

## Introduction: The Origins of the Rhetorical in Archiac Greece

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Continued scholarly interest in the origins, development, and early practice of rhetoric is attested by the recent appearance of books and articles that have these subjects as their focus. During the past five years, a number of studies have examined the emergence of rhetoric in ancient Greece and its theory and practice during the fifth and fourth centuries.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the study of speech in our own time has been rooted in an appreciation of Greek rhetoric and an application of its precepts. From the pioneering work of Bromley Smith early in the present century, to the later inquiries of Hunt, Parrish, Bitzer, Kennedy, and others, classical rhetoric has been central in theorizing about, teaching, and criticizing pragmatic speech.<sup>2</sup>

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1. For instance, see Thomas Cole, *The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Edward Schiappa, *Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991); Susan C. Jarratt, *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991); George A. Kennedy, *Aristotle, On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Richard Leo Enos, *Greek Rhetoric Before Aristotle* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland, 1993); John Poulakos, *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995); W. M. A. Grimaldi, S. J., *Aristotle, RHETORIC II: A Commentary* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1988); Barbara Warnick, "Judgment, Probability, and Aristotle's Rhetoric," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 75 (August 1989): 299–311; Susan C. Jarratt, "The Role of the Sophists in Histories of Consciousness," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 23 (1990): 85–95; and the exchange between Edward Schiappa and John Poulakos regarding the Sophists in *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 23 (1990).

2. See, for example, the series of early studies by Bromley Smith in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (*QJS*), including "The Father of Debate: Protagoras of Abdera," *QJS* 4 (1918): 196–215; "Prodicus of Ceos: The Sire of Synonymy," *QJS* 6 (1920): 51–68; "Corax and Probability," *QJS* 7 (1921): 13–42; and "Gorgias: A

The present volume was undertaken in an effort to contribute to this enterprise by having a number of contemporary scholars examine some of the important issues that persist in the study of Greek rhetoric and oratory. Historical, theoretical, critical, and contextual problems in our understanding of ancient rhetoric are illuminated and addressed in a series of essays that consider the early development and practice of the art of oratory. Out of these essays emerges a clearer portrait of Greek rhetoric as it unfolded during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. and thus of the early study and exercise of suatory speech.

The aim of this introductory discussion, in addition to previewing the essays to follow, is to set the context of these studies by surveying briefly the principal historical and intellectual conditions out of which Greek rhetoric

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Study of Oratorical Style," *QJS* 7 (1921): 335–59. Other early articles include Everett Lee Hunt, "Plato on Rhetoric and Rhetoricians," *QJS* 6 (1920): 35–56; Paul Shorey, "What Teachers of Speech May Learn from the Theory and Practice of the Greeks," *QJS* 8 (1922): 105–31; Russell H. Sage, "The Rhetorical Theory of Isocrates," *QJS* 8 (1922): 322–37; and William E. Utterback, "Aristotle's Contribution to the Psychology of Argument," *QJS* 11 (1925): 218–25.

For later work in the same vein see, for example, Lester W. Thonssen, "A Functional Interpretation of Aristotle's Rhetoric," *QJS* 16 (1930): 297–310; Lane Cooper, "The Rhetoric of Aristotle," *QJS* 21 (1935): 10–19; James H. McBurney, "The Place of the Enthymeme in Rhetorical Theory," *Speech Monographs* 3 (1936): 49–74; George P. Rice Jr., "Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Introductory Public Address," *Western Speech* 7 (1943): 2–5; Wayland M. Parrish, "The Tradition of Rhetoric," *QJS* 33 (1947): 464–67; Thomas H. Marsh, "Aristotle Versus Plato on Public Speaking," *Southern Speech Journal* 18 (1953): 163–66; Lawrence J. Flynn, S.J., "Aristotle: Art and Faculty of Rhetoric," *SSJ* 21 (1956): 244–54; Wilbur Samuel Howell, "Classical and European Traditions of Rhetoric and Speech Training," *SSJ* 23 (1957): 73–78; W. Scott Nobles, "The Paradox of Plato's Attitude Toward Rhetoric," *Western Speech* 21 (1957): 206–10; Edwin Black, "Plato's View of Rhetoric," *QJS* 44 (1958): 361–74; Ray Nadeau, "Hermogenes on 'Stock Issues' in Deliberative Speaking," *Speech Monographs* 25 (1958): 59–66; Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited," *QJS* 45 (1959): 399–408; James G. Backes, "Aristotle's Theory of Stasis in Forensic and Deliberative Speech in the *Rhetoric*," *Central States Speech Journal* 12 (1960): 6–8; Paul D. Brandes, "Evidence in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*," *Speech Monographs* 28 (1961): 21–28; and Ralph Pomeroy, "Aristotle and Cicero: Rhetorical Style," *Western Speech* 25 (1961): 25–32.

The publication in 1963 of George Kennedy's *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) marks the beginning of a three-decade proliferation of scholarly research in Greek rhetoric to which the authors included in this volume have contributed significantly.

emerged. Much of this ground has been covered elsewhere, so this consideration is more synthetic than original. Nonetheless, since the studies of Greek rhetorical theory and practice included here take as their point of departure the appearance of teachers of argument in Sicily during the early fifth century, it would be useful and appropriate to review current thinking concerning the precursors of the art in which these men provided instruction.

I find compelling the contention of such scholars as Cole and Schiappa that *rhetoric* as a concept and as a systematic way of thinking about speech is an invention of the Classical Period, indeed of the fourth century. Cole argues that rhetoric, viewed as “a speaker’s or writer’s self-conscious manipulation of his medium with a view to ensuring his message as favorable a reception as possible on the part of the particular audience being addressed,” is a “typically fourth-century phenomenon.”<sup>3</sup> Schiappa (like Cole) contends that the term *rhêtorikê*, used to designate an intellectual discipline concerned with the art or skill of the *rhêtôr*, was coined by Plato in the course of composing the *Gorgias*.<sup>4</sup> Even so, the use of *rhêtôr* (or an earlier form, *rhêtêr*) to designate a public speaker or pleader occurs prior to the fifth century.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, the art of rhetoric outlined by Plato in the *Phaedrus*, developed systematically by Aristotle, and practiced self-consciously by Demosthenes, Aeschines, and others, did not appear ex nihilo. Pericles was renowned a century before Aristotle’s zenith as a skilled and persuasive orator. Protagoras, Gorgias, and other fifth-century Sophists taught techniques of argument. And what before them? What made argument about practical, political matters—

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3. Cole, *The Origins of Rhetoric*, pp. ix–x. Cole’s thesis, elaborated and argued for throughout his book, incorporates a conception of “ancient rhetoric’s two fundamental assumptions—separability of matter from method and the existence of a number of equally adequate methods for transmitting any given piece of subject matter” (p. 19).

4. Schiappa, “The ‘Invention’ of Rhetoric,” in *Protagoras and Logos*, pp. 39–63. This chapter is an elaboration of his earlier essay, “Did Plato Coin *Rhêtorikê*?” *American Journal of Philology* 111 (1990): 460–73. The central proposition in this article is also featured in his “*Rhêtorikê*: What’s in a Name? Toward a Revised History of Early Greek Rhetorical Theory,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78 (1992): 1–15.

5. *Rhêtêr* is found in the *Iliad* (9.443), a work that includes numerous examples of speakers seeking to influence others’ actions through exhortation and the invocation of divine will. Schiappa’s search of the *Inscriptiones Graecae* revealed that “the earliest surviving use of *rhêtôr* is in the Brea Decree, ca. 445 B.C.E.” (*Protagoras and Logos*, p. 41 and p. 59 n. 2).

and subsequently an art of rhetoric—possible? Although a comprehensive answer to this question requires a rather more detailed examination of the history and culture of Archaic Greece than is feasible here, a summary of the most salient factors involved in the appearance of rhetoric during the fourth century emphasizes the following: (1) the oral tradition in Greece and the transition from orality to literacy, (2) the emergence of the *polis*, and (3) the shift from *mythos* to a naturalistic cosmology, with its consequent development of a scientific, rational worldview and a philosophical terminology and syntax.

The rhetorical impulse—that is, the disposition to incite to decision and action through eloquence of expression—was inherent in the language and culture of the Greeks. The numerous speeches in books 2 and 9 of the *Iliad*, the bardic songs of the *Odyssey*, and the lyrical flights of the archaic poets, even the oratorical *epideixis* of the Sophists, the somber verse of the tragedians, the linguistic wit of the comic playwrights: all bespeak an infatuation with the sounds and potencies of human speech that is characteristically Greek.

One important feature of the society that would give birth to rhetoric is that, as Havelock has noted, “in its formative and creative stages, it was wholly nonliterate. . . . [The Archaic Greeks possessed] an astonishingly sophisticated but unwritten language.”<sup>6</sup> During the period after the decline and disappearance of the Mycenaean civilization (ca. 1100 B.C.E.) until the advent of the phonetic alphabet in the middle of the eighth century, Greece was a wholly oral culture. Even following the reinvention of writing in the Greek world, communication was largely the product of an oral consciousness for several centuries at least.<sup>7</sup> This consciousness shaped not only the process of

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6. Eric A. Havelock, “The Linguistic Task of the Presocratics,” in Kevin Robb, ed. *Language and Thought in Early Greek Philosophy* (LaSalle, Ill.: Monist Library of Philosophy, 1983), p. 7. See also Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Methuen, 1982) and Tony M. Lentz, *Orality and Literacy in Hellenic Greece* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989).

7. See Havelock, “The Linguistic Task,” especially pp. 7–15. See also his discussion of the transition from orality to literacy in *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), particularly ch. 7 (“The Oral Sources of the Hellenic Intelligence”) and ch. 8 (“The Homeric State of Mind”). See also Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, especially ch. 1 (“The Orality of Language.”)

It should be noted that Havelock is not without his critics, and it seems possible that his central theories about the effects of orality and literacy on consciousness

composition, but also the activities of listening and thinking. When, in the *Encomium of Helen*, Gorgias likened the effect of speech on the soul to the power of drugs over the body, he expressed a cultural truth: “Speech is a powerful lord.” Oral eloquence, first in poetry and later in prose, was a conspicuous presence in public life, and those who experienced it were moved by and took pleasure in it. They became sophisticated consumers of speech. The eloquence of the proto-rhetorical age created the communicative habits and tastes that eventually made possible the rhetorical culture of the Classical Period, for it shaped the audience upon which the art could be practiced.

A second formative factor in the antecedents of rhetoric was the reinvention of writing.<sup>8</sup> Though it would be several centuries before literacy would replace orality as a mode of popular consciousness, nonetheless the advent of writing brought about an objectification of speech that eventually made possible an *art* of oral persuasion that could be studied and taught. If we take as essential to rhetoric, following Cole, the conscious manipulation of language with a view to producing desired effects in hearers, then the objectification of speech through writing is a prerequisite.<sup>9</sup> It allows the deliberate manipulation of the medium of expression. A written text takes on a

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are somewhat overstated. In this connection, see Friedrich Solmsen’s review of *Preface to Plato* in the *American Journal of Philology* 87 (1966): 99–105; also John Halverson, “Havelock on Greek Orality and Literacy,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 53 (1992): 148–63. Nonetheless, Havelock has, I think, rightly understood that the transition from orality to literacy was a key factor in the development of Greek thought, and that this transition included the emergence of new ways of using the language that previously had given expression to a mythopoeic worldview.

8. I say “reinvention” because, however limited in function and despite being syllabic rather than phonetic in structure, the Linear A and B scripts of the late Minoan and the Mycenaean periods were forms of recorded speech. Linear B has been deciphered by Michael Ventris and is recognized by most scholars as an early form of Greek. The story of the decipherment can be found in John Chadwick, *The Decipherment of Linear B*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967). Many of the texts are reproduced in Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973). A historical interpretation of the texts appears in Chadwick’s *The Mycenaean World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

9. I should note here that my analysis of the precursors to rhetoric is somewhat at odds with Cole’s. He contends, contrary to “the unanimous tradition derived from antiquity, that rhetoric . . . [is not] a system that emerged gradually out of attitudes toward speech and poetry well attested in Greece at a much earlier date. It is,

life of its own, and in doing so it makes itself available for study, criticism, and revision. Thus does mere expression become a message, and thus ultimately can one view alternative forms of expression as tactical options in seeking to communicate effectively.

Just as it did not arise out of a cultural vacuum, so was the emergence of an art of rhetoric in the fourth century a consequence of the political developments and activities of the Archaic Period, and perhaps of a still earlier era. When he had Gorgias identify the subject of his expertise as “the speaker’s art” (*hê rhêtorikê technê*), Plato identified as the product of craftsmanship a mode of activity that had been practiced in the Greek world for at least the previous two centuries. Indeed, some scholars find the roots of rhetoric in the Dark Age chiefdoms that followed the Bronze Age (ca. 1100–750 B.C.E.).<sup>10</sup> In any case, constitutional and legal developments in Athens and elsewhere during the seventh and sixth centuries fostered circumstances in which the ability to address audiences convincingly about public issues was prized.

The case of Athens is illustrative. The transition from the local kingships of the Dark Age to the democratic *poleis* of the Classical Era was marked politically by growth in the sphere of public decision making. Greek communities as they emerged from the Dark Ages in the eighth century had the most

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rather, a typically fourth-century phenomenon” (*The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece*, p. x). The position I am advancing here is that, though the art as Cole has described it is, indeed, a Classical invention, it necessarily arose out of earlier intellectual, political, and cultural conditions in the absence of which it could not have developed. These conditions provided the milieu in which the theory and *technai* of persuasive speech were born and nourished.

10. In an unpublished paper, classicist Walter Donlan contends that “speaking persuasively was a necessary skill for political leaders at least as early as the ninth century B.C.E., and most likely a good deal earlier.” Donlan, whose research has concentrated on the origins of the *polis*, observes that because Dark Age chiefs (*basileis*) could not easily coerce the loyalty of the small farmers who constituted their fighting forces, “the leader-people arrangement worked by persuasion and argument.” Moreover, he continues, “the occasions of public discourse were the same in the pre-state chiefdom as in the *polis*. The full assembly of all adult males (*agorê* in Homer) and the smaller council of the leading men (*boulê*) passed on into the city-state.” In contrast to Cole, Donlan even suggests that “what one must call a self-conscious art of oratory was well established in the later Dark Age. Nor is there any reason, social or aesthetic, to believe otherwise” (Walter Donlan, “The Dark Age Chiefdoms and the Emergence of Public Argument,” presented at the Speech Communication Association convention, New Orleans, 5 November 1988).

simple form of political organization. Local aristocratic lords (the *basileis*) were jealous of their autonomy, acknowledging only reluctantly any form of central control. Loyalty to family, clan, and followers came first. The *basileus* was advised by a “council of elders,” a group most likely made up of the heads of the noble families. In Athens, this group was known as the Council of the Areopagos, named for the rocky “Hill of Ares” overlooking the *agora*, where it originally convened.<sup>11</sup>

How long the monarchy lasted in Athens is uncertain. Even the name of the last genuine king remains undecided, although among ancient writers the popular choice was Codrus. All accounts agree, however, that because of changes that occurred before the seventh century, the kingship was no longer what it once was. While the title *basileus* remained attached to an office onto which devolved sacred duties connected with religious observance, the real power passed to the nobility, who substituted their own privileged rule for that of the monarch. It is not clear whether the usurpation was carried out by the whole aristocracy acting in concert or by a single, powerful clan. By whatever means, the reduction of the kingship took place gradually.<sup>12</sup>

It seems clear that some sort of deliberation took place within the Council. It was a decision-making body that ruled on questions of policy and law. The assembly of the Athenian people (the *ekklêsia*) existed more in principle than in fact in earliest times. Consistent with the pattern common in other Indo-European societies, the *dêmos* was asked to voice its formal support in times of danger, but under the monarchy this earliest Assembly was more akin to a rally of roused tribesmen than to a meeting of informed citizens prepared to vote.

Solon came into this situation at the beginning of the sixth century. An aristocrat and merchant, Solon was chosen by the Athenians to serve as mediator and law-giver. As Plutarch and Aristotle describe in some detail, he responded by crafting his constitutional reforms of 594 B.C.E., which created

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11. The history of the *agora* and the Areopagos during the Archaic period, as revealed in the archaeological and epigraphical record, is presented well in John M. Camp, *The Athenian Agora* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), especially ch. 3; and in R. E. Wycherley, *The Stones of Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

12. For a more detailed consideration of this period in Athenian history, see Finley Hooper, *Greek Realities: Life and Thought in Ancient Greece* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1967), especially ch. 6; and the Joint Association of Classical Teachers, *The World of Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

a system of political classes among Athenian citizens based on wealth and which reorganized the political structure such that the powers of the former monarch were distributed among magistrates (the *archons*) elected from among the wealthiest class. Moreover, the folk gathering comprising the earliest *ekklêsia* was replaced by a regularly-constituted body that may have been given some voice in the election of magistrates, and that had principal responsibility for passing judgment on proposed legislation. Participation in this assembly was limited to men with some amount of property, and election to office was open only to those of noble birth.

Although the traditional Council of the Areopagos retained its responsibility for adjudicating religious disputes and for trying cases of murder, Solon instituted a second body, the Council (*Boulê*) of Four Hundred. Composed of members of the four Athenian “tribes” (also created by Solon), the *Boulê* discussed all policy questions and proposed laws, and it decided which matters were to be brought to the *Ekklêsia* for a vote. As such it took over the prerogative that the Areopagos had had during the time of aristocratic domination. Under Solon, then, constitutional arrangements were established that extended the sphere of public participation in the political process. Moreover, this participation took a form that became the dominant mode of political activity during the Classical Period: oratory in a public setting.

The reforms instituted by Solon were preserved during the tyranny of the Peisistratids,<sup>13</sup> and they were augmented at the end of the sixth century by Kleisthenes. Almost nothing is known personally about this man and yet he, if anybody, was the founder of the Athenian democracy. Solon and Peisistratos may have indirectly prepared the way for democracy, but it was the reforms of Kleisthenes between 510 and 507 B.C.E. that actually put the power in the hands of the *dêmos*. He abolished wealth as a criterion of political participation and replaced it with parentage and residence: citizenship and franchise depended on living in the Athenian *polis* as a free-born male of an Athenian father (after Pericles’ citizenship law of 451 only men who had full Athenian parentage qualified as citizens). Kleisthenes replaced the four tribes of Solon with ten tribes (*phylai*), each of which contained a

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13. The tyrant Peisistratos seized power in the 560s and was ousted twice before establishing himself in 545. Upon his death in 527 B.C.E., he was succeeded by his sons Hippias and Hipparchos. Though he took power unconstitutionally, there is evidence that the reign of Peisistratos was not unduly oppressive. Aristotle specifically states (*Athênaiôn Politeia* 14.3 and 16.2) that for the most part he governed according to the existing constitution, though with his own men in the principal offices and magistracies.



cross-section of the whole population of Attica. He abolished the Council of Four Hundred, drawn from members of the top three classes, and replaced it with a Council of Five Hundred—fifty men drawn from each of the ten tribes.

Though the objective of Kleisthenes' reforms was to retain the freedom of the aristocratic families to compete with each other politically, the eventual effect was to open the political system to all Athenian (male) citizens (though representation of rural and agrarian interests was inhibited by practical constraints). This was the system that was in operation at the beginning of the fifth century, the century that would see the flourishing of Athenian democracy, the rise of Pericles, the emergence of the Athenian empire, and (not coincidentally) the initial systematization of the principles of effective public oratory into a *technê* that could be taught.

The point to be taken from all this is that the political and social conditions that gave rise to public speaking as a mode of political activity preceded the Classical Era by a century, if not more. If public argument flourished during the Classical Era as a result of the requirements of popular government, it had been an important practice during the Archaic Period in which the foundations were laid for such a political system. The art of rhetoric that emerged during the fourth century, like the practice of public persuasion that dominated Athenian life during the fifth, can only be understood against the background of the political developments of the preceding period. In the Archaic *ekklêsia* and *boulê* we find the institutions in which the *logoi* of the Sophists were first crafted and employed as instruments of political influence.

The last point to be considered here concerns the role in the development of rhetoric of the transition from *mythos* to *logos* (i.e., from a mythopoeic theogony to a naturalistic cosmology) as ways of understanding the world. Rhetoric, as both an art of public argument and a theory of civic discourse, was made possible in the fourth century by the development during the Archaic Era of rational rather than mythopoeic uses of language. Essential to the theory and technique of rhetoric as these were conceived by Aristotle (whose treatise on the art is the first systematic account and the fullest expression of its Classical theory) are argument, proof, and probability. These linguistic resources were generated and conditioned by the inquiries and speculations of the first Greek "proto-philosophers" who invented a rational worldview and developed an abstract, analytical syntax and vocabulary.

The shift from myth and poetry to cosmology and analytic prose marks one of the most profound changes in the intellectual history of the human race. Although it provides an account of the origins and workings of the natural world, myth does so in terms of supernatural beings whose personal

wills, not bound by any absolute law, can affect natural and human events.<sup>14</sup> The original forms of this account—the epic verse of Homer and Hesiod, itself a reformulation and record of oral tales about the Heroic Age—was a medium of preservation and inspiration, not of definition and justification.<sup>15</sup> The mythopoeic consciousness—which finds perhaps its fullest Greek expression in Hesiod’s *Theogony*—sees in the world the work of divine personalities whose caprices, contests, and couplings have created the history in which human beings are swept up. It is a world where events are to a large extent unpredictable, and in which the observed regularities of experience are liable to be upset by the actions of beings who can keep the sun from rising, keep spring from coming, and cause people to take nonhuman forms.

Reasoned discourse, in contrast to the tale-telling and narrative structure of myth, is marked by the use of the impersonal noun and of verbs of attribution rather than of action; moreover, it articulates a worldview in which events are ordered according to an in-dwelling, singular, self-consistent (in sum, rational) principle. The *kosmos* is ordered by a *logos*. The language of

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14. Guthrie notes that the transition in Greek intellectual life from a mythopoeic to a cosmological view of the world is marked in the first instance by the shift from seeing world events in terms of “a clash of living, personal wills” to understanding them as manifestations of “impersonal forces”: “Myth seeks an individual cause [for an event]—the wrath of a god, the jealousy of a goddess—whereas reason is only satisfied when it can explain in terms of a general law.” See W. K. C. Guthrie, *Myth and Reason* (London: London School of Economics and Political Science, 1953), p. 5. This point is also made by Bruno Snell in *The Discovery of the Mind in Greek Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Dover, 1982), especially in ch. 9, “From Myth to Logic”

15. Havelock, among others, notes the first feature. “All cultures,” he writes, “preserve their identity in their language, not only as it is casually spoken, but particularly as it is preserved, providing a storehouse of cultural information which can be reused. . . . [How] is such information preserved in an oral culture? It can subsist only in the individual memories of persons, and to achieve this the language employed—what I may call the storage language—must meet two basic requirements, both of which are mnemonic. It must be rhythmic, to allow the cadence of the words to assist the task of memorization; and it must tell stories rather than relate facts: it must prefer mythos to logos. For the oral memory accommodates language which describes the acts of persons and the happening of events, but is unfriendly to abstracted and conceptual speech” (“The Linguistic Task,” p. 13).

Epic poetry, in addition to being a medium of preservation, is also a means of evocation and inspiration. Its language is rich in simile and other vivid description, and its themes—heroism, pride, betrayal, conquest, loyalty—portray ideals to which we are invited to aspire. It is no accident that the moral education of Greeks throughout the Archaic and Classical Eras consisted in reciting and memorizing Homer.

theory and argument is not that of genealogy and description, but rather of abstraction, definition, and deductive inference. And this kind of language was not waiting ready-made for Plato and Aristotle, or even for the Sophists before them; it had to be invented.<sup>16</sup> The invention of the idiom of theoretical explanation, as of the intellectual architecture of probabilistic argument, was one accomplishment of the presocratic thinkers.

One facet of this achievement—the creation of a naturalistic worldview—is implicit in the earliest writings of the Ionian thinkers, and it becomes explicit in the work of Heraclitus. The chief contribution of Thales to the development of such a view was not his contention that the world is in its origin and nature water, but that it was constituted from a single, material substance. This idea made possible the more abstract and sophisticated theses of Anaximander and later thinkers concerning the operation in nature of a universal, impersonal, divine, and finally rational (that is, regular, measured, consistent, predictable) *archê*: an originating element or causative principle. It is the existence of such an *archê* that gives order to the world, thus making it a *kosmos*. The speculative task of the Ionian cosmologists, as of later philosophers of nature, was to identify and explain the operation of this ordering principle—whether it be “some . . . boundless [*apeiron*] nature from which all the heavens arise and the *kosmoi* within them . . . according to what must needs be,”<sup>17</sup> or the

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16. Jean-Pierre Vernant, for instance, observes that “the birth of philosophy . . . seems connected with two major transformations of thought. The first is the emergence of positivist thought that excluded all forms of the supernatural and rejects the implicit assimilation, in myth, of physical phenomena with divine agents; the second is the development of abstract thought that strips reality of the power of change that myth ascribed to it, and rejects the ancient image of the union of opposites, in favor of a categorical formulation of the principle of identity” (*Myth and Thought Among the Greeks* [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983], p. 351). He writes elsewhere that “philosophy had little by little to invent a language, elaborate its concepts, erect a logic, construct its own rationality” (*The Origins of Greek Thought* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982], p. 132). The same point is made by Havelock in “The Linguistic Task of the Presocratics.”

17. This is Kahn’s translation of Anaximander’s extant fragment. See Charles H. Kahn, *Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Cosmology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), especially ch. 3, “Anaximander’s Fragment: The Universe Governed by Law.” Kirk and Raven tell us of “some . . . *apeiron* [unbounded] nature, from which come into being all the heavens and the worlds [*kosmoi*] within them . . . ‘according to necessity.’ ” See G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 118.

condensation and rarefaction of *aêr*,<sup>18</sup> or the *logos* in accordance with which “all things come to pass.”<sup>19</sup>

The idea of probability owes its inception to such a worldview. In order for a thing to be probable, the world must behave in a relatively regular, consistent way. If natural events are merely manifestations of the actions and preferences of anthropomorphized divinities, and if such beings are capable of acting and preferring in irregular and inconsistent ways (which they clearly were, for the Greeks), then one cannot surmise that the potential occurrence of one thing is more or less probable than that of another on the basis of past regularities. The fact that there is no evidence of probabilistic reasoning prior to the sixth century suggests that this form of thinking and of persuading required a worldview that only came into being during that century.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to a worldview that postulates unity and regularity in events, the development of rhetoric as both a theory and a technique of public argument necessitates certain enrichments in language itself that were also accomplishments of the presocratic thinkers. In Aristotle’s account of the *pisteis*

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18. This refers, of course, to the view of Anaximenes that *aêr* is the material principle (*archê*) of things. See Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, pp. 144 ff., and W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 115 ff.

19. This is Kahn’s translation of Heraclitus, fragment DK 1. See Charles H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 29.

20. Plato attributes the invention of argument from probability to Tisias and Gorgias (*Phaedrus*, 267a). What examples of persuasive oratory we have from before the fifth century are found almost exclusively in Homer, and they exhibit not so much argumentative technique as they do exhortation. Moreover, the ground of such exhortation is not in any sense probabilistic; rather, speakers appeal to divine signs and portents, to omens and the will of Zeus, and to the pursuit of honor and avoidance of disgrace. The Homeric speaker might have employed a sort of primitive rhetoric, but he did not employ reasoning from probabilities. In his account of Homeric speech, Kennedy notes that “in all early invention the most important fact is the absence of what was to be the greatest weapon of Attic oratory, argument from probability. The speakers in Homer are not even conscious that the subject of their talk is limited to probable truth” (*The Art of Persuasion in Greece*, p. 39).

The one exception to this observation, noted by Kennedy (p. 40), is the (probably late-sixth-century) *Hymn to Hermes*, where the day-old Hermes, accused by Apollo of stealing his cattle, argues that it is unlikely that a newborn in swaddling clothes could have done such a deed. Of course, one might ask how likely it is that a day-old infant could articulate such a sophisticated argument.

of rhetoric, in particular, we find evidence of the Presocratics' legacy. The proofs of rhetoric, by means of which the orator seeks to secure the auditor's assent, function as "a sort of demonstration."<sup>21</sup> The form taken by this demonstration, of course, is the enthymeme, a deductive argument. When Aristotle describes argument—the "proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself" (1356a3–4)—he characterizes a use of language in which ideas are structured and expressed in such a way that other ideas follow logically from these.<sup>22</sup> Rhetorical argument, then, embodies principles of deductive logic that inhere in the very nature of language itself—principles that were first identified and employed by Parmenides and Empedocles a century and a half before Aristotle set out to systematize the elements of the rhetorical art.

Analytic thinking and deductive reasoning—both essential aspects of rhetorical demonstration—require a syntax in which mythopoeic verbs of action are replaced by the verb of analysis: to be (*einai*).<sup>23</sup> In the "was and is and will be"<sup>24</sup> of the rationally ordered *kosmos*, verbs of becoming and dying away, of doing and acting and happening must be replaced by the timeless present of the verb to be: "The angles *are* equal to two right angles. They are not born that way or become or are made so."<sup>25</sup>

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21. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1355a5–7: "... *pistis apodeixis tis*. . . ." *Apodeixis* has the sense of scientific proof, such as the dialectician employs. Rhetorical proof, of course, is in some sense an *antistrophos* of dialectical demonstration. Subsequent citations from the *Rhetoric* will appear in the text.

22. See, for example, *Rhetoric*, 1156b15–17: "When it is shown that, certain propositions being true, a further and quite distinct proposition must also be true in consequence, whether invariable or usually, this is called syllogism in dialectic, enthymeme in rhetoric."

23. In his account of the emergence of a "new language of philosophy" in the work of the Presocratics, Havelock observes that construction of a "single, comprehensive statement" that would reduce all worldly events to a single whole—"a cosmos, a system, a one and an all"—would require the replacement of "verbs of action and happening which crowded themselves into the oral mythos by a syntax which somehow states a situation or set of situations which were permanent, so that an account could be given of the environment which treated it as a constant. The verb called upon to perform this duty was *einai*, the verb to be." See "The Linguistic Task of the Presocratics," p. 21. Vernant makes the same point in *The Origins of Greek Thought*, especially in ch. 8, "The New Image of the World."

24. The allusion is to Heraclitus, fragment DK 30: "The order [*kosmon*], the same for all, no god nor man had made, but it was always and is and will be fire everliving, kindled in measures and in measures going out."

25. Havelock, "The Linguistic Task," p. 14.

If the development of deductive reasoning—and thus of enthymematic argument—required the invention of an analytical syntax and a rational worldview, the capacity to theorize about argument required the invention of a philosophical vocabulary. In order to speculate about and describe the structure and functions of thought and speech, one requires a set of conceptual categories—and thus an abstract vocabulary—in terms of which to speculate and describe. In the case of Aristotle’s theory of rhetorical argument, what was required was a conceptual system and terminology that would allow him to grasp and articulate the theoretical principles that explain rhetoric. These include such ideas as “first principle” (*archê*), “probabilities” (*eikota*), and “the universal” (*to katholou*). The development of such an abstract vocabulary, and so of the concepts they express, was another contribution of the presocratic thinkers.<sup>26</sup>

The fashioning of a conceptual terminology—such as is reflected in Aristotle’s discussion of the Enthymeme, with its emphasis on “the particular” (*to kata meros*), “the probable,” and “the universal”—is the result of two modifications to the language made by the earliest Greek thinkers: the employment of the neuter article *to* in connection with certain nouns and the metaphorical use of these and other nouns to effect a “stretching” of terminology that made possible their use in expressing abstract concepts.

In myth, the things of the world around us—sun, moon, earth, sea, sky, wind—are personified as masculine or feminine beings who hold sway over certain important spheres of human experience and activity: hence, *ho hêlios* (sun, masculine), *hê selênê* (moon, feminine), *hê gaia* (earth, feminine), etc. In moving from masculine/feminine to the neuter, Greek was augmented in its capacity for expressing the abstract concepts upon which philosophy draws in its effort to provide a rational account of the world, and upon which

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26. “From the standpoint of a sophisticated philosophical language,” Havelock writes (“The Linguistic Task,” p. 14), “such as was available to Aristotle, what was lacking [for the Presocratics] was a set of commonplace but abstract terms which by their interrelations could describe the physical world conceptually; terms such as space, void, matter, body, element, motion, immobility, change, permanence, substratum, quantity, quality, dimension, unit, and the like. . . . The history of early philosophy is usually written under the assumption that this kind of vocabulary was already available to the first Greek thinkers. The evidence of their own language is that it was not. They had to initiate the process of inventing it.”

Aristotle drew in his effort to conceive and articulate the idea of rhetorical argument or proof.<sup>27</sup>

The second pertinent contribution of the Presocratics to the development of a speculative terminology lies in their metaphorical expansion of the language of myth. In their effort to grasp that “all things are one” and to find the “hidden attunement” in the cosmos,<sup>28</sup> these earliest explorers of the rational universe had no adequate terminology through which to articulate their emerging apprehensions of the cosmic order. They were inheritors, however, of the epic vocabulary of myth, and this they employed in a novel fashion by “stretching” (as Havelock puts it) the meanings of terms taken from what Aristotle calls “the ancient tongue” (*Rhetoric*, 1357b10) so they could be used to express new conceptions.<sup>29</sup> The presocratic task of stretching the language is performed by using figuratively such mythopoeic terms as *genesis*, *logos*, *kosmos*, and *archê* to give expression to radically new ways of

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27. As Kahn points out (*Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Cosmology*, p. 193), “in the historical experience of Greece, Nature became permeable to human intelligence only when the inscrutable personalities of mythic religion were replaced by well-defined and regular powers. The linguistic stamp of the new mentality is a preference for neuter forms, in place of the ‘animate’ masculines and feminines which are the stuff of myth. The Olympians have given way before *to apeiron* [the unbounded], *to chreon* [necessity], *to periechon* [the environment], *to thermon* [heat], *ta enantia* [opposites]. The strife of elemental forces is henceforth no unpredictable quarrel between capricious agents, but an orderly scheme in which defeat must follow aggression as inevitably as the night [follows] the day.”

28. Heraclitus, fragments DK 50 and 54.

29. One example of such “linguistic experimentation” offered by Havelock involves the word *kosmos*: “It was doubtfully put forth by the Milesians, but his [that is, in Heraclitus, fragment DK 30] is the first fully attested entry of the term into philosophical language. It has been borrowed from the epic vocabulary, in particular from previous application to the orderly array of an army controlled by its ‘orderer’ (*kosmêtôr*); but it is now ‘stretched,’ so to speak, just as the neuter of the numeral *one* is being stretched, to cover a whole world or universe or physical system, and to identify it as such” (“The Linguistic Task,” p. 24). Kahn (in *Anaximander*, p. 193) makes the same point when he observes that “all philosophic terms have necessarily begun in this way, from a simpler, concrete usage with a human reference point. For example, the concept of a ‘cause,’ *aitios*, is clearly a development from the idea of the ‘guilty one, he who is to blame,’ *aitios*. Language is older than science, and the new wine must be served in whatever bottles are on hand.”

perceiving the causes of events and the relations between them. In this sense, much of theoretical language even now is metaphorical, and we understand that language and its implications fully only when we see in it its archaic significance—only, for instance, insofar as we read into the term *generate* the wholly organic process of procreation and birth. The linguistic accomplishment of the Presocratics was to give a metaphorical dimension to terminology that had been in use orally in service of myth, and to have employed this terminology to provide for things an explanation that was capable of rational examination.

Aristotle is the beneficiary of this linguistic accomplishment. It is precisely the existence of such terms as *logos* (as rational principle and as reasoned discourse or argument), *eikos* (as probability, from *eoika*, to be like, to seem likely), and *katholou* (as universal, from *kath' holou*, on the whole, in general) that makes possible his conceptualization of rhetorical argument as demonstration from probable premises. Had such terminology not existed, Aristotle himself would have had to invent it before this construction of “rhetorical proof” could have been conceived.

The foregoing survey of Archaic antecedents to the fourth-century emergence of rhetoric as *technê* and *praxis* illuminates some of the cultural, political, and intellectual conditions that made this emergence possible. Classical rhetoric may have been an invention of the fourth century, but it was invented using tools and materials that had been crafted during the preceding two hundred and fifty years. The rhetoric of Isocrates and Aristotle, of Lysias and Demosthenes was a product, it is true, of a distinctively Classical consciousness, but this consciousness itself was a product of ways of thinking, of using language, and of doing politics that emerged during the Archaic Era. Only with this in mind can we understand and appreciate fully the essays that follow.

These essays survey the full range of Classical Greek rhetoric, from its origins with Corax and Tisias at Syracuse in the early fifth century, through the zenith of the Older Sophists and the oratory of Periclean Athens later in the same century, to the fourth-century apogee of Classical theory and practice in Aristotle and Demosthenes. Moreover, the discussions of Greek oratory during this period consider both the theory and practice of the art and the physical circumstances in which speech took place. The late Father William Grimaldi, in one of his last writings, traces a progression in thought and methodology from the earliest teachers of rhetoric to Aristotle’s sophisticated analysis of the art. He seeks to identify the sources in sophistic thought and Eleatic philosophy of the rhetorical precepts advanced by Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle. His accomplishment has been to provide a comprehensive,



detailed account of the evolution of these precepts from their roots. John Poulakos augments this effort in his examination of Aristotle's account of and response to the Sophists. He begins by noting that those wishing to study the ideas and rhetorical practices of the Sophists generally turn to Plato for insight, ignoring Aristotle's account owing to the belief that he mainly reflected the views of his teacher. As Poulakos demonstrates, however, Aristotle's report of the Sophists both resembles and deviates from Plato's perception, and the former both preserves and corrects their rhetorical precepts. In correcting the Sophists' reasoning, Aristotle follows Plato, but in attempting to extend the rhetorical tradition they initiated, he makes his own path. Edward Schiappa also considers sophistic practice as it is revealed in Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen*. His analysis of this speech proceeds in the awareness that certain intellectual disciplines had, in the fifth century, not yet been formalized either in theory or in practice. This approach "problematizes" some of the conclusions drawn from more conventional readings, and he advances novel answers to three key questions: What is the speech's purpose? What are its contributions to fifth century discursive practices? And what are its contributions to fifth century theory? Pursuing these questions, Schiappa concludes that the *Helen* represents an earnest (and early) effort to illuminate the workings of *logos*, passion, and the mind.

The next three papers concentrate more extensively on certain pragmatic features of Classical oratory, though not to the exclusion of theoretical and historical interests. Michael Leff takes as his point of departure a distinction between Classical rhetoric, which emphasizes production and action, and contemporary rhetoric with its hermeneutic functions of interpretation and understanding. The central question he considers is whether the former, embodying as it does an "ideology of human agency," remains useful for hermeneutic inquiry. Through an examination of Thucydides' account of the Mytilene debate in Athens of 428 B.C.E., Leff argues that human agency is necessarily constrained by historical circumstances and that pragmatic discourse can be studied to explain the interaction between the ideology of agency and the demands of history. My study of Greek oratorical settings opens with the observation that one cannot understand nor appreciate fully the meanings of oratorical texts and events except by taking into account the physical settings in which texts were performed. Physical context can affect the style, delivery, and effectiveness of public speech and even our historical understanding of how rhetoric functioned in Greek public life. A survey of types of oratorical settings is followed by a detailed consideration of the acoustical deficiencies of the Pnyx (the meeting place of the Athenian civic assembly). The limitations of this site rendered public speaking problematic

as a direct means of affecting judgment, and so we must re-examine our understanding of how oratory functioned in the Athenian deliberative arena. Donovan Ochs' analysis of Demosthenes' most famous speech, applying Kenneth Burke's conception of form as the creation and satisfaction of appetite, proposes that the efficacy of the speech can be productively understood in terms of an analogy with the athletic contest known as the *pankration*. He argues that the speech offered the auditor an opportunity to satisfy desires for vindication, aesthetic superiority, and the symbolic death of an opponent. After reviewing the current state of theory concerning *apologia* as a genre of discourse, Ochs accounts for the success of Demosthenes' speech of self-defense in terms of the *pankration*, an Olympic event in which two opponents employed techniques of both boxing and wrestling in what could be a battle to the death. Demosthenes' artistic domination of Aeschines and his verbal fisticuffs help to account for his rhetorical success.

The last two papers included here concentrate on Aristotle's theory of rhetoric. William Fortenbaugh, extending work he has done elsewhere, considers Aristotle's discussion of persuasion through character in two passages in the *Rhetoric*. Contending that Cicero has blurred Aristotle's distinction between persuasion through character and emotional appeal, Fortenbaugh finds that *êthos* provides grounds on which the audience can trust the orator rather than creating favor for the orator and his client, and he sees Aristotle distinguishing between judicial and deliberative applications of *êthos* as a means of persuasion. In his "reworking" of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, George Kennedy reflects on his recent retranslation of the work and explores several related issues that arose in the course of the task. His approach here concentrates on Aristotle's use of metaphor in explaining the foundations and dynamics of rhetoric, and he considers particularly such images as sight, place, and gender in Aristotle's account of the art. Kennedy concludes by discussing the nature and functions of language itself as these pertain to understanding the *Rhetoric*, and by inviting the reader to continue the task he has undertaken.

One objective of seeking some balance in these essays between theory and practice, between origins and culminations, between text and context, between the traditional and the unconventional, has been to provide as comprehensive a consideration of Classical Greek rhetoric as is possible in a relatively brief volume. I will leave it to the reader to determine the extent to which this aim has been met.