THE IRRELIGIOUS FORMULA
Ο ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ ΑΛΙΤΗΡΙΟΣ AND ITS CODIFICATION
AS ANTIDEMOSTHENIC PROPAGANDA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the function of the irreligious formula ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος («cursed offender of Greece»), known only in the speeches of Aeschines (*Against Ctesiphon*) and Dinarchus (*Against Demosthenes*). Both authors conceptualise this vehement criticism of Demosthenes, seeking to condemn the consequences of his entire public career. We will attempt to define the semantic scope of this formula, taking into account the historical-political context in which these speeches were composed. Furthermore, we will verify its deep link with several rhetorical and stylistic devices.

KEYWORDS: Aeschines, Dinarchus, irreligiosity, oratory, rhetoric.

LA FÓRMULA IRRELIGIOSA Ο ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ ΑΛΙΤΗΡΙΟΣ
Y SU CODIFICACIÓN COMO PROPAGANDA ANTIDEMOSTÉNICA

RESUMEN

En este trabajo se pretende comprobar la operatividad de la fórmula irreligiosa ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος («maldición de Grecia»), únicamente atestiguada en las composiciones de Esquines (*Contra Ctesifonte*) y Dinarco (*Contra Demóstenes*). Ambos autores conceptualizan esta crítica vehemente contra Demóstenes, en un intento de condenar las consecuencias de su carrera pública. De este modo, intentaremos precisar el espectro semántico de dicha fórmula atendiendo al contexto histórico-político en que tales discursos fueron compuestos, además de verificar su profunda interrelación con distintos recursos retórico-estilísticos.

Palabras clave: Esquines, Dinarco, irreligiosidad, oratoria, retórica.

INTRODUCTION

Irreligiosity in classical Athens is a phenomenon that has gained momentum in recent years. Previously, several irreligious notions were usually defined briefly and inaccurately, opposing Athenian religiosity. At the end of the last century, Winiarczyk (1984, 1990: 5, 1994) put forward an attractive proposal for researching atheism through a lexical perspective, which would allow us to distinguish words that describe violence towards religion, and by doing so, to establish different levels of irreligiosity depending on semantics. Several scholars are currently pursuing the methodological path set out by Winiarczyk[1]. Through a lexical-semantic perspective, they verify literary sources in which such a lexicon occurs, mainly classical genres including drama, historiography, and oratory.

For irreligiosity in the oratorical corpus, the bibliography is relatively scant despite the high number of manifestations of this lexicon. Following a common tendency, authors such as Martin (2009) and, more recently, Serafim (2021) have approached the irreligious vocabulary. However, the focus of their studies is on religious discourse and argumentation, so semantic definitions of irreligiosity are sometimes absent. More recently, several researchers have opted to tackle irreligious evidence in the oratorical genre through a philological approach. Translation and exegesis of the texts provide a much fuller picture of irreligious functionality in this genre[2]. These works usually stress the importance of semantics and pragmatics. Thus, irreligiosity proves to be a powerful device for discrediting the opponent publicly and humiliating him[3]. Irreligiosity, together with several rhetorical *topoi*, allows the speaker to show their rival's worst side and to stir hostile emotions among the audience by hinting at a chain of transgressions, vulnerability, danger, and fear (Eidinow, 2015: 77-79).

Within this theoretical framework we shall consider the occurrence in the oratorical corpus of ἀλιτήριος, an irreligious word with significant semantic and rhetorical implications. The word has been understood as describing the kind of person who, due to serious wrongdoings, had triggered divine anger, which could result in terrible misfortunes (Furley, 1996: 109-110). In a study of its semantics, Hatch (1908: 157-163) classifies the evidence for ἀλιτήριος, documenting connotations or differences in meaning within the literary context. Despite the value of

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[1] Cf. Ramón Palerm (2014); Ramón Palerm (2018a).
[2] Cf. Leite (2014); Leite (2017); Ramón Palerm (2018b); Leite (2020); Vergara Recreo (2021a); Vergara Recreo (2021b).
[3] Based on literary evidence, lawsuits concerning religious matters are a controversial and broadly debated issue. The information from classical and post-classical sources is sometimes unreliable, and Attic oratory transmits few clear examples in which religion worked as the main charge of a legal procedure. Cf. Filonik (2013: 57-59); Filonik (2016); Vergara Recreo (2021a: 38-44).

reviewing classical passages, Hatch's work suffers from some inaccuracies[4]. Recently, Ramón Palerm (2019) has identified the shortcomings in Hatch's study and has proposed a new approach to ἀλιτήριος in which diachronic-synchronic perspective is combined with analysis and commentary on significant passages[5].

As noted previously, ἀλιτήριος has an interesting development within Attic oratory, and in each author, in each milieu, subtle nuances of meaning can be perceived. Its eighteen instances are distributed from the last decades of the 5th century BC to the second half of the 4th century BC[6]. Diachronically, we can perceive variations in meaning. For example, Antiphon re-elaborates for his homicide speeches the basic idea of the 'offender hunted by gods': ἀλιτήριος metaphorically turns into a sort of Erinys, a vengeful spirit seeking to trouble the murderer[7]. Since Antiphon, it usually evokes someone who has lost the favour of the gods through his crimes, and lives hounded by divine wrath. Nevertheless, semantic differences can be perceived depending on the literary context or on the purpose of each orator: sometimes the political invective blurs the original meaning of ἀλιτήριος[8]; sometimes its powerful significance is intensified by other religious and ritual references[9].

We must therefore consider how Aeschines and Dinarchus employ the word ἀλιτήριος. In their speeches, the term is always written as ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος. In this expression, an objective genitive (τῆς Ἑλλάδος) complements ἀλιτήριος –a term that usually appears in isolation–, magnifying the scope of the curse carried by one individual. Both authors appropriate the phrasing to launch political propaganda against Demosthenes. After the Battle of Chaeronea (338 BC), political opponents developed accusations against Demosthenes, in which they highlighted that the ruin of Athens, and by extension Greece, was due to the statesman's failures in political, military, and religious administration[10]. In addition, ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος is often related to the topic of the pernicious τύχη harassing Demosthenes, mainly in situations of religious and political wrongdoings. Thus, the meaning of ἀλιτήριος is transformed from someone attacked by the divinities because of sacrilege into a sort of metaphor or personification: Demosthenes embodies the ἀλιτήριος itself, which has dual features: on the one hand, Demosthenes is shown cursed by his early

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[4] Again, Hatch briefly notes different variants in the meaning of ἀλιτήριος without commenting exhaustively on the literary passages. This triggers a lack of accuracy in the lexical and semantic definition of the term, mainly in contexts where its significance is enriched by other religious or political motifs.

[5] Equally relevant is the study of Ballesta Alcega (2021), which analyses the functionality of ἀλιτήριος in Flavius Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum*.

[6] Cf. And. 1.51, 130, 131; Aeschin. 3.131, 157; Antipho 4.1.3-4; 4.2.8; 4.3.7; 4.4.10; D. 18.159; 19.197, 226; Din. 1.77; Lycurg. 1.117; Lys. 6.52-53; 13.79.

[7] Antipho 4.1.3-4; 4.2.8; 4.3.7; 4.4.10. Decleva Caizzi (1969: 248); Ramón Palerm (2018b: 220).

[8] Cf. And. 1.51, 130, 131; D. 19.226; Lycurg. 1.117.

[9] Cf. D. 18.159; 19.197; Lys. 6.52-53; 13.79.

[10] On this kind of political dynamics, cf. D. 18.249, 285; Plu. *Dem.* 21.1; Martin (2009: 86-92).

actions – in the words of Aeschines, due to his corruption, contempt, and scornful stance toward religious custom. On the other hand, Demosthenes has the faculty of cursing communities, so the Athenian concept of pollution is sometimes active in this kind of invective[11].

This paper aims to analyse the critical propaganda developed by Aeschines and Dinarchus through their use of the expression ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος and its combination with other (ir)religious words. We will also examine how the speakers combine irreligious invective with other rhetorical *topoi* that allow them to intensify their arguments or to create negative perceptions of the opponent before the jury.

AESCHINES, *AGAINST CTESIPHON*

The long-term feud between Demosthenes and Aeschines was reactivated when the latter brought a charge against Ctesiphon (330 BC). Alleging that Ctesiphon had passed an illegal decree to crown Demosthenes, Aeschines uses his prosecution to attack his rival directly. Aeschines summarises Demosthenes' entire political career from the initial conflict with Philip II to the disastrous entrance of Macedon onto Greek soil. Furthermore, the sharp accounts of the orator, combined with invective and insults, have a rhetorical feature that distinguishes them from the style of Demosthenes: the (ir)religious element is plentiful and more explicit in Aeschines (Vergara Recreo, 2023: 303-309), allowing him both to create dramatism and to discredit the defendant politically.

To depict both a polluted and a polluting Demosthenes, Aeschines moves his narrative to the stages immediately before the fight at Chaeronea. Several bad omens took place in Athens, and the people decided to ask the Delphic oracle how they should act. However, Demosthenes, asserting that the Pythia spoke on behalf of Philip, persuaded his fellow citizens not to undertake the consultation[12]. Besides Demosthenes' misconduct in military sacrifices before the Battle of Chaeronea, this action prefigured the catastrophic ruin of Athens. In this context, ἀλιτήριος occurs for the first time when Aeschines configures his criticism along with several ritual terms (Aeschin. 3.131):

> οὐ τὸ τελευταῖον ἀθύτων καὶ ἀκαλλιερήτων ὄντων τῶν ἱερῶν ἐξέπεμψε τοὺς στρατιώ-
> τας ἐπὶ τὸν πρόδηλον κίνδυνον; καίτοι γε πρώην ποτὲ ἀπετόλμα λέγειν ὅτι παρὰ
> τοῦτο Φίλιππος οὐκ ἦλθεν ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν ὅτι οὐκ ἦν αὐτῷ καλὰ τὰ ἱερά. τίνος
> οὖν εἶ σὺ ζημίας ἄξιος εἶ τυχεῖν, **ὦ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριε**; εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν κρατῶν

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[11] Cf. Aeschin. 3.113-115, 135.

[12] Aeschines narrates how divinities had sent these portents to Athens: some *mystai* were killed by a monster during the Mysteries, and Demosthenes, alleging that the Pythia was 'phillipised' (Aeschin. 3.130: φιλιππίζειν), prevented the Athenian delegation from marching to Delphi.

οὐκ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν τῶν κρατουμένων χώραν ὅτι οὐκ ἦν αὐτῷ καλὰ τὰ ἱερά, σὺ δ' οὐδὲν προειδὼς τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι, πρὶν καλλιερῆσαι τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐξέπεμψας, πότερα στεφανοῦσθαί σε δεῖ ἐπὶ ταῖς τῆς πόλεως ἀτυχίαις, ἢ ὑπερωρίσθαι;

Didn't he finally send the troops out to face unmistakable danger with the sacrifices missing or inauspicious? And yet the other day he dared to claim that the sole reason Philip did not attack our country was that the sacrifices he made were not favorable. What punishment do you deserve, **you curse of Greece**? For if the victor did not invade the territory of the defeated because his sacrifices were not favorable, and you without knowing the future sent out the troops before auspicious sacrifice was made, should you be crowned as a result of the city's misfortunes, or cast beyond the borders? (Tr. Carey, 2000).

With rhetorical questions, Aeschines reminds his audiences of the risks faced by the Athenian army, for which Demosthenes had complete responsibility[13]. Two religious and ritual terms, formed with a privative alpha, highlight the transgression (ἀθύτων καὶ ἀκαλλιερήτων ὄντων τῶν ἱερῶν). On the one hand, ἄθυτος marks the failure to fulfil a sacrifice. On the other, ἀκαλλιέρητος –an Aeschinean *hapax*– shows the direct outcome of that frustrated sacrifice, consisting in its refusal by the divinities (Naiden, 2013: 109-110). Despite the bad omen, Demosthenes had dared to send soldiers into battle (οὐ τὸ τελευταῖον...ἐξέπεμψε τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐπὶ τὸν πρόδηλον κίνδυνον).

Aeschines answers his own question by employing a rhetorical device as *hypophora*, describing the contemptuous arguments Demosthenes had provided in the recent past (πρώην): the reference to Philip, who decided not attack Athens as he had not gained favourable sacrifices, works to imply the hypocrisy of the defendant. Aeschines explicitly reveals it by opposing the ritual stance of Demosthenes with that of Philip. This antithetical contrast is enhanced by the religious formula καλὰ τὰ ἱερά. The expression mainly emerges from epigraphical sources and indicates divine acceptance of sacrificial rites (Mikalson, 2016: 279-282).

This allows Aeschines to frame his invective against Demosthenes, which reaches its climax with the following rhetorical question. The orator appeals directly to his opponent and refers to him as the accursed man of Greece (ὦ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριε). The vocative form embraces a highly religious meaning. This hyperbolic expression obtains a figurative sense in which Demosthenes, because of his illicit actions, embodied a curse. The negligence from the unsuccessful sacrifice turned him into someone considered despicable towards the gods, and the transgression, while unpunished, spread misfortune everywhere.

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[13] While Aeschines attempts to demonstrate how his rival's policy triggered misfortunes after Chaeronea, Demosthenes manipulates the notion of defeat, turning it into something heroic for the Athenian democracy (D. 18.200-208; 60.21-22). Cf. Goldman (2018).

Aeschines then targets the rival, strengthening the antithesis between the attitudes of Demosthenes and those of Philip. By rephrasing both the preceding arguments and their vocabulary, Philip reappears, obeying divine signals sent to him by the gods through sacrifice (οὐκ ἦλθεν...ὅτι οὐκ ἦν αὐτῷ καλὰ τὰ ἱερά). The portrayal of Demosthenes is in contrast to that of Philip. Using syntactical restructuring, Aeschines reinforces the sinful decisions committed by Demosthenes: he put soldiers in danger when he sent them to fight before receiving a favourable response from the divinities (πρὶν καλλιερῆσαι τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐξέπεμψας). Aeschines chooses to employ different derivatives to express both notions of observance and transgression of the sacrificial rules: the verb καλλιερέω usually alludes to proper respect to sacrifice, and here appears with a negative nuance; the adjective ἀκαλλιέρητος stresses negative ritual behaviour, while the formula (οὐ) καλὰ τὰ ἱερὰ εἶναι can take either meaning depending on the context.

A final interrogation raises the question about what Demosthenes should suffer for all the damage caused (ἐπὶ ταῖς τῆς πόλεως ἀτυχίαις). Adducing the grounds of Ctesiphon's decree, the speaker complains and draws on two opposing questions: whether Demosthenes deserved to be granted a crown, despite his dreadful political career (στεφανοῦσθαί σε δεῖ); or whether he should be punished by throwing him out of the polis (ὑπερωρίσθαι). The last question acquires an outstanding rhetorical strength due to the hinted word ἀτυχία, a constituent shared with the previous sentence, inferred by zeugma. Furthermore, the meaning of the verb ὑπερορίζω is eminently ritual. It usually marks a response towards impure elements, which are expected to be thrown out of the polis to preserve civic welfare. Indeed, the notion of ritual expulsion is linked to the punishments given for crimes such as treason, homicide, or temple robbery. Besides the disfranchisement of citizen rights, the literary sources speak about the death penalty and, subsequently, the ban on burying the wrongdoer's corpse in Attic territory[14]. Aeschines thus creates an extensive ritual framework to show the scorn of Demosthenes towards sacrifices and bad omens. These attacks result in a defiled and offensive condition (ἀλιτήριος), due to which he should be ejected from Athens as a preventative measure (ὑπερωρίσθαι)[15].

A few paragraphs later, Aeschines resumes this invective, now focused on Alexander's punishment over Thebes. While Alexander was fighting in northern Greece, Thebes –the biggest victim of the measures Philip imposed after Chaeronea[16]– saw the opportunity to revolt against Macedonia. The city dispatched embassies

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[14] Cf. D. 21.105; Pl. *Lg.* 873b, 873e, 909b-c; X. *HG* 1.7.22.

[15] Parker (1996: 268); Martin (2009: 90). Lysias' *Against Andocides* shows a similar perspective through the argumentative play of ἀλιτήριος, φαρμακός, and several ritual terms. Andocides, being defiled, was a risk to the welfare of the community. His expulsion from the polis operates as an apotropaic action that prevents the diffusion of pollutive impiety throughout society (Lys. 6.52-53). Cf. Vergara Recreo (2021a:101-112).

[16] Cf. D.S. 16.87.3, 17.8.3-7; Worthington (2013: 255).

through different regions to create a common Greek front[17]. Finally, Alexander travelled to Thebes and crushed the rebellion quickly[18]. Indeed, Aeschines' account describes the severe reprisals of this military movement when the League of Corinth, presided over by the Macedonian king, decided to destroy the city (Aeschin. 3.157):

> ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τοῖς σώμασιν οὐ παρεγένεσθε, ἀλλὰ ταῖς γε διανοίαις ἀποβλέψατ' αὐτῶν εἰς τὰς συμφοράς καὶ νομίσαθ' ὁρᾶν ἁλισκομένην πόλιν, τειχῶν κατασκαφάς, ἐμπρή-σεις οἰκιῶν, ἀγομένας γυναῖκας παῖδας εἰς δουλείαν, πρεσβύτας ἀνθρώπους, πρεσβύ-τιδας γυναῖκας ὀψὲ μεταμανθάνοντας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, κλαίοντας, ἱκετεύοντας ὑμᾶς, ὀργιζομένους οὐ τοῖς τιμωρουμένοις, ἀλλὰ τοῖς τούτων αἰτίοις, ἐπισκήπτοντας μηδενὶ τρόπῳ **τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριον** στεφανοῦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν δαίμονα καὶ τὴν τύχην τὴν συμπαρακολουθοῦσαν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ φυλάξασθαι.
>
> But since you were not there in person, witness their disasters with your mind's eye and imagine that you can see their city being captured, the demolition of the walls, the burning of the houses, the women and children being led away to slavery, old men, old women learning late in life to forget their freedom, weeping, begging you, angry not at the people who were taking revenge on them but at the men responsible for these events, solemnly instructing you under no circumstances to crown **the curse of Greece** but to be on your guard against the evil destiny and the bad luck that dogs the man's footsteps. (Tr. Carey, 2000).

The rhetoric of vividness (ἐνάργεια) in the text is outstanding[19]. Aeschines seeks to transport judges' imaginations to the resulting events of the siege of Thebes. This is marked by several rhetorical devices. Firstly, the syntactical organization ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τοῖς σώμασιν…ἀλλὰ ταῖς γε διανοίας highlights the fact of this imaginary construction. Secondly, terms like ἀποβλέπω and ὁράω suggest the rhetoric of seeing, which, as O'Connell (2017b: 121-131) argues, helps to convey dramatism. The mental vision of that destruction is also magnified by the asyndeton and by the catalogue of different motives. The core elements in which emotional effect is assembled are the siege of the city (ἁλισκομένην πόλιν), its burning (τειχῶν κατασκαφάς, ἐμπρή-σεις οἰκιῶν), and the enslavement of its population (ἀγομένας γυναῖκας παῖδας εἰς δουλείαν).

Evocation of the extinction of Thebes' liberty provides Aeschines with a powerful argument to show his audience the reality of a close menace to the Athenian community (μεταμανθάνοντας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν). The tragic features of the whole

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[17] One of these *poleis* was Athens, where an assembly was held to debate whether or not to collaborate in it. Firstly, Demosthenes seemed to defend sending aid to Thebes, but he then adopted a more careful stance and deterred the *demos* from participating in that struggle (Worthington, 2013: 279). Cf. Sealey (1993: 203).

[18] Cf. Arr. 1.8.8; Plu. *Alex.* 11.7-12.

[19] Cf. Webb (2009: 87-106); O'Connell (2017a).

text reach their climax in quoting the Theban people in the context of supplication. The value of the verb ἱκετεύω is strengthened by the juxtaposition with κλαίω ('to cry'). The overall strategy seeks to elicit sentiments related to the Greek concept of ἔλεος. This ambiguous notion, usually compared with 'compassion' or 'pity', has a semantic value that is more complex than latter translations allow. Concretely, ἔλεος specifies the achievement of the positive disposition of the jury through persuasion[20]. Although a supplication ritual was usually linked to the speeches of defendants, Aeschines employs it to provoke a hostile perception among the jury. The dikast is the explicit object of the request (ὑμᾶς), and the speaker tries to create a sort of identification between the addressee and Theban suffering, using the logic that those misfortunes might occur in Athens (Serafim, 2019: 353-354).

The last section of the passage is highly emotive. The explicit use of the verb ὀργίζομαι and its combination with the rhetorical *topos* of *correctio* achieve this state. On the one hand, ὀργή ('anger') is what an individual or a group of persons feel when perceiving harm to something or somebody close to them. Anger automatically triggers a desire for revenge[21]. On the other hand, the emotion is not projected against the Macedonians (οὐ τοῖς τιμωρουμένοις), but against those responsible for the situation (ἀλλὰ τοῖς τούτων αἰτίοις). The hinted liability of Demosthenes for these events becomes clear in the following lines, where Aeschines inserts the epithet τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος[22]. Its meaning is inferred by the macrostructure of the rhetorical strategy, rather than by the text itself. The polluting status of Demosthenes is exploited in several ways in Aeschines' *Against Ctesiphon*, and each of them allows the speaker to create a harmful perception of the opponent[23]. The previous paragraph is the clue to understanding the responsibility of Demosthenes in the fall of Thebes: it seems that the Persian king sent a monetary fund to Athens to defray the cost of the levy. Demosthenes, who managed the money, stole it, snatching from Thebes the only opportunity to challenge Macedon. Of course, Aeschines does not waste the chance to depict his account with irreligious nuances: the venality of Demosthenes caused the ruin of familial, civic, and religious institutions[24]. The *correctio* shows again

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[20] Arist. *Rh.* 1385b 13-19. Cf. Konstan (2004).

[21] Arist. *Rh.* 1378a 30-32. Cf. Konstan (2006: 41-76).

[22] In fact, Demosthenes rebuffs Aeschines with the reconstruction of the topic of ἀλιτήριος (D. 18.158-159).

[23] That occurs, for example, when he narrates the breakout of the Fourth Sacred War, in which Amphissians were accused of cultivating the sacred plain of Cirra. Aeschines aims to use that sacrilegious context to suggest that Demosthenes had been bribed by the culprits and polluted by an infectious impiety (Aeschin. 3.106-129). Likewise, such a dynamic was analysed in the first passage (Aeschin. 3.131), when the statesman disdained bad omens from sacrifices and put Athenian troops in danger.

[24] Aeschin. 3.156: «[…] Do not remind the wretched Thebans, who were exiled because of him and who have been given refuge in our city, of their incurable and irreparable sufferings, when their temples and children and tombs have been destroyed by Demosthenes' corruption and the king's gold (ἱερὰ καὶ τέκνα καὶ τάφους ἀπώλεσεν ἡ Δημοσθένους δωροδοκία καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν χρυσίον)». Tr. Carey (2000).

that the Athenian community had to protect itself from the cursed and cursing nature on Demosthenes.

Besides the expression τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριον, the idea is expressed by the hendiadys τὸν δαίμονα καὶ τὴν τύχην (Wankel, 1976: 908-909). Ἀτυχία surrounding Demosthenes is one of the strongest invectives employed by Aeschines in his discourse[25]. He aims to show the audience that not only Demosthenes' political choices but also his religious ones had caused him to inherit a polluting condition. Thus, τύχη gains high importance as a religious term representing the supernatural force that embodies the fate dictating human affairs. Despite Wankel's proposal in which δαίμων and τύχη would be synonymous concepts, semantic differences can be identified between the two terms. On the one hand, δαίμων represents a divine, almost anthropomorphic agent whose commitment was revenge for the sinful acts of Demosthenes, which is materialised in the curse devastating the Greek panorama. Therefore, δαίμων distinguishes the divinities responsible for catastrophes from those who look after the wellbeing of the community[26]. On the other hand, τύχη is the most abstract concept that treats this kind of curse, here personified by harassing Demosthenes and, by extension, every community that was in contact with him.

DINARCHUS, *AGAINST DEMOSTHENES*

During the last years of Alexander's reign, a scandal known as the Harpalus affair crushed Athens[27]. Harpalus, the Macedonian treasurer, had fled from Babylon to Athens due to the embezzlement of royal funds[28]. After the first rejection from Athens, he reappeared as a suppliant and the polis was forced to admit him. The general political situation became complicated, and after Alexander's magistrates replied to the extradition of Harpalus, fears of a potential retaliation increased within the Athenian citizenry[29]. Thus, they held an assembly where Demosthenes proposed that Harpalus should stay in prison and his money should be deposited in the Acropolis[30]. However, the situation worsened: Harpalus escaped to Crete, and half of the money disappeared. With this chaotic internal situation, suspicions proliferated of politicians accepting bribes. Then Demosthenes, attempting pre-emptive action, asked the Areopagus to begin an inquiry into the case. Unfortunately for him, the Council reported a list of culprits, with Demosthenes at the top[31].

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[25] Cf. Aeschin. 3.79, 115.
[26] E.g., D. 18.1-2, 324; 19.255-257.
[27] Cf. Worthington (1995: 41-77); Sealey (1993: 213-214); Worthington (2013: 310-324); Worthington (2014: 290-291).
[28] Cf. D.S. 17.108.4-7.
[29] Hyp. *Dem.* 8.
[30] Cf. Din. 1.89; Hyp. *Dem.* 9.
[31] Din. 1.4-6, 53. As a comic parody Timocles' *Delos* offers a catalogue of several politicians liable for corruption (Timocl. fr. 4 K-A).

In this context the speech *Against Demosthenes* (323 BC) was delivered. Dinarchus, a metic and speechwriter who acquired fame by his rhetorical skills, composed the accusation. Like previous propaganda against Demosthenes, part of the argument focuses on the failure of his political agenda and his behavioural vices[32]. Indeed, it is easy to observe how Dinarchus employs the invective patterns used by Aeschines in the speeches against his rival. This explains the occurrence of the expression ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος at the oration, which is combined with other typically Aeschinean arguments (Din. 1.77):

> διόπερ ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι δεῖ ταῦθ᾽ ὑμᾶς ὁρῶντας καὶ λογιζομένους, μὴ μὰ Δία τὸν πλείω χρόνον τῆς Δημοσθένους δωροδοκίας καὶ ἀτυχίας κοινωνεῖν, μηδ᾽ ἐν τούτῳ τὰς ἐλπίδας τῆς σωτηρίας ἔχειν, μηδ᾽ οἴεσθαι ἀπορήσειν ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ συμβούλων σπουδαίων, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῶν προγόνων λαβόντας ὀργὴν τὸν ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ κλέπτην εἰλημμένον καὶ προδότην, τὸν οὐκ ἀπεχόμενον τῶν εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἀφικνουμένων χρημάτων, τὸν εἰς τὰς δεινοτάτας ἀτυχίας ἐμβεβληκότα τὴν πόλιν, **τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριον** ἀποκτείναντας ἐξόριστον ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ποιῆσαι, καὶ μεταβαλέσθαι τὴν τῆς πόλεως τύχην ἐᾶσαι, καὶ προσδοκῆσαι τούτων γενομένων βέλτιον πράξειν.
> Athenians, if you recognize and consider these things, then, by Zeus, you should have no more to do with Demosthenes' venality and ill fortune. Do not place your hopes of safety on this man, and do not think you will lack brave men and wise advisers. Take up the anger of your ancestors, and have this robber and traitor, who has been caught in the act, executed and his body cast beyond the borders –this traitor, who does not keep his hands off the money brought into the city, who has brought the city to the most calamitous misfortunes, and who is **a plague for Greece**. Allow the fortune of the city to change, then look forward to a better lot. (Tr. Worthington, 2001).

The main argument is based on the notion of τύχη, the divinised concept which, in the Athenian imaginary from the 4th century BC, marked political affairs. For the orator, such dynamics of fate seem conditioned by the attitudes and activities of politicians, who could nourish prosperity or trigger the decline of the community. After providing some *exempla* from the past[33], the orator reconnects that thought with his slanders against Demosthenes. In general, the emotional strength of the text stresses the overall criticism, while attempting to stir hostile responses in the audience. The chain of the second person of plural imperatives and anaphoric repletion of negations also reinforces this perception. Thus, he tries to provoke rejection of the statesman (μή...κοινωνεῖν). Athenians are asked not to conflate two different charges: venality related to his alleged involvement in the Harpalus affair (τῆς Δημοσθένους

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[32] In fact, the speech is traditionally considered a *deuterologia*. This label explains the lack of narration and procedural evidence, which would have been exposed in the first oration declaimed by Estratocles (Din. 1.1-2). Cf. Alexiou (2020: 285).

[33] Din. 1.72-76.

δωροδοκίας); and misfortune, here defined with the substantive ἀτυχία. Here is the first connection with Aeschines' argumentation: the evil τύχη linked to Demosthenes, who had caused the ruin of Greece by failing to observe proper behaviour in several areas throughout his political career.

On the other hand, the speaker seeks to deter the jury from trusting Demosthenes. Considering Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and his theory of emotions, ἐλπίς could be a kind of prospective feeling, the opposite of fear, by which a positive resolution in the future is expected[34]. Nevertheless, the negation of any chance of salvation under Demosthenes' leadership (μηδ' ἐν τούτῳ τὰς ἐλπίδας τῆς σωτηρίας ἔχειν) would elicit entirely different emotions. Empty trust turns automatically into distrust. As a result, the negative shift of that emotion would turn into fear of possible catastrophes if Demosthenes were still an influential and active politician[35].

The bad τύχη linked to Demosthenes and the fear elicited about the possible civic outcome are well exploited in Aeschines by functioning as recurrent invective to stress the danger inherent in his rival[36]. Dinarchus takes up this idea of denigration, which reaches its climax with the expression τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος. Rhetorically, the enumeration in asyndeton and the *gradatio* stress the most significant wrongdoings of Demosthenes. Firstly, he is described as a thief, since he had been accused of taking twenty talents from Harpalus to facilitate his flight (κλέπτην). Secondly, his venality is compared to an act of treason, the highest charge against those attacking the city (προδότην)[37]. Finally, the speaker introduces the landscape of misfortunes for which Demosthenes is liable. The syntagma τὰς δεινοτάτας ἀτυχίας, amplified by the superlative, again highlights the vividness and emotional value of Dinarchus' prosecution. Just like Aeschines' *Against Ctesiphon*, the topic of ἀτυχία culminates in the irreligious expression τὸν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριον which, likewise, portrays Demosthenes both as a polluted being and as a polluting curse, whose political administration had led to the decline of Greece (Worthington, 1995: 246).

The final appeals to the audience are intensified through several rhetorical devices. Besides requesting the death penalty –which Demosthenes seems to have demanded himself in case of guilt (ἀποκτείναντας)–, the speaker evokes the anger of their forefathers and seeks to translate their hostile response to the jury. We must remember that Aristotle defines anger (ὀργή) as something painful, felt when anybody or anything akin to us is humiliated, which automatically triggers a desire

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[34] Arist. *Rh.* 1383a 5-8.
[35] Arist. *Rh.* 1382a 22-25.
[36] On Dinarchus' continuation of Aeschinean invective motifs, cf. Alexiou (2020: 283).
[37] In the second half of the 4th century BC, the charge of treason constituted another rhetorical tool for discrediting the opponent. For example, Aeschines' betrayal is the main topic in Demosthenes' *On the False Embassy* and *On the Crown*. Likewise, Lycurgus uses it against Leocrates to condemn his departure from Athens just after the Battle of Chaeronea (338 BC).

for revenge[38]. Thus, the misfortunes of Athens and Demosthenes' responsibility would elicit anger, an emotion that is only resolved by just punishment of the wrongdoer. Finally, one last similarity with Aeschines is found: the orator also asks the listeners to cast Demosthenes out, beyond the Attic boundaries, and hints that if this is not done, his pollution will still spread and harm the community (ἐξόριστος ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ποιῆσαι). The text nevertheless ends with a note about trust: Demosthenes' expulsion, together with the election of honourable politicians (ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ συμβού-λων σπουδαίων), will allow Athens to recover its past welfare and political magnifi-cence (μεταβαλέσθαι τὴν τῆς πόλεως τύχην ἐᾶσαι, καὶ προσδοκῆσαι τούτων γενο-μένων βέλτιον πράξειν)[39].

CONCLUSIONS

Following our analysis and commentary, we can reach several conclusions on both the semantics and the pragmatics of ἀλιτήριος. The irreligious formula ὁ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀλιτήριος develops a figurative meaning in which Demosthenes personi-fies a curse. The objective genitive τῆς Ἑλλάδος specifies the scope of his dangerous condition. Far from being employed as a simple form of political abuse, such a sense was sometimes strengthened by religious and ritual terminology, suggesting impiety as the attitude that activated the curse. The first text from Aeschines proves this: the sacrificial misconduct and disobedience to the divine omens caused the defeat at Chaeronea (Aeschin. 3.131). The outcome of the risks that Demosthenes took during his career is hinted at in the second example (Aeschin. 3.157). Although there is no explicit religious fault, it must be considered the discursive macrostructure not only for understanding the meaning of ἀλιτήριος, but also for the occurrence of τὸν δαίμονα καὶ τὴν τύχην[40]. Finally, Dinarchus recovers ἀλιτήριος to develop his anti-demosthenic propaganda, and codes it in a similar vein to Aeschines. The irreligious formula is combined with that ritual by which impure people were cast out of Athens as an apotropaic action (ἐξόριστος). In this way, the resemblance between the two orations allows us to establish an intertextual relationship between the orators, in which Dinarchus emulates those invective motifs deployed by Aeschines in his speech *Against Ctesiphon.* Thus, the strategy of discrediting Demosthenes with the irreligious term ἀλιτήριος seeks to humiliate the statesman by portraying him as

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[38] Cf. Arist. *Rh.* 1378a 30-32.

[39] The formulation recalls the epilogue of Demosthenes' *On the Crown* (D. 18.324).

[40] The most highlighted proofs of Demosthenes' religious misconduct are the acceptance of polluted money from Amphissians (Aeschin. 3.113-115, 129), his contempt towards divine signs (Aeschin. 3.130-131), and the celebration of Philip's assassination without fulfilling the ritual mourning after his daughter's death (Aeschin. 3.77).

responsible for the ruin of Greece. Despite the strength of this invective thought, such arguments are usually intensified with several rhetorical *topoi*, mainly by stirring hostile emotions in the audience.

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