

ABSTRACT

DEMOCRACY AND THE GENERALS: THE PROBLEM OF CIVILIAN CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY AND AUTONOMOUS GENERALS IN ATHENS

Athens of the fifth century B.C. is often studied for its remarkable accomplishments in art, architecture, philosophy, rhetoric, comic and tragic drama, scientific and historical inquiry, and democracy. The revolutionary reforms of Cleisthenes in 508/7 had introduced to the Athenian *polis* a political model—*demokratia*, or “rule by the people”—that repudiated centuries of oligarchy and autocracy, and involved a vast citizen population in directing the state’s affairs.

The Athenians’ peculiar constitution promoted not only innovation through personal and intellectual freedom, but a fervent desire on the part of the citizenry to protect their democracy from potential tyrants. This led to a unique approach to holding their magistrates, both civilian and military, accountable. It is the phenomenon of the Athenians’ rigid system of civilian control over their military leaders, and moments where the system was circumvented by autonomous generals, which this thesis explores.

Aimee Bogna
May 2006