Demetrios” as follows: “they (*sc.* the Athenians) also created two new tribes, Demetrias and Antigonis; and they increased the number of the senators, which had been five hundred, to six hundred, since each of the tribes must furnish fifty senators”.<sup>1</sup> Of the various aspects of the Athenian constitution after 307 BC presented by Ilias Arnoutoglou in his paper I thus want to focus briefly on the tribal reform, since in my opinion this measure exceeded considerably a simple return to the *patrios politeia*, which in Plutarch’s account of Demetrios’ arrival in Athens is described as the primary reason for the Antigonid intervention: “he (*sc.* Demetrios) proclaimed by the voice of the herald at his side that he had been sent by his father ..., to set Athens free, and to expell her garrison and to restore to the people their laws and their ancient form of government (καὶ τοὺς νόμους αὐτοῖς καὶ τὴν πάτριον ἀποδώσοντα πολιτείαν).<sup>2</sup> Later, as we are told by the same author, Demetrios “assembled the people and gave them back their ancient form of government” (καὶ συναγαγὼν τὸν δῆμον ἀπέδωκε τὴν πάτριον πολιτείαν).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Plut. Demetrios 10,4: ταῖς δὲ φυλαῖς δύο προσέθεσαν, Δημητριάδα καὶ Ἀντιγονίδα, καὶ τὴν βουλὴν τῶν πεντακοσίων πρότερον ἑξακοσίων ἐποίησαν, ἅτε δὴ φυλῆς ἑκάστης πενήκοντα βουλευτὰς παρεχομένης; cf. Diod. 20,46,2 (referring the proposal of Stratokles to bestow various honours on Antigonos and Demetrios): πρὸς δὲ τὰς δέκα φυλάς προσθεῖναι δύο, Δημητριάδα καὶ Ἀντιγονίδα, καὶ συντελεῖν αὐτοῖς κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν ἀγῶνας καὶ πομπὴν καὶ θυσίαν “to add to the ten tribes two more, Demetrias and Antigonis, and to hold annual games in their honour with a procession and a sacrifice”; see also Poll. 8,110; Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀντιγονίς. The two new *phylai* are also often mentioned in Athenian and Attic inscriptions of the period from 307/6 to 201/0 BC.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. Demetrios 8,5: κήρυκα παραστησάμενος ἀνείπεν ὅτι πέμψειεν αὐτὸν ὁ πατὴρ ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐλευθερώσοντα καὶ τὴν φρουρὰν ἐκβαλοῦντα καὶ τοὺς νόμους αὐτοῖς καὶ τὴν πάτριον ἀποδώσοντα πολιτείαν.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. Demetrios 10,1.

However, the result of the introduction of the two new *phylai* constituted no less than a revision of the Kleisthenic order, approximately 200 years after its establishment.<sup>4</sup> A revision which meant a shift in the system of picking membership for the *boule*, the law courts and the magistracies from a decimal to a duodecimal basis.

To give only a few important examples: since the number of demes was not increased<sup>5</sup>, the reform required a redistribution of several demes of the old *phylai* to the two new *phylai* which were to consist of 15 demes each, thus resulting in the loss of three, four or five demes for nine of the ten old *phylai* – the old *phyle* Aiantis (being smaller) remained unaffected by the reform which was compensated by a greater loss of demes of the two largest *phylai* Aigeis and Leontis.<sup>6</sup> Also as a result of the reform the number of councilors in the *boule* was increased from 500 to 600 – a consequence of the reform which was already noted by Plutarch in the passage quoted above – and the business-calendar of the council was now divided into 12, instead of the former 10 prytanies, within which the two new *phylai* Antigonis and Demetrias from now on occupied the first and second ranks in the fixed sequence of the prytanising *phylai*<sup>7</sup> which (necessarily) now had shorter terms of office; the two new *phylai* and their respective prytany necessitated also a redistribution of the required 40 days of session of the *ekklesia* during the year corresponding to the now 12 (instead of the former 10) prytanies; also the number of many of the minor and major magistracies of the city had to be increased<sup>8</sup>; membership in the Heliaia and other lawcourts rose from 6000 to 7200; the hoplite army had to organize two new military contingents; – all these measures also bore considerable consequences for the city's finances, since more people than before were now entitled to receive allowances for attending the sessions of the various constitutional bodies.<sup>9</sup> And – last but not least – the conspicuous monument of the eponymous *phylai*-heroes on the Athenian *agora* had to receive two new statues.<sup>10</sup>

To put all this into effect undoubtedly must have meant some considerable bureaucratic hassle. The literary sources for the tribal reform, namely Diodorus and Plutarch, report on the establishment of the two new *phylai* in the context of their

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<sup>4</sup> For the tribal reform of 307/6 BC see especially the most recent contribution by Weber 2018 citing all the relevant previous studies on the issue.

<sup>5</sup> It was only in 224/3 BC, when the now 13<sup>th</sup> *phyle* Ptolemais (named in honour of Ptolemy III. of Egypt) was introduced, when the Athenians also added a new *demos* named Berenikidae after queen Berenike II., the wife of Ptolemy III., see Traill 1975, 29–31; Pritchett 1942/43; Weber 2018, 128–129.

<sup>6</sup> For the details see Traill 1975, 26–28; Weber 2018, 131–141; and also Arnautoglou at the beginning of section II of his paper.

<sup>7</sup> This becomes evident from the epigraphic record see e.g. *IG* ii<sup>2</sup> 478 (305/4) quoted by Arnautoglou in footnote 22.

<sup>8</sup> See also Arnautoglou in section II of his paper.

<sup>9</sup> See e.g. Weber 2018, 143–145.

<sup>10</sup> See esp. Shear 1970, and also Weber 2018, 141–143.

account of the divine and other honours which the city of Athens bestowed upon the Antigonids. Taking into account the consequences of this reform, its rather complex implementation, and its impact of the daily routine in the working of the Athenian democracy, it seems, however, difficult to explain this action simply by the wish of the Athenians to honour their new hero – and god! – Demetrios Poliorketes and his father for having restored the city’s freedom; apart from – of course – naming the two new subdivisions of the citizenry after the two Antigonid dynasts. One may also regard the fact that the two *phylai* Antigonis and Demetrias outlived the revolt of the Athenians against the now king Demetrios in 287 BC – in contrast to all the other divine honours bestowed upon Demetrios Poliorketes in 307 and 304 BC respectively, – as an indication that the creation of the two new – so to speak “Macedonian” – *phylai* was not only – and perhaps not even primarily – motivated by the wish to flatter the liberators and saviours of the city. In fact, the Athenians kept their two new Macedonian *phylai* for more than a century and also in times of independence of the city from Macedonian hegemony between 287 and 262 BC and again between 229 to 200 BC. It was only in 200 when the two *phylai* Antigonis and Demetrias were finally abolished and their names erased from public inscriptions, because Athens’ entering into the war against Macedon as allies of the Romans had fundamentally changed the rules of the game.<sup>11</sup> This long duration of the reform seems to indicate also that its effects must have enjoyed some popularity among the Athenian citizens.

Not everything, of course, was affected by the *phylai*-reform of 307/06. The number of the *strategoï*, for example, remained stable and there were not appointed two additional *strategoï* representing the two new *phylai* Antigonis and Demetrias. This may be due to the fact that already some years before 307 the requirement that each of the ten *phylai* had to be considered in the nomination of the candidates for the election of the *strategoï* had been abandoned and the *strategoï* were now elected from all Athenian citizens, perhaps because the former requirement had too severely limited the selection of suitable candidates.<sup>12</sup>

Concerning the increase in the number of the *bouleutai* from 500 to 600, Gregor Weber in a recent article on the tribal reform of 307 entertained the idea that a theoretical alternative was to keep the council of the 500 even with the two new *phylai* by reducing the number of the councilors from 50 to an average of 42, but this was presumably rejected because it would have resulted in a reduction of the seats in the *boule* for the demes.<sup>13</sup> There is, however, also a practical issue which may be raised against this assumption, since one does not get a council of 500 if one wants to give 12 *phylai* an equal number of councilors. It works well with ten, but not with 12; with 12 one would have to allot, for example, 42 *bouleutai* each to eight

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<sup>11</sup> See Byrne 2010.

<sup>12</sup> See Bleicken 1994, 245.503.

<sup>13</sup> Weber 2018, 133.

*phylai* (in total 336 *bouleutai*) and 41 councillors each to another four *phylae* (in total 164 *bouleutai*). But to allow for such an unequal distribution of *bouleutai* on the *phylai* would have presumably contradicted the democratic principle of equality in the representation of the *phylai* within the *boule*.

It is, though, beyond doubt that the increase in the number of councillors which was due to the creation of the two new *phylai* considerably enhanced the possibilities for democratic participation for a greater number of Athenian citizens than before 307.

It has also been very correctly argued by Ilias Arnaoutoglou in his paper that the increase in major and minor magistracies which was due to the reform had a considerable impact on the routine bureaucratic business of Athenian democracy, because there was now, “an increased likelihood for the average Athenian to exercise a polis-function at some point in his lifetime. The increased number of tribes led to an increased number of magistracies to be filled, thus augmenting the chances of every Athenian male, over thirty years of age, to be allotted in one of them.”<sup>14</sup>

Returning to the increase in the number of councillors as a result of the reform and their distribution by demes, it is striking that for the two new *phylai* there is no balance between the three *trittyes* of a single *phyle*, since in Antigonis and Demetrias altogether 44 *bouleutai* out of 12 demes come from the town, 24 *bouleutai* out of 7 demes come from the inland and 34 *bouleutai* out of 11 demes come from the coastal region. The attribution of 13 *bouleutai* to their relevant demes remains unclear and six demes in Antigonis and Demetrias cannot be located. However, the distribution of demes in the two new *phylai* also resulted in changes in the other *phylai* from which those demes had been taken away to fill up Antigonis and Demetrias. In total, about 50 demes were affected by the modification of the councillors quota because they had to send more councillors each to the new council of 600 than before to the council of 500.<sup>15</sup> In discussing this phenomenon, some scholars have quite plausibly linked the modifications in the number of councillors with demographic and economic factors, assuming that the increase in the number of the *bouleutai* may reflect the increased prosperity and economic success of several families whose origins can be traced back to the demes whose quota changed.<sup>16</sup> Since, however, we do not know the mode and rationale underlying the selection and the distribution of the demes on the two new *phylai* of 307/6 one has to be cautious in drawing too far-reaching conclusions.

To sum up: It seems obvious that the *phylai*-reform of the year 307/6 BC. cannot be explained solely by the desire on the side of the Athenians to honour the Antigonid liberators of their city in an outstanding way. Rather, the Athenians used

<sup>14</sup> Arnaoutoglou in section II of his paper.

<sup>15</sup> See Traill 1975, 28 and 59; Weber 2018, 134–135.

<sup>16</sup> See e.g. Oliver 2007, 103 and 105; see also Weber 2018, 135–136 with footnote 49.

the tribute to the Antigonids in introducing two new *phylai* named after them as a vehicle for a significant extension of the opportunities for the Athenian citizens for democratic participation.

Looking back to the most recent past, this action may, of course, be regarded as an immediate and adequate response to the restrictions of such opportunities for participation during the regime of Demetrios of Phaleron with – *inter alia* – its imposed property census.<sup>17</sup> In a broader historical perspective, however, this first revision of the Kleisthenic order since its introduction 200 years earlier, may have provided also a good opportunity for taking into account socio-economic and demographic shifts in the population of Athens and Attica which were not anymore adequately represented in the composition of the existing *phylai*. In this sense the enhancement for democratic participation resulting from the introduction of the two new *phylai* Antigonis and Demetrias went well beyond a mere restoration of the *patrios politeia*, and may be understood as an expression of the desire of the Athenians to strengthen their ancestral constitution, and to reinforce their democracy at the threshold of an age in which Athenian democracy was to be seriously challenged by the Hellenistic rulers.

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<sup>17</sup> For the property census of 1,000 drachmae as qualification for Athenian citizenship associated with the regime of Demetrios of Phaleron (Diod. 18.74.3) see e.g. van Wees 2011.

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