

REPRESENTATION IN ANCIENT GREEK DEMOCRACY

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Abstract: Although modern ‘representative’ democracy is conventionally distinguished from its ‘direct’ ancient Greek counterpart, the language of representation appears in many scholarly accounts of ancient Greek democratic institutions. This article explains why that language is apt. Ancient authors portrayed nearly all ancient Greek political actors as acting on behalf of and in the interests of others. The difference between ancient and modern democracy is not the use of political representation but ancient democrats’ preference for synecdochical representation over the metaphorical forms that predominate today, as well as the accountability measures that they applied to all (and only) metaphorical representatives.

Introduction

Virtually everyone who writes about the history of democracy distinguishes modern ‘representative’ democracy from its ‘direct’ ancient Greek counterpart. Supposedly, in ancient Greek democracies citizens made political decisions themselves rather than electing or otherwise allowing some members of the community to make decisions on their behalf.³ Political representation of the latter kind is often portrayed as a necessary accommodation to the size and complexity of modern states,⁴ although some authors have also argued that it

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² I thank Frank Ankersmit, Mark Bevir, Konstantinos Bizos, Paul Cammack, Edwin Carawan, Paul Cartledge, Josh Cohen, Shterna Friedman, David Singh Grewal, Christopher Kutz, Matthew Landauer, H el ene Landemore, Jane Mansbridge, Isabella Mariani, Richard Tuck, George Scialabba, Wendy Salkin, Sam Stevens, Aaron Zielinski, the Political Theory Workshop at UC San Diego, the Kadish Workshop in Law, Politics and Philosophy at UC Berkeley, and participants in Wendy Salkin’s seminar on representation at Stanford University for valuable comments and questions. Translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

³ E.g. M.I. Finley, *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (New Brunswick, 1985), p. 49; J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton, 1989), p. 8; M.H. Hansen, *Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes* (Norman, 1999), p. 1; P. Cartledge, *Democracy: A Life* (Oxford, 2016), p. 91. Cf., however, M.H. Hansen, *Reflections on Aristotle’s Politics* (Copenhagen, 2013), pp. 97–107.

⁴ E.g. ‘The Liberty of the Ancients Compared to that of the Moderns’ (1819), in B. Constant, *Selected Political Writings*, ed. B. Fontana (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 307–28; ‘Considerations on Representative Government’ (1861), in J.S. Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays*, ed. J. Gray (Oxford, 1991), pp. 203–468. Cf. H. Pitkin, ‘Representation and Democracy: An Uneasy Alliance’, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 27 (2004), pp. 335–42.

actively benefits the pursuit of the public interest.⁵ No one has seriously challenged the allegation of Hanna Pitkin (and before her, Jean-Jacques Rousseau) that ancient Greek democracy ‘had nothing whatever to do with representation, an idea for which their language had no word’.⁶

Nonetheless, the language of representation does appear in many scholarly discussions of ancient Greek political institutions. As Pitkin notes, the ancient Greeks ‘elected some officials and sometimes sent ambassadors — activities which we might call representation’.⁷ J.A.O. Larsen, D.M. MacDowell and P.J. Rhodes each portray the Athenian council of five hundred as a representative institution;⁸ Rhodes, David Mirhady and Edwin Carawan use the same language to describe Athens’ popular courts;⁹ and Bernard Manin has drawn attention to the representational character of the ancient Greeks’ use of selection by lot.¹⁰ Most significantly, M.H. Hansen and Josiah Ober have debated the best way to capture the relationships between classical Athenian political bodies and the wider public. Did Athens’ assembly or courts (for example) ‘manifest’, ‘embody’ or ‘represent’ the Athenian people?¹¹ In an important

⁵ E.g. ‘Speech to the Electors of Bristol’ (1774), in E. Burke, *On Empire, Liberty, and Reform: Speeches and Letters*, ed. D. Bromwich (New Haven, 2000), pp. 50–7; J. Madison, *Federalist 10* (1787), in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. C. Rossiter (New York, 1999), pp. 71–9; and ‘Observations sur le rapport du comité de constitution concernant la nouvelle organisation de la France’ (1789), in E. Siéyès, *Écrits Politiques*, ed. R. Zapperi (Paris, 1994), pp. 247–71. Cf. B. Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Princeton, 1997); D. Plotke, ‘Representation is Democracy’, *Constellations*, 4 (1997), pp. 19–34; N. Urbinati, ‘Representation as Advocacy: a Study of Democratic Deliberation’, *Political Theory*, 28 (1999), pp. 758–86; and N. Urbinati, *Representative Democracy: Principles and Genealogy* (Chicago, 2006).

⁶ Pitkin, ‘Representation and Democracy’, p. 337; H. Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley, 1967), pp. 2, 241; J.-J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract* III.15.6. Cf., however, Manin, *Principles*, pp. 1–41; M. Saward, ‘The Representative Claim’, *Contemporary Political Theory*, 5 (2006), pp. 297–318, at p. 315; and M. Saward, *The Representative Claim* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 160–2; H. Landemore, *Open Democracy: Reinventing Popular Rule for the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, 2020), pp. 66–73; and J. Mansbridge, ‘The Evolution of Political Representation in Liberal Democracies: Concepts and Practices’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Representation in Liberal Democracies*, ed. R. Rohrschneider and J. Thomassen (Oxford, 2020).

⁷ Pitkin, *Concept*, p. 3, emphasis original.

⁸ J.A.O. Larsen, *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* (Berkeley, 1966), p. 5; D.M. MacDowell, *Andokides: On the Mysteries* (Oxford, 1962), p. 88; P.J. Rhodes, *The Athenian Boule* (Oxford, 1972), p. 192.

⁹ Rhodes, *Boule*, p. 168; D. Mirhady, ‘The Dikasts’ Oath and the Question of Fact’, in *Horkos: The Oath in Greek Society*, ed. A. Sommerstein and J. Fletcher (Bristol, 2007), pp. 48–59, at p. 53; E. Carawan, ‘Court Reform, *Kleroteria* and Comic Testimony’, *Classical Journal*, 111 (2016), pp. 385–416.

¹⁰ Manin, *Principles*, pp. 8–41.

¹¹ M.H. Hansen, ‘Demos, Ecclesia and Dicasterion in Classical Athens’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 19 (1978), pp. 127–46; M.H. Hansen, *The Athenian*

contribution of 1989, Ober eschewed the term ‘representation’ in this context in favour of ‘synecdoche, a figure of speech in which a part stands for or refers to a whole or vice versa’, on the basis that: ‘Each of the various institutional “parts” of the citizen body (*ekklesia*, *dikasteria*, *nomothetai*, *boule*)¹² could stand for and refer to the whole citizen body’.¹³ Yet, as H  l  ne Landemore has recently argued, ‘what Ober . . . describes under the term synecdoche’, namely the act of ‘standing for’, looks ‘exactly [like] what most political theorists since at least Pitkin would acknowledge as representation’.¹⁴ Moreover, as Landemore also notes, Ober himself has recently suggested as much. Rejecting the ‘common notion’ that representation is a ‘uniquely modern concept, utterly foreign to ancient democratic thought’, Ober argued in *Demopolis* (2017) that ‘the Athenian demos (as the whole of the citizen body) was imagined as present in the persons of those citizens who chose to attend a given assembly. So the demos was conceptually represented, *pars pro toto*, by a fragment of the citizenry’.¹⁵

To what extent did ancient Greek democracy involve recognizable forms of political representation? We may fruitfully begin by turning the question around. What actions were said to have been authored not by a ‘fragment of the citizenry’, to borrow Ober’s formulation, but specifically by all citizens (*pantes politai*)? Numerous examples — swearing oaths of citizenship, upholding the laws — appear in the sources, but making political decisions is not

Assembly in the Age of Demosthenes (Oxford, 1987); M.H. Hansen, ‘The Concepts of *Demos*, *Ekklesia* and *Dikasterion* in Classical Athens’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 50 (2010), pp. 495–536.

¹² That is, ‘assembly, popular courts, lawmakers and council’. Ober follows convention in referring to the Athenian assembly as ‘the *ekklesia*’. Throughout this article and elsewhere, I distinguish between the assembled people (*d  mos*), i.e. the agent that performed actions attributed to the assembly, and the meeting (*ekkl  sia*) that created that agent. See Hansen, ‘Concepts’, p. 507; D. Cammack, ‘The *D  mos* in *D  mokratia*’, *Classical Quarterly*, 69 (2019), pp. 42–61, at p. 50. ‘Lawmakers’ (*nomothetai*) are not discussed in this article owing to insufficient evidence, but cf. D. Cammack, ‘The Popular Courts in Athenian Democracy’, forthcoming.

¹³ J. Ober, ‘The Nature of Athenian Democracy’, *Classical Philology*, 84 (1989), pp. 322–34, at pp. 330–1 = J. Ober, *The Athenian Revolution* (Princeton, 1996), p. 118. Cf. Y. Papadopoulos, *D  mocratie Directe* (Paris, 1998), p. 16; S. Epstein, ‘Quorum in the People’s Assembly at Athens’, *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 60 (2009), pp. 69–98; S. Epstein, ‘Direct Democracy and Minority Rule’, in *Stability and Crisis in the Athenian Democracy*, ed. G. Herman (Stuttgart, 2011), pp. 87–102; P. Pasquino, ‘Democracy Ancient and Modern: Divided Power’, in *D  mocratie Ath  nienne — D  mocratie Moderne: Traditions et Influences*, ed. A. Christian-Hern  ndez (Geneva, 2010), pp. 1–49, at pp. 15–16.

¹⁴ Landemore, *Open Democracy*, p. 73.

¹⁵ J. Ober, *Demopolis: Democracy Before Liberalism in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 19; quoted by Landemore, *Open Democracy*, p. 73. Cammack, ‘*D  mos* in *D  mokratia*’, argues (against Ober and others) that *d  mos* did not primarily indicate ‘the whole of the citizen body’ but rather, first and foremost, ‘assembly’ or ‘collective common people’.

among them.¹⁶ Nor is ostracism (the practice of voting prominent political leaders into exile for a limited time), although that procedure was certainly open to all citizens in a number of democracies.¹⁷ Just as in elections and referenda today, there was no upper limit to the number of voters that could participate in an ostracism: any citizen who wanted to simply had to drop off his pre-prepared ballot in the *agora* on the appointed day. Ostracism was thus both fully open, in that all citizens could take part, and direct, in that each voter acted on behalf of himself and himself alone. Accordingly, it is an excellent example of non-representational political action. Yet it was also rare — in Athens, uncommon in the fifth century (we know of only ten cases) and obsolete in the fourth.¹⁸

Such fully open and direct political activity was, in fact, the exception rather than the norm in ancient Greece. Just like most people today, most ancient Greek citizens were occupied with private business (*ta idia*; *ta oikeia*) most of the time, turning their attention to public matters (*ta koina*; *ta politika*) more irregularly.¹⁹ That was especially likely to be true of those who worked the land — a significant majority in every ancient Greek community.²⁰ Accordingly,

¹⁶ Lyc. 1.76, Pl. *Laws* 747a; cf. Pl. *Crito* 51d, Dem. 24.59. Other examples: receiving suppliants (Aesch. *Suppl.* 483); hearing prophecies (Aesch. *Ag.* 1210); grieving the loss of a prince (Eurip. *Hipp.* 1462); suffering the defilement caused by an unexpiated homicide (Ant. 4.9); taking part in festivals (Xen. *Anab.* 5.3.9); singing hymns to the gods (Pl. *Laws* 799b); suffering from the misfortunes of the city (Lyc. 1.41); sharing common meals (Arist. *Pol.* 7.1330a6); wishing malefactors to be discovered (Din. 1.4); knowing the reputation of public figures (Din. 2.15); sharing in the justice, temperance and holiness necessary to sustain common life (Pl. *Prot.* 324d); seeing the lists of names of candidates in elections (Pl. *Laws* 756e); performing military service (Pl. *Laws* 814c, Arist. *Pol.* 4.1299a20); and being vulnerable to impeachment for seeking to overthrow the *dēmos* or militarily undermine the city (Hyp. 4.7).

¹⁷ Ostracism existed at Argos, Athens, Chersonesus, Cyrene, Megara, Miletus, Syracuse (under the name *petalismos*) and possibly Ephesus. See Arist. *Pol.* 5.1302b18–19; schol. Ar. *Knights* 855; S. Forsdyke, *Exile, Ostracism, and Democracy: The Politics of Expulsion in Ancient Greece* (Princeton, 2005), pp. 285–8. At Athens and presumably elsewhere, ostracism was a two-stage process: if the assembly voted to hold an ostracism, then several weeks later, citizens were invited to drop off a potsherd (*ostrakon*) bearing the name of the person they thought ought to be exiled. Whoever received the most votes had ten days to put his affairs in order before departing Attica for ten years (see further Forsdyke, *Exile*, pp. 146–9).

¹⁸ Forsdyke, *Exile*, pp. 165–77. The last ostracism we know of took place in 416, although the assembly continued to vote on whether to hold one down to the 330s (*Ath. Pol.* 43.5).

¹⁹ See e.g. Thuc. 2.40; Arist. *Pol.* 5.1308b33 — and *pace* a long tradition of argument about Athens, prominently exemplified by Constant.

²⁰ Strongly argued by V.D. Hanson, *The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization* (Berkeley, 1995), pp. 6–7. Note, however, the suggestion of D. Lewis, ‘Labour and Employment’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Athens* (Cambridge, 2021), ed. J. Neils and D. Rogers, pp. 217–30, at p. 217, that

nearly all ancient Greek political actors²¹ were ‘representative’ in the sense that they acted, and were explicitly portrayed as acting, on behalf of others who were physically absent.

The foundation of this argument is the wealth of ‘representative claims’ found in the sources.²² Although, as noted above, it has been said that the ancient Greeks had no word for ‘representation’ (which derives from the Latin *repraesentare*, ‘bring before another’, ‘portray’),²³ ancient Greek authors routinely portrayed political actors as acting on behalf of or in the interests of others. To do this, they used the preposition *hyper* (ὑπέρ), which (among other things) could mean ‘in defence of, on behalf of, in the interests of’; ‘instead, in the name of, as [a] representative’; ‘for, because of, by reason of, on account of’; or ‘for the sake of’.²⁴ *Hyper* did not always imply representation: it could indicate public service, as in the cases of liturgists (wealthy sponsors of public goods) or citizens under arms.²⁵ In this article, I take it that while all representatives serve, not all public service is political representation. Political representation specifically suggests the performance of actions leading up to and including a political decision, by some agents on behalf of others. This definition is narrow in one sense, since it focuses on actions implicated in decision-making, and broad in another, since it encompasses both formal transfers of power and less formal toleration of self-selected leaders.²⁶ It also, importantly, avoids presupposing any strong distinction between acting on someone else’s behalf and acting in their interests. Hansen has recently distinguished sharply between those two senses of *hyper*, alleging that only the

in classical Athens, only around half of the population was directly involved in farming (cf. A. Bresson, *The Making of the Ancient Greek Economy* (Princeton, 2016), pp. 142–5). For the claim that such men were less likely to attend political meetings, see Arist. *Pol.* 4.1292b25–29 with S. Todd, ‘*Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and the Attic Orators: The Social Composition of the Athenian jury’, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 110 (1990), pp. 146–73, at pp. 168–9.

²¹ By ‘actor’, I mean any person portrayed as the author of a political action (i.e. any subject of a verb denoting a political action), such as ambassadors or assembly-goers. As will be discussed in the Conclusion, collective political bodies were not portrayed as representatives, although the individuals who comprised them were.

²² Here, I follow the lead of Saward, ‘Representative Claim’.

²³ Pitkin, *Concept*, p. 2.

²⁴ H. Liddell, R. Scott and H.S. Jones, *An Ancient Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1956) (hereafter *LSJ*).

²⁵ Liturgists: see e.g. Dem. 51.54. Soldiers: see e.g. Thuc. 1.70, Isoc. 4.77, Lys. 18.7, Dem. 24.94, Aeschin. 2.183. Public officials (*archai*) also seem to have been conceived as public servants as opposed to representatives; at any rate, I have not found any representative claims featuring them.

²⁶ On formal and informal representation, see L. Montanaro, *Who Elected Oxfam?* (Cambridge University Press, 2017); W. Salkin, *Not Just Speaking for Ourselves* (Harvard University Press, forthcoming).

former suggests representation.²⁷ However, I follow Pitkin in thinking that ‘representation’ frequently implies both, and indeed that some blurring between them may be an essential feature of that concept.²⁸ Certainly, as we shall see, ancient Greek political actors often claimed that they did both.

Hyper was especially likely to indicate representation when used in conjunction with other relevant terms. Here, I draw attention to three: the noun *prostatēs* (προστάτης), one who ‘stood for’ another as a guardian or protector; the adjective *dēmōtikos* (δημοτικός), ‘on the side [or ‘in the interests’] of the *dēmos*’, which was used of both populist political measures and political leaders who advanced the interests of non-elites;²⁹ and the phrase *to plēthos to hymeteron* (τὸ πλῆθος τὸ ὑμέτερον), ‘your multitude’, which denoted the wider multitude in the community with which the speaker identified his audience but (significantly) not himself.

In what follows, I show that those terms indicated the representativeness of a wide range of political actors: elected ambassadors, generals and consuls (*proxenoi*); self-selected orators, ‘champions’ (*prostatai*) of the people, public prosecutors, and assembly-goers; and randomly selected councillors and judges.³⁰ Several of these roles existed within both democratic and oligarchical regimes, as did, in fact, electoral representation of the kind associated today with democracy. As Hansen has argued, a type of indirect democracy existed in Solonian Athens and perhaps ancient Mantinea: in both cases, Aristotle suggests that ‘the power of the people [was] restricted to electing the magistrates and calling them to account whereas deliberation and decision-making [were] left to the [elected] officials’.³¹ With respect to *oligarchia*, Matthew Simonton notes that the oligarchical norm was ‘a single powerful council’, which, however, ‘could only accommodate part of the ruling class at any one time’, causing oligarchs to rotate ‘in and out of the council by allotment or election’.³² At Larissa, Abydos and apparently elsewhere, the electorate extended beyond those eligible to sit on the ruling council (normally

²⁷ Hansen, ‘Concepts’, p. 536.

²⁸ Pitkin, *Concept*, pp. 209–10; cf. J. Fairlie, ‘The Nature of Political Representation, I’, *American Political Science Review*, 34 (1940), pp. 236–48, at p. 237. Accordingly, although in what follows I typically translate *hyper* ‘on behalf of’, the reader should be aware that ‘in the interests of’ is also implied.

²⁹ E.g. *Ath. Pol.* 9 and 28 respectively. See further Cammack, ‘*Dēmos* in *Dēmokratia*’.

³⁰ I translate *dikastai* ‘judges’ (sometimes rendered ‘jurors’), since although, like jurors, *dikastai* sat in mass panels, unlike jurors they did not engage in group discussion of cases, and, like judges, they had power to determine fact, law and penalty.

³¹ Hansen, *Reflections*, pp. 100, 106–7, drawing on *Pol.* 1318b21–32 as emended by Hansen. On Mantinea, cf. E. Robinson, *Democracy Beyond Athens* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 31–8; and A. Lintott, *Aristotle’s Political Philosophy in its Historical Context* (London, 2018), pp. 116, 161, 180–1.

³² M. Simonton, *Classical Greek Oligarchy: A Political History* (Princeton, 2017), pp. 82–3.

large property-owners or members of a political association) to the hoplites (heavily-armed soldiers) or the *dēmos* more broadly conceived.³³ Such cases approximate modern electoral democracy prior to the end of a property qualification for representatives (abandoned in the UK in 1918). However, in this article I do not pursue those cases further, but focus on classical Athens, both because of the nature of the evidence and because Athens is often portrayed as the ur-example of ‘ultimate’ (*teleutaia*) direct democracy.³⁴ Spelling out the respects in which classical Athenian politics also involved representation is accordingly to ground an argument *a fortiori*.

As we shall see, the political actors named above were frequently portrayed as acting on behalf of the *polis* (entire citizen community), *plēthos* (wider multitude) and/or *dēmos* (assembly or collective common people).³⁵ In all cases, one or more citizens ‘stood in’ for others who were not literally present, making them ‘present in a non-literal sense’ — the core of Pitkin’s widely accepted definition of representation.³⁶ Moreover, in line with Andrew Rehfeld’s argument that representation occurs whenever a relevant audience recognizes someone or something as a representative, these parties were plainly regarded as representatives by a relevant audience — at a minimum, our texts’ authors, who routinely portrayed them as acting on behalf of their fellow citizens.³⁷

Political representation was thus a feature of ancient no less than modern democracy. Yet within that basic similarity, significant differences remain. For one thing, ancient Greek democrats avoided what may be called subdivisional representation: the special responsibility of political representatives to advance the interests of the subdivision of the community from or by which they had been selected, as distinct from the interests of the community as a whole.³⁸ Even when they were chosen by deme (like Athenian councillors) or by tribe (like Athenian judges), political representatives in ancient

³³ Arist. *Pol.* 5.1305b28–34.

³⁴ To borrow Aristotelian language: *Pol.* 5.1312b35. For an example of such treatment, see Lintott, *Aristotle’s Political Philosophy*, p. 1; M.H. Hansen, ‘Introduction’, in *Démocratie Athénienne — Démocratie Moderne*, ed. Christian-Hernández, pp. xi–xxxviii, at p. xxv.

³⁵ Cammack, ‘*Dēmos* in *Dēmokratia*’, treats *plēthos* and *dēmos* as synonymous. However, a *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* search of both terms to within fifteen words reveals important differences. Whereas *dēmos* typically implied the assembly, *plēthos* indicated ‘a great number’, ‘multitude’ or ‘majority’, usually either a majority within an assembly or other determinate body, or the wider multitude in the community. Here, I focus on the latter usage; I take up the topic of *plēthos* and majoritarianism elsewhere.

³⁶ Pitkin, *Concept*, pp. 8–9; cf. Fairlie, ‘Nature’, p. 236; Mansbridge, ‘Evolution’, pp. 2–3.

³⁷ A. Rehfeld, ‘Towards a General Theory of Political Representation’, *The Journal of Politics*, 68 (2006), pp. 1–21.

³⁸ As Hansen observes, ‘at *polis* level there is no indication in our sources that any of the political institutions were *representative* in character’, where ‘representative’ implies that ‘officials coming from different subdivisions of a *polis* or from different census

Greek democracies do not seem to have been expected to act on behalf of that tribe or deme in particular, but on behalf of the entire *polis*, *plēthos* or *dēmos*.³⁹ In other words, they did not have personal constituents or constituencies. Those concepts are a modern invention.⁴⁰

Still more important, the ancient Greeks deployed a mode of representation neglected in modern democracies.⁴¹ Here, I draw on Frank Ankersmit's illuminating observation that there are two (and, he emphasizes, only two) ways that something can represent something else: either metaphorically, where not-A stands for A, or synecdochically, where a part of A stands for A or vice versa.⁴² For example, in the line 'all the world's a stage', 'stage' represents 'world' metaphorically (the world is not in fact a stage), whereas in the phrase 'hired hands', 'hands' represent workers synecdochically (hands are a part of the worker). Modern democratic institutions, most importantly elected legislatures, rely on metaphorical representation, typically in a subdivisive form. Metaphorical representatives are saliently distinct from those they represent — for instance, because they have won an election or other competition for appointment, or (less formally) because they possess an unusual level of commitment, ability or skill — and serve as representatives in virtue of that difference. This is the case even if a representative is elected or otherwise

classes were supposed to represent those who had elected them or from among whom they had been selected by lot' (Hansen, *Reflections*, p. 98, emphasis original). As Hansen's formulation implies, the same was not true above *polis* level: see Larsen, *Representative Government*; H. Beck, *Polis und Koinon* (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 166–70; E. Mackil, *Creating a Common Polity* (Berkeley, 2013).

³⁹ As Hansen also notes, however (*Reflections*, pp. 98–9), the *idea* of subdivisive representation appears at *Pol.* 1318a11–17 and 1298a40–b2, 21–23, where Aristotle advocates two groups of equal size being elected from rich and poor respectively to jointly make decisions for the *polis*. Since *Pol.* 1298b12–27 specifically concerns democracies, it may even be that some ancient Greek democracies adopted that model, though that cannot be inferred. A reference to electing by tribes also appears at *Pol.* 1305a30, but again, subdivisive representation does not seem to be implied, rather something closer to the Roman system of electing tribunes by tribal assembly.

⁴⁰ Note, however, that in his classic statement of modern representative political ideology, Burke expressly denied that he owed any more to his constituents than to the rest of the nation or empire when performing his representative duties: 'If the local constituent should have an interest, or should form an hasty opinion, evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community, the member for that place ought to be as far, as any other, from any endeavour to give it effect.' Burke, 'Speech to the Electors', pp. 55–6. On the idea of the 'constituent' more generally, see L. Rubinelli, *Constituent Power: A History* (Cambridge, 2020).

⁴¹ Neglected but not unknown, since it is implicit, for example, in the portrayal of those who actually vote as 'the [entire] electorate' and/or 'the [entire] people'.

⁴² F. Ankersmit, 'Synecdochical and Metaphorical Political Representation: Then and Now', in *Creating Political Presence*, ed. D. Castiglione and J. Pollak (Chicago, 2019), pp. 231–53, at pp. 236–7. Note that subdivisive representation constitutes a further sub-category within either synecdochical or metaphorical representation.

advanced as ‘someone like us’, i.e. one of the represented’s own, as Edmund Burke argued long ago: ‘You chuse a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *Parliament*.’⁴³ The act of election itself differentiates the elected from the electorate; whoever is elected gains the right to sit in a governing body from which the electorate is excluded. A constituent may not stand in for a senator — the two are not interchangeable. Accordingly, the representative is a metaphor for the represented. Appointed ambassadors and self-selected leaders are metaphorical representatives for the same reason: they are not interchangeable with the represented in the performance of their roles.

Ancient Greek ambassadors, generals, orators and volunteer public prosecutors were all metaphorical representatives. Even if they had originally emerged from the crowd, they represented their fellow citizens in virtue of some salient difference from them: election, capacity, will. Yet, as Ober and Landmore correctly sensed, a distinctive feature of ancient Greek democracy was its reliance on synecdochical political representation, especially for the most authoritative parts of the political system.⁴⁴ Synecdochical representatives are undifferentiated parts of the wholes they represent and serve as representatives in virtue of their essential similarity to the represented rather than any perceived or actual difference from them. In the performance of political roles, synecdochical representatives and those they represent are actually interchangeable. Any member of the whole (or almost any, given minimum age requirements in some ancient Greek cases) can stand in for any other. Ancient Greek democratic councillors, judges and assembly-goers were all synecdochical representatives.⁴⁵

Distinguishing between metaphorical and synecdochical political representation helps to explain the long-standing plausibility of the claim that ancient Greek democracy was ‘direct’ as opposed to ‘representative’. All members of the part that acted for the whole, such as assembly-goers, did

⁴³ Burke, ‘Speech to the Electors’, p. 55. As Ankersmit argues, the metaphorical quality of modern political representation is obscured by party-political ideology, which fudges the difference between represented and representatives (Ankersmit, ‘Synecdochical’, pp. 241–4).

⁴⁴ Ankersmit argues that metaphorical and synecdochical representation are mutually exclusive, since a symbol must either be part of what it symbolizes or not: ‘*tertium non datur*’ (Ankersmit, ‘Synecdochical’, p. 237; I intend to return to this claim elsewhere). Yet nothing in his argument excludes the possibility that the two modes of representation could co-exist in different parts of a political system, as I believe was the case in ancient Greece.

⁴⁵ Ankersmit does not discuss ancient Greek politics, but treats the medieval king as the primary example of synecdochical political representation (Ankersmit, ‘Synecdochical’, p. 239). As I will suggest below, however, the representation of many by many is arguably a crucial feature of synecdochical representation. Either way, ancient Greek politics offers excellent examples of the mode of representation Ankersmit describes.

indeed engage in direct political action, that is, action on their own behalf. They were *also* treated by contemporaries as representing other citizens, but the manner in which they did so is not easily legible to anyone accustomed to identifying political representation exclusively with metaphorical (and usually subdivisive) representation.

The significance of the metaphorical-synecdochical distinction goes further. Not only did ancient Greek democracies employ both modes of representation, but also, judgments regarding the manner in which representatives should act were grounded in understandings of the different character of metaphorical and synecdochical representation respectively. The two modes of representation had distinct normative implications, revealed by the connotations in each case of acting on one's own behalf or in one's own interests (*hyper heatou*). In the case of metaphorical representatives, acting (or seeming to act) in one's own interests was ground for suspicion, requiring some form of explanation or justification. By contrast, in the case of synecdochical representatives, acting in one's own interests was portrayed as an obvious and appropriate way to serve the interest of the *polis*.

These different understandings had important practical effects. Since it was assumed that the interests of metaphorical representatives and those they represented might well diverge, all metaphorical representatives were subject to routine accountability measures; and since it was assumed that the interests of synecdochical representatives and those they represented could *not* diverge, synecdochical representatives were not held accountable. What seems to have given ancient Greek democrats confidence that synecdochical representatives would not make decisions unpalatable to the rest of the citizen body was the size and openness of synecdochical institutions. Councillors, judges and assembly-goers did not make decisions singly but with, and through, the agreement of hundreds or (often) thousands of their fellow citizens, all 'being ruled and ruling in turn'.⁴⁶ In this respect and others, synecdochical representation lay at the heart of ancient Greek democracy.

I

Metaphorical Political Representatives

As noted above, in metaphorical representation, not-A stands for A. In political contexts, the representative is saliently distinct from those represented (for instance, through having been elected or possessing unusual qualities), and serves as a representative in virtue of that distinctness.

In ancient Greece, the distinctness of representatives with respect to the represented could be the result of either an election or self-selection.⁴⁷ I begin

⁴⁶ Arist. *Pol.* 6.1317b3.

⁴⁷ Ancient Greek elections were often uncontested, i.e. what we would call an approved nomination. *Haireō*, 'choose' or 'elect', was in fact distinct from *proaireō*,

with the most obvious case of metaphorical representation, namely elected ambassadors, and proceed to less obvious cases, such as self-selected orators. However, the plausibility of the less obvious cases is supported by the fact that the language used to advance claims to representativeness was in all cases the same.

Elected Representatives: Ambassadors, Generals and Proxenoí

Ancient Greek communities often sent ambassadors (*presbeis*, also rendered ‘envoys’) on missions abroad to speak, receive messages and negotiate treaties on behalf of their *polis*. How ambassadors were appointed was obviously up to each community, but in democracies, the norm was election by the assembly. Ambassadors served collegially, in groups of at least two, usually more, and the position was *ad hoc*, not long-term, although those who acquitted themselves well were likely to be chosen for other missions.

As Pitkin noted, we would call such activity ‘representation’, and the sources present numerous claims to the representativeness of ambassadors.⁴⁸ The Athenian orators Aeschines and Demosthenes regularly portrayed ambassadors as speaking and making agreements ‘on the city’s behalf’ (*hyper tēs poleōs*).⁴⁹ They also spoke of their own and others’ actions as ambassadors using the term *hyper hymōn*, ‘on your behalf’ or ‘in your interests’, where ‘you’ indicated, in the first instance, their audience (in all extant cases, a popular court).⁵⁰

Ambassadors were not normally granted power to conclude agreements but were required to return to the assembly for a vote, which if successful would be followed by a further mission to exchange oaths with representatives of the other party.⁵¹ However, if the assembly saw fit, ambassadors could be made *autokratores*, that is, given full powers (*plena potestas*) to conclude treaties on the spot.⁵² In such cases, the ambassadors not only represented the *polis* but also, and specifically, the decision-making assembly. The Athenian orator Andocides, addressing assembly-goers after a trip to Sparta at which he and his fellow ambassadors had decided to return home and put the matter before the assembly despite having ‘autocratic’ power to conclude the treaty themselves, provides an illuminating glimpse of this relationship:

‘choose one in preference to another’. See D. Cammack, ‘Aristotle’s Denial of Deliberation about Ends’, *Polis*, 30 (2013), pp. 228–50, at p. 237.

⁴⁸ Pitkin, *Concept*, p. 3; cf. Rehfeld, ‘General Theory’. ‘Representative’ also appears in translation, e.g. Dem. 19.140, trans. Vince.

⁴⁹ E.g. Aeschin. 2.55, 160; 3.116; Dem. 21.115.

⁵⁰ Aeschin. 2.24, 2.149; Dem. 19.11, 19.140, 19.165, 19.232, 19.331, 24.138; cf. Din. 1.12.

⁵¹ As in the embassy that is the subject of Aeschin. 2 and Dem. 19. The oaths were frequently sworn by generals and/or councillors, discussed below.

⁵² E.g. Thuc. 5.27, Andoc. 3.6.

Some say that the forty days allowed you for deliberation are superfluous and that we wronged you in negotiating them, for the whole point of our being sent to Sparta with full powers [*autokratores*] was to avoid this being referred back to you . . . But I think we deserve praise rather than blame if despite being sent with full powers we nonetheless hand the matter over to you for consideration. In acting as your ambassadors, we must rely not only on your written instructions but on your character, Athenians; and you have a way of being dissatisfied with things if you can have them . . .⁵³

Evidently, Andocides and his colleagues feared that they would face criticism if they actually used the decision-making power they had been given. Nonetheless, while in Sparta, they had represented the Athenians in the fullest possible sense.

Generals (*strategoí*) were also elected by assembly-goers, served collegially, and could be both re-elected and made *autokratores*, which enabled them to make decisions in the field without consulting the assembly.⁵⁴ Unlike ambassadors, they sat for year-long terms. In democratic Syracuse, generals sat as a board of fifteen, later reduced to three.⁵⁵ In Athens, the number was ten, and although they had once been elected by tribes, during the fourth century they were elected *ex hapantōn*, ‘from everyone’.⁵⁶ As well as commanding those under arms, Athenian generals presided over trials in cases under military law, made regular reports to the council, sealed treaties by taking the oath on behalf of the *polis*,⁵⁷ and (at least in the fifth century) could summon assemblies.⁵⁸ Several of these actions were portrayed as performed on behalf of the wider community. In his court case against Meidias, for example, Demosthenes described Alcibiades, the ‘best general and ablest speaker of his day’, as several times ‘tak[ing] up arms on behalf of [*hyper*] the *dēmos*’, and argued that ‘many men have done you great and useful service . . . some have won naval victories, others have captured cities, still others have set up many fine trophies on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis*’.⁵⁹

Another elected representative was a *proxenos* (related verb *proxeneo*, ‘be one’s patron or protector’ or ‘manage or effect something for another’).⁶⁰ A *proxenos* was something like a consul: a citizen who had close ties with a foreign *polis* and was accordingly deemed to be able to represent that *polis*’s interests to his home community. The nature of the relationship is indicated

⁵³ Andoc. 3.33–35.

⁵⁴ E.g. Thuc. 6.8, 6.72–73.

⁵⁵ Thuc. 6.72.

⁵⁶ *Ath. Pol.* 61.1. See L.G. Mitchell, ‘A New Look at the Election of Generals in Athens’, *Klio*, 82 (2000), pp. 344–60.

⁵⁷ Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, pp. 268–9; *IG II2* 124.

⁵⁸ Thuc. 2.22. Presumably via a request to the council, see Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, pp. 133, 229, 253; cf. Hansen, *Reflections*, p. 104.

⁵⁹ Dem. 21.145, 169; cf. 20.83, 23.214.

⁶⁰ *LSJ*.

by the name, *pro-* signifying ‘for’, and *xenos* ‘foreigner’. This position seems to have been determined in part through family ties, subject to confirmation by the assembly.⁶¹ Among prominent Athenian *proxenoi* were the generals Callias and Cimon, who represented Spartan interests at Athens, and the poet Pindar, a Theban who represented Athenian interests at Thebes.⁶²

Self-Selected Representatives: Orators, Prosecutors and ‘Champions’

The most influential political leaders in ancient Greek democracies were the orators (*rhētores*) who regularly addressed assemblies and argued cases before the courts. In the frequency and skill with which they did so, these men formed a distinct group.⁶³ For obvious reasons, ambassadors were drawn from the most successful of this pool; there was also a good deal of overlap with generals, although, in Athens, less so in the fourth century than in the fifth.

Although (or perhaps precisely because) orators were self-selected rather than elected, they were frequently portrayed, and portrayed themselves, as acting on behalf of a wider community. Lysias, in court, narrating events at the end of the Peloponnesian War, when the Spartans had been dictating peace terms to the Athenians, recalled how ‘you [indicating the judges] refused to stomach what you had heard as to the demolition of the walls, and Cleophon [a prominent Athenian orator] arose and protested on behalf of you all [*hyper hymōn pantōn*] that it could not be done’.⁶⁴ Elsewhere, in a speech written for an aspiring politician who was undergoing the scrutiny (*dokimasia*) required of all nominated councillors before taking up their seat, Lysias had the speaker argue that nobody should be ‘annoyed’ with him for ‘having attempted at too young an age to speak before the *dēmos*’, since, having observed how much ‘you’ valued men of that kind, ‘who would not be moved to act and speak on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis*?’⁶⁵ Demosthenes, likewise, portrayed orators as delivering speeches ‘on behalf of [*hyper*] this great *polis*’, warned that many would only ‘pretend’ to ‘speak and make proposals in the interest of [*hyper*] the *plēthos*’, and praised those such as Agyrrhius of Colytus who actually did so: ‘a good man, *dēmotikos*, and very ardent with

⁶¹ Thuc. 5.43.

⁶² *LSJ*.

⁶³ On the distinctness of this group, see M.H. Hansen, *Athenian Ecclesia II* (Copenhagen, 1989), pp. 1–72; Ober, *Mass and Elite*, esp. pp. 104–55; D. Cammack, ‘Deliberation in Ancient Greek Assemblies’, *Classical Philology*, 115 (2020), pp. 486–522; D. Cammack, ‘Deliberation and Discussion in Classical Athens’, *Journal of Political Philosophy* (2020); M. Landauer, *Dangerous Counsel: Accountability and Advice in Ancient Greece* (Chicago, 2019).

⁶⁴ Lys. 13.8, trans. Lamb. Cf. 13.12.

⁶⁵ Lys. 16.20–21.

respect to your *plēthos*’ (*to plēthos to hymeteron*, ‘your multitude’, indicating the mass of non-elite citizens represented by the judges he was addressing).⁶⁶

A special relationship obtained between assembly speakers and the *dēmos*, ‘assembly’ or ‘collective common people’.⁶⁷ In democracies, prominent citizens were expected to be *dēmotikos*, ‘on the side of the *dēmos*’. Demosthenes described how Lycurgus, the preeminent Athenian administrator of the 330s, ‘began to devote himself . . . to the *dēmos*’ at a time when ‘many of those who pretended to be *dēmotikos* were deserting you’, not because this policy seemed safe, ‘since there were many manifest dangers which a man was bound to incur who spoke on behalf of [*hyper*] the *dēmos*’, but because Lycurgus was ‘truly *dēmotikos* and an honest man’.⁶⁸ Elsewhere, Demosthenes portrayed those who proposed new laws as legislating ‘on behalf of [*hyper*] the *dēmos*’ and condemned Timocrates, a rival politician, for only ‘pretending’ to have the *dēmos*’s interests at heart.⁶⁹ Evidently, those who spoke publicly and made proposals in democracies were supposed to advance the interests of the *dēmos*. Observing this, Aristotle advised prudence, in order to avoid pushing the other side too hard and provoking a reaction: ‘In democracies, the demagogues . . . ought always to pretend to be speaking on behalf of [*hyper*] the well-to-do, while in oligarchies the oligarchs ought to pretend to be speaking on behalf of [*hyper*] the *dēmos*.’⁷⁰

Those who spoke before the assembly also frequently acted as volunteer public prosecutors. In Athens, indictments were of two kinds: *graphai* (public ‘writs’, which included all political offences) and *dikai* (private ‘wrongs’). *Dikai* could be brought only by the wronged individual or a family member acting on his or her behalf,⁷¹ but *graphai* could be brought by any citizen in good standing (that is, not under the penalty of partial disenfranchisement, for example on account of an outstanding debt to the *polis*). The bringer of a *graphē* was called *ho boulomenos*, ‘he who wishes’, and such men often portrayed themselves as acting on behalf of the *plēthos*.⁷² Aeschines, prosecuting Timocrates in an ‘Orators’ Scrutiny’ (*dokimasia rhētorōn*), claimed to speak on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis*, while Lycurgus, in a prosecution for treason, threatened any witnesses who refused to testify with a summons, to be brought by him ‘on behalf of you all [*hyper hymōn*] and the laws and the democracy’.⁷³

⁶⁶ Dem. 13.18, 26.23, 24.134. Cf. 16.1, 19.131.

⁶⁷ For this interpretation of *dēmos*, see Cammack, ‘*Dēmos in Dēmokratia*’.

⁶⁸ Dem. *Ep.* 3.3, trans. DeWitt, modified.

⁶⁹ Dem. 24.111, 119.

⁷⁰ Arist. *Pol.* 5.1310a7.

⁷¹ Another example of metaphorical representation, albeit not a political one.

⁷² Lys. 13.17, 18.2, 26.4, 16; cf. 26.17.

⁷³ Aeschin. 1.116, Lyc. 1.20.

Prominent leaders were sometimes called *prostatēs*, literally one who ‘stands for’ another.⁷⁴ In Athens, this term often indicated the citizen required by law by every foreign resident to stand in for them in any dealings with the citizen community (such as litigation), and to guarantee payment of the metic tax.⁷⁵ In that context, the representational relationship can scarcely be doubted. In political contexts, the arrangement was less formal and involved no transfer of either liability or decision-making power. A *prostatēs tou dēmos*, ‘champion of the people’, was simply a prominent popular leader such as the Athenians Solon, Cleisthenes or Pericles, or the Syracusan Athenagoras.⁷⁶ Moreover, in Chapter 28 of the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians*, the *prostatāi* of the *dēmos* of every generation were methodically counterposed to the *prostatāi* of the elite, suggesting that (at least according to Aristotle’s school), the *prostatēs* had become a recognized political role across the political spectrum.

The representational character of this relationship is somewhat obscured by *LSJ*, which interprets *prostatēs* in this context as signifying ‘chief’ or even ‘ruler’, as well as ‘leader’. Against that interpretation, numerous men identified as *prostatāi* by the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians* (including all those listed above) simply spoke, proposed and otherwise acted on behalf of either the *dēmos* or the *gnorimoi*, suggesting that the relationship involved (non-decision-making) representation rather than rule.⁷⁷ It does not seem to have mattered that many Athenian ‘champions of the people’ were members of the socio-economic and political elite; indeed, we are told that it was not until Cleon, in the 420s, that the Athenian *dēmos* ‘took a *prostatēs* that was not in good repute with the respectable’.⁷⁸ According to this author, even Peisistratus, the sixth-century tyrant of Athens, was a *prostatēs* of the *dēmos*, because he had been *dēmotikos*, as revealed by his ‘mild’ and ‘politic’ rule and low taxes.⁷⁹ The crucial feature of a ‘champion of the people’ was that he acted in the interests of the *dēmos*, not that he was himself a man of the people. Plato, in another context, portrayed Socrates (ironically perhaps) as a

⁷⁴ *LSJ* emphasizes ‘stands before’, as in one who stands in front of others on a battlefield. However, compare H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Harvard, 1956), §1694.

⁷⁵ Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, pp. 117–18.

⁷⁶ *Ath. Pol.* 28; Thuc. 6.35.

⁷⁷ Even Pericles, described as the ‘first man’ of Athens by Thucydides (2.65.9), did not rule the *polis*. Decisions were still made by voters in the assembly and courts. At best, leaders might be *pithanōtatos*, ‘most persuasive’ (like Cleon and Athenagoras: Thuc. 3.36, 6.35).

⁷⁸ *Ath. Pol.* 28. On the meaning of *dēmagōgeō*, literally ‘lead the *dēmos*’, see Finley, *Democracy Ancient and Modern*, pp. 38–75, and Cammack, ‘*Kratos in Demokratia*’.

⁷⁹ *Ath. Pol.* 14, 16.

prostatēs of poetry, aptly translated ‘advocate’ by Paul Shorey.⁸⁰ In the same way, a *prostatēs* of the *dēmos* was its advocate.

II

Synecdochical Political Representatives

As discussed above, in synecdochical representation, a part stands for a whole (part-for-whole synecdoche) or vice versa (whole-for-part synecdoche). In political contexts, the representative is part of the whole they represent, and serves as a representative in virtue of their essential similarity to the rest of the whole, not their differences from them.

In ancient Greek democracies, councillors, judges and assembly-goers were synecdochical political representatives. They represented the *polis*, *plēthos* and *dēmos* by virtue of being parts of those groups. They acted on behalf of their fellow citizens not because they were distinguished in any way, but precisely because they were undistinguished — that is, similar or even identical to them in what were regarded as essential respects. All the same, these men were portrayed as representing wider communities in the same language as metaphorical representatives.

Councillors

Ancient Greek sources are full of councils, many of which involved representational relationships.⁸¹ Some were what we may call ‘international’, that is, composed of members from several *poleis*, such as the joint councils of the Boeotian federation.⁸² In such cases, councillors acted on behalf of the communities from which they were drawn, either because they ruled them or because they had been selected to represent them in a similar manner to ambassadors. In other words, they were subdivisational representatives.

Councillors on ‘national’ bodies could also be portrayed as representatives, although no *poleis* that we know of adopted subdivisational representation. Aristotle makes it clear that such bodies existed in most if not all democracies, but we know most about the Athenian council (*boulē*) of 500.⁸³ Athenian councillors were men over the age of thirty, drawn every year from volunteers from each of Athens’ 139 demes in proportion to deme size. Accordingly, the council was a geographical cross-section or ‘microcosm’ of the *polis*, although the wealthy may have been slightly overrepresented.⁸⁴ Each deme

⁸⁰ Pl. *Rep.* 607d.

⁸¹ Larsen, *Representative Government*, pp. 5–15.

⁸² Larsen, *Representative Government*; Mackil, *Creating a Common Polity*.

⁸³ Arist. *Pol.* 4.1299b33.

⁸⁴ ‘Microcosm’ appears in Rhodes, *Boule*, p. 192, as a translation of *mikra polis* (mini-*polis*, schol. Aeschin. 3.4). On the wealth distribution of the council, see Rhodes, *Boule*, pp. 5–6; M.H. Hansen, *Demography and Democracy* (Herning, 1985), pp. 58–60.

was responsible for providing two candidates per position, one of whom would act as an alternative in case the nominated councillor was rejected at his pre-office scrutiny or became unable to perform the role for some other reason, and the choice between them was made by random selection.⁸⁵ Councillors took the bouleutic oath before entering office and nobody was permitted to act as a councillor more than twice in a lifetime, ensuring a high degree of rotation.⁸⁶ Finally, councillors served annual terms, meeting some 275 days per year, and were paid five obols at the end of each meeting they attended.⁸⁷

The fact that councillors were appointed proportionally from each deme may lead us to suppose that councillors were expected to represent their fellow demesmen, but there is no sign of that in the sources. Rather, councillors were consistently portrayed as acting on behalf of the entire *polis*, *plēthos* and *dēmos*. One fifth-century decree described councillors making a sacrifice on behalf of (*hyper*) the *polis*, and Demosthenes similarly argued that Meidias was ‘so impious’ that after accusing Demosthenes of murder, ‘he allowed me to conduct initiatory rites and sacrifices on behalf of [*hyper*] the council, and to inaugurate the [sacrificial] victims on behalf of you [*hyper hymōn*, indicating judges] and all the *polis*’.⁸⁸ Antiphon’s speech ‘On the Choreutes’ runs:

I offered sacrifices and prayers on behalf of [*hyper*] this *polis*; more than that, I acted as a *prytanis* [president] for the entire first month save two days; I was to be seen making offerings and sacrificing on behalf of [*hyper*] democracy, putting motions to the vote and giving opinions on the weightiest, most worthwhile public questions.⁸⁹

An inscription detailing the reward to be given to the councillor who in that year had ‘spoken [*eipein*] the best . . . on behalf of [*hyper*] the council and assembly [*dēmos*]’ confirms that giving advice and (almost certainly) sponsoring proposals were regarded as important conciliar functions.⁹⁰ Councillors were also (once) portrayed as ‘deliberating’⁹¹ and (frequently) as taking

⁸⁵ Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, p. 248. It is sometimes suggested that councillors were virtually conscripted onto the council (e.g. *ibid.*, p. 249), but there is no direct evidence of that. Presumably, the expectation that most men of age would serve at least once went a long way.

⁸⁶ *Ath. Pol.* 62.3. On the significance of the lot as a device to ensure rotation, see J. Headlam, *Election by Lot at Athens* (Cambridge, 1898), and Manin, *Principles*, pp. 28–41.

⁸⁷ *Ath. Pol.* 62.2; Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, p. 253.

⁸⁸ *IG* I3 40.65; Dem. 21.114.

⁸⁹ Ant. 6.45.

⁹⁰ *IG* II3 1 306; cf. Dem. 18.1.35. *Eipe*, ‘spoke’, was the conventional way of identifying the originator of a decree or law on inscriptions.

⁹¹ Lyc. 1.37. This is a rare use of *bouleuomai*, which implied decision-making, with the council. Cf. D. Cammack, ‘Deliberation and Discussion in Classical Athens’, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, online publication 2020. Councillors were usually said to

oaths on behalf of (*hyper*) the *polis*.⁹² In more general terms, they were described by one Athenian citizen as *bouleuein peri hēmōn*, ‘sitting in council about our concerns’,⁹³ and were sometimes treated as the authors of actions performed by the assembly.⁹⁴

Most significantly, councillors were portrayed as acting on behalf of the *plēthos* or wider multitude through the phrase *to plēthos to hymeteron* (sometimes *to hymeterou plēthos*), ‘your multitude’. Addressing councillors during a *dokimasia*, one Lysian speaker argued that ‘you should keep watch over the scrutiny process, for in making sure each man holds office fairly, the political system is safeguarded [*sōzetai*] and the rest of your multitude [*to allo plēthos to hymeteron*]’.⁹⁵ No metaphorical representative was ever addressed in that way. Ambassadors, orators and so on were frequently portrayed as acting on behalf of the *plēthos*, but they were not themselves identified with it: they were depicted as champions or advocates of the multitude, not as part of it. By contrast, the possessive adjective ‘your’ (*hymeteros*) implied a much more direct connection between councillors and the wider multitude.

Why were councillors depicted in this way? Apparently, because the vast majority were ‘everymen’ — undistinguished citizens, rather than men of prominence or ambition. As Hansen has shown, about two thirds of Athenian citizen men over forty must have served on the council at least once during their lifetime to keep it at full strength every year, and many of those men have left little or no trace on the historical record. To be sure, some famous names — a Socrates or a Demosthenes — do crop up in lists of councillors, and Demosthenes himself differentiated between the ‘talkers’ (*legontes*) and ‘orators’ (*rhētores*) on the council and the rest.⁹⁶ Yet the numbers involved imply that those who talked relatively little or not at all must have been in the majority.⁹⁷

Most councillors were therefore *of* the multitude as well as *for* it. As others have observed, the scrutiny (*dokimasia*) for Athenian officials, including councillors, set a very low bar. Councillors had to be over thirty, have a household shrine to the gods, and not have thrown away their shield in battle (i.e. deserted) or mistreated their parents.⁹⁸ In the aftermath of the regime of the Thirty, candidates might also be deemed unworthy if they had cooperated

‘predeliberate’, *probouleuō*, i.e. prepare the agenda (including proposals) for consideration (*bouleuomai*) by the assembly. However, I have not found a representative claim involving *probouleuō*.

⁹² E.g. *IG II2* 105.32–4, 124.

⁹³ *Lys.* 31.5; cf. 31.31.

⁹⁴ E.g. *Lys.* 26.2 (note the use of the second person plural).

⁹⁵ *Lys.* 26.9; cf. *Lys.* 24.25.

⁹⁶ *Dem.* 22.36–38.

⁹⁷ See further Cammack, ‘Deliberation in Classical Athens’.

⁹⁸ Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, pp. 218–20.

with the oligarchs against the *dēmos*.⁹⁹ Aside from that, any male citizen could be a councillor, provided that he wished do it. As Lysias put it, ‘I say that it is right for none other to sit in council on our concerns [*bouleuein peri hēmōn*] than those who are citizens and desire it [*epithumountas*]’. For ‘to them it makes a huge difference whether this *polis* does well or badly, because they consider themselves obliged to share a part [*meros*] of its disasters, just as they share in its benefits’.¹⁰⁰ Such men were no different from most members of the *polis*. That was the criterion on which they claimed a seat on the council and why their judgments mattered once they were installed. Again, in Lysias’ words:

I have omitted many things; but I am confident that even without them, you will yourselves judge what is advantageous [*ta sympheronta*] for the *polis*. For to judge those who are worthy to sit on the council, nothing is required other than yourselves and the civic character that enabled you to pass your own scrutiny.¹⁰¹

The civic standard to which Lysias’ speaker alluded was conceived as common to the vast majority of citizens. Those who acted as councillors served as representatives in virtue of the fact that in reaching that standard, they were exactly like most other citizens — undistinguished parts of the community as a whole.

Judges

Aristotle tells us that in ancient Greek democracies it was standard for judging (*to dikazein*) to be performed ‘by all and from all’ and for judges to be selected by lot and to receive payment.¹⁰² Unfortunately, we know very little about the composition of any courts (*dikastēria*) other than the Athenian.¹⁰³ Like councillors, Athenian judges were drawn from subsections of the political community to produce a cross-section of the *polis*, although in this case the relevant subsection was not the deme but one of Athens’ ten tribes.¹⁰⁴ Unlike councils, judicial panels likely skewed poor, thanks to the small stipend that judges received (said to have been introduced as a way of supporting the poor): three obols for only a single day’s commitment, made available to hundreds of citi-

⁹⁹ Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, p. 219; Lys. 16, 25, 26, 31.

¹⁰⁰ Lys. 31.5.

¹⁰¹ Lys. 31.34.

¹⁰² Arist. *Pol.* 6.1317b20–35.

¹⁰³ M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen, *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford, 2004), Appendix 12, lists twenty eight other *poleis* in which *dikastēria* are either certainly or possibly attested.

¹⁰⁴ Carawan, ‘Court Reform’.

zens, some 175 to 225 days per year.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, unlike councillors, judges did not have to undergo *dokimasia*. Any male citizen over the age of thirty who had taken the judicial oath (some 6,000 citizens per year in the fifth century, with evidence lacking for the fourth) was eligible to offer his service any morning that the courts were in session simply by handing in his name-plate for inclusion in the *klēroterion* (random allotment machine).¹⁰⁶ Private charges (*dikai*) were judged by a minimum of 200 citizens, public ones (*graphai*) by a minimum of 500, and panels could be combined to give 1,000, 1,500 or more judges, depending on the importance of the case.¹⁰⁷ Trials lasted no more than a day and verdicts were reached by secret ballot, through a process that was repeatedly refined to make it more secure.¹⁰⁸

Like councillors with respect to demes, judges do not seem to have been treated as representatives of their tribes except during the selection process. But they were frequently portrayed as acting on behalf of the *polis*. Demosthenes, prosecuting Aeschines in 343, argued that it would be ‘discreditable’ that ‘you [judges], who have entered this court to adjudicate at the scrutiny of these transactions, and have taken the judicial oath on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis*’, should return a verdict of acquittal.¹⁰⁹ Elsewhere, he portrayed judges as ‘coming to a decision on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis* and its laws’, while Aeschines asked the judges to ‘vote on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis* what is just and advantageous’.¹¹⁰ Another speechwriter even depicted judges as acting on behalf of citizen women, who could not, of course, judge themselves: ‘I would have each of you consider that he is casting his vote, one on behalf of [*hyper*] his wife, another his daughter, another his mother, another on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis* and the laws.’¹¹¹ Aeschines elaborated on the relationship between those inside and those outside the courts: ‘Today all the citizens [*pantes hoi politai*] have put the *polis* and the political system into your hands [*parakatathemenoi*] as a solemn trust. Some are present, listening to the case; others are absent, pursuing their personal affairs [*tōn idiōn ergōn*].’

¹⁰⁵ *Ath. Pol.* 27; Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, p. 186. D. Mirhady and C. Schwarz, ‘Dikastic Participation’, *Classical Quarterly*, 61 (2011), pp. 744–8, treat 1500 judges per day as an average requirement.

¹⁰⁶ Carawan, *Control of the Laws*, pp. 64–5, argues plausibly that in the fourth century, all citizens over thirty may have taken the judicial oath.

¹⁰⁷ Evidently, the Athenians felt that what constituted ‘enough’ participants varied depending on the circumstances; they may even have supposed that a larger sample size would give a more accurate impression of public opinion (see *Din.* 3.19, quoted below). Cf. Epstein, ‘Quorum’; more generally, on ‘enough’ in political contexts, see R. Tuck, *Free Riding* (Harvard, 2008).

¹⁰⁸ A. Boegehold, *The Lawcourts at Athens* (Princeton, 1995), pp. 21–42.

¹⁰⁹ *Dem.* 19.132, trans. Vince, modified.

¹¹⁰ *Dem.* 25.14; *Aeschin.* 3.260.

¹¹¹ *Dem.* 59.114.

Respect them and the oaths that you have sworn . . .'.¹¹² This passage, unusually, portrays political representation from the (assumed) perspective of the represented. As Aeschines put it, the entire citizenry had 'transferred' (*parakatathemenoi*) the power of judging on behalf of the *polis* into the hands of those inside the courtroom.¹¹³

Judges were also said to act on behalf of the *plēthos*. Isocrates argued explicitly that their role was to 'see to it on behalf of [*hyper*] the *plēthos* that they obtain their just rights in private disputes and have their share of common privileges'.¹¹⁴ The phrase *to plēthos to hymeteron*, 'your multitude', also appeared frequently, showing that — like councillors and unlike metaphorical representatives — judges were conceived of as standing in for a wider multitude. The speaker of Antiphon's speech 'On the Choreutes' argued that none of his enemies had been able to prove that he had done 'your *plēthos*' any harm,¹¹⁵ and this phrase reappears in the court speeches of Lysias, Demosthenes, Aeschines and Hyperides.¹¹⁶ In every case, the implication was that judges acted especially on behalf of the (presumed pro-democratic) multitude, of which they constituted a part.

Judges were also said to act on behalf of the *dēmos*. Dinarchus twice depicted judges in that way: 'you who have been assembled on behalf of [*hyper*] the *dēmos*' and 'you to whom the lot has assigned the task of judging on behalf of [*hyper*] the *dēmos*'.¹¹⁷ The interpretation of these lines has been a subject of considerable scholarly dispute.¹¹⁸ As Alastair Blanshard argues, the relationship between *dēmos* and judges was ambiguous: sometimes, as in these examples, they appeared distinct, while elsewhere — as in Dinarchus' admonition, 'You must . . . show the world that a majority [*plēthos*] of the *dēmos* has not been corrupted by a few orators and generals and are not intimidated by their reputation' — *dēmos* and judges were more closely identified.¹¹⁹ The boundaries between *dēmos* and judges were particularly blurred when pleaders attributed actions performed by assembly-goers to judges

¹¹² Aeschin. 3.8.

¹¹³ Cf. Dem. 21.233.

¹¹⁴ Isoc. 15.309.

¹¹⁵ Ant. 6.9; cf. Andoc. 1.136.

¹¹⁶ Lys. 10.27; 12.42–43, 49, 66–67, 87; 13.1–2, 9–11, 16–17, 48, 92; 20.2, 4, 7, 10, 16, 19, 26–27; 25.7; 28.3; 30.16; Dem. 24.111; Aeschin. 3.65; Hyp. 5.3.

¹¹⁷ Din. 1.84, 3.16, trans. Burt, modified.

¹¹⁸ Most notably, after repeatedly arguing that these passages show that Athenian judges were conceived as 'representing' the *dēmos*, Hansen has now retracted that argument, suggesting instead that judges merely assembled and judged 'in the interests' of the *dēmos* (Hansen, 'Concepts', p. 536, with citations).

¹¹⁹ Din. 3.19; cf. Arist. *Pol.* 4.1292a; *Ath. Pol.* 9.1, 41.2. A. Blanshard, 'What Counts as the *Demos*? Some Notes on the Relationship between the Jury and "the People" in Classical Athens', *Phoenix*, 58 (2004), pp. 28–36, at pp. 31–2.

using the second person plural ‘you’.¹²⁰ Sometimes, some of the judges may indeed have been present at the relevant meeting, as when Demosthenes, addressing judges, alleged that ‘you’ had ‘shouted to me not to let [Meidias] off’ at an assembly-meeting held some weeks earlier.¹²¹ In other cases it was plainly impossible that the addressees had actually authored the actions attributed to them, as when a pleader in a Lysian court speech claimed that his grandfather had been ‘deemed worthy by you of holding high command’, referring to an election held two generations earlier.¹²²

The concept of synecdochical representation helps to make sense of these passages. In my opinion, there is no doubt either that *dēmos* and *dikastai* constituted distinct institutions — the assembly and the courts respectively, as Hansen has long argued¹²³ — or that the two institutions were closely associated. That association could be either direct or indirect. When directly associated, judges were portrayed as personally helping to constitute the *dēmos*: to that extent, judges represented the *dēmos* synecdochically, i.e. through being part of it. One logistical detail is significant here: the courts did not meet on assembly days, indicating that some overlap in attendees was both expected and intended.¹²⁴ Yet even when a literal overlap was impossible, judges and *dēmos* could be interpreted as co-constitutive in an indirect way, since both represented the wider community. As Hansen argues, there was a ‘connecting concept’ between the two bodies — namely, the *polis*.¹²⁵ To that, I would add the *plēthos*. The language used to imply a connection between judges and *dēmos* was not mere figurative ‘licence’ (as Blanshard has argued) but a reflection of the actual relationship between these political bodies.¹²⁶ Judges acted ‘on behalf’ or ‘in the interests’ of the *dēmos* inasmuch as both epitomized, in the manner of parts to wholes, the wider *plēthos* and *polis*.

Like councillors, judges were ‘everymen’ — undistinguished citizens. Indeed, on average, they were probably much less distinguished than councillors, since *dokimasia* was not required and several sources suggest that many judges were in it mainly for the easy money — three obols for a commitment

¹²⁰ See e.g. Hansen, ‘Concepts’, p. 520; Ober, ‘Nature’, n. 17; A. Wolpert, ‘Addresses to the Jury in the Attic Orators’, *Classical Philology*, 124 (2003), pp. 537–55.

¹²¹ Dem. 21.214–216, cf. 2.

¹²² Lys. 19.14. Similar examples noted by Ober, *Mass and Elite*, p. 329; Dem. 19.224; Hyp. 5.17; Aeschin. 2.84, 3.125; Isae. 5.38.

¹²³ M.H. Hansen, *The Sovereignty of the People’s Court in Athens in the Fourth Century B.C.* (Odense, 1974); Hansen, ‘Concepts’.

¹²⁴ Dem. 24.80. By contrast, the fact that councillors met nearly every day precluded them from acting as judges, though not from attending the assembly — on the contrary, councillors were provided with front row seats at assembly meetings, and then met separately afterwards.

¹²⁵ Hansen, ‘Concepts’, p. 519.

¹²⁶ Blanshard, ‘What Counts?’, p. 41.

of only a single day.¹²⁷ In any event, judges acted on behalf of their fellow citizens in virtue of their essential similarities to them, rather than any special attributes or achievements. Namely, they were male; they were citizens; they were over the age of thirty; and, by and large, they were not especially well off.¹²⁸

Assembly-Goers

Virtually every ancient Greek *polis* we know of held mass meetings (*ekklēsiai*) open to all citizens.¹²⁹ What differentiated democracies from non-democracies was the extent of decision-making power held by the assembled people (*dēmos*) and how far down the socio-economic ladder citizenship extended. Aristotle suggested that it was *dēmotikos*, ‘on the side of the *dēmos*’, for the open meeting to be *kyrios*, ‘authoritative’, over either all things or the most important.¹³⁰ He also suggested that the earliest democracies had been dominated by agrarian small-holders; only in the ‘ultimate’ (*teleutaia*) democracies of his day did citizenship extend to the entire non-slave and non-foreign resident male population, including artisans, retailers and day-labourers.¹³¹

Yet even (or perhaps especially) where the citizenry included all free, non-foreign men, assemblies had a representative character. It was never the case that every citizen could attend an *ekklēsia*. As Eric Robinson has observed: ‘If we consider the assembly spaces at democratic Argos, Acragas, Mantinea, Megalopolis, and Syracuse, the same phenomenon emerges: very small areas for the citizen assembly relative to the estimated citizen population.’¹³² Many venues accommodated only 1,000–3,000 assembly-goers, for estimated populations of 10,000–20,000 citizens.¹³³ At Athens, on the most widely cited estimates, the Pnyx could hold at most 8,000 attendees during most of the classical era, increasing to 10,000–13,000 around 340, out of a total citizen population of 30,000–40,000.¹³⁴

¹²⁷ *Ath. Pol.* 27.4; *Ar. Wasps* 605–20. Cf. Todd, ‘*Lady Chatterley’s Lover*’.

¹²⁸ M.M. Markle, ‘Jury Pay and Assembly Pay at Athens’, *History of Political Thought*, 6 (1985), pp. 265–97.

¹²⁹ Hansen and Nielsen, *Inventory*, Appendix 12.

¹³⁰ *Arist. Pol.* 6.1317b29. On the meaning of *kyrios*, see Cammack, ‘*Kratos* in *Dēmokratia*’.

¹³¹ *Arist. Pol.* 6.1319a1. Cf. Hansen, *Reflections*, pp. 102–3.

¹³² Robinson, *Democracy Beyond Athens*, p. 229.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 229–30.

¹³⁴ M.H. Hansen, ‘Reflections on the Number of Citizens Accommodated in the Assembly Place on the Pnyx’, in *The Pnyx in Athens*, ed. B. Forsén and G. Stanton (Helsinki, 1996), pp. 24–33. Hansen’s estimate assumes that all attendees were seated, whether on the ground or on benches. However, G. Stanton, ‘The Shape and Size of the Athenian Assembly Place in its Second Phase’, in *ibid.*, pp. 8–21, argues that up to 20,000 attendees would have been possible if (as seems to me plausible) standing was

The oratorical evidence confirms what the architectural evidence implies. Athenian authors were perfectly comfortable with the thought that any given set of assembly-goers was only a part of the community as a whole. Isocrates claimed that in private matters, assembly-goers looked for wise advisers, but ‘whenever you assemble [*ekklēsiazete*] on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis*, you distrust and dislike men of that kind’.¹³⁵ Demosthenes, addressing an assembly, identified his audience as ‘men deliberating on behalf of [*hyper*] the *polis*’.¹³⁶ Like councillors and judges, assembly-goers were also portrayed as standing in for the wider multitude: in Thucydides, the Athenian orator Cleon argued that speakers should not be so carried away with ‘combats of eloquence and wit’ as to give poor advice to ‘your *plēthos*’, while Demosthenes, addressing the assembly by letter, described himself as ‘a man who is as much devoted to your *plēthos* as the best patriots’.¹³⁷ Another illuminating line appears in Plato’s *Apology*. ‘Perhaps it may seem strange’, Socrates remarks, ‘that I go about and . . . give this advice in private [*idia*], but do not venture to come before your *plēthos* and advise the *polis*’.¹³⁸ Here, the multitude is represented by both judges (the immediate addressees) and assembly-goers (those whom Socrates does not venture to address). Moreover, the assembly is in the same breath identified with the *polis*, suggesting a double representative role. That portrayal aligns with the interpretation of *dēmokratia* advanced by the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians*. Throughout that text, the author suggests that the *plēthos* has the upper hand in the community when (and only when) the *dēmos* is authoritative (*kyrios*) in the *polis* overall.¹³⁹ *Dēmokratia* implied government by the multitude (*plēthos*) because its organ, the *dēmos* (assembly) — rather than a single man or an elite council — ruled the *polis*.¹⁴⁰ In other words, in ancient Greek democratic assemblies, *dēmos*, *plēthos* and *polis* were one, albeit (to echo Pitkin) in a non-literal sense.

Like councillors and judges, assembly-goers were undistinguished citizens. Indeed, they were even less distinguished. In Athens, they simply had to be males who had reached the age of majority (eighteen or possibly twenty) and had, accordingly, taken the citizenship oath.¹⁴¹ This was the lowest possible common denominator of citizenship. Assemblies were also open to many more citizens: up to 8,000 (or 13,000 after 340), compared to only 500

allowed. On the date of the reconstruction of the Pnyx, see S. Rotroff and J. McK. Camp, ‘The Date of the Third Period of the Pnyx’, *Hesperia*, 65 (1996), pp. 263–94.

¹³⁵ Isoc. 8.13.

¹³⁶ Dem. *Ex.* 12; cf. 5.3.

¹³⁷ Thuc. 3.37, cf. 6.38; Dem. *Ep.* 2.24, trans. DeWitt.

¹³⁸ Pl. *Ap.* 31c.

¹³⁹ Ath. *Pol.* 9.1, 20.2, 21.1, 25.1, 41.2.

¹⁴⁰ Cammack, ‘*Dēmos* in *Dēmokratia*’.

¹⁴¹ Ath. *Pol.* 42 with Lyc. 1.76. Cf. P. Siewert, ‘The Ephebic Oath in Fifth-Century Athens’, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 97 (1977), pp. 102–11.

per year on the council and a few thousand most days in the courts. Attendance was kept up by increasing the stipend, which by 330 had reached six obols at each of thirty meetings per year and nine obols for the main meeting of the month — notably higher than conciliar and judicial payments.¹⁴² Also significant with respect to their representative function is the fact that assembly-goers were effectively anonymous. Councillors' and judges' names were known, since they had to hand in their official name-plate in order to take part in the selection process, but assembly attendance depended *solely* on citizen agency: if someone wished to participate, all he had to do was turn up on time.¹⁴³ As a result, it was never known precisely who had or had not been present at an assembly meeting (as the 'Old Oligarch' complained).¹⁴⁴

Accordingly, whereas Athenian councils and judicial panels were determinate samples (what Landmore calls 'open mini-publics'),¹⁴⁵ an assembly, *qua* open mass meeting, was an indeterminate part; and this, arguably, made assembly-goers still more apt synecdochical representatives. At an assembly meeting, one anonymous mass stood in for — which is to say, could easily be interpreted as — another, namely all those who were politically insignificant as individuals but powerful when they acted collectively. As I argue elsewhere, towards the end of the fifth century (when attendance was constrained by war and intimidation), the openness of the Athenian assembly — especially the practice of voting by show of hands entailed by its size — made it vulnerable to oligarchical takeover.¹⁴⁶ But in the fourth century, the increased numbers attending (thanks to the stipend) made meetings both more open and more secure against coups, making the assembly an excellent venue for synecdochical representation.

Perhaps because of these qualities, whole-for-part synecdoche often appeared in portrayals of the assembly, unlike in the cases of councils and judicial panels.¹⁴⁷ Athenian assembly-goers were sometimes depicted as 'all

¹⁴² *Ath. Pol.* 41.3, 62.2; Todd, '*Lady Chatterley's Lover*', pp. 172–3. As Epstein, 'Quorum', argues, it seems that the Athenians wished to see the main meeting of the month (at which, among other things, a vote of confidence was held in current holders of public office) especially well attended. As in the case of judges, it seems that the Athenians felt that what constituted enough participants in one context was not enough in another.

¹⁴³ Cf. *Ar. Ecc.* 280–283. Conversely, anyone who did *not* attend could be assumed to have chosen that outcome themselves — a point that considerably strengthened the assembly's claim to legitimacy. As noted by Epstein, 'Quorum', n. 17. Cf. Landmore, *Open Democracy*, pp. 109–14, on 'tacit majoritarian authorization'.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *Ps. Xen.* 2.17.

¹⁴⁵ Landmore, *Open Democracy*, pp. 13, 218–19.

¹⁴⁶ Cammack, 'Popular Courts'.

¹⁴⁷ As noted by Hansen, 'Concepts', p. 519. The only judicial examples I have found are Plato's portrayal of Socrates as having been condemned by the *polis* in the *Crito* (50c) and one conflation of 'you', the listening judges, with '[this] great *polis*' (*Dem.* 43.72).

Athenians',¹⁴⁸ 'all citizens',¹⁴⁹ or '30,000 citizens'.¹⁵⁰ Aristotle, too, used 'all citizens' to refer to assemblies when discussing ways of arranging deliberative activity in democracies.¹⁵¹ These examples may be interpreted as showing that ancient Greek authors believed that all citizens took part in ancient Greek democratic assemblies. But, more plausibly, they merely reveal the extent to which ancient authors took the representational character of assemblies for granted. It was precisely because assembly-goers were conceived of as standing in for 'all citizens' that ancient authors could portray a meeting of any citizens, open to all, as a meeting of the entire citizen body, despite the fact that all citizens were not literally present (and physically could not have been). The ancient Greeks knew perfectly well that any given meeting constituted 'a fragment of the citizenry', to repeat Ober's formulation. It was just that synecdochical political representation made it plausible to use terms denoting the whole to portray the acting parts.

III

Personal Interest and the Public Interest

The preceding two sections have shown that many political actors in ancient Greek democracies, primarily exemplified by Athens, were portrayed by contemporaries as representing other citizens. Most significantly, I have argued that Athenian councillors, judges and assembly-goers represented other citizens synecdochically, that is, through being parts that stood for a whole. In this section, I present further evidence that councillors, judges and assembly-goers represented the *polis*, *plēthos* and *dēmos* in virtue of their essential similarity to their fellow citizens, rather than (as in the case of metaphorical representatives) their differences from them. The criterion is simple: whether action on the representative's own behalf (*hyper heatou*) was suspected or celebrated. Metaphorical representatives were supposed to act for the larger group and not, or at least not primarily, for themselves. But in the case of synecdochical representatives, acting on one's own behalf was portrayed as not only acceptable but desirable. It was precisely by acting in their own interests that councillors, judges and assembly-goers were expected to serve the interests of the wider *polis*, *plēthos* and *dēmos*, as befitted their role as parts that adequately represented the whole.

Metaphorical political representatives, especially self-selected ones such as orators, often portrayed themselves as acting not on their own behalf but on behalf of their audiences and the wider groups those audiences represented.

¹⁴⁸ Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.9; Lys. 13.32, 86, 19.50; Dem. 24.48; Isae. 1.11; Din. 3.1; Aeschin. 3.224. Note that in none of these examples were assembly-goers portrayed as acting subjects (cf. n. 15 above).

¹⁴⁹ Dem. 58.45; Din. 1.4.

¹⁵⁰ Hdt. 5.97.2; Ps.-Pl. *Axioch.* 369A.

¹⁵¹ Arist. *Pol.* 4.1298a10–35; cf. 4.1300a10–25.

Demosthenes wrote: ‘If I possess any skill in speaking, you will all find that that skill has always been exercised on public issues [*tois koinois*] and on your behalf [*hyper hymōn*], never on personal issues [*ta idia*] and against you [*kath’ hymōn*].’¹⁵² Similar claims appear throughout the Demosthenic *Exordia*, a collection of openings to assembly speeches. The ‘duty’ of orators was ‘to consider what is best on your behalf [*hyper hymōn*] without self-seeking [*philonikias*].’¹⁵³ A good speaker was ‘one who seeks to gratify neither himself nor certain people, but wishes to say on your behalf [*hyper hymōn*] what he is convinced is most advantageous [*sympherein*].’¹⁵⁴ Exordium 53 is most explicit:

Has anyone ever stood up in front of you and said, ‘I have come forward . . . wanting to get my hands on something of yours, not on your behalf [*hyper hymōn*]’? Certainly not a single one — rather, they say ‘on your behalf’ [*hyper hymōn*] and ‘on your account’ [*di’ hymas*] . . . Come now . . . consider why in the world you, ‘on whose behalf’ they all speak [*hyper hōn hapantes legousin*], are on the whole doing no better than before, while these men, who all say ‘on your behalf’ [*hyper hymōn*], without a single one ever having said ‘on our own behalf’ [*hyper hautōn*], have gone from being beggars to rich men. It is because, although they say they love you, Athenians, they love not you but themselves [*hautous*].¹⁵⁵

In this passage, action by orators on their own behalf was portrayed as simple corruption — the antithesis of pursuing the public interest, which was consistently portrayed as the interest or advantage (*sympheron*) of the audience.¹⁵⁶

Acting on one’s own behalf might sometimes be admitted on the part of metaphorical representatives. One Lysian speaker, justifying the fact that he had come before the assembly at an unusually early age, argued that he had been ‘compelled to speak before the *dēmos* to protect my own interests [*hyper tōn hemautou pragmatōn*].’¹⁵⁷ Volunteer public prosecutors were especially likely to refer to their personal situations, since, as noted above, under Athenian law all public charges (*graphai*) had to be brought by private individuals, who self-selected into the prosecutorial role. Since this naturally invited politically strategic or simply vexatious lawsuits, it became conventional for prosecutors to argue explicitly that their case served the interest of the *polis* and was not *merely* the result of a private quarrel.¹⁵⁸ Aeschines, for example, opened

¹⁵² Dem. 18.277; cf. Aeschin. 19.232.

¹⁵³ Dem. *Ex.* 8.1.

¹⁵⁴ Dem. *Ex.* 19.2.

¹⁵⁵ Dem. *Ex.* 53.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Dem. 18.138, 19.132, 21.66, 23.15, 94–95, 100, 24.68, 26.14, 56.25; Aeschin. 2.118.

¹⁵⁷ Lys. 16.20, trans. Lamb.

¹⁵⁸ E.g. Lys. 1.47, 31.1–2, Dem. 18.279.

his case against Timarchus by saying that he had never previously indicted anyone, and continued:

But when I saw that the *polis* was being seriously injured by the defendant . . . I decided that it would be a most shameful thing if I failed to come to the defence of the whole *polis* and its laws, and to your defence and my own . . . Thus it appears, fellow citizens, that what is so frequently said of public suits is no mistake, namely, that very often private enmities [*idiai echthrai*] correct public abuses [*tōn koinōn*].¹⁵⁹

Since prosecutors had to go to some personal trouble to bring a case, it stood to reason that judges would want to know what had motivated them, over and above the wrong to the *polis* that constituted the charge.¹⁶⁰ The saying ‘private enmities correct public abuses’ developed by way of explanation. It was a neat way of arguing that in *this* case, at least, personal interest and the public interest coincided. Yet, crucially, the coincidence had to be argued for. It could not be assumed.

In all the above cases, it was taken for granted that there might be some mismatch between the interests of the representative and those of the rest of the community. By contrast, councillors, judges and assembly-goers were urged to act in their own interests. Their interests were assumed to be identical to the interests of the *polis* as a whole — not because each council, judicial panel or assembly was believed to be identical to the *polis*, but because, as undistinguished parts of the whole community, councillors, judges and assembly-goers were presumed likely to be affected by decisions on common affairs — defence, war and peace, foreign policy, public finance, supplies, legislation, control of politicians and public officials, and honours and punishments — in similar ways to a majority of the rest of the community.

In the case of councillors, this is revealed by the fact that the speaker in Lysias’ *dokimasia* speech ‘Against Philon’ argued against Philon’s accession to the council on the sole ground that, having abandoned the *polis* while it was ruled by the Thirty, he had shown that he did not take his personal interests and those of the *polis* to coincide. Philon would ‘abandon the public interest of their city [*to tēs poleōs koinon agathon*] to seek his private gain [*to heautōn idion kerdos*]’.¹⁶¹ The outcome of the case is not known, but since Lysias was famous in antiquity for having won nearly all his cases, this argument was almost certainly successful.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Aeschin. 1.1–2, trans. Adams.

¹⁶⁰ On the importance and implications of eliciting judicial anger, see D. Allen, *World of Prometheus: The Politics of Punishing in Classical Athens* (Princeton, 2000).

¹⁶¹ Lys. 31.6–7.

¹⁶² D. Whitehead, ‘Absentee Athenians: Lysias against Philon and Lycurgus against Leocrates’, *Museum Helveticum*, 63 (2006), pp. 132–51, at p. 133.

In the case of judges, the sources contain abundant exhortations to action in one's own interests.¹⁶³ Judges were urged to 'go to the limit of your powers, on your own behalf [*hyper hymōn autōn*] as well as on that of [those who had opposed the Thirty]'; to 'punish those who thus without scruple have given false testimony, for your own sakes [*hyper hymōn autōn*], for mine, for the sake of justice and the laws'; to 'mete out punishment in your own interest [*hyper hymōn autōn*]'; and to 'cast your votes, not only on behalf of yourselves [*hyper hymōn autōn*] and the laws, but also in the interest of reverence towards the gods'.¹⁶⁴ The language of interest or advantage (*sympheron*) also frequently appeared in judicial contexts. The exhortation to 'vote what is just and in your own interests [*ta sympheronta hymin autois*]' was so common as to constitute a rhetorical trope.¹⁶⁵ Yet it did not constitute an affront to the *polis* — quite the contrary.

Assembly-goers were also exhorted to act in their own interests. In Demosthenes' 'Third Olynthiac', he argued: 'I am not indeed blaming the man who does your duty for you, but I call on you to do that for yourselves [*hyper hymōn autōn*] which you reward others for doing . . . It is for you to choose what is likely to benefit [*sympherein*] the *polis* and all of you.'¹⁶⁶ Similarly, in Exordium 46, the listening audience was asked to 'become . . . willing listeners on your own behalf [*hyper hymōn autōn*]'. Elsewhere, Andocides praised assembly-goers for acting in their own interest (*ta sympheronta hymin autois*), while Demosthenes repeatedly depicted their task as choosing the proposal most to their advantage (*sympheron*).¹⁶⁷

In sum, all ancient Greek political representatives, whether they represented others metaphorically or synecdochically, were supposed to act on behalf of wider groups — *polis*, *plēthos* and/or *dēmos*. But only councillors, judges and assembly-goers were portrayed as acting on behalf of those wider groups *inasmuch as* they acted on their own behalf or in their own interests.¹⁶⁸ Speakers routinely asked synecdochical representatives to act in their own interests, seemingly without fearing that that might present a conflict of interest either with one another or with the rest of the citizenry. Metaphorical political representatives, by contrast, were urged to aim at a public or common

¹⁶³ Possibly contradicting Arist. *Rhet.* 1354b25–30.

¹⁶⁴ Lys. 12.94, trans. Lamb; Dem. 46.28, 50.64, 59.74, all trans. Murray. Cf. Aeschin. 3.120; Din. 1.26; Din. 1.98.

¹⁶⁵ Hyp. 2, Fr. 15b. Cf. Is. 1.40; Lys. 19.64; Aeschin. 3.8; Dem. 21.213, 26.14, 24, 35.56, 43.84, 45.49.

¹⁶⁶ Dem. 3.36, trans. Vince.

¹⁶⁷ Andoc. 1.106; Dem. 1.1, 7.1, 16.23, *Ex.* 3, 6, 13, 18, 20, 32, 34, and 36.

¹⁶⁸ Here, we should note Aristotle's interpretation of *demokratia* as a regime in which those of little property rule in their own interest (*Pol.* 3.1279b9; cf. Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 2.20). On my argument, that was entirely correct: it was precisely by ruling in their own interest that the mass of assembly-goers were expected to serve the public interest.

(*koinē*) interest beyond or distinct from their own interest, thus confirming their presumed distinctness from those they represented.

This argument does not imply that councillors, judges and assembly-goers were believed to be unable to distinguish between public matters (*ta koina, ta politika*) and personal or private ones (*ta idia, ta oikeia*). Those two spheres were clearly differentiated in one of the most celebrated examples of ancient Greek democratic ideology, Thucydides' rendering of Pericles' Funeral Oration: 'Our public men have, besides politics [*ta politika*], their private affairs [*oikeiōn*] to attend to, and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters [*ta politika*].'¹⁶⁹ The difference between public and personal affairs was also, arguably, implied in the judicial oath, which bound judges to give each side an impartial hearing and to decide in accordance with the laws and decrees of the Athenians.¹⁷⁰ The significant point is simply that in the case of synecdochical representatives considering public matters, the personal interest of participants was assumed to coincide with the public interest, whereas in cases of metaphorical representation, that coincidence was not assumed.

This assessment was highly consequential for the distribution of decision-making powers and accountability. In ancient Greek democracies, decision-making power was virtually always kept in the hands of synecdochical representatives (or, in the case of ostracisms, the entire citizen body), who were formally unaccountable, while metaphorical representatives made few or no final decisions and were always subject to accountability measures. In Athens, ambassadors and generals underwent an audit (*euthuna*), both ethical and financial, at the end of each period of office, and could face impeachment (*eisangelia*) at any time.¹⁷¹ Even those voted 'autocratic' powers were not thereby rendered unaccountable: being *autokratores* simply meant that they were authorized to use their independent judgment while abroad — it did not prevent them facing charges for dubious decisions later (thus explaining the reluctance of Andocides and the other envoys to Sparta to actually use the powers they had been granted). Orators could be targeted by the 'Orators' Scrutiny' and prosecuted for making a deceitful promise to the *demos*, for taking bribes, or for making an illegal (*paranomōn*) or 'unfitting' (*mē epitēdeion*) proposal.¹⁷² Even volunteer public prosecutors were liable to a crippling fine if they failed

¹⁶⁹ Thuc. 2.40, trans. Smith. Cf. Isoc. 8.13.

¹⁷⁰ Reconstructed by M. Fränkel, 'Der attischen Heliasteneid', *Hermes*, 13 (1878), pp. 452–66; cf. Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, p. 182; Mirhady, 'Dikasts' Oath', p. 49. On 'demotic justice', see D. Cammack, 'Plato and Athenian Justice', *History of Political Thought*, 36 (2015), pp. 611–42, and D. Cammack, 'Were the Ancient Greeks Epistemic Democrats?', in *The Discovery of the Fact*, ed. C. Ando and W. Sullivan (Ann Arbor, 2020), pp. 9–38.

¹⁷¹ Dem. 19.211; M.H. Hansen, *Eisangelia* (Odense, 1975), p. 58.

¹⁷² Dem. 49.67; Hyp. 4.8; Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, pp. 205–12. 'Unfitting' is Carawan's translation, *Control of the Laws*, p. 51.

to secure a fifth of the judges' votes and could also be prosecuted for slander or other wrongs.

By contrast, judges, assembly-goers and councillors were formally unaccountable (*aneuthunos*) for their actions.¹⁷³ That is easy to see with respect to judges and assembly-goers, since they were subject to neither audit nor impeachment and their decisions could not be appealed.¹⁷⁴ Councillors present a trickier but ultimately revealing case. Aeschines explicitly described the council as *hypeuthunos*, 'accountable', and Rhodes speaks of the 'corporate' accountability of the council as an established fact.¹⁷⁵ As Steven Johnstone has discussed, 'corporate' or 'collective' accountability was certainly practised in ancient Greece, most notoriously in the case of the eight Athenian generals tried for treason after the battle of Arginusae, but also with respect to many other boards of magistrates.¹⁷⁶ But the only form of collective accountability that seems to have applied to the council is the fact that the assembly could withhold their honorific crowns if the Athenian navy was not adequately kept up.¹⁷⁷ That was a very mild form of accountability, if it deserves to be called that at all. On the other hand, individual councillors were certainly held accountable when playing official roles on top of their basic service as councillors — which, as Danielle Allen has shown, many did.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, they could be prosecuted if (when acting as a council president) they improperly put a motion to the vote or (when acting as a *rhētor*) they sponsored an illegal proposal. The latter fact is particularly striking, since every proposal that emerged from the council had to be voted onto the assembly's agenda by a majority of the entire council. The fact that the Athenians chose not to hold the entire council accountable if the proposal was later judged to have been illegal suggests that they deliberately avoided the principle of collective responsibility for councillors.

The Athenians were, accordingly, comfortable with synecdochical representatives being unaccountable for their actions. Why? One reason is suggested

¹⁷³ Informal accountability lay in the fact that the council was often open to spectators (Lys. 26.12–15), and trials and assembly meetings always were. See A. Lanni, 'Spectator Sport or Serious Politics? οἱ περιεστηκότες and the Athenian Lawcourts', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 117 (1997), pp. 183–9.

¹⁷⁴ As discussed by M. Landauer, 'The *Idiōtēs* and the Tyrant: Two Faces of Unaccountability in Democratic Athens', *Political Theory*, 42 (2014), pp. 139–66, and Landauer, *Dangerous Counsel*, pp. 25–58; K. Hoekstra, 'Athenian Democracy and Popular Tyranny', in *Popular Sovereignty in Historical Perspective*, ed. R. Bourke and Q. Skinner (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 15–51. The decisions of assembly-goers could, however, be annulled by judges if the proposer of a decree was convicted of having made an illegal proposal: Hansen, *Athenian Democracy*, pp. 205–12.

¹⁷⁵ Aeschin. 3.20; cf. Andoc. 2.19. Rhodes, *Boule*, p. 15.

¹⁷⁶ S. Johnstone, *A History of Trust in Ancient Greece* (Chicago, 2011), p. 132.

¹⁷⁷ Dem. 22.12; cf. *Ath. Pol.* 46.

¹⁷⁸ Allen, *World of Prometheus*, Appendix A, pp. 305–16, with *Ath. Pol.* 24.3.

by Lysias, in a case of *dokimasia* of an official: ‘had he qualified for the Council, he would have held his seat as one in a body of five hundred, for a year only; so that, if in that period he had wished to commit an offence, he would have been easily prevented by the others’.¹⁷⁹ Councillors did very little singly. Their most important actions, such as setting the assembly’s agenda, were authored not by individual councillors but by the entire council, operating under the majority principle. The same, of course, was true of assembly-goers and judges. As individuals, they were powerless; their actions were collective, predicated on the agreement of large numbers of other citizens — not only those in the majority in any given vote, but also those who, despite being outvoted, nonetheless unanimously supported the majority position being advanced as the decision of the entire body.¹⁸⁰ On this view, what protected the rest of the *polis* and *plēthos* from harm was largely safety in numbers — and, presumably, the prospect of other citizens taking their own turn soon enough.

This raises an important question. Should acting *en masse* be considered an intrinsic aspect of synecdochical representation? The ancient Greek evidence suggests that it should. Ancient Greek councillors, judges and assembly-goers were not only undistinguished parts of the *polis*, *plēthos* and *dēmos*, but also undistinguished parts of the council, judicial panel and assembly. The parallel is striking. Some political roles, such as ambassador, orator or board of officials, could only be performed by individuals or small groups.¹⁸¹ But inasmuch as those men performed influential individual roles, they were by definition distinguished from the mass of citizens. Only a mass of undistinguished citizens could represent the wider multitude without fear that its interests would diverge from the public interest, precisely because its actions depended on the agreement of so many other citizens. An ancient Greek democrat would probably not have regarded any influential individual — whether a ‘champion of the people’, a medieval king or member of Parliament — as a synecdochical representative: the singularity of those positions prevents it.

Conclusion

The claim that ancient Greek democracy was direct as opposed to representative is as close to a truism on this topic as any one may find. Yet, it is misleading. Many citizens in ancient Greek democracies did indeed participate directly in political decision-making. But they *also* acted on behalf of (*hyper*) others: the entire citizen community (*polis*), the wider multitude (*plēthos*), and/or the assembly or collective common people (*dēmos*). Representation

¹⁷⁹ Lys. 26.11.

¹⁸⁰ As described in Dem. *Ex.* 35.

¹⁸¹ Cf. D. Cammack, ‘Aristotle on the Virtue of the Multitude’, *Political Theory*, 41 (2013), pp. 175–202.

was built into the fabric of ancient Greek democracy. It could not have functioned otherwise.

One representational mode, which I have (following Ankersmit) called ‘metaphorical’, is found in both ancient and modern democracies. In such cases, not-A stands for A. Both elected officials and self-selected leaders represent other citizens metaphorically, i.e. in virtue of some salient difference between themselves and the represented — having been elected or having special skills or dedication. Because of these salient differences, in classical Athens, metaphorical representatives had to work hard to show that their political actions were not (merely) self-interested but were aligned with the interests of the *polis*, and they were subjected to routine accountability measures to keep them in line.

But ancient Greek democracies also — and more importantly — used another representational mode, which I have (again, following Ankersmit) called ‘synecdochical’. In such cases, a part of A stood for A. Ancient Greek democratic councillors, judges and assembly-goers represented their fellow citizens synecdochically, that is, by being undifferentiated parts of the wholes from which they were drawn. They represented others in virtue of their essential similarities to them — typically, because they too were citizens, men, sufficiently old, relatively insignificant, and one of many. Because of those similarities, whatever actions a majority of synecdochical representatives deemed to be in their interest were assumed to be in the interests of a majority of other citizens as well. Accordingly, councillors, judges and assembly-goers were expected to consider their own interests when deciding public matters and were not held accountable by the wider community for their decisions. The large numbers of synecdochical representatives and the high degree of rotation through the community over time seem to have provided all the reassurance that most citizens needed that there would be no significant conflicts of interest between synecdochical representatives and the rest of the community.

To conclude, I wish to consider the implications of a hitherto under-emphasized feature of the foregoing material: synecdochical representation in ancient Greek democracy was performed by individual citizens, not collective political bodies. As we have seen, ancient Greek authors frequently portrayed councillors, judges and assembly-goers as acting on behalf of other citizens. They also frequently portrayed councils, judicial panels and assemblies as collective agents.¹⁸² However, I have not found any examples of a collective political agent being portrayed as a political representative. Nowhere in the extant sources, for instance, is it said that the *dēmos* acted on behalf of (*hyper*)

¹⁸² Councils: Andoc. 1.90; Lys. 13.19; Dem. 20.4, 36, 21.162. Judicial panels: Ar. *Wasps* 623; Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.2 and 5.2.35; Pl. *Laws* 909b; *Ath. Pol.* 49.3. Assemblies: Aesch. *Supp.* 623; Ps. Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 1.16; Aeschin. 2.60; Dem. 19.8. See further Cammack, ‘Deliberation in Ancient Greek Assemblies’, pp. 512–13.

the *polis*. This contrasts with English usage, according to which the (entire) UK Parliament, for instance, has historically been called the ‘Representative of the People’.¹⁸³

This ancient Greek discursive habit suggests an intriguing disjunction between representation and rule. Representation of some citizens by others was an important element of ancient Greek democracy, but — as Aristotle observed — political authority (*kyros*) belonged not to the individual assemblage, councillor or judge, but to the collective bodies of which they formed a part: the (entire) assembly, council or court.¹⁸⁴ Aristotle also identified a core principle of *dēmokratia* as ‘being ruled [*archesthai*] and ruling [*archein*] in turn’, recently reworked by Landmore as ‘representing and being represented in turn’.¹⁸⁵ On the evidence presented in this article, ancient Greek democracy involved both representation and rule, but sequentially and by subtly different agents. Large numbers of citizens could severally represent others in the run-up to politically authoritative acts. But the authoritative body was the collective entity, made into a single agent through the majority principle, that is, the unanimous agreement of the entire body to adopt as its decision the position advanced by its largest part; and when *it* acted, the collective body did not represent others but ruled them.

Although modern political discourse does not portray representative politics in the same light, the ancient Greek perspective is illuminating. The disjunction between representation (performed by individuals) and rule (performed by collectives) implied throughout the sources on ancient Greek democracy parallels the fact that, although we hope that our elected political representatives will act as our advocates during the political process, we are bound not by their individual actions but only by the actions authored by the collective body of which they form a part.¹⁸⁶ That, in turn, implies that the modern use of subdivisional representation may be less consequential, from the point of view of democratic authority, than is normally supposed. The fact that a district is represented on an authoritative political body does not give that district a share in rule but only periodic control over who will form part of the ruling body. Representative government, as practised today, means being ruled by a council (or hierarchically organized series of councils) of some tens or hundreds of elected officials, who collectively make authoritative decisions for the rest of the community without any routine form of accountability beyond the possibility of not being re-elected. As noted above, this closely

¹⁸³ See e.g. D. Hirst, *The Representative of the People?* (Cambridge, 1975).

¹⁸⁴ Arist. *Pol.* 3.1282a33–40.

¹⁸⁵ Arist. *Pol.* 6.1317b2; Landmore, *Open Democracy*, p. 10. *Contra* Cammack, ‘*Dēmos* in *Dēmokratia*’, who suggests that the *dēmos* ‘acted on behalf of, or in other words ruled, the *polis*’. In the evidence canvassed above, ‘acting on behalf of’ and ‘ruling’ were not equivalent.

¹⁸⁶ I thank Jane Mansbridge for encouraging me to think about this issue.

resembles one species of ancient Greek oligarchy. What distinguished ancient Greek democracy from that form of government was the fact that supreme political authority rotated through large numbers of synecdochical representatives, in the form of both open mini-publics (councils and courts) and open mass meetings (assemblies); and that model of democracy — *pace* many modern commentators — is not obviously precluded by either the size or the complexity of modern states.

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