

The Distribution of Population in Attica

Vincent J. Rosivach

THIS PAPER discusses the distribution of the citizen population of Attica between the urban agglomeration and the countryside in the fourth century. A common view is that the population of Cleisthenic Athens was predominantly rural, but that over time there was a substantial migration from the rural demes to the urban agglomeration, including the Piraeus, especially following the devastation of the countryside during the Peloponnesian War. This view is found in demographic literature at least as far back as Beloch's *Bevölkerung* (1886),¹ but it is still perhaps best known, at least to English-speaking scholars, from Gomme's *Population of Athens*, published in 1933.² Gomme estimated that only about 1/7 or 1/6 of Athens' citizen population lived in the urban agglomeration at the time of Cleisthenes, but that 1/3 lived there by 431, a figure that rose to nearly a half by the last third of the fourth century.

Although a significant body of ancient evidence was eventually developed to support this view, it is worth noting that its early supporters—notably Beloch and Meyer³—to a large extent based their arguments not on the ancient evidence⁴ but on an

¹ J. BELOCH, *Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt* (Leipzig 1886: hereafter 'Beloch') 101.

² A. W. GOMME, *The Population of Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.* (Oxford 1933: hereafter 'Gomme') 37–48.

³ Beloch 101 and his *Griechische Geschichte* III.1 (Berlin 1922: hereafter 'Beloch, GG'); Eduard MEYER, *Geschichte des Alterthums* (Stuttgart 1902: 'Meyer').

⁴ Beloch (101) cites (but does not quote) only Xen. *Vect.* 2.6, which, if anything, supports the opposite view (πολλὰ οἰκιῶν ἔρημά ἐστιν ἐντὸς τῶν τειχῶν καὶ οἰκόπεδα). Beloch borrowed the citation from K. Wachsmuth, *Die Stadt Athen im Alterthum* (Leipzig 1874) I 608, whom he cites in a footnote. Later, Beloch (GG 316f) drops the reference to Xen. *Vect.* 2.6 and cites instead Xen. *Vect.* 4.6, *Oec.* 20.22ff, and *Dem.* 23.208. Xen. *Vect.* 4.6 refers to capitalists who may forego planting their land for a season or two (but do not sell it) if their money can find greater profit elsewhere, and not to impoverished peas-

earlier tradition that attributed the *moral* decline of the Athenian peasant to his enforced residence in the city during the Peloponnesian War,⁵ coloring this tradition with shared assumptions about capital and the *economic* nature of Athenian agriculture, assumptions that we now see were strongly influenced by socio-economic developments in nineteenth-century Europe.⁶ According to Beloch (*GG* 316–26, 347), Meyer (280–91), *et al.*, Athenian agriculture was oriented toward production for the market; when small-scale farmers, especially those ruined by the Peloponnesian War, were no longer able to compete successfully because of competition from imported grain (Meyer) or from larger farms staffed by slave labor (Beloch), they sold off their land to capitalist entrepreneurs, who specialized in the production of olive oil and wine for export, and moved to the urban agglomeration, where they found employment in the burgeoning industries of the city.

This view of a mass migration from country to city became orthodox, and in time scholars found a good amount of evidence in the ancient sources that they interpreted as support for it. As with most orthodoxies, the original arguments in favor

ants forced to sell their farms (see further P. Gauthier, *Un commentaire historique des Poroi de Xénophon* [Geneva 1976] 121f); the unworked plots that Isomachus' father bought, rehabilitated, and sold at a profit (*Oec.* 20.22f) are best understood as land belonging to such capitalists who chose not (or were unable because of other financial commitments) to cultivate it; and Dem. 23.208 (γῆν δ' ἔνιοι πλείω πάντων ὑμῶν τῶν ἐν τῷ δικαστηρίῳ συνεώνται) tells us only that land was available to be purchased, but nothing about the previous owners of the land. Note also that the comment suggests that many, if not most, of the members of the jury were farmers. Meyer (283) cites only the relevant pages of Beloch's *GG* and Xen. *Oec.* (the latter generically, without reference to section numbers).

⁵ E.g. E. Curtius, *Griechische Geschichte* III (Berlin 1867) 55 (no sources cited): "Vor allem aber fehlte es an Liebe zum Landbaue [*sic*]...; man war durch die wohlfeile und reichliche Seezufuhr verwöhnt und wollte den täglichen Unterhalt lieber auf dem Markte kaufen als auf eigenem Felde bauen. Durch Krieg und Revolution waren die kleinen Grundbesitzer auf ihren Lebensgewohnheiten aufgestört; sie waren ihrem Berufe entfremdet, an Herumtreiben gewöhnt, zu stetiger Arbeit unlustig."

⁶ See especially V. N. Andreyev, "Some Aspects of Agrarian Conditions in Attica in the Fifth to Third Centuries B.C.," *Eirene* 12 (1974) 5ff; for the supposed effects of expanding capitalism on the economy of rural Attica, see R. von Pöhlmann, *Geschichte der sozialen Frage und des Sozialismus in der antiken Welt* I³ (Munich 1935) 180–93; first edition (1893). For the views of Marx and Engels on the effects of capital, see P. Lekas, *Marx on Classical Antiquity: Problems of Historical Methodology* (Sussex 1988) 113f, 227f.

of a mass migration were eventually forgotten, and discussion concentrated instead on the newer supporting arguments drawn from the ancient evidence. Indeed, the supposed migration of Attic farmers to the city has even been used as 'evidence' for their impoverishment after the Peloponnesian War—an assumption that gave rise to the orthodox view in the first place.⁷ This sort of circular reasoning might have validity if the ancient evidence provided strong support for the orthodox view, but this is not the case.

The evidence and the arguments drawn from that evidence are presented most fully by Gomme (38–45), who arranges the material under six heads:

(1) A large number of political figures active in the fourth century belonged to inland or coastal demes; since politics requires a politician's presence in Athens, these politicians must have lived in the city. Gomme assumes, correctly I believe, that these were people already living in the city who became politicians, and not people who moved from the countryside to become politically active. Gomme contrasts the fourth-century situation with that in the fifth century, when most politicians were from urban demes; and he takes the shift in the composition of the political class as one index of a general shift of Attic population from the countryside to the city.

(2) The inscriptions dealing with the construction of the Erechtheum (*IG I*³ 475–76), with the rebuilding of the Piraeus wall (*IG II*² 2657–64), and with construction at Eleusis (*IG II*² 1666, 1670–75) show a surprisingly high number of people from coastal and inland demes engaged in the building trades, which Gomme seems to assume were an exclusively urban occupation. Similarly in the speeches of the fourth-century orators, the merchants and capitalists and the guarantors and witnesses of loans—all essentially urban activities—come as often from the coastal and inland demes as from the urban ones.

(3) The "silver *phiale*" inscriptions (*IG II*² 1553–78) show that ex-slaves lived primarily in Athens and its environs or in the Piraeus, even though the majority of their former masters came from coastal or inland demes, and that ex-slaves who now had 'urban' occupations (manufacturing, distribution and transportation, etc.) had masters who belonged as often to inland and

⁷ So e.g. M. M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece: An Introduction*, tr. and rev. M. M. Austin (Berkeley 1977) 140: "it seems that there was a certain move from the countryside to the city, which may reflect an impoverishment of the peasant class...."

coastal demes as to urban ones. Gomme seems to assume that ex-slaves followed the occupations of their masters and/or that they continued to live with or near their masters after manumission, and so takes the occupational and residential patterns of these ex-slaves as evidence that their former masters from inland and coastal demes were by and large residents of the urban agglomeration.

(4) Dicasts' tickets (*IG* II² 1835–2923) show a relatively even distribution between town, coastal, and inland demes. As the popular courts were located in the city of Athens, according to Gomme most of the dicasts from the coastal and inland demes had probably migrated to the city.

(5) A remarkably large number of gravestones of people belonging to non-city demes have been found in Athens and the Piraeus.

(6) Land and mine leases show many people leasing outside the deme to which they belong, suggesting that movement between demes was quite general in the fourth century.

Of these various arguments, the large number of politicians, merchants, *etc.* (nos. 1 and 2) tells us something about the wealthy, who were likely to move to the urban center to have access to the economic opportunities and amenities available in the city, but nothing about the large mass of ordinary citizens too poor to benefit from these. As to the "silver *phiale*" inscriptions (no. 3), it is far from certain either that ex-slaves followed the occupations of their former masters or that they continued to live with or near them. But even if Gomme's argument is sound, the evidence from these inscriptions can tell us something only about the Athenians wealthy enough to own slaves, but not about the far more numerous Athenians who could not afford them.⁸ Mine and land leases (no. 6) likewise tell

⁸ Gomme (40) comments: "the reason why the metics settle in the town to trade is obvious; is it likely the citizens ignored the advantage?" This misses two important differences between ex-slaves and free citizens: (1) slaves could not own land, and thus found their economic opportunities severely limited in the predominantly agricultural countryside; (2) ex-slaves, foreigners (typically non-Greeks) by birth or ancestry, had an additional social motivation to move to the city, to be together with other ex-slaves with the same non-Greek backgrounds. R. Osborne, "The Potential Mobility of Human Populations," *OJA* 10 (1991) 244ff, is probably correct that landless citizen artisans also gravitated to the *asty* and the Piraeus, whose larger populations made them more attractive places to practice their crafts than the smaller local centers in the countryside; but the total number of landless full-time artisans living in the countryside (as opposed to part-time artisans who also farmed) was never likely to have been very large anyway.

us only about those wealthy enough to lease. Besides, the leases probably show only the wide economic interests of the lessees, not their personal mobility. On the other hand, the dicasts' tickets (no. 4) may tell us something about ordinary citizens, but not necessarily that they migrated to the city: as Mogens Hansen⁹ reminds us, almost two-thirds of the demes were within what fourth-century Athenians could consider an acceptable walking distance to the *asty*, and even Gomme concedes that at least some of the non-urban dicasts came from coastal and inland demes like Acharnae and Aixone, which were still close to the urban center.¹⁰ Somewhat similarly, Gomme's interpretation of the evidence for workers from non-urban demes in the construction trades (no. 2) fails to consider the possibility that some, and perhaps many, of these workers were in fact farmers engaged only seasonally during the slack periods of the agricultural year.¹¹ Finally, the evidence from gravestones (no. 5) is biased by the unevenness of excavations in Attica, where at least parts of Athens and the Piraeus have been well

⁹ "Political Activity and the Organization of Attica in the Fourth Century, B.C.," *GRBS* 24 (1983) 235ff. C. W. Hedrick, Jr., "Phratry Shrines of Attica and Athens," *Hesperia* 60 (1991) 260ff, argues that phratries were locally based, almost all of them in the countryside, and he sees the comparably large number of phratry shrines in and near the Agora as "auxiliary" meeting places for city-dwelling *phratores* who had immigrated from the country, but this is quite unlikely: the shrines were religious sites (*hierai*) and must therefore have been the primary seats of these phratries, wherever the *phratores* lived.

¹⁰ Gomme 44. Of the dicasts' tickets with demotics in J. H. Kroll's inventory (*Athenian Bronze Allotment Plates* [Cambridge (Mass.) 1972] 284–91), I count 88 tickets from inland demes, 68 from coastal demes, and only 55 from urban demes. Of the 88 tickets from inland demes fully 46, more than half, come from the six demes of Acharnae, Athmon, Erchia, Cephisia, Paiania, and Phlya, all within walking range of the *asty*; similarly, of the 68 tickets from coastal demes, 24 are from Eleusis, Halai (presumably nearby Aixonides, not Araphenides), and Lamptraí. Significant too are the demes that are unrepresented or under-represented. There are e.g. no tickets from the more remote demes of Cephale (bouleutic quota of 9), Marathon (quota of 10), Rhamnous (quota of 8), Thorikos (quota of 5); there is only one ticket from Aphida (quota of 16), and two from Anaphlystos (quota of 10). By contrast nearer demes tend to supply more tickets, e.g., 10 from Acharnae (bouleutic quota of 22), six from Athmon (quota of 6), 11 from Erchia (quota of 7), 12 from Halai (quota of 7), 9 from Phlya (quota of 6). Despite exceptions (e.g. 6 tickets from Phyle), the general pattern is consistent with the hypothesis that most non-urban dicasts continued to live in their home demes and walked to court, not that they migrated to the city.

¹¹ See further R. Osborne, *Classical Landscape with Figures* (London 1987) 14ff.

explored, but the rest of Attica, with a few exceptions, is represented only by random finds;¹² and it is quite possible that further exploration of the countryside would show that a far larger number of citizens were buried in their native demes than the currently available evidence would suggest.¹³ Thus the evidence of the gravestones shows that there was some migration from country to city, but not Gomme's massive migration.¹⁴

If the evidence used to support the conventional view is not very persuasive, the original argument is no more convincing. Victor Hanson has shown that the effects of the devastation caused by the Peloponnesian War were in fact relatively short-lived, and did not seriously damage the long-term productivity of the Attic countryside.¹⁵ Alison Burford Cooper has observed that the destructive effects of war were not so different from disasters caused by flood, drought, and the like: disasters that were common enough in the lives of subsistence farmers and did not deter them from continuing to farm.¹⁶ One might also add that with their simple equipment, which could be easily sheltered from invaders by being brought into the *asty*

¹² On this and other problems with the evidence see A. Damsgaard-Madsen, "Attic Funeral Inscriptions. Their Use as Historical Sources and Some Preliminary Results," in *id.*, ed., *Studies in Ancient History and Numismatics Presented to Rudi Thomsen* (Aarhus 1988) 56–63.

¹³ As an illustration of how fragile conclusions based on the currently available evidence of gravestones can be, note the case of Rhamnous (Osborne [*supra* n.8] 241): when *IG II²* was published there were sixteen gravestones of Rhamnousians with certain provenance, six from Rhamnous, four from Athens, and six from elsewhere, including one from the Piraeus; but subsequent finds up to *SEG XXXVI* (1986) have added another thirty-four, of which thirty-two were from Rhamnous itself, the results of the systematic excavations carried out there, but only one from Athens and one from elsewhere.

¹⁴ Osborne (*supra* n.8: 239–42) suggests that local emulation and the higher visibility that some locations provided could also have been factors influencing the distribution of grave monuments. The evidence of gravestones is also biased in favor of the wealthy, but probably less so than usually assumed: see T. H. Nielsen *et. al.*, "Athenian Grave Monuments and Social Class," *GRBS* 30 (1989) 411–20.

¹⁵ *Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece* (Pisa 1983) 111–43, esp. 137ff. See further D. Whitehead, *The Demes of Attica, 508/7–Ca. 250 B.C.* (Princeton 1986) 353f.

¹⁶ A. B. Cooper, "The Family Farm in Greece," *CJ* 73 (1977–78) 168, who also points out that because the devastation of the Persian War did not prevent the Athenian farmers from re-establishing themselves in the countryside (*cf.* Thuc. 2.16.1), there is no reason to assume that the Peloponnesian War would have done so either.

(cf. Thuc. 2.13.2), and with virtually no investment in a 'fixed plant' (e.g. irrigation works), Attic farmers could have easily resumed at least grain farming immediately after the Peloponnesians left, even if it took longer for vines and olive trees to be restored.¹⁷

More generally, Andreyev has called attention to the total absence of evidence of pauperized peasants forced to sell their farms or losing them through foreclosure, as the conventional view assumes.¹⁸ Indeed, few today would see any relevance to fourth-century Attica in the entire model of "Kapitalisten und Proletariat"—Meyer's chapter heading—which underlies the conventional view. Quite the contrary, Osborne, for example, has argued that the fragmented landholdings for which we have evidence in the fourth century are a clear sign that small-scale subsistence agriculture remained the norm.¹⁹ Elsewhere Osborne observes that given the importance of the deme in an Athenian's civic life, "membership of a deme ... itself constitutes a very considerable bar to movement and particularly a bar to permanent migration and the total abandonment of the ancestral community." And Whitehead has argued conversely that the continuing vitality of deme government in the fourth century, as reflected in our sources, would have been impossible if a substantial number of demesmen no longer lived in their home demes.²⁰

When carefully examined then, the argument that Athens experienced a large-scale shift in population from country to

¹⁷ Indeed the urban economy may have taken even longer to recover from the war than the rural economy did. In particular, Athens' defeat brought with it a significant decrease in public-sector spending (building projects, dockyard work, etc.), which would have had a negative ripple effect throughout the urban economy. The urban economy eventually recovered, but for the short run, in the immediate aftermath of the war, there may even have been some temporary migration from city to country, where at least some food could still be grown and where "even the landless could serve as a tenant farmer or a seasonal laborer": B. Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy, 403–386 BC* (Ithaca 1986) 43f.

¹⁸ Andreyev (*supra* n.6) 18–23, where the author also discusses the evidence, mostly literary, for an essentially conservative tradition favoring small landholdings.

¹⁹ R. Osborne, *Demos: The Discovery of Classical Attica* (Cambridge 1985) 63.

²⁰ Cf. Osborne (*supra* n.8: 239), who still argues (242) from the epigraphical evidence that perhaps 1/3 of the population lived outside their ancestral demes in the fourth century, though not necessarily in the urban agglomeration; Whitehead (*supra* n.15) 352–56.

city, especially in the fourth century, is not very convincing. This is not to suggest, however, that there was no migration at all; indeed, the city may very well have served as a safety valve, drawing off excess population from the countryside. For the city could remain attractive to e.g. the youngest sons of oversized rural families if its population did not grow beyond the city's ability to find enough jobs for the newcomers. Thus the urban population can be viewed, in effect, as a self-regulating mechanism: a reduced fecundity and a higher rate of mortality continually opened up fresh places for immigrants from the country to the city. But if at any point the number of immigrants exceeded the number of open places, the city ceased to be attractive to immigrants, and immigration from the countryside was discouraged until more places opened up, assuring that the urban population remained close to its optimum size. There is, however, a great difference between this kind of movement of excess rural population to the city (a movement that did not significantly alter the relative populations of city and country) and the sort of mass migration that Gomme *et al.* see as increasing the urban population at the expense of the rural and leading to the relative depopulation of the Attic countryside.

Evidence supporting the view that in the fourth century the citizen population of Attica was still predominantly rural is to be found, I believe, in the way in which seats in the *boule* were allocated to the several demes in 307/306, when the Athenians created two new tribes in honor of Antiochus and Demetrius and expanded the *boule* from five hundred to six hundred members to accommodate the new tribes. In what follows I rely on Traill's *Political Organization of Attica* for the bouleutic quotas of the several demes.²¹ My argument will be in two steps. First, just as Cleisthenes' original bouleutic quotas broadly reflected the relative adult male citizen populations of the several demes at the time of his reform, so too the number

²¹ J. S. TRAILL, *The Political Organization of Attica: A Study of the Demes, Trittyes, and Phylai, and Their Representation in the Athenian Council* (= *Hesperia* Suppl. 14 [Princeton 1975: hereafter 'Traill']) 59, 67–71, and Tables I–XII for the bouleutic quotas of the several demes. For convenience I do not distinguish between the small number of demes whose allocations Traill considers probable and the far larger number whose allocation he considers certain, as the difference of one seat more or less in the few uncertain cases will not seriously affect the argument. Similarly I have included the demes of Upper and Lower Potamos in the coastal trittys of Aigeis, as Traill does in his charts (71 n.32); again, placing them in Aigeis' inland trittys would not significantly alter our conclusions.

of *bouletai* to be drawn from individual demes for the expanded *boule* broadly reflected the relative adult citizen populations of the demes as they were in 307/306; and second, the distribution of population reflected in the reorganization of 307/306 may be taken as evidence that there was no permanent migration of the magnitude envisaged by Beloch, Gomme et al. from the rural demes to the urban agglomeration in the wake of the Peloponnesian War. The data we are dealing with, it should be emphasized, are hardly a demographer's dream. Certainly they cannot tell us in detail exactly how the population of Attica was distributed; but they are nonetheless sufficient, I believe, at least to support the negative argument being made here, that whatever migration occurred was not large enough to alter significantly the relative sizes of the rural and urban populations of Attica.

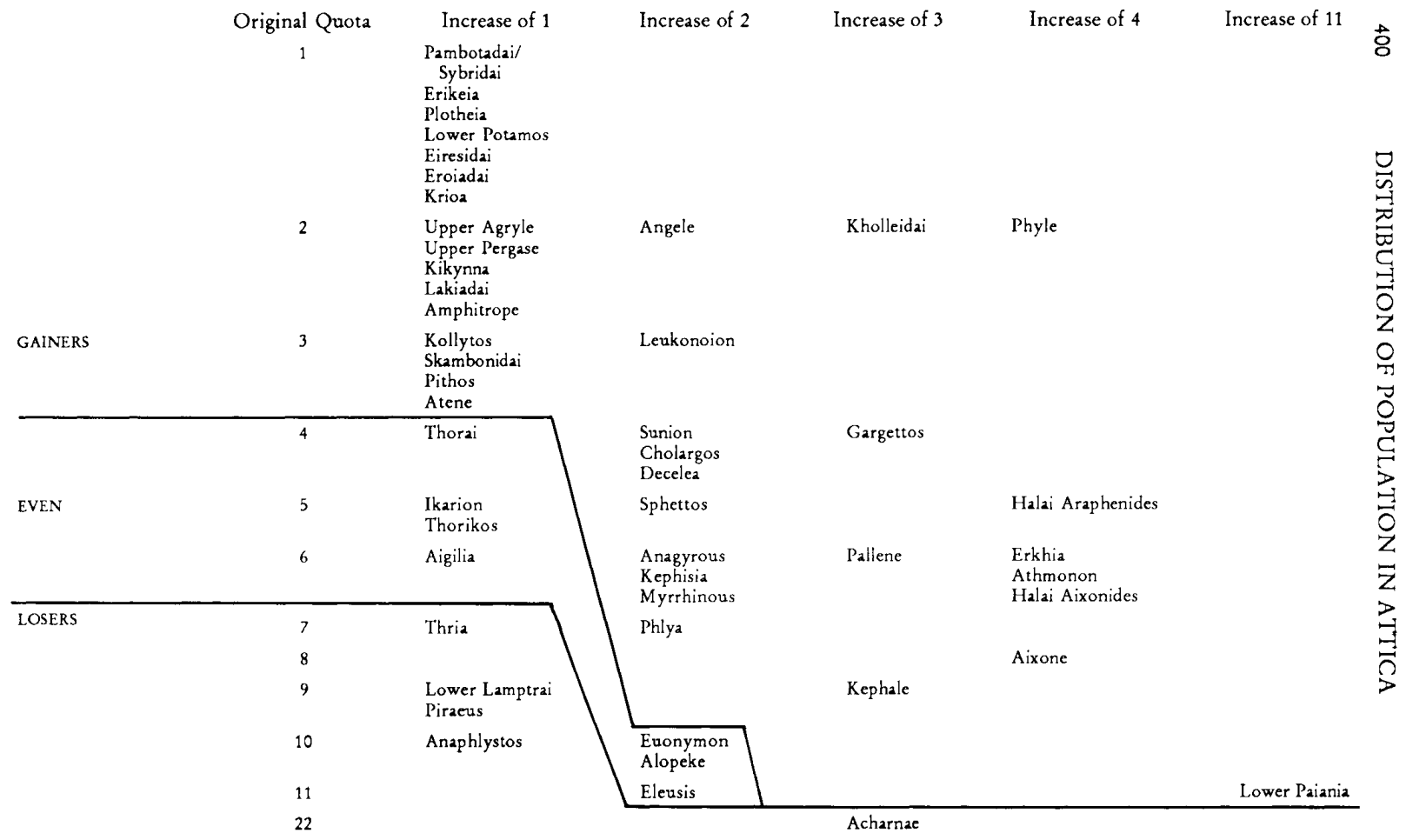
As to the first step of my argument (see Fig. 1),²² when the size of the *boule* was increased by 20% from five hundred to six hundred, the additional one hundred *bouletai* were recruited by increasing the bouletic quotas of 49 of the 139 demes. Several factors seem to have been involved in deciding which demes' quotas would be increased and by how much. First, all things being equal, when the size of the *boule* was increased by 20%, in theory the representation of each of the several demes should also have increased proportionately by 20%. In the practical order, however, almost two-thirds of the demes had only one, two, or three *bouletai*,²³ so that a 20% increase would still produce less than one new *bouleutes*; in such cases—again all things being equal—the only choice was between leaving the deme quota as it was or increasing it by one. As allocations were increased by one for some of these smaller demes but not for others, we would assume that demes whose current adult male citizen populations were greater than some fixed point were allocated an additional seat while others whose populations were below the fixed point were not. Sixteen small demes²⁴ would have seen their bouletic quotas increased by one in this fashion; these are the demes marked “gainers” in the first column of Fig. 1. Four larger demes, marked “even,” saw

²² I discuss this point more briefly in *The System of Public Sacrifice in Fourth-Century Athens* (Atlanta 1994) 5f.

²³ According to Traill (67–70), 37 demes (counting as one deme the linked pair of Pambotadai and Sybridai) had only one seat in the Cleisthenic *boule*, 36 had two seats, and 19 had three seats.

²⁴ Counting as one the linked pair of Pambotadai and Sybridai.

Figure 1
Increases in Bouleutic Quotas in 307/306 (after Traill 59)



400
DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN ATTICA

their allocations increased by exactly the expected 20%, and the increased quotas of three other larger demes probably reflect the same 20% increase with some rounding.²⁵ Important for our purposes is that only 26 of the 100 seats can be accounted for solely in this fashion, by the simple increase in the *boule*'s size from 500 to 600 members.

As *Fig. 1* also shows, there were several big 'winners', small demes that received more than the one additional seat they might expect from the 20% increase in the size of the *boule*, and larger demes that received an increase of more than 20% in the number of seats allocated to them. Indeed, these 'winners' accounted for 56 of the newly created seats even if we leave aside the anomalous increase of eleven seats in Lower Paiania, and 67 if we include the seats for Lower Paiania. There were four losing larger demes, Thria, Lower Lamprai, Piraeus, Anaphlystos, and Acharnae, whose quotas increased at a rate less than 20%.

Finally, there were thirteen other larger demes, listed in *Fig. 2*, with bouleutic quotas of five or more, whose quotas should have increased but did not, and who were thus also "losers" in that they sent proportionately fewer members to the expanded six-hundred-seat *boule* than they had to the earlier five-hundred-seat one. The pattern of gainers and losers is too complex to be explained solely as the result of political maneuvering, and can only be understood as a reflection of shifts in the relative populations of the several demes.

To follow up on this last point, whatever Cleisthenes' original intentions might have been, I suspect that by the fourth century the bouleutic quotas were less a matter of proportional representation and more a matter of ensuring an adequate supply of *bouleutai*.²⁶ With an additional one hundred seats to fill in 307/

²⁵ Ikarion and Thorikos (5 seats to 6) and Euonymon and Alopeke (10 to 12) increased by exactly 20%. The increases of Thorai (4 to 5), Aigilia (6 to 7), and Eleusis (11 to 13) would reflect a 20% increase with some rounding.

²⁶ Assuming that "a deme's bouleutic quota was by necessity related to its size," M. H. Hansen *et al.* ("The Demography of the Attic Demes. The Evidence of the Sepulchral Inscriptions," *AnalRom* 19 [1990] 29) argue that the bouleutic quotas must have been readjusted at some point between the reforms of Cleisthenes and the expansion of the *boule* in 307/306 to compensate for changes in the relative populations of demes during this period, even though we have no evidence of any such reallocations (Traill 56ff). Rather we might argue that if proportional representation were a major concern to the Athenians, we would expect to find seats in the *boule* periodically reallocated as the relative populations of the demes shifted over time; as we have no evi-

Figure 2

Larger Demes with Unchanged Bouleutic Quotas, 307/306

QUOTA	DEME
5	Hagnous Upper Lamptrai Probalinthos
6	Prospalta Kerameis Oe
7	Melite Xypete
8	Rhamnous
9	Marathon Phrearrhioi
12	Kydathenaion
16	Aphidna

306, it is a priori unlikely that any deme would have its quota reduced.²⁷ Conversely we would expect higher quotas to be assigned precisely to demes with larger populations capable of supply the extra *bouleutai* required. There is thus every reason to believe that the bouleutic quotas of 307/306 generally reflect the relative populations of the several demes.²⁸

dence for any reallocations, we may conclude that proportional representation was not a major concern (see further Traill 58). Hansen, I should add, had earlier argued (*supra* n.9: 230ff) for a reallocation of seats immediately after the Peloponnesian War; but his argument there, that finding 500 new *bouleutai* every year required an optimum fit of deme quotas with populations (and hence a reallocation to adjust for changes in the relative populations of demes), is based on a rather low estimate of 21,000 for the total adult male citizen population of Attica. Now ("The Demography" 27) Hansen uses a population estimate of 30,000. J. A. O. Larsen (*Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* [Berkeley 1966] 7f) believes there was a reallocation of seats within the tribe Aigeis *ca* 350, but see Traill 16 n.20.

²⁷ Indeed, if a deme was expected to meet its Cleisthenic quota before 307/306, then there is no reason why it could not be expected to meet the same quota after that date. Some demes, to be sure, may have had difficulty meeting their quotas from time to time, but helping them by reducing their quotas would not be one of the priorities of the new allocations that were aimed at recruiting the one hundred additional members.

²⁸ Traill, although granting that shifts in population could have been a factor in the changes in bouleutic quotas, argues that they could not have been the only factor for two reasons: first, that shifts in population should have resulted in some demes losing seats, but there is no unambiguous evidence of even one such loss (59f); and second, that the relative sizes of the bouleutic quotas do not match the *known* populations of the demes as calculated by

To consider the bouleutic quotas of 307/306 in greater detail, the pattern of gainers and losers is complicated, but even a quick comparison of the data in *Figs. 1 and 2* with a map of the Attic demes suggests that something else is going on demographically that has nothing to do with migration to the urban agglomeration.

Figure 3

Distribution of Bouleutic Seats by Trittyes

	URBAN	COASTAL	INLAND
pre-307/306 quota (% of 500 seats)	130 (26%)	139 (39%)	174 (35%)
307/306 quota (% of 600 seats)	145 (24%)	235 (39%)	220 (37%)
increase in 307/306 (% of pre-307/306 quota)	15 (12%)	39 (20%)	46 (26%)

The overall trend becomes apparent, however, when we group the demes according to the geographical trittytes (urban, coastal, or inland) to which they belonged.²⁹ As we can see from the

Gomme on the basis of *KirchPA* (Traill 66; for the figures see Gomme 56–65). Neither argument is persuasive. As to the first, as we have seen, several of the larger demes received either no increase in their quota or an increase less than the expected 20%, and thus saw their quota account for a smaller percentage of the new *boule* even as the quota remained the same or even increased. As for Traill's second argument, Kirchner assembled his *PA* from literary and epigraphic sources, and we have already seen how calculations based solely on such sources are unreliable as evidence for the relative populations of the several demes. Gomme himself (55) questioned the value of such calculations: "From the numbers of members of the demes as recorded in *Prosopographia Attica* not much is obtained that can be useful."

²⁹ The term "geographical trittytes" is used here to distinguish these groupings from the "trittytes of *prytaneis*" to which Traill assigns demes in his subsequent *Demos and Trittytes: Epigraphical and Topographical Studies in the Organization of Attica* (Toronto 1986). These "trittytes of *prytaneis*" were first proposed by W. E. Thompson, "Τριττὸς τῶν πρυτανέων," *Historia* 15 (1966) 1–10, who believed that he had found evidence for groupings of demes within tribes, which provided roughly equal committees of *bouleutai* to facilitate the business of the *boule*. It is important to note, however, that this system of *prytaneis*-trittytes, if it existed, involved only the administrative organization of the *boule*'s personnel, not the geographical location of the demes—indeed, to make the scheme work Traill places such obviously non-urban demes as Probalinthos and Rhamnous in 'urban' *prytaneis*-trittytes. The "trittytes of

groupings in *Fig. 3*, the total number of *bouleutai* from each group of trittyes increased, but those from the urban demes increased at a much lower rate than those from the coastal and inland demes, and *bouleutai* from the urban demes held proportionately fewer seats in the *boule* after 307/306 than they had before. In other words, as the bouleutic quotas of 307/306 are likely, as we have seen, to reflect the relative populations of the demes as of that date, it would appear that members of the urban demes made up a smaller part of the Athenian citizen population in 307/306 than they had in the days of Cleisthenes.

Of course some of the demes in the 'urban' trittyes lay outside the urban agglomeration. If we limit ourselves to the five demes within the city walls (Koile, Kollytos, Kydathe-naion, Melite, Skambonidai) plus Alopeke,³⁰ Phalerum, and the Piraeus, the relative decline of urban vs rural demes is even more pronounced, with bouleutic representation for the strictly urban demes increasing by only 8.9% in 307/306, as can be seen in *Fig. 4*.³¹

Recall that the size of the *boule* had increased by 20% in 307/306; if any sector's quota increased by less than 20%, we may infer that that sector had either lost population or at least had seen its population increase at a rate slower than that of the other sectors. Compared with the overall increase of 20%, the relatively

prytaneis" are thus not relevant to our present concerns for the geographical location of the demes, for which we depend on Traill's earlier work (*supra* n.21). On the "trittyes of *prytaneis*" see further J. S. Traill, "Diakris, the Inland Trittys of Leontis," *Hesperia* 47 (1978) 97-106, 109; P. J. Rhodes, "ΤΡΙΤΤΥΣ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΥΤΑΝΕΩΝ," *Historia* 20 (1971) 385-404. S. Dow, "Companionable Associates in the Athenian Government," in L. Bonfante and H. Heintze, edd., *In Memoriam Otto J. Brendel: Essays in Archaeology and the Humanities* (Mainz 1976) 72-80, denies that the "trittyes of *prytaneis*" had any role in the administrative organization of the *boule* and argues, possibly rightly, that the "trittys of *prytaneis*" whom the *epistates* of the *prytaneis* chose to spend the night with him (*Ath. Pol.* 44.1, the *locus classicus* for the term τριττύς τῶν πρυτάνεων) were not an official body but an informal grouping that the *epistates* was free to choose as he wished, for companionship and other personal reasons.

³⁰ The large number of metics resident at Alopeke is good evidence that it was part of the urban agglomeration; on metics' demes of residence see most conveniently M. Clerc, *Les métèques athéniens* (Paris 1893) 385f with 450-57 ("Appendice").

³¹ There was also no increase in the bouleutic quotas—and hence a relative decline in the representation—of the five immediately suburban demes of Didalidai, Diomeia, Keiriedai, Kerameis, and Oion Kerameikon.

Figure 4

Bouleutic Quotas of 'City' Demes

	pre-307/306 quota	307/306 quota	% increase
demes within walls + Alopeke	38	42	10.1
Phalerum, Piraeus	18	19	5.3
TOTAL	56	61	8.9

small increase of 8.9% in the quotas of the strictly urban demes is truly striking.

In a sense, the loss of population, or at least a lower rate of growth, in the urban demes is exactly what we would expect. Historically, fecundity is typically lower and mortality higher in urban settings. City-dwellers typically have fewer children because it is more difficult—or at least more obviously difficult—to feed an extra mouth in the city than on the farm; and poor sanitation and the denser population of the city puts people at greater risk of death through communicable diseases.

It is important to remember, however, that deme membership was hereditary, and that a citizen continued to be a member of the deme of his ancestors³² regardless of where he lived himself. This was true in the period from the reforms of Cleisthenes down into the fourth century, and there is no reason to believe that it was changed when the two new tribes were created in 307/306. Indeed, the way in which these new tribes were created, by shifting demes from preexisting tribes and not by creating new demes from some of the larger old ones, strongly argues that the hereditary principle remained intact, and that even after 307/306 all Athenian citizens were members of their ancestral demes. Thus, properly speaking, information on the allocation of bouleutic seats in 307/306 can tell us something about the place of residence of the ancestors of the Athenians who were alive in 307/306, and it can even tell us which ancestral demes were more prolific in producing offspring and which less; but, at least thus far in our argument, the bouleutic quotas tell us nothing about the place of residence of the Athenians who were alive in 307/306.

³² More precisely, the deme of his direct male ancestor who was alive at the time of the reforms of Cleisthenes, or of the deme of the first direct male ancestor to be enfranchised thereafter.

Families, however, immigrating from the countryside to the urban agglomeration would of course eventually suffer the same negative effects of urban living—decreased fecundity and increased mortality—as the native city-dwellers did. The longer migrant families remained in the city, the more they would experience the negative demographic effects of urban living, and the more similar their reproductive pattern would become to those of native city-dwellers. Even if the massive migration posited by Beloch, Gomme, *et al.* occurred as late as the Peloponnesian War, the immigrant families would still have gone through at least three generations in the city by the time the seats in the *boule* were reallocated in 307/306, more than enough time for them to experience the negative effects of urban living.

With this in mind we may return to the bouletic quotas of 307/306. As we have seen, these quotas seem broadly to reflect the populations of the several demes at the time. Now if, as Gomme thought, so many rural demesmen had migrated to the city that almost half the citizen population now lived in the urban agglomeration, the negative effects of decreased fecundity and increased mortality should also be reflected in the bouletic quotas of the rural demes to which these immigrants still belonged, lessening the disparity between urban and rural demes in the rates at which they increased their quotas when the *boule* was expanded from 500 to 600 seats. This, however, is clearly not the case. Indeed, the contrast between the increase of 12% for the urban trittyes as a group, and especially the increase of only 8.9% for the strictly urban demes on the one hand, and increases of 20% for the coastal demes and 26% for the inland ones on the other would appear precisely to support the opposite view, that the populations of the rural demes did not suffer the same negative effects of city living as the populations of the urban demes did, essentially because most of the population of the rural demes had remained in the country and did not migrate to the city.

The thrust of this argument, I should emphasize, is not that there was no migration from countryside to city, only that whatever migration occurred was not as massive as Beloch, Gomme, *et al.* might lead us to believe. The argument, I would also add, is limited to movements of the citizen population, and I would in no way question the widely held view that large numbers of former slaves moved to the city after manumission and, as metics, made up a significant part of the population of

the urban agglomeration, especially in the fourth century.³³ But the conventional view of mass migrations of citizens from country to city and of a consequent depopulation of the Attic countryside is one that we would do well to put to rest, together with the faulty assumptions about the Athenian rural and urban economies upon which the conventional view was originally based.

FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY

August, 1994

³³ D. Whitehead, *The Ideology of the Athenian Metic* (Cambridge 1977) 100 n.31 for literature; for metics' reasons for moving to the urban agglomeration see *supra* n.12.