

BOOK REVIEW

Demosthenes of Athens and the Fall of Classical Greece. By IAN WORTHINGTON. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xxviii + 382. \$67.54. ISBN 978-0-19-993195-8.

The most recent of Ian Worthington's informative and lively biographical histories of the fourth century (*Alexander the Great: Man and God* [2004]; *Philip II of Macedonia* [2008]) focuses on the period that witnessed the fading of Greece's hegemonic *poleis* and the rise of the kingdom of Macedon (355 to 338 bc). This "watershed in Greek history," (2) is seen through the lens of Demosthenes' hawkish public orations and those of his rival Aeschines, a supporter of the pacifistic and economically sound policies of Eubulus, who guided Athens through a period of peace and prosperous complacency after the Social War. Key passages in Demosthenes' speeches, perceptively analyzed and interpreted, reveal the interplay between orator and assembly, the orator's mastery of crowd psychology and the rhetorical buttons he presses to evoke the desired audience-response: misrepresentation, re-contextualizing of facts, appealing to past glories, flattery, ridicule and showmanship (118, 154 and 216).

Worthington begins with the trope that after Chaeronea, "Greece remained under the control of different powers until 1829" (2), which (tropes being illusory) contradicts his statement (47) that "the evidence supports the belief that the Macedonians were Greek." Greek hegemonies had existed since the sixth century. The issue is ideological: Macedonia was a monarchy and Philip his own master, Athens a democracy whose advisor was as cunningly brilliant as his Macedonian foe. Athens lost its hegemony through apathy, procrastination and indecisiveness. Was Demosthenes then responsible for the defeat at Chaeronea? "Was he indeed Greece's greatest patriot, or did he cynically exploit the danger of Philip for his own political agenda?" Was the result inevitable? Worthington addresses these questions and rehabilitates Demosthenes without heroizing him as a martyr to political freedom (7, 341).

Whether or not Demosthenes precipitated the demise of Greek freedom through his baiting of Philip between 351 and 339, Worthington regards Chaer-

onea as “the inevitable culmination of Philip’s imperialistic policy,” evident as early as 352 when he “turned from border security ... to creating a Macedonian empire” (107). His second hypothesis concerns the trajectory of Demosthenes’ career. The public speeches, from 355 to 351 were self-serving, because “he had to pander to public favor to establish support” (viii, 8). These early orations show his ineffectual attempts to galvanize the Assembly into action by prosecuting Eubulus’ connections and by resuscitating the Persian or Spartan bogeyman.¹

Demosthenes’ patriotic phase began after 349 when he perceived Philip’s actions in Thrace as threatening Athens’ interests. (242) Between 351 and 342 his northern campaigns provided a target more palpable than Athenian apathy. Philip’s peace-initiative in 346 was the turning point. (172) Demosthenes’ experiences at Pella as a negotiator of the Peace of Philocrates made him “distrust the efficacy of the peace and Philip’s designs on it” (172). Also, “Philip had emerged as a blatant imperialist.” (199). The second *Philippic* (344) “planted the notion ... that Philip intended to subdue Greece ... and would move against Athens” (196), and prefigures the bellicosity of the later *Philippics*. Demosthenes’ “grand” alliance of 339, which privileged Thebes at Athens’ expense, (245) compelled Philip into a conflict Demosthenes saw as a panhellenic defense of Greek freedom; (2) its disastrous result he proclaimed as a moral victory and justified his action by claiming that his predictions had been proved correct (cf. 242, 303).

Fifteen well-detailed chapters cover the five main episodes in Demosthenes’ life. Chapters 1–3 situate him in his historical context, detail his early life to the mid-350s and log the rise of Macedonia during the destabilization of the Greek powers. Chapters 4–6 examine his public speeches between 355 and 348 and track the evolution of the foreign policy that would identify him as an incorruptible *symbouleutês*.² The first *Philippic* and Oration 13, *On Organization*, belong to this early stage of his career. With the *Olynthiacs* (349/348) Demosthenes finds his niche as a politician and a profitable target in Philip, then seen as an upstart rather than an existential threat to Athens (137).

Chapters 7–8 cover Philip’s peace initiative in 346, Demosthenes’ support for the Peace of Philocrates and his surprising *volte face*. Philip now emerges as the enemy of the Greeks and his “bribed agent” Aeschines as Demosthenes’ im-

¹ *Against Androtion* (22), *Against Leptines* (20), *Against Aristocrates* (23), *Against Timocrates* (24), *On behalf of the Megalopolitans* (15), and *On behalf of the Rhodians* (16).

² That is, as an “advisor” such as Pericles had been; (cf. 39; “Thucydides’ writing had an profound impact on him”). See also 77, 81–82, 104, and G. Mader, “Dramatizing *Didaxis*: Aspects of Demosthenes’ Periclean Project.” *CPh* 102.2 (2007) 155–179, at 165.

mediate target. Chapters 9–11 track the escalating rhetoric of Orations 6–10, the rising support for Demosthenes, the fourth Sacred War, Athens' overtures to Persia, the alliance with Thebes, Demosthenes' 'moment of glory,' Chaeronea and Philip's settlement with the Greeks. Chapters 12–15, discuss Demosthenes' cautious policy under Alexander, his fall from grace after the Harpalus affair, his role in the Lamian War and suicide. The chapter concludes with remarks about Demosthenes' *Nachleben* and his imitators.

Catchy chapter titles and subheadings elucidate and enhance this well-referenced explication of a complex historical period, as do the detailed chronology, catalogue of orations and comprehensive index. There are monochrome photographs (surprisingly, none of Philip's coinage) two detailed maps of northern Greece and a tactical diagram of Chaeronea (frustratingly, there is no map of central Greece where much of the action took place).

Some inaccuracies obtrude: unfounded generalizations such as "The Macedonians practiced polygamy" (51). As far as we know, only Philip and Alexander systematically married multiple wives for political reasons. The digressions on the occupants of the Vergina tombs (68–69; 275–277) seem extraneous. There are also some verbal inaccuracies.³ However, such infelicities do not diminish Worthington's perceptive insight into the minds of the antagonists, his superb grasp of fourth-century history and oratory and his masterful conversion of Demosthenes' convoluted rhetoric into a compelling narrative.

ADRIAN TRONSON

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, tronson@unb.ca

³ See, for example, on p. 242, note 24, quoting Or. 18 (*On the Crown*), 173: the verb Demosthenes uses to describe his dramatic appearance in the Assembly in 339 is *ephanên* from *phainên*, not from the compound *epiphanein* (*sic*) a late usage unattested in Demosthenes; also (p. 51, n. 38) on Philip's matrimonial methods: Athenaeus' expression [13,557b] quoting or paraphrasing Satyrus] *aiei kata polemon egamei* does not mean 'made war by marriage' but something like 'On every occasion he married according to the war <he was fighting>.'