

Metic and Non-citizen Bodies in Lysias' Funeral Oration

This paper argues that Lysias' funeral oration (Lys. 2) develops a subtle but subversive erasure of corporeal differences between citizen and non-citizens as a response to the socially mutable position of non-citizens during his lifetime. As a genre, *epitaphioi* tend to focus on the supremacy of Athenians, highlighting their autochthony as a sign of their exceptionalism. Lysias' oration, however, pays special attention to battles fought by non-traditional/non-autochthonous soldiers. This attention, I argue, reflects Lysias' interest in highlighting the arbitrariness of the legal distinctions separating citizen and non-citizen Athenians despite the latter group's military contributions and dedication Athens. This project represents a contribution and addendum to Loraux (1986), who diminishes the significance of individual authors of funeral orations in search of common *topoi*, and the recent volume edited by Pritchard (2024) that demonstrates the need to consider how each speaker's politics and agenda contribute to the content of their speeches.

Loraux characterized *epitaphioi* as ignoring metics and slaves with "a consistency that cannot be accidental". However, five of the six extant funeral orations comment on the presence of these disenfranchised audience members. Nevertheless, discussion of Lysias' metic status and how it impacts his oration has largely centered on the question of a non-citizen's ability to deliver an *epitaphios* (for bibliography, see Blanshard 2024). But, Lysias' oration, written by a metic who was temporarily awarded citizenship, offers a subtle commentary on the disconnect between the service non-citizens provide to the state and their diminished legal status.

The speaker discusses non-ideal citizen bodies to problematize the correlation between autochthony and bravery in warfare, a commonplace in *epitaphioi*. Lysias explains that the

Amazons were considered men on account of their courage rather than women in accordance with their nature (*phusis*, 2.4). The theme of nontraditional bodies succeeding in war and the subordination of nature to virtue continues when Lysias discusses Myronides' force in Megara, which comprised men characterized as too old or too young for service (2.53). The Amazons, the young, and the old serve their homelands well despite apparent physical deficiency relative to the idealized, autochthonous citizen-soldier. In Lysias' speech, a soldier's merit is commensurate with his/her comportment in battle, not their appearance.

Lysias' commentary on the place of non-citizens within Athenian warfare becomes more explicit after his praise of the democratic faction's victory over The Thirty (a struggle in which Lysias himself fought). After praising the democrats, Lysias addresses his foreign (ξένους, 2.66) audience members, noting that the city is burying them at public expense and affording them "the same honors as citizens for all time" (2.66). Here, Lysias suggests that the distinction between foreigner and citizen that existed in life disappears among them in service and death, a point underscored by his proclivity for ending sections of praise for any and all soldiers who died for Athens with the phrase "these men are buried here" (e.g. 2.1,20,54,60,64, 66,75). Their difference in station during life is erased in public burial by their shared tomb and by the words of their metic orator.

Works Cited

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