

Athens, Freedom, & the Liberal Arts: Reacting Game

(1) A Concise History

(2) Procedures for Legislation:
the Assembly

(3) Procedures for Revenge:
Penalties, ostracism, the Lawcourts

(1) A Concise History:
Athens, the Council (*Boule*), and the Assembly
(*Ekklesia*)

Events leading to 403 BCE



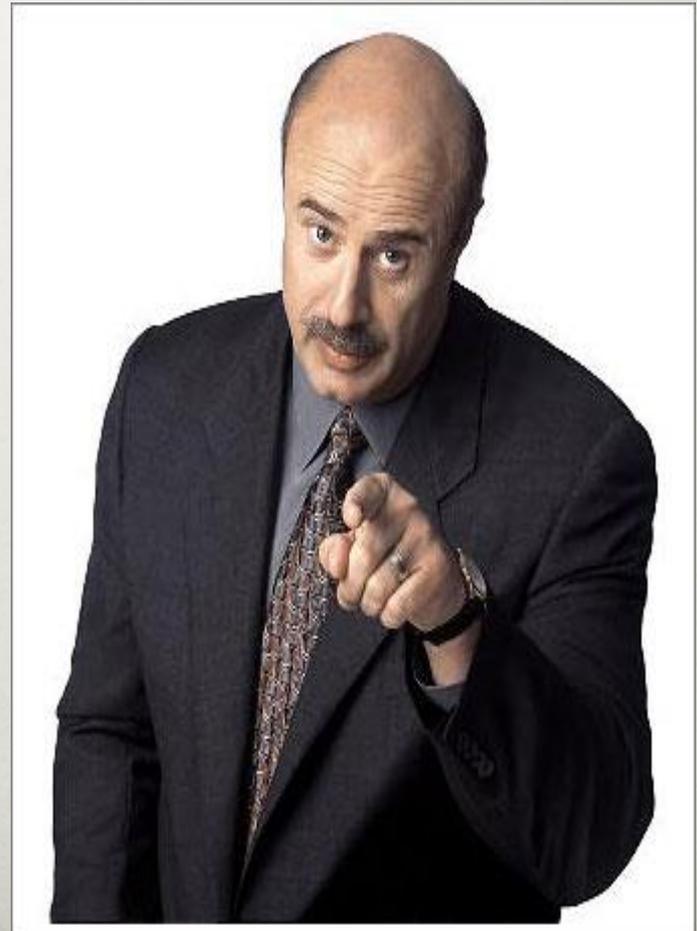
- 594/3: Solon's Reforms
- 560-527: Peisistratos tyrant
- 527-510: Hippias becomes tyrant
- 508/7: Kleisthenes' reforms
- 479: Battles of Plataea and Mykale: Delian League founded
- 454: Treasury of Delian League moved from Delos to Athens
- 451: Pericles' law restricting citizenship to those whose parents were both Athenian
- 431: Peloponnesian war begins
- 411/410: Oligarchy in Athens
- ←404: Peloponnesian war ends; Athens pwned, Thirty Tyrants

Boule, or Council of 500

- Powers were executive, not legislative. No policies were made in the Boule
- Term of office was one year, with a maximum 2 terms served non-consecutively in a lifetime
- Exclusive only to those in the Zeugitai class or wealthier, who made at least 200 medimnoi in a year
 - This excluded the Thetes, who made up over half of the Athenian population

Responsibilities and privileges of members of the Boule

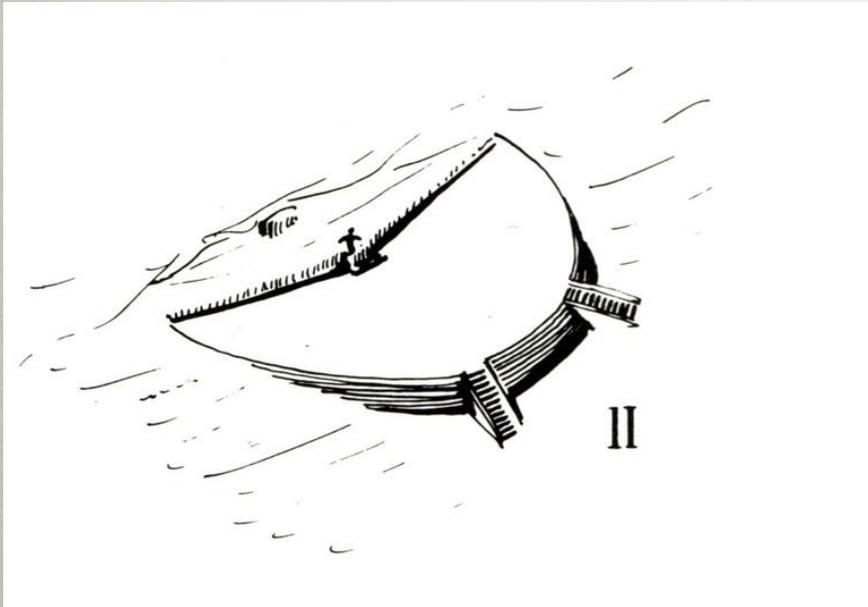
- Exempt from military service for the duration of their service
- Met every day except when a festival or ill omen prevented it
- Frequent absences could result in criticism →



Functions of the Boule

- Prime function: to prepare the agenda for all meetings of the assembly (Ekklesia)
- This included recommendations and open questions for the Ekklesia to decide on
- Received all embassies to Athens and decided whether or not they should be allowed an audience with the assembly
- Most work was in implementing the policies of the assembly

The Pnyx: hill where the Ekklesia meets



Bema:
speaker's platform



The Orientation of the
Pnyx Was Changed,
404/3 BCE

Ekklesia: What are we doing here?

- Legislation on matters such as food supply, defense of the city, etc. were decided during meetings
- Meetings took place about every nine days
- Those reluctant to participate were marked with red paint and subject to fines

Ekklesia (2): who are all these people?

- All male citizens above the age of 20 participated (modernity is willing to look past the fact that some of you are, in fact, female and/or too young)
- Not all Athenians came to every meeting, but a quorum of 6000 had to be present in order for the Ekklesia to convene

Ekklesia (3): who are all these people?

- Herald:
 - Opens meeting of the Assembly, delivers a prayer, arranges the ritual sacrifice of a pig
- President of the Assembly:
 - Presides over a single meeting of the Assembly.
 - Sets the agenda in advance of the meeting (game only)
 - Recognizes speakers at the bema
- Archon:
 - One of several magistrates, each of whom presides over one of several law courts. (There will be two selected by lot at the beginning of the game.)

Ekklesia: who's missing? (4)

- Metics (resident aliens), slaves, and women are NOT present in the assembly.
 - In the context of this game, a metic is present at the Ekklesia. He has no voting rights, but does have speaking rights.

(2) Procedures for Legislation: the Assembly (*Ekklesia*)

First, You Need an Identity

- Read your character sheet

- (and about other characters, pp. 77-87)

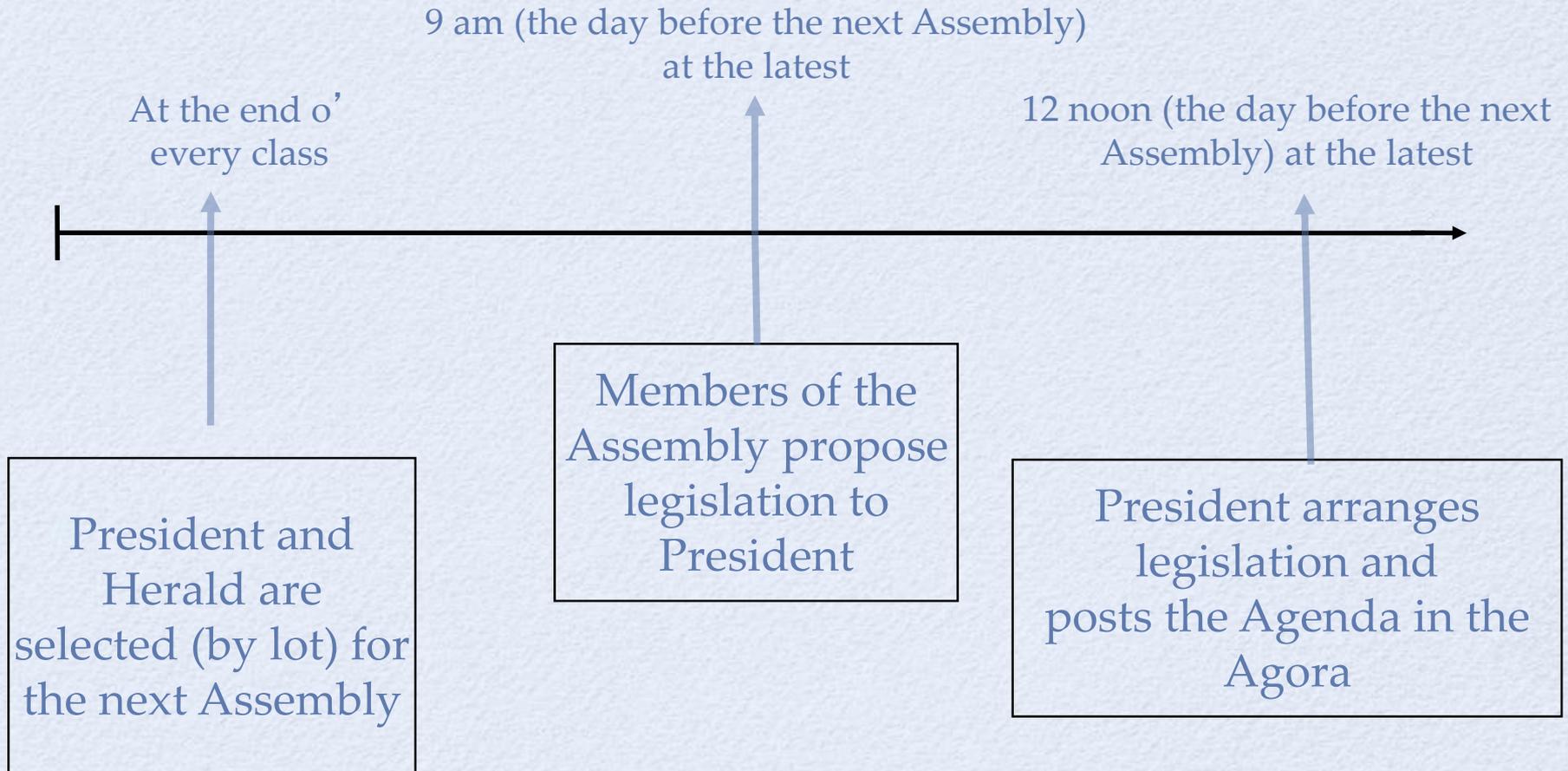
- Make a costume?

- To explore the options, see the links at

- <http://agoraathens403.blogspot.com>

How to Assemble

Days 1-2 (see pp. 56-57)



How to Assemble

Day 2

speech writing

inter-factional meetings

intra-faction meetings

RESEARCH

plotting

blogging*

wheeling
and dealing

By 8 pm: If you have legislation on the agenda,
you have posted a 3-4 page proposal defense
on the blog

*see future slide

How to Assemble

Day 3

Heralding! (p.58)

- Call the meeting to order
- Sacrifice a pig and drag it around the Pnyx
- Offer a prayer (see gamebook for tips on how to pray), possibly draw from Pandora's urn

President introduces the Agenda (pp. 59-60)

- Presents the proposals for the day and the order in which they will be considered
- Calls the author of the first proposal to the bema

Speech! Speech! Speech!

- The author of the proposal at hand delivers a speech
 - defines the specifics of the proposal
 - delineates the logic behind the proposal
- defends against most likely counter-arguments

Open the Floor

- Speaker recognizes simple questions from the floor
- MEANWHILE those with more involved additions to the discussion are lining up beside the podium
- President decides when to end question-response time and call the next speaker in line

2 minutes left: next Assembly's President and Herald are selected

President: Responsibilities Before the Assembly

- Setting the Agenda

- All those wishing to propose legislation must have emailed the proposal to the President by 9 am on the day before the next Assembly (i.e., if I want something to become law on Friday, it must be emailed to Friday's President by 9 am on Thursday)

- The President may order proposals as he sees fit and must post the official Agenda to the blog by 12 noon that day

President: Responsibilities During the Assembly

- Presiding over the Assembly:
 - determines which proposals are on the table and can call them to a vote at any time during the proceedings (subject to approval by the majority of the Assembly members).
 - recognizes speakers (at the bema, not questions from the floor)
 - sets the pace of discussion and time limits for speakers
 - BUT (1): any president who abuses his office or shows poor judgment can be censured at the end of his term by a vote of the Assembly.
 - BUT (2): the Game Master reserves the right to override anything that he considers abusively filibuster-y and press the discussion forward

Speaking in the Ekklesia

- At start of game: due to their rhetorical eloquence, each person controls:
 - 500 votes in the ekklesia (= assembly)
 - 40 votes in the dikasterion (= lawcourt)

Speaking in the Ekklesia

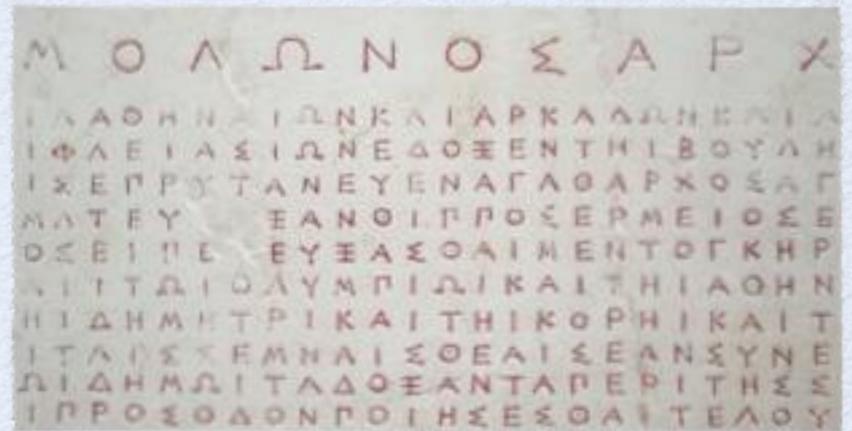
- Each member of the ekklesia is required to speak at the bema (speaker's platform) a minimum of three times (3x) during the game. This includes making proposals, speaking in favor of proposals, and/or speaking against proposals.
- Any member of the ekklesia who fails to speak for two (2) consecutive sessions (and thus fails to represent her/his constituents) loses 125 votes in the ekklesia. Any member who fails to speak for three (3) consecutive sessions loses 250 votes. (As you might imagine, your participation grade will also suffer...)

Rules for speakers in the Ekklesia

- “Anyone addressing the Boule or Ekklesia must keep to the matter in hand, must not deal with two separate matters together, and must not speak twice on the same matter at any one meeting. He must not engage in slanders and scurrility, or interrupt others. He must speak only from the bêma, and must not assault the presiding officer”
 - (from Aeschines Against Timarchus 1.35)

Writing

- In 403 BCE, writing is rapidly growing in its importance as a technology that aids the stability of the Athenian laws. In fact, Athenian legislators have just agreed to standardize the Athenian alphabet, in order to continue promoting the use of writing in the daily functions of the democracy.



Writing in the Agora

- The Agora (our [blog](#)) will include:
 - Agenda for each Assembly (posted by the relevant President);
 - The results of the previous Assembly (posted by me).
- In addition, each member of the ekklesia must post a minimum of:
 - Two (2) long proposals, responses, or position papers (approx. 3-4 pages each), either defending a proposal or countering one. This paper should be the basis of two (2) of the three (3) speeches you make in class, submitted before your speech. You should submit one of these two papers by the Second Assembly session.
 - Two (2) single-paragraph responses to one of these papers, either bolstering the position or providing rebuttal.
- Your papers will go there too.

(3) Procedures for Revenge: Ostracism, and the Lawcourts (*dikasteria*)

Ostracism

Ostracism < *ostraka*, 'pottery shards' or 'potsherds'



Once a year, the President of the Assembly asks the *ekklesia* if they wish to ostracize an Athenian citizen. If a majority votes for an ostracism, citizens convene for an *ostrakophoria* and each writes the name of a citizen on an *ostrakon*. The citizen who receives the most votes is ostracized - that is, he must leave Athens and go into exile for ten years.

Ostracism was instituted along with the Kleisthenic reforms in 507 BCE as a means to keep any one citizen from getting too powerful. The first known ostracism is that of Hipparkhos in 488/7 BCE. The famous statesman Themistokles was ostracized in 471 BCE. The last known ostracism occurred in 418 BCE; when Athenians sought to ostracize either Alkibiades or

Ostracism in the Game (pp. 60-61)

— [There can only be one ostracism per year (that is, once during the entire Reacting game).

— [Any member of the *ekklesia* who is ostracized will be banished from Athens and will no longer be able to participate in the *ekklesia* or the lawcourts.

— [Be warned! Those who propose ostracism are sometimes the object of the ostracism they initiate...

Other Legal Attacks: *Graphe Paranomon* (p. 60)

— [All laws passed by the *ekklesia* will be chiseled in stone and posted in the *agora* (i.e., on the blog), including the name of the person(s) proposing the law.

— [If a law is passed contrary to existing laws, a member of the *ekklesia* can initiate a *graphe paranomon* and give a speech in the *ekklesia* denouncing the author(s) of the law. If a majority of the *ekklesia* concurs with the *graphe paranomon*, the law is annulled.

The *dikasteria* (pp. 61-64)

— [*Dikasterion*: 'lawcourt'

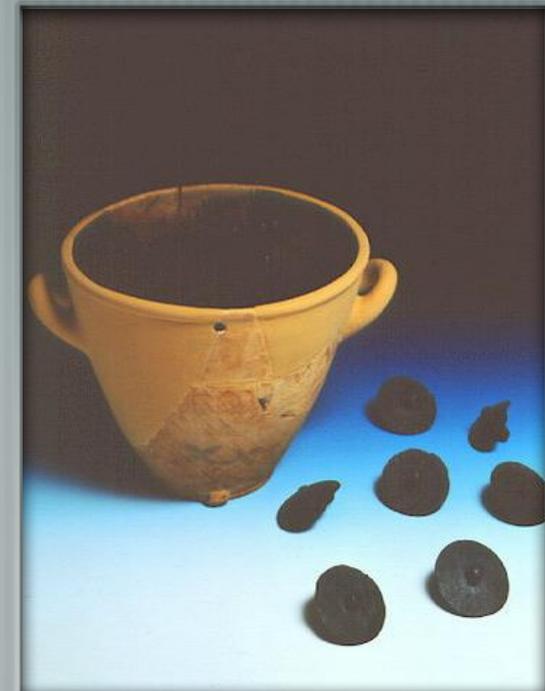
— [Any Athenian citizen can bring another citizen into the *dikasterion*. In order to initiate a trial, the citizen who wishes to prosecute must approach an *archon*. If the *archon* agrees that the case has sufficient merit, a trial will be scheduled (in lieu of the next meeting of the *ekklesia*), over which the *archon* will preside.

— [A citizen seeking prosecution does not need to cite a specific law or legal precedent for the trial. (It is worth noting there are some laws mentioned in the Reacting game book.) The trial itself functions to set the laws. The prosecutor should make the distinction, however, whether the alleged crime is an offense against the polis or against a private citizen(s), as this affects the nature of the punishment.

Speaking in the *dikasterion*

— [Athenian citizens represent themselves in court. That is, there are no hired prosecutors or defense attorneys. (One can, however, hire a *logographos* or ‘speech writer’, such as the famous *logographoi* Lysias and Demosthenes.)

— [The prosecution and defense can only speak for a limited length of time. This length of time is determined by the *klepsydra* or ‘water clock’. When the *klepsydra* runs out, the speaker is done.



Dikasteria: Juries

— [Athenian *dikasteria* are democratic and, in order to ensure the courts represent the will of the *demos*, consist of juries of 500+ citizens.

— [Jury pay was instituted in the 450s BCE. Jurors are paid 3 obols (1/2 drachma) for each day of jury service. (For this reason, juries often consisted of older men who could no longer work in order to secure a wage.)

— [All decisions of the jury are based on majority vote.

Dikasteria: Penalties

If a jury concludes that the defendant is guilty, then the prosecutor will propose a penalty and the defendant will speak against it and make a counter-proposal. The jury will then vote in favor of one or the other penalty.

If the prosecutor fails to secure 20% of the jury's vote for a conviction, then the suit will be deemed 'frivolous' and the prosecutor loses all his voting rights in the *ekklesia* and *dikasteria*. The *archon* who permitted the trial will also be censured by the *ekklesia* and will lose 50% of his votes or 250 votes.

Let the Games Begin.

καλή τύχη!