The central focus of civilisation for the Greeks, after the oikos or family unit, was the polis (plural: poleis). Polis is usually translated as 'city-state' as a polis was generally an independent state, with its own laws, customs, political system, military force, currency and sometimes calendar. According to Aristotle those who did not live in a polis were 'tribeless, lawless, hearthless', and to the Greeks the fact that they lived in a city-state was proof that they were a civilised people (doc. 1.1). But the polis should also in Aristotle's opinion be limited in size and self-sufficient. He was the first to employ the metaphor of the 'ship of state'. Too few inhabitants and the polis could not be self-sufficient, too many and the ship would be too big, and the administration of the polis would be adversely affected (doc. 1.3).

Aristotle's well-known statement that 'man is a political animal' should in fact be translated as 'man is a creature who lives in a polis' (Arist. Pol. 1253a 2–3: doc. 1.1), while according to Thucydides (7.77.7) 'it is men who are the city, and not walls or ships with no men inside'. Much of the history of the Greeks is the history of the interaction between its cities. City-states were generally independent, and, though various cities at different times attempted to dominate the other cities in Greece, these attempts were generally short-lived. The cities, rather than uniting with each other, were prone to fight amongst themselves, and nearby neighbours were often the most implacable enemies, such as Sparta and Argos. While there was a concept of mutual identity when faced with an outside enemy, as when during the Persian Wars the Hellenic League was formed to combat Xerxes (docs 11.19, 11.24), most Greeks saw themselves not primarily as Greek, but as a member of their city-state. Aristotle viewed the Greeks as superior to other peoples; the Greeks attained the 'highest political development' and Greece 'could rule everyone else, if it could achieve political unity' (doc. 1.2). But such unity was achieved only under Philip and Alexander of Macedon.

Apart from links with a mother-city which had sent out a colony, individual communities preferred to be self-sufficient, though many states were members of leagues, larger organisations formed to protect smaller cities or contribute to the power of the largest city-state in the region, such as the Peloponnesian League and Boeotian federation (docs 1.57–58, cf. 6.62–63). Athens was to gain power over a number of cities through the Delian League. There could also be cultural and religious unions between different cities (docs 1.59–60). While the Greek states shared several cultural features, such as the same language, religious beliefs, and system of writing (doc. 3.90), there were still differences between states: there were dialectical variations, each state had its own tutelary deities with different cults, names and festivals, and there could be differences of alphabet (cf. doc. 2.10).

Athens was the largest mercantile and commercial centre but had a rival in Corinth whose position on the Isthmus made it a major shipping centre and trading depot, with goods being transferred across the Isthmus to avoid the longer sail around the Peloponnese (docs 1.61–62). From
the available sources, it is possible to obtain a clear impression of some of the economic priorities of Greek city-states. Obviously by the fifth century the import of grain was of great importance to certain states like Teos (doc. 1.65), and there was legislation to stop corruption and consumer exploitation, as in the wine trade at Thasos, which not only regulated when wine could be sold, but specifically prevented adulteration and retail dealing, in terms which imply that these were a common occurrence (doc. 1.66). The most specific evidence for the economy of a city-state of course derives from Athens. Athens controlled trade (doc. 1.69), and levied customs duties (doc. 1.68), and had revenues drawn from a wide variety of taxes (doc. 1.28). All cities would have had their own system of taxation, both direct and indirect (doc. 1.47), and in the sixth as well as the fifth century BC most states would have had quite complex taxation and commercial systems in place.

Aristotle’s discussions of the various types of government point to the diversity of political organisation in Greece: kingship, aristocracy and constitutional government (politeia), from which the ‘deviations’ were, respectively for him, tyranny, oligarchy and democracy (doc. 1.1). Naturally the constitutions of cities changed over time, and the Athenaios Politeia listed eleven changes in constitution (politeia) from Athens’ earliest history down to the 320s BC (doc. 1.4). In a democracy, Aristotle notes that all the citizens ‘must be equal’; each citizen is governed by the others but in turn governs them (through rotation of who holds the political offices). The majority of citizens should decide what is to be done (doc. 1.5). Theophrastos in discussing the laws of Eresos saw ‘merit, adequate property and common sense’ as defining the criteria for office (doc. 1.6), but Perikles summed up a different political ideology for democratic Athens: it was merit alone, not the property a citizen owned, which was the determining principle in political participation: no one was denied office because of being poor (doc. 1.17).

While the poorer citizens in a democracy did ensure that they enjoyed sacrifices and civic amenities (doc. 1.8, cf. 1.18), and Aristotle defined democracy as looking only to the ‘interests of the poor’ (doc. 1.1), citizenship carried specific obligations. Perikles in his Funeral Oration outlined the privileges citizens enjoyed: to stand for political office and to speak in the assembly, with the majority managing the affairs of the city and ‘not just a few’ (doc. 1.17). All citizens were to participate in Athenian affairs of state: Solon had passed a law against political apathy in 594/3 BC (doc. 8.21). More importantly, Perikles described the citizen who took no part in politics as ‘totally useless’ (doc. 1.17). A citizen had to be prepared to lay down his life for his city (cf. doc. 1.41); he had to look at Athens and become its lover (doc. 1.17).

Aristotle’s concern that if the citizens are unknown to each other then the ‘management of political positions’ suffers (docs 1.1, 1.3) was overcome in Athens by the people having control over the officials, who were examined before they took office and had to give an account of their term of office when it was over (docs 1.19, 1.22). Widespread political participation by the citizens was ensured at Athens by paying the citizens for political duties, such as holding office, being a member of the boule, serving on a jury, and in the fourth century for attendance at the assembly (ekklesia). The vast majority of citizens had to work hard for a living and needed financial reimbursement for working time spent in political duties. In particular, payment for serving on juries was fundamental to Athenian practice because the law courts made so many decisions (doc. 9.23), particularly in the fourth century BC when laws proposed in the assembly could be declared illegal, with the juries deciding on the issue. Despite Aristophanes’ comic caricatures of the jurors as cranky old men who loved deciding a lawsuit (docs 1.25–26, 1.28), the judicial system worked efficiently; arbitrary punishment, imprisonment, execution and confiscation of property were not hallmarks of the democracy but of the two periods of oligarchy in 411 and 404–403 BC.

Most of the evidence about the workings of city-states comes from Athens. This was an unusually large city, with several important urban areas, such as Eleusis, and various villages (demes) scat-
tered throughout the territory of Attica (though Syracuse in Sicily was also larger and more important than many mainland Greek cities). Every citizen had the right to vote and also to speak in the assembly, which in fifth-century Athens was the decision-making body (doc. 1.18; cf. 7.26 for Mytilene). Nevertheless there were constitutional constraints on the assembly, and from Kleisthenes’ time the agenda for the meeting was drawn up beforehand by the boule, the Council of Five Hundred, which served rather like a standing committee. Of the five hundred councillors, fifty were chosen from each of the ten tribes and one of the tribes was in office (‘held the prytany’, each prytany being one-tenth of the year) at any one time, the fifty councillors from that particular tribe being responsible for the day-to-day business that came up in the Council and procedure in the assembly, such as putting questions to the vote. But the procedure did not always run normally, as after the battle of Arginousai in 406 BC (doc. 1.20). In the seventh and sixth centuries the most important officials of Athens had been the archons: there were nine of these – the basileus (or king) archon, the eponymous archon, after whom the year was named, and the polemarch (war archon), plus six thesmothetai. In the time of Kleisthenes, the archons were joined by a tenth, the secretary of the thesmothetai, and now corresponded to the new ten tribes, with one archon was elected from each. In fact, in the fifth century the most important officials were the ten generals (strategoi), who were appointed annually, one from each tribe, but were eligible for re-election and thus became the real political leaders of Athens as well as the commanders of the armed forces.

Perikles’ Funeral Oration is a valuable document for the Athenians’ concept of the responsibilities of a citizen in a democracy as well as making clear the fact that Athens in particular prided itself on its independence and political system (doc. 1.17). Nevertheless, there was no ‘model’ for a city-state, despite Aristotle’s theoretical propositions. It would be unwise to take Athens as representing the ‘average’ Greek polis: Sparta was in many respects the very antithesis of Athens, in political structure and constitution, society, economy and culture. All Greek city-states were different and possessed their own constitutions and social practices (cf. docs 1.45–54), but all were of course equally important to their inhabitants, whose lives revolved entirely around this integral component of Greek civilisation and culture.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY-STATE

1.1 Aristotle Politics 1252b28–1253a7, 1279a22–1279b10: Man Is a ‘Political Animal’

The phrase ‘man is a political animal’ is a famous mistranslation of Aristotle’s phrase: ‘man is by nature a creature of the polis’. That is, man functions with and belongs to the city-state (the polis; pl.: poleis), which was the essential building block of Greek civilisation and one of its defining characteristics. Aristotle defines various types of government but what is crucial is that the individual citizen has a role in the polis; he here sees democracy, like that of fifth-century Athens, as a deviation from normal rule by the people. The amalgamation of villages into a single unit was synoikismos, synoecism (for which see docs 1.7, 1.55–56).

1252b28 The amalgamation of numerous villages creates a unified city-state, large enough to be self-sufficient or nearly so, starting from the need to survive, and continuing its existence for the sake of a comfortable lifestyle. So, the city is natural just like the earlier forms of society. It is the outcome of them, and the nature of a thing is its outcome, for what each thing is when its development has been completed we call this its nature, whether we are talking of a man, or a horse, or a household. Moreover the final cause and outcome of a thing is the best, and to be self-sufficient is the best outcome.
From this it is clear that the state is a creation of nature and that man is by nature a creature of the polis. And anyone who by nature and not by chance is without a polis is either a bad man or far above humanity, and like the ‘tribeless, lawless, hearthless’ person whom Homer (Iliad 9.63) condemns, this man is by nature necessarily a lover of war, and may even be compared to an isolated piece in a board-game like draughts.

Then, with regard to the different types of government, we have to find out how many there are, and what they are, and first of all what their true forms are — for when these are defined the deviations from them will at once become clear. The words constitution and government have the same meaning and the government, which is the supreme authority in poleis, must be in the hands of one, or of a few, or of the many, and the true forms of government therefore are those in which the one, or the few, or the many are ruling with a view to the common interest, while those which rule with a view to private interests, whether of the one, or of the few, or of the many, are deviations. For, the citizens, if they are truly so, ought to share in the benefits of government.

Of the types of government which look to the common interest we normally call that in which one person rules kingship; that in which more than one but not many rule, aristocracy — either because the rulers are the best men, or because they promote the best interests of the state and citizens; and, when the many administer the state for the common interest, the government is called by its generic name – constitutional government …

Of the above-mentioned types, the deviations from these are as follows: from kingship, tyranny; from aristocracy, oligarchy; from constitutional government, democracy. For tyranny is a kind of monarchy, which looks only to the interests of the ruler; oligarchy looks to the interests of the wealthy; and democracy to the interests of the poor: none of these looks to the common good of the people as a whole.

1.2 Aristotle Politics 1327b23–33: Greek Superiority over Other Countries

The Greeks are here seen as superior to other races by reason of the effect geography and climate have on their development, and their right to rule or enslave inferior peoples is implicitly accepted. Herodotos similarly praises the location of the cities of the Ionian Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor (doc. 1.59).

Peoples in cold countries, especially those in Europe, are spirited but lack intelligence and skill; for this reason they remain mostly free, but do not attain political development and are unable to rule those near them. The peoples of Asia possess intelligence and skill, but they lack spirit, and for this reason they remain governed by others and enslaved. The Greek race, however, lying between these regions, shares the characteristics of both. It is spirited and intelligent, and for this reason remains at liberty and attains the highest political development, while it is able to rule everyone else, if it can achieve political unity.

1.3 Aristotle Politics 1326a40–b24: The Ideal City-State

The city-state, according to Aristotle, needs to be of a certain size and to be self-sufficient, while the citizens are to know each other so that the ‘management of political offices’ and judgements in law
cases are sound. Despite his emphasis on the self-sufficiency of cities, most of them relied on imports, and Perikles boasts that Athens can afford imported goods from all over the world (docs 1.17, 1.69). Aristotle argues that in a large city foreigners and metics can more easily claim citizenship, but the Athenians overcame this problem by having the citizen rolls managed at the level of the small deme units (doc. 1.38). Stentor was the herald with a booming voice in Homer’s *Iliad* (5.785–6).

1326a40 A boat that is the span of an outstretched hand in length will not be a boat at all, nor will one that is two stades in length. When a boat comes to a certain length it will be unseaworthy either because it is too small or because it is too big.

1326b2 It is the same with a polis: if it has too few inhabitants it will not be self-sufficient (a polis is necessarily self-sufficient), and if it has too many it will of course be self-sufficient, but as a country, not as a polis; for it will not easily acquire a government — for who would be a military commander of such an excessively large group of people, or who a herald, unless he had a voice like Stentor? So when the population first reaches the minimum size for self-sufficiency and prosperity in respect of its political community, it can continue growing larger in size than this and become a larger polis, but this, as we said, cannot go on indefinitely.

1326b11 It is easy to determine from how a polis works the limit of where this growth has to stop. The tasks of a polis belong to those who rule and those who are ruled, the tasks of the ruler being governing and giving judgement. But, for judging lawsuits and the allocation of offices according to merit, citizens have to know each other and what kind of people these others are, and where this is not the case the management of political positions and the judging of lawsuits obviously suffers. In both cases it is not proper to conduct these in a casual manner, as clearly has to happen where the population is too large. It also makes it easier for foreigners and metics to claim citizenship, as it is not difficult to escape detection because of the size of the population. So it is clear that a polis is of best size when it has a population large enough for a self-sufficient lifestyle but one that can be seen at a glance.

1.4 [Aristotle] *Athenaion Politeia* 41.2: The Eleven Constitutions of Athens

Writing in the 320s BC, the author of the *Athenaion Politeia* outlines eleven major constitutional changes at Athens, and sees the constitution as having become increasingly democratic throughout the fourth century. Voting for decrees in the ekklesia, and control of the law courts (dikasteria), are given as the two ways in which ‘the many’ govern the Athenian state.

41.2 The return from Phyle and the Piraeus (403 BC) was the eleventh change to the constitution. The first was the establishment of Ion and his companions when they came to settle at Athens, for it was then that the Athenians were divided for the first time into four tribes and the tribe-kings appointed. The second (the first after the original one which had a constitutional significance) took place in the time of Theseus, and deviated slightly from monarchy. After this came the one in the time of Drakon, in which laws were drawn up for the first time. The third was in the time of Solon following civil unrest, which saw the start of democratic rule. The fourth was the tyranny in Peisistratos’ time. The fifth was that of
Kleisthenes after the overthrow of the tyrants, which was more democratic than that of Solon. The sixth followed the Persian Wars under the oversight of the Council of the Areiopagos. The seventh and subsequent change had been suggested by Aristeides, but was put into effect by Ephialtes when he dissolved the Areiopagos Council, during which owing to the demagogues and its naval empire the city committed its greatest mistakes. Eighth was the establishment of the Four Hundred, and after this came the ninth, when democracy was restored. Tenth was the tyranny of the Thirty and the Ten. The eleventh was the one that came into being after the return from Phyle and the Piraeus. From this time the constitution has continued down to that of the present day, and the power of the people has continuously increased throughout this period. For the people has made itself master of everything and administers everything through decrees and jury-courts in which the people has total control, for even the law cases tried by the Council have come across to the people. They appear to act correctly in so doing: for a few people are more easily corrupted by money and favours than the many.

1.5 Aristotle *Politics* 1317a40–b4: Aristotle on Democracy

Democracy, or the ‘rule of the people’, was the form of government at Athens from 508/7 to 322/1 BC. The Athenian government was a form of ‘direct’ democracy, in which all citizens were expected to participate, both by voting and speaking in the assembly and by standing for various offices and magistracies, or serving on Athens’ council, the boule: Perikles praises this form of government in his Funeral Oration (doc. 1.17). Greek cities also possessed governments in the form of kingships (especially the dual kingship in Sparta), tyrannies (one-man rule), aristocracies (‘the rule of the best’) and oligarchies (‘the rule of the few’).

1317a40 A democratic polis presupposes liberty, and it is generally said that only in this type of state can liberty be enjoyed: 1317b1 people say that this is the aim of every democracy. One principle of liberty is that everyone is governed and governs in turn. This is because democratic justice means equality by numbers and not by merit, and this being so the majority must be the sovereign power, and whatever the majority decides must be the final decision and be just. Every one of the citizens, it is said, must be equal. In consequence, in democracies the poor have more power than the wealthy, as there are more of them and the decision of the majority is supreme. So this is one of the marks of liberty, which all democrats see as the distinguishing mark of their constitution: another is that everyone should live as he chooses. This, they affirm, is liberty in practice, since not living in accordance with your wishes constitutes the life of a slave. This is the second distinguishing mark of democracy, and in consequence of this there has evolved the desire not to be governed, by anyone if possible, and if not for government to be taken in turns, thus contributing to the concept of liberty founded on equality.

1317b17 As this is our foundation and starting point, the principle features of democracy are as follows: the election of all officials from the whole body; that everyone should govern each individual and that every individual should in turn govern everyone; that appointment to every position, or at least those that do not require experience and skill, should be made by lot; that no property qualification should be needed for officials or just a very low one; that the same person should not hold the same office twice, or not often, except in the case of military positions; that all positions, or as many as possible, should be limited in duration;
that everyone should be involved in the judicial system and selected out of everyone and judge all issues, or at least the majority of them and those of the greatest importance, such as the audit of accounts, the constitution, and private contracts, with the assembly the supreme authority over all of these, or at least the most important, with the magistrates having no responsibility over any of them or only a very few. Of all the magistracies, the Council is the most democratic when there is no way of paying everyone; but, if there is, the authority of the Council is lost as well, as the people when paid take over all the lawsuits themselves as I said in my discussion earlier. The next feature of democracy is that everyone gets paid, including assembly, courts, and magistrates, and, if this is not possible, then magistrates, courts, Council and the sovereign assemblies, or at the very least those magistrates who have to dine together. While oligarchy is defined by birth, wealth and education, the distinguishing factors of democracy seem to be the opposite of these, such as low birth, poverty and the lifestyle of a tradesman.

1.6 Theophrastos, Laws for Eresos: The Need for Experience in Public Life

Theophrastos (c. 370–288), a pupil of Aristotle’s and his successor in the Academy, is here theorising about the best ways to appoint officials. Theophrastos’ home was the city of Eresos on the island of Lesbos.

What is best is that someone should gain trust through his lifestyle and upbringing, not his property, and education and good customs in the state will bring this about. At any rate, the practice of basing office-holding on census classes seems in general too archaic because it would often debar the true leaders: neither Epameinondas, nor Pelopidas, nor Iphikrates and Chabrias from Athens would have become generals, nor those earlier and better men Aristeides and Themistokles. It appears, therefore, that there needs overall to be some consideration of which offices should be filled on the basis of wealth and merit or merit only or wealth only. For the treasury positions, as has been said, people look for wealth; for guarding the laws or some other such position one needs justice, and for the generalship, whether it is in charge of matters outside or within the city, sufficient fortune in addition to merit, as well as the third factor, mentioned before, experience. These are the three requirements for holding office: merit, adequate property, and common sense — assuming that goodwill is a common factor. The two first of these are needed for all, while common sense is appropriate for some, but essential for the most important offices. In some ways it is enough if one looks at both criteria honestly, for they are in general good at observing, and best at recognising, times of crisis; as a result people are chosen for their good fortune and ability, though some people do look at one or the other because they choose the best citizens, while most people who are poor at judging look to property. It is true, as said before, that some offices especially call for trustworthiness, some common sense and cleverness, and others attention to detail and aggression, even if this is distasteful. But it is not easy to assign a person to each by law, so that it has to be those who scrutinise the candidates who select the most suitable.

Since some offices, as has been said, require experience, it is a good idea always to introduce into these some of the younger men so they can be trained how to do things by those with the knowledge and so not cause any damage to the city’s administration, as Hagnon once advised the Athenians to do in the case of their generals, using the example of hunting, where, he said, lovers of hunting always bring along puppies. And some of
the well-administered smaller cities already do this, such as Karystos and Kythnos: they appoint three men who have already served as generals and two of the younger men. In this office in particular the most important crises are bound to arise, but nevertheless some mixture of this sort, combining the different age-groups, will result in good government and positive reinforcement from both ages, as in the gymnasiarchy: those who elect two men, one older, one younger, for this position do this in the right way, so that one provides the discipline for his share, while the other takes the lead in the fitness exercises when he strips off. Not that it is fair that both have exactly the same duties — but the overall responsibility belongs to them both, and what is needed for that is a high degree of attention to detail. Anyone, however, who intends to hold the higher magistracies should first hold other offices, as was said for the generalship. It would be ridiculous if a person who had not been a taxiarchos (leader of a tribal contingent) or phylarchos (leader of a tribe) went straight into being a general. As was said before, some offices can be tried out earlier, others should be left till later, for two reasons: in this system the man who expects office is made eager and ambitious to be tried out because of the status of the more important offices or, as used to happen in Epeiros, the delay (before they can be held). In some places the law states that candidates for higher offices have to be selected from the lower ones or from those supposed to lead to the higher ones, as in Phokis, where they select their generals from those who have been phylarchs and treasurers. Generally speaking no one should hold office without at least having been a member of the Council, as in Ambrakia.

ATHENS: ‘THE VIOLET-CROWNED CITY’

‘Rich, violet-crowned and famed in song,
Bulwark of Greece, glorious Athens.’

Pindar F64

Estimates of Attica’s overall population in the fifth century are difficult to arrive at. It seems likely that that there were between 30,000 and 40,000 male citizens, with their wives and children, in addition to the resident foreigners, the metics. There were not large numbers of slaves, so an overall human population of 200,000–250,000 is probable.

1.7 Thucydides 1.10.2: A Comparison of Athens and Sparta

Sparta was made up of separate, geographically unconnected villages, and had not undergone a synoikismos into one community, unlike Athens (see doc. 1.56; and for Athens’ great buildings, docs 1.9, 1.35).

1.10.2 If the Spartans’ city were to become deserted, and only the temples and foundations of buildings were left, I think that the people of that time far in the future would find it difficult to believe that the Spartans’ power had been as great as their fame implied (and yet they inhabit two-fifths of the Peloponnese, and are in command of all of it as well as of many allies outside it; nevertheless, it has not been synoikised into a city, nor does it possess costly temples and buildings, but consists of a number of villages in the early Greek manner, and would seem an inferior place), whereas if the same thing were to happen to Athens, from its visible remains one would assume that the city had been twice as powerful as it actually is.
1.8 [Xenophon] *Constitution of the Athenians* 2.9–10: The Amenities of Athens, c. 425 BC

The author is apparently annoyed that the people can enjoy benefits which the rich have to pay for themselves. At doc. 1.30 the author complains that it is the wealthy who pay for liturgies, and sees a popular motive behind it, so that the poorer citizens become wealthy and the rich poorer, which of course did not happen.

2.9 The people, realising that it is impossible for each of the poor to offer sacrifices, hold banquets, set up shrines and govern a great and beautiful city, have discovered a way of having sacrifices, shrines, festivals and sanctuaries. So the city sacrifices numerous victims at public expense, but it is the people who banquet and who are allocated the victims. 10 And while some of the wealthy have their own private gymasia, baths and dressing-rooms, the people have built for their own use many wrestling-schools (palaistrai), dressing-rooms and bath-houses; and the ordinary people enjoy far more of these than the aristocrats and the wealthy.

1.9 Plutarch *Life of Perikles* 12.1–2: Perikles’ Building Programme

Perikles’ opponents in the assembly criticised his building programme as misuse of funds contributed by the allies. But it is unclear whether tribute funded the Parthenon, which itself probably only cost some 460–500 talents over several years and could have been paid for by internal revenues.

12.1 But what brought most pleasure and adornment to Athens, and the greatest amazement to the rest of mankind, and is the only evidence that the tales of Greece’s power and ancient prosperity are not lies, was Perikles’ construction of monuments. But this of all his measures was the one most maligned and slandered by his enemies in the assembly … 2 ‘Greece must be outraged,’ they cried, ‘and consider this an act of blatant tyranny, when she sees that with the contributions she has been compelled to make towards the war we are gilding and beautifying our city, like some vain woman decking herself in precious jewels and statues and temples worth thousands of talents.’

1.10 Thucydides 2.13.3–5: Athens’ Resources at the Outbreak of War

Perikles is here pointing out the city’s resources to the people of Athens at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. Compared to Sparta, Athens was financially well prepared for war, and in addition had a fleet of 300 triremes. The sacred monies could be used but were to be repaid, but Athens in the event did not repay them: cf. doc. 1.11 for the treasures in the Parthenon.

2.13.3 Perikles told the Athenians to take courage from the fact that the city had nearly six hundred talents a year coming in as tribute from the allies, quite apart from the rest of the revenue, and that they still had on the acropolis six thousand talents in coined silver (at its greatest the reserve had amounted to nine thousand seven hundred talents, from which they had paid for the propylaea of the acropolis and the other buildings and for Potidaea). 4 There was also uncoined gold and silver in the shape of private and public dedications and all the sacred accoutrements used in the processions and festivals, and Persian spoils and other things of the same kind, amounting to not less than five hundred talents. 5 And
to this he added the many possessions of the other shrines, which they could make use of, and, if nothing else were available to them, the gold decorating the statue of the goddess herself. He pointed out that there was forty talents’ weight of pure gold on the statue, all removable. But he said that if they used it to ensure their own safety, they had to replace no less an amount afterwards. 6 As to their finances then he told them to have confidence: as to hoplites there were thirteen thousand, not counting the sixteen thousand who manned the garrisons and city walls. 7 This was the number that was initially on garrison duty when the enemy were invading, comprised of the oldest and youngest citizens and those metics who were hoplites ... 8 He pointed out that there were twelve hundred cavalry, including mounted archers, and three hundred seaworthy triremes.

1.11  *Inscriptions Graecae* I 351: Inventory of the Treasures of the Parthenon, 422/1 BC

The treasures in the Parthenon were made up of dedications and war booty. Every four years an account had to be made of the treasures, to ensure that there had been no theft or embezzling: note the precise value given for specific objects. These treasures belonged to the goddess Athena, and while Perikles said the treasures could be borrowed the Athenians had to give back ‘no less an amount’ (doc. 1.10). Compare Croesus’ dedications at Delphi: Hdt. 1.50 (cf. doc. 3.20), cf. 9.80. [IG I 2 280.]

1 Gods. The following was handed over by the four boards, who gave their account from the Great Panathenaia to the Great Panathenaia, to the treasurers, for whom Presbias son of Semios of Phegaia was secretary. The treasurers, for whom Presbias son of Semios of Phegaia was secretary, handed over to the treasurers for whom Nikias son of Euthykes of Halimous was secretary, to Euphemos 5 of Kollytos and his colleagues in the Parthenon: crown of gold, weight of this 60 drachmas; bowls (phialai) of gold, five, weight of these 782 drachmas; uncoined gold, weight of this 1 drachma, 4 obols; drinking-cup (karchesion) of gold, its base silver gilt, sacred to Herakles of Elaious, weight of this 138 drachmas; two nails, silver underneath, gilt, weight of these 184 drachmas; mask, silver underneath, gilt, weight of this 116 drachmas; phialai of silver, 138 drachmas; horn of silver; weight of these 2 talents, 3,307 drachmas.

By number as follows: short Persian swords set in gold, 6; 10 standing crop set in gold, ears of corn, 12; breadbaskets wooden underneath, gilt, 2; censer, wooden underneath, gilt, 1; girl on a stele, gilt, 1; bed, wooden underneath, gilt, 1; gorgon mask, skull overlaid with gold; horse, griffin, front part of griffin, griffin, head of lion, necklace of flowers, serpent, these overlaid with gold; helmet, overlaid with gold; shields, overlaid with gold, wooden underneath, 15; beds, Chian work, 7; beds, Milesian work, 10; sabres, 9; swords, 5; breastplates, 16; shields with devices, 6; shields covered with bronze, 31; chairs, 6; footstools, 4; camp-stools (diphroi), 15 9; lyre, gilt, 1; lyres of ivory, 4; lyres 4; table inlaid with ivory; helmets of bronze, 3; feet of beds, overlaid with silver, 13; small leather shield; phialai of silver, 4; small cups, silver underneath, 2; horse of silver; weight of these 900 drachmas. Shields, overlaid with gold, wooden underneath, 2; short Persian sword, overlaid with gold, unweighed; phialai of silver, 8, weight of these 807 drachmas; drinking-cups (poteria) from Chalkis of silver, 4, weight of these 124 drachmas; flute-case from Methymne of ivory, gilt; shield from Lesbos, with device; helmet from Lesbos, of Illyrian bronze; phialai 20 of silver, 2; drinking-cups (karchesia) of silver, 2; weight of these 580 drachmas. Lesbian cups
(kotyloi) of silver, 3, weight of these 370 drachmas; crown of gold, weight of this, 18 drachmas, 3 obols; crown of gold, weight of this 29 drachmas; crown of gold of Athena Nike, weight of this 29 drachmas; crown of gold, weight of this 33 drachmas; crown of gold of Athena Nike, weight of this 33 drachmas; tetradrachm of gold, weight of this 7 drachmas, 2½ obols; onyx on a gold ring, unweighed.

1.12 *Inscriptiones Graecae* I³ 458a: Pheidias’ Statue of Athena, 440/39

This inscription provides for the purchase of materials for the cult-image of the Parthenon, which was begun in 447/6 and dedicated in 438 BC; cf. Thuc. 2.13.5; Plut. *Per*. 13.14. The total cost may have been between 700 and 1,000 talents. For the charges against Pheidias of impiety and embezzling gold and ivory intended for the statue, see Plut. *Per*. 31.2–5. [IG I² 356.]

Kichesippos of the deme Myrrhinous was secretary for the commissioners of the statue. Receipt 5 from the treasurers for whom Demostratos of Xypete was secretary: 100 talents. The treasurers were Ktesion, Sistros, 10 Antiphates, Menandros, Thymocharis, Smokordos, Pheideleides. 15 Gold was bought, weight 6 talents, 1,618 drachmas, 1 obol; the cost of this was 87 talents, 4,652 drachmas, 5 obols. 20 Ivory was bought: 2 talents, 743 drachmas.

1.13 *Inscriptiones Graecae* I³ 449: Building Accounts of the Parthenon, 434/3 BC

This is the best preserved of the Parthenon building accounts, of which the fifteen years 447/6 to 433/2 BC are recorded on the four sides of a marble stele on the acropolis. The accounts start with the balance from the previous year and the year’s income of the board of annual commissioners, the main grant coming from Athena’s treasurers (here less than normal at four talents as the project was nearing completion). [IG I² 352.]

For the commissioners for whom 370 Antikles was secretary in the (year of) the fourteenth Council in which Metagenes was first secretary, when Krates was the 375 Athenians’ archon. Receipts for this year are as follows:

| 1,470 dr. | Balance from the last year |
| 74:       | Lampsakene gold staters   |
| 27 ½:     | Cyzicene gold staters     |
| 385       | From the treasurers of the goddess’s treasury for whom Krates of Lampsai was secretary |
| 25,000 dr.: | From gold sold off, weight 98 drachmas; payment for this |
| 1,372 dr.: | From ivory sold off, weight 3 talents, 60 drachmas; payment for this |
| 1,305 dr. 4 ob.: | |

395 Expenditures:

| … 200: | For purchases |
| —2 dr. 1 ob.: | |

For wages:

| 1,926 dr. 2 ob.: | For the workers at Pentelikos and those who load the stone on the wagons |

11
401

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>16,392 dr.</td>
<td>Wages for the sculptors of the pediment-sculptures</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,800 dr.</td>
<td>For monthly wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>..11 dr., 2 ob.</td>
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405 Balance for this Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74: Lampsakene gold staters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 ½: Cyzicene gold staters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.14 *Inscriptiones Graecae* I 3 49: Care of Athens’ Water Supply, c. 435 BC

This inscription concerns Perikles and his sons Paralos and Xanthippos (and other unspecified sons; cf. doc. 4.29) and the improvement of Athens’ water supply, which was to receive first priority from the income from the tribute once Athena had received her one-sixtieth share (the ‘first fruits’). Perikles and his sons had apparently offered to pay some of the costs themselves, but the people decided to use the money from the tribute instead. [IG I 54.]

1... Hipponikos proposed the motion: ... each ... are to receive pay of a drachma for each day, and they are to look after the spring and 5 the conduit for the water ... Nikomachos proposed the amendment: that the rest be as resolved by the Council, ... so that they flow ... so that for minimum cost ... the prytaneis who by lot are the first to hold office, ... in the first of the 10 regular assemblies immediately after the sacred matters. ... is good for the people of the Athenians ... not occur and it shall turn out for the Athenians ... proposed the amendment: that the rest be as Nikomachos proposed; and that Perikles and Paralos and Xanthippos and the (other) sons be commended; and expenditure (on this) shall be made from the money 15 that is paid into the tribute of the Athenians, once the goddess has received from them her accustomed portion.

1.15 Demosthenes 43 Against Makartatos 71: Athens’ Olive Trees

The defendant is accused of having cut down more than a thousand oil-producing olive trees in order to sell the wood while the inheritance of a minor’s estate was still under adjudication. The prosecution claims that olive trees are so important to the state that the offence was not only against the owners of the estate but against Athens itself. Olive oil was used for food, lighting and bathing. It was also one of Athens’ more important exports. The olive tree was sacred to Athena. Jars of oil from the sacred trees were presented as prizes at the Panathenaia in Athens and jars of olive oil were left on tombs: doc. 3.57.

71 If anyone digs up an olive tree at Athens, unless it is for a sanctuary of the Athenian state or a deme, or for his own use up to the maximum of two olive trees per year, or for the needs of a deceased person, he shall owe the treasury a hundred drachmas for each olive tree, with a tenth of this belonging to the goddess. In addition he shall owe the individual who prosecutes him a hundred drachmas for each olive tree. Cases concerning such
matters are to be brought before the archons, according to their jurisdiction. The prose-
cutor shall deposit the court fees for his part. When a person is convicted, the archons
before whom the case was brought shall make a written report to the collectors of the
amount due to the treasury and to the treasurers of the goddess of the amount due to the
goddess. If they do not make this report, they shall themselves be liable for the amount.

THE WORKINGS OF ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

The two most important democratic institutions of Athens were the assembly (ekklesia)
and the law courts (dikasteria); in the fifth century all citizens over eighteen years of age
were members of the assembly, but in the fourth century citizens had to be at least twenty
years of age. After Kleisthenes’ reforms in 508 BC, the ekklesia made all of the political
decisions, and, in the fourth century, indictments against proposed laws were aggressively
pursued by political opponents in the dikasteria. The courts also possessed some political
jurisdiction in the examination of the incoming and outgoing magistrates (dokimasiai and
euthynai), who may have comprised some 700 (doc. 1.23). The Council, or boule, arranged
the agenda for the assembly. In the fifth century the Council had 500 members, fifty from
each tribe, each tribe presiding in turn: these presiding councillors were called the
prytaneis and met in the prytaneion, the ‘town hall’.

1.16 [Aristotle] Athenaion Politeia 43.1–6: Business Matters for the Council and
Assembly

In the Athenian democracy it was axiomatic that any one citizen was as good as another and as
capable of holding office – hence choosing by lot was an appropriate way of selecting officials.
Exceptions, however, were made in the cases of financial officials, generals and those in charge of
the water supply, showing not only that these were important functions, but that it was admitted that
they needed skills not necessarily possessed by the ‘average’ citizen. The theoric fund was a
festival account.

43.1 All the officials involved with routine administration are chosen by lot. The excep-
tions are: the treasurer of the military fund, those in charge of the theoric fund, and the
superintendent of the water supply. All these are elected by show of hands, and those who
are elected stay in office from one Panathenaia to the next. All military officials are also
elected by show of hands. 2 The five hundred members of the Council are elected by lot,
fifty from each tribe. Each of the tribes in turn presides, in an order decided by lot, with
the first four holding office for thirty-six days each and each of the remaining six for thirty-five
days, as the year is comprised of lunar months. 3 Members of the presiding tribe (the
prytaneis) first dine in the prytaneion, receiving a payment from the city, and then convene
meetings both of the Council and the people, with the Council meeting on every day
except holidays, and the people four times in each prytany. The prytaneis give written
notice of the business to be dealt with by the Council, and the agenda for each day, and the
venue. 4 They also give written notice of assembly meetings: one sovereign meeting, at
which there must be a vote on whether the magistrates appear to be performing their
duties properly, and to deal with the food supply and defence of the country. On this same
day those who wish to do so bring impeachments, and the inventories of confiscated
property and claims to estates and heiresses are read out, so that no one is unaware of any
vacant estate. In the sixth prytany, in addition to the other matters mentioned, they take a vote on whether to hold an ostracism or not, and hear complaints about informers, both Athenians and metics, no more than three each, and whether anyone has failed to redeem a promise made to the people. The second meeting is one for petitions at which anyone who wishes can place an olive-branch (on the altar) and address the people on any matter he chooses, whether private or public. The other two meetings deal with the remaining business and at these the laws lay down that three discussions of sacred matters must take place, three to do with heralds and embassies, and three to do with secular matters.

1.17 Thucydides 2.37.1–43.1: The Duties of a Citizen: Perikles’ Funeral Oration

This speech was delivered by Perikles in 431/0 BC over the first Athenians who fell in the Peloponnesian War. Perikles is here stressing the ideals of democracy and praising the Athenian way of life. The essential nature of Athenian democracy is made clear: the majority of the citizens run the state, all are equal before the law and any citizen can stand for political office. There is a deliberate implicit comparison with Sparta: the Athenians ‘love wisdom without cowardice’. The essential participatory nature of the democracy is made clear in the reference to the ‘totally useless’ citizen. Citizens are to ‘love’ their city: for the lover and beloved in Greek culture, see docs 4.72–89.

2.36.1 I shall speak firstly of our ancestors, for it is right as well as appropriate to give them the place of honour on such an occasion through the recollection of their deeds. For they handed down to us this country of ours, which the same people have inhabited continuously through successive generations up to this very day, free and independent through their valour. And not only do they deserve praise, but our fathers deserve it even more, for, in addition to the inheritance that they were given, they acquired — and not without considerable trouble — the empire that we now possess and bequeathed it to those of us who are alive today. And those of us now here, who are mostly still in the prime of life, have increased this empire even further in most respects and provided it with all the resources necessary to make it self-sufficient both in war and in peace. I will not remind you of the military achievements by which our various possessions were acquired, whether it was ourselves or our fathers that valiantly repelled the approach of war, from barbarians and Greeks, as I do not want to speak at excessive length to those who already know the facts. But I do want to begin by describing the sort of training that has brought us to our present position, and the political institutions and way of life that have made our empire great, and then continue on to the praise of these men, as I consider that on the present occasion such statements are not unsuitable and that the whole crowd of both citizens and foreigners can listen to it with advantage.

2.37.1 We possess a constitution which does not imitate the laws of our neighbours: in fact we are an example to others rather than imitating anyone else. And the constitution’s name is democracy, because the majority manage its affairs, not just a few; as regards the laws, everybody is equal when private disputes are being settled, and, as regards the criteria used to pick out anyone for office, what counts is not his belonging to a particular class, but his personal merit, while as regards poverty, as long as he can do something of value for the city, no one is prevented by obscurity from taking part in public life. We conduct our political life with freedom, especially freedom from suspicion in respect of each other in our daily business, not being angry with our
neighbour if he does as he pleases, and not even giving him the sort of looks which, although they do no harm, still hurt people’s feelings. But while we avoid giving offence in private life, in our public life it is primarily fear which prevents us from committing unlawful acts and makes us obey the magistrates and the laws, and in particular those laws made to protect those who are being unjustly treated and those which, though unwritten, bring acknowledged disgrace on people who break them. 2.38.1 Furthermore, we have provided numerous forms of relaxation and recreation for the mind: there are festivals and sacrifices throughout the year, and the elegance of our private dwellings and the pleasure we take in these day by day drives out any distress we might feel. 2 And because of the city’s size, all kinds of things are imported from all over the earth, so that it seems just as natural to us to enjoy the goods of other men as those of our own production … 2.40.1 We love good things without extravagance and we love wisdom without cowardice; we use wealth as an opportunity for action rather than as something to boast about, and there is nothing disgraceful for anyone in admitting poverty — what is disgraceful is not taking steps to escape it. 2 In the same people there is a concern at the same time for their own affairs and for those of the city, and even those primarily concerned with their own business are not deficient in their knowledge of the city’s affairs; indeed, we are unique in considering the man who takes no part in the affairs of the city not as one who minds his own business, but as one who is totally useless …

2.42.4 Not one of these men allowed either wealth, with the prospect of its continued enjoyment, to make him cowardly, or the hope which exists in poverty, that if you could only escape it you could become rich, to make him shrink from danger: they believed that vengeance on their enemies was more desirable than either, and also regarded such a risk as the most glorious of all, deciding to accept it and revenge themselves on the enemy, relinquishing their personal wishes and desires, and trusting to hope the uncertain chance of success, while in action, with regard to what faced them, they relied confidently on their own abilities. In that moment of combat, they thought it better to die in defending themselves than to yield and save their lives, and fled from dishonour, while standing firm in the face of physical danger, losing their lives in that brief moment ordained by fate, at the pinnacle not of fear but of glory.

2.43.1 And so these men conducted themselves as befits our city; and you who survive, though you pray the circumstances that will face you may be less hazardous, have to resolve that you will possess a spirit to resist the enemy no less brave than theirs. You have to judge the advantage of such a spirit not by words alone, though much could be said on this theme about all the benefits inherent in resisting the enemy — and you know all this without being told. No — you must actively keep before you the power of this city day by day, and become her lovers (erastai), and, when you are inspired by the vision of her greatness, remember that all this has been attained by men of courage who knew their duty and who, when it came to action, possessed a sense of honour. Even if they failed in an undertaking, they thought it right that their city should not be deprived of their valour, and offered it up to her as the most glorious contribution they could make. 2 They gave their lives for the common good, and in so doing won for themselves the praise which never grows old and the most distinguished of all tombs, not that in which they lie buried, but that in which their glory lies in eternal remembrance, on every occasion on which story or deed calls for its commemoration.
1.18 Aristophanes *Acharnians* 17–27: Assembly Procedure

Though the *Acharnians* was performed in 425 BC during the Archidamian phase of the Peloponnesian War when many country-dwellers were living together cramped up in the city, the vermilion-painted rope was still needed to pull people into the assembly. This perhaps shows the lack of attention of the people to public duty, or more probably simply the difficulty in getting citizens to the assembly so that it could start on time – the citizens were busy with gossiping and, as at all public functions, there was a problem getting everyone into the venue on time so it could commence. Dikaiopolis, a die-hard countryman, is speaking here.

> Never, from the time when I began to wash  
> Have I been so tormented by soap under my eyebrows  
> As now, when a regular assembly is due to be held

20 At dawn, and the Pnyx here is deserted —  
People are chatting in the agora and here and there  
Avoiding the vermilion rope.  
Even the prytaneis haven’t come, but they’ll arrive  
Late, and then jostle as you’d expect

25 To try and get on the front bench,  
All pouring in together; but that there’ll be peace,  
They don’t care at all — O city, city!  
I am always the first person to get to the assembly  
And take my seat; then in my solitude

30 I groan, I yawn, I stretch myself, I fart,  
Get bored, scribble, pluck my bead, do sums,  
While I gaze out to the countryside, longing for peace,  
Hating the city and longing for my own deme,  
Which never told me to ‘buy coal,’

35 ‘buy vinegar,’ ‘buy oil’ — it didn’t know the word!  
It produced everything all by itself and that ‘buy’ word didn’t exist.  
So now I’m here absolutely ready  
To shout, interrupt, and abuse the speakers,  
If anyone speaks of anything other than peace!

1.19 Isocrates 7 *Areiopagitikos* 26–7: The Essence of Athenian Democracy

Isocrates (436–338 BC) praised Athenian democracy in this speech, which was probably delivered in 354; there is an implicit reference here to the rendering of the accounts of officials at the end of their term of office (the euthyna, or audit).

26 In short, our ancestors decided that the people, as the absolute power, should appoint the magistrates, punish those who failed in their duties, and act as judge in matters of dispute, while those who had the time and the means should devote themselves to public affairs like servants. 27 If they acted with justice they would be commended and be satisfied with this honour; if they governed badly they would receive no mercy but be subjected to the severest penalties. And yet, how could anyone discover a democracy with more stability
or more justice than this one — which put the most competent men in charge of its government, but gave the people absolute power over them?

1.20 Xenophon *Hellenika* 1.7.9–15: The Trial of the Generals after Arginousai

In 406 BC the Athenians sent every available man (including slaves: doc. 5.23) to aid the Athenian fleet blockaded at Mytilene by the Spartans. They were victorious at Arginousai, but a storm prevented the Athenian generals from rescuing those cast into the sea. Six of the eight generals involved returned to Athens, and were brought before the assembly. Kallixenos secured passage in the Council of a resolution that the assembly should simply vote to acquit or condemn, by ballot, all six defendants together without further discussion. The Athenians soon regretted what they had done: Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.35. Socrates, who was a member of the Council at the time, was the only one to object (doc. 3.85). The Eleven were the jailers and executioners at Athens.

1.7.9 Then they held an assembly, to which the Council presented its proposal, Kallixenos bringing the motion as follows: since the Athenians have heard both those who brought charges against the generals and the generals’ defence in the previous assembly, they are all to vote by tribes; and two urns will be provided for each tribe; and for each tribe a herald shall proclaim that whoever thinks the generals to be guilty of not picking up those who had won the naval battle shall place his vote in the first urn, and whoever thinks them to be not guilty, in the second. 10 And if it is decided that they are guilty, they shall be punished with death and handed over to the Eleven and their property confiscated, and a tithe to belong to the goddess ... 12 Euryptolemos and Peisianaktos and some others brought a charge against Kallixenos of having made an unconstitu- tional proposal. And some of the people commended this, but the majority shouted that it would be dreadful if the people were not allowed to do what they wanted. 13 In addition, when Lykiskos proposed the motion that these men should be judged by the same vote as the generals unless they withdrew their charge, the mob again created an uproar, and they were forced to withdraw their charges. 14 Some of the prytaneis declared that they would not put the question to the vote contrary to law, but Kallixenos again mounted the speakers’ platform and made the same accusations against them. And the crowd shouted that all who refused should be taken to court. 15 The prytaneis, terrified, all agreed to put the question to the vote except for Socrates, son of Sophroniskos; he declared that he would not do anything against the law.

1.21 Antiphon 5 *On the Murder of Herodes* 69–71: A Hasty Judgement

This particular example, which occurred some time in the past and had become notorious, indicates that ‘the exception proves the rule’; Athenian justice worked remarkably fairly over two centuries. The hellenotamiai (‘Greek treasurers’) administered the funds of the Delian League. The Eleven were Athenian officials in charge of the prison and the execution of criminals; they were appointed by lot.

69 The hellenotamiai of Athens were once wrongfully charged with embezzlement, as wrongfully as in the case against me today. All but one of them were executed, with anger overtaking rationality. The true facts later came to light. 70 The survivor, whose name is said to have been Sosias, had been condemned to death, but not yet executed. In the
meantime it was revealed how the money had disappeared, and the fellow was rescued by the Athenian people although already in the hands of the Eleven, while the others who died were completely innocent. The older ones amongst you remember this, I expect, while the younger ones like myself will have heard of it.

1.22 Aeschines 3 Against Ktesiphon 17–21: Athenian Auditors

As Aeschines notes in this speech dating to 330 BC, all Athenian officials of any kind, political, military or religious, had to undergo an audit (euthyna), an examination of their period in office, at the end of their term. The priestly families specifically mentioned, the Eumolpidai and Kerykes, were those involved in the Eleusinian Mysteries (docs 3.31–39). The trierarchs were those wealthy individuals made responsible for the costs of maintaining a warship – trireme – for one year (see docs 1.30–31).

In this our city, so ancient and powerful as it is, no one who has held any public office is exempt from audit. I shall initially illustrate this with examples which you will find most unexpected. For example, the law requires priests and priestesses to be subject to audit, both collectively and each of them individually, and these are people who only receive perquisites and whose job is to offer prayers to the gods on your behalf — and they are subject not only individually, but whole clans together — the Eumolpidai, Kerykes and all the others.

The law again requires that the trierarchs are subject to audit, though they have not handled public funds, and do not withdraw large sums of your money and repay them with small ones, nor do they claim to be making donations when they are in fact paying back your money — in fact, they are acknowledged as having spent their family property in your service. And not only the trierarchs, but the most powerful committees in the state come under judgement in the courts.

Firstly the law requires that the Council of the Areiopagos lodges its accounts with the auditors and submits to examination — yes, that grim supreme authority comes under your judgement … Once again the legislator has made the Council of Five Hundred subject to audit. And he so deeply distrusts persons subject to audit that he states at the commencement of the laws, ‘An official’, he says, ‘who is subject to audit may not leave the country.’ ‘Herakles!’, you might say, ‘because I have held office, I am not allowed to leave the country?’ No, in case you are making off with the city’s money or public business. What’s more, a person subject to audit may not consecrate his property, or make a dedication, or be adopted, or make a will disposing of his property, and many other prohibitions as well. In short the legislator keeps as security the goods of all those subject to audit until their accounts have been examined by the city.


The Athenaión Politeía is here recording Aristeides’ policy towards the populace, resulting in their ‘taking control of the empire’. The ‘prytaneion’ refers to those, like victors at the pan-Hellenic festivals, who dined at public expense (doc. 1.78).

They also gave the populace a comfortable standard of living, as Aristeides had proposed. For it came about that more than 20,000 people were maintained from the tribute contributions, the taxes and the allies. For there were 6,000 jurors, 1,600 citizen
archers, plus 1,200 cavalry, 500 members of the Council, 500 guards of the dockyards, plus 50 guards on the acropolis, about 700 officials at home, and about 700 abroad. In addition, when they afterwards went to war, there were 2,500 hoplites, 20 guard-ships, and other ships carrying the tributes with 2,000 men chosen by lot, as well as the prytaneion, and orphans, and jailers; for all of these received their maintenance from the state.

1.24 [Aristotle] Athenaios Politeia 41.2–3, 62.2: Payment for Citizen Duties in the Fourth Century

Due to the difficulties of achieving a quorum for meetings of the assembly, payment for attendance was introduced at the end of the fifth century (cf. doc. 1.18). The fact that the sum involved was soon raised implies that even payment did not entirely solve the problem. By the time of the writer of the Athenaios Politeia payment had been raised to a drachma or more. For Herakleides, see Plato Ion 541d.

41.3 At first they refused to grant payment for attending the assembly, but as people were not attending the assembly, and the prytaneis kept coming up with many ideas to get the populace to attend so that proposals could be ratified through their show of hands, Agyrrhios (403/2 bc) first introduced payment of an obol, after him Herakleides of Klazomenai, known as 'King', made it two obols, and then Agyrrhios again made it three...

62.2 Payment for public duties: first of all the people are paid a drachma for attending ordinary assemblies, and nine obols for a sovereign one; the jury-courts get three obols per day; the Council five obols. The prytaneis are given an extra obol for food. The nine archons each get four obols for food and have to keep a herald and flute-player; the archon for Salamis gets a drachma a day.

1.25 [Aristotle] Athenaios Politeia 50.1–51.4: Officials in the Athenian Democracy

Here are listed some of the officials in Athens responsible for the smooth running of the city, handling everything from the hiring of flute girls to the superintendence of the market regulations. The financial officials were established by Kleisthenes. The living conditions as described here show that the city had its less glamorous side (50.2).

50.1 Ten men are elected by lot as Repairers of Shrines, who receive thirty minas from the financial officials for the restoration of those temples that most require it, and ten as City-controllers. 2 Five of these hold office in the Piraeus and five in the city, and they supervise the female flute, harp and lyre players to ensure that they do not receive more than two drachmas, and, if more than one person wants to hire one, the officials cast lots and hire her to the winner. And they take care that none of the night-soil collectors deposits excrement within ten stades of the city wall and they prevent buildings being constructed in the streets so that balconies overhang the streets or overhead pipes overflow into the streets or windows open onto the streets. They also remove the bodies of those who die on the streets, and have public slaves for this purpose.

51.1 Ten Market-controllers are also elected by lot, five for the Piraeus and five for Athens itself. The laws assign these the responsibility of overseeing all merchandise, to ensure that
only pure and unadulterated goods are sold. 2 Ten Measure-controllers are also elected by lot, five for the city and five for the Piraeus. They inspect all weights and measures to ensure that sellers use correct ones. 3 There used to be ten Grain-guardians as well, five for the Piraeus and five for the city, but now there are twenty for the city and fifteen for the Piraeus. Their duties are, first of all, to ensure that unground grain is for sale in the market at a reasonable price, and then that the millers sell barley-meal at a price related to that of barley and bakers their loaves at a price related to that of wheat, and that these weigh the amounts that the officials prescribe — for law prescribes that they determine the weight. 4 They also elect by lot ten harbour inspectors, whose job it is to supervise the markets at the harbour and ensure that the merchants bring the city two-thirds of the grain brought by sea that arrives at the grain-market.

1.26 Aristophanes Wasps 836–62, 894–97: A Satire on Jury-Court Procedure

The Wasps, performed in 422 BC, is in many respects a satire on the jury-courts and Aristophanes is in particular satirising Kleon’s control of the jury-courts and his use of them against opponents (for Kleon as a dog, see doc. 13.18; his deme was Kydathenaion (cf. line 895): ‘kyon’ means dog). Labes is meant to represent the general Laches and this is a parody of Laches’ trial before a court for embezzlement during his generalship in Sicily in 426/5 BC. Bdelykleon (Kleon-hater), whose father Philokleon (Kleon-lover) is a confirmed and obsessive juror, tries to keep him from the courts by setting up a mock trial at home. Philokleon is itching to inflict a harsh penalty by drawing a long furrow in his voting-tablet (cf. Wasps 106–08); if the defendant was found guilty the jurors then voted between the penalties proposed by the prosecutor and the defendant.

Bdelykleon: Whatever is the matter?
Sosias (a slave): Why, that dog Labes just
Rushed into the kitchen, snatched up
A fresh Sicilian cheese and ate the lot!
Bdelykleon: So this is the first case to be brought before
840 My father: you can be there as prosecutor.
Sosias: Not I indeed; actually the other dog has said
That he will prosecute, if someone brings the indictment.
Bdelykleon: Very well, bring them both here.
Sosias: I’ll certainly do that.
Bdelykleon: What’s that?
Philokleon: The pig-pen from the Hearth.
Bdelykleon: Do you want to commit sacrilege?
Philokleon: No, it’s so that
846 I can begin right from the start and squash someone.
But come on, hurry up; I have my eye on condemning a defendant.
Bdelykleon: Hold on while I get the noticeboards and charge sheets.
Philokleon: Damn it, you’re wasting time and driving me mad with these delays.
850 I’m longing to plough furrows in the space on my voting-tablet!
Bdelykleon: There you are.
Philokleon: Call the case.
Bdelykleon: Very well. Who’s The first?
Philokleon: Blast! I’m cross That I forgot to bring out the urns.
Bdelykleon: Hey, where are you dashing off to?
Philokleon: To get the urns.
Bdelykleon: There’s no need.
855 I brought these small jugs.
Philokleon: Splendid. Now we have everything We need, except a water-clock.
Bdelykleon: Well, what’s this? (He produces a chamber pot.) Not a water-clock?
Philokleon: You’ve provided everything, and all as smartly as an Athenian.
Bdelykleon: Let someone bring fire as quickly as possible
861 And myrtle-wreaths and incense from indoors, So we can first pray to the gods.
The indictment:
895 Now hear the indictment. Prosecution by The Dog of Kydathenaion against Labes of Aixone That he wronged one Sicilian cheese by eating it All by himself. Penalty a figwood dog-collar.

1.27 Aristophanes Wasps 605–12: The Delights of Jury Pay

Anyone over thirty years of age could serve as a juror, and the official number of jurors was 6,000 (600 from each tribe); see Wasps 662 (doc. 1.28), [Arist.] Ath. Pol. 24.3, 63.3. A full court for important public cases needed 501 jurors, private suits had 201 or 401. Perikles introduced jury pay of two obols a day, which was raised to three obols probably in 425 or 424. A family of four, living frugally, might have subsisted on less than two and a half obols a day for their food in the late fifth century, and jury pay would have been a useful source of support, especially for the elderly. Philokleon, the old and enthusiastic juror, is speaking here.

605 But the most enjoyable thing of all of these, which I had forgotten, Is when I get home with my pay, and everyone joins In welcoming me back for my money, and first of all my daughter Gives me a wash and rubs my feet with oil and bends down to kiss me And calls me daddy, and fishes out the three obols with her tongue,
610 While my wife brings me a barley cake to win me over And sits down beside me and presses me: ‘Eat this, Try this.’

1.28 Aristophanes Wasps 655–64: Revenues at Athens

Here the character Bdelykleon lists Athens’ revenues, to prove to his father that the jury-courts only receive a small proportion of the state’s income; he is calculating on every juror serving 300 days a year, surely an overestimate.
Bdelykleon: Listen now, daddy darling, and relax your forehead a little. First of all make a rough calculation, not with counters but on your fingers, Of the tribute which comes to us from all the cities together, Then apart from this the taxes, besides, and the many one-per-cents, Court deposits, mines, market-taxes, harbour dues, rents for public land, confiscations;

660 From these we get a total of nearly 2,000 talents. Now take away from this a year’s pay for the jurors, 6,000 of them — ‘for no more than these yet dwell in our land’ — And we get some 150 talents.

Philokleon: So the pay we’ve been getting is not even a tenth of the revenue!

1.29 Aristophanes *Knights* 162–67: The Basis of Power in Athens

Demosthenes the slave is here trying to persuade the sausage-seller to take over the government; performed in 424 BC, this is a bitter satire against Kleon, who was granted dining-rights in the prytaneion after his victory at Pylos (doc. 13.11). The sausage-seller is here promised Kleon’s heritage — he can control the sources of Athens’ prosperity and political power, override the Council, and cut the generals down to size in the courts at their euthynai (audits). The verb in line 167 has a very abusive tone even by the standards of Athenian comedy.

Demosthenes: Look over here,
Can you see the rows of all these people?
Sausage-seller: Yes I can.
Demosthenes: Of all of these you will be chief,
165 And of the agora and the harbours and the Pnyx;
You’ll tread on the Council and humble the generals,
Throw people into prison, and suck penises in the prytaneion.

RICH AND POOR IN ATHENS

Solon took four existing property classes and made them the basis for political rights and privileges – the pentakosiomedimnoi (the wealthiest), the hippeis, zeugitai, and the poorest, the thetes. While there were clearly wealthy citizens, such as Nikias (doc. 5.16), and the hippeis and zeugitai were reasonably well off, the class of thetes consisted of the poorest citizens, who rowed in the navy and were the ‘backbone’ of the Athenian empire in the fifth century. Slave-owning was not as extensive as is often assumed by modern scholars and many Athenians worked hard for their living (see docs 5.53–64).

1.30 Lysias 21 *On a Charge of Taking Bribes* 1–5: Liturgies and the Wealthy

The defendant in this lawsuit, apparently on a charge of corruption, was eighteen in 411/0 BC and gives an account of his public services (liturgies) down to 404/3; he states that in eight years he spent over ten talents on liturgies. The richer individuals, those with estates worth more than three
talents, financed certain state activities, and often reminded the jurors of this in lawsuits, as in this speech. The eisphora was a levy imposed on the wealthy from time to time to meet special military costs. There were about 100 liturgies for plays and other services in any one year, as well as the 300 trierarchies.

1 I was judged of age in the archonship of Theopompos, and was appointed choregos for tragedy, spending thirty minas, and, two months later at the Thargelia, 2,000 drachmas where I won with a male chorus, as well as 800 drachmas in the archonship of Glaukippos on pyrrhic dancers at the Great Panathenaia. 2 In the same archonship I also won with a male chorus at the Dionysia, spending 5,000 drachmas including the dedication of the tripod, and, in the archonship of Diokles, 300 on a cyclic chorus at the Lesser Panathenaia. In the meantime I was trierarch for seven years and spent six talents. 3 And though I have incurred such expenses and been daily in danger on your behalf on service abroad, nevertheless I made contributions, one of thirty minas and one of 4,000 drachmas, to special taxes (eisphorai). And when I returned in the archonship of Alexias, I immediately produced games at the festival of Prometheus, and won a victory, after spending 12 minas. 4 And afterwards I was made choregos for a children’s chorus and spent more than 15 minas. In the archonship of Eukleides, I was choregos for comedy for Kephisodoros and won, spending, including the dedication of the costumes, 16 minas. I was also choregos at the Lesser Panathenaia with beardless pyrrhic dancers and spent 7 minas. 5 I have won a victory with a trireme in the competition at Sounion, spending 15 minas; and this is apart from sacred embassies and processions of maidens in honour of Athena Polias (arrhephoriai) and other such duties, in which my expenditure has been more than thirty minas. If I had wanted to perform my liturgies according to the actual regulations, I would have spent less than a quarter of what I have enumerated.

1.31 Inscriptiones Graecae II² 1609 lines 83–111: A Trierarchy, 371/0 or 366/5 BC

The triremes in Athens’ fleet all had feminine names, such as Saviour in the first entry. This inscription is one of many records of the shipyard superintendents at the Piraeus, Athens’ harbour. A wealthy Athenian would act as a trierarch for each trireme, though sometimes two would share the duty, and the equipment which came with the ship when given to him was recorded. Many trierarchs provided all new equipment from their own resources as a mark of their pride in the state, and the trierarchs were expected to captain their ship for the year. Apart from the Saviour, the other ships appear to have been founding a cleruchy (an overseas settlement), and were presumably carrying colonists with Euktemon and Euthios as the oikistai (founders); Good Renown is apparently collecting tithes for Eleusis. Each trireme had 170 rowers: the 200 oar-timbers are to allow for wastage when the oars are made.

83 Saviour: trierarchs Apollodoros of Acharnai, Timokrates of Krioa. These have the complete set of wooden equipment that Archestratos of Alopeke contributed; of hanging equipment 85 they have a sail which Stephanos of Euonymon contributed, white sidescreens, two anchors that Pasion of Acharnai contributed, sidescreens of hide and other screens (a hypoblema and katablema) that Phil… of Acharnai returned, ropes that Pasion of Acharnai returned. During our term of office, this ship… light ropes, a sail, Na… contributed.
These triremes sailed out under Euktemon of Louisa and Euthios of Sounion, the leaders of the cleruchy:

*Doric maid:* trierarchs Apollodoros of Acharnai, Timokrates 90 of Krioa. Of the wooden equipment this ship has two ladders, two poles, two supports.

*Leadership:* trierarchs Philinos of Lamptraei, Demomeles of Paiania. These took no equipment in our term of office.

*Music:* trierarchs Phanostratos of Kephisia, Dorotheos of Eleusis. These took no equipment in our term of office.

*Victory:* the work of Pistokrates, one of the new ships; trierarchs Deinias of Erchia, Leochares of Pallene. These have no equipment in our term of office.

*Leadership:* one of the new ships, the work of Lysikrates; 95 trierarch Chabrias of Aixone. He has two hundred oar-timbers and in place of these oar-timbers he is to give back a full set of oars.

*Good Renown:* trierarch Kallippos of Aixone. He has hanging equipment and wooden, full sets. This ship was given to the collectors of tithes.

*Backhante:* one of the new ships, the work of Hierophon; trierarch Aristaichmos of Choleidai. He has a complete set of hanging equipment and of the wooden two hundred oar-timbers. In place of these he is to give back a full set of oars. He also has a large mast.

*Naukratis:* one of the new 100 ships, the work of Xenokles; trierarchs Timotheos of Anaphylatos, Theoxenos of Euonymon. These have of the hanging equipment a sail, a hypoblema, a katablema, light ropes, four anchor cables and of the wooden equipment two hundred oar-timbers. In place of these they are to give back a full set of oars.

*Good Weather:* one of the new ships, the work of Aristokles; trierarchs Charikleides of Myrrhinous, Kallistratos of Aphidna. These have the hanging equipment, a full set, and wooden, except for the spare mast. In place of the full set 105 he (sic) took two hundred oar-timbers, on condition of giving back a full set.

*Blameless:* trierarchs Philippos of Kolones, Polykles of Anagyrous. These have a full set of hanging equipment. Of the wooden they have a large mast, a large yardarm, ladders, two hundred oar-timbers. In place of the oar-timbers a full set of oars is to be given back. They have returned the hanging equipment except for the heavy ropes and the cables for the hull; of the wooden they have returned a full set of oars.

*Rose-bed:* trierarchs Kleotimides of Atene, Kephalion of Aphidna. These 110 owe a full set of hanging equipment, and of the wooden a large yardarm, ladders. The rest Timotheos of Acharnai, Theodoros of Melite are to return.

### 1.32 Inscriptiones Graecae I3 421h: Sale Prices of Alkibiades’ Bedroom Furniture

After setting out on the Sicilian expedition, Alkibiades was recalled in 414 BC to stand trial for his alleged part in the mutilation of the hermai and profanation of the Mysteries; he escaped to Sparta and his property was sold. This is a sale-list of part of Alkibiades’ bedroom furniture; twelve of the couches were made in Miletos; the garments were presumably nightclothes. For Alkibiades’ wealth, see docs 3.27, 4.55. [IG I2 330; Tod 1.80.]
THE POLIS: THE GREEK CITY-STATE

-- A two-doored chest
-- A four-doored chest
90 dr. 11 Milesian-made couches
16 dr. 4 tables
5 17 dr. A one-ended low couch
10 dr. 1 ob. A plain coverlet
      A two-ended Milesian-made couch
5 17 dr. A one-ended low couch
      6 perfume containers
-- 5 stools
10 1d 1 ob. A seat-back
- 4 ob. A wicker-basket
-- A reed-mat
-- A garment
15 -- A garment
-- A bedstead
-- Yellow wool
-- A bedstead
-- Two horsehair ropes
20 -- A wide box
-- 3 boxes
-- A stuffed pillow
-- A stuffed pillow
-- 4 bedspreads
25 -- 4 bedspreads
-- 4 bedspreads
-- 4 bedspreads

1.33 Lysias 24 On the Refusal of a Grant to an Invalid 6: A Disabled Tradesman

This speech was probably written after the restoration of the democracy in 403 BC. Every year the Council examined the claims of disabled persons, and, if they could show cause, would allow them a pension of an obol a day. In this case a small tradesman who ran a shop has been accused of not being disabled.

6 My father left me nothing, and I ceased maintaining my mother on her death only two years ago, and I do not yet have any children to look after me. I possess a trade from which I can obtain only slight support, which I work at with difficulty, and I am as yet unable to procure someone to relieve me of this. I have no other income besides this pension and if you deprive me of it, I am in danger of ending up in the most dreadful position.

1.34 Theophrastos Characters 10: The ‘Penny-Pincher’

Theophrastos, writing in Athens in the late fourth century, here describes some of the characteristics of a typical penny-pinner. A ‘cent’ here is a copper coin worth three-eighths of an obol.

10.5 When a slave breaks a pot or plate, the penny-pinner takes it out of his rations. 6 And if his wife drops a ‘cent’, he’s the sort to move all the furniture, beds and chests and
rummage through the floor-sweepings. ... 11 When he gives a dinner for his fellow demesmen he serves up meat cut into minuscule portions. 12 When he goes shopping, he comes home without having bought anything. 13 He forbids his wife to lend salt, or a lamp-wick, or cumin, or oregano, or barley, or garlands, or cakes for sacrifice, asserting that these small items add up to a lot during the course of a year.

1.35 Demosthenes 23 Against Aristokrates 206–209: Public versus Private Wealth

Demosthenes contrasts the public glories and honest politicians of the fifth century with the more lowly buildings and wealthier politicians of the fourth. The picture is probably exaggerated, but Athens’ public buildings of the fifth century were not equalled by those in the fourth, and there were financial difficulties attendant upon military campaigning which had not been an issue when Athens had its financial reserves as recorded by Perikles (doc. 1.10). For Aristeides and his incorruptibility, see doc. 10.12.

206 In olden times the city was prosperous and magnificent in public, while in private no one stood higher than everybody else. 207 And the proof is this: if any of you know the sort of house that Themistokes or Miltiades or any of the other great men of that period possessed, he could see that it was no grander than anyone else’s, but, as for the city’s buildings and constructions, they were so large and of such quality that no chance of outdoing them was left to later generations — like the Propylaea, shipyards, porticoes, Piraeus, and all the rest which you see adorning the city. 208 But today everyone in public life has so much property that some of them have constructed houses that are more splendid than many public buildings, and some have acquired more land than all of you in this court possess between you. As for the public buildings you put up and whitewash, I am ashamed to say how small and shabby they are. Can you name anything you have acquired that you can leave to future generations, as they did the Chersonese, Amphipolis, and the glory of their noble achievements? It’s their glory that citizens like these are throwing away as fast as they can, but they cannot hide it, men of Athens, and that is fair. 209 In those days when Aristeides had total control of organising the tributes, his own property did not grow by a single drachma, and when he died the city had to pay for his burial; if you needed anything you had more money in the treasury than any other Greek state, and as a result, for however long you decreed a campaign would last, you set out with pay for that whole period. But today those who manage public affairs start poor and end rich and have enough put by to maintain them in affluence for a long time, while you don’t have enough in the treasury to pay for a single day on campaign, and if something has to be done, you do not have the money for it. In those days the people were the master of the politicians — now it is the servant.

CITIZENSHIP

The Greek word for citizenship was politeia, which also meant constitution and the body of citizen members: citizenship was the basis on which the constitution rested. There were clear political and legal distinctions between citizens on the one hand and metics and slaves on the other; one of the more severe punishments for a citizen was atimia, or loss of citizen rights. A citizen in Athens had the right to attend the assembly, and be a magistrate or juror when over thirty, to own property and attend all festivals, and had full access to the protection of the law.

More rigorous regulations regarding citizenship were brought in by Perikles in 451/0 BC, perhaps because of the growing size of the citizen body as indicated here, or so that Athenians could find citizen husbands for their daughters. There was possibly a large number of mixed marriages and dubious cases of citizenship at this point, and the law now became very clear on who could or could not become a citizen. There were strict penalties for breaking this law: doc. 4.56.

26.4 In the archonship of Antidotos (451/0 BC), because of the number of citizens, it was decided on a motion of Perikles that a person should not have citizen rights unless both of his parents had been citizens.

1.37 [Demosthenes] 59 Against Neaira 104: The Plataeans Become Athenian Citizens

The Plataeans allied themselves with Athens in 519 BC, and fought alongside them at Marathon. [Demosthenes] quotes a decree conferring citizenship on the Plataeans, after Plataea was destroyed by Sparta in 427 (Thuc. 3.68.3); rather than settle in Athens, most of them set up a new city at Skione. The conferral of citizenship was a great honour: see doc. 1.54.

Hippokrates proposed the motion: that the Plataeans are to be Athenians from today, with full rights like the rest of the Athenians, and share in all the things which the Athenians share, both sacred and profane, but they shall not be eligible for any priesthood or rite which belongs to a particular family or the nine archonships, but their descendants shall be. And the Plataeans shall be distributed among the demes and tribes. Once they have been so distributed, it will no longer be possible for any Plataean to become an Athenian, unless he is awarded the honor by the Athenian people.

1.38 [Aristotle] Athenaiōn Politeia 42.1–2: Registration as a Deme Member

Male youths were registered as deme members after their eighteenth birthday, when the deme members voted as to whether they were the correct age, and whether they were eligible for deme membership; if anyone was judged to be ineligible as not-free, he was allowed to appeal to the court. In the fourth century, the ephebes at the age of eighteen had two years of military service before being entered on the register of citizens (the pinax ekklesiastikos) of their deme. For the oath taken by the ephebes, see doc. 3.13.

42.1 The present arrangement of the constitution is as follows: those whose parents have both been citizens have the right to be citizens, and they are enrolled amongst the demesmen at the age of eighteen. When they are enrolled, the demesmen decide by vote under oath concerning them, first if they appear to be the legal age, and if they do not appear to be, they again return to the status of boys, and secondly if the candidate is free and has been born in accordance with the laws. When they decide that someone is not free, he appeals to the law-court, and the demesmen choose five men from amongst themselves as his accusers, and if it appears that he had no right to be enrolled, the city sells him (into slavery); but if he wins his case, the demesmen are compelled to enrol him. 2 After this the Council examines those who have been enrolled, and if anyone appears to be younger than eighteen years, it fines
the demesmen who enrolled him. When the young men (ephebes) have been examined, their fathers assemble by tribes, take an oath, and elect three of their tribesmen over the age of forty, whom they consider to be the best and most suitable to supervise the young men, and from these the people elects by vote one from each tribe as guardian and from the other Athenians a superintendent for all of them.

1.39 Philochoros Atthis F35a: Phratry Membership

Phratries (‘brotherhoods’) were primarily concerned with the entitlement of potential members to membership and the ritual ceremonies which accompanied the acceptance of new members. The orgeones are members of the phratry, but their exact nature is unclear; homogalaktes means ‘men of the same milk’ (cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1252b16–18), gennetai ‘members of clans (gene)’; possibly associations of orgeones, which were upper class in origin, offered sacrifices at their own expense on the altars of gods and heroes in Attica. This law possibly dates to 451/0 BC. For phratries in Attica in 621/0, see doc. 8.3. [*FGH* 328 F35a.]

Philochoros has also written concerning the orgeones: ‘the phratry members are to be compelled to accept both the orgeones and the homogalaktes, whom we call gennetai.’

1.40 *Inscriptiones Graecae II² 1237*: Of Zeus of the Phratry, 396/5 BC

The phratriarch was the president of the phratry, probably of the Dekeleians in this case, the Demotionidai being a privileged clan (genos) within that phratry. The Apatouria was an Ionian festival (*Hdt.* 1.147.2), lasting for three days during Pyanopsion, at which children were presented to the phratry members as new members. On the first day (Dorpia) the fellow phratry members feasted together; the second day was given over to sacrificing, especially in honour of Zeus Phratrios and Athena Phratria; and on the third day (Koureotis) young boys were admitted to the phratry, their change of status being celebrated by sacrifices (the meion and koureion), both of which probably took place on this day. The koureion sacrifice accompanied a dedication of a lock of the boy’s hair to Artemis to celebrate his passage out of childhood, hence the name from ‘kouros’, boy. According to Andocides 1.127 the father had to swear on the altar that he was introducing a legitimate (gnesios) son to the phratry. Line 120 makes it clear that the mother’s father’s name and deme have to be recorded.

1 Of Zeus of the Phratry. The priest Theodoros son of Euphantides inscribed and set up the stele. The priest is to be given the following perquisites from sacrifices: 5 from every meion a thigh, a side-cut, an ear, and three obols of silver; from every koureion a thigh, a side-cut, an ear, a cake made from a choinix measure of flour, a half-kotyle of wine and a drachma of silver. 9 The following was resolved by the members of the phratry, when Phormio was archon of the Athenians and Pantakles of Oion was phratriarch. Hierokles proposed the motion: all those who have not been adjudicated on in accordance with the law of the Demotionidai 15 the members of the phratry shall immediately adjudicate on, swearing by Zeus of the Phratry and taking their ballot from the altar; whoever appears to have been admitted without being entitled to be a phratry member, the priest 20 and the phratriarch are to delete his name from the register of the Demotionidai and the copy, and the man who introduced the person who has been rejected shall be liable to pay a fine of 100 drachmas sacred to Zeus of the Phratry, and this money 25 the priest and the phratriarch are to exact or be liable to pay the fine themselves. In future the
atiephra (on new members) is to take place in the year after the sacrifice of the koureion, on the koureotis day of the Apatouria. The (phratry members) are to take their ballot from the altar. If anyone wishes to appeal to the Demotionidai regarding the grounds on which he has been rejected, he is allowed to do so; the house of the Dekeleians shall elect as judges five men over thirty years of age, and the phratriarch and the priest shall take their oaths to undertake their duties most justly and not to allow anyone who is not entitled to phratry membership to belong to the phratry … Menexenos proposed the amendment: that the rest be resolved by the phratry members regarding the introduction of the children in accordance with the previous decrees, but, so that the members of the phratry may know which men are going to introduce (new members), there is to be recorded with the phratriarch in the first year (of the child’s life) or in that of the koureion his name and father’s name and deme, and his mother’s name and deme, and the phratriarch is to make a record of the names submitted and set this up in a place which the Dekeleians frequent, and the priest is to record it on a whitewashed noticeboard and set it up in the sanctuary of Leto. And this decree is to be recorded on the stele …

THE LESS THAN IDEAL CITIZEN

1.41 Theophrastos Characters 25 (On Cowardice): A Typical Coward

Military cowardice was punished both at Sparta (docs 6.10, 6.15) and at Athens (docs 1.42, 1.44): ancient Greek society required that all adult males be prepared to fight and die for their city when required (cf. Perikles’ Funeral Oration: doc. 1.17).

1 Of course, cowardice is clearly when the soul becomes overwhelmed by fear. The coward is the sort of person, who, when sailing, believes that the cliffs are pirate ships. When a wave strikes, he asks if anyone on board has not been initiated. With the helmsman, he looks up and asks him if they are halfway there yet, and how he thinks the sky is looking, and says to the man sitting next to him that he is frightened because of a dream he has had; and he takes off his tunic, hands it to his slave and begs to be put to shore.

3 When he is on military service and the infantry is sallying out, he tells everyone to stand near him first and have a look round, and says that their job is to discover which ones are the enemy. 4 When he hears an outcry and sees men falling, he says to those standing next to him that in his haste he forgot to get his sword, runs to the tent and sends the slave out to see where the enemy are, hides the sword under the pillow and then wastes a lot of time pretending he is looking for it. 5 While in his tent he sees one of his friends being brought in wounded, and runs up to him, tells him to bear up, picks him up and carries him. He looks after him, sponges him off, sits beside him shooing the flies away from the wound — anything rather than fight the enemy! When the trumpeter sounds the signal for battle, he sits in his tent saying, ‘Go to the crows! He doesn’t let a man have even a wink of sleep with all his signalling!’ 6 Covered in blood from the other man’s wound, he meets those returning from battle and recounts as if he’d been in danger, ‘I saved one of our friends!’ Then he brings in the members of his tribe to look at him lying there, while he tells each of them how he carried him into the tent with his own hands!
1.42 Aeschines 1 Against Timarchos 26–32: Inappropriate Conduct on the Speaker’s Platform

Aeschines delivered this speech against Timarchos in 346 BC. Athenian law debarred from addressing the assembly those who mistreated their parents, were cowards or male prostitutes or who had squandered their inheritance. The private activities of a citizen were thought to reflect on their abilities to advise the state. For Timarchos as a male prostitute, see doc. 4.87.

26 Consider, men of Athens, the difference between Timarchos and Solon — along with those men of old I referred to a moment since. They considered it inappropriate to speak with their arm outside their cloak, whereas he not long ago — in fact just the other day — threw off his cloak in the assembly and, stripped to the skin, behaved like a wrestler in a pankration match — except that his heavy drinking and licentious lifestyle meant his torso was such a ghastly and shameful sight that respectable men, at least, covered their eyes in their shame for our city that our policy should be in the hands of advisers like this. 27 The legislator (Solon) had this type of conduct in mind when he clearly laid down rules as to those who could address the assembly and those who could not speak before the people. Solon does not exclude from the platform the man who has no ancestors who held office, or the man who earns his daily bread by pursuing a trade: in fact he welcomes these with enthusiasm and for this reason has the invitation put repeatedly, ‘Who would like to speak?’

28 Who then does the legislator think should be barred from speaking? Those who have lived a scandalous life — he refuses to allow them to address the people. And where is the evidence for this? Where he says, ‘The examination of public speakers: if anyone addresses the people who treats his father or mother with violence, or fails to maintain them, or refuses them a home, he is not allowed to make a speech.’ And quite correctly in my view, by Zeus! Why? Because if a person behaves badly towards those whom he ought to respect like the gods themselves, how, he asks, will he treat those who are not of his family, or indeed the city as a whole?

Whom next does he bar from speaking? 29 ‘The man who has failed to carry out all the military service required of him, or who has thrown away his shield.’ And rightly so. Why? Well sir, if you do not take up arms on behalf of your country, or your cowardice prevents you from defending it, you have no right to act as one of its counsellors. Who is his third target? ‘The man who has put himself in the position of a prostitute or hetaira,’ he tells us. After all, the man who has sold his own body in violation of all rules of decency, he considered to be a person who would think little of betraying his city’s interests.

30 Whom does he list in the fourth place? ‘The man who has squandered his ancestral possessions or his inheritance.’ He thought that the man who mismanaged his own household would behave in exactly the same way towards the interests of the city, and Solon could not envisage that the same man could be a scoundrel in private life but in public life a valuable citizen, and believed that public speakers should approach the platform prepared not only by what they have to say but by how they live their lives. 31 He considered that advice from a good and upright man would benefit his audience, even if awkwardly and simply delivered, while he thought that the words of a loose-living man,
who has made his own body a laughing stock and inexcusably wasted his inheritance, would
be of no benefit, however well delivered. 32 In consequence he debars them from the
platform and forbids them to address the people.

1.43 Demosthenes 21 Against Meidias 47: Hybris in Athens

Individuals committing hybris – an act of violence by the stronger against the weak – could be
indicted before the thesmothetai (‘law givers’ or junior magistrates) and a case brought to the
heliaia, the Solonian court. Men, women and children, whether slave or free, were protected against
hybris at Athens.

47 If a person commits hybris against anyone, whether child or woman or man, either free
or slave, or commits any unlawful act against any of these, any Athenian citizen who wishes
to do so may bring an indictment before the thesmothetai. And the thesmothetai shall
bring him before the Heliaia within thirty days of the date of the indictment, unless some
public business should prevent it, in which case they shall do so as soon as possible. Should
the Heliaia condemn the offender, it shall immediately decide the penalty or fine he is
thought to deserve. In cases where indictments are lodged in accordance with the law, if
someone fails to prosecute, or following prosecution fails to obtain a fifth of the votes, he
shall pay 1,000 drachmas to the treasury. If the penalty for the hybris is a fine and the
offence was against a free man, the offender shall be imprisoned until he has paid it.

1.44 Demosthenes 24 Against Timokrates 105: Penalties for Serious Crimes

Solon’s laws provided specific punishments for thieves, as well as for those who maltreated their
parents and evaded military service.

105 If someone recovers the property which has been stolen, the penalty (for the thief)
shall be twice its value; if it is not recovered, the penalty shall be ten times the value, in
addition to the legal punishment. The thief shall be kept in the stocks for five days and
nights, if the Heliaia imposes an additional penalty. The additional penalty may be
proposed by anyone who chooses, when the question of punishment is under discussion. If
anyone is arrested after being convicted of maltreating his parents or evading military
service, or of entering any forbidden place after notice of outlawry, the Eleven shall
imprison him and bring him before the Heliaia and anyone who chooses and is entitled to
do so may prosecute him. If he is convicted, the Heliaia shall decide the penalty which he
shall undergo, whether corporal or financial. And if the penalty is financial he shall be
kept in prison until he has paid it.

CITY-STATES AND THEIR LAWS

1.45 Meiggs & Lewis 2: A Law from Dreros in Crete, c. 650 BC

This may be the earliest surviving Greek law on stone, and is the earliest which has survived
complete. It forbids the repeated tenure of the office of kosmos, probably the chief magistracy,
within ten years. The demioi (damioi) may be financial supervisors and the twenty perhaps the
Council. The use of the word city, may, or may not, imply the participation of the assembly.
May god be kind (?). The city has decided as follows: when a man has been kosmos, for ten years that same man shall not be kosmos; if he should become kosmos, whatever judgements he gives he shall himself owe double, and he shall lose rights to office as long as he lives, and whatever he does as kosmos shall be nothing. The swearers shall be the kosmos, and the damioi and the twenty of the city.

1.46 Meiggs & Lewis 8C: The Popular Council at Chios, 575–550 BC

The role of the people in Chios has already by this point become considerable, and the popular Council can apparently judge appeals; cf. doc. 8.19 for this inscription’s possible relevance to the Council of Four Hundred of Solon at Athens. The Hebdomaia was a festival to Apollo celebrated on the seventh of every month.

1 Let him appeal to the Council of the people; on the third day after the Hebdomaia, the Council of the people with power to inflict penalties is to assemble, with fifty men chosen from each tribe; it shall transact the other business which concerns the people and in particular all the lawsuits which arise subject to appeal in the month …

1.47 SIG3 4, lines 5–12: Immunity from Indirect Taxation at Cyzicus

This sixth-century BC inscription from the relatively small community of Cyzicus grants exemption (ateleia) from certain indirect taxes to the descendants of two citizens who died for their country. It was reinscribed in the first century BC, and was therefore presumably still current.

5 In the prytany of Maiandrios. The city has given the son of Medikes and the sons of Aisepos and their descendants exemption from taxes and maintenance in the prytaneion, with the exception of the nautos, the tax for the use of the public scales, the tax on the sale of horses, the tax of twenty-five per cent, and the tax on the sale of slaves; they shall be exempt from all the others; the people swore about these over the sacrificial victims. The city gave this stele to Manes son of Medikes.

1.48 Meiggs & Lewis 13 A & C: A Lokrian Community Sets New Territory

This law on a bronze plaque from western Lokris, dated to c. 525–500 BC, deals with the regulations concerning the settlement of new territory, including rules to protect the new settlers; it appears in particular to define pasturage-rights, but the term epinomia may instead refer to inheritance, as translated here; text C has also been inserted as an omitted line (see Meiggs & Lewis, p.23). The lots are only allowed to be sold in cases of real need, which implies the desire to keep the property (kleros) in the family, and the colony, not the mother-city, is to have the right of decision as to whether they need reinforcements under the necessity of war. The fact that they already have temples, elders and a citizen assembly suggests that these are not new settlers from another area, but members of an existing settlement who are assimilating a new stretch of agricultural land.

1 This law concerning the land shall be in force for the division of the plain of Hyla and Liskara, both the separate lots and the public ones. The right of inheritance (epinomia) shall belong to the parents and the son; if there is no son, to the daughter; if there is no daughter, to the brother; if there is no brother, by degree of relationship let a man
inherit according to the law. If the heirs do not take the property, he shall have the right to bestow it on whoever he wishes. Whatever a man plants, he shall be immune from its seizure. Unless under compulsion of war a majority of the one hundred and one men chosen from the best citizens decides that at least two hundred fighting men are to be brought in as additional settlers; whoever 10 proposes a division (of land) or puts it to the vote in the Council of elders or in the city or in the select Council or who causes civil dissension concerning the division of land, he and his family for all time shall be accursed and his property confiscated and his house be razed to the ground just as for the law on murder. This law shall be sacred to Pythian Apollo and the gods who dwell with him; 15 on the man who transgresses it may there be destruction for himself and his family and his property, but may god be propitious to the man who observes it. The land shall belong half to the previous settlers, half to the additional settlers. Let them distribute the valley portions; exchange shall be valid, but the exchange shall take place before the magistrate.

1.49 Buck no. 58: A Treaty between Oiantheia and Chaleion

This treaty between two small states of western Lokris is recorded on a bronze tablet of the mid-fifth century BC. The first document guarantees reciprocal rights to the citizens of each when on the other’s territory, specifically the prevention of seizure of persons or property in enforcement of existing claims on the other party; the second consists of regulations regarding the legal rights of foreigners. The proxenos (‘guest-friend’) presumably bears witness that the foreigner has been resident there for a month or more.

A No one is to carry off an Oiantheian foreigner from Chaleian territory, nor a Chaleian from Oiantheian territory, nor his property, even if anyone is making a seizure; but the person who has made the seizure may be seized with impunity. The property of foreigners may be seized at sea with impunity, except from the harbour of either city. If anyone makes a seizure unlawfully, (the penalty is) 5 four drachmas; and if he holds what has been seized for more than ten days he shall be liable to pay half as much again as the value of what he seized. If a Chaleian resides in Oiantheia or an Oiantheian in Chaleion for more than a month he shall be subject to the legal procedure there. If the proxenos acts falsely as proxenos, he shall be fined double.

B If those who judge suits concerning foreigners are divided in opinion, 10 the foreigner who brings the suit shall choose jurors from the best citizens, exclusive of his proxenos and private host, in suits involving a mina or more, fifteen men, in those involving less, nine men. If a citizen brings a suit against another citizen 15 in accordance with the treaty, the magistrates shall choose the jurors from the best citizens after having sworn the five-fold oath. The jurors shall take the same oath and the majority is to prevail.

1.50 Buck no. 61: An Eleian Law, c. 500 BC

This law appears to free from liability the family and phratry of an accused person, and to prevent his maltreatment. The hellenodikai (sing.: hellenodikas) were ‘hellenic judges’, whose duties also included supervision of the Olympic festival.
1 The law (rhetra) of the Eleians. The phratry, family and property (of an accused man) shall be immune. If anyone makes a charge (against them), he shall be prosecuted as in (the case of) an Eleian. If he who has the highest office and the magistrates (basileis) do not exact the fines, each of those who fails to exact them shall pay a fine of ten minas sacred to Olympian Zeus. 5 The hellanodikas shall enforce this, and the board of public workers (demiourgoi) shall enforce the other fines (which have not been exacted); if the hellanodikas does not enforce it, he shall pay double in his accounting. If anyone maltreats a man who is accused of a charge involving a fine, he shall be liable to the fine of ten minas, if he does so intentionally. And the secretary of the phratry shall incur the same (fine), if he wrongs anyone. The tablet sacred at Olympia.

1.51 Buck no. 64: A Sixth-Century Eleian Law
This is the conclusion of an inscription, the first tablet of which has been lost, from Elis. Compare the procedure in Sparta where the assembly was not allowed to propose changes to motions.

If he commits fornication (?) in the sacred precinct, he shall pay the penalty by sacrificing an ox and complete purification, and the official (?) (thearos) the same. If anyone gives judgement contrary to what is written, the judgement shall be invalid, and the rhetra of the people shall be final in judging; anything of what is written may be amended if it seems better with regard to the god, by withdrawing or adding with the approval of the whole Council of five hundred and the people in full assembly. Changes may be made three times (?), 5 adding or withdrawing.

1.52 Meiggs & Lewis 17: An Alliance between Elis and Heraia, c. 500
Heraia is in western Arcadia; this was passed prior to Elis’ synoikismos (synoecism) in 471/0 BC (see doc. 1.55). For a similar alliance, a Spartan treaty with Aetolia, see doc. 6.61.

The covenant (rhetra) of the Eleians and the Heraians. There shall be an alliance for one hundred years, starting with this year. If there shall be any need either of word or deed, they shall combine with each other both in other matters and in 5 war. If they do not combine, a talent of silver is to be paid sacred to Olympian Zeus by the offenders. If anyone offends against these writings, whether private individual, official, or the state, he is to be liable to the penalty 10 written here.

1.53 Meiggs & Lewis 42B: A Treaty Between Knossos and Tylissos, c. 450 BC
This is part of an inscription defining relations between Argos and the two Cretan states Knossos and Tylissos; Tylissos, possibly a dependency of Argos, is being protected against Knossos; the Argives do not have the power of veto when the two cities are in agreement, but are able to break a tied vote. This fragment, found at Argos, deals with the sharing of plunder and the export of goods.

2 … the land of the Acharnaians may be plundered by the Tylissians except for the parts belonging to the city of the Knossians. Whatever 5 we both win together from the enemy, the Tylissians shall in a division have a third part of everything taken by land, and the half of everything that is taken by sea. The Knossians shall have the tithe of whatever we seize in
common; the finest of the spoils shall be sent to Delphi by both jointly, and the rest shall be dedicated to Ares at Knossos by both jointly. Export shall be allowed from Knossos to Tylissos and from Tylissos to Knossos; but if a Tylissian exports beyond, let him pay as much as the Knossians, and goods from Tylissos may be exported wherever he desires. To Poseidon the Knossian priest shall sacrifice at Iutos. To Hera in the Heraion both shall sacrifice a cow jointly, and they shall sacrifice before the Hyakinthia …

1.54 Inscriptiones Graecae I² 110: Commendation of a Proxenos at Athens, 408/7 BC

A proxenos was a foreigner who looked after the interests of another state in his home town, and the position was usually hereditary. In this case, Oiniades of Old Skiathos is officially made a proxenos of Athens for his services to Athenians on the island of Skiathos. This position was considered to be a great honour. This stele was discovered on the Athenian acropolis. [Meiggs & Lewis 90; IG I² 118.]

Gods. Decree of the Council and people, the tribe Antiochis held the prytany, Eukleides was secretary, Hierokles presided, Euktemon was archon. Diethypheus proposed the motion: since Oiniades of Old Skiathos is a loyal friend towards the city of the Athenians and eager to promote our interests in any way he can, and behaves well to Athenians who visit Skiathos, he is to be commended and inscribed as proxenos and benefactor of the Athenians, along with his descendants. The Council that is in power and the generals and the magistrate at Skiathos, whoever it might be, are to ensure that no wrong is done to him. The secretary of the Council is to have this decree inscribed on a marble stelae and to have it set up on the acropolis. He is also to be invited to dinner at the prytaneion for tomorrow. Antichares proposed the amendment: all else to remain as proposed but the resolution be altered to read not Skiathos as written, but Oiniades of Old Skiathos.

LEAGUES, UNIONS AND FEDERATIONS

Synoikismos (synoecism) was the amalgamation of communities to form a single city-state. The advantages were that one single community could be walled and more easily defended, and a range of civic amenities, such as theatres, political meeting places and markets could be provided, as well as giving greater political, social and religious identity to the people who were united together in one place.

1.55 Diodorus Library of History 11.54.1: The Synoikismos of Elis 471/0 BC

In 471/70 BC the various villages and towns of Elis joined together – underwent synoikismos – into a single state. See docs 1.50–51 for laws passed by the Eleian cities prior to this.

When Praxiergos was archon in Athens and the Romans elected as consuls Aulus Verginius Trikostus and Gaius Servius Structus, in this year the Eleians who were living in a number of small cities were synoecised into a single city, which is called Elis.

1.56 Thucydides 2.15.1–2: The Synoikismos of Athens

Thucydides is here describing how, according to Athenian tradition, Theseus reorganised Attica, making Athens the single political centre. The Synoikia festival in honour of Athena celebrated
Athens’ political union, and was held both as a state festival and also in individual demes, and even in the last years of the fifth century was celebrated by the four pre-Kleisthenic tribes (doc. 10.20).

2.15.1 In the time of Kekrops and the first kings down to Theseus, the people of Attica had always lived in cities, each of which had their own administrative building (prytaneion) and officials, and unless there were some danger they did not join in consultation with the king, but each of them would govern itself and make its own decisions; and some of these on occasion actually made war on Athens, like Eumolpos and the Eleusinians against Erechtheus. 2 But when Theseus became king, being an intelligent as well as a powerful man, he organised the country primarily by dissolving the Council chambers (bouleuteria) and governments of the other cities and bringing them together into the present city, making one council chamber and one seat of administration, and compelling everyone to belong to this one city, though they could look after their own affairs just as before. With everyone uniting in it, it was a great city that was handed down by Theseus to posterity; and he inaugurated the Synoikia (celebration of union), a festival in honour of the goddess, which the Athenians still keep at public expense even today.

1.57 Thucydides 5.38.1–3: The Boeotian Federation
Thebes took the lead of the Boeotian cities in about the seventh century BC; under Theban supremacy there was a federal army under the command of Boeotarchs (commanders of Boeotia); Thebes was only one of nine, later ten, league members, but there were eleven representational districts, for which doc. 1.58 provides details. The autonomy of the individual cities was limited by the compulsion to adopt a certain moderately oligarchic constitution; the government of the individual cities, and it seems of the league as well, was in the hands of a Council, divided into four sections, which took it in turns to transact business. This passage relates to 421/0 BC.

5.38.1 Meanwhile the Boeotarchs, Corinthians, Megarians and envoys from Thrace resolved to exchange oaths with each other that they would come to each other’s help on any occasion when requested, and that they would not make war or peace without common consent, and that the Boeotians and Megarians (who were acting in concert) should conclude a treaty with the Argives. 2 But before the oaths were taken the Boeotarchs communicated these proposals to the four Councils of the Boeotians, which have the supreme authority, and advised them that oaths should be exchanged with all the cities who were willing to form a defensive alliance. 3 But the members of the Councils refused to agree to this proposal, fearing that they might be acting in opposition to the Spartans, by entering an agreement with the Corinthians who had revolted from them.

1.58 Hellenica Oxyrhynchia 16.1–4: The Boeotian Confederacy
Boeotia’s alliance with Sparta led to its defeats at Tanagra and Oinophyta (docs 12.20, 6.60); later it was under Athenian control until the battle of Koroneia in 447. Boeotia now re-formed the Confederacy, which had come into being at the end of the sixth century, as described below.

16.1 In this summer the Boeotians and Phokians went to war. Some people in Thebes were mainly responsible for the bad feeling between them. Only a few years earlier the Boeotians had engaged in internal strife. 2 The situation at that time in Boeotia was as follows: at that
period there were four Councils set up in each of the cities. Not all the citizens were allowed to participate in these, only those who possessed a certain degree of wealth. Each of these Councils in turn met and made decisions on policy matters, referring these decisions to the other three, and anything agreed by all of them was approved. While they continued to administer internal affairs in this way, the Boeotian government was organised as follows: everyone there was divided into eleven areas, each of which provided a Boeotarch on this model: Thebes provided four, two for the city, and two for Plataea, Skolos, Erythrai, Skaphai and the other places previously associated with them but now under Theban control; Orchomenos and Hysiai provided two Boeotarchs; Thespiai along with Eutresis and Thisbai another two; Tanagra one; Haiaartos, Lebadeia and Koroneia another one which each city provided in turn; similarly a Boeotarch was provided by Akraiphnion, Kopai and Chaironeia. This was how the districts returned their magistrates. They provided sixty counsellors for each Boeotarch and covered their day-to-day expenses. With regard to the organisation of the army, each region had to provide about one thousand hoplites and one hundred cavalry — in simple terms, depending on the number of their magistrates, each region shared the common treasury, the taxes, provided jurors, and participated equally in public affairs, whether bad or good. This constitution applied to the whole of the Boeotian people and the Council and assemblies of the Boeotians met in the Kadmeia.

1.59 Herodotos 1.142.1–4, 1.148.1: The Panionion

Twelve of the Ionian cities and islands of Asia Minor formed a league (koinon) which met at the Panionion, from which other Ionians were excluded. At the Panionion, a temple dedicated to Poseidon on the north side of Cape Mykale, they celebrated a festival called the Panionia. Ethnic identity and solidarity found expression in religious unity.

1.142.1 These Ionians, who possess the Panionion, have founded their cities in places more favoured by weather and seasons than any other we know… They do not all use the same speech but have four different dialects. Miletos is the most southerly of the cities, and after it Myous and Priene; these are settled in Caria and speak the same dialect. The following are in Lydia: Ephesos, Kolophon, Lebedos, Teos, Klaizomenai and Phokaia. These cities share a dialect completely different to those previously mentioned. There are also three remaining Ionian cities, of which two are on the islands of Samos and Chios, and one, Erythrai, is founded on the mainland. The Chians and Erythraians speak the same dialect, while the Samians have one peculiarly their own … 1.148.1 The Panionion is a sacred place on Mykale, facing north, jointly dedicated by the Ionians to Poseidon of Helikon; Mykale is a cape of the mainland running out towards Samos in a westerly direction, and here the Ionians from the cities used to gather and celebrate the festival, which they called the Panonia.

1.60 Herodotos 1.144.1–3: The Dorian Pentapolis

The Dorian pentapolis (‘five cities’) of Asia Minor and Rhodes shared a temple, the Triopion, where they celebrated the Games of Triopian Apollo.

1.144.1 The Dorians of what is now the country of the ‘Five Cities’, the same country which used to be called the ‘Six Cities’, refuse to let any of the neighbouring Dorians have
admission to the Triopian temple, and even barred from using it those of their members who had broken the temple’s regulations. 2 In olden times, at the festival of Triopian Apollo, they used to award bronze tripods to the victors and those who received them had to dedicate them there to the god and not take them home. 3 A man of Halikarnassos called Agasikles, when he was victorious, ignored this law and took the tripod home and nailed it to his wall. For this offence, the five cities — Lindos, Ialysos, Kamiros, Kos and Knidos — forbade the sixth city, Halikarnassos, from sharing the use of the temple.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

Colonisation led to an increase in trade and wealth (cf. doc. 7.3) and commercial treaties, symbola, were signed between city-states. Agriculture was the economic basis of Greek society, and most ancient Greeks would have been involved in growing foodstuffs. Athens imported a large amount of grain (docs 1.71–75) due to the heavily urbanised nature of its population.

1.61 Thucydides 1.13.2, 1.13.5: The Wealth and Power of Corinth

Corinth had long been a commercial emporion because of its position on the Isthmus, even when most communication was overland and before it had a navy; hence its wealth. When traffic by sea became more common, the Corinthians acquired a navy, put down piracy, and opened a market on both sides of the Isthmus (cf. doc. 7.8). The diolkos, the stone runway for moving ships and goods across the Isthmus, can still be seen (doc. 7.61); Homer described Corinth as ‘wealthy’ (Iliad 2.570).

1.13.2 The Corinthians are said to have been just about the first to involve themselves with naval matters along modern lines, and it was at Corinth, it is said, that the first triremes in Greece were constructed … 1.13.5 As the Corinthians had founded their city on the Isthmus they had always possessed a trading-station (emporion), as the Greeks of ancient times travelled more by land than by sea, with those from within the Peloponnese and those outside of it having to pass through Corinthian territory to make contact with each other. And the Corinthians grew rich and thus powerful, as is shown by the early poets, who called the place ‘wealthy’. And when the Greeks began to take more to the sea, the Corinthians acquired ships and put down piracy, and since they were able to provide a double emporion (for traders by land and sea) they made their city powerful with the money that flowed in.

1.62 Strabo Geography 8.6.20: ‘Wealthy’ Corinth

Malea is a dangerous promontory on the south coast of the Peloponnese, with a narrow strait separating it from the island of Kythera.

Corinth is called ‘wealthy’ because of its emporion, as it is situated on the Isthmus and controls two harbours, one of which leads to Asia and the other to Italy. The exchange of cargoes from both countries that are so far from each other is thus made easy. And just as in olden days the strait of Sicily was dangerous for sailors, as well as the high seas, the sea beyond Malea was especially so because of the contrary winds. From this comes the proverb: ‘when you double Malea, forget your home!’ So both merchants from Italy and those from Asia preferred to avoid the journey around Malea and instead unloaded their cargoes at
Corinth. In addition the taxes on items exported by land from the Peloponnese and imported to it belonged to those who held the keys. This has continued ever since, but the advantages to the Corinthians of later times further increased, as the Isthmian festival celebrated there drew huge crowds. And the Bakchiadai who became tyrants were wealthy and numerous and of distinguished family, and held power for nearly 200 years and enjoyed in security the profits from this trade.

1.63 Herodotos 3.57.1–2: Siphnos’ Revenues Distributed
The islanders of Siphnos used to divide the proceeds of their mines amongst themselves every year. The context of this document is the joint expedition by Samian exiles and the Spartans against Polykrates (doc. 7.34); the Samians asked the Siphnians to lend them ten talents. When this request was refused they attacked the island and forced the Siphnians to pay them 100 talents (Hdt. 3.58.3–4). For the Thasians’ revenue from their mines, see Hdt. 6.46.2–47.2.

1.64 Chadwick 35–36: The Berezan Lead Letter, c. 500 BC
This inscription on a lead tablet was found on the island of Berezan near Olbia, a Milesian colony on the Black Sea. It is a letter from Achillodoros, who was travelling on a business trip on behalf of Anaxagoras. His cargo has been confiscated by Matasys, who has attempted to reduce Achillodoros to slavery, presumably in order to settle an outstanding claim against Anaxagoras. Matasys claims that Anaxagoras has deprived him of what ought to be his, that Achillodoros is Anaxagoras’ slave, and that he is therefore liable to seizure by Matasys as compensation. Achillodoros here writes to his son Protagoras to let him know what is happening and to tell him to inform Anaxagoras. He tells his son to get the rest of the family to safety in the city, where they can appeal to the magistrates against any attempt to enslave them; Euneuros may be another of Achillodoros’ sons.

Protagoras, your father sends you this message: he is being wronged by Matasys, for Matasys is reducing him to slavery and has deprived him of his cargo vessel. Go to Anaxagoras and say to him: Matasys says that Achillodoros is the slave of Anaxagoras, and says, ‘Anaxagoras has my property, male slaves, female slaves, and houses.’ But Achillodoros complains loudly and says that there is nothing between him and Matasys, and says that he is free and that there is nothing between him and Matasys. But what there is between Matasys and Anaxagoras they themselves know between them. Tell this to Anaxagoras and Achillodoros’ wife. Achillodoros sends you another message: take your mother and your brothers, who are among the Arbinatai, to the city, and Euneuros will come himself to him (?Achillodoros) and then go straight down. Reverse: The lead of Achillodoros; addressed to his son and to Anaxagoras.
1.65 Meiggs & Lewis 30: Public Imprecations at Teos, c. 470 BC

The following curses are to be pronounced three times each year by certain magistrates against those who endanger the community, including those who prevent the import of grain, showing its great importance to the community that imported it, and against pirates; the aisymnetes is apparently a magistrate. For Thucydides on piracy as a way of life in his own time amongst the Ozolian Lokrians, Aetolians, and Akarnanians, see Thuc. 1.5.1–6.2; cf. Hom. Od. 3.71–74.

A Whoever makes drugs that are poisonous against the Teians as a community or against an individual, that man shall die, both 5 himself and his family. Whoever prevents grain being imported to the Teian land by any cunning or contrivance either by sea or by the mainland, 10 or re-exports it after it has been imported, shall die, both himself and his family.

B … 8 Whoever in future is aisymnetes in Teos or in the territory of Teos 10 … knowingly betrays the city and territory of Teos or the men on the island 15 or on the sea hereafter or the Aroian fort; or who in future commits treason or robbery or receives brigands 20 or commits piracy or receives pirates knowingly, who carry off (plunder) from the territory of Teos or from the sea; or who plots some evil against the Teian 25 community knowingly either with Greeks or with barbarians shall die, both himself and his family.

1.66 Pleket Epigraphica I, no. 2: The Wine Trade on Thasos c. 425–400 BC

The wine trade was obviously of extreme importance to Thasos. The second part of the inscription forbids the import of foreign wine into the area of the mainland which the Thasians controlled, the Thasian peraia, and the Thasian landowners are presumably ensuring the sale of their own produce, free from foreign competition. In lines 12–13, the selling of wine retail (literally by the kotyle, or jug) is also forbidden, which aims at ensuring that wine sold came from amphorai specifically labelled as Thasian. Plynterion is a month on Thasos.

I Neither sweet wine nor wine from the crop on the vines shall be bought before the first of Plynterion; whoever transgresses and buys it, shall be bound to pay stater for stater, one half to the city and the other half to the prosecutor. The lawsuit shall be as for cases of violence. 5 But if someone buys wine in wine-jars (pithoi) the purchase shall be valid, if (the seller) has stamped a seal on wine jars.

II … the penalties and deposits shall be the same. If no one puts down a deposit (does not prosecute), the commissioners of the mainland are to bring the case. Whenever they win, all the penalty is to belong to the city; but if the commissioners 5 do not bring the case, though they have learned of the matter, they shall be liable to pay a double penalty; whoever wishes shall bring the case in the same way, and he shall have half the penalty, and the magistrates (demiourgoi) shall grant the case against the commissioners in the same way. No Thasian ship shall import foreign wine within Athos and Pacheia; if it does, 10 (the owner) shall be liable to the same penalties as for adulterating the wine with water, and the helmsman shall be liable to the same penalty; and the lawsuits and the deposits shall be the same. Nor shall anyone sell wine by the kotyle either from amphorai or from a cask or from a false (non-regulation) wine-jar (pithos); and whoever sells it, the lawsuits and the deposits and the penalties shall be the same as 15 for adulterating it with water.
1.67 Herodotos 3.6.1–2: The Mystery of the Missing Amphorai

3.6.1 From all of Greece, and from Phoenicia as well, earthenware jars full of wine are imported into Egypt throughout the year, yet one could say that not a wine jar is to be seen anywhere. 2 Obviously, one should ask, where are these disposed of? I will explain this. Each mayor (demarch) has to collect all the wine jars from his city and send them to Memphis, and the people of Memphis have to fill them with water and take them to the waterless regions of Syria.

1.68 Andocides 1 On the Mysteries 133–34: Customs Duties at the Piraeus

Like most other taxes, the 2 per cent customs duty levied by Athens was not collected by a government agency but farmed out to the highest bidder at the cost of thirty talents: at this percentage the volume of traffic was approximately 1,800 talents in 399 BC, and presumably was much greater under Athens ‘empire’.

133 Agyr rhios here, that honest man, two years ago was chief contractor for the tax of two per cent. He bid thirty talents for it and those people he meets under the poplar tree all had shares in it with him; you know the kind of people they are. I think they met there with two purposes, to be paid for not outbidding him and to get a share in a tax-collecting business sold at a low price. 134 When they’d made a profit of six talents and realized what they were onto and how valuable it was, they all combined, gave the other bidders a share and put in a bid for the tax again for thirty talents. Since no one else put in a rival bid, I came forward before the Council and kept raising their offer, until I got the contract for thirty-six talents. After getting rid of those men and providing you with guarantors, I collected the money and paid it over to the city, without making any loss by it, as my partners and I made some small profit; and I’d ensured that those men didn’t share out between them six talents of your money.

1.69 [Xenophon] Constitution of the Athenians 2.11–12: Athenian Control of Trade

Athens had a long-standing need for timber, particularly during the days of its empire, for the construction of its fleet (Xen. Hell. 6.1.11).

2.11 They alone of Greeks and barbarians are able to possess wealth. For if a city is rich in timber for shipbuilding, where will it dispose of it unless it has the consent of the rulers of the sea? If a city is rich in iron, copper or flax, where will it dispose of these unless it has the consent of the rulers of the sea? But it is from these very things that my ships are made, timber from one place, from another copper, from another flax, from another wax. 12 In addition, they will not permit exports elsewhere to wherever any of our rivals are, on pain of not being allowed use of the sea. And I, though I do nothing, have all these things from the land because of the sea, while no other city has two of them; the same city does not have timber and flax, but where there is most flax the land is smooth and timberless; the same city does not even have copper and iron, nor do any two or three of the rest come from a single city, but one from this and one from that.
Public slaves at Athens included the Scythian archers (doc. 5.11), clerks for the jury-courts, and this dokimastes, or tester of coinage. Athens in the 370s BC had certain financial difficulties, hence the need to standardise the coinage and rate of exchange. The epimeletai were commissioners in charge of the docks; the thesmothetai are the six junior archons in charge of allocating the courts; the apodektai received the revenue and assigned it to various functions; the poletai, or sellers, sold or leased state property; and the syllogeis were members of the Council with policing functions. [SEG 26.72; Harding 45; R&O 25.]

Resolved by the nomothenai, in the archonship of Hippodamas; Nikophon proposed the motion: Athenian silver coinage is to be accepted when it is shown to be silver and carries the official die. The 5 public tester, who sits among the (bankers’) tables, is to test according to these regulations every day except whenever there is a payment of money, when he should test in the Council chamber. If anyone brings forward foreign currency which carries the same die as the Attic, if it is good 10 he is to give it back to the one who brought it forward. But if it is bronze underneath or lead underneath or counterfeit, he is to cut it across and it is to be sacred to the Mother of the Gods and he is to deposit it with the Council. And if the tester does not sit (at his post) or does not test according to the law, he is to be struck 15 with fifty blows of the whip by the Syllogeis of the people. If someone does not accept what silver currency the tester has approved, he is to have confiscated everything he has for sale on that day. Denunciations that coins are contraband are to be made in the grain-market before the commissioners for the grain-market (the Sitophylakes), in the agora and the rest 20 of the city before the Syllogeis of the people, and in the trading-port (emporion) and Piraeus before the Epimeletai of the trading-port, except for those in the grain-market, as those in the grain-market are to be made before the commissioners for the grain-market. For all denunciations which are less than ten drachmas the magistrates have jurisdiction to give a verdict, but for those above ten drachmas they are to bring them into the law-court. The thesmothetai are to assist by granting them a court assigned by lot when they request one or be subject to a fine of … drachmas. The informer is to receive one-half, if he gets a conviction. 30 If the seller is a male or female slave, let him or her be beaten with fifty lashes of the whip by the magistrates to whom each denunciation has been allocated. If any of the magistrates does not act in accordance with the written regulations, anyone of the Athenians who chooses and who is allowed to do so may bring him before the Council. 35 And if he is convicted, he is to cease being a magistrate and the Council is to fine him up to 500 drachmas.

In order that there may also be a tester in the Piraeus for the shipowners and merchants and all the others, the Council is to appoint one from among the public slaves … 40 or is to purchase one, and the Apodektai (receivers) are to apportion the price. The Epimeletai of the trading-port are to ensure that he sits at the stele of Poseidon and are to apply the law as has been stated in the case of the tester in the city. Inscribe this law on a stone stele and place one in the city among the tables and another in the Piraeus in front of the stele of Poseidon. The secretary of the Council is to report the price to the Poletai and let the Poletai bring it into the Council. The payment of the salary of the tester in the trading-port is to begin from when he is appointed in the archonship of Hippodamas, and the Apodektai are to assign him the same amount as for the tester in the city. In the future his salary is to come from the same source as for workers in the mint. If there is any decree inscribed anywhere contrary to this law the secretary of the Council is to pull it down.
THE GRAIN TRADE

1.71 Herodotos 7.147.2–3: Grain from the Black Sea

This passage is the earliest explicit reference to the grain trade (both wheat and barley: barley was the staple diet in Greek cities for the ordinary citizen: doc. 1.25). Half of Athens’ supply came from the Black Sea region (doc. 1.74). Grain from the western Greeks was equally important: Gelon promised to ship sufficient grain to Greece for the duration of Xerxes’ invasion (Hdt. 7.158.4).

When Xerxes was at Abydos he saw boats from the Black Sea sailing through the Hellespont with cargoes of grain, carrying it to Aegina and the Peloponnese. His counsellors, on learning that they were enemy ships, were prepared to capture them, and kept their eye on the King awaiting his order. 3 Xerxes asked them where the boats were sailing; they answered, ‘They are carrying grain, sire, to your enemies.’ His reply was, ‘Are not we sailing there ourselves, equipped, among other things, with grain? So what harm are they doing in transporting our grain for us?’

1.72 Demosthenes 35 Against Lakritos 51: A Law on the Transport of Grain

According to this law it was illegal to contract a loan on a ship which did not bring grain to Athens on its return voyage or to lend money for transporting grain anywhere other than Athens. The grain supply was so important that it was a fixed item on the assembly’s agenda each month ([Arist.] Ath. Pol. 43.4: doc. 1.16). The epimeletai here are superintendents of the grain supply.

51 It shall be illegal for any Athenian or metic living at Athens, or for anyone for whom they are responsible, to lend money on any ship which is not going to bring grain or any of the other items specifically mentioned back to Athens. And if anyone lends money contrary to this law, information and an account of the money shall be laid before the epimeletai in the same way as is provided with regard to the ship and the grain. And the merchant shall have no right to bring a case to recover the money which he has lent for a voyage to anywhere other than Athens, and no magistrate shall bring any such case to trial.

1.73 Demosthenes 35 Against Lakritos 10–13: Contract for a Maritime Loan

The terms of the loan are that the borrowers should sail to Mende or Skione in Chalkidike, and purchase 3,000 jars of wine which they would then transport to the Black Sea, where they would sell the wine and ship a return cargo (of grain) for sale in Athens. On their return they would then pay back the loan with interest (the rate of interest remains unchanged even if their return takes place in the following year, which in Athens commenced with the summer solstice).

10 Androkles of Sphettos and Nausikrates of Karystos have lent Artemo and Apollodoros, both of Phaselis, 3,000 drachmas in silver for a voyage from Athens to Mende or Skione and from there to the Bosporos, or if they wish as far as Borysthenes on the left-hand side of the Black Sea, and from there back to Athens, at a rate of 225 drachmas per 1,000, but if they set sail from the Black Sea to the Hieron after the rising of Arcturus (the dog-star) at the rate of 300 per 1,000. This is on the security of 3,000 jars of wine from Mende, which will be transported from Mende or Skione in the twenty-oared ship owned by Hyblesios. 11
They give these as security, and do not owe any money on them to any other person, nor will they borrow anything further upon this security. And they will transport all the goods acquired by trade from the Black Sea back to Athens in the same ship. If the goods arrive at Athens safely, the borrowers will repay the lenders the money due in accordance with the contract within twenty days of their return to Athens, with no deductions except for any jettison made by all the passengers in agreement or for any money paid to enemies: otherwise they will pay in full. And they will give the lenders the security to hold unencumbered, until they have repaid the money due in accordance with the contract. 12 And if they do not repay it within the time agreed, it will be legal for the lenders to pledge or sell the security for its current value; and, if the money falls short of the sum which is due to the lenders under the contract, the lenders can proceed against Artemo and Apollodoros and against all their property, whether landed or maritime, wherever it might be, as if they had lost a lawsuit and were overdue with the payment, and either one or both of the lenders may do this. 13 And if they do not enter the Black Sea, but remain in the Hellespont for ten days after the rising of the dog-star, and unload their goods at a place where the Athenians do not have the right of seizure and from there complete their voyage to Athens, they shall pay the same interest as that written into the contract the year before. And if the ship in which the goods are conveyed is damaged beyond repair, but the security is saved, whatever survives is to belong jointly to the lenders. And with regard to these matters nothing is to have greater authority than the contract. Witnesses: Phormio of Piraeus, Kephisodoros of Boeotia, Heliodoros of Pitthos.

1.74 Demosthenes 20 Against Leptines 31–32: The Importance of Grain Imports

Delivered in 355 BC this speech shows the crucial nature of Black Sea grain for Athens as shown by the fact that Athens starved when Lysander blocked the arrival of grain from this area (doc. 13.35). Athens had granted exemptions for Leukon and his children from liturgies and war-taxes.

31 You’re aware that more than any other people we depend on imported grain. The grain that comes to us from the Black Sea equals the amount that arrives from all other emporia. This is understandable: for not only does that region produce the greatest amount of grain, but Leukon, who controls the area, has granted exemption from taxes to those carrying grain to Athens, and has laid down that those sailing to you have priority in loading. For just as he has been granted exemption for himself and his children he grants it to all of you. 32 See what this amounts to. He takes a tax of one-thirtieth from those who export grain from his country. Now from that region there come to Athens some 400,000 bushels: anyone can check this by looking at the records of the grain-commissioners. So for each 300,000 bushels he gives us a present of 10,000 and from the other 100,000 roughly 3,000.

1.75 Tod 2.196: Cyrene supplies Greece with Grain, 330–326 BC

Cyrene in North Africa – one of Greece’s most successful colonies (docs 2.28–30) — donated fifty-one shipments of grain to forty-one different Greek states (that is, some states received two separate shipments), and a further two to Olympia in Macedonia and Kleopatra (married to the ruler of Epiros), Alexander the Great’s mother and sister respectively. The amounts are in medimnoi, measures of grain, with one medimnos equalling fifty-five dry litres, and were shipped during a grain crisis between c. 330–326 BC, which is known from other sources. Sparta is conspicuous by
its absence from the list. Pindar described Cyrene as ‘grain-bearing’ (Isthmian 4.54). [SEG 9.2; Harding 196; R&O 96]

The priest was Sosias, son of Kalliades. To whom the city gave grain, when the grain shortage happened in Greece:

5 To the Athenians 100,000; to Olympics 60,000; to the Argives 50,000; to the Larisans 50,000; to the Corinthians 50,000; to Kleopatra 50,000; to the Rhodians 30,000; to the Sikyonians 30,000; to the Meliboians 20,000; to the Megarians 20,000; to the Lesbians 15,000; to the Therans 15,000; to the Oitaians 15,000; to the Ambraciots 15,000; 20 to the Leukadians 15,000; to the Karystians 15,000; to Olympics 12,600; to the Atragians of Thessaly 10,000; to the Kythnians 10,000; to the Opountians 10,000; to the Kydonians 10,000; to the Aetas 10,000; to Olympias 10,000; to the Meliboians 10,000; to the Lesbians 10,000; 35 to the Bocotians of Tanagra 10,000; to the Gortynians 10,000; to the Eleians 10,000; to the Palaiartis of Akarnania 10,000; to the Megarians 10,000; to the Meliboians 8,500; to the Phleiasians 8,000; 40 to the Hermionians 8,000; to the Oitaians 6,400; to the Troizenians 6,000; to the Plataians 6,000; 45 to the Iouliians on Keos 5,000; to the Aeginetians 5,000; to the Astypalaians 5,000; to the Kytherians 5,000; to the Kydonians 5,000; to the Karthaians on Keos 4,000; to the Kytherians 3,100; to the Koresians 3,000; 50 to the Illyrians (Elyrians of Crete?) 3,000; 55 to the Lepsoians on Keos 1,000; to the Ikeryrians 1,000; to the Knossians 900.

**THE SUPERSTARS OF THE CITY-STATE**

Cf. doc. 9.41 for perpetual dining rights in the prytaneion for all victors at the four pan-Hellenic festivals and for the descendents of the ‘tyrannicides’ Harmodios and Aristogeiton and other benefactors of the city of Athens, such as Kleon after his victory at Pylos (doc. 1.29).

**1.76 Diodorus Library of History 13.82.5–8: Athletes Honoured in Sicily**

Exainetos of Akragas in Sicily won the foot-race (stadion) at the Olympic Games in 412 BC. Sicily was noted for its luxury and extravagance: see docs 7.48, 7.52. Diodorus’ description makes clear the enthusiastic reception accorded to the victors when they returned home and the importance of sports to Greek culture.

13.82.5 At that period there was an man-made lake outside the city, seven stades in circumference and twenty cubits deep; the inhabitants of Akragas channelled water into this and cleverly kept a vast number of fish of every kind for their public banquets. The fish attracted swans and an immense number of other kinds of bird, and so the lake was a great attraction to those who saw it. 6 The luxurious lifestyle of the locals is also shown by the extravagant cost of the monuments which they erected, some adorned with race-horses and others with the birds kept as pets by girls and boys, monuments which Timaeus says he had seen extant even in his own lifetime. 7 And in the Olympiads before the one under discussion, the ninety-second, when Exainetos of Akragas won the stadion, they escorted him into the city in a chariot and accompanying him (not to mention everything else) there were three hundred chariots each drawn by white horses, all of these belonging to citizens of Akragas. 8 In general, from their youth they enjoyed a luxurious
lifestyle, wearing extremely delicate clothing and gold ornaments and even using strigils and oil-flasks made of silver and gold.

1.77 Athenaeus Deipnosophistae 412d–413a: A Healthy Appetite

The oxen-devouring athletes below were presumably those competing in physical events such as boxing, wrestling and the pankration. Milon proved his strength both by carrying around an ox on his shoulder as if it was a lamb and then by devouring it without assistance. The beasts would have been first offered in sacrifice to Zeus, and then eaten by the participants in the sacrifice; Pisa means Olympia.

412d Theagenes, the athlete from Thasos, finished off an entire bull on his own, as Poseidippos says in his epigrams:

   412e ‘And for a bet I once ate a Maonian ox;
   My country of Thasos could not have provided a meal
   For Theagenes. Whatever I ate, I demanded more. And so
   I stand in bronze, holding out my hand.’

Milon of Kroton, as Theodoros of Hierapolis tells us in his work On Athletic Contests, used to eat twenty minas (weight) of meat and as many of bread and three jugs of wine. At Olympia he hoisted a four-year-old bull on his shoulders, 412f and carried it right around the stadium, after which he cut it up and ate it all on his own in a single day. Tithormos of Aetolia competed with him in eating an ox for breakfast as a bet, as Alexander of Aetolia records. And Phylarchos says, in the third book of his Histories, that Milon devoured a bull while reclining in front of the altar of Zeus. In consequence the poet Dorieus wrote this in his honour:

   ‘Such was Milon, when he lifted the weight from the ground,
   A four-year-old steer, at Zeus’ festival,
   413a And on his shoulders the mighty beast, like a young lamb,
   He carried like a light-weight through all the spectators.
   That was amazing enough, but he accomplished a greater wonder than this
   Before the sacrificial altar at Pisa, stranger:
   The ox, not broken to the yoke, that he had carried round,
   He cut this up for meat and feasted on it all on his own.’

1.78 Xenophanes Poems F2: The Heroes of the City-State

Successful victors in the games could be awarded a state pension or a monetary reward by their city or dining rights in the prytaneion for the rest of their lives. For example, a victor from Athens at the Isthmian games was awarded 100 drachmas (cf. Plut. Sol. 23.3; Diog. Laert. Sol. 1.55: a victor at Olympia 500 drachmas). Socrates also asked for maintenance in the prytaneion for life (doc. 3.86 cf. 9.41, 1.29); the philosopher Xenophanes of Kolophon (c. 570–c. 475 BC) and Socrates seem to have had similar views of their own merits as opposed to those of athletes.
But if anyone were to win a victory through swiftness of foot
Or through competing in the pentathlon, in the precinct of Zeus
Beside the streams of Pisa at Olympia, or in wrestling
Or through possessing the painful art of boxing,
Or in that dreadful kind of contest which they call the pankration,
To the citizens he would be more glorious to behold
And would win a conspicuous seat of honour at the games
And would get maintenance out of public stores
From the city, as well as a gift for him to put by as treasure;
So too if he won with his horses, he would obtain all these things —
Though not deserving of them like I am. For better than the strength
Of men or of horses is my wisdom.
But opinion about this is random, nor is it right
To prefer strength to noble wisdom.
For even if there is a good boxer in the community
Or one good at the pentathlon or wrestling,
Or at swiftness of foot, which is most honoured
Of all the feats of strength in men’s contests,
The city would not, for this reason, be better ordered.
Small delight would this be to a city,
If anyone were to compete and win beside the banks of Pisa!
These things do not enrich the store-chambers of a city.