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Stasis, 'good victory', and the Athenian demos

The Peloponnesian War ended in total defeat for the Athenians, but worse was yet to come: *stasis* and the overthrow of the democracy for the second time in less than ten years. The Thirty did not remain in power long but their overthrow did not take place without fighting between Athenians and Athenians. When the democracy was re-established, the *demos* had the problem of publicly honouring and commemorating the dead killed fighting, not external enemies of the *polis*, but fellow citizens. Was such a thing even possible? Nicole Loraux has answered negatively: 'there can be no "good victory" after a *stasis*' she writes in *The Divided City* (101). Our evidence, however, tells a different story. As I argue, the Athenians successfully memorialised those who died fighting for the democracy and they did, indeed, create a 'good victory' out of *stasis*, an achievement displayed in the city's topography and ritual practices.

The primary vehicle was a decree proposed by Theozotides who specified that the legitimate sons of Athenians killed fighting the oligarchy on behalf of the democracy should be honoured with a stipend just as the war orphans were (*SEG XXVIII 46*). These sons are assimilated to the sons of those killed fighting the external enemies of Athens and the dead are the equivalent of the war dead. In his text, Theozotides uses terms which appear in other late fifth-century honorary decrees; their political force comes out from the contrast with the terms used by the Athenians to treat a parallel situation in 410 after the oligarchy of the Four Hundred. On that occasion, Demophantos' decree against overthrowing the democracy (Andokides 1.96-98) specified that, in such circumstances, Athenians were to kill or attempt to kill individuals who overthrew the democracy or subsequently held office. Any man killed in this process and his descendants were to receive the benefits of Harmodios and Aristogeiton. These honours, however, stressed the internal nature of *stasis* because both the Tyrannicides and the Athenian democrat killed or would kill other Athenians, albeit ones who were not behaving properly. Such a model was inappropriate in 403 when the citizens had sworn not to remember previous misfortunes. The solution was to identify the surviving sons with the war orphans, the dead democrats with the war dead, and the oligarchs with external enemies.

This proposal did not instantly banish strife from the city: the fragments of a speech by Lysias indicate that Theozotides was indicted by a *graphe paranomon* for his efforts (fr. 6 Gernet and Bizon). *Stasis* was not easily transformed into 'good victory' and, as Loraux argues, it is an essential aspect of the *agon*. 'Good victory', however, triumphed in the end and the *stèle* was inscribed and erected in the Agora. The fathers were permanently memorialised as good democrats who died to save the city from external enemies. The sons' names were read out at the City Dionysia with the other war orphans (Lysias fr. 6.2) and the dead men were buried in the *Demosion Sema* (Lysias 2.64); the city's practices reinforced the strategies of Theozotides' decree. The erection of the *stèle* in the Agora juxtaposed the text with the paintings in the Stoa Poikile commemorating Athenian victories over external foes (Pausanias 1.15.1-4) and the new victory was added to this series of successes against external enemies. The inscription also contrasted with the statues of the Tyrannicides, those victors over internal enemies, the route not taken by

Theozotides. This setting emphasised the status of the dead as war dead and their enemies as external. It identified the results as a success and not merely the end of civil strife. The Athenians had, indeed, created 'good victory' out of *stasis*, which was removed from the picture.