

Individual *Philia* as a Source of Athenian Demagogues' Power  
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Following Pericles' death in 429, Athenian politics changed distinctly, with politicians of modest backgrounds, later to be called demagogues, assuming the sort of influence that only individuals from prominent families and who were part of powerful *hetaeriae* did up to that point. While for decades Athenian politicians rose to power with the help of family and friends and openly returned the favor with legislation favorable to them (e.g., Calhoun 1913; Chroust 1954; Atkins 1960), Cleon broke that pattern, renouncing his friends as a hindrance to his political service to Athens (Plut. *Mor.* 806f9-13; cf. Isoc. 8.126), and setting a trend that saw outsiders like him, Hyperbolus, and Cleophon dominate the Athenian assembly for a quarter-century. How could this approach have worked? The demagogues were all considered charismatic speakers (Arist. *Pol.* 1305a12-13), which would have been effective in the Athenian assembly, and their support was likely bolstered by their tendency to support measures that primarily benefited the poor, who far outnumbered the rich (e.g., Thuc. 2.65.10, 3.19.1; Ar. *Eq.* 773-776; Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.2; Finley 1962; Munn 2000; Rosenbloom 2002). Expertise in management gained from running their families' businesses may also have given them credibility (Andrewes 1962; Davies 1981; *pace* Thompson 1981).

Connor (1971), though, sees old-school Athenian political methods in these new politicians, and it is through an elaboration of Connor's point of view that a neglected part of the demagogues' power can be explained. During the period when Cleon cut loose his personal friends, expressions like *philodemos*, *philopolis*, and *eunous toi demoi* emerged or became more common (Connor 1971, 101-06), seemingly reflecting the increasing currency of an attitude that politicians' purpose was to serve the largest constituency, not those close to them. Yet a reexamination of the sources suggests that the demagogues' power came about at least in part not just because they convinced the *demos* and *polis* as a whole that they were its friends, but because they made individual members of the neglected lower classes feel as though they had personal friends and advocates in power, with others likely feeling the same way by proxy, as only the wealthy and well-connected previously had.

An overlooked technique that seems critical to demagogues' success with common people is personal interactions and shared space, so that members of the lower class felt that their relationship with the demagogue was, at least to an extent, one of personal *philia*. In Euripides' *IA*, the reason that Agamemnon wins over the army initially is that he interacts enthusiastically with *demotai* (337-42), but he loses it when he no longer acts as a *philos* to those who previously saw him that way (343-48). Odysseus, on the other hand, whose "nature aligns him with the rabble" (*okhlos*, 526), guides the army of commoners by standing in the middle of it (528), using proximity to communicate affinity for the group. Depictions of Cleon, too, show him in close physical proximity to his main constituency. While Aristophanes calls them "flatterers" (*kolakes*: *Vesp.* 683, 1033; *Pax* 756), these people who crowded around Cleon likely felt a sense of personal connection to him similar to that of members of aristocratic political factions, who were described as being "those around" (*hoi peri/amphi*) a politician, and generally thought of as being the central figure's *philo*i (Connor 1971, 68). While not every common citizen could share the space of his favored demagogue on a regular basis, the fact that SOME clearly did suggests that others might have seen themselves as the SORT of people who could be *philo*i with a powerful figure. That would then make the *philia* that demagogues showed the *demos* through favorable legislation and conspicuous displays of fondness and dedication (mocked at, e.g., Ar. *Eq.* 732, 786; *Vesp.* 895, 970; *Pax* 313) an extension of individual *philia* with members of the *demos*.

While *philia* to the *demos* as a whole has long been acknowledged as a part of demagogues' approach to winning votes in the assembly, this study reveals that that *philia* was embraced in part because common Athenians could see demagogues as their personal *philo*i, not just their benefactors.