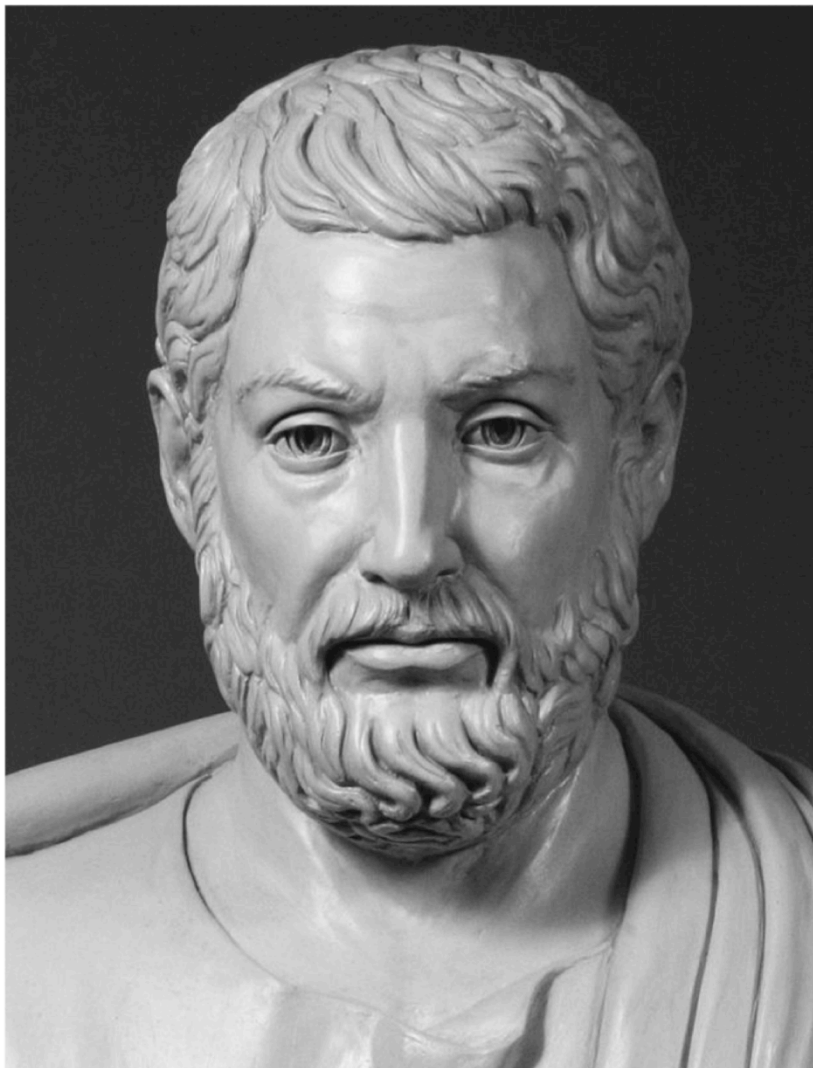


Athenian Democracy

Background



- 6th Century B.C.E.— Athens site of ongoing tension between rich (who controlled the government) and poor (typically farmers and merchants).
- In 508 B.C.E., a wealthy Athenian named Cleisthenes rose to power in the city-state and introduced a system of government known as democracy.

*Bust of Cleisthenes created in 2002-2004
by Anna Christoforidis*

democracy



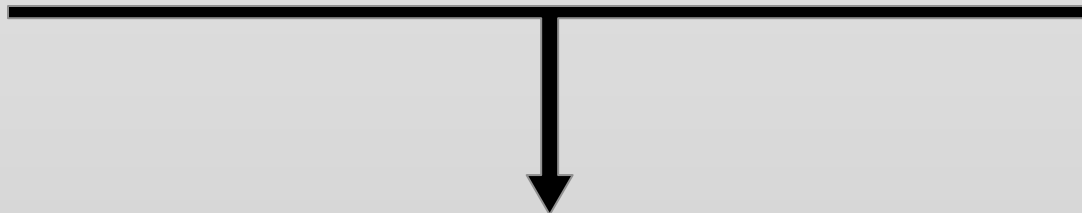
demokratia

demo:

the people

kratia:

power or rule



rule by the people

Athenian Democracy

The *Ekklesia* (Assembly)

- Main governing body
- Made most important decisions
- Any citizen could attend and vote.
- Met 40 times/year.
- Simple majority rules.

The *Boule* (Council of 500)

- Council of 500 men
- Chosen by lottery
- 1 year term
- Managed day-to-day government
- Decided which issues go before *Ekklesia*.

The *Dikasteria* (The Courts)

- Court of 500 men
- Over 30 years old
- Chosen by lottery.
- Decided legal cases.
- Majority rule
- No police or lawyers.
- Had to be a citizen.

Central Historical Question

*Was ancient Athens truly
democratic?*