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Autor: Chaniotis, Angelos
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IV

ANGELOS CHANOTIS

HISTORY AS AN ARGUMENT IN HELLENISTIC ORATORY: THE EVIDENCE OF HELLENISTIC DECREES

1. Counting speeches: how much Hellenistic oratory is preserved in inscriptions?¹

Oratory, as an elaborate, artful, and staged form of oral communication, is doomed by its very oral nature to extinction. Orations are preserved in cultures that possess recording devices – such as our culture –, or when listeners have been trained to take shorthand notes of delivered speeches, or when the speakers themselves record a more or less accurate version of a speech and produce and circulate copies, motivated by vanity, political agenda, the wish to make money, or the ambition to educate future orators. Unless future archaeological discoveries prove otherwise, for Greek and Roman oratory we have to rely on self-promoted, recorded, or (re)constructed speeches as well as on the information provided by teachers of rhetoric and their handbooks.

Unlike the – mainly Athenian – oratory of the 5th and 4th centuries BC, the Latin oratory of the Late Republican period, and the Greek and Latin oratory of the Imperial period

¹ All dates, if not otherwise mentioned, are BC. For epigraphic publications I use the abbreviations of the *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. I am grateful to Henry Heitmann-Gordon (University of Munich) for correcting the English text.

and Late Antiquity, which are well preserved, Hellenistic oratory is notoriously elusive.² It might have been instructive to consider the reasons for this in our encounter, but this cannot be the task here. Nevertheless, before I turn to my rather narrow subject – the use of history as an argument in Hellenistic oratory –, it is worth briefly considering what we do have and how epigraphy can contribute to our understanding of Hellenistic oratory.

Oratory is a form of direct speech, and the only orations preserved as direct speech from Alexander to Cleopatra are the orations that are quoted in the works of the Hellenistic historians, for instance the famous speech of Agelas in the peace conference in Naupaktos in 217 BC or the speech of the Athenian statesman Athenion at the beginning of the First Mithridatic War in 88 BC, presented by Polybius and Poseidonios respectively.³ Such speeches are not numerous. Although they are the product of the historians' creative imagination – loosely connected with what was said, at the best –, they do provide information on rhetorical techniques, types of arguments, persuasion strategies, and forms of delivery.⁴ I am also convinced that some orations preserved in Plutarch's *Lives* of Hellenistic statesmen ultimately derive from Hellenistic historians; but this would be the subject of a different study.

What about other contemporary, Hellenistic sources, beyond historiography? As D. Papanikolaou has recently demonstrated, an 'aretalogy' for Isis from Maroneia (ca. 100 BC)⁵ is the only surviving sophistic encomium to a deity from the Hellenistic

² See more recently the collection of studies in KREMMYDAS / TEMPEST (2013); see also WOOTEN (1973); VANDERSPOEL (2007); ERSKINE (2007). See also the bibliography in notes 4-6.

³ The speech of Agelaos: POLYB. 5, 104; DEININGER (1973); CHAMPION (1997). Athenion's speech in POSIDON. *Hist. fr.* 247 ed. THEILER = *FGrH* 87 F 36 § 50-51 = ATH. 5, 212f-213c.

⁴ On speeches in Polybius and Hellenistic historiography, see WOOTEN (1974); SACKS (1986); WIEDEMANN (1990); CHAMPION (2000); USHER (2009); WIATER (2010).

⁵ *I.Thrac.Aeg.* E 205. See PAPANIKOLAOU (2009).

period. Papanikolaou's studies of this text as well as of a decree from Mantinea have made clear that to consider only direct speech for a study of Greek rhetoric would be as deficient an enterprise as to study Greek historiography by ignoring the fragments of Greek historians.⁶ Evidence for oral communication is much more abundant than just records of direct speech.

First, we have both in historiographical works and in inscriptions, especially in decrees, abundant evidence for indirect (or reported) speech. For instance, in documents concerning international arbitration the arguments of the parties to the conflict and testimonies of witnesses are sometimes presented in indirect speech.⁷ Decrees and *senatus consulta* also commonly summarise the oral presentations of envoys in the council, the assembly, and the senate using expressions such as διελέχθησαν, ἀπελογίσαντο περί, and λόγους ἐποιήσαντο.⁸ The lengthier the summary, the more information we get about the rhetorical performance. A good example, to which I will return later because it is directly relevant for my subject, is a well-known inscription from Xanthos concerning an embassy from Kytenion in Doris in 206 BC. It begins with a long summary of the envoy's speech in the assembly, introduced with the verbs ἀπολογίζεσθαι ("to give an account"), διαλέγεσθαι ("to give a lecture or a report"), λέγειν, προσαπολογίζεσθαι ("give an additional account"), and

⁶ PAPANIKOLAOU (2012). For further epigraphic evidence for Hellenistic oratory see CHANIOTIS (2013a).

⁷ See, e.g., arguments introduced with ἐλέγσαν in the document concerning the delimitation of the sacred land of Delphi in ca. 117 BC: CID IV 119 E = ROUSSET (2002), 86 no. 6 B lines 28-33: [ἐλ]έγσαν ὅτι δεῖ τὸ κρῖμα ἐστηκὸς καὶ κύριον εἶναι, τὸ τότε γεγονός ... The most detailed records are those concerning the arbitration of Rhodes in the territorial dispute between Priene and Samos (new edition: MAGNETTO [2008]; cf. *I.Priene* 37 + 38; AGER [1996] no. 74; MAGNETTO [1997] nos. 3, 44, and 75) and that of Magnesia on the Maeander in the border dispute between Hierapytna and Itanos (*I.Magnesia* 105; *I.Cret.* III iv, 9; AGER [1996] no. 127; MAGNETTO [1997] no. 43). The arguments of parties to the conflict are introduced with the verbs ἀποδείκνυμι, ἐπιδείκνυμι, φάσκω, φημί, δικαιολογέω, and ἐμφανίζω.

⁸ E.g. *IG* V 2, 419 line 4; *IG* XII 7, 221 b line 9; *F.Delphes* III 1, 261 line 4; *I.Iasos* 3 lines 2-4; *I.Magnesia* 48 line 6; 61 line 35; *I.Priene* 40.

παραδείκνυσθαι (“to demonstrate”). I quote a short passage, which summarises parts of the envoys’ speech, referring to the legend of the hero Aletes (“the Wanderer”):

“Besides, they demonstrated that the colonists, sent out from our land by Chrysaor, the son of Glaukos, the son of Hippolochos, received protection from Aletes, one of the descendants of Herakles; for Aletes, starting from the land of the Dorians, came to their aid when they were being warred upon. Putting an end to the danger by which they were beset, he married the daughter of Aor, the son of Chrysaor.”

Also decrees whose *narratio* is introduced with the verbs εἶπεν or εἶπαν summarise the proposal submitted to the assembly. In the Hellenistic period, these narrations are sometimes long and rhetorically elaborate, giving an impression of the content of orations delivered in the assembly. Syncopated orations are a characteristic feature of decrees in the late Hellenistic period, but this phenomenon starts already in the late 4th century BC, providing valuable insights into deliberative oratory.⁹

But in addition to direct and indirect speech, we also have evidence for ‘rhetorical events’ that took place without leaving any information as to their content. For instance, lists of victors in agonistic festivals include the names of the winner in encomiastic oration,¹⁰ but the only Hellenistic texts of this sort that survive are a speech of the Athenian representative at the Eleutheria of Plataiai, who defended the right of Athens to lead

⁹ See, e.g., the honorific decree of Athens for Eumenes II and his brothers: *IG* II³ 1323. The best examples are long ‘biographical’ decrees, such as those for Lykourgos (*IG* II² 457, 513, 3207; LAMBERT [2012] 264-265), and Kallias of Sphettos in Athens (*SEG* XXVIII 60), Diophantos in Chersonesos in Tauris (*IOSPE* I² 352), Protogenes (*IOSPE* I² 32) and Nikeratos in Olbia (*IOSPE* I² 34), Polemaios and Menippos in Kolophon (*SEG* XXXIX 1243 and 1244), Pyrrhakos in Alabanda (HOLLEAUX [1898] 258-266), Moschion in Priene (*I.Priene* 108), Apollonios in Metropolis (*I.Metropolis* 1), and Orthagoras in Araxa (*SEG* XVIII 570). The laudatory fragment *IG* XII 4, 1036 (1st century, Kos) is either part of a ‘biographical’ decree or of an oration.

¹⁰ E.g. *I.Oropos* 521 (Amphiareia, ca. 85 BC): ἐγκώ[μιο]ν εἰς τὸν θ[εό]ν; *IG* XII 9, 91 (festival Tamyneia, 1st century): ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν Ἀπόλλ[ων]α.

the procession (2nd century),¹¹ and possibly an encomium for Amphiaraios from Oropos (late 4th century).¹²

Innumerable decrees concerning diplomatic relations also use the more or less stereotypical phrase “the envoys delivered the decree and gave a speech in accordance with the decree”,¹³ without, however, summarising the content of that oration. Similarly, scores of honorific decrees use the stereotypical phrase “may it be resolved that he is praised and crowned”. Just as στεφανῶσαι has a very concrete meaning – the offering of a crown of a specific value –, so does ἐπαινέσαι: at least in some cases, the benefactor was not praised with the laconic phrase “the people praise NN” but with an oration; this may have been more common in the case of posthumous honours. From the Imperial period onwards, we also find a type of decree that offers consolation to the relatives of deceased members of the elite. Again, the short formula “let us offer them consolation”¹⁴ means far more than simply paying a formal visit and saying a few polite words of condolence. As we know both from letters of condolence from Roman Egypt¹⁵ and from consolation decrees from the Roman East,¹⁶ there was a developed genre of consolatory texts, some of which had the form of short rhetorical texts. Whether this genre was as widespread in the Hellenistic period as it was in the Imperial period escapes our knowledge. Finally, when in texts concerning international arbitration we read the phrase “the judges heard the arguments

¹¹ *IG* II² 2778; CHANIOTIS (1988a), 42-48; cf. ROBERTSON (1986). See also note 5 on an encomiastic oration for Isis.

¹² *I.Oropos* 301; cf. the comments in *SEG* XLVII 498.

¹³ E.g. *I.Magnesia* 18: [τό τε ψάφισμα ἀ]πέδωκαν [κῆ αὐ]τὶ διελέ[γησαν ἀκολούθως τοῖς ἐν τῷ ψαφίσμ]ατι γεγραμμένοις; *Syll.*³ 618: τό τε [ψήφ]ισμα ἀπέδωκαγ καὶ αὐτοὶ διελέγησαν ἀκολού[θως τοῖς ἐν τῷ [ι ψη]φίσματι κατακεχωρισμένοις; cf. *IG* VII 4139: ἐπελθόντες δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπὶ τό [τε] συνέδριον καὶ τὸν δῆμον διελέγησαν ἀκολούθως τοῖς ἐν τῷ γραπτῷ κατακεχωρισμένοις; *F.Delphes* III 2, 94: τὸ τε ψάφισμα ἀπέδωκαν ἅμῃν καὶ ἐπελθόντες ἐπὶ τὰν ἐκκλησίαν διελέγησαν ἀκολούθως τοῖς ἐν αὐτῷ κατακεχωρισμέν[ο]ις.

¹⁴ E.g. *IG* IV² 83-84, 86; *IG* XII 7, 53-54, 239, 394, 399-400, 405, 409.

¹⁵ CHAPA (1988).

¹⁶ E.g. STRUBBE (1998).

of the parties to the conflict”,¹⁷ this, again, refers to a now elusive ‘oral event’; it attests to the delivery of now lost court speeches.

I have presented this long introduction into indirect sources for Hellenistic oratory, often ignored in studies of oratory and persuasion strategies, not only to give an impression of the still largely unexploited epigraphic evidence for oratory and an idea about the kind of sources that I will be using, but also to give a sense of the quantity and diversity of oratory that was produced between the campaigns of Alexander and the Principate of Augustus. Just as many phenomena and practices for which we have isolated attestations in earlier periods increase in frequency from the late 4th century BC onwards and are more widely distributed, rhetorical strategies and types of oration that are mainly attested in Athens and a few big cities likewise become more widespread. This certainly applies to the use of history as an argument. It is not an innovation of Hellenistic oratory; it only becomes more common in the Hellenistic period.

2. History as an argument: why?

Since Thucydides, the belief that people can learn from history serves as a legitimization of the historian’s profession. It is not the satisfaction of personal curiosity and pleasure that motivates the historians in their engagement with historical facts and questions, but the conviction that what they discover and describe can be of permanent value – a *ktêma es aei*, in Thucydides’ words. In a short book under the title *Geschichte als Argument*, Alexander Demandt discussed how historical traditions were used by statesmen and theoreticians as a medium of persuasion that uses experience in order to appeal to common sense.¹⁸ History – or historical memory – served this purpose as

¹⁷ E.g. *I.Cret.* III iv, 9 line 29; *I.Magnesia* 93 line 10.

¹⁸ DEMANDT (1972).

early as the *Iliad*. The myth of Meleagros in Book 9 presented a warning to Achilles about the potential consequences of uncontrolled rage. And much later, in 4th-century oratory the historical experiences of the previous century – the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War – played a major part in Athenian oratory, especially in deliberative oratory and in Isocrates' Panhellenic vision.¹⁹ Learning from history is only one of the reasons why history can be used as an argument in rhetorical performances. Legal and moral considerations as well as the emotional impact of historical arguments explain the manifold use of this rhetorical device in negotiations both among individuals and between communities. Let us consider two examples from literary sources of the 5th and 4th centuries: Herodotus and Xenophon.

In 480, just before the beginning of Xerxes' invasion, the tyrant of Syracuse Gelon is said to have negotiated with Athens and Sparta about his participation in the Panhellenic alliance against the Persians. According to Herodotus, Gelon demanded the leadership of the Greek army.²⁰ When the representative of Sparta, which had a claim on the supreme command, heard this demand, he responded:

“Agamemnon son of Pelops would truly lament loudly, should he hear that the Spartans were deprived of the command by Gelon and the Syracusans! Do not ever think of this again, that we will give the command to you. If you wish to help Greece, know that you shall be under the command of the Lakedaimonians.”

The mere fact that a member of the house of the Pelopids, which had ruled Sparta in legendary times and before the arrival of the Dorians, had led the Greek army against Troy was – at least in Herodotus' eyes – sufficient reason for the Spartans to demand the leadership of the Greek army in the present war against the barbarians. When Gelon's demand was

¹⁹ E.g. ALLROGGEN (1972); NOUHAUD (1982); GRETHLEIN (2014).

²⁰ HDT. 7, 157-162, esp. 159 and 161.

not accepted, the tyrant tried to get the leadership of the fleet, held by the Athenians. The Athenian argumentation was more sophisticated than the Laconic answer of the Spartans:

“If we, being Athenians, yield the command to the Syracusans, it would be in vain that we possess the largest sea-faring army among the Greeks, we who are the most ancient nation and who alone among the Greeks have never migrated; of all who came to Ilion, as the epic poet Homer says, the best man in ordering and marshalling armies was one of us [Menestheus].”

The Athenians combined a pragmatic argument – they had the largest fleet – with an important element of their identity and self-representation – their autochthony. This argument is culturally determined; it is based on the view that the ‘seniority’ of a community gives this community precedence over others. The Athenians also used a historical argument: in Homeric times, the best man in marshalling armies was an Athenian.

In Herodotus’ narrative, both Spartans and Athenians used historical arguments originating in Homer. The arguments had a rather superficial relation to the conclusion to be drawn. The privilege of military command and the military achievements of a single individual in legendary times (Agamemnon and Menestheus respectively) were projected upon their entire community in the present (Sparta and Athens). This projection is based on the assumption that rights and properties can be inherited. This is not surprising. In Greek culture – and democratic Athens was no exception – not only property titles were inherited but also social prestige, political influence, priestly offices, and privileges. The historical arguments of Athenians and Spartans were based on this mentality. Of course, when we scrutinise these arguments, we recognise discrepancies between argument and conclusion. Agamemnon was a Pelopid, but he was neither a king of Sparta nor of the same ‘ethnic’ origin as the Spartans. In the late 6th century the Spartans had brought the bones of Agamemnon’s son Orestes to Sparta in order to construct a continuity from Achaean times and to legitimise their claim to lead the Peloponnesian League. Menestheus, on

the other hand, was described by Homer as experienced in matters related to military tactics on *land*, and not to naval strategy as one would expect, since the issue at hand was the leadership of the fleet.

Now the second example. After the defeat of the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War, the Spartan allies, Corinth and Thebes, were urging the Spartans to destroy Athens. Xenophon presents the argument used by the Spartans to justify their decision not to destroy the city of their enemies:²¹

“The Lakedaimonians, however, said, that they would not enslave a Greek city which had done great service amid the greatest perils that had befallen Greece.”

The Spartans referred to the Athenian contribution to the rescue of Greece more than two generations earlier, during the Persian Wars. Participation in the Persian Wars remained an important element of identity and self-representation of Greek communities for centuries.²² Here, the argument was not used by the Athenians but by their enemies, who acted upon a moral obligation deriving from the feeling of gratitude. In this case, the historical precedent (the rescue of Greece in the past) has an even more superficial relation with the issue that was negotiated (mercy on the Athenians in the present). But exactly as in the narrative in Herodotus, an achievement in the past, a collective achievement this time, was projected onto the present. The historical argument of the Spartans had an emotional background. It was based on a feeling of gratitude that resulted in moral obligations.

These two examples from non-rhetorical literary sources correspond to the way historical arguments were also used in oratory, both in deliberative oratory and in court speeches. First, the past could give legal support or legitimacy to a claim; second, the past could serve as an exemplum and lend logical

²¹ XEN. *Hell.* 2, 2, 20.

²² JUNG (2006).

support to a decision; third, the past underlined a moral responsibility for a decision; and fourth, the commemoration of the past could have an emotional impact. In 4th-century and later oratory, references to the past – references to the history of the Greeks, of a community, or of a family – had these functions: logical or educational, moral, legitimising, and emotional. Historical arguments were used in negotiations within a community and in negotiations between communities; they were used in the assembly, in philosophical discourse, and in the court. But although this usage seems quite banal, and can be observed in our time as well, this does not mean that a historian is not confronted with various questions when studying this phenomenon. In what contexts were historical arguments used and how effective were they? Were historical arguments combined with a more ‘pragmatic’ argumentation? How were historical traditions manipulated to fit a certain situation? Did this phenomenon remain static throughout Greek history, or can we recognise a development in the use and the acceptance of historical arguments? Were the historical arguments invented ad hoc, by orators, statesmen, and envoys, or were they drawn from a certain stock of arguments belonging to a fixed set of local traditions or to the ‘cultural memory’ of a community? A study of the Hellenistic material contributes to a better understanding of these issues.

3. History as an argument I: appeal to reason and arousal of emotion

As already mentioned, the *narratio* of Hellenistic decrees, far more detailed than *narrationes* of decrees that antedate the reign of Alexander, sometimes reflects the arguments that were used in the popular assembly. Thus, these narratives provide information on Hellenistic deliberative oratory that can be compared with the information that we find in the works of Hellenistic historians, especially Polybius. The decree proposed

by Chremonides in Athens in 267 gives us an impression of discussions before the war against Antigonos Gonatas. Chremonides asked the Athenian popular assembly to ratify a treaty of alliance between Athens, Sparta, and many other Greek communities, which eventually led to the Chremonidean War. Since the preamble contains a rather long justification of this decision, we may reconstruct his strategy of persuasion.²³ The arguments presented by Chremonides are a combination of political pragmatism, subtle propaganda, and historical analogies:

“The Athenians, the Lakedaimonians, and their respective allies had in the past established a common friendship and alliance with each other and fought together many and fair wars against those who attempted to enslave the cities; with these wars they won fame for themselves and brought freedom to the other Greeks. Now that similar circumstances have afflicted the whole of Greece because of those who attempt to abolish the laws and ancestral constitutions of each city, and king Ptolemy following the policy of his ancestors and of his sister conspicuously shows his zeal for the common freedom of the Greeks, the people of the Athenians have made an alliance with him and the other Greeks and have passed a decree to invite all to follow the same policy ... So that now that a common concord has been established between the Greeks against those who have now committed injustice and broken the treaties with the cities, they may prove eager combatants with king Ptolemy and with each other and in future may save the cities preserving the concord.”

²³ *IG* II² 687: ἐπειδὴ | πρότερον μὲν Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ σύμμαχοι οἱ ἑκατέρων φιλίαν καὶ συμμαχίαν κοινὴν ποιησάμενοι | πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς πολλοὺς καὶ καλοὺς ἀγῶνας ἡγωνίσαντο μετ’ ἀλλήλων πρὸς τοὺς καταδουλοῦσθαι τὰς πόλεις ἐπιχειροῦντας, ἐξ ὧν ἑαυτοῖς τε δόξαν ἐκτήσαντο καὶ τοῖς ἄλλ[ο]ις | “Ἐλλησιν παρεσκεύασαν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν· καὶ νῦν δὲ κ[α]ιρῶν | καθειληφότων ὁμοίων τὴν Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν διὰ τοῦς κ]αταλύειν ἐπιχειροῦντας τοὺς τε νόμους καὶ τὰς πατρίους ἐκάστ[ο]ις πολιτείας ὅ τε βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος ἀκολούθως τεῖ τ[ῶν] προγόνων καὶ τεῖ τῆς ἀδελφῆς προ[α]ιρέσει φανερός ἐστ[ιν] σπουδάζων ὑπὲρ τῆς κοινῆς τ[ῶν] Ἑλλήνων ἐλευθερίας· καὶ | ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἀθηναίων συμμαχίαν ποιησάμενος πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ | τοὺς λοιποὺς Ἑλλήνας ἐψήφισται παρακαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν αὐτὴν προαίρεσιν· ... ὅπως ἂν οὖν κοινῆς ὁμονοίας γενομένης τοῖς Ἑλλήσι πρὸς τε τοὺς νῦν ἡδυνήκοντας καὶ παρεσπονδηκότες τὰς πόλεις πρόθυμοι μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου | καὶ μετ’ ἀλλήλων ὑπάρχουσιν ἀγωνισταὶ καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν μεθ’ ὁμονοίας σώιζουσιν τὰς πόλεις.

Chremonides' main political and pragmatic argument was that the establishment of Macedonian garrisons in central Greece resulted in the subversion of law and the traditional civic institutions. Presenting Antigonos as a threat to freedom and constitution was an accurate representation of reality; the use of words with a strong emotional impact, such as καταδουλοῦσθαι, καταλύειν τοὺς τε νόμους καὶ τὰς πατρίους ἐκάστοις πολιτείας, ἡδικηκότας and παρεσπονδηκότας aimed at arousing the audience's indignation.²⁴ But the praise of Ptolemy as a champion of freedom is pure propaganda, and the expectation that joining one monarch in his war against another would free Greece was clearly short-sighted and ignored all historical experience from 307 BC onwards.

The main argument of Chremonides, at least in the recorded summary of his proposal, was a historical exemplum: the subtle assimilation of the Persian invasion with the threat posed by the Macedonian king Antigonos ("... now that similar circumstances have afflicted the whole of Greece"). United Athenians and Spartans had defeated the Persians, winning fame and protecting freedom; united again they will prevail! Glory, justice, and fame were ideas that appealed to the civic values of Greek citizens. Chremonides skilfully combined different strategies of persuasion that appealed to reason, values, and emotions.

This decree permits several observations. First, Chremonides used a combination of political and historical arguments. The historical arguments drew upon a familiar motif of Greek historical consciousness and identity: the wars of Athens and Sparta against the Persians (see note 22). Chremonides *selected* a historical example, not only a familiar one but also one that could easily fit the present situation. There were several obvious or constructed analogies between past and present: Athens and Sparta fought together against the Persians; they should now do the same again. Concord (*homonoia*) was the common denominator and the guarantor of success. The purpose

²⁴ For emotional language in Hellenistic decrees see CHANIOTIS (2013b).

of both wars was the same: the freedom of the Greeks (*eleutheria*). These two analogies were straightforward. A third analogy is implicit and more subtle; the common wars of Athens and Sparta were wars of free Greek communities against a barbarian monarch; similarly, the new war was directed against a monarch. Even though the Macedonian king Antigonos Gonatas was not a barbarian – after all the Macedonian kings were members of the Panhellenic alliance established in Corinth in 337 and renewed by Antigonos' father and grandfather in 302 BC –, his kingdom was foreign to the world of Greek *poleis* and *koina*.

But in order to understand the weight of these historical analogies, we need to consider Antigonid propaganda as well. Chremonides' decree gives us a syncopated version of Chremonides' oration in Athens; but hardly any orator in a free Greek assembly spoke without facing opposition. The Antigonids had followers in Athens and, if their supporters did speak, they probably also used a historical argument: exactly as the Athenians had saved Greece from the barbarians in 490 and 479, Antigonos Gonatas had saved Greece from the barbarians, the Gauls, at the battle of Lysimacheia ten years earlier, in 277 BC. We know how important this victory was for Antigonid propaganda in Greece and how vivid its commemoration remained for many decades. In Athens itself, where Antigonos established a garrison after his victory in the Chremonidean War, Herakleitos, the commander of the garrison, dedicated to Athena Nike a monument "containing memorials of the king's deeds against the barbarians for the salvation of the Greeks" (ca. 250 BC).²⁵ This monument, probably consisting of painted panels, commemorated Antigonos' victory over the Gauls. Standing in the shadow of the temples of Athena Parthenos and Athena Nike, and borrowing themes of their sculptural decoration, Herakleitos'

²⁵ *IG II²* 677; CHANIOTIS (1988a) 301. Another example of Antigonid commemoration of this victory is the establishment of the festivals Soteria and Paneia in Delos; see CHAMPION (2004-2005).

monument was erected in an ideal setting to convey its message: it was Antigonos Gonatas who had saved the Greeks from the barbarians. In this setting, the victory of the Macedonian king was incorporated into the Greek traditions of victories over the barbarians. Although it postdates the Chremonidean War, it reflects traditional Antigonal propaganda. Exactly as Herakleitos' monument was engaged in a dialogue with the sculptural decoration of the Temple of Athena Nike, that showed the Athenians defending their fatherland from the Persians in Marathon or Plataiai, Chremonides' historical argument a few years earlier had opposed Antigonal propaganda that presented the Macedonian king as the rescuer of Greek freedom. In Chremonides' rhetoric the Persian Wars were not only an exemplum but also an argument counterbalancing Antigonal self-representation.

As already mentioned, Chremonides' historical argument was the result of selection. Selection of one event necessarily means omission of others: the wars of Athens against Sparta and the efforts of Athenians and Spartans to subvert the freedom and the constitutions of other Greek states were conveniently forgotten.

In this case, the historical argument primarily appealed to reason. It is one of the rare instances of the use of history in Hellenistic decrees, with the aim to reach a logical conclusion: the Greeks should learn from their history and unite their forces against those who tried to enslave them. The "similar conditions" mentioned by Chremonides called for similar measures. But although this historical argument appeals to reason, we should not underestimate its emotional power: it appeals to the love of freedom, to pride in past achievements, to indignation against injustice and enslavement, and to concord. By highlighting the concord between Athens and Sparta and recalling the Persian Wars, Chremonides was also implicitly urging his audience to forget the far more common wars between Athens and Sparta. His strategy is very similar to the one we observe in amnesty and reconciliation agreements, that seek to control

memory (μὴ μνησικακεῖν) and emotion.²⁶ We can best understand the impact of this particular historical argument if we place Chremonides' exemplum in its contemporary context.

Some time after Chremonides had urged the Greeks to ally themselves with Ptolemy, the defender of "the common freedom of the Greeks", and to preserve concord (*homonoia*), presenting this alliance as the lesson to be learned from the Persian Wars, the same interdependence of freedom and concord was played out in Plataia, the place where the last battle of the Persian Wars had been fought. Our source is a decree of the league of the Greeks that participated in the festival of the Eleutheria, passed after the Chremonidean War (ca. 261-246 BC) but providing information about the instrumentalisation of historical memory before and during the war.²⁷ On the very battlefield where the concord of the Greeks had prevailed over the enemies of freedom, the decree praises no other than Chremonides' brother: Glaukon, an Athenian in the service of Ptolemy II,

"had contributed to making more lavish the sacrifice to Zeus Eleutherios and Concord and the contest which the Greeks celebrate on the tomb of the brave men who fought against the barbarians for the freedom of the Greeks."²⁸

This is the earliest reference to an altar of Homonoia (*Concord*) that stood next to that of Zeus Eleutherios,²⁹ serving as a reminder that freedom can be best defended through concord. We do not know if the cult of Homonoia was introduced in Plataia during the Chremonidean War or earlier,³⁰ but we can be certain that during and after this war the emphasis of the Eleutheria festival

²⁶ CHANOTIS (2013c).

²⁷ ÉTIENNE / PIÉART (1975); *SEG* LXI 352.

²⁸ Lines 18-24: συνη[ύ]ξησεν δὲ καὶ τὴν θυσίαν τοῦ Διὸς τ[οῦ] || Ἐλε<υ>θερίου καὶ τῆς Ὁμονοίας καὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα ὃ τιθέασιν οἱ Ἕλληνες ἐπὶ | τοῖς ἀνδράσιν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἀγωνισαμένοις πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους | ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐλευθερίας. English translation: AUSTIN (2006) no. 63 (modified).

²⁹ THÉRIAULT (1996) 102-122.

³⁰ WALLACE (2011) proposes to date the introduction of the cult of Homonoia in Boedromion 335 BC, after the destruction of Thebes by Alexander the Great, but this is not supported by any direct evidence.

had shifted from the notion of freedom alone to the combination of concord and freedom. It is interesting to observe that the surviving fragment of a speech delivered by an Athenian representative on the occasion of this festival in the late 2nd century (see note 11), castigates the Spartans for abandoning this concord immediately after the battle of Plataia and not participating in the subsequent wars against the Persians. The result was that Greek cities fell under the rule (*despoteia*) of the Persians.

The striking convergence between the decree of Chremonides (concord defends freedom), the honorific decree for Glaukon (the Persian Wars as exemplum for freedom and concord, joint cult of Zeus Eleutherios and Homonoia), and the oration in Plataia (lack of concord leads to subjugation under foreign rule) shows that historical arguments were effective when they were familiar; when they are continually and consistently used. I will return to this point later.

Before we leave Chremonides' decree, let us compare his arguments with those used on other occasions in Hellenistic oratory. A good parallel is offered by the orations of Chlaineas of Aitolia, an ally of the Romans, and Lykiskos of Akarnania, an ally of the Macedonians, when they attempted to convince the Spartans to become their allies, in 210 BC. Reconstructions of the two speeches are presented by Polybius.³¹ Exactly as in 267 BC, the decision to be taken was a decision about an alliance and a war. Chlaineas' aim was to persuade the Spartans to join the anti-Macedonian alliance. To do so, he summarised Greek history from the reign of Philip II to Antigonos Doson, attributing the miseries of Greece to Macedonian policies. The Spartans should, therefore, be the natural enemies of Macedonia. History obliges. But history also encourages. Since the Aitolians had not been defeated by Philip V, Chlaineas continued, the Spartans should be confident that by allying themselves with Aitolia they would be victorious. Chlaineas' historical arguments offered both moral justification and logical encouragement. The Spartans should

³¹ POLYB. 9, 28-39.

join the enemies of Macedonia, first because they must hate the Macedonians and, second, because the enemies of Macedonia were strong. A few passages may give an impression of the emotional power of Chlaineas' excursions in history. First, the speaker refers to the actions of Philip II:³²

"Having enslaved Olynthos and established an exemplum, he not only took control of the cities in Thrace, but also subjugated the Thessalians because of their fear. Not long after, after he had defeated the Athenians in battle, he responded with magnanimity to this victory, not in order to benefit the Athenians – far from that – but in order to use the benefaction towards them so as to invite the others voluntarily to follow his commands."

He then continued with Antipatros, calling to memory scenes of merciless prosecution, which are very similar to the description of the atrocities of the Thirty by Lysias in his speech *Against Eratosthenes*.³³ The objective of these descriptions is to foment anger:³⁴

"He reached such levels of *hubris* and lawlessness that he appointed hunters of exiles and dispatched them to the cities against those who had opposed the Macedonian royal house or had at all distressed it. Some of them were dragged violently from the sanctuaries or were removed from the altars and were killed with vengeance; and those who escaped were exiled from all of Greece. They could not find refuge anywhere, with one exception: the *ethnos* of the Aitolians."

Moving to more recent events, the orator continually framed his narrative with a variegated palette of emotions: gratitude, hope, fear, envy, and hatred:³⁵

"I return now to the most recent king, Antigonos, so that some of you may not regard the events that he caused without

³² POLYB. 9, 28, 3-4.

³³ LYS. 12, 8-22 and 95-98. See 12, 5: ἀναμνησσαι; 12, 92: ἀναμνήσας; 12, 94: ἀναμνησθέντες; 12, 95: ἀναμνήσθητε; 12, 96: ἀναμνησθητε. See BEARZOT (1997) 94-95, 159, 234-235, 238; CHANIOTIS (2013c) 56-59.

³⁴ POLYB. 9, 29, 3-4.

³⁵ POLYB. 9, 29, 7; 9, 29, 11-12.

grudge, thinking that you are obliged to feel gratitude towards the Macedonians. ... When he recognised that his rule would not be secure if you were to take over the leadership of the Peloponnesians, and when he saw that Kleomenes was very suitable for this task and that fortune was favouring you splendidly, he arrived with fear and envy not in order to help the Peloponnesians, but in order to deprive you of your hopes and in order to abase your supremacy. Therefore, you are not obliged to feel affection towards the Macedonians for not plundering your city when they captured it, but you should regard them as enemies and hate them, because they have prevented you already many times from becoming the leaders of Greece when you could.”

Thereupon, the orator contrasts the behaviour of the Macedonian kings with that of the Aitolians:³⁶

“Of all the Greeks, only the Aitolians dared to face Antipatros for the sake of the security of those who suffered unjustly; they alone withstood the attack of Brennos and the barbarians who followed him; they alone came to fight together with you, when they were called upon, in order to re-establish jointly with you ancestral leadership among the Greeks.”

Despite its exaggerations and inaccuracies, Chlaineas’ speech so impacted on the audience that the next orator, Lykiskos, the envoy of the Akarnanians, had first to wait until silence was restored and the people in the assembly had stopped discussing his speech.³⁷ In order to counter the impact of Chlaineas’ speech, Lykiskos too referred to past events. If Chlaineas’ selective version of history aimed to incite anger against the Macedonians, Lykiskos’ version aimed to inspire gratitude for Alexander’s benefactions to the Greeks and to deflect the anger of the audience away from the Macedonians and towards the Aitolians:³⁸

“Again, you have bitterly reproached Alexander for punishing the city of the Thebans, when he believed that he had been

³⁶ POLYB. 9, 30, 3-4.

³⁷ POLYB. 9, 32, 1-2.

³⁸ POLYB. 9, 34, 1-11.

wronged, but you neither mentioned that he avenged the outrages that the Persians had committed on all the Greeks nor that he delivered us all from great evils, by enslaving the barbarians and depriving them of the resources that they used for damaging the Greeks – funding now the Athenians and the ancestors of these (Spartans), now the Thebans, against one another –, nor that he finally made Asia subject to the Greeks. As for his successors, how dare you even mention them? They, indeed, many times benefited some and harmed others, as the circumstances demanded. Others might be justified in feeling resentment against them, but you Aitolians have not the least right to do so, since you have never done any good to anyone, but have done evil to many and at many times. Who invited Antigonos, son of Demetrios, to dissolve the Achaian League? Who swore oaths and made a treaty with Alexander of Epeiros for the enslavement and partition of Akarnania? Was it not you? Who jointly sent out such commanders as you did? These men even dared lay hands on inviolable sanctuaries. Timaios plundered the sanctuary of Poseidon in Tainaron and that of Artemis in Lousoi; Pharykos and Polykriotos pillaged the precinct of Hera in Argos and that of Poseidon in Mantinea. And what about Lattabos and Nikostratos? Did they not violate the sanctity of the Panboiotian festival in peacetime, behaving like Scythians or Gauls? No such deeds were ever committed by Alexander's successors."

Then, Lykiskos cited recent events, asking the Spartans to view with suspicion the Romans and the Aitolians:³⁹

"They have already robbed the Akarnanians of Oiniadai and Nasos, and they recently seized the unfortunate city of Antikyra, and together with the Romans they enslaved it. So, the Romans are carrying off the women and children to suffer, of course, what those must suffer who fall into the hands of aliens, while the Aitolians divide the land of the unfortunate people among themselves by lot."

After the presentation of the emotive image of women and children carried off into slavery, and after contrasting the cultural community of the Greeks to the unnatural union of the Aitolians,

³⁹ POLYB. 9, 39, 2.

who behaved like barbarians, and the Romans, Lykiskos invoked memory and emotion:⁴⁰

“It is good and befitting, men of Lakedaimon, remembering who your ancestors were, placing yourselves on guard against the aggression of the Romans, viewing with suspicion the evil plans of the Aitolians, and, above all, remembering the favours conferred upon you by Antigonos to continue to be haters of wickedness, to refuse the friendship of the Aitolians, and to share the same hopes with the Achaians and the Macedonians.”

Lykiskos finished with an appeal to the historical exemplum of the Persian Wars. The Spartans should join the Greeks against the new barbarians, the Romans, exactly as their ancestors did against Xerxes.⁴¹

Chremonides' oration in the Athenian assembly is lost but the few lines that summarise its content reveal multiple layers of a persuasion strategy that appealed to reason and emotion, were connected with familiar aspects of Greek historical consciousness, and aimed at counterbalancing Antigonid propaganda and the arguments of Antigonos' supporters. Although the main strength of the historical argument lies in its logic – concord protected freedom in the past, concord shall restore freedom in the present –, emotional aspects were very important. The commemoration of past glory strengthened pride, the exemplum supported hope.

Hope is a very peculiar emotion – if we do accept the view that it is an emotion. Usually defined as a positive attitude of the mind, hope is much more closely connected with judgment and appraisal than other emotions; the expectation of a positive outcome in the future is based on past experiences and judgment. When the historical argument is used in order to support hope, its function resembles that of a *historiola* in contemporary magic. A short mythological narrative serves as an exemplum for the desired outcome of the magical prayer.⁴²

⁴⁰ POLYB. 9, 39, 6.

⁴¹ POLYB. 38, 1-39, 5.

⁴² On the function of *historiolae* in magic see, e.g., GRAF (1996) 200 and 205.

Exactly as Hephaistos bound his mother and Zeus had Prometheus bound, let the opponent in a trial be bound, states an Aiginetan curse tablet of the late fourth or early 3rd century.⁴³ Exactly as concord saved freedom in the past, let concord save freedom in the present. Unlike in magic, of course, the success of Chremonides' historical exemplum depended entirely on human agents, on the military abilities of the coalition against Antigonos. The historical argument was convincing, but the hopes that it aroused were not fulfilled. History did not repeat itself. Concord did not save freedom.

Historical arguments such as the one used by Chremonides are occasionally to be found in summaries of deliberative orations in the assembly. A more or less contemporary example is a decree from Miletos. Peithenous, son of Tharsagoras, argued as follows, in order to support his proposal for a treaty of friendship and alliance between Miletos and King Ptolemy II (ca. 262/260):⁴⁴

“Because the people already in the past chose to have friendship and alliance with Ptolemy, god and rescuer, it occurred that the city came to prosperity and distinction and the people became worthy of many and great good things. For this reason the people honoured him with the greatest and fairest honours. His son, King Ptolemy, having inherited the kingship and renewed the friendship and alliance with the city, shows the greatest zeal for whatever is beneficial to the Milesians. He has granted them additional land, has secured peace for the people, and has been the cause of the other good things for the city.”

After this historical account, the orator continues with *καὶ νῦν* (“and now”), describing the current state of affairs and explaining

⁴³ *IG IV² 2, 1012; SEG LVII 313.*

⁴⁴ *I.Milet I 3, 139C: ἐπειδὴ τοῦ δήμου καὶ πρότερον ἐλ[ο]μένου τῇ φιλίαν καὶ τὴν συμμαχίαν τῇ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ σωτῆρ[α] | Πτολεμαῖον συνέβη τὴν τε πόλιν] εἰς εὐδαιμονίαν καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν ἐλθεῖν καὶ τ[ὸν] | δῆμον πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν ἀξιοθῆναι, δι' ἃς αἰτίας ἐτίμησεν | αὐτὸν ὁ δῆμος ταῖς μεγίσταις καὶ καλλίσταις τιμαῖς, διαδεξάμενός τε | τῇ βασιλείαν ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος καὶ ἀνανεωσάμενός | τὴν τε φιλίαν καὶ συμμαχίαν τῇ πρὸς τῇ πόλιν, πᾶσαν πεποιήται | σπουδὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν συμφερόντων πᾶσι Μιλησίοις, χώραν τε ἐπιδίδους καὶ | τὴν εἰρήνην παρασκευάζων τῷ δήμῳ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀγαθῶν πα[ρ]αίτιος γινόμενος τῇ πόλει.*

why the alliance with Ptolemy II would be beneficial to Miletos. Although this would have been enough as argument, the mention of the benefits that arose from the alliance with Ptolemy I and the moral obligations of the Milesians strengthened the pragmatic justification of the new treaty. We find the same combination of a historical argument that arouses hope, moral arguments that appeal to the feeling of gratitude, and pragmatic arguments as in the decree of Chremonides.

Another, much later example is an Athenian decree concerning the re-organisation of the festival of the Thargelia (129 BC):⁴⁵

“Since it is a norm of the forefathers and a custom of the Athenian demos and an ancestral tradition to show the greatest care for piety towards the gods and it is for this reason that the Athenians have achieved the fame and the praise of the most glorious deeds both on land and on the sea through many campaigns on land and on board of ships, always beginning all their activities with an homage to Zeus Soter and with the worship of the gods; and since there also exists Apollo Pythios, who is an ancestral god of the Athenians and an interpreter of good things, at the same time a saviour of all the Greeks, the son of Zeus and Leto; and since he has ordered us with oracles to pray to the god who is called ‘the god of the forefathers’ and to perform the ancestral sacrifices on behalf of the demos of the Athenians annually, offering sacrifices to Apollo as is the ancestral custom of the demos.”

The orator, a certain Xeno[--], son of Sopatrides, justified the proposal not only by reference to the divine commands given via oracles and to an ancestral tradition, but also with a historical

⁴⁵ SOKOLOWSKI (1962) no. 14; *SEG* XXI 469 C: ἐπειδὴ πάτριόν [ἐ]στ[ιν] καὶ ἔ[θ]ος τῶι δῆμῳ τῶι Ἀθηναίων καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν προγόνων π[α]ραδε[δ]ομένον περὶ πλείστου ποιεῖσθαι τὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς [εὐσέβειαν] καὶ διὰ ταῦτα πολλα<ί>ς <πεζαῖς> καὶ ἐπὶ ναυσὶ στρατεῖ<αι>ς τὴν κλε[ιν]οτάτων ἔργων καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν εὐδοξία[ν] καὶ [εὐλογία]ν κέκτ[η]νται ἀρχόμενοι διὰ παντός ἀπὸ <τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ> Σωτῆρος [τῆς π]ρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ὁσιότητος· ὑπάρχει δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἀπόλλων ὁ Πύθιος ὢν τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις Πατρῴος καὶ ἐξηγητὴς τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ κοινῇ σωτὴρ πάντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὁ τῆς Ἀητοῦς καὶ τοῦ Διὸς [υἱός· τούτ]ο[υ] δὲ διὰ τῶν χρησμῶν προσ[τ]ε[ταχ]ότος αὐτοῖς λ[ι]τῶν[ε]υσ[α]ι τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἐπικαλούμενο[υ]ν Πατρῴον καὶ ποιουμένους τὰς [πατρ]ε[ο]υ[ς] θυσι-
ας ὑπὲρ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων τοῖς τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ [καιροῖς τῶι Ἀπ]ό[λ]λωνι [θ]ύοντας ὡς πάτριόν ἐστι τῶι δῆμῳ.

argument, similar in structure to those we have seen so far. In the past, the Athenians were pious towards the gods; it is for this reason that they were victorious in wars. The conclusion implicitly follows that if they restore their piety, they will be successful in the future. Of course, this historical argument stands or falls depending on whether people believe that what made the Athenians victorious in the past was piety, not the number of their ships, the tactics of the military commanders, the military valour of their soldiers, the strength of their walls, and the money in their treasury. The argument is similar to the one recently used by the then Greek Minister of Culture, Nikos Xydakis: Having the drachma for 200 years, the Greeks achieved great things.⁴⁶ It implicitly follows that somehow, by means of magical sympathy, they will achieve great things if they re-introduce their national currency. Before we dismiss such arguments for what they are – pure nonsense –, we need to place them into their context. And the context of the Athenian decree is the increased interest in piety under the influence of the contacts between Greeks and Romans. In one of the earliest documents concerning the relations between Greek cities and Roman authorities, the praetor M. Valerius Messalla justified the grant of inviolability to Teos thus (193 BC):⁴⁷

“One would surmise that we always pay the greatest attention to piety towards the gods from the fact that we receive the favour of the gods for this reason; but we think that the honour that we pay to the divine has become obvious to all also from many other facts.”

Messalla directly linked piety with military success, exactly in the way the Athenian orator did sixty years later. This corresponds

⁴⁶ <http://www.tovima.gr/culture/article/?aid=715204>. Interview to the newspaper *Ephemerida ton Syntakton*, June 15, 2015.

⁴⁷ SHERK (1969) no. 34 lines 11-17: καὶ ὅτι μὲν διόλου πλεῖστον λόγον ποιούμενοι διατελοῦμεν τῆς πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβείας, μάλιστα ἂν τις στοχάζοιτο ἐκ τῆς συναντωμένης ἡμεῖν εὐμενείας διὰ ταῦτα παρὰ τοῦ δαιμονίου· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἄλλων πλειόνων πεπεῖσμεθα συμφανῇ πᾶσι γεγονέναι τὴν ἡμετέραν εἰς τὸ θεῖον προτιμίαν.

to the weight given by Polybius to Roman pious behaviour.⁴⁸ The duty to respect the gods was not invented by the Romans. But Polybius' explicit praise of Roman piety suggests that in the 2nd century BC this was regarded by some Greek political leaders and intellectuals as a distinctive feature of the Roman character, as one of the factors that determined Roman policies – as opposed for instance to the notorious lack of piety shown by the Macedonians and the Aitolians –,⁴⁹ and was a cause of their success. We observe again that the value of historical arguments is connected with the familiarity of contemporary audiences with historical traditions and with mentalities that are culturally determined.

4. History as an argument II: past services oblige

Apart from deliberative oratory in the assembly and court speeches, a very common type of oration in the Hellenistic period are the orations delivered by envoys in foreign cities, λόγοι πρεσβευτικοί in Polybius' typology.⁵⁰ They are quite well represented in the work of Polybius, with speeches such as the aforementioned speeches of Chlaineas and Lykiskos of Akarnania, the speech Eumenes II delivered in Rome in 189 BC, and the oration of the Rhodian Astymedes in Rome in 165 or 164 BC.⁵¹ To judge from the sheer amount of diplomatic missions in Hellenistic Greece, orations by envoys were extremely common, and we should not be surprised if they followed existing models. References to past relations between the negotiating communities appear as a standard feature of these speeches. In

⁴⁸ On Polybius' appraisal of the piety of the Romans see 6, 56, 6-14. More examples in CHANIOTIS (2015) 93-94.

⁴⁹ See, e.g., Polybius' comments on the plundering of sanctuaries by Philip V and the Aitolians: POLYB. 4, 62, 2 (Dion); 4, 67, 3-4 (Dodona); 5, 9-12 (Thermon).

⁵⁰ POLYB. 12, 25a, 3; ERSKINE (2007) 274; THORNTON (2013). On orations by envoys see esp. WOOTEN (1973); RUBINSTEIN (2013).

⁵¹ POLYB. 21, 19-21 and 30, 31, 3-18.

most cases we only find vague references to ancestral relations, past services, and traditional friendship. “They renewed (i.e. commemorated) the *philanthropa* [privileged relations of affection based on services and goodwill] that mutually exist from the time of the ancestors on” (ἀνανεωσάμενοι τὰ διὰ προγόνων ὑπάρχοντα πρὸς ἀλλήλους φιλάνθρωπα) is a stereotypical phrase found in many variations.⁵² However, in some cases the decrees preserve specific information concerning the content of speeches by envoys.

Among the cases in which concrete historical events are mentioned, the most instructive is the case of the embassy sent by Magnesia on the Maeander to various kings, cities and federal states in 208 BC, requesting the recognition of the inviolability of the city and the elevated status of the local agonistic festival.⁵³ The Magnesians envoys were accompanied on their journey by an impressive corpus of histories, oracles, poems, and documents documenting local history and demonstrating Magnesia’s benefactions to the Greeks in general and to certain cities in particular. From the surviving dossier of documents we can infer that the envoys used different historical arguments in the different cities. Sometimes references to the content of their orations are very vague, e.g. in Antiochia in Persis:⁵⁴

“the Magnesians of Maeander are relatives and friends of our people and have done many and distinguished services to the Greeks, services that contribute to good reputation ... [their envoys] appeared in front of the council and the assembly, delivered a decree of the Magnesians, commemorated the kinship and friendship, and gave a detailed account of the epiphany of

⁵² E.g. *I.Iasos* 152 lines 31-32; *SEG* XLIX 1114.

⁵³ *I.Magnesia* 20-65. On the organisation of this embassy see CHANIOTIS (1988) 34-40, and (1999).

⁵⁴ *I.Magnesia* 61 lines 11-14: Μάγνητες οἱ ἀπὸ Μαιάνδρου συγγενεῖς ὄντες | καὶ φίλοι τοῦ δήμου καὶ πολλὰς καὶ ἐπιφανεῖς χρεῖ|ας παρρείσχημένο[ι] τῶν [Ἑλλ]ήσιν [τῶν εἰς εὐδοξί|αν ἀνηκουσῶν; lines 32-37: ἐπελθόντες ἐπὶ τε τὴν βουλὴν καὶ | τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ψήφισμά τε ἀπέδωκαν παρὰ Μάγνη|των καὶ ἀνανεωσάμενοι τὴν συγγένειαν καὶ τὴν φι|λίαν ἀπελογίσαντο διὰ πλειόνων τὴν τε τῆς θεᾶς ἐ|πιφάνειαν καὶ τὰς χρεῖ|ας ἃς παρέσχονται Μάγνητες | πολλαῖς τῶν Ἑλλη-νίδων πόλεων.

the goddess and the services that the Magnesians rendered to many of the Greek cities ...”

But in many cases we get precise information. In Kephallenia, e.g., the envoys reminded the audience of the affinity between the mythical founders of the two cities: Magnes and Kephalos, the eponymous heroes, were brothers. In Megalopolis they recalled something more material than that, the fact that they had given the Arcadians 300 Dareikoi for the building of the city walls in 370 BC; the Cretans were reminded of the fact that Magnesia had stopped a war on the island (217 BC), and so on.⁵⁵

We can assume that even the general and vague references to the past such as references to kinship, affinity, friendship, past benefactions and the like (συγγένεια, οἰκειότης, φιλία, εὐνοία, εὐεργεσία) were founded on very specific historical traditions, which were narrated in the speeches of the ambassadors. A good example is provided by the decree of Epidamnus, which gives a more detailed account of the speech of the envoys in that city:⁵⁶

“They sent as envoys and also as theoroi Sosikles, son of Diokles, Aristodamos, son of Diokles, Diotimos, son of Menophilos, who appeared in front of the council and our assembly, handed in the decree, and discoursed with every zeal, presenting the epiphany of Artemis, the (military) assistance that their ancestors offered to the sanctuary in Delphi, when they defeated in a

⁵⁵ Kephallenia: *I.Magnesia* 52 line 14; Megalopolis: *I.Magnesia* 44 lines 25-29. Crete: *I.Magnesia* 25 lines 8-12.

⁵⁶ *I.Magnesia* 46 lines 5-16: ἀφεστὰ[λκα]ντ[ι] πρεσβευτάς, τ[ο]ύς δὲ αὐ[τοῖ]ς καὶ θια[ρ]οὺς, Σωσικ[λῆ] | Διοκλέος, Ἀρι[σ]τ[ό]δαμον Διοκλ[έ]ος, Διότιμον Μηνοφί[λου], οἱ ποτελθόντες ποτὶ | τὴν βουλὴν καὶ τὸν δᾶμ[ον] ἁμῶν τὸ ψάφισμα ἀπέδωκα[ν] καὶ αὐτ[ο]ὶ διελέχθησαν μετὰ πά[σας] φ[ι]λοτιμία[ς] ἐμφανίζ[αντες] τὰν τᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἐπιφάνειαν καὶ τὰν γεγεννημέν[αν] | βοάθειαν ὑπὸ τ[ῶ]ν π[ρ]ογόνων αὐτῶν [εἰ]ς τὸ ἱερὸν τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, νικασάντων μάχαι τοὺς || βαρ[β]άρους τοῖς ἐπιστ[ρατεύ]σαντας ἐπὶ διαρπαγαῖ τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ χρημάτων, καὶ τὰν | εὐεργεσίαν, ἣν [συ]νετελέσαντο εἰς τὸ κοινὸν τῶν Κρηταί[ων] δι[α]λύσαντες τὸν ἐμφύλιον πόλεμον· ἐνεφάνιζαν δὲ καὶ τὰς εἰς τοὺς ἄλλους [Ἑ]λλήνας γεγεννημέν[ας] | εὐεργεσίας διὰ τε τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ χρησμάτων καὶ διὰ τῶν π[ρ]οιητῶν καὶ διὰ τῶν ἱ[σ]τορ[ι]αγράφων τῶν συγγεγραφότων τὰς Μαγνήτων πρ[ό]ξει[ς]· παρανέγνωσαν δὲ | καὶ τὰ ψαφίσματα τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῖς παρὰ ταῖς πόλ[ε]σιν, ἐν οἷς ἦν καταγεγραμμέναι τιμαὶ τ[ε] καὶ στέφανοι εἰς δόξαν ἀνιχοῦνται <τᾶι> [πρό]λ[ε]ι.

battle the barbarians who had campaigned against it in order to plunder the god's property, and the benefaction that they accomplished for the Cretan Koinon, when they ended the civil war with reconciliation. They also presented their benefactions for the other Greeks, documenting (all this) through the god's oracles, the (works of the) poets, the historians, who have written the deeds of the Magnesians. In addition to this, they read the decrees that have been issued for them by the cities, in which honours and crowns are recorded, which contribute to the city's glory."

For many years historians believed that references to kinship cannot be taken at face value – some historians may still believe this. Until 1988 this view might have had some justification. When a document claims that communities believed in antiquity to be of different ethnic origin were in fact *syngeneis* – e.g. the Ionians of Teos and the Dorians of Crete –, one is indeed tempted to regard such a claim as an expression of politeness devoid of any concrete content. However, the publication of an inscription from Xanthos in 1988 provided definite proof that this view is wrong.⁵⁷ Who would believe that the Lykians of Xanthos and the inhabitants of the small city of Kytenion in Doris were *syngeneis*? And yet, a dossier of documents dating to the late 3rd century BC proves that a concrete narrative lies behind every such claim – its historicity is another matter. More importantly for our subject, the inscription from Xanthos showed that such a narrative was often an integral part of the *πρεσβευτικὸς λόγος* delivered by the envoys.

The oration in question was delivered in Xanthos during the assembly on 2 Aoudnaios of the year 206. The arrival of three men from a distant place of which most of the Xanthians had never heard must have caused quite a thrill. Lamprias, Ainetos, and Phegeus had come all the way from Kytenion in Doris,

⁵⁷ The text: *SEG* XXXVIII 1476: Commentaries: BOUSQUET (1988); CURTY (1995) 183-191 no. 75; JONES (1999) 61-62, 139-143. Here, I summarise the analysis that I have presented in two studies: CHANIOTIS (2009) 249-252, and (2013a).

equipped with two letters of recommendation by the Dorians and the Aitolians, but also equipped with their eloquence. Their speech fascinated the Xanthians to such an extent that the decree voted on by the assembly gives an unusually lengthy report of their oral presentation, thus providing an interesting insight into the rhetorical performances in the popular assembly. The three envoys of Kytenion requested financial aid for the reconstruction of the fortification wall of their city. They supported this request with a common argument: kinship.⁵⁸ The oral presentation of the envoys is referred to with the terms *apologizesthai* ("to give an account") and *dialegesthai* ("to present a discourse, to give a lecture"). The speech of the envoys included at least five sections. First, they gave an account of recent events (lines 10-13):

"They brought a decree of the Aitolians and a letter of the Dorians, with which they gave an account (*apologizesthai*) of what had befallen their fatherland; they gave a lecture (*dialegesthai*) in accordance with what was written in the letter."

Then they presented a mythological narrative treating the birth of Artemis and Apollo in Lykia and the birth of Asklepios in Doris (lines 16-20):

"They said that Leto, the patron/leader of our city, gave birth to Artemis and Apollo amongst us; from Apollo and Koronis, the daughter of Phlegyas, a descendant of Doros, Asklepios was born, in Doris."

From a divine genealogy they then moved to a heroic one (lines 20-24):

"Besides their kinship with us, which derives from these gods, they gave an additional account (*prosapologizestai*) of the intertwining of kinship which derives from the heroes, putting together (*synistasthai*) the genealogy which goes back to Aiolos and Doros."

⁵⁸ Kinship between communities is a subject to which Olivier Curty and Christopher P. Jones have dedicated profound studies: CURTY (1995), (1999), and (2005); JONES (1999).

A (presumably long) narrative followed, whose content was the foundation of the Lykian cities (lines 24-30). This narrative is summarised in greater detail, probably because it presented an unknown version of local history:

“Besides, they demonstrated (*paradeiknysthai*) that the colonists, sent out from our land by Chrysaor, the son of Glaukos, the son of Hippolochos, received protection from Aletes, one of the descendants of Herakles; for Aletes, starting from the land of the Dorians, came to their aid when they were being warred upon. Putting an end to the danger by which they were beset, he married the daughter of Aor, the son of Chrysaor [the Golden Sword].”

The otherwise unattested legend of Aletes and Aor must have been a fascinating adventure and love story, similar to the legend of Leukippos and Leukophryene:⁵⁹ a wandering hero with the characteristic name Aletes (the Wanderer), a typical Heraclid, followed his destiny which brought him to Lykia in a crucial moment of its early history. Here, colonists were under attack by some anonymous barbarians. In this moment of despair, Aletes appeared, he defeated the enemies and married the daughter of Aor (the Sword), the only anonymous person in this narrative.

Other historical narratives are alluded to in the phrase “they indicated with many other proofs the goodwill that they had customarily felt for us from ancient times because of the tie of kinship” (lines 30-32). These narratives constituted the ‘historical arguments’ of the envoys: these ‘historical traditions’ morally obliged the Xanthians to offer help. First, because they were relatives of the Dorians; second, because the Xanthians themselves had received assistance, when they were in need. The arguments from myth and legend did not appeal to reason but to the feelings of gratitude and affection.

We have already seen that one of the functions of historical arguments is the arousal of gratitude and, consequently, of moral obligations. The Athenians were not the only ones who

⁵⁹ PARTHENIUS, *Mythogr. Gr.* 2, 1, 5.

used such arguments but they were great experts in this regard. A well-known example, and at the same time a relatively well-preserved fragment of Hellenistic oratory, is preserved in the Amphiktyonic decree that concerns privileges of the association of Dionysiac artists in Athens (118/7 BC):⁶⁰

“... it has occurred that an association of the *technitai* was established for the first time in the city of the Athenians – the people who, becoming the principal cause of all the good things that exist among humans, brought the humans from animal life to civilisation and became the cause of communal life by introducing the tradition of the mysteries; through this the Athenian people counselled the Greeks that interactions with each other and trust are the greatest goods among humans. The Athenians also received from the gods specially for themselves as gifts the laws concerning human relations of friendship, education, and the delivery of grain, but gave the advantage from this gift jointly to the Greeks. Being the first to establish an association of *technitai* and participants in contests, the Athenians created thymelic and scenic contests. Testimony for all this is given by most historians and poets, and truth itself clearly attests to this, reminding that Athens is the mother-city of all dramas and that it invented and developed tragedy and comedy ...”

Exactly as the Greeks of today use the invention of democracy in ancient Greece to create the favourable emotional context for requests concerning their present financial misery, the Athenian

⁶⁰ LEFÈVRE (2002) 284-285, no. 117: ἐπει[δ]ὴ γερονέ[ν]αι [τε καὶ συν]ῆχθαι τεχνιτῶν σύνοδον παρ’ Ἀθηναίοις συμβέβηκε πρῶτον, ὧν ὁ δῆμος, ἀ[π]άντων τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθῶν ἀρχηγὸς κατασταθείς, ἐγ μὲν τοῦ θηριώδους βίου μετήγαγεν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς ἡμερότη[τα], παραίτιος δ’ ἐγε[ν]ήθη τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλ[ους] κοινωνί[ας] εἰσαγαγὼν τὴν μυστηρίων παράδοσιν, καὶ διὰ τούτων παρ[α]γ[γ]λ[ε]ίλας τοῖς Ἑλλησιν ὅτι μ[έ]γιστον ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἡ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς χρῆσις τε καὶ πίστις· ἔτι τε τῶν δοθέντων | [ὑπὸ θεῶν περὶ φιλανθρώπων νόμων [καὶ τῆς π]αιδείας ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῆς τοῦ καρποῦ παραδόσεως ἰδίαι μὲν ἐδέξατο | [τὸ δῶρον, κοινὴν δὲ] τὴν ἐξ ἐ[α]υτ[οῦ](>?) εὐχρηστίαν] τοῖς Ἑλλησιν ἀπέδωκεν· πρῶτός τε πάντων, συναγαγὼν τεχνιτῶν σύνοδον | [καὶ ἀγωνιστῶν, θυμελικ[οὺς] καὶ σ]χηγιχ[οὺς] ἀγῶνας ἐποίησεν, οἷς καὶ συμβαίνει μαρτυρεῖν μὲν τοὺς πλείστους τῶν ἱ[στο]ριαγράφων καὶ ποιητῶν, αὐτὴν δὲ καὶ τ[ῆ]ν ἀλήθειαν ἐμφανῶς δεικνύειν, ὑπομιμνήσκουσιν ὅτι μητρόπολις ἐστὶ τῶν | [δραμάτων ἀπάντων, τ]ραγωιδίαν καὶ κωμωιδίαν εὐροῦσά τε καὶ αὐξήσασα.

theatre artists based the request for privileges on the moral obligations deriving from Athens' contribution to culture. The argument of the Kytenians in Xanthos had a similar aim. In the very same way as a legendary Dorian saved your ancestors, you now have the moral obligation to save us.

The Kytenian envoys also used another dramatic narrative to appeal to emotion: the narrative of a recent war. It is summarised in the decree of Xanthos and in the letter of the Kytenians:

"It occurred that in the time when king Antigonos had invaded Phokis [228 BC] parts of the city walls of all the cities had collapsed because of the earthquakes and the younger men had marched to the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi in order to protect it. When the king arrived in Doris he destroyed the walls of all our cities and burned down our houses."

Even these few lines give us a sense of the dramatic narrative. After earthquakes had destroyed parts of the fortification walls, the enemy exploited this moment of weakness to invade Phokis. The cities of Doris lacked not only the *promachones* of their fortifications, but also the *promachoi*, the young warriors, their usual defenders in such situations. The young men, in accordance with a pattern we find both in real life and in literature, had marched to Delphi, in order to defend it. The defence of the cities of Doris was left to the old men and the women; the enemy prevailed, taking the cities, destroying what had been left of the city walls and burning the houses. Similar narratives in contemporary historiography give us an impression of the possible content of the narrative of the Kytenian envoys.⁶¹ Hellenistic audiences loved these stories, full of suspense, dramatic changes and tragic ironies.

⁶¹ Phylarchos' description of the attack of Pyrrhos against Sparta: PLUT. *Pyrrh.* 28, 4-5; Phylarchos' (?) narrative of the sack of Pellene by the Aitolians: PLUT. *Arat.* 31-32; Polybios' narrative of the sack of Abydos: 16, 30-34. See CHANIOTIS (2005a) 198-199, and 208.

It seems, however, that the Kytenian orators, in spite of their preoccupation with these old legends, did not lose their contact with reality. If none of these arguments would work, they could also play a 'political card', implying that they had the support of Ptolemy IV, who was still controlling this part of Asia Minor. What is, however, interesting, is that this support was invested with a historical content. As the Kytenians claimed, Ptolemy's dynasty originated in Herakles, the Dorian hero par excellence (lines 47-49: "for King Ptolemy as a descendant of Herakles, is a relative of the kings who descended from Herakles"; lines 109-110: "for King Ptolemy is our relative on account of his kinship with the kings", i.e. the Argeads). Once again we see in this document the interaction of historical, moral, and pragmatic arguments.

The oration of the Kytenian envoys ended with a dramatic appeal to the distant relatives in Xanthos not to show indifference:

"They ask us to bring to our memory our kinship to them, which originates in the gods and the heroes, and not to remain indifferent to the fact that the walls of their fatherland have been razed to the ground' (lines 14-17). ... They requested not to look on the elimination of the largest city among the cities of the Metropolis (the Mother-City) with indifference."

The dramatic narratives and the emotional appeal were effective. We may detect the compassion of the assembly in the answer of the Xanthians: "We should respond that all the Xanthians felt the same grief with you (*synachthestai*) for the misfortunes (*akleremata*) which have befallen your city" (lines 42-44).

But despite the emotional impact of the oration and despite the invocation of Ptolemy's name, the allegedly bad financial situation of Xanthos did not allow the Xanthians to give more than a symbolic contribution of 500 drachmas. Still, we should be grateful to the Xanthians, who invested a significant amount to have the 4,500 letters of this inscription inscribed. By doing so and preserving the content of this oration they permit us to

come to an important conclusion: even the least plausible claims to historical relations in Greek diplomatic documents were founded in mythological or historical traditions. When these traditions did not already exist, they had to be created. From a decree of Apollonia on the Rhyndakos concerning the relations between this city and Miletos (2nd century) we learn that at least sometimes the historical arguments made by envoys in their orations were carefully scrutinised.⁶² The citizens of Apollonia sent an embassy to Miletus to renew their relation to the city they believed was their mother city. They also asked the Milesians to let them participate in the cult of Apollo. The envoys of Apollonia brought with them historiographical works to substantiate their claim that they had been colonists of Miletos:⁶³

“Whereas we sent an embassy to the Milesian people in order to renew the existing kinship between our people and the Milesians, kinship that is founded on the foundation of a colony, the Milesians listened carefully to our envoys, with every goodwill, and after examining (ἐπισκεψάμενοι) the relevant histories and the other documents, they responded that our city has truly (ἐπὶ τῆς ἀληθείας) been a colony of their city. This was achieved by their ancestors, at the time when they sent a military expedition to the region of the Hellespont and Propontis and defeated in war the barbarians who inhabited that land, they founded along with the other Greek cities also our city, Apollo of Didyma being the leader of the expedition.”

⁶² *I.Milet* I 3, 155.

⁶³ *I.Milet.* I 3, 155: ἐπεὶ πεμ|φθείσης πρεσβείας πρὸς τὸν δῆμον τὸν Μιλη-
σίων περὶ τοῦ ἀνα|νέωσασθαι τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν πρὸς αὐτὸν τῷ δῆμῳ ἡμῶν | διὰ
τὴν ἀποικίαν συγγένειαν Μιλήσιοι διακούσαντες | τῶν πρεσβευτῶν μετὰ πάσης
εὐνοίας καὶ ἐπισκεψάμενοι | τὰς περὶ τούτων ἱστορίας καὶ τᾶλλα ἔγγραφα ἀπε-
κρίθησαν | τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τῆς ἀληθείας γεγενῆσθαι ἀποικὸν | τῆς ἑαυτῶν
πόλεως διαπραξαμένων τῶν προγόνων, | καθ’ οὓς καιροὺς ἐκπέμψαντες στρα-
τευμα καὶ εἰς τοὺς | [κ]ατὰ τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον καὶ τὴν Προποντίδα τόπους |
κρατήσαντες δόρατ(ι) τῶν ἐνοικούντων βαρβάρων κα|τώ(ι)κισαν τὰς τε ἄλλας
Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν κα|θηγησαμένου τῆς στρατείας Ἀπόλλωνος
Διδυμέως.

The reference to the careful examination of the historical argument by the Milesians confirms the assumption that historical arguments were not mere politeness. Similarly, a king, possibly a Spartokid, who received a Koan embassy that promoted the *asylia* of the Asklepieion (242 BC), confirmed that the tradition concerning the kinship between his dynasty and Kos was trustworthy:⁶⁴ “we accept the *asylia* and we gladly also accept the kinship, which is true and worthy of you and us” (καὶ τὴν ἀ[συλία]ν δεχ[ό]μεθα καὶ τὴν συγγένειαν οὕσαν ἀλ[η]θινὴν καὶ [ύ]μῶν τε ἀξίαν καὶ ἡμῶν ἡδέως προσ[δε]-δέγμεθα).

Because of the great number of Hellenistic diplomatic undertakings, such as the conclusion of treaties, the recognition of the inviolability of cities (*asylia*), the recognition of the elevated status of agonistic festivals, requests for financial support, requests for the sending of foreign judges, the mutual award of privileges, and so on, we have hundreds of inscriptions that directly mention or indirectly allude to the use of historical arguments. Expressions such as “the Eresians are the friends of our city since old times”, or the “Tenians are our relatives and friends and have always been benevolent towards our city” presuppose the presence of historical arguments in orations. An Athenian decree concerning Priene is one example out of many (2nd century).⁶⁵ If we only had the first lines (“the Prienians, who are friends and relatives from old times”), we might wonder about the concrete historical content of the envoys’ oration. Fortunately, the text continues with concrete information:

“They always remember all the other benefactions of the Athenian people to them, and above all they remember that the Athenians rebuilt their city after it had been destroyed by Cyrus.”

⁶⁴ RIGSBY (1996) no. 12 lines 22-24.

⁶⁵ *I.Priene* 45; new edition: *IG II³* 1239.

6. History as an argument III: a culturally determined ritual

In 87 BC, during the war against Mithridates VI, Sulla was besieging Athens, then governed by the philosopher Athenion. After a year of siege Athenion sent envoys to Sulla. Their speech is summarised by Plutarch:⁶⁶

“But after a long time, at last, he sent out two or three of his fellow-revellers to negotiate for peace; when they made no demands which could save the city, but proudly talked about Theseus and Eumolpos and the Persian Wars, Sulla said to them: ‘Go away, blessed men, and take these speeches with you; for I was not sent to Athens by the Romans to fulfil love of knowledge, but to subdue rebels’.”

The Athenian envoys used a script that was almost four centuries old: “we saved the Greeks from the Amazons, we saved them from the Thracians, we saved them from the Persians”.⁶⁷ This appeal to the common cultural memory of the Greeks had indeed been effective in the past, if not as the cause of decisions, certainly as their justification; after the Peloponnesian War the Spartans had justified their decision not to destroy Athens in precisely this manner. In negotiations among Greeks, this approach was based on the principle of *do ut des* – we have saved us Greeks, now we deserve to be rescued; it appealed to gratitude and it implied the common ancestry of the Greeks and a shared identity. Persuasion strategies based on gratitude and affection had an impact on decision-making, especially in assemblies. This is why they were used. The historicity of Plutarch’s report is therefore irrelevant; no matter whether Athenian envoys *did* use such an approach on that occasion or not, both the literary and the documentary evidence confirm that this was the standard approach. In Plutarch’s narrative the Athenian envoys did not realise that a ‘script’ that worked well in negotiations among Greeks could not possibly have the same

⁶⁶ PLUT. *Sull.* 13.

⁶⁷ CHANIOTIS (2005b).

impact in their negotiations with a Roman general. Other Greeks had learned the lesson and had adjusted their negotiation strategies to Roman values and priorities.⁶⁸

These few lines encapsulate the confrontation of two cultures. On one level Plutarch presents us with the confrontation between the ritualised use of history as an argument in Greek diplomacy on the one hand and the pragmatism of a Roman general, who is not interested in a historical lecture, on the other. But on another level this anecdote of a *ritus interruptus* narrates the failure of communication that was based on the cultural memory of one party, a memory that was totally misunderstood by the other. The oration of the Athenian envoys consisted of the most glorious chapters of Attic history, the best known components of their self-representation. Plutarch simply mentions the names of two heroes (Theseus and Eumolpos) and the Persian Wars, with no further details. He obviously presupposed that his reader (or the reader of his source, possibly Poseidonios) would understand the significance of these names without any explanation. He was certainly right in his assumption. Perhaps not every Athenian would have been in a position to list all of Theseus' adventures, not every Athenian would have known the name of the mythical king who had defended Athens against the Thracian invasion under Eumolpos, and it is doubtful whether many Athenians would have been in a position to place the Persian Wars in an accurate historical context. Nevertheless, Theseus, Eumolpos, and the Persian Wars, in this particular constellation (three victorious wars) and in this particular context (the siege of Athens by a foreign army), conveyed to every Athenian a message that could easily be understood: Athens had often been attacked by foreign armies (the Amazons, the Thracians, the Persians), but it had always prevailed. From Plato's *Menexenos* in the 4th century to Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration* in the 2nd century AD these three victories, of Theseus over the Amazons, of king

⁶⁸ CHANIOTIS (2015).

Erechtheus over the Thracians of Eumolpos, and of the Athenians over the Persians, were stereotypically alluded to as the pillars of Athenian self-representation.

Cultural memory is abstract and vague with regard to historical contents, but unequivocal as a means of communication. An event is reduced to a few essential points and becomes a sign that can be activated through the mention of a word or a name. Naturally, cultural memory can serve as communication only among those who share it. For the Athenians, the mention of Theseus, Eumolpos, and the Persian Wars was unequivocal, because these three events were always mentioned in the particular context of the glorification of Athens, as the most important Athenian victories that had saved Greece from invading barbarians. What the Athenians did not take into consideration is the fact that Sulla was not an ordinary recipient of this type of argument: he was just another of the non-Hellenic aggressors; and he was not part of the circle that shared the same cultural memory. Nothing could interest him less than the Athenian contributions to the defence of Greece. More than two centuries earlier Alexander the Great had not destroyed Athens, thus paying his respect precisely to these achievements. Alexander knew and understood the Athenian traditions, Sulla did not.

7. Conclusions

After this presentation of some characteristic cases in which historical arguments were used in Hellenistic orations summarised in decrees, I attempt some general remarks. What we have seen so far, is that historical arguments seem to have been indispensable in political debates and in negotiations, so indispensable that when a relevant historical tradition did not exist, the gap had to be filled with an invented 'tradition'. We have also seen that historical arguments were sometimes only one component of a more sophisticated argumentation, which might

include political, legal, economic or military considerations. It is precisely this co-existence of historical with pragmatic arguments that emphatically underlines the firm position of historical traditions in political reasoning. Even when a city had a political argument, it still had to use a historical one as well. The tantalising questions are, of course, why the historical argumentation was indispensable and how effective it might have really been. These two questions cannot be discussed independently.

A first important factor should be seen in the nature of decision-making in Hellenistic communities. All important decisions, including complex diplomatic matters, had to be taken by the popular assembly in all communities that were not ruled by kings. This applies to democratic and oligarchic communities alike, to city-states and confederations. In the majority of the Greek communities, especially in the Hellenistic age, the popular assembly had the right to debate on the political issues at stake.⁶⁹ And even in the communities, in which the popular assembly did not have the right of a debate, the debates did take place before the meeting of the assembly, in the market place or at drinking parties. The assembly comprised all the male adult citizens, young and old, educated and not, intelligent and naive, cautious and impulsive. Foreign envoys and the local statesmen who delivered the speeches in the assembly had to deal with a mass that was anything but homogeneous. Different arguments would appeal to different people. For that reason alone arguments of all kinds – historical, pragmatic, legal, and moral – had to be combined. The rules influencing decision-making in assemblies, market places, and drinking parties are by no means identical to those appropriate for the negotiations between sober statesmen. Arguments closely connected with religion and morality, arguments more appealing to sentiment than reason, have good chances to prevail. Aristophanic comedies, speeches in Thucydides, and the works of the Athenian orators reveal a multitude of tricks that smart

⁶⁹ GRIEB (2008).

orators used to distract the attention of the audience from the arguments of an opponent. Gossip, oracles, moral lessons, and a great deal of history belonged to the standard repertoire of cunning orators, able to manipulate their audience. Interestingly, among envoys in the Hellenistic period we not only find pragmatic politicians, but also orators, historians, philosophers, actors, dancers, and musicians,⁷⁰ and this is suggestive of the nature of the diplomatic activity and persuasion strategies in the assembly.

But this is certainly not the only reason for the use of historical arguments in Hellenistic, as well as in earlier and later deliberative oratory. Another, perhaps more important, reason may be seen in the fact the present draws its legitimacy from the past. This is quite obvious in the case of precedents, e.g. in constitutional history, but also in the legal relations between two states. Legal rights (e.g. privileges, the control of a sanctuary or the claim to a territory) can only be defended by a community if it can provide proof that it had these rights in previous times as well. This was, naturally, very important in territorial conflicts, an area that I cannot treat in this context.⁷¹ For instance, in the conflict between Hierapytna and Itanos on Crete over the possession of a territory near the sanctuary of Zeus Diktaios, the arbitrators, judges from Magnesia on Maeander, summarised in their verdict the legal principles which rendered the claim to a piece of land legitimate:⁷²

“men have proprietary rights over land either because they have received the land themselves from the ancestors, or because they have bought it for money, or because they have won it with spear, or because they have received it from one of the mightier”.

These four ways of legal acquisition of property are all directly connected with the past, in other words with history. In order to defend its legal claims, a community has to look to the past

⁷⁰ CHANIOTIS (1988b).

⁷¹ CHANIOTIS (2004).

⁷² *I.Cret.* III iv, 9. Discussion: CHANIOTIS (2004).

for arguments. *Mutatis mutandis*, this applies to claims of other natures as well. Individuals and communities alike supported claims to prestige and influence, certain honorary privileges and positions that were inherited διὰ γένους, and very often also the claim to receive support for a service that had been done in the past. The principle of reciprocity that determined the relations within communities, between mortals and gods, between cities and monarchs, and between the people and the elite, was also one of the foundations of historical arguments as a persuasion strategy: when one partner of the negotiation requests the reciprocation of past services, he needs to provide the necessary historical narrative and documentation.

The weight of moral arguments, even when combined with pragmatic arguments, can be seen in a story narrated by Xenophon in the Book 6 of his *Hellenica*. After Sparta's defeat at the battle of Leuktra by the Thebans, the Spartans had to ask the support of the Athenians. Their envoys used arguments of political realism, especially pointing to the danger that the new power represented; however, the majority of their arguments were of historical character. The Spartan envoys reminded their audience of the Spartan benefactions to the Athenians – the expulsion of the tyrants in the late 6th century and the fact that they did not destroy Athens after the Peloponnesian War –, thus appealing to their obligation to repay these benefactions. A second group of arguments can be labelled as precedents: the Spartans listed all the previous cases, in which the Athenians had helped them – especially the Third Messenian War – as well as the cases in which Athenians and Spartans had fought together, namely the Persian Wars; of course they did not forget to underline the fact that the present enemies, the Thebans, had taken the Persian side in these wars. The Athenians accepted the Spartan proposal of an alliance. According to Xenophon,

“the weightiest of the arguments urged by the Lakedaimonians seemed to their hearers to be that at the time when they subdued the Athenians, though the Thebans wanted to destroy

Athens utterly, it was they who had prevented it. Most stress was laid, however, upon the consideration that the Athenians were required by their oaths to come to their assistance.”⁷³

In the eyes of a conservative and deeply religious historian, the historically founded obligation of the Athenians to repay a benefaction weighed more than any other argument.

So, we have to reach a trivial conclusion: historical arguments in Hellenistic oratory, and more generally, owed their effectiveness to their relation to the very foundations of organised life in ancient Greece: law and moral, social, political, and religious values. They were not more or less effective than law and morality can be in a world of many city-states and confederations opposed to each other, exposed to wars, social and political conflicts, and changes of every kind. History was not the only argument in their political deliberations, but it seems that it could not be absent. In 364 the Thebans attacked and destroyed the neighbouring city of Orchomenos. As Diodorus reports, the Thebans presented their war as an act of revenge for the injustice of the legendary forefathers of the Orchomenians, the Minyans, who had imposed a tribute upon the Thebans:⁷⁴

“So the Thebans, thinking they had a good opportunity (*kairos*, i.e. a civil war in Orchomenos) and having got plausible pretexts (*prophaseis*) for punishing them, took the field against Orchomenos, occupied the city, slew the male inhabitants and sold into slavery the women and children”.

A good opportunity was no less necessary for the Theban attack than a plausible moral or legal argument provided by a historical tradition.

The attitude of the Greeks towards law, morality, religion, and historical traditions did not remain unchanged in the course of centuries. The changes, especially the influence of the sophistic movement, certainly affected the way historical arguments

⁷³ XEN. *Hell.* 6, 5, 35-36.

⁷⁴ DIOD. 15, 79.

could be used or were in fact used by individuals and communities. In the Hellenistic period, the specific cultural context of historical arguments is primarily provided by the importance of historical culture: the prolific production of historiographical works; the abundance of commemorative anniversaries; the lectures of itinerant historians.⁷⁵ This strong presence of ‘history’, without precedent in earlier Greek culture, strengthened the already existing trend to endorse pragmatic arguments with historical arguments. One of the fables of Babrius (2nd century AD) very much resembles an ironic comment on the ritualised use of history as an argument – in this case, the presentation of grievances before a declaration of war:

“Once a wolf saw a lamb that had gone astray from the flock, but instead of rushing upon him to seize him by force, he tried to find a plausible complaint (*enklêma euprosôpon*) by which to justify his hostility. ‘Last year, small though you were, you slandered me.’ ‘How could I last year? It’s not yet a year since I was born.’ ‘Well, then, aren’t you cropping this field, which is mine?’ ‘No, for I’ve not yet eaten any grass nor have I begun to graze.’ ‘And haven’t you drunk from the fountain which is mine to drink from?’ ‘No, even yet my mother’s breast provides my nourishment’. Thereupon the wolf seized the lamb and while eating him remarked: ‘You’re not going to rob the wolf of his dinner even though you do find it easy to refute all my charges’ (*pasan aitiên*).”⁷⁶

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⁷⁵ For these phenomena in the Hellenistic period see CHANIOTIS (1988a) and (1991). For similar developments already in fourth-century Athens see LAMBERT (2011).

⁷⁶ BABR. *Fab.* 89.

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DISCUSSION

J.-L. Ferrary: La communication d'Angélos Chaniotis a présenté sous tous ses aspects le rôle complexe attribué à l'histoire dans l'éloquence hellénistique, et montré combien on pouvait tirer parti, en l'absence de discours parvenus jusqu'à nous et compte tenu de la rareté des textes historiographiques (à l'exception de Polybe et du discours d'Athénion chez Posidonius), des considérants des décrets. Du point de vue des rapports entre Grecs et Romains, j'ai particulièrement apprécié son analyse du texte de Plutarque (*Sull.* 13, 5) concernant la réponse de Sylla aux ambassadeurs d'Aristion qui invoquaient Thésée, Eumolpos et les Guerres médiques. Comme souvent, toutefois, l'attitude des Romains restait ambiguë. Après s'être emparé de la cité qu'il traita sans ménagement, Sylla répondit favorablement aux supplications des Athéniens qui étaient restés fidèles aux Romains, avaient fui leur cité et se trouvaient dans son camp, et il déclara qu'il pardonnait "en l'honneur du plus grand nombre", c'est-à-dire des morts, c'est-à-dire de son illustre passé (*Plut. Sull.* 14, 9). La différence entre les deux réponses successives s'explique à la fois par les contextes dans lesquels elles furent données (avant et après la répression de la rébellion), et par l'identité des interlocuteurs (rebelles ou amis fidèles).

A. Chaniotis: Many thanks for this observation. There is a common denominator in the Athenian plea and Sulla's response towards loyal friends: *charis*, the gratitude and benevolence that one deserves for past services. The problem is that the Athenians appealed to *charis*, without noticing that a Roman did not care about their services to the Greeks and would not reward them. The importance of loyalty (*pistis* or *fides*) for the Romans is evident in many contemporary sources that I have discussed in a recent study (Chaniotis [2015]).

P. Ducrey: Nous nous situons ici à l'époque hellénistique. Mais l'évocation d'un passé historique plus ou moins éloigné rappelle le plaidoyer que les Platéens prisonniers des Thébains après la prise de leur ville adressent aux Lacédémoniens, si l'on en croit Thucydide. Ils évoquent en effet pour tenter d'infléchir leurs vainqueurs leur attitude loyale lors des Guerres médiques et de la révolte des hilotes (Thuc. 3, 54, 3-5).

A. Chaniotis: I do not recognise a difference in the use of arguments – very common in Classical historiography and rhetoric –, but there is a difference of cultural contexts. Let me give you three examples of how cultural contexts may affect the use of historical arguments. First, historical experiences, such as the traumatic experiences during the Peloponnesian War and the civil wars that were connected with it, had an impact on values and, consequently, on values to which historical arguments appealed. Second, the growth of historiography and the increased interest in history (e.g. public lectures of historians) had an impact on historical knowledge and on the way historical arguments were used and viewed. Just compare how little local historiography (hardly any) we have in the late 5th century BC, when the Plataeans appealed to the historical past, and how common local histories become from the 3rd century BC on – Jacoby has more than 600 local historians that can be dated to the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. The change in quantity is connected with qualitative changes. The place of history in education, everyday culture, and therefore in rhetoric was different. And thirdly, historiographical styles changed. Exactly as Hellenistic historiography is emotional and filled with vivid narratives, historical arguments in rhetoric are connected with more elaborate narratives and aim at emotional arousal.

L. Pernot: Y a-t-il des degrés de caractère persuasif entre les différentes sortes d'histoire ? Est-ce que les mythes, les traditions locales et la 'grande histoire' étaient utilisés comme arguments au même titre les uns et les autres ou à des titres différents ?

Que savons-nous sur ceux qui pensaient le contraire, à savoir que l'histoire n'est pas un argument ? Dans la littérature grecque classique, certains passages témoignent d'un refus de tirer des leçons de l'histoire, soit en vertu d'une opposition de principe, soit pour des raisons conjoncturelles. Ainsi, Aristophane se moque parfois des références aux Guerres médiques, et le Spartiate Sthénélaïdas, chez Thucydide, rejette les conclusions que les Athéniens veulent en tirer. Il y a aussi le cas de Platon.

A. Chanotis: There are indeed differences in the way historical arguments were used and received, depending on the historical knowledge and consciousness of the audience. In some cases an orator may just use keywords to invoke events of the past, in other cases long narratives and explanations are needed. There is evidence that historical arguments were scrutinised or rejected. I already mentioned the case of Miletos and Apollonia on the Rhyndakos. In the arbitration of Rhodes between Samos and Priene (*I.Priene* 37), the Rhodian judges rejected a version of history that was presented to them by the Samians, contained in the histories of Milesios, because they discovered that the historical work of Milesios was a forgery.

M. Kraus: Nachdem Sie Ihren Vortrag mit einer Fabel beschlossen haben, sei auf die enge strukturelle Verwandtschaft von Fabeln und historischen Argumenten im rhetorischen Kontext hingewiesen. Beide gehören zur Kategorie der Beispiele. Wie Aristoteles sagt, ist das Beispiel die rhetorische Erscheinungsform des induktiven Arguments, so wie das Enthymem diejenige des deduktiven Beweises (*Arist. Rhet.* 1, 2, 1356b5-6; 12-18; 2, 20, 1393a26-27). Nun gehören aber induktive Beispiele ebenso typischerweise gerade zum deliberativen *genus* wie deduktive Enthymeme zum forensischen (*Rhet.* 1, 9, 1368a29-33). Beispiele (παράδειγματα) wiederum können entweder historisch oder erfunden sein; die erfundenen sind dann entweder Gleichnisse (παραβολαί) oder Fabeln (λόγοι) (*Rhet.* 2, 20, 1393a28-1394a8).

A. Chaniotis: Vielen Dank für diese Beobachtung. In spezifischen Kontexten werden historische *exempla* verwendet. In anderen Fällen, wie in der Fabel von Babrius oder aber im Peloponnesischen Krieg, dient die Vergangenheit als *enklêma*, als Vorwurf, der Handlungen rechtfertigt.

M. Edwards: I note the use of the words “fellow-revellers”. Is this important?

A. Chaniotis: The Greek original has *sympotês*. Posidonios, most likely the source for this incident, wanted of course to paint a very negative image of the Athenian supporters of Mithridates; in fragments of his history, Athenion is presented as someone who is not truly an Athenian and a statesman. There may also be a subtext in the reference to drinking, that is, to Dionysiac revelling. Mithridates was known as the New Dionysos and the Dionysiac artists in Athens supported him.

M. Edwards: Perhaps past history was used in this case because the ambassadors to Sulla could see Athens and the Acropolis? Also these were not real ambassadors – so the context is important.

A. Chaniotis: Yes, the geographical context is important. We should not forget that two of the three legends mentioned by the Athenians, the Amazonomachy and the Persian Wars, were parts of the sculptural decoration of the Parthenon and the temple of Athena Nike. The third legend, the attack by the Thracians of Eumolpus and the rescue of Athens through the sacrifice of Erechtheus’ daughters may well be the subject of the central scene of the Parthenon frieze, as Joan Connelly has argued.

D. Nelis: The strategy of controlling memory and emotions: there is an element of both sides agreeing to forget certain things for pragmatic reasons, Romans can forget a lack of *fides*?

A. Chaniotis: Memory can be selective, depending on contexts. Ephesos supported Mithridates; it later re-interpreted its policy as the result of fear; and the fact that it was not loyal did not prevent the Romans from keeping Ephesos as capital of the province of Asia. Selective memory is also very important in cases of reconciliation after a civil war, when people have to place the duty to establish concord (*homonoia*) over the duty to take revenge; in order to do this, they have to learn to forget the injustice or the pain that they had suffered. E.g. in Nakone they had to establish artificial families, consisting of members of the two parties and neutral citizens, in order to be able to establish peace; in other words, they had to delete family histories.

M. Edwards: That last remark of yours reminds me of Cleisthenes' reforms and the artificial tribes and phratries.

A. Chaniotis: The amnesty of 404/3 BC in Athens is another characteristic case of a community imposing the duty of *mê mnêsikakein*, the duty to forget the evil things that one had suffered.

M. Edwards: Lysias did not forget.

A. Chaniotis: Also the people of Eresos did not forget their suffering under the tyrants. When the descendants of the tyrants attempted to return to the city, their request was rejected. The relevant decree (*IG XII 2, 526 + Suppl.*) describes all their atrocities in great detail, precisely in order to arouse emotions – indignation and grief – through commemoration.

M. Edwards: You use the term 'Greeks' a great deal.

A. Chaniotis: For the period that I am discussing, that is, after Alexander's conquest, one can do this because of the increased mobility, the foundation of new cities and the re-settlement of

populations, the increased number of international festivals, the exchange of diplomatic documents, the use of a shared formulaic language in diplomatic contacts, and consequently increased homogenisation in the Greek world.

M. Edwards: Does this explain why the times of conflict between Athens and Sparta are overlooked?

A. Chaniotis: You raise the important issue of cultural memory in the Hellenistic period. Collective and cultural memory consist of either very early events – foundation legends and early wars against barbarians (the Trojan War, the Persian Wars) – or very late events – events that occurred one or two generations earlier. The Peloponnesian War and other events of the 5th and 4th centuries BC are hardly ever mentioned.

C. Kremmydas: Thank you for your stimulating discussion of Hellenistic decrees as evidence for the actual practice of political oratory. Your discussion of the dossier from Xanthos and the appeal to kinship myth reminds me of Alexander's visit to Mallus in neighbouring Cilicia in 333. He appealed to their foundation by the hero Amphilochus and drew a link to their shared Argive origins. This enabled him to stop the stasis in their community and secure his back before the showdown with Darius. I wonder whether the manipulation of kinship myth and even history in diplomatic discourse might have been rendered easier by the practice of forging pseudo-historical documents attested already in the 4th century.

A. Chaniotis: This is in part an explanation for the production of forged or pseudo-historical documents. Another important reason is *enargeia*, the attempt of historians to make their narrative vivid through the quotation of documents. I suspect that the person who fabricated 'documents' such as the text of the Peace of Callias, the Themistocles' decree, and the Oath of Plataea was the local historian Kleidemos.

L. Pernot: Les documents cités présentent une remarquable homogénéité de style. Ils utilisent le même vocabulaire, les mêmes structures syntaxiques, et ont quelque chose de vaguement isocratique. C'est un style qui rend un son encomiastique autant que délibératif, d'ailleurs. Il reflète probablement une *koinê* stylistique des écoles de rhétorique.

A. Chaniotis: This is an interesting observation, and I am sure that you are right that there is a shared style. Historians, orators, and authors of decrees went through the same schools of rhetoric. Stratokles, the author of the honorific decree for Lykourgos as well as of many other decrees, was also a prominent orator. He was also fully aware of the power of inscriptions. As Stephen Tracy has pointed out, Stratokles had many decrees published on stone. In so doing, he ensured that the inscribers of these documents used blank spaces or line-initial position to give his name visual prominence on the stone.

D. Colomo: My question concerns the point you make in your contribution on the use of mythological narratives as exempla/historical arguments "in order to support hope". Did Hellenistic orators perceive and thus exploit in a different way mythology/'mythological' history on the one hand, and 'real' history on the other?

A. Chaniotis: This is a very interesting question concerning the relation between myth and history and Greek attitudes towards myth. One should avoid generalisations – e.g. the attitudes of intellectuals vary – but if we consider the public course, we may say that the main difference between myths or legends of heroes and what we consider as history is a difference in distance. Legends belong to a far more remote past than historical events and cannot be verified in the same manner as historical events. This affects their use in argumentation; they are more likely to be accepted as exempla than as support of legal claims. But they were nevertheless used for all kinds of

purposes. For instance, in the “Lindian anagraphe” (*I.Lindos* 2), a list of dedications to Athena Lindia that aimed to propagate the sanctuary’s fame, legendary dedicants (e.g. Herakles and Menelaos) appear alongside historical personalities (e.g. Amasis and Alexander the Great), in the proper chronological sequence.

C. Kremmydas: Could you please clarify the function of *enargeia* in connection with the use of forged, pseudo-historical documents? Do you mean that they were used as inartistic means of proofs, i.e. as witness testimonies, thus introducing an external authority into ambassadorial speeches, or were they used in order to evoke a particular emotional response? Or were these two functions indistinguishable?

A. Chaniotis: Yes, I think that their main function was to provide evidence, to serve as witnesses. E.g. as Plutarch mentions in the *Life of Theseus*, Kleidemos included in his history a forged decree of the Greeks from the time of Theseus. Kleidemos served as secretary of the council. He knew how to formulate a decree.