

**Julia L. SHEAR**

**Konon and the Politics of Commemoration in the Athenian Agora**

The Athenian Agora was well-known in antiquity as a location for honorary statues of good generals and the Tyrannicides Harmodios and Aristogeiton (Lykourg., *Leok.* 51) and Pausanias included large numbers of such figures in his description of the marketplace. In the fifth century B.C., however, the only honorary statues in the Agora were the Tyrannicides. After the Battle of Knidos in 394 B.C., they were joined by honorary bronze statues of Konon and Euagoras of Cypriot Salamis (Dem. 20.70; Isok. 9.57). This decision to set up these new images marks a significant change in the patterns of commemoration in the Agora and it eventually led to the marketplace full of statues which Pausanias describes. Despite the importance of this development, scholars have devoted very little attention to Konon's and Euagoras' images. As I show in this paper, Konon and Euagoras were identified as destroyers of tyrants and saviours of the city. For the Athenians, they served as models of the proper behaviour exactly parallel to the Tyrannicides and their statues indicated that individuals who followed their lead and saved the city by their great military deeds would continue to be given signal honours in the Agora.

Konon's status in Athens after the Battle of Knidos was evidently clear to his contemporaries: according to Demosthenes, they voted him the statue because his defeat of the Spartans had ended no small tyranny and the decree honouring him specified that he had brought freedom to the Athenian allies (Dem. 20.69-70). Konon, therefore, was a tyrannicide and a bringer of freedom. These roles were also emphasised by the location of the honorary statue next to the image of Zeus Soter and in front of the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios (Isok. 9.57; Paus. 1.3.2). The human and divine saviours and bringers of freedom were, therefore, juxtaposed. Since the Agora was the centre of the rule of the democratic city, Konon's credentials as a democrat were also stressed by the setting. Euagoras' statue was erected next to Konon's so that the king was also identified as a saviour and bringer of freedom, as he also was in the public announcement of his honours and in Isokrates' encomium of him (Isok. 9.56, 68; *SEG* XXIX 86.16-17).

In the years immediately after 394, the only commemorative statues in the Agora were the figures of the Tyrannicides and of Konon and Euagoras. The absence of other monuments reinforced the connections between these two groups and it emphasised Konon's and Euagoras' roles as saviours. They had imitated the earlier Tyrannicides and subsequently were suitably honoured. The decision to erect the new bronze statues marks a radical break with previous practices: Harmodios and Aristogeiton were dead when their statues were erected and subsequent fifth-century memorials in the Stoa Poikile commemorated military successes achieved by the whole city and not by an individual. In 394, however, the achievements of individual living generals were celebrated and they were likened to the Tyrannicides. They were saviours because they had won important military victories and not because they had actually killed a 'tyrant'. Blurring this distinction enabled the Athenians to honour later generals, such as Iphikrates, Chabrias, and Timotheos, for their military deeds with bronze statues set up in the Agora (e.g. Aischin. 3.243) because they, too, had 'saved' the city with their victories. These new

figures reinforced the existing idea that proper democratic Athenians should model themselves on the Tyrannicides and their imitators and, when they had achieved great deeds, they, too, would similarly be honoured in the Agora.