SERAFIM (A.) **Religious Discourse in Attic Oratory and Politics**. Abingdon: Routledge, 2020. Pp. x + 164. £120. 9781138570863.
doi:10.1017/S0075426923000903

In this concise book, Andreas Serafim undertakes a nuanced and rigorous analysis of the use of religious discourse in extant Attic oratory. The most recent comprehensive study on this topic is G. Martin's *Divine Talk: Religious Argumentation in Demosthenes* (Oxford 2009). Serafim's approach is different, as he aims to provide a 'holistic' analysis of the use of religion 'in the entirety of the transmitted forensic, symbouleutic and epideictic orations of the Ten Attic orators' (1), with specific aims to map out its contextual specificity and cognitive and emotional effects on the audiences in Athens' political and social spheres.

In the introduction, Serafim defines the main terminologies of religion, polis and religious discourse, emphasizing the transcendental and cultural aspects of ancient religion and following the concept of polis religion to highlight the intersection between religion and rhetoric (10–12). The core of the book consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 offers a 'comprehensive, full-scale' survey of the 'recurrent' religious references in the whole corpus of Attic oratory. Chapter 2 borrows the concept of the 'logics of appropriateness' from the New Institutionalism to contextualize religious references in their proper rhetorical contexts. Chapter 3 analyzes the 'actual' or 'expected' interaction between orators and audiences. Chapter 4 explores how religious references to civic spirit/patriotism and ideal statesmen and heroes (de)construct Athenian civic identity.

Serafim's analyses of the linguistic and performative features of individual orators' rhetorical techniques in using religious references to interact with the audiences are most impressive. In Chapter 3, he emphasizes the term 'airy nothing' and the 'two-cornered active involvement' between speakers and audiences. Building on his 2017 book *Attic Oratory and Performance* (London), Serafim identifies two categories of reactions: the physical/sensory and the cognitive/emotional, with the analysis of physical/sensory reactions further divided into verbal and non-verbal communications. His analysis of orators' rhetorical techniques centres on the gestural and vocal uses of *hupokrisis* in making prayers and oaths and on the linguistic and semantic features of formulaic invocations. While for the reactions of the audiences, Serafim notes the difficulty of pinning down their actual reactions and stresses them as *polysemic* (91), paying particular attention to the functions of orators' use of the imperative mood (92–95). The linguistic and semantic focus extends to his analysis of the implicit and explicit emotional and cognitive responses of audiences, enhanced by his introduction of modern neuroscientific findings to explain the impact of religious invocations on the audiences in Athenian law courts (95–110).

One of Serafim's objectives is to identify similarities and differences in the use of religious references in forensic, symbouleutic and epideictic genres, as well as subgenres such as forensic public and private speeches. His analyses proceed with an alphabetical and statistical survey of the ten Attic orators in Chapter 1, aiming to identify 'the consistently and recurrently used features or those situated in emotionally heightened contexts or other parts of the speech' (33), with Chapter 2 explaining the contextual and other non-contextual constraints. But Serafim's categories of the ten Attic orators' speeches are sometimes arbitrary, and his explanations for the use of religious discourse in different genres and by different orators are not always satisfactory. For instance, citing Isocrates' *Panegyricus* 4, Serafim explains epideictic oratory as a genre that concerns 'the great affairs of people and life' (48, 72). Consequently, he attributes Isocrates' extensive use of religious references, especially mythological genealogies linking humans and gods in *Evagoras*, *Encomium of Helen*, and *Busiris*, and, more generally, religion in the epideictic genre, to these stories' intimate connection between gods and humans (48–49) and to the educational function of the epideictic genre (72). The conclusions are reasonable, but it is still worth

considering to what extent Isocrates' epideictic speeches, and more generally epideictic oratory, share generic conventions with other forms of encomium in using religion to maintain the shared values of the community, as well as the performative context of epideictic oratory, which is very different from forensic and deliberative oratory.

Moreover, Serafim finds that Lysias is less prone to using religious references than Demosthenes (51–52, 74), and concludes that Lysias' 'almost complete lack of patterns of thematic religious discourse' can be explained by his 'personal distaste for religious arguments' and the speeches' lack of a 'grand' political dimension to influence inter- or intra-state politics, denying any 'explicit' rhetorical reasons (74). But a comprehensive, chronological analysis of Attic oratory might have yielded a more nuanced understanding of how changing attitudes towards religion in the fourth century BCE and the sociopolitical and legal contexts of the specific cases might have conditioned the orators' use of religious discourse.

Nonetheless, Serafim provides a detailed catalogue of religious references in the extant Attic oratory, making this volume an important resource for scholars who venture to work on this topic in the future.

MENGZHEN YUE
Shandong University
Email: mzyue1821@126.com

STEINER (D.T.) **Choral Constructions in Greek Culture: The Idea of the Chorus in the Poetry, Art and Social Practices of the Archaic and Early Classical Periods**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xxi + 761, illus. £75. 9781107110687.
doi:10.1017/S0075426923000083

Deborah Steiner's provocative investigation starts with the question τί δεά¿– με χορεύειν; ('why should I take part in the chorus?'), from Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* 896. The main issue here is not so much 'what was the chorus in ancient Greek culture?', but rather 'in what measure can Greek art, culture, and society be regarded as choral?' This is less about dancing and singing choruses, an important matter in current scholarship (21–24), and more about 'chorality', as a network of aesthetical and cultural paradigms, archetypes and models. Political aspects have been tackled recently by historians: Vincent Azoulay and Paulin Ismard (*Athènes 403: une histoire chorale* (Paris 2020)) use 'chorality' on two levels, as an analytical tool to study Classical Athens, where choral practices exemplify the dialectics of dissension and harmony, and as a discursive device shaping a 'procession' of ten exemplary classical figures. Steiner's inquiry expands wider, from Geometric to Classical art, and from Homer to Euripides (and even Callimachus), with important references to Plato and post-classical history and rhetoric (Pausanias, Philostratus, Lucian). However, a fuller inclusion of pre-Platonist philosophers and classical sophists and orators could have benefited the argument as a whole.

From the title on, Steiner uses the expressions 'choral constructions' and 'the idea of the chorus'. This is an elegant way, somewhat choreographic, to 'cross-pollinate' various fields, such as performing arts (*choreia*, rather than choral dance), poetry, music, visual arts, rituals, mythology, writing and architecture. In the dynamic structure of a chorus, consonance depends on tensions and intensity on variety. As dance is a question of structure and fluidity, the architectural, biological and aesthetic concept of 'tensegrity' could be helpful here. Steiner often draws from analogies recalling cognitive psychology and prototypical semantics. Chorality, then, is a pervasive conceptual metaphor. Not for this reviewer, but for some readers, these analogies may be too speculative.