

# Persuasion through Proximity (and Distance) in the Attic Orators’ Historical Examples

*Giulia Maltagliati*

**T**O WHAT EXTENT might the recollection of a historical example (παράδειγμα) help a speaker to persuade the audience? In what way was there an understanding that certain events could be more suitable than others? And how did the context and circumstances of delivery influence an orator’s selection of his examples? Moreover, how freely could speakers manipulate past events when offering them as examples? And how could an audience be induced to accept an example that had been modified *ad hoc* so that it better mapped onto the current situation?

The use of arguments from historical examples in Attic oratory has received considerable attention. Some scholars have focused on the rhetorical functions of historical allusions, and have thematically classified the most recurrent παραδείγματα.<sup>1</sup> Others have addressed the problem of the ‘inaccuracy’ of arguments from history, and speculated whether speakers could modify their accounts so that the παράδειγμα in question would suit their rhetorical and political agenda.<sup>2</sup> Recent studies have

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. K. Jost, *Das Beispiel und Vorbild der Vorfahren bei den attischen Rednern und Geschichtsschreibern bis Demosthenes* (Paderbon 1935); M. Nouhaud, *L’utilisation de l’histoire par les orateurs attiques* (Paris 1982).

<sup>2</sup> L. Pearson, “Historical Allusions in the Attic Orators,” *CP* 36 (1941) 209–229; S. Perlman, “The Historical Example. Its Use and Importance as Political Propaganda in the Attic Orators in the Fourth Century B.C.,” *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 7 (1961) 150–166; P. Harding, “Rhetoric and Politics in

also taken into account the impact of oral traditions, social memories,<sup>3</sup> rhetorical genres,<sup>4</sup> and institutions<sup>5</sup> on the orators' presentation, and the audience's evaluation, of historical events.

In this paper I focus on the ways in which historical examples are introduced, a topic that has not yet been the object of a detailed study. I suggest that the manner in which historical examples are presented to an audience can increase the cognitive 'appeal' and, consequently, the persuasiveness of the analogy between a past event and the current situation.<sup>6</sup> I shall show that the Attic orators often introduced their *παροδείγματα* with expressions that were designed to generate a sense of proximity to or distance from the example in question. Depending on an orator's goals and the circumstances of delivery, these framing expressions might have affected the persuasive power of the historical example for the audience.<sup>7</sup>

Fourth-century Athens," *Phoenix* 41 (1987) 25–39; I. Worthington, "History and Oratorical Exploitation," in *Persuasion: Greek Rhetoric in Action* (London 1994) 109–129.

<sup>3</sup> R. Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1989), has shown how different oral traditions could explain alternative versions of historical events. B. Steinbock, *Social Memory in Athenian Public Discourse: Uses and Meanings of the Past* (Ann Arbor 2013), has given attention to the role played by collective memories in the renegotiation and transmission of certain events.

<sup>4</sup> J. Grethlein, *The Greeks and their Past. Poetry, Oratory and History in the Fifth Century BCE* (Cambridge 2010), has examined the different use of examples in the context of deliberative and epideictic rhetoric.

<sup>5</sup> On the influence of democratic institutions on the orators' use of the past see M. Barbato, "Using the Past to Shape the Future: Ancestors, Institutions and Ideology in Aeschin. 2.74–78," in E. Franchi et al. (eds.), *Conflict in Communities. Forward-looking Memories in Classical Athens* (Trento 2017) 213–254.

<sup>6</sup> Other scholars have successfully applied a cognitive framework to the study of Classics. See i.a. the recent P. Meineck et al. (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Classics and Cognitive Theory* (New York/London 2019).

<sup>7</sup> On the way in which framing effects influence group choices and contribute to political manipulation see i.a. A. Tversky and D. Kahneman, "The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice," *Science* 30 (1981) 453–458; D. Chong and J. N. Druckman, "Framing Theory," *Annual Review of*

I shall first demonstrate that the perceived familiarity of an event, understood in terms of *salience* and *recency* (both terms will be defined below), enhances the credibility of arguments from historical examples (§1). I shall then discuss three different strategies that orators could adopt to manipulate their audience's perception of certain historical events (§2.1–3). Finally, I will use Demosthenes' *Against Androtion* (22.12–15) as a case study in order to show how all these techniques can also work together (§3).

Previous studies have often interpreted statements that highlight the familiarity of a certain example as an attempt on the part of speakers to avoid giving the impression that they are more knowledgeable than their audience.<sup>8</sup> What I propose, instead, is to take these introductory strategies as the orators' response to the necessity of making certain examples appear cognitively more appealing and, therefore, more compelling. The presence of these tactics confirms the orators' awareness that not every event can work as a *παράδειγμα*, and will provide us with an indication of some of the criteria that might have guided a speaker's selection of examples. Ultimately, the investigation of the cognitive operation of framing expressions that convey the proximity or distance of a given event will shed new light on the persuasive potential of arguments from history.

### 1. *Familiarity, similarity, and persuasion*

Scholarship on the operation of historical analogies in decision-making processes has argued that the persuasive potential of arguments from historical analogies largely depends on the analogy's cognitive appeal.<sup>9</sup> That is to say that the higher the

*Political Science* 10 (2007) 103–126; G. Lakoff, *The ALL NEW Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction 2014).

<sup>8</sup> See A. O. Wolpert, "Addresses to the Jury in the Attic Orators," *AJP* 124 (2003) 540; J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton 1989) 177–181; but already Pearson, *CP* 36 (1941) 213–219. Recently, M. Canevaro, "La memoria, gli oratori e il pubblico nell'Atene del IV secolo a.C.," in *Conflict in Communities* 171–212, has argued against this interpretation.

<sup>9</sup> The literature on the use of historical analogies in foreign and domestic policy-making processes consists of the work of both psychologists and

degree of the perceived correlation between the past event and the current situation, the higher the chances that the historical analogy will be accepted as both valid and persuasive.<sup>10</sup> The connection between the heuristic and persuasive functions of historical analogies is made clear by Houghton's formulation:<sup>11</sup>

Since these devices [viz. analogies] govern the manner in which we learn and the way we understand the world around us, if we can get others to accept our analogies, then we have gone a long way towards convincing them that the world is in fact as we see it. So, analogizing seems vital both to the persuasion of the self, as well as to persuade others.

A key finding of cognitive psychology is that a historical analogy will be more effective if it consists of an event that is perceived as familiar because it is either *salient* or *recent*.<sup>12</sup> Indeed,

political scientists. Among those who have recognised both the cognitive and the persuasive operation of historical analogies see e.g. Y. Y. I. Vertzberger, "Foreign Policy Decisionmakers as Practical-Intuitive Historians: Applied History and its Shortcomings," *International Studies Quarterly* 30 (1986) 223–247; Y. F. Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton 1992); D. P. Houghton, "Historical Analogies and the Cognitive Dimension of Domestic Policymaking," *Political Psychology* 19 (1998) 279–303, and *US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis* (Cambridge 2001); A. Brändström, F. Bynander, and P. Hart, "Governing by Looking Back: Historical Analogies and Crisis Management," *Public Administration* 82 (2004) 191–201; A. Mumford, "Parallels, Prescience and the Past: Analogical Reasoning and Contemporary International Politics," *International Politics* 52 (2015) 1–19; D. Ghilani, O. Luminet, H.-P. Erb, C. Flassbeck, V. Rosoux, I. Tames, and O. Klein, "Looking Forward to the Past: An Interdisciplinary Discussion on the Use of Historical Analogies and their Effects," *Memory Studies* 10 (2017) 274–285.

<sup>10</sup> On the cognitive operation of analogical reasoning see i.a. M. Gick and K. Holyoak, "Analogical Problem Solving," *Cognitive Psychology* 12 (1980) 306–355; D. Gentner, "Analogical Reasoning, Psychology Of," in L. Nadel (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science* (2003) 106–112.

<sup>11</sup> Houghton, *US Foreign Policy* 202.

<sup>12</sup> On the importance of familiarity for the cognitive operation of historical analogies see T. Gilovich, "Seeing the Past in the Present: The Effect of Associations to Familiar Events on Judgments and Decisions," *Journal of Personality*

the perceived *salience* of a historical event may lead to “an over-concentration on that event and a consequent predilection to exaggerate the likelihood that it will re-occur.”<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the *recency* of an event may make people more likely to draw an analogy between that event and the situation at hand.<sup>14</sup> The familiarity of an event further increases the cognitive attractiveness of an analogy insofar as salient or recent events are more likely to provoke both emotional and ethical reactions. These reactions, in turn, have the potential to overshadow a more rational assessment of the situation that has prompted the evocation of the analogy in the first place.<sup>15</sup> In persuasive terms, then, generating a sense of familiarity allows a speaker to achieve a better cognitive ‘fit’ between a given historical event and a current situation, and makes the analogy between past and present more compelling.<sup>16</sup>

Ancient theories about *παραδείγματα* also acknowledged the cognitive significance of familiarity.<sup>17</sup> Aristotle defines a *παρά-*

*and Social Psychology* 40 (1981) 797–808; I. Blanchette and K. Dunbar, “Analogy Use in Naturalistic Settings: The Influence of Audience, Emotion, and Goals,” *Memory and Cognition* 29 (2001) 730–735. For the meaning of “salience” and “recency” in psychology see *OED* on-line s.vv. 2b and 2. *Salience* is “the quality or fact of being more prominent in a person’s awareness or in his memory of past experience.” *Recency* is “the fact of an item having been encountered more recently than other items, as increasing its likelihood of being remembered.” Salience and recency are therefore *relative* values that influence the *availability* of an event, namely the subjective ease with which such an event is retrieved from long-term memory.

<sup>13</sup> Houghton, *US Foreign Policy* 30.

<sup>14</sup> Gilovich, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 40 (1981) 802; Houghton, *US Foreign Policy* 30.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Vertzberger, *International Studies Quarterly* 30 (1986) 234; Brändström, Bynander, and Hart, *Public Administration* 82 (2004) 206–207, esp. n.6, “trauma.”

<sup>16</sup> See S. Macdonald, *Rolling the Iron Dice: Historical Analogies and Decisions to Use Military Force in Regional Contingencies* (Westport/London 2000) 196–197; Houghton, *US Foreign Policy* 203.

<sup>17</sup> On analogy as a cognitive and rhetorical device in early Greek philosophical and scientific discourse see G. E. R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy: Two*

δειγμα as “a kind of induction, moving from similar to similar (ὅμοιον πρὸς ὅμοιον),” in which “one component is more known (γνωριμώτερον) than the other” (*Rh.* 1357b28–30; cf. *An.Pr.* 69a19).<sup>18</sup> He illustrates the operation of the historical example as follows: if a speaker wanted to say that Dionysius was plotting a tyranny because he asked for a guard, he should remind their audience of how both Pisistratus and Theagenes became tyrants right after they asked for a guard. Because these instances (and their outcomes) are already *known* to the audience, Aristotle says, “they become a παράδειγμα for Dionysius, whose reasons for asking for a guard the audience does not know (οὐκ ἴσασιν)” (1357b30–36). By using familiar historical examples, speakers can therefore induce their audiences to make inferences about unknown situations.<sup>19</sup>

Whilst Aristotle describes examples as “things that have happened before” (*Rh.* 1393a29, πράγματα προγεγενημένα), Anaximenes specifically grounds the pertinence and persuasive potential of παραδείγματα in their temporal or spatial proximity to the audience. Should recent and domestic events be unavailable, a speaker can resort to those that—although distant—are nevertheless held as “important” and “well-known”:<sup>20</sup>

λαμβάνειν δὲ δεῖ τὰ παραδείγματα <τὰ> οἰκεία τῷ πράγματι καὶ τὰ ἐγγύτατα τοῖς ἀκούουσι χρόνῳ ἢ τόπῳ, ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ὑπάρχη τοιαῦτα, τῶν ἄλλων τὰ μέγιστα καὶ γνωριμώτατα.

Take the examples that are appropriate to the subject and closest to the audience in time or place. But if there are none of these, use others that are very important and well known.

The orators also show an awareness of the importance of spatial proximity in the selection of historical παραδείγματα, and often note that it is necessary to choose examples from Athenian

*Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Bristol 1966).

<sup>18</sup> Aristotle uses παράδειγμα interchangeably for the “source” element, i.e. the *illustrans*, and for the analogical process.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. also *Top.* 157a16.

<sup>20</sup> *Rh. Al.* 1438b40–1439a3; transl. R. Mayhew and D. C. Mirhady, *Aristotle: Problems II* (Cambridge [Mass.]/London 2011).

history rather than “foreign” ones. For instance, Demosthenes, in *Against Timocrates*, justifies choosing the foreign example of the Locrians (24.139) by assuring the Athenians that they “you will not be inferior, having listened to an example, especially one set by a well-governed community” (οὐδὲν γὰρ χείρους ἔσεσθε παράδειγμά τι ἀκηκοότες, ἄλλως τε καὶ ᾧ πόλις εὐνομουμένη χρῆται). This quasi-preemptive statement signals that examples closer in spatial proximity were probably thought more effective.<sup>21</sup>

Temporal proximity seems to be another crucial feature for a compelling παράδειγμα, and recent events appear to be favoured especially in the contexts of the Assembly and the Courts.<sup>22</sup> Demosthenes, in particular, avoids mentioning the mythological past, and uses against his adversaries the argument that the distant past is irrelevant.<sup>23</sup> This predilection for the more recent past might hint at the orators’ awareness that the recollection of

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Dem. 19.269, 20.110; Isoc. 1.9, 5.113, 9.77; Lyc. *Leoc.* 128. On the orators’ preference for domestic examples see Perlman, *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 7 (1961) 157–158.

<sup>22</sup> As shown by J. Grethlein, “The Value of the Past Challenged: Myth and Ancient History in Attic Orators,” in C. Pieber et al. (eds.), *Valuing the Past in the Greco-Roman World* (Leiden 2014) 326–336; K. Clarke, *Making Time for the Past: Local History and the Polis* (Oxford 2008) 251; Pearson, *CP* 36 (1941) 219. As the anonymous reader points out to me, the Athenians must have been used to these kinds of reservations, as these are also frequently found in historiography, e.g. Hdt. 9.27, Thuc. 1.73.2.

<sup>23</sup> Dem. 14.1; *De cor.* 209. Aeschines and especially Lycurgus make a wider use of chronologically distant examples than does Demosthenes (e.g. Aeschin. *In Tim.* 141 ff., *In Ctes.* 107–112; Lyc. *Leoc.* 62, 83–132). That said, Aeschines himself is aware of the potential issues relating to the distant past. At *In Ctes.* 112, for instance, he feels compelled to offer a proof that he is speaking the truth about the ancient (cf. the generic τότε at 107) story he has just related about the Delphic oracle. Lycurgus, too, before introducing the ancient story of Codrus, resorts to legitimising formulae (*Leoc.* 83): these ancient examples are “brief” (μικρά) and allow us to make better decisions (βέλτιον βουλευέσθε); cf. similar remarks at 80, 98. On Lycurgus’ conspicuous use of mythological examples in his speech cf. Grethlein, in *Valuing the Past* 340–347, and 84 ff. below.

remote events would be met with some resistance by the audience: no matter how well known they might have been, ancient events were too far distant in time to be verified.<sup>24</sup> Remote events could also be considered less trustworthy because they had been transmitted by the poets, who were often criticised by orators and rhetoricians for embellishing their narratives.<sup>25</sup>

Despite these reservations, however, the remote past is not ignored altogether and the argument emphasising the antiquity of certain events can be used to enhance their exemplary value and distinction. In *epitaphioi logoi*, the deeds of the war-dead and those of the Athenian ancestors are usually set in a seemingly uninterrupted chain predicated on the ancestors' virtue and on the promise of an unperishable glory for the war-dead.<sup>26</sup> In this context, therefore, the *salience* and exemplarity of the ancestors' deeds seems to depend largely on their perceived chronological distance. As Demosthenes points out, events that are more recent have not come to be celebrated precisely because of their temporal proximity (*Epit.* 9):

ἂ δὲ τῇ μὲν ἀξία τῶν ἔργων οὐδέν ἐστι τούτων ἐλάττω, τῷ δ' ὑπογώτερον εἶναι τοῖς χρόνοις οὐπω μεμυθολόγηται, οὐδ' εἰς τὴν ἡρωϊκὴν ἐπανῆκται τάξιν, ταῦτ' ἤδη λέξω.

But I will now mention achievements which are no less deserving of glory than those but are closer to us in time and so have not yet become household stories or been raised to heroic stature.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Cf. also Clarke, *Making Time* 267. In general, speakers tend to distinguish between τὸ μυθώδες, i.e. "fabulous" facts that usually, but not necessarily, coincide with remote events that have been transmitted by the poets, and facts on which people agree. For instance, in Isoc. *Panath.* 237–238, the events μυθώδη are contrasted with τὰς πράξεις τὰς ὁμολογουμένας; cf. *Paneg.* 54 and 5.33. See also 84 below.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. Arist. *Poet.* 1451a36; Isoc. 9.36, *Bus.* 38; Thuc. 1.10 and *passim*.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Dem. *Epit.* 12. On the tonal unity of *epitaphioi logoi* see N. Loraux, *L'invention d'Athènes* (Paris 1981); Grethlein, *The Greeks and their Past* 123.

<sup>27</sup> Translations of the orators are from M. Gagarin (ed.), *The Oratory of Classical Greece* (Austin 1998–).



Distant events can therefore be profitably used as παραδείγματα in accordance with context and speakers' purposes. This is further confirmed by Anaximenes' claim that, if proximate spatio-temporal examples are not "available" (ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ὑπάρχη), the speaker should use what the audience consider as "important and well-known events" (τὰ μέγιστα καὶ γνωριμώτατα).

We may then wonder in what sense recent and domestic events might not "be available." Anaximenes is probably aware that not all recent events from Athenian history are suitable or relevant to the circumstances of delivery (cf. οἰκεία τῷ πράγματι), just as he is conscious that not every temporally or geographically near event would bear a resemblance to the situation at stake. Indeed, the lack of similarity is a counter-argument that a speaker should use when refuting the adversary's own historical example (*Rh. Al.* 1430a6ff., 1443b38–40; *Arist. Rh.* 1403a6–10). Such a form of *lusis* applies to both ancient and recent events.<sup>28</sup> But instances of recent events may be more easily challenged in this way because they are presumably fresher in the audience's (and adversaries') memories.<sup>29</sup> By contrast, the temporal and spatial distance of remote events potentially allows a speaker to rewrite traditional accounts in a way that emphasises their similarities to (and understates their differences from) a current situation.<sup>30</sup> Finally, by evoking events that are temporally or physically too close, particularly negative ones, an orator might risk diminishing the goodwill of the audience or stirring up counterproductive reactions.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> For instance, Demosthenes challenges the analogy between Philip and Sparta on account of the lack of similarities between the military techniques employed in the two historical periods (9.47). Likewise, Lycurgus criticises his opponents for having compared Leocrates, who fled from his city, to the Athenians abandoning their land to Xerxes (*Leoc.* 68).

<sup>29</sup> E.g. *Dem. Meid.* 36–38; cf. Andocides' specious distinction between a truce and a peace for the recent events of 404 B.C. (3.10–12).

<sup>30</sup> Thus the reflections found in Isoc. *Panath.* 168, as well as his account of the figure of Agamemnon (74–87).

<sup>31</sup> As reported by Herodotus (6.21), the Athenians "fined Phrynichus a

In his *Problems*, Aristotle aptly summarises the limits of both too remote and too recent events, and identifies a causal nexus between the audience's temporal perception of a certain event and their evaluation of it (*Pr.* 917b10–16):

διὰ τί ἡδόμεθα ἀκούοντες τὰ μήτε λίαν παλαιὰ μήτε κομιδῆ νέα;  
ἢ διότι τοῖς μὲν πόρρω ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἀπιστοῦμεν, ἐφ' οἷς δὲ ἀπιστοῦ-  
μεν οὐχ ἡδόμεθα, τὰ δὲ ὡσπερ ἔτι αἰσθανόμεθα, καὶ περὶ τούτων  
ἀκούοντες οὐχ ἡδόμεθα;

Why do we enjoy hearing what is neither very old nor quite new?  
Is it because we disbelieve what is far away from us, and we do  
not enjoy what we disbelieve, whereas the latter as it were we still  
perceive, and we do not enjoy hearing about such things?

Aristotle's observations indicate a concern with the way an audience might have reacted to specific events. A passage of Isocrates further shows that speakers could affect their audience's perception of an event by how they presented it (*Paneg.* 8–9).<sup>32</sup> Although the deeds of the past “have been left as an inheritance common to all” (αἰ μὲν γὰρ πράξεις αἰ προγεγενημέναι κοινὰ πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατελείφθησαν), Isocrates says, they need to be used “appropriately” (ἐν καιρῷ).<sup>33</sup> More specifically, a speaker might

thousand drachmas,” because he had reminded them of “familiar sufferings” (οἰκῆια κακά). As shown by C. Carey, “Propriety in the Attic Orators,” in F. De Martino et al. (eds.), *Studi sull'eufemismo* (Bari 1999) 386–388, speakers also avoid mentioning recent defeats too explicitly; see e.g. Lys. 31.8, Lyc. *Leoc.* 16, Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 252. By contrast, mythological and distant events were appreciated by the public (cf. Isoc. 2.48, *Panath.* 1). Demosthenes often resorts to negative, but foreign, examples to stir both the shame and pride of the Athenians (e.g. 6.20–25, 9.56–68). Occasionally, however, he also criticises the recent Athenian past more explicitly (e.g. 1.8–11, 3.5). As Carey observes (388) the speaker's ἦθος, as well as the scale of the disaster, probably influenced the audience's attitude toward negative events.

<sup>32</sup> See R. Nicolai, *Studi su Isocrate. La comunicazione letteraria nel IV sec. a.C. e i nuovi generi della prosa* (Rome 2004) 129–130; J. Marincola, “Intertextuality and exempla,” *Histos Working Papers* 3 (2011) 7–8; Clarke, *Making Time* 248–254. For the idea that an orator needs to vary his way of speaking according to subjects and circumstances see Isoc. 13.12, 16.

<sup>33</sup> For this idea see also Isoc. *Antid.* 277.

influence the audience's perception of certain examples by recounting (διελθεῖν) τὰ παλαιά “in a new manner” (καινῶς) and reporting (εἰπεῖν) τὰ νεωστὶ γεγενημένα “in an old fashion” (ἀρχαίως).<sup>34</sup> What Isocrates seems to suggest is that it is not the absolute dating nor contents of past events that matter, but the way speakers situate, with their words, such events in relation to their audiences.

In the following section I illustrate three strategies that the Attic orators could use in order to diminish or increase the temporal and spatial distance between their audience and the historical event that they employ as an example. Doing so might result in a παράδειγμα that is cognitively more appealing and, thereby, more persuasively effective.

## 2. Proximity and distance

### 2.1. Recent and ancient events

A productive technique for increasing an audience's familiarity toward a certain example is to combine ancient and more recent events, often via *praeteritio*. As Grethlein has recently shown, speakers frequently declare their intention to neglect what is far in time and then turn their attention to a temporally closer event.<sup>35</sup> Such an attitude might confirm the greater effectiveness of recent events, as well as the orators' awareness of it. At the same time, I suggest, the juxtaposition of remote and recent events allows speakers to simultaneously emphasise their audience's distance from ancient events and generate proximity toward the selected παράδειγμα. In this way, even if not too close in time, such an example will nevertheless appear more relevant on the grounds that it is *relatively* more recent.

Isocrates adopts this strategy in his *Archidamus*.<sup>36</sup> At 6.41,

<sup>34</sup> Here Isocrates thinks about the rhetorical operation that Plato attributed to Teisias and Gorgias (*Phdr.* 267B).

<sup>35</sup> Grethlein, in *Valuing the Past* 328 ff.

<sup>36</sup> That the speech is probably fictitious does not affect my argument; Isocrates has Archidamus addressing the Spartans by using Athenian rhetorical strategies. To an external audience (i.e. the Athenians reading this

Archidamus says that “one could use many examples” (πολλοῖς ἂν τις παραδείγμασι χρῆσαιτο) of successful resistance against strong invaders, especially in the case of the Athenians. He then specifies (6.42):

τοὺς μὲν οὖν παλαιοὺς κινδύνους εἰ διεξιοίην, οὓς ἐποιήσαντο πρὸς Ἀμαζόννας ἢ Θραῦκας ἢ Πελοποννησίους τοὺς μετ’ Εὐρυσθέως εἰς τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν εἰσβαλόντας, ἴσως ἀρχαῖα καὶ πόρρω τῶν νῦν παρόντων λέγειν ἂν δοκοίην· ἐν δὲ τῷ Περσικῷ πολέμῳ τίς οὐκ οἶδεν ἐξ οἴων συμφορῶν εἰς ὅσῃν εὐδαιμονίαν κατέστησαν;

Now, if I were to recall the old threats they faced against the Amazons or the Thracians or the Peloponnesians who invaded their land under Eurystheus, perhaps I might seem to bring up ancient events, far from our present concerns. But in the Persian Wars too, who doesn’t know what height of fortune they came to after being so low?

According to Grethlein, this passage “expresses a general scepticism that comes to the fore in other speeches in which Isocrates introduces references to the remote past with apologies or qualifications.”<sup>37</sup> Indeed, the phrase ἀρχαῖα καὶ πόρρω τῶν νῦν παρόντων resonates with Anaximenes’ correlation between the recency of certain examples and their pertinence (cf. 68 above). Yet, Archidamus himself extensively taps into the Spartan mythological past (see 6.16–33) and deliberately highlights the utility of ancient examples (6.16).<sup>38</sup>

I would thus argue that Archidamus’ (i.e. Isocrates’) attitude towards the Athenian mythological past has at least two other functions. First, Archidamus may not want to dwell too much on

speech), Archidamus’ argumentation might have seemed specious, and his historical examples inappropriate. Cf. T. Blank, *Logos und Praxis: Sparta als politisches Exempletum in den Schriften des Isokrates* (Berlin 2014) 323–340.

<sup>37</sup> Grethlein, in *Valuing the Past* 329, with further examples.

<sup>38</sup> A more decisive element of scepticism might be Archidamus’ comment at 6.24 (ὁ γὰρ παρὼν καιρὸς οὐκ ἐᾷ μυθολογεῖν). However, such a statement is, once more, praeteritorial as it precedes his references to the Heraclids.

the Athenians' παλαιοὶ κίνδυνοι because they are, for the Spartans, παραδείγματα ἀλλότρια that were frequently used to praise the Athenians' glorious past.<sup>39</sup> A brief mention of these events is thus more than enough to evoke their memories in his Spartan audience. Second, and more important, the qualification of the mythological enterprises of the Athenians as ἀρχαῖα and as πόρρω τῶν νῦν παρόντων directs the audience's attention to the second example provided: Salamis. To be sure, the battle of Salamis is not so recent either, especially if compared to the other examples chosen by Archidamus that are both from the fourth century.<sup>40</sup> Yet, Salamis will be perceived as recent and relevant thanks to the contrast with more ancient events.<sup>41</sup> Salamis, moreover, is an ἀλλότριον παράδειγμα too.<sup>42</sup> However, unlike the other Athenian enterprises mentioned by Archidamus, Salamis does feature a contribution of the Spartans, and this is precisely what he emphasises (6.43, κοινωήσαντες δὲ τῶν κινδύνων ἡμῖν). As such, this example will probably feel more appropriate than the Athenians' παλαιοὶ κίνδυνοι, and will be better received by the fictional audience that Archidamus' speech is addressing.<sup>43</sup>

This strategy of increasing the temporal proximity of a historical example by contrasting it to an event that is more distant

<sup>39</sup> See S. Gotteland, *Mythe et rhétorique. Les exemples mythiques dans le discours politique de l'Athènes classique* (Paris 2001) 100; E. Zingg, *Isokrates, Archidamos* (Düsseldorf 2017) 552. Cf. Procles' use of these examples to convince the Athenians to give help to the Spartans (Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.47). But see also the Spartans' refutation of the Athenians' appeal to the past in Thuc. 1.73.2–3.

<sup>40</sup> Dionysius (396 B.C.) and Amyntas (393).

<sup>41</sup> The familiarity of such an example is further highlighted by the expression τίς οὐκ οἶδεν, on which see below.

<sup>42</sup> The fictional date of this speech might be in the 360's. See Zingg, *Isokrates, Archidamos* 54.

<sup>43</sup> The παράδειγμα ἀλλότριον of Salamis is offered again by Archidamus at 6.83. Note, however, that his reading of the events at Salamis would have seemed completely wrong to an Athenian reader. Cf. Blank, *Logos und Praxis* 340–343.

in time is also at work in Dinarchus' *Against Demosthenes* (1.37–38):

ὦν τοὺς μὲν ἀρχαίους ἐκείνους μακρὸν ἂν εἶη λέγειν, Ἀριστείδην καὶ Θεμιστοκλέα ... ἀλλὰ ταυτὶ τὰ μικρὸν πρὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἡλικίας γεγεννημένα ὑπὸ Κεφάλου τοῦ ῥήτορος καὶ Θράσωνος τοῦ Ἐρχιέως καὶ Ἡλείου καὶ Φορμισίου καὶ ἐτέρων ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν, ὧν ἐνίων ἔτι καὶ νῦν ζῆ τὰ σώματα.

It would be a long task to tell of these great men of the past, Aristides and Themistocles ... You will remember the deeds shortly before the present time performed by Cephalus the orator, Thrason of Herchia, Eleus, and Phormisius, and other fine men, some of whom even now are still alive.

The *praeteritio* (μακρὸν ἂν εἶη λέγειν) allows the speaker to evoke temporally distant figures while ostensibly dismissing them.<sup>44</sup> But other than rejecting Aristides and Themistocles' examples because they are “ancient” (ἀρχαίους), Dinarchus exaggerates the chronological proximity of the second group of men. For events such as the régime of the Thirty (404/3) and the liberation of Cadmeia (379/8), to which Dinarchus appears to refer, had happened more than *fifty* years before his speech (323). Despite this chronological distance, Dinarchus insists that these events, as opposed to those concerning Aristides and Themistocles, happened “shortly before *our* time.”<sup>45</sup> He further points out that, of these men, “some are even alive today.” In this case, Dinarchus associates the juxtaposition of ancient and recent events to an elision of the temporal distance between past and present. The combined use of such strategies is meant to give the *dikastai* the impression that the second set of examples is effectively recent and therefore more compelling.

A passage of Demosthenes' *First Philippic* further shows that the orators sought to stress the proximity of a selected example to

<sup>44</sup> As observed by Grethlein, in *Valuing the Past* 329–330. The value of ancient examples is not at issue, and is enhanced by Dinarchus' rhetorical question whether the audience do not remember “the actions of the elders” (οὐκ ἀναμνήσεσθε, ὦ ἄνδρες, τὰς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων πράξεις).

<sup>45</sup> On Dinarchus' exaggeration see I. Worthington, *A Historical Commentary on Dinarchus* (Ann Arbor 1992) 193.

their audiences even when the event in question was not too recent. At the beginning of his speech, Demosthenes offers the Athenians the παράδειγμα of their previous wars against the Spartans (4.3):

ἔπειτ' ἐνθυμητέον καὶ παρ' ἄλλων ἀκούουσι καὶ τοῖς εἰδόσιν αὐτοῖς ἀναμνησκομένοις, ἡλίκην ποτ' ἐχόντων δύναμιν Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐξ οὗ χρόνος οὐ πολὺς, ὡς καλῶς καὶ προσηκόντως οὐδὲν ἀνάξιον ὑμεῖς ἐπράξατε τῆς πόλεως, ἀλλ' ὑπεμείναθ' ὑπὲρ τῶν δικαίων τὸν πρὸς ἐκείνους πόλεμον.

Next, you must consider, whether you hear it from others or remember it from personal knowledge, how powerful the Spartans once were, not long ago, and how well and appropriately you acted, in keeping with the reputation of the city, and endured war against them for the sake of justice.

Scholars have puzzled over Demosthenes' exact reference here.<sup>46</sup> Rather than trying to identify a specific allusion, I suggest that Demosthenes' vagueness (cf. ποτ') is intentional. The indeterminacy of the example makes it as cognitively appealing as possible, and prompts the audience to make their own inferences: some Athenians might have thought of the Corinthian War, others might have recalled the more recent Boeotian conflict instead. After all, Demosthenes states that some people might remember the event he is alluding to from direct ex-

<sup>46</sup> H. Weil, *Les Harangues de Démosthène* (Paris 1873) 83 n.4, and P. Carlier and I. Sarini, *Demostene. Orazioni*<sup>2</sup> (Milan 1994) 154 n.1, leave the choice open; L. Pearson, "The Development of Demosthenes as Political Orator," *Phoenix* 18 (1964) 123, interprets the passage as a reference to the period after the end of the Peloponnesian War; L. Canfora, *Discorsi e Lettere di Demostene* (Turin 1974) 166 n.10, takes it as an allusion to the Corinthian war but does not rule out the possibility that Demosthenes might refer, more generically, to the Athenians' continuous hostilities with the Spartans. C. R. Kennedy, *The Olynthiacs and the Philippics of Demosthenes* (Toronto 1894) 26 n.1, thinks of the Boeotian War, and so does C. Wooten, *A Commentary on Demosthenes' Philippic I* (Oxford 2008) 62–63, who makes this choice based on the expression ἐξ οὗ χρόνος οὐ πολὺς. J. E. Sandys, *The First Philippic and the Olynthiacs of Demosthenes*<sup>4</sup> (London 1924) 74, does not commit himself, but comments that the reference to the Boeotian war might be "more probable, as is shown by ἐξ οὗ χρόνος οὐ πολὺς."

perience (τοῖς εἰδόσιν αὐτοῖς ἀναμνησκομένοις), while others might have learnt it by hearsay (παρ' ἄλλων ἀκούουσι). With these remarks, Demosthenes implies that the facts that he is recalling are well known and beyond contestation.

Demosthenes also points out that the events he is referring to are not temporally too distant (ἐξ οὗ χρόνος οὐ πολὺς). Whether he is alluding to the Corinthian war or to the later Boeotian conflict, his temporal qualification enhances the audience's sense of familiarity with the παράδειγμα. In this way, he frames his example as relevant to a situation (the fight against Philip) that bore little similarity to the previous battles fought against the Spartans, a point that he himself will raise more than ten years later (see 9.47). Having reduced the temporal distance between his audience and this event, Demosthenes then emphasises the cognitive operation of his example and even sets the Athenians as 'viewers': he has introduced this παράδειγμα, he says, to make them "know and contemplate" their previous attitude—i.e. 'nothing scares you when you are on guard'.

It is not always the case that orators juxtapose their παράδειγμα with an older event in order to generate in their audience an impression of proximity.<sup>47</sup> Depending on their purposes, speakers can generate a chronological distance from certain events instead. For example, Dinarchus, in the speech we have analysed above, says (1.75):

ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν ἦν μεγάλη καὶ ἔνδοξος παρὰ τοῖς Ἑλλησι καὶ τῶν προγόνων ἄξια, μετὰ γε τὰς ἀρχαίας ἐκείνας πράξεις, ὅτε Κόνων, ὡς οἱ πρεσβύτεροι λέγουσιν, ἐνίκησε τὴν ἐν Κνίδῳ ναυμαχίαν, ὅτ' Ἰφικράτης ἀνέϊλε τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων μόραν, ὅτε Χαβρίας ἐν Νάξῳ κατεναμάχησε τὰς Λακεδαιμονίων τριήρεις, ὅτε Τιμόθεος τὴν ἐν Κερκύρᾳ ναυμαχίαν ἐνίκησε.

Our city was great, highly esteemed by the Greeks and worthy of our ancestors, and after those deeds from the past, when Conon,

<sup>47</sup> Notice how, for instance, at 2.24 Demosthenes is again highly vague (cf. ποτ'), but on this occasion does not stress the temporal proximity of the events that he is recalling (whether the Corinthian or the Boeotian war) in order to better achieve a contrast with the present (εἰ Λακεδαιμονίους μὲν ποτ' ... νυνὶ δὲ ...).



as our elders say, won the naval battle at Cnidus, when Iphicrates destroyed the Spartan company, when Chabrias defeated the Spartan triremes at sea off Naxos, and when Timotheus won the naval battle at Corcyra.

The adjective ἀρχαῖος now refers to fourth-century enterprises, even though these events are contemporary to those that Dinarchus (1.38) had previously framed as recent by contrast with other ἀρχαῖα events. Among the deeds that he gives as a reason for the great reputation of the Athenians, he lists Conon's victory at Cnidus (394 B.C.), the deeds of Iphicrates (390), Chabrias (376), and Timotheus (375). Notwithstanding the temporal distance between these events, Dinarchus offers them in chronological sequence as part of a seemingly uninterrupted *continuum* of successes.

By marking these παραδείγματα as “ancient,” Dinarchus purposefully increases the distance between a glorious past and a disgraceful present that is embodied by Demosthenes. Yet, even if configured as ancient, these events are credible because they are reported by a reliable source, the eldest men of the audience (οἱ πρεσβύτεροι λέγουσιν). We shall see below (§2.3) the importance of comments on the popularity of ancient events. For now, we shall note that by stressing both the antiquity and the credibility of his παραδείγματα, Dinarchus appeals to his audience's sense of duty toward their tradition. The *dikastai* can therefore “appropriate their ancestors' anger” (τὴν τῶν προγόνων λαβόντας ὀργήν) and condemn Demosthenes.

## 2.2. Perceived (dis)continuity

Another strategy to generate in the audience a sense of proximity to certain past events is to conflate the Athenians of the present with those of the past. To do so, speakers often address their audiences in the second-person plural, thus configuring them as the collective authors of ancient decisions or enterprises, which they could have neither taken nor accomplished.<sup>48</sup> This

<sup>48</sup> For this strategy see Wolpert, *AJP* 124 (2003) 545–550. Wolpert observes that the strategy contributed to the “fiction of an ageless demos” (551). To

strategy produces an illusion of continuity between past and present, which then frames the speaker's παράδειγμα in a way that makes it appear more familiar and pertinent, and, therefore, more persuasive.

Demosthenes uses this technique in his defence speech *On the Crown*, where, attacked for his political choices, he argues that he has constantly aligned his policy to the ἦθος of the Athenians. As part of his argumentation, he resorts to historical examples that illustrate the inevitability of his decisions.<sup>49</sup> Towards the middle of his speech (18.96–101) he recalls the battles of Haliartus (395 B.C.) and Corinth (394), the period following the battle of Leuctra (371), and the liberation of Euboea (357). He introduces these examples with the observation that both individuals and cities should always take inspiration from their ancestors (18.95):

ἐν ἧ δύο βούλομαι τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς πεπραγμένων καλῶν τῇ πόλει διεξελεθῆναι, καὶ ταῦτ' ἐν βραχέσι· καὶ γὰρ ἄνδρ' ἰδίᾳ καὶ πόλιν κοινῇ πρὸς τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αἰεὶ δεῖ πειρᾶσθαι τὰ λοιπὰ πράττειν.

I wish to discuss briefly one or two of the noble acts done by the city during your lifetime. Both individual citizens and the city as a whole must ever strive to act in accord with the noblest standards of our tradition.

Just as we have seen in the *First Philippic*, Demosthenes here claims that these examples are close in time to the audience (καθ' ὑμᾶς), although, in fact, more than sixty years separated the Athenian *dikastai* from the Corinthian war, forty from Leuctra and more than twenty from the “liberation” of Euboea.<sup>50</sup> Yunis,

this, I add that, through the *apostrophe* in the second-person plural, arguments from historical examples would appear more pertinent and, therefore, more persuasive.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. the scholion *ad loc.* (M. R. Dilts, *Scholía Demosthenica* 1 [Leipzig 1983] 220, no. 166): βούλεται διὰ παραδειγμάτων σεμνῶν καὶ κατορθωμάτων λαμπρῶν καὶ τὸ καθ' αὐτὸν ἀπολύσσασθαι καὶ δεῖξαι ὡς “διὰ τὸ ἔθος ἢ πόλις, οὐ δι' ἐμέ, βεβοήθηκε.”

<sup>50</sup> That Demosthenes here uses the expression καθ' ὑμᾶς for such ancient events further corroborates my claim that the expression ἐξ οὗ χρόνος οὖ

following Pearson, suggests that in this way Demosthenes wants to avoid giving the impression “that his examples come from a bookish source.”<sup>51</sup> I would add that Demosthenes contracts the temporal distance between the audience and these events in order to show the Athenians the relevance of the events that he is recalling.

During the exposition of his examples (18.96–100), Demosthenes keeps blurring the lines between past and present. He even uses the second-person plural for the Athenians who intervened at Haliartus (96, ὑμεῖς τοίνυν, ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι ... ἐξήλθετ' εἰς Ἀλίαρτον), although the current *dikastai* would certainly not have participated in the Corinthian war.<sup>52</sup> In this way, Demosthenes shows that the motives of their ancestors (should) belong to the current jurors too,<sup>53</sup> and implicates his audience in the decisions of their forefathers. He then concludes his account (100) with a comment on “a thousand other examples” (μυρία τοίνυν ἕτερα) he might mention “from the past, as well as from the present” (καὶ πάλαι γεγονυίας καὶ νῦν ἐφ' ἡμῶν αὐτῶν) that testify to the Athenians' generous attitude. With this final observation, Demosthenes reinforces the idea of an alleged continuity in the actions of the Athenians. Moreover, by declaring that he is omitting (παραλείπω) a thousand suitable examples, he simultaneously activates and shapes his audience's memories in a way that might lend further support to his reading of the Athenian past.<sup>54</sup>

Such an identification of the current Athenian audience with their ancestors seems to be particularly profitable in forensic speeches, where speakers recall the judgments given by the

πολύς in the *First Philippic* should not be taken as a precise temporal indication.

<sup>51</sup> H. Yunis, *Demosthenes. On the Crown* (Cambridge 2001) 162.

<sup>52</sup> A scholion to this passage (Dilts 220, no. 167) notices this discrepancy, and explains it in these terms: καίτοι παλαιότερα τῶν νῦν ἐστί τὰ λεγόμενα, ἀλλὰ δῆλον ὡς πρὸς μίαν πόλιν διαλέγεται.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Yunis, *Demosthenes. On the Crown* 162.

<sup>54</sup> In Lakoff's formulation (*Don't Think of an Elephant* 20): “even when you negate a frame, you activate the frame.”

ancestors in a past case that is allegedly similar to the present one.<sup>55</sup> A telling example is in Aeschines' speech *Against Timarchus*, in which he invites the current *dikastai* to remember how they had convicted Socrates (173):

ἔπειθ' ὑμεῖς, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, Σωκράτην μὲν τὸν σοφιστὴν ἀπεκτείνετε, ὅτι Κριτίαν ἐφάνη πεπαιδευκῶς, ἕνα τῶν τριάκοντα τῶν τὸν δῆμον καταλυσάντων, Δημοσθένης δ' ὑμῖν ἐταίρους ἐξαιρήσεται...;

So then, men of Athens, you put Socrates the sophist to death, because it was found that he had taught Critias, one of the Thirty who overthrew the democracy; yet is Demosthenes to get his comrades off in your court...?

A scholion to this passage comments that, by saying ἐπειθ' ὑμεῖς, Aeschines' statement is ψεῦδος:<sup>56</sup> indeed, the *dikastai* judging Timarchus could hardly have been the same people who had condemned Socrates fifty years earlier (399).<sup>57</sup> Yet, by apostrophising the jurors with the second person, Aeschines produces an impression of familiarity that possibly prevents the current jurors from thinking of the differences between Socrates' trial and that of Timarchus.<sup>58</sup> In this way, Aeschines implicates the *dikastai* in a decision that (allegedly) *they themselves* have already

<sup>55</sup> Arguments from previous judgments perform a cognitive operation: the jurors feel compelled not to contradict a verdict that had been rendered by their ancestors, by another panel of jurors or, even more significantly, by themselves. Cf. Wolpert, *AJP* 124 (2003) 541. The question whether references to previous verdicts also had a legal value is still hotly debated among scholars. Cf. i.a. E. Harris, *The Rule of Law in Action in Democratic Athens* (Oxford 2013) 246–273; L. Rubinstein, “Arguments from Precedent in Attic Oratory,” in E. Carawan (ed.), *The Attic Orators* (Oxford 2007) 359–371; A. Lanni, “Precedent and Legal Reasoning in Classical Athens: A Noble Lie?” *American Journal of Legal History* 43 (1999) 27–51; S. C. Todd, *The Shape of Athenian Law* (Oxford 1993) 60–61.

<sup>56</sup> M. R. Dilts, *Scholia in Aeschinem* (Stuttgart/Leipzig 1992) 51, no. 346.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Wolpert, *AJP* 124 (2003) 538.

<sup>58</sup> To better create a parallel with Demosthenes, Aeschines emphasises just one of the charges that had been levelled at Socrates, namely the corruption of the youth, and ignores the crucial issue of Socrates' ἀσέβεια.

made, so as to urge them to make the same decision in the case of Timarchus.

In other instances, speakers throw the decisions of others into relief instead. This allows them to generate a certain distance between present and past *dikastai* that contributes to the construction of *a fortiori* arguments.<sup>59</sup> Aeschines even goes so far as to offer the Spartans as a model for the Athenian jurors (*In Tim.* 180–182), and legitimises the introduction of such a foreign example by claiming that “it is a good thing to imitate even foreign virtues” (καλὸν δ’ ἐστὶ καὶ τὰς ξενικὰς ἀρετὰς μιμεῖσθαι). He then quickly adds an example taken from the Athenians’ own ancestors (καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων προγόνων μνησθήσομαι), so as to prevent the impression that he is flattering the Spartans too much. As a result, the *dikastai* now have two potential analogues for their conduct: will they let Timarchus walk away, proving themselves unworthy of both their ancestors (cf. 185) and even of the Spartans?<sup>60</sup>

Finally, my claim that the choice of a specific form of address influences the audience’s perception of certain memories can be confirmed by the pronouns that Aeschines uses in his account of the demegory of 346 B.C. (2.75–77). In the course of this speech, Aeschines had urged his fellow citizens not to “imitate” (μιμεῖσθαι) their ancestors in everything they had done, but to distinguish between “sound decisions” (εὐβουλίας) and “errors” (ἀμαρτήματα). Crucially, when speaking of the mistakes that had been committed, Aeschines does not say “us” or “you” but “they” (2.76, ἐξέπεμψαν ... οὐδὲν ἤθελον ... πολεμεῖν δὲ προηροῦντο; 77, τοῦτο τὴν πόλιν προήγαγον). Aeschines thus frames his reference to the past in a way that emphasises the distance between the past and the present. He does this in order to avoid alienating his audience; whilst the Athenians of the past made

<sup>59</sup> This tactic is also used in deliberative speeches. Thus e.g. Dem. 9.24, whose use of pronouns promotes an implicit contrast between the Athenians of the past and those of the present: ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν ὑμῖν, μᾶλλον δὲ τοῖς τότε οὖσιν Ἀθηναίοις ... πάντες ὄντο δεῖν ... μετὰ τῶν ἡδικημένων πολεμεῖν.

<sup>60</sup> The παράδειγμα ἀλλότριον is thus used to stir up the pride of the audience. For similar uses cf. Dem. 15.22–23, Isoc. 6.83.

reckless decisions, the Athenians of the present can now show themselves to be more sensible and judicious.

### 2.3. *An illusion of knowledge*

The final strategy that speakers might adopt is to introduce historical examples with expressions that aim at generating a sense of shared knowledge in the audience. Induced to think that everybody (else) knows what a speaker is referring to, the members of an audience will be more inclined to accept that speaker's account of certain historical events. This strategy is particularly useful in the case of ancient events, as it mitigates the risk that the latter might be considered less compelling, or even untrustworthy, because of their temporal distance.

An application of this type of strategy is found in Isocrates, in which he claims that ancient traditions should be considered, though not “new” (καινά), at least “trustworthy” (πιστά), precisely because they are ancient, and, as such, have been told by many and heard by *everybody* (διὰ γὰρ τὸ πολλοὺς εἰρηκέναι καὶ πάντας ἀκηκοέναι).<sup>61</sup> As we have argued above for the forms of *praeteritio* and other justificatory statements, Isocrates' assertion confirms a general awareness that temporally distant events might be received with suspicion by an audience.<sup>62</sup> More importantly, this passage shows that statements on the familiarity of certain events could be used to promote the acceptance of the proposed historical analogy, especially if it consisted of an ancient, and so unverifiable, event. The alleged popularity of certain events thus acts as a guarantee of their reliability.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> *Paneg.* 30; cf. *Paneg.* 27, *Panath.* 149–150.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Grethlein's observations on this passage in *Valuing the Past* 333.

<sup>63</sup> *Pace* B. Steinbock, “A Lesson in Patriotism: Lycurgus' *Against Leocrates*, the Ideology of the Ephebeia, and Athenian Social Memory,” *CLAnt* 30 (2011) 308 and n.159, for whom the “as all of you know” *topos* should not be considered a rhetorical trick precisely because it is used in conjunction with famous events. Of the examples he mentions in support of his point, Archidamus (Isoc. 6.99) rather invites his audience to remember (cf. the imperative ἀναμνήσθητε) ancient events (the battles of Dipaea, Thyrea, and Thermopylae); Lycurgus (*Leoc.* 75) stresses the familiarity (καίπερ πρὸς εἰδότης), and hence the pertinence to the current debate, of *ancient* laws (οἱ παλαιοὶ νόμοι).

Isocrates in his *Nicocles* shows himself to be equally aware of the controversial status of distant and unverifiable events. In the course of the speech, Nicocles resorts to the example of Teucer to legitimise his own monarchic rule (3.27, ὡς δὲ προσηκόντως τὴν ἀρχὴν ἡμεῖς ἔχομεν). This example is the second that Nicocles mentions; previously he had referred to Zeus' position at the head of the hierarchical structure of Olympus as a "sign" (σημεῖον) of the gods' preference for monarchy (26). Both Teucer and the gods' παραδείγματα are ancient (cf. the excusatory formula for the example of the gods at 26: εἰ δὲ δεῖ τι καὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων εἰπεῖν). But mentioning the gods first permits Nicocles to present his "story" (λόγος) of Teucer as "one on which there is more agreement" (μᾶλλον ὁμολογούμενος ὁ λόγος ἐστίν). This example is thus *relatively* more reliable.<sup>64</sup>

However, Nicocles does not legitimise the example of Teucer only by showing that it is less controversial. He also strategically introduces his narrative of Teucer' deeds with the expression "who does not know" (3.28, τίς γὰρ οὐκ οἶδεν). By premising his example with this rhetorical question, Nicocles underlines its (presumed) popularity, and, in this way, makes his account of Teucer's ancient exploits more compelling.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, in a speech dense with mythological examples, Lycurgus introduces the παράδειγμα of the fortunes of Troy by opposing its popularity to its antiquity (*Leoc.* 62, εἰ καὶ παλαιότερον εἰπεῖν ἐστὶ τὴν Τροίαν τίς οὐκ ἀκήκοεν). Just as in the case of Nicocles' τίς γὰρ οὐκ οἶδεν, Lycurgus' τίς οὐκ ἀκήκοεν mitigates the danger that his account of a remote event could be disputed on the grounds that it is too distant in time to be relevant.<sup>66</sup>

That expressions such as "who does not know," "everybody knows," and similar could be used to preemptively provoke an

<sup>64</sup> By contrast, the example of the gods is introduced as disputable (3.26): περὶ ὧν εἰ μὲν ἀληθὴς ὁ λόγος ἐστὶ ... εἰ δὲ τὸ μὲν σαφὲς μηδεὶς οἶδεν.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Isoc. 6.42: Archidamus introduces the example of the Persian wars with the same expression.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *Leoc.* 106 (Tyrtaeus).

audience's psychological reaction is confirmed by Aristotle (*Rh.* 1408a32–36):

πάσχουσι δέ τι οἱ ἀκροαταὶ καὶ ᾧ κατακόρως χρῶνται οἱ λογογράφοι, “τίς δ’ οὐκ οἶδεν;” “ἅπαντες ἴσασιν”. ὁμολογεῖ γὰρ ὁ ἀκούων αἰσχυρόμενος, ὅπως μετέχη οὐπὲρ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες.

Listeners react also to expressions speechwriters use to excess: “Who does not know?” “Everybody knows...” The listener agrees out of embarrassment in order to share in the [alleged] feelings of others.<sup>67</sup>

According to Aristotle, these introductory expressions create an illusion of shared knowledge that might embarrass (αἰσχυρόμενος) the ignorant or forgetful member(s) of the audience. Unable to understand or remember the speaker's exact reference, such a member is thus induced to rely on an illusory community authority. By introducing their historical examples in this way, speakers can then support their personal reading of an event, even a recent one, or present as known something that was probably obscure to at least part of the audience.<sup>68</sup>

Demosthenes resorts to this appeal to a presumed common knowledge in his speech *On the Chersonnese* (8.74). He introduces the more recent example of the Athenians' intervention in favour of the Euboeans in these terms: “you surely know that the famous Timotheus once made a speech before you saying that you should help and save the Euboeans” (ἴστε γὰρ δήπου τοῦθ' ὅτι Τιμόθεός ποτ' ἐκεῖνος ἐν ὑμῖν ἐδημηγόρησεν ὡς δεῖ βοηθεῖν καὶ τοὺς Εὐβοέας σῶζεῖν). Given that Timotheus' speech had been

<sup>67</sup> Transl. G. A. Kennedy, *Aristotle on Rhetoric. A Theory of Civic Discourse* (Oxford 1991).

<sup>68</sup> For the exploitation of the “as you all know” *topos* for forensic narratives, cf. Dem. 40.53, with J. Hesk, *Deception and Democracy in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 2000) 227–230; C. B. R. Pelling, *Literary Texts and the Greek Historian* (London/New York 2000) 28–29; Canevaro, *Conflict in Communities* 196–200. Aeschines, for instance, presents Timarchus' actions as notorious (*In Tim.* 44, 70, 158). Cf. Dem. *Meid.* 64, 149; 36.53; *Lys.* 29.6, 30.2. For the possibility that the audience has a more detailed knowledge of mythological events than more recent ones see Arist. *Rh.* 1416b.



delivered more than fifteen years earlier, the audience most definitely would not have recalled his exact words. Demosthenes seems to be aware of this, and cautiously introduces an approximate version of the speech (οὕτω πως). At the same time, to make his example cognitively more appealing, he stresses the audience's (impossible) secure knowledge of the event (ἵστε ... δήπου), their (improbable) collective presence at Timotheus' speech (ἐν ὑμῖν), and the popularity of Timotheus (ἐκεῖνος), and he keeps the time reference vague (ποτ').<sup>69</sup>

### 3. Complementary strategies

In the preceding section, I have sought to assess these three strategies separately. However, the techniques that I have illustrated are often combined, and speakers can even use all of them at the same time.<sup>70</sup> In Demosthenes' *Against Androtion* (22.12–15), for instance, the “as you all know” *topos* operates in conjunction with forms of *praeteritio* of the ancient past as well as *apostrophe* in the second-person plural. As such, this passage represents the perfect conclusion to our enquiry.<sup>71</sup>

In this speech, a series of παραδείγματα are introduced by the claim that “no one would deny” (μηδέν' ἀντειπεῖν) “that all that has happened to our city, in the past or in the present ... has resulted in the one case from the possession, and in the other from the want, of warships” (22.12). This statement, expressed with an emphatic triple negative (μηδέν' ἀντειπεῖν ὡς οὐχ), is meant to give the *dikastai* the impression that what Diodorus is about to tell them is unconditionally true, and allows the possibility for certain events to be manipulated *ad hoc*. By anticipating their absolute agreement, Diodorus thus manufactures a sort of

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Dem. 9.55, where the *topos* (πάντες εἴσεσθε) is used to create a sense of shared knowledge about the detailed account that the orator gives of the recent, but foreign, examples of Olynthus, Eretria, Oreus.

<sup>70</sup> In the case of Dem. 23.66, for instance, Demosthenes also juxtaposes “ancient” and “recent” events (καὶ τὰ μὲν δὴ παλαιὰ ταῦτα· τὰ δ' ὕστερον) and also comments (65) on the shared acquisition of the ancient and legendary stories (μυθώδη) about the Areopagus: ὡς ἡμῖν ἀκοῦειν παραδέδοται.

<sup>71</sup> For good remarks on these passages see Grethlein, in *Valuing the Past* 330–331.

pre-consensus that should induce the audience to accept the subsequent παράδειγμα more readily.

Diodorus then declares (13) that among “many instances ... ancient and new” (πολλὰ μὲν ἄν τις ἔχοι λέγειν καὶ παλαιὰ καὶ καινὰ), he has specifically chosen “those that are extremely familiar to *all* to hear” (ἃ δ’ οὖν πᾶσι μάλιστα ἀκοῦσαι γνώριμα), regardless of their temporal qualification. In this way, Diodorus activates his audience’s personal and collective memories of exactly those “many” events that he is formally rejecting. At the same time, by implying a contrast with the examples that he claims he is dismissing, he preventively frames the events that will follow as *the most* familiar and, therefore, appropriate ones.

Diodorus’ first example is the Athenians’ victory at Salamis, which, as his audience “know well” (ἴστε δήπου), depended entirely on their fleet. By pointing out his audience’s familiarity with the παράδειγμα, he makes the rather distant example of Salamis appear extremely pertinent, and further supports his own reading of the battle. Indeed, he ascribes the Periclean building programme to the men of Salamis (ἐκεῖνοι). In doing so, he connects Athens’ material and still observable glory to the successes of the Persian wars, thus lending visual credibility to his example. Additionally, Diodorus points out that the benefits that followed that battle were so great “that not even time can obliterate their memories” (οὐδ’ ὁ χρόνος τὴν μνήμην ἀφελέσθαι δύναται). Just like the appeal to the audience’s secure and unanimous knowledge, this observation on the perpetuity of the memories of the Athenian victory also mitigates the risk that the example of Salamis might be thought out of place because of its temporal distance.<sup>72</sup>

That the battle of Salamis might have been perceived as too ancient is confirmed by Diodorus himself, who, anticipating his audience’s and adversaries’ criticism (cf. the pleonastic expression at 22.14, ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνα μὲν ἀρχαῖα καὶ παλαιά), reminds them of their “help” to the Euboeans instead (357 B.C.). But, as we have seen (§2.1), emphasising the temporal distance of an event

<sup>72</sup> An argument that Demosthenes will use against Aeschines in *De cor.* 209.

is also part of a precise strategy: by juxtaposing the battle of Salamis and the Euboean expedition, Diodorus aims to enhance the pertinence of his second example. The help given to the Euboeans is also presented as “something you all have seen” (πάντες ἐοράκατε), and which “you know” (ἴσθ’). The remark on the audience’s alleged common knowledge is, once more, strategic, as Diodorus most likely shortens the timing of the Athenian intervention,<sup>73</sup> adopts an ambiguous time reference for it (πρώην),<sup>74</sup> and makes no mention of the land-force that, at least according to Aeschines (3.85), backed up the maritime one. Diodorus finally identifies the current *dikastai* with the *ekklesiastai* who voted for the intervention in favour of the Euboeans (cf. the second-person plurals ἐβροθήσατε, ἀπεπέμψατε), thus implicating his audience in a collective, and correct, decision (cf. §2.2). In this way, he generates the illusion of an unbroken sequence of consistent choices, which, he implies, would be undermined by a verdict in favour of Androtion.

The same constructed dichotomy between ancient and recent events recurs at 22.15, where Diodorus introduces a pair of negative examples. First, the Decelean War—“a bit of old history, which,” nevertheless, “you *all* know better than I do” (τῶν γὰρ ἀρχαίων ἔν, ὃ πάντες ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον ἐπίστασθε). Once more, the appeal to community knowledge should promote the acceptance of a temporally distant event. Then, as in the case of Salamis/Euboea, the first example is said to be παλαιός (καὶ τί δεῖ τὰ παλαιὰ λέγειν), and Diodorus refers, rather vaguely, to “the last war against the Spartans” (τὸν τελευταῖον ... τὸν πρὸς Λακεδαιμονίους πόλεμον). As the Athenians “know” (ἴστε), this war was also resolved only after the dispatch of the fleet.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Three days *contra* the five (and thirty in total) of Aeschin. 3.85.

<sup>74</sup> As I. Giannadaki notes in her forthcoming *A Commentary on the Speech of Demosthenes, Against Androtion* (Oxford 2020) *ad loc.*, πρώην can mean “lately,” but can also have the more definite sense of “the day before yesterday” (LSJ).

<sup>75</sup> For Diodorus’ rather free interpretation of this event see Canevaro, *Conflict in Communities* 200.

Notably, Diodorus constricts the length of his negative examples so that he avoids stirring up adverse feelings in the audience. For this exact reason, he also omits the Athenians' most recent defeats during the Social War, which would have been chronologically symmetrical to the Euboean victory. Instead, he picks a not so upsetting nor recent event (possibly the war against the Spartans in defence of Corcyra in 374/3, or, more plausibly, Chabrias' victory at Naxos in 376/5),<sup>76</sup> and stresses its temporal proximity and familiarity to the audience, as we can see from the adjective *τελευταῖον*, the verb *ἴστε* for a sense of shared knowledge, and the second-person plurals *ἀπεστείλατε* and *ἐβούλεσθε* conflating *dikastai* and *ekklesiastai* (22.15–16).

Before concluding, we may wonder about the reasons behind the profusion of historical examples in this passage. As Giannadaki (*ad loc.*) observes, Diodorus' excursus betrays the absence of solid legal grounds behind his argumentation. Indeed, he fails to address Androtion's claim that the law preventing the Council from *asking* for its rewards if they have built no ships, nowhere says that the *demos* cannot *grant* the rewards on other grounds. Diodorus focuses on the importance of the navy instead, and by mentioning examples of both successes and defeats, he appeals to his audience's pride, fear, and perceived national *ἦθος*. In this light, the combination of all three strategies in Diodorus' presentation of *παραδείγματα* might be both a sign of, and a response to, an otherwise weak legal argument.

#### 4. Conclusion

Analysis of several passages from the Attic orators has demonstrated that their selection of a *παραδείγμα* was anything but random. We have seen that a key criterion guiding a speaker's choice was the familiarity of an example. As the cognitive studies mentioned above have shown, the more an example is familiar, because it is perceived as *salient* or *recent*, the more it (i) allows an

<sup>76</sup> For a summary of scholars' attempts to identify this reference see Giannadaki's forthcoming commentary *ad loc.*

audience to draw inferences about the future (*qua* the unknown), and (ii) generates a sense of shared knowledge in the audience that might prevent more rational considerations on the (lack of) similarities between past and present.

Instances from the Attic orators and rhetoricians indicate that the criterion of familiarity is associated with recent and domestic events more than with ancient and foreign ones as the latter can be challenged as untrustworthy, no matter how well known they might be. However, as they are fresher in the audience's memories, recent events might be disputed for their alienness to the current situation. In addition, a recent or domestic example might feel too raw (§1).

Aware of the different reactions that the use of certain examples in specific circumstances might have caused, speakers then seek to manipulate their audience's temporal and spatial perception of certain memories. To do so, they can frame their examples as "ancient" and "recent" and juxtapose allegedly ancient and more recent events in order to stress the proximity (or distance) of their selected παράδειγμα (§2.1). The use of *apostrophe* in the second-person plural creates the illusion of a timeless and constantly unanimous *demós*, thereby increasing the pertinence of certain past decisions and deeds for the present (§2.2). Finally, expressions that generate an illusion of a shared, pre-existing knowledge of a select example might enhance its credibility and support the speaker's interpretation of a certain event, ancient or recent (§2.3).

The detection of such framing strategies confirms the orators' skill at rhetorically manipulating arguments from historical examples. The analysis of these techniques also shows that the rhetorical operation of historical examples depends on the extent to which a given παράδειγμα is compatible with an audience's expectations and with their perception of different chronological and spatial settings. More importantly, I hope to have demonstrated that the way that παραδείγματα are introduced, and framed, is as crucial as their content in ensuring

both the cognitive and the persuasive potential of a historical analogy.<sup>77</sup>

*October, 2019*

Royal Holloway  
University of London  
Giulia.Maltagliati@rhul.ac.uk

<sup>77</sup> This paper is the product of a three-month research period that I conducted at the Humboldt University in Berlin. I would like to thank the DAAD and the Humboldt's History Department for their support during my stay in Berlin, and Prof. Claudia Tiersch for fruitful conversation about my project. A shorter version of this paper was delivered at the ISHR Twenty-Second Biennial Conference in New Orleans. I wish to thank the audience for the feedback I received on that occasion. I am also deeply grateful to Mike Edwards, Christos Kremmydas, Maria Serena Mirto, and Matthew Ward for their insightful remarks on written drafts, all of which improved this paper, and to Ifigeneia Giannadaki, who kindly shared her forthcoming commentary with me. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous readers for their helpful suggestions. Mistakes that remain are my own.