

Athenian Wheat-Tsars: Black Sea Grain and Elite Culture

Alfonso Moreno

We may begin a study of the Athenian grain supply from the Black Sea (and the Bosporan Kingdom in particular) from the well-known passage in Demosthenes' speech *Against Leptines* (Dem. 20.29-35), where the orator speaks of approximately 400,000 *medimnoi* (equivalent to more than 13,000 metric tons) of grain (*sitos*) coming to Athens from Bosporos.¹ At stake in the case is the *ateleia*, or exemption, of Leukon, the king of Bosporos and (simultaneously) honorary citizen of democratic Athens, from the performance of public services for his adoptive city. Demosthenes invites his audience to reflect:

While of our other benefactors each has made himself useful to us on one occasion, Leukon will be found on reflection to be a perpetual benefactor, and that in a matter especially vital to our city. For you are aware that we consume more imported corn than any other nation. Now the corn that comes to our ports from the Black Sea is equal to the whole amount from all other places of export. And this is not surprising; for not only is that district most productive of corn, but also Leukon, who controls the trade, has granted exemption from dues to merchants conveying corn to Athens, and he proclaims that those bound for your port shall have priority of lading. For Leukon, enjoying exemption for himself and his children, has granted exemption to every one of you. See what this amounts to. He exacts a toll of one-thirtieth from exporters of corn from his country. Now from the Bosporos there come to Athens about four hundred thousand *medimnoi*. (Dem. 20.30-32, Loeb translation).

The context of the passage (not to mention its verbal syntax) make absolutely clear that constant, *per annum* quantities are indicated. Moreover, according to Demosthenes, the amounts of imported grain were verifiable from public accounts (20.32); and in a previous year of shortage, Leukon had sent an amount of grain in addition to the usual amount (20.33). Demosthenes' annual figure therefore cannot reasonably be dismissed on *a priori* grounds, as some scholarship has done.²

In addition, Strabo supplies evidence for the amounts exported from a single Bosporan port, stating that Leukon sent 2,100,000 *medimnoi* from Theodosia to Athens (Strab. 7.4.6). This equals about 260,000 *medimnoi per annum* in the eight years between the opening of the port shortly before 355 BC and the death of Leukon in 349/8 BC.³

These figures find independent corroboration in two other sources: 1) We find that in 340 BC the Macedonian king Philip II captured at Hieron either 180 or 230 ships bound for Athens with grain (the figures come respectively from Theopompos and Philochoros (*FGrH* 115 F292 and 328 F162, respectively). Calculating from the average capacity of a merchant ship, approximately 3,000 *medimnoi*, we find that this convoy may well have consisted of at least 540,000 *medimnoi*.⁴ 2) If Mytilene was importing more than 100,000 *medimnoi* yearly from the Bosporan Kingdom c. 350 BC,⁵ it is perfectly credible that Athens imported as much as Demosthenes claims.

But it is my aim in this paper to avoid crude exercises in quantification, and instead look at a broader set of evidence that will *qualify* the economic context of these mutually-corroborating and independent figures. We should ideally seek to describe the cultural parameters within which this grain trade operated. This requires us to pay special attention to the period from the last third of the 5th century to the end of the 4th century BC, for which the surviving evidence is relatively abundant. For this period, Athenian relations with the ruling house of the Spartokidai are not only especially amenable to a cultural analysis based on archaeological and textual evidence, but also especially relevant to a study of the Athenian grain supply. For example, the decree of the politician Androtion honoring Spartokos and Pairisades in 346 BC (*IG* II², 212), and including a relief of the kings (Fig. 1), establishes the grain supply from Bosporos as a reciprocal relationship between Athens on the one hand, and the Spartokid dynasty on the other.⁶ The *ateleia* and loading priority received by merchants who took grain to Athens was granted not by Bosporan law, but through Spartokid edicts (*kerugmata*).⁷ Of course, a powerful oligarchy shared some power at Bosporos with the Spartokidai, but it is unmistakable that the latter held an absolute control of foreign affairs, particularly pertaining to the grain trade.⁸ Demosthenes was strictly accurate when referring to Leukon in 355 BC as *kurios* of Bosporan grain (Dem. 20.31). The dozen or so rural settlements which have been excavated during the last fifteen years on the European Bosporos, near or on the coast of the Sea of Azov, and which appear to be large farmsteads dating from the fourth to the mid-third centuries, have been convincingly suggested as the bases for the intensive exploitation of Bosporan royal domains.⁹

Any analysis of Spartokid power must start from Bosporan epigraphy, which portrays each Spartokid from Leukon onwards as embodying the dual powers of an *archon* (towards his Greek subjects) and a *basileus* (towards his barbarian subjects).¹⁰ Michael I. Rostovtzeff long ago recognized this *Doppelnatur*, or *Zweiseitigkeit*, as a unique Bosporan feature that encapsulates the

Fig. 1. The decree of Androtion (IG II², 212) (photo by A. Moreno).



complex influences and compromises at the core of Spartokid identity and politics.¹¹ But how and why was this dual system instituted? Until recently, we could only speculate that, although Leukon (who ruled from 389/8 to 349/8 BC) is the first Bosphoran *archon* / *basileus* attested, the titles might have originated with his predecessors. However, the massive architrave of the Ionic *propylaia* recently discovered at Nymphaion bears identical dedicatory inscriptions, in which Leukon appears as “*archon* of Bosphoros and Theodosia and of all Sindike, and of the Toretoi and Dandarioi and Psestoi”.¹² In representing Spartokid power as an archonship over both Greeks *and* non-Greeks, this text suggests that it was later, during Leukon’s forty-year reign, that the title *basileus* was introduced, and thus (at least at this formal level) that the Bosphoran state began its transformation into a kingdom.¹³ However, we must remember that titles are only manifestations of deeper realities: Spartokid kingship had to develop conceptually before it could be expressed as a name. The Nymphaion inscription only shows that it was not the initial (nor, for that matter, an automatic) choice. As a *terminus post quem* it presents us with the problem of explaining how the institution of kingship began at Bosphoros, probably during (and certainly not long before) the first quarter of the 4th century BC.



Fig. 2. The dromos of the Tsar's Kurgan near Kerch (photo by A. Moreno).

Michael I. Rostovtzeff reflects common opinion in thinking that the Spartokidai simply took over the types of government customary for each part of their subjects, civic magistracy for Greeks, kingship for barbarians.¹⁴ This at first seems highly plausible, especially in the context of political maneuvers like the marriage alliance between Satyros (who ruled from 433/2 to 389/8 BC) and Hekataios, the king of the Sindoi.¹⁵ In this hypothesis, kingship was transferred to the Spartokidai from their various non-Greek subjects, in a process that, in light of the new inscription, would have gradually culminated with Leukon's transformation from *archon* to *basileus*.

However, archaeological evidence from aristocratic burials in the northern Black Sea region casts doubt on this idea. After the first quarter of the 4th century BC, we find that distinctive and well-studied typologies of local burial, like the Sindo-Maiotian brick and wood graves, come to an abrupt end, to be replaced by the stone-chambered kurgans typical of 4th century Pantikapaion.¹⁶ The custom and technique of burial in stone-chambered kurgans not only around Gorgippia, but also across the Sea of Azov in the region of the Lower Don, almost certainly emanated from Pantikapaion, and can be traced to the architects who worked there and created a hybrid form of burial, a Scythian mound re-designed according to the possibilities of Greek

monumental architecture (Fig. 2).¹⁷ This observation alone forces us to look more closely at the possibility that Spartokid kingship was itself an inspired hybrid of Scythian and Greek ideas of royalty.

The origin of these ideas is to be viewed in the context of direct Atheno-Bosporan interaction. Our sources allow us to trace this back no further than the end of the Peloponnesian War, when Satyros successfully seized Nymphaion from Athenian control (Aeschin. 3.171-172).¹⁸ Instead of treachery by Gylon, the Athenian in control of the place (and grandfather of the politician Demosthenes), the likeliest cause of Nymphaion's loss is simply that Athens at this time could no longer hold the place. Nor would it have wished to, for there would have been little sense in fighting a faraway strongman who, if appeased, could instead promise reliable friendship and supplies, including grain, to a city whose Aegean Empire was in clear and present danger of collapsing.¹⁹ From his fort at Dekeleia, the Spartan king Agis could observe the results of this policy of appeasement: "ships carrying grain that were constantly sailing into Peiraeus", but which could be cut off at Kalchedon and Byzantium (Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.35, Penguin translation, is the earliest direct reference to Athenian imports of grain from the Black Sea). In taking Nymphaion, Satyros had only to observe the contemporary needs and capabilities of Athens. The praise later publicly lavished on him by the grateful Athenians (Isoc. 17; *IG* II², 212) shows the true nature of Gylon's so-called betrayal: it was more like a personal exchange of gifts marking the creation of elite *xeniai*. We hear that Gylon himself received from Satyros a Scythian princess as his bride, and was given Kepoi, on the Taman peninsula, as a place to retire. When the Athenian defeat at Aigospotamoi interrupted supplies, Satyros continued his personal generosity by providing refuge for dislocated Athenian aristocrats, like the Mantitheos who in the late 390's BC cites Satyros as his alibi during the rule of the Thirty (Lys. 16.4), as well as for high-ranking pro-Athenian partisans, like the Byzantine associates of Alkibiades (Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.1).

Athenian elite movements to Bosporan safe harbors were paralleled by Bosporan movements to Athens: in the 390's BC, the Bosporan noble Sopaios gave his son money and two grain ships and sent him off on a *voyage de formation*. The trip was both educational and commercial in nature, as the young man says: "my father loaded two ships with grain, gave me money, and sent me off on a trading expedition and at the same time to see the world" (Isoc. 17.4, Loeb translation). Significantly, the son went directly to the school of Isokrates and began to move rapidly in Athenian elite circles. The influential politician Agyrrhios of Kollytos (now much better known as the proponent of the Athenian Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 BC) appears as a witness in the lawsuit against the Bosporan's former friend, the powerful banker Pasion (Isoc. 17.31-32).²⁰

Voyages like that of the son of Sopaios seem to have become frequent during the rule of Leukon, and by the 350's BC Isokrates could refer to a series of his other, no doubt similarly aristocratic, students from Pontos (Isoc.

15.224), who were educated in his school side by side with men like the politician Androtion, the general Timotheos, and the historian Ephoros. Many of these leading Athenians established intensely personal, hereditary connections with the Spartokidai. Just as it was Gylon's grandson Demosthenes who defended Leukon's *ateleia* in 355 BC, and, according to Dinarchos (Din. 1.43), set up public statutes of the Spartokidai in exchange for personal, yearly gifts of grain; it was Isokrates' pupil Androtion who moved honors for Leukon's sons in 346 BC (*IG II²*, 212); and it was Agyrrhios' great-grandson, also named Agyrrhios, who did the same for Spartokos III in 285/4 (*IG II²*, 653).²¹ Among Isokrates' students, Timotheos pursued an active policy of Athenian expansion and control in the Hellespont (as Isokrates boasted: *Isoc.* 15.112), and Ephoros started, as we shall see, an entire tradition of historiography on Scythia. This important Atheno-Bosporan elite network was forged during the rule of Satyros and Leukon.

If we now inquire about the intellectual pursuits and aesthetic tastes of this group, we find 4th century Athenian *paideia* as the principal source for the ideology of Bosporan kingship. Here the visual medium serves an evidentiary role parallel to that of public rhetoric, letting us see how its propagators and consumers wished to represent themselves. The objects relevant to this analysis consist of luxury manufactures of gold, electrum, and silver from the 4th century kurgans of Bosporos and Scythia, mostly made by Greek craftsmen who themselves lived, or worked, in the Black Sea *poleis*, especially Pantikapaion.²² These masterpieces reveal a first-hand understanding not only of Scythian objects and shapes, but also of the aesthetic principles of Scytho-Siberian art and their translational potential into Greek terms.²³ Crucially, they were created under the immediate demand and according to the tastes of their consumers, and at Pantikapaion the nearest and most influential of these clients were obviously not Scythians from the steppe, but members of a traveled and urbanized Bosporan aristocracy.

It is therefore remarkable that so many scholars, including Rostovtzeff, have described samples of this art as ethnologically realistic "illustrations to Herodotos", or as "precious documents for reconstructing the life and religion of the Scythians".²⁴ Indeed it would be highly surprising if the Bosporan aristocrats who commissioned this art had much desire for scientific accuracy, or if the craftsmen of Pantikapaion went to any lengths to understand and realistically depict things like the lore of the Great Goddess, the ceremonies of holy communion, or other intricacies so appealing to modern scholarship. Instead, we must place these objects in their appropriate cultural context, remembering that they were made for the same class of Bosporans present in Athens in the circle of Isokrates. Taste matches education, as we see when we juxtapose the iconography of these objects with the views expressed by a member of this circle, Ephoros of Kyme (as preserved by Strabon):²⁵

Ephoros, in the fourth book of his *History*, the book entitled *Europe* (for he made the circuit of Europe as far as the Scythians), says towards the end that the modes of life both of the Sauromatai and of the other Scythians are unlike, for, whereas some are so cruel that they even eat human beings, others abstain from eating any living creature whatever. Now the other writers, he says, tell only about their savagery, because they know that the terrible and the marvelous are startling, but one should tell the opposite facts too and make them patterns of conduct (*paradeigmata*), and he himself, therefore, will tell only about those who follow "most just" habits, for there are some of the Scythian nomads who feed only on mare's milk, and excel all men in justice; and they are mentioned by the poets: by Homer, when he says that Zeus espies the land "of the Galaktophagoi and Abioi, men most just", and by Hesiod, in what is called his *Circuit of the Earth*, when he says that Phineos is carried by the Storm Winds "to the land of the Galaktophagoi, who have their dwellings in wagons". Then Ephoros reasons out the cause as follows: since they are frugal in their ways of living and not money-getters, they not only are orderly towards one another, because they have all things in common, their wives, children, the whole of their kin and everything, but also remain invincible and unconquered by outsiders, because they have nothing to be enslaved for. And he cites Choerilos also, who, in his *The Crossing of the Pontoon-Bridge* which was constructed by Darios, says, "the sheep-tending Sakai, of Scythian stock; but they used to live in wheat-producing Asia; however, they were colonists from the Nomads, law-abiding people". And when he calls Anakharsis "wise", Ephoros says that he belongs to this race, and that he was considered also one of Seven Wise Men because of his perfect self-control and good sense. And he goes on to tell the inventions of Anacharsis: the bellows, the two-fluked anchor and the potter's wheel. These things I tell knowing full well that Ephoros himself does not tell the whole truth about everything; and particularly in his account of Anacharsis (for how could the wheel be his invention, if Homer, who lived in earlier times, knew of it? "As when a potter has wheel that fits in his hands", [Hom. *Il.* 18.600] and so on); but as for those other things, I tell them because I wish to make my point clear that there actually was a common report, which was believed by the men of both early and of later times, that a part of the nomads, I mean those who had settled the farthest away from the rest of mankind, were "Galaktophagoi", "Abioi", and "most just", and that they were not an invention of Homer. (Ephoros, *ap.* Strab. 7.3.9 = *FGrH* 70 F42, Loeb translation).

If we look at the 4th century luxury metalwork surviving from Bosphoros to the Dnieper, it is plain to see in them the Scythians of Homer and Ephoros: the justest and wisest, drinkers of mare's milk, frugal, nomadic, wagon-dwelling, strangers to money-making, communists, invincible warriors, lords of wheat and livestock, the people of Anacharsis. But this is Homer rather than Herodotos, poetry and art instead of ethnography, the fantasies of 4th century Athenian rhetoricians instead of a *historia* of the steppe. Here, therefore, we have the palpable evidence of the enormous intellectual influence that aristocratic Athens – and in particular a closed circle of men with conspicuous connections to the city's grain supply – had on the identity and self-representation of the Bosphoran elite.

Rostovtzeff, carefully reading this passage of Ephoros, recognized it as a fantasy typical of the Isokratean school: "Ganz augenscheinlich ist auch, abgesehen von dem Inhalt, daß eine von diesem Gesichtspunkte aus verfaßte Beschreibung keine wirkliche, sondern nur eine künstliche sein muß... Die Skythen des Ephoros sind dementsprechend nichts Reales. Sie sind ein rhetorisches, moralisierendes *paradeigma* im Sinne des Isokrates, dessen treuer Schüler Ephoros war".²⁶

But, in studying the iconography, Rostovtzeff indulged in an unfortunate inconsistency:

The scenes of social life are slightly idealized, the types also. Here we can trace the Stoic tendency of Ephoros, who desired to substitute, for the real Scythians, Scythians idealized according to Stoic theory. But the idealization does not go very far. One can see that the Scythians themselves, under Greek influence, wished the Greek artists to provide them with objects reproducing Scythian scenes: scenes from their religious, from their economic and social life. Precious documents for reconstructing the life and religion of the Scythians...²⁷

However, Rostovtzeff must be credited for the enormously valuable task of tracing the commanding influence of the Ephoran Scythian on the literary traditions of antiquity, from the 4th century BC to the age of Strabo and Lucian. These works provide enough quotations to set almost as captions for the surviving 4th century metalwork. The Stoics, for example, liked to see their wise Anacharsis as the antithesis not only of sea travel and trade (ironically, since it was probably his fabled voyage (Hdt. 4.76-77) that inspired the 4th century *voyages de formation* of the son of Sopaïos and others), but also of the gymnasium, music, wine, and pleasure (see Lucian, *Anach.*; Hercher, *Epistolog. Graec.* 102-105). In the same way, the depictions on Black Sea metalwork strikingly lack any trace of pleasurable engagements: we are a world away from the Herodotean Scythians inhaling cannabis and "delighted, shouting for joy" (Hdt. 4.75).²⁸



Fig. 3. Silver gilt vessel from Solocha. Courtesy of the State Hermitage, St Petersburg.

On the other hand, the iconography of the silver gilt vessel from Solocha (Fig. 3) and on the pectoral from Tolstaja Mogila (Fig. 4) strikingly match the boast of the Ephoran, communist Anacharsis: “We hold all our land in common. We take whatever it gives us willingly, and let go whatever it hides. We save our cattle from savage beasts, and receive milk and cheese in return” (Hercher, *Epistolog. Graec.* 104-105).²⁹

The contention of Lucian’s *Toxaris* that “Scythians think that there is nothing greater than friendship” (Lucian, *Tox.* 7), backed by his five different adventure vignettes of Scythian friendship, closely matches the iconography on the electrum vase from Kul’-Oba (Fig. 5).³⁰ The same exercise of comparison can be continued indefinitely.

Strabo gives us only hints of the well-deserved thrashing that these moralizing *paradeigmata* of Scythia later received at the hands of Eratosthenes of Kyrene and Apollodoros of Athens.³¹ He himself thought that Homer, and after him Aischylos, had been right to praise people who abstained “from living a life of contracts and money-making” and, *Platonikôs* (an illuminating adverbial choice!), possessed everything in common, except sword and drinking-cup. In doing this, Strabo reveals both the gamut of elite prejudices carried by the students of Isokrates as they manufactured their ideal Scythians, as well as how sharply these ideas contrasted with reality:



Fig. 4. Pectoral from Tolstaja Mogila. Courtesy of the Museum of Historical Treasures of Ukraine, Kiev.

And yet our mode of life has spread its change for the worse to almost all peoples, introducing amongst them luxury and sensual pleasures and, to satisfy these vices, base artifices that lead to innumerable acts of greed. So then, much wickedness of this sort has fallen on the barbarian peoples also, on the nomads as well as the rest; for as the result of taking up a seafaring life they not only have become morally worse, indulging in the practice of piracy and of slaying strangers, but also, because of their intercourse with many peoples, have partaken of the luxury and the peddling habits of those peoples. But though these things seem to conduce strongly to gentleness of manner, they corrupt morals and introduce cunning instead of the straightforwardness which I just now mentioned. (Strab. 7.3.7, Loeb translation).

One wonders how much the Scythian elite itself, avid consumer of Bosporan art that its kurgan inventories show it to have been, did not wish to re-invent itself according to the Ephoran model, and in doing so became an example of life imitating art. This is, in fact, what the Bosporan aristocracy seems to have done increasingly. We know of Satyros II leading his troops in “the Scythian custom” in 310 BC (Diod. 20.22.3). A similar detail is attached to his brother Eumelos (except that here it is *death* that imitates art):

As he was returning home from Sindike and was hurrying for a sacrifice, riding to his palace in a four-horse carriage which had four wheels and a canopy, it happened that the horses were frightened and ran away with him. Since the driver was unable to manage the reins, the king, fearing lest he be carried to the ravines, tried to jump out; but his sword caught in the wheel, and

he was dragged along by the motion of the carriage and died on the spot. (Diod. 20.25.4, Loeb translation).

And, of course, the ultimate example of art in death: the reinvention of the Scythian kurgan, and its combination, as Ephoros would have done for his “justest and wisest” Scythians, with the *heroa* and corbelled tombs of Homeric princes (Fig. 2).³²

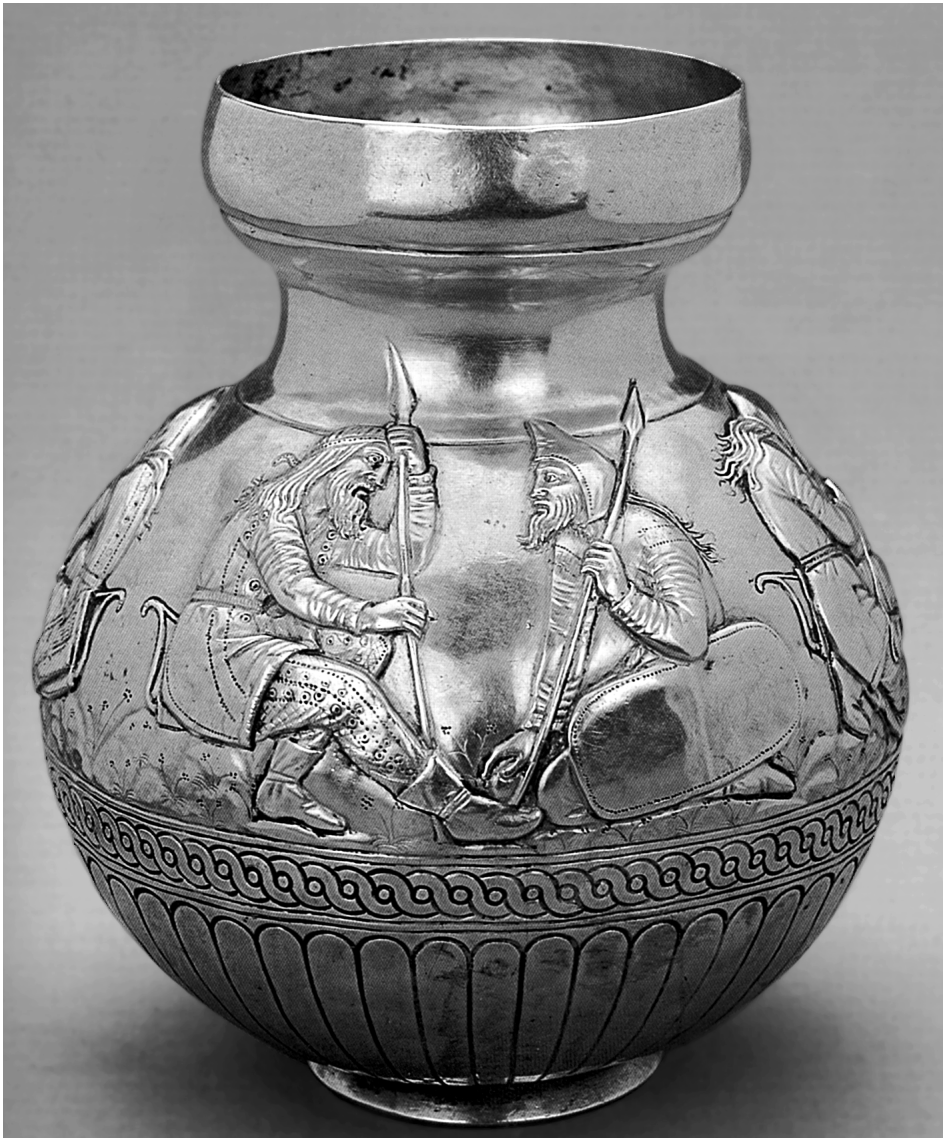


Fig. 5. Electrum vessel from Kul' Oba. Courtesy of the State Hermitage, St Petersburg.



Fig. 6. Comb from Solocha. Courtesy of the State Hermitage, St Petersburg.

Transforming a state by educating its leaders, the *paideia* of Isokrates triumphed in Bosphoros. This monarchic rule of the Spartokidai would, in Isokrates' view, have assimilated them to the gods themselves:

The Carthaginians and the Lakedaimonians, who are the best governed peoples of the world, are ruled by oligarchies at home, yet, when they take the field, they are ruled by kings... And, if there is need to speak also of things old in story, it is said that

even the gods are ruled by Zeus as king. (Isoc. 3.24-26, Loeb translation).

Even better, every Bosporan aristocrat had access to the ennobling “history” of a Homeric Scythia and its *paradeigmata*, and could in turn become, like Isokrates’ ideal monarch, a *paradeigma* for common people.³³ In the words of Isokrates, writing as the Cyprian king Nikokles:

I was not, of course, unaware that those kings also are highly thought of by the multitude who are just in their dealings with their citizens, even though they provide themselves with pleasures from outside their households; but I desired both to put myself as far above such suspicions as possible and at the same time to set up my conduct as a pattern (*paradeigma*) to my people, knowing that the multitude are likely to spend their lives in practices in which they see their rulers occupied. (Isoc. 3.37, Loeb translation).

The same yearning to recover the moral *paradeigmata* of history drove the student of Isokrates, whether he was a Bosporan commissioning work from a Pantikapaian artist, or an Androtion writing his *Atthis*, to look back to the traditions of his ancestors, whether more or less imagined or studied: “for if you are mindful of the past you will plan better for the future” (Isoc. 3.35, Loeb translation).³⁴ And on Androtion’s decree displayed in Peiraieus, the sons of Leukon, each looking the part of a wise Anacharsis, “the justest of men”, kings of Bosporos, were *paradeigmata* themselves, great benefactors, Isokratean “models for others to copy” (Fig. 1).³⁵

One of the great ironies of the ideology of Bosporan kingship is that it developed in Athens, alongside and within an ideology that was democratic, or at least professed to be so; another is that it developed a moralizing, philosophic myth of aristocratic detachment from money-making and applied it to the very class of men who organized and controlled an overseas trading empire. Equally ironic is how those who idealized Scythia were, on the one hand, living contradictions of democratic ideals, yet could present themselves in Athens as democratic benefactors (with their official title as *basileis* punctiliously excluded, though clearly implied, as in *IG II²*, 212). It did not matter either that Plato could use the same Scythian *paradeigma* that appears on the Solocha comb (Fig. 6) to disprove the democratic tenet (a *topos* of the Athenian funeral oration)³⁶ that courage was the monopoly of hoplites (Pl. *Lach.* 191a-191c). Nor was there inconsistency (or sincere populism) involved when the “democratic” sons of Leukon were praised by the son of one of the four hundred men who had overthrown the Athenian democracy in 411 BC. Athenian rhetoric produced the brilliant sleights of hand that made these little contradictions disappear, replacing them with pleasing fictions: the transfor-

mation of kings and oligarchs into democrats, and of economic profit into the antithesis of the aristocratic ethos.

Conclusion

I would like to end with the provocative suggestion that the most important factor enabling Athenian grain imports from the Black Sea was the transformation, in the early 4th century BC, of a local tyranny at Pantikapaion into a powerful Graeco-Scythian monarchy. That transformation took place in the context of a specific intellectual and social nexus comprising a Bosporan and Athenian elite. These men were instrumental in the process of ideologizing, and thus of perpetuating, a royal economy that could generate large and stable surpluses of grain, and thus supply large quantities annually to Athens. Two things only were needed to ensure the permanence of this system: the good-will of the Bosporan kings, and Athenian control of the route between Pantikapaion and Peiraeus. As long as Athenian political leadership could provide this, Athens would be fed and a few of its politicians gain enormous power. If correct, we may have here a very different way of understanding this trade: an oligarchic grain supply sustaining a professedly democratic state.

Notes

- 1 The key to converting a *medimnos* of wheat or barley into its approximate modern weight equivalent appears in lines 21-25 of Agora I 7557 (see Rhodes & Osborne (eds.) 2003 26): "The buyer will weigh out the wheat at a weight of a talent for five *hekteis*, and the barley at a weight of a talent per *medimnos*". Thus: 1 *medimnos* of wheat = 32.96 kg; 1 *medimnos* of barley = 27.47 kg. Before this discovery, the weight of ancient grains was normally simply taken as roughly equivalent to modern varieties, which now turn out to be considerably (c. 30 %) heavier (e.g. 1 *medimnos* of modern wheat and barley at 40.54 kg and 33.77 kg, respectively). The nutritional value of the *medimnos* is thus significantly less than previously thought.
- 2 I refer in particular to Garnsey 1988, 97, in his influential and minimalist attempt to downplay the scale of Athenian grain imports. Garnsey approvingly quotes Gomme's reckless supposition that "Demosthenes was a politician, and so was probably not speaking the truth" (in Gomme 1933a, 32). Cf. Braund in this volume.
- 3 Demosthenes speaks in 355 BC as if the facilities at Theodosia have only recently been opened (Dem. 20.33). Kocevalov 1932, 321-323, first made this division of Strabon's figure, but he gets 420,000-350,000 *medimnoi* per year, taking 355/4-349/8 as the end-points.
- 4 See Casson 1971, 183-199 on ship capacities.
- 5 Tod, *GHI* II, 163.
- 6 Rostovtzeff 1993, 73.
- 7 Rostovtzeff 1993, 73. On these *kerugmata*, see Braund 2003, 204-205.
- 8 Burstein 1993, 83, contrasts the evidence from Isokrates with that from Demosthenes and the decree of Androtion to argue that "a major reorganization of the Bosporan grain trade... must have occurred sometime between the late 390's and 355 BC...".

its principal feature being the centralization of control into Spartokid hands at the expense of other Bosporan aristocrats. He points specifically to the conclusion of Isokrates' speech (17.57), where Sopaïos appears to have a capacity equal to that of Satyros to grant favors to Athens, including export rights. This would follow the general trend outlined in this paper, but the relative importance of Bosporan aristocrats in relations with Athens throughout the fourth century is unmistakable (e.g. in the notable position of Sosis and Theodosios in *IG II²*, 212), and probably more stable than Burstein assumes.

- 9 See Maslennikov 1998, 42-72.
- 10 See W. Dittenberger's note in *Syll.³* 211: "*Graecorum archontes, barbarorum reges passim vocabantur Spartocidae saeculo quarto*". The earliest instances are: *CIRB* 6 (= *Syll.³*, 211), 7 (much restored), 8, 1037, and 1038.
- 11 Rostovtzeff 1993, 70-71.
- 12 Sokolova 2001, 369 (the preliminary announcement of the find). The *editio princeps* of this text has not yet appeared, nor have I been able to see the actual stone, but the published photograph allows the reading. I am deeply thankful to Dr. Sokolova for showing me other photographs of the text and discussing it with me on various occasions in Crimea and in St. Petersburg.
- 13 A similar (albeit much restored) text on a long-known altar might illustrate the introduction of kingship at a stage following that of the *Nymphaion* inscription, since it shows Leukon as archon of the *Sindoi* and basileus over *Toretoi*, *Dandarioi* and *Pessoi*: *CIRB* 6a (Škorpil's restoration, see Sokolova 2001, 371).
- 14 Rostovtzeff 1993, 79.
- 15 See Polyainos, *Strat.* 8.55. On the identification of this Satyros as Satyros I (as opposed to his four later Spartocid namesakes), and the overall historicity of this story, see Rostovtzeff 1993, 118-120.
- 16 Alekseeva 1999, 330; Vinogradov 2001, 85-87.
- 17 Rostovtzeff 1922, 76-79; Minns 1913, 194. There has never been serious doubt that Greek architects created the full typology of stone-chambered kurgans of Bosporos, which also appears simultaneously and abundantly in Thrace. A comparison of the typically Greek rusticated masonry from the *Tsarskii Kurgan*, with that from contemporary Bosporan monumental buildings makes this fact quite obvious, and the stones of a kurgan in *Sveshtari*, Thrace, still bear the Greek numeral signs that aided workmen in the assembly of the building: see Tsetskhladze 1998b, 53.
- 18 This does not overlook the most discussed literary source for Athenian presence in the Black Sea in the fifth century, namely the famous expedition of Perikles to Sinope (*Plut. Per.* 20.1-2), usually dated to the early 430's. The passage from Plutarch has received countless interpretations, from scholars who have Perikles continue to the north coast and secure a source of grain for Athens, to others who go as far as to deny the historicity of whole account (see Tsetskhladze, who is among the more skeptical scholars, for a full reference to the debate: 1997a, 461-466). I simply accept the account as it stands, not only because Plutarch and his source obviously had reasons to avoid linking the expedition with the north coast (a temptation they, too, would surely have felt), but also because the reported results of the mission match the well-attested Athenian policies of establishing cleruchies and controlling maritime routes. See Hind 1994a, 492, setting the date of *Nymphaion's* seizure as ca. 405 BC.

- 19 Braund 2003, 198-202, is helpful in presenting other arguments against straightforward readings of Gylon's "treachery".
- 20 On Agyrrhios and the Grain-Tax Law, see Stroud 1998 with Moreno 2003.
- 21 See Davies 1971, 279-281 and Traill 1994, 125-126.
- 22 Boardman 1994, 196-210; Rostovtzeff 1993, 86; Vinogradov, in Rostovtzeff 1993, 142; Treister 1999a, 79 (see also 1999b, 117-121, for sculptors); Gajdukevič 1971, 132.
- 23 Boardman 1994, 196-210.
- 24 Rostovtzeff 1922, 104-112. See also Rostovtzeff 1993, 38-39, 86; Jacobson 1995, 52-64; Rolle 1989, 54-131; Raevskii, in Rostovtzeff 1993, 61, n. 31 has references to the wide range of recent studies on this art as representing actual Scythian customs, cult, etc.
- 25 Barber 1935, 12, dates the composition of the fourth book of Ephoros' *History* to ca. 356.
- 26 Rostovtzeff 1931, 81-82.
- 27 Rostovtzeff 1922, 104.
- 28 Rostovtzeff 1993, 87.
- 29 See Rostovtzeff 1993, 87.
- 30 See Jaeger 1945, 96: "Like Theognis in his plan for rearing the young nobleman, Isokrates attaches the greatest importance to the right kind of friendships".
- 31 Rostovtzeff 1993, 87.
- 32 On the study and re-use of Mycenaean tombs for heroic cult in the Classical period, see Boardman 2002, 52-67. Compare Minns 1913, 194, with Rostovtzeff 1922, 78.
- 33 Jaeger 1945, 100: "He makes the ideal monarch the representative of his people's culture, the visible embodiment of the character of his state".
- 34 See Jaeger 1945, 118.
- 35 See Jaeger 1945, 100.
- 36 See Loraux 1986, 212.