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# ACCEPTING THE OMEN: EXTERNAL REFERENCE IN GREEK DECLAMATION

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Traditional accounts of Greek declamation paint this important imperial genre as a flight from the alleged impotence of Greek cities under Roman rule into a nostalgic fantasy of the autonomy of the classical past. But there is clear evidence of declaimers using their works to refer to the world outside the fiction, often to the immediate performance context, and above all to themselves. This paper examines examples from Aelius Aristides, Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists* and Polemo, and shows that such a practice facilitated vigorous and eloquent communication, while also allowing for any external message to be plausibly denied.

## Introduction

Λολλιανὸς δὲ ὁ Ἐφέσιος προῦστη μὲν τοῦ Ἀθήνῃσι θρόνου πρῶτος, προῦστη δὲ καὶ τοῦ Ἀθηναίων δήμου στρατηγήσας αὐτοῖς τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν ὅπλων, ἡ δὲ ἀρχὴ αὕτη πάλαι μὲν κατέλεγέ τε καὶ ἐξῆγεν ἐς τὰ πολέμια, νυνὶ δὲ τροφῶν ἐπιμελεῖται καὶ σίτου ἀγορᾶς. θορύβου δὲ καθεστηκότος παρὰ τὰ ἀρτοπώλια καὶ τῶν Ἀθηναίων βάλλειν αὐτὸν ὡρμηκότων Παγκράτης ὁ κύων ὁ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐν Ἰσθμῷ φιλοσοφήσας παρελθὼν ἐς τοὺς Ἀθηναίους καὶ εἰπὼν "Λολλιανὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀρτοπώλης, ἀλλὰ λογοπώλης" διέχεεν οὕτω τοὺς Ἀθηναίους, ὡς μεθεῖναι τοὺς

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I cite Hermogenes, *De statibus* according to the edition of Patillon (2009), [Hermogenes,] *De inventione* according to the edition of Patillon (2012) and Apsines, *Ars rhetorica* according to the edition of Spengel and Hammer (1894); following convention, I cite Polemo's two surviving declamations as 'A' and 'B'. *RG* refers to Walz (1832–6). All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

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λίθους διὰ χειρὸς αὐτοῖς ὄντας. σίτου δὲ ἐκ Θετταλίας ἐσπεπλευκότος καὶ χρημάτων δημοσίᾳ οὐκ ὄντων ἐπέτρεψεν ὁ Λολλιανὸς ἔρανον τοῖς αὐτοῦ γνωρίμοις, καὶ χρήματα συχνὰ ἠθροίσθη...

κατηγορῶν μὲν γὰρ τοῦ Λεπτίνου διὰ τὸν νόμον, ἐπεὶ μὴ ἐφοίτα τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις ἐκ τοῦ Πόντου σῖτος, ὧδε ἤκμασεν· "κέκλεισται τὸ στόμα τοῦ Πόντου νόμῳ καὶ τὰς Ἀθηναίων τροφὰς ὀλίγαι κωλύουσι συλλαβαί, καὶ ταὐτὸν δύναται Λύσανδρος ναυμαχῶν καὶ Λεπτίνης νομομαχῶν." (Philostr. *VS* 526, 527)

Lollianus of Ephesus was the first holder of the chair of rhetoric at Athens, and he also led the Athenian people as Hoplite General. Formerly this office involved holding the levy and leading the Athenians out to war, but these days it is concerned with the food supply and the grain market. When there was an uproar in the bakeries, and the Athenians were starting to stone Lollianus, Pancrates the Cynic, who after these events pursued philosophy at the Isthmus (of Corinth), came before the Athenians and said, 'It is words, not bread, that Lollianus sells', and in this way so diverted the Athenians that they let go of the stones that were in their hands. And when a shipment of grain had arrived from Thessaly and there was no money in the treasury to pay for it, Lollianus told his students to make contributions, and a great deal of money was collected...

When Lollianus was condemning Leptines for the law he had brought, since the Athenians had stopped receiving grain from Pontus, the climax of his speech was as follows: 'The mouth of the Pontus has been barred by a law, and Athens' food supply is being held back by a few syllables, and Leptines with his laws is as powerful as Lysander was with his ships.'

Did Lollianus use his speech condemning Leptines to talk about himself and his own position in Athens? That speech, of course, was a rhetorical exercise, specifically a declamation, a fictitious speech.[1] This declamation was set in the fourth century BC, and was inspired by Demosthenes' *Contra Leptinem*. It is imagined that Leptines' bill, in which it was proposed to abolish all exemptions from liturgies, has been ratified, and that Leucon of Bosporus, who had previously enjoyed such an exemption, has retaliated by stopping shipments of grain to Athens, as Demosthenes had warned might happen (Dem. 20.29–40).[2] Given that Lollianus as Hoplite General at Athens had faced at least one bread riot, and on another occasion had had to raise money from his own students when there was no public money to pay for a shipment of grain from Thessaly, it is tempting to see in this grain crisis faced by classical Athens a reflection of Lollianus' own

1 On Greek declamation generally see Russell (1983). Other accounts of the genre are to be found in Bowie (1970) 4–10; Reardon (1971) 104–14; Kennedy (1974); Anderson (1993) 55–64; Swain (1996) 91–6; Schmitz (1997) 10–12, 112–27, 198–205; and Korenjak (2000).

2 On this declamation scenario see Kohl (1915) 67, Rothe (1989) 48–50 and Civiletti (2002) 471–2.

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position. Yet while several scholars have noticed the coincidence between Lollianus' real-world occupation and his artistic output, they have generally remained cautious about seeing any intentional link between the two. Russell says (of this instance and of the possibility of the phenomenon in general): 'in default of clearer evidence, we should be sceptical';[3] Anderson follows Russell in saying that 'Lollianus does not actually seem to have used his rhetoric against Leptines in front of the real mob';[4] the commentaries of Rothe and Civiletti say simply that such a declamatory scenario might have been of particular interest to a man who was concerned with Athens' grain supply.[5] Only Pernot comes out in favour of a deliberate link.[6]

That there is a notable alignment here between life and art is not disputed. What is harder to decide, however, is whether (in the absence of a definitive statement by Philostratus) that alignment was likely to have been actually exploited by Lollianus. Yet what tips the balance in favour of a contemporary reference is the fact that this is not an isolated example. In this paper (which limits itself to second- and third-century Greek declamation), I examine five clear instances (clearer indeed than the Lollianus example) of declamations being employed in this way, and conclude that Greek declamation was probably frequently used to make specific reference to the world outside its own fiction, often to the immediate performance context, and above all to the author himself.[7] Such use of declamatory characters to talk about oneself would of course be a natural extension of a phenomenon already well known to scholarship, namely the Greek imperial habit of seeing the present in terms of the classical past,[8] and in the examples that follow we will see several instances in which the personae adopted by a sophist in declamation continue and enlarge upon those he used outside declamation also.

This conclusion matters since to many Greek declamation, with its painstaking recreation of the language and history of Classical Greece, seems, in Russell's phrase, to be 'escapism' from a world which offered 'no worthy theatre'.[9] To see such external

3 Russell (1983) 108.

4 Anderson (1986) 64.

5 Rothe (1989) 49; Civiletti (2002) 471.

6 Pernot (2007) 222–5.

7 Extant second- and third-century declamations: Luc. *Tyr.*, *Abd.*, *Phal.* 1, *Phal.* 2 (text in Macleod (1972–87), translation in Harmon (1913) and Harmon (1936)); Aristid. *Orr.* 5–16 (text in Lenz and Behr (1976), translation in Behr (1981–6)); two declamations by Polemo (text in Stefec (2016), translation and commentary in Reader (1996) (but see Stefec (2013) 113–14)); three declamations by Lesbonax (text and commentary in Kiehr (1906)); one perhaps by Herodes Atticus (text and commentary in Albini (1968)); one by Hadrian of Tyre (text in Hinck (1873)). For the second and third centuries as a (tolerably) coherent unit of analysis see Schmitz (1997) 33–4 and Whitmarsh (2005) 3 n. 1. For later Greek declamation and Latin declamation see below, nn. 57 and 58.

8 On this phenomenon see Anderson (1986) 33–6; Desideri (1992); Swain (1996) 65–100; Schmitz (1998); and Webb (2006).

9 Quotations from Russell (1983) 109 and Perry (1955) 295 respectively. Compare e.g. Marrou (1965) 304 ('tournait délibérément le dos au réel'); Bowie (1970) 28 ('flight from the present'); Anderson (1993) 101 ('nostalgic self-awareness'); Bost-Pouderon (2010) 99 ('une profonde nostalgie'). Like much Greek imperial literature, many declamations were written in an archaising and Atticising *Kunstsprache*. Schmid (1887–97) is the fundamental work on Atticism: see also Reardon (1971) 81–96; Kennedy (1983) 45–9; Anderson (1993) 86–100; Swain (1996)

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references in declamation, then, is to reimagine the genre as not so divorced from the real world after all.[10] I now examine five instances of declamations being used to speak to the world outside their own fiction.

## Aelius Aristides

My first example is confirmed by explicit ancient comment. In the autumn of AD 145, the orator Aelius Aristides, who had been suffering from a terrible illness for almost two years, was staying at the sanctuary of Asclepius in Pergamum, hoping for a cure. He had given up on rhetoric, and referred to this period of his life as a καθέδρα, a 'time of inactivity'.[11] In the fourth of his *Hieroi logoi*, he narrates some events that had occurred at the beginning of his stay in Pergamum. Even though, as he reminds us, his illness had forced him to give up rhetoric (*Or.* 50.14), he was nonetheless commanded by Asclepius in a dream to go to the Temple Stoa and declaim (*Or.* 50.14–15). Accordingly he went to the Stoa, where a man called Maximus who chanced to enter at the critical moment suggested a scenario. That scenario was 'While Alexander is in India, Demosthenes advises that it is time to act' (Ἀλεξάνδρου … ἐν Ἰνδοῖς ὄντος συμβουλεύει Δημοσθένης ἐπιθέσθαι τοῖς πράγμασιν, *Or.* 50.18 tr. Behr).[12] The proposed rebellion is historical fiction, but the known dates of Alexander's sojourn in India mean that the scenario must be set in 327–325 BC. Aristides comments 'so immediately I accepted the omen, both of Demosthenes speaking again and the fact that the words were about hegemony' (εὐθὺς μὲν οὖν ἐδεξάμην τὴν φήμην, τὸν Δημοσθένη τε αὖθις λέγοντα καὶ τοὺς λόγους ὄντας περὶ ἡγεμονίας, *Or.* 50.18). The notion of Demosthenes speaking 'again' (αὖθις) seems to refer to his relative political inactivity after Alexander's accession in 336;[13] 'hegemony' (ἡγεμονία) indicates the prospect of Athens recovering its position as a leading Greek power. In what sense did Aristides take these two elements of the declamation scenario as an omen? As regards 'speaking again', the parallel is surely that while both orators had been undergoing periods of unusual silence, both were about to return to the practice of oratory. As for 'the fact that the words were about hegemony' (τοὺς λόγους ὄντας περὶ ἡγεμονίας), this second part of the omen perhaps finds a parallel in that just as Athens had in prospect the recovery of its political leadership of Greece, so Aristides is about to begin the process of recovering a metaphorical hegemony in the field of oratory. Aristides certainly saw himself as metaphorically 'first' among the Greeks (πρῶτος, *Orr.*

43–64; Schmitz (1997) 67–96; and Whitmarsh (2005) 41–56. For classicism of theme see the statistics offered by Russell (1983) 107.

10 For previous work on external reference in Greek declamation see below, nn. 49 and 58.

11 For a reconstruction of this period of Aristides' life, see Behr (1968) 23–60, 121–3. Καθέδρα: *Orr.* 48.70, 49.44. For this sense of the word, see *LSJ* s.v. A.II.2. That Aristides had *rhetorical* inactivity in mind specifically is suggested by the choice of a term that could also refer to a chair of rhetoric (Behr (1968) 26).

12 On this scenario see Kohl (1915) 80–1. It is also found at Syrian. *In Hermog.* II.181.8–11.

13 For Demosthenes' inactivity in these years see Worthington (2000).

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33.32, 50.87), and political terms were sometimes used to describe a declaimer's status: the declaimer Herodes Atticus was 'the king of words' (τὸν βασιλέα τῶν λόγων, Philostr. *VS* 586, cf. also 598), while Lucian's Bad Teacher of Rhetoric holds out the same prospect (βασιλεὺς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, *Rh. Pr.* 11), and advises the would-be orator to exercise a 'tyranny' over his audiences (τυραννίς, *Rh. Pr.* 19); the metaphorical use of 'leadership' to describe pre-eminence in an intellectual sphere is also paralleled in an inscription from the 220s AD in which one Callaeschrus, a devotee of Plato, is described as a σοφίης ἡγήτωρ ('leader in wisdom').[14] This, then, is a clear if unusual example of a declamation (or at least a declamation scenario) used to make specific reference to the world outside its own fiction.

## Interlude: Philostratus as evidence

The next three examples are taken from Philostratus' *Vitae sophistarum*. As this text therefore provides a majority of the five main examples examined in this article, it is sensible at this point to consider its value as evidence. One concern we might have is that the blurring of art and life seems to be a characteristic interest of Philostratus, seen most obviously in his *Imagines*, where for instance the narrator affects not to know whether a bee in the depiction of Narcissus is real or painted (1.23.2). Is the blurring of declamation and life in our examples a further instance of this phenomenon, something that Philostratus has added to the raw materials at his disposal? This seems unlikely, for two main reasons.

First, while Philostratus provides the majority of our examples, we have enough evidence to suggest that the external references that we observe in the *Vitae sophistarum* were not unique. We have already looked at the case of Aristides' dream, and our fifth and final example will be that of Polemo's two extant declamations, where external reference can be inferred from the text itself. Among the further possible cases with which we will finish are two more from Aristides; there are also strong candidates on the Latin side, and very suggestive cases in later Greek declamation.[15] The predominance of Philostratean examples of this phenomenon for the second and third centuries makes our evidence for this period lopsided, to be sure, but the existence of examples before, after and roughly contemporary with the *Vitae sophistarum* provides grounds for confidence in Philostratus' testimony.

A second reason for confidence comes from an examination of Philostratus' working methods in the *Vitae sophistarum*. At a general level, the genre of this text, fairly characterised by Swain as a cross between pure biography and the blend of biography

14 For Callaeschrus see Puech (2002) 278–81. This phenomenon is found in the fourth century AD also. The inscription on the statue dedicated to the sophist Prohaeresius at Rome reportedly read 'Rome, the Queen of Cities, to the King of Words' (Η ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΥΣΑ ΡΩΜΗ ΤΟΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΝΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΛΟΓΩΝ, Eunap. *VS* 492), and Eunapius himself uses the image of the tyrant to describe Prohaeresius' standing (τυραννίς, 490) as well as that of Julian of Cappadocia (ἐτυράννει, 482).

15 Cf. below, nn. 57 and 58.

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and doxography exemplified by Diogenes Laertius, implies a significant commitment to truth.[16] Indeed we find Philostratus engaging in a reassuring range of truth-seeking practices, such as citing different types of evidence, giving alternative versions and correcting the errors of others: this is clearly a different sort of text from the *Vita Apollonii*, and Swain's overall judgement is that where data given in Philostratus can be independently verified, they are usually found to be correct.[17] Philostratus' personal involvement in the world he describes is also important: as Swain says, 'to distort the substance of the information received from his teachers and friends – members of the same cultural and economic class – would involve Philostratus in a disrespect of which he shows no sign'.[18] This pressure would have been particularly strong in the case of the declamations of Heliodorus and Hippodromus discussed below. Both sophists were more or less contemporary with Philostratus. Philostratus actually witnessed Heliodorus' declamation in person.[19] Meanwhile, his source for Hippodromus' declamation, performed before Megistias, seems to have been Megistias himself (*VS* 618); furthermore, Hippodromus had taught Philostratus' son-in-law (*VS* 617), and on one occasion in his narrative of Hippodromus' life, Philostratus actually slides into the first person;[20] he had also probably met Hippodromus' kinsman Philiscus at the court of Julia Domna (*VS* 622). While Philostratus' connection to the rather earlier Herodes Atticus was obviously more distant, Philostratus says that his account offers new material that he gathered from personal contacts: any substantive distortion of what he had been told might have run the risk of offending his informant.[21] Finally, where declamations had been written down, and had survived until the time when Philostratus wrote the *Vitae sophistarum* (something more likely in the case of the near-contemporary work of Hippodromus and Heliodorus), titles and quotations could be checked: Philostratus tells us that there were 'about thirty' (τριάκοντα ἴσως) declamations of Hippodromus still extant in his time (*VS* 620), and a phrase from a declamation of Herodes, one of my examples below, is described by Philostratus as 'that oft-repeated line' (τὸ θρυλούμενον ἐκεῖνο, *VS* 574).[22] So genre, social ties and the possibility of cross-checking together make it unlikely that Philostratus could have engaged in much finessing of the declamations he mentions in

16 Swain (1991) 151. I am indebted throughout this paragraph to Swain's article. For a narratological view of Philostratus see Whitmarsh (2004) 435–9.

17 Swain (1991) 158–9.

18 Swain (1991) 152–3.

19 Philostratus witnessed Heliodorus' appearance before Caracalla in 213 (*VS* 625–6, esp. ἡμῖν 'to us' in 626), and this sophist was still alive when Philostratus was writing (*VS* 627); Hippodromus' dates are roughly 156–230. For the biography of both figures see Janiszewski *et al.* (2015) 159, 176.

20 'We expected to hear a speech…' (ᾠόμεθα λόγου ἀκροάσεσθαι, *VS* 617).

21 New material: 'part of it unknown' (τὰ δὲ ἠγνοημένα, *VS* 566). Personal contacts: Ctesidemus the Athenian (*VS* 552) and 'my own teachers' (τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ διδασκάλων, *VS* 585).

22 For the writing down of declamations and other performances of rhetors, even relatively ad hoc performances, see Heath (2004) 255–76. Other instances in Philostratus of declamations preserved in writing: *VS* 512, 539, 579, 612, 621. Some of Dionysius of Miletus' students knew his declamations by heart (*VS* 523).

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the direction of external references. It is further reassuring that in one case that we can independently verify, Aristides' declamations on the Sicilian expedition (*Orr.* 5–6), Philostratus reports the scenario correctly (*VS* 584), and that for another declamation, performed by Aristides before Marcus, Philostratus actually refuses to give the title because of the proliferation of variants (*VS* 583): this is not the action of a man who is cavalier about declamation titles.[23]

It seems likely, then, that just as Philostratus' picture of a marked flourishing of declamatory culture in the second and third centuries was ultimately vindicated by epigraphic and numismatic evidence, despite relatively sparse attestation elsewhere in the literary record, and despite the doubts of Brunt, so too is the evidence he provides of external references in declamation essentially sound.[24]

## Heliodorus

My second example involves the sophist Heliodorus. After his colleague on an embassy to the emperor Caracalla had fallen ill, he tried to postpone his suit, and an official had to bring him into court 'against his will, dragging him by the beard' (ἄκοντά τε καὶ τοῦ γενείου ἕλκων, *VS* 626); his opening words to the emperor were a plea that he not harm his case by speaking alone. The emperor then unexpectedly called Heliodorus 'such a man as I have not yet encountered, a discovery of my own times' (οἷον οὔπω ἔγνωκα, τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ καιρῶν εὕρημα), and shook his cloak at him (*VS* 626). At first, Philostratus says, Heliodorus thought that the emperor was mocking him (διαπτύοι, *VS* 626), but in reality, this was a rather cryptic (maybe deliberately cryptic) expression of approval, and Caracalla went on to grant Heliodorus equestrian status. Reassured by this happy turn of events, the sophist was then bold enough to invite the emperor to hear him declaim. Possibly he was too bold, and missed the latent menace of the emperor's odd behaviour, for the emperor replied that Heliodorus should declaim immediately, and proposed the scenario 'Demosthenes on trial for cowardice after he had broken down in a speech before Philip' (ὁ Δημοσθένης ἐπὶ τοῦ Φιλίππου ἐκπεσὼν καὶ δειλίας φεύγων, *VS* 626).[25] This title refers to an incident in 346 BC, when, according to Aeschines, Demosthenes broke down while addressing Philip on an embassy at Pella.[26] This scenario clearly figures the context in which the declamation is performed: the ambassador Heliodorus,

23 This reticence is notable given Philostratus' practice elsewhere of reporting variant traditions without expressing a preference (e.g. *VS* 559, 585): perhaps he feared offending one of his informants if he came out against their version on this occasion (though ancient historians often record variants without judgement in this way).

24 Doubts: Brunt (1994). Epigraphic and numismatic evidence: Schmitz (1997) 14–17 and Puech (2002).

25 Such a change of temper on the part of the emperor is quite consistent with Philostratus' image of Caracalla elsewhere: see Civiletti (2002) 653.

26 Aeschin. 2.34–5. This scenario is also found in the scholia to Hermogenes' *De statibus* (*RG* VII.442.1–2). Cf. Kohl (1915) 68.

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who tried repeatedly to postpone his appearance before the emperor, has been figured as the orator Demosthenes accused of cowardice on his embassy, and Caracalla is using the declamation to ridicule the sophist.[27]

## Hippodromus

My third example is Hippodromus' declamation on 'The magician who had resolved to die when he had been unable to kill another magician who had committed adultery' (τὸν μάγον τὸν ἀποθνήσκειν ἀξιοῦντα ἐπειδὴ μὴ ἐδυνήθη ἀποκτεῖναι μάγον μοιχόν, *VS* 619).[28] This scenario is seen by Rothe as yet another example of 'the completely unrealistic, indeed absurd, legal cases that were declaimed in the imperial period'.[29] And at first glance, to be sure, the interest in such a scenario would appear to be purely artistic: a chance for a dramatic *prosangelia* (an imaginary sort of case in which a man denounced himself and sought permission to die), for parallelism and contrast between the two magicians, and for the paradox of the magician who couldn't do magic.[30] Yet for this declamation, Philostratus' unusually full account of the context in which it was performed (*VS* 618–19) reveals once more a close connection between declamation and life.

On arriving in Smyrna for the first time, Hippodromus enters the class of a distinguished local sophist (τις … τῶν ἐπιφανῶν, *VS* 618), Megistias, without explaining himself. Having thus secured the rhetor's attention, he at first refuses to state his business, waiting until he and Megistias are alone,[31] and then proposes to declaim himself, even going as far as to demand (with obvious symbolism) that Megistias swap his 'gown suitable for public speaking' (δημηγορικὸν ἱμάτιον, *VS* 619 tr. Wright) for his own traveller's cloak.[32] This is highly provocative behaviour. Megistias duly proposes 'The magician who had resolved to die when he had been unable to kill another magician who had committed adultery' (*VS* 619).

Now this scenario, however fantastical, has clear parallels with Hippodromus' meeting with Megistias. In both the real world and the proposed fiction, we have two pairs of professionals, rhetoricians and magicians: the figuring of rhetoricians in terms of

27 Anderson (1986) 53 calls the choice 'appropriate', though he also refers to it as an 'irrelevant re-enaction of history'. It is just possible that Caracalla is also provocatively figuring himself as the terrifying Philip here, for it was not unknown for emperors to be so figured (Aristid. *Or.* 32.29; Philostr. *VA* 7.1–2, 7.37).

28 A reconstruction of the full background to the scenario is attempted by Rothe (1989) 241.

29 '[D]ie völlig unrealistischen, sogar absurden Rechtsfälle, über die in der Kaiserzeit deklamiert wurde', Rothe (1989) 241 (English translation mine).

30 For *prosangelia* see Russell (1983) 35–7.

31 How long he waits depends on how we take διακωδωνίσας (*VS* 619). If we follow LSJ (s.v. III), the verb means 'dismiss by the sound of a bell', and Megistias sends his students away immediately so as to be able to speak with Hippodromus; other authorities, however, take this verb as meaning 'test, examine', and believe that Megistias finishes his lesson first. Certainty is impossible (for the debate see Civiletti (2002) 639 and Rothe (1989) 239), though for Megistias calmly to finish his teaching before speaking to the upstart would represent a deliciously prickly response to the intrusion on his lesson.

32 For the ἱμάτιον as the garment typically used by sophists for their performances see Civiletti (2002) 639–40.

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magicians is natural when we recall the traditional association between rhetoric and magic.[33] In both the real world and the fiction the relative status of the two professionals is in question: one magician resists the other's attempts to kill him, while Hippodromus, an unimpressive-looking newcomer in Smyrna ('rather boorish to look at', ἀγροικότερος τε ὢν τὸ εἶδος, *VS* 618), seeks to win the respect of an established sophist.[34] But Megistias is doing more than simply using the present context as inspiration: there is also something rather aggressive about the scenario he has suggested. Hippodromus is being asked to play the part of the lesser of the two professionals, the magician who could not kill his colleague, and who was so distressed by this that he wanted to die; Megistias casts himself as the other magician, impervious to his rival's skills. Moreover, he has skilfully placed the upstart in a catch-22 situation: either he tries to meet the challenge, but in doing so has to play the part of a failed and suicidal professional, or he refuses this demeaning suggestion, but thereby fails the challenge. As it turns out, Hippodromus declaims so successfully that he wins the admiration of both Megistias and 'the cultured men in Smyrna' (τῶν κατὰ τὴν Σμύρναν πεπαιδευμένων, *VS* 619). The one quotation that Philostratus gives from the declamation, and the one at which Megistias 'could not contain himself for admiration' (ἐξέπεσεν ἑαυτοῦ ὑπὸ θαύματος), is 'but myself at least I can [kill]' (ἀλλ' ἐμαυτόν γε δύναμαι, *VS* 619): perhaps Hippodromus adopted, or aimed to adopt, the specific strategy within his declamation of abasing himself to such an extent that Megistias felt compelled to yield.[35] The scenario 'The magician who had resolved to die when he had been unable to kill another magician who had committed adultery', then, turns out to figure the circumstance in which it was suggested, and becomes a sophisticated vehicle for the contestation of status between sophists.

## Alexander Clay-Plato

My fourth example is Alexander Clay-Plato's Scythian declamation (*VS* 571–4). Alexander is one of the sophists about whose career Philostratus gives us a relatively large amount of information. One of the leitmotifs of that career in Philostratus is travel. We hear that Alexander practised in Antioch, Rome, Tarsus and – 'by Zeus' (νὴ Δία) – the whole of Egypt, where he met the mysterious naked philosophers (*VS* 571).[36] When he delivered his declamation on the Scythians he was making what Philostratus explicitly describes as

33 For the connection between rhetoric and magic in Gorgias, Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle and the Second Sophistic see de Romilly (1975); for sophists' interest in magic see Civiletti (2002) 588.

34 There may be a further pun involved in figuring Meg-istias as μάγος ('mag-ician'). For the sophists' fondness for nicknames see Heath (2004) 40–1.

35 Such a strategy would fit with Philostratus' account of Hippodromus' modesty and decorous behaviour towards his seniors (*VS* 616–17). Philostratus' phrasing ('having begun the scenario and having said', ἀρξαμένου δὲ τῆς ὑποθέσεως καὶ εἰπόντος) leaves it unclear whether these were the opening words of Hippodromus' attempt at the declamation. For scholars' differing opinions and translations see Civiletti (2002) 641.

36 One 'Alexander the Rhetor' (Ἀλέξανδρος ῥήτωρ) turns up in an inscription on a statue base of the second or third century from Memphis, dedicating the statue 'to the most fertile Nile' (Νίλωι γονιμωτάτωι). See Puech (2002)

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one of his few visits to Athens, that centre of sophistic activity. Even this visit, however, was a mere stop on the way to Pannonia, and the journey from the East (perhaps from his home in Seleucia) is explicitly described as a long one. Its length is also foregrounded by the tragic idiom Alexander uses to announce his stay in Athens, 'Here let us bend the knee in rest' (ἐνταῦθα … γόνυ κάμψωμεν, *VS* 571; cf. [A.] *PV* 32 οὐ κάμπτων γόνυ of not being able to rest); his preliminary remarks too include (along with an encomium of Athens) an apology for not having visited the city sooner. Even Herodes gets in the mood by arriving in an Arcadian hat, which Philostratus interprets as a sign that he too had just arrived from a journey. It is hardly surprising, then, that the scenario proposed concerns travel: 'A man encourages the Scythians to return to their former itinerant lifestyle after they fall ill living in cities' (ὁ τοὺς Σκύθας ἐπανάγων ἐς τὴν προτέραν πλάνην, ἐπειδὴ πόλιν οἰκοῦντες νοσοῦσι, *VS* 572).[37] Given that this title puts Alexander in a position to praise the wandering lifestyle, it looks like a friendly invitation for him to valorise his own mode of life.[38] If, as Alexander says in the course of his declamation, waters that keep on the move are sweeter (*VS* 573), so too is Alexander the better for his wandering lifestyle; one of the quotations from the declamation reveals that the fictitious speaker was a Scythian himself (*VS* 573), making self-reference easier still. The scenario chosen for Herodes' response ('The wounded in Sicily beg the departing Athenians to kill them with their own hands' (οἱ ἐν Σικελίᾳ τρωθέντες … αἰτοῦντες τοὺς ἀπανισταμένους ἐκεῖθεν Ἀθηναίους τὸ ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀποθνήσκειν, *VS* 574) also seems to have relevance to the context, particularly the 'oft-repeated line' (τὸ θρυλούμενον ἐκεῖνο) mentioned by Philostratus, 'Ah, Nicias, ah, father, so may you see Athens' (ναὶ Νικία, ναὶ πάτερ, οὕτως Ἀθήνας ἴδοις): such words could easily have been addressed to the man who had only now, at long last, fulfilled the expectations of the Athenians and visited their city, and indeed it is notable that Alexander is said to have spoken up at this point, which seems to have been the end and therefore perhaps the climax of the declamation. Once again, declamation proves to be a sophisticated vehicle for social interaction among sophists, albeit less aggressively than in the case of Hippodromus and Megistias.

46–7. This is tantalising, but as Puech rightly says, 'la banalité du nom interdit toute tentative d'identification' (46).

37 On this scenario see Kohl (1915) 14–15; it also appears at Aps. *Rh.* 228.10–11, 230.6, 233.17–18, 247.17–19 and 253.3–4; Hippodromus also performed a scenario referred to by Philostratus as 'The Scythians' (οἱ Σκύθαι, *VS* 620). Quite a number of Alexander's known declamations in fact seem to have some connection with travel. Besides his declamation advising those who live in the mountains to migrate to the plains, presumably similar to his Scythian declamation (*VS* 575), Philostratus also reports another scenario in which he spoke in favour of Darius bridging the Danube, and a third in which he sought to dissuade Xerxes from making a second expedition against Greece (*VS* 575), though this last scenario puts the speaker in the position of arguing *against* migration; among the unplaced quotations from his oratory, too, it is notable that one is flowery praise of the land of Arabia (*VS* 574).

38 To figure oneself as a Scythian was of course far from unparalleled: Lucian sees a reflection of his itinerant career in stories about Scythians (*Scyth.*), and there is also something more than a little Lucianic in the Scythian's probing questions about Greek culture in *Anach.* and *Tox.*

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## Polemo

The examples so far have all been excerpts mentioned in passing, but our analysis need not be confined to fragments. For external reference also occurs, I believe, in the surviving pair of Marathonian declamations by the famous declaimer Polemo. The scenario for this pair of speeches is as follows. It is imagined that there is a custom that, after a battle, the funeral oration over the dead is given by the father of the best fighter from among those who died. In these declamations, the fathers of two Greek casualties at Marathon make the case for their sons, Cynegirus and Callimachus, of whom the latter was leader of the Athenian army (polemarch). Cynegirus had died when his hands were cut off as he clung to a retreating Persian ship; Callimachus had been killed by enemy projectiles, though his body had somehow remained upright, even in death.

It is my contention that the fates of these two fighters evoked the sufferings of Polemo himself, who fought and lost a lengthy battle against a wasting disease of the joints.[39] Such a self-identification is bold, to be sure, but hardly beyond the arrogant Polemo;[40] furthermore, the use of illness and, in particular, spectacular illness as part of one's public identity was of course a strategy also used extensively by another, slightly later, declaimer, Aristides, and, in a later century, Libanius.[41] 'With his joints hardening' (λιθιώντων αὐτῷ τῶν ἄρθων), Polemo famously wrote to Herodes Atticus that, albeit metaphorically, 'I have no hands' (χεῖρας οὐκ ἔχω, *VS* 543), just as Cynegirus lost his hands. And just as Callimachus in these declamations is imagined as struggling to stay standing (B3, 11, 12, 14, 15, 38, 47, 53–6, 58, 60), so standing too must have been difficult for Polemo: in the same letter to Herodes, he said 'I have no feet' (πόδες οὐκ εἰσί μοι, *VS* 543), and we read in Philostratus that Polemo had to be carried in a litter to his performances (*VS* 537); presumably his habit of standing for the high points of his speeches (*VS* 537), and therefore remaining seated for the majority of the time, is to be traced to foot trouble

39 Compare den Dulk and Langford (2014) 221 n. 46, who say suggestively with reference to Polemo's suicide that '[n]oble death was also a topic on which Polemo gave public discourses'. Reader (1996) 39–40 considers the stress on the severed hands and upright corpse in Polemo's version of this familiar narrative to be uniquely Polemonian: a deliberate shaping of the story on Polemo's part to bring it closer to his own sufferings could explain this observation. On Polemo's self-presentation generally see Gleason (1995) 21–54, esp. 21–9.

40 Polemo was reportedly 'so arrogant that he talked down to cities, talked to rulers without any hint of inferiority, and talked to gods from a position of equality' (ὑπέρφρων … οὕτω … ὡς πόλεσι μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ προὔχοντος, δυνασταῖς δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ ὑφειμένου, θεοῖς δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἴσου διαλέγεσθαι, *VS* 535), and when putting up a statue of Demosthenes, gave patronymic and demotic for the greatest orator Greece had ever known, but referred to himself simply as Polemo, as if he were the more famous of the two (Puech (2002) 399–400).

41 See Anderson (1986) 30–1 for sophists' 'bizarre privations'. Aristides' sufferings are narrated in his *Hieroi logoi* (*Orr.* 47–52): on these see Petsalis-Diomidis (2010); Israelowich (2012); and Downie (2013). For Libanius see Leppin (2011) 428. For conquering physical pain as an (alternative) strategy of self-presentation in this period see Francis (1995). One final point of contact between Polemo and Callimachus was that the former was also – in name at least – a general, holding the office of *stratēgos*, Smyrna's senior magistracy (Amandry and Burnett (2015) no. 1972). For the generalship at Smyrna see Cadoux (1938) 194.

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also, for the usual procedure was to deliver the *prolalia* seated but to stand throughout the declamation itself.[42]

Both the sophist and his subjects show similar attitudes to their physical sufferings. Polemo urged his doctors when treating him to 'dig and carve in the stone-quarries of Polemo' (ὀρύττειν καὶ τέμνειν τὰς Πολέμωνος λιθοτομίας, *VS* 543 tr. Wright),[43] while Callimachus taunted the Persians, saying: 'Pelt me; do not hold back. Why are you not pelting me? I demand missiles' (βάλλετε καὶ μὴ φείδεσθε. τί δ' οὐ βάλλετε; ἐγὼ δέομαι βελῶν, B56). Both the sophist and his subjects also showed extraordinary obstinacy. Polemo famously thought of declaiming even as he was being buried alive ('give me a body and I will declaim', δότε μοι σῶμα καὶ μελετήσομαι, *VS* 544), just as Callimachus even when pierced through with arrows went on 'fighting without a soul' (χωρὶς ψυχῆς μεμαχημένον), a 'corpse stronger than death' (νεκρὸν θανάτου κρείττονα, B2; for the same insistent idea cf. B1, 11, 12, 47, 50, 53, 55, 60); the same resistance to physical necessity can be found in Cynegirus too, who 'rebuked his nature for being feeble, and demanded his hands back from it' (ὡς ὀλίγῃ κατεμέμφετο τῇ φύσει καὶ χεῖρας ἀπῄτει παρ' αὐτῆς, A11). Polemo and his subjects are also specifically concerned not to be seen to fail: 'Hurry, hurry – may the sun not see me silent' (ἔπειγε, ἔπειγε, μὴ γὰρ ἴδοι με σιωπῶντα ἥλιος), cried Polemo as he was buried (*VS* 544); Callimachus stayed standing as the Persians were sailing away, 'so that [he] might not fall in the presence of any foreign witnesses' (ὡς ἂν ἐπὶ μηδενὸς μάρτυρος ἀλλοτρίου πέσῃς, B14). Obviously Polemo's death happened after these declamations were delivered, but it is plausible to assume that Polemo's behaviour at his death demonstrated traits of character that he had shown throughout his life.

These speeches contain several striking opportunities to underline the identification of Polemo and his subjects in performance.[44] Consider for example Callimachus' *aristeia*, which is so insistently presented in these speeches as a feat not just of not falling, but also of standing. Given that, as Philostratus tells us, standing was difficult for Polemo, but that he nonetheless did so for the high points of his performances, there arises the tantalising possibility that by bringing himself to stand for the high points (of which there are many) of these speeches, Polemo underwent and performed the sufferings of Callimachus before the very eyes of his audience. If such an identification was made, then a line like Callimachus' reported last words to himself late in the second speech – 'stand unmoved,

42 Connolly (2001) 85 notes the pain that standing in performance must have caused Polemo. Philostratus also, however, in the same chapter refers to Polemo as sometimes stamping the ground during his speeches: presumably this habit dates from a time before his illness had begun to make standing difficult, or occurred only after Polemo had already stood up for a high point, in which case it would likely have been another instance of the sophist making a show of overcoming physical limitations (den Dulk (2014) 228). For the convention of standing for the declamation itself, see Clarke (1968) and Vössing (2003).

43 Anderson (1986) 70 (supported enthusiastically by Civiletti (2002) 501) suggests that 'perhaps he saw himself as giving orders to the Athenian prisoners in Syracuse': if so, this would be another instance (albeit brief) of Polemo figuring himself as a character from classical history.

44 On theatricality in declamation see Connolly (2001) esp. 85–6.

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Callimachus' (στῆθι, Καλλίμαχε, ἀκίνητος, B58) – delivered by a barely standing Polemo, could have been positively electric.[45] Again, this sort of behaviour would not have been unprecedented. For making a show of overcoming physical impairments to declaim we could look to the career of Aristides, who proudly talks of the *panēgyris* ('national assembly', as Behr translates it) that came to his house to hear him speak when he was ill ('contending right from my bed', αὐτόθεν ἐκ κλίνης τοὺς ἀγῶνας ποιουμένῳ, *Or.* 47.64), and who describes the breathing problems that he had to overcome at the start of a performance (*Or.* 50.17); for the idea that the orator's challenge is as great as that of his subjects, we might compare Aristides' claim in his *Panathenaicus* that the rhetorical challenge of adequately describing the Battle of Salamis is as great as the battle itself (*Or.* 1.152).

A second opportunity for underlining the identification of sophist and subject in performance concerns Cynegirus' and Polemo's hands.[46] Right at the end of his speech, Cynegirus' father says to the Athenians, 'I stretch forth hands to you that are like those lying fallen on your behalf' (χεῖρας ὑμῖν ὁμοίας προτείνω ταῖς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κειμέναις, A49). Now while the point of comparison (ὁμοίας) is explained in what follows – Cynegirus' father puts his hands on his son's tomb, as his son put his hands on a Persian ship – at the moment in the speech at which Cynegirus' father utters these words that point of comparison is not yet clear: given that the speaker before their eyes famously had a wasting sickness of the joints, the audience could have heard χεῖρας ὑμῖν ὁμοίας προτείνω ταῖς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κειμέναις as 'I, [Polemo] stretch out hands to you that are similar to those [of Cynegirus] that fell': similar, that is, in their state of ill health.[47] These are the moments at which the identification of the two pairs of hands could have been most to the fore, but there are others: at A42 Cynegirus is described as 'giving up someone else's hand, as it were' (ὥσπερ ἀλλοτρίαν χεῖρα διδούς), in a clever reuse of this Isocratean formula; at A39 we hear the suggestive line 'if we had such hands as you had' (εἰ τοιαύτας χεῖρας εἴχομεν οἵας σύ).[48]

45 In bringing such suffering so graphically before the eyes of his audience, Polemo's performance might also perhaps have had more than a little in common with the spectacle of Galen's gory vivisections, for which see Gleason (2009).

46 On the attention paid to hands in a rhetorical performance see [Cic.] *Rhet. Her.* 3.15.26–7; Cic. *De or.* 3.220; Quint. 11.3.85–124.

47 If Polemo were to have actually stretched out his hands at this moment or others during the performance, the double meaning would have been obvious: the deictics in τοῦτο ἦν τὸ δόρυ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἡ Κυναιγείρου δεξιά, τοῦτο δᾶδες τῶν θεῶν χεῖρες ἐλευθέριον σέλας φέρουσαι ('this – the right hand of Cynegirus – was the spear of Athena; this – the hands that brought the light of freedom – was the fire-brands of the gods', A36) might have offered a particularly appropriate moment for a gesture. If Polemo's hands appeared visibly diseased, so much the better.

48 The equation is complex by this stage, to be sure (strictly three sets of hands are now involved), but the similarities would have been more salient if reinforced visually, and would have been easier to spot after the more obvious points of similarity between Polemo and his subjects earlier in the speech.

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## Further examples

How common was such external reference? Given our limited information about the context in which a particular declamation was performed, the instances that we can discern today may well be only the tip of the iceberg. I now attempt to glimpse the underside of that iceberg, by examining a number of other suggestive alignments between declamation and life in the cases of Polemo and Aristides. In view of the clear cases that we have examined above, it seems quite likely that some of these alignments were also put to use by the declaimers for self-reference.[49]

We start with Polemo, given his self-referential technique in his extant declamations.[50] Philostratus records three declamations delivered by this sophist that centred around *prosangelia*, a case in which, as we said above, the speaker seeks permission to die (*VS* 542–3):[51] given the use that Polemo makes of his illness in his extant declamations on Marathon, it seems quite possible that these *prosangeliai* also made capital out of his illness or coming death. Furthermore, given that Polemo could make reference to his illness in declamation, it is likely that he could have made reference to other aspects of his life: indeed, it was probably hard to avoid self-reference in his 'Demosthenes

49 I find some of the details of the examples in Pernot (2007) problematic. The first two examples, both taken from Cassius Dio (59.20.6, 67.12.5), are rhetorical denunciations of tyrants (in this instance actually in *progymnasmata* (preliminary exercises) rather than full declamations). These are understood by Caligula in the first instance and Domitian in the second as directed at themselves, and are accordingly punished. But the emperors' readings in both cases are taken as indications of bad character: is it not precisely the point that only paranoid emperors such as Caligula and Domitian would see allusions to themselves that are not really there in these texts? Pernot's answer, that it is the emperors' excessive response (exile, in one case, and the death penalty in the other) that is at fault, while their reading of the rhetoric is sound, is not totally convincing. Pernot's third example is the case of Lollianus that we have already considered: this is surely his strongest case, especially in light of the verbal parallels between declamation and life that he identifies in the text of Philostratus. Pernot's fourth example, however, does not concern a declamation, but rather involves Demosthenes' *Contra Leptinem* being used to refer to contemporary life (*VS* 601): this can only be considered suggestive. The final example Pernot cites is found in Aristides' first declamation on the Sicilian expedition, in which the speaker argues that enlargement will actually strengthen Athens' empire, as the different subject peoples will fear one another, like slaves in a large household (Aristid. *Or.* 5.39). Pernot hears in this passage an unflattering reference to the Roman Empire and to the classic imperial tactic of divide-and-rule. Is this credible? At the point at which this remark comes, the audience has just been through thirty-eight chapters of dense Aristidean argumentation: is such a brief reference really enough to trigger a jump to the present day? Even Pernot sounds a little unsure, conceding that 'nulla obblighi a riferire tale ragionamento alla situazione contemporanea' (228).

50 Civiletti (2002) 493, discussing one of Polemo's lost declamations, talks of the 'glorioso passato classico, che non mancava certo di caratteri ed episodi da prendere a modello di un'esistenza continuamente in bilico tra realtà e finzione libresca'.

51 'Xenophon resolving to die after Socrates' death' (ὁ Ξενοφῶν ὁ ἀξιῶν ἀποθνήσκειν ἐπὶ Σωκράτει), and 'three (declamations on) Demosthenes, (first) bringing himself to trial after Chaeronea, and (second) pretending to consider himself deserving of the death penalty after the Harpalus affair …' (οἱ Δημοσθένεις τρεῖς, ὁ μετὰ Χαιρώνειαν προσαγγέλλων ἑαυτὸν καὶ ὁ δοκῶν θανάτου ἑαυτῷ τιμᾶσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς Ἁρπαλείοις …). The third Demosthenic declamation that Philostratus mentions, 'Demosthenes advising the Athenians to flee on their triremes as Philip approaches' (ὁ ξυμβουλεύων ἐπὶ τῶν τριήρων φεύγειν ἐπιόντος μὲν Φιλίππου), is also close to a *prosangelia*, for such a proposal would have incurred the death penalty, 'Aeschines having ratified a law that anyone who made mention of the war should be killed' (νόμον δὲ Αἰσχίνου κεκυρωκότος ἀποθνήσκειν τὸν πολέμου μνημονεύσαντα).

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swearing that he had not received a bribe of 50 talents' (Δημοσθένης ἐξομνύμενος ταλάντων πεντήκοντα δωροδοκίαν, *VS* 538), given that he is attacked for venality in contemporary epigram, and recorded as having been accused of embezzling the greater part of quarter of a million drachmae (*VS* 533).[52]

Similarly suggestive alignments can be found in Aristides. In his *Concerning a Remark in Passing* (Περὶ τοῦ παραφθέγματος, *Or.* 28), Aristides lists four characters from classical history that he has played in his declamations:[53] Demosthenes, Miltiades, Themistocles and Aristides the Just, the famously upright Athenian politician of the fifth century BC (28.6). The first three names are unsurprising: Demosthenes features in countless declamation scenarios, and Miltiades and Themistocles are not uncommon.[54] But Aristides the Just is almost unheard of as a character in declamation: he features once in Hermogenes' *De statibus*, and once in the somewhat obscure *prolegomena* to this work, in both cases in scenarios that are said to be implausible, for they involve accusing this proverbially just character of theft.[55] So it is striking that Aelius Aristides mentions declamations he has delivered as Aristides the Just, especially in a list of characters that are meant to exemplify his declamatory activity. Given the examples of self-reference in declamation we have seen so far, we might well wonder whether Aelius Aristides ever exploited the homonymy between himself and his fictitious subject in such declamations: he does after all explicitly draw attention to their shared name, referring to Aristides the Just as 'homonymous' (ὁμώνυμος).

But the possibility that Aelius Aristides made reference to himself through the character of Aristides the Just becomes a probability when we consider the use that he makes of his namesake elsewhere in his oeuvre. In his *To Plato: In Defence of the Four* (Πρὸς Πλατώνα ὑπὲρ τῶν τεττάρων, *Or.* 3), he makes an explicit comparison between himself and his fifth-century BC namesake (described as ὁμώνυμος again), arguing that his pursuit of oratory is even purer than that of the fifth-century Athenian politician, as he refuses fees or the *sportulae* of patrons (3.99). Meanwhile in his *To Plato: In Defence of Oratory* (Πρὸς Πλάτωνα ὑπὲρ ῥητορικῆς, *Or.* 2), in defending his own profession of oratory, he cites Aristides the Just as a clear example of a good orator (2.346–61); the homonymy is obviously meant to be suggestive. So given the use that Aelius Aristides makes of Aristides the Just in talking about himself in his non-declamatory speeches, what more natural explanation for his

52 On the parallel see Anderson (1986) 34. On venality see Ammian. A.P. 11.180–1.

53 The term he uses is ὑποκρίνομαι: strictly, this verb does not necessarily refer solely to declamations, but might also include *prosōpopoiiai*.

54 Miltiades: Aps. *Rh.* 299.15–300.3 (= 301.12–16, 310.9–16, 323.9–12); *RG* IV.720.1–3 (= Syrian. *In Hermog.* II.165.4–6), V.76.1–2. Themistocles: Lib. *Decl.* 9–10; Him. *Or.* 5; Aps. *Rh.* 220.16–19, 305.13–18 (= 323.10–12); [Hermog.] *Inv.* III.6.20; *RG* IV.185.21–5 (= *RG* VII.165.3–6; Syrian. *In Hermog.* II.42.18–19); *RG* IV.102.4–15 (= *RG* IV.122.27–123.2, V.44.14–22, VII.24.21–25; *Prolegomenōn Syllogē* 211.24–212.1), IV.122.7–9, IV.567.10–12 (= Syrian. *In Hermog.* II.121.24–122.1), V.44.11–14, V.75.14–15, VIII.389.17–18; Syrian. *In Hermog.* II.163.9–11.

55 Hermog. *Stat.* I.18.2–3; *Prolegomenōn Syllogē* 208.16–18. Another reason for Aristides the Just's absence from declamation is probably the poverty of the historical tradition, which is largely limited to Plutarch's rather thin *Life of Aristides*.

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extremely unusual declamations on this figure than that these too exploited the homonymy? A second such case in (Aelius) Aristides concerns his lost declamation *Contra Leptinem* (*Or.* 4.3). Given Aristides' well-publicised fight for exemption from liturgies,[56] it would be very natural to hear in Demosthenes' defence of exemptions an echo of Aristides' own position; indeed, we know from Philostratus of an instance of Demosthenes' own *Contra Leptinem* being used to refer to real-life exemptions (*VS* 601).

In addition to these further second- and third-century Greek examples, there are also a number of suggestive cases in Latin declamation and in later Greek declamation. When Porcius Latro was declaiming before Augustus about adopting a grandchild born of a prostitute (*Controv.* 2.4), the statement 'that man is now by adoption being raised from the depths and inserted into the nobility' (*iam iste ex imo per adoptionem nobilitati inseritur*, 2.4.13) was heard by some as a reference to Augustus' adoption of the humble Agrippa's grandsons.[57] The most commonly alleged case in later Greek declamation is that of Lib. *Decl.* 1, where the figure of Socrates is said to stand for the emperor Julian.[58] Other possible examples are to be found in the declamations of the sixth-century Gazan orator Choricius. The *prolaliai* and *theoriai* that were prefaced to these works often foreground similarities between the declaimer and his subject (e.g. chapter 5 of the *Theoria* to *Decl.* 12, chapter 6 of the *Theoria* to *Decl.* 5), and *Decl.* 12, in which Choricius plays the part of an orator and which ends with the fictitious orator asking as a reward for his public service that 'your sons attend my school' (τοὺς ὑμετέρους υἱεῖς εἰς ἐμὴν φοιτῆσαι παλαίστραν, 12.116), practically cries out to be read self-referentially.[59]

## Conclusions

We have numerous instances of declamations being used to make clear and in some cases fairly detailed reference to the world outside their fictions, most often to the declaimer himself and his immediate performance context. We are now in a position to draw some provisional conclusions about this phenomenon.

(i) We now have some idea of the specific techniques used to effect such external reference. The use of metaphor is clear. In the scenario proposed by Hippodromus to Megistias, the literal magicians of the declamation stand for metaphorical 'magicians', viz. the two orators. When Aristides is given a scenario about a more literal, political hegemony (ἡγεμονίας, as he sees it: the word does not occur in the title itself), he detects a parallel with his more metaphorical 'hegemony' in the sphere of rhetoric. And in Polemo's Marathonian declamations, Cynegirus' literal loss of hands corresponds to

56 See Boulanger (1923) 137–43; Behr (1968) 61–86 *passim*; and Bowersock (1969) 36–40.

57 On this episode see Gunderson (2003) 101–4 and Pernot (2007) 219–21.

58 On this debate see Penella (2009) 125.

59 The survival of this practice of declamatory self-reference would be a further argument against the notion of a distinct 'Third Sophistic' in the centuries after the military, political and economic troubles of the third century. For this debate see Van Hoof (2010).

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Polemo's metaphorical loss of hands. Puns may also play a role in at least one case, if Megistias is figured as a μάγος ('mag-ician'; cf. n. 34). In Polemo's declamations, the chance to examine a whole text suggests further techniques that might be paralleled if we had more declamations preserved in full: the use of words whose meaning is dependent on context, such as pronouns, and the use of body language to clinch an identification.

(ii) Why talk about oneself through the medium of declamation rather than openly? Pernot's preferred model for external reference in declamation is figured speech. A figured speech is one that has a covert rhetorical purpose supplementary to (or even contradicting) its ostensible purpose, or to put it more simply, one that says one thing and means another.[60] Pernot focuses on the first of the traditional reasons for resorting to figured speech – safety: figured speech allows one to say indirectly something that it would be too dangerous to have said openly. But in our examples, safety can hardly be considered to be at issue. None of those who suggest declamation titles that figure some aspect of the performance context – neither Asclepius nor the emperor Caracalla nor the sophist Megistias nor Alexander Clay-Plato's audience – have anything to fear: on the contrary, in each case it is they that are in the more powerful position. A concern not for literal safety, however, but rather for a broader, 'social' safety does seem to be operative in some of our examples; this is quite similar, indeed, to a second traditional goal of figured speech, that of propriety.[61] Whenever one makes bold claims about oneself (as several of our declaimers do), one runs the risk that those claims will be contested and rejected by others, and the evidence of Philostratus suggests that any such public humiliation would be long remembered. Lucian too in his *De historia conscribenda* is very harsh on a contemporary historian's aspirations to be a second Thucydides (*Hist. Conscr.* 15);[62] the propriety of self-praise, too, was much discussed in this period, forming the subject of treatments by Plutarch and Aristides himself.[63] If failure occurs in a fictional realm, however, there is the possibility of denying the claim. In the face of Hippodromus' provocative intrusion on his lesson, Megistias uses a declamation title to suggest his great superiority over the newcomer: but when Hippodromus turns out to be a skilled declaimer, there is no direct proof of what Megistias had tried to do. Similarly,

60 Pernot (2007). Strictly, a figured declamation would say one thing to make another understood *within the world of the fiction*: a declamation that makes reference to the world *outside the fiction* is obviously not 'figured' in this literal sense. What Pernot is describing is rather figured declamation in a metaphorical sense: declamations that say one thing *within the world of the fiction* to make another thing understood *in the real world*. For general accounts of figured speech see Demetr. *Eloc.* 287–95; [D.H.] *Rh.* 8–9; Quint. 9.2.65–99; Aps. *Rh.* 330–39; [Hermog.] *Inv.* IV.13; Pernot (2008); and Schouler (1986).

61 The sort of impropriety that figured speech is designed to circumvent, however, is much stronger than a bit of boasting: in [Hermog.] *Inv.* IV.13.4, for example, it is employed to avoid having openly to accuse one's father of incest.

62 The *Vitae sophistarum* include Herodes' failure before Marcus (*VS* 565) and Philagrus' sham extemporising (*VS* 579–80); Lucian too claims to have caught a declaimer attempting precisely the same ruse, and that using plagiarised material (*Pseudol.* 5–6).

63 Plutarch, *On Praising Oneself Inoffensively* (Περὶ τοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινεῖν ἀνεπιφθόνως); Aristides, *Concerning a Remark in Passing* (Περὶ τοῦ παραφθέγματος, Or. 28). See Rutherford (1995) and Pernot (1998).

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in the rather charged encounter between Herodes Atticus and Alexander Clay-Plato, the figuring of the sophists as fictional declamation characters allows them to negotiate their respective statuses in greater safety.

The notions of social safety and deniability will not work for all of our examples, however. Aristides actually makes the equation between himself and Demosthenes explicit, and while Caracalla does mask his disapproval of what he seems to see as Heliodorus' cowardice by figuring the sophist as a cowardly Demosthenes, the emperor's aggression is so flimsily disguised that it is hardly deniable. Furthermore, Polemo's identification with Cynegirus and Callimachus, while less immediately obvious, is so thoroughgoing that once seen it too can hardly be denied. But what this figuring as a famous person from the classical past does achieve is to render whatever claims are made about the declaimer notably more powerful. Aristides' oratorical abilities are as great as those of Demosthenes; Polemo's battle with disease is as great as the battle of Marathon; and Heliodorus' hesitancy is, crushingly, as bad as Demosthenes' failure before Philip. As was acknowledged above, the habit of seeing oneself in classical history is not limited to declamation: but declamation allows one to pursue such identifications on a grand scale.[64] This effect has something in common with what Quintilian lists as a third goal that some pursue in figured speech (not present in other accounts, either in Latin or Greek), namely 'elegance' (*venustas*). 'By its very freshness and variety' (*ipsa novitate ac varietate*), Quintilian explains, 'it gives more pleasure than if it were a straightforward account' (*magis quam si relatio sit recta delectat*, 9.2.66). Yet Quintilian's formulation suggests something a little less serious than the claim to be a second Demosthenes. To be able to figure the contemporary world as the classical at the drop of a hat demonstrates a range of sophistic virtues: learning, inventiveness, a ready tongue, even wit, particularly if the identification is recondite or unusually apposite; thus the phenomenon we have been describing is of a piece with the attitudes on show in numerous other encounters between declaimers in Philostratus' *Vitae sophistarum*. Self-reference through declamation, then, can be used to achieve a range of sophisticated ends.

(iii) Reference to the world outside its own fiction, then, and in particular to its author and its immediate performance context, emerges as a significant, previously underappreciated function of Greek declamation, used for talking about oneself and one's circumstances in a powerful, eloquent, and yet also deniable way. This discovery is of importance not only for declamation and sophistic culture in the second and third centuries, but also for the numerous occasions on which declamatory material is found in other genres of this period, as well as for the later Greek declaimers Libanius, Himerius and Choricius, and for Latin declamation.

64 Cf. n. 8 above.

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