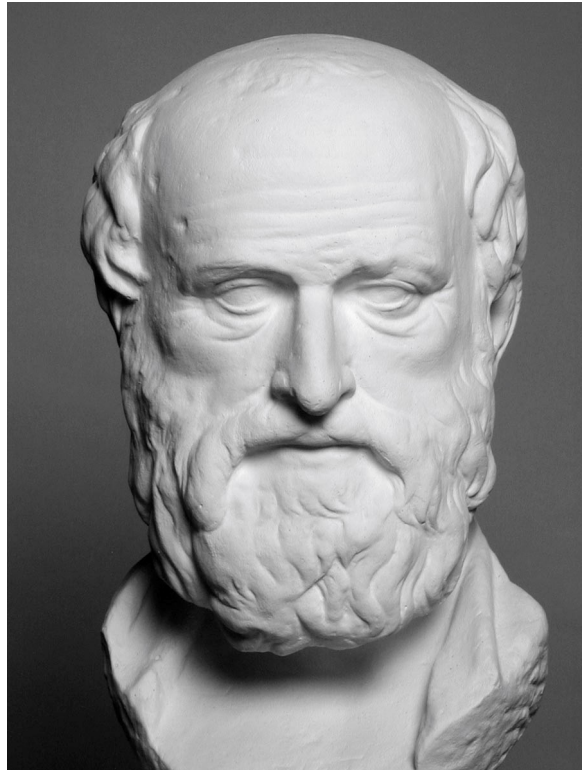


Lysias: The Defence of the Disabled Man.

Brief notes by P. G. Brown



References:

Eight Orations of Lysias, M.H. Morgan 1885

Attic Orators: Selections, R.C. Jebb, 1966 edition. (Only covers chapters 10-14.)

Lysias Orationes, XVI, E.S. Shuckburgh, 1967 edition.

Date: Unknown.

Those whose property was below three minai and who were disabled (ἀδύνατοι) were given a pension of one obol a day. They had to undergo an annual assessment (δοκιμασία) to check that they were eligible for the payment. His opponent claims that the disabled man in question (who is never named):

1. has a trade
2. was seen riding on horseback and cavorting with the wealthy
3. has a shop with a disreputable character.

He replies that

1. he does not earn enough from the shop to support himself
2. the horse was borrowed and he needs it to get around
3. he has no control over the character of those who frequent his shop.

Introduction: Sections 1-3:

1. οὐ πολλοῦ δέω χάριν ἔχειν - 'I am almost grateful'.

παρασκευάσαι τόνδε μοι τὸν κίνδυνον -tr. 'that he has cooked up this ordeal for me'.

2. τίνος ἂν ὑμῖν ...- 'from what wickedness would such man seem to you to keep his distance'.

συκοφαντεῖ -tr. 'slanders'.

φίλω - 'as a friend'.

3. τοιαύτη κεχρημένος συμφορᾶ - 'although enduring such misfortune', i.e. being disabled.

ἐπιτηδεύμασιν - 'pursuits, activities'.

εἰ γὰρ ἐξ ἴσου ... 'for if I hold my mind and conduct the rest of my life on equal footing (ἐξ ἴσου) with my disability, how would I differ from this man?'

Refutation of the first complaint: Sections 4-9.

4. τῷ σώματι δύνασθαι - '(he says I) am able bodied'.

τούτου -refers to the pension.

5. τῆς δ' ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ εὐπορίας - 'from the wealth I get from my craft'.

δυναμένοις - 'who are able'.

6. διαδεξόμενον αὐτήν -`relieving me of my work', i.e. a slave. A technical word. A διάδοχος is a `successor'.

πρόσοδος -`income'.

ἄν for ἕάν

τύχη -tr. `plight'.

7. ἔδοτε -sc. μοι.

μηδὲ πρότερον καὶ περὶ ...-`nor when previously, even when you seemed to be most piteous regarding those who had nothing the matter (lit. bad) with them, but now, on account of this man (his enemy), give a rough reception to (ἀγρίως ἀποδέξησθε) those who are objects of pity even to their enemies'.

9. προκαλεσάμην αὐτὸν εἰς ἀντίδοσιν -`I would challenge him to an exchange of property'. See Morgan ad loc. The cost of being choregos was huge. If someone was required to undertake public duty but thought another should be doing it, he could call for an exchange of property.

διὰ πολλὴν εὐπορίαν -`by means of my vast resources' (sarcastic).

ἐξ ἴσου-`on an equal footing', as in section 3.

εἰ δὲ ὧν ἐγὼ λέγω ...-`but if he happened to do any of the things I have suggested (*i.e. swapped properties*), he would agree that I am such (*i.e. poor*) and even more badly off'.

Refutation of the second complaint: Sections 10-14.

10. οὐ πολὺς ὁ λόγος -`there is not much to tell'.

τοῦτο φιλοσοφεῖν -tr. `and to have made a study of this'. (High language).

ὡς ἀλυπτότατα μεταχειριούνται -`how he shall manage with the least pain'.

ὧν εἷς ἐγὼ -`I am one of those'

ῥαστώνη -`facility'.

τῶν ἀναγκαίων -partitive gen.

11. ἐπ' ἀστράβης ἄν ὠχούμην - 'I would have ridden (mounted) on a mule saddle'. This was a padded saddle with a back used by invalids and women.

12. ἤτημένους -tr. 'borrowed'.

δυνατός - 'able-bodied'.

μὴ κατηγορεῖν ... - 'he should not make the accusation that this also is what able-bodied men do'.

οἷς - 'both of which' (the crutches and horse).

13. εἷς ὤν -tr. 'he alone'.

κληροῦσθαι - 'to draw lots for the office of'. If he were not disabled he would be eligible for this office.

τούτῳ δὲ ψηφίσασθαι ... - 'and for all of you to vote (to give the obol) to this man, as one who is maimed (ἀνάπηρος)'.

οὐ γὰρ δήπου ... - 'for surely you will take away that which is given (the obol) since that man is able-bodied, the law officers will not debar that same man, as being disabled, from drawing the lot'.

14. οὐθ' οὔτος ... εὖ ποιῶν - 'nor does he – and quite rightly'. There may be a lacuna here.

ἐπίκληρος - 'an heiress'. Legal term for a woman claiming an inheritance when there is no male heir.

τῆς συμφορᾶς ἀμφισβητήσεων - 'being about to dispute my misfortune/sad state'.

Refutation of the third complaint: Sections 15-20.

15. λίαν ἀσελγῶς διακείμενος - 'utterly disgusting in my way of life/manner/conduct'.

εἰ φοβερῶς ὀνομάσειε ... - 'as though he could only speak the truth if he used terrible words and could not do so if he used mild words'.

διαγιγνώσκειν - 'to distinguish between'.

ἐγχωρεῖ -impersonal, 'it is allowable'.

16. ἀπόρως - 'without means'.

17. ἐξωνοῦνται - 'buy off', 'pay off', 'but their way out of'.

18. τοὺς ὑπάρξαντες - 'those who started the aggression'.

οὔτε ὑβρίζειν ... - 'nor, if they wished to act violently, to get the better of their victims'.

σπευδάζων - 'seriously'.

ὥσπερ τι καλὸν ποιῶν - 'as though perpetuating some fine joke'.

19. ὡς ἐμέ -tr. 'at my shop'.

τέχνας -tr. 'a trade'.

20. μυροπώλιον - 'perfumery'.

κουρεῖον - 'barber shop'.

κατεσκευασμένους -tr. 'who have set up shop'.

ἀμουγέπου = ἀμοῦ γέ που - 'somewhere'.

Final summing up and defence of his character: Sections 21-27.

21. πρὸς ἕν ἕκαστον - 'in regard to each point one by one'.

ὁμοίως τούτῳ - 'like he does'.

22. μεταλαμβάνω - 'to have a share in'.

τούτου διὰ τουτονὶ - 'because of this (word) of this man'.

τῶν μεγίστων ἀρχῶν - 'of the most important position', i.e. the archonship.

23. προνοηθεῖσα τῶν οὕτως διακειμένων - 'in its forethought for those in this predicament'.

τοιούτων - 'in such a disposition'.

24. πολυπράγμων - 'busybody'.

φιλαπεχθημων - 'quarrelsome, fond of making enemies'.

οὐ τοιαύταις ἀφορμαῖς ...- 'but I happen not to have made use of such a way of life', (lit. 'starting point')

25. κακῶς ἐποίησα - 'I treated badly'.

μετ' ἐκείνων- 'with them', the Thirty.

26. μὴ τοίνυν, ὧ βουλή, μηδὲν ἡμαρτηκῶς ...- 'may I, who have done nothing wrong, not be treated by you like to one who has committed many wrongdoings'.

οὐδεμίαν εὐθύνας ὑπέχω νῦν αὐτῆς - 'not now undergoing a public enquiry about it (an official position)'

27. τῶν ὁμοίων αὐτῷ περιγίγνεσθαι - 'but try to get the better of men as strong as himself'.