CHAPTER 5

The Orator and the Ghosts: Performing the Past in Fourth-Century Athens

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Quintilian tells us that impersonating people put particular physical demands on the ancient orator,¹ and it is no surprise that *eidōlopoeia*—the act of impersonation of a dead individual²—looks (on the basis of our evidence) to be something relatively rarely deployed. It was worth attempting, though, both as a means of generating *pathos* to help win a case by inviting the audience to consider the virtues and values of a figure or figures no longer alive, usually in contrast with those of an opponent, and also as a validation of a speaker’s credibility as a public performer—if successfully managed. Cicero’s conjuring up of the venerable and unassailably eminent Appius Claudius Caecus in *pro Caelio* (56 B.C.) to shame his descendant Clodia must be the best-known example;³ Quintilian says that Cicero put on a special voice to play Appius, which he then varied for the impersonation of Clodius that followed.⁴

*Eidōlopoeia* has a fairly consistent meaning in ancient rhetorical theory,⁵ and is most frequently placed in some sort of relationship with *prosōpopoeia*:

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¹ Quint. *Inst.* 2.1.2 (with Reinhardt and Winterbottom (2006), 42; they compare 11.3.136; see also 3.8.49 and 9.2.33); cf. Cicero’s own comments: *Orat.* 85.
⁵ As opposed to philosophy (which I do not discuss here: Longin. 15.1, linking *eidōlopoeia* with *phantasia*, seems to be drawing his understanding of the term partly from this side: see Russell (1964) 120). A broad consensus accepts a distinction between *ēthopoiia* (cf. *sermocinatio*) or *prosōpopoeia* (cf. *fictio personae*) as an umbrella term: for more on the choices here see Lausberg (1998), §§ 820–829 and De Temmerman (2010), 34–36)—note in particular that Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.31 subsumes *sermocinatio* under *prosōpopoeia*. The speech of dead individuals tends to belong under *prosōpopoeia*, along with personified abstractions. Some writers (Quint. *Inst.* esp. 3.8.52–54; 9.2.31; Demetr. *Eloc.* 265–266; Theon, *Prog.* 115; Nicol. *Pr.* 65 Kennedy; Aps. *Rhet.* 10.5 Dilts-Kennedy) do not distinguish *eidōlopoeia* from *prosōpopoeia* “proper” specifically; some do (see n. 2). On *enargeia* and *ekphrasis*, which are relevant to these categories, see esp. Webb (2009b); in Aeschines particularly: (2009a); and in Demosthenes 18 and 19 now Serafim (2015) 96–108.
therefore there is the regular expectation that the conjured dead figure should be given at least some direct speech, however much (or little) the orator may choose to do to individualise them.\textsuperscript{6} Embedded direct speech voiced by secondary individuals in general is quite common both in Cicero and the Athenian orators;\textsuperscript{7} but the situation is different with the speaking “ghosts” covered by \textit{eidōlopoeia}. Cicero’s \textit{pro Caelio} passage seems to be an outstanding example of a wider phenomenon (if still sparingly deployed) in Roman oratorical contexts;\textsuperscript{8} but by contrast, we find no \textit{eidōlopoeia}—no speaking ghosts—in extant Classical Athenian oratory.\textsuperscript{9} Why? And what do we find instead?

A helpful way of framing the issue will be to think in terms of the distinction between “direct/sensory” and “cognitive/emotional” performative techniques coined and examined by Serafim in his monograph, \textit{Attic Oratory and Performance}.\textsuperscript{10} We see Athenian orators deploy the first type of technique hardly at all when presenting figures from the past—indeed, on the single occasion where we can be semi-confident that an orator used physical \textit{mimēsis} to evoke a historical figure, this was specifically targeted by his opponent later.\textsuperscript{11} But the orators do deploy the second type, and to striking effect, constructing set pieces aimed at emotive engagement with audience members’ conceptions

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\item[6] The writers in n. 5 tend to assume that direct speech will be employed in \textit{prosōpopoeia}, but one of Apsines’ examples (the personified \textit{kairos} in D. 1.2) uses \textit{oratio obliqua} (cf. the perhaps better-known D. 18.172), and Rutil. 2.6 even has a “second type” of \textit{prosōpopoeia} which embraces abstractions using \textit{oratio obliqua}.
\item[8] Cicero assumes in his theoretical texts that it will get used: \textit{Brut.} 322; \textit{De or.} 1.245, 3.205; \textit{Part.} 55; \textit{Top.} 45; \textit{Orat.} 85. Though we have no direct parallels for the Appius moment, three examples suggest wider deployment of the technique (given by Dufallo (2007) 28): i) Cicero’s own conjuring up of Scaurus the Elder in \textit{Scaur.} 49–50 (cf. Quint. \textit{Inst.} 4.1.69 for his use of \textit{prosōpopoeia} in the other \textit{Pro Scauro}, on which see Crawford (1984) 198–201; ii) Helvius Mancia’s address to Pompey, a sort of “auto-\textit{eidōlopoeia}” (\textit{Orat.} 4.71 = v. \textit{Max.} 6.2.8); iii) a speech made by Vatia Isauricus before Metellus Nepos in which the eminent consular “nearly raised all the Metelli from the dead”: Cic. \textit{Sest.} 130–131; cf. Red. \textit{Sen.} 25–26; \textit{Prov. Cons.} 22.
\item[9] With the quasi-exception Pl. \textit{Mx.} 246d–248d (see below).
\item[10] Serafim (2017).
\item[11] Aeschin. 1.25 and D. 19.252 (see below, main text).
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