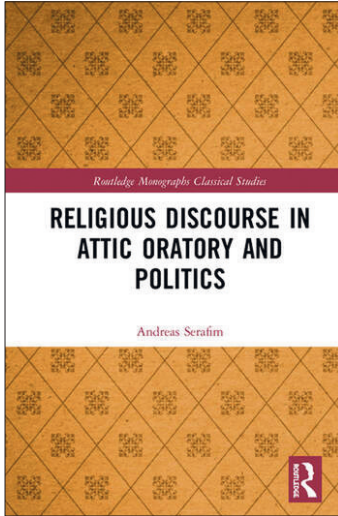


RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE



SERAFIM, ANDREAS (2020).
*Religious Discourse in Attic Oratory
 and Politics*. Abingdon: Routledge,
 176 pp., 112,17 € [ISBN: 978-1-
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THE WORK IS WRITTEN BY A SPECIALIST IN THE FIELD, as Andreas Serafim (S.) has already published as author and editor works on oratory and rhetoric.¹ In his last work he endeavors a large-scale exploration of religious discourse in the corpus of 151 forensic, sym-bouleutic and epideictic speeches of the Attic orators (Aeschines, Andocides, Antiphon, Demosthenes, Dinarchus, Hypereides, Isaeus, Isocrates, Lycurgus and Lysias).

1. Serafim, 2017; Papaioannou, Serafim & Demetriou, 2020; Papaioannou, Serafim & Edwards, 2022.

The premises in doing so are multifaced: Inter alia, the rhetorical character of religion itself and the omnipresence of religion as a constitutive element in every aspect of communal and personal life within a *polis* (see “Introduction”). Unlike previous works focused on single orators or subjects, the author examines the entire oratory canon known to us and offers a holistic approach: S. collects about 931 sections throughout the speeches referring to talking about gods, prayers, curses, hymns, oaths, and oracular utterance (ch. 1 “Religious Discourse in Attic Oratory. A Full Survey”). This enables S. to evaluate the rhetorical context, *i.e.*, reference to words spoken or written for a specific audience (*boulè*, assembly, court) resulting to different appropriateness of the religious discourse (ch. 2 “Contextualizing Religious Discourse”). In examining the cognitive and emotional aspects of the religious discourse (ch. 3 “Reacting to the ‘Airy Nothing’”), S. applies an interdisciplinary approach (New institutionalism, identity construction and social identity theory) in the ways a sense of community is formed, communicated, and perceived (ch. 4 “Civic/Political Identity in Religious Discourse”).

The outcome is a very stimulating investigation in the means in which religion permeated and shaped law, oratory, and politics as well as in the strategies of persuasion applied in decision making institutions (see “Conclusion”). The book is a very rewarding lecture offering a new, insightful approach which can be used as a methodological tool for further investigation in the field of religion as persuasive and identity construction mechanism.

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