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'THE TYRANTS AROUND THOAS AND DAMASENOR' (PLUT. Q. G. 32.298c-d)

At Quaestiones Graecae 32.298c-d, Plutarch raises the question, τίνες οἱ ἀειναῦται $\pi a \rho a$ Μιλησίοις, 'Who were the Perpetual Sailors among the Milesians?'; he frames the circumstances of his answer using a genitive absolute clause: $\tau \hat{\omega} \nu \pi \epsilon \rho \hat{\nu} \Theta \hat{\sigma} \alpha \nu \tau \alpha$ καὶ Δ αμασήνορα τυράννων καταλυθέντων ('when the tyrants around Thoas and Damasenor had been overthrown'). In the absence of any other mention of these men in the extent sources, these words—especially the appellation τυράννων—have caused concern among editors and commentators of Plutarch. In the Teubner edition of 1935 Titchener changes τυράννων to the accusative τυράννους, while Halliday in his Oxford commentary suggests that the word should be deleted as a gloss. Each of these suggested changes to the received text is motivated by the occurrence here of the common idiom of $\pi \epsilon \rho i$ + Accus. nominis proprii. This expression is, from the time of Polybius on, frequently used by Greek historians to indicate succinctly a group or faction, especially one centred around an important personage. Furthermore, a rather odd periphrastic usage of this phrase has been identified by scholars of Greek grammar as common from at least the Roman period. In this usage, οί περί τινα serves as the equivalent of the simple proper name. Thus $\tau \hat{\omega} \nu \pi \epsilon \rho \hat{\nu} \Theta \hat{\sigma} \alpha \nu \tau \alpha \kappa \alpha \hat{\nu}$ $\Delta a \mu a \sigma \eta \nu o \rho a$ may be a periphrasis for Thoas and Damasenor alone.²

¹ For example, Plut. Tim. 30.4 τῶν δὲ περὶ [τὸν] Μάμερκον τὸν Κατάνης τύραννον καὶ 'Ικέτην ('those around Mamerkos, the tyrant of Katane, and Hiketes').

² Kühner and Gerth 1.270; Schwyzer and Debrunner 2.417; LSJ s.v. $\pi\epsilon\rho i$ C.I.2 (with accusative of persons): 'later oi π . $\tau\iota\nu\alpha$, periphr. for the person himself'; cf. C.I.3.

³ On this common ellipsis, see Kühner and Gerth 1.269.

⁴ In fact, of examples of this form in Plutarch, the passage cited here is the only instance where the periphrastic interpretation appears to us the most likely.

⁵ For example, Polyb. 5.95.7 οἱ δὲ περὶ Λύκον καὶ Δημόδοκον τὸν τῶν ἀχαιῶν ἱππάρχην συνέντες τὴν ἐκ τῆς Ἦλιδος τῶν Αἰτωλῶν ἔξοδον, ἐπισυναγαγόντες τοὺς Δυμαίους . . ., σὺν δὲ τούτοις ἔχοντες τοὺς μισθοφόρους, ἐνέβαλον εἰς τὴν Ἡλείαν ('Those around Lykos and Demodokos the Hipparch of the Achaians, learning of the expedition of the Aitolians from Elis, gathered the Dymaians . . . and, taking in addition the mercenaries, invaded Elis'). Polybius uses the οἱ περὶ τινα construction with great frequency in military contexts, where it usually refers non-periphrastically to a leader and his men. However, because the words οἱ περὶ Λύκον καὶ Δημόδοκον in this instance are associated with predicates appropriate to commanding

Titchener's alteration would seem to have the effect of bringing the text into harmony with the expected form of the periphrasis and making it possible to read, 'when the tyrants Thoas and Damasenor had been overthrown'. A text with such a meaning would be unobjectionable: our knowledge of the history of archaic Miletos is certainly lacunose enough to allow the possibility of such a tyranny, even if supported by no other evidence.

However, Titchener's emendation is surely wrong, for it produces unlikely Greek. Since $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \nu \sigma s$ must be meant as an attribute of $\Theta \acute{a}a\nu \tau a$ $\kappa a \grave{\iota}$ $\Delta a \mu a \sigma \acute{\eta} \nu \rho \rho a$, Titchener should have written $\tau o \grave{\upsilon}_S \tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \sigma s$. The definite article is necessary. Such is the elementary rule of the grammars and the almost invariable practice of Plutarch. That author puts $\tau \acute{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu \sigma s$ in apposition to a proper name more than fifty times, and in all but two instances we find the definite article used as expected (e.g. $\lambda \lambda \acute{\epsilon} \xi a \nu \delta \rho \sigma s$ $\delta \tau \acute{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu \sigma s$, Pel. 27.6.1). Furthermore, although the construction $\sigma \acute{\iota} \tau \epsilon \rho \acute{\iota} \tau \iota \nu a$ appears very frequently in the pages of Plutarch—some four hundred times in all—he rarely joins adjective or appositional substantive to the object of the preposition. Examples of the form $\sigma \acute{\iota} \tau \epsilon \rho \acute{\iota} \kappa a \rho \nu \epsilon \delta \delta \eta \nu \tau \delta \nu \lambda \kappa a \delta \eta \mu a \ddot{\iota} \kappa \delta \nu$ (Cat. Ma. 22.1) occur perhaps only in half a dozen passages. Thus, Titchener's suggestion runs doubly foul of the norms of Plutarch's prose and should be dismissed.

Halliday's identification of $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \omega \nu$ as a gloss, while more sensible than Titchener's change, also presumes that $\tau \acute{\omega}\nu \ \pi \epsilon \rho \grave{\iota} \ \Theta \acute{o} a \nu \tau a \ \kappa a \grave{\iota} \ \Delta a \mu a \sigma \acute{\eta}\nu \rho \rho a$ is periphrastic. That Halliday's glossator would have written the genitive $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \omega \nu$ indicates that this unknown scribe understood $\tau \acute{\omega}\nu \ \pi \epsilon \rho \grave{\iota} \ \kappa \tau \lambda$. in this way. Strangely, although Halliday considers $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \omega \nu$ an element foreign to the text, he nonetheless incorporates—even if diffidently—this addition into his exegesis, and identifies Thoas and Damasenor as 'candidates for the tyranny after Thrasybulus'. He does not explain how a glossator

officers—συνέντες, ἐπισυναγαγόντες, and ἔχοντες τοὺς μισθοφόρους—they are commonly interpreted as periphrastic, meaning simply 'Lykos and Demodokos'.

⁶ This has been a preferred rendering of the text since the very first printed translation of the *Q.G.*, the Latin *Problemata* of Ioannes Petrus Lucensis (Venice, *c.* 1477): 'damasenore ac thoante tyrannis exactis'.

The two exceptions are not true counter-examples. Both are cases of the 'nominale Indetermination' of the grammar books (Schwyzer and Debrunner 2.23; Kühner and Gerth 1.589). The first occurs at Rom. 2.1, where Plutarch is reporting the competing traditions on the source of the name 'Rome': οἱ δὲ 'Ρῶμιν Λατίνων τύραννον. The context, set as it is in the legendary past, makes clear that the article is omitted with special point: 'Some say Romis, a tyrant of the Latins'. Plutarch hereby indicates that little is known of Romis but his name. Compare οἱ δὲ 'Ρωμανόν, 'Οδυσσέως παῖδα καὶ Κίρκης ('Some say Romanos, a son of Odysseus and Circe') which occurs a few lines previously. The indeterminate nature of the expression is certain. The second example comes from Per. 20.1, Plutarch's narration of the Athenian general's successful campaign in the Black Sea. Perikles, we are told, left ships and soldiers to the Sinopians to be used ἐπὶ Τιμησίλεων τύραννον. Again, indetermination is the best interpretation; the name Timesileos appears to be a hapax in Greek literature and 'against a certain tyrant Timesileos' seems a most appropriate rendering of these words.

On the other hand, indetermination, the effect of Titchener's $\tau \nu \rho \dot{\alpha} \nu \nu \sigma s$, is not appropriate at Q.G. 32.298c-d, since Plutarch uses the clause $\tau \dot{\omega} \nu \pi \epsilon \rho \dot{\nu} \Theta \dot{\alpha} \nu \tau \alpha \kappa \alpha \dot{\nu} \Delta \alpha \mu \alpha \sigma \dot{\nu} \nu \rho \rho \alpha \dots \kappa \alpha \tau \alpha \lambda \nu \theta \dot{\epsilon} \nu \tau \omega \nu$ to specify the temporal setting of his aition.

8 In contrast, constructions of the form of $\pi\epsilon\rho$ ι Σικίννιον και Βρούτον δημαγωγοί (Cor. 13.1), where the substantive belonging with the definite article is expressed, are far more common, with over fifty occurrences. In all these instances (in which the substantive is used attributively) the textbook pattern seen here—article-prepositional phrase-substantive—is in fact found. Thus Plutarch's normal usage in this regard supports the $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \omega \nu$ of the manuscripts.

annotating a manuscript of the Plutarch would have had reliable information on the affairs of archaic Miletos.

In any event, an evaluation of the text of Q.G. 32 which includes the premise that $\tau \hat{\omega} \nu \pi \epsilon \rho \hat{\iota} \Theta \hat{\iota} \alpha \nu \tau \alpha \kappa \alpha \hat{\iota} \Delta \alpha \mu \alpha \sigma \hat{\eta} \nu \rho \rho \alpha$ was written periphrastically is seriously compromised by the findings of recent scholarship which demonstrate that occurrences of the periphrastic meaning of $\hat{\iota} \kappa \epsilon \rho \hat{\iota} \tau \nu \alpha$ are much less frequent than previously thought. These studies, drawing on a wide range of evidence, show that in the large majority of cases the context will reveal that the commentators and translators have assumed periphrasis unnecessarily. Given the infrequency of the periphrastic usage, to admit it to Q.G. 32, a passage devoid of any context that may support that interpretation, is extremely bad method: less a plausible suggestion than a shot in the dark.

Thus, the efforts of Halliday and Titchener to improve the text of this passage are seen to be misguided. However, if we are to retain the reading of the manuscripts, a satisfactory meaning for 'the tyrants around Thoas and Damasenor' must be found. As it is the presence of $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \omega \nu$ that has led to dissatisfaction with the text, that word must be the focus of our investigation. Proper attention to the nuances conveyed by $\tau \acute{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu o s$ reveal two interpretations of the text that accord with Plutarch's usage.

- 9 The most extensive study is that of Michel Dubuisson, OI AMΦI TINA, OI ΠΕΡΙ TINA: l'evolution des sens et des emplois (Dissertation, Liège, 1977). Scepticism about the periphrasis was already expressed by A. Traina, 'I. Humbert e la sintassi greca', Atene e Roma NS 1 (1956), 201–2. These works constitute only an important first step in the reevaluation of oi $\pi \epsilon \rho i$ + Accus. Our own investigations, based on the study of over a thousand examples of the construction, lead us to believe that there are many fewer cases of periphrasis in historical narrative than even Dubuisson will allow. Much further research must be done before the use of this expression and its historical development are confidently understood.
 - ¹⁰ See the famous lines of Archilochos (Diehl 22).
- ¹¹ For tyranny in general, see now Victor Parker, 'Τύραννος: the semantics of a political concept from Archilochos to Aristotle', Hermes 126 (1998), 145–72; basic are still: A. Andrewes, The Greek Tyrants (London, 1956) and H. Berve, Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen, 2 vols (München, 1967).
- 12 Ar. Pol. 5.1315b12-14: πλεῖστον γὰρ ἐγένετο χρόνον ἡ περὶ Σικυῶνα τυραννίς, ἡ τῶν 'Ορθαγόρου παίδων καὶ αὐτοῦ 'Ορθαγόρου' ἔτη δ' αὕτη διέμεινεν ἐκατόν ('The tyranny at Sikyon—of the children of Orthagoras and Orthagoras himself—lasted the longest time. It endured for a hundred years'). For a discussion of the relevant evidence, see Fritz Schachermeyr, RE 18.2, 1430-2.
- Thoas, Damasenor, and at least one other. It must be noted that the tyrant Thrasyboulos, mentioned as he is by Herodotos, cannot be a member of a series indicated by these words. It is the norm for the ol $\pi\epsilon\rho$ i τ iva construction that the name of the most prominent member of the group be given as the object of the preposition. Of course, $\tau\hat{\omega}\nu$ $\pi\epsilon\rho$ l Θ 6 ω ν τ a κ al Δ a μ a σ η ν ν ρ a

However, there is another pertinent meaning of $\tau \dot{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu o_S$. In a usage that represents a point of view distinctly hostile to one-man rule, the word may characterize a harsh, selfish, and violent ruler. Furthermore, and this is a crucial point here, $\tau \dot{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu o_S$ in its pejorative sense need not refer to monarchy, but may be applied to the misrule of any number of people. Recall, for example, the harsh oligarchy of the Thirty Tyrants at Athens. ¹⁴ In the same vein, the phrase 'the tyrants around Thoas and Damasenor' may indicate an oligarchy, not a tyranny, as the following parallels will make clear.

The historian Hippias of Erythrai, telling of the fall of King Knopos of that same city, writes, as quoted by Athenaios (6.259b-c):

καὶ καταληφθέντος τοῦ ἄστεος ὑπὸ τῶν περὶ τὸν 'Ορτύγην πολλοὶ μὲν ἀναιροῦνται τῶν τοῦ Κνωποῦ φίλων καὶ ἡ Κλεονίκη μαθοῦσα φεύγει εἰς Κολοφῶνα. οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν 'Ορτύγην τύραννοι ἔχοντες τὴν ἐκ Χίου δύναμιν τοὺς ἐνισταμένους αὐτῶν τοῖς πράγμασι διέφθειρον καὶ τοὺς νόμους καταλύσαντες αὐτοὶ διεῖπον τὰ κατὰ τὴν πόλιν...

When the city had been taken by those around Ortyges, many of the friends of Knopos were killed and Kleonike, learning this, escaped to Kolophon. With the force from Chios the tyrants around Ortyges killed everyone who opposed their actions and, after setting aside the laws, they ran the city's affairs . . .

Here we find the phrase, 'the tyrants around Ortyges', but to whom do these words refer? Not, as one might guess, a tyrant named Ortyges and his faction—for the plural of $\tau \dot{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu o s$ sometimes has this use. In a previous passage Hippias makes the matter clearer. There Knopos, still on the throne, sets out to Delphi to consult the oracle because he is worried about his personal safety (Ath. 6.259a):

καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ὁρμήσαντος αὐτοῦ εἰς Δελφοὺς οἱ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ καταλῦσαι βουλόμενοι, ἵν' ὀλιγαρχίαν καταστήσωνται· (ἦσαν δ' οὖτοι 'Ορτύγης καὶ 'Ιρος καὶ 'Έχαρος, οἳ ἐκαλοῦντο διὰ τὸ περὶ τὰς θεραπείας εἶναι τῶν ἐπιφανῶν πρόκυνες καὶ κόλακες) συμπλέοντες...

And afterwards, when he set out for Delphi, sailing with him went the very men who wanted to overthrow his kingship in order to establish an oligarchy (these men were Ortyges, Iros, and Echaros, who are called the Lap-Dogs and the Flatterers, because they attended famous people) . . .

Hippias is describing a situation where a king is deposed in favour of an oligarchy. Of $\pi\epsilon\rho i \ \tau \delta \nu$ ' $O\rho\tau \dot{\nu}\gamma \eta\nu \ \tau \dot{\nu}\rho a\nu\nu o\iota$ are thus a narrow oligarchy, hostile to both the laws and the demos.

Plutarch himself uses this form of expression when he describes the oligarchy which, with Spartan help, took over at Thebes in 382 B.C. He calls the oligarchs in question $\tau \dot{\nu} \rho a \nu \nu o \iota$, ¹⁵ and both of $\pi \epsilon \rho \iota$ $\Lambda \epsilon o \nu \tau \dot{\iota} \delta a \nu$ (Pelop. 6.2) and of $\pi \epsilon \rho \iota$ $\Lambda \rho \chi \dot{\iota} a \nu$ (Pelop. 9.2). Pelopidas 6.1 is particularly telling, for there both parts of the troublesome phrase of Q.G. 32 occur together:

τυράννων could refer to a succession of relatively minor tyrants before or after Thrasyboulos. In this case, the duration of this period of tyranny, including the rule of Thrasyboulos, will have been less than the eighteen years allotted by *Politics* 5.1315b34 to the tyranny $\pi\epsilon\rho$ ι Γέρωνα καὶ Γέλωνα $\pi\epsilon\rho$ ι Συρακούσας (the fourth longest—after the tyrannies of the Orthagorids, the Kypselids and the Peisistratids—known to the author of this passage).

The connection in partisan discourse of oligarchy and tyranny was common at Athens before the Thirty. For example, referring to the reactions of the Athenians to the Mutilation of the Herms and the Profanation of the Mysteries, Thucydides says (6.60.1) πάντα αύτοις ἐδόκει ἐπὶ ξυνωμοσία ὀλιγαρχικῆ καὶ τυραννικῆ πεπρᾶχθαι ('it seemed to them that everything had been done for an oligarchical and tyrannical conspiracy'). For more on this connection, see Roger Brock, 'Athenian oligarchs: the numbers game', JHS 109 (1989), 160–4.

¹⁵ Pelop. esp. 6 and 9; Comp. Pelop. et Marc. 1.6; Ages. 24.2; De gen. Soc. 109.576b, 586d, etc.

καταδεδουλωμένοις ύπο των <u>περί Άρχίαν</u> καὶ <u>Λεοντίδαν</u> οὐδὲ ἐλπίσαι περιῆν ἀπαλλαγήν τινα τῆς τυραννίδος.

[the Thebans] being enslaved by those around Archias and Leontidas, had no hope that they could find any escape from this tyranny.

Clearly, then, the transmitted text of Q.G. 32 preserves Plutarch's words and should not be altered: $\tau \nu \rho \acute{a}\nu \nu \omega \nu$ yields plausible sense supportable by parallels, it is the reading of all of the manuscripts, and, given the admitted obscurity of the expression, it is the *lectio difficilior* as well.

On the other hand, choosing between the two interpretations offered here is less straightforward. The wording of the genitive absolute gives us no clues, for while $\kappa a \tau a \lambda \delta \omega$ is admittedly the *mot juste* for describing the overthrow of a tyranny, ¹⁶ it is also used of oligarchy and democracy. ¹⁷ A decision must rest on a thorough sifting of all the evidence on the polity of Archaic Miletos, a procedure that would transgress the bounds of this study. ¹⁸ It is nonetheless clear that whatever solution is reached, it must not seek to alter Plutarch's words, but must find an appropriate historical context for 'the *tyrants* around Thoas and Damasenor'.

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¹⁶ For example, Thuc. 1.18.1: ἐπειδὴ δὲ οἴ τε Ἀθηναίων τύραννοι . . . κατελύθησαν ('And after the Athenian tyrants . . . had been overthrown'); Plut. Per. 3.2, δς ἐξήλασε Πεισιστρατίδας καὶ κατέλυσε τὴν τυραννίδα ('[Kleisthenes,] who drove out the Peisitratids and overthrew the tyranny').

¹⁷ The Athenian law of Demophantos (410/9 B.C.) anathematized 'whoever should overthrow the democracy at Athens or hold any office if the democracy be overthrown' (ἐάν τις δημοκρατίαν καταλύη τὴν Ἀθήνησιν, ἢ ἀρχὴν τινα ἄρχη καταλελυμένης τῆς δημοκρατίας [Andoc. Myst. 96.8]); the expression is very common. With oligarchy the verb is rarer, but still well-attested, e.g. Arist. Pol. 2.1273b35: Σόλωνα δ' ἔνιοι μέν οἴονται νομοθέτην γενέσθαι σπουδαῖον ὀλιγαρχίαν τε γὰρ καταλῦσαι λίαν ἄκρατον οὖσαν ('Some think that Solon was an excellent lawgiver, for he overthrew an oligarchy that was excessively absolute'); Plut. Per. 25.2: ὁ Περικλῆς τὴν μέν οὖσαν ὀλιγαρχίαν ἐν Σάμω κατέλυσεν ('Perikles overthrew the oligarchy that existed in Samos').

¹⁸ See V. B. Gorman, Miletos, the Ornament of Ionia (Ann Arbor, forthcoming), ch. 3.