



# THE FUNERAL ORATION AND NICOLE LORAUX

An International Study Day

**19 February 2020**

**Le Collegium de Lyon  
The University of Lyon, France**

## CONVENORS

**Stavroula Kefallonitis** (HiSoMA–Saint-Étienne)  
**David M. Pritchard** (HiSoMA–Lyon/Queensland)

## PARTICIPANTS

Pierre Balmond (Paris)  
Halima Benchikh-Lehocine (ENS de Lyon)  
Richard Bouchon (Lyon 2)  
Pascale Brillet-Dubois (Lyon 2)  
Paul Cartledge (Cambridge)  
Antoine Chabod (Paris)  
Christophe Cusset (ENS de Lyon)  
Madalina Dana (Lyon 3)

Marie Durnerin (ENS de Lyon/EHESS–Paris)  
Stavroula Kefallonitis (Saint-Étienne)  
Dominique Lenfant (Strasbourg)  
François Lissarrague (EHESS–Paris)  
Christophe Pébarthe (Bordeaux)  
David M. Pritchard (Lyon/Queensland)  
Bernd Steinbock (Western Ontario)  
Johannes Wienand (Braunschweig)

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**PROGRAM**

**WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2020**

<b>9.30</b>	<b>Arrival and Late Registration</b>
<b>9.45</b>	<b>Session 1: The Funeral Speech of Pericles</b>
	Session-Chair: Associate Professor Stavroula Kefallonitis (Saint-Étienne)
9.45	1. Associate Professor Stavroula Kefallonitis: Welcome
9.55	2. Associate Professor David M. Pritchard (Lyon/Queensland) 'L'oraison funèbre après Nicole Loraux'
10.10	3. Associate Professor Bernd Steinbock (Western Ontario) 'The <i>Epitaphios Logos</i> of Pericles: Thucydides's Ambivalence towards the Funeral Oration'
11.00	4. Marie Durnerin (ENS de Lyon/ EHESS-Paris): Response by a Doctoral Student
<b>11.10</b>	<b>Morning Tea</b>
<b>11.40</b>	<b>Session 2: Democracy and the Funeral Oration</b>
	Session-Chair: Professor Christophe Cusset (ENS de Lyon)
11.40	5. Professor Christophe Cusset: Introduction
11.50	6. Professor Dominique Lenfant (Strasbourg) 'L'oraison funèbre comme autoportrait de la démocratie athénienne'
12.40	7. Halima Benchikh-Lehocine (ENS de Lyon): Response by a Doctoral Student
<b>12.50</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>14.00</b>	<b>Session 3: Gorgias and the Beautiful Death</b>
	Session-Chair: Professor Madalina Dana (Lyon 3)
14.00	8. Professor Madalina Dana: Introduction
14.10	9. Professor François Lissarrague (EHESS-Paris): 'Nicole Loraux et la belle mort athénienne'
14.40	10. Professor Dr Johannes Wienand (Braunschweig) "'Living Tombs": Approaching the <i>Epitaphios Logos</i> of Gorgias'
15.30	11. Pierre Balmond (Paris-Est Créteil): Response by a Doctoral Student
<b>15.40</b>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b>
<b>16.10</b>	<b>Session 4: Tragedy and the Paris School</b>
	Session-Chair: Associate Professor Richard Bouchon (Lyon 2)
16.10	12. Associate Professor Richard Bouchon: Introduction
16.20	13. Associate Professor Pascale Brillet-Dubois (Lyon 2): 'Nicole Loraux et la tragédie: Un contrepoint à <i>l'Invention d'Athènes</i> '
16.50	14. Associate Professor Christophe Pébarthe (Bordeaux): 'Qu'est que "l'anthropologie historique": Réflexions historiographiques sur l'École de Paris'
17.20	15. Antoine Chabod (Paris-Est Marne-La-Vallée): Response by a Doctoral Student
17.30	Questions and Open Discussion
<b>18.00</b>	<b>Close</b>

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## L'oraison funèbre après Nicole Loraux

David M. Pritchard

La célèbre oraison funèbre attribuée à Périclès est encore de nos jours étudiée dans les classes et dans les universités australiennes. Voilà qui suscite souvent la surprise des Français, aux yeux desquels l'Australie n'est qu'un pays lointain, avec ses feux de brousse violents et ses très étranges animaux. Toutefois, la présence en Australie d'un domaine d'étude consacré à la Grèce antique remonte à l'arrivée des Européens, il y a deux siècles.

Les premiers dirigeants coloniaux de mon pays redoutaient que leur civilisation ne disparaisse. L'Europe était très loin, et la plupart des colons qui les accompagnaient étaient des condamnés de droit commun. En conséquence, ils considéraient qu'il était urgent d'inculquer à tous les valeurs fondamentales des Lumières européennes. Ces dirigeants voyaient l'étude de la Grèce antique dans les classes comme un moyen important pour parvenir à cet objectif.

Les Français ne sont généralement pas moins surpris d'apprendre qu'un Australien séjourne en France pour y mener des recherches sur l'Antiquité grecque. Certes, ils comprennent bien pourquoi des philosophes australiens pourraient venir ici. Cela relève de la fierté nationale due au fait que la « *French theory* » a conquis le monde anglophone dans les années 1980. En revanche, peu de Français ont conscience que « l'École de Paris » a exercé une influence tout aussi grande sur celles et ceux qui étudiaient la Grèce antique.

Les figures de proue de ce cercle parisien d'historiens de l'Antiquité étaient Jean-Pierre Vernant et Pierre Vidal-Naquet. La lecture de leurs ouvrages ainsi que de ceux de membres plus jeunes de ce cercle a complètement transformé nos vies. Ils ont fait de moi et d'autres étudiants australiens en études grecques les historiens du culturel que nous sommes aujourd'hui.

L'ouvrage de « l'École de Paris » qui a eu le plus grand impact sur nous est *L'Invention d'Athènes* de Nicole Loraux. Avant sa publication en 1981, les historiens

de la démocratie athénienne n'avaient guère accordé d'importance à l'oraison funèbre. Pour eux, l'oraison de Périclès et les autres discours annuels prononcés en l'honneur des soldats morts au combat n'étaient composés que de clichés.

Loraux a prouvé qu'ils avaient tort en montrant le rôle central que ce discours jouait dans la perpétuation de l'identité que les Athéniens avaient construite d'eux-mêmes. *L'Invention d'Athènes* a démontré comment chaque mise en scène de l'oraison funèbre avait aidé les Athéniens à conserver le même « imaginaire » deux siècles durant.

Ainsi, d'après ce genre, les Athéniens étaient presque toujours victorieux parce qu'ils étaient plus courageux que le reste des Grecs. En luttant pour la sûreté ou pour la liberté des autres, ils ne menaient que des guerres justes.

*L'Invention d'Athènes* a été une réussite remarquable. Le fait que Loraux ait étudié l'oraison funèbre est à lui seul frappant. Ce genre adhérait à un militarisme culturel effréné : il proclamait que la guerre produisait seulement des avantages et il en minimisait les coûts humains.

Cela était en désaccord avec l'antimilitarisme fort de la gauche française des années 1970. Ainsi, en étudiant l'oraison funèbre, Loraux allait absolument à contre-courant.

Il est tout aussi remarquable qu'elle l'ait fait sans les outils que nous considérons désormais comme allant de soi. Aujourd'hui, les études sur la mémoire sociale et la tradition orale sont bien établies. Tel n'était pas le cas lorsque Loraux a écrit son premier ouvrage.

En effet, le seul outil qu'elle pouvait utiliser était le marxisme français et italien des années 1970. Quiconque a tenté de comprendre Louis Althusser sait bien que cet outil n'est pas si utile.

De plus, *L'Invention d'Athènes* était remarquablement différente des autres ouvrages de « l'École de Paris ». À cette époque, Vernant et Vidal-Naquet, par

exemple, faisaient des recherches sur les structures élémentaires de la pensée grecque. Ce que Loraux a découvert était beaucoup plus compliqué : un récit identitaire complexe et une série de pratiques discursives qui l'entretenaient.

Malgré son impact considérable, *L'Invention d'Athènes* était loin d'être un ouvrage complet. Notamment, on n'y trouve pas de comparaison de l'oraison funèbre avec les autres genres littéraires produits par la démocratie athénienne.

En conséquence, Loraux a avancé trois affirmations audacieuses, sans néanmoins en apporter la preuve. La première de ces affirmations était que « l'imaginaire » qu'on peut observer dans l'oraison funèbre avait eu un grand impact sur les débats politiques au sujet de la guerre.

De plus, Loraux affirmait non moins audacieusement que la démocratie athénienne n'avait pas eu la capacité d'inventer ses propres valeurs fondamentales. Il en résultait que les Athéniens de l'époque classique étaient condamnés à utiliser les valeurs aristocratiques traditionnelles. Loraux pensait en avoir trouvé la preuve dans l'oraison funèbre.

Sa troisième affirmation audacieuse était que les pièces de théâtre et les débats politiques copiaient généralement le message pro-guerre de l'oraison funèbre. Cela voudrait dire que l'Athènes démocratique était dépourvue du vigoureux discours anti-militariste qu'on rencontre assez couramment dans les démocraties d'aujourd'hui.

Le projet que je dirige en France a pour but de compléter *L'Invention d'Athènes* en effectuant cette comparaison entre tous les genres littéraires de la démocratie athénienne.

Ce projet confirme déjà la première affirmation de Loraux. Il est vrai que les hommes politiques athéniens promouvaient souvent la cause de la guerre au nom de l'intérêt de l'État. Pourtant, leurs discours reposaient tout aussi souvent sur la même identité que l'oraison funèbre.

Clairement, l'idéalisme lui aussi jouait un rôle important dans les affaires étrangères athéniennes.

Toutefois, cette comparaison réfute la deuxième affirmation audacieuse de Loraux. Un discours militaire est rarement une bonne occasion de décrire la démocratie.

En revanche, dans leurs débats politiques, les chefs athéniens étaient doués pour justifier les valeurs fondamentales de la démocratie. En comparant la démocratie avec l'autocratie, les auteurs de tragédies faisaient cela encore mieux.

Le projet que je dirige en France n'en confirme pas moins la dernière des trois affirmations de Loraux. Certes, les comédies rappelaient aux Athéniens qu'il valait mieux faire l'amour que la guerre, alors que les tragédies faisaient indirectement référence à la lourdeur des coûts de cette dernière.

Toutefois, le théâtre représentait encore la guerre comme une très bonne chose et les guerres que les Athéniens avaient menées comme toujours justes. Les hommes politiques athéniens faisaient encore moins de concessions : ils suivaient simplement l'oraison funèbre en vantant les avantages de la guerre.

Bien sûr, étudier la Grèce antique reste un moyen important d'apprendre un grand nombre de valeurs européennes fondamentales. Néanmoins, l'oraison funèbre de Périclès ou tout autre discours athénien ne constitue pas une leçon en matière de paix.

De leur histoire sombre des deux derniers siècles, les Européens ont appris que la paix repose sur des normes pacifiques, des identités partagées et des discours politiques conciliateurs.

Cette leçon n'est pas moins importante que celles qui nous viennent de l'Antiquité grecque.



# Turkey ‘more of a challenge to US interests’

Director of Penn Biden Center outlines the big issues in the East Med, hails relations with Greece as ‘one of the few bright spots’ in the region

BY KATERINA SOKOU  
Kathimerini

The senior director of the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement Michael Carpenter tells Kathimerini in an interview that US-Greece ties are one of the “very few bright spots” in transatlantic relations at the moment.

Carpenter, who served as foreign policy adviser to Vice President Joe Biden, says that President Donald Trump’s undermining of America’s closest alliances is a tragedy, while also offering his views on relations with Turkey, the latter’s demarcation agreement with Libya, Cyprus’ role and regional cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In an article in Foreign Affairs, former vice president Biden criticized President Trump for undermining diplomacy and America’s strategic partnerships. Do you share his view?

I very much share that view. I think it’s a real tragedy that over the last three years President Trump has undermined our closest alliances with our democratic partners and friends around the world, including in Europe, the members of the NATO alliance, but also in East Asia. That really sends us back when it comes to confronting the challenges of the 21st century, whether it’s big powers like Russia and China, or whether it’s other types of challenges like pandemic disease. The threats of the future are not ones that can be tackled by nation states alone, and to see especially the transatlantic relationship so frail is really frightening to me.

Still, US-Greece relations have been described as the best they have ever been. Do you agree with this premise, and, if so, why do you think that might be the case?

I do agree with it. I think that Greece is one of the very few bright spots in our transatlantic relationship and that is due to a set of unique

factors. One of them is the fact that Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has such strong ties to the US, and not just to the Trump administration, but I think bipartisan ties that extend to a range of members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. We have a fantastic ambassador in Athens in Geoff Pyatt. And the strategic situation in Southeast Europe and especially in the Eastern Med is such that as Turkey becomes less and less of a reliable NATO ally and more of a challenge to US security interests in the region, it is natural that we rely more and more on Greece. But also because Greece shares our values and is a democracy committed to a Europe whole, free and at peace, whereas Turkey is playing a very dangerous role in Cyprus, in Syria, in Libya, and in other parts of the region.

Does Turkey’s acquisition of the S-400 missile system from Russia pose a strategic threat for NATO?

Well, no. I don’t think the S-400 acquisition poses a strategic threat. I think it is a tactical threat. It makes it impossible for the US to cooperate with Turkey on the development of the F-35 fighter, because the S-400 system is designed through its algorithm to collect intelligence on the flight performance of the F-35. So, it’s really impossible to have both. And Turkey has shown very clearly that it wants to have the S-400, so that means that it can’t have the F-35. But that’s not a strategic issue, it’s more of a tactical, technological issue. If there were a strategic rapprochement between Turkey and the rest of NATO, I am sure there would be a way to find a solution to the S-400 problem, where that system could essentially be sidelined.

But I think the greater problem is that [Turkish President Recep Tayyip] Erdogan is both increasingly authoritarian at home and is causing trouble for the European Union and for the NATO alliance in his neighborhood. By that I’m thinking of his denial of Cyprus’ rights to develop hydrocar-



Michael Carpenter previously served as deputy assistant secretary of defense.

*‘I think it’s incumbent on Turkey to cool it and to play a more constructive role’*

bon resources in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), I’m thinking of his intervention in Libya, the conflict with the YPG [Kurdish militia] in Syria which has displaced the US, all be it with President Trump’s support – but all these things are causing Turkey to get crosswise with our European allies. At the same time, there are potentially common interests, as neither Turkey nor Europe wants to

see millions of refugees flow from Idlib into Turkey. So, there are still common interests where we should be cooperating, but it’s just much more painful these days compared to five, six, seven year ago.

You mentioned some aspects of Turkey’s foreign policy that are seen by its neighbors as power projection. Does this mean anything for the region and for Turkey’s relations with the US?

Yes, I think it’s destabilizing, some of the actions it has taken. You will recall there was a rendition of suspected Fethullah Gulen sympathizers from Kosovo, for example, which was carried out through extrajudicial means. That undermines the rule of law in the Western Balkans, so it’s unacceptable. I already mentioned Turkey’s intervention or threats of intervention with exploration of the Cypriot EEZ. That is disruptive of the rule of law as well, and in fact hinders forward movements on a settlement to the Cyprus problem because it creates animosity between the two sides, whereas potentially significant hydrocarbon revenues could be a source that brings the two sides of the island together and allows us to realize a resolution. So, in various different areas Turkey is being more a cause of the problem than a source of solutions, and that is why I think the relationship between the US and Turkey is so fraught right now.

I realize you share the view that Cyprus has a right to develop those resources. How?

I do. And I also believe that all the citizens on Cyprus deserve to benefit from the hydrocarbon revenues, including those who live in the north. And I am sure, I am confident that an agreement could be reached whereby there was an equitable distribution of the profits from that exploration. But Turkey’s role is not allowing us to move to a resolution. We were very close in Crans-Montana a couple of years ago, and unfortunately it was

largely due to the Turkish side that the international community was not able to get the sides to come together to a resolution.

Tensions with Turkey have increased after its memorandum of understanding was signed with the Tripoli-based government in Libya. There is great concern in Greece about how this may unfold. How do you assess the situation?

I think it’s another example of Turkish lawfare, if you will – this agreement with Libya to demarcate their offshore waters. On the other hand, this agreement will be challenged I am sure on various international tribunals in the future, and so I don’t know that it has immediate impact on any pipeline projects. Because frankly the East Med pipeline that has been proposed is a long way off because the commercial viability of that project is in question. So, I think, for the moment, this demarcation between Turkey and Libya is not going to have any immediate effect and I think that it will be challenged in various tribunals and courts in the future. And of course, the situation in Libya is so uncertain that who knows what is going to happen with the Libyan government from one day to the next? But, sure, of course it’s a source of tension.

There is concern that a Turkish drillship may start exploration or research in Greece’s continental shelf. Greece has indicated that if this were to happen it would respond accordingly. How can the US prevent such a situation from escalating into a military one?

Well, obviously there’s a long history of Greek-Turkish military tensions in the islands of the Aegean and the East Med. I don’t want to dismiss this as something that’s been around for a long time and we know how to cope with it, because of course the situation is perilous. But I think what it takes is the US stepping in and having some very frank conversations, especially with the Turks. Because, frankly, as

I see the situation, it’s Turkey that is being more and more detached from the international normative system that has held for the last several decades, in terms of its intervention for example in Libya. I think it’s incumbent on Turkey to cool it and to play a more constructive role.

Now that’s easier said than done; there have to be inducements, probably positive and negative, in any discussion that the US has with Turkey. And it’s complicated by the S-400 issue and by any number of other issues including Turkey’s actually very helpful role in containing a flow of refugees into Europe. There are many irons in the fire, many interests in play with Turkey, and it would be best if we had a better relationship. The more the relationship suffers, the harder it is to achieve what we want – and the easier it is for the Turks to drift off and undertake unilateral actions of their own.

In an era of great power competition, how do you view the Eastern Mediterranean and US interests in the region?

I think the Eastern Med is its own geographic region and is very central because it’s at the crossroads of Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, but also serves at the crossroads of the world of liberal democracies to the west and more oligarchic, authoritarian systems to the east and south. And so it is critical to preserve Western interests in the Eastern Med and Cyprus is really a key element of that – both Cyprus and Israel, which are two democracies in the Eastern Med that are supported by the US. Obviously, our relationship with Israel is different, it has a very strong military/security component to it, which we do not have with Cyprus. But we need to strengthen our ties in the region and also the ties between Greece, Cyprus, Israel, because these are democracies who share our values and who, when they cooperate, can achieve more than when they act individually.

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## When French historians of ancient Greece conquered the world

COMMENTARY | BY DAVID M. PRITCHARD\*

Australians continue to study the celebrated funeral oration attributed to Pericles at school and at university. Often the French are surprised to learn this. For them, Australia is simply a distant land with fierce bushfires and very strange animals. Yet studying ancient Greece in Australia dates back to the arrival of Europeans two centuries ago.

The first colonial leaders of my country feared that their civilization would be lost. Europe was very far away and most of their fellow colonists were convicted criminals. Consequently they saw it as an urgent task to inculcate everyone in the core values of the European Enlightenment. These leaders saw studying ancient Greece at school as an important way to achieve this.

The French are no less surprised to learn that an Australian has come to France to research ancient Greece. They understand why Australian philosophers might come here. It is a matter of national pride that “French theory” conquered the Anglophone world in the 1980s. But few French realize that among students of ancient Greece “the Paris School” was just as influential.

The leading figures of this Paris-based circle of ancient historians were Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet. Reading their books as well as those of younger circle-members completely changed our lives. It turned me and other Australian students of ancient Greece into the cultural historians that we are today.

The book of “the Paris School” that had the greatest impact on us was “The Invention of Athens” by Nicole Loraux. Before its publication, in 1981, historians had accorded little importance to the funeral oration. For them, the oration of Pericles and the other annual speeches in honor of the war dead consisted only of clichés.

Loraux proved them wrong by showing the central role that this genre played in the maintenance of Athenian self-identity. “The Invention of Athens” demonstrated that each staging of a funeral speech helped the Athenians to maintain the same “imaginary” over two centuries.

Thus, according to this genre, Athenians were almost always victorious because they were more courageous than the other Greeks. In fighting for the safety or liberty of others, they waged only just wars.

“The Invention of Athens” was a remarkable achievement. It was striking that Loraux even studied the funeral oration at all. This genre endorsed a rampant cultural militarism: It claimed that war brought only benefits and minimized its human costs.

This was at odds with the strong anti-militarism on the French left during the 1970s. In studying the funeral oration, Loraux was absolutely going against the tide.

It is just as remarkable that she did this without the tools that we take for granted. Today the studies of social memory and oral tradition are well established. This was not the case when Loraux wrote her first book.

Indeed, the only tool that she was able to use was French and Italian Marxism of the 1970s. Anyone who has tried to understand Louis Althusser knows that this tool is not so useful.

“The Invention of Athens” was also remarkably different from the other works of “the Paris School.” At this time Vernant and Vidal-Naquet were researching the basic structures of Greek thought. What Loraux discovered was much more complicated: a complex narrative of self-identity and a series of discursive practices that maintained it.

In spite of its huge impact, “The

*In their political debates, Athenian leaders were very good at justifying core democratic values*

Invention of Athens” was far from a complete work. In particular it did not compare the funeral oration with the other literary genres that Athenian democracy had produced. Consequently Loraux did not prove three audacious claims. Her first claim was that “the imaginary” that one can observe in the funeral oration had made a big impact on political debates about war.

Loraux no less audaciously claimed that Athenian democracy did not have the capacity to invent its own core values. Consequently the Athenians were condemned to use traditional aristocratic values. Loraux felt that she had found the evidence for this in the funeral oration. Her third audacious claim was that plays and oratory generally

copied the pro-war message of the funeral oration. This would mean that democratic Athens lacked the strong critique of militarism that is quite common in present-day democracies.

The project that I am directing in France aims to complete “The Invention of Athens” by undertaking this comparison between all the literary genres of Athenian democracy.

Already this project is confirming Loraux’s first claim. It is true that Athenian politicians often argued for a war in terms of the state’s self-interest. But their speeches just as often drew on the same self-identity as the funeral oration.

Clearly idealism too played an important role in Athenian foreign affairs.

Yet this comparison refutes Loraux’s second audacious claim. A military speech is rarely a good opportunity for describing democracy.

By contrast, in their political debates, Athenian leaders were very good at justifying core democratic values. By comparing autocracy and democracy, the tragedians did this even better.

My project in France is affirming no less Loraux’s final audacious claim. Admittedly Athenian comedies argued that making love was preferable to war, while tragedies indirectly referred to its heavy costs.

Yet drama still generally depicted war as a very good thing and the wars that the Athenians had waged as always just. Athenian politicians conceded even less: They simply followed the funeral oration in talking up war’s benefits.

Certainly studying ancient Greece remains an important way to learn about many of Europe’s core values. Nevertheless, the funeral oration of Pericles or any other Athenian speech for that matter is no lesson in peace.

From their somber history of the last two centuries, Europeans have learnt that peace rests on peaceful norms, shared identities and conciliatory public discourses. This lesson is no less important than those from ancient Greece.

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