

How did Athens come to represent the model Greek City? *L'invention d'Athènes* answers this question, showing how the ideal was created by the Athenians themselves. In the 5th century B.C., the Athenian community offered public funerals and made speeches to honor their citizens fallen in combat. As the earth covered the bones of the dead, the funeral oration addressed the living, praising the city for the sake of its citizens, for the Greeks, and for posterity. In the *topos* of the "fine death" of the citizen-soldier, time comes to a stop. Men die and glory is theirs, for the city remains, a source of all memory, of all value. Through the bold system presented in the funeral orations as an aristocracy of merit, Athens became synonymous with nobility but at the same time, the author argues, she lost the tongue she might have used for expressing democracy.

L'invention d'Athènes

Histoire de l'oraison funèbre dans la cité classique

by Nicole Loraux

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