

**Sophia Papaioannou, Andreas Serafim, Beatrice da Vela, eds. *The Theatre of Justice: Aspects of Performance in Greco-Roman Oratory and Rhetoric*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017. ISBN 978-90-04-33464-9.**

This volume, which has its origins in a conference of the same title held at University College London in April 2012, comprises sixteen papers on various aspects of performance in Greek and Roman oratory. It is somewhat unbalanced in content: eleven of the sixteen contributions deal with classical Athens, only five with Rome. As the title suggests, the papers are concerned largely, but not exclusively, with forensic speeches.

The first and longest of the five parts into which the book is divided ('Speakers—Audience') opens with a paper by Ian Worthington (ch. 2), who suggests that the performance demands of forensic oratory and deliberative oratory were significantly different. Speeches delivered in an Athenian court certainly had to be performed, but litigants could stick closely to their prepared text, whereas speakers in the assembly needed to be able to think on their feet and improvise. Andreas Serafim (ch. 3) examines the different ways in which Demosthenes addresses the judges in three of his longest forensic speeches. He argues that Demosthenes chose specific forms of address to encourage the audience to think about their role in a particular way. Thus when he addresses them as 'Judges' he emphasizes their judicial role, whereas calling them 'Athenians' seeks to create a 'rhetoric of community' between speaker and audience, from which his opponent is shut out. Brenda Griffith-Williams (ch. 4) explores performative aspects of the narrative of Isaios 6, a speech written for a client involved in an inheritance dispute. She notes parallels with comedy in the speech's account of the machinations of the prostitute Alce, and identifies performative cues that Isaios' client might have used to make his presentation more engaging. Guy Westwood (ch. 5) looks at Athenian orators' summoning up of figures from the historical past. Such *eidōlopoiia* is generally indirect: the audience is invited to imagine these 'ghosts', but the orator does not seek to impersonate them. Aeschines was particularly fond of this technique and used it as part of a broader strategy 'to confirm [his] authoritative command of Athenian history'. He also imitated Solon, but was attacked by Demosthenes for his excessive theatricality. Finally, Catherine Steel (ch. 6) discusses what she terms informal exchanges in Roman republican trials. She argues that the texts we have present a misleadingly sanitized impression of what actually happened in court. Witnesses, the defendant, and spectators all introduced an element of unpredictability into proceedings, and the successful court-room orator had to be able to improvise, as did politicians when they addressed political meetings. She concludes that 'Roman oratory was never more than partially scripted.' (p. 88)

Part II contains two papers on the creation of character ('Ēthopoiia'). Christos Kremmydas (ch. 7) writes on the relationship between character and argumentation in the assembly-speeches in Thucydides. He interestingly suggests that the use of general reflections about life (*gnōmai*) and of historical examples served to create an

impression of wisdom and experience on the part of the speaker. Henriette van der Blom (ch. 8) uses fragments of the speeches of the Roman republican general and politician Metellus Numidicus to support a necessarily speculative reconstruction of how he sought to represent himself after his recall to Italy and replacement by Marius.

Part III ('Hypocrisy—delivery—actio') opens with a paper by Kostas Apostolakis (ch. 9) on the performative aspects of Athenian judicial speeches that were intended to elicit the judges' pity. He suggests that entreaties and appeals, often involving the introduction of children and other family-members, came to be expected by the judges, to the extent that the refusal to use them, as for example by Socrates in Plato's *Apology*, could be seen as a rejection of democratic norms. Beatrice da Vela (ch. 10) uses Donatus' fourth-century commentary on the comedies of Terence to argue that in the Roman educational system of his day comedies were studied as a way of teaching performance techniques, as an early stage of oratorical training. Finally, Kathryn Tempest (ch. 11) identifies the *Letters* of Pliny the Younger as a rich source for the oratorical culture of his day, and shows how the author, in writing about himself, his pupils and rivals, identifies performative skills (memory, voice, posture etc.) as a central element of what makes a man a good speaker.

Part IV ('Emotions in the Law-Court') contains three chapters. Dimos Spatheras (ch. 12) argues that Demosthenes' vivid description of his opponent Meidias' wealth and luxurious lifestyle in Dem. 21 is intended to provoke the judges to feel resentment and to regard Meidias as anti-democratic. Edward Harris (ch. 13) draws a sharp distinction between tragedy and forensic oratory in their handling of emotion. Unlike characters on the tragic stage, litigants rarely describe their own feelings, do not express anger or grief at what they claim to have suffered, and are restrained in their descriptions of violence. The emotional responses of others may be related, but speakers take care to represent themselves as self-controlled. Two appendices collect references to anger and pity in the forensic speeches of Demosthenes. Lastly, Jon Hall (ch. 14) looks at the conduct of Roman judges as in the courtroom. He shows that they were far from passive participants in the trials that they decided. Senatorial judges, by definition men of political experience, were particularly prone to what might be termed grandstanding. Moreover, judges felt no need to conceal their emotions, and a skilled orator would tailor his words as he spoke to what he could see of their reaction.

In the first paper of Part V ('Language and Style in Performance') Christopher Carey examines Aeschines' speech against Timarchus. He suggests that Aeschines finds fault with his opponent's flamboyant style of oratorical performance as part of a broader attack on his lack of bodily restraint. This attack serves to reinforce Aeschines' main allegation, that Timarchus had prostituted himself. Conversely, he creates for himself a persona of 'manly restraint'. Konstantinos Kapparis (ch. 16) looks at the handling of narrative in the speeches of Apollodoros. He argues that the orator's taste for lengthy narratives, full of vivid details and dramatic episodes, is rhetorically effective and, far from being a fault, in fact demonstrates his skill and experience as an orator. Finally, Alessandro Vatri (ch. 17) investigates stylistic differences between speeches written to

be read and those written to be delivered. Using Antiphon as a case study, he compares the *Tetralogies* with the forensic speeches. His conclusion is that the former are more stylistically complex, as befits texts which could be read and re-read at leisure, whereas repetition and recapitulation — techniques that help to hammer a point home to a live audience — are prominent in the latter.

This is a valuable collection, which shows the vitality of ancient oratory as a subject of study. Its emphasis on performance and on the interaction between speakers and audiences is entirely welcome. The quality and relevance of the contributions are somewhat mixed, but even the slighter papers contain points of interest, and the volume as a whole is a stimulating and worthwhile read.

The book would, however, have been improved by a stronger editorial hand. Even on a generous definition of performance, several of the papers do not really belong. Conversely, the addition of chapters on, for example, Quintilian's treatment of delivery would have strengthened the collection. Its division into five parts is arbitrary and at times obscures important connections, as for example between the chapters by Steel (Part I) and Hall (Part IV), which both deal with the active participation of people other than the speakers in a Roman court. The contributors almost never refer to each other's papers, even when they discuss the same material (e.g. Westwood and Carey on Aeschines' use of Solon) or examine similar topics (e.g. Griffith-Williams and Kapparis on the performance of narrative). This lack of communication is surprising in view of the volume's origins as a conference.

The papers are heavily text-based, and archaeology and iconography are almost wholly absent. There is some mention of dress, especially the disheveled clothing worn by defendants in an attempt to secure the judges' pity, but nothing on how orators were depicted in action. Nor is there anything on the courtroom as the physical space within which oratorical performances took place. No paper gives a clear sense of what an Athenian or Roman court was like. Obviously the sources for the performance of oratory are patchier than those for drama, but I miss at least an attempt to recreate an ancient trial in the same sort of way that Oliver Taplin and others have illuminated the performance of Greek tragedy.

There might also have been more reflection on what is meant by performance, and on how the performative aspects of daily life (playing a particular social role) relate to the performance of a speech. One paper refers to 'the modest oratorical *habitus* of politicians of earlier times' (p. 71), but Pierre Bourdieu, to whom this concept is owed, is absent from both bibliography and index.

The papers are summarized in the Introduction, but there is no epilogue, and so the reader is left to draw his or her conclusions. What struck me most is that, whilst the performative aspects of ancient oratory were always important, and giving a speech was never simply a matter of reciting a script, oratorical performance was quite different from theatrical performance. In Athens in particular, as several contributors

show, litigants sought to project an image of self-control and avoided engaging in overt theatricality. In other words, over-performance was as much a fault as its opposite.

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