

DEPICTING DEMOCRACY: AN EXPLORATION OF ART AND TEXT IN THE LAW OF EUKRATES*

Abstract: This paper examines the range of symbolic associations surrounding the relief sculpture (Democracy crowning the Athenian people) that accompanied the law proposed by Eukrates against the establishment of tyranny. It examines some of the investments made in it by various communities and individuals. The role of personifications in political allegory is examined. This analysis shows both the potency of personifying representations of the Athenian people and the interpretative complexities that they create.

INTRODUCTION: LAW IN A COLD CLIMATE

EVEN before the law of Eukrates could tell us anything about Athens, it was telling us about ourselves. Few readers who settled down to the *New York Times* of 26 May 1952 would have found it a comforting experience. Written during the fever of the Cold War, the journal delights in recounting a nightmarish vision of Communist incursions both at home and abroad. The pages are full of fanatical North Korean Communists, a power-mad Moscow bent on dominating Germany, the infiltration of Reds into Montreal's textile unions, and Maoist purges of China's educators. Inside the paper, everyone from the US Commissioner for Displaced Persons (who demands the 'downfall of the communist empire and the restoration of human freedom to enslaved peoples') to the Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church ('If you don't wake up, clean out the Reds from your churches, schools, and labour unions, and unite with other free countries to put an end to the danger that menaces all free nations, America may be next!') knew that the free world was under threat. Politicians were happy to fuel the paranoia. Governor Taft from Ohio clearly saw that there was work to do. In an advertisement in support of his presidential nomination, one of his key election pledges was to 'uproot subversive and disloyal influences in the government'.¹

Amidst all this cause for panic, two articles may have provided some comfort. The first one (on p. 11) reports the good news that atomic testing in Nevada has produced the largest, brightest explosion yet. The second reassures America (on p. 25) that it is not alone in having to fight for democracy against external forces. Democracy has always been under threat, and has always needed to be protected by the most severe measures. In an article headed 'Athenians fought dictator menace' we find the first official publication of the monument containing the law of Eukrates. The paper reports the discovery in the Agora of an Athenian law against the establishment of tyranny – a law that specified (to quote the paper) 'that anybody who killed a would-be dictator shall be considered guiltless'. Intriguingly that is not quite what the law provides. The law has two main clauses.² The first gives immunity from prosecution to the killers of anybody who has overthrown democracy (ll. 7-11). It is more concerned with actual tyrants than potential ones. The second clause prohibits meetings of the Areopagus during an anti-democratic *coup* (ll. 11-16). Failure to abide by this restriction will result in the forfeiture of citizenship and property (ll. 16-22).

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¹ *NYT* 26 May 1952: front page (Korea, Moscow), p. 2 (China), p. 4 (Commissioner for Displaced Persons), p. 15 (Gov. Taft), p. 20 (Ukrainian Archbishop). In this, the *New York Times* was not unusual. On American media culture during the Cold War, see Boyer (1985); Henriksen (1997); Schwartz (1998) and Yoder (1995).

² For the text of the inscription, see *SEG* 12.87.

However, the last thing that is important here is pedantic accuracy. Namely, the game that the *New York Times* is playing is the one of historical continuity ('a perennial menace – dictatorship'). The picture that accompanied the article tells the story – Eugene Vanderpool obediently taking notes for Western culture (PLATE 1a). Here Classical Greece's hard-line stance against the opponents of democracy gives authority to the most draconian (the usage is deliberate) of anti-Communist purges.³

We can sense this repackaging in the newspaper's claim that 'Excavators hail find as one of the most interesting in the course of 17 seasons' research'. In fact, if you read the reports in the scholarly press, their response is much more muted. This piece is only one of a number of significant finds during the 1952 season. Epigraphically, it had to contend with the discovery of a large fragment from the monument to the Argives who fell at Tanagra, an inscription made far more attractive to scholars by its ability to provide both a footnote to Thucydides and an opportunity to reconstruct a verse epigram.⁴ More interest that year seems to have been generated by Pritchett's work on the fragments of the Attic Stelai.⁵

This difference in the discussion between the pages of the *New York Times* and of *Hesperia* is not merely a function of the expectations of audience and genre. It is equally a function of the monumentality of this inscription. Monuments are all about claims to register. We have to decide how seriously we wish to take them. In the gap between finding our own past and finding just another inscription to catalogue, there exists a number of reading positions. This article is written as a response to the challenge of these reading positions. It attempts to unearth the various investments that individuals and communities had in this monument. It begins with reception because reception highlights the moment, the point and trauma, of first contact.

CHAIRESTRATOS' COMMISSION: ON PLACING DOCUMENTARY RELIEFS

According to the monument itself (ἀναγράψαι ... τὸν γραμματέα τῆς βουλῆς), when we begin to think about investment in this text, we need to start with the secretary, Chairestratos, son of Ameinias of the deme of Acharnai. Apart from these few details (patronymic and demotic), we know almost nothing about him. Fate was kind to him in the lottery for position of grammateus in 337/6 (and hence making him responsible for the publication of this decree⁶), but cruel in removing almost every other record of his existence. In many ways, he is typical of the 'faceless ciphers' that occupy the position of secretary. Such erasure of identity is an important conceit of epigraphic documents. It is crucial that ownership ultimately rest with the community. This is particularly the case with this decree which, as we shall see, makes particular claims about community identity and the discourse that binds it together. Nevertheless, the form that the publication of a decree took was not decided entirely by blindly following precedent. The details of the commission required a number of complex decisions relying on personal judgement. In the negotiation of the various contingencies, it is tempting to see glimpses of a mind that was profoundly aware of the complexities of democratic ideology, the difficulties of the relationship between art and text, and the possibilities for epigraphic records, not merely to record decisions, but also to create meanings and significance.

³ The relationship between classical culture and Cold War politics has received its most extensive treatment in the area of film studies. Here we see a complicated cultural politics of authority and resistance as classical culture is invoked both to endorse a Western capitalist ethos and oppose it. On this, see Wyke (1997) 60-72; Babington and Evans (1993) 191-2; and Wood (1975) 183-4. For more direct interactions between classics and Cold War politics, see Henderson (2001).

⁴ The inscription is discussed in Meritt (1952). For accounts of the epigraphic finds of the season, see the reviews by Cook (1953) 111 and Daux (1953).

⁵ For example, see the discussion of Thompson (1953) 26.

⁶ This assumes that the secretary (of the prytany) and the secretary of the Boule are the same person, a view affirmed by Rhodes (1972) 136-7; (1981) 599-600.

There are a number of features that make the publication of this law unique. The most immediately striking one is the relief sculpture that accompanies the inscription (PLATE 1b). In including a relief with this law, the inscribers were not merely blindly following well-established patterns. There are no rules for the inclusion of document reliefs. Certain genres attract more reliefs than others. Honorific inscriptions seem to be especially favoured. However, within a genre there seems to be no pattern.⁷ Considerations of both genre and price militate against this inscription attracting a relief. Laws passed by the nomothetai do not fall into a genre that was particularly attractive to reliefs. No other fourth-century law has a relief. Indeed, a relief seems to have been denied to another law passed by the nomothetai in the same year.⁸ Furthermore, with an allocation of 20 drachmas from the Treasury, this inscription comes at the cheap end of inscriptional prices.⁹ The decision to adorn this stele with a relief is a deliberate and marked choice.

It seems most likely that we should see Chairestratos as the instigator behind its presence. A number of other figures, apart from the secretary, have been identified as being responsible for the addition of document reliefs to inscriptions. Suggestions have included the proposers of the decrees, the honorand or their sponsor, or collectors who wished to have their own copies of the decrees.¹⁰ However, all of these suggestions are driven by the supposition that it is impossible to account for the relief under the financing arrangements laid out in the cost formulae. Such a proposition is by no means certain. The variables are such that it would seem possible to make provision for the inclusion of a relief within the strictures of a 20-drachma price limit.¹¹ Further, if we need to find a benefactor to cover the costs, there seems no plausible reason to look for another figure beyond the secretary, the official responsible for the erection of the reliefs.¹²

There is every reason to believe that the secretary had a vested interest in promoting the correct, efficient and prominent publication of inscriptions under his curatorship. The writer of the *Ath. Pol.* (54.3) is certainly correct when he states that the office of secretary became a much less prominent position when it was allocated by sortition rather than acclamation. The dropping of the secretary's name in headings before the decree prescripts presumably reflects this.¹³ However, we should be wary of downgrading too much the opportunity to have one's name dotted all over the city in prominent places. It was an opportunity that would be grasped by politicians a few decades later who would tweak the spacing on the stone to give greater prominence to their names.¹⁴ The secretaries had everything to gain from the publication of inscriptions. Lot may have put them there; it was up to the secretaries to demonstrate that they were up to the job. In the process of publication, the secretary is able to participate in public affairs in a way that may normally have been denied to him. We should not deny him some minimal ambition in carrying out his duties.¹⁵

If Chairestratos did contribute anything to the cost of publication, he had good reason to believe that such unofficial liturgical service could reap rewards. After all, he had acted as secretary earlier in the year to a meeting where Demosthenes (through his supporters) turned a

⁷ Lawton (1995) 5.

⁸ Assuming we date *IG* II² 244 (law relating to the Peiraieus fortifications) to 337/6 and not 338/7. For discussion of the date and bibliography, see Schwenk (1985) 25-6 (who favours 338/7). On the unusual activity of the nomothetai in this year, see Sealey (1958).

⁹ The amount allocated to inscriptions in this period generally fluctuates between 20 and 30 drachmas: Nolan (1981) 74-6.

¹⁰ For example, see Meyer (1983) 12-21 (proposers); Lambert (2001) 64-5 (honorands or their sponsors); and Drerup (1896) 230 (private copies).

¹¹ Nolan (1981) 108-9. See also Lawton (1995) 25-6 and Clinton (1996) 745-7.

¹² This idea was first suggested by Ferguson (1898) 29-30. There are, of course, a few examples where parties apart from those responsible for the publication of the inscription contributed to the cost; see *IG* I³ 101.43-4, *IG* II² 130.18 and *IG* II² 1187.27 (cited by Loomis (1998) 158 n.237 following Lawton (1995) 23 and Clinton (1996) 746 n.2).

¹³ For discussion and examples, see Rhodes (1981) 602-3.

¹⁴ See the examples collected by Tracey (2000).

¹⁵ This was not the only relief that was instigated under Chairestratos' secretaryship. Two honorary decrees for this year also received reliefs: *IG* II² 239 (Lawton 37) and *IG* II² 242 + 373 (Lawton 39).

minor tribal appointment – the Commissioner of Walls – into an opportunity for self-aggrandisement and public crowning.¹⁶ Nor was Chairestratos' ambition thwarted. His service as secretary would later that year see him crowned by the people.¹⁷ Beneath the standard phraseology of the award, in particular the inclusion of a clause commending his fulfilment of obligations according to the laws, scholars have seen an allusion to his erection of the law against tyranny.¹⁸ Eukrates gets to do the speaking, but without Chairestratos to do the writing those words amount to nothing. It was in Chairestratos' interest not to let him forget it. This is not politics on a grand scale. Rather, the monument is a witness to the micro-politics that attends Athenian civic administration. No doubt to accord all decisions to the hand of Chairestratos does disservice to the other figures involved in the creative process that lies behind this monument. We can never know what input the sculptor, inscriptional mason and proposer had on the final decree.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the fiction of the inscription is that this monument begins (line 2) and ends (line 24) with the secretary. It is Chairestratos' contribution to the civic art/politics of late fourth-century culture that concerns the rest of this article.

LOOKING DEMOS IN THE EYE: THE RELIEF AND ITS CLAIMS FOR ATTENTION

The excavators of this relief were unimpressed with their discovery. At times they are almost apologetic for it:

It would be easy to criticise the panel on the score of its uncouth composition, the faulty perspective in the rendering of the chair, the artist's failure to indicate the sceptre in the left hand of Demos. Yet, the specialist will welcome it as another well-preserved and precisely dated document for fixing the chronology of fourth century sculpture; and the general reader will observe that the little picture conveys its message in language almost as clear as that of the written text.²⁰

The relief is entirely subservient to the text ('little picture'). Its only interest is as a dating tool for sculptural styles. This seems to be the fate of most documentary reliefs. Art historians have tended to work with them divorced from their epigraphic context. Epigraphers have noted their presence, but have rarely incorporated them into their discussion of texts, except when they are useful for establishing joins.

This reluctance to engage with reliefs is partly a function of their curious relationship with the inscriptions they accompany. The relationship is not direct ('almost as clear'). They do not illustrate the text. Rather their focus is meditative. They act as frames, wrapping the inscription in layers of connotations. They are integral components for reconstructing epigraphic meaning in the Classical city. We are meant to take notice of this relief.

We should remember the importance of the law that the relief adorned. The introductions of laws by the nomothetai were comparatively rare events in the Athenian legislative year. In the context of the political developments of 337/6, they are charged with new vitality. The precise concerns that the law of Eukrates seeks to address are disputed. Even the most benign explanation, such as the passing of the law as an attempt merely to gain legislative consistency relating

¹⁶ This was, of course, the incident that would provide the basis for the famous dispute 'On the Crown'. On this office and its method of appointment, see Aeschin. 3.28-30.

¹⁷ The inscription is published in Schweigert (1938).

¹⁸ Meritt (1952) 357 and Schwenk (1985) 51.

¹⁹ It is tempting to see some influence of Eukrates in the subject matter of the relief. It certainly seems to accord with his democratic politics and his nasty death under the Macedonian hegemony (Lucian, *Dem. Enc.* 31).

The relationship between the sculptor and inscriptional mason is intriguing. Unlike other combinations of reliefs and inscriptions (e.g. type III grave stelai), the mason and sculptor were different people. Masons in high demand might work with a number of sculptors (e.g. according to Tracey's handlist, 'The Cutter of IG II² 244' works with at least four different relief sculptors; see IG II² 242 +373; IG II² 1202; IG II² 336; IG II² 1238).

²⁰ Thompson (1953) 53.

to tyranny, should still make us wonder what had prompted this revision.²¹ Some have seen the law as a reaction to fear about intervention from Philip.²² Others have seen an attempt to curb an internal threat posed by an increasingly politically active Areopagus.²³ What seems certain is that the provisions both reflect and intensify feelings over the precariousness of the constitution and the place of the people within it. Immunity from prosecution for tyrannicides is not a new feature. From the Archaic period onwards, the Athenian legislative legal and administrative landscape is littered with provisions, oaths and procedures designed to thwart the establishment of tyranny.²⁴ However, the inclusion of a specific mention of ‘the demos’ is worth noting. Protection of ‘the demos’ (as opposed to ‘democracy’) is not found in the law of Demophantos, the closest parallel to this text.²⁵ Both precedent and the explicit wording of the law serve to foreground the demos as a figure for concern. Even more worrying are the provisions relating to the Areopagus. The deprivation of citizenship and property from members of the council who sit during the suspension of democracy is a new development. This is starkly different from the generic threats to democracy that punctuate fourth-century political discourse. In specifically naming an organ of government and envisaging a situation where it acts contrary to the interests of the state, the threats are made more concrete and real than ever before.

The location of the inscription underlined its importance. Unlike the decrees that cluttered the civic spaces of Athens, this inscription stood alone.²⁶ As a place of erection, the entrance to the council room of the Areopagus is unique.²⁷ The momentousness of the site is signalled by the twisted erection formula. The oddly reduplicated τῆς in ll. 24-5 signals a desire for precision and a necessity for description that is difficult to find elsewhere in fourth-century Athenian epigraphy.²⁸ Even the erection of a copy in the assembly is reasonably uncommon (although becoming more common towards the end of the fourth century). It was intended to stand out. It stood as a reminder of the democratic duty of all citizens.²⁹ The Areopagus was especially put on guard. Every time they entered to deliberate they were reminded of the consequences of those deliberations for themselves, for the city.

It is impossible to escape the gaze of these full-frontal faces. Again, we are in uncharted territory. There is no precedent for a full-frontal Demos in document reliefs.³⁰ Demos is rarely seated.³¹ When he does sit, he is always shown in profile. Even standing, at most we get three-quarter faces.³² Only by going outside Athens and the genre of document reliefs is it possible to

²¹ For the revision hypothesis, see Oikonomides (1956-57), who argues that the law about tyranny was not a new statute, but an amplification of the law outlined in *Ath. Pol.* 16.10.

²² This was the feeling of the initial publishers of the decree (e.g. Meritt (1952) 358) and has been followed by other commentators; cf. Ostwald (1955).

²³ Sealey (1958).

²⁴ The evidence is usefully collected in Ostwald (1955), who traces such legislation back to the time of Draco. See also Rhodes (1981) 220-1. For a discussion of the democratic poetics of tyrannicide, see Ober (2003).

²⁵ And. 1.96-8. This difference was noted by Ostwald (1955) 122, but dismissed as relatively minor.

²⁶ Assuming that the copy excavated is not the copy from the Ecclesia. Its presence as fill in the buildings beneath the Stoa of Attalos makes it highly unlikely that it is the assembly copy.

²⁷ For the placement of laws, see Richardson (2000). On the placement of inscriptions generally, see Liddel (2003).

²⁸ Meritt (1953).

²⁹ There is a possibility that the Ecclesia copy may also have had the same relief. Unfortunately there is no evidence of Athenian practice in this regard: Lawton (1995) 17.

³⁰ For discussion of the iconography of Demos, see Buschor (1950); Hamdorf (1964) 93-5; Palagia (1980) 61-3; Alexandri-Tzahou (1981-99); Lawton (1995) 55-8.

³¹ There are two examples of a seated Demos: NM 2407 (Lawton 133) and EM 2809 (Lawton 167). Both would appear to be honorary decrees. Only the first is securely identified by a label. Demos standing is a more common pose, see EM 2791 (Lawton 117), Lawton 176 (now lost), EM 2811 (Lawton 49), NM 2958 (Lawton 150), NM 2946 (Lawton 149), NM 2961 + 2952 (Lawton 126), NM 1482 (Lawton 54), and an uncatalogued relief in the collection of Stelios Lydakakis (Lawton 147). Only the first two personifications are labelled.

³² See, for example, NM 1482 (Decree honouring Euphron of Sikyon) (PLATE 2a).

find comparanda.³³ The influence of Pheidias' statue of Zeus at Olympia is tangible.³⁴ Within document reliefs, frontal faces are rare.³⁵ In almost every case, we are spared the full gaze of the deities and personifications that adorn the relief.³⁶ The effort taken to achieve this effect has started to show (e.g. the failure to realize the throne and legs correctly).³⁷ The twist of Demos' torso reminds us that we are supposed to meet this image full on. We feel the effort that has been expended to ensure that we look Demos and Democracy straight in the eye.

The final lure for the viewer is the figures themselves. Here, the viewer is presented with another novelty, the combination of Demos and Demokratia. Admittedly, in the absence of any inscriptional tags, the identification of these figures must remain conjectural. The generally accepted identification of the figures as Demos and Demokratia is based on the repetition of the formula 'demos or democracy' three times in the inscription (ll. 8-9, 13, 16-17). They are the ultimate subject matter of this inscription. It was to secure their safety that the law of Eukrates was passed. Moreover, there is nothing inconsistent in the depiction of the male figure with depictions of Demos, and while there is no securely identified representation of Demokratia from the Classical period, her cult is attested and it is hard to assign any other female personification to the figure.³⁸ The only other figure given to personification who is associated with Demos in the inscription is Agathe Tyche (ll. 5-6, ἀγαθὴ τύχη τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων). Although the high-girt chiton and long hair are consistent with this figure, the absence of the cornucopia, an attribute of Tyche since the sixth century, counts heavily against it.³⁹ Finally, there is precedent for the juxtaposition of this pair in Euphranor's painting in the Stoa of Zeus.⁴⁰

Indeed, some have seen this relief as a poorly worked copy of Euphranor's painting.⁴¹ However, there are a number of reasons for rejecting this suggestion.⁴² Euphranor's painting revolves around Theseus, not these two figures.⁴³ It is the hero's muscular frame that dominates the scene.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, they do share one feature in common. Both are daring ventures into the new world of political allegory. They attest to experimentations with a new symbolic vocabulary, one where meaning is derived from allusion and association. In isolating and positioning Demos and Demokratia on this relief, we are presented with a daring venture into the political – powerful and, apparently, unprecedented.

³³ Many have been attracted by the similarity between the relief and a bronze mirror depicting Leukas and Corinth: Raubitschek (1962) 238; Palagia (1980) 60.

³⁴ The similarity between the seated Demos and the iconography of Zeus has been long recognized; see Lawton (1995) 57 n.127 for bibliography. On the iconography of the Pheidias Zeus and its influence in the fourth century, see Lapatin (2001) 83-5, 96.

³⁵ Occasionally we are invited to look into the delighted face of the honorand. For a striking example, see AM 6787 (Lawton 134). Other examples are NM 1471 (Lawton 35, Honours for Spartocus II, Pairisades I and Apollonios of the Bosphorus); NM 2952 + 2961 (Lawton 126); and BM 771 (Lawton 124).

³⁶ The closest we get to staring a deity in the face in fourth-century document reliefs occurs with the almost frontal face of Ares in a decree (*SEG* 21.519) of the deme Acharnai concerning the sanctuary of Ares and Athena Aeria: Athens, *École française* I 6 (Lawton 143).

³⁷ Of course, such failings were not uncommon. For discussion, see Richter (1970) 41.

³⁸ For discussion of the image of Demokratia, see Oliver (1960) 164-6; Raubitschek (1962); Sealey (1973); Palagia (1975); (1980) 59 and (1982). On the cult of Demokratia, see Raubitschek (1962).

³⁹ For the iconography of Tyche, see Shear (1971) 271; Villard (1981-99); Shapiro (1993) 227-8; and Palagia (1994). For the adoption of the iconography, see Lichocka (1997). The association with Tyche is attractive as it offers the possibility of this relief being a generic design applicable for a wide variety of official inscriptions. For generic designs in document reliefs, see the repetition of design in AM 1333 (Lawton 12) and EM 7862 (Lawton 13).

⁴⁰ Pausanias 1.3.3. For discussion and bibliography, see Palagia (1980) 57-63.

⁴¹ See Oliver (1960) 164-6; Raubitschek (1962) 238; Thompson and Wycherley (1972) 102.

⁴² See especially the criticism in Palagia (1980) 60.

⁴³ Paus. 1.3.3: δηλοῖ δὲ ἡ γραφὴ Θησέα εἶναι τὸν καταστήσαντα Ἀθηναίους ἐξ ἴσου πολιτεύεσθαι. For the suggestion that Theseus was shown presenting Demokratia to Demos as a bride, see Webster (1956) 48-9 and Robertson (1975) 436.

⁴⁴ According to ancient anecdotes, Euphranor used to compare his Theseus to the one by Parrhasios, saying that Parrhasios' had fed on roses, but his own on beef: see Pliny 35.129; Plutarch, *De Glor. Athen.* 2. On the 'robust and athletic' appearance of Theseus, see Palagia (1980) 59.

DEMOS AND DEMOKRATIA – THE PERSONAL IS THE POLITICAL

ΠΑΦΛΑΓΩΝ. καὶ νῆ Δί' ὑπό γε δεξιότητος τῆς ἐμῆς
δύναμαι ποιεῖν τὸν δῆμον εὐρὺν καὶ στενόν.
ἌΛΛΑΝΤΟΠΩΛΗΣ. χὼ πρῶκτος οὐμὸς τουτογὶ σοφίζεται.

(Aristophanes, *Knights* 719-21)

PAPHLAGON. And what is more, by Zeus, thanks to my ingenuity, I can make Demos expand and contract.
SAUSAGE-SELLER. Even my arsehole knows *that* trick.

Demos must be our starting point. Aristophanes ensures that the depiction of Demos is no laughing matter. It is *Knights* more than any other work that demonstrates that the depiction of Demos is not a neutral act.⁴⁵ Rather, every move one makes with Demos has profound political consequences.⁴⁶ Paphlagon provides the key: power lies with the ability to control the physical characteristics of Demos. The sausage-seller may try to deride this, but the rest of the play tells another story.

The play is an exercise in training the viewer's eye to see, in every aspect of Demos, a political message. His age tells us something about the generosity of the Athenian people (40-4). His facial expression tells us about their capacity to govern and to deal with rhetoric (752-5).⁴⁷ His clothing tells us how well he is treated by contemporary politicians (871-83). His greying hairs, gummed-up eyes and runny nose leave us in no doubt about the state of the nation (908-11). This display of politico-physiognomic hermeneutics reaches its climax when we see that the curing of the political ills of Athens (the removal of Paphlagon – the Kleon stand-in) leads to the complete rejuvenation and transformation of Demos (1321-32).⁴⁸ Demos lies in the details. Like the chorus, our only question when encountering Demos should be: 'πῶς ἂν ἴδοιμεν; ποῖον (τιν') ἔχει σκευήν; ποῖος γεγένηται;' ('How can we see him? What sort of dress does he wear? What sort of man has he become?') (1324).

It is inevitable that whenever we encounter Demos, politics is not too far away. Pliny illustrates this point. We can see the inevitable transition from art to politics in his discussion of the painting of Demos by Parrhasios, possibly the first depiction of Demos in state art, and certainly one of the most influential:

pinxit demon Atheniensium argumento quoque ingenioso. ostendebat namque varium iracundum iniustum inconstantem, eundem exorabilem clementem misericordem; gloriosum [lac.], excelsum humilem ferocem fugacemque et omnia pariter.

(Pliny, *NH* 35.69)

His picture of the Athenian *demos* also shows ingenuity in treating the subject, since he displayed it as fickle, choleric, unjust and variable, but also placable and merciful and compassionate, boastful [and lac.] lofty and humble, fierce and timid – and all these at the same time.

It is impossible to see this as objective description. Some have tried to do so. De Quincy suggested a reconstruction based on a multi-headed owl with various animal heads.⁴⁹ Rumpf preferred a crooked eyebrow to convey all this meaning.⁵⁰ Such suggestions miss the mark.

⁴⁵ The depiction of Demos by Aristophanes has recently been examined in Reinders (2001), esp. 178-89.

⁴⁶ On the issue of the politics of criticism in the portrayal, see Reinders (2001) 168-70.

⁴⁷ For open-mouthed gaping connoting stupidity or gullibility, see *Knights* 261, 1263, *Acharnians* 133; Sommerstein (1981) 182.

⁴⁸ A rejuvenation that is not without its political implications; see Reinders (2001) 192-9 for discussion.

⁴⁹ Quatremère de Quincy, *Mon. restitués* 2.71ff., cited in Rumpf (1951) 7-8.

⁵⁰ Rumpf (1951) 8.

Pliny is not describing a work of art.⁵¹ He is doing precisely what one must inevitably do on encountering a depiction of the Demos: take a political position. Any attempt at critical engagement with the representation inevitably results in political expression. Whether you think the depiction of the People is too old, too young, too rich, too poor, too plain or too good-looking, too kind or too cruel – you have implicated yourself in a political view.⁵²

With such high iconographic stakes, it is perhaps understandable that the figure of Demos on the Eukrates relief constantly seeks to defer meaning and interpretation. Its allusions lack closure. Whenever one seeks to pin down *this* Demos, one always ends up somewhere else. This is not to say that the figure lacks significant features. Rather, those features take us only a little way to understanding the Demos.

Apart from his masculinity (underlined and offset by his attentive female companion), age is the most striking feature of the figure. Initial commentators were all agreed on the great age of the figure.⁵³ This probably needs to be mitigated a little. Certainly he is not the oldest figure we find on document reliefs.⁵⁴ The musculature on the torso is still well defined. However, he is not young, and it is safest to regard him as a mature adult. Games with age are easy to play with personifications.⁵⁵ In preferring to make Demos a mature adult, rather than a beardless youth, the relief stresses the people's stability, strength and development. Change and revolution – the features of the young – are absent from this figure.⁵⁶ Moreover his age embraces a normative definition of citizenship found in other sources. Wealth may not have guaranteed extra rights in Athenian democracy, but age did. Demos' age reinforces the two-tier age distinction in Athenian democratic practice, whereby one gained admittance to the assembly at the age of 18 or 19, but was not eligible for office-holding or jury service until the age of 30.⁵⁷ To be an active member of the people, you need to be mature. Our Demos represents a citizen at his greatest capacity for government.

This administrative focus is continued in Demos' costume. Demos is dressed for the assembly, not the battlefield. This Demos is no aristocratic *idiotes* looking to retire to a life of refined leisure (none of Aristophanes' purple cloth and golden cicadas here). The Pnyx is where he belongs. Much has been written on the way in which the hoplite embodied the civic virtues of the Athenian citizen.⁵⁸ It is interesting to note that when the People decide to depict themselves, martial prowess is entirely neglected. Demos is not a fighter. Thucydides was correct: it is impossible to have a civic life unless you put down your sword (Thuc. 1.5.3). The martial figure in Athenian documentary iconography is Athena. It is probably no coincidence that whenever Athens needs to record treaties with foreign powers, it prefers to be represented by Athena, often armed and armoured, in the relief.⁵⁹ In martial circumstances Demos seems to be absent. The relief recording the honours of Euphron of Sikyon is a partial exception (PLATE 2a). The

⁵¹ This was realized earlier by Pfuhl (1923), but dismissed by Rumpf (1951) 8. The influence of Xenophon's depiction of the conversation between Socrates and Parrhasios in the *Memorabilia* (3.10.5) was noted by Brunn (1889) 2.109. For a similar allegorical description, see the earless Demos attributed to Lysippos (*Gnomol. Vat.* 339b).

⁵² Even Plato cannot resist this game. See Plato, *Alcibiades I* 132a for the allegory of the beautiful Demos that disguises its hideousness beneath a mask.

⁵³ Cook (1953) 111; Daux (1953) 199; and Picard (1935-63) 4.2, 1264.

⁵⁴ Compare the slightly hunched figure of Kios in EM 6928 (Lawton 9).

⁵⁵ See also the *genius populi Romani* whose initial representations depict him as a mature male. However,

by the Flavian period (his iconographic heyday) he appears as young man in order to provide contrast to personifications of the Senate (*cf.* the arch of Titus and the Cancellaria reliefs). For discussion, see Fears (1978) and Hannestad (1986) 202, 207.

⁵⁶ Strauss (1993) 142-3, 217.

⁵⁷ For discussion of age distinctions in Athenian government, see Hansen (1991) 88-90.

⁵⁸ The classic formulation of this position is Vidal-Naquet (1968).

⁵⁹ For Athena performing dexiosis on foreign treaties, see EM 6598 (Lawton 7), EM 6928 (Lawton 9), AM 1333 (Lawton 12), NM 1481 (Lawton 24), NM 1480 (Lawton 28). For a discussion of these reliefs and their iconography, see Ritter (2001).

relief has Demos standing ready to receive the alliance from Sikyon that would bolster Athenian efforts in the Lamian War. Demos may be involving himself in the affairs of war. However, this involvement will only be at a distance. It is only aegis-clad Athena holding a painted spear and Euphron with a sword strapped across his chest who are ready for fighting.⁶⁰

These simple messages are easy to understand. On more complex issues of identity and political philosophy, this Demos proves more elusive. Much discussion has gone into the range of semantic meanings that the term ‘demos’ embraces – general populace, the assembly, the jury, and deme community.⁶¹ All are alternative competing and complementary definitions. Yet, it is impossible to work out which definition is suggested by this Demos. Other document reliefs are more helpful. When Demos is accompanied by the personification of the Boule, the Ecclesia associations are foregrounded.⁶² The Demos on deme decrees can only refer to the local community.⁶³ These reliefs explore the range of meanings of Demos. This one refuses to acknowledge that you could formulate such a division or range. The lack of guidance about where we should locate the demos or its precise meaning can only be strategic. Just as the law refuses to specify what will constitute an attempt *ἐπαναστήναι τῷ δήμῳ* or *καταλύειν τὸν δῆμον* (‘to subvert or overthrow the people’, ll. 7-10), so the relief refuses to name explicitly the target of these subversives (assembly, deme or more abstract target). We have to make decisions for ourselves about which actions overstep the mark. From the motion of Pythodoros onwards, Athens has plenty of experience of oligarchs attempting to pass off their revolutions as constitutional, appropriating Solon and Kleisthenes along the way.⁶⁴ It is better to leave these things unsaid.

Moreover, this Demos specifically resists certain strategies of interpretation. This figure is not susceptible to analogy. If we try to understand this figure through charting resemblances, we discover that Demos looks like variously nobody, anybody and everybody. His generic qualities often make him unrecognizable. The personification of Demos has few distinguishing characteristics. On one level, he often resembles the standard middle-aged figure found on grave, votive and honorific reliefs.⁶⁵ Both workshop practice and democratic ideology combined to make this desirable.⁶⁶ It was important that nobody/everybody saw themselves in the figure of Demos. Portraiture was impossible; it rendered the whole project of personification unviable. In seeking recourse to the generic figures of relief sculpture, Demos simultaneously sets up a relationship of both familiarity and distance with the viewer. In looking at Demos you saw yourself reduced to your bare essentials, the sculptural shorthand of citizen masculinity.

⁶⁰ This contrast between an honorand sporting military equipment and an unarmed Demos is also found in NM 2946 (Lawton 149) and 2958 (Lawton 150).

⁶¹ On the range of meanings of ‘demos’, see the debate between Hansen (1978), (1989) and Ostwald (1986) and Ober (1989).

⁶² For a document relief containing the personifications of Demos and Boule, see EM 2811 (Lawton 49). For a secure personification of Boule, see NM 1473 (Lawton 142).

⁶³ For Demos on deme decrees, see an honorary decree from Acharnai in the collection of Stelios Lydakos (Lawton 147). The whereabouts of another deme decree showing Demos from the excavations at Trachones is currently unknown (Lawton 176).

⁶⁴ This feature of anti-democratic rhetoric was first observed by Fuks (1953). For discussion, see Ruschenbusch (1958); Cecchin (1969); and Ostwald (1986) 337-411.

⁶⁵ For comparanda, see document reliefs – AM 2996 (Honours for Proxenides of Knidos, Lawton 68.1); grave stele – NM 902 (Clairmont *CAT* 1.251), NM 995 (Clairmont *CAT* 1.344), NM 758 (Clairmont *CAT* 2.280).

⁶⁶ Although there have been no identified cases of sculptors working across all genres of reliefs, it is clear that there are close connections between them. The similarity between type III grave stelai and document reliefs is remarkable. We have one case of a documentary relief for a deme decree found on a stele that was intended as a funeral relief – EM 13461 (Lawton 43). On the whole, workshops that produced documentary reliefs tend to employ more capable and accomplished masons for the inscription. For discussion of the quality of inscriptions on gravestones, see Clairmont (1970) 49-50.

Demos is not only an everyman figure, he is an ‘every-god’ figure too. His iconography can be easily confused with that of Erechtheus, Asklepios and the Eponymous heroes.⁶⁷ The influence of the Pheidian Zeus has already been mentioned. In addition to this, we should also add both the seated Zeus on the east pediment of the Parthenon and the seated Zeus on the amphora attributed to Group E depicting the birth of Athena (Richmond, Virginia, Museum of Fine Arts 60.23) (PLATE 2b).⁶⁸ This association with Zeus opens up an intriguing set of complications. In a document that seeks to entrench democracy at the expense of tyranny, such a strong note of autocratic power seems a little jarring. Prometheus may have reconciled himself to the tyranny of Zeus’s rule; can we reconcile ourselves to the tyranny of the Demos?⁶⁹ The answer must be in the affirmative – an easy answer, or rather one that you had better find easy, if you want to live in Athens. The relief functions as a litmus test of democratic fervour. Drawing upon the most extreme iconographic vocabulary it can muster for autocratic supremacy (throne, sceptre, etc.), it places Demos as the ruler and asks you to accept this. If you think the Demos is giving itself airs, then the law of Eukrates puts you on notice to watch your step. At the same time, individuals are stopped from contemplating themselves in the place of Zeus by the curious everybody/nobody quality of Demos. You can be subsumed in Demos, but Demos can never be identical with you. Power will always be diffuse because identity is constantly deferred.

This sophistication in the relationship between the text of the inscription and the relief points to a completeness of vision that is hard to find in other document reliefs. In a number of cases, there is little evidence to suggest that the sculptors of document reliefs knew the precise wording of an inscription. The inscribing did not take place until the relief sculpture had been completed.⁷⁰ Occasionally the reliefs suggest that the sculptors’ knowledge of the content of the inscription may have been fairly sketchy. So, for example, we find the personification of the Boule apparently occurring in a relief where there is no specific mention of her in the accompanying inscription.⁷¹ The only parallel where we seem to have so close a relationship between text and relief is the case of the inscription honouring Euphron of Sikyon (PLATE 2a). The relief closely follows ll. 8-12: [καὶ νῦν ἥκων παρ]ὰ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Σικυωνίων ἐπαγγ[έλλεται τὴν πόλιν] φίλην καὶ σύμμαχον [οὔσ]αν [ἀμυνεῖν κατὰ τῶν πολεμ]ίων τῷ δήμῳ τῷ Ἀθηναίων (‘and now having come from the People of Sikyon, proclaims that his city, being a friend and ally, will defend against its enemies the people of Athens’).

However, unlike the relief for Euphron, this relief is no illustration. On one level, its allegorical message is simple: Democracy is the one system of government (notice the absence of other figures) that honours and – frozen forever in stone – will continue to honour the People. Democracy is the only active participant in this transaction. She is the vital principle. Yet, once we penetrate this message, we are drawn into more complex questions and debates of political philosophy.⁷² We have seen that the text regards the two institutions, dems and democracy, as

⁶⁷ The similarity is discussed in Lawton (1995) 57-8, following Palagia (1980) 58 and Kron (1976) 238. For figures where confusion in attribution has occurred, see Erechtheus – Louvre 831 (Lawton 8), NM 1479 (Lawton 14), EM 7859 (Lawton 20); Asklepios – NM 2985 (Lawton 132); tribal hero – EM 2788 (Lawton 115) and NM 2958 (Lawton 150).

⁶⁸ On the Parthenon Zeus, see Harrison (1967). The Group E amphora is discussed in Korshak (1987) 33, *FF* 221.

⁶⁹ On the characterization of Zeus’s rule as tyrannical, see Podlecki (1966) 101-22 (‘the play gives us the first formulation of any length of the new democracy’s quarrel with the tyrant, who, as a law unto himself and beyond the check of legal redress, constituted an exact

antithesis to the democratic process’ – 115); and Conacher (1980) 120-37.

⁷⁰ See, for example, École française I 6 (Lawton 143), where the failure to calculate for Athena’s helm in the frame of the relief requires the inscription to be re-spaced, or EM 13461, where the omicron in θεοί has been slightly raised to compensate for the head of the personification of the deme Eitea, which owing to miscalculation protrudes outside the frame.

⁷¹ EM 2811 (Lawton 49). The text of the inscription *IG* II² 367, although fragmentary, leaves no room in the prescript for a reference to the Boule.

⁷² For the dems’ participation in the ongoing Athenian conversation on democracy, see Ober (2003) 222-6.

having an equivalence (τὸν δῆμον ἢ τὴν δημοκρατίαν). The two are interchangeable. Harming one is the same as harming the other. This equality is not followed through in the relief. Instead, a curious hierarchy is set up with one figure crowning another. It is unusual to be crowned by an equal.⁷³ The vast majority of honorary inscriptions accompanied by reliefs feature a distinct hierarchy where a larger superior (god/hero/personification) bestows crowns upon grateful recipients.⁷⁴ There are only two cases where divinities crown each other. However, as we can see in a deme decree from Acharnai, the uncomfortable composition of Athena crowning Ares reflects both the inexperience in resolving such a situation iconographically and its rarity.⁷⁵ A meeting of equals is normally accompanied by dexiosis. We are being invited to consider the politics of crowning. The relief demands that we theorize the relationship between the recipient (Demos) and the donor (Demokratia) of a crown. What does it mean for Democracy to honour the Demos? What is (should be) the status of the various parties in this transaction? How does the crowning subsequently alter their respective status? Is there reciprocity in this relationship? Ultimately, is it better to give or receive?

In prompting these questions, the relief implicates us in a particularly fourth-century project. Both the politics of crowning and the relationship between the demos and democracy were firmly on the intellectual agenda in this period.⁷⁶ Aischines realized the potential problems that crowning poses for the democratic state. From the very beginning of his prosecution of Ktesiphon over the award of a crown to Demosthenes, he reminds the jury that democracy is at stake, and that they need to tread carefully if they wish to avoid a slide into tyranny (Aeschin. 3.6-7). Aischines capitalizes on the ambiguity of an award that should be deserved and yet is always more than one should expect. Demosthenes' attitude threatens to upset this democratic compromise on the awarding of honours. He lacks the requisite gratitude or loyalty that crowning should engender (Aeschin. 3.33, 47). His desire for cheap glory shows no respect for the customs or opinions of those offering the award (Aeschin. 3.32-48). Demosthenes responds by repackaging the award ceremony of a crown – it is a moment that reflects more on the donor than the recipient (Dem. 18.120). In this battle, we see an attempt to carefully calibrate the effect and implication of crowning. The democratic state has always had problems with awards to anyone other than itself.⁷⁷ Aischines plays up its paranoia, while Demosthenes attempts to soothe its troubled brow. Compared to this exchange, the crowning of the Demos by Demokratia seems less problematic. There is no external threat that threatens to upset the security of Demos on his throne. It was a democratic fiction that these two entities were indissoluble ('τὸν δῆμον ἢ τὴν δημοκρατίαν'). Driving wedges between these two was largely an oligarchic project.⁷⁸ By binding these two figures in an affectionate relationship of honour-exchange, such splitting is avoided.⁷⁹

⁷³ On the tendency to divide up relationships into those 'between equals' and those 'between superiors and inferiors', see Arist. *Eth. Eud.* 1238 b 15-1239 b 5 and *Eth. Nic.* 8.1158 b 11-19.

⁷⁴ For example, see Lawton 36, 43, 49, 68(1), 126, 137, 145, 147, 149, 153, 167, 176. Such a hierarchy is not so often observed in Roman depictions of crowning; see Rumscheid (2000).

⁷⁵ Athens, École française I 6 (Lawton 143). The other example features Herakles crowning Athena in the corner of NM 2407 (Lawton 133).

⁷⁶ Both these issues form off-shoots of the much larger debates on *philia*; see Mitchell (1997) 1-21; Millett (1991); and Schofield (1998).

⁷⁷ For the crowning of the Demos by foreign states, see the decree of Byzantion to erect a statue of the Athenian Demos being crowned by the Demoi of Byzantion and Perinthos (Dem. 18.91). On the content and authenticity of this decree, see Wankel (1976) 1.496-8.

⁷⁸ See, for example, Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 2.19. For an example of the ceaseless interest in attempting to define the relationship between Demos and Demokratia, see Arist. *Pol.* 1278 b 6-15.

⁷⁹ On the affections that can attend moments of exchange, see Foxhall (1998).

CONCLUSION: THE ABSENT CENTRE – THE PLACE OF THE PEOPLE
IN DEMOCRATIC ART

In the subject of paintings and sculptures people recognised their own features, and this filled them with legitimate pride ... Few people, however, could identify with the principles of morality and behaviour implicit in the artistic image of the new man ... few Germans felt that their lives conformed with the Führer's ideal to be as tough as a thong, as swift as a hound and as hard as Krupp steel. Everyone to a greater or lesser degree felt that his faith was not strong enough, his work not productive enough ... Totalitarian man was proud of his country's power and his leader's wisdom; at the same time he felt defenceless in the face of this power that might, at any moment, be turned against him.⁸⁰

As a final gesture, a moment of discontinuity: the law of Eukrates as a monument to the gulf that separates Athens and Western democratic culture. We see this most clearly when we co-ordinate the relief within a genealogy of strategies for personification. Personifications coalesce as the precipitate of various cultural and political discourses. They function as a tease – a slippery point of entry that leads to moments of self-awareness. Engaging with them is a dangerous business. It is much easier to hope that they are merely decorative. We have seen the way Athenian democratic art stages the people for contemplation. It demands that we pause, reflect, and ultimately commit ourselves to a notion of the people. There is a certain sort of bravery (or confidence) in demanding such self-reflection on civic fundamentals.⁸¹

In embracing self-reflection, the Athenian personification of the people rejects coercion. There is power in demotic icons. Totalitarian regimes, those most accustomed to coarse articulations of power, are keen to teach us this. Such regimes have proven in the last century to be the most comfortable with personifying the people.⁸² Only in Socialist or Fascist regimes is it possible to find such representations with any regularity. This discrepancy appears paradoxical. Yet it takes only the most cursory examination to see that the artistic embodiments of totalitarian regimes are interested not in opening up debate, but in closing it down. In the face of these Fascist bodies, one can only acquiesce or resist. There is no place for reason. The few moments of compulsion we have felt with the Athenian Demos are light touches in comparison.

The totalitarian body politic is one based on a series of exclusions.⁸³ It may claim to be you, but there is always an anxiety that this might not turn out to be the case. Such exclusionary definitions must provide part of the reason why democratic state art has traditionally hidden its people away. It is almost impossible to find any personification of the 'People' in public

⁸⁰ Golomstock (1990) 215.

⁸¹ Such confidence and bravery is often born out of moments of revolution. For example, see the brief flourishing of the imagery of the People as Hercules in revolutionary France. The short-lived popularity of this figure saw him hold a prominent place in the revolutionary fête of August 1793. A 24-foot-high statue was erected at Les Invalides by David. For discussion, see Gutwirth (1992) 275-6. For examples of the iconography, see Roberts (2000) figs 107 (The French People overwhelms the Hydra of Federalism) and 109 (Le Peuple mangeur de Rois). The eventual eclipse of this figure and the rise of Liberty and the Nation as the predominant revolutionary images is charted in Landes (2001). On the imagery of the People as the body, see discussion in de Baecque (1997) 96-106.

⁸² On the importance of the People (das Volk) in totalitarian artistic vocabulary, see Golomstock (1990) 173-6. For examples, see Miramey's poster 'Le Faisceau'

produced for the founding rally of French Fascism (repr. in *Nouveau siècle*, 12 November 1925); Vera Mukhina's colossal 'Worker and Collective Farm-woman' that topped the Soviet pavilion at the 1937 International Exhibition in Paris; the early National Socialist election poster 'Die Arbeiter sind erwacht' (repr. in Golomstock (1990) 172); Hans Toepper's 'The People in Danger'; 'Politica di Amore' showing the Italian People's love of Fascism (repr. in Silva (1973) pl. 42). On National Socialist allegory, see Hinz (1979) 156-60. In addition, one could include various examples from totalitarian genre-painting. These images may have claimed to be realist. However, political expediency meant that they always had a strong component of the symbolic and mythic. On the collapse of realism into the symbolic, see Golomstock (1990) 182-98.

⁸³ On the creation of this alien body aesthetic, and its exclusions based on race, sex, blood type, physiognomy, see the collection of essays in Magan (1990) and (2000).

monuments. Justice, Wisdom and Liberty are to be found by the dozen.⁸⁴ The closest we get to personifications of the people are representations of the nation states – corporations at one remove ('Uncle Sam wants You!').⁸⁵ Depicting the 'People' represents a limit-case in democratic thought and the reception of the classical tradition. The artist and architects of state monuments are prepared to adopt many classical tropes, to dress up their buildings as ancient temples, to find virtue in the symbolic language of personifications. Yet, when it comes to the 'People', they will not tolerate graven images. They prefer to make such definitions redundant. We can 'people' the monuments ourselves.

Discourses of identity and diversity rightly make us suspicious of any such project of personification. We tremble at the prospect. How could any one figure include all of us? The implicit exclusions loom so large. In our revulsion at such a project – the moment at which the law of Eukrates relief looks so alien – we may begin to wonder what separates us from the Greeks: our notion of 'democracy' or the 'people'?

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⁸⁴ For American examples, see Horwitz (1976).

⁸⁵ On the iconography of Uncle Sam, see Horwitz (1976) 92-106; and Ketchum (1959).

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(a) Eugene Vanderpool
and the law of Eukrates
(photograph: Agora excavations,
American School of Classical
Studies, Athens)



(b) Relief from the law of Eukrates against tyranny
(photograph: Agora excavations, American School of
Classical Studies, Athens)





(a) Relief from the honorific decree for Euphron of Sikyon
(photograph: Agora excavations, American School of Classical Studies, Athens)



(b) The birth of Athena amphora attributed to Group E (Richmond, Virginia, Museum of Fine Arts 60.23) (photograph: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. The Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund)