

ATHENIAN POLITICIANS AND INSCRIPTIONS OF THE YEARS 307 TO 302

For Christian Habicht

ABSTRACT

The leading politicians of the years 307/6 to 302/1 B.C. in Athens were Demosthenes' nephew, Demochares, son of Laches, of Leukonoion, and Stratokles, son of Euthydemos, from Diomeia. With the ouster of Demetrios of Phaleron in the year 307, they and their fellow politicians ostentatiously proclaimed renewed freedom. As part of their democratic program, they published many decrees on stone. They also took care that the inscribers of these measures used blank spaces or line-initial position to give their names visual prominence. Clearly, they expected their fellow citizens to notice—that is, to read—their names.

It is the purpose of this note to document briefly a curious case in which prominent Athenian political figures appear to have exercised a direct influence on the layout of inscriptions.¹ The layout of the text on the stone was a matter normally, and of necessity, left to the discretion of the letter-cutters, that is to say, those who actually did the inscribing.²

Inscriptions basically reflect political acts. Attic decrees are a manifestation of actions taken by the Athenian council and public assembly. The motivation behind the passage of a decree, in most cases, cannot be known by us in any detail. Moreover, the decision about which measures were to be inscribed and set up in a public place was no doubt often a matter of much partisan wrangling. Again, it is unclear what rules applied. Not inscribing may also be a political act. During the ten-year period from 317 to 307 B.C., when Demetrios of Phaleron was Cassander's spokesman in Athens, few decrees were inscribed.³ This situation has been taken to indicate the autocratic nature of the government at that time; it certainly made Demetrios vulnerable to attack on the issue. I have argued elsewhere, however, that this should be interpreted not as an anti-democratic act but an economic one.⁴ Demetrios of Phaleron circumscribed the funds available for inscribing stelai, just as he limited private expenditures for lavish grave monuments; thus, few texts were inscribed in a more or less permanent form on stone. In any case, a lack of inscriptions provides no evidence that the assembly was less active than usual. When the other Demetrios, the

1. A version of this paper was delivered in Chicago on December 29, 1997, at the inaugural paper session of the American Society of Greek and Latin Epigraphy (ASGLE), a joint colloquium of the American Philological Association and the Archaeological Institute of America. That session honored my colleague and friend Christian Habicht.

2. On the procedures of a cutter, see Tracy 1975, pp. 95–120, esp. 115–119.

3. For specifics, see below, p. 229 and note 29.

4. Tracy 1995, pp. 36–51, esp. 37–41.

son of King Antigonos, took Athens in 307 and expelled the Macedonian garrison, he claimed to have freed Athens and restored the democracy. Demetrios of Phaleron was allowed to withdraw to Thebes. The Athenians responded with an outburst of enthusiasm at the ouster of the hated Macedonian garrison from Piraeus and by lavishing praise upon Demetrios and his father King Antigonos as “Savior gods.”⁵

The leading politicians of the ensuing new order were Demochares, son of Laches, of the deme Leukonoion⁶ and Stratokles, son of Euthydemos, from Diomeia.⁷ Demochares was a nephew of Demosthenes and followed his uncle’s policy of outspoken opposition to the Macedonians. During the late summer of the year 322 B.C., when he was only in his late twenties, he opposed the demand by the victorious Macedonian general Antipater to condemn Demosthenes, Hyperides, and other Athenian leaders after the defeat at Krannon.⁸ He was very active in rearming and refortifying the city in the year 307 and thereafter, following the ouster of Demetrios of Phaleron;⁹ indeed, it was almost certainly he (the name is restored) who proposed in the year 307/6 the inscription published as *IG II² 463*, a decree to rebuild the long walls. In doing this, he surely had in mind the leadership of his uncle just thirty years earlier in refortifying the city after the defeat at Chaironeia.¹⁰ During the year 307 or 306, Demochares also supported a certain Sophokles, who proposed and secured the passage of a law stipulating that no one be allowed to head up one of the philosophical schools unless approved by the council and the assembly of Athens. Although ostensibly a general law, it was aimed at Aristotle’s school, the *Peripatos*. Aristotle and his successor, Theophrastos, both had had extensive connections with Macedonia and were no doubt considered by some to be dangerously “pro-Macedonian.” Sophokles’ law was soon found unconstitutional and he was fined, despite Demochares’ plea for the defense in which he vigorously attacked Aristotle.¹¹ Demochares’ dislike of the Macedonians and admiration for his uncle Demosthenes lasted all his life. Indeed, one of his final public acts was to move a decree in the year 280/79 granting posthumous honors—a statue and the right to eat in the public dining room—to Demosthenes.¹²

The other major political figure of the time was Stratokles of Diomeia. He came from a wealthy family; both his grandfather and father served as trierarch several times.¹³ He was almost an exact contemporary of Demochares. We first hear of him in the year 324, when he joined in the prosecution of Demosthenes at the time of the Harpalos affair.¹⁴ He proposed twenty-eight decrees that we know of in the years 307 and after, more than any other known politician.¹⁵ Among these is *IG II² 457*, the famous decree of early 306 B.C. honoring Lykourgos, the great Athenian financier, for his championing of the democracy.¹⁶ This seems a clear attempt on his part to recall the great days of the democracy of the 330s and to align himself programmatically with the policies of Lykourgos. He soon, however, became a strong adherent of Demetrios Poliorketes and was criticized for his flattery of the king by Demochares.¹⁷ This led to Demochares’ exile early in the year 303.¹⁸

Demochares and Stratokles were not, of course, the only political figures active at this time; there were others (see the names of the orators/

5. Plut. *Demetr.* 10.

6. *PA* 3716.

7. *PA* 12938.

8. [Plut.] *Vit. X orat.* 847d with Plut. *Dem.* 28.2.

9. [Plut.] *Vit. X orat.* 851d.

10. On Demosthenes’ role as τευχῶν ἐπιμελητής, see Dem. 18.118, Aeschin. 3.17, and [Plut.] *Vit. X orat.* 845f–846a, 851a.

11. Ath. 13.610f; Diog. Laert. 5.38. On the whole affair, see Habicht 1988, pp. 7–10.

12. [Plut.] *Vit. X orat.* 850f–851c.

13. *IG II² 1612*, lines 136–140, 271–278, 317–319, 320–321, 322–323. For more on the family, see Davies 1971, pp. 494–495.

14. Din. 1.1, 20–21.

15. For a list, Dinsmoor 1931, pp. 13–14, with the additions noted by Habicht (1977, p. 39, note 15). There is another decree of his now published in Koumanoudis 1986. Osborne (1981–1983, II, p. 137) has identified no. D62 in his collection as yet another.

16. This inscription is quite fragmentary. [Plut.] *Vit. X orat.* 852 also provides a text of this measure.

17. Ath. 6.252f–253d.

18. Plut. *Demetr.* 24; [Plut.] *Vit. X orat.* 851e.

19. *PA* 5326. During the year 304 he proposed the fragmentary honorary decree, *Hesperia* 5, 1936, p. 201, for a supporter of the democracy (line 15) and in the next year *IG* II² 483, a measure praising a Rhodian doctor, most probably for his services in the four-year war against Cassander.

20. *PA* 9450; Davies 1971, p. 425. In about 302 he proposed *IG* II² 506, a decree praising a certain Menoites for, among other things, his aid in the Lamian War.

21. He is most probably the son of Nikostratos, son of Pythodoros, of Acharnai (*PA* 11026). For the family, see Davies 1971, pp. 481–484. He is restored as the orator in line 9 of *Agora* XVI, no. 107, a fragmentary honorary decree of the year 307/6.

22. Davies 1971, pp. 161–165.

23. *Lys.* 13.13, 31; 30.14.

24. *Xen. Hell.* 6.3.2, 7.

25. *Dem.* 18.114; *IG* II² 1496, lines 22–25.

26. *Arr. Anab.* 1.10.4.

27. Habicht 1995, pp. 76–88; this is translated in the English version as “Democracy without Full Freedom” (Habicht 1997, pp. 67–81).

28. (Lykourgos) [ὑπὲρ τοῦ τῆν πόλιν] ἐλευθέραν εἶναι καὶ αὐτ[όνομον πάσῃ μηχανῇ ἀγωνιζόμενος (*IG* II² 457, lines 16–17). These fulsome words of Stratokles praising Lykourgos early in the year 306 provide a good idea of the political rhetoric of the time.

29. For a discussion of other inscriptions that have been assigned to these years or may be, see Tracy 1995, p. 36, note 2.

30. Fifteen are listed in Tracy 1995, p. 40, note 21. We may now add *Agora* I 4953 (*Agora* XVI, no. 107A).

31. No such prominence is granted to the secretary or to the chairman of the *proedroi*, the other two officials routinely named in the bodies of preambles. The archon's name has natural prominence, for it normally comes first in the dating formula ἐπὶ τοῦ δεῖνος ἄρχοντος.

politicians listed in Table 1), such as Euboulides of Eleusis,¹⁹ Lysikrates of Melite,²⁰ Pythodoros of Acharnai,²¹ and Diotimos of Euonymon. Lamentably, we know little directly about these individuals beyond the decrees they proposed. Diotimos of Euonymon is representative. He put forward *IG* II² 467, a decree of the year 306/5, honoring a certain Timosthenes for his actions against the Macedonian general Antipater at the time of the Lamian War. This is all we know of *him*, but his family is a well-known one with a history of supporting the democracy.²² His great-grandfather's brother was a general in the Peloponnesian War and was executed by the Thirty Tyrants in 405/4.²³ His grandfather's cousin was remembered for a strongly anti-Spartan speech.²⁴ His uncle contributed shields to rearm the people after the battle at Chaironeia²⁵ and was one of those followers of Lykourgos and Demosthenes whom Alexander demanded be handed over to him in autumn of the year 335.²⁶

The record is clear. These men tended to look to the past and sought to align themselves, through proposals put forward in the assembly, with prominent individuals who had led the city in opposition to Macedon. Whatever their political differences—Demochares will not, for example, have appreciated *or forgotten* Stratokles' prosecution of his uncle Demosthenes in the Harpalos affair—in the first years following the ouster of Demetrios of Phaleron they collaborated in presenting a strong public stance that was pro-democratic and anti-Macedonian. Their cohesiveness was undoubtedly abetted by Cassander's efforts to regain control of Athens during the years 307 to 304 in the conflict known as the Four Years' War. The two led what Christian Habicht in his recent book on Hellenistic Athens has felicitously described as “die halbfreie Demokratie.”²⁷

Whatever else they did, they made a special point of issuing many decrees on stone and obviously intended these inscriptions to publicize their political program: the ostentatious claim of a renewed freedom.²⁸ The contrast between their practice and that under Demetrios of Phaleron is most striking. Only two inscriptions, *IG* II² 450 and 453, can certainly be assigned to the years 317 to 307, the ten-year period of Demetrios.²⁹ Sixteen inscriptions can now be attributed to the year 307/6 alone, the first year of the new regime.³⁰ These politicians clearly considered decrees published on stone not only as visible signs of democratic action, but also as a clear way of differentiating themselves from the previous regime. They unquestionably expected their fellow citizens to take note.

All this is more or less well known, at least to a select few. What has not heretofore been noticed is that an unusually high number of the texts of the years 307 to 302 emphasize the orator, that is, the politician who proposed the measure.³¹ This is accomplished either by placing blank spaces before the speaker's name or by according his name first position in the line. Large letters, which might also have achieved the desired effect, were not used; they are deployed in Attic decrees only in headings, never in the body of a text. Moreover, Attic inscriptions normally have no spaces between clauses and none between words; their inscribed faces present to the viewer a sea of letters all run together. Thus, blank space(s) and line-initial position will have enabled a reader to pick out quite easily the name of the speaker. That was the purpose and it is a matter of some consequence.

TABLE 1. INSCRIPTIONS OF THE YEARS 307/6 TO 302/1

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Orator/Politician</i>	<i>Cutter/Hand</i>
SPEAKER EMPHASIZED				
<i>Agora XVI</i> , no. 107	[Anaxikrates] 307/6 ^a	space[s] before ἔδοξε	[Pythodoros Acharneus]	<i>IG II</i> ² 1262 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 358	[Anaxikrates] 307/6	line-initial	----nos Kydathenaieus	<i>IG II</i> ² 498 Cutter
Hondius 1925, pp. 39–40	Anaxikrates 307/6	line-initial	[Str]atokles [Diomeeus]	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 455	[Anaxikrates] 307/6	line-initial	[Stratokles Diomeeus]	<i>IG II</i> ² 1262 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 463	[Anaxikrates] 307/6	line-initial	[Demochares Leukonoieus]	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 467	Koroibos 306/5	line-initial	Diotimos [Euonymeus]	————
<i>Agora XVI</i> , no. 113	Koroibos 306/5	blank space[s]	son of Kephisogenes Acharneus	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 471	Koroibos 306/5	1 blank space	Stratokles Diomeeus	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 796	[Euxenippos] 305/4 ^b	line-initial	-----	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 554	ca. 305	2 blank spaces	Phileas Palleneus	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 482	Pherekles 304/3	line-initial	-----eus	————
<i>Horos</i> 4, 1986, pp. 19–20	[Pherekles] 304/3	2 blank spaces	[Ka]laides [Xypetaion]	————
<i>Hesperia</i> 7, 1938, p. 297, no. 22	[Pherekles] 304/3	1 blank space	Stratokles [Diome]eus	<i>IG II</i> ² 478 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 486	Pherekles 304/3 ^c	4 spaces before ἔδοξε	[Stratokles] Diomeeus	<i>IG II</i> ² 495 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 496	[L]eostr[atos] 303/2	1 blank space	[Stratokles] Diomeeus	<i>IG II</i> ² 1262 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 498	[Leostratos] 303/2	6 blank spaces	Philostratos Kephisieus	<i>IG II</i> ² 498 Cutter
<i>Hesperia</i> 1, 1932, p. 45, no. IV	Nikokles 302/1	3 blank spaces	Strat[okles Diomeeus]	<i>IG II</i> ² 478 Cutter
<i>Agora XVI</i> , no. 123	Nikokles 302/1	2 blank spaces	Memnon Aphidnaios	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 504	[Nikokles] 302/1	line-initial	-----eus	<i>IG II</i> ² 1262 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 374	307–303/2 ^d	line-initial	[---k]leous Gargettios	————
<i>Agora XVI</i> , no. 110	307–301	1 blank space	Str[atokles Diomeeus]	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 595	ca. 303	line-initial	[-----G]argettios	<i>IG II</i> ² 478 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 506	ca. 302	line-initial	Lysikrates [Meliteus]	————
NO EMPHASIS ON SPEAKER				
<i>IG II</i> ² 457	[Anaxikrates] 307/6	————	Strat[okles Diomeeus]	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 460	[Ana]xikrates 307/6	————	[Stratokles] Diomeeus	<i>IG II</i> ² 1262 Cutter
<i>Hesperia</i> 5, 1936, p. 201	Euxeni[ppos] 305/4	————	[Euboulides] E[leusinius]	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 483	Pherekles 304/3	————	Euboulides Eleusinius	<i>IG II</i> ² 498 Cutter
<i>Horos</i> 4, 1986, pp. 11–12	[Pherekles] 304/3 ^e	————	Stratokles [Diomeeus]	<i>IG II</i> ² 495 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 489	Leostratos 303/2	————	Charisos [Sphettios]	<i>IG II</i> ² 498 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 493	Leostratos 303/2	————	Kallias Hermeios	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 494	Leostratos 303/2	————	[A]ristok---	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 495	Leostratos 303/2 ^f	————	Stratokles Diomeeus	<i>IG II</i> ² 495 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 499	[Nikokles] 302/1	————	[Stratokles Diom]eieus	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 500	Nikokles 302/1	————	Memnon Aphidnaios	<i>IG II</i> ² 650 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 503	Nikokles 302/1	————	[Stratokles] Diomeeus	————
<i>IG II</i> ² 505	Nikokles 302/1	————	Euphiletos Kephisieus	<i>IG II</i> ² 1262 Cutter
<i>IG II</i> ² 559 + 568 (addenda p. 662)	ca. 303	————	Strato[kles Diomeeus]	————

^aDow 1963, pp. 58–60, established the date. ^bOn the date, Meritt 1936, pp. 201–203. ^cPassed on the same day as the previous inscription. ^dThe date is that of Osborne 1981–1983, no. D50. ^ePassed on the same day as *Hesperia* 7 (1938), p. 297, no. 22, and *IG II*² 486. ^fPassed on the same day as *IG II*² 496.

The preamble of *IG* II² 471, an honorary decree of the year 306/5, provides a good example of the use of a blank space placed before the speaker's name. The text that follows repeats that of J. Kirchner from the second edition of *IG*:

Ἐπὶ Κοροΐβου ἄρχοντος ἐπὶ τ-
 ῆς Οἰνεΐδος δεκάτης πρυτανε-
 ίας εἰ Πάμφιλος Θεογείτονο-
 5 ς Ῥαμνούσιος ἐγραμμάτευεν
 Μουνιχιῶνος ἐνει καὶ νέαι ἐ-
 μβολίμωι, ἐνάτει καὶ εἰκοστ-
 εἰ τῆς πρυτανείας· ἐκκλησία·
 τῶν προέδρων ἐπεψήφισεν Πύ-
 10 θιππος Πυθίωνος Μαραθώνιο-
 [ς] καὶ συμπρόεδροι· ἔδοξεν τῶ-
 ι δήμωι· ὃ Στρατοκλῆς Εὐθυδή-
 μου Διομεεὺς εἶπεν· ἐπειδὴ [ο]-

When a cutter chose to place the speaker first in his own line, that is, to begin the line with his name, he usually could accomplish this only by leaving some blank space at the end of the previous line. *IG* II² 455, the top right part of a decree that has been convincingly restored as proposed by Stratokles near the beginning of the year 307/6, displays this arrangement in lines 6 to 7. The inscriber, the *IG* II² 1262 Cutter,³² has left nine letter-spaces blank at the end of line 6 in order to begin line 7 with Stratokles' name.³³ The text is Kirchner's from the second edition of *IG*:

[Ἐπὶ Ἀναξικράτους ἄρχοντος ἐπὶ τῆς Ἴπποθω]ν- *vacat* (7)
 [τίδος δευτέρας πρυτανείας, ἦι Λυσίας Νοθί]ππου Διομ-
 [εεὺς ἐγραμμάτευεν· Μεταγεινιῶνος ἐνάτη]ι ἱσταμέν-
 [ου, τρίτει τῆς πρυτανείας· ἐκκλησία· ὃ τῶν πρ]οέδρων ἐπ-
 5 [εψήφισεν27]ὸς καὶ συν-
 [πρόεδροι· ἔδοξεν τῇ βουλήι καὶ τῷ δήμωι]· *vacat* (9)
 [Στρατοκλῆς Εὐθυδήμου Διομεεὺς εἶπεν· ἐπε]ιδὴ ὁ δήμο-

Not all texts of these years give the speaker emphasis. *IG* II² 460, also of the year 307/6, also proposed by Stratokles, and also by the *IG* II² 1262 Cutter, provides an example of a text whose layout gives no emphasis to the name of the speaker. Here the clause of ratification has been omitted and Stratokles' name, revealed by the *stoichedon* order, straddled lines 6 to 7 with no spaces left before it. Again the text is that of Kirchner:

[Ἐπὶ Ἀνα]ξικράτο[υς ἄρχοντος ἐπὶ τῆς]-
 [ίδος δε]κάτης πρυ[τανείας, ἦι Λυσίας Νοθί]ππο-
 [υ Διομ]εἰεὺς ἐγραμ[μάτευεν· Ἐλαφηβολιῶνος ἐ]-
 5 [νάτη]ι ἱσταμένου, ἐ[νάτηι τῆς πρυτανείας· ἐκκ]-
 [λησί]α· τῶν προέδρω[ν ἐπεψήφισεν]
 . . . ὃ Ἀλωπεκῆθεν κ[αὶ συμπρόεδροι· Στρατοκλ]-
 [ῆς Ε]ὐθυδήμου Διομ[εεὺς εἶπεν]

32. See Tracy 1995, pp. 136–147, for a description of this cutter's hand and a list of his inscriptions.

33. The rationale for the *vacat* of seven spaces in line 1 is unclear.

This latter case, with no special emphasis on the speaker's name, is the norm. There is also evidence, however, in the years before and after the period studied here, for a tendency to set off with blank spaces either the speaker's name or the clause of ratification (ἔδοξεν τῆι βουλῆι καὶ τῶι δήμῳ), which, when included, immediately precedes his name. This practice occurs roughly a quarter of the time. For example, of forty preambles published in the second edition of volume II of *IG* and dated to the years 336 to 308, ten emphasize the speaker.³⁴ The proportion after the year 300 is coincidentally the same—four of the sixteen inscriptions dated to the years 299 to 280.³⁵ There was, thus, some inclination on the part of cutters to guide the reader's eye past the preamble toward the beginning of the decree proper.

In sharp contrast, nearly two-thirds of the inscriptions from the years 307/6 to 302/1 give emphasis to the name of the orator/politician (23 out of 37, or 62%; see Table 1). Clearly the politicians of these years took care that their names were given prominence rather often in the texts inscribed on stone and set up publicly. How, precisely, they accomplished this is difficult to say. It is hard to imagine a Demochares or a Stratokles visiting a cutter's workshop to make his wishes known on the subject.

It is probably the case that the matter was called to the attention of the secretaries in the assembly and they, or their emissaries, conveyed it, more or less strongly, to the cutters at the time when they delivered the copies of the measures to be inscribed on stone. There was clearly no absolute requirement to give prominence to the name of the politician; the cutter was, after all, the one who was primarily responsible for the layout. The information provided in Table 1 reveals that not every measure proposed by a given politician, nor every one inscribed by a given cutter,³⁶ nor even all those passed at the same session, emphasized the speaker. This lack of consistency suggests that the mechanism was informal, perhaps a note of reminder attached to the measure to be inscribed. There was apparently, as one might expect, greater onus on cutters to do this initially, when enthusiasm was high for the new regime, than in later years when it had waned and the threat of invasion by Cassander no longer provided cohesion. In any case, 5 of 7 texts give prominence to the orator's name in the year 307/6, 3 of 3 in 306/5, 1 of 2 in 305/4, and 4 of 6 in 304/3; but this ratio falls to 2 of 6 in 303/2 and 3 of 7 in 302/1.

That politicians took the trouble to have their names prominently featured on inscribed copies of measures set up in public is of more than passing interest. It is, first of all, an indication, it bears repeating, that these Athenian politicians saw inscriptions as visible symbols that could be used to support their political claims of renewed freedom. Second, it is apparent that they anticipated people reading their names; clearly, they both wanted and expected to receive credit for measures that they had put forward. Perhaps, indeed, this is evidence that people often referred to a measure by the name of the man who proposed it, for example, "Stratokles' decree." This point has interesting implications for the level and extent of literacy in Athens at this time. At the very least, we may conclude that by the late 4th century B.C. most, if not all, citizens residing in the city used writing and "found literacy indispensable."³⁷

34. *IG* II² 348, 349 (ἔδοξεν), 350, 358, 360, 363 (ἔδοξεν), 368, 372, 374, and 448 (I).

35. *IG* II² 661, 662 (ἔδοξεν), 665 (ἔδοξεν), and 666.

36. Apart from the *IG* II² 478 Cutter, who will be discussed in a study of 3rd-century inscribers now in preparation, these cutters have been presented and studied in Tracy 1995.

37. This last phrase is from Harris 1989, p. 115. Harris takes a conservative view of the general level of literacy in Attica, regarding it, in fact, as quite low (p. 94 and note 135, for example).

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