

CHRISTOS KREMMYDAS, *Commentary on Demosthenes Against Leptines, with introduction, text and translation*, Oxford, OUP, 2012, pp. xi + 489, ISBN 9780199578139.

As the publisher's blurb tells us, this is the first detailed commentary on Dem. 20 (*Against Leptines*) in any language since the nineteenth century. It is a substantially expanded version of the author's 2005 University of London PhD thesis, "Commentary on Demosthenes' speech 'Against Leptines', chapters 1-119". In addition to a commentary on the entire speech (167 chapters), the published volume includes an extended Introduction, the Greek text (based on the OCT) with a facing English translation, and an index. The comprehensive Bibliography has been expanded to include some forty items published since the completion of the commentary in thesis form. What, then, makes this particular speech worth studying in depth?

Leptines passed a law in 356 abolishing *ateleia* (honorific exemption from liturgies) except for the descendants of the tyrannicides Harmodios and Aristogeiton. Leptines was prosecuted by Bathippos in a *graphē nomon mē epitēdeion theinai* (public action for passing an inexpedient law), but Bathippos died before the case could come to trial. More than a year later Bathippos' son, Apsephion, started a new prosecution, this time against Leptines' law rather than Leptines himself, because the legislator could no longer be held personally responsible after the expiration of the time limit. Demosthenes was one of the supporting speakers for the prosecution. So the speech is an important source for fourth century Athenian law, politics and legislative procedure; and, for the student of oratory or rhetoric, it marks a significant stage in Demosthenes' oratorical career as his first speech in a public prosecution.

The speech also has a wider resonance: any reader with an interest in twenty-first century politics will recognize some of the arguments deployed in the Athenian debate on the duty of the rich to contribute more to the public purse at a time of financial crisis, and on the acceptability of public honours (including hereditary honours) in a democracy. Yet, despite the stated aim of making the book accessible to a 'wider scholarly audience', it will be a formidable challenge to readers with no knowledge of Greek. The use of some Greek script is of course inevitable, especially in the Commentary, where notes on linguistic and stylistic issues will not, in any event, be of concern to readers without Greek; but the use of the Greek alphabet for the names in the *Dramatis personae* (34-8) is less easy to explain. Non-Greek readers will certainly be helped by Kremmydas' translation (more literal than that of

Ed Harris in the Texas University Press series) and by the transliteration and glossing of key technical terms in the Introduction and Commentary. But the practice in this respect could be more consistent: one finds, for example, ‘*phoros* (‘tribute’) and ‘a different kind of allied contribution (*syntaxeis*)’ (both p. 4); ‘*pistis* (‘proof’ section)’ and ‘*epilogos* (‘peroration)’ (both p. 55); but other terms, including *euthyna*, *hypomosia*, *meletai*, and *synegoros / sunegoria*, are not glossed. In the absence of a full glossary, it would have been helpful if all transliterated Greek words had been glossed at least on their first occurrence in the book.

That said, the book will be an indispensable reference tool for advanced students of Athenian law, oratory, and political history, and it will no doubt remain the authoritative work on Dem. 20 for many years. The sheer breadth of its coverage, as well as the detail in which individual topics are covered, make it impossible for a review such as this to do it full justice; but a synopsis of its contents and some examples of the approach adopted in the Commentary will, I hope, provide a sufficient flavour of what it has to offer.

The Introduction (1-69) comprises three substantial sections: ‘The context’, which includes historical background, honours and liturgies in classical Athens, and the Athenian legislative process; ‘The trial against Leptines’ law’, covering the date of the speech, *dramatis personae*, the use of *synegoroi* and the division of labour, *ateleia* in Dem. 20, procedure, and rhetorical scope; and ‘Scholarship on Dem. 20’, including the title, ancient hypotheses, the reputation of the speech in antiquity, modern scholarship, and the text. Kremmydas’ stated aim (1) is not to provide ‘the definitive guide’ to these issues, but rather ‘to facilitate the reader grappling with the complex and diverse issues of this long speech’; he also hopes the Introduction will ‘act as a starting point leading the reader to further inquiries’. His success in achieving this is well illustrated in the section on legislation in classical Athens (24-33) where Kremmydas makes his own conclusions clear while summarizing the different approaches taken by earlier scholars to the sources of Athenian laws on legislation.

Kremmydas’ text is based on the OCT edition of M. R. Dilts. While relying on Dilts’s collation of the manuscripts, and adopting his main editorial principles, Kremmydas departs from the OCT at thirty-five points, which are listed in the Introduction (68) and explained in the Commentary where necessary. The Commentary covers the full range of legal, historical and rhetorical issues arising from the speech. Its strength lies in Kremmydas’ recognition that these dimensions are interconnected, and cannot be treated in isolation from one another. As he points out in the Introduction (57-8), Demosthenes’ reliance on logical argumentation rather than emotional persuasion merely creates the illusion that the dikasts are being given an objective account of the facts so that they can judge for themselves; the reality is that Demosthenes is leading the audience to his own conclusions,

sometimes by misrepresenting facts or redefining key terminology to suit his case. In the commentary on §74, where Konon's services to the city are contrasted with the duplicity of Themistokles, Kremmydas shows how 'Dem. arbitrarily concentrates on those salient features of their stories that would maximize the effect of Konon's exploit, while obfuscating crucial dissimilarities'. Elsewhere, narratological analysis reveals how an apparently objective narrative can be slanted by changes in focalization, for example when the account of the 'great battle' by the river Nemea in 394 BC is focalized through the Corinthians (§52), or when Khabrias becomes the focalizer in the account of his own exploits, giving a 'special twist' to the ancient Greeks' belief that 'honourable death is preferable to life in disgrace'.

A key rhetorical feature of Dem. 20, characteristic of prosecution speeches, is anticipation of the opponent's argument. This, as Kremmydas explains in his commentary on §1 (180-1), can be used in a variety of ways to inconvenience or prejudice the opposition, and the speaker may or may not accurately predict what his opponent will actually say. At numerous points in the Commentary (for example, on §56), Kremmydas shows how Demosthenes uses this device to undervalue or ridicule the main points in favour of Leptines' law. A particular point which Demosthenes seeks to undermine is the idea that the law will be expedient for the city. He does this, as Kremmydas points out in the Introduction (57-8) by redefining the concept of 'expediency' (*to sumpheron* or *to lusiteloun*), which (he says) Leptines and his supporters understand purely in financial terms, to encompass also the reputation of the city. Specific references to 'expediency' are flagged up in the Commentary, notably at §1, where 'Dem. places his concern for the interest of the city among the reasons for undertaking this *synegoria*', and at §13, where 'The orator suggests that the concept of expediency ... should be assessed independently of and parallel to any pecuniary concerns'.

The interplay between law and rhetoric is particularly significant in the sections of the speech (§§88-101) where legal issues are discussed most extensively, and where, as Kremmydas claims (341), '[Dem.] clearly places far greater emphasis on the rhetoric than on the hard legal evidence. He manages to obfuscate issues of legal fact and procedure and evades the charge of procedural irregularities levelled against the prosecution team ...'. As Kremmydas notes on §90, the *topos* of 'Solon the lawgiver' is deployed here to enhance the orator's authority as well as that of the 'old' law to which he refers, and is reinforced by 'the addition of its supposed justification by the lawgiver ('focalization' through Solon in narratological terms ...)'. In the subsequent 'bridging' section between the legal section and the rest of the speech, the *topos* is further exploited to create a specious analogy between the law on *ateleia* and two genuinely Solonian laws, on adoption and on defamation of the dead. Kremmydas' analysis of this passage (§§102-4) clearly brings out the difference between Demosthenes' earlier argumentation,

‘describing specific breaches of the laws to establish the central facts of the case’ and the use of two laws ‘merely for their rhetorical effect in order to support his general argument. The reader is assisted here, as throughout the Commentary, by extensive parallels from other speeches, and by references to modern scholarship.

Stylistic and linguistic details are not overlooked in the Commentary, where Kremmydas notes, *inter alia*, the frequent use of the transitional particle *toinun* (‘well, now’), which he identifies as characteristic of Demosthenes’ early speeches (109, on §5). The commentary on §1 starts with a helpful note on addresses to the dikasts in Attic oratory, rightly pointing out that the choice between ‘judges’ and ‘men of Athens’, which may appear to be interchangeable, is not in fact random. Kremmydas also deals here with the problem of translating the term *dikastēs*, which is not rendered accurately in English by either ‘judge’ or ‘juror’, explaining his own preference for using ‘judge’ in the translation but retaining the transliterated Greek form as a technical term in the introduction and commentary. Later (on §96) he flags up the single instance of ‘judges’ in the ‘legal section’ (§§88-101, where the usual form of address is ‘men of Athens’), to remind the dikasts of their judicial responsibilities.

Unfortunately the standard of scholarship displayed in this book is not matched by its typography. I have not systematically looked for errors (and what follows is not intended as an exhaustive list) but they are difficult to overlook. In the Preface (v) we find ‘the *Leptinea*’ for ‘the *Leptines*’; and on the first page of the Introduction (1) ‘Leptine’s law’ for ‘Leptines’ law’ (cf. ‘Leptines’ himself’ for ‘Leptines himself’, 55) ‘Defense’ for ‘defence’ (1) is an isolated instance of American spelling in a book that regularly uses English orthography. Simple mistakes include ‘evidence’ for ‘evident’ (30), ‘demosthenic’ for ‘Demosthenic’ (33), and ‘μν’ for ‘μὲν’ (351). There is confusion between ‘liturgies system’ and ‘liturgy-system’, both on p. 14, and ‘liturgy system’ (the correct form) on p. 20. There is also some inconsistency in the transliteration or Anglicization of Greek words: for example, there is an isolated instance of *timē* on p. 8, although long vowels are not regularly marked; and ‘dicastic’ (487) occurs as well as ‘dikastic’ (389, where, incidentally, ‘dikastic law’ should read ‘dikastic oath’). In the Bibliography (p. 466), ‘Hansen, M. H. (1971-80)’ should read ‘(1979-80)’. (Cf. the reference on p. 26, where the item is correctly dated.) More seriously, the omission of the author’s name gives the erroneous impression that five items by S. Todd are attributable to E. N. Tigerstedt (479).

BRENDA GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS  
University College London  
b.griffith-williams@ucl.ac.uk