PART FIVE

ORATORY

CHAPTER NINETEEN

ANTIPHON

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The importance of time in the rhetorical sphere was recognised by Aristotle, who in the *Rhetoric* (1.3.4) classified speeches according to whether they dealt with future, past or present events: deliberative rhetoric concerns the future, forensic the past, and epideictic generally concerns the present. We shall concentrate here on the narrative sections of forensic speeches and so on the past, considering examples of forensic narrative in Antiphon, Lysias and Demosthenes. As in *SAGN* 1, ‘narrative’ will be taken to mean the discrete element or elements of a speech where the speaker, acting as narrator, gives his version of the events that caused the dispute.

In forensic narratives, which are embedded in a non-narrative hosting text, the story of the crime that is narrated comprises most of the details of the overall fabula, although other elements of the fabula may occur in other parts of the speech. In Antiphon 5, for example, the speaker, Euxitheus, complains about the way he has been treated by the relatives of Herodes in the time between his arrest and the trial (5.8–19). This treatment (the use of what he claims is a highly unusual legal process to bring him to trial) is part of what is for the narratee the overall fabula of the events concerning the alleged murder of Herodes, and may have formed part of his opponents’ story. But Euxitheus uses it as part of his argumentation, restricting his narrative to the events leading up to and immediately following the alleged murder itself (5.20–24). The bulk of the story, however, will be told in the narrative, most noticeably when, as in the following example, that narrative forms a single, self-contained section of the speech.

Let us, then, take as our Antiphontean example the narrative from the first speech, *Against the Stepmother*.¹ Although rather shorter than the

¹ For commentaries and discussions see Blass 1887–1898: I 187–194; Jebb 1893: I 64–67; Wijnberg 1938; Kennedy 1963: 132; Due 1980: 16–28; Gagarin 1997; Usher 1999: 28–30; Gagarin 2002: 146–152; M.J. Edwards 2004.

extended narratives of, for example, Lysias, this is the longest sustained narrative in Antiphon's three surviving courtroom speeches. It may be significant in this regard (despite the paucity of preserved Antiphontean speeches) that the *Stepmother* narrative was delivered in the only prosecution speech among them.² Here the unnamed speaker is prosecuting his stepmother for poisoning his father, and unusually in a forensic context is an external narrator, since he was only a boy when his father died a number of years earlier (§30).³ His status as external narrator becomes clear when at times he indicates that he is inferring certain facts; for example, 'she asked if she was prepared to follow her instructions and, *I imagine*, received a ready assent'.⁴ Indeed, the fact that he had not witnessed the events himself clearly gave his imagination free rein to devise a persuasive story, though, as is common, he confidently announces that he will 'tell a truthful story' (§13).

Frequency and rhythm

Forensic narratives are primarily singulative, while events which are important to a case usually are repeated during the proofs section of the speech. Our speaker narrates his story in three stages (§§14–16, 16–18, 18–20). The style of the narrative is simple, with short clauses giving the narrative a staccato feel, in contrast to a more complex style adopted elsewhere in the speech, most notably in the proem.

The first stage introduces the four characters. Opening in 'epic' fashion ('There was an upper room in our house ...'), the narrator introduces his father and his father's friend, Philoneus, who when he visited Athens used to stay in that room. They are immediately juxtaposed to the female characters: Philoneus' slave mistress (*pallakē*), whom he intended to put in a brothel, and the stepmother, who befriends the mistress and sympathises with her plight, which she claims to share, but without giving any details (*implicit ellipsis*). The stepmother suggests a

² Aristotle (*Rh.* 3.16.6) states that narratives in defence speeches need not be as long as those in prosecutions. This is reasonable (especially since prosecutors spoke first and therefore had the opportunity, as well as the need, to paint a damning picture of their opponent's actions) and may reflect actual practice, though, for example, Lysias 1, *On the Killing of Eratosthenes*, is a notable exception to Aristotle's rule. Further on Antiphon's practice see *SAGN* 1:318.

³ Cf. *SAGN* 1:319.

⁴ Cf. also 'she imagined *perhaps* that if she gave him more' (§19).

solution to restore their men's love, which at this stage is not specified (*implicit ellipsis*), and indeed, few details of the couples' circumstances are provided.

The rhythm in this first section modulates between *summary*, where the men are concerned, and something near to a *scene*, including indirect speech, where the women are concerned (§§ 15–16), the difference in narrative speed helping to put stress on the negative actions of the women.

With a vague temporal marker, 'after this' (§ 16), the story moves on to a second stage and to another setting, as the two men both plan to leave Athens for Piraeus, Philoneus to perform a sacrifice to Zeus Ctesius and the father to set sail for Naxos. Philoneus thinks it an excellent idea that they go together and stay at his house, and they are accompanied by the mistress. On arrival, the sacrifice is performed. As before, there is less detail here than there appears to be at first sight. The reason why Philoneus is sacrificing to Zeus in his household guise is not revealed, nor why the father is going to Naxos. Again, details of the journey from Athens to Piraeus are omitted, as are the details of the sacrifice. This summary style is then briefly abandoned in order to narrate in detail the mistress' thoughts as to how to administer the drug, whether before or after supper, and her decision to follow the advice of her instigator, who is now maliciously nicknamed Clytemnestra (§ 17). The slowing down of the narrative speed again serves to paint in detail the incriminating actions of the two women. The narrator's deft handling of rhythm becomes apparent when he explicitly says that he will not go into the details of the supper (*ellipsis*) but will pass on to the administration of the poison. His promise to tell 'as briefly as possible' is a commonplace feature of rhetorical narratives, as the narrator seeks to avoid boring his audience, but in fact heralds a detailed and scenic section, which in its detail will hopefully win the jurors over, despite his lack of any real evidence, by rousing pathos for the two men and anger against the stepmother.

The third stage of the story, again introduced by the rather vague time-marker, 'after they had dined', commences with the two men pouring libations and sprinkling frankincense. The narrator slows down to a scenic pace, paying lavish detail to the pious actions of the men and their reasons for doing so; they are trying to secure the gods' favour, Philoneus for his sacrifice to Zeus Ctesius and because he is entertaining a guest, the father because he is about to set sail and is being entertained by his friend. Their pious behaviour is contrasted with the irreligi-

gious actions of the mistress, as she pours the drug (note the vivid use of the historic present tense, *enekhei*). With ample pathos the narrator then states how the men ‘grasping their own slayer, drained their last drink on earth’ (§ 20, with another historic present, *ekpinousin*).

After this climactic slowing down, the narrator speeds up again, and recounts the deaths of the two men, the one instantaneously, the other after twenty days,⁵ and the torturing and execution of the mistress in summary fashion. The narrator leaves mentioning his father’s deathbed injunction to bring his murderers to justice, which he gives a more prominent, separate place in his proem (§ 1) and epilogue (§ 30). Instead, he ends the narrative very effectively by turning—in the course of one and the same sentence—from subsequent narration to prior narration, expressing his wish for the stepmother to be punished. From time to time in the course of the rest of his speech he comes back to parts of his earlier narrative; for example, ‘[my brother] will ask you to refrain from punishing a crime which the guilty woman could not bring herself to refrain from committing’ (§ 22); or ‘he was the victim who involuntarily came to a violent end; for he was on the point of sailing from his country and was dining under a friend’s roof, when she, who had sent the poison, with orders that a draught be given him, murdered our father’ (§ 26).

Order

The role of the narrative in a forensic speech was, of course, to give the jurors the speaker’s version of events, in a persuasive manner that formed part of the overall argumentation. The story tends to be told in a chronological fashion by the narrator, who is very often a participant in it, since litigants in Athenian courts were expected to deliver their own cases.⁶ In our speech the speaker is an external narrator, who uses his *ex eventu* knowledge to insert three ominous internal prophecies, the first two in the climactic scene of the administration of the poison: ‘while they offered their prayers, prayers never to be (*emelle*) fulfilled,

⁵ Again, note the vivid use of the historic present in *apothnēskēi* (‘dies’) and *emipiētei* (‘falls ill’).

⁶ They might, however, be represented by an advocate (*sunēgoros*). Cf. in general Rubinstein 2000.

men of the jury’ and ‘grasping their own slayer’.⁷ These prolepses do not serve to heighten the suspense, but the pathos, and hence are of an incriminating nature. The jurors, explicitly addressed, are supposed to become filled with anger and pity. A somewhat different effect is achieved by the last prolepsis: (giving Philoneus the larger draught) the mistress ‘did not yet know (*oupō ēidei*) that she had been duped by the stepmother before the deed was done’ (§19). Very effectively, the narrator here prepares for his later point that though the mistress was guilty and deservedly executed, it is the stepmother who was the real culprit and hence deserves to be punished too (§20).

In addition to these narratorial prolepses we find actorial ones, which take the form of the intentions of the bad women: the stepmother thinks she knows ‘how to restore Philoneus’ love for her and our father’s for herself’ (§15), and the mistress gave Philoneus the larger draught, ‘thinking perhaps that if she gave him more, he would love her more’ (§19).

The one internal narratorial analepsis is completing: when the mistress deliberates when to administer the poison, before or after supper, she decides for the latter course, ‘thereby carrying out the suggestion of this Clytemnestra here’ (§17): this suggestion had not been recorded before, in the course of the initial planning between stepmother and mistress (§§15–16). The narrator effectively presents this incriminating piece of information at the point it is put into action, thereby adding to the charge against the stepmother.

Conclusion

If one wished to point to a parallel for the kind of relatively straightforward, singulative, and chronological narrative we find in Antiphon 1, the messenger-speeches of Euripides (→) present themselves.⁸ Though here we are dealing with an internal, rather than an external narrator, we find the same kind of clear and straightforward narrative. The messenger-speeches of *Andromache* 1085–1165, *Helena* 1526–1618,

⁷ On which see M.J. Edwards 2004: 59–62.

⁸ The similarity between the narrative of Antiphon 1, in particular the scene of the giving of the poison, and the tragic messenger-speech was noted by Gernet 1923: 42 n. 1. Cf. in more detail Due 1980: 20.

and *Iphigenia Taurica* 1327–1419 display a comparable use of *ex eventu* prolepses:⁹ for example, ‘we knew nothing of this yet (viz. that guards had been posted in the temple, where Neoptolemus is about to enter, and who will later kill him)’, which resembles Antiphon’s ‘the mistress did not yet know that she had been duped by the stepmother before the deed was done’ (§19).

As noted above, the narrative of Antiphon 1 differs from those of speeches 5 and 6 in being a single entity. Antiphon 5, *On the Murder of Herodes*, may be analysed as having two narratives, at §§20–24 and 29–30, and Antiphon 6, *On the Chorus-Boy*, has three, at §§11–13, 21–24 and 34–40.¹⁰ The general pattern of singulative, chronological narrative is discernible in speech 5, as the speaker, this time an internal narrator, tells the story of the voyage from Mytilene to Aenus that was interrupted by a storm (§§20–21), during which the voyagers began drinking and Herodes disappeared (§23); an unfruitful search was conducted, after which the speaker continued on his voyage (§24), and in his absence Herodes’ relatives conducted a second search, which resulted in the torture of two men (§§29–30). The details are even sparser than those given in the *Stepmother* narrative, but as there they are picked up in later sections of the speech and used as the basis of various arguments, most notably an extensive examination of the torture evidence (§§31–52). Similarly, in speech 6 the speaker gives a few details of his arrangements for the training of the boys’ chorus (§§11–13), but more facts are revealed as the speech progresses and the speaker’s political rivalries become more and more apparent. The second stage of the narrative describes events on the day of the dead chorus-boy’s funeral, when the speaker’s opponents laid their charge (§§21–24), while the third stage, although taking the story on, also contains an analepsis concerning the events before the funeral that led to the laying of the charge (§§35–36). Antiphon thereby demonstrates that he is capable of changing the order of events in his narratives according to the demands of effective persuasion. The weighing up, indeed, of the most effective means of persuasion will have determined the logographer’s choice in any given case between these two basic narrative structures, of a discrete, extended narrative and of separate, briefer narratives. Lysias (→), with his brilliant skills of narration, tends towards the former model;

⁹ Cf. de Jong 1991a: 45–49 and 52–56.

¹⁰ For an analysis of the narrative of speech 6 see *SAGN* 1:319–322.

the versatile Demosthenes ($\rightarrow$) tends towards the latter and provides a good example of how to make the best of a weak case by breaking up the narrative.