

## DE FALSA LEGATIONE

D. M. MACDOWELL (ed.): *Demosthenes On the False Embassy (Oration 19)*. Pp. xviii + 368. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Cased, £60. ISBN: 0-19-815303-1.

Ten years after his well-received edition of Demosthenes' speech *Against Meidias* (see CR 41 [1991], 28–9), MacDowell has turned his attention to *On the False Embassy*, to equally good effect. As in the earlier volume, he provides a text and facing translation of the speech, together with a lengthy introduction and detailed commentary. *On the False Embassy* is the longest of Demosthenes' works, and a vital source for the negotiations between Athens and Philip leading to the Peace of Philocrates in 346 B.C. As a source it has been far from neglected by historians of the period, but as a speech it has received little scholarly attention. Indeed, this is the first commentary in any language for more than a century (or virtually the first: M. was just pipped to the post by T. Paulsen's *Die Paraprosbeia-Reden des Demosthenes und des Aischines* [Trier, 1999]).

The introduction is divided into four sections. The first, on the Peace of Philocrates, offers a concise account of the background to the case. The second, on the prosecution of Aeschines, discusses the duties of Athenian ambassadors, the procedure of *euthynai* under which Aeschines was charged, and the course of the trial. In the third section, on the speech itself, M. offers a new solution to the problem that the speech seems to be much too long to have been delivered in the time that would have been available to Demosthenes. He rejects the theory that important trials such as this could have extended into a second day, thereby allowing the litigants time to speak at greater length, yet finds nothing in the speech to suggest that it was revised—and in the process expanded to its present length—after the trial. (By contrast, signs of revision *are* detected in Aeschines' speech in his own defence.) M.'s tentative explanation is that Demosthenes wrote the speech that we have for the trial, but intended to deliver only the first half of it in full (to §178), supplementing this from the remaining material as time allowed. This hypothesis accounts neatly both for the length of the speech and for the scrappy nature of its second half; whether or not it is right, it is an important contribution to the wider debate about the revision and publication of speeches at Athens. The fourth and longest section is devoted to the manuscripts and text. Building on his work on *Against Meidias*, M. concludes that 'the manuscripts later than the 11<sup>th</sup> century seldom, if ever, derive from sources independent of the earlier extant ones'. However, he modifies his earlier view that F (Venice, Bibl. Marciana, gr. 416) is 'essentially a conflation of S and A', and now argues plausibly that this manuscript had 'access to an independent line of transmission of the text from antiquity'. Substantial space is devoted to the more recent manuscripts: although these contribute little to the establishment of the text, it is good to have the results of his investigations so clearly set out.

The text represents a marked improvement, in rigour and clarity, on all its predecessors (of which the most recent is the Budé of 1946). Ancient manuscripts (many recently published in *P.Oxy.* 67) and testimonia are fully cited, and several plausible emendations suggested, most of which are printed in the text. Particularly noteworthy is the identification of a phrase that has apparently been interpolated from §207 into §112.

M. claims in the preface that his translation is intended solely as an aid to understanding the Greek. Whilst he succeeds admirably in this aim, he has also produced a

fluent and readable version. To this end, he regularly contracts 'is', and occasionally uses colloquialisms (e.g. 'kudos' at §23). More debatable, perhaps, is his decision to gloss oaths by 'really' or the like: whilst this makes the speech less alien to modern ears, it also risks giving a misleading impression of the reality of the gods for Demosthenes and his contemporaries. Overall, indeed, this version is splendidly lucid, but a little lacking in Demosthenic thunder for my taste.

M. also claims that the commentary is not meant to be exhaustive, though it is certainly wide-ranging and comprehensive. Historical, legal, and linguistic matters are all given due attention, and his comments are invariably succinct, clear, and fair-minded. Even where one might disagree with his conclusions, the presentation of the evidence is scrupulous. His commendable desire to keep the commentary within reasonable bounds spares us yet another disquisition on the historicity of the Peace of Callias (*ad* §273), for which I was grateful, but just occasionally I wished that he had probed a little deeper. A case in point is the puzzling allusion at §293 to a 'prosecution [brought by Euboulos] for sacred money against Kephisophon for being three days late in depositing seven mnai at the bank'. M. suggests that Kephisophon may have been a treasurer, and that the reason why sacred money was being deposited in a bank was that the treasurers hoped to obtain interest on it. Since the case is otherwise unknown, and the general point that Demosthenes is making is clear enough (Euboulos prosecutes other people for minor financial irregularities, but ignores Aeschines' acceptance of bribes), one can understand M.'s reluctance to engage in speculation. Yet his hypothesis prompts farther questions. For example, if the treasurers were seeking to earn interest, for whose benefit was this, theirs or the state's? (Compare *Σ ad Dem.* 24.136 for the allegation that a board of treasurers deposited public money in their trust with a banker in the hope of keeping the interest for themselves.) And why are private banks involved (as they appear to be here) in the financial affairs of the state?

In conclusion, this volume, which has been well copy-edited and attractively produced, is a splendid companion to *Against Meidias*, and will be of great value not only to students of Demosthenes, but to all who work on fourth-century Athens.

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## THE STRUCTURE OF PLATONIC DIALOGUES

G. CASERTANO (ed.): *La struttura del dialogo platonico*. Pp. 331. Naples: Loffredo Editore, 2000. Paper, L. 32,000. ISBN: 88-8096-720-7.

This collection of essays makes a laudable attempt to consider literary aspects of Platonic dialogues, taken either singly or in groups. A few of the essays provide intriguing perspectives on Platonic literary technique and its relation to philosophical issues. But the quality is not uniformly high, and the editorial treatment of the volume is rather poor. The Greek is occasionally misspelled, or presented in non-Greek font (e.g. 'sunousiva', p. 259). Some of the analogical diagrams in Esposito's essay seem to have been printed incorrectly (p. 249).

There is considerable overlap in theme among the essays, although this does not lead to useful dialogue among them. Several (Cerri, Vegetti, Velardi, and Nonvel Pieri) stress the importance of the interlocutors and their nature in shaping the form of the argument. A number pay particular attention to intertextual reference among

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