

Alcibiades in Olympia: Olympic Ideology, Sport and Social Conflict in Classical Athens

ZINON PAKONSTANTINO[†]
Department of History and Archaeology
Cardiff University

IN THE OLYMPIC GAMES OF 416¹ ALCIBIADES OF ATHENS fielded three teams in one of the most prestigious Olympic events, the quadriga. He won a victory while his other teams placed second and fourth (or according to some sources third).² Such a sweep was unprecedented in ancient Olympics. Equally noteworthy were the multiple repercussions of Alcibiades' Olympic performance. This paper examines the evidence for Alcibiades' victory and the prolonged reaction it generated in the light of ideological and social conflict in classical Athens.³ An initial examination of some critical aspects of Alcibiades' victory is followed by an analysis of classical Athenian perceptions of the symbolic and practical value of Olympic victories. It is argued that the rhetoric revolving around the issue of the victory of Alcibiades articulated oppositional discourses of ideological appropriation and exploitation of Olympic victories and sport in general. These discourses were

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informed by wider social and political interests and therefore Alcibiades' victory can serve as an entry-point to an examination of the nexus of sport and political power in classical Athens. In the final section I attempt to integrate the evidence presented in the initial parts of the article into a wider context, and thus I offer some reflections towards a revisionist interpretation that views sport in classical Athens not only as a socially integrative force but also as a field of social and ideological contestation. By tracing the origin and establishing the influence of these conflicting paradigms on the significance of sport in the social divisions and political struggles of classical Athens, I conclude by arguing that, during the classical period, sport became an arena in which political ideologies were contested and social inequalities negotiated.

Gifted with a distinguished pedigree, good looks and charisma, Alcibiades was certainly the most extravagant public man of his era (i.e., the second half of the fifth century). His flamboyant and, according to many of his contemporaries, dissolute social life was matched only by his checkered and largely opportunistic public career.⁴ Like numerous other politicians of well-heeled backgrounds, Alcibiades appears to have been cognizant of the tremendous appeal of victories in Panhellenic games and thus spared no resources towards achieving his sporting ambitions.⁵ His ostentatious victory in the Olympics of 416 was the highlight of his sporting career. The earliest notice of the events of 416 comes from the speech that Alcibiades himself delivered in the popular assembly in Athens before the disastrous Sicilian expedition in 415. In this speech Alcibiades attempts to persuade the Athenians to ratify his campaign plan and elect him as chief commander of the expedition. In order to achieve this objective Alcibiades openly advertises his recent Olympic victory and claims that he is a worthy leader of Athens because: "of the magnificence with which I represented it [i.e., Athens] at the Olympic games the Greeks assumed our city to be even greater (*hyper dunamin*) than it really is. . . . Custom regards such displays as honorable, and they cannot be made without leaving behind them an impression of power (*dunamis*)."⁶ This representation of Olympic victory echoes a cliché argument found in late archaic and early classical (sixth to mid fifth centuries) epinician (i.e., victory) poetry that depicts victories won by individuals of aristocratic origin as honorable and beneficial to both the victor and his home city.⁷

This representation of Olympic victories is slightly adjusted in the speech delivered by Alcibiades to suit the inter-*polis* power struggle (notice the emphasis on one of the key words of this passage, *dunamis*) in which Athens was currently involved in the context of the Peloponnesian War. Furthermore, Alcibiades' attempt to project Athens as the main beneficiary of his Olympic victory was very likely a calculated attempt to justify the extravagance of his Olympic delegation. Such a reaction on the part of Alcibiades is understandable in light of the negative repercussions of his victory in late fifth-century Athens. Alcibiades' showing in Olympia, besides being one of the most distinguished in athletic terms, was also one of the most controversial in the entire ancient Olympic history. It all started before the actual chariot race, when Alcibiades appropriated and competed with a team of horses that apparently belonged to another Athenian.⁸ Then the night of his victory Alcibiades organized a huge party in which he entertained everybody present in Olympia,⁹ a party that was remembered as one of the most extravagant Olympic celebrations by Athenaeus almost seven centuries later!¹⁰ The following day Alcibiades managed

to persuade the Athenian delegates to allow him to use first in his personal sacrifice to Zeus the official sacred vessels before returning them to the Athenian delegation, something that certainly created a lot of frustration among the Athenians and made other spectators believe that it was Alcibiades who was lending the vessels to the Athenian *theoroi* and not the other way around.¹¹ Moreover, Alcibiades as an individual and not as representative of the city of Athens, defiantly accepted large material gifts from other states thus acting, as some sources put it, more like an Eastern despot than a representative of a free, democratic state.¹²

Given the magnitude of lavishness and display involved in Alcibiades' victory in Olympia it is not surprising that these events generated a considerable reaction by his fellow citizens at home. Nevertheless, it is quite remarkable that most of our information on this affair, including the negative reactions, derives from Athenian sources of the early fourth century, i.e., about twenty years after the actual events of Alcibiades' victory. Two texts of the early fourth century, i.e., pseudo-Andocides *Against Alcibiades* and Isocrates *On the Team of Horses*, highlight the conflicting attitudes of the Athenians on the value and significance of Alcibiades' Olympic victory.¹³ For Alcibiades the younger, the son of the Olympic victor, who allegedly delivered the *On the Team of Horses*, Alcibiades' *megaloprepeia* (magnificence) in Olympia, a place where Greek cities showcase their wealth and talent, surpassed that of all the other cities combined and it was ultimately perceived as a sign of prestige and power for the entire city of Athens.¹⁴ For pseudo-Andocides, on the other hand, the same incident was an insult to the entire city: Alcibiades' conduct in Olympia was reminiscent of a tyrant (*turannos*) and not a friend of the people (*demagōgos*), thus debasing the democracy and making it seem worthless.¹⁵

Are these strong, partisan reactions due only to the controversy surrounding Alcibiades himself, or are these conflicting attitudes symptomatic of more general trends? While Alcibiades was without doubt a controversial figure who developed a love-hate relationship with the Athenian public,¹⁶ it is particularly interesting that most of the arguments employed in these conflicting discourses on the value of his Olympic victory were not unique to this episode; in fact, the texts of Isocrates and pseudo-Andocides utilize rhetorical motifs that were in currency in Athens during the second half of the fifth and the fourth centuries and can be considered as part of an ongoing debate on the significance of horseracing during the same period. Already in the early fifth century a pottery sherd used in an ostracism ballot against Megakles Hippokratous, a victor in chariot racing at the Pythian games of 486, bears the deprecating graffiti *hippotrophos* (horsebreeder) and *hipotes* (rider, jockey) suggesting that the traditionally aristocratic practices of horse breeding and riding were perceived in some quarters as good grounds for political annihilation.¹⁷ The famous dramatic playwright Euripides included in his now lost *Autolykos* a scathing critique of sport practices, the uselessness of athletes and their victories in Panhellenic games.¹⁸ Nevertheless, his expressed views did not prevent him from composing on commission a few years later an epinician for the Olympic victory of Alcibiades in 416.¹⁹ Around the same time, Aristophanes presented in his *Clouds* a satirical view of opposing opinions on horse-breeding.²⁰

The same pattern of conflicting attitudes continued into the fourth century. In the 380s the speaker of *On the Property of Aristophanes* written by Lysias could claim in a

popular court that chariot-racing victories in Panhellenic games bring honor (*timē*) to the city.²¹ Several decades later in a speech written around 350 Demosthenes presented Alcibiades' victory in 416 as an *exemplum* of patriotism²² while around twenty years later (c.330) Lycurgus portrayed horseracing as a practice worthless to the community and beneficial only to the victor.²³

To be sure, taking these passages out of context might be a little misleading. Public oratory is often self-serving and rhetorical exaggeration or contradictory opinions by the same author (e.g., Euripides see above) was certainly not unknown in Athenian rhetoric and dramatic performances. Nonetheless, this survey demonstrates that both positive and negative evaluations of horseracing and sport in general were current throughout the classical period. Parts of the Athenian public apparently found something appealing in both these views, otherwise the incorporation of similar arguments in dramatic performances and public oratory would have been pointless if not counterproductive.

The fact is that in the ancient world only the wealthiest could own and maintain the number of quality horses necessary for competing in chariot-racing events in Panhellenic games. This strong association between horseracing and the aristocracy of wealth and blood probably made horse-breeding somewhat unpopular with the lower social orders although a victory in a Panhellenic festival, including chariot-racing events, remained highly prestigious and, as the case of Alcibiades demonstrates, victors duly capitalized on the symbolism and appeal of their victories. Athenian attitudes towards chariot-racing can be better understood if we view them as part of an ongoing process of negotiation, through practices, literature and oratory, of the significance of competitive sport. Depending on the occasion and audience athletes, politicians, orators and playwrights strove to present some of the numerous and often conflicting connotations of sport victories as the dominant way of thinking about sport.

The rhetoric that developed around the Olympic victory of Alcibiades was therefore not exceptional in the kind of arguments used, but rather it exemplified two diametrically conflicting opinions on the significance of Olympic victories and sport in general: one that viewed such victories as prestigious and beneficial to both victor and the city and another that perceived them as elitist, harmful and inconsistent with the democratic constitution. Similar conflicting attitudes towards sport are encountered in other parts of the Greek world as well, especially during the late archaic period (sixth-early fifth centuries).²⁴ However, the fact that in Athens such opposing views remained in currency for at least one-and-a-half centuries (c.480s-330s) should be explained in the light of the particular social conditions that were created and gradually developed there after the establishment of the popular democracy at the beginning of the classical period. In what follows, I evaluate Athenian attitudes towards sport in the context of the development of egalitarian political institutions and the conditions of social and economic inequality between various social groups that existed in classical Athens.

The sixth century is characterized by the emergence in the Greek world of egalitarian movements that emphasized social mobility and increased participation of lower social classes in politics and decision-making.²⁵ In Athens, this process culminated with the enactment of democratic constitutional reforms in 508/7 and the subsequent development and elaboration of a democratic institutional framework during the fifth century.²⁶

By the time Alcibiades achieved his victory in Olympia, Athens was considered the democratic state *par excellence* in the Greek world. In practical terms, this meant that political decision-making was largely in the hands of the citizenry, including the poorest members of the population, through the popular assembly and courts. The overwhelming majority of political leaders, however, were men of elite descent like Alcibiades who had wealth, prestige and a loyal clientele, factors that were critical if not indispensable for political advancement. These men were able to afford several years of training in philosophy and oratory, skills necessary in swaying the electorate in an essentially oral society like Athens. Moreover, it was usually men of this same group who distinguished themselves in sports and particularly in chariot-racing, the favorite athletic past-time of Greek elites.

Given the discrepancy between social prestige and economic resources on the one hand (elite) and decision-making power on the other (*dēmos*, the Greek word for populace), it is not surprising that very often social problems were perceived in terms of class conflict between haves and have-nots. This was also the case with sport. In classical Athens, the practice of sport had strong class connotations. The extant evidence suggests that practices and ideologies of sport were largely conditioned by the social and economic position of the individual. In *On the Team of Horses*, the speaker accounts for Alcibiades' preference in horseracing on the grounds that "he (i.e., Alcibiades) disdained athletic contests, for he knew that some of the athletes were of low birth (*kakōs gegonotas*), inhabitants of small states and of mean education, but he turned instead to horse-breeding which is possible only for the most well-off (*eudemonestatōn*) and not to be pursued by anyone from the lower classes (*phaūlos*)."²⁷

Similarly deprecating language is also encountered in the discussion of athletic habits of the lower classes by another elitist Athenian author of the second half of the fifth century.²⁸ The unknown author²⁹ of the militant pro-oligarchic tract entitled *The Political Regime of the Athenians* (*Athenaiōn Politeia*) claims that even though certain gymnasias, baths and dressing rooms are owned by the some of the rich (*plousiois*), the people (*dēmos* with a derogative sense here meaning "the mob," "the rabble," "the commoners") build and enjoy many similar facilities, to the extent that the rabble (*ochlos*) owns more of them than all prosperous members of the upper class (*hoi oligoi kai hoi eudaimones*, literally the "few and wealthy") together.³⁰ Moreover, the same author maintains that the people had prevented some citizens from specializing in competitive sports and music, because they know (i.e., the commoners) they could never become very good in these occupations themselves.³¹ Instead, they are content to have the rich (*plousioi*) pay for the maintenance of their gymnasias and the organization of their festivals—or, according to the same author "the commoners (*dēmos*) demand to receive money (*argurion lambanein*) no matter what they do—singing, running, dancing, sailing the navy: the real point is to give to themselves and make the rich poorer."³²

Despite the obvious rhetorical exaggeration and the fact that some of the claims they contain³³ are difficult to substantiate independently, these texts present a striking picture of Athenian perceptions and practices of sport as conditioned by class origins and economic interests. Alcibiades and the authors of all the texts examined above see an old symbol of aristocratic *kudos*, like the pursuit of sport and Olympic victory, being debased, underrated and appropriated by the common people. Furthermore, feeling under siege as

a group, they either attack the sporting habits of the lower classes (Old Oligarch) or they attempt to re-assert the validity of the traditional aristocratic discourse of Olympic victory (Alcibiades in Th. 6.16). Hence, sport is presented in these texts as inextricably entwined with structures of political and economic hierarchy within Athenian society.

Furthermore, these texts, and especially that of the Old Oligarch, portray the Athenian populace as actively involved in sporting activities. This picture is indirectly confirmed by the increased participation of the *dēmos* in ceremonial sport in the context of civic festivals.³⁴ In other words, while rhetoric and drama propagated conflicting perceptions of sport, the Athenians were actively appropriating traditional aristocratic athletic practices in an act of ideological resistance to elite symbols of social ascendancy.



In the final segment of this article I will summarize the conclusions reached in the initial sections and present some general reflections towards an outline of the historical development of sport in the city of Athens that accounts for the conflicting ideologies and rhetoric examined above as well as for the portrayal in classical authors of sport practices in terms of class origins and economic interests. Sport is often a symbol of inequality and difference. In a number of societies, including ancient Greece, the distinction between elite and popular sports or the degree of popular participation in these sports legitimizes social divisions and perpetuates the existing social structure. Interestingly enough, it is in Athens that we find the first attempt in archaic Greece, with the legislation of Solon in the early sixth century, to introduce a civic discourse on sport and map out the relationship between Olympic victor and the state.³⁵ During the sixth century and especially during the Peisistratid tyranny (546-510) Athens witnessed an expansion of interest and participation in civic sports.³⁶ However, it is with the formal establishment of the democracy in 508 and the development of the radically egalitarian political institutions in the early fifth century that sport acquires an entirely new significance. The establishment of democratic institutions altered not merely patterns of political representation and decision-making, it also established new economic relationships between the poor, the rich and the state as well as new classifications of values.³⁷ This created the background conditions for ideological and social conflict that pitted the rich against the *dēmos* on several occasions. The way sport was practiced and perceived in classical Athens cannot be properly understood unless it is viewed as an integral part of this new political and social environment.

Sport, in addition to maintaining social inequality can also become a means of social emancipation. This appears to have been the case in classical Athens. During the fifth century the Athenian *dēmos*, with the encouragement and financial sponsorship of the democratic state, became more aware and involved in sport in a ceremonial, competitive or even more casual, everyday setting.³⁸ In this way, the *dēmos* appropriated symbols and practices related to sport and leisure that were traditionally associated with the aristocracy. As the preceding discussion demonstrates, a concomitant aspect of this encroachment of aristocratic sport symbolism and practice was the development of alternative ideologies and rhetoric on the value of sport and Olympic victories. These paradigms of evaluating Olympic victories challenged and even rejected earlier aristocratic perceptions associated with such practices that placed their emphasis on notions like *kudos* and charisma.³⁹ Over-

all, the Athenian *dēmos*, through its increased participation in sport and other leisure practices that were previously largely dominated by the elite, was presented with unique opportunities for ideological resistance. Members of the social and political elite, on the other hand, ideologically exploited sporting success in their attempt to enhance their public image and sway as much economic and political power as possible in a city whose constitutional framework clearly gave the political advantage to the *dēmos*.

The victory of Alcibiades in the games of 416 should therefore be interpreted in the framework of social and ideological conflict between the privileged elite and the *dēmos* in classical Athens. Deliberately employing motifs reminiscent of the outmoded aristocratic epinician victory odes in his speech in the Athenian popular assembly in 415 Alcibiades attempted to re-assert the traditional aristocratic discourse of athletic victory that emphasized aristocratic magnanimity, *kudos* and civic pride. However, subsequent rhetoric that developed around this event went beyond the controversial persona of Alcibiades and incorporated not only traditional aristocratic sporting ideologies but also perceptions and practices of sport espoused by the politically dominant *dēmos*. Such conflicting attitudes towards sport ultimately articulated and helped generate actual conditions of social and political conflict in democratic Athens.



¹All ancient dates are B.C.

²The story is well documented. The main sources are Thucydides 6.16.1ff; Isocrates 16.32-34; [Andocides] 4.26-31; Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 12. For sport in ancient Athens in general see Donald G. Kyle, *Athletics in Ancient Athens* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987). See also more recently Donald G. Kyle, "The Panathenaic Games: Sacred and Civic Athletics," in *Goddess and Polis: The Panathenaic Festival in Ancient Athens*, eds. Jennifer Neils *et al.* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 77-101; idem, "Gifts and Glory: Panathenaic and Other Greek Athletic Prizes," in *Worshipping Athena: Panathenaia and Parthenon*, ed. Jennifer Neils (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 106-136; Mark Golden, *Sport and Society in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), passim; and Nick Fisher, "Gymnasia and the Democratic Values of Leisure," in *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, eds. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 84-104.

³During the past thirty years scholarship on Greek sport has justifiably expended much effort in reviewing the evidence and rectifying misunderstandings of the past. The most well known instance of scholarship along these lines is the work of Henri W. Pleket, "Zur Soziologie des antiken Sports," *Mededelingen van het Nederlands historisch Instituut te Rome* n.s. 36 (1974): 57-87; idem, "Games, Prizes, Athletes and Ideology: Some Aspects of the History of Sport in the Greco-Roman World," *Stadion* 1 (1975): 49-89; and David C. Young, *The Olympic Myth of Amateur Greek Athletics* (Chicago: Ares Publishers, 1984) on the issue of professionalism and the social origin of Greek athletes. On Greek sport in general see Wolfgang Decker, *Sport in der griechischen Antike: Vom minoischen Wettkampf bis zu den Olympischen Spielen* (München: C.H. Beck, 1995); Golden, *Sport*, and Christian Mann, *Athlet und Polis im archaischen und frühklassischen Griecheland* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001). On critical attitudes towards sport in antiquity see S. Müller, *Das Volk der Athleten: Untersuchungen zur Ideologie und Kritik des Sports in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1995). Scholarship on Greek sport often places greater emphasis on its integrative aspects, i.e. its contribution to the moral and physical development of individuals and to the well-being of the community in general. Although the positive effects of sport on both the individual and social level should not be denied, due to the adoption of such an approach the importance of sport (by definition a highly competitive activity) in the context of ideological and social struggle is largely overlooked.

⁴For Alcibiades' pedigree see John K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families 600-300 B. C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), no. 600, 9-22. For his life and political career see Jean Hatzfeld, *Alcibiade* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1951); and Walter M. Ellis, *Alcibiades* (London: Routledge, 1989).

⁵On the link between politics and sport victories in ancient Athens see Kyle, *Athletics*, 155-68. Kyle maintains that "Alcibiades represents the last use of Panhellenic victory as a means to attain or retain political power" (pp. 167-168). However, cf. Mark Golden, "Equestrian Competition in Ancient Greece: Difference, Dissent, Democracy," *Phoenix* 51 (1997): 327-344. Besides his victory in the Olympics of 416 Alcibiades also won at the Nemea and Pythia and maybe at the Panathenaia games as well. See Davies, *Athenian*, 20-21; and Kyle, *Athletics*, 195-196, A4, for testimonia.

⁶Th. 6.16.1-3.

⁷The epinician poetry of Pindar, Simonides and Bacchylides presents the most typical expression of such elitist representation of Panhellenic victories. See in general Leslie Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise: Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991); V. Visa-Ondarçuhu, *L'image de l'athlète d'Homère à la fin du Ve siècle avant J.-C.* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1999), 73ff.; Mann, *Athlet und Polis*, 40-49; P. A. Bernardini, "Esaltazione e critica dell' atletismo nella poesia greca dal VII al V sec. a. C.: storia di una ideologia," *Stadion* 6 (1980): 81-111.

⁸[And.] 4.26; Plu., *Alc.* 12.2; Diodorus Siculus 13.74.3.

⁹Isoc. 16.34. There must have been at least several hundred pilgrims, athletes and spectators present at Olympia that evening.

¹⁰Athenaeus 1.3e.

¹¹[And.] 4.29.

¹²[And.] 4.30; Plu., *Alc.* 12.1. Ephesos provided him with a tent that was twice as large as that of the official delegation; Chios gave sacrificial animals and food for his horses; and the people of Lesbos offered wine and other foodstuffs.

¹³Although their relative chronology (early fourth century) is not disputed, there are problems regarding the authorship and context of delivery of these works. See David Gribble, *Alcibiades and Athens: A Study in Literary Presentation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 90ff. For my purposes what is most important about [And.] 4 and Isoc. 16 is their deployment of conflicting discourses regarding Alcibiades' Olympic victory. Since in both orations the ideological standpoint of the speakers relative to Alcibiades' victory is evident, issues related to composition and exact chronology of these works, although important, are largely inconsequential for my argument.

¹⁴Isoc. 16.32-34.

¹⁵[And.] 4.27-29.

¹⁶See Gribble, *Alcibiades*; and Victoria Wohl, *Love among the Ruins: The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002), 124-170, for the representation of Alcibiades in classical Athenian rhetoric and literature.

¹⁷See Stefan Brenne, "Die Ostraka (487-ca. 416 v. Chr.) als Testimonien" in *Ostrakismos. Testimonien I*, ed. Peter Siewert (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), nos. T 1/101-105, 112-114; cf. also T 1/158, an ostrakon for the same Megakles, bearing an illustration of a horse-rider. For Megakles see Brenne, "Die Ostraka"; Davies, *Athenian*, no. 9695 and no. 9688, X, 379 and Kyle, *Athletics*, 207, A43. Megakles was a victor at the Pythia games in 486 immediately after his ostracism in Athens, a victory celebrated in Pindar's *Pythian* 7.

¹⁸Euripides, *Autolykos* frag. 282 (Nauck *TGF* 441), apud Ath. 10. 431 c-f (c. 420). Cf. Müller, *Das Volk*, 99ff.

¹⁹See Denys L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) frag. 755 apud Plu., *Alc.* 11 (c. 416); cf. Cecile Maurice Bowra, "Euripides' Epinician for Alcibiades," *Historia* 9 (1969): 68-79; also Mann, *Athlet und Polis*, 105ff, for the symbolic significance of the act of commissioning at the end of the fifth century an epinician ode, a genre that was traditionally associated with the celebration of aristocratic Panhellenic victors but was in decline since the second quarter of the fifth century.

²⁰The *Clouds* was performed in 423.

²¹Lysias 19.63.

²²Demosthenes 21.145. For a discussion of the problems relative to the composition and delivery of this speech see Douglas M. MacDowell, *Demosthenes: Against Meidias (Oration 21)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 23ff.

²³Lycurgus 1.139-140. But cf. Hyperides 1.16 when in another forensic oration delivered at the end of the 330s the defendant presents his *hippotrofia* (horse-breeding) as grounds for sympathy from the jury.

²⁴Such conflicting evaluations of Olympic victories and sport in general can be traced back to the archaic and early classical period to authors like Tyrtaios, Xenophanes and Pindar. See e.g. Tyrtaeus frag. 12 West; Xenoph. frag. 2 Gentili-Prato all of whom present critical evaluations of sport contrary to the perception propagated by epinician poetry that portrayed sport as an act embodying prestige and *kudos*; see Müller, *Das Volk* and Bernardini, "Esaltazione e critica," 81-111. In other words, the rhetoric employed by Alcibiades, Isocrates and pseudo-Andocides regarding the value of Alcibiades' Olympic victory and by other Athenian orators and playwrights regarding the significance of sport in general can be partly seen as a continuation of older panhellenic intellectual trends.

²⁵See Ian Morris, "The Strong Principle of Equality and the Archaic Origins of Greek Democracy," in *Demokratia: A Conversation on Democracies, Ancient and Modern*, eds. Josiah Ober and Charles Hedrick (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 19-48; and idem, *Archaeology as Cultural History* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000), 186ff. and passim.

²⁶The bibliography on these issues is enormous. For the events of 508/7 see Josiah Ober, "The Athenian Revolution of 508/7 B.C.: Violence, Authority and the Origins of Democracy," in Josiah Ober, *The Athenian Revolution. Essays on Ancient Greek Democracy and Political Theory* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 32-52; for the institutional reforms of Kleisthenes see Pierre Lévêque and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Clisthène l' Athénien* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1964); for the development of Athenian egalitarian institutions and ideology during the late archaic and classical period see also Josiah Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); Philip Brook Manville, *The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Christian Meier, *The Greek Discovery of Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Kurt A. Raaflaub, "Power in the Hands of the People: Foundations of Athenian Democracy," in *Democracy 2500? Questions and Challenges*, eds. Ian Morris and Kurt Raaflaub (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishers, 1998), 31ff.

²⁷Isoc. 16.33. To be sure, Alcibiades the Younger who allegedly delivered this speech appears to be referring in this passage to participants in athletic contests from other city-states. However, the grounds for this elitist attitude towards athletes (humble origins, lack of education) also existed in his home city of Athens. In addition, the fact that such distinctions based on social origins and educational background were included in this work that was composed with the Athenian public in mind suggests that such opinions were shared by part of the Athenian audience or readership and that they were recognized as part of the debate on the nature and significance of sport.

²⁸For the composition and general objective of this work see Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens: Intellectual Critics of Popular Rule* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 14ff. with earlier bibliography. I find the recent theory by Simon Hornblower, "The *Old Oligarch* (Pseudo-Xenophon's *Athenaiôn Politeia*) and Thucydides: A Fourth-Century Date for the *Old Oligarch*?" in *Polis and Politics: Studies in Ancient Greek History Presented to Mogens Herman Hansen on His Sixtieth Birthday*, eds. Pernille Flensted-Jensen, Thomas H. Nielsen and Lene Rubinstein (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen: 2000), 363-384, for a fourth-century dating of pseudo-Xenophon unconvincing but for reasons that lie beyond the scope of this paper.

²⁹For the sake of convenience he is called Old Oligarch, due to his inveterate anti-democratic stance, or pseudo-Xenophon because the *Athenaiôn Politeia* survives in manuscripts along with other works of Xenophon, yet it is clear that it was not written by the latter.

³⁰[X.], *Respublica Atheniensium* 2.9.

³¹[X.], *Ath.* 1.13. Note that the emphasis here is on the opposition of the *dēmos* to specialization (*epitēdeusis*) in sports and music and not on the lack of involvement on the part of the common people in

athletics. Hence, I see no contradiction between this passage and the admission by the same author that members of the *damos* use public athletic facilities (cf. *Ath.* 2.9) as some scholars have argued (Fisher, "Gymnasia," 88-89, with references to earlier scholarship). The implication in 1.13 is of course that the level of specialization required for competitive athletics and musical expertise can only be achieved by the leisured classes and not the commoners who, acting out of envy, prevent the former from specializing in such practices.

³²[X.], *Ath.* 1.13.

³³For example, regarding the existence of numerous public athletic facilities as described by the Old Oligarch see Kyle, *Athletics*, 68.

³⁴See Robin Osborne, "Competitive Festivals and the Polis: a Context for Dramatic Festivals at Athens," in *Tragedy, Comedy and the Polis: Papers from the Greek Drama Conference, Nottingham, 18-20 July 1990*, eds. Alan H. Sommerstein, Stephen Halliwell, Jeffrey Henderson and Bernhard Zimmerman (Bari: Levante editori, 1993), 21-38; and Fisher, "Gymnasia."

³⁵For Solonian legislation on sport see Eberhard Ruschenbusch, *ΣΟΛΩΝΟΣ ΝΟΜΟΙ. Die Fragmente des solonischen Gesetzeswerkers mit einer text- und Überlieferungsgeschichte* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1966), F 143a-c; Donald G. Kyle, "Solon and Athletics," *The Ancient World* 19 (1984): 91-105.

³⁶See in general Kyle, *Athletics*, 25ff.

³⁷See endnotes 25 and 26.

³⁸See endnote 34.

³⁹For the archaic Greek notion of athletic *kudos* see Leslie Kurke, "The Economy of Kudos" in *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece: Cult, Performance, Politics*, eds. Carol Dougherty and Leslie Kurke (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 131-163.