

### Battling Desire in Lysias 3: Against Simon

In speaking of his desire for Theodotos in Lysias 3, a defence speech against a charge of wounding with intent (*trauma ek pronoias*), the speaker appeals to the jurors to look kindly upon him, since sexual desire is a normal emotion (3.4). Despite his sexual longing (*epithumia*) for the boy and the adversity he confronted, he remained in control of his emotions. The speaker thus calculatingly positions his relationship to desire in his opening (3.4), since he indicates later on in the speech that his opponent Simon has in fact accused him of being motivated by such feelings (*epithumia* (3.31)) in his actions. But the speaker also argues that desire was what motivated Simon to behave so disorderly and violently towards himself, the boy, and others! His entire speech in fact contrasts the responses of each to their *epithumia* (3.4). They are not only in competition for the boy, but now also their approach to desire, and the speaker puts that of each openly on display for the jurors.

A direct contrast between the reactions and interactions of the speaker and the opponent with the boy, Theodotos, appears in the opening of the narrative (3.5) and continues to provide the framework for the speaker's arguments throughout the speech. While they both experienced similar desires, they reacted quite differently to these feelings. Simon lacks control over these emotions, whereas the speaker is able to endure (*pherein*) the sufferings caused by his desire (*sumphora*) in a most orderly and self-controlled manner (*kosmiōtata*) (3.4). The orderliness which the speaker highlights as crucial to identifying the best and most *sōphrones* men in the face of desire (and of which he hints he himself is the masculine exemplum) is absent in the case of Simon. Instead, Simon's inability to control his desire leads to *hubris* and *paranomia* and is a danger to the city and its citizens.

The language (and absence of specific language like  *pornos*,  *misthoun*,  *hetairein*,  *erastēs*,  *erōmenos*) in the narrative, particularly when the speaker relates his own experiences, suggests an anxiety about admitting to his devotion to Theodotos (for debate on the boy's status see Todd 2007: 279-81). Prostitution was an accepted practice, but the fact that boys were available for courtship complicates the practice of male prostitution. Certainly other texts, such as Aeschines 1, suggest a slippage between pederasty and prostitution, but the seeming embarrassment of the speaker of Lysias 3 in discussing the relationship with the boy and his obfuscation of the boy's status merit further explanation than the age of the speaker (Todd 2007: 310). Through a detailed examination of the vocabulary and actions surrounding desire in this speech, I suggest that the speaker's representation of Simon holds the answer: the hubristic personality makes the perfect purchaser of male prostitution, since such a one cannot easily contain himself in a pederastic relationship. The speaker thus obscures his own relationship with Theodotos, making himself into a model  *erastēs* (Todd 2007: 281, 311-12), while representing Simon as its polar opposite.

### Bibliography

Todd, S. C. 2007.  *A Commentary on Lysias, Speeches I-11*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.