

# The Concept of Self and Others in Ancient Greek Courts

## The Case of *Against Aristogeiton I*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction: the concept of self and others in democratic Athens

Each society fosters forms of polarisations among its members that create internal distinctions. The interaction between people can be complex and hard to predict, as its nature depends on a wide range of factors. Furthermore, the difference from the other within a society allows for a better definition of the self. This paper attempts to examine the dichotomy between the self and the other in democratic Athens, with a focus on issues of citizenship and the ways in which every *politēs* tended, on the one hand, to portray himself as belonging to a given group and, on the other, to reject those people whose cultural and social models differed from that proposed by the *polis*.

Defining the boundaries of civic identity in classical Athens is an intriguing issue.<sup>2</sup>

Although membership of the group of citizens was framed by birth and ancestry, and regulated by certain laws, the concept of who could be defined as a citizen and who could not was a thorny topic. In addition to the main distinction between citizens/non-citizens, there were many other sub-classifications that complemented and branched out from the first, including,

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<sup>2</sup> Among the relevant sources on citizenship in the Greek world could be mentioned the studies of Marshall 1964; Finley 1973, 1981; Sinclair 1988; Ober 1989; Hansen 1991; Boegehold, and Scafuro 1994; Manville 1997; B. Cohen 2000; Cartledge 2002; Farenga 2006; Lape 2010; Gundara 2011; Kamen 2013; Blok 2017; Cecchet, and Bussetto 2017, esp. Cecchet 2017:1–30; Giangiulio 2017:33–49; Filonik, Griffith-Williams, and Kucharski, 2020.

but not limited to, Greek/barbarian, male/female, rich/poor, citizen/metic.<sup>3</sup> In turn, each group could be further divided, i.e. slaves, *nothoi*, etc.<sup>4</sup>

It is important to note that the criteria for belonging to a given group were constantly subject to change and status transitions. Procedures such as adoptions, naturalisation, and *atimia*,<sup>5</sup> prevented an unfringeable consolidation of categories and reflected potential changes in the civic body. Gtundara describes Athenian society as an intimate and positive legacy, “deeply and profoundly shaped by the multicultural environment in which it existed.”<sup>6</sup> Bold interactions within the society created a “blurring of identities,” an environment of daily contacts that fostered sharing and forms of co-participation between people from differing social backgrounds.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of the civic body’s dynamic nature and the general state of peaceful coexistence among individuals, incidents of rejections could take place on occasion, with the consequent desire to alienate “others” from the body of citizens and exclude them from the internal group to which they unduly belonged. The reason for this distinction could be legal, political, or behavioural, and could take place at family and/or public level. According to Whitehead, “whatever the principles for allocating specific political rights and functions within a citizen

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<sup>3</sup> These dichotomies could either present the conjunction “and” or the preposition “versus.” In fact, the relation between the groups could be at times inclusive and/or exclusive. Some of these categories are discussed by Cartledge 2002. See also Hall 1989; Osborne, and Byrne 1996; Bäbler 1998; Vlassopoulos 2013.

<sup>4</sup> See Harrison 1968:61–68, 168–183; MacDowell 1978:75–89, 245–247; Finley 1981; Whitehead 1984:77–95; Rhodes 1985:496–497; Manville 1997:11–13.

<sup>5</sup> On *atimia* see, among the others, Aeschines 1.28–32, 64, 81, 134, 180; Lysias 21.25; Demosthenes 9.47; 19.257, 284; 27.68. See Harrison 1971:169–176; Hansen 1976:55–90; MacDowell 1978:73–75; D. Cohen 1991:72–74; Todd 1993:142–143, 365; Allen 2000:230–232.

<sup>6</sup> Gundara 2011:231–241; cf. Gundara 1990; Gundara, and Jacobs 2000; Fisher 1998:84–104; 2000:355–396; Taylor 2015:35–53.

<sup>7</sup> The expression was originally coined by Evans, and Boyte 1986. Then, it has been applied to a classical historical concept by Vlassopoulos 2007:33–52; 2009:347–363; 2013:100–102; Taylor, and Vlassopoulos 2015:1–18. See also E. Cohen 1992:61–110; 2000; Hunt 1998; Lewis 2002; Ismard 2010; R. Osborne 2011:85–157.

body, the global demarcation between citizens- all citizens – and others – all others - was conceptually paramount.”<sup>8</sup> Many forensic extant speeches attest to minor conflicts between characters. The separation between the self and the other is then emphasised in the arguments employed by litigants in public trials in the framework of both defence and prosecution speeches. Although based on a set of actual facts, the demarcation between individuals, to a certain extent, originates from an arbitrary perception of the other that shows the various ways in which membership of a community is interpreted.

The evidence of public discourse provides modern scholars with a window into which the social system of democratic Athens can be explored. This allows us to overcome the limits of a superficial factual knowledge and gain a fuller understanding of the *polis* and its concerns by setting them in the context of a trial. The lack of a defined model of the common citizen in a society which is subjected to modification could represent both a disincentive and an incentive in the courts. Civic identity had to be established from time to time as it was flexible and could undergo changes and modifications. As a concept, it could be influenced by the fact that every individual had to behave correctly and conform to certain given standards to prove himself worthy of status. Birth and ancestry were just two elements of this determination and did not suffice to ensure that a person was exempt from any risk of disenfranchisement. Speakers in the lawcourts would address popular judges who were greatly interested in safeguarding themselves and their exclusivity against the usurpers of status and civic boundaries. For the social actors, both litigants and jurors, the employment of persuasive arguments was key to defining themselves and depicting their opponents negatively and endorsing the courts' decisions. The orators deliberating on public discourses would advise what was best and

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<sup>8</sup> Whitehead 1991:144.

advantageous for the city and appeal to common sense and the protection of appropriate divisions.

The topic of investigation is extremely broad and offers a variety of approaches. The aim of this article is to discuss a particularly relevant case study, *Against Aristogeiton I*, (Demosthenes 25), that depicts the other as opposed to the community's values.<sup>9</sup> The highlighting of some consistent arguments used enables the representation of Athenian society and its system of beliefs.

## The complete civic ban of Aristogeiton

The case displays, with particular clarity, a veracious attempt to undermine and, eventually, banish a man by appealing to the dominant democratic Athenian ideology of the union and homogeneity among civic members. Aristogeiton is accused of disrupting the *polis'* order and bringing shame and disgrace upon the city through his behaviour (8–9, 25).<sup>10</sup> The speaker presents a vivid narrative of the facts and employs arguments that would serve to depict his opponent's disparity. In this paper, I shall explore how Aristogeiton is portrayed as a social outsider, in the utmost attempt to emphasise a distinction between him and the full citizens.

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<sup>9</sup> There is an ongoing debate about the speech's authenticity and authorship. Among the most recent overview of the question and of the scholars who have addressed the issue, see Martin 2009:182–202; Wohl 2010:51 note 63; Apostolakis 2014:203–208; Harris 2018:193–197 and 195 note 10; Kostantakos 2021:241 note 16. I would also like to add that although I refer to Demosthenes as the author of this speech, this does not mean that I can firmly prove that to be the case. As this argument would not affect the aim of this paper, I postpone further consideration on the debate to a future time.

<sup>10</sup> Sources about Aristogeiton are Demosthenes 25, 26, Dinarchus 2, Lycurgus' *Against Aristogeiton*, which is lost (clues of it are in the *hypothesis* of Libanius), and another oration of Hyperides, of which are preserved just fragments. Aristogeiton himself was the author of some orations, but even in this case there are just spare fragments. On his character, see also Quintilian *Institution Oratoria* X. 22; Plutarch *Lives of the ten orators* 850 c-e; Photius *Bibliotheca* 491a, 496b. This speech was pronounced after that of Lycurgus (Demosthenes 25.1) and is part of a deuterology together with Demosthenes 26.

Space limitation prevents me from discussing the speech entirely. Thus, I will focus on selected sections and topics that are supportive of my argument.

A bit of context, on a preliminary basis, is essential: Aristogeiton had been punished and had the obligation to pay a fine in two previous lawsuits where he had been found guilty. Being insolvent on both occasions, he was legally banned from speaking (*parrhēsia*) before the temple of the Goddess (28).<sup>11</sup> Thus, he was accused of arbitrary participation in the public scene despite still owing money to the treasury. After five years (42) and the partial payment of the fines, he resumed bringing cases before the court and speaking in front of the Ecclesia as a full citizen (37–38). These misdeeds display his lack of respect for the *polis*' decision. His acts of theft and physical violence, as well as his disrespect for the community, portray a man behaving contemptuously. Personal defamation and accusations concerning his family members are mentioned in a process of vilification. Additionally, a set of evidence proves his personal and public misconduct underlining his total inadequacy to be regarded as a fellow citizen.<sup>12</sup> The record of his misdemeanours underpins the argument that he was the epitome of whatever was wrong in the *polis* (78). The profile of Aristogeiton exemplifies the polarity between his meanness and the integrity of the citizens. The speaker, thereby, by relying on the outrageous presentation of his opponent, sought to punish Aristogeiton's insolence and exclude him permanently from the *polis* considering him unworthy of status. Aristogeiton thus becomes the target of fierce accusations and aggressive polemic.

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<sup>11</sup> On *parrhēsia* see, among the other, Demosthenes 21.95; [Demosthenes] 58.68–69; Aeschines 1.3, 14; Lysias 10.1. See Sinclair 1988:23–24; Monoson 1994; Montiglio 2000:116–122; Foucault 2001; Saxonhouse 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Several crimes and serious accusations are enumerated (18, 30, 56–59), such as his abuses to gain advantages and extort money (41), the destruction of order in law and government (19), and his disregard for honourable affairs and liturgies (51). For a discussion of Aristogeiton's private life and behavior, see Apostolakis 2014:201–230.

The voluntary prosecutor (ὁ βουλόμενος) stands for the whole *demos* and presents his case as relevant to the protection of the common good.<sup>13</sup> Hence, it was crucial for him to show that he was acting in defence of the *polis* and that Aristogeiton's actions jeopardised the whole group of citizens.<sup>14</sup> As a means of maximising the sense of community between the jurors and the suitor who share a similar ideology, a solid ethical alliance is established (4, 20, 42). In this way, the “self” represents figuratively the whole civic body, which contrasts its beliefs with those of the adversary. It follows that the accusation, while intending to restore the legal order and alienate Aristogeiton, becomes a social manifesto and a discourse of civic propaganda.

The speaker appeals to the body of citizens using a familial simile, suggesting that they are all relatives (89, τὸν αὐτὸν τοίνυν τρόπον ὑμεῖς, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τὴν πόλιν οἰκεῖτε συγγενικῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως). This enables him to advocate civic unity and accuse the individual who was endangering this balance.<sup>15</sup> As is typically the case with voluntary prosecutions, the speaker constructs a conceptual frame and appeals to the jurors' common-sense. The projection of the image of kinship among the citizens is powerful, since the family represented the basic unit of society and was deeply interwoven with the *polis*.<sup>16</sup> As a result, whoever disrupted this social harmony in order to pursue his own interests, had to be condemned.

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<sup>13</sup> On volunteer prosecution see Christ 1998:118–159; Rubinstein 2003:92–95.

<sup>14</sup> It is likely that the *graphē* had political reasons, as well. In fact, Aristogeiton played an active role in the public scene, siding with Philip. If the speech actually belonged to the period of Demosthenes, if his authorship is confirmed, the speaker may have felt antagonism towards his political opponent for his demagogic vocation.

<sup>15</sup> For the image of unity among the citizens, 15–16, 19, 22, 24–27.

<sup>16</sup> [Demosthenes] 45.53; Lycurgus 1.131; Plato *Statesman* 259c; *Laws* 7.804d; Aristotle *Politics* 1253b2–8, 1263b30–31, 1337a27–38. On the interdependency between family and *polis* and their mutual derivation, see Lacey 1968:97 ff., 125 ff.; Harrison 1968:92 ff; Sealey 1987:29; Rubinstein 1993:1–15; Pomeroy, 1997; Patterson, 1981; 1998; Roy 1999; Brock 2013:25–42; Ojakangas 2020.

The resemblance between people is acutely shown through their common compliance with regulatory laws, of which *Dikē* is the supreme ruler. In the speech, justice is both the personified appearance of a deity and the principle that should be followed by all *dikastes*. As a deity, *Dikē* is personified as sitting beside Zeus' throne, surveying each individual and exhorting everyone to cast a just vote. Her supervision indulges all jurors, who are led to feel as if they are being observed by hallowed and inexorable justice (11, καὶ τὴν ἀπαραίτητον καὶ σεμνὴν Δίκην, ἣν ὁ τὰς ἀγιωτάτας ἡμῖν τελετὰς καταδείξας Ὀρφεὺς παρὰ τὸν τοῦ Διὸς θρόνον φησὶ καθημένην πάντα τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐφορᾶν, εἰς αὐτὸν ἕκαστον νομίσαντα βλέπειν οὕτω ψηφίζεσθαι, φυλαττόμενον καὶ προορώμενον μὴ καταισχυῖναι ταύτην). This being the case, they would be persuaded to judge correctly and to acknowledge a superior presence establishing the *polis'* order.

*Nomos* and justice are the *polis'* governing principles and its regulating forces. Throughout the speech, the speaker develops a contrast between *nomos* and *physis* that is the main distinction ruling society.<sup>17</sup> This dichotomy revolves around the importance of the law as a guarantee for order in spite of the chaos and violence generated by wild nature. These traits distinguish humans and, by extension, the citizens, from all others. Of the two elements, *nomos* is important for the imposition of order. Moreover, it rules civilised community. By contrast, *physis* is irregular and peculiar to each individual (15, Ἄπας ὁ τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίος, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κἂν μεγάλην πόλιν οἰκῶσι κἂν μικράν, φύσει καὶ νόμοις διοικεῖται. τούτων δ' ἡ μὲν φύσις ἐστὶν ἄτακτον καὶ κατ' ἄνδρ' ἴδιον τοῦ ἔχοντος, οἱ δὲ νόμοι κοινὸν καὶ τεταγμένον ταῦτο πᾶσιν). As civic life is governed by *nomos*, the pre-eminence of *physis* and the lack of discipline results in creating the idea that people who do not follow legal order, resemble beasts, and lack civilisation (20). It is thus clear that whoever infringes the laws and their order, like

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<sup>17</sup> For a relevant study on the distinction between *nomos* and *physis* in the speech, see Wohl 2010:50–65.

Aristogeiton, needs to be alienated, as he plays no part in the civic family and is unsuitable to live a decent life in any respect (5, ὁ δὲ κρινόμενος τῶν μὲν εἰς σωτηρίαν φερόντων ἄλλ' οὐδ' ὄτιοῦν πάρεστιν ἔχων, οὐ τοὺς ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πράγματος λόγους δικαίους, οὐ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον ἀνθρώπινον, οὐκ ἄλλ' οὐδ' ὄτιοῦν ἀγαθόν).

The whole speech attempts to show Aristogeiton as totally detrimental to the *polis* and its order (48–50). To express this rift as caused by his behaviour and his savage nature, the speaker has recourse to a consistent use of metaphors and similes that reinforce the sense of contempt in a process of dehumanisation. The use of zoomorphic comparisons, together with the description of his shameful actions, enhance the perception of his otherness and contribute to his negative portrayal. Aristogeiton is described as a wild animal (8, τὰ τοιαῦτα θηρία), a monster or a beast (31, τοιοῦτω θηρίῳ, 58, τὸ θηρίον καὶ ἄμεικτον), a watchdog of the democracy (40, κύων ... τοῦ δήμου), a snake or a scorpion with sting erect (52, ὥσπερ ἔχιδις ἢ σκορπιος ἠρκῶς τὸ κέντρον), a cancer or an ulcer or some other incurable growth (95, καρκίνον ἢ φαγέδαιναν ἢ τῶν ἀνιάτων τι κακῶν), a viper or a tarantula (96, ἔχιδις ἔδακεν οὐδὲ φαλάγγιον), a sycophant (19, 37, 41, 45, 49, 63) whose presence upsets the order of the *polis*.<sup>18</sup> This list of abundant animal similes, on the one hand, enhances a vivid visualisation of the savagery of Aristogeiton, while, on the other hand, substantiates the idea that since he did not live his life as a civilised human, he could not be considered a citizen.

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<sup>18</sup> In Harpocration there is a comparison between sycophant and snakes (s.v. *pareiai ophēis*). On *rētores* as snakes, cf. Hyperides fr. B 19. 80; Aeschines 2.99; Harpocration s.v. *argas*. On sycophants and scorpions, cp. Eupolis fr. 231 K-A. The labelling of one's opponent as a sycophant was common in forensic suits, see among all the accusations in Lysias 25.3; Aeschines 2.145; Lycurgus 1.32; Demosthenes 36.3, 14, 21, 24, 26–27, 52–54, 68, 70. On sycophancy, see MacDowell 1978:62–66; R. Osborne 1990:83–102; Harvey 1990:103–121 esp. pages 103–104, note 1 for the earlier bibliography; Christ 1992:334–346; 1998:48–71. For a presentation of Aristogeiton's sycophancy, see Spatharas 2013:77–79. For similes in other speeches of Demosthenes to the Assembly, see Demosthenes 2.21, 29; 3.11; 4.26, 40. On the role of metaphors and similes in the oratory, see Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1410b–1413a. On the relegation of Aristogeiton based on negative metaphors, see Spatharas 2013:77–95; 2021:149–166.

I would like now to turn my attention to a notable section of the speech that describes a trivial yet violent fight involving Aristogeiton during his stay in prison (60–62).<sup>19</sup> He was accused of having stolen a pocket-book from an unnamed man of Tanagra, who had just been put in prison (This document was later found among Aristogeiton’s belongings). Aristogeiton denied any responsibility and reacted with unrestrained rage. After a ferocious exchange of stinging blows, he bit off his accuser’s nose (61, ὡς δ’ εἰς τοῦθ’ ἤκεν, ἀπεσθίει τὴν ῥῖνα τάνθρωπου). The starting point of this dispute, for all its banality, foreshadows the unexpected brutality of the outcome. Aristogeiton’s reaction was so inhuman that he was alienated even by the other inmates of the prison who, stunned by his uncontrollable rage, decided not to share anything more with him (61, ὕστερον δ’ εὐρίσκουσι τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐν κιβωτίῳ τινί, οὗ τὴν κλεῖν οὗτος εἶχεν. καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ψηφίζονται περὶ αὐτοῦ ταῦθ’ οἱ ἐν τῷ οἰκήματι, μὴ πυρός, μὴ λύχνου, μὴ ποτοῦ, μὴ βρωτοῦ μηδενὸς μηδένα τούτῳ κοινωνεῖν [μηδὲ λαμβάνειν, μηδ’ αὐτὸν τούτῳ δίδοναι]). The turmoil of the other prisoners is highly informative about the disrespect towards Aristogeiton. Although guilty of the worst crimes, as their imprisonment confirms, these men could not do anything but censure Aristogeiton and convict him after an informal trial.<sup>20</sup> His banishment from sharing basic daily activities relegates him to the worst of the worst.<sup>21</sup>

The example illustrates clearly how far Aristogeiton was from the model of a civilised person. His shameful behaviour makes him incapable of dealing properly even with people of the lowest status.<sup>22</sup> The decision taken by the villains was an example of primitive *atimia* that

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Dinarchus 2.9–10.

<sup>20</sup> See Rosenbloom 2003:112; Christ 1998:57–59; Wohl 2010:57–58; Spatharas 2013:85–87; 2021:162–163.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Dinarchus 2.9–10. Other similar cases are in Aeschines 2.97; Lysias 13.78–79; Isaeus 9.16; Xenophon *Hellenica* 1.7.35.

<sup>22</sup> Spatharas 2013:82: “Aristogeiton belongs neither to humankind nor to the civilized and structured society of

emphasises the scorn for a man who improperly pretended the right to be involved in the community despite his unseemly behaviour. The punishment could be included within social sanctions, namely those private penalties unrelated to institutions and that were meted out for violations of laws and norms.<sup>23</sup> Although the echo of this situation and the reference to the assembly of prisoners as a parameter for the jurors in the court may seem excessive, it should not be forgotten that the speech refers to Aristogeiton as the inhuman *par excellence*, whose attitudes are more akin to those of animals than those of other citizens. Confined to the body of a man, he has nothing that would characterise him as such. Hence, he is the epitome of the other, that needs to be alienated for the *polis*' safety. This mini-narrative has a significant didactical value. However odd it may appear, the prisoners are transformed into a basic body of voters. Their sense of justice should impress the society and invite jurors to retaliate against Aristogeiton. The prisoners become a yardstick for the entire community. They could be considered a microcosm, a small representation of the larger society. Thus, the actual panel of jurymen cannot exonerate a person who has been convicted even by villains (63).

As previously argued, otherness was a distinguishing trait that differentiated one person from the opponent, or opponents. Forensic trials took place in contexts in which ideology came to the fore and informed the way Athenians understood their status and civilisation. The prison episode confirms the need to maintain a decorum of language and actions at any civic level. The speaker condemns Aristogeiton because of the savage use of his mouth and the action of cannibalism to the detriment of the other inmate. This exemplifies Aristogeiton's physical misuse of the mouth, emphasising its dangerous consequences.

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Athens.”

<sup>23</sup> See Lanni 2013.

Accusations of this kind were common both in oratory and in comedy. For instance, Demosthenes was repeatedly condemned by Aeschines for his abuse of the mouth as well (Aeschines 2.23, ὁ δὲ οὐδὲν ἄπρατον ἔχων μέρος τοῦ σώματος, cf. 2.88, εἰ κίναιδον αὐτὸν προσειπὼν καὶ μὴ καθαρεύοντα τῷ σώματι). In that case, the accuser started by deliberately misinterpreting his opponent's nickname, *batalos*.<sup>24</sup> Literally, the term indicates a person of notorious effeminacy. Nonetheless, the word could also signify “anus.” Therefore, it is also liable to a pejorative and indecent interpretation. Aeschines smears Demosthenes for his sexual deviance and oral practices, exploiting the malicious meaning of the term, using it as a scurrilous epithet to underscore his rival's level of perversion. This enhances a criticism of his despicable oral habits that, in a more extended interpretation, mirrors the contamination of his mouth in his speeches as well.

It is clear that in the case of Demosthenes, as in that of Aristogeiton, there are two levels of interpretation. The dispute between Demosthenes and Aeschines over the second embassy to Philip and over whether Demosthenes deserved the benefactor's crown for his services to the *polis* led to strong arguments of denigration. Aeschines associates the mouth with intemperate behaviour and unacceptable arguments. Similarly, Aristogeiton did not just cause physical damage with his mouth and was, for this reason, banned by the other inmates, but also public damage, by not respecting the verdict that had been passed on him. Although he had been punished by not being allowed to talk in public, he kept misusing his mouth pronouncing heinous charges. Furthermore, throughout the speech, he is accused of being like a watchdog for Athenian democracy (40, κύων νῆ Δία, φασί τινες, τοῦ δήμου). The definition alludes to a

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<sup>24</sup> See Plutarch *Demosthenes* 4.3; Aeschines 1.126, 131, 164; contra Demosthenes 18.180. See Eupolis 92KA; Harpocration s.v. *batalos*, and the *scholia* to Aeschines 1.126.2. see also Aeschines 2.99. For a similar parallel see Douris of Samos FGH 76 F8; Timaios FGH 566 F35, both quoted in the *Suda*; Aulus Gellius 5.1. Aristophanes *Knights* 167, 424; Eupolis fr. 92 Kassel-Austin. On the sarcastic use of the term *batalos*, see Henderson 1991:203; Fisher 2001:265–267; Yunis 2001:211; Worman 2008:238–255.

class of people who step forward into the political scene to attack those who are accused of being wolves, while protecting the sheep, but who are in the meantime capable of gobbling up the sheep they claim to protect (40, οἷος οὐς μὲν αἰτιᾶται λύκους εἶναι μὴ δάκνειν, ἃ δὲ φησι φυλάττειν πρόβατ' αὐτὸς κατεσθίειν).<sup>25</sup> Hence, the charge constitutes a sarcastic representation of his unlawful actions and his total disrespect towards the banishment to legal silence.

Overall, the accusation against Aristogeiton is evidence that the mouth, either used for wrong actions or to pronounce unacceptable speeches, could become a reason for personal debasement. In keeping with his portrayal of Aristogeiton as a violent man, much of the speaker's description is cast in terms which refer to a disordered and wild nature. Some of this imagery results in the debasement of Aristogeiton who, for this reason, should be alienated with no possibility of appeal.

## Conclusion

The sections discussed regarding *Against Aristogeiton I* suggest that the rejection or non-acceptance of another person or group of people was based on a specific conception of Athenian identity. Behaviour and origins in ancient Athens were all essential traits that showed a wide range of self-assessment patterns. Although democratic Athens was a place where citizens lived together harmoniously, there was always a vision of “racial citizenship” that somehow produced a gap between insiders and outsiders (Lape, 2010). Thus, the

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<sup>25</sup> See Thucydides 2.65; cf. Theophrastus *Characters* 29.4; Aristotle *Athenian Constitution* 28.3–4; cf. Demosthenes 9.2; 3.22. Plutarch *Demosthenes* 23.5 claims that Demosthenes assimilated himself to a watchdog. This activity dates back already to Cleon, who was accused with a biting irony by Aristophanes for his conduct and attempt to please the mass whatever it took. On the allusion to Cleon as a watchdog, see Aristophanes *Knights* 259–260; 691–701; 1017–1034; *Wasps* 672–677, 894, 970–972. See Brock 1991; Christ 1998:148–150.

Athenians were interested in preserving their exclusivity by excluding those people who were considered undeserving of status or whose presence jeopardised the *polis*.

The representation of the other as different from the established social order was indispensable for the development of a clear distinction from the self. Aristogeiton is accused of having misappropriated his civic status and the label of a human being, to the extent that the speaker attributes to him names of animals, considering these more suited to him. The defamatory vocabulary demonstrates that Aristogeiton's behaviour was marked by obnoxious traits that alienated him from the model of citizenship. His exclusion, even from the worst individuals of the *polis*, displays the ultimate condemnation of a man. As claimed by Rosenbloom, "for Aristogeiton to be similar to the Athenians is to admit all the goods the laws represent – religious, social, economic, and political – have been corrupted."<sup>26</sup> Additionally, he misappropriated the right to speak (*parrhēsia*), which was a distinctive feature for Athenian citizens.

On the whole, the section shows how abusive and insulting the savage actions of an individual could be even before prison inmates. The analogy between the prisoners' decision and the jurymen may serve to promote a just vote in the court. The imagery used aims to influence the judgement, demonstrating that the intemperate behaviour of Aristogeiton was a visible emblem of otherness.

My paper has thus charted a crucial conjunction between the community as a social entity and an outsider as a person who jeopardised its unity. The dualism self-other reinforces the distinction between the society's common characteristics and the outsider. A last consideration worthy of note is that the "self" did not just differ from the "other," but was also completed by it, in a process of mutual definition: when the speaker (and by extension the

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<sup>26</sup> See Rosenbloom 2003:104.

community of citizens) slandered another man, he evidently assumed that he represented the opposite of what he was accusing.

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