

**DIKANIKOS LOGOS
IN EURIPIDES: A
DISSERTATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649235445

Dikanikos Logos in Euripides: A Dissertation by James T. Lees

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Cover @ 2017

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JAMES T. LEES

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ΔΙΚΑΝΙΚΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ

IN EURIPIDES.

A DISSERTATION

*Presented to the Board of University Studies of the
Johns Hopkins University for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy.*

BY
Thomas
JAMES T. LEES.

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LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

1891.

Se 36.887



Gift of
Johns Hopkins Univ.

ΔΙΚΑΝΙΚΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ

IN EURIPIDES.

INTRODUCTION.

THE subject of this investigation was suggested by a passage in Aristophanes, *Eirene*, 533, 534 :

*οὐ γὰρ ἴδεται
αὐτὴ ποιητῆ ῥηματίων δικανικῶν.*

The *ποιητής* referred to is Euripides.¹ The attacks of the conservative Aristophanes on the liberal Euripides are too well known to require comment. Every work on Greek literature, and almost every edition of the plays of Euripides, inform us of this fact. The charge made in the passage quoted above doubtless contains much truth; but whether it is to be regarded as a grave fault of Euripides or as an argument in his favor, since he tried to please his audience, scholars are by no means agreed. After the severe onslaught of Schlegel there was a united attack against Euripides, and scholars vied with each other in trampling him down; but now we know that the harsh criticism of Schlegel was unreasonable, and the poet is in a fair way to receive justice.

In preparing this investigation, the long speeches in the plays of Euripides have been carefully studied for the purpose of selecting those which might be called forensic discussions, either in the form of a trial, where the plaintiff, defendant, and judge appear on the stage, or in a less formal court scene, as well as the persuasive and epideictic speeches.

¹ Cf. Arist., *Batr.*, 771 fg. Also Quintilian, 10, 1, 67 fg.

The subject thus includes the *γένος δίκαιικόν*, *γένος συμβουλευτικόν*, and *γένος ἐπιδεικτικόν*.¹

In literature the speech is as old as Homer. From the first speech in the Iliad until the end of the classical period the *ῥήσις* plays an important rôle in all the branches of Greek literature, with the single exception of the Lyric. Public speaking was indigenous; the Greeks were born speakers. The popular assembly and the eloquent orator were to them what the quiet room and the newspaper of to-day are to us. Theirs was a listening, ours is a reading public. It is but natural, therefore, that the speech, which was so important a factor in the life and development of the nation, should be of frequent occurrence in the Epos and the Drama, as well as in History and Philosophy.

In Aischylos the long *ῥήσεις* are generally delivered by a messenger who relates some action which has taken place at a distance, or by a stranger who gives a description of a far-off country and people. The tendency to argument is very slight, and generally no sooner is a discussion begun than it is ended. In the Hept. Theb., 1026 fg., after a *ῥήσις* of sixteen lines by Antigone, the discussion is quickly brought to a close by a short *στιχομυθία* (1042 fg.). In the Eumenides, 443 fg., the trial of Orestes naturally leads to discussion; but the arguments are advanced by Orestes and by the chorus, hence would not produce the same effect on the audience as two long *ῥήσεις* delivered by individuals on the stage. The parties argue in *στιχομυθία*, vv. 588-606, and only Apollo, the advocate for Orestes, speaks at any length (Eum. 614-621, 625-639). The poet, therefore, shows a strong tendency to avoid long *ῥήσεις* in such discussions.

But when we come to Sophokles we find the rhetorical element in a more marked degree. This change is doubtless due to the fact that rhetoric and discussion had begun to occupy a more prominent place in Athenian life, and the

¹ Quintilian (II, 21, 23. III, 4, 1; 7, 1) informs us that Aristotle was the first to make this triple division of rhetoric. See also Dion. Hal., De Lysia Iudicium, 16.

advance in the economy of the drama by which Sophokles introduced three actors belongs to the same line of development. In at least four of the seven extant plays of Sophokles the rhetorical element is clearly discernible. The best example is in the *Antigone*, 639-680, 683-723, where the character of Haimon is manifestly that of an Athenian pleader. A discussion, which may be compared with many in the plays of Euripides, is found in *Soph.*, *Elek.*, 516-551, 558-609. In this passage the *ῥήσις* of Klytæmnestra has a distinctly rhetorical structure, and contains a *προσίμιον*, 516-522, as well as an *ἐπίλογος*, 549-551. The *ῥήσις* of Elektra in reply is much longer, but the divisions are not so clearly defined. We also see a strong tendency to argument and discussion in *Soph.*, *Ajax*, 1226-1263, 1266-1315, *Oid. Tyr.*, 380-403, 408-428. We may also add *Philok.*, 1004-1044, 1047-1062.

Clearly discernible in Sophokles, the rhetorical element becomes still more conspicuous in the dramas of Euripides. Tragedy and oratory, each a form of public speaking, began to be strongly attracted to each other. Oratory lent its schemes to tragedy, and the drama in turn affected oratory, as we see from many dramatic passages in the orators from Lysias in the earlier time to Aischines in the later. And as in Aischines we think that we can trace the effects of his early training as an actor, so in Euripides we can trace the fondness for argument and altercation to his early familiarity with sophistic methods,—to the influence of such men as Prodikos. At any rate, natural bent, sophistic training, tendency of the times, singly or combined, will suffice to explain the rhetorical speeches in nearly all the plays of Euripides. This peculiar feature of the plays of Euripides is more widely distributed than the "Agon of the Old Comedy."¹ In the comedies of Aristophanes there are three plays without an Agon;² while in the dramas of Euripides there is but one without a rhetorical scene.³ This is the *Iph. Taur.*, and even

¹ See Zielinski, "Die Gliederung der Altattischen Komödie," Leipzig, 1885. Also M. W. Humphreys, "The Agon of the Old Comedy," A. J. P. VIII, 179-206.

² *Acharnes*, *Eirene*, *Thesmophoriazousai*. ³ The *Rhesos* is not included.

in this drama, although it contains no long rhetorical *ρήσεις*, some of the short speeches approach very near to forensic discussion. Cf. especially vv. 597-608, 674-686, 687-715.¹

In the treatment of the rhetorical speeches a brief synopsis of the play has been given as far as the scene in which the discussion occurs; this scene is then treated more fully with a synopsis of the speeches of the plaintiff and defendant. The speeches have been divided, so far as it was found practicable, into the four divisions *προσίμιον*, *πρόθεσις*, *πίστις*, *ἐπιλογος*, which every complete rhetorical speech contains.²

The discussion is often referred to by the word *ἀγών*,³ just as it is used to denote a trial or action at law in the orators.

In Herakl. 116, before the formal *ρήσεις* are delivered, the word is used :

πρὸς τοῦτον ἀγὼν ἄρα τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου
μάλιστα ἂν εἴη.

In Orest. 491, it occurs in the first line of the first *ρήσις* :

πρὸς τόνδ' ἀγὼν ἂν τί σοφίας εἴη πέρι :

Also after ten lines of the first *ρήσις* have been delivered in Andr. 328 :

δούλη κατέστης εἰς ἀγῶνα.

In Her. Main. 1311, it occurs in the lines of the chorus after the first *ρήσις* :

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου δαιμόνων ἀγὼν ἔδε
ἢ τῆς Διὸς δάμαρτος.

It occurs at the beginning of the second *ρήσις* in Hiket. 427 :

ἐπεὶ δ' ἀγῶνα καὶ σὺ τόνδ' ἠγωνίσω
ἄκου' ἄμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προὔθηκας λόγων.

¹ The latter may perhaps be divided into *προσίμιον* 687, 688, *πίστις* 689-707, *ἐπιλογος* 708-715.

² See Aristotle, *Ars. Rhet.* III, 13 fg.; Dion. Hal., *Ars. Rhet.* c. X fg.; De *Lys. Iudic.* 17, 18, 19; Volkmann, *Die Rhetorik der Griechen und Römer*, ch. 36; Rössler, *Rhetorum Antiquorum de Dispositione Doctrina*, p. 30 fg.

³ This word is used in Aristophanes to refer to the formal contest in comedy. See A. J. P. VIII, 183 (note).

In Andr. 234, it is used even after both *ρήσεις*, in the spirited debate which follows :

τί σεμνομυθεῖς κείς ἀγῶν' ἔρχει λόγων.

The *προοίμιον* can be clearly discerned in nearly all the longer rhetorical *ρήσεις*. Sometimes, however, it is hardly worthy of the name when the first few lines of the leading *ρήσις* are an answer to the previous words of the opponent. In a few passages it is omitted altogether, as, for example, Hek. 251, 1132; Her. Main. 170, 1313. The *προοίμιον* may be general or particular. There is no regular form or phrase used to introduce it, but in two *ρήσεις* we find the word itself used. Elek. 1060 :

λέγοιμ' ἄν· ἀρχὴ δ' ἤδε μοι προοίμιον.¹

Hekabe 1195 :

καί μοι τὸ μὲν σὺν ᾧδε φροίμοις ἔχει.

The *πρόθεσις* is generally found in the first *ρήσις* of a pair or series of speeches, but is omitted in Hek. 251, Elek. 1017, Ion 589, Orest. 495, Troad. 918. Sometimes it is scattered through the *πίστεις*, as in Alkest. 633 fg., Andr. 154 fg. In many *ρήσεις* it is somewhat argumentative, and extends into the *πίστεις* even where the division has been made. In such cases it is impossible to determine exactly the dividing line. On the other hand, it is regularly omitted in the second *ρήσις*, for either the first speaker has already stated the case, or the audience is acquainted with the facts from the preceding part of the drama. In this Euripides follows the custom of the orators, for with them the second speech on the same case has no *πρόθεσις*.

The *πίστεις* form the most important part of the discussion, and therefore regularly extend through the greater part of the *ρήσις*. This part is omitted but once,² Phoin. 493.

¹ Nauck brands the word *προοίμιον* as "absurdum."

² The speech in Hiket. 857-917 is a funeral oration, and hence contains no *πίστεις*.