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## ALCAEUS ON THE CAREER OF MYRSILOS: GREEKS, LYDIANS AND LUWIANS AT THE EAST AEGEAN- WEST ANATOLIAN INTERFACE

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the evidence for the life and career of the Lesbian tyrant Myrsilos. Following an examination of the ancient testimonia for Myrsilos in the text of Alcaeus and later sources, the name Myrsilos is then considered in relation to the Hittite royal name Muršiliš, Myrsilos as an alternate name for the Lydian king Kandaules and various toponyms in Lydia and Caria that appear to be derived from the same underlying name or title. The consequences of the distribution of these names is then considered in the cultural and historical context of the Aegean-Anatolian interface, with implications for early Lesbian history and cultural continuity from the Late Bronze Age down to the Archaic period.

### I. Στάσις

Mytilene at the turn of the sixth century, we are told, was torn with internal strife.<sup>1</sup> The rule of the Penthilidae, descendants of Penthilos who led the Aeolic migration to Lesbos, was overthrown when the populace took exception to being clubbed in the agora (Arist. *Pol.* 1311b = *fr.* 472). A certain Melanchros filled the vacuum, to be followed by Myrsilos and finally Pittacus, who assumed the monarchy and quelled the factional powers of Mytilene before restoring the city's self-governance (Strabo 13.2.3 = *fr.* 468). Myrsilos however was less easy to dispatch than either the Penthilidae or Melanchros, and seems to have turned up again despite having been exiled (*fr.* 305), and perhaps even entered into a power-sharing arrangement with Pittacus (*fr.* 70.6–7), before finally meeting his demise one way or another (*fr.* 332). All met with disfavour in the poetry of Alcaeus.

Information about the first of these tyrants, Melanchros, is scant. He is the first attested ruler of Mytilene after the fall of the Penthilidae, though he did not play a direct role in their overthrow if Aristotle is to be believed.<sup>2</sup> We have a few testimonia to his mention by Alcaeus, but his name only occurs in one fragment (*fr.* 331). Diogenes Laertius (1.74 = *fr.* 469) tells us that Pittacus, along with Alcaeus' brothers, was involved in the overthrow of Melanchros. This did not however result in Pittacus' ascendancy to power, but rather that of Myrsilos. At a later point Pittacus is in power (*Pol.* 1285a citing *fr.* 348), though we are nowhere told how the downfall of Myrsilos was achieved. The treachery of Pittacus, which seems to be suggested in *fr.* 129, is presumed to involve his conspiring with Myrsilos<sup>3</sup> before (presumably) double-crossing him too and ascending to the position of tyrant.

Myrsilos, despite being better attested than Melanchros, is nonetheless a shadowy figure and nowhere near as palpable a presence in the remains of Alcaeus as Pittacus is. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the rift between Pittacus and Alcaeus, and Pittacus' role in Alcaeus' exile(s). Yet an examination of the instances where Myrsilos is recorded in Alcaeus' poetry, or in ancient scholia and testimonia, sheds very little light on his career compared to that of Pittacus, while even in the case of Melanchros we are informed of the means of his removal from power.

\* alexander.dale@keble.oxon.org. Fragments of Alcaeus are cited from Voigt without any further qualification (thus '*fr.* 332' = Alcaeus *fr.* 332 Voigt). I am indebted to two anonymous readers, whose comments and criticisms greatly improved the finished product.

<sup>1</sup> See *inter alia* Page (1955) 149–243; Osborne

(1996) 189–97; judicious and succinct summary in Hutchinson (2001) 188–89.

<sup>2</sup> He attributes it to Megakles and Smerdis, Arist. *Pol.* 1311b = *fr.* 472.

<sup>3</sup> For which our sole witness in the text of Alcaeus is *fr.* 70.6–7.

We only have three verbatim fragments where Myrsilos is mentioned by name, *fr.* 70.7, 129.28 and 332.2. The first two of these fragments mention Myrsilos in a context with Pittacus, while the last is the famous celebration of his death, imitated by Horace in celebration of the death of another reviled ruler. *Fr.* 70.6–7 appears to refer to Pittacus' marriage into the Penthilidae and his previous association with Myrsilos: κῆνος δὲ παώθεις Ἄτρεΐδα[ . ] / δαππέτω πόλιν ὡς καὶ πεδὰ Μυρσί[λ]ω[.]<sup>4</sup> In *fr.* 129 Alcaeus expresses the wish that the Erinyes pursue Pittacus for his oath breaking and then goes on to dwell on the hardships of exile that Alcaeus and his comrades suffer; as the text breaks off we find a reference to Μύρσιλ[ο]. *Fr.* 332 is an unambiguous celebration of Myrsilos' death: νῦν χρῆ μεθύσθην καὶ τινα πὲρ βίαν / πώνην, ἐπεὶ δὴ κάτθανε Μύρσιλος. In addition to these three occurrences, there are a number of instances in the scholia and ancient commentaries where Myrsilos is said to be the subject of, or to have occurred in, a poem of Alcaeus; below I list the instances where anything can be made out of the context.

*Fr.* 6 is one of the 'ship of state' poems, where amidst the buffeting of waves Alcaeus exhorts his companions to shore up the ship, find safe harbour, recall previous hardship and remain steadfast and not show cowardice. Towards the end of the papyrus the narrative seems to turn from gnomic exhortation to a political situation. Line 27 reads μοναρχίαν, while the following line reads μῆδὲ δεκωμ[. A marginal comment, which is otherwise illegible, preserves the name Μυρσίλου. It is a reasonable inference that this refers to the content of the previous lines, and perhaps the sense was 'let us not accept the monarchy of Myrsilos'. Heraclitus (*Homeric Allegories* 5.5–9; pp. 9–11 Russell-Konstan) confirms that the poem was about the tyrannical activities of Myrsilos. The same author quotes another passage from Alcaeus (*fr.* 208.1–9 Voigt = 326 L-P), again describing a storm at sea, telling us that it as well is about Myrsilos and his tyrannical conspiring.<sup>5</sup>

Beyond this we have very few substantive references to Myrsilos. Scholia in *PBerol* 9569 col. ii (= *fr.* 114) refer to Alcaeus' first exile, when he and his companions hatched a plot against Myrsilos; the same events might be mentioned in the scholia to *fr.* 60. In *POxy* 2304 (= *fr.* 302a) a marginal scholion to col. i.19 reads Μυρ[σ]ίλου while in col. ii (*fr.* 302b) the only words that can be made out are Πένθι[λ]- at line 1, which could be a reference to either the eponymous ancestor of the ruling family of Mytilene or to the family itself, and τοις τύρα[νν]- at line 7. *POxy* 2306 col. i (= *fr.* 305a) is a papyrus commentary that records the return of Myrsilos from exile at the agency of one Mnamon, while col. ii (= *fr.* 305b) seems to refer to *fr.* 208 (see above). Several fragments of *POxy* 2307 (= *fr.* 306) might refer to the first exile of Alcaeus and the plot against Myrsilos mentioned in *fr.* 114. Finally, a commentary in *POxy* 2734, several fragments of which seem to deal with the political poems, preserves the name Μυρσίλωι (*fr.* 6 = 267 *SLG*), while another fragment from the same commentary preserves μοναρχ[ and ]τυρανν[ in lines 5–6. We note in these passages the association of the words *monarchia* and *tyrannia* with Myrsilos.

Despite the prominence that Myrsilos must have had in Mytilene at the beginning of the sixth century, we can say hardly anything substantive about him. We are told that he was the son of one Kleanax, though the sources do not inspire confidence. A marginal scholion in *PBerol* 9569 (= *fr.* 112.23) identifies the Κλεανακτίδαν of line 23 as Myrsilos. However, the authority of the scholiast might be undermined by the next line, where he identifies the (otherwise unattested) (Ἄ)ρχεανακτίδαν as Pittacus, who is otherwise well attested as the son of Hyrras. *POxy* 2733 (= *fr.* 263 *SLG*) reads ] υἱὸς τοῦ Κλεάνορος ὅτι [ / ] ἐξῆς τὸν Μύρσιλον .εγε[. The syntac-

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of this fragment and the significance of Pittacus' marriage alliance with the house of Atreus (from which the Penthilidae claimed descent), see Gagné (2009).

<sup>5</sup> Though we should perhaps be cautious in accepting without question the statement of an allegorizing interpreter of Homer.

tical relationship of the two lines cannot be established, and so we cannot be certain whether the passage confirms or denies the relation of Myrsilos to Kleanor/Kleanax, though if  $\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$  [ conceals some form of  $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega$ , the former might well be the case. However, Strabo 13.2.3 = *fr.* 468 reads  $\text{Ἀλκαῖος... ἔλοιδορεῖτο... Μυρσίλωι καὶ Μελάγχρωι καὶ τοῖς Κλεανακτίδαις καὶ ἄλλοις τισίν}$ , which suggests that Myrsilos was not one of the Kleanaktidae. Wilamowitz deletes the second  $\text{καὶ}$ , making both Melanchros and Myrsilos Kleanaktids. Both the scholiast in *PBerol* and Strabo are presumably drawing on ancient biographical traditions betraying a familiar *horror vacui*, and posit genealogies wherever possible. Beyond this we have nothing but the bare bones of a tyrannical career outlined above, barely attested in the fragments of Alcaeus himself, but mostly fleshed out from scholia and ancient commentaries.

## II. Μυρσίλος

Herodotus 1.7, at the beginning of his account of the kings of Lydia, records that Kandaules, the last Heraclid king of Sardis, was called Myrsilos by the Greeks:  $\text{ἦν Κανδαύλης, τὸν οἱ Ἕλληνες Μυρσίλον ὀνομάζουσι, τύραννος Σαρδίῳν}$ .<sup>6</sup> The Lydian name  $\text{Κανδαύλης}$ , which is only attested in the Hellenized form, is likely to be cognate with Luwian *handawat(i)-*, Lycian *xñtawat(i)-*, and to have entered Lydian as a loan-word from either Luwian or Lycian or from Carian<sup>7</sup> (< \**hantawa-*),<sup>8</sup> all meaning ‘supreme authority, king’.<sup>9</sup> Nicolaus of Damascus (*FGrHist* 90 F 47)<sup>10</sup> records that Kandaules’ name was in fact Sadyattes or Adyattes ( $\text{Σαδυάττης, Ἀδυάττης}$ ), which also reveals a Luwic pedigree; for the formation compare the Hittite royal name Madduwattaš.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, (S)adyattes looks like a doublet of Alyattes ( $\text{Ἀλυάττης}$ ), the grandfather of Sadyattes, with loss of the initial sibilant and interchange of *d/l*.<sup>12</sup> The appearance of the names Ardys, (S)adyattes and Alyattes amongst both the Heraclid and Mermnad rulers of Lydia suggests that we are dealing with a limited stock of dynastic names, further suggested by the lack of a dynastic name attested for Gyges, the usurper of the throne from Kandaules.<sup>13</sup> The most likely explanation for the names of Kandaules is that (S)adyattes

<sup>6</sup> It seems obvious that Herodotus’ words mean that the ruler was called Myrsilos by Greek-speaking peoples (at least the Greeks of Asia Minor), while amongst Lydians he was known as Kandaules. Evans (1985) suggests that Herodotus attests a specific Greek story in which the ruler was named as Myrsilos.

<sup>7</sup> Confirmation for the decipherment and interpretation of Carian as a Luwic language has been provided by the bilingual from Kaunos; see Frei and Marek (1997); Adiego (2007).

<sup>8</sup> See Szemerényi (1969) 980–81; Yakubovich (2010) 94–95; for the respective forms see Melchert (1993) 52; Adiego (2007) 10, 364, 372; Neumann (2007) 128–30. That the word is not an internal development in Lydian is suggested by that language’s loss of PA *h* (Melchert (1994) 361). Yakubovich argues ((2010) 94–95) that the sound change *t > l* required in a borrowing from Luwian or Lycian rules out its being a loan-word from either of these languages, and he suggests the possibility that Kandaules is an adjectival derivative of the Carian form. However, the fluctuation between *tl* and *dl* (see below) in various Anatolian languages renders any definite pronouncement untenable.

<sup>9</sup> For the appearance of Anatolian ‘*h*’ as ‘*k*’ in Greek compare the Greek realization of inherited Anatolian names in Lycian, for example the Stormgod *Tarhu(nt)* as  $\text{Τροκονδας}$ , *hant(a)* as  $\text{Κινδ-}$ ; see Houwink ten Cate

(1961) 117. The connection of the name with ‘Hermes the dog-strangler’ (Hipponax *fr.* 3a *IEG*<sup>2</sup>) is to be rejected, see Szemerényi (1969) 980–81; Yakubovich (2010) 94, n.27. Nor are we to see in it a Carian sacral name (*pace* Pedley (1974) 96–99).

<sup>10</sup> For his account of the Lydian kings Nicolaus seems to have drawn on Xanthus of Lydia (mid-fifth century), and so is of some value. See recently Mehl (2003).

<sup>11</sup> See van den Hout (2003) 305; for the first element *cf.* Hittite *Šadduwaziti*; Laroche (1966) §1138.

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps both names contained the Lydian palatalized lateral, transliterated into Greek with  $\lambda$ ; *cf.* Melchert (1994) 339; compare Lydian *Lamētru-* for Demeter; Melchert (1994) 335. The loss of */s/* is less easy to explain, though we should note that while Lydian preserves initial */s/*, in Lycian */s/ > /h/*, which is then ignored in renderings of Anatolian names in the pslitic Greek dialects of Asia Minor (see Melchert (2008) 49). We might wonder whether the variations in what appears to be the same underlying name might reflect dynastic intermarriage between Lydians and Lycians.

<sup>13</sup> Note however that the name Gyges ( $\text{Γύγης}$ ) is of Luwian origin, related to *hūha-*, ‘grandfather’; *cf.* the Lycian cognate *xuga-* (Zgusta (1964) §987a). See Yakubovich (2010) 95; Melchert (1993) 71 *s.v.* *hūha-*.

was an actual dynastic name, while Kandaules was a throne name or title, equivalent to Caesar in Latin or Labarna/Tabarna in Hittite,<sup>14</sup> which he assumed or was conferred on him when he ascended the throne.

Muršiliš II was one of the more prominent kings of the Hittite New Empire and was heavily involved during his reign with western Anatolia and particularly Arzawa, the territory in western Asia Minor where Lydian Sardis and the Aeolic Greek lands of western Asia Minor were later located.<sup>15</sup> After the collapse of the Hittite Empire at the end of the Bronze Age, we find various Hittite dynastic names used by the Luwian rulers of the Neo-Hittite states in Anatolia and Northern Syria. The name Šuppiluliumaš is attested for rulers at both Hattina and Commagene (Hawkins (1970) 77–78), and owes its popularity to king Šuppiluliumaš I, one of the most successful kings of the New Empire and father of Muršiliš II; from Commagene again we also have the name Ḫattušiliš (Hawkins (1970) 78–79). In central Anatolia, in the area of the Konya plain, two Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions attest a ‘Great King’ Hartapuš, whose father, also styled a ‘Great King’, is given as Muršiliš.<sup>16</sup> As Bryce notes,<sup>17</sup> ‘It would not be surprising if, as in the Syro-Hittite kingdoms, some post-Bronze Age Anatolian kings assumed the names of illustrious members of the Hittite royal dynasty, whether or not they were closely related to them, in order to legitimate their position or enhance their status’.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, the name Muršiliš seems to live on as a toponym in western Asia Minor, in the border region between Lydia and Caria. A *syngeneia* decree of the Hellenistic period found near Mylasa (*ISinuri* 11.11; Zgusta (1984) §866-1) mentions the toponym Μυρσηλοι or Μυρσηλα, where a domain of the Carian god Sinuri was to be found.<sup>19</sup> Another inscription of the second century AD from Magnesia on the Maeander (*IMagnesia* 116.53; Zgusta (1984) §866-2) lists tax revenues from, amongst other places, one Μυρσιλεία. Finally, an edict of Alexander the Great regulating affairs in Priene and Naulochon (*IPriene* 1.9) mentions what seems to be a tribe, restored as Μυρσηλείων.<sup>20</sup> The Μυρσηλείοι of the Priene decree could well be associated with the toponym found in *IMagnesia* 116, as in the former they are mentioned along with the *Pedies*, tribes that inhabited the plain of the Maeander valley, while Μυρσιλεία, which must surely be identified with the modern village of Mursallı,<sup>21</sup> 3.5km east of Magnesia, lies at the top of the Maeander plain some 30km northeast of Priene (close to the Late Bronze Age coastline). The modern place name Mursallı occurs once more in this general area, at a site in the foothills of Mount Tmolos (modern Bozdağ) at the top of the Kaystros plain. The town lies at the head of a pass through the mountains that leads directly to Sardis, some 25km to the northeast. The location of these toponyms, both ancient and modern, on the periphery between Lydia and Caria<sup>22</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Whether the variation between *t/l* in this name can be related to what we see in Lydian is uncertain. See Melchert (2003) 18, arguing for an Anatolian etymology; Soysal (2005) for a derivation from Hattic.

<sup>15</sup> For the Bronze Age geography see Hawkins (1998).

<sup>16</sup> The dynasty might have survived until 730–729 BC; see Hawkins (1988) 108.

<sup>17</sup> Bryce in Melchert (2003) 95, n. 79.

<sup>18</sup> We have other examples of Hittite dynastic names appearing in the first millennium. The Lydian name Μυτταλις (Hipponax *fr.* 42.4 *IEG*<sup>2</sup>; cf. Carian Μότυλος, Zgusta (1964) §976), though ultimately of Luwian origin, probably owes its popularity to the Hittite king Muwattalliš II (Zgusta (1964) §997; further attested elsewhere in Anatolia, cf. Laroche (1966) §837). The Hittite word *atta-*, ‘father’, a common element in Anatolian onomastics (as seen in (S)adyattes, Alyattes,

is probably to be seen in the Hellenistic Greek Attalid dynasty; cf. Yakubovich (2010) 90, n.15. Even the name of the Mysian king Telephos has been compared to the Hittite dynastic name Telepinuš; cf. Gindin (1999) 248.

<sup>19</sup> See Robert, *ISinuri* p. 39. With characteristic perspicacity Robert says ‘[l]e nom est indigène et rappelle aussitôt les rois hittites Muršiliš’.

<sup>20</sup> See Heisserer (1980) 156; Sherwin-White (1985) 81, n. 100.

<sup>21</sup> The ‘Mousalü’ where Cousin and Deschamps (1888) 209 describe the find of a copy of the first half of *IMagnesia* 116.

<sup>22</sup> Carruba (1970) 196 notes, in commenting on a fourth-century BC Lydian inscription found at Aphrodisias, that ‘the boundary between Lydian- and Carian-speakers was a good deal farther south than the political line between Lydia and Caria as it is commonly shown in atlases of the ancient world’.

strongly suggests the use of Muršiliš/Myrsilos as a royal name or title amongst the Luwic- and Greek-speaking peoples of western Asia Minor in the first millennium BC – we might compare the proliferation of the toponym Caesarea during the Roman Empire.

Thus the most obvious explanation for the use of Myrsilos for a Lydian king is that the name Muršiliš came to be used as a throne name and eventually a title in the regions that Muršiliš II brought back under Hittite control.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, it is noteworthy that it was the Greeks who used Myrsilos for Kandaules/(S)adyattes and that it was not a Lydian name or title. This suggests that Μυρσίλος entered into Greek as a throne name or honorific title for a ruler not from Lydian but from the Luwian/proto-Lycian/proto-Carian groups that the Greeks encountered in western Asia Minor from the Bronze Age on, which in turn entails it entering the dialects that came into contact with these peoples, namely East Ionic and Aeolic. Thus the name that Kandaules was known by amongst the Greeks is in essence a calque on his Lydian title. Both simply meant ‘king’.<sup>24</sup>

### III. Alcaeus *fr.* 383

Having strayed some way from Lesbos, we return to Alcaeus and find one fragment which, in the light of the preceding discussion, sheds further light on Myrsilos and contemporary politics at Mytilene. The text in question is Alcaeus *fr.* 383:

ἦρ' ἔτι Δινομένην τῶι τ' Ὑρραδῆωι  
τᾶρμενα λάμπρα κέοντ' ἐν Μυρσιλήωι;

1 τ' Ὑρραδῆωι Seidler : τ' Ὑρρακῆωι Turnebus : τῶ τυρρακῆω codd. : fort. recte τ' Ὑρραδάωι 2 Μυρσιλήωι Seidler : μυρσινῆωι cod. H : μυρσινῆω cod. I : μυρσίνωι cod. A (i ex η corr. m.<sup>1</sup>)

Do the weapons<sup>25</sup> of Dinnomenes, the Hyrradean man, still lie shining in the Myrsileion?

Seidler's first conjecture is almost certain; it is not however a patronymic adjective in the strict sense, ‘the son of Hyrras’,<sup>26</sup> but a relational adjective agreeing with Δινομένην. Built not on the

<sup>23</sup> A further question is the relation of the name Μυρσίλος to Μυρτίλος. While it is possible that the latter is derived from μύρτος and is unconnected with Μυρσίλος, it seems more reasonable to assume that we have two variants of the same name and that both are descended from Hittite Muršiliš (thus already Hall (1909)), Μυρτίλος having been subsequently formed by popular etymology on analogy with μύρτος. It has also been noted that the most famous Μυρτίλος we know was the charioteer of Oenomaus, who thus has a connection to Anatolia through the Pelops legend; see Bremmer (2008) 317, n. 97; Mason (2008) 60, who also adduces Scholia Eur. *Or.* 990, which makes Oenomaus a king of Lesbos, thus placing his charioteer firmly in an east Aegean/west Anatolian context.

<sup>24</sup> For the development personal name > throne name > title seen in the stages of Muršiliš/Myrsilos from Hittite to Greek we can again compare Caesar, the cognomen of Gaius Julius Caesar, > Caesar as throne name (the emperor Claudius was the first to assume the name upon accession to the throne) > title, as in German Kaiser, Russian Czar or the title Kayser-i-Rûm in Ottoman Turkish, assumed by Mehmet II after the conquest of Constantinople.

<sup>25</sup> A rare word, with meanings ranging from a ship's tackle, to ‘equipment’, to food; see Chantraine *s.v.* ἀραρίσκω.

<sup>26</sup> The patronymic for the first declension noun Ὑρρας is Ὑρραος, as attested at *fr.* 129.13. A further complication is caused by the form Ὑρράδιος, first found at Callimachus *Ep.* 1.2 Pf., and then only in lexica and other late sources (for example, Hesychius, Eusebius, Scholia Dion. Thrax, Suidas, all collected in *fr.* 469). The form is not attested in Alcaeus, though Ὑρράδιδιον has been conjectured at *fr.* 298.47 for the papyrus' ὠρραδον.[ (other articulations are possible; the form could not be a diminutive, as we would expect \*Ὑρράιδιος and the metre at 298. 47 requires –υυ–). Ὑρράδιος looks suspiciously un-Lesbian, since (a) we would not expect a patronymic in -ιος to be built on a form in -(i)δας, as this in itself would already be a patronymic (though see next note), and (b) Aeolic would either retain the -α of the stem and form an adjective in -ιος (with subsequent consonantalization and omission of antevocalic ι) or eliminate the -α and use a termination in -ειος (*cf.* Morpurgo Davies (1968), with specific reference to Thessalian). It might be the case that at a later point

noun Ὑρρας (Dinnomenes was not, we assume, a son of Hyrras) but on a patronymic Ὑρράδας, Ὑρράδης would mean ‘the man of the son of Hyrras’.<sup>27</sup> For the formation and sense we can compare Βρασιδῆοι στρατιῶται, ‘Brasidas’ soldiers’, at Thucydides 5.67.1.<sup>28</sup> Dinnomenes is mentioned in only one other place in Alcaeus, *fr.* 376 ἐκ δὲ ποτήριον πῶνησις Δινομένης(ι) παρίσδων, which places him in the context of the aristocratic *hetaireia* we see elsewhere in Alcaeus’ poetry; indeed, given the association between Dinnomenes and Pittacus implied in *fr.* 383, *fr.* 376 might well be addressed directly to Pittacus (thus Voigt *ad loc.*). This interpretation, along with the present passage, would identify Dinnomenes as prominent in the faction that ascended to power at Mytilene under Pittacus.

The second conjecture is inevitable, ‘in the Myrsileion’. The word has obviously been corrupted on analogy with the likes of πρυτανεῖον. Now, ousted or slain tyrants do not usually have buildings named after them.<sup>29</sup> There is no parallel at this period for the worship of historical figures that we see beginning in earnest in the fifth century, and we would have to look to the fourth century, in, for example, the Archilochion on Paros or the Philippeion at Olympia, for a comparable example of a dedication to a historical person.<sup>30</sup> Aside from shrines and temples, formations in -ιον, -εῖον (Lesbian -ηον) are found mainly in buildings such as the πρυτανεῖον, where the πρύτανις<sup>31</sup> resided, or indeed the βασιλεῖον, where the βασιλεύς resided. The only explanation for a Μυρσιλήιον at Mytilene is that it was where the Μύρσιλος resided, i.e. the ruler or king.

This is made more likely by the obvious import of the passage. *Fr.* 383 is a rhetorical question<sup>32</sup> perhaps addressed to the *damos*, and obviously refers to the acquisition and/or retention of power by Pittacus, which was perhaps tinged with more violence than Aristotle or other later sources acknowledge. We are told that Pittacus was elected by the *damos* at Mytilene to quell the factional violence that had erupted after the fall of the Pentilidae and to act against the faction led by Alcaeus and Antimenidas.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Aristotle (*Pol.* 1285a = *fr.* 470) tells us that Pittacus was elected as αἰσυμνήτης for a limited period of time. ἔτι, ‘still’, might

first declension Ὑρρας was reinterpreted as a third declension with a genitive \*Ὑρραδος, on which an -ιος patronymic was formed (a point suggested by one of the *JHS* readers). It would then appear that the form was reinterpreted as a second declension noun; *cf.* Diog. Laert. 1.74 Πιττακὸς Ὑρραδίου Μυτιληναῖος. *Cf.* also Eustathius 13.45f Ὑρρας κύριον Αἰολικόν... ἀφ’ οὗ πατρωνυμικὸν Ὑρράδης, ὅπερ οἱ Αἰολεῖς Ὑρράδιος λέγουσι.

<sup>27</sup>The form might more properly be \*Ὑρράδαος (-α + ἰος, with subsequent loss of antevocalic ι). -(ι)δας was for the most part not productive as a patronymic suffix in the historical period, though it is attested in syllabic Cypriot, for example *SEG* 20.248 *o-na-sa-to a-ra-wa-ti-ta-u* = Ὀνάσα(ν)το(ς) Ἀρφατίδου, ‘of Onasas, son of Arwatos’. See further examples cited by Keurentjes (1997) 385–86. In Homer the suffix survives as one of a number of ways to form the patronymic, notably as Πριαμίδης used of Hector, and we might suspect that it is used here in a tone of mock-epic solemnity (which might account for -ηωι in place of -αωι) in an already indignant rhetorical question. For other interpretations see the excellent note of Liberman (1999) 2.247–48.

<sup>28</sup> See Hornblower *ad loc.*; Fraser (2009) 35–53 notes that the use of ‘ktetic’ adjectives is a particular feature of post-Classical Greek. However, the widespread use of relational adjectives in place of the

genitive of possession in all branches of Aeolic makes such a ktetic use in Alcaeus in no way problematic.

<sup>29</sup> See the comments of R. Laqueur, *RE* 16.1147 s.v. Myrsilos. Liberman (1999) 2.248 accepts the reading Μυρσιλήωι, but thinks rather of a *heroön*, on the analogy (I presume) of the sacred precinct dedicated by Pittacus at Diog. Laert. 1.75. It should be noted however that what Diogenes attests is not a *heroön* dedicated to Pittacus, a Πιττακεῖον, but that the dedication made by Pittacus was in Diogenes’ time called ‘Pittakean’, ἥτις νῦν Πιττάκειος καλεῖται.

<sup>30</sup> In the Archaic period we do find cultic rites for the recently dead, see Kurtz and Boardman (1971) 200–17 and *cf.* 297–302. This is however very different from worship with *heroön* and *temenos* such as we have for Archilochus and Philip.

<sup>31</sup> Note that this word, which in early Greek means simply ‘ruler, lord’, is used as a personal name for a Lycian at *Il.* 5.678. Heubeck (1961) 67–68 considers it to be a loan-word from Anatolian. Perhaps here we have a parallel case for personal name > title from Anatolian to Greek. However, an actual Anatolian source for πρύτανις has yet to be identified, though, for an attempt, see Szemerényi (1974) 154.

<sup>32</sup> Further suggested by the use of ‘epic τε’ in line 1, bringing to the audience’s attention something which is already well known to them.

<sup>33</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1285a = *fr.* 470; Strabo 13.2.3 = *fr.* 468.

indicate that Pittacus had maintained power longer than was necessary and longer than the *damos* that elected him had expected. Secondly, the reference to the Myrsileion might be pointed. If Pittacus' election as αἰσυμνήτης had been for a limited period, then perhaps the office he held was not intended to come with all the trappings of king or tyrant<sup>34</sup> – by associating the rule of Pittacus with the hall of an ancestral line of kings, Alcaeus assimilates him to the *ancien régime* which had been overthrown by the same *damos* who later elected him.

Pittacus is the first ruler in Greek history to be referred to as τύραννος;<sup>35</sup> *fr.* 348 describes the election of Pittacus at Mytilene:

τὸν κακοπατρίδα(ν)  
Φίττακον πόλιος τὰς ἀχόλω καὶ βαρυδαίμονος  
ἔστάσαντο τύραννον, μέγ' ἐπαίνεντες ἄλλεες

They established Pittacus the base-born as tyrant of the cowardly and ill-stared city, all praising him greatly.

At *fr.* 75.12–13 we again find the association of Pittacus the 'base-born' with the concept of tyranny: κακοπάτριδι / τυραννεύ-. The word τύραννος is, once again, probably of Luwian origin, from Hieroglyphic Luwian /*tarwana/i-*, 'ruler'.<sup>36</sup> The title is used by several Neo-Hittite rulers in the Iron Age,<sup>37</sup> and might well have entered Greek not directly from Luwian, but via Lydian.<sup>38</sup> There is still not a unified consensus as to the range of meaning of τύραννος and its cognates in the Archaic period; the concept is not in itself pejorative, since Alcaeus seems to use the word for the Dioscuri (*fr.* 34 A. 6). It does however seem to convey the sense of absolute power (implicit in Archilochus *fr.* 19, which is a priamel of ultimate attainments), and thus could well be pejorative when applied to persons such as Pittacus who, according to later sources, were elected within a broader constitutional framework, and for a limited period of time.

#### IV. Conclusions

We know next to nothing about the history and society of Lesbos in the Archaic period; aside from the few details that are provided by the poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus and their ancient commentators, we have a few passages in Aristotle, Strabo and other ancient authors, which however almost certainly derive from the Lesbian poets themselves. Our literary sources portray Lesbos as a thoroughly Hellenized society that for generations had been ruled by the Pentilidae. The archaeological record paints a completely different picture. Two recent studies<sup>39</sup> of the archaeological record of Lesbos in particular and the entire Aeolic-speaking area of the North-east Aegean suggest a high degree of continuity from the Late Bronze Age into the Archaic period, revealing on Lesbos a society whose cultural connections with Anatolia and the East were much stronger than those with the Greek mainland or even the other east Aegean islands; Spencer sums up the situation:

<sup>34</sup> The powers of αἰσυμνήτης varied according to time and place, and we have no way of knowing how far-reaching they were at Mytilene at this period; see Page (1955) 239.

<sup>35</sup> The *Homeric Hymn to Ares*, cited as perhaps the first occurrence of the word in some older scholarship (for example LSJ *s.v.*), postdates Archilochus and Alcaeus by roughly 1,000 years; see West (1970).

<sup>36</sup> Heubeck (1961) 68–70; Giusfredi (2009); for the problematic relationship of Luwian /*tarwana/i-*, Greek τύραννος, and Ugaritic and Hebrew *srn*, see also Yakubovich (2002) 111–12; (2010) 147. It is unclear whether the HLuwian /*tarwana/i-* is in any way related

to CLuwian (Glossenkeil-word) *tarrawa/i-*.

<sup>37</sup> For example, by Yaririš at Carchemish and Tarḫunazaš of the BULGARMADEN inscription; see Hawkins (1979); also (1970) 81–82.

<sup>38</sup> Perhaps it is significant that the first attestation of the root, in the cognate τυραννίς, occurs in a context along with the Lydian king Gyges; Archilochus *fr.* 19.1–3 *IEG*<sup>2</sup> οὐ μοι τὰ Γύγεω τοῦ πολυχρύσου μέλει, / οὐδ' εἰλέ πώ με ζῆλος, οὐδ' ἀγαίομαι / Θεῶν ἔργα, μεγάλης δ' οὐκ ἔρέω τυραννίδος.

<sup>39</sup> Spencer (1995); Rose (2008); see also Parker (2008).

...the literary sources for the archaic period do indeed reveal Lesbos to be a flourishing island in the East Aegean with an Aeolian Greek element in the population and culture, but it is an element which one would hardly have believed existed at all if the literary sources had not survived and one was making a judgement from the material record alone ((1995) 305).

The survival of the name *Muršiliš* amongst Neo-Hittite states in the Iron Age, the presence of various toponyms in *Mursil-* in western Asia Minor, the use of *Myrsilos* as a name for *Kandaules* by Greeks and the existence of a ‘*Myrsileion*’ in Mytilene all combine to suggest that the dynastic Hittite name *Muršiliš* passed into Greek via the Luwic-speaking inhabitants of the area as a royal name or title. We are still left with the question of who *Myrsilos* at Mytilene was. We can of course give no definitive answer, but two different suggestions might be offered.

As was noted above, the rulers of various Neo-Hittite states adopted Hittite dynastic names to legitimate their position, and there is no reason not to suppose that this occurred on Iron Age Lesbos. Thus we might be dealing with an indigenous royal house on Lesbos, a Luwic ‘*Myrsilidae*’ that had coexisted alongside an Aeolic *Penthilidae*. In this scenario we should not imagine that each had remained culturally distinct; the archaeological record again indicates almost seamless cultural integration of the Greek and non-Greek population on Lesbos, including, for example, the worship of Greek and Anatolian deities in the same temple precincts.<sup>40</sup> When the *Penthilidae* were overthrown, perhaps one of the various factions that ascended to overall power at Mytilene was led by *Myrsilos*, an heir to the eponymous ancestor of an indigenous noble family on Lesbos.

A second scenario might be envisaged. There was no such person as *Myrsilos*, but rather the name was simply a title, such as that used by the Greeks in Herodotus for *Kandaules*. This would entail that there was no one named *Myrsilos* involved in Mytilene at the time, but rather two *Myrsiloi*, namely *Melanchros* and *Pittacus*, both of whom were referred to by *Alcaeus* as *Myrsilos* once they had ascended to power. It would then be easy to see how the later tradition fell into confusion and posited a historical *Myrsilos* between *Melanchros* and *Pittacus*. We noted above that two sources attest that *Myrsilos* was a descendent of one *Kleanax*,<sup>41</sup> while a third suggests either that he was not a *Kleanaktid* or that both he and *Melanchros* were *Kleanaktidae*.<sup>42</sup> Perhaps the confusion arose due to the use of the patronymic for the same person under two different names. Furthermore, this hypothesis would dispel the somewhat suspicious statement that *Pittacus*, along with *Alcaeus*’ brothers, overthrew *Melanchros*, only to see *Myrsilos*, instead of *Pittacus*, ascend to power (*fr.* 469). Moreover, we are told that *Myrsilos* was not easily despatched, but was exiled and then returned to Mytilene and to power (*POxy* 2306 col. i = *fr.* 305a). It is of course completely possible that a tyrant named *Myrsilos* was exiled and then returned to power (a career trajectory seen many times throughout Greek history); at the same time, a tradition of two separate periods of rule might be due to references in *Alcaeus* to two distinct rulers called *Myrsilos*, namely *Melanchros* and *Pittacus*.

Following this scenario we might briefly summarize the dynastic strife in Mytilene as follows. At some point, and perhaps immediately following the fall of the *Penthilidae*, *Melanchros* assumes the position of tyrant. *Pittacus* marries into the family of the *Penthilidae* (*fr.* 70.6), thus gaining greater political capital. Perhaps due to *Pittacus*’ ascendancy as a result of this marriage, *Melanchros* (i.e. *Myrsilos*) enters into an alliance with *Pittacus* (*fr.* 70.7). At some point, either before or during this arrangement, *Pittacus* conspires with *Alcaeus*’ brothers to overthrow *Melanchros*, which is promptly done. *Melanchros*’ death is celebrated in song by *Alcaeus* (*fr.* 332). However, the result of *Pittacus*’ acquisition of power is not what *Alcaeus* might have imagined, with the result that *Pittacus*, like *Melanchros* before him, becomes an object of attack in *Alcaeus*’ poetry, sometimes addressed or referred to as *Myrsilos*.

<sup>40</sup> See Spencer (1995) 298.

<sup>41</sup> Or perhaps *Kleanor*, cf. *POxy* 2733 (= *fr.* 263 *SLG*) cited above.

<sup>42</sup> Depending on whether we accept *Wilamowitz*’ emendation, see above.

I conclude with two further observations on Alcaeus *fr.* 383, which both underscore the ‘Easternness’ of the fragment and Lesbian poetry generally.<sup>43</sup> The first involves the homeoteleuton in Ὑρραδῆωι/Μυρσιλήωι. Vowel assonance and other aural effects are certainly not uncommon in Greek poetry. However, vowel assonance at line-end is a defining characteristic of Lydian verse.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the metre of *fr.* 383 is a 12-syllable combination of a hemiepes and penthemimer, attested only here in Lesbian poetry. Likewise, a 12-syllable line (though exhibiting more of an anapaestic rhythm) is by far the most common form for Lydian verse.<sup>45</sup> Given the Anatolian antecedents of the office of *tyrannos* that Alcaeus associates Pittacus with, as well as the title ‘Myrsilos’ that possibly went with it, it is tempting to see Alcaeus here employing a poetic form (vowel assonance and a 12-syllable line) that further emphasizes the eastern connections of power as it was wielded on Lesbos at the turn of the sixth century BC.

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### Abbreviations

- IEG*<sup>2</sup> = M.L. West (ed.) (1989–1992) *Iambi et Elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum Cantati* (2nd edition) (Oxford)
- IMagnesia* = O. Kern (ed.) (1900) *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander* (Berlin)
- IPriene* = F.F. Hiller von Gaertringen (ed.) (1906) *Inschriften von Priene* (Berlin)
- ISinuri* = L. Robert (ed.) (1945) *Le sanctuaire de Sinuri près de Mylasa i, Les inscriptions grecques* (Paris)
- L-P = E. Lobel and D.L. Page (eds) (1955) *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta* (Oxford)
- PMG* = D.L. Page (ed.) (1962) *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford)
- SEG* = (1923–) *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Leiden and Amsterdam)
- SLG* = D.L. Page (ed.) (1974) *Supplementum Lyricis Graecis* (Oxford)
- Voigt = A.-M. Voigt (ed.) (1971) *Sappho et Alcaeus* (Amsterdam)

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<sup>43</sup> Parallels between Lesbian and west Anatolian poetry and culture have been noted in the past; see, for example, Watkins (2007). Specifically Lydian elements in Greek poetic culture are suggested by, *inter alia*, the Lydian, Mixolydian and (perhaps) Phrygian modes in Greek music. The Phrygian mode is mentioned already in Stesichorus (*fr.* 212 *PMG*), while Aristoxenus (*fr.* 81

Wehrli = [Plut.] *De Musica* 1136e) attests the use of the Mixolydian mode in Sappho (= *fr.* 246 Voigt); see further West (1992) 177–84; Franklin (2008).

<sup>44</sup> For example, West (2007) 57.

<sup>45</sup> See Eichner (1993) 114–27. Bachvarova (2004) has offered a new analysis of Lydian verse along accent-counting, rather than syllable-counting, principles.

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