

Russell's Anthology of Greek Prose

Text 23: Socrates begins his defence (Plato)

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a) Source:

Apology 17A-18E.

b) Background (synopsis quoted from Russell's book):

"The prooemium of Plato's *Apology* is full of elements that parody the standard tricks of the forensic speaker. Socrates denies he has skill in speaking, asserts that he is unfamiliar with the law courts, asks for the noise to die down, pleads his age in mitigation, and so on."

c) Language comment:

The most unusual characteristic is maybe the use of a third person imperative in line 18. Line 52 offers some strange legal terminology, or rather some strange uses of normal words in legal sense. Lines 58-60 offer a strange boxing comparison and a difficult genitive absolute.

d) Content:

Socrates exposes to the jury that he is not going to make use of rhetorical tools to defend himself, and then proceeds to explain how he is going to rebuke the accusations made against him: first, he is going to prove that his accusers brainwashed people when they were still very young and therefore very mouldable; later, he will defend himself against the second class of accusers: those who were always slandering him in his absence.

e) Distribution of content:

(numbers refer to the lines in the printed edition)

1-12:	Astonishment at the accusations.
12-27:	What and how you will hear from me.
27-34:	What I request from you.
35-41:	Two kinds of accusers.
41-52:	The first kind of accusers.
52-60:	No defence against these.
60-65:	Final restatement.

f) Notes for help:

1) ὅτι: introducing ind.qu., cf. ἤ in direct question: "I do not know how you have been affected by ...". (More literally: what you have suffered at the hands of ...).

1) πεπόνθατε: perf. of πάσχω.

2) δ' οὖν: Denniston 461, cf. Hdt. No.5.47. It confirms the truth of what follows.

2) ὑπ' αὐτῶν: supply παθών.

2) ὀλίγον: "just about, almost" , Goodwin 1116, 1534. Perhaps ellipse of absolute inf. δεῖν, "lacking little".

2-3) ὀλίγον ἐμαντοῦ: don't put them together.

3) ἐπελαθόμεν: aor. ἐπιλανθάνομαι, "forget", w. gen.

3) καίτοι ἀληθές γε: Denniston 564: emphatic word following καίτοι is often stressed by γε.

4) ὡς ἔπος εἶπεῖν: "virtually", absolute inf., the phrase is used to modify negative expressions, here οὐδέν, Goodwin 1534.

4) εἰρήκασιν: perf. from pres. form εἶρω, "speak" (pres. not used in Attic).

4) αὐτῶν: gen. after ἐθαύμασα (LSJ VI.c).

5) ὧν: regular attraction of relative from acc. ἧ, Goodwin 1031.

5) τοῦτο: "namely this", resuming and explaining ἔν in 4. cf.7-9,30 ff.

5-6) Observe the two different usages of ὡς.

6) μή + subj., "lest" (cf. Lat. ne) with verbs of fearing, Goodwin 1374-5.

6) *ὡς* with pple., "on the grounds that I am...", giving alleged cause.

7) *λέγειν*: infin. w. *δεινοῦ*, "clever at speaking".

7) *ὅτι*: explains the *αἰσχυνθῆναι*.

7-9) articular inf. resumed by *τοῦτο*, and the real subject of *ἔδοξεν*: "The absence of shame ..., this seemed ...". *μή* negative w. infin. Note emphatic final position of antithetical *ἔργω...λέγειν*.

8) *ἐπειδάν*: indefinite clause with subjunctive, neg. *μή*.

8) *μηδ' ὅπωςτιοῦν*: "not in any way whatsoever". cf. e.g. *ὅστισοῦν*.

8) *φαίνωμαι* with inf., "seem to be", ctr. with pple., "am manifestly".

10) *εἰ μὴ ἄρα*: "unless perhaps" (cf. Lat. nisi forte), indicating the possibility has only just been thought of, Denniston 37. Indic. in straight present conditional.

10) *δεινὸν...λέγειν*: emphasis on *δεινὸν* by splitting it from *λέγειν* - to emphasise contrast with *ἀληθῆ*.

11) *μέν* solitarium (i.e. no *δέ*).

11-12) mixed condition, *εἰ* + pres.indic., followed by *ἄν* + opt., "If they do say this, I would agree".

11-12) *οὐ κατὰ τούτους...ρήτωρ*: "a rhetor not on their level, not like them".

12-13) *ἢ τι ἢ οὐδέν*: "little or nothing".

13) *ἀκούσεσθε* (fut. with middle form): w. acc. of thing and gen. of person.

14) *οὐ μέντοι μὰ Δία*: Denniston 399 on *μέντοι* emphasizing (not adversative) with *νή* and *μά* (*μά* with neg., *νή* with positive).

15) *οἱ τούτων*: understand *λόγοι*.

16) *οὐδέ*: "and not yet either" (13 ff. *οὐ...οὐδέ...*).

16) *εἰκῆ* = *εἰκῆ* = "at hazard".

16) *λεγόμενα*: "what is said", no article but the object of *ἀκούσεσθε* (verb repeated though also understood in previous clause).

16-7) *τοῖς ἐπιτυχοῦσιν ὀνόμασι*: lit. "with words as they meet me", i.e. just as they come: aor. pple. with instantaneous force?

18) *μηδεῖς*: neg. with third person aorist imperative *προσδοκησάτω*, "expect" (aor imperative rather than subjunc. more common with third rather than second person prohibitions, G1347).

18) ex. of *δήπου*, stronger than *που* and used where you expect agreement, "you will

admit". cf. 28.

18) ἄν with opt., potential.

19) *μειρακίῳ πλάττοντι*: would go with a *μοι* to be supplied, which at the same time would be the object of *πρέποι ἄν*.

19) *τῆδε τῆ ἡλικίᾳ*: = "to me at my age"; dat after *πρέποι*.

20) *λόγους*: if you consider that *εἰσιέναι* is inf. of *εἰσέρχομαι*, *λόγους* would be direct object of *πλάττοντι*, but if you consider that *εἰσιέναι* is inf. of *εἰσίημι*, then *λόγους* would be its direct object.

20) *καὶ μέντοι καί*: Denniston 414 on progressive use.

21) *δέομαι*: "beg", with acc. of thing and gen. of person, cf. 30.

21) *παρίεμαι* = "intercede", an unusual meaning.

21) note asyndeton.

21) *ἔάν* with subj., future conditional.

23-4) ex. of *ἵνα* + indic., "where".

24) *ἀκηκόασι*: 3rd. pers. perf. act. *ἀκούω*.

24) infs. following 21 *δέομαι καὶ παρίεμαι*. These two infinitives are what he is asking for, so they are the *τοῦτο* on line 21.

25) use of *ἔχω* + adverb in the meaning of "to be", and moreover supply the subject *τοῦτο* = "the situation".

25) *νῦν ἐγώ*: asyndeton after introductory word preceding, esp. forward-looking pronouns, as here *οὕτωςί*, Denniston, Style 109 ff., cf. Hdt.No.5.23.

26) *ἀναβέβηκα*: 1st pers. perf. act. *ἀναβαίνω*.

26) note separation of noun and numeral.

26) *ἄτεχνῶς*: idiomatic Attic colloquialism, "simply, literally". cf. 52, 58.

26-7) *ξένως ἔχω* (+ gen.) = *ξένος εἰμι* (+ gen.), "I am a stranger to". For advb. + *ἔχειν*, cf. 25 *ἔχει οὕτωςί*.

27) *ἐνθάδε*: here, i.e. in the lawcourt. (cf. 57 *ἐνταυθοῖ*); advb. sandwiched betw. article and noun.

27) *τῷ ὄντι*: "really".

27-8) *ἄν* repeated, the first time near beginning of sentence: Goodwin 1312. Ex. of present unreal condition: *εἰ* + impf. indic., then *ἄν* + impf. indic. Then still in unreal condition plupf.

29) *ἔτεθράμμην* (pass. *τρέφω*).

28) *συνεπιγνώσκετε*: see that two conditional clauses depend on it, one before and one after.

29-30) *καὶ δὴ καὶ νῦν*: Denniston 253, 257, taking *καὶ νῦν* together.

30) *γέ*: common in limitative *ὡς* clauses (note here personalized use of 1st person *δοκῶ* rather than 3rd).

31-3) *ἔαν, σκοπεῖν, προσέχειν*: infinitives after *δέομαι* (30); infinitives that explain the *τοῦτο*.

31-2) potential optative with *ἄν*.

33-34) two parallel sentences, supply in both the verb *ἐστί*, in its normal use with a genitive.

33-4) *αὕτη ἀρετή*: predicative, "this is the function of a judge . . ." (not *αὕτη ἡ ἀρετή*).

35) *δίκαιος εἰμί*: "it is right that I". Goodwin 1527.

36) *μου*: gen. with *κατηγορημένα* (cf. 43), "against the lies first charged against me"; from now on, remember that verbs of accusing and similar meaning compounded with *κατά* take usually a genitive of the person and an accusative of the alleged crime: *κατηγορῶ σου τὴν προδοσίαν*.

37) *ὑστερον...ὑστέρους*: understand *ψευδῆ κατηγορημένα* and *κατηγόρους*.

39) *πολλὰ...ἔτη*: accus. of time how long.

40) *τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ἄνυτον*: "Anytus and his friends".

40) *καίπερ*: giving following pple. concessive force, "although".

41) *ὑμῶν* doesn't go with *παίδων* on line 42.

42) *τοὺς πόλλους*: direct object of *παραλαμβάνοντες*.

42) *ἐκ παιδῶν*: from childhood.

42-3) imperfect tenses stressing continuous past action, cf. 55.

43) *κατηγόρουν*: with gen. of person and acc. of charge.

43) *ὡς*: "alleging that . . ." (*ἐστί*: present in vivid sequence after past verb of statement); the *ὡς* clause is the direct object of *κατηγόρουν*.

44) *τὰ μετέωρα φροντιστής*: acc. after verbal noun, rare, Goodwin 1050

45) *ἀνεζητηκώς*: perf. pple. *ἀναζητέω*.

45 TEXT: misprint: read *ἦττω* (acc. masc. is *ἦττω* or *ἦττονα*).

46) *κατασκεδάσαντες*: aor. pple. *κατσκεδάννυμι*.

48) οὐδέ: "not either", cf. 53 (οὐδέ as neg. of emphasizing = also, even; contrast connective use = and not").

48-9) εἰσιν...κατηγορηκότες: periphrastic perfect.

48-9) TEXT: misprint: read οὗτοι οἱ κατηγοροί.

49-50) ἔτι δὲ καί: "and what is more" (lit. and moreover also)

50-1) ἄν ἐπιστεύσατε: "you may well have been most credulous", Goodwin 1337; curious use of aorist indicative + ἄν, instead of an imperfect without it; maybe Socrates means that in fact they hadn't believed what they were told at that age, and he uses a subordinate contrary to fact in the past.

51) although all of this refers to ὑμᾶς, it's in nominative because it depends on the (to be supplied) subject of ἐπιστεύσατε.

52) ἐρήμην: supply δίκην meaning "trial without the defendant being there", something reinforced by the genitive absolute following; int. acc., Goodwin 1052; on (δίκη) ἐρήμη see WS 1027 for ellipse with fem adjs., with implicit ἡμέρα, ὁδός, χεῖρ.

52) ἀπολογουμένον οὐδενός: gen. absolute at end of sentence, cf. 59-60.

52-3) relative in apposition to whole sentence, WS 2494. ὅ, sometimes ἄ, at beg. of sentence, e.g. Pl. Symp. 220c ὃ μὲν πάντων θαυμαστότατον, Σωκράτην μεθύοντα οὐδεὶς πώποτε ἐώρακεν ἀνθρώπων, "what is most wonderful, is that...". Sometimes, as here, the main clause is introduced by ὅτι or ὡς (as if ellipse of ἐστι), cf. Pl. Rep. 49b ὃ μὲν πάντων θαυμαστότατον ἀκοῦσαι, ὅτι...

53) ὅτι: explains the former relative ὅ.

53) οἷόν τε: understand ἐστι (as you find it on line 57).

55-6) οἱ δὲ καί...: "and others persuading others because they themselves had also been persuaded" - loosely added without a preceding οἱ μὲν; πεπεισμένοι, perf. pass. ppl. πείθω.

57-8) αὐτῶν: with οὐδένα.

57-8) note that the second οὐδέ has nothing to do with the first.

58) ἐνταυθοῖ: to this place" (i.e. up to the speakers platform).

58) ἀνάγκη: supply ἐστίν.

59) ὥσπερ σκισμαχεῖν: it could be perfectly without the ὥσπερ, which just adds a comparative nuance.

59) acc. and inf. after (ἐστι) ἀνάγκη, "that in defending myself I must virtually as it

were shadow box and cross examine when no one answers."

59) the *τε* should have rather been after *σκιαμαχεῖν*, as here two actions are combined. The subject of both infinitives is *ἀπολογούμενον*.

59) *μή* or *οὐ*: influence of *ἀνάγκη*. Goodwin 1614. See WS 2737 for unexpected *μή* for *οὐ* (usually depending on verb that has *μή*, or would have if it were negated).

59-60) genitive absolute.

60) *ἀξιώσατε*: aor. imperative *ἀξιόω*.

60) *ὕμᾱς*: misprint, read *ὕμεῖς*.

63) *οἰήθητε*: aor. imperative *οἶμαι* (aor. with passive form in Attic).
