

The Space of Ritual: Marriage and Social Control in Lysias 1 and [Demosthenes] 59

Lysias 1 and [Demosthenes] 59 provide a unique insight into domesticity and family life as experienced in the ancient Greek world. Lysias 1 is perhaps the best extant source for the law regarding adultery, and as such, current scholarship on the play focuses on forming a legal picture of adultery and its ramifications in ancient Greek society (Cohen 1991, Kapparis 1995). The main issue in [Demosthenes] 59, on the other hand, is citizenship, and the speech details the legal and social repercussions of passing someone off as an Athenian citizen (Carey 1992, Kapparis 1999). Because both speeches describe life within the *oikos*, they feature women prominently and provide invaluable information on how they functioned as members of their household. On the surface, the rhetorical treatises present marriage as it is legally defined; Lysias 1 depicts, at least initially, a picture of a congenial marriage and the means by which it could be destroyed, while [Demosthenes] 59 shows a pseudo-marriage between Stephanus and Neaera and the unsanctioned marriages of Phano, both with Phrastor and Theogenes.

In addition to this portrayal of family life, both speeches include references to the (mis)appropriation of physical space, which sheds new light on not only the dynamics of marriage, but also women's movement and visibility in civic and ritual participation. Domestic and ritual space are often rendered analogous to each other, not least because the activities performed by women in each sphere were similar. Therefore, women sought the same agency and expression that they found within their own homes in religious spaces. In Lysias 1, for example, Euphiletus' wife locks him in a room, thereby seizing control over the rest of the *oikos* and dominating the traditionally male-held capacity as master of the house. It is this usurpation of space that enables Euphiletus' wife to bring Eratosthenes into the house and engage in an adulterous affair with him; this both dishonors Euphiletus and his potentially specious children and threatens the wider social structure as it was traditionally arranged. This seizure and misuse of domestic space is mirrored by his wife's dishonoring of civic space at the *Thesmophoria*, at which Eratosthenes' mother was able to aid her son in the corruption of Euphiletus' wife. Female ritual duty channels the agency for an act that ultimately shattered a marriage and together with it the *oikos* and *polis*, according to the male representation. Similarly, in [Demosthenes] 59, Apollodorus accuses Phano,

Neaera's daughter, of violating the festival of the *Anthesteria*, to which she should have been barred entry, either because she was a partner in an adulterous union or because of her status as a foreigner. [Demosthenes] shows how the corruption of ritual space, one of the main stages for female participation and conspicuousness, would have had negative effects on the *polis* as a whole. This is further borne out by the fact that debarment from ritual was one of the punishments for a woman who had been taken in adultery.

Gendered space, both physical and socio-cultural, is explored in contemporary sociological theory as a mechanism of social control by males (Ardener 1993, *et al.*). By assigning women to a confined, supervised domain, men attempted to control or curb female actions. This paper investigates how this male-controlled, or male-sanctioned in the case of some ritual activity, domain was appropriated by women in an effort to assert their own agency and seeks to further answer why male representation highlights ritual space as offering the platform or outlet for female deviation.

Bibliography

- Ardener, S. (Ed.). (1993). *Women and Space: Ground Rules and Social Maps*. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers Ltd.
- Carey, C. (1992). *Apollodoros Against Neaira: (Demosthenes) 59*. Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips.
- Cohen, D. (1991a). *Law, Sexuality, and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Kapparis, K. (1995). "When were the Athenian adultery laws introduced?" *Revue internationale des droits de l' antiquité*, 42, 97-122.
- Kapparis, K. (1999). *Apollodoros 'Against Neaira' [D. 59]*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.