

*Strangely, perhaps, in view of the totally negative nature of the treatise On Not-Being, we do have two reports, in Plato's Meno (76Aff. = B4) and in Theophrastus' On Fire (73 = B5), of a piece of positive scientific doctrine by Gorgias, derived from his mentor Empedocles, on the nature of colour and light, namely that it impresses itself on our vision by means of 'effluences' (aporrhoai) emanating from the object seen, and fitting themselves into 'pores' (poroi) in our eyes. This must derive from some other source than the above, but provides interesting evidence of Gorgias' readiness to engage in physical speculations when it suited him.*

### *The Encomium of Helen*

*We may turn now, however, to something completely different, and much more characteristic of Gorgias: his two surviving display-speeches, The Encomium of Helen and The Defence of Palamedes. Though they are obviously very different in style from On Not-Being, yet it could be argued that their purpose is not dissimilar, being, as it is, to demonstrate the all-conquering power of persuasive speech. In the case of the Helen, the purpose is not to mount a serious defence of Helen, but rather to hymn the power of persuasion; in that of the Palamedes, which has a much more explicitly forensic format, it seems to be to present a model for argument from probability. As we have said above, we have chosen to present the Helen in quasi-poetic form, distinguishing the cola, in an attempt to convey something of the impression it must have made on its hearers; we have also included in brackets a selection of the more striking alliterative flourishes of the Greek. In the case of the Palamedes, such extreme measures are not necessary. Firstly, the Helen:*

31. [1] The adornment (kosmos) of a city is manpower,  
 of a body beauty,  
 of a soul, wisdom,  
 of an action, virtue,  
 of a speech, truth;  
 and the opposites of these make for disarray (akosmia).

Man and woman and speech and deed and city and object  
 should be honoured, if praiseworthy, with praise  
 and incur, if unworthy, blame,

for it is an equal error and mistake  
 to blame the praiseable and to praise the blameable.

[2] It is the part of one and the same man  
 both to speak the needful rightly  
 and to refute <what is said not rightly;  
 it is fitting, then,><sup>91</sup> to refute those who rebuke Helen,  
 a woman about whom univocal and unanimous  
 has been the testimony of inspired poets,  
 as has the ill omen of her name,  
 which has become a memorial of misfortunes.

For my part, by introducing some reasoning into my  
 speech,

I wish to free the accused from blame (*pausai tēs aitias*),  
 and, by revealing her detractors as liars and showing forth  
 the truth,  
 to free her from ignorance (*pausai tēs amathias*).

[3] So then, that in nature and in ancestry  
 the woman who is subject of this speech  
 is pre-eminent among pre-eminent men and women  
 is not unclear, even to a few.

For it is clear that her mother was Leda,  
 and her father was in fact (*genomenou*) a god, Zeus,  
 but said to be (*legomenou*) a mortal, Tyndareus,  
 of whom the one was shown to be her father  
 because he was (*dia to einai*),  
 and the latter was disproved,

because he was said to be (*dia to phanai*),  
 and the latter was the most powerful of men,  
 while the former was lord of all things.

[4] Born of such stock, she had godlike beauty,  
 which, taking and not mistaking (*labousa kai ou lathousa*),  
 she kept;  
 In many did she work much desire for her love,

and with her one body she brought together many bodies  
of men

thinking great thoughts for great goals,  
of whom some had greatness of wealth  
some the glory of ancient nobility,  
some the vigour of personal agility,  
some command of acquired knowledge;

and all came

because of a passion which loved to conquer  
(*philonikou*)

and a love of honour which was unconquered (*anikêtou*).

[5] Who it was, and why and how he sailed away,  
taking Helen as his love, I shall not say.  
To tell the knowing what they know already  
shows the right but brings no delight.  
Having passed over the time then in my speech now,<sup>92</sup>  
I shall go on to the beginning of my future speech,  
and I shall set forth the causes which made it likely  
that Helen's voyage to Troy should take place.

[6] For either it was by the will of Fate  
and the wishes of the Gods  
and the votes of Necessity  
that she did what she did,  
or by force reduced  
or by words seduced  
or by love possessed.<sup>93</sup>

Now if through the first,

it is right for the responsible to be held responsible;  
for God's predetermination (*prothymian*) cannot be  
hindered

by human premeditation (*promêthiâi*).

For it is the nature of things,  
not for the stronger to be hindered by the weaker,  
but for the weaker to be ruled and drawn by the  
stronger,  
and for the stronger to lead and the weaker to  
follow.

God is a stronger force than man  
in might and in wit and in other ways.  
If then on Fate and on God one must place blame  
(*anatheteon*)

Helen from disgrace one must free (*apolyteon*).

[7] But if she was by violence raped  
and lawlessly forced  
and unjustly outraged  
it is plain that the rapist, as the outrager, did the wronging,  
and the raped, as the outraged, did the suffering.  
It is right, then,

for the barbarian who undertook a barbaric undertaking  
in word and law and deed  
to meet with blame in word,  
exclusion in law,  
and punishment in deed.

And how would it not be reasonable for a woman  
raped and robbed of her country and deprived of her  
friends

to be pitied rather than pilloried?  
He did the dread deeds; she suffered them.  
It is just, therefore,  
to pity her, but to hate him.

[8] But if it was speech which persuaded her  
and deceived her soul,  
not even to this is it difficult to make an answer  
and to banish blame,

as follows:

Speech is a powerful lord, who  
with the finest and most invisible body  
achieves the most divine works:  
it can stop fear and banish grief  
and create joy and nurture pity.

I shall show how this is the case,  
for I must offer proof to the opinions (*doxêi deixai*) of  
my hearers.

I both deem and define all poetry

as speech possessing metre.

[9] There come upon its hearers

fearful shuddering (*phrikê periphobos*)

and tearful pity (*eleos polydakrys*)

and grievous longing (*pothos philopenthês*),

and at the good fortunes and evil actions

of others' affairs and bodies

through the agency of words

the soul experiences suffering of its own.

But come, I shall turn from one argument to another.<sup>94</sup>

[10] Inspired incantations conveyed through words

become bearers of pleasure (*epagôgoi hêdonês*)

and banishers of pain (*apagôgoi lypês*);

for, merging with opinion in the soul,

the power of the incantation beguiles it

and persuades it

and alters it by witchcraft.

Of witchcraft and magic twin arts have been discovered,<sup>95</sup>

which are errors of the soul (*psychês*

*hamartêmata*)

and deceptions of opinion (*doxês*

*apatêmata*).

[11] All who have and do persuade people of things

do so by moulding a false argument.

For if all men on all subjects

had both memory of things past

and <awareness><sup>96</sup> of things present

and foreknowledge of the future,

speech would not be similarly similar,

since, as things are now, it is not easy for them

to recall the past

nor to consider the present

nor to divine the future;

so that on most subjects most men

take opinion as counsellor to their soul.

But opinion, being slippery and insecure,

casts those employing it into slippery and insecure successes.

[12] What cause, then,<sup>97</sup> prevents the conclusion

that Helen similarly, against her will,

might have come under the influence of speech,

just as if ravished by the force of pirates?

For the mode of persuasion is in no way like that of necessity,

but its power is the same.

For the speech which persuades the soul

constrains that soul which it persuades

both to obey its utterances

and to approve its doings.

The persuader, as constrainer, does the wrong,

and the persuaded, as constrained, is wrongly blamed.

[13] That persuasion, when added to speech,

can impress the soul as it wishes,

one may learn

first from the utterances of the astronomers

who, substituting opinion for opinion,

taking away one but creating another,

make what is incredible and unclear

seem true to the eyes of opinion;

and second, compelling contests in words,

in which a single speech,

written with art, but not spoken with truth,

may charm and persuade a large multitude;

and third, the struggles of philosophic arguments,

in which swiftness of thought is also shown

making belief in an opinion easily changed.

[14] The effect of speech upon the structure of soul

is as the structure of drugs over the nature of bodies;

for just as different drugs dispel different secretions from

the body,

and some bring an end to disease, and others to life,

so also in the case of speeches

some distress, others delight,

some cause fear, others embolden their hearers,  
and some drug and bewitch the soul with a kind of evil  
persuasion.

[15] It has been stated, then, that, if she was persuaded by  
speech,

she did not do wrong (*êdikêsen*), but was unfortunate  
(*êtykhêsen*).

The fourth cause I shall discuss in a fourth section.

For if it was love which did these things,

no difficulty will she have in escaping the charge  
of the sin which is alleged to have taken place.

For the things we see

do not have the nature which we wish them to have,  
but the nature which each happens to have;  
through sight the soul is impressed even to its core.

[16] For example,

when enemy bodies fit themselves out against enemies,  
with warlike gear of bronze and iron,  
some for defence, some for offence,  
if the sight sees this, it is alarmed, and alarms the soul,  
so that often men flee in terror  
from future danger as if it were present.

For strong as is the habit of obedience to the law,  
it is driven out by fear resulting from sight

which, coming to a man, causes him to set at naught  
both the noble that is adjudged through law,  
and the good that comes about through victory.

[17] It has happened that people, having seen frightening  
sights,

have lost presence of mind for the present moment;  
even thus does fear extinguish and expel thought.  
And many have fallen victim to

useless labour (*mataiois ponois*)  
and dread diseases (*deinais nosois*)  
and madresses hard to cure (*dysiatois maniais*).

In this way the sight engraves upon the mind  
images of things seen.

And many frightening impressions linger,  
and what lingers is very similar to what is said.

[18] Moreover, whenever pictures from many colours and  
figures

perfectly create a single figure and form,  
they delight the sight;  
while the crafting of statues and the production of  
art-works

provide a pleasant vision to the eyes.

So it is natural for the sight

to be grieved by some things and to long for  
others;

and much love and desire for many things and bodies  
is wrought in many people.

[19] If, therefore, the eye of Helen,  
pleased by the body of Alexander,  
presented to her soul eager desire and contest of  
love,  
what is wonderful in that?

If, being a god, love has the divine power of the gods,  
how could a lesser being reject and refuse it?

But if it is a disease (*nosêma*) of human origin  
and a blind-spot (*agnoêma*) in the soul,  
it should not be condemned as a sin (*hamartêma*),  
but considered a misfortune (*atykhêma*);

for she came – as she did come –

by the snares of fate (*tykhês agreumasin*)  
not by the counsels of reason (*gnômês bouleumasin*),  
and by the constraints of love (*erôtos anangkais*),  
not by the devices of art (*tekhnês paraskeuais*).

[20] How then can one regard the blame of Helen as just,  
seeing as, whether she did what she did,  
by love o'ermastered  
or by speech persuaded

or by force ravished  
 or by divine constraint compelled,  
 she is utterly acquitted of all charge?

[21] I have through speech removed ill fame from a woman.

I have stayed true to the procedure that I set up  
 at the outset of my speech.

I have tried to end the injustice of blame (*mô mou adikian*)  
 and the ignorance of opinion (*doxês amathian*).

My purpose was to compose a speech as an encomium of Helen  
 and an amusement for myself.<sup>98</sup>

### Defence of Palamedes

*The Defence of Palamedes, as we have said already, while stylistically graceful, is not a prose poem in the way that the Helen is. It is rather an exercise in argument from probability,<sup>99</sup> transposed to the arena of myth. The story behind it is that of the 'framing' of Palamedes, at the siege of Troy, by Odysseus. Palamedes, who was reputed the cleverest of the Greeks after Odysseus himself, had incurred the enmity of Odysseus by exposing his trickery when Odysseus attempted to get out of serving in the expedition to Troy by feigning madness. In revenge, when the expedition reached Troy, Odysseus framed Palamedes by forging a letter to him from Priam, arranging for him to betray the Greeks, and hid a sum of gold in his tent. On this evidence, Palamedes was found guilty and put to death by the army.*

*As a counterpart to this speech – not a direct response to it, but probably stimulated by it – see the Odysseus of Gorgias' pupil Alcidamas, below ch. 9, pp. 303–9.*

32. [1] Prosecution and defence are not what is crucial in the judgement about death. No, it is Nature, with an open ballot, that casts a vote of death against every mortal on the day he was born. What is at issue is rather the question of dishonour and

honour, whether I am to die justly, or whether I must die violently with the greatest reproaches and the most shameful accusation. [2] These being the two alternatives, you have the latter<sup>100</sup> within your power, I the former; for justice is in my hands, violence in yours. You will be able to kill me, if you wish, easily, for you have power in this sphere, over which, as it happens, I have no power.

[3] If, then, the accuser, Odysseus, made his accusation, either clearly knowing that I was betraying Greece or conjecturing somehow that this was the case, out of good will towards Greece, then he would be the best of men; how would this not be true of one who saves his homeland, his parents and all Greece, and in addition punishes a wrongdoer? But if he has compounded this allegation out of envy or conspiracy or knavery, just as in the former case he would be the finest of men, so in this case he would be the worst of men.

[4] In my exposition of these matters, where shall I begin? What shall I say first? To what part of the defence shall I turn my attention? For an unsupported accusation creates evident perplexity, and because of the perplexity it follows that I am at a loss in my speech, unless I learn something from the truth itself and the present necessity, having come upon teachers more productive of danger than solutions.<sup>101</sup> [5] Now I clearly know that my accuser accuses me without clear <knowledge>;<sup>102</sup> for I know in my heart clearly that I have done no such thing; and I do not know how anyone could know what did not happen. But in case he made the accusation thinking it to be so, I shall show you in two ways that he is not speaking the truth; for I could not if I wished, nor would I if I could, put my hand to such works as these.

[6] I turn first to this argument, that I lack the capacity to perform the act. There must, after all, have been some starting-point of the treason, and that starting-point would have been speech, for before any future deeds there must first be discussions. But how could there be discussions unless there had been some meeting? And how could there have been a meeting unless the other party sent to me or someone went from me to him? For no message arrives in writing without a bearer.

[7] But this, you may say, can be conveyed by speech. So then, suppose he gets together with me, and I with him – how does this work? How do we communicate with each other – Greek with foreigner? How do we listen and talk to each other? Just on our own? But we do not understand each other's language. So with an interpreter? That would be adding a third person in a situation where things need to be secret.

[8] But let us assume that this event has happened, even though it has not. The next thing requisite is to give and receive some pledge of faith. What would the pledge be? Would it be an oath? Who was going to trust me, traitor that I would be? But perhaps an exchange of hostages? And who could those be? For instance, I might have handed over my brother (for I had no one else),<sup>103</sup> and the foreigner one of his sons; in this way the pledge would have been most secure from him to me and from me to him. But such action, if it happened, would have been manifest to all of you.

[9] Now it may be alleged that we made the contract for money, he giving it, and I receiving it. Was it, then, for a small sum? But it is not probable that a man would take a small sum for a great service. So, then, a large sum? What, in that case, was the means of conveyance? How could one person have carried it? Or are we to suppose many? But if many brought it, there would have been many witnesses to the plot, while if one brought it, what was brought could not have amounted to anything much. [10] And again, did they bring it by day or by night? But, in the latter case, there is the difficulty of the great number of guards and the frequency of their patrols, so that there is no possibility of evading them. By day, then? But the light plainly militates against such activities. So much for that, then. Next, did I go out to receive this bribe, or did he who was bringing it come into the camp? But both alternatives are impossible. If I had in fact gone out and got it, how would I have concealed it both from those within the camp and those outside it? Where would I have put it? How would I have kept it safe? If I had made use of it, I would have been unmasked; if I did not, then of what advantage was it to me? [11] But let us assume that what did not happen in fact happened. We met

up, we came to an agreement, I received money from them, I managed to avoid detection, I hid the money. I then had to deliver that about which these deliberations had taken place. This, however, is more troublesome still than what I have already described. For in acting, I had to act either by myself or with others. But this is not work for one man. Then in concert with others? But who? Clearly those with whom I associate. These would have to be free men or slaves, would they not? Well, the free men with whom I associate are you yourselves. Who, then, among you had any awareness of this? Let him speak. As for slaves, is it not incredible that I would use them? For they are prepared to inform both in the hope of freedom and when hard-pressed by necessity.<sup>104</sup>

[12] As for the action, how would it have been carried out? Clearly the enemy had to be introduced into the camp in greater numbers than yourselves, which is impossible. How could I have introduced them? Through the gates? But it is not my job to shut or open these – there are special officers in charge of that. Well then, perhaps over the walls, with a ladder? But surely <I would have been detected>.<sup>105</sup> The whole area is full of guards. Well, how about through a hole in the wall? No, it would have been obvious to all. Life under arms is carried on outdoors (this is a camp, after all!), where everyone sees everything, and everyone is seen by everyone. In every circumstance, then, and by every means it was impossible for me to do any of these things.

[13] Consider, all of you, the following point as well. What reason did I have to want to do this, even granting to the full that I had the capability? For no one wishes without due reward to run the greatest dangers, or to plumb the depths of wickedness. So what reason was there? (Again I revert to this point.) Was it to gain absolute rule? Over you, or over the foreigners? But over you I would have no prospect of ruling, so many as you are and of such a nature, considering the many great resources at your disposal, noble ancestry, material wealth, distinguished achievements, strength of intellect, royal status in your cities. [14] So, over the foreigners then? But who is going to be their betrayer? By employment of what power shall I, a Greek, take

over the foreigners, I being one and they many? By persuasion, pray, or force? They would not be willing, I think, to be persuaded, and I would hardly be in a position to apply force. But perhaps there are those willing to betray them to a willing accomplice, accepting a reward for their betrayal? But to believe and accept this is the height of foolishness; for who would choose slavery instead of kingship, the worst in place of the best?

[15] Now someone might say that I have entered on this through a passion for wealth and money. But I possess a modest sufficiency of money, and I have no need of much. It is the big spenders who have need of much money, not those who are in control of the pleasures of nature, but those who are enslaved to pleasures and are seeking to acquire honours from wealth and conspicuous consumption. None of this applies to me. To the truth of this claim I offer my past life as witness, and to this you yourselves can be witnesses. You have been my companions, so you know where the truth lies.

[16] Nor indeed for the sake of honour would anyone with even a moderate degree of wit set his hand to such an enterprise. For honours derive from virtue, not from wickedness. How would honour accrue to the betrayer of Greece? And in any case, I am not in want of honour; for I am in fact held in the highest honour, by the most honourable of men, that is to say yourselves, for my wisdom. [17] Nor, furthermore, would one do these things on grounds of security. For the traitor is the enemy of all: the law, justice, the gods, the great multitude of mankind. He transgresses the law, he dissolves justice, he destroys the multitude, he dishonours divinity. But he whose life is beset with the greatest dangers can have no security. [18] But perhaps I wanted either to help my friends or harm my enemies? After all, one might commit injustice for these reasons. But in my case quite the opposite situation obtained: I was harming my friends and helping my enemies. The action involved no acquisition of goods; but no one enters upon a crime with the aim of doing badly. [19] The remaining alternative is that I did what I did to escape some terror or trouble or danger. But no one could say that any of these motives apply to me. All men do all things in pursuit of these two aims: either in search

of some profit, or to escape some punishment; and whatever villainy is committed for reasons other than these <is likely to involve the perpetrator in great evils. But that I would most of all><sup>106</sup> do harm to myself by committing these acts is quite clear. For in betraying Greece I was betraying myself, my parents, my friends, the honour of my ancestors, the cults of my native land, the tombs of my family and my fatherland which is the greatest in Greece.<sup>107</sup> Those things that mean most to all men I would be handing over to wrongdoers.<sup>108</sup> [20] And consider this also. How would my life not be unliveable if I had done these things? Where could I have turned for help? To Greece? Only to suffer the due penalty from those that I had wronged? Who, indeed, of those who had suffered could keep his hands off me? So then was I to stay among the foreigners? Abandoning everything of most importance to me, deprived of the finest honour, spending my days in the most shameful ill-repute, casting aside the labours performed in the cause of virtue throughout my past life? And that through my own fault, though to fail through one's own fault is the greatest shame for a man. [21] Moreover, not even among the foreigners would I be trusted. How could I be, seeing that they were aware that I had done something supremely untrustworthy, in having betrayed my friends to my enemies? Life is not worth living if one loses one's credibility. One may lose one's money, or be deposed from absolute rule, or be exiled from one's fatherland, and still pick oneself up, but once one has lost one's credibility one can never get it back.

So then, that I would not, <if I could, nor could not, if I would>,<sup>109</sup> betray Greece I have now sufficiently demonstrated. [22] I next wish to turn to a direct address to my accuser. In what, I wonder, do you put your faith when, having such a character as you have, you direct an accusation at one such as me? It is worthwhile learning what sort of a man it is who makes these allegations, such as you are unworthy to make, and I am unworthy to receive.<sup>110</sup> Are you attacking me on the basis of sure knowledge or of conjecture? If on the basis of knowledge, you presumably know what you know either from seeing the deed yourself, or from participating, or through learning the facts from someone who participated. If, then, you saw yourself,

tell the judges here the manner, the place, the time – when, where, how you saw. If you participated, you are liable to the same questions. And if you heard the facts from a participant, we must know who he is – let him come forward, let him show himself, let him bear witness! For the accusation will gain much in credibility if you can produce a witness. As it is, neither of us can produce a witness.

[23] But perhaps you will claim that it is fair for you not to produce witnesses of what you allege happened, but that it is for me to produce witnesses for what did not happen. But this is precisely not fair; for as to what did not happen it is, surely, impossible to produce witnesses, whereas for what happened it is not only not impossible, but is actually easy, and not only easy, but <actually required. But><sup>111</sup> for you it was not possible to find, never mind witnesses, but even false witnesses, while for me it was possible to find neither of these. [24] That you do not possess knowledge about the subject-matter of your accusation is obvious, then. It follows, therefore, that since you do not have knowledge, you must have an opinion. Do you then, most reckless of men, on the basis of opinion, that most untrustworthy thing, and having no knowledge of the truth, dare to bring a man up on a capital charge? Who do you know of that has done any such thing? It is open, surely, to all men to have opinions on any subject you please, and as to this you are no wiser than anyone else; but it is not right to repose trust in those who express opinions, but rather in those who have knowledge, nor to hold opinion to be more trustworthy than truth, but on the contrary, truth more trustworthy than opinion.

[25] You have accused me in the indictment we have heard of two most contradictory things, wisdom and madness, things which cannot coexist in the same man. When you claim that I am artful and clever and resourceful, you are accusing me of wisdom, while when you claim that I betrayed Greece, you accuse me of madness. For it is madness to attempt actions which are impossible, disadvantageous and disgraceful, the results of which would be such as to harm one's friends, benefit one's enemies and render one's own life contemptible and precarious.

And yet how can one have confidence in a man who in the course of the same speech to the same audience makes the most contradictory assertions about the same subject? [26] I would like to hear from you whether you think that wise men are witless or intelligent. For if you think they are witless, your argument is innovative, but not true; whereas if you think they are intelligent, then surely it is not appropriate to intelligent men to commit the grossest mistakes, and to prefer evils to the goods in their possession. If therefore I am wise, I have not made mistakes; if I have made mistakes, I am not wise. So in either case you would be wrong.

[27] I have no desire, though I could do so, to bring up against you in turn the many abominations, both old and new, that you have committed in your time;<sup>112</sup> for I do not wish to escape this indictment on the ground of your misdeeds, but on the basis of my virtues. So much, then, for you.

[28] To you, however, gentlemen of the jury, I want to say something about myself which may seem invidious, but is true, something that would not be appropriate to one who is not under indictment, but quite fitting to someone who is. For I am now undergoing scrutiny<sup>113</sup> before you, and presenting an account of my past life. I therefore implore you, if I remind you of some of my past good deeds, not to be offended at what I say, but rather to accept that it is incumbent on one who is under grave and false indictment to say something about his true virtues among you who know them already – which indeed I regard as a most pleasant task. [29] First, then, and second and most of all, all through from beginning to end my past life has been blameless, free from any accusation; for no one has been able to fix any true accusation of wrongdoing against me with you. Indeed not even my accuser has presented any proof of anything that he has alleged; thus his speech, lacking any proof, has the effect of mere abuse. [30] I might indeed claim, and in doing so I would not be lying, nor could I be refuted, that I am not only blameless but actually a major benefactor of you and of the Greek nation and of mankind in general, not only of the present generation but of all those to come. For who else but I made human life viable instead of destitute, and civilized

instead of uncivilized, by developing military tactics, a major contrivance for progress; written laws, the guarantees of justice; writing, the instrument of memory; weights and measures, the convenient means of commercial exchange; number, the guardian of goods; powerful beacons and very swift messenger services – and, last but not least, draughts, a harmless way of passing the time?<sup>114</sup> [31] I mention these by way of demonstrating that it is to this sort of thing that I apply my attention, using this as an indication that I abstain from shameful and wicked deeds. For when one puts one's mind to such things as the former, it is impossible that one concern oneself with the latter. And I claim the right, if I on my part have done you no harm, not myself to suffer harm at your hands. [32] And indeed for none of my other activities am I deserving of ill-treatment, at the hands of either young or old. For to older men I cause no offence, to younger ones I am not without usefulness, while to the fortunate I bear no grudge, and for the unfortunate I am full of sympathy. I do not despise poverty, nor do I honour wealth above virtue, but rather virtue above wealth. I am not useless in council, nor am I lazy in battle, but I do what I am assigned, in obedience to those in command. In truth, it is not my habit to praise myself, but the present emergency compels me, since I have been accused of these things, to make my defence in every possible way.

[33] It remains to me now to speak to you about yourselves, and with that I will end my defence. Appeals to pity and entreaties and the intercession of friends are of use when the trial takes place before a mob;<sup>115</sup> but among you, the most distinguished of the Greeks, and deservedly so regarded, it is not proper to resort to persuasion by means of the intercession of friends or entreaties or appeals to pity, but it is right for me to escape this charge by relying on the most perspicuous justice, explaining the truth, not seeking to deceive you. [34] And you in your turn should not direct your attention to words in preference to deeds, nor give more credence to accusations rather than their refutation, nor deem that a short time affords wiser judgement than a long time, nor believe that slander is more reliable than your experience of me. For in all cases good men must

take great care not to make mistakes, and much more in cases that admit of no remedy than in those that do; for these can be dealt with by those who exercise foresight, but are beyond cure to those who must resort to hindsight. And this is the case when men judge a man on a capital charge, as is the situation facing you now. [35] If, then, through words the truth of deeds could become transparent and manifest to one's hearers, judgement would now be easy on the basis of what has been said. Since, however, that is not the case, put a guard on my body, wait for a longer time and make your judgement on the basis of truth. For you run the great risk, through appearing unjust, of losing one reputation and gaining a different one. To good men death is preferable to a shameful reputation; for the one is the natural end of life, while the other is a disease within life. [36] If you kill me unjustly, it will become obvious to many; for I am not unknown, and your wickedness will become known and perspicuous to the whole of Greece. And the blame for this injustice, as will be clear to all, will rest with you, not with my accuser; for the outcome of the trial rests with you. But no greater error could be committed than this. For you will not only be sinning against me and my parents if you deliver an unjust verdict here, but you will have on your consciences the commission of a dreadful, godless, unjust, lawless deed, in having put to death a man who was an ally, useful to you, a benefactor of Greece, and a fellow Greek, convicting him on the basis of no clear wrongdoing or reliable accusation.

[37] I have said what I have to say, and I rest my case. For while to recapitulate what has already been said at length may be sensible before bad judges, it is not appropriate to assume that a body comprised of the most eminent of the Greeks does not pay attention nor remember what has been said.<sup>116</sup>

### *Funeral Speech*

*Other than these two orations, we have one considerable passage of a Funeral Oration, designed to be spoken over the Athenian dead at some point during the Peloponnesian War, preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (= B6), as an example*