

Thesis of PhD dissertation

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**ANTIPHON OF RHAMNUS**

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## 1. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON ANTIPHON, PROBLEMS

There is no *consensus philologorum* in any question regarding Antiphon of Rhamnus, the first orator included in the canon of the ten Attic orators. The so-called *corpus Antiphonticum* (the works preserved under the name of Antiphon) contains the following items:

(a): speeches preserved in the manuscript tradition; all concerns homicide cases: three of them present real case (*Against the Stepmother* [or. 1: Κατὰ τῆς μητροιᾶς], *Murder of Herodes* [or. 5: Περὶ τοῦ Ἡρώδου φόνου], *On the Chorus Boy* [or. 6: Περὶ τοῦ χορευτοῦ]), the other three treat hypothetical homicides (*First tetralogy* [or. 2: Τετραλογία Α], *Second tetralogy* [or. 3: Τετραλογία Β], *Third tetralogy* [or. 4: Τετραλογία Γ]), each consists of four speeches, two on each side (α, β, γ, δ);

(b): fragments from many other courtroom speeches, which preserved first of all by the lexicographers;

(c): fragments survived by papyri and references scattered in several different works. The many (c) fragments are attributed traditionally to three philosophical or sophistic treatises (*On the Truth* [Περὶ ἀληθείας Α, Β], *On the Concord* [Περὶ ὁμονοίας], *Statesman* [Πολιτικός]).

Since the biographical tradition and the ancient testimonies sometimes connect the word „sophist” as apposition to the name of Antiphon, the so-called separatists suppose the existence of Antiphon the sophist, an Athenian, who also lived in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. According to these scholars, the works of group (c) strongly differ from the works of (a) and (b) due to the political commitment and ideological standpoints. Furthermore, there are some alleged dialectical and stylistical discrepancies between these groups. The unitarians attribute all these works to Antiphon of Rhamnus.

According to the widely known picture Antiphon of Rhamnus was one of the most influential leaders of the Four Hundred, who – from the background – leads the oligarchic party attempting to overthrow the democratic state and a conservative orator of extraordinary eloquence, who avoids the publicity and never comes upon any public scene. This picture formed mainly by the famous passage of Thucydides (VIII, 68) needs some modifications. The political activity and the tragic fall of Antiphon shaped not only the course of public opinion adversely, but also modified his evaluation as orator and influenced the manuscript tradition.

As regards his art of rhetoric, Antiphon stands at the beginning of the tradition of Attic literary prose. According to the public opinion, the so-called ἄτεχνοι (“artless”) proofs were primary and decisive in this „proto-rhetoric” age, whereas the argumentation, the persuasive force of the words began to play an important role in a later period.

## 2. METHODS

In the present dissertation, I am going to deal with the problem of Antiphon the orator and Antiphon the sophist. I would like to analyse firstly the historical background, the confused biographic tradition, the so-called sophistic treatises, and the fragmentary courtroom speeches in detail. answer the question of identity

Then, I would try to explain the problems of each homicide case taking particular care over the „artless proofs.”

Finally, I try to reconstruct the history of the canonization of the Attic orators, especially Antiphon of Rhamnus. The history of research do not forms a separate chapter, I connect it to the single issues for the sake of the good arrangement. I am not going to deal neither with the argumentative technique of Antiphon's speeches, nor with his stylistic features: these questions were treated by the scholars exhaustively.

The dissertation has a historical-philological point of view. I do not use the terms and methods of modern theory of literature.

### 3. RESULTS

In the analysis of the **ancient biographic tradition** it was proved that

(1): all the biographies came to being later: Pseudo-Plutarch, who served as basic source for the others, worked ca. 500 years after Antiphon's death. Therefore

(2): the tradition is strongly contaminated, the figures are incorrect, the biographies treats three different person. The cause of this chaotic situation is the fact that

(3): the authors of biographies did not know the speeches of Antiphon, they quoted only secondary statements (enumeration of the titles, general evaluation – firstly from the works of Caecilius).

(4): the analysis of the biographic tradition is not enough to us to form a clear picture about the life and activity of Antiphon.

In the analysis of the **ancient testimonies on Antiphon** it was proved that

1): in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, one could certainly apply the term „sophist” to an orator/logographer in general: both of them interest in the rhetorical studies, both of them are skillful orator, both of them teach the eloquence for an adequate sum of money;

(2): the conditions mentioned above are shown concretely regarding the career of Antiphon in the contemporaneous testimonies: Antiphon of Rhamnus was one of the most famous orator of the age (Thucydides), Antiphon of Rhamnus had a school of rhetoric (Plato), Antiphon of Rhamnus took fees for his instructions (Aristophanes);

(3): the only one contemporaneous author, who calls Antiphon as a sophist, is Xenophon. But he do not use this apposition to differentiate another Antiphon from the orator, because (a) Xenophon seems to be no consequent in the use of epithet, (b) his work is a literary one, (c) Xenophon is biased against Antiphon in the favour of his master, Socrates, so (d) the *Memorabilies* is not a decisive historical source, (e) in addition, we can compare the single details with the career of Antiphon of Rhamnus without problems;

(4) there is a gap in the tradition in the second part of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC; the references are missing until the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD; this *damnatio memoriae* was the result of the punishment after the fall of the Four Hundred; as a consequence of it, the later authors do not know any more the *corpus Antiphonteuim*;

(5) the few rhetorical expert people, who know very well the *corpus* (first of all Harpokration, the lexicographer) do not concede the opinion of the separatists: they know only one Antiphon, Antiphon of Rhamnus.

In the analysis of the **sophistic treatises** (group c) it was proved that

(1): the fragmentary nature of our text, the lacunose condition of some parts of the papyri and the highly hazardous physical connections between the fragments detain us from all interpretation of Antiphon's own views, although

(2): the treatise *On the Truth* probably dealt with contemporaneous ideas about the antithesis of νόμος – φύσις, furthermore published the results of Antiphon's own inquiries.

(3): we do not find any element in the several modern interpretations, which contradicts to any detail of the activity of the Rhamnusian orator.

(4): the linguistic-stylistic analysis do not refute, rather confirms the authorship of Antiphon of Rhamnus.

The **fragments of the forensic speeches** (group *b*) overwrites the traditional opinion about Antiphon's political conviction:

(1): the diversity of the cases in question ranging from political indictments to guardianship cases and the occurrence of numerous well-known personalities in the speeches urge us to assume that Antiphon was not a theoretical expert retired from public affairs, but rather a professional speech-writer active in public life.

(2): the mere analysis of the fragments is definitely not sufficient to identify Antiphon's political commitment.

To sum up, we reject the existence of Antiphon the Sophist, and we attribute all the pieces of the *corpus Antiphonteum* to the Rhamnusian orator.

The analysis of the single **homicide speeches** (group *a*) threw light on the little details of the cases (homicide law, legal problems, arguments on the probability [εἰκός] etc.). Our results are the following ones:

(1): according to the sequence of the preserved speeches in the manuscripts, the group of the hypothetical speeches, the so-called *Tetralogies* (or. 2, 3, 4) are inserted in the delivered forensic speeches (or. 1, 5, 6); we suppose that present condition is a result of a conscious composition; the structural principle is the type of the case; each tetralogy (model-speech) has a pair, a delivered speech; the connection between the speeches is shown below (the name of the standpoint [στάσις] is in the brackets):

1. Against the Stepmother	poisoning (conjecture)
2. First tetralogy	<b>intentional homicide (conjecture)</b> ~ or. 5
3. Second tetralogy	<b>unintentional homicide (quality)</b> : ~ or. 6
4. Third tetralogy	intentional (or lawful?) homicide (definition)
5. Murder of Herodes	<b>intentional homicide (conjecture)</b> : ~ or. 2
6. On the Chorus Boy	<b>unintentional homicide (quality)</b> : ~ or. 3

(2): the traditional translation of the term ἄτεχνοι πίστεις („*artless/non-technical proofs*”) is incorrect; the alleged “proofs” have not probative force (laws, oaths), they occur rarely (contracts), they justify facts, which are not disputed by anyone (witnesses), or serve as tools of oratory (torture, provocation). It seems to be more convenient, if we translate the term as a reversal adjective construction: „*artless part of the evidence/argumentation.*”

(3): the ἄτεχνοι πίστεις do not occur in Antiphon's homicide speeches more often as usual; they are not decisive; the use of this tool is different, but it always connects with tools of ἐντεχνοι πίστεις.

In the reconstruction of the **canonization** it was proved that

(1): in the Greek literary tradition traces of various lists can be found from the beginnings (nine Muses, seven sages, etc.) nyomait.

(2): the Alexandrian scholars were also familiar with the idea of compiling lists of the best authors in a particular genre; they used the term ἐγκριθέντες for the select authors and probably it was they who had formed the canons of the nine lyric poets and the three tragedians. Nevertheless, they showed a special interest in poetry: their annotations to the oratorical works are rare and sometimes even incorrect.

(3): Cicero studied the history of the Attic eloquence, but he was interested in stylistic questions, especially those related to the debate of the Atticist and Asianists. He had no knowledge of the canon anyway.

(4): the influence and authority of Cicero produced an effect on the Greek prose-writers, who themselves began to study the Attic orators; their activity yielded numerous works on the orators by several authors.

(5): the compilation of the canon of the ten Attic orators is the work of Caecilius of Cale Acte.

(6): the birth of the canon encouraged other critics to publish their own canon: Dionysius of Halicarnassus also composed a canon of six orators.

(7): the canon of Caecilius became the most important and a well-known one due to the Pseudo-Plutarchean treatise; afterwards, since the works of Caecilius were lost, this treatise became the main source for the subsequent generations: Quintilian, Hermogenes, Photius and the others.

(8): Caecilius also deserves the credit for the rediscovery of Antiphon. He was the first, who knew the works of the Rhamnusian orator, and the first, who publish a separate treatise on the style of Antiphon. According the opinion of the antiquity, he was the most expert scholar in Antiphonitean questions. Naturally, Caecilius select his favourite author to the canon, when provided a standard or a model for imitation.

#### 4. PUBLICATIONS ON THE ISSUE

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