

THE LOST ARCHAIC WALL AROUND ATHENS

ROBERT G. A. WEIR

IT IS DIFFICULT TO DESCRIBE the putative Archaic wall around Athens since not a stone of it has been found. In fact, some scholars, faced by the absolute dearth of physical evidence, have felt bound to dismiss the possibility that any fortification walls were erected at Athens between LH III and 479/8 B.C.¹ But the balance of opinion has now reversed itself, and most modern authorities are convinced that a circuit wall of some sort stood around Athens before the time of the Persian Wars.² This paper will review the basis for this modern scholarly consensus as a prelude to a discussion of certain characteristics of that wall, i.e., its construction, course, and date. It will also suggest a reason for the mysterious absence of any trace of the wall from the material record.

The consensus rests on a few well-known *testimonia* to a wall around pre-Classical Athens (chiefly Andoc. 1.108, Hdt. 9.13, and Thuc. 1.89.3)³

This paper is substantially my final contribution to a graduate seminar entitled "Topography and Monuments of Athens," held at Princeton in the autumn of 1992. I wish to thank both its leader, Dr T. L. Shear Jr, for his encouragement outside the classroom, and two anonymous reviewers for *Phoenix* for their helpful criticism of an earlier draft.

The following works will be cited by the author's name or author's name and abbreviated title: Wilhelm Dörpfeld, *Alt-Athen und seine Agora* (Berlin 1937); A. von Gerkan, *Griechische Städtanlagen* (Berlin and Leipzig 1924); Heidi Lauter-Bufe and Hans Lauter, "Die vorthemistokleische Stadtmauer Athens nach philologischen und archäologischen Quellen," *AA* 90 (1975) 1-9; Ioannis N. Travlos, *Πολεοδομική εξέλιξις τῶν Ἀθηνῶν* (Athens 1960); Eugene Vanderpool, "The Date of the Pre-Persian City Wall of Athens," in D. W. Bradeen and M. F. McGregor (eds.), *PHOROS: Tribute to B. D. Meritt* (Locust Valley, N.Y. 1974) 156-160; Otto Walter, "Zur Frage der vorthemistokleischen Stadtbefestigung Athens," *AnzWien* 86 (1949) 518-527; F. E. Winter, *Greek Fortifications* (Toronto 1971) (= Winter, *Fortifications*); *id.*, "Sepulturae intra urbem and the Pre-Persian Walls of Athens," in Eugene Vanderpool (ed.), *Studies in Attic Epigraphy, History, and Topography* (Princeton 1982, *Hesperia* Supp. 19) 199-205 (= Winter, "Sepulturae"); Rodney S. Young, "Burials within the Walls of Athens," *AJA* 52 (1948) 377-378 (= Young, "Burials"); *id.*, "Sepulturae intra urbem," *Hesperia* 20 (1951) 67-134 (= Young, "Sepulturae").

¹Disbelievers in the Archaic wall include Dörpfeld (25-29), von Gerkan (26), and Jane Ellen Harrison (*Primitive Athens as Described by Thucydides* [Cambridge 1906] 31).

²Supporters of the wall include Walter Judeich (*Topographie von Athen*² [Munich 1931] 120-124), Lauter-Bufe and Lauter (1-9), Travlos (40-42), Vanderpool (156-160), Walter (518-527), Winter (*Fortifications* 61-64 and "Sepulturae" 199-205), and Young ("Burials" 378 and "Sepulturae" 132).

³Other literary *testimonia* exist, but they are either too vague or too late to inspire much confidence: *Ath. Pol.* 23.2; *Cic. Fam.* 4.12.3 and *Att.* 7.11; *Nepos Miltiades* 4; *Hdt.* 7.140; *Justin* 2.15.2; *Lycurgus Leocr.* 86; *Plato Critias* 112a; and *Thuc.* 1.126.6.

and the more recent contributions of archaeological excavation and comparisons with other Archaic Greek centres. The fifth-century B.C. sources were especially well qualified to speak of the Archaic wall since they had ready access to records and memories of the destruction of Athens by the Persians, and there was also no reason for them to falsify topographical details that could easily have been verified by their audience. These texts are as follows:

Andoc. 1.108: [οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι] τὴν πόλιν ἀνάστατον παραλαβόντες ἱερά τε κατακεκαυμένα τεῖχη τε καὶ οἰκίας καταπεπτωκυίας ... τὴν πόλιν ὑμῖν τοιαύτην καὶ τοσαύτην παρέδωκαν.

Hdt. 9.13: [Μαρδόνιος] ὑπεξεχώρει ἐμπρήσας τε τὰς Ἀθῆνας, καὶ εἰ κού τι ὀρθὸν ἦν τῶν τειχέων ἢ τῶν οἰκημάτων ἢ τῶν ἱρῶν, πάντα καταβάλων καὶ συγχώσας.

Thuc. 1.89.3: [οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι] ... τὴν πόλιν ἀνοικοδομεῖν παρεσκευάζοντο καὶ τὰ τεῖχη: τοῦ τε γὰρ περιβόλου βραχέα εἰστήκει καὶ οἰκίαι αἱ μὲν πολλαὶ ἐπεπώκεσαν, ὀλίγαι δὲ περιῆσαν, ἐν αἷς αὐτοὶ ἐσκήνωσαν οἱ δυνατοὶ τῶν Περσῶν.

The absence of corroboration for the literary sources led some scholars of an earlier generation (most notably Wilhelm Dörpfeld) to quibble with the apparently clear evidence of Thucydides and the others by arguing that they in fact referred to the Bronze Age fortifications in the area of the Acropolis, which were the only fortifications that Athens possessed before 479/8 B.C.⁴ These walls (called the Pelargic or Pelasgic τεῖχος) are well attested in our sources,⁵ but still the position of Dörpfeld, Otto von Gerkan, and J. E. Harrison can no longer be sustained.⁶

⁴Dörpfeld 27; Harrison (above, n. 2) 31; von Gerkan 26.

⁵For a complete list of testimonia, see Ernst Curtius, *Die Stadtgeschichte von Athen* (Berlin 1891) lxxvi–lxxvii.

⁶In the case of Thuc. 1.89.3 (quoted above), the correct interpretation of περιβόλου cannot be the Bronze Age walls (Winter, *Fortifications* 63; pace Dörpfeld 27 and von Gerkan 23). For one thing, the Acropolis fortifications were normally referred to as the Pelargic, or Pelasgic, wall (τὸ Πελαργικὸν / Πελασγικὸν τεῖχος) so that the reader would not mistake it for another τεῖχος, or fortification wall (LSJ⁹ 1767 s.v. τεῖχος), while *testimonia* referring to the Archaic circuit simply use the appellation τεῖχος, or sometimes περίβολος. The lack of any qualifying adjective or antiquarian details indicates that the structure in mind is simply the circuit wall of Athens, one that is mundanely utilitarian and not noteworthy (Walter 519–521; Judeich [above, n. 2] 113, 119–120; Curtius [above, n. 5] lxxvi–lxxviii; cf. Winter, *Fortifications* 63). Dörpfeld also chose to ignore that the term περίβολος is occasionally used to mean the wall around a town (e.g., Plato *Leges* 759a: ὁ τῆς πόλεως περίβολος). Thucydides' inspiration for this choice of synonym plainly sprang from the expression τεῖχος περιβάλεισθαι, the usual one for building a wall around one's city (e.g., Hdt. 1.141; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.28; Paus. 1.28.3). The use of a synonym also sets up a characteristically Thucydidean *chiasmus* at 1.89.3 (... πόλιν ... τεῖχη; περιβόλου ... οἰκίαι ...) that equates περίβολος with τεῖχος (Walter 519). The same *chiasmus* also equates πόλις with οἰκίαι, which precludes Dörpfeld's hypothesis that πόλις

Further evidence for the Archaic wall's existence was furnished in 1965 when excavations by the local archaeological service brought to light parts of a sixth-century B.C. retaining wall running up the west slope of the Acropolis towards its crest. It was the retaining wall for a ramp that gave access to the Acropolis (perhaps in conjunction with the Old Propylon of problematic date), at a time before the Mnesikleian Propylaia and its ramp were built atop it in 437–432 B.C. The excavator, Platon, calculated that the ramp was about 12m wide and dated it, on the basis of some pottery sealed beneath its west end, to the second half of the sixth century B.C.⁷ A few years later, Eugene Vanderpool argued persuasively that such a wide and direct approach to the Acropolis was proof that the Athenians were willing to forgo the narrow and zig-zagging approach of earlier centuries because they now felt secure behind a proper city circuit.⁸

Scholars have also argued cogently for an Archaic wall around Athens by drawing comparisons from other sites. In view of the *comparanda*, some say, the burden of proof rests rather on those who contend that Athens was an exception (at least by the later sixth century B.C.) because it did *not* have a wall.⁹ Fortification walls came to the Greek homeland after their appearance in Ionia, where the earliest circuit of Old Smyrna is a good example of Middle Geometric date. One of the earliest city circuits yet discovered in Greece proper is that of Eretria, which was dated by its excavator to the seventh century B.C.;¹⁰ other seventh-century B.C. fortification walls stood on the west slope of the Acrocorinth, and places like Lokrian

(here and at 1.93.1) meant the Acropolis alone: it was before 479/8 B.C. a sacred, non-residential area, without any οἰκία (e.g., *IG* I³.1, 4). Dörpfeld's rebuttal, that the proper term for the lower city of Athens was ἄστυ (25), is only partially correct. A number of literary and epigraphic *testimonia* from the fifth century B.C. on clearly do use the word πόλις in a narrower sense than usual to refer to the Acropolis (e.g., *Ar. Lys.* 245, 288, 758, *Eq.* 1093; *IG* I³.1, 474; and the publication clauses of two peace treaties quoted *verbatim* by Thucydides at 5.23.5 and 5.47.11). But this use of πόλις was an archaism, more apt for poetry or the text of official decrees than everyday prose, as Thucydides makes clear at 2.15.3–6, his digression on pre-Thesean Athens: the πόλις of Thucydides' own day is twice distinguished from that of early Athens, which surely indicates that whenever he refers to πόλις without further qualification he does not mean the Acropolis alone.

⁷N. Platon, "Ἐργασία διαμορφώσεως καὶ τακτοποιήσεως τοῦ ἀρχαιολογικοῦ χώρου 'Ἀκροπόλεως," *Deltion* 21B (1966 [1968]) 36–44, at 42.

⁸This is the thesis of Vanderpool's article (155–160).

⁹Lauter-Bufe and Lauter 4. There seem to have existed more city circuits by the late-Archaic age than we know of. The vague *testimonium* of Thuc. 1.90.2 implies not that other towns besides Athens were also rebuilding their walls in 479/8 B.C. but that a number of pre-existing walls outside the Peloponnese had survived the Persian invasion (Walter 523).

¹⁰Karl Schefold, "Die Grabungen in Eretria im Herbst 1964 und 1965," *AntK* 9 (1966) 106–124, at 117–118; Winter, *Fortifications* 61. Remains of the earliest wall at Eretria were found only at the West Gate, which is about 650m southwest of the *akropolis* that

Halai and Messenian Hira had their own by the next century.¹¹ Early walls for a settlement smaller than a *polis* existed in rural Attika at Tricorynthos, which was probably a fort, not a deme centre, that flourished between the late eighth century and the fifth century B.C.¹² But the best extant example of an Archaic circuit from Attika is at Peisistratid Eleusis. The socle of local limestone is well preserved throughout much of its length, and certain portions still preserve some of the mudbrick superstructure.¹³ The construction of this mighty wall greatly increased the size of the *temenos* and was accompanied by a remodelling of the Telesterion, which is also attributed to the tyrant Peisistratos. Is it reasonable to suppose that he would have expended so much effort on building projects outside Athens if Athens itself still lacked a circuit wall?

Granted that there existed a wall around Archaic Athens, what sort of wall was it? It was clearly not a particularly strong wall that figured prominently in Athenian defensive policy, nor was it a particularly early one. Certain historical arguments once used by those who disbelieved in the wall's existence allow one to reach these conclusions.¹⁴ Why is no city wall mentioned in connection with Kylon's seizure of power at Athens, but rather he is said to have been besieged on the Acropolis by the Athenians in ca 632 B.C. (Hdt. 5.71, Thuc. 1.126)? Why was Peisistratos not simply locked out by the supporters of Lykourgos when he returned to his second tyranny in ca 552/1 B.C. (Hdt. 1.60, *Ath. Pol.* 14.4)? Why would Hippias and his supporters have taken refuge from Kleomenes within the Acropolis walls in 511/0 if a city circuit was available (Hdt. 5.64–65, *Ath. Pol.* 19.5–6)? The quick retreat of the Athenians to the city after the battle of Marathon has also been taken to indicate that no wall was in place to protect it from the Persians (Hdt. 6.116). Finally, why in 480 B.C. did opponents of Themistocles look to some old fortifications atop the Acropolis for the "wooden walls" that would save them instead of relying upon an existing circuit wall (Hdt. 7.141–143)?

was Eretria's original stronghold. The sixth-century B.C. fortification walls of Eretria endured until the Persian sack of 490 B.C. and likely extended as far as the seashore, some 1300m south of the *akropolis* (Winter, *Fortifications* 61; cf. Hdt. 6.100–101).

¹¹Lauter-Bufe and Lauter 2.

¹²James R. McCredie (*Fortified Military Camps in Attica* [Princeton 1966, *Hesperia* Supp. 11] 41) relies upon surface finds to date the site's period of occupation. He also argues persuasively that Tricorynthos and other sites like it in Attika were all almost certainly forts rather than deme centres (91–92).

¹³Plates 9–12 in Walter Wrede's *Attische Mauern* (Athens 1933) illustrate sections of the Peisistratid circuit of Eleusis; 11 in particular shows the courses of mudbrick visible atop the socle at one point. Cf. K. Kourouniotes, "Ἀνασκαφή Ἐλευσίνος κατὰ τὸ 1933," *Deltion* 14 *Parartema* (1931–32 [1935]) 1–30.

¹⁴Winter (*Fortifications* 62) and Lauter-Bufe and Lauter (7) list all of the following historical arguments.

The issue of missing physical remains will be addressed shortly, but first suffice it to say that the mere lack of explicit reference to an Archaic wall in either Herodotos or the *Athenaion Politeia* does not prove that one did not exist.¹⁵ As regards the arguments against the wall's existence prior to the third tyranny of Peisistratos, the dissenters may have been correct, but not for the reasons they put forward. As already stated, the presence of an Archaic ramp on the west slope of the Acropolis implies that a city wall was already in place before the ramp—dated by Eugene Vanderpool to ca 550–500 B.C.—was built. However, there is no reason to suppose that the wall was built much before this time, i.e., before the third tyranny of Peisistratos and the rule of his sons (536/5–511/0 B.C.). By comparison with its later splendour, pre-Peisistratid Athens lacked many fine public buildings, perhaps as a result of acute factional strife that inhibited the undertaking of projects as major as a city wall.

Secondly, there is no reason for the Acropolis and its walls not to have been besieged, even if a circuit wall were already in existence. The Acropolis has always been a natural citadel with but one good access on its west slope. Hence a small force has often been able to defend it quite successfully against a much larger force, as happened in 480 B.C. for instance (Hdt. 8.52–53). It, therefore, made good sense for the likes of Kylon and Hippias to barricade themselves within the Acropolis, since they and their supporters would have found it much harder, if not impossible, to drive out, and keep out, their rivals from a proper city circuit. Similarly, it would have been apparent to the Athenians in 490 B.C. and 480 B.C. that their prospects of successfully withstanding a siege by the Persians (who were not only vastly more numerous, but skilled in siegecraft besides) were worse than if they attacked the Marathon beachhead or took their chances in the narrow waters off Artemision and Salamis. The same is probably true of the engagement at Pallene in 536/5 B.C.: Peisistratos had been gathering resources for ten years before staging his second return, and likely had a sizeable army when he arrived at Marathon (Hdt. 1.61–62, *Ath. Pol.* 15.2–5). Whereas the Archaic wall of Athens cannot have been a very good one (and certainly not worth defending against the Persians),¹⁶ even impregnable fortifications were useless against betrayal, which was the cause of Eretria's

¹⁵It is entirely possible that neither author saw fit to mention such a detail, perhaps because it was considered common knowledge in any case. As an example, consider the fortification walls of the Peiraeus that Themistocles undertook during his archonship in 493/2 B.C. (Thuc. 1.93.3). Herodotos makes no mention of this project, even though he might conceivably have alluded to it at 7.144 (how Themistocles spent the Laurion windfall of the 480s B.C. on a fleet for the defence of Athens) by recalling that he had previously seen to the protection of her port too.

¹⁶Walter 524; Winter, "*Sepulturae*" 200, 203. Marching out to meet the enemy, and not waiting behind a circuit wall, was of course the usual first response to an invasion of one's χώρα (David Whitehead, *Aineias the Tactician* [Oxford 1990] 22–25).

fall to the Persians in 490 B.C. after only seven days of siege (Hdt. 6.101). This example would have been fresh in the minds of the Athenians when they heard that Persian forces, the aged Hippias among them, had landed at Marathon, and they may well have feared that the same thing could happen to themselves at the hands of Peisistratid loyalists.¹⁷ Even the Themistoclean circuit around Athens lacked great importance because its makeshift construction was not soon replaced by anything better, whereas at the first subsequent opportunity Themistocles built a very fine wall to shelter the Peiraieus—a sure sign of where his priorities lay (Thuc. 1.93.3–7).

What did the Archaic wall look like? It almost certainly had the same construction as many of its precursors in Asia Minor, and its contemporaries in Greece, as well as its immediate successor in the Themistoclean circuit: a low socle with masonry faces and a stone or brick packing that was surmounted by several metres of unbaked mudbrick covered in protective stucco or the like. This is suggested by the literary passages already quoted. Indeed, the statements of Andocides (1.108), that the wall was found to be fallen down, and of Herodotos (9.13), that the destruction of walls was effected by a process of demolition (καταβαλὼν καὶ συγχώσας), very clearly indicate that what the Persians did was to pull or knock down the mudbrick superstructure of a city wall whose only masonry element was a low stone socle. The Thucydidean passage cited above (1.89.3) is in agreement on this point since it states that the Athenians considered it necessary, or at least desirable, to rebuild the city (πόλιν) and the walls (τείχη), for (γάρ) of the circuit wall only short/low portions (βραχέα) were left. The crucial adjective is often translated as “small” but could just as well be rendered as “short” or “low.” The latter options of course emphasize that Thucydides meant by them the wall’s stone socles. These structures were wholly indefensible since they stood no more than a metre or two above ground. Once the brick superstructure had been toppled, the Persians would not have bothered to dig out and demolish the socles because Athens would be in essence an open city already.¹⁸

This type of fortification wall was exceedingly common, especially before the fourth century B.C. when all-stone walls gained popularity.¹⁹ Except that they were much thicker than their counterparts in Greece, city circuits 1–4 at Old Smyrna (ninth- to fourth-century B.C.) all made use of the same technique.²⁰ The earliest city wall of Eretria may have been built in the same way too. The excavator, Karl Schefold, describes what he found under

¹⁷Lauter-Bufe and Lauter 7.

¹⁸Walter 522.

¹⁹Winter, *Fortifications* 69–73.

²⁰R. V. Nicholls (“Old Smyrna: The Iron Age Fortifications,” *BSA* 53–54 [1958–59] 1–137) describes the various building phases at great length. See esp. 51 for a set of reconstructions of all four phases.

the West Gate as a socle of rubble masonry rising to a height of seven or eight courses (about 2.35m). Its thickness was 2.75m and exhibited the usual sandwich-type construction of a rubble packing between two masonry faces.²¹ The same sort of construction can be seen in the Peisistratid circuit at Eleusis where two to four courses (1m–2m) of limestone socle 2.3m thick stand above the sixth-century B.C. ground level. Parts of the mudbrick superstructure were so well preserved that Kourouniotis was able to ascertain that each brick of the Archaic circuit was made to the standard of 0.45m square by 0.09m thick.²²

The Archaic wall's appearance probably resembled that of the Themistoclean circuit, but it is known to have enclosed a smaller area than its successor:

For the circuit wall (περίβολος), a greater one, was extended in every quarter (πανταχῇ) of the city (πόλεως) (Thuc. 1.93.2)

This passage may also solve the mystery of why no trace of it has ever been found, or, rather, why not a single one of its stones has ever been identified. First, it is important to note the context of that statement, which is Thucydides' explanation of how the wall, and a more extensive one than previously too, came to be built so quickly, and how one could still see for oneself the hasty construction. It was precisely because the circuit of Themistocles was larger (γάρ) that it had been necessary for the builders to pillage grave *stelai* and make use of other *spolia*, which were in turn the visual proof that the wall had been erected in great haste, explains Thucydides. If the Classical wall was built in such great haste as he indicates (so that it could be raised to a defensible height before the Spartans learned what was happening [1.90.3]), it is perfectly understandable that the builders would have used whatever stonework came most readily to hand for the construction of the much longer socle that it required.²³ Therefore, why not make use of the stonework already conveniently available and cleared

²¹Schefold (above, n. 10) 117–118.

²²For description of the Peisistratid walls at Eleusis see Wrede (above, n. 13) 7–8 and plates 10–13; G. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton 1961) 91–92. Photographs of the brickwork can be seen in the published excavation report of Kourouniotis (above, n. 13). A much less complete account of the Peisistratid wall, without photographs, was originally published by D. Philios (“Ἀνασκαφαὶ Ἐλευσίνος,” *Praktika* [1888 (1889)] 23–27). Did the military camps in rural Attica have walls of the same construction? Archaic Tricorynthos, for instance, had an inner circuit 2.60m thick (McCreddie [above, n. 12] 39), but Thucydides' account of a similar fort's construction at Sphakteria makes no mention at all of brickwork (4.4.1–5.2).

²³Was this feat possible? It depends upon the time factor. Thucydides is not precise, but it is reasonable to suppose that Themistocles was able to delay in Sparta for a number of weeks; if time really was of the essence, then why did the Athenians go to the extra trouble of building a larger circuit? For the sake of argument let us take von Gerkan's figure of six weeks (26) and calculate how much wall might have been erected

of its overburden in the now-useless socle of the Archaic wall? It would in this way have been very easy to produce quickly much of the stonework needed by the Themistoclean socle: one had only to dislodge and carry out the blocks to the nearest point on the new line of defence.²⁴ Thucydides may even have alluded to this process with these words: ... πανταχῇ ἐξήχθη τῆς πόλεως ("... It was borne out in every quarter of the city," 1.93.2).²⁵ This theory is attractive because it reconciles the statements of Thucydides and others with the lack of physical evidence: with the socle gone and the collapsed mudbrick soon washed away, nothing but a shallow, wide cutting into the bedrock would have been left to indicate where the wall had been. There is also some comparative evidence to suggest that this practice was not restricted to Athens.²⁶

within that period of time by a given group of people. How many people were working on it? Since the entire able-bodied population of Athens helped to build the wall (Thuc. 1.90.3), let us assume that Themistocles had at his disposal about as many workers as men who had rowed the city's 180 triremes against the Persians at Salamis (Hdt. 8.44, 61). Since each trireme had a full complement of 200 men (John S. Morrison and John F. Coates, *The Athenian Trireme: The History and Reconstruction of an Ancient Greek Warship* [Cambridge 1986] 107–108; Hdt. 3.13.1–2, 7.184, 8.17; cf. Thuc. 8.29.2 and Dem. 4.28), our hypothetical total is 36,000 able-bodied Athenians. How much wall was there to build? Thuc. 2.13.7 and a scholiast thereto, as affirmed by Aristodemos 5.4 (in K. Müller [ed.], *FHG* 5 [Paris 1883] 8), give a total circuit of 60 stades in length. Since each Thucydidean stade was approximately 150m (Robert L. Scranton, "The Fortifications of Athens at the Opening of the Peloponnesian War," *AJA* 42 [1938] 525–529), the total length of the Themistoclean circuit was thus about 9,000m. Dividing this length by 36,000 workers yields a hypothetical 0.25m stretch of wall to be raised by each person within six (or however many) weeks. Each 0.25m stretch of wall included a stone socle about 3m thick and 1.5m high, which works out to 1.1m³ of masonry and rubble fill per person. About 8m of mudbrick superstructure, of the same thickness, was needed atop the socle to bring the wall to full height (Gottfried Gruben, "Die Ausgrabungen im Kerameikos—Untersuchungen am Dipylon 1961–3," *AA* 79 [1964] 385–419, at 389), which comes to a hypothetical 3m³ of unbaked mudbrick to be made and set by each worker. There were also the jobs of transporting materials, waterproofing the brick wall, and making defensive arrangements atop it. The whole task would have been a challenge, but not an impossible one for the highly motivated population of Athens. The erection of 30 stades (4500m) of all-stone wall on the Epipolai of Syracuse by 60,000 men within the space of only 20 days in 402 B.C. (Diod. Sic. 14.18) is a good *comparandum*. In addition, Themistocles asked the Athenians only to raise the wall "to such a height as was absolutely necessary for defence" (Thuc. 1.90.3), by which he possibly meant half its full height, as Thuc. 1.93.5 suggests: although the Peiraieus wall was only brought up to half its planned height, it was nonetheless considered fully defensible.

²⁴The same solution occurred to Walter (522) and Travlos (34).

²⁵Walter is probably correct in his association of τῆς πόλεως with the closer πανταχῇ, rather than with περίβολος in the way that most translators render the sentence (521). πανταχῇ frequently takes a genitive of place (e.g., Hdt. 7.106, τοῦ Ἑλλησπόντου π.; Eur. *Ion* 1107, π. γὰρ ἄστεως).

²⁶There is the case of Epidauros Limera in Lakonia where one side of the earlier (fifth-century B.C.?) circuit was robbed down to its bedrock trenches when a new wall

The last text makes it clear that the older wall lay within the line of its successor, which raises the question of where the Archaic fortification ran. Strategic considerations would have played a major part in this determination. F. E. Winter has thus proposed a circuit of ca 560 B.C. that included very little of the built-up area (leaving out the Kolonos Agoraios and Agora for instance) and ringed only the Acropolis and Areopagos hills. It is not so much a city circuit as a *Fluchtfort*, or place of refuge. Winter's proposed circuit is dated in accordance with Platon's excavation of the Archaic ramp on the west slope of the Acropolis and Vanderpool's subsequent interpretation of these finds. A date after ca 550 B.C. would, by comparison with walls in other Hellenic states, allow a much more extensive circuit, which could properly be called a *city circuit*.²⁷ Travlos suggests a different reconstruction of the Solonian period. His wall's course is more generous and runs (counter-clockwise from the west) south along the ridge of the Kolonos Agoraios, then south-east along Apostolou Pavlou and onto Dionissiou Areopagitou, which it follows as far as the Plaka before turning north onto Vironos, and finally west back to the Kolonos along the line of Hadrianou.²⁸ Winter's reconstruction is more strategically sound because it avoids an uphill slope just outside its southern line; and the safe extension of the line to the Hill of the Nymphs-Pnyx-Mouseion ridge is not attested until much later.²⁹

On the other hand, Travlos takes into account the one sure clue we have about the circuit's course from our ancient sources, namely the implications of Thucydides' description of the murder of Hipparkhos in 514 B.C. Thuc. 1.20, and particularly 6.57, conflict with *Ath. Pol.* 18.3 in a few particulars, most notably that the latter locates Hippias on the Acropolis, whereas Thucydides has him out in the Kerameikos (ἔξω ἐν τῷ Κεραμεικῷ).³⁰

was extended beyond it in the mid-fourth century B.C. (A. W. Lawrence, *Greek Aims in Fortification* [Oxford 1979] 146-147). The reuse of material from obsolete walls in larger circuits possibly occurred at a number of sites, e.g., Halikarnassos (G. E. Bean and J. M. Cook, "The Halicarnassus Peninsula," *BSA* 50 [1955] 93), Hellenistic Aigai in Aiolis (Lawrence 145-146), and Syracuse under Dionysios I (Winter, *Fortifications* 314-315; cf. Diod. Sic. 14.18). The reverse process is certainly attested: the *akropolis* of Plataia, for instance, was fortified in Justinianic times with ashlar blocks taken from the north line of the town's fourth-century B.C. wall (Lawrence 442, n. 4).

²⁷Winter, "Sepulturae" 202-203.

²⁸Travlos 33-34; *id.*, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens* (London 1971) 158.

²⁹Winter, "Sepulturae" 203. Thuc. 1.126.6 and the discovery of a large number of dedications to Zeus Meilikhos on the north slope of the Hill of the Nymphs (R. E. Wycherley, *The Stones of Athens* [Princeton 1978] 189) possibly furnish a *terminus post quem* of Kylon's day (ca 632 B.C.) for the extension of the wall out as far as this ridge.

³⁰For a different point of view see Mabel Lang ("The Murder of Hipparchos," *Historia* 3 [1954-55] 395-407), who argues that the internal consistency of Thucydides' account is vitiated by personal interpretation, and that his facts are thus less reliable than those of the *Athenaion Politeia* and Herodotos (who had no axes to grind).

But both authors do agree that Hipparkhos was slain somewhere along the Panathenaic Way near a monument called the Leokoreion. Thucydides adds the further detail that there lay a gate (πύλαι) between the Kerameikos and the Leokoreion (6.57.1–3). The spatial relation between the two places is expressed by the adverbs εἴσω and ἔξω, which make the best sense when taken as having the same point of reference, namely a wall; and πύλαι obviously require the presence of a wall too. Nor is Thucydides likely to have falsified topographical details pertaining to his readers' polis, especially since the Archaic wall had been destroyed within living memory of when he started compiling his history in 431 B.C. (1.1.1).³¹ The standard lexica locate the Leokoreion tolerably well "in the middle of the Kerameikos," by which they mean the Agora in general.³² But the best *testimonium* is furnished by Demosthenes, whose description of an encounter with a friend in its vicinity makes clear that the Leokoreion was located on the west side of the Agora proper and close to one of the main routes running south to Melite (54.7–8). The area in question is undoubtedly a short distance east of the Stoa Basileios, and the Leokoreion may or may not be identified with the Crossroads Enclosure discovered next to the Altar of the Twelve Gods.³³ The only confident conclusion afforded by the literary evidence is that the Archaic wall intersected the Panathenaic Way somewhere in the 400m or so between the Leokoreion and the Dipylon Gate.³⁴

Unfortunately, settlement patterns and grave patterns do not give much insight into the wall's possible course. The former show that city walls seldom suited the extent of built-up areas at any given time, which is not surprising.³⁵ At Athens it is observable from salvage excavations carried out by the local authorities that already by Protogeometric times there were people living out beyond the line of the Themistoclean wall.³⁶ As regards burial patterns, it has been generally recognized ever since Rodney Young's article of 1951 (on the largely sixth-century B.C. cemetery just to the west

³¹If the author of the *Athenaion Politeia* was unaware of an Archaic wall because all traces had disappeared and its memory too had faded, this could explain his variance with the earlier account of Thucydides (Lauter-Bufe and Lauter 4).

³²Harpokration, Hesychios, Photios, and the Suda, all s.v. "Λεωκορείον"; cf. Theophylaktos Simokatta, *Quaest. phys.* 1.5.

³³Identification of the Crossroads Enclosure with the Leokoreion is problematic because, although it is in roughly the correct location, the votive deposits retrieved from within it are no earlier than the third quarter of the fifth century B.C. (John M. Camp, *The Athenian Agora: Excavations in the Heart of Classical Athens* [London 1986] 79–81).

³⁴Might this section of the wall have followed the bank of the Eridanos along the north side of the Agora? Plato (*Critias* 112a) and Pausanias (1.15.1) may preserve vague recollections of such a course.

³⁵Winter, *Fortifications* 61.

³⁶For a list of settlement and burial sites in Athens (1100–500 B.C.), see Ian Morris, *Burial and Ancient Society* (Cambridge 1987) 228–233.

of the Areopagos) that the Athenian ban on burials *intra urbem* mentioned in Cicero's *Ad familiares* 4.12.3 cannot have been introduced before ca 500 B.C.³⁷ Burials of the sixth century B.C. were not necessarily segregated from residential areas; indeed, the results of salvage excavations point to cohabitation of the living with the dead from at least Sub-Mycenaean times through the Archaic period.³⁸ In addition to the Classical Agora, another area which one might conjecture had been enclosed by the Archaic wall is to the north, northeast, and east of the Acropolis (roughly between the Roman Agora and the Olympieion). Despite a few excavations here, it is notable that no traces of settlement or burial have ever been found. If there were simply an absence of graves, one might conclude that the density of settlement was such as to make burials in the region undesirable. However, the apparent lack of domestic remains too suggests that this spot had some public function and was perhaps the site of market and/or government activity in pre-Classical Athens and, as such, did not admit burials in the area. If so, it is reasonable to assume that an effort would have been made to enclose at least part of this important *locale* within a circuit wall.

It only remains to speculate when and why the Archaic wall was built. Suggested dates have ranged from the seventh century B.C. to the Peisistratid tyranny, which is little wonder given the very scanty evidence at hand.³⁹ The only evidence worth considering, in fact, is the *terminus ante quem* furnished by the Archaic ramp discovered on the west slope of the Acropolis. Eugene Vanderpool assigned to the ramp a *terminus post quem* date of the second quarter of the sixth century B.C., which he based on some pottery sealed in a house and a well underneath the ramp. Using this information, Vanderpool and Winter have supplied a date of ca 550 B.C. for the ramp and ca 560 B.C. for the city wall.⁴⁰ However, only a small amount of the crucial pottery that fixes this date was found (most of it in the form of six whole vessels from the well's period-of-use fill), and it is, therefore, hazardous to conclude that the ramp was built by 550 B.C. It is safer to move the date of both ramp and wall down into the third, or even fourth, quarter of the century. The slightly lower date also fits better with the late-sixth-century to early-fifth-century B.C. date Vanderpool himself assigns to the style of polygonal masonry used in the ramp wall.⁴¹ Datedating has

³⁷Young, "Burials" 378 and "*Sepulturae*" 131-133. It is generally agreed that at Athens *intra urbem* was coterminous with the area within the walls (*intra muros*; e.g., Winter, "*Sepulturae*" 199).

³⁸Morris (above, n. 36) 228-233.

³⁹Seventh century B.C.: Judeich (above, n. 2) 113; Solonian: Travlos 33-34 and *id.*, *Pictorial Dictionary* (above, n. 28) 158; ca 560 B.C.: Vanderpool 156, Winter, "*Sepulturae*" 200; Peisistratid: Young, "Burials" 378 and "*Sepulturae*" 133, Winter, *Fortifications* 61.

⁴⁰Vanderpool 159; Winter, "*Sepulturae*" 200.

⁴¹Vanderpool 155.

the added allure of enabling us to associate the wall with the building program carried out by Peisistratos and his sons. No other association could be more plausible. Thus I conclude that the first wall around the lower city of Athens (or at least a part of it) was a modest and utilitarian part of Peisistratid efforts to enhance and modernize the city they ruled.

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
PRINCETON, N.J. 08544-1018