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The beginnings of Demosthenes' public career after Athens' defeat in the Social War are somewhat difficult to pin down and have been the object of significantly different assessments. Whether the young orator made his debut after having already developed a clear political vision and, at least to some extent, acting as a supporter of Eubulus's programme or, to the contrary, was merely an opportunist pursuing a personal agenda remains controversial and highly debated.¹ Demosthenes 20-22, the speeches *Against Leptines*, *Against Meidias* and *Against Androtion*, are among the principal testimonies to this early phase of the orator's activity and Edward M. Harris's new translation, introductions and thorough notes in *The Oratory of Classical Greece*, vol. 12, not only succeed in making available an excellent tool "for those who do not read Greek" according to the aims of the series as presented by Michael Gagarin in the "Series Editor's Preface" but also in providing scholars with a first-class work rich in information and insights to build on for future investigations on a wide range of topics in law, democracy and society in fourth-century Athens.

Like the previous Demosthenes volumes in the series, this volume includes a brief "Series Editor's Preface," a "Series Introduction" by Michael Gagarin that effectively illuminates the role of oratory and the orators within the workings of Athenian institutions (xiii-xxxi), and an "Introduction to Demosthenes" (1-5), by the same. Together with the translation of the three speeches, Harris has provided an "Introduction to this volume," highlighting the historical context and the overall significance of the three orations and a separate "Introduction" to each of them (15-21, 75-87, 167-170), clearly discussing the main questions posed by the speeches, the points of law and the speaker's arguments with particular reference to their weaknesses and strengths. For the translation of *Against Leptines* and *Against Androtion* he has used the new OCT edition by Mervin Dilts, while the translation of *Against Meidias* is based on the text masterfully edited by D.M. MacDowell in 1990. As for commentaries on the individual speeches, scholars studying *Against Leptines* and *Against Meidias* can rely on the well-known works by, respectively, J.E. Sandys (1890), still valuable though somewhat outdated, and D.M. MacDowell (1990), while for *Against Androtion* no modern commentary exists, although much of the historical and biographical background is provided by Ph. Harding's book on Androtion as an Attidographer.² As it was to be expected from one of the leading experts on ancient Greek law, Harris's introductions and notes are particularly useful for all legal matters underlying the three court cases, while the rhetorical aspects, though not neglected, are

perhaps less systematically commented on.

Against Leptines, delivered in 355/4 when the orator was 29, was Demosthenes' first public address. He acted as *synegoros* in a charge against Leptines' law abolishing all exemptions from festival liturgies on the ground that it was "inexpedient" (*graphe nomon me epitedeion theinai*; cfr. 20,83, 88, 95-96, etc.) and severely harmed Athens' reputation. Reviewing the arguments deployed in the speech, Harris appropriately notes that Demosthenes addressed not only "the central legal charges in the case" but also a number of fundamental political issues, such as "the nature of democracy, the rule of law and the relationship between the wealthy and the rest of the community" (8), emphasizing, firstly, that Leptines' law was undemocratic as it deprived the assembly of the power to award public honours (20,2-6 and 102-103), and, secondly, that it damaged the polis, since, by preventing the demos from reciprocating and showing appropriate *charis*, gratitude, it discouraged the rich from displaying competitive emulation, *philotimia*, and spending their money to the benefit of the community. In this respect, *Against Leptines* is one of the key texts showing how, in the middle of the fourth century, *philotimia*, which had had a rather ambivalent status in Greek literature, often referring to excessive selfish ambition, was redefined into a positive concept describing the attitude of the good, public-spirited and generous citizen. As stressed by Harris, another recurring theme in the speech is that of the rule of law. He observes that the speech lacks any kind of personal attack against Leptines (17-18), that even in the apparently more rhetorical sections Demosthenes "kept to the point" using arguments which were directly relevant to the legal issue (19) and that a large section (20,29-41) is actually dedicated to procedural aspects showing how Leptines had violated the laws governing *nomothesia*. As is well known, this speech, together with *Against Timocrates* (Dem. 24), constitutes one of the main sources for legislative procedures in fourth-century Athens.³

Harris concludes that such arguments disprove both E.M. Burke's contention that the reason for Demosthenes' apparent lack of success in the early part of his career lay in his elite bias and attitude favourable to the wealthy, which offended the average Athenian (20 with n. 15), and the view that in this period the orator "had no basic policy of his own, no assessment of political and strategic priorities" (9 and n. 13).⁴ As for the outcome of the trial, Harris takes a positive stand and trusts Dio Chrysostom's report that the prosecution was successful; following A. Schaefer he points, moreover, to IG II² 212 (RO 64) and other epigraphic evidence confirming that Leucon, to whom Demosthenes devotes a long section of the speech, and, after his death, his sons Spartocus and Paerisades, continued to enjoy the privilege of *ateleia* Leptines' law was meant to abolish (20-21).⁵

One question Harris alludes to only briefly (17 and 66 n. 173 on 20,144), but which would perhaps have deserved closer scrutiny, concerns a procedural aspect. Although Apsephion was the chief prosecutor in the trial, the original initiator of the indictment in 356/5 had been Bathippus, Apsephion's father, who had died before the case could be brought before a court. When the charge was resumed two years later the statutory one-year limit had expired and the prosecution was technically directed not against Leptines but against the law (20,144). Considering that there was probably no precedent for such anomaly, M.H. Hansen's plausible suggestion is that "the *thesmothetai* arranged a compromise" and allowed the case to be heard by a *dikasterion* (20,1) as in a *graphe nomon me epitedeion theinai*, but at the same time also ruled to have five *syndikoi* speaking for and against the law (20,146-153) as in the regular procedure of *nomothesia*.⁶ If this is correct, it becomes clear why Demosthenes refrained from personal attacks against Leptines, while his charge that Leptines had violated the laws governing legislation becomes misleading. For the

rhetoical aspects in *Against Leptines* I have found very useful the recent article by Chr. Kremmydas, *Logical Argumentation in Demosthenes' Against Leptines*, in J. Powell (ed.), *Logos. Rational Argument in Classical Rhetoric*, London 2007, 19-34, which appeared too late to be taken into account by Harris.

Although *Against Meidias* was delivered in early 346 -- thus several years later -- the speech is, to a degree, a complement to *Against Leptines*, as it also addresses "the issue of reciprocity in the relationship between the rich and the rest of the Athenian people" (11).⁷ Throughout the speech Meidias is presented as the prototype of the arrogant rich, investing his money in conspicuous consumption and unwilling to spend it for the benefit of the community. This is a speech Harris has worked on extensively⁸ and where he is at his best. In the "Introduction" (75-87) he takes a stand on several controversial problems. Harris argues that Demosthenes' claim that Meidias' enmity against him had been long-standing and went back to 364/3 (21,77-80) is probably false and served the purposes of the prosecution, no doubt a *graphe hybreos*; he follows Harrison in assuming that the procedure of *proboule*, which could end in a vote of censure, was only a means of initiating legal proceedings and did not bind the accuser to pursue his case in court (cfr. 21,2-3) nor to bring a public charge (21,25 and 28), which Demosthenes eventually did; he stresses that "[t]he crime of *hybris* was a complex offense" and there were two sides to *hybris*, a subjective aspect, i.e. lack of self-restraint, excessive self-indulgence, "having energy and power," and an objective aspect, acting with the intention to inflict dishonour and a sense of humiliation. Consequently, "[t]o prove that Meidias had committed *hybris*...Demosthenes must show not only that Meidias struck him but that he did so with the intent to humiliate him" (81-82).

After a brief presentation of the structure of the speech, two more crucial problems are then dealt with: whether the speech was actually delivered and, in this case, published in an unrevised form, and secondly, whether the documents found in the manuscripts are authentic or forgeries. Concerning the first point, Harris agrees with MacDowell that Aesch. 3,52, accusing the orator of having sold the case for thirty mnai, is not conclusive evidence for assuming that Demosthenes dropped the charge and accepted an out-of-court settlement, but he also adds the important argument that if the orator had attended the *anakrisis*, composed the speech, and then not brought the case to court, he would have incurred *atimia*.⁹ As Harris notes, "[t]he most probable scenario is that the court convicted Meidias, then imposed a small penalty on him" (85-86). Concerning the second, he believes that not only the witness statements but all documents (including laws and oracles) cannot be genuine, both on the basis of stichometry and on factual and linguistic grounds (86-87, 89 n. 48, 90 n. 50, 103-104 nn. 95-99, 105-106 n. 106). Harris's arguments appear to be strong and persuasive and, as he has anticipated his intention to carry out a systematic analysis of all the documents in the Attic orators, we must eagerly await the results of this project.

One final question concerns the political background to the trial and the role Eubulus played in it. Commenting on 21.205-207, Harris takes a skeptical approach to this question and remarks that, "[d]espite the friction between them because of Meidias, there were no major disagreements between Eubulus and Demosthenes about foreign policy and public finances" (159 n. 288).¹⁰ In the light of the *idia echthra*, "personal enmity," admitted to by Demosthenes and the strong criticism directed against Eubulus (I would say that Demosthenes is deferential but not "clearly anxious not to offend him") this statement seems somewhat extreme and, although Eubulus's own implication in this episode is not directly attested by the sources, I wonder whether disagreement over the Euboean

expedition in 349/8, at a time when Demosthenes "wished the Athenians to give the most effective help to Olynthus," [11](#) does not indeed provide the answer.

Against Androtion is the earliest of the three speeches. Demosthenes wrote it in 356/5 in the capacity of *logographos* for Diodorus acting as *synegoros* in a *graphe paranomon* against a decree proposed by Androtion that granted honours to the retiring *boule*, of which Androtion himself was a member. Unlike the other two speeches, no modern commentary is available for *Against Androtion* and Harris's introduction and notes prove to be most useful and provide a good starting point for readers at all levels. The speech can be divided into two parts: in the first Androtion's arguments in defense of the decree are one by one refuted (1-41), while the second part consists of a general attack on Androtion's political career (42-78). Introducing the speech, Harris notes that, as in the case of many of Demosthenes' *logoi*, it is impossible to decide how much of it truly reflects his own views and distinguishes between the personal slander directed at Androtion, which probably owes more to Diodorus's desire to take revenge against an enemy (22.1-2), and more general points about Athenian democracy and public policy, emphasizing "the key role of the fleet in maintaining Athenian power and prestige" (22.12-16; cfr. Dem. 14.16-28) and pleading for the rule of law and democracy as the political regime best suited to protect the rights of the individual and "where all things are kinder and gentler" (22.32 and 51), which bear some similarity to statements made in other speeches from this period (9-10). From the point of view of our understanding of Athenian law, one particularly important and well-known passage in the speech is found at 22.25-27, where the orator presents a model for the functioning of the Athenian legal system according to which the same offense could be pursued by means of different procedures depending on the personal circumstances of the prosecutor. Building on the work of Chr. Carey, Harris comments that "[t]his passage is misleading as a description of the Athenian legal system, for it gives the false impression that each offense in Athenian law could be prosecuted in different ways. This was true for theft and for bribery of officials...but not for all kind of offences...There were often major substantive differences between legal procedures" (179-180 n. 44).

I have found the translation of the three speeches accurate and readable, sometimes perhaps not very literal, but always effective and precise, even in difficult passages where the language is technical or metaphorical (e.g. 20.167: a "monetary" metaphor; 21.101 and 184-185: *eranos* as a metaphor of the individual's contribution to society). I have a few comments on points of detail. At 20.115 "woodland" is not the best rendering for *ge pephyteumene*, which usually refers to "fruit and olive trees" (as opposed to arable land). At 20.125 "it would be... terrible for someone who has an exemption to be barred from religious ceremonies" for *deinon...ei ton ieron ateles tis aphethesetai* is misleading and I prefer "it is monstrous that anyone should be exempt from the dues of religion" as in the Loeb translation by J.H. Vince. At 21.20: "Those who come to an agreement at least received compensation for themselves. You, on the other hand, have inherited the task of defending the laws....," the antithesis *ten men huper hauton diken, tes d'huper ton nomon (diken)* in the Greek text is lost. The notes, as it must have become apparent from my previous observations, are extremely rich in information and guide the reader through all the factual and interpretative problems posed by the speeches. The bibliography (197-206) is accordingly well selected and up-to-date. I was only surprised not to find any reference to G. Herman, *Morality and Behaviour in Democratic Athens*, Cambridge 2006 (and related earlier articles by the same author), especially for *Against Meidias* which is a key speech with respect to honour and shame and related codes of behaviour in Athenian society. But these are minor quibbles. Edward Harris must be thanked for having

produced, within the aims and the limits of the series, a valuable, well-commented translation that will be extremely helpful to all those working on Demosthenes 20-22.

Notes:

- [1.](#) Contrast, for example, P. Carlier, *Démosthène*, Paris 1990, 67-81, with E. Badian, "The Road to Prominence," in I. Worthington (ed.), *Demosthenes. Statesman and Orator*, London-New York 2000, 18-30, esp. 24.
- [2.](#) J.E. Sandys, *The Speech of Demosthenes against the Law of Leptines*, Cambridge 1890; D.M. MacDowell, *Demosthenes. Against Meidias (Oration 21)*, Oxford 1990; Ph. Harding, *Androtion and the Atthis*, Oxford 1994. For *Against Leptines* see also Chr. Kremmydas, *A Commentary on Demosthenes Against Leptines*, Oxford, Oxford University Press (forthcoming 2010).
- [3.](#) On Athenian *nomothesia* see, among the most recent works, J. Atkinson, "Athenian Law and the Will of the People in the Fourth Century," *Acta Classica* 46, 2003, 21-47; P.J. Rhodes, "Sessions of *Nomothetai* in Fourth-Century Athens," *Classical Quarterly* 53, 2003, 124-129.
- [4.](#) See, respectively, E.M. Burke, "The Political Speeches of Demosthenes: Elite Bias in the Response to Economic Crisis," *Classical Antiquity* 21, 2002, 165-194; I. Worthington, "Introduction: Demosthenes, Then and Now," in I. Worthington (ed.), *Demosthenes. Statesman and Orator*, 3-4.
- [5.](#) On Leucon and the Spartocids see now A. Moreno, *Feeding the Democracy. The Athenian Grain Supply in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BC*, Oxford 2007, esp. 170-206.
- [6.](#) M.H. Hansen, "Athenian *Nomothesia*," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 26, 1985, 350-351; cfr. also Rhodes, *Sessions of Nomothetai*, 128-129.
- [7.](#) For observations along the same lines see also C. Mossé, "Égalité démocratique et inégalités sociales. Le débat à Athènes au IV^{ème} siècle," *Métis* 2, 1987, 165-176, esp. 175-176.
- [8.](#) E.M. Harris, "Demosthenes' Speech *Against Meidias*," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 92, 1989, 117-136; Id., Review of D.M. MacDowell, *Demosthenes. Against Meidias (Oration 21)*, *Classical Philology* 87, 1992, 71-80.
- [9.](#) On this question see E.M. Harris, *Democracy and the Rule of Law in Classical Athens*, Cambridge 2006, 405-422, esp. 412-413.
- [10.](#) For the details of the argument he refers to his article "Demosthenes and the Theoric Fund," in *Democracy and the Rule of Law in Classical Athens*, 121-139.
- [11.](#) P. Brunt, "Euboea in the Time of Philip II," *Classical Quarterly* 19, 1969, p. 250; cfr. also E.M. Burke, *The Political Speeches of Demosthenes*, 174 and n. 47.

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