

BOOK REVIEW

Commentary on Demosthenes Against Leptines. With Introduction, Text, and Translation. By CHRISTOS KREMMYDAS. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xi + 489. Hardcover, £99.00/\$170.00. ISBN 978-0-199-57813-9.

Demosthenes' speech *Against Leptines* (number 20 in the corpus) was his first recognized foray into public affairs. He acted as one of the prosecutors (συνήγοροι) against a law that had been introduced more than a year before by Leptines of Koile. His speech was well respected in antiquity and has been equally well received in the tradition. Nevertheless, the most recent modern commentary in English is that of J. E. Sandys in 1890. This neglect is particularly hard to explain, since the speech, quite apart from its importance to students of Demosthenes' development as an orator, is full of juicy material for those interested in Athenian legal and legislative procedure (νομοθεσία); the liturgical system and, particularly, exemption from its grasp (ἀτέλεια); the extent of Athens' dependence upon imported grain, especially from the Black Sea area (and by extension, the size of the population of Attica); and the political and financial situation in Athens at the end of the Social War in 355 BC. Kremmydas successfully remedies this neglect with this publication. He provides a lengthy Introduction (1–69), which discusses all the above issues; a new Text with 35 departures from Dilts' OCT; a facing Translation, which is generally clear and accurate, and a detailed Commentary (175–458), which contains material for all interests—historical, political, social, legal and rhetorical.

The speech *Against Leptines* was dated to the archonship of Kallistratos (355/4) by Dionysios of Halikarnassos (*Ad Ammaeum* 1.4). Whilst appearing to tip his hat to those who contest the reliability of Dionysios' dates, Kremmydas concludes that the internal evidence from the speech confirms this date (33–4). Therefore, the law it contests must have been introduced and ratified at least a year before (356/5), since the proposer, Leptines, was no longer personally responsible under the statute of limitations (one year) for prosecutions under the νόμον μὴ ἐπιτήδειον θεῖναι (proposal of an inexpedient law). Following established procedure, the state chose five σύνδικοι to defend the law against its prose-

cutors (συνήγοροι), of whom there may only have been three. The σύνδικοι were all men of standing: Aristophon of Azenia, Deinias of Erkhia, Kephisodotos from Kerameis, Leodamas of Akharnai and Leptines himself. The συνήγοροι were relatively or almost completely unknown: Apsephion, son of Bathippos (the man whose original indictment of Leptines had lapsed due to his death), Phormion (an unidentifiable individual) and Demosthenes, who spoke third. Those who like to see factional politics behind every public lawsuit in fifth- and fourth-century Athens identify the five σύνδικοι as members of one faction (Aristophon's) and suspect another (Euboulos') hiding behind the inexperienced prosecutors. Kremmydas discusses these possibilities with circumspection (34–42) and concludes with others that the litigation belongs in the more general context of the effort to find a solution to Athens' straightened financial situation at the end of the Social War (357–355 BC).

It is only from Demosthenes' citations of clauses of Leptines' law that we can recreate it. Whilst some might question the reliability of Demosthenes' representation, Kremmydas concludes that the citations provide a clear idea of what the law was (52–3). Quite simply it stated: "In order that the wealthiest men perform liturgies, no one shall have ἀτέλεια, neither citizens, ἰσοτελεῖς or foreigners, nor shall it be possible to grant ἀτέλεια in the future; the only exceptions to this law being the descendants of Harmodios and Aristogeiton." Not surprisingly this raises issues about the liturgical system; what were liturgies, who was eligible for them, who got exemption from them (ἀτέλεια) and how? Kremmydas devotes a large part of his Introduction to these issues (11–23). On the key question about the attitude of the wealthy elite to this form of compulsory contribution to the operation of the democratic system Kremmydas finds himself faced with a familiar dilemma. On the one hand, he argues that "liturgies became the primary field of competition for honour for Athenian elites" (13), on the other, he recognizes that very many wealthy men did their best to avoid them, and concedes that no one complained when Demetrios of Phaleron abolished them later in the century.

It was against the background of reluctance at a time of financial shortage that Leptines introduced his law to do away with honorary ἀτέλεια (exemption from liturgies except the trierarchy), a liturgy-loophole that had been granted to an unknown number of people both citizen and foreigners as a reward for services rendered. On its introduction the previous year it had passed easily. No one, it seems, questioned the need to tighten the screws on the wealthy. Even Demosthenes shies away from attacking the law on financial grounds; rather he concen-

trates his appeal on the damage it will do to Athens' reputation at home and abroad, if it rescinds honors it has already granted and if it can no longer make such grants, which are an important element in its foreign and domestic policy, in the future. He devotes almost one third of his speech to the benefactors of Athens, sandwiching some group benefactors—Corinthians, Thasians and Byzantines—between four special individuals. The first two are foreigners: Epikerdes of Kyrene, a grain merchant, who had helped Athens in the past, and Leukon of Pantikapaion (an area Demosthenes knew well), for his pro-Athenian trade preferences and gifts of grain. The last two are great heroes of fourth-century Athens, Konon and Khabrias, the latter of whom had just died fighting at Khios and whose son, Ktesippos, was probably present in court (maybe even represented by Demosthenes). These were all tear-jerking references and it is not surprising that Kremmydas concludes (58–60), despite the absence of confirmation from ancient commentators, that Demosthenes was successful in bringing about the repeal of Leptines' law.

The bulk of the volume is taken up by the Commentary, which, as stated above, is full of valuable and well-considered information. So much information leaves scope for quibbling. Each will have his own. For my part, I cannot pass unnoticed the *non sequitur* on p. 279, that *IG II² 10* is "Thrasyloulos' overly generous decree, which was indicted through a *graphe paranomon* by Archinos ..." A successfully indicted decree does not get inscribed!

Nevertheless, overall, Kremmydas has produced a very thorough study of this important work and made a valuable contribution to the growing modern interest in fourth-century Athens, and Demosthenes in particular.

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