

MANTITHEUS OF LYSIAS 16: NEITHER LONG-HAIRED NOR
SIMPLE-MINDED*

Hamaker's conjecture κομᾶ (for τολμᾶ, *sic*) at Lysias 16.18 was adopted by Rauchenstein in his influential edition of 1869 and soon given powerful endorsement by Jebb and by Shuckburgh. Successive later editors and commentators have seen no reason to demur: Thalheim, Adams, Hude, Gernet and Bizos, Lamb, and finally Edwards and Usher all adopt κομᾶ, and, where they comment, unanimously cite Aristophanic parallels (especially *Eg.* 580) in support of a connection between long-haired affectation and 'oligarchic' affiliations; some also adduce the expression ἀπ' ὀψεως in justification. But this is an egregious instance of unwarranted tampering with a sound text. τόλμα is a quality conspicuously displayed by Mantitheus, on his own account of his character, words, and actions.

He claims complete confidence in himself (σφόδρα ἐμαντῶ πιστεύω, 2) rather than—as would be conventional—in justice, or in his case; and this confidence is borne out by repeated use of the first person pronoun (ἐγώ, 2, 10, 13, 16, 20). He tells how he put himself forward, speaking out of turn in military situations (ἐγὼ προσελθὼν ἔφην τῷ Ὀρθοβούλῳ, 13; εἶπον ὅτι χρή, 14; ἐγὼ διεπραξάμην, 15; ἐγὼ τὸν ταξίαρχον ἐκέλευον, 16) and how he attempted to speak in the assembly before he was old enough—and the verb suggests not that he spoke while still rather young, but that he made an unsuccessful bid for premature attention (νεώτερος ὢν ἐπεχείρησα λέγειν ἐν τῷ δήμῳ, 20).

τόλμα and τολμᾶν are weasel words, sometimes used with 'good' connotations (as κινδυνεύειν ἐτόλμων, 17), especially in association with military valour or steadfastness; but commonly with 'bad' connotations (as ἐτόλμησάν μου καταψεύσασθαι, 8), especially in association with verbal effrontery and shamelessness.¹ Mantitheus displays τόλμα of both kinds. But whereas valour in war (to which he makes claims so extravagant as to verge on the absurd, rather like those of the Shavian Sergius in *Arms and the Man*) might have been lauded as a virtue, his tendency to excessive and inappropriate speech certainly would not.² In using the word τολμᾶν, Mantitheus is making a potentially dangerous admission; and he softens it by the allusive third person τῆς.³ He argues that a front of τόλμα is not incompatible with proper civic

* The following editions are mentioned: R. Rauchenstein, *Ausgewählte Reden des Lysias* (Berlin, 1869, rev. K. Fuhr 1897, repr. 1963); R. C. Jebb, *Selections from the Attic Orators* (London, 1880, 2nd edn. 1888 and repr.); E. S. Shuckburgh, *Lysiae Orationes xvi* (London, 1882 and repr.); T. Thalheim (Leipzig, 1901); C. D. Adams, *Lysias: Selected Speeches* (New York, 1905, repr. Oklahoma, 1970); C. Hude (Oxford, 1912 and repr.); L. Gernet and M. Bizos, *Lysias, discours, t. 2* (Paris, 1926); W. R. M. Lamb, *Lysias* (New York, 1930); M. Edwards and S. Usher, *Greek Orators I: Antiphon and Lysias* (Warminster, 1985). I am grateful to Sir Kenneth Dover and to the anonymous referee of *CQ* for helpful comments.

¹ Of 74 instances of τόλμα words in the Lysianic corpus (sbs., adj., or vb.) the vast majority are, like 16.8, 'bad', e.g. (to cite only one occurrence per speech) 1.40, 3.40, 6.9, 7.17, 10.6, 12.2, 13.49, 14.5, 15.3, 19.51, 21.19, 24.7, 26.3, 29.7, 30.24, 31.1, 32.15. An example of 'good', like 16.17, is 2.40. But the data may be skewed by a common concern to impute this quality to mendacious opponents, while military action is not a regular theme. There are also cases which are neutral (vb. meaning 'have the heart to', *vel sim.*) and cases where the negated vb. is used of failing to perform actions, commonly desirable (2.50, 6.49, 12.5, 14.17, 32.15, 34.11) but sometimes undesirable (14.15).

² Cf. Lysias 2.51, πρεσβύτεροι command and νεώτεροι obey orders, and Pl. *R.* 425b σιγαὶ . . . τῶν νεωτέρων παρὰ πρεσβυτέρους.

³ There is no direct Lysianic parallel to the absolute use of the verb; in the closest case, 26.3, ποιεῖν is to be understood. But this is perfectly acceptable Greek usage. Here, inverted commas are implicit, if—as is likely—the speaker uses a word prominent in his opponent's allegations.

behaviour; and that actions are what matter. It is probable that his opponents had accused him of *τόλμα* and that he is attempting to defuse such charges: by first laying claim to military *τόλμα* and then declaring that *τόλμα* should not induce hatred, he puts by equivocation a good spin on a damaging character trait, and one at odds with conventional Athenian values, and views of behaviour appropriate in young men.

Mantitheus argues that ambitious and orderly civic conduct should be assessed by military valour (*χρῆ τοὺς φιλοτίμως καὶ κοσμίως πολιτευομένους ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων σκοπεῖν*, 18) and that boldness should not incite enmity as such characteristics harm no one, whereas military prowess benefits all. Mantitheus' attempt to present himself as a good citizen (in spite of his 'bad' civic *τόλμα*) as he is a good soldier (because of his 'good' military *τόλμα*) is astute. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of adverbs is daring: good order is not necessarily associated with ambition and may even be jeopardized by an excess of ambition. Mantitheus openly confesses that even on his own assessment he is overambitious (*καὶ ἐμαντῷ δοκῶ φιλοτιμότερον διατεθῆναι τοῦ δέοντος*, 20): he would have no difficulty establishing this point, and so cunningly attempts to suggest that ambition and orderly conduct are somehow linked.⁴

Mantitheus has a problem in presenting his character as 'orderly'. He claims initially to have had a restrained lifestyle (*μετρίως βεβιωκώς*, 3) and later lays claim to a decent character (*τεκμήριον . . . τῆς ἐμῆς ἐπεικελίας*, 11), contrasting his pastimes with those of dissipated youths who are, he says, his enemies (in a barbed attack on his accusers). But at the same time he admits by clear implication that he is not among those who say little and conduct themselves in an orderly fashion (*μικρὸν διαλεγόμενοι καὶ κοσμίως ἀπερχόμενοι*, *sic*,⁵ 19). Instead, he identifies with others who pay no heed to such attributes (*ἕτεροι . . . τῶν τοιούτων ἀμελοῦντες*, 19): the generalizing plural, like *τις* in the expression *εἴ τις τολμᾷ*, evades a direct, potentially more damaging, admission in the first person. On his view, judgement should be based not on impressions but on actions (*οὐκ . . . ἀπ' ὄψεως . . . ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν ἔργων σκοπεῖν*, 19).⁶ The phrase *ἀπ' ὄψεως* may seem to give support to Hamaker's conjecture: clearly, long hair is a matter of appearance. But general outward appearances (admitted to be potentially detrimental) are here opposed to inner worth (claimed to be evinced by his actions); the opposition is akin to the common opposition between *λόγοι* (which may be dismissed) and *ἔργα* (which provide true evidence of character): see, for instance, 19.61.

Mantitheus walks a tightrope: to persuade, he must ideally present himself as *μέτριος*, but if that is not possible (and he seems to abandon his initial stance), he must argue that one who is not overtly *μέτριος* may nonetheless be in his actions a good citizen. He walks this tightrope with remarkable assurance and considerable skill in equivocation. Similarly, he must ideally rebut the charge of serving under the thirty, but if that is not possible he must argue that, though he would admit this to be heinous (*δεινόν*, 8), he should, because of the general amnesty, still be permitted to serve if he had wronged no citizen.⁷ On this particular charge his arguments seem to carry more conviction.

⁴ On disreputable *philotimia*, cf. Lys. 14.21, 35, 43 and see K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* (Oxford, 1974), 233.

⁵ The true reading may be not *ἀμπεχόμενοι* as Dobree and others emend (with the effect of reinforcing Hamaker's conjecture), but a verb of more general connotation, e.g. *ἀποφαινόμενοι*. Or perhaps *κάκοσμίως ἀπεχόμενοι*, closer to the MS tradition, might be considered.

⁶ For the phrase *ἀπ' ὄψεως*, used of inference from (false) appearances, cf. Th. 1.10; also 2.37.2.

⁷ Such attempts to have it both ways are common: the defendant may claim that he is innocent

The speech affords an insight into the tensions and animosities which were rife in the postwar period; and to the attitudes and prejudices prevalent in public life of the early fourth century. The same nexus of values is apparent in other speeches where similar issues are explored: 14, 25, 31, and especially 26. But Mantitheus seems to be the object of personal dislike as well as political suspicion and hostility. The term 'enemies' is conventional (ἐχθροί, 3), as is the allegation of their 'slander' or 'fabricating stories and telling lies' (1, 11), and the verb 'hate' (μισεῖν, 18 and 19) is not in itself conclusive (cf. ὑπερμισεῖν, 31.19), but Mantitheus starts by trying to disarm anyone 'ill-disposed' to him (ἀγδῶς διακείμενος, 2) and later refers to people who feel irritation or opprobrium towards him (ἀχθομένων, 20). A certain arrogance is evident in his treatment of his elders both in military and in civic situations; he sneers at Thrasyboulos (τοῦ σεμνοῦ Στειριῶς, 15) and contemptuously dismisses examination of the evidence of cavalry rosters as 'foolish' (εὐηθές, 6; but on this see also 26.10).

Assessments of Mantitheus' character have been favourable: Devries finds him 'noblest of all the men we know through Lysias', showing the 'frank self-consciousness of youth', and sums up, 'straightforwardness is the keynote of Mantitheus' character'. Lamb uses the terms 'young, gallant and ingenuous', and commends 'his bluff, inapprehensive personality'. Usher concludes, 'Mantitheus emerges clearly as a young man of generous impulses, incapable of deceit, a little boastful but not without justification, and perhaps a little overambitious, but venially so . . .'.⁸ These judgements seem wide of the mark. Rather, the speaker belongs to the generation of youths trained in and skilled at speaking (cf. νεώτερος ὢν ἐπεχείρησα λέγειν ἐν τῷ δήμῳ, 20) and he is not innocent of rhetorical prevarication, to make a 'worse' cause or person appear 'better' (cf. βελτίω με . . . ἡγήσεσθαι, 2; τοὺτους δὲ ἡγείσθαι χείρους εἶναι, 3; βελτίων ὑφ' ὑμῶν νομιζόμενος, 17). The speech may be seen as an attempt by a loud, clever, and unscrupulous young nonconformist to square his self-seeking actions with current moral values.

The avoidance of hiatus in the speech has often been remarked. Whatever construction we put on this stylistic phenomenon,⁹ it involves conscious elaboration in composition; form as well as content is carefully contrived. Further, Mantitheus shows mastery of the rhetorical devices of paradox, 1 and of argument from εἰκός, 5. The end of the speech is carefully composed: there is a long sentence of self-justification for attempting to speak in the assembly, giving two reasons for this (a, that he was compelled to speak on his affairs; b, that he is overambitious) followed by two reasons for his ambition (a, that he was emulating his family forbears; b, that he observed that only the ambitious got public approval), and there is a concluding rhetorical question, 'Who would not then be induced to engage in public life?' A short second rhetorical question is followed by a final short sentence which aims to disarm his hearers, by putting himself in their hands for judgement (κρίται, 21). Mantitheus is disingenuous rather than ingenuous; and, whatever his political sympathies may have been, well able to deploy the tools of persuasion regarded as a democratic rather than an 'oligarchic' skill.

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of the charge, or some aspect of it; but simultaneously—just in case he is not believed—argue that even if guilty he does not deserve the impending punishment.

⁸ W. L. Devries, *Ethopoia* (Baltimore, 1892), 18–20; S. Usher, 'Individual characterisation in Lysias', *Eranos* 63 (1965), 99–119, at 110. Usher does, however, comment also on the 'over-confident tone' and on Mantitheus' idea that he is exceptional in his patriotism.

⁹ See K. J. Dover, *The Evolution of Greek Prose Style* (Oxford, 1997), 178–80.