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Multiple Gentile Affiliation and the Athenian Revolution of 103/2 BCE

By the end of the second century BCE, several Athenians held multiple gentile memberships. A prior explanation of adoption cannot suffice, as the stemmata of all known multiple gentile members from the second and first centuries BCE do not show any cases of adoption. Even matrilineal inheritance of gentile affiliation, examples of which date as early as mid-third century BCE, cannot alone explain this phenomenon's sudden appearance and growing trend.

One of the earliest examples of multiple gentile membership comes from a wealthy family, whose members held multiple political offices, Medeios II Medeiou of Piraeus (member of the Eteoboutadai and Eumolpidai). He, along with Serapion of Melite and Diodorus of Halai Aixonides, all multiple office holders whose descendants held multiple gentile affiliations, led the oligarchic revolution of 103/2 that saw the abolishment of lot for election, the judicial oversight of officials' accounting, and the restriction of office holding to one year only. As the second century came to a close the wealthy assumed more and more the financial costs of political offices and religious functions. Medeios and company finally gained control of a state they sponsored out of personal pockets.

This revolution cannot explain the multiple gentile affiliation phenomenon, because the earliest examples preceded the political changes, although probably by no more than one generation. The sole exception to this assertion, a third-century BCE Eteoboutad was a member of the Mesogeioi, rests upon the questionable identification of this cult association as a *genos*. Patrilineal inheritance of gentile membership continued as well, so we cannot say for certain that priesthods became divorced from gentilician administration. Perhaps mirroring the second-century political sphere maybe several *gene* enfranchised those Athenians willing to assume the expenditures of religious offices and functions. Such an explanation might explain how the priesthods of Poseidon Erechtheus and Athena Polias, customarily occupied by members from two separate Eteoboutad branches, were filled by a brother and sister, Medeios II Medeiou and Phillipe Medeiou of Piraeus. If we cannot explain sufficiently the reasons for the change, at least we can acknowledge the fact that a change regarding gentile admission must have occurred sometime in the later half of the second century BCE. Consequently, our understanding of the Hellenistic Athenian *gene* must change. For example, a family's gentile membership cannot be guaranteed by working back in time through a stemma built up from a known member dated after the second century BCE. Our knowledge of *gennetai* of the Classical era is now even more limited.