The sycophant's farm: Animals and rhetoric in *Against Aristogeiton I**

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'Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy'.
George Orwell, *Animal Farm*

I. Introductory notes: Aristogeiton and sycophancy

THE SPEECH *Against Aristogeiton I*, whose authorship has been a matter of scholarly dispute, concerns a figure of the 4th century whom the sources portray unanimously in denigrating colours. Aristogeiton is accused of delivering speeches in the assembly and bringing prosecutions to the courts despite the fact that he owed money to the state treasury. Another speech of prosecution emphasizing the legal aspects of the case was delivered by Lycurgus who, according to Demosthenes (*Against Aristogeiton I*. 1), spoke first. This left enough room for Demosthenes to embark on the powerful invective that he launched against Aristogeiton, the sheer ferocity of which made Dionysius of Halicarnassus (as well as scholars who took him at his word) reject Demosthenes' authorship.[1]

* I would like to thank warmly Kostas Apostolakis for reading an earlier draft of this paper and improving my argument.

1 Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Dem.* 57) found the style of the speech extremely crude and therefore claimed that it was not written by Demosthenes. MacDowell (2010, 312) is right to claim that the strong rhetoric of the speech must rather be taken as an indication of Demosthenic authorship, but he is cautious enough to point out that none of the arguments put forward so far either proves or disproves that it was composed by Demosthenes. Even if what we have today is the product of a later drastic revision, none of the *topoi* or arguments of the speech is incompatible with 4th century oratory (see Wohl 2010, 51, with n. 63, offering a summary of views concerning the authorship of the speech; another recent treatment of the topic can be found in Martin 2009, 182-202). The fact that throughout the paper I refer to Demosthenes as its author does not mean that

Against Aristogeiton I includes the most vehement attack on an alleged sycophant that survives in the corpus of the Attic orators. The meaning of sycophancy in classical Athens was different from that in modern English usage. As is often the case with evaluative terms, sycophancy is a multi-layered concept. It designated pejoratively abuse of the legal system of Athens, especially but not solely through malicious uses of public indictments (*γραφαί*), that is public charges pressed against individuals by volunteer prosecutors (*βουλόμενος*). The fullest survey on the meaning of sycophancy was provided by Harvey in a paper that appeared in 1990.[2] On the basis of a detailed examination of the existing sources, Harvey concluded that the most salient characteristics of sycophancy are: 'monetary motivation'; 'false charges'; 'sophistic quibbling'; 'slanderous attacks'; the sycophant 'frequently takes people to court'; 'acts after the event and rakes up old charges'. Lastly, the sycophant is a 'fluent speaker' (Harvey 1990, 114).

On one level sycophancy thus expresses exploitation and abuse of the legal system of Athens. But our evidence makes it abundantly clear that sycophancy is also a term of condemnation that carries strong social implications; it is therefore commonly associated with a wide range of other negative values, the most prominent among them being *πονηρία* (crudely translated as 'villainy').[3] Sycophants are typically presented as parasitic outsiders, whose misanthropic nature or anti-Athenian activity bring harm to innocent individuals and ultimately pose a threat to the stability of the community as a whole.[4] This aspect of the sycophants is vividly depicted in comedy that presents them as a destabilizing,[5] dubious, and parasitic social category

I can prove that this is the case. It only means that on the balance of evidence I believe this to be a strong possibility.

2 Harvey argues convincingly against Osborne (1990) that sycophancy was not a professional activity.

3 For a full account of the evaluative terms surrounding sycophancy in the sources, see Harvey 1990.

4 On this point, see Christ 1998, 50.

5 Sycophantic activity is frequently presented in the sources as causing 'disturbance' to the city (cp. for example πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω ποιῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλη-

that brings pollution to the city, they are *μιαροί* or *φαρμακοί*: the chorus of the *Wasps* (1043) for example elevates Aristophanes to the status of such an heroic benefactor as Hercules on account of his cleansing the city from sycophants (*καθαρτήν*).[6]

In what follows, I propose to examine the ways in which dominant Greek concepts concerning nature and bestiality enhance the character-assassination on which Demosthenes embarks in this speech. I argue that these concepts enhance Demosthenes' adumbration of Aristogeiton as a misanthrope, a social outcast, and ultimately a disgusting enemy of the city. As Wohl has recently claimed, with this speech Demosthenes sought 'not only to silence Aristogeiton but to banish him from human society altogether' (2010, 51). At the same time, the substantial use of animal imagery in the speech brings out the strong affinities of forensic invective with comedy. I also suggest that Demosthenes' overturning of Aristogeiton's self-presentation as a 'watchdog of the people' (*κύων τοῦ δήμου*) is marked by intertextual affinities with fables.

II. Nature vs culture

One of the pivotal themes of the speech concerns the importance of the law as a guaranty for the orderly life of the city. In order to underscore Aristogeiton's presentation as a social outcast, Demosthenes employs a dichotomy with a long tradition in Greek literature and therefore opposes *physis*, typically construed as the realm of chaos and violence,[7] to civilized society whose order is maintained by the rule of law.[8] Demosthenes treats this topic with an unusual

σίαις at paragraph 48 of the speech under discussion, with Ar. *Pax* 268-70); as Edmunds (1987, ch. 2) has shown, the relevant imagery in Aristophanes relies on the 'ship-of-state metaphor'.

6 In comedy, sycophants, like other *parasitoi*, are commonly expelled from the scene through the use of violence – see Lofberg 1920; Christ 1998, 53-55; Spatharas 2008.

7 Nature, according to Demosthenes, is *ἄτακτον* ('disorderly'), whereas the law is (*τεταγμένον*) (15). On the identification of nature with unruliness and savagery in Greek thought, see Segal 1981, ch. 2 (a revised version of Segal 1973/4).

8 As early as Hesiod (*Works* 267-80), animals are thought to be governed by can-

tendency to theorization and abstraction, while the mythical examples that he adduces to support his arguments add to the speech the flavour of a sophistic *epideixis*.[9] The antithetical pair *physis*/*nomos* is further elaborated in the speech and generates a number of subordinate polarities, by means of which Demosthenes identifies his opponent with the savagery of nature. The most fundamental of these polarities, and the one that figures prominently, concerns the distinction between beasts and men. It is perhaps a truism to mention that in ancient Greek thought animals not only hold the lowest place in the tripartite hierarchy god-man-animal, but are also typically viewed to represent the destructive powers of wilderness.[10] Not being an animal and not living the life of an animal are fundamental criteria that determine human condition and allow the emergence of civilization (cp. 20).

nibalistic and predatory instincts; by contrast, humans enjoy the gift of justice bequeathed to them by Zeus. As is well known, the *nomos*/*physis* dichotomy acquired prominence in the thought of the Sophists; on the impact of their thinking upon subsequent concepts of law, see de Romilly 1971; on the nomos/physis polarity and the speech under review, see Wohl (2010, 53, n. 67), who rightly maintains that 'if the motif is philosophical the uses to which it is put [in the speech] are typical of forensic thought'.

9 According to Libanius' hypothesis, the speech is 'philosophical' and 'periodic'. At 11 Demosthenes claims that the jurors are invigilated by Dike, to whom each one of them owes the name *δικαστής* (note that a similar argument appears at Dem. 21.32). The reference to the deified *aidos, dike* and *eunomia* at 34-35, whose 'holiest shrines exist in the soul and nature of each individual man', is reminiscent of Protagoras' myth in Plato's homonymous dialogue, where Zeus imparts *aidos* and *dike* into humans, thereby making it possible for them to unite in orderly communities and protect themselves from beasts.

10 For the tendency of the Greeks to keep these categories apart, see Heath 2005, 26-29. As is expected, the distinguishing mark of humans that Demosthenes stresses in the speech is law: disrespect for the civic institutions is commensurate with the unruly living of the beasts (cp. 20). It is indeed striking that Demosthenes not only foists on Aristogeiton disrespect for the rules and institutions of the city, but goes so far as to insinuate that his opponent shows disobedience to the law of nature to which both humans and the beasts submit themselves (cp. τὸν τῆς φύσεως διασῴζει νόμον, ὃς καὶ ἀνθρώποις καὶ θηρίοις εἷς καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς ἅπασιν ὥρισται, στέργειν τοὺς γονέας, 65-66): Aristogeiton ventured to beat his mother, but also showed no interest to offer his father a burial.

From the outset of his speech, Demosthenes presents Aristogeiton as a beast,[11] an external enemy who has made his way into human society. Aristogeiton belongs neither to humankind nor to the civilized and structured society of Athens.[12] As Demosthenes says, he is insensitive to the fact that Athens is a harmonious family whose members show feelings of 'friendliness' (*φιλία*) and 'humanness' (*φιλανθρωπία*) to each other. His unsociability is encapsulated in the qualification *ἄμεικτος* (52, 58), a word that along with the phrase *τῆς πατρικῆς ἔχθρας πρὸς τὸν δῆμον ἀνάμεστος* (32) indicate his unsociability and ultimately his isolation from the community of human beings. The connotations of *ἄμεικτος* that Demosthenes seeks to introduce into the speech become clear in the frequent applications of the word in literature, and especially in tragedy, to describe creatures such as Cyclops or Kyknos who live in remote places and emblematize the violence and rawness of uncivilized life.[13] The strong associations of these words with wilderness point emphatically to the aggressive violence that Aristogeiton exercises in the *polis* because of his manic litigiousness.

The implications of the qualification *ἄμεικτος* are elaborated by Demosthenes in descriptions that clearly mark off the civilized space of the city from the wilderness of desolate places.[14] At some point of the speech, for instance, he portrays the jurors as farmers and Aristogeiton as a weed that they must uproot rather than transplant in more courts of law (*μοσχεύητε*, 48). In doing so, he invites his audi-

11 Cp. especially τὰ τοιαῦτα θηρία, ὧν μέσος καὶ τελευταῖος καὶ πρῶτός ἐστιν οὗτος (8-9). It seems that *θηρίον* was a qualification particularly favoured by Dinarchus, but Demosthenes employs it also at 18. 322; see Worman 2008, 230, n.56.

12 *kosmos* is used twice in the speech to describe the political order secured by the rule of the law (19, 27). On the meaning of *kosmos* in the civic life of Athens, see Cartledge 1998.

13 Cp. E. *Cycl*. 428-430 and *Her*. 389-93 with S. *Tr.* 1095; On the privative tricolon *ἄσπειστος, ἀνίδρυτος, ἄμεικτος,* see Whitehead 2000, 111.

14 On the association of violence and savagery with remote places, see Segal 1973/4, 291-298. On the civic space and Athenian identity, see von Reden 1998, esp. 171.

ence to construe the city and its institutions as a piece of tamed land that Aristogeiton seeks to contaminate. When later Demosthenes criticizes Aristogeiton for practicing sycophancy, he claims that his opponent has never engaged in either farming or any other form of art.[15] The only type of farming that Aristogeiton practices is one that eventuates disaster to his fellow-citizens. The contrast between farming and sycophancy highlights the peculiarity and parasitic nature of sycophancy by presenting it as a socially unidentifiable profession. This is clearly depicted in Aristophanes' *Wealth* (900-908), where the Just Man interrogates the Sycophant concerning the nature of his profession and thus asks him if he is a farmer or a merchant. The Sycophant not only refuses with overt sarcasm that he pursues either of these professional activities, but also boasts for the usefulness of his métier which he describes with the trademark label of volunteer prosecutors, i.e. the verb *βούλομαι*.[16] This passage brings eloquently to the surface the indeterminacy of sycophancy as measured against established and recognizable engagements; but the Sycophant's self-description as a 'decent' citizen (*χρηστός*) and a 'patriot' (*φιλόπολις*) also points to the rhetorical tactics by means of which public prosecutors sought to legitimize their legal actions, thereby removing possible suspicions that they were motivated by self-interest (see section III, below).

The farming metaphors in the speech, however, can also be viewed as a vehicle through which Demosthenes further highlights Aristogeiton's savagery.[17] In Greek thought, the cultivated and there-

15 οὐχὶ τῶν πολιτικῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐπ' οὐδενὶ τῇ ψυχῇ διατρίβει· οὐ τέχνης, οὐ γεωργίας, οὐκ ἄλλης ἐργασίας οὐδεμιᾶς ἐπιμελεῖται, 51.

16 σὺ φιλόπολις καὶ χρηστός; / ὡς οὐδείς γ' ἀνήρ / καὶ μὴν ἐπερωτηθεὶς ἀπόκριναί μοι— / τὸ τί; /γεωργὸς εἶ; / μελαγχολᾶν μ' οὕτως οἴει; / ἀλλ' ἔμπορος; / ναί, σκήπτομαί γ', ὅταν τύχω. / τί δαί; τέχνην τιν' ἔμαθες; / οὐ μὰ τὸν Δία. / πῶς οὖν διέζης ἢ πόθεν μηδὲν ποιῶν; / τῶν τῆς πόλεώς εἰμ' ἐπιμελητὴς πραγμάτων καὶ τῶν ἰδίων πάντων. / σύ; τί μαθών; / βούλομαι (Ar. *Plu.* 900-908); for discussion of this passage, see McGlew 1997, 46-49; Christ 1998, 53 and 146-47. Cp. also Lys. 20.12 with Apostolakis 2003, 162-163.

17 On the interconnection of agriculture with civilization in Athenian festivals, see Parker 2005, 280-282 (note in particular his discussion of the 'Bouzygean curs-

fore tamed land stands in stark opposition to the wilderness of such remote places, as for example the deserts of Libya described by Herodotus (4.191.2-9), where wild men and women live together with all sorts of beasts, including oversized lions, snakes, and headless monsters. According to Demosthenes, Aristogeiton has crept into the city like a snake or a scorpion and slithers in the agora ready to bite the passers-by, namely decent and inapprehensive citizens (51-52).[18] Demosthenes therefore invites his audience to view Aristogeiton as a misplaced beast that imports into the city the voracity and unruliness that Greek imagination associates with desolate places. Consequently, the jurors must throw him out of the city, or, as Demosthenes graphically puts it, he is a tarantula that they must kill even if it has never bitten them (96). Furthermore, when Demosthenes argues that because of his past life his opponent can make no legitimate pleas to the jurors' pity, he compares the relevant *topoi*, a word that here denotes both rhetorical commonplaces and physical locations, with an area of waste land full of steep gorges.[19] The analogy between Aristogeiton's unwarranted appeals to the jurors' pity and unwelcoming locations masterfully emphasizes his isolation from the community on account of his beastly behaviour towards his fellow-citizens and thus invites jurors to retaliate against Aristogeiton for his savage behaviour. Because of his past life, the city and its institutions are now an unapproachable place for Aristogeiton: his desperate cries for the jurors' pity echo in the emptiness of this unwelcoming land, because he does not deserve the compassion of his fellow-citizens.[20]

es' directed against antisocial behaviour in the course of ritual ploughing; these curses targeted among others those who 'leave a corpse unburied' (282). Aristogeiton is accused of leaving his own father without a burial, 58.

18 On *rhetores* as snakes, cp. Hyper. fr. B 19. 80; Aeschin. 2. 99, with Harpocration s.v. *Ἀργᾶς*. Cp. also S. *Phil.* 631-4 and see Worman 2008, 256, n.141. On sycophants and scorpions, cp. Eupolis fr. 231 K-A: Τῆνος αὕτη,/ πολλοὺς ἔχουσα σκορπίους ἔχεις τε συκοφάντας.

19 τούτῳ δ' οὐδέν' ὁρῶ τῶν τόπων τούτων βάσιμον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ πάντ' ἀπόκρημνα, φάραγγας, βάραθρα (76).

20 Aristotle defines pity as an emotion with negative valence directed towards indi-

Demosthenes' emphasis on Aristogeiton's bestiality is further enhanced through certain descriptions of his physical features and gestures. Aristogeiton's haranguing in the courtrooms is presented in terms of inarticulate shouting and is therefore similar to Cleon's terrorizing style of performance that Aristophanes compares to the barking of a bloodthirsty dog.[21] At some point of the speech for example Demosthenes describes vividly the highly theatrical delivery of a speech that Aristogeiton gave when he brought legal action against an *idiotes*:

> τὸν ἐλαιοπώλην Ἀγάθωνα (ταυτὶ γὰρ τὰ πρώην) **βοῶν καὶ κεκραγὼς καὶ ἰοὺ ἰού**, πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω ποιῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ὡς δέον στρεβλοῦν, λαβὼν ὁτιδήποτε, παρὼν ὅτ' ἀφίετο, ἄφωνος ἐγένετο (48).

This passage presents Aristogeiton as being incapable of articulating meaningful human speech: when he fails to achieve the destruction of his opponent through unintelligible cries, he becomes 'speechless' (*ἄφωνος*).[22] Elsewhere in the speech, Demosthenes refers to the penalties imposed upon Aristogeiton for the false accusations that he brought against several citizens in the past. In that context, he employs vivid imagery that associates Aristogeiton with an untamable beast that the city attempted to constrain by using the chain of law. Aristogeiton was so uncontrollable that he attempted to break this chain in order to regain his freedom and engage afresh in the extinction of innocent citizens (28). Lastly, Aristogeiton's depiction as a snake or a scorpion with an erect sting not only serves as a metaphor for his venomous speaking, but also invests him with the dart-

viduals who suffer *undeservedly* (Arist. *Rh.* 1385b 13-15). In the orators, desert is frequently dependent on the defendants' adherence to the cooperative values of the city and recognition of the juror's power; see Johnstone 1997, 110-114; Konstan 2005.

21 Cp. also paragraphs 9 and 49 from the present speech, on Cleon's loud haranguing, cp. Ar. *Knights* 256; 274; 275-6; 303-4 and see Worman 2008, 231-232.

22 On inarticulacy as a distinctive and distinguishing characteristic of the beasts, which our sources frequently describe as *ἄφωνα*, see Heath 2005 *passim*.

ing of beasts that are on the look out to attack passers-by (51-52).[23] The fact that Demosthenes chose to place the description of Aristogeiton's walking, or rather slithering, in the setting of the agora, the epicenter of the city's communal life, is also particularly significant. Being reduced to a serpent or an insect, Aristogeiton is not capable of interacting with his fellow citizens in the place that hosted human communication and civic business *par excellence*. Unlike the rest of the citizens, Aristogeiton will never be seen *going to* a shop to meet his friends; his movements are those of a serpent 'darting this way or that' (*ἄττων δεῦρο κἀκεῖσε*, 52), as MacDowell renders the phrase, seeking to take his victims unawares (2010, 304).[24]

The last issue that I would like to address before I move on to discuss Aristogeiton's self-presentation as a 'watchdog', is his cannibalism. One of the strongest value words that Demosthenes employs to present his opponent as a beast is *ὠμός* ('raw'), in one instance combined with *μιαιφονία*, literally denoting 'murderousness'.[25] As early as Homer, raw eating is a hallmark of such beasts as wolves, lions or jackals; but *ὠμός* is also used metaphorically to describe extreme cruelty. Thucydides for instance employs it to explain the reasons that prompted the Athenians to reconsider their initial resolution to massacre the whole population of Mytilene (3.36).

23 The consequences of his biting are permanent like the biting of Pericles' enchanting rhetoric that served as a painful and persistent reminder of the need for unpopular measures at Eupolis fr. 102 K-A. (I owe this reference to Kostas Apostolakis.) Cp. also the phrase *ὀξύτατον, ὀξύθυμον, ἐντεταμένον κέντρον* describing the jurors' anger in Ar. *V.* 407.

24 Note Pindar's metaphor at *P.* 2.83-85 describing the poet as a wolf that is constantly on the look out for his enemies and attempts secret attacks: 'I'll be here and there, and twist and turn' [transl. Bowra] (*ἄλλ' ἄλλοτε πατέων ὁδοῖς σκολιαῖς*).

25 For *μιαιφονία*, cp. Euripides' *Orestes* (523), where Tyndareus stresses the political repercussions of Clytemnestra's and Helen's domestic conduct, which he denounces as 'beastly' and 'murderous' (*θηριῶδες…καὶ μιαιφόνον*) and proclaims his intention to check it by enforcing the law. Cp. also Plato (*Rep.* 565e3-566a4), equating the demos' leaders in democratic anarchy with tyrannical 'wolves' who indulge in cannibalism: these people seek to establish their power through murderous prosecutions against their fellow citizens whose flesh 'they taste' (*μιαιφονῇ*) in courtrooms 'with their polluted mouths and tongues'. On the association of tyrants with wolves in Plato and archaic poetry, see Irwin 2005, 249-261.

The metaphorical connotations of rawness in contexts that disparage sycophancy often retain their resonance with cannibalistic violence.[26] This also applies to the speech under discussion, especially through the emphasis that Demosthenes places on his opponent's mouth.[27] Aristogeiton 'tears up' (*σπαράττων,* 50) the state offices and, as we saw earlier, his sycophantic accusations are commensurate with the lethal biting of venomous animals. The analogy between biting and invective is deeply rooted in Greek literature and goes back to Homer; be it here sufficient to mention Pindar's well-known comparison of *kakagoria* with harsh biting in a context where he accuses Archilochus, the most prominent representative of iambic *psogos*, of fattening off through slander.[28] Aristogeiton's biting must therefore be associated with the abusive language of rhetorical *diabole*, an inextricable element of groundless prosecutions that enabled sycophants to serve their personal interests at the expense of others.[29]

The most striking and indeed literal illustration of Aristogeiton's cannibalistic cruelty is found in a passage where Demosthenes describes a skirmish that took place when his opponent was in jail (60-62).[30] According to Demosthenes, a man from Tanagra accused Aristogeiton of stealing a document from him. This document was later found in a box that belonged to Aristogeiton. Aristogeiton not only denied that he had stolen the document, but also attacked the

26 Cp. for example ἀλλ' ὦ πάντων ἀστῶν λῷστοι σεῖσαι καὶ προσκαλέσασθαι,/ παύσασθε δικῶν ἀλληλοφάγων, Teleclides fr. 2. The use of the semantic field of devouring in contexts referring to political power and discord is as early as Homer: in the *Iliad* (1.231), Achilles describes Agamemnon as a 'people-devouring king', *δημοβόρος βασιλεύς*. Hesiod also attributes to kings excessive appetites and insatiability through the qualification 'gift-devourers', *δωροφάγοι* (*Op.* 39, 263-264); cp. also Alc. 70. 6-7 and Thgn. 1181.

27 On abusive language and the mouth, see Worman 2008, esp. 230-232 discussing the present speech.

28 See Nagy 1979, 224-232; Steiner 2001; Worman 2008,48-51; Rotstein 2010, 284-288.

29 On invective as an indispensable weapon of the sycophants, see Harvey 1990, 113.

30 This incident is also described by Dinarchus in his speech of prosecution against Aristogeiton (Din. 2.9-10); for discussion of this passage, see Worthington 1992, 297-300.

man from Tanagra so ruthlessly as to bite off his nose and swallow it. Demosthenes' narration of the event is so designed as to present the jail-community as a miniature of the city.[31] When the rest of the prisoners became aware of Aristogeiton's crime, they held an informal trial and voted unanimously for his conviction (*ψηφίζονται περὶ αὐτοῦ*, 61). The penalty imposed on Aristogeiton is also significant: the prisoners resolved to isolate him from their community and thus excluded him from their commensalities.[32] Demosthenes' story serves as an *a fortiori* argument: if the outcasts punished Aristogeiton, will the legitimate jurors that he addresses offer him acquittal? Furthermore, the emphasis on Aristogeiton's cannibalistic use of his mouth offers a further upsetting parallel to the destructive powers of his sycophantic speaking. The sarcastic locution with which Demosthenes caps the description of this ghastly incident underlines the association between Aristogeiton's speaking and biting by turning the jurors' attention to his polluted mouth:

> καλῶν γ' ἔργων ὁ ῥήτωρ δημιουργὸς ὑμῖν γέγονεν. ἄξιόν γ' ἐκ τοῦ τοιαῦτα πεποιηκότος στόματος λόγον ἢ συμβουλήν τιν' ἀκοῦσαι.

This phrase looks back to Aristogeiton's past speeches in the courtrooms and the *ekklesia* (*συμβουλήν*) from which he was banished. At the same time, it urges the jurors to punish Aristogeiton with *atimia*, thereby shutting his mouth for ever.

31 See Christ 1998, 58.

32 These commensalities notably represent elementary commodities of civilized life. Wohl (2010, 57) points out that Aristogeiton's banishment is comparable to the removal of polluted men. There is also room to interpret the exclusion of Aristogeiton from the common meals in relation to mythical parallels depicting cases of *ὠμοφαγία* or cannibalism. In Euripides' *Hercules* (380-386), the civilizing feats of the hero include the taming of the monstrous, man-eating mares of Diomedes that the poet describes with the word *δυστράπεζοι*. Cp. also the case of Astyages who offered to Harpagus the flesh of his son in a feast that Herodotus describes with the phrase *ἀνόμῳ τραπέζῃ ἔδαισε* (1.162.1). In Astyages' case, the emphasis is, of course, placed on the fact that he tasted the flesh of his own offspring.

III. Aristogeiton 'the watchdog of the people'

Having established that Demosthenes' portrayal of Aristogeiton as an archetypical sycophant relies heavily on animal imagery, in this section I turn my attention to a passage full of political implications where canine imagery prevails. There are some people in the city, Demosthenes says, who think that Aristogeiton is a watchdog that protects the demos (*κύων νὴ Δία, φασί τινες, τοῦ δήμου*, 40). However, this is false. The case is that Aristogeiton is a fierce, bloodthirsty and deceitful dog in the guise of a watchdog. Demosthenes' message is clear: if some jurors embrace the view that Aristogeiton is loyal to them, they are wrong. The right course of action would be to treat him like a treacherous watchdog that attacks the sheep folk that it professes to protect from voracious wolves.

Aristogeiton's self-gratulatory presentation as a watchdog of the demos must have been used widely by politicians who wished to convey their subservience to the people.[33] Cleon seems to have also adopted it almost a century before Aristogeiton and Aristophanes did the most out of it by exhausting its comic possibilities in the *Knights*; in that play, Aristophanes warned his audience that Cleon's wagging of his tail was not to be taken as a trustworthy sign of his loyalty to the *demos*.[34] But Demosthenes' *own* overturning of Aristogeiton's image as a *kuon tou demou* seems to rely on material from fables. As

33 Plutarch (*Dem.* 23.5) claims that Demosthenes assimilated himself with a watchdog: ὅτε καὶ τὸν περὶ τῶν προβάτων λόγον ὁ Δημοσθένης, ὡς τοῖς λύκοις τοὺς κύνας ἐξέδωκε, διηγησάμενος αὑτὸν μὲν εἴκασε καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ κυσὶν ὑπὲρ τοῦ δήμου μαχομένοις, Ἀλέξανδρον δὲ τὸν Μακεδόνα μονόλυκον προσηγόρευσεν. Kurke (2011, 149 and n.55) claims that "Plutarch himself at least seems to sense and echo an Aesopic resonance in Demosthenes' fable". For the phrase 'watchdog of the people', cp. also Theophrastus, *Characters* (29.4), with Diggle 2004, note ad loc. See Brock 1991; Christ 1998, 149-150, 161 with n.3; Taillardat (1962, 403-405) discusses the parody of this image by Aristophanes; see also Brown 1974, identifying Cleon on a vase painting that depicts a seated man with a dog.

34 Cleon as a treacherous watchdog: Ar. *Eq.* 259-60; 691-701; 1017-34; *V.* 672-7; 894; 970-2; see Mainoldi 1984, 156-160.

Aristotle says in the *Rhetoric* (1394a 2-5), fables (*logoi*), which along with historical precedents are a species of 'examples' (*paradeigmata*) – and therefore a subspecies of *enthymemes* – are useful because they are applicable in cases where speakers are unable to find relevant historical parallels.[35] Moreover, fables are short narratives that convey unequivocal meaning and therefore serve two important purposes of forensic storytelling: they add specificity to individual cases by providing jurors a frame of mind to decide them and enable speakers to achieve simplification.[36]

Although Demosthenes does not narrate a fable from start to end, he attempts to induce his audience to project upon Aristogeiton typical characteristics that some fables attribute to treacherous watchdogs. Wolves and sheepdogs appear frequently in stories related to pastoral life and typically depict these two species as standing in the two extreme edges of an inimical relationship: dogs represent tameness and domestication while wolves incarnate savagery and bloodthirstiness.[37] However, there are fables where two-faced sheepdogs collaborate with their 'brothers', namely wolves, in order to have a share in the ensuing feast.[38] These treacherous dogs not only deviate from their domestic duties, but also seem to emulate the villainy of wolves (*πονηρία*).[39] The message of Demosthenes' identification of his opponent with a deceitful watchdog is provided in a gnomic (note the use of *φασί*) that further underscores the generic affinity of his example with fables:

35 Note that the phrase τὸν περὶ τῶν προβάτων λόγον in Plutarch's passage cited in above (n.33) indicates that Demosthenes propelled his self-presentation as a watchdog through the telling (*διηγησάμενος*) of a fable (*λόγον*). Aristogeiton's unreliability as a watchdog is also stressed in *Against Aristogeiton II* (22).

36 On forsensic narratives, see Spatharas 2009, 99-100.

37 Relevant material is gathered and discussed in Mainoldi 1984, 204-205; on demagogues as wolves, see Plato, n. 25 above.

38 See Mainoldi 1984, 203. As Irwin (2005, 252) observes, in relevant fables the wolves endorse political diction and seek to secure the alliance of dogs by stressing (in what Irwin identifies as populist rhetoric) their similarity or equality.

39 On *poneria* as a typical characteristic of the wolves' hunting strategy, see Buxton 1987 and Mainoldi 1984, 208, who discusses relevant material from fables.

> ἀλλὰ μὴν τοὺς γευομένους κύνας τῶν προβάτων κατακόπτειν φασὶ δεῖν, ὥστ᾽ οὐκ ἂν φθάνοι κατακοπτόμενος (40).

On one level, Demosthenes' overturning of Aristogeiton's self presentation as a *kuon tou demou* relies on his association with the fiendish tactics of watchdogs that we find in some fables; at the same time, Demosthenes' language highlights the bloodthirstiness, isolation and trickery of the demos' powerful enemies whose behaviour depicts the predatory instincts of wolves that are constantly on the look out to attack secretly.[40] Yet it is important to bear in mind that Demosthenes' use of canine imagery in the present context anticipates Aristogeiton's argument that he is a useful and self-sacrificing citizen (*χρήσιμος*). For this reason, it invites us to interpret it in the light of the tensions involved in public prosecutions and the rhetorical manipulations that they necessitated.[41]

At some point of the speech, Demosthenes expresses his fear that the jurors may cast their vote on the basis of calculations that they would never wish to confess openly (7). Demosthenes' warning reveals his suspicion that some jurors would perhaps endorse Aristogeiton's self-presentation as a watchdog of the demos and consequently accept that his activity in the courts protected their own interests. Demosthenes perhaps expected that Aristogeiton would argue, as other public prosecutors frequently did,[42] that his previous convictions vouch for the risks that he took for the well-being of the city. This becomes clear from Demosthenes' attempt to neutralize his opponent's self-gratulatory rhetoric by adducing a list of citizens who allegedly fell prey to Aristogeiton's groundless accusations. All these men, Demosthenes says, were everyday people (*ἰδιῶται*), rather than threatening wolves of the political arena. However, elsewhere in the speech Demosthe-

40 Cp. ὁ συκοφάντης ἐστὶ τοῖς πέλας λύκος, Menander, *Monost*. 440=603.

41 See Christ 1998, 143-148.

42 Christ 1998, 148 adduces the following examples: Dem. 24.3; 53.1; Lyc. 1.3 – where speakers highlight the penalties prescribed by law against unsuccessful prosecutions; and Dem. 23.1; 58.59-60; Lyc. 1.3 – referring to prosecutors' statements to the effect that their indictments cause the enmity of their opponents.

nes holds Aristogeiton responsible for bringing against him numerous prosecutions in the past (37), some of which were related to his anti-Macedonian initiatives and thus politically motivated. This entails that before his debarment from public speaking, Aristogeiton had been courageous enough to bite wolves at least as strong as Demosthenes and oppose them on serious political matters.

It remains to answer why Demosthenes decided to act as public prosecutor at that given time, even if, as he says, he did so reluctantly out of fear for Aristogeiton's response. Scholars seem to agree that the speech was delivered in 325 or in 324; if this date is correct, it roughly coincides with Harpalus' arrival at Athens.[43] It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Demosthenes' involvement in the case when the city decided to act legally against Aristogeiton was politically motivated; perhaps he had good reasons to believe that he would be safer if Aristogeiton was convicted to *atimia* and lost his right to public speech (*parrhesia*). Yet the scarcity of evidence about Aristogeiton and the uncertainty concerning the authorship of the speech make it extremely difficult to determine its political background and pin down the calculations of the prosecutors with any hope of accuracy.

If the speech was written by Demosthenes, and, on the balance of evidence I think that it was,[44] it seems reasonable to speculate that for some reason he regarded the state's initiative to bring legal action against Aristogeiton as a good opportunity to get him out of his way. Furthermore, as MacDowell points out, Demosthenes' unusual reticence when he refers to Aristogeiton's political friends indicates that 'he [i.e. Demosthenes] is afraid not only of annoying the jury, but of suffering retaliation from some powerful supporters of Aristogeiton' (2010, 303). It is therefore possible to suggest that when Demosthenes acted as prosecutor against Aristogeiton, his opponent was still actively involved in the public life of the city and that he had strong political allies. Yet, it would also be possible to take the sheer vitriol of Demosthenes' speech to be suggestive of personal hostility. If Demosthenes' allegation that Aristogeiton had been pestering him

43 On Aristogeiton's alleged involvement in Harpalus' affair, see Worthington 1992, 54-55; 64-65; 302-303.

44 See n. 1, above.

in the past with legal actions is reliable, then we may have a possible indication concerning his personal motives.

According to Dinarchus (2.13), Demosthenes, Lycurgus and perhaps the author of *Against Aristogeiton II* managed to secure Aristogeiton's conviction. A few years later, both Aristogeiton and Demosthenes were among the citizens who were accused of taking bribes from Harpalus. Aristogeiton was acquitted. Demosthenes was found guilty. Despite Demosthenes' argument at *Ep*. 3.37 that the Athenians convicted him and let a scoundrel like Aristogeiton go unpunished, perhaps his feelings about Aristogeiton's acquittal were mixed. For his pivotal argument in the *Epistles* was that the acquittal of even one of the defendants in the Harpalus' affair would have been sufficient proof of the innocence of all of them.

IV. Conclusion

As both ancient and modern critics have observed, *Against Aristogeiton I* is marked by a high degree of theorization. This theorization is founded in the long established nomos/physis antithesis. On the basis of this polarity, Demosthenes stresses the importance of the law for the stability of the city, but also identifies his opponent with the rawness, anarchy and violence that Greek thought typically associated with the realms of *physis*. This identification is enhanced significantly through the imagery of the speech and especially through the comparison of Aristogeiton's sycophantic activity with features of aggressive animals. The animal imagery of the speech – that frequently echoes Aristophanes' disparagement of Cleon – exemplifies in the most effective way the unsociable or even misanthropic nature that our sources commonly attribute to sycophants, thereby stressing the threats that these internal enemies pose to the stability of Athenian society. At the same time, Demosthenes employs material from animal stories in order to deal with Aristogeiton's self-presentation as a watchdog of the people. Through the use of this material, Demosthenes sought to destroy Aristogeiton's argument that his legal actions in the past aimed to protect the masses from powerful and bloodthirsty wolves of the political arena.

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Η φάρμα του συκοφάντη:
Ζώα και ρητορική στον *Κατὰ Ἀριστογείτονος Ι*

Δήμος ΣΠΑΘΑΡΑΣ

Περίληψη

ΣΤΟ ΑΡΘΡΟ αυτό επιχειρώ να δείξω τους τρόπους με τους οποίους η σύγκριση του Αριστογείτονα με μια σειρά από ζώα εξυπηρετεί τους ρητορικούς στόχους του Δημοσθένη. Βασιζόμενος στο δίπολο φύσις/νόμος, ο Δημοσθένης παραλληλίζει τη συκοφαντική δραστηριότητα του αντιπάλου του με την επιθετικότητα των άγριων ζώων. Με τον τρόπο αυτό υπογραμμίζει την αντικοινωνική και απάνθρωπη συμπεριφορά των *συκοφαντών*, οι οποίοι εκμεταλλεύονται τη δυνατότητα που τους παρέχει το αθηναϊκό δίκαιο να ασκούν αγωγές ως *βουλόμενοι* εξυπηρετώντας αθέμιτα προσωπικά τους συμφέροντα. Υποστηρίζω, επίσης, ότι προκειμένου να αναδείξει την υποκριτική συμπεριφορά των *συκοφαντών*, ο Δημοσθένης αξιοποιεί μύθους που αναδεικνύουν τη δίβουλη φύση των σκύλων: ο Αριστογείτων προσποιείται ότι είναι φύλακας του *δήμου*, αλλά στην πραγματικότητα επιβουλεύεται το δημόσιο συμφέρον. Τέλος, προτείνω ότι η ακραία αυτή επίθεση του Δημοσθένη στον Αριστογείτονα ενδεχομένως να είχε πολιτικά κίνητρα.