

# RHETORIC AS RITUAL: THE SEMIOTICS OF THE ATTIC FUNERAL ORATION

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The Athenians were unique among the ancient Greeks in the burial of their war dead.<sup>1</sup> These they interred not, like the other Greeks, on the battlefield where they fell, but in a common grave in their public cemetery. It was located in the Kerameikos, Athens' most beautiful suburb. This practice had begun at least by the time of the Persian Wars and lasted throughout the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Its most outstanding feature was the funeral oration recited annually each winter over those who had died in the previous summer's campaigns.<sup>2</sup> This *epitaphios logos* comprises a genre of literature that provides us with unusual access to the concerns and issues of Athenian society. Our direct evidence spans the years 465 to 322 B.C.<sup>3</sup> It thus coincides with the career of Athenian democracy, with the rise and fall of the Athenian empire, and with the brilliant efflorescence at Athens of oratory, philosophy, history, and tragedy. While the funeral oration's ostensible purpose was to eulogize the dead, in fact it was an encomium on the city itself. The *epitaphioi* reveal how the Athenians pictured to themselves their city's merits and achievements, its present policy and past actions.

Indeed, these speeches formed a truly popular genre. The speakers were selected by the democratic city council, themselves chosen for office by blind lot, and voted upon by the assembly. Their qualifications

were not oratorical or intellectual brilliance, but political respectability.<sup>4</sup> Further, the contents of the speeches were remarkably static: traditional themes and *exempla* were recited with little or no change year after year, in speech after speech. Although some originality and variation were permitted, the speakers were constrained to work within very close limits. Indeed, the constant repetition of commonplace themes gives the orations a formulaic, almost liturgical quality. Yet, though less lofty in artistic expression or undistinguished for individual brilliance, these speeches fulfilled an important, indeed vital, social function for the Athenians.<sup>5</sup> However hackneyed its themes may seem, the funeral oration was a true *vox populi*: it promulgated a message that was hardly the personal expression of the orators, but rather the collective voice of the Athenian polity. In sum, the orations were designed not to inform or to innovate, but to articulate in ritual fashion shared community ideals, values, and attitudes. In particular, they expressed and sought to resolve troubling inconsistencies and contradictions that were the legacy of Athenian culture and history.

The issues which the *epitaphios* embraced were many. Here the focus will be to examine the treatment of just one set of contradictions, the conflict between a cultural ideal of Panhellenic altruism and harmony and one of ruthless lust for honour (*φιλοτιμία*) and supremacy at any cost (*φιλονικία*).<sup>6</sup> This latter code spawned an actual practice of interstate rivalry and selfish aggrandizement, in which Athenian aggression and militarism played a prominent role, a practice which clashed with the Panhellenic ideal. At the same time, this aggressive foreign policy generated fear and resistance among the other Greek states that resulted in the Peloponnesian War and Athens' total and humiliating defeat. This historical experience was a negation of the code of *φιλοτιμία* and *φιλονικία*. To account for these inconsistencies the funeral orations effected a symbolic resolution by portraying Athens as a lonely benefactor, compelled to intervene, sacrificing her citizens' lives to insure justice, freedom, and security for the rest of Greece. To demonstrate this function it will be necessary first to contextualize the speeches historically and culturally and then to show how myth and history were deliberately altered and manipulated to serve as paradigms of an ideology that transformed

Athenian aggression into benefaction and failure into success.

The surface discourse of the *epitaphioi* was universally fulsome, indeed hyperbolic, self-praise. The speeches incessantly touted Athens' uniqueness, primacy, and selflessness. She alone upheld Hellenic law and custom, protecting the weak and oppressed, repelling invasion and aggression, punishing wrongdoing. Athens was the only city whose very existence was predicated on justice, for her citizens alone were truly autochthonous and, unlike others, did not unfairly expel original inhabitants to found their polity. Athens was the foremost city, the educator of Greece, the guardian of security, the apostle of justice, the bestower of freedom. To illustrate these feigned virtues an almost unvarying selection of Attic legends and Athenian military successes was cited. This representation is a clear expression of the contemporary cultural code of altruistic Panhellenism with Athens as its very avatar. But there are significant incongruities in these speeches which warn us not to accept the surface discourses as a straightforward, if naively boastful, representation of the facts. Rather, they indicate that we are here dealing with a specialized language of ideology.

A useful entry point into the dynamics of this rhetoric is to examine the frequent claims in the *epitaphioi* to Athenian primacy and uniqueness. Although given various expression, the refrain is repeated tirelessly. Athens is *first* in a variety of accomplishments or virtues. Athens *differs from* and thus *excels* all other Greek cities: Athens *stands alone* and is *unique*. One common claim, which appears in Herodotus, Thucydides, Lysias, Plato, and Demosthenes *inter alios*, is that Athens *all by herself* repulsed Darius' invasion at Marathon.<sup>7</sup> Further, Lysias tells us (2.18) that the early Athenians were the first and only ones (πρῶτοι καὶ μόνοι) to do away with oligarchy and to establish democracy. Plato points out (*Menex.* 237E) how Athens had been the first and only country (πρῶτη καὶ μόνη) to produce human nourishment, a claim repeated by Demosthenes (60.5). Pericles asserts that the Athenians are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the majority in doing good deeds (Thuc. 2.40.4: ἐνηντιώμεθα τοῖς πολλοῖς), and he claims, "We are the only ones who do someone a favour without first calculating what we'll get out of it" (Thuc. 2.40.5: μόνοι ἀφελούμεν). In sum, he says,

"Athens alone (μόνη) is greater than her reputation . . . and alone (μόνη) gives the invader no shame for defeat" (Thuc. 2.41.3). These are only a few of the many instances we could catalogue from the extant epitaphic literature.<sup>8</sup>

What is particularly striking is how this formulation was extrapolated onto historical events. Uniformly, the funeral orations which chronicled Athens' past to illustrate the prowess and ἀρετή of her forebears distorted and misinterpreted these events wilfully and deliberately. In general terms, Athenian foreign policy in the fifth century can be characterized as one of aggression, military adventurism, and imperialistic expansion that went on without halt from the formation of the Delian league in 478 until the defeat at Aegispotami in 405 B.C. Conversion of Athens' onetime league of allies against Persia into a subservient empire, the reduction of Aegina, intervention in Egypt, seizure of the Megarid, invasion of Boeotia, the ruthless military subjection of allies such as Thasos, Naxos, Samos, and Mytilene, the brutal destruction of Melos, and the infatuated but ill-fated attempt to seize all Sicily are but highlights in this seventy-year career of aggression.<sup>9</sup> But in his *epitaphios* Lysias depicted such events in the most glowing terms:

What words or how much time or how great an orator could adequately tell the valour of the men who lie buried here? Enduring countless hardships and labours, fighting in the most brilliant battles, and running the most glorious risks, they made Greece free and made their own country supreme (μεγίστην). For seventy years they ruled the sea and saved their allies from revolution . . . not by weakening them, but by making them strong. So great was our forebears' military power, the king of Persia no longer coveted foreign lands . . . and in that age no tyrant ruled among the Greeks, and no city of Hellas was enslaved by the barbarians. Great indeed was the restraint and awe our forebears' courage and valour inspired in all men everywhere. That is why they and they alone (μόνους) deserved to be foremost (προσπάτας) of the Greeks and leaders (ἡγεμόνες) of their cities. (2.54-57, abridged)

There are many examples which show how the *epitaphioi* specifically inverted or falsified well-known events to fit this same paradigm. In these the Athenians not only distorted the truth to insist on how they accomplished great deeds, but also they omitted altogether their allies' help or participation. The result is, of course, that the Athenians appear not just to have led the way but to have acted single-handedly. For example, they claimed total credit for the victory at Artemisium (480 B.C.). Lysias says (2.30-32), "The Athenians embarked in their ships and won the victory there," while by contrast, he notes, the Spartans were being crushed at Thermopylae. What Lysias failed to mention, of course, is that the fleet of 324 ships at Artemisium, while preponderantly of Athenian vessels, represented forces from Corinth, Megara, Chalcidice, Aegina, Sicyon, Sparta, Epidaurus, Eretria, Troezen, Styra, Ceos, and the Opuntian Locrians. Lysias also neglected to mention that the commander of the Greek fleet was not an Athenian, but Eurybiades, the Spartan (Hdt. 8.1-2).

These examples point up two important mechanisms in the speeches. First, the assertions and illustrations of Athenian uniqueness, superiority, altruism, and of acting alone for the common good constituted a device to transform Athenian aggression into noble self-sacrifice. In this way, it offered a mediation between the code of Panhellenic altruism and the reality of interstate warfare governed by φιλοτιμία and φιλονικία. Hence, the facts of history as the Athenians indeed knew them were compromised and distorted to serve as paradigms of this resolution. The funeral orations are so rife with such falsifications that it would be impossible to list them all exhaustively here.<sup>10</sup> But a few typical examples will help establish their tendency. For instance, in Lysias (2.20-46) the Athenians are given almost complete credit for winning the Persian Wars, but no mention is made of the Hellenic League, although the Serpent Column lists thirty-one allies, nineteen of whom are Peloponnesians or their allies.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Themistocles is credited with leadership at Salamis (2.42), whereas in fact Eurybiades the Spartan was supreme allied commander. The Athenians are said to have won the "prize of valour" (ἀριστεῖα) at Salamis, while Herodotus states that the Aeginetans were accorded the highest praise for their efforts there (8.93). Hyperides' funeral oration also exhibits a number of significant inaccuracies.<sup>12</sup>

It is claimed that Leosthenes occupied Thermopylae after the battle of Boeotia, when in fact he already had control of the area. Harmodius and Aristogiton are said to have liberated Athens (6.39), when in fact the Alcmaeonids achieved that feat four years later in 510, and with Spartan aid, as the Athenians well knew.<sup>13</sup> It is further claimed that Leosthenes defeated the Macedonians with inferior forces, but in actuality until Leonnatus and Craterus arrived, the Greeks had numerical superiority, since Antipater's forces were distracted to defend various parts of Greece. Finally, no mention is made of Athenian defeats on sea at Abydos, Amorgos, and the Lichiades islands.<sup>14</sup> In addition to these examples, other instances of distortion and outright falsifications will be pointed out in the course of this paper.

In effect, the Athenians in their funeral orations created a perfect world, where their cultural values were not in conflict, but complementary. But there was a snake in this Eden. For the speeches also reflected a deep anxiety over their isolation from the rest of Greece and a resentment and suspicion of the other Greeks, who were commonly depicted in the *epitaphioi* as petty, shortsighted, jealous, treacherous, and ungrateful for all the benefactions the Athenians had allegedly bestowed on them. For example, demonstrating at length that Athens' forebears "never did an injustice to any Greek or barbarian" (60.7) and that "wherever justice was stationed [on the battlefield], there [the Athenians] arrayed themselves" (60.18), Demosthenes compared his countrymen with the other Greeks thus:

In both [good sense and courage] the Athenians excelled (πολὸν δὲ ἤνεγκαν). If ever a common threat faced all the Greeks they were the first (πρῶτοι) to foresee it and time and again summoned everyone to common salvation. This is a demonstration of good intent! And even though ignorance among the rest of the Greeks was mixed with spitefulness -- when it was within their power to prevent these things without difficulty, either they lacked the foresight or else sneered at the danger -- none the less our forefathers did not bear any grudges: they heard the call and were willing to do whatever was right. They

took the lead (προστάντες) and gave their all eagerly, their lives, their resources, their allies . . . .

A second example is particularly apposite and requires examination. Plato's *Menexenus* was written to satirize the patriotic oratory Plato felt so repugnant and pernicious to good government.<sup>15</sup> In order to expose the weaknesses and insecurities he perceived in the Athenian national character, he exaggerated the typical themes of the *epitaphios*. Here Socrates purports to recite from memory a funeral oration glued together from the scraps left over from Pericles' famous *epitaphios*. Written in 386, the dialogue introduced a new, but thematically familiar, complaint.<sup>16</sup> In 392 the Persian satrap Tiribazus had offered peace terms to the Spartans. All the other Greeks, says Socrates, including the Corinthians, the Argives, and the Boeotians, sold out and were willing to get peace by surrendering the Greek cities in Asia Minor. But not so with the Athenians. "We alone had the courage neither to give in nor to swear to the treaty" (μόνοι δὲ ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἔτολμήσαμεν οὔτε ἐκδοῦναι οὔτε ἁμώσαι, 245C). But the actual facts of the matter were quite different. We know that when the treaty was first proposed in 392, it was rejected not only by the Athenians, but also by the Thebans and the Argives.<sup>17</sup> Eventually Athens did yield, in 386, and swore to the Peace of Antalcidas. Only then did the Argives accede, but the Thebans were still holding out.<sup>18</sup> As a critic of Athenian patriotic oratory, Plato had two purposes in presenting this material in his mock *epitaphios*. First, the Athenian boast to have stood alone against Persian pressure in refusing to swear to the treaty was flatly, almost absurdly, false. The *Menexenus* had been written in 386, the very year the Athenians in fact caved in and accepted the peace. More importantly, Plato perceived the hidden meaning of the μόνος boast, that it also signified abandonment, failure, loss of esteem. Accordingly, right after the proud assertion, "We were the only ones who had the courage not to give in . . . ," he had Socrates add, "We were left alone" -- isolated (ἐμονώθημεν) -- "because we refused to do anything wrong and surrender Greeks to barbarians" (245D). Thus, by a linguistic transformation from μόνου . . . ἔτολμήσαμεν to ἐμονώθημεν, Plato underscored what he saw as an essential connection

in the psychology of self-praise in the *epitaphios logos*.

Now, this anxiety over being isolated and alienated from the rest of Greece, though magnified by Athens' aggressive posture in expanding her empire, had some justification in fact. For it is true that during the Persian Wars the other Greeks who had not defected to the Medes were unenthusiastic about helping the Athenians face the advancing barbarians. When Darius invaded at Marathon in 490 B.C., only the Plataeans came to fight alongside the Athenians. The Spartans had been informed in advance, but they said that they could not come because they were waiting for the full moon. They showed up the day after the battle. In 480 B.C., when Xerxes' army invaded Attica and sacked Athens, the Peloponnesians wanted to withdraw to the isthmus of Corinth and build a wall to protect the Peloponnese, abandoning Athens. Only by a desperate ruse did Themistocles compel the Greeks to fight at Salamis and win a great victory. Even the next year, when Xerxes had gone home and left a much reduced force in Boeotia, the Athenians got the Spartans to help them drive the barbarians out of Greece only by a bitter embassy (Hdt. 9.7). In effect, their resentment toward the other Greeks for their abandonment at Marathon and before and after Salamis made the Athenians transform their isolation into a virtue.<sup>19</sup> Their successes on land and sea against the Persians turned their anger over their adversity into a proud boast, "We fought alone." It was a claim that grew so in exaggeration that Athenian *μονομαχία* began to eclipse the facts: allies and their assistance, large or small, dropped out of sight, wholly replaced by the Athenians alone. Finally, for the seventy years of Athenian empire after the Persian Wars, the *μόνος* theme grew to be a justification of foreign policy. Thus, in her own eyes Athens was compelled to become the leader of Greece and to act alone because the other states, jealous, quarrelsome, shortsighted, spiteful, petty, and vindictive, refused to act for their own good and for the good of Hellas.

In sum, this complex of themes, statements, and their historical and mythical illustrations comprised a symbolic language which was itself a mediation between conflicting cultural codes and of contradictions between those codes and Athenian historical experience. We have already noted the inconsistency between the codes of altruism and *φιλοτιμία*,



of helping others and of helping oneself. While in practice the ideal of altruism remained just that, a social myth, φιλονικία engendered an actual history of Athenian aggression and imperialist expansion that was contrary to helping others, that is, a policy that entailed injuring others. At the same time, this aggression created a backlash and invited retaliation. It was first instanced by the Persian invasions and then culminated in Hellenic resistance to the Athenian empire that resulted in the Peloponnesian War and Athens' total defeat. Thus, in simple terms, the policy that embodied φιλονικία ended in a historical reality that was its complete opposite: instead of being first and most glorious as winners, they suffered defeat, hatred, and ignominy. The Athenians' problem, which the funeral orations solved -- in so far as any such unsolvable problem can be solved --, was to reconcile these conflicts. Hence, the *epitaphioi* generated a perfect, mediated world, in which aggression was benefaction and losing was really winning. To effect this mediation, the *epitaphioi* employed a single set of loaded terms, "first," "alone," "leaders," "benefactors," "saviours," "liberators," which allowed a linguistic, that is, symbolic, resolution of such conceptual contradictions. It was a practice which linguists call "semantic mismatching," where one set of signifiers can contain contradictory meanings.

A final example in this section will help show how such paradoxes were realized. In the Peloponnesian War, according to the *Menexenus*, all the rest of the Greeks were arrayed against Athens. The vast empire the city ruled was not mentioned at all! But thus isolated, said Socrates, the city refuted the claims of others to have excelled her in the Persian Wars: on her own (ἰδίᾳ) she conquered the leading Greek states with whom she had once in alliance defeated the barbarians (242C-D). And finally, when Athens was winning the war, something terrible and unforeseen happened. "The other Greeks craved so much to be first and foremost (εἰς πρῶτον φιλονικίας ἐλθεῖν) they called in their deadliest foe, the king of Persia, whom they had once expelled in joint effort, now to attack Athens alone (ἰδίᾳ) and they united all the other Greeks and barbarians against her" (243B-C). Yet, said the orator, Athens actually won the Peloponnesian War! Or, on second thought, others did

not defeat her, she defeated herself -- by being too kind and generous (243D; 244E).

Just as historical accounts were altered in the *epitaphioi* to serve an ideological function, so myths were changed in significant ways for the same purpose. Clearly, these reworked legends functioned analogically as paradigms to forecast subsequent Athenian historical deeds. Indeed, we can see how particularly epitaphic accounts of such legends stemmed from and were related to specific historical events and then expanded to serve as types for any similarly interpreted events. A close look at particular cases will bear this thesis out.

Four major myths were used as paradigms in the Attic funeral oration.<sup>20</sup> In each specific themes were repeated that illustrated the typically claimed Athenian virtues and that proleptically anticipated similar acts and attitudes in Athenian history. The basic structure is as follows. Either a foreign force has invaded Greece or a Greek state has committed an injustice in violation of the Hellenic cultural code (νόμος Ἑλληνικός). Athens intervenes, either driving out the foreign invaders or else crushing the offending Greek state militarily, thereby succouring the oppressed, upholding justice and Hellenic νόμος, and punishing the wicked. In each case she must act alone, because other Greek states are either afraid to help or spiteful. Of particular importance is that the versions of the legends in the *epitaphioi* that illustrate these themes differed significantly from those current elsewhere in Greece, indeed in Attica as well. Furthermore, the Athenian audience was well aware of these differences. In three of these myths the major variation is that in the funeral orations the Athenians were portrayed as compelled to intervene militarily, while in other accounts the altercations were settled peaceably.

A prominent instance is the legend of how the Athenians secured the proper burial of the Seven against Thebes.<sup>21</sup> According to Lysias' *epitaphios*, which gave the most expansive account, Athenian redress occurred as follows:

First they sent heralds and requested permission to take up the corpses. When they failed to obtain them, they marched

against [the Thebans]: no previous quarrel subsisted between them and the Cadmeans, nor did they wish to gratify the Argives who were still living; but thinking it right that those who had died in war should receive the customary treatment, they risked combat that one side should cease from grossly outraging the gods by their trespass against the dead, and that the other should not hasten away . . . frustrated of an ancestral honour, cut off from Hellenic custom, and disappointed in a common hope . . . . They found a numerous enemy, but had justice as their ally, and they fought and conquered . . . . And in contrast to [the Cadmeans'] impiety they showed them their own virtue, and obtaining for themselves the prize for which they had come -- the corpses of the Argives -- they buried them in their own land of Eleusis . . . . (Lys. 2.7-10, abridged)<sup>22</sup>

Yet this peculiarly epitaphic version differed from two other main traditions. Pausanias noted briefly the epitaphic account of the myth and added, "But the Thebans say they returned the corpses voluntarily and deny they fought a battle" (1.39.2). This Theban account went back at least to the time of Pindar, who mentioned it in two odes, *Nemean* 9 (22-4), 474 B.C., and *Olympian* 6 (12 ff.), 468 B.C. Homer knew of a myth wherein the Seven were buried after the battle on Theban soil (*Il.* 14.114).<sup>23</sup> Thus, the version of the funeral oration is idiosyncratic. But in Athens as well it had a counterpart in which the Athenians succoured the suppliant Argive women by recovering the corpses under a treaty. In fact, some traditions reported that Theseus invented treaties with this first covenant.<sup>24</sup> Our most important text is Plutarch, *Thes.* 29.4-5:

Theseus aided Adrastus in recovering for burial the bodies of those who had fallen beneath the walls of the Cadmea, not by mastering the Thebans in battle, as Euripides has it in his tragedy, but by persuading them to a truce; for so most of the writers say, and Philochorus adds that this was the first truce ever made for recovering the bodies of those slain in

battle, although in the accounts of Heracles it is written that he was the first to give the slain back to his enemies . . . . The account of Euripides is also disproved by that of Aeschylus in his *Eleusinians*, where Theseus is made to relate the matter as above.<sup>25</sup>

While these accounts too give the Athenians an important role (it is worth noting the typical claim that Theseus was the first to return war dead under treaty), their difference in depicting how the conflict between Athens and Thebes was settled is of great consequence. Obviously, it was not sufficient for the purpose of the funeral orations for the Athenians merely to right the wrong, to assert the νόμος Ἑλληνικός, to validate the Panhellenic ideal by peacefully securing the burial of the Seven. In epitaphic version, military action and severe punishment of Thebes was mandatory. That was because it was a prime function of the *epitaphioi* to validate Athenian aggression as a benefaction. Simple satisfaction of the cultural code by retrieving the bodies peaceably would in these speeches not have served to mediate the contradiction that troubled the Athenians.

Furthermore, there is a striking confluence of indirect evidence that indicates that this bellicose tradition with its justification of Athenian aggression originated with Athenian-Theban antagonisms in the mid-fifth century. Since the topos seems peculiarly epitaphic in its *tendenz*, rough *termini a quo* and *ad quem* can be provisionally established: the invention of the *epitaphios* is variously but traditionally dated to the early 470's, while Herodotus' usage of the topos at 9.27 may point to its currency before 440.<sup>26</sup> Now, in 460 Athens formed an alliance with Argos, and the Argives aided the Athenians in their adventurist campaigns in Boeotia in 458.<sup>27</sup> A thousand Argives fought alongside the Athenians at Tanagra (Thuc. 1.107.5), and those who died in battle, perhaps as many as four hundred, were accorded the high honour of being buried in the Kerameikos (Paus. 1.29.8), presumably sharing in the encomium as well.<sup>28</sup> Thus the Argive connection and Athenian incursions into Boeotia suggest the likelihood that the bellicose version of the Seven legend was developed around this time in the *epitaphios* to justify

Athenian aggression paradigmatically.<sup>29</sup> This conclusion is further supported by circumstantial evidence in two ways. Euripides' *Suppliants* contained many funeral oration topoi and featured the warlike version of the myth in which Theseus defeated the Thebans in battle and forced them to return the bodies of the Seven.<sup>30</sup> In particular, it seems to refer to the Argive-Athenian alliance both in Adrastus' oath (1191-5), which embodies a treaty of ἐπιμαχία, and in the legendary tripod on which the oath was inscribed (1196-1204). The language of these lines has been shown to be typical of fifth-century treaties, and a case has been made that the tripod on which it was inscribed, a mythical gift of Heracles, actually existed, a *pia fraus* in Zuntz's words, when the play was performed.<sup>31</sup>

This counterfeit and the inscription on it, "hallowed by the impenetrable nimbus of sanctity and antiquity" at the time the play was performed, could only have been devised in the 450's.<sup>32</sup> In the *Suppliants*, then, termed ἔγκλιμτον Ἀθηναίων in its hypothesis and specifically linked to the Athenian funeral oration by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (5.17.4), Euripides grounded the epitaphic version of its myth in pseudo-legendary materials devised in the era in which this bellicose variant seems first to have been propagated.<sup>33</sup> Finally, by an intricate but highly speculative argument, L. H. Jeffery has posited that the much debated subject of the "Battle of Oinoe" in the Stoa Poikile was in fact the combat between the Athenians and the Thebans over the burial of the Seven.<sup>34</sup> The construction of the Stoa was finished by 460, and the paintings were installed in the years immediately thereafter.<sup>35</sup> This conjecture, if correct, would point to the Argive alliance and Athenian intervention in Boeotia in the 450's as the impulse that gave rise to the warlike version of the myth whose function was to transform Athenian aggression into selfless benefaction and the repulse of unjust invasion. It should be emphasized that contrary versions of such a legend could exist side by side in the culture, just as discrepant historical accounts did. Isocrates provides an excellent example. In both the *Panegyricus* (55, 58) and the *Plataicus* (53) he followed the epitaphic version wherein the Athenians won a military victory to compel Thebes to relinquish the bodies of the Seven. But later in the *Panathenaicus* (168-174), the

story was given its peaceful resolution. Isocrates there acknowledged its variance with his earlier accounts, testily deflecting criticism over his change. Thus, such alterations were recognized as more than incidental. Isocrates' desire to promote a Theban alliance may have motivated this change.<sup>36</sup> In other words, such variations were based on specific ideological rationales. It is likewise significant that Philochorus (*FGrHist* 328 F. 112) followed a version differing from the epitaphic tradition. Indeed, Kleidemos (*FGrHist* 323 F. 18) did the same for the Amazonomachy. Far from expounding the patriotic line, these Atthidographers rejected versions of legends framed to fulfill the ideology of the funeral orations, validation of Athenian aggression to mediate the conflict of φιλονικία with Panhellenic altruism.<sup>37</sup> What is more, similar contradictions and the same tendentious reworking of myth can be shown in two other legends, that of the Eumolpidae and the story of the battle of the Amazons.

Historically, before the seventh century B.C. Eleusis was an autonomous city, dominating the rich agricultural area to the west of Athens. It was then taken over by Athens and incorporated into Attica.<sup>38</sup> The history of Eleusis' prior independence was preserved in a variety of legends. One of these featured the resistance of their king Eumolpus to Athenian encroachment, in which he called to his aid Thracian -- that is, barbarian -- allies. In the epitaphic tradition Eumolpus and the Thracians were depicted as aggressors. Although the legend as transmitted is very complicated, with a number of important variations, the only one of direct concern is the difference in the accounts of how the Athenians warded off Eumolpus.<sup>39</sup> The funeral orations and related literature portrayed Eumolpus as an invader, whereas in historical terms it was the Athenians who had been the aggressors in their annexation of Eleusis. Further, he was connected with barbarian intruders; indeed in some accounts he was called a Thracian prince, although the Thracian relation most likely referred to the influence of the Dionysian religion, which had its roots in Thrace, upon the famous Eleusinian mysteries.<sup>40</sup> Finally, in the epitaphic versions the Athenians destroyed Eumolpus' army with military force. But Pausanias knew of a local account in which the conflict was settled by a truce that gave Athens political

rule over Eleusis but left control over the mystery religion with the Eleusinians (1.38.2; 2.14.2).

Further, in our sources the defeat of the Eumolpidae was often closely related to, almost equated with, the invasion of the Amazons, another barbarian tribe. Although the Amazons were mentioned in literature as early as Homer (*Il.* 3.189; 6.186), the legend of combat between the Athenians and Amazons alone dates to the early fifth century, not long after the development of the Attic funeral oration. The earliest literary notice is in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (685 ff.), while vase paintings on this theme first occurred in the second or third quarters of the fifth century.<sup>41</sup> In the funeral orations the Amazonomachy was Athens' defence of her native soil and, by larger implication, of all Greece.<sup>42</sup> Yet in earlier versions the *casus belli* had been Theseus' rape of an Amazon queen as he accompanied Heracles on a raiding expedition, while the repulse of the Amazons' counterattack featured both Heracles and Theseus. The surviving *epitaphioi*, however, made no mention of these motives, of Heracles, or even of Theseus. The hero and his amorous adventures fell from view; the Athenians alone resisted the imperial ambitions of the Amazons who were now allied with the barbarian Scyths. Yet there was an important local variant, preserved in the *Atthis* of Kleidemos, Plutarch reports (*Thes.* 27.3-4 = Kleidemos, *FGrHist* 323 F. 18):

Kleidemos, who wishes to be minute, writes that the left wing of the Amazons extended to what is now known as the Amazonion . . . . Joining battle . . . the Athenians were driven back at the Peiraic gate as far as the shrine of the Eumenides . . . . After three months a treaty was made . . . .

By contrast, Lysias remarked in his funeral oration, after a lengthy description of the Amazons' aggressive designs:

But having met with valiant men they found their spirit was like to their sex . . . . They would not return home and report their own misfortune and our ancestors' valour. For they perished on the spot and were punished for their folly, thus making our own citizens' memory imperishable for its

valour, while rendering their own country nameless. (Lys. 2.4-6, abridged)

Thus, just as with the Seven or the Eumolpidae, the funeral oration propounded a special version of the legend in which the Athenians destroyed the invaders with military might. The suppression of peaceful solutions found in other traditions and the insistence on military victory were intrinsic to this mythological rhetoric. For these specialized legends were reshaped analogically by the Athenians' historical experience and by their perception of what those deeds signified within the cultural matrix. Thus, the myths, like the tendentious historical *exempla*, conformed to a conceptual grid, a mediating discourse, which was invented to make sense of the contradictions inherent in contemporary Greek culture and interstate political reality. Serving as paradigms, they anticipated or forecast the significance of historical deeds, as the Athenians saw it. In this way, the legends verified the terms of the epitaphic discourse and reinforced its message. Yet this discourse was not explicit, but covert, embodied, indeed submerged, in these mythical paradigms and historical *exempla*. Their real meaning can only be elicited by understanding how they stood in opposition to other traditional or historical accounts. These differences the Athenians themselves were well aware of. If we are to discover the function of the *epitaphioi* and their encoded message, we must bring these discrepancies to the surface and seat them in their historical and cultural context.

It has been a major thesis of this paper that a principal function of the *epitaphioi logoi* at Athens was to reconcile or mediate conflicting cultural codes. If that be so, what was there about the funeral oration that made it an appropriate vehicle for this purpose? It was pertinent first of all because it was a prominent part of a community ritual, the burial of the war dead, one that stemmed from Athens' relations with the other Greek states. The death of Athens' citizen soldiers in wars with her neighbours or foreign invaders engendered troubling contradictions which demanded resolution. In fact, the *epitaphios logos* was itself a ritual act. That ritualistic character is clear, for instance, from the formulaic, almost liturgical nature of the speeches. Explicit evidence



is provided by Socrates' revealing -- albeit ironic -- remarks in the *Menexenus* (235A-C) about the speeches' effect on the Athenian audience:

These orators bewitch our souls when they laud the city in every possible way, both those who have fallen in war, all our ancestors before us, and us ourselves who still live. The result is that . . . I feel quite grand when I hear their praise, and every time I listen to them and come under their spell, I have an almost religious experience (ἑξέστηκα) and feel at that particular moment that I have become bigger, and better, and more noble . . . . It is a feeling of awe and sublimity (σεμνότης) that stays with me at least two or three days. That speech and its tones ring so clearly in my ears that not until the fourth or fifth day -- and that with some difficulty -- do I come to myself and recognise that I do not dwell in the Isles of the Blessed.

Thus, the themes of the *epitaphioi* were self-reflexive, and to recite and to hear those speeches was a sort of sacrament or ritual whose function, in the words of Pierre Giraud, "[was] not so much to inform as to commune. Its aim [was] to illustrate the solidarity of individuals relative to social, religious, or national obligations contracted by the community."<sup>43</sup> But the funeral oration was only one part of a much larger ceremony of bereavement and burial. That ceremony was composed of a number of verbal and physical acts, which, joined with the very environment of their performance, place, people, time, and human behaviour, constituted a total act of communication.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, the funeral of the dead would rhetorically reinforce and present, as a concrete symbol of Athens' self-proclaimed role of benefactor in the Greek world, both her boast of φιλονικία and primacy and the fearful reality of isolation and defeat. Thus, conversely, these war dead and the procedure of their interment became a physical analogue that verified the terms of the oration.

Furthermore, the funeral speeches shared with the locale of burial, the Kerameikos, and with the burial ceremony an important function as a boundary zone between the living and the dead, a sacred zone in which,

typically, the normal and the well-defined were replaced by the abnormal and the ambiguous. Indeed, for every culture such transition areas, whether geographic, social, biological, or of status, are deeply ambiguous, the focus of ritual, magic, or taboo, where cultural oppositions are both delimited and mediated.<sup>45</sup> Commonly, these boundaries are marked by special rites *de passage* which are designed both to bridge and to define social zones considered normal, time-bound, and clear-cut; but they are themselves abnormal, timeless, and ambiguous.<sup>46</sup> The *epitaphios*, the centrepiece of public Athenian funerary rites, displays just such characteristics. Myth and history are mixed together to provide timeless exemplars of Athenian prowess and excellence. The clear-cut opposition between discrepant cultural ideals or between those ideals and reality are mediated in a realm of linguistic and semantic ambiguity. Finally, normal history or tradition is suspended and inverted; customary legends are transmuted. In this special context, the apparent license of the orators in distorting myth and history becomes understandable: in the liminal zone which the funeral oration constituted the normal sequences and narratives of history and tradition could be transgressed. On this view, it is no paradox that the Athenians were able to entertain inconsistent versions of their history and legends.<sup>47</sup>

To be sure, the treatment of the available evidence has been far from exhaustive in this paper, and only some of the many issues and *exempla* which the Attic funeral oration expounded have been examined. What is more, the surviving evidence from antiquity constitutes only a small fraction of what once existed. In the classical era, Greece was embroiled in almost constant internecine warfare, and Athens was frequently involved in these conflicts. Thus, the *epitaphioi* over the war dead must have been given almost annually in the Kerameikos. Yet out of these, we have only a half dozen speeches, some dependent texts, fragments, and reports. None the less, it is possible to reconstruct the message of this literature with some accuracy and confidence. The information contained in the encoded discourse which the funeral orations comprise has been preserved against error or loss by the great redundancy of the speeches. By compiling all the available data from antiquity, superimposing them, and summing them up, we can construct a composite

transmission of the cultural message which the funeral orations were sending.<sup>48</sup> It was a message whose senders and receivers were one and the same, the Athenian *demos*; or, to paraphrase Lévi-Strauss, "the funeral orations were like conductors of an orchestra whose audience became the silent performers."<sup>49</sup>

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This article was presented orally in different form on April 5, 1979 at Wayne State University in a symposium entitled "The Cultural Roots of Literary Genre." It has been much expanded and revised for this publication. Special thanks are due to Prof. N. Armstrong and Prof. L. Tennenhouse for their patient advice and perspicacious criticism.

<sup>2</sup> Principal modern discussions are A.W. Gomme, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1956) II, 94-103; F. Jacoby, "PATRIOS NOMOS: State Burial in Athens and the Public Cemetery in the Kerameikos," *JHS* 64 (1944) 37-66; L. Weber, *Solon und die Schöpfung der attischen Grabrede* (Frankfurt 1935).

<sup>3</sup> The earliest extant fragment of a funeral oration is Paus. 1.29.4-5; the latest extant speech Hyperides 6. There are fragments of Pericles' *epitaphios* from the Samian War (see L. Weber, "Perikles' samische Leichenrede," *Hermes* 57 [1922] 375-95). Surviving *epitaphioi* are those of Pericles (ap. Thuc. 2.35-46), ca. 430; Lysias 2, ca. 392; Plato, *Menexenus*, ca. 386; Demosthenes 60, ca. 338; Hyperides 6, ca. 322. E. Meyer, *Forschungen zur alten Geschichte* (Halle 1889) II, 219 ff., has shown that Hdt. 7.161 and 9.27 derive from the epitaphic tradition. Also related are Isocrates' *Panegyricus* and *Panathenaicus* and Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaicus*. Still further material can be found scattered in the historians, orators, and tragedians.

<sup>4</sup> Thuc. 2.35.6; Plato, *Menex.* 234B; Dem. 18.295. See the pertinent remarks of Jacoby (at n. 2) 57 n. 92; Gomme (at n. 2) 102-3.

<sup>5</sup> When this function and its attendant constraints upon the speeches' form are once realized, the old problem of whether Lysias or Demosthenes could really have composed the *epitaphioi* attributed to them is dissolved. The debate on these orations' authenticity has revolved around such issues as style and originality. (See, for example, M. Pohlenz, "Zu den attischen Reden auf die Gefallenen," *Sym. Osl.* 26 (1948) 46-74; J. Walz, *Der lysianische Epitaphios* [Leipzig 1936] = *Philologus*, Suppl. Bd. 29; J. Sykutris, "Der demosthenische Epitaphios," *Hermes* 63 [1928] 241-58.) But within the strictures of this formalized discourse neither Lysias nor Demosthenes could have written funeral speeches in their own characteristic styles. Thus, lack of high artistry or originality should be no bar to considering these speeches genuine.

<sup>6</sup> For a treatment of other codes in the *epitaphioi* see my article "Political Codes and the Rhetoric of Attic Mythology," *Journal of the Ancient World* 2 (1979) 75-7. On φιλονικία and related material see A.W.H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford 1960); A.W. Gouldner, *Enter Plato* (New York 1965).

<sup>7</sup> Hdt. 7.10.β1; 9.27.5; Thuc. 1.73.4; Lys. 2.20; Dem. 60.10-11; Plato, *Menex.* 240C; *Laws* 698B-699D; Isoc. 4.97; 7.75; Lycurg. *Leoc.* 104.

<sup>8</sup> See J. Ziolkowski, *Thucydides and the Tradition of Funeral Speeches at Athens* (diss. Chapel Hill, N.C. 1963) 91 ff.; K. Oppenheimer, *Zwei attische Epitaphien* (Berlin 1933) 14 ff. J. de Romilly, *Thucydide et l'impérialisme Athénien* (Paris 1947) 148 ff., on different formulations of the μόνος-πρῶτος themes.

<sup>9</sup> Such is the view expressed in almost all the ancient sources. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, "The Character of the Athenian Empire," *Historia* 3 (1954) 1-40, attempts to overthrow this "traditional view," but he is effectively rebutted by D.W. Bradeen, "The Popularity of the Athenian Empire," *Historia* 9 (1960) 257-69.

<sup>10</sup> See for informative investigations H. Strasburger, "Thukydides und die politische Selbstdarstellung der Athener," *Hermes* 86 (1958) 17-40; P. Wendland, "Die Tendenz des platonischen Menexenus," *Hermes* 25 (1890) 171-95.

<sup>11</sup> Hdt. 7.132, 145, 172; 8.3; 9.81; Plut. *Them.* 20.3; Paus. 5.23. P.A. Brunt, "The Hellenic League Against Persia," *Historia* 2 (1953/4) 135-63; R. Meiggs and D.M. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford 1969) no. 27.

<sup>12</sup> In general, see the introduction to G. Colins's Budé edition of Hyperides (Paris 1946) 287 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Thuc. 6.53.3. Cf. F. Jacoby, *Atthis* (Oxford 1949) 152-68.

<sup>14</sup> Th. Walek, "Les opérations navales pendant la guerre Lamiaque," *Rév. Phil.* 48 (1924) 23-30.

<sup>15</sup> For the most cogent statement of this view see G. Vlastos, "ΙΣΟΝΟΜΙΑ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ" in *Isonomia*, ed. J. Mau and E.G. Schmidt (Berlin 1963) 22 ff. On Plato's attitude toward the Athenian democracy see esp. *Gorgias* 515B-519D. Cf. Méridier (below, n. 16) 53-55.

<sup>16</sup> On the date see L. Méridier, *Platon* (Paris 1956) 5.1 p. 82 (and nn. 3-5 for references to other literature).

<sup>17</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.13-15.

<sup>18</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.32. See Vlastos (at n. 15) 24 n. 1, for a detailed treatment of this falsification.

<sup>19</sup> On Athenian resentment see Lys. 2.45; Plato, *Menex.* 245D; Hdt. 7.139; 9.6; 9.7 (β.1); Thuc. 1.74.

<sup>20</sup> The myths of the Heraclidae, the Eumolpidae, the Suppliant Women, and the Amazonomachy.

<sup>21</sup> The buried dead are commonly called the "Seven," although only Tydeus, Capaneus, Parthenopaos, and Hippomedon were killed outside Thebes. See the ancients' disquiet over this anomaly in schol. Pind. *Ol.* 6, 23a.

<sup>22</sup> For other ancient sources see C. Collard, *Euripides Supplices* (Groningen 1975) 1.3-8. Funeral oration versions: Hdt. 9.27.3; Plato, *Menex.* 239B; Dem. 60.8. Cf. Euripides, *Suppl.* passim. Cf. too Isoc. *Paneg.* 55, 58; *Plat.* 53; Paus. 1.39.2; *Apoll. Bibl.* 3.78-79; D.S. 4.65.9.

<sup>23</sup> The Homeric line was asthetized by the three great editors because it contradicted the Attic version and presumably also the *Thebais* (so Jacoby, *FGrHist* IIIB2 n. 24 ad *FGrHist* 328 F. 112-13). The issue of how the *Thebais* depicted the burial of the Seven is very controversial. See Jacoby (*ibid.*); M.E. Bethe, *Thebanische Heldenlieder*

(Leipzig 1891) 93 ff.; L. Weber (above, n. 2) 177. For Pindar cf. Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 6.32a, 26.

<sup>24</sup> Pliny, *NH* 7.202; *POxy* 10.1241.3.23-8 (a chrestomathy).

<sup>25</sup> A. Hauvette, "Les Éleusiniens d'Éschyle et l'institution du discours funèbre à Athènes," *Mélanges Henri Weil* (Paris 1898) 159-78; Weber (at n. 2) 42.

<sup>26</sup> The date of invention is traditionally the Persian Wars or just after: Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 5.17.4; Diod. Sic. 11.33.3. For a good discussion of the ancient evidence and a review of the older secondary literature see O. Schroeder, *De Laudibus Athenarum a Poetis Tragicis et ab Oratoribus Epidicticis Excultis* (Gottingen 1914) 68-76. Wilamowitz, *Aristoteles und Athen* (Berlin 1893) II, 294 n. 4, posited 475 to fit his scheme of Cimonian propaganda (followed by Hauvette [at n. 25]); this view was exploded by Schroeder (this note) and Jacoby (at n. 2), of whom the latter argued for 465/4 (contra Gomme [at n. 2]). It should be noted that Wilamowitz's attempt to use Aeschylus' *Eleusinians* and Euripides' *Suppliants* as *termini* for the development of the warlike version is suspect, even though his conclusion is correct: "irgend ein Redner nach Äschylos vor Euripides hat aus der diplomatischen eine bewaffnete Intervention gemacht" (*Einleitung in die griechische Tragödie* I, 206). The *Eleusinians* cannot be dated with any certitude (Wilamowitz himself originally dated it to before the Persian Wars [*Einleitung* I, 190], then moved it down to 475 or after to fit his theory of the beginnings of the *epitaphios* [*Aischylos Interpretationen* (Berlin 1914) 241 n. 1]), and in any case contradictory accounts of the same myth can exist side by side and therefore do not exclude each other. The Athenian speech ap. Hdt. 9.27 is usually taken as unhistorical, cf. Meyer (at n. 3); Schroeder (this note) 40-43; E. Maass, "Zur Geschichte der griechischen Prosa," *Hermes* 22 (1887) 589 n. 1; Weber (at n. 3) 393-5; W.J. Woodhouse, *JHS* 18 (1898) 41. The date of 440 for the speech in Herodotus is based on the following consideration. Herodotus joined the foundation of Thurii in 443, and we have no notice of his return to Athens thereafter (Arist. *Rhet.* 1409a29). Although his work does mention early events in the Peloponnesian War but none after 430 (6.91; 7.137, 233; 9.73), and although his work was presumably

completed and published by the early 420's (on the basis of Arist. *Ach.* 513 ff.), the real issue is when Herodotus would have had his last opportunity to hear an *epitaphios* at Athens. Meyer (at n. 3) asserted that 7.161 and 9.27 were both composed after 440, basing his claim on the similarity of expression of 7.162 (ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ τὸ ἕαρ ἐξαπεῖσθαι) with the phrase Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1411a2-4) attributed to Pericles in his funeral oration. This phrase does not occur in Thucydides' version of Pericles' speech in 431, and Wilamowitz had already claimed (*Hermes* 12 [1887] 365 n. 51) that Aristotle's citation must have come from Pericles' Samian funeral oration (Plut. *Per.* 28.3-5), delivered in 440. This claim overlooks the fact that the phrase may have come from yet another, unknown, Periclean *epitaphios*; however, the obvious familiarity with the speech which Aristotle expects in the reader and our ignorance of any other funeral oration by Pericles make that of 440 the likely model of Herodotus' speeches at 7.161 and 9.27. For the argument that these two really derive from the same single original, see Weber (at n. 3) 379.

<sup>27</sup> The alliance: Thuc. 1.102.4; Paus. 1.29.2; 4.24.7; Aesch. *Eum.* 287-91. Argive support in 458: Thuc. 1.107.5; Paus. 1.29.6-9; 3.11.8; 4.24.6; 5.10.4; Diod. Sic. 11.80.

<sup>28</sup> IG 1<sup>2</sup> 932 [= W. Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften* (Berlin 1955) no. 15; Meiggs and Lewis (at n. 11) no. 35], from a stele over a polyandreion. See also Meiggs and Lewis (at n. 11) no. 36, a Spartan thank-offering for the victory at Tanagra, restored from Paus. 5.10.4, mentioning the Argives.

<sup>29</sup> It has been possible to reconstitute some part of the *epitaphioi* for these campaigns from Diod. Sic. 11.82-84. See my forthcoming article "Diodorus 11.82-84 and the Second Battle of Tanagra," *American Journal of Ancient History* 3 (1979).

<sup>30</sup> G. Zuntz, *The Political Plays of Euripides* (Manchester 1955) 88-94, dates the play to 424. On the epitaphic character of the play and its funeral oration topoi see Schroeder (at n. 26) 42-3.

<sup>31</sup> Zuntz (at n. 30) 73-8, on the treaty language of lines 1191-5 and on the tripod. See further on the treaty language Collard (above, n. 22) ad loc., relying on H. Bengston (with R. Werner), *Die Staatsverträge des Altertums II: die Verträge der gr.-röm. Welt von 700 bis*

338 v. Chr. (1962).

<sup>32</sup> Zuntz (at n. 30) 78.

<sup>33</sup> That the play alludes to events of 460 and afterwards see F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden 1954) IIB2, p.351 n. 23.

<sup>34</sup> L.H. Jeffery, "The Battle of Oinoe in the Stoa Poikile: A Problem in Greek Art and History," *BSA* 60 (1965) 41-52, esp. 47-52.

<sup>35</sup> On the date of the Stoa see, in addition to Jeffery (at n. 34), L.S. Merritt, "The Stoa Poikile," *Hesperia* 39 (1970) 233-64; H.A. Thompson and R.E. Wycherley, *Agora XIV: The Agora of Athens* (Princeton 1972) 90-4.

<sup>36</sup> Schroeder (at n. 26) 41 and P. Wendland, "Beiträge zu athenischer Politik and Publicistik des 4. Jahrhunderts," *Nachrichtung von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* 1 (1910) 123-82, at 165 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Indeed, this observation supports P. Harding's recent thesis (in rebuttal of Jacoby's views) that the Athidographers did not exhibit political bias in their works ("Atthis and Politeia," *Historia* 26 [1977] 148-60).

<sup>38</sup> T.W. Allen and W.R. Halliday, *The Homeric Hymns* (1936) 111-4. On archaeological evidence supporting a late date for Eleusinian incorporation see R. Sealey, *A History of the Greek City States* (Los Angeles 1976) 93-4 and G.E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton 1962) 59-62. See also Paus. 1.27.4; 1.38.3; 2.14.2; 9.30.4. Paus. 1.20.3 and 1.38.8 point to a time when Eleusis was annexed by Athens and its tutelary deity Dionysus Eleuthereus carried off to the Acropolis. Paus. 1.2.5 tells us that Pegasus of Eleutheræ brought to Athens the cult figure of the god in the reign of Amphiktyon. (Thus, it should be noted that Philochorus, *FGrHist* 328 F. 112, spoke of bodies from the conflict over the Seven buried in two locales, the ἡγεμόνες at Eleusis and the πολλοί at Eleutheræ.) In any case, there is reason to believe that the annexation was forced and not voluntary: U. Kahrstedt, *Studien zum öffentlichen Recht Athens: I Staatsgebiet und Staatsangehörige in Athen* (Stuttgart/Berlin 1934) 351 ff.; U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, "Eleutheræ," *Mitteilungen des kaiserlichen deutschen archaeologischen*



*Institutus Athens* 33 (1908) 141-44 [= *Kleine Schriften* V.1.177 ff.].

<sup>39</sup> See J. Toepffer, *Attische Genealogie* (Berlin 1889) 41 ff.; F. Hiller von Gaertringen, *De Graecorum Fabulis ad Thracas Pertinentibus* (Berlin 1886) 12 ff.; F. Jacoby ad *FGrHist* 328 F. 13; 329 F. 8; 333 F. 1. Ancient sources include Paus. 1.5.2; 1.27.4; 1.31.3; 1.36.4; 1.38.3; 2.14.2; 7.1.5; 9.9.1; Thuc. 2.15.1; Plato, *Menex.* 239B; Isoc. 4.68; 12.193; Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.10; Dem. 60.8; Lycurg., *Leoc.* 98; Apoll. *Bibl.* 3.15.4; Strabo 8.7.1; Hyg. *Fab.* 46; Plut., *De Exsil.* 18; schol. Homer, *Il.* 18.490; schol. Soph. *OC* 1053; schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 854; Aristides, *Panath.* 87.

<sup>40</sup> E. Ermatinger, *Die attische Autochthonensage bis auf Euripides* (diss. Zürich 1897) 86.

<sup>41</sup> D. von Bothmer, *Amazons in Greek Art* (Oxford 1957) 161 ff. Both the Theseion (ca. 475 B.C.) and the Stoa Poikile (ca. 460) had famous murals of the Athenian Amazonomachy: Paus. 1.17.2; 1.15.2. On the possible Cimonian origins of the myth see E. Prigge, *De Thesei Rebus Gestis* (Marburg 1891) 13 ff. Cf. L.H. Jeffery (at n. 34); contra H. Herter, "Theseus der Jonier," *RM* 85 (1936) 219 ff. The legend may be older, but its popularity and its tendentious use obtained after the Persian invasions.

<sup>42</sup> The provenance of this mythical assault seems surely to have been the Persian invasions. For instance, the Amazons are associated with the Scyths (Diod. Sic. 4.28; Isoc. 4.68-70); hence they are the type of the foreign invader. Accordingly, they are often mentioned in the same breath with the Thracian attack under Eumolpus: Isoc. *Arch.* 42; *Areop.* 75; *Panath.* 193; *Paneg.* 68-70; Plato, *Menex.* 239; Dem. 60.8; Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.9. Schroeder (at n. 26) 60 says simply, "gloria igitur Atheniensium ex devictis Persis parta causa est similem etiam in praeterita saecula transferendi." He compares Lys. 2.21 and Isoc. 4.94, where the Persians' goal is to strike at Athens first to win all Greece, with Isoc. 4.68, in which the Amazons are credited with the same strategy. But it would be wrong, as E. Büchner implies (*Der Panegyrikos des Isokrates* [*Historia Einzelschriften* 2 (Wiesbaden 1958)] 71), to see Isocrates as the first to make this connection. For there is significant earlier evidence that joins this myth with the Persian invasions and the *epitaphioi*. First,

Plutarch notes that the Amazonomachy "was fought on the day of Boedromion on which down to the present day the Athenians celebrate the Boedromia" (*Thes.* 27.3). That was the sixth of Boedromion, the same day as the Athenians celebrated their victory at Marathon: Plut. *GA* 349; *MH* 862; *Cam.* 19.5; *Etym. Mag.* 202, 49; Harp. s.v. Βοηδρομία (pace L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* [Berlin 1956] 202, who gives the seventh). The anniversary of the battle of Marathon had apparently been moved to this day, about a month after the date of the actual event, because the day was sacred to Artemis Agrotera (Plut. *MH* 862) and Kallimachos, polemarch at Marathon, had vowed to sacrifice a yearling goat to her for every Persian slain (Xen. *Anab.* 3.2.12; Arist. [*AP*] 58.1; schol. Arist. *Eq.* 658. Ael., *Var. Hist.*, is apparently wrong in giving 6 Thargelion and three hundred kids). Indeed, on this same day occurred the mythical battle of the Athenians against the Eumolpidae: Philochorus, *FGrHist* 328 F. 13; Pherecydes, *FGrHist* 333 F. 2; Hesychius, s.v. Βοηδρομεῖν. Coincidentally, a number of other famous victories over the Persians can also be assigned to Boedromion: on the third or fourth, Plataea and Mykale; on the twentieth, Salamis (Plut. *Cam.* 19.3). This striking confluence of data excites the suspicion that the anniversaries of the Amazonomachy and the defeat of the Eumolpidae were deliberately set on the sixth of Boedromion to connect them with the victory over the Persians. It should be noted that F. Jacoby ("*Genesisia: A Forgotten Festival of the Dead*," *CQ* 38 [1944] 65-75) identified the *Genesisia*, which occurred on 5 Boedromion, with the burial of the Athenian war dead and with the delivery of the *epitaphios logos*; this is rejected as too early by A.W. Gomme (at n. 2) 100-1; L. Méridier, *Platon* (at n. 16) 52-3, gives 5-7 Pyanepsion without authority. Finally, the supposed bivouac of the Amazons at the base of the Areopagus (Plut. *Thes.* 27.3; D.S. 4.28.2; Ammonius, *FGrHist* 361 F. 4; Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀμαζονεῖον; *Bibl. Epig.* 1.16; Aesch. *Eum.* 685-690) turns out to be the very place the Persians encamped when they occupied Athens (Hdt. 8.52).

<sup>43</sup> P. Guiraud, *Semiology* (London 1975) 94; cf. 8, 14.

<sup>44</sup> E. Leach, *Culture and Communication* (Cambridge 1976) 33-6; 77-9.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Leach (at n. 44) 25-7; 43-5; and "Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse," in *Mythology*, ed.

P. Maranda (London 1972) 39-67, at 46-51, first appearing in *New Directions in the Study of Language*, ed. E.H. Lenneberg (Cambridge 1964) 23-63.

<sup>46</sup> Leach (at n. 44) 33-6; 55-64. See on rites de passage A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago 1960, trans. of French ed., 1908) v-xviii, 1-40, 146-65, 189-94; M. Gluckman, "Les Rites de Passage," in *Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations* (Manchester 1962) 1-52; *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, s.vv. "Myth and Symbol" (vol. 10, 576-82, V.W. Turner); "Ritual" (vol. 11, 520-6, E.R. Leach).

<sup>47</sup> E. Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon," *Journal of Sociology* 7 (1966) 58-101; Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning* (New York 1979) 41-2.

<sup>48</sup> On summing up the various texts see C. Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," in *Myth: A Symposium*, ed. T.A. Sebeok (Indiana 1965) 89 ff.; E. Leach, *Claude Lévi-Strauss* (New York 1970) 65 ff. On the function of redundancy, see Guiraud (above, n. 43) 13 ff.; U. Eco, *Theory of Semiotics* (Indiana 1976) 270; E. Leach, *Genesis as Myth* (London 1969) 8-9; Lévi-Strauss (this note) 105: "repetition has as its function to make the structure of the myth apparent . . ."

<sup>49</sup> C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked* (London 1970) 17.