

The Rhetoric of Athenian Identity in Demosthenes' Early Assembly Speeches

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DEMOSTHENES' DELIBERATIVE SPEECHES consistently engage with the rhetoric of identity to confront an internal crisis in the Athenian Assembly. While the speeches have been traditionally viewed as anti-Macedonian, this approach has at times overlooked a more immediate focus on Athenian internal dynamics and more nuanced rhetorical strategies.¹ Although the immediate context of the speeches is issues of Macedonian expansion (such as Amphipolis, Olynthus, or individuals such as Dioppeithes), most of Demosthenes' comments are on the Athenians, their past achievements, and their current failings.² His focused and sustained criticism of the Athenians, particularly in *Philippic 1*, has not gone unnoticed in recent scholarship, with the latest commentaries of Herrman, Wooten, and Karvounis³ all noting Demosthenes' frustrated castigations of the Assembly in this speech.

¹ E.g. R. Ellis and R. D. Milns, *The Spectre of Philip* (Sydney 1970) 2; S. Usher, "Symbolic Oratory," in I. Worthington (ed.), *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric* (Malden 2010) 230–234. J. Roisman, *The Rhetoric of Conspiracy in Ancient Athens* (Berkeley 2006) 124, discounts the deliberative corpus from his consideration. J. Herrman, *Demosthenes: Selected Political Speeches* (Cambridge 2019) 2, views Dem.1–4 as "a series of Assembly speeches against Philip." For further discussion see S. Bremner, *Athenian Ideology in Demosthenes' Deliberative Oratory: Hailing the Dēmos* (diss. Birmingham 2017) 1–3.

² Cf. Dem. 4.2 and 9.4. Demosthenes' harshest call for punishment in the corpus (*apotumpanismos*, 8.61) is reserved for the *rhetors* in Athens, not Philip.

³ Herrman, *Demosthenes*; C. Wooten, *A Commentary on Demosthenes' Philippic I* (New York 2008); C. Karvounis, *Demosthenes: Studien zu den Demegorien orr. XIV, XVI, XV, IV, I, II, III* (Tübingen 2002).

This discussion develops and extends their analysis to emphasise that the rhetoric of identity, and a specifically internal Athenian focus, is integral to understanding the deliberative speeches in their immediate historical context, and augments a growing focus in scholarship on the importance of social memory in oratory and persuasion in fourth-century Athens.⁴ By approaching these speeches without a ‘Philippic’ lens, this discussion frames the focused criticism of the Athenians in *Philippic 1* as part of a wider rhetoric of identity ubiquitous in the deliberative corpus.

Specifically, I elucidate Demosthenes’ strategy of establishing an identity based on past actions and then criticising the Athenians for deviating from it: establishing a sense of Athenian identity via failures in the present juxtaposed with success in the past, and challenging that identity in order to shame them into action.

This approach presupposes the self-identification of the Assembly as *Athenian*, and in the interpellative moment, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, Demosthenes *hails* the *dēmos* as—categorically—*Men of Athens*.⁵ In practice, oratory hails its audience within a collective ideological framework of shared knowledge of what it means to be an Athenian citizen in fourth-century Athens.⁶ Demosthenes uses this framework to safely criticise the current Assembly and didactically instructs them to conform to these civic norms via the rhetoric of identity.

Demosthenes’ strategy of repeated allusions to core values associated with Athenian identity resonates with the collective social memory of the Athenian master narrative, and draws

⁴ See B. Steinbock, *Social Memory in Athenian Public Discourse: Uses and Meanings of the Past* (Ann Arbor 2013); G. Maltagliati, “Persuasion through Proximity (and Distance) in the Attic Orators’ Historical Examples,” *GRBS* 60 (2020) 68–97; M. Barbato, *The Ideology of Democratic Athens: Institutions, Orators and the Mythical Past* (Edinburgh 2020).

⁵ On interpellation see Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 9–12.

⁶ See J. Ober, “Public Speech and the Power of the People in Democratic Athens,” *Political Science and Politics* 26 (1993) 481–486.

parallels to the didactic presentation of Athenian identity crystallised in the *epitaphioi logoi*.⁷ By reminding them of their collective values, Demosthenes reasserts the behaviour expected of Athenians *by* Athenians, and juxtaposes their current state to their virtuous past actions and their immutable ideology.⁸ Demosthenes' rhetoric relies on collective memory to urge the Assembly to recognise their moral degeneration and equates their external problems with their failure to act *Athenian*.⁹ In this regard, Demosthenes augments his *parrhēsia* with the emotive and ideologically loaded power of their ancestral identity and assimilates his proposals to core Athenian virtues as the means to resolve their problems.

This analysis complements Loraux's research on how the *epitaphioi logoi* craft an ideal Athens that "expresses what the city wants to be in its own eyes rather than describing what it is in reality: at all times ... the *Polis* is at once a reality and an ideal."¹⁰ Demosthenes utilises this relationship between the

⁷ Steinbock, *Social Memory* 7–8, citing A. Assmann, "History and Memory," *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Amsterdam 2001) 6824: social memory as "cultural memory," "believed history," "intentional history"; J. Fentress and C. Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford 1992) 25, define it as an "expression of collective experience"; B. Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Maidenhead 2003) 158, "a group's representation of its past ... that enacts and gives substance to that group's identity, its present conditions and its vision of the future." For the parallels between *epitaphioi logoi* and Assembly speeches see Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 13–16; Herrman, *Demosthenes* 122.

⁸ N. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens: The Funeral Oration in the Classical City* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1986) 86: *epitaphioi* preserve "the *athanatos mnēmē* (immortal memory) of the city."

⁹ Steinbock, *Social Memory* 30: social memory "provides a pool of collective experience for the perception and analysis of present realities, but it also serves as a repository of symbols and metaphors." See too J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton 1989) 40: "communication between the members of a society, especially in the context of political decision making, will make use of symbols (metaphors, signs) which refer to and derive from ideology."

¹⁰ Loraux, *Invention* 251, citing V. Ehrenberg, "When did the Polis Rise?"

ideal and the real Athens by calling the Assembly to reflect self-critically. In this we can see the didactic and prescriptive projection of Athenian identity in the epideictic oration performed in a deliberative context, where Demosthenes' rhetoric of identity (via examples of the past) evokes this *idea* of Athens. As Loraux observed:

The funeral oration wants to be the political expression of the city as a whole, and to ensure the cohesion of Athenians against others, it must first proclaim it to the Athenians themselves. Is it not the peculiarity of the epideictic oration, which was always bound up with traditional values, to "strengthen a disposition to action by increasing adhesion to the values that it exalts"?¹¹

This paper explores how Demosthenes uses this peculiarity in his rhetoric of identity to rebuke and advise the Assembly to act in a manner worthy of Athens. As "the most official of lessons," the *epitaphioi logoi* offered a coherent reality on "the unchanging lesson that they had to draw from the city's shifting affairs," and Demosthenes uses this identity to safely criticise the Assembly and instruct them to conform to these civic norms.¹²

JHS 57 (1937) 158. Loraux views the *epitaphioi* as "a way of conceiving of Athenian history between the fragmented time of battle and the paradigmatic timelessness of the citizens' valor. It is a discourse on 'democracy', the geometric locus of arete, forever protected from conflicts and tensions ... it is a political genre in which, governed by civic laws, the logos becomes in turn a civic norm for speaking of Athens. From epitaphios to epitaphios, a certain idea that the city wishes to have of itself emerges, beyond the needs of the present" (42).

¹¹ Loraux, *Invention* 253, citing C. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *Traité de l'argumentation: La nouvelle rhétorique* (Brussels 2008) 66–67.

¹² Loraux, *Invention* 144, 189. Steinbock, *Social Memory* 51: "the praise of past and recent Athenian achievements ... was normative, and all Athenians were encouraged to emulate their example." K. Clarke, *Making Time for the Past: Local History and the Polis* (Oxford 2008) 312, notes oratory's "symbiotic relationship with the 'official tradition' of the *dēmos* both influencing and being determined by it." Cf. R. Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1989) 202: "the vision of Athenian history presented in oratory must express what orators and *demos* know." P. Hunt, *War, Peace, and Alliance in Demosthenes' Athens* (New York 2010) 20: the *epi-*

This resonates with the *dēmos* as Demosthenes is utilising collective social memory where historical *topoi* become “symbols of national character.”¹³ As such, to disagree becomes equivalent to revoking their identity as ὁ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, as Demosthenes’ proposals are assimilated to the core values of being an Athenian.

Defining and juxtaposing Athenian identity: the recent past and the present

In *Philippic 1*, in the debate on the unresolved issue of Amphipolis, Demosthenes asserts that the current crisis is self-inflicted and rebukes the citizens for their inactivity.¹⁴ He weaves a delicate balance between criticising their behaviour and presenting hope in the power of an active Athens (Dem. 4.2; cf. 9.5):¹⁵

First, men of Athens, you must not despair at the present situation, even if it seems dreadful. For its worst aspect in the past holds out our best hope for the future. What am I referring to? To the fact, men of Athens, that our situation has deteriorated so badly while you have been doing none of the things you needed to do.¹⁶

Demosthenes shames the Assembly for their lack of action, to-

taphioi “aim to appeal to a mass audience, they allow us to discern the guiding ideals of Athenian policy.”

¹³ Assmann, *History and Memory* 6824.

¹⁴ I date Dem. 4 to 351, Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 27–30; cf. I. Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens and the Fall of Classical Greece* (Oxford 2013) 40–43; F. Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit* III (Leipzig 1898) 368.

¹⁵ Unless otherwise stated, translations of Demosthenes are from Trevett, *Demosthenes*.

¹⁶ Wooten, *Commentary* 45, notes that the phrase with οὐκ ἄθυμητόν emphasises the need to “not despair.” Karvounis, *Studien* 240–241, states that Demosthenes detects the “problem” of Philip in its entire extent, considering for the first time the developing situation: “Demosthenes erfaßt das ‘Problem’ Philipp in seinem ganzen Umfang, das heißt, er bezieht sich nicht auf eine bestimmte Begebenheit sondern betrachtet zum ersten Mal die Situation in ihrer Entwicklung.” While I agree, this focus on Philip risks overshadowing Demosthenes’ criticism of the Assembly.

gether with the accusation that—because Athens has done nothing—the current crisis is self-inflicted: “For if our situation were so poor when you had been doing all that you should, there would be no hope of improving matters” (4.2).¹⁷

Demosthenes offers a silver lining by balancing his criticism with the hope that their lack of action provides them with the simple means to rectify the situation. He then recalls their role in a recent conflict,¹⁸ as a paradigm of Athenian behaviour (4.3):

Next, you must consider, whether you hear it from others or remember it from personal knowledge, how powerful the Spartans once were, not long ago, and how well and appropriately you acted, in keeping with the reputation of the city, and endured war against them for the sake of justice.¹⁹

¹⁷ Wooten, *Commentary* 46: ἔχειν plus the adverb indicates a situation that is dynamic and changing; Herrman, *Demosthenes* 163, stresses that οὐδέ is emphatic.

¹⁸ For this as a reference to the Corinthian War see Trevett, *Demosthenes* 71; N. G. L Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* (London 1994) 483–484. Wooten, *Commentary* 48, thinks more likely the invasion of Boeotia by Agesilaus in 378, citing Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.34–41. D. Phillips, *Athenian Political Oratory* (New York 2004) 229 n.3: either the Corinthian War (395–387/6) or recent hostilities before the battle of Leuctra in 371. Herrman, *Demosthenes* 163–164: “Demosthenes refers more generally to their hegemony after the Peloponnesian war.” Maltagliati, *GRBS* 60 (2020) 82: Demosthenes, rather than invoking a specific allusion, is intentionally vague: “the indeterminacy of the example makes it as cognitively appealing as possible, and prompts the audience to make their own inferences: some Athenians might have thought of the Corinthian War, others might have recalled the more recent Boeotian conflict instead.”

¹⁹ Cf. Isoc. *Plat.* 14, where the voice of the Plataeans reminds the Athenians that they acted “on behalf of those deprived of their autonomy.” Wooten, *Commentary* 50–51: contrast is emphasised in the antithesis between their actions and their negligence, it contains what Demosthenes sees as the real problem in Athens, “their lack of action to improve matters.” I concur with Herrman that it is used to “highlight the failing of contemporary Athenians.” On the difference made between the past and present: Herrman, *Demosthenes* 163; Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 115, 155, 170, 285, 295, 329, 332, 351.

By reminding the Athenians of their worthy past actions, Demosthenes does more than present an example to follow, but juxtaposes their current neglectful behaviour and their past reputation. While this is building on a general ‘decline theory’ on the recent past, it can be treated in a more general comparison of past and present behaviours.²⁰ Unlike their ancestors the Assembly is avoiding war and hardship, and by reminding the *dēmos* that enduring war for the sake of justice is part of their inherited duty, Demosthenes uses the past to both reproach and instruct the current generation of Athenians (4.3):²¹

Why do I mention this? To make you see, men of Athens, and understand (καὶ θεώσησθε) that nothing frightens you when you are on your guard, but that if you are contemptuous, nothing is as you might wish, using as my examples the Spartans’ strength then, and this man’s arrogance now, which alarms us because we fail to attend to any of the things that we should.

Demosthenes reminds the Assembly of what can be achieved when they choose to act, and reduces Philip to the product of their inaction.²² Indeed, καὶ θεώσησθε emphasises the call for self-reflection, indicating the nuanced use of the past to prescribe an idealised vision of Athenian action, juxtaposed with their current failings.²³ This goes beyond defining Philip as

²⁰ Clarke, *Making Time* 252–253, sees Demosthenes’ use of the recent past as participation in a general decline theory. For the purposes of this paper, it does not matter which war Demosthenes refers to, but rather that he is presuming an expected behaviour that transcends a specific context.

²¹ On the cognitive appeal of historical examples in the Attic orators see Maltagliati, *GRBS* 60 (2020) 68–79.

²² While Herrman, *Demosthenes* 7, holds that it was 346 when Demosthenes “began to blame his political opponents in Athens for Philip’s success,” we can see this here in 351.

²³ Arist. *Rh.* 3.7.7 says that shame causes embarrassment to the listener. Trevett, *Demosthenes* 144, notes “the desire to avoid humiliation was an important motivating factor in the ‘shame culture’ of ancient Greece.” C. H. Tarnopolsky, *Prudes, Perverts, and Tyrants: Plato’s Gorgias and the Politics of Shame* (Princeton 2010) 93, views Plato’s use of shame as “a necessary but dangerous motivational force underlying both democratic deliberations and philo-

their enemy, but reminds the Athenians of the behaviour expected of them.²⁴ Moreover, using the *dēmos*' awareness of this collective past draws a parallel to the didactic function of the *epitaphios logos*, which uses the Athenian past to prescribe the behaviour expected of the living generation of Athenians.²⁵ Demosthenes seeks to understand Philip's success by examining its origins and, in doing so, shifts the focus onto Athenian culpability and diminishes Philip to a by-product of Athenian inaction.²⁶ This too is a topos of the *epitaphioi logoi*: that the

sophic discussions. The Athenian ideal of *parhēsia* (frankness, freedom of speech) articulates the structure of shame necessary to these two forms of deliberation." Wooten, *Commentary* 48–50, cites Quint. *Inst.* 6.5.7–8 praising Demosthenes' good judgement "by pointing out to his audience that it is still possible to improve the situation that has been created by their negligence. Then, rather than openly attacking their lack of energy in defending their own interests, he praises the courageous policy of their ancestors. This, according to Quintilian, makes them favorably disposed to the speaker, and the pride that they feel in Athens' heroic past causes them to repent of their own unheroic behavior." In this we can see reference to Yunis' notion of "taming democracy," where the orators want to create "in the minds of the audience an enlightened self-understanding that actually dispels conflict and realises the politically harmonious community": H. Yunis, *Taming Democracy: Models of Political Rhetoric in Classical Athens* (Ithaca 1996) 28. L. Pearson, *The Art of Demosthenes* (Meisenheim am Glan 1976) 123, views this in terms of Philip: "the first task Demosthenes sets himself in the *First Philippic* is to change the attitude of the Assembly towards Philip." I concur with Wooten that Demosthenes calls for a change of attitude towards *themselves*.

²⁴ I go beyond Karvounis, *Studien* 246, who views this as part of the traditional struggle for supremacy in the Greek world: Demosthenes does not define Philip merely to assert that he is their enemy, but to remind the Athenians of the expected behaviour towards traditional foes.

²⁵ Cf. Pl. *Menex.* 246B. Steinbock, *Social Memory* 51: "the praise of past and recent Athenian achievements was not an end in itself but fulfilled a didactic function: the ἀρετή displayed by the fallen and their ancestors was normative, and all Athenians were encouraged to emulate their example."

²⁶ I differ here from Wooten, *Commentary* 45 on 4.2–7, that Demosthenes encourages the Athenians to action by the example of "Philip himself, who overcame formidable foes by taking vigorous action." Similarly, Karvounis, *Studien* 234, suggests that these are separate arguments. In contrast, I argue

Athenians are defeated, not by others, but by their own errors/mistakes/lack of action.²⁷ As such, while it may be said that “the *First Philippic* is the first act of the drama of Demosthenes and Philip,”²⁸ the drama is also unequivocally the first act between Demosthenes and an inactive Assembly.

The distant past and the present

In the *Olynthiacs*, Demosthenes uses the distant past to augment his criticism of their failure to defend Olynthus and their culpability for Philip’s expansion in the northern Aegean (notably at their own expense).²⁹ In *Olynthiac 1*, Demosthenes criticises Athens’ failure to seize the *kairos* presented by the Olynthians’ call for aid to recoup their losses and push Philip back.³⁰ Following the failure of the speech, Demosthenes delivered *Olynthiac 2* to persuade the Assembly to consider again sending aid to Olynthus.³¹ To provoke them to action, he claims amazement at their apathy and contrasts their past actions (2.24):

But I am amazed at this: that in the past you rose up against the Spartans in the cause of justice for the Greeks and refused many opportunities to make large private gains, but instead spent your own money by raising taxes and were the first to risk your lives on campaign, so that the majority of Greeks should get justice,

that the comments on Athenian negligence and Philip’s aggression can be viewed as one issue: Demosthenes describes Philip to denounce the Athenians’ neglect, and to shame them into acknowledging their responsibility.

²⁷ Cf. Pl. *Menex.* 243D, *Leg.* 626C2–3; Loraux, *Invention* 199.

²⁸ Ellis and Milns, *Spectre of Phillip* 11.

²⁹ For example, Dem. 1.9 “always neglecting,” ἀεὶ προΐήμενοι, which emphasises the culpability of the Athenians. Both Herrman, *Demosthenes* 85, and J. E. Sandys, *The First Philippic and the Olynthiacs of Demosthenes* (London 1924) 135, remark Demosthenes’ fondness for προΐήμενοι.

³⁰ On *kairos* see Arist. *Rh.* 2.4.5, 2.5.8. Cf. P. Sipiora et al. (eds.), *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis* (New York 2002); Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 77–79.

³¹ I date the *Olynthiacs* to 349/8 and follow the order I, II, III: Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 81–82.

whereas now you shrink from marching out and put off paying taxes, even to protect your own possessions! Indeed, I am amazed that you, who have often rescued the other Greeks, both collectively and individually, now sit about, even when you have been deprived of your own property.³²

Demosthenes nuances his criticism by augmenting this with their past actions and their moral obligation to protect their fellow Greeks: the Athenians are acting in a manner at odds with their reputation, and the mention of loss of property invokes not only Amphipolis, Potidaea, Pydna, and Methone, but how those losses exacerbated the economic hardships they were already experiencing in the aftermath of the Social War.³³ What, if not this, will provoke them to action? Moreover, the reference to the past reminds the Athenians of their reputation and prescribes the action expected of them, which again evokes the didactic purpose of the *epitaphioi logoi* to motivate the *dēmos* via the example of the ancestors.³⁴ Demosthenes does not need to cite specific events as he is tapping into the social memory of their shared past experiences that affirm Athenian hegemony and success.

In *Olynthiac* 3, Demosthenes again recalls their fifth-century

³² Herrman, *Demosthenes* 122, notes the brief allusion to Athens as the defender of Greece, and observes the parallels to the annual funeral oration. Phillips, *Athenian Political Oratory* 223 n.9, cites the same response in Dem. 4.3 discussed above. Again, I follow Maltagliati that the dating of these events is deliberately vague. As observed by an anonymous reviewer, it is noteworthy that Demosthenes does not tie his paradigm to a specific event, but focuses on ideological aspect of memory.

³³ On the Social War, Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens* 67, cites Dem. 10.37 on annual revenues being ca. 137 talents in contrast to the thousands in 431. Hunt, *War, Peace, and Alliance* 34, likewise notes “Athens’ annual revenues were only 45 talents per year after the Social War”; Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* 35: “in summer 355 Athens was reduced to impotence.”

³⁴ E.g. Pl. *Menex.* 239A–B: “Our fathers, and these men themselves, performed many fine deeds, for all the world to see ... in the belief that freedom was worth fighting for, whether for the Greeks against Greeks or for Greece as a whole against barbarians.” See too Lys. 2.17.

counterparts to criticise those who put self-interest over dutiful *parrhēsia* (3.22):

But ever since the appearance of these politicians who ask you “What do you want? What shall I propose? What favour can I do you?” the affairs of the city have been pledged in exchange for immediate gratification and this is the result: all their affairs prosper, while yours are in a shameful state.³⁵

The criticism is directed at those who manipulate the *polis* for their own ends *and* at the *dēmos* for indulging rhetorical display over the needs of the *polis*.³⁶ To augment this, Demosthenes uses their idealised ancestors to showcase (and prescribe) civic behaviour (3.21–26):

For, I have heard, as perhaps you have too, that the public speakers in the time of our ancestors—men whom all the speakers praise, even though they do not imitate them at all—adopted this manner of political conduct: the famous Aristides, Nicias, my namesake, and Pericles.³⁷ ... In private they were so restrained and true to the nature of their constitution that if any of you knows which is the house of Aristides or of Miltiades or of the distinguished men of that time, he sees that it is no grander than that of its neighbour. For they did not conduct the affairs of the city to their own profit, but each of them thought it right to make the commonwealth more prosperous. Because they managed the affairs of Greece honestly, and matters relating to the

³⁵ Herrman, *Demosthenes* 147, notes that the short rhetorical questions in asyndeton are lively, but that parodic direct speech is rare in Assembly speeches, yet frequent in Dem. 19.

³⁶ Cf. his criticism of their attitude towards Neoptolemus in Dem 5.6; Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 168–169.

³⁷ On the relevance of this selection to the current situation see Herrman, *Demosthenes* 151; Trevett, *Demosthenes* 62: Aristides prioritised the *polis* over personal interests, Miltiades did not pander for popularity, Nicias challenged the Sicilian expedition. Cf. D. M MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* (Oxford 2009) 237 n.93. G. Mader, “Dramatising *Didaxis*: Aspects of Demosthenes’ ‘Periclean Project,’” *CP* 102 (2007) 157, adds that the Periclean paradigm serves to validate Demosthenes’ persona in the adversarial assembly contests. See C. Carey, “Solon in the Orators,” *Trends in Classics* 7 (2015) 117, on the omission of Solon.

gods piously, and their own affairs in a spirit of equality, they rightly enjoyed great fortune.³⁸

Ranging across space and time, Demosthenes transports the Assembly to a specific version of the past. In this ekphrasis-like moment, he chooses archetypal Athenians: Pericles, Aristides, Demosthenes, Nicias, who embody core democratic values of honesty (πιστώς), and piety (εὐσεβῶς). By reminding the Assembly at 3.24–25 of “our ancestors, whom the speakers of the day neither indulged nor loved, as these men now do you,” whose building projects and offerings were such that “none of their descendants could surpass them,”³⁹ Demosthenes presents a stark contrast to the present (3.29):

Look at the politicians who are responsible for these things. Some of them were beggars and are now rich; others were obscure and are now prominent. Some have built private houses that are grander than our public buildings. The more our city has declined, the more these men have flourished.⁴⁰

The correlation of the rise of individuals to the decline of the *polis* equates the current crisis to the decline of civic morality. It was precisely this moral integrity, central to their projected identity, which was key to their past success (3.30):

What is the reason for this? Why is it that everything was fine in the past, but is in a wretched state now? Because then the people had the courage to act and campaign in person, and were the masters of the politicians, and controlled all good things, and each of the others was content to receive a share of honour or

³⁸ Herrman, *Demosthenes* 150: this contrasts “the glory (δόξα) of fifth-century Athenians that was manifest in public works and the private selfishness of fourth-century Athenians.”

³⁹ B. Gray, *Stasis and Stability: Exile, the Polis, and Political Thought* (Oxford 2015) 176, argues that Demosthenes “offers a vague, uncontroversial account of past Athenian heroism, comparable to Thucydides’ Pericles, to give an uncontroversial veneer to controversial foreign-policy proposals.”

⁴⁰ Herrman, *Demosthenes* 155, on the nostalgic image with parallels in Dem. 23.209–210; Isoc. 7.26–27; Ar. *Eq.* 111–114.

office or any other benefit from the hands of the people.⁴¹

The full extent of the threat posed by their behaviour is vividly expressed in the neologism *ekneurizo* (3.31):

Now the opposite is the case: the politicians control all the good things, and everything is done through them, and you the people are hamstrung.⁴²

With ἔκνευρισιμῆνοι, Demosthenes presents a vivid metaphor that the Assembly has passively accepted castration, and their citizen identity is undermined by current deliberative practices.⁴³ Citing the moral authority of the ancestors, Demosthenes attributes the current crisis with Philip to the rejection of defining Athenian democratic values. This rhetorical use of identity and social memory also transforms his unpopular and controversial proposals regarding the redistribution of the Theoric Fund into a return to the virtuous civic behaviour of the ancestors.⁴⁴

The past protecting the present

This use of the past to critique the present continues in *Philippic 2*,⁴⁵ but with a psychological twist: Demosthenes crafts Philip's voice to present a Macedonian assessment of Athenian character, based on their Persian War reputation.⁴⁶ After criti-

⁴¹ Clarke, *Making Time* 377: the ancestors' successes were "connected to their refusal to be flattered by public speakers."

⁴² A. Das, *Medical Language in the Speeches of Demosthenes* (diss. Univ. Washington 2015) 116, notes that the verb implies to castrate, cf. Aeschin. 3.166.

⁴³ Demosthenes continues that they are content to play the part of a servant, ἐν ὑπηρέτων: *hupēretēs* is specifically a hoplite's servant, cf. Thuc. 3.17.4.

⁴⁴ On the Theoric Fund see Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 97–98, 139–144.

⁴⁵ I date Dem. 6 to 344/3: *Athenian Ideology* 191; Trevett, *Demosthenes* 100.

⁴⁶ This 'psychological' element of imagining Philip's thoughts is discussed in Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens* 194. S. Usher, *Greek Oratory: Tradition and Originality* (Oxford 1999) 233, notes that "no speech illustrates his command of [psychological insight] more tellingly than the *Second Philippic*." G. Mader, "Praise, Blame and Authority: Some Strategies of Persuasion in Demosthenes, *Philippic 2*," *Hermes* 132 (2004) 57, calls this a "psychological trick" to confront the Athenians with their own behaviour. Cf. D. Guth,

cising the Athenians in the proemium (“the blame belongs to all of us, men of Athens,” αἴτιον δὲ τούτων, ὅτι πάντες, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι) Demosthenes addresses the crisis of deliberation in the Assembly (6.3):

At a time when those who are greedy and ambitious should be punished by deeds and actions, not by words, first we speakers shrink from making proposals and offering advice, fearing we will incur your enmity.⁴⁷

This is in direct opposition to Philip’s account of their reputation (6.8):

He saw correctly that our city and our national character are such that nothing he could offer or do would induce us to abandon any of the other Greeks to him for our own benefit, but that you would take account of justice, shun the infamy associated with betrayal, make all necessary plans, and resist him, if he tried to do anything of this kind, just as if you were at war.⁴⁸

While τοῖς ἤθεσι τοῖς ἡμετέροις can mean “our customs,” in the context of this passage Demosthenes implies a sense of national character. Just as he evoked their recent behaviour in *Philippic 1* to remind the Athenians of what they could achieve when they acted with conviction, he evokes the image of an incorruptible Athens to remind them of their duty. Presenting this from the perspective of ‘Philip’ softens his *parrhēsia* by citing a traditional view of Athens from an outsider (and enemy) perspective.⁴⁹

“The King’s Speech: Philip’s Rhetoric and Democratic Leadership in the Debate over the Peace of Philocrates,” *Rhetorica* 33 (2015) 345–346, on Philip’s “imaginary inner monologue” in Dem. 19.320.

⁴⁷ Cf. Dem. 3.12. MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* 329, observes that “by 344 this [*logos* and *ergon*] was a familiar theme, but it is handled more elaborately here than elsewhere.”

⁴⁸ Usher, *Greek Oratory* 233; the use of *echthros* instead of *polemios* at 6.6 “implies that the conduct of outright war was not necessary for enmity to be affirmed.”

⁴⁹ Mader, *Hermes* 132 (2004) 57; Guth, *Rhetorica* 33 (2015) 345. Cf. Dem. 19.320–324.

Demosthenes develops this evaluation further with ‘Philip’s’ attitude towards the Medizers (6.10):

For these developments show that he judges you to be the only people who will not abandon the common rights of the Greeks in return for any profit and will not trade your good will towards the Greeks for any benefit or advantage. He naturally took this view of you, and the opposite view of the Argives and Thebans, in the light not only of present circumstances but also of past history.

Demosthenes’ praise that Philip “is paying you the highest compliment, men of Athens” (6.9) is clearly ironic.⁵⁰ However, Demosthenes uses this memory not merely in a nostalgic capacity, but to remind the Athenians of the power of their ideology (6.11):

For he finds it recorded, I think, and hears it said that your ancestors, when they had the chance to rule the rest of Greece on condition that they obey the King, not only rejected this proposal, when Alexander, the ancestor of these people, came as a herald on this matter, but chose to abandon their land and endured suffering anything at all, and subsequently did things that everyone longs to tell but no one has been able to recount worthily, which is why I too will omit them, and rightly so—for their deeds are greater than anyone could do justice to in words.⁵¹

Holding up their ancestral past, Demosthenes engages in Gehrke’s ‘intentional history’, where historical experience is formative in defining the Athenian self-image.⁵² Demosthenes arguably uses this to alert the Assembly to the dangers of their current position, which is in complete opposition to their Per-

⁵⁰ Mader, *Hermes* 132 (2004) 61–62. Usher, *Greek Oratory* 233, notes that this idealised patriotism makes the political reality all the more shocking. Neither Mader nor Usher, however, extend this past contrast/nostalgia.

⁵¹ Cf. Isoc. *Plat.* 14.57.

⁵² H.-J. Gehrke, “Marathon als Mythos: Von Helden und Barbaren,” in G. Krumeich et al. (eds.), *Schlachtemythen. Ereignis – Erzählung – Erinnerung* (Cologne 2003) 22; cf. Steinbock, *Social Memory* 20.

sian War reputation.⁵³ Indeed, the frequency of the Athenians' rejection of Alexander in their public discourse suggests that the *dēmos* was aware that their ancestors were affronted by the notion of shirking their duty out of apathy or for personal gain.⁵⁴ Those Athenians, moreover, would not tolerate being ruled or manipulated rhetorically, but if the current Assembly chooses cooperation with Philip, they accept Macedonian hegemony under the guise of peace. These ancestral paradigms both invite negative comparison to the current Athenians and assert that peace with Philip is fundamentally opposed to their ideology.

Moreover, by arguing that Philip's actions reveal his understanding of the Athenian character, Demosthenes uses Philip to define their identity. In this, we can see Loraux's observations on the use of a specific 'ideal' Athens in the *epitaphioi logoi* as applying in a deliberative context, suggesting that the influence of social memory and the rhetoric of identity should be seen as integral to the Attic orators, and across the wider milieu of fourth-century Athens.

The past to help the present: Diopēithes and Timotheus

By 341 tensions had escalated between Athens and Philip, particularly in the Chersonese region, with Philip formally complaining about the Athenian general Diopēithes.⁵⁵ It is

⁵³ Particularly Marathon, cf. Steinbock, *Social Memory* 53–54: it was a “cornerstone of their identity” and had a “prescriptive force for future conduct.” Cf. M. Jung, *Marathon und Plataiai: Zwei Perserschlachten als “lieux de mémoire” im antiken Griechenland* (Göttingen 2006) 130 n.11.

⁵⁴ Lys. 2.33; Isoc. *Paneg.* 4.94–96; Dem. 18.202–204; Lycurg. *Leoc.* 71. Steinbock, *Social Memory* 144, views this episode as “an essential part of the commemorated history of the Persian Wars and was thus quite familiar to Demosthenes' audience.” Cf. Hdt. 8.144.1–3.

⁵⁵ Dem. 8 is dated to spring 341, following Philip's Thracian campaign: Dion. Hal. *Ann.* 1.10; cf. Worthington *Demosthenes of Athens* 216; MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* 347; Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit* III 368. M. A. Sears, *Athens, Thrace, and the Shaping of Athenian Leadership* (Cambridge 2013) i: “Thrace was vitally important for Athens thanks to its natural re-

important to observe the timeframe here, in terms of both the deteriorating situation after the Peace of Philocrates and the failure to heed Demosthenes' previous warnings in *Philippic I* and the *Olynthiacs*.⁵⁶ Demosthenes criticises the Assembly for debating Diopieithes' punishment, for it indicates a breakdown of *logos* and *praxis* (8.22, 30):

But in our speeches, we praise those who speak worthily of the city, whereas in our actions we join with their opponents ... And yet, terrible though it is, that some of these men are behaving like this, this is not the really terrible thing. Rather, you who sit here are already so disposed that if someone were to come forward and say that it is Diopieithes who is responsible for all our troubles, or Chares, or Aristophon or whichever citizen one might care to mention, you immediately agree and cry out that he is speaking the truth.⁵⁷

According to this they have lost their capacity for critical reasoning (something Thucydides' Pericles praises them for in his *epitaphios logos*) and base their decisions on hearsay not first-hand knowledge, for which Demosthenes had criticised them back in 351.⁵⁸ Rather than having a greater grip on matters, the Athenians are losing control of the situation, to the point that they now consider punishing their own general to appease

sources and access to strategic waterways, which were essential to a maritime empire." For Philip's Thracian campaign see Diod. 16.71.2, 17.62.5; G. L. Cawkwell, *Philip of Macedon* (London 1978) 44; Worthington 171, 214–215; Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* 122. Diopieithes' alleged breach of the Peace: Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 158; cf. Hammond 127–128; R. A. Gabriel, *Philip II of Macedon: Greater than Alexander* (Washington 2010) 187; I. Worthington, *Philip of Macedonia* (New Haven 2008) 126.

⁵⁶ Cf. Plut. *Dem.* 9.6 (Demosthenes' scathing reply); Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens* 210.

⁵⁷ This paper is not concerned with Demosthenes' veracity but with the rhetorical strategy. See G. L. Cawkwell, "Demosthenes' Policy after the Peace of Philocrates II," *CQ* 13 (1963) 200–213, for analysis of Demosthenes' accuracy.

⁵⁸ *Dem.* 4.28–29, 1.20; cf. Thuc. 3.38.4; Polyb. 12.27.1 (Heraclitus 22 B 101a D.-K.); Arist. *Metaph.* 980a25.

Philip. Demosthenes continues (8.33):

Contrary to your present practice, men of Athens, the public speakers should all have trained you to be mild and considerate in the Assembly, since it is there that you discuss your rights and those of your allies, but to show yourselves fearsome and severe in your preparations for war, since there the struggle is against your enemies and rivals.⁵⁹

In this illogical attitude towards Diopieithes and Philip, they have deluded themselves that the debate on prosecuting Diopieithes solves their present predicament. For Demosthenes, they are avoiding the issue at hand: war with Philip. Their inability to recognise this avoidance exacerbates the situation in the North and Thrace, as debating Diopieithes' punishment wastes time and is an illusion of meaningful action.⁶⁰

Demosthenes further qualifies this criticism by referring to Timotheus.⁶¹ This example recalls that when their ancestors heeded advice and took effective action, their security was assured (8.74–75):

You doubtless know that the famous Timotheus once made a speech before you saying that you should assist and go to the rescue of the Euboeans when the Thebans were trying to enslave them, and that he said something like this: "Tell me, when you have the Thebans on an island, are you deliberating about

⁵⁹ Pearson, *The Art of Demosthenes* 146, also remarks Demosthenes' attempt to "change their attitude, instead of making things easy for Philip and disheartening their allies by their perversity."

⁶⁰ G. Mader, "Fighting Philip with Decrees: Demosthenes and the Syndrome of Symbolic Action," *AJP* 127 (2006) 367–386, considers this to be "Speech Act Logic," citing J. Ober, *The Athenian Revolution* (Princeton 1996) 151, on Austinian speech-act theory. J. E. Sandys, *Demosthenes: On the Peace, Second Philippic, On the Chersonese and Third Philippic* (Cambridge 1910) 162, on illusions of reality and action at 8.31: the Athenians appear distressed "as if they think something of theirs is being destroyed." The implication of Demosthenes' version of events is that the illusion of peace is destroyed, as is their scapegoat; cf. Mader 378.

⁶¹ Timotheus secured their "possessions" such as Potidaea, which they have subsequently lost.

how to treat them and what to do? Will you not fill the sea, men of Athens, with triremes? Will you not leap to your feet and proceed to Piraeus? Will you not launch your ships?" Timotheus spoke these words, and you acted, but the success arose from these two things together: his words and your action.⁶²

The alternative scenario is evident in Demosthenes' present predicament (8.75):

If he had given the best possible advice, as he did, but you had remained idle and paid no attention, would any of the things that then benefited the city have happened? They could not have. So too with what I say: you should seek action from yourselves, but the best advice from the man who steps up to speak.⁶³

Demosthenes associates his own *parrhēsia* with Timotheus' role as *parrhēsiastēs*, and also reinforces the duty of the Assembly to respond in kind.⁶⁴ The current Athenians are far removed from Timotheus' citizens, and their refusal to heed Demosthenes' advice is framed as a rejection of Athenian values.

Physical reminders and the present

Philippic 3 was delivered only few months after *On the Chersonese* and continues Demosthenes' complaints about the Assembly's illogical attitude (9.3–4):

Look at it like this: You believe so strongly that in other areas freedom of speech should be granted to all inhabitants of the city that you have allowed foreigners and slaves to share in it, and many slaves here can be seen saying whatever they like with

⁶² Trevett, *Demosthenes* 151, notes that this happened in 357, citing Dem. 1.8, 4.17, 21.174; Aeschin. 3.85; Diod. 16.7.2.

⁶³ Despite the corruption of the Greek text, the meaning is still clear: Trevett, *Demosthenes* 151; J. H. Vince, *Demosthenes* (Cambridge 1986), translates this as "for advice, the best that skill in speech can command."

⁶⁴ Cf. Isoc. 15.132–138: Isocrates recalls an exchange with Timotheus, instructing him on the need to find favour with the *dēmos*: "if you gratify the people, they judge everything you do not according to how things actually are but in whatever way helps your cause" (134); but Timotheus "was unable to change his nature ... he could not adapt himself to such men who are hostile" (138).

greater freedom than is enjoyed by the citizens of some other states, but you have entirely banished freedom of speech when it comes to the giving of advice.⁶⁵

The Assembly has expelled *isēgoria* and *parrhēsia* from the centre of Athenian democracy when both were fundamental aspects of democratic ideology.⁶⁶ By withholding their *eunoia*, but granting it to self-serving *rhetors*, they have destabilised their democracy (9.4):

The result is that in meetings of the Assembly, you are spoiled and easily flattered, and listen to everything with an ear to your own pleasure, but in your public policy and in the reality of the situation, you are already in deadly danger. If this is your disposition even now, there is nothing I can say to you.⁶⁷

As in the example of Timotheus, Demosthenes asserts that the current Athenians have damaged the crucial relationship between the speaker and the *dēmos* which was central to Athenian democracy functioning effectively. To reinforce this he uses the

⁶⁵ Sandys, *Demosthenes: Third Philippic* 194: the ending παντάπασιν ἐξεληλάκατε is “purposefully brief” to contrast the absence of free speech in the Assembly compared to “its general diffusion elsewhere.” Herrman, *Demosthenes* 207, views the claim as “highly exaggerated,” similar to the Old Oligarch’s remarks, [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1.10. I think Demosthenes’ point is to stress the hostility to his advice/the lack of *eunoia*, building on his reference to Timotheus in Dem. 8.

⁶⁶ See R. Balot, “Free Speech, Courage, and Democratic Deliberation,” in I. Slutier et al. (eds.), *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden 2004) 233–259, on the interplay of *parrhēsia* and *isēgoria*. While Trevett, *Demosthenes* 156, and MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* 126–129, concur that there was “no absolute free speech in Athens” (Trevett), Roisman, *Rhetoric of Conspiracy* 268, suggests that “Athenian democracy permitted citizens to use frank speech in the cause of benefiting the state, guiding the people to the right course of action, and educating them to become better citizens.”

⁶⁷ Cf. Dem. 4.38 and 3.22; Isoc. 8.14: “even though we live in a democracy, there is still no freedom of speech (καὶ ὅτι δημοκρατίας οὐσης οὐκ ἔστι παρηγορία) except here in the Assembly for those who are foolish and do not care about you ... instead you are hostile to those who rebuke or admonish you as you are to those who actively harm the city.”

inscription about Arthmius⁶⁸ as a moral lesson on the values central to their identity (9.41–45):

Yet in previous times the opposite was the case, as I shall show not in my own words but from a document of your ancestors that they inscribed on a bronze pillar and deposited on the Acropolis. It reads: “Arthmius the son of Pythonax of Zeleia is to be an outlaw and enemy (ἄτιμος καὶ πολέμιος) of the Athenian people and its allies, himself and his descendants.”⁶⁹ After that is written the explanation: “because he brought gold from the Medes into the Peloponnese.” This is the document. Consider, by the gods, what was the purpose and resolve of the Athenians of that time in taking this action. They wrote that a man of Zeleia, Arthmius, a slave of the king (for Zeleia is in Asia), because in the service of his master he had brought money to the Peloponnese—not to Athens—should be declared their and their allies’ enemy, himself and his descendants, and that they should be outlaws. And this is not the form of outlawry that people commonly speak of—for what would it matter to a Zeleian to be forbidden to participate in Athenian public life? But that is not what it means; rather, it is written in the laws of homicide, with regard to cases where prosecutions for homicide may not be brought, but one may kill without pollution: “and let the outlaw be killed.” This law means that anyone who has killed such a man shall be free from pollution (καθαρόν). These men thus thought it their duty to ensure the safety of all of Greece.

The use of *polemios* and *katharos* suggests a “clean” killing free of *miasma* and demonstrates the severity of the ancestors’ stance,

⁶⁸ Other references to Arthmius: Dem. 19.271, Aeschin. 3.258, Din. 2.24–25; cf. Trevett, *Demosthenes* 168. On 19.271: MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* 532; W. Mack, *Proxeny and Polis: Institutional Networks in the Ancient Greek World* (Oxford 2015) 94 n.12. R. D. Milns, “The Public Speeches of Demosthenes,” in I. Worthington (ed.), *Demosthenes: Statesman and Orator* (London 2000) 22 n.43, views Arthmius as a *topos* in the Attic orators.

⁶⁹ Herrman, *Demosthenes* 239, stresses that πολέμιος must be accurately quoted, as it adds a distinct injunction “an enemy at war” whom the Athenians are obliged to kill, with legal and moral impunity; cf. E. M. Harris, “The Authenticity of the Document at Andocides *On the Mysteries* 95–98,” *Tekmeria* 12 (2014) 136–137.

which exacerbates the shame of the current Assembly for their failure to purge the *polis* of such men.⁷⁰ Not only do the current Athenians require a visual reminder to do their duty, but they take the opposite course of action by honouring men who commit such offences. Demosthenes again urges failure to emulate their ancestors as the explanation of Athens' decline and Philip's current position of power; if Athens had acted in a manner "worthy of the city," Olynthus would not have fallen, nor would they have conceded their possessions. The condemnation of the current Athenians is all the stronger as it is delivered via the ancestors, comparable to the *prosopopoeia* at Pl. *Menex.* 247 that warns of an ill-welcome if they have dishonoured the *polis*.

In these juxtaposed pairs of present failures and past virtues Demosthenes presents the Assembly as apathetic, self-interested, and neglectful of their duty as Athenians; in failing to act in a manner worthy of the city they have failed to offer the same protection as their ancestors did to other cities and to their own interests. Thus Demosthenes uses their identity to assert that Athens' problems are not the product of Philip per se but of the rejection of core values that constitute Athenian

⁷⁰ Cf. Lys. 1.34–36 and 47 on lawful killing as a punishment/ridding the *polis* of those who will harm it. C. Plastow, *Homicide in the Attic Orators: Rhetoric, Ideology, and Context* (Princeton 2020) 82 n.13, views this as an "explanation of the act that such people could be killed with impunity rather than a reference to pollution," citing Pl. *Leg.* 874B–D on the killer as *καθαρός*, "presumably due to the element of reciprocity in the crimes." Herrman, *Demosthenes* 241, notes that Demosthenes chooses to rephrase the description as *καθαρός*, as this does not appear in the inscribed laws or decrees, and so is a conscious decision and not a direct quotation. On homicide laws see MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* 109–122. On *miasma* and pollution see E. M. Harris, "The Family, the Community and Murder: The Role of Pollution in Athenian Homicide Law," in C. Ando et al. (eds.), *Public and Private in Ancient Mediterranean Law and Religion* (Berlin 2015) 11–35; Trevett, *Demosthenes* 168; M. Gagarin, *Antiphon the Athenian: Oratory, Law and Justice in the Age of the Sophists* (Austin 2002) 109–110; R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford 1983) 104–143.

identity. Collectively, these examples demonstrate how invoking the burden of the Athenian past, as noted by Yunis, was not just a device employed retrospectively after Chaeronea, but was a fundamental part of Demosthenes' persuasive strategy throughout the deliberative corpus and played a critical role in confronting the Assembly with their identity throughout the 340s—long before the delivery of *On the Crown* in 330.⁷¹

Challenges to Athenian identity: Athenian apathy vs. Philip's proactivity

Demosthenes' rhetoric also challenges the Assembly's identity by other comparisons, and this too follows the pattern of juxtaposing current actions with the ideology of Athenian behaviour.

In *Olynthiac 1*, Demosthenes criticises their rejection of good advisers: the Assembly cannot progress beyond deliberation, and their failure to seize their *kairos* has exacerbated the situation (1.9; cf. 3.9). Instead, they must seize the *kairos* of Olynthus “to wipe away the dishonour of your past conduct” (1.11), and realise that the greatest threat to Athens is not Philip, but the self-sabotaging practices of the Assembly (1.14–15):

My purpose is to make you understand, men of Athens, both the harm done by our continual neglect of our affairs, one after the other ... I fear, men of Athens, that, like those who thoughtlessly borrow at high rates of interest and prosper for a short while but later lose even their principle, so we may be seen to have paid a high price for our neglect and, in our constant search to do what brings pleasure, may later be forced to do many hard things against our will, and our very homeland may be at risk.⁷²

The reference of “what brings pleasure” is arguably the protection of the Theoric Fund, which may have resonated because of the suffering from the Social War; the need to avoid further

⁷¹ H. Yunis, “Politics as Literature: Demosthenes and the Burden of the Athenian Past,” in E. Carawan (ed.), *Oxford Readings in the Attic Orators* (Oxford 2007) 372–390.

⁷² Cf. Herrman, *Demosthenes* 89: Demosthenes' insistence to be heeded is stressed via pairs of virtually synonymous verbs which emphasise knowledge and perception.

hardship would not be an empty message.⁷³ Demosthenes emphasises the reality of the situation by presenting a role reversal with Philip (1.24):

Consider: if Philip were to seize such an opportunity against us, and war were to come against our land, how readily do you think that he would attack us? Are you not then ashamed if you will not dare, when you have the chance, to do to him the very things that he would do to you, if he could?⁷⁴

This statement is all the more provocative as earlier references to Amphipolis, Pydna, Potidaea, and Methone (1.6–9) indicate that this is exactly what Philip *has* done. “There is also the insult and the shame that you would feel at the situation—for decent men, there is no greater punishment” (1.27): their habit of complacency has not only exacerbated the problem of Macedonian expansion in the northern Aegean, but has also undermined their reputation as Athenians.

Athenian reactions vs. Philip’s proactivity

To return to *Philippic 1*: at 4.31–32 Demosthenes observes Philip’s ability to utilise the Etesian winds to his own strategic advantage.⁷⁵ This is an uncomfortable comparison for the Athenians, whose reputation is built on their thalassocracy and tactical excellence: not only are they ineffective in this regard,

⁷³ See too Dem.1.27: “I think the damage the farmers among you would suffer would exceed all you have spent on the previous war in its entirety. But if war comes, how much damage must you suppose they will suffer?” This echoes Dem. 4 on failure to anticipate the very real dangers facing Athens. Here again the context of the Social War is crucial, and the economic hardship may also account for Demosthenes’ lack of success in the early deliberative speeches, as the economic advice of Eubulus may have been more persuasive. See R. K. Sinclair, *Democracy and Participation in Athens* (Cambridge 1988) 46; Worthington, *Demosthenes of Athens* 89–91.

⁷⁴ This develops 4.10, that shame should be enough motivation. Herrman, *Demosthenes* 96, notes the transitional particle εἶτα, easing the change in focus from Philip to the Athenians.

⁷⁵ Wooten, *Commentary* 93, thinks Demosthenes is projecting an image of himself as well informed on geography so that his advice will work this time.

but they are being outmanoeuvred by a Macedonian. Just as Demosthenes used past conflicts to emphasise their current apathy and its consequences, here Philip's initiative exhibits the behaviour traditionally associated with Athens (cf. 4.2). Demosthenes emphasises that this crisis is caused by their failure to seize the initiative (4.40):

But you, men of Athens, who possess greater force than anyone else—triremes, hoplites, cavalry, revenues—never have yet, to the present day, used any of them as you should, but instead you wage war on Philip in the same way that a foreigner boxes. For when one of them is struck on the other side, his hands go to that place: he has neither the knowledge nor the will to put up his guard or watch for the next blow.⁷⁶

The comparison asserts that Athenian actions are *reactions*, and this degrading assimilation to a foreign boxer emphasises how removed they are from their projected identity. It creates a *mundus perversus*: the Athenians know how to conduct war but appear incompetent, whereas Philip shows Athenian ingenuity and tactical skill. Moreover, having established earlier in the speech that their elected generals are like clay men of the agora, supported by paper forces, their lack of anticipation is another example of their unAthenian behaviour.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Trevett, *Demosthenes* 84: Demosthenes assumes that foreigners would be unfamiliar with Greek boxing, implying inferiority. I agree with Wooten, *Commentary* 105, that this refers to Athens' reactive decision-making. I differ on the target of the analogy: Wooten reads this as a "satiric mode" that Philip, a barbarian, is fighting like a Greek. I focus on the inversion of Athenian behaviour—they are fighting like a barbarian. Wooten's observation (106) that similar language is used to describe the barbarian's flawed technique and the Athenians' foreign policy would support the Athenian focus of this passage. Herrman, *Demosthenes* 194, views the sluggishness as a shaming device for failing to "live up to their own ideal."

⁷⁷ Herrman, *Demosthenes* 195: the "concluding point" is that the boxer is unwilling to act in his own interest, which serves as a criticism *if* the Athenians refuse to act on Demosthenes' advice. Cf. Bremner, *Athenian Ideology* 62–64.

“*A wretched Macedonian*”

The most damning criticism of Athens is in fact in a passage traditionally considered as the crystallisation of ‘Philippic’ invective. Here we explore it as a further example of shaming the Assembly through their failure to live up to their ancestral past (9.30–31):

You also know that all the wrongs the Greeks suffered at the hands of the Spartans or of ourselves were injustices committed by genuine Greeks at least, and one should treat this in the same way as if a legitimate son, after coming into a great fortune, manages it badly and unjustly: such a person deserves blame and censure for his actions, but it cannot be denied that he who was doing these things was an heir.⁷⁸ But if a slave or changeling wasted and spoiled what did not belong to him, by Herakles, how much more terrible and deserving of anger would everyone have said this was.⁷⁹ And yet they do not take this attitude towards Philip and his actions—he who is not only not Greek and in no way related to the Greeks, nor even a foreigner from a land to which it is honourable to say that one belongs, but a wretched Macedonian, from a land from which in the past you could not have even bought a decent slave.⁸⁰

While Demosthenes denies Philip’s Greek identity (with a repetition of οὐδέ), Philip is not the prime target of this attack: Demosthenes shames the Athenians via the unworthy origins of

⁷⁸ Sandys, *Demosthenes: Third Philippic* 213: κατηγορίας suggests that a person could be prosecuted if he attempted to exercise citizen rights after squandering an inheritance, see Aeschin. 1.30.

⁷⁹ Herrman, *Demosthenes* 230: this echoes forensic rhetoric, see L. Rubinstein, “Stirring up Dicastic Anger,” in D. L. Cairns et al. (eds.), *Law, Rhetoric, and Comedy in Classical Athens. Essays in Honour of Douglas MacDowell* (London 2004) 187–203.

⁸⁰ Hunt, *War, Peace, and Alliance* 81: “Demosthenes here denies Philip any fictive kinship with the Greeks”; cf. Herrman, *Demosthenes* 230. Conversely, Guth, *Rhetorica* 33 (2015) 333: ambassadors “praised Philip’s speaking ability as part of his philhellenism.”

the man who now subjugates them.⁸¹ The Athenians' shame is compounded by the fact that they are overcome by an inferior 'other'.⁸² He then uses the Athenian past to define the present situation (9.36):

What is the explanation for this state of affairs? It is not without reason or just cause that the Greeks were so enthusiastic for liberty in the past, but for slavery now. There was something then, there really was, men of Athens, in the spirit of the people, which is now absent, which overcame the wealth of Persia and led Greece to freedom, and was undefeated in battle on sea and land—but now it has been lost, ruining everything and turning Greece upside down.⁸³

Demosthenes returns to the extreme dichotomy between their current selves and the ancestors, but extends this shame to all the Greeks and attributes their current problems to their moral bankruptcy (9.37):

What was this thing? It was the fact that everyone hated any person who took money from those who were seeking to dominate or destroy Greece: it was most dreadful to be convicted of taking bribes, and such a man was punished with the severest penalty.⁸⁴

For Herrman (*Demosthenes* 235) Demosthenes' focus on the mindset of Athenian predecessors as key to their success sets

⁸¹ Pearson, *The Art of Demosthenes* 152: "the tolerance of the Greeks in the face of Philip's *hybris* is not praiseworthy but shameful."

⁸² On indignity see Arist. *Rh.* 2.9.2–10.

⁸³ The dichotomy is emphasised by the polysyndeton of καί. Sandys, *Demosthenes: Third Philippic* 217, suggests that the personification of the unconquerable principle which "overcame the wealth of Persia and maintained the freedom of Greece" rises to a higher level than that of ordinary prose.

⁸⁴ I take a different approach from that of G. A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton 2009) 74, that at 9.36–40 "a battle for Athens, decadent and fond of flattery, is fought out between Demosthenes the unpopular patriot (2) and Philip the violent foreign king." The battle is between Demosthenes and the Assembly.

this speech apart from the earlier Assembly speeches. But as we have seen, this was a consistent part of Demosthenes' rhetorical strategy.

To come full circle to *Philippic 1*: Demosthenes implores the Athenians to act with conviction (9.70):

First, I say, we must defend ourselves and make our preparations in person, with triremes and money and troops. Even if everyone else submits to be enslaved, we at least must fight for liberty!⁸⁵

Demosthenes makes the rejection of his proposals a rejection of their Athenian heritage, stating at 9.74 "it is up to you to act: your ancestors won this prize, having faced many great dangers in doing so, and bequeathed it to you."⁸⁶ His rhetoric engages with their sense of Athenian reputation, and seeks to revive an ancestral attitude, in keeping with a manner worthy of the city. This, again, draws parallels between the praise and didactic functions of the *epitaphioi logoi* and Demosthenes' own balance of criticism and hope as he frames his persuasion within the emotive power of their ancestral identity.

Conclusion

This discussion demonstrates Demosthenes' rhetorical tactic of establishing an Athenian identity both to criticise the current Assembly and to prescribe this specific form of 'Athens'. By reminding them of their past actions he juxtaposes their current behaviour, and in challenging their sense of identity he dares the Athenians to resolve their crises.⁸⁷ The rhetoric of identity

⁸⁵ Demosthenes frequently urges the Athenians to pay for military action (1.6, 2.13, 3.4, 4.7).

⁸⁶ The sense of duty is emphasised by γέρας; Herrman, *Demosthenes* 264, observes how this ranks the Athenians as presiding over the protection of the Greeks. This also, arguably, implies their responsibility and culpability.

⁸⁷ The early deliberative speeches give a strong impression that the domestic corruption left a power vacuum for Philip to exploit in the first place.

is used to make the Assembly recognise the severity of the situation and the damage they have inflicted upon themselves (and Greece) by their failure to act in a manner worthy of Athens.

This tactic criticises their current behaviour but also offers them proposed action and hope, as the praise of the ancestors is ontologically a praise of their own innate (if latent) identity as autochthonous Athenians. This also softens the blow of his *parrhēsia*, making his criticism more acceptable to his audience.

It is this innate identity that Demosthenes appeals to when he confronts them with unflattering role reversals with Philip, and whenever Demosthenes hails the Assembly as “Men of Athens,” he calls them to reflect self-critically on their present behaviour. Importantly, the deliberative corpus emphasises the crisis *within* Athens, and this analysis adds the deliberative speeches to the wider intellectual milieu, the anxieties about democratic deliberation that we see in Thucydides, Plato, Isocrates, and explored throughout the Athenian tragedians and Aristophanes.

This discussion also suggests that clear parallels can be drawn between the expectations of Athenian identity in the early Assembly speeches and the *epitaphioi logoi*, demonstrating Loraux’s premise in wider democratic practice.⁸⁸ Indeed, the acute awareness of this identity is precisely why such a rhetorical strategy would be powerful in a deliberative context. It is prudent to observe, however, that this did not guarantee success, and the economic realities of the period may account for Demosthenes’ failure to pass his earlier proposals.

In a constitution where oratory is political *praxis*, a corruption of the deliberative decision-making process causes and exacerbates crises, including Macedonian expansion under Philip. As such, while the speeches have been traditionally approached as the source of ‘Philippic’ invective, this analysis demonstrates that the rhetoric of identity is integral to Demosthenes’ agenda to tackle the crisis he perceives in the Assembly, which prevents

⁸⁸ Loraux, *Invention* 144.

Athens from taking effective action against Philip. The speeches discussed span the decade from 351 to 341, indicating that the rhetoric of identity is a defining characteristic of the corpus during this period. Accordingly, while the period is dominated by the Macedonian question, Demosthenes' early Assembly speeches are far more nuanced than the term 'Philippic' suggests, and the pressing crisis in Athens is, first and foremost, a crisis of 'self', not 'other'.⁸⁹

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