



Miltiades of Cimon

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Introduction

Miltiades, son of Cimon Coalemos, was a member of a side branch of the aristocratic Philaid clan. According to the account of Herodotus (who is the most important source we have left on this figure), after his older brother Stesagoras had been killed by the Lampsacenes, Miltiades took over power of the Thracian Chersonese, which had been conquered, in turn, by his uncle Miltiades the Elder, son of Cypselus and maternal stepbrother of Cimon Coalemos. Miltiades the Elder, who had possibly been forced to leave Athens under pressure from the tyrant Peisistratos, moved to the Thracian Chersonese and became tyrant there. Later on, since he was childless, he adopted his own nephew Stesagoras and brought him up. Finally, after the unexpected death of Stesagoras, leadership of the Chersonese, as mentioned, passed to his younger brother Miltiades. He moved there and probably stayed a long time, marrying the Thracian princess Hegesipyle, confronting the local populations and the Scythians, and managing to capture the islands of Lemnos and Imbros. He took part in the campaign in Scythia of Darius I, king of Persia, but on that occasion, according to Herodotus, he advised the other Ionian tyrants to destroy the bridge on the Danube and free Ionia, as the Scythians advised. On the eve of the first Persian invasion of Greece, he returned to his homeland, where he was put on trial for his tyrannical rule in the Chersonese. He escaped conviction and was appointed a general by the people, making a decisive contribution to the safety of Athens by encouraging his fellow citizens and the polemarch Callimachus to attack the enemy on the plain of Marathon, where the Athenians defeated the Persian troops. He achieved eternal glory and great credibility among his fellow citizens, who entrusted him the following year with a fleet of seventy ships to lead a mysterious mission in the Aegean Sea, in particular to the island of Paros, which was guilty of having sided with the Persians during the Battle of Marathon. Wounded in the leg during the siege operation at Paros, he returned to Athens without having achieved any result; therefore he was put on trial by Xanthippus, the father of Pericles, who accused him of deceiving the Athenians. He was condemned, possibly to death initially, but then to a fine of fifty talents, which was later paid by his son Cimon, since Miltiades died of gangrene.

General Overviews

There are no early-21st-century monographs on the figure and exploits of Miltiades, son of Cimon, but individual facts or specific aspects of his life and career have been widely examined in a number of studies. Two general monographs should be mentioned, both rather dated: Berve 1937 and Kinzl 1968, the latter a dissertation. Wade Gery 1951 is still an important point of reference: although it is a brief article, it touches on the most-important points of the career of Miltiades and provides stimulating reflections and ideas for research that are still relevant in the early 21st century. Hammond 1956 offers a reconstruction of moments and aspects of the Philaid history, but the author's reconstruction has not been totally followed up by researchers.

Berve, H. 1937. *Miltiades: Studien zur Geschichte des Mannes und seiner Zeit*. Hermes Einzelschriften 2. Berlin: Weidmann.

This author, who examines the history of the Philaids from 560 to 489 BCE, describes Miltiades as a gentleman, with princely features, and a warlord whose interests lay in acting on a personal level, decidedly tyrannical and independent from the polis of Athens. The neohumanistic viewpoint of Berve does not meet with current general consensus.

Funke, P. 1999. Miltiades. In *Große Gestalten der griechischen Antike: 58 historische Portraits von Homer bis Kleopatra*. Edited by K. Brodersen, 301–310. Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck.

In the section titled *Politik*, devoted to the classical and postclassical age, a basic picture is given of the main ventures carried out by Miltiades, starting from his archonship down to his conviction in the aftermath of the expedition to Paros. The role played by his son, Cimon, in glorifying the heroism of his father is well highlighted.

Hammond, N. G. L. 1956. The Philaids and the Chersonese I: The three bearers of the name “Miltiades.” *Classical Quarterly* 6.3–4: 113–129.

The author offers a reconstruction of moments and aspects of the Philaid history and the hypothesis on the existence of three individuals named Miltiades, with close links between them (father, son, and nephew). Also, he analyzes the *Life of Miltiades* by Cornelius Nepos, making comparison with the tradition of Herodotus, which in his opinion is not a benchmark text. The hypothesis of the existence of three individuals named Miltiades has not been widely accepted by scholars.

Kinzl, K. 1968. Miltiades-Forschungen. Dissertationen der Universität Wien. Vienna: Verlag Notring.

This is a dissertation, debated at the University of Vienna, under the guidance of Fritz Schachermeyr. It is divided into two parts: the first is dedicated to historical research (the genealogy of the Philaids, the Scythian invasion, the conquest of Lemnos, Miltiades' advice on the bridge of boats over the Danube), and the second is a criticism of the sources (especially the Nepos biography of Miltiades) and philological analysis (especially exam of Herodotus, Book 6, chapter 40).

Obst, E. 1932. s.v. Miltiades (2). In *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Vol. XV.2, *Met–Molaris lapis*. Edited by G. Wissowa, col. 1681–1705. Stuttgart: Metzler.

Even though it is dated, the extensive item written on Miltiades (2) by Obst for *Real-Encyclopädie* continues to prove helpful, standing out because of its clear explanation and thoroughness of the topics dealt with, in chronological order.

Stahl, M. 1987. *Aristokraten und Tyrannen im archaischen Athen: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung, zur Sozialstruktur und zur Entstehung des Staates*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Paragraph 1 of chapter II of this volume is devoted to “The Miltiades Histories,” where especially the role that was assumed by the Philaid during his experience in the Chersonese comes under discussion, through the examination of some of the chapters of Book 6 of Herodotus.

Wade Gery, H. T. 1951. Miltiades. *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 71:212–221.

A brief but intense study that deals with some of the main problems of the history of Miltiades: the Olympic victories and the death of his father, Cimon Coalemos; the Scythian campaign of Darius; Book 6, chapter 40 of Herodotus; Miltiades' conquest of Lemnos; the relations between Hippias and Miltiades; the chronology of the life of Miltiades. The largest part of the hypotheses put forward by Wade Gery forms the basis of later studies.

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