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Timaeus' Athens Revisited
Culture and Politics in Early Hellenistic Athens

Nino Luraghi

For Oswyn Murray,
who is present in this pages
more than he may realize

For a number of reasons, the period that goes from the death of Alexander the Great to the Chremonidaean War, between the end of the twenties of the fourth century BCE and the sixties of the third, can easily be seen as a discrete period in the history of Athens, both in political and in cultural terms[1]. It was the age of New Comedy, the age of Menander, Philemon, and Diphilos[2], and the golden age of Hellenistic philosophy, the period that saw the establishment and consolidation of the schools that were to dominate Greco-Roman philosophical thought up until Late Antiquity: the age of Theophrastus, Epicurus, and Zeno[3]. It was also the Indian Summer of Atthidography, whose last and most widely read representative, Philochoros, was apparently executed on orders of Antigonos Gonatas because of his pro-Ptolemaeic leanings[4]. On the political side of things, there is no denying that the Lamian War and the Chremonidean War bookend a characteristic period of Athenian history, one in which the Athenians, increasingly faced with the new realities of the kingdoms of the Successors, were striving most of the time to regain or retain some amount of independent initiative in international politics. The war against king Antigonos Gonatas was their last attempt, and its failure marks a clear turning point in the political history of Athens[5].

[1] In order not to encumber the text, references to the abundant scholarship on the several problems that will be touched upon are kept to a bare minimum. Christian Habicht's works, and especially his history of Hellenistic Athens (best consulted as Habicht 2006), are presupposed throughout.

[2] For a recent survey of the evidence on the three major poets of New Comedy, see Scardino in Scardino, Sorrentino 2014, pp. 1051-60.

[3] On the chronology of the philosophical schools and their members, see Dorandi 1999.

[4] Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 T 1.

[5] Ferguson 1911, p. 184: «An epoch in the history of a city is seldom so clearly

Finally, there is something characteristic to the way the Athenians of this period, or at least some of them, looked at their identity and their past, and in particular at the glorious times of what is for us the fifth century, from the Persian Wars to the Peloponnesian War and its aftermath – a gaze that was distinctly different from the patriotic and occasionally jingoistic rhetoric of the age of Isocrates and of the Second Naval League[6]. The explicit references to the Persian Wars that are contained both in the decree of the Athenian *ekklesia* that started the Lamian War and in the so-called Chremonides decree, the alliance with Sparta that de facto opened the Chremonidean War, mark a trajectory in which the Persian Wars progressively lost their traditional role of underpinning for the Athenians' claim to Panhellenic leadership and turned into a motivation for the Athenians themselves to carry on their struggle for freedom[7]. In what can be regarded as an extended period of political and economic crisis, the Athenians, or some of them, appear to have developed a new and quite characteristic take on their past and on how to mobilize it in the interest of the present[8].

Even though the turning point signaled by the surrender of Athens to Gonatas has often been remarked upon, it seems fair to say that the chance of drawing a richer image of Athenian cultural history during this period has not been taken advantage of, in spite of the remarkably similar trajectories that can be observed in so many different aspects of Athenian culture and politics. What one tends to find instead is a series of fundamentally paratactic studies of aspects of a historical and cultural context that on the contrary was ostensibly highly integrated. Recent scholarship has mostly separated literature from philosophy, theater from politics, historiography from history, distributing each of them neatly in non-communicating chapters in the best case, and more often in separate books, and impoverishing dramatically the general picture. An exception

defined as that which the Chremonidean War ended in Athens». See also Heinen 1972, pp. 204-5. The importance of the Chremonidean War as a historical turning point has been rarely questioned, but see Treves 1955, pp. 91-2 and the discussion at p. 106, note 49.

[6] For a succinct overview, see Rhodes 2011, pp. 20-6.

[7] The shift is explored in some detail in Luraghi 2017.

[8] Several interconnected aspects of the crisis are presented, from an Athenian perspective, in Oliver 2007.

to this relative lack of interest for a comprehensive picture of Athenian culture of the early Hellenistic age is represented by a famous and typically inspiring article by Arnaldo Momigliano, to which the title of the present contribution alludes[9].

In his 1959 article *Athens in the third century BC and the discovery of Rome in the* Histories *of Timaeus of Tauromenium*, Momigliano posed the question of what does it imply that antiquity's most influential work on the history of the Greeks of Sicily and Southern Italy, and the first work of Greek historiography that showed any sustained understanding of the 'clouds from the west', was written in Athens in precisely this period. Momigliano's article appeared in the very year in which Felix Jacoby died. The influence of Jacoby's work, which Momigliano admired very highly, is obvious throughout the article, and amply acknowledged by Momigliano himself[10]. Momigliano's description of Timaeus as a historian who wrote books based on other books resonates with Jacoby's characteristic concern for the difference between primary historiography based on oral tradition and derivative historiography based on the works of previous historians[11]. But the echo of Jacoby is heard even more clearly in the very way in which Momigliano phrased the topic of his article. In his typically aphoristic, eminently quotable way, Jacoby had written that «If Polybius had wanted to be honest […] he should have recognized that Timaeus was his true predecessor as regards the central fact of Roman world power»[12]. Momigliano was less ready than Jacoby to question the intellectual honesty

[9] Originally published in Italian as Momigliano 1959, the article has been reprinted several times, including Momigliano 1982, pp. 225-57, and Momigliano 1987a, pp. 97-126. The *Contributi* edition is Momigliano 1966, pp. 23-53. For convenience's sake, it is here quoted in Judith Landry's English translation, Momigliano 1977, pp. 37-66, with cross-references to the *Contributi* edition.

[10] On Momigliano and Jacoby, see Di Donato 2006.

[11] See his (self)ironical remarks in Momigliano 1990, p. 99: «Timaeus was a pedant, was inclined to criticise his predecessors violently, had political prejudices, and made books out of books. In a word, he was one of us.»

[12] Jacoby 1955, p. 527: «Wenn er ehrlich hätte sein wollen (aber diese Objektivität ist vielleicht zu viel verlangt, oder er hat das entscheidende Faktum selbst nicht klar erkannt), hätte er ihn für die zentrale Tatsache der römischen Weltherrschaft als seinen wirklichen Vorgänger anerkennen müssen».

of ancient historians, but the question at the heart of his essay can be seen as a way of drawing the consequences from Jacoby's dictum: if it was true that Timaeus was Polybius' true predecessor, how had Timaeus himself arrived at his understanding of the historical importance of Rome? To ask the question was, for Momigliano, to interrogate the historical context in which Timaeus' thought had developed: Athens in the first decades of the third century BCE.

Untypically for Momigliano's work, this article, located as it is at the crossroads of various key topics of Greek and Roman history, has not really been central to subsequent debates, and Momigliano himself developed only some of the ideas he had sketched in it. An obvious line of continuity leads from it towards Momigliano's works on the origins of Roman historiography and on the connection between Timaeus and Fabius Pictor[13]. The fact that Momigliano's article on Timaeus and Fabius on the census of Servius Tullius originally appeared in a 1963 volume of studies in memory of Augusto Rostagni, the Turin classicist and former teacher of his to whom Momigliano had dedicated the 1959 article as well, may be seen as an indication of the fact that indeed for Momigliano that was the line of thought in which the 1959 article belonged, as well[14]. On the other hand, it is more than a bit puzzling to see that Timaeus plays no role of any importance in Momigliano's ideas on antiquarianism. In any case, the exact position of this article in Momigliano's thought, which normally developed along clear and recognizable lines, deserves further investigation.

As for the reception of this article by other scholars, it would be fair to say that those interested in Sicily have mostly thought that the article was about Athens, and those interested in Athens that it was about Sicily. Research on Timaeus, most prominently by Italian scholars, to the extent that it has not remained absorbed in problems of source-criticism, has essentially treated Timaeus as a Sicilian historian, usually leaving aside the issues raised by Jacoby and Momigliano – and this is why Timaeus until very recently has been treated in the same frameworks as the great fourth-century historians such as Theopompos and Ephoros, rather than

[13] See especially Momigliano 1990, pp. 88-109, Momigliano 1960, and Momigliano 1963 (both reprinted, alongside Momigliano's most important contributions on early Roman history, in Momigliano 1989, pp. 123-9 and 397-407).

[14] On Momigliano and Rostagni, see Dionisotti 1989, pp. 36 and 77-9.

as a representative of Hellenistic historiography. The fact that he wrote most if not all of his work in Athens, and may have never returned to Sicily, is rarely addressed in this context[15]. As for the study of Hellenistic Athens, here, too, Momigliano's work found little resonance in a scholarly landscape that is, and will for the foreseeable future continue to be, dominated by the study of inscriptions and by problems of chronology and political history. Christian Habicht's masterful synthesis on Hellenistic Athens has only a perfunctory reference to Momigliano in a footnote, and the recent excellent book by Lara O'Sullivan on Demetrios of Phaleron does not even feature the article in its bibliography[16]. Somehow, in this case, too, Momigliano did not really reach the audience he was supposed to reach. Today more then ever, from the vantage point of the remarkable increase in our knowledge of the period brought about by over half a century of epigraphic research, there are excellent reasons for revisiting Momigliano's 1959 article, in order to assess its potential as a starting point for a new investigation of Athenian cultural history at the dawn of the Hellenistic age.

Timaeus of Tauromenium probably left Sicily around the time when his city fell to Agathokles of Syracuse, and arrived in Athens during the rule of Demetrios of Phaleron, presumably around 315 BCE. According to what he himself says, he was in exile for at least fifty years, and there is no real proof that he ever went back to Sicily. He may have written his whole work on the Greeks of Sicily and Southern Italy while based in Athens[17]. We have every reason to believe that he was there at the time of

[15] Vattuone 1991 provides by far the most detailed and insightful treatment of Timaeus' historical thought. Most noteworthy, in the decades after Momigliano's article, are several contributions by Guido Schepens, especially Schepens 1994. Christopher Baron's recent book (Baron 2013, pp. 89-112) represents the first attempt after Momigliano to interpret Timaeus explicitly against the historical background of early Hellenistic Athens.

[16] Habicht 2006, p. 436, note 68 (but note that Momigliano's article and Jacoby's commentary to the fragments are cited as the foundations of the discussion of Timaeus at pp. 135-6); cf. O'Sullivan 2009.

[17] On the duration of Timaeus' presence in Athens, see *FGrHist* 566 T 4b, and the discussion of Vattuone 1991, pp. 70-1 with notes 18-9; I follow Momigliano on the date of Timaeus' arrival in Athens (Momigliano 1977, pp. 38-39 = 1966, p. 24).

the outbreak of the Chremonidean War, in 269/8 BCE according to the most recent chronology[18]. For Momigliano, it was «obvious that Timaeus will remain even more incomprehensible if we do not try to see him in the streets of the city which he never regarded as his, and among the men he loathed or for whom he had no sympathy, but towards whom he was never indifferent»[19]. Polybius' remarks on the unacceptable way that Timaeus slandered the Athenian politician Democharis of Leukonoion, Demosthenes' nephew, were the starting point for Momigliano' attempt at situating the exile from Sicily in the political and cultural scene of early-Hellenistic Athens[20]. Momigliano tried to piece together the political allegiances and fault lines among the Athenians, in order to figure out where Timaeus stood with respect to what he, largely in the footsteps of his teacher Gaetano De Sanctis, saw as the main 'parties'. Signs of dislike for Aristotle and in general for the philosophers who had ties to Macedon proved for Momigliano that Timaeus was anti-Macedonian. But here the problems began, because his hostility to the staunchly anti-Macedonian Democharis would have put him in an awkward position[21]. Momigliano sensed political isolation, and thought that it translated for Timaeus in personal isolation as well: he characterized the historian from Tauromenion as an antisocial *dyskolos*[22].

Gauging Timaeus' political alignment was for Momigliano a means towards an end of a different nature. What intrigued him was the precise way in which the political and cultural climate of Athens might have impacted Timaeus' work and his historical thought. Eduard Schwartz authoritatively said that «this spiritual climate of Athens, politically decadent, dreaming of the past, must have influenced the Greek from Sicily»[23]. Momigliano at first followed suit, declaring that Timaeus' work must be understood in the atmosphere of the waning freedom of

[18] Byrne 2006-7, pp. 175-9. This is the chronology followed in the new edition of IG II/III^3.

[19] Momigliano 1977, p. 40 (= 1966, p. 28).

[20] Polyb. 12.13 = *FGrHist* 566 F 35b.

[21] Momigliano 1977, pp. 39-40 and 46-7 (= 1966, pp. 26-7 and 36-7).

[22] Momigliano 1977, p. 38 (= 1966, p. 24); here, too, as is often the case with Momigliano's casual remarks on ancient historians, one is tempted to see a self-ironic autobiographical allusion (for another, even clearer example, see note 11 above).

[23] Schwartz 1899, p. 492, quoted by Momigliano 1977, p. 61, note 8 (= 1966,

Athens, but then, after a robust overview of the period, he concluded on a rather different note: «At that time Athens was more than a city yearning for political freedom: she was a city creating intellectual freedom»[24]. Obviously, this is a far cry indeed from Schwartz' dreamy decadence.

The details of Momigliano's biography would suffice in themselves to suggest why intellectual and political freedom were topics close to his heart, but there is more to it than that. Benedetto Croce, the most important influence on Italian historians of the war generation, famously thought that history is essentially the history of freedom, and within the school of Gaetano De Sanctis a heated debate on ancient and modern freedom had been taking place in the late twenties and early thirties, in implicit but clear polemic with the rise of fascism in Italy[25]. Momigliano's first large-scale project once he arrived in England from Italy in March 1939, was a book on liberty and peace in antiquity, which was supposed to develop out of a series of lectures he gave in Cambridge in 1940[26]. In other words, intellectual freedom was for him a historical factor of a primary importance.

The role played by intellectual freedom in Momigliano's interpretation of the impact that the new Athenian environment had on Timaeus is perhaps the most obvious trace of De Sanctis' influence, but by no means the only one, and arguably not even the most important. Momigliano largely inherited from his teacher a somewhat schematic understanding of the political situation in early Hellenistic Athens, an understanding shared, in its essential lines at any rate, with his younger colleague Piero Treves. De Sanctis had written his dissertation under Julius Beloch in 1892 on the

p. 25, note 8): «Diese geistige Luft des politisch verfallenden, von der Vergangenheit träumenden Athen hat auf den Sikelioten gewirkt».

[24] Momigliano 1977, p. 43 (= 1966, p. 32).

[25] Momigliano 1987b, p. 88: «The most important discussion on ancient history which developed in Italy in the thirties was about Greek liberty. Though inspired by Benedetto Croce, it remained almost entirely a discussion internal to the school of De Sanctis, involving De Sanctis himself, Aldo Ferrabino, Piero Treves and myself». On this discussion and its protagonists, see Franco 2012, p. 28, with further references. On Croce's influence on Momigliano, see Dionisotti 1989, pp. 27-64.

[26] On Momigliano's escape to Britain, the lectures in Cambridge in 1940, and the book project, see Murray 2010. The manuscript of the lectures was finally published in Momigliano 2012, I, pp. 3-105, edited by Riccardo Di Donato.

history of Athens from the Lamian to the Chremonidean War[27]. In his later research, this became a rather peripheral topic, to which he returned a few times, especially in the twenties, without however ever devoting to it more than an article or two, often focusing on issues of chronology. The specific impact on his pupil of this early work of his would require further and more detailed investigation, but just comparing De Sanctis' thesis and Momigliano's article, the influence of the former over the latter is clearly recognizable – and acknowledged by Momigliano[28]. In broad strokes, De Sanctis envisioned the political landscape of Athens as cut across by two rigid ideological fault lines that tended to overlap and opposed respectively pro-Macedonians to independentists, and radical-democrats to oligarchs. The wealthy Athenian landowners, «the propertied class» in De Sanctis' words, were pro-Macedonian and had oligarchic leanings. It is clear that De Sanctis thought in terms of party politics, and his terminology was unabashedly modern – some might even say anachronistic. In his pages, one meets again and again terms such as republicans, democrats, radicals, conservatives, and even left and right[29]. As seen even more clearly in the work of Piero Treves[30], this view of Athenian party politics was of one piece with that of the age of Demosthenes, hence the central function of the notion of anti-Macedonianism, which obviously becomes somewhat problematic after the death of Alexander and the emergence of the kingdoms of the successors – all of them Macedonian, after all.

[27] Originally published in *Studi di storia antica*, II (Torino 1893), pp. 3-62, edited by Beloch, De Sanctis' dissertation is reprinted in De Sanctis 1970, pp. 249-302, followed by reprints of De Sanctis' other contributions on the chronology and history of Hellenistic Athens.

[28] In spite of what Momigliano 1977, p. 62, note 16 (= 1966, pp. 29-30, note 16) says regarding the respective merits of De Sanctis' and Ferguson's reconstructions of the years of Lachares, his general picture of Athenian party politics owes more to the former than to the latter, it seems to me.

[29] For examples of this way of seeing Athenian politics, and of this terminology, see De Sanctis 1970, pp. 249, 266, 268, 273.

[30] See especially Treves 1933; here, however, unlike what was the case in De Sanctis' 1892 dissertation, the implicit political backdrop was fascist Italy, and accordingly the Athenians' fight for freedom took on a completely different meaning. On Treves' book, and on Momigliano's reactions to it, Franco 2012, pp. 29-31 provides a wealth of perceptive observations and references.

This view of politics in Hellenistic Athens was based on several implicit but recognizable assumptions. In attributing the Macedonians the role of habitual ally of the wealthy, which made of them the natural target of democratic opposition, De Sancits' view extended back in time to this period the outlines of an image of social conflicts in Greece at the time of the Roman conquest that had been, in its essence, formulated by Polybius for the benefit of the Roman *nobilitas*, with the Macedonians somewhat paradoxically taking up the role that in a later period was assigned to Rome[31]. Beyond that, De Sanctis, who had himself no sympathy for nationalism, organized the past according to an implicit nationalistic matrix, as was normal for historians of the late nineteenth century. Especially the way he understood the historical role of Macedon is part and parcel with the notion that political unity had to be the ultimate *telos* of Greek history, and the fact that such *telos* was desirable could be taken for granted[32]. De Sanctis was writing only a few decades after German historians in the footsteps of Droysen had cast Macedon as the Prussia of Greece, a notion Momigliano struggled with in his book on Philip the Second, published in 1934[33]. These two preconditions go some way towards explaining the curious pro-oligarchic bias of De Sanctis' reconstruction and the fact that he could not take seriously the Athenians' fight for freedom: for him, the Athenians, seduced by irresponsible demagogues, were blindly swimming against the tide of history, and what they were really fighting for was particularism, for which he, a good child of the Italian Risorgimento, could have no sympathy[34].

In its outlines, De Sanctis' approach, which Momigliano appears essentially to have followed, is still the dominant view in scholarship on Hellenistic Athens – often, one suspects, out of inertia more than out

[31] The view that the Romans consistently supported the upper class in the Greek cities has an impressive scholarly pedigree, going back to Fustel de Coulanges. For a classic and duly nuanced statement of the theory, see Briscoe 1967. For incisive criticism, see Gruen 1976.

[32] On national unity as the goal of Greek history for De Sanctis, see Clemente 2014, p. 18.

[33] See Momigliano's opening remarks in Momigliano 1934, p. xi, and his acute observations on Droysen going from Hellenism to Prussian history in Momigliano 1977, pp. 311-2.

[34] Note the concluding remarks of De Sanctis' thesis, De Sanctis 1970, pp. 283-4.

of deep persuasion[35]. The evidence that has accumulated in the last half century however proves that it is much too static and schematic a view. Ever since the liberation of Athens from Demetrios acquired historical substance, largely due to the publication of the Athenian decree in honor of Kallias of Sphettos, scholars have had trouble figuring out in which party to put Athenian politicians such as Olympiodoros and Phaidros of Sphettos, both of whom were involved quite prominently in the liberation of Athens but appear at other times to have sided with the Antigonids, and possibly even, at least in the case of Phaidros, with Kassander[36]. In order to explain their actions, scholarship has added another anachronistic label to De Sanctis' impressive panoply, relying increasingly on the notion of a nationalist party in Athens, which one cannot but find alarming, rather than taking the alternative route, consisting in abandoning a party-politics approach altogether, as scholars dealing with the age of Demosthenes have long since done.

A striking example, that epitomizes the problems caused by such an approach, is provided by the political biography of another Athenian, one who has been known to scholars for a rather longer time than Kallias of Sphettos: Philippides of Paiania. Philippides, whose political career was memorably laid out by Piero Treves, was the recipient of a highest-honors decree in 293/2 BCE, proposed by none other than Stratokles of Diomeia[37]. This was the year in which Olympiodoros was the eponymous archon for the second time in a row, hardly as the outcome of a lottery. Phaidros of Sphettos was being serially elected *strategos* in those same

[35] See my discussion in Luraghi 2014, pp. 200-3.

[36] On the decree for Kallias, now IG II/III^3 911, see the detailed commentary of the *editio princeps*, Shear 1978. His brother Phaidros, according to the decree in his honor (IG II/III^3 985, lines 21-31), was a *strategos* at least eight times before 288/7 (year of Kimon); he was ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευήν in 296/5 and, on any but the lowest possible estimation of the word πολλάκις in line 25, he would have been a *strategos* also when Athens was still in Kassander's field (and in any case, his *strategia* of 296/5 may be taken as an indication in the same sense, Habicht 2006, p. 105). Olympiodoros, the hero of the liberation according to Pausanias (1.26.1), was eponymous archon twice in a row in 294-3 and 293-2, when Athens was firmly under Demetrios Poliorketes (see Habicht 1979, p. 7).

[37] IG II/III^3 857; see Treves 1938 with the comments of Davies 1971, p. 550. The evidence on Stratokles is presented in Luraghi 2014.

years. Philippides was a contemporary of Demosthenes and had been a trierarch many times in the twenties of the fourth century[38]. Back then he had probably been brought to trial by Hypereides, who accused him for his pro-Macedonian stance[39]. Later, Philippides seems to have been a sympathizer of Kassander, or at any rate, he shows up as the proponent of a decree in honor of a man who had helped the members of an Athenian embassy to king Kassander (*sic*) in 299/8[40]. Stratokles, the man who moved the honors for Philippides, is usually labeled a radical democrat, in part because Plutarch likened him to Kleon[41]. Olympiodoros and Phaidros, who seem both to have been in office when Athens was controlled by Demetrios Poliorketes and to have been leaders of the uprising against him, are called nationalists, which appears to mean that political independence, but not necessarily democracy, was their agenda. In order to explain why all these people, and by extension the parties they are supposed to represent, appear to be on the same side at this point in time, scholars have devised the most oblique political trajectories, without apparently being touched by the suspicion of hammering square pegs into round holes.

Clearly, it is not a matter of finding better labels – although one would be particularly relieved to witness the demise of that most spectacular anachronism, the Athenian Nationalist Party. Beyond that, it is crucial to set aside the very notion of political parties grouped around major ideological issues as a frame of reference into which to explain how political allegiances and conflicts actually worked in Athens, and how they evolved over time[42]. A clearer understanding of a political landscape in

[38] On the liturgic career of Philippides, see Davies 1971, pp. 549-50.

[39] On the identification of Philippides, son of Philomelos of Paiania, with the politician accused by Hypereides, in the period between the battle of Chaironeia and the death of Philip of Macedon, as a lackey of the Macedonians, see Luraghi 2014, pp. 214-7, building on Whitehead 2000, pp. 28-9 and Bartolini 1977, p. 77.

[40] IG II/III^3 844; Paschidis 2008, p. 115 plausibly suggests that Philippides may have been a member of the embassy.

[41] Plut. *Dem.* 11-2; see Luraghi 2014, pp. 204-8.

[42] The analysis of Bayliss 2011, rich in acute observations as it is, is in some ways an attempt at salvaging the old paradigm, keeping the opposition of oligarchs and democrats as the main organizing principle of Athenian politics – which is not to say that Bayliss is wrong in arguing that Athenian politicians of this period were capable of

which alignments were in many ways flexible and fluid, and in any case largely personal, and accordingly more complex that hitherto assumed, would also help approach in a more satisfactory way the broader problem of the relationship of politics and culture and the specific problem of where to locate Timaeus in this landscape, thereby opening the way to a significant expansion of Momigliano's observations, beyond the problematic notion of Timaeus' isolation[43]. The new understanding of the Athenian political landscape at the time of Timaeus' exile made possible by decades of painstaking research, largely based on new epigraphic documents, provides a framework in which Momigliano's line of thought could be further fruitfully pursued.

What most obviously recommends a return to Momigliano is especially the fact that his implicitly holistic approach was free from the one-sidedness that so often characterized research on the several topics involved. To his historicist eyes, it was obvious that Timaeus, Democharas, Menander, Theophrastus all belonged to the same historical context and all deserved attention on the part of the scholar bent on investigating that historical context. If such an approach may appear desirable in general, it is all the more so in the case of early Hellenistic Athens, where even the most preliminary exploration of the evidence easily brings to the fore close connections between the cultural and political life, and in general a very high level of interpenetration between their several fields, perhaps even higher than was the case during the classical period.

A case in point is provided by the study of the Athenian new comedy[44]. To this day, and in spite of rare voices of protest, scholarship on Menander by and large keeps repeating the mantra of the death of politics in Hellenistic Greece as an explanation for the resolute confinement of the action to the private sphere in Menander's comedies[45]. One can meet the apolitical Menander even in the pages of Christian Habicht, the very scholar who

real ideological commitment; but on the whole, even a broader opposition of oligarchs and democrats obscures the real dynamics of the struggle.

[43] As Vattuone 1991, pp. 72-3 rightly points out, this notion runs the risk of undermining Momigliano's whole project of understanding Timaeus against the background of Athenian culture and society.

[44] The discussion builds on Luraghi 2012.

[45] Among the voices of protest, see especially Major 1997.

has come as close as one possibly can to proving that the comic poet Archedikos, whose slander of Democharis was picked up by Timaeus, was in all likelihood a rather prominent politician with sympathies for Antipater and Kassander[46]. Contrary to the impression one might get from looking only at the relevant scholarship, and not at the evidence, some moderate amount of squeezing of the admittedly not very juicy fragments of the New Comedy can easily show that politics had by no means deserted the comic stage after the death of Alexander. Timokles' satire of the Athenian politicians involved in the Harpalos scandal is still a few months too early[47], but then we have Archedikos, regardless of whether he was indeed identical with the politician Archedikos of Lamptrai or not[48]. The sexual slander he hurled at Democharis, probably before 307 and the fall of Demetrios of Phaleron, could scarcely be free of political implications[49]. Then comes the best-known case, the comic poet Philippides of Kephale, a *philos* of king Lysimachos and a bitter enemy of Stratokles of Diomeia, the leading politician in Athens under the tutelage of Demetrios Poliorketes. A significant amount of information on Philippides' political biography can be gleaned from the long text of a decree in his honor passed by the Athenian assembly in 283/2 BCE[50], but his activity as a comic poet has also left important traces in our sources. Philippides is known to have put Stratokles himself on stage, apparently with his true name and obviously not for complimentary purposes, and later, surely after the battle of Ipsos, to have savaged Stratokles again, holding him responsible for the extravagant honors Athens had paid to Poliorketes. Apparently, Stratokles had previously retaliated against Philippides' early attacks by accusing Philippides himself of subversion and possibly pressuring him into leaving Athens. At Lysimachos' court, Philippides became prominent enough to earn the gratitude of his fellow-citizens by convincing the king to support the city with grain and other

[46] See Habicht 2006, pp. 116-20 and Tracy 1993.

[47] Timokles fr. 4 Kassel-Austin; an admirer and imitator of Aristophanes, Timokles has often been considered particularly close to Old Comedy precisely because of his many references to current politics and politicians, see Constantinides 1969, pp. 54-60.

[48] As suggested by Habicht 1993.

[49] As suggested by Polybius himself; see Polyb. 12.13 = *FGrHist* 566 F 35b and Archedikos fr. 4 Kassel-Austin.

[50] IG II/III^3 877.

supplies[51]. The depiction of Stratokles as a new Kleon found in Plutarch's biography of Demetrios Poliorketes is likely to have originated with Philippides' comedies and to have migrated thence into historiography, either to the work of Democharesor, perhaps even more likely, to that of Douris of Samos. If we remind ourselves that the staging of one old comedy was part of the regular program of the City Dionysia since 340/39, it is tempting to speculate that Philippides' audience may not have needed to go to the library in order to know about Aristophanes and Kleon[52].

These and other examples show that the notion that political comedy survived into Attic Middle Comedy and then disappeared with the death of Alexander is misconceived[53]. The remarks of August Meineke in the prefatory volume to his collection of fragments of comic poetry, dating from before the sands of Egypt started returning Menander's comedies, are telling[54]. Once we realize that, in the age of Menander, the Athenian audience was still expecting current politics to filter onto the comic stage, we may see with different eyes Menander's studious avoidance of any recognizable reference to facts and persons – one thinks for example of the Asia Minor campaign in the *Aspis*, depicted so as not to be identifiable,

[51] For a detailed and insightful political profile of Philippides, especially in his capacity as a go-between between Athens and Lysimachos, see Franco 1990, pp. 113-21. On Philippides and Stratokles, Luraghi 2014, pp. 204-8; Hartwig 2015, pp. 24-7 suggests that the *hetaira* who did not want to kiss Stratokles in fr. 26 Kassel-Austin might stand in for Demetrios, which seems somewhat implausible to me.

[52] Older comedies were re-performed in the City Dionysia starting in 340/39, as documented by IG II^2 2318, lines 1534-5. Hartwig 2014, pp. 211-3 argues that fifth-century political comedies were less appealing to audiences of the second half of the fourth century because of their topicality, but it should be pointed out that the direct evidence he draws upon is later, and he may underestimate the extent to which fifth-century politics was still on the horizon of late-fourth century Athenians: the trial of Socrates was still very much a topic for debate at the end of the century – but this is admittedly the only concrete example that the evidence documents. Consider also the Aristophanic revival that Constantinides 1969 recognized in Timokles' comedies.

[53] *Pace* Nesselrath 1997, pp. 271-2.

[54] Meineke 1839, p. 436: «ii magnopere falluntur, qui novam comoediam intra privatae vitae parietes ita quasi inclusam fuisse sibi persuadent, ut eam neque in publicam lucem prodiisse nec nisi fictis nominibus lusisse existiment».

even partially, with any fact of the recent past[55]. This starts sounding like a rather loud silence[56], and it is hard not to think of the fact that Menander was himself put on trial after Demetrios of Phaleron left Athens in 307 BCE[57]. Whatever the grounds for the accusation, it at least casts a very different light on the notion that Menander's comedies, in their own historical context, were intended and perceived to be apolitical[58]. All this goes towards undermining the common view of an Athens that had retreated from the political into the private – a view that our knowledge of Athenian political history should have been sufficient by itself to dispel. The literary scene of early Hellenistic Athens is in urgent need of a reassessment, which will need to integrate what we know about the traditional genres with hybrid or in any case less clearly definable authors and works, such as Machon with his *Chreiai* or the comic poet and historian of comedy Lynkeus of Samos, without forgetting Matron of Pitane's epic parody, which features two Athenian politicians of the caliber of Xenokles of Sphettos and Stratokles of Diomeia[59].

[55] Men. *Aspis* 23-82; on this war narrative, see now Lamagna 2014, pp. 60-9.

[56] See the remarks of Bodei Giglioni 1984, pp. 27-8.

[57] On the trial of Menander, see Potter 1987, pp. 494-5, with important observations on the political context.

[58] It should also be pointed out that the general characterization of Menander may be, as in so many similar cases, a product of the random selection of the surviving texts; traces of political engagement have been noticed e.g. by Burstein 1980.

[59] On Lynkeus' oeuvre, including comedies (a genre in which he appears to have been remarkably successful, defeating Menander according to the isolated notice of Suda), culinary prose, literary epistles, a collection of anecdotes and a work on Menander, see Dalby 2000 (with a collection of fragments) and, more briefly, Bruzzese 2013, pp. 69-70. Machon, a native of Corinth or Sikyon, active in Alexandria at the time of Callimachus, was an author of comedies, with a documented interest in the theory of comedy, a topic on which he is said to have taught Aristophanes of Byzantium; he is most famous for his collection of anecdotes in iambic trimeters, the *Chreiai*: see again Bruzzese 2013, pp. 70-1. On the *Chreiai*, the discussion of Kurke 2002 points to an intriguing interplay of poetry and politics that is worth of being pursued further. Note especially that Kurke 2002, p. 41, expanding on an observation of Gow 1965, p. 5, note 1, makes a strong case for Machon having produced comedies, although not his own, in Athens before moving to Alexandria. On Matron of Pitane, see the introduction to Olson, Sens 1999.

Another branch of Athenian literature that needs to be brought back into the picture for a full image of Athenian culture to emerge is obviously historiography. Here, it is particularly necessary to go beyond Momigliano's own conclusions, largely based, as argued above, on an understanding of Athenian politics that appears no longer tenable. The notion of Timaeus' isolation, that after all Momigliano's approach already silently undermined, needs to be set aside, in order to appreciate the many ways in which Timaeus' work can in fact be seen as typical for the cultural scene of early Hellenistic Athens. At the same time, a scrutiny of various aspects of history writing in and around Athens in this period will reinforce the claim about the cultural interconnectedness and political fluidity of the Athens of Timaeus that the present article formulates. The following remarks will concentrate on a group of writers that would not normally all be labeled 'historians': the Athenians Diyllos, Democharès, and Philochoros, Douris of Samos, Idomeneus of Lampsakos, Phainias of Eresos, and of course our Timaeus. Their lives overlapped to a significant extent, and they could easily be seen as belonging to the same generation. Many of them are non-Athenians, but with only one possible exception they all lived in Athens, at least for some time. In any case, even the odd man out, Idomeneus of Lampsakos, clearly had a strong interest in matters Athenian and close personal ties that linked him to the city. Of course, we are looking at a landscape in ruins: the works of all of these authors are lost, and known to us in a very partial and imperfect fashion, almost exclusively thanks to references in extant works of other authors, often somewhat improperly called 'fragments'. Even so, looking at the few details that are documented a clear pattern soon emerges. The inventory will start with the Athenian authors, reserving for Timaeus the last position.

A rather shadowy figure, Diyllos was probably the son of the much less shadowy Atthidographer Phanodemos, a man of Lykourgos' circle[60].

[60] The little that can be said about Diyllos is in Jacoby 1926, p. 112. Given the rarity of the name, it is extremely likely that the Atthidographer Phanodemos son of Diyllos should be identified as our Diyllos' father. Jacoby 1954, p. 172 calls Phanodemos «the minister of public worship and education of Lycurgus», where one wonders whether this somewhat opaque definition might not be a translation of the German expression Kultus- und Kulturminister, which actually refers to what one might more usually call the ministry of education. On Phanodemos' role in seconding Lycurgus' financial and cultural program, see Bertoli 2010, pp. 209-11 and Csapo, Wilson 2014, pp. 410 and 421.

He wrote 26 books of history, covering the period from 357/6 to 297/6. His work can be seen as a continuation of Ephoros' universal history. Some level of involvement in current politics on his part is indicated by his satire of Demetrios of Phaleron's erotic life (73 F 4). One of his fragments (73 F 3) refers to a decree of Anytos granting a *dorea* of 10 talents to Herodotus. Democharesis better known as a politician, but is also reported to have written over 20 books of history, possibly from Demosthenes onwards[61]. His lampooning of Demetrios of Phaleron is well known (75 F 4)[62]. He apparently found reason to mention the death of Agathokles of Syracuse (75 F 5), and scholars have occasionally thought that he might have said more about him and thereby attracted the hostility of Timaeus[63]. Democharesis also a distinguished orator, and author of a famous speech in defense of the Law of Sophokles where he attacked Socrates, describing him as useless as a citizen-soldier, the Academy, which he considered a school of tyrants, and even, unsurprisingly after all, Aristotle[64]. Judging by the number of surviving fragments, Philochoros appears to have been the most widely read of the group[65]. He wrote a famous *Atthis* in 17 books, but also a collection of Attic decrees, treatises on Sophocles and Euripides, on various religious matters, and on the archons of Athens. A public figure of some prominence, he was a *mantis* for Athens in 306/5, as he himself tells us (328 F 67), and his involvement in politics must have been sufficiently significant to warrant his execution on orders of Gonatas[66].

[61] All the evidence on Democharesis collected and discussed in Marasco 1984.

[62] For an extended discussion of this fragment, that attempts to tease out its ideological implications, see Asmonti 2004.

[63] See the tentative remarks of Jacoby 1955, pp. 556-7, cautiously followed by Momigliano 1977, p. 47 (= 1966, p. 37), and the objections of Marasco 1984, p. 102.

[64] The fragments of the speech are collected in Marasco 1984, pp. 139-41. On the purpose of the law of Sophokles, see recently Haake 2008 and, on the procedure of the proposal, Canevaro 2011.

[65] For his *Atthis*, see the recent and amply commented edition of the fragments by Costa 2007. Philochoros' *Atthis* was still read in the Augustan age, and it is not entirely clear whether Plutarch could still draw upon it; see Costa 2007, pp. 15-6 and 175-6, and the helpful discussion of the theory according to which Plutarch knew Philochoros' work only indirectly, through that of Ister, in Landucci 2010, pp. 250-2.

[66] Jacoby 1954, pp. 221-2.

Of the non-Athenians, Douris of Samos is by far the best known – in fact, he was among the most influential historians of Greek antiquity, in the same category as Timaeus[67]. A pupil of Theophrastos, he may have come to Athens with his brother Lynkeus after the Four Years War[68]. He wrote at least 23 books of history, from 370 to after 281. Like Democharis and Diyllos, Douris lampooned Demetrios of Phaleron (76 F 10), and seems to have said that Socrates was (for some time?) a slave (76 F 78). His work incorporated slander of Athenian politicians coming from comedy (76 F 8 on Demosthenes). Beside his *Histories*, he also wrote at least two books of local history of Samos and a special monograph on Agathokles of Syracuse[69]. His attention for things western is also indicated by the fact that he mentioned the battle of Sentinum (76 F 56)[70]. His list of publications included treatises on tragedy, Euripides, Sophokles, and Homeric problems. Furthermore, he is said to have ruled over Samos as a tyrant, which, even on the most skeptical reading, means that at the very least his level of political involvement was such as to warrant the accusation[71]. A significant involvement in politics, most likely at the Antigonid court, is documented also in the case of Idomeneus of Lampsakos, a friend of Epikouros' who wrote a (short?) work *On the Athenian Demagogues*,

[67] As such, he is the subject of two monographs and one collection of essays: Kebric 1977, Landucci Gattinoni 1997 and Naas, Simon 2015. On his relation to Athens, see now especially Knoepfler 2015.

[68] As suggested by Kebric 1977, p. 6. Of course, it should not be overlooked that, unlike the case of his brother Lynkeus, Douris' connection with Theophrastos is somewhat tentative, resulting as it does from a textual correction to Ath. 4.128a (= *FGrHist* 74 T 1); *pace* Dalby 1991, pp. 540-1, however, the emendation gives a slightly more logical text: if here Athenaeus were saying that Hippolochos, not Lynkeus, was a pupil of Theophrastos, one might expect him to add that Lynkeus and Hippolochos had this in common.

[69] See now the detailed discussion of Giovannelli-Jouanna 2015.

[70] Amply discussed in Franco 2002 and Briquel 2015.

[71] Due in part to the bad state of preservation of one of the key texts, Paus. 6.13.5 (= *FGrHist* 76 T 4), the problem of the tyranny of Douris (and possibly also of his father Skaios, on whose name see Knoepfler 2015, p. 22) has found widely diverging solutions in modern scholarship; see Kebric 1977, pp. 6-9 and Landucci Gattinoni 1997, pp. 20-8. The persistent silence of a growing corpus of epigraphic evidence cannot be ignored.

from Peisistratos to Phokion, often quoted by Plutarch[72]. Idomeneus also wrote a treatise on the Socratics, of which nothing at all is known. A pupil of Aristotle and Theophrastos, and possibly an associate of the latter in local politics in their common native *polis*[73], Phainias of Eresos is more often described as a philosopher or an antiquarian than as a historian, but his works warrant his inclusion in the present inventory[74]. Among them, we find a local history of Eresos as well as treatises that may have used historical information for moral purposes, such as the *Tyrants killed in revenge* (1012 F 3-6) or the *Tyrants of Sicily* (1012 F 1-2). He also wrote a treatise *On poets* and one *On the Socratic philosophers*. And finally, we come to Timaeus of Tauromenion. The son of the tyrant Andromachos, an associate of Timoleon, Timaeus lived in exile at Athens roughly 315-265, or longer. His history of the Western Greeks falls somewhere between local history and *Hellenica*. Timaeus made ample use of inscriptions and had a strong interest in chronology, lists of magistrates, and lists of agonistic winners. His work incorporated slander of Athenian politicians coming from comedy (566 F 35), and he utterly disliked Aristotle and Plato (not to mention Democharès).

In pointing out commonalities between these writers, we may begin with more specifically historiographical aspects. A number of phenomena that, applying Momigliano's own categories, could be subsumed under the heading 'antiquarianism' run across the works of many of the authors listed above. Interest in inscriptions, for which Timaeus was famous according to Polybius, is documented in a major way for Philochoros, and

[72] According to the current consensus, Idomeneus was born around 325 BCE and his involvement in politics dates to the years 306-1, see Dorandi 1999, p. 15, based on Angeli 1981. This chronology however seems hard to reconcile with what we read on Idomeneus in fr. 13 Angeli (= Sen. *Ep.* 21.3-5), which seems to point to a senior political position that is surprising for a man in his early twenties. Nobody seems to have wondered whether Idomeneus might not be identical with the Idomeneus sent with Moschion to Rhodes by Antigonos in 314 (Diod. 19.37.4). On Idomeneus' work on the Athenian demagogues, its traditional models and its political agenda see Cooper 1997.

[73] *FGrHist* 1012 T 7; on Phainias' views of tyranny and his possible involvement in the overthrow of one of several such regimes that existed in Eresos during his lifetime, see Engels 1998, commentary to *FGrHist* 1012 F 1-2.

[74] On Phainias' life and works, see Engels 1998.

also for the shadowy Diyllos. Specific writings on literature are attested for Philochoros and Douris, not to mention Douris' brother Lynkeus, a poet and literary critic, and of course for the Aristotelian Phainias of Eresos. Chronology was a specialty of Timaeus, who is credited with generalizing the use of the Olympic era, but at least Philochoros had a specific interest in it, as well. The two of them also shared a deep interest in religious cults and rituals. Finally, leaving open the question of how we should define Timaeus' work in terms of scope, local history was a concern shared at least by Philochoros, Douris, and Phainias. The whole spectrum of erudite interests that characterize early Hellenistic antiquarianism was spread over the works of these authors, with overlaps on the margins of the generic field.

Almost no one of our characters can be said to have been indifferent to the philosophical schools and especially to their role in politics. Douris, for some time probably a pupil of Theophrastos, nevertheless lampooned Demetrios of Phaleron, as, less surprisingly, Democharesalso did. Even more interestingly, Douris had bad things to say on Socrates and Plato, as well. As for Democharesh, he was the author of one of the most famous all-out attacks on the Socratic schools, where it seems that every prominent representative, and especially the great master, came in for slander and satire. At least on this, he and Timaeus must have been in agreement, since the list of philosophers that Timaeus is known to have badmouthed is about as comprehensive. As for Idomeneus of Lampsakos, we are in no position to tell what the *Tendenz* of his book on the school of Socrates was, although being an Epicurean and usually sharp-tongued, he is not likely to have idealized them – all the more so, if he really was a member of Antigonos' court. Needless to say, the work by Phainias on the same topic appears to have had a totally different character and tone[75].

The very inclusion of personal slander in historiography – which offered Polybius, one is tempted to say, an easy way of discrediting his rival in front of his Roman audience – appears to have been a new fashion that became especially prominent in Timaeus' Athens, one that is documented beyond Timaeus' own work at least in that of Douris, who just like Timaeus picked up from the comic scene references to the sexual habits of Athenian politicians (in his case, Demosthenes). And when it comes to slandering politicians, one can hardly fail to point out that Idomeneus' treatise *On*

[75] *FGrHist* 1012 F 11-2, with the commentary of Engels 1998.

Athenian politicians seems to have consisted mostly of slander, targeting every single famous political leader of Athens from Peisistratos all the way to Phokion, and possibly beyond. Even though Theopompus can in some sense be said to have opened the way, with his almost grotesque portrait of Philip and his vitriolic review of Athenian demagogues, there is no denying that after the death of Alexander the phenomenon was taken to unprecedented levels, as if to include satire within the purview of historiography, with the quotations from comedy pointing to a tendency towards the mixing of genres that is immediately recognized as typical of Hellenistic literature[76].

Even the most essential aspect of Timaeus' work, its subject matter, finds unexpected parallels. A strong interest in Sicilian affairs was shared at least by Douris, who may have had personal connections with the island and wrote a fairly extensive work on the tyrant Agathokles of Syracuse, by Phainias, with his work on the Sicilian tyrants, and possibly even by Democharès, who has sometimes been attributed with a biography of Agathokles, and at any rate found some reason to mention him in his work – all of which is all the less surprising if we remember that Agathokles was present enough on Demetrios Poliorketes' mind for it to be worth his while to make fun of him, calling him 'ruler of the island' rather than king, and also that Agathokles' daughter Lanassa was wife to Pyrrhos since 295 and then, probably in 291, to Demetrios himself[77]. On the occasion of her first wedding, Agathokles himself took her to Epirus to join her groom. The far West was not that far after all. As for the discovery of Rome that intrigued Momigliano, we may remind ourselves of Pliny's statement according to which Theophrastos was «primus externorum qui aliqua de Romanis diligentius scripsit» (NH 3.57-8 = Fr. 599), or of the fact, already mentioned, that Douris talked about the battle of Sentinum.

In sum, it appears that every essential aspect of Timaeus' history

[76] On Theopompos' portrait of Philip see Flower 1994, pp. 98-115; on his excursus on Athenian demagogues, Connor 1968 is a classic. On the influence of Theopompos on Idomeneus' work on Athenian demagogues, Cooper 1997, pp. 457-8.

[77] Agathokles nesiarch: Plut. *Dem.* 25.7 (also in *mor.* 823c-d), possibly from Douris, with Hauben 1974 (especially p. 113 and note 36, with further references, for the meaning of the mocking title); the version of the episode reported by Phylarchos (*FGrHist* 81 F 31) omits Agathokles. Franco 1993, pp. 247-51 prefers to date the episode after the battle of Ipsos.

of the Western Greeks finds parallels on the Athenian cultural scene. Especially in terms of range of interests and methods, his work can be said to be typical of the cultural context in which it was written. Jacoby and Momigliano saw this clearly, and the complex web of analogies and connections, that Jacoby's subdivision of authors in different categories and in different volumes of the *Fragmente* obscures more than a bit, makes it less and less plausible that Timaeus might have lived isolated from the environment around him – and one may add the pedestrian observation that, in order to write his work, he needed access to books, which would have been rather problematic without good connections to upper-class Athenians. One even wonders if it is at all thinkable that his work may have been carried through without access to the collections of the Lycaeum, a line of thought that would open up unexpected perspectives on the relationship between Timaeus and the Aristotelians. Obviously, this line of thought would carry us far away indeed from Momigliano's isolated Timaeus. On the other hand, what has been observed earlier should have demonstrated that the notion itself originated from views of the political dynamics of Timaeus' Athens that are nowadays untenable. Once the polarized political landscape that Momigliano inherited from an intellectual tradition most prominently represented by his own teacher is called into question, Momigliano's own suggestive remarks on the ways that Timaeus' work needs to be understood in the historical context in which he lived can develop their potential[78]. Timaeus' very biography turns out to be, among other things, a particularly clear example of something that the trajectories of other writers hint at, namely the pivotal position occupied in this period by Athens as a center of cultural production, and its powerful gravitational pull. A look at the biographies of major comic poets of this period, many of whom were non-Athenian, would reinforce this view.

[78] In other words, it seems to me that Momigliano himself was seeing through the blinkers of the scholarly tradition from which his views derived, even though he did not recognize completely how his own approach was leading him away from that tradition. Beyond this however, it should also be pointed out, Momigliano may have taken a bit too seriously the sharply critical image of Timaeus created by Polybius (a historian for whom Momigliano had deep sympathy), an image that recent scholarship has increasingly come to mistrust (see now Baron 2013, pp. 58-88, in the footsteps of Guido Schepens and Riccardo Vattuone).

Beyond these potential implications for the way we situate Timaeus in the Athenian cultural landscape, this cursory scrutiny of writers and works has inevitable consequences for how we envision that landscape. It is striking to observe that most of the characters we encountered could be characterized in several ways: historians, antiquarians, philosophers, poets, there is hardly one of them who does not have a legitimate claim to more than one of these labels. Historians and philosophers are especially hard to disentangle, and opposition and cooperation appear in various shapes and blends. At the same time, some level of involvement in politics is attested for the majority of these men, and here we ought not to forget about Philippides the comic poet, to say nothing of Demetrios of Phaleron. Some of our characters, such as Douris, Phainias, and possibly Idomeneus, achieved political prominence only in their respective cities, to be sure, but it could hardly have been otherwise. Until his death in 287, Theophrastos appears in many ways as the center of gravity of this world, and one has the impression that his political role would benefit from a reassessment that included in the picture his political and historical-antiquarian writings, which are now more easily accessible than ever before[79]. Finally, one hardly needs to underline that no simple binary opposition, political or otherwise, can cut across this thick web of relations. If Douris and his brother had been pupils of Theophrastos, this did not prevent Douris from lampooning Demetrios of Phaleron, which incidentally should warn us when it comes to turning Timaeus' sharp judgments on people into pages of his biography.

Needless to say, some of what we are observing is simply the product of a much higher density of information in comparison to, say, the late fifth century, but it seems hard to dispute that we are also dealing here with a more thickly integrated social landscape, one in which politics and cultural spheres and activities such as philosophy, dramatic poetry, historiography, antiquarianism – if we want to use this label – are ostensibly more tightly interconnected than ever before, and accordingly need to be studied together if we want to have a sense of what this historical and cultural context was like – a sense of its texture, as it were. For such an enterprise, Momigliano's thoughts will offer a stimulus and a model. His attempt at grasping the character of this age has something to teach us, and points to an agenda of research: one that tries to take multiple

[79] Thanks to Fortenbaugh *et al.* 1992.

perspectives on culture and politics, bringing philosophy and literature back into the picture in a much more robust way than has been the case in the last decades. What may conceivably emerge from such an endeavor is a cultural history of the early third century that brings Athens back to the central position it clearly occupied, offering a more satisfactory framework in which to understand the momentous transformation represented by the replacement of Athens by Alexandria as the cultural center of the Mediterranean[80]. Momigliano's work offers a template and a framework to look again at the autumn of Athens with a clearer sense of what is at stake – ultimately, the rise of Hellenistic culture.

[80] Famously, Rudolf Pfeiffer insisted on the break between Athenian culture of the fourth century in general, and the Peripatos in particular, and early Alexandrian culture, and on the distinctly non-Athenian character of the literary activity of the early Alexandrian poet-scholars (Pfeiffer 1968, pp. 87-104; on the role of the Peripatos, see already the objections of Wilson 1969, p. 369; I thank my colleague Denis Feeney for bringing Wilson's review of Pfeiffer to my attention); now that new documents and new studies have made it possible to view the political relations between Athens and the Ptolemies in a new light (see Habicht 1992), it is high time to reassess also the import of contacts in several fields of literary culture. To take two random examples, the cases of Philemon (Bruzzese 2011, pp. 18-22) and Machon (n. 59 above) may point to the movement of comic poets between Athens and Alexandria, while Benedetto 2011 has brilliantly illustrated the influence of the Atthidographers on Kallimachos.

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