

ARISTOTLE ON THE PERIOD (*RHET.* 3. 9)

Aristotle (*Rhet.* 3. 9) distinguishes two types of style, the ‘periodic’ or ‘rounded’ (λέξεις κατεστραμμένη) and the ‘non-periodic’, ‘strung-on’ or ‘continuous’ (λέξεις εἰρομένη).^{*} The latter is typical of prose in its young and unsophisticated state, and Aristotle is not much interested in it; his discussion of the periodic style is much longer, with subdivisions being introduced and numerous examples given. His basic definition of the period is not, however, clear, and the point has seen some controversy. There are two possibilities. (1) He defines the period ‘rhythmically’ (as I shall call it). The essential feature of the period is that its beginning and end are marked off by specific metrical rhythms (discussed in the preceding chapter, 3. 8, where Aristotle recommends the paeon).¹ (2) He defines it ‘logically’. The period is a syntactic structure with an inner cohesion produced by the logical, pre-planned arrangement of its parts according to the requirements of the whole.² The current consensus at least of written opinions is that Aristotle intended the first;³ I believe that the issue can be settled fairly decisively in favour of the second.

Arguments either way fall into two groups: those based on an understanding of Aristotle’s own words (exegetical arguments); and those which range farther afield. To begin then with exegesis. I give Kassel’s text, except that the quotation from Herodotus has been excised. The deletion will be justified below.

Rhet. 3. 9 1409a24. τὴν δὲ λέξιν ἀνάγκη εἶναι ἢ εἰρομένην καὶ τῷ (25) συνδέσμῳ μίαν, ὥσπερ αἱ ἐν τοῖς διθυράμβοις ἀναβολαί, ἢ κατεστραμμένην καὶ ὁμοίαν ταῖς τῶν ἀρχαίων ποιητῶν ἀντιστρόφοις. ἡ μὲν οὖν εἰρομένη λέξις ἢ ἀρχαία ἐστίν [*Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ἡδ’ ἱστορίας ἀπόδειξις*]: ταύτη γὰρ πρότερον μὲν ἅπαντες, νῦν δὲ οὐ πολλοὶ χρῶνται. λέγω δὲ εἰρομένην, ἢ (30) οὐδὲν ἔχει τέλος καθ’ αὐτήν, ἀν μὴ τὸ πρᾶγμα λεγόμενον τελειωθῇ. ἐστὶ δὲ ἀηδὴς διὰ τὸ ἄπειρον· τὸ γὰρ τέλος πάντες βούλονται καθορᾶν. διόπερ ἐπὶ τοῖς καμπτήρῳσι ἐκπνεύουσι καὶ ἐκλύονται· προοράντες γὰρ τὸ πέρας οὐ κάμνουσι πρότερον. ἡ μὲν οὖν εἰρομένη τῆς λέξεώς ἐστιν ἡδε, κατε(35)στραμμένη δὲ ἢ ἐν περιόδοις· λέγω δὲ περίοδον λέξιν ἔχουσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ τελευτὴν αὐτὴν καθ’ αὐτὴν καὶ μέγεθος εὐσύνοπτον. [1409b] ἡδεῖα δ’ ἢ τοιαύτη καὶ εὐμαθής, ἡδεῖα μὲν διὰ τὸ ἐναντίως ἔχειν τῷ ἀπεράντῳ, καὶ ὅτι αἰεὶ τι οἴεται ἔχειν ὁ ἀκροατὴς τῷ αἰεὶ πεπεράνθαι τι αὐτῷ· τὸ δὲ μὴδὲν προνοεῖν εἶναι μὴδὲ ἀνύειν ἀηδές. εὐμαθής δέ, ὅτι εὐμνη(5)μόνευτος. τοῦτο δέ, ὅτι ἀριθμὸν ἔχει ἢ ἐν περιόδοις λέξις, ὁ πάντων

* Note on citations: Hermogenes is cited by page and line number according to the Teubner edition of H. Rabe (1913); the *Opuscula* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus by volume, page and line number in the edition of H. Usener and L. Radermacher (Leipzig, 1899–1929; volumes v and vi in the complete Teubner Dionysius). ‘Sp.’ denotes a reference to L. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* (1853–6; vol. i partem ii iterum ed. C. Hammer, 1894); ‘Walz’ to C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* (1832–6; for authors not in Spengel); ‘Halm’ to C. Halm, *Rhetores Latini Minores* (1863).

¹ In practice rhythms and cohesive syntax both characterize the period (cf. below p. 92); the question here is what defines the period in theory.

² This definition is amplified below, pp. 90 f.

³ For the rhythmical definition: especially J. Zehetmeier, ‘Die Periodenlehre des Aristoteles’, *Philol.* 85 (1930), 192–208, 255–84, 414–36 (hereafter referred to by author’s name); also W. Schmid, *Über die klassische Theorie und Praxis des antiken Prosarhythmus* (*Hermes Einzelschriften* 12, 1959), 112 ff.; D. M. Schenkeveld, *Studies in Demetrius on Style* (1964), pp. 28 ff.; cf. F. Solmsen, *AJP* 62 (1941), 45 n. 36. For the ‘logical’ definition: G. Kaibel, *Stil und Text der Πολιτεία Ἀθηναίων des Aristoteles* (1893), pp. 64 ff.; A. W. de Groot, *Der Antike Prosarhythmus* (1921); L. P. Wilkinson, *Golden Latin Artistry* (1963), pp. 167 ff. A. Primmer, *Cicero Numerosus: Studien zum Antiken Prosarhythmus* (1968), pp. 45 ff., thinks that neither logic nor metre defines a period, but the use of sound-figures, which he says constitutes a type of ἀριθμός.

εὐμνημονευτότατον. διὸ καὶ τὰ μέτρα πάντες μνημονεύουσι μᾶλλον τῶν χύδην· ἀριθμὸν γὰρ ἔχει ὡς μετρεῖται. δεῖ δὲ τὴν περίοδον καὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ τετελειώσθαι, καὶ μὴ διακόπτεσθαι ὥσπερ τὰ [Σοφοκλέους] ἱαμβεῖα,

(10) Καλυδὼν μὲν ἦδε γαῖα Πελοπίας χθονός.

τοῦναντίον γὰρ ἔστιν ὑπολαβεῖν τῷ διαιρεῖσθαι, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ εἰρημένου τὴν Καλυδῶνα εἶναι τῆς Πελοποννήσου.

περίοδος δὲ ἡ μὲν ἐν κώλοις, ἡ δ' ἀφελής. ἔστι δὲ ἐν κώλοις μὲν λέξις ἡ τετελειωμένη τε καὶ διηρημένη καὶ εὐα(15)νάπνευστος, μὴ ἐν τῇ διαιρέσει [ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ περίοδος], ἀλλ' ὅλη. κῶλον δ' ἔστι τὸ ἕτερον μόριον ταύτης. ἀφελὴ δὲ λέγω τὴν μονόκωλον. δεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ κῶλα καὶ τὰς περιόδους μήτε μούρους εἶναι μήτε μακράς.

Style must be either continuous and united by connecting particles, like the non-strophic structure of dithyrambs, or rounded, analogous to the antistrophes of the old poets. The continuous style is the archaic one; ['This is the exposition of the researches of Herodotus of Thurii.] for it was formerly employed by all writers, but now only by a few. By 'continuous' I mean that style which has no end in itself, unless its subject-matter run out. It is unpleasant because it is unlimited; for everyone likes to have the end in sight. For this reason runners lose their breath and strength at the finishing-line, while before when they have the goal in view they do not tire. Such then is the continuous style; the rounded style consists in periods. By 'period' I mean a sentence which has a beginning and end in itself, and a size which can be seen as a whole. This sort of style is pleasant and comprehensible. Pleasant, because it is the opposite of the unlimited, and the hearer thinks always that he has a grip on something, because there is always a sense of completion; being unable to foresee or to reach the end of anything is unpleasant. It is comprehensible, because it is easily remembered; this is because the periodic style has number, which of all things is most conducive to remembering. For this reason too everyone remembers verse more easily than prose; for poetry is measured by number. The period must be completed also with the sense, and not cut short as in the iambs [of Sophocles]:

This land is Calydon of Pelops' country;

for with such divisions, it is possible to suppose the opposite of the truth, as in the example, that Calydon is in the Peloponnese.

The period may be either composed in cola or simple. A sentence in cola is one which is complete, has subdivisions, and is easily pronounced in a breath – that is, as a whole, not by subdivisions [as is the period]. A colon is one of the two subdivisions of such a sentence. By 'simple' period I mean that which has one colon. Cola and periods must be neither curtailed nor too long...

λέγω δὲ περίοδον λέξιν ἔχουσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ τελευτὴν αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτήν. 'In itself' makes sense only if the logical definition of the period is meant;⁴ the imposition of metrical patterns is just that – an imposition – and the period cannot thereby have a beginning and end *in itself*. In a 'logically' constructed period, the parts have a clear relation to one another, and their position in the sentence is determined by the requirements of the whole.⁵ The structure of a period is pre-planned. The hearer can recognize the presence of this structure and follow the direction, provided that the period is not too long. The end of the period, when it comes, seems pre-ordained. It is required to complete the sense; the end of a non-periodic sentence, by contrast, may arrive simply when the speaker runs out of things to say, or breath (cf. 1409b15). Clearly the nature of the period's τέλος is important; Demetrius expands on the topic.

Aristotle conceives of the period as coming round on itself, as his choice of the adjective *κατεστραμμένη* and his use of metrical periods and antistrophes as analogies indicate. It is quite clear that these are only analogies (1409a25 ὥσπερ, a26 ὁμοίαν); there are three points of contact. First, the even measures, balanced

⁴ Russell translates (*Ancient Literary Criticism*, edd. D. A. Russell and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1972), p. 148): 'a beginning and end determined by its own structure'.

⁵ This usually involves syntactic subordination, but not always, since a period can have only one colon (1409b17, on which see further below nn. 18, 22, 40).

proportions and neat cadences of verse reflect the qualities of a well-written period. The element which verses and periods have in common Aristotle calls 'number', meaning primarily the abstract principle of order, balance and harmony (cf. below p. 92). There is not a word in this passage about specific numerical, i.e. metrical, patterns. Secondly, the notion of coming round on oneself is nicely paralleled by the dance movements of antistrophic choral odes. Thirdly, the responson of strophe to antistrophe parallels the internal, logical responson of the period.⁶ Exactly opposite to all this is the strung-on style, which owing to its lack of structure resembles the *ἀναβολαί* of modern dithyrambs. (*ἀναβολαί* here is a technical term referring to the abandonment of strophic responson by dithyrambic poets; it does not mean in this context 'preludes'. The antithesis is clear from 1409b26 f.: 'Thus Democritus of Chios was able to poke fun at Melanippides, who wrote *ἀναβολαί* instead of antistrophes'.)

As I have said, there is not a word in this passage about specific metrical patterns. The topic has, however, just been discussed (3. 8). Those who argue for the rhythmical definition of the period in 3. 9 maintain that when Aristotle wrote this section he intended the reader to keep the remarks of 3. 8 in mind as background.⁷ They point also to 1409b8, where Aristotle says 'the period must be completed *also* with the sense'; this, they say, shows clearly that he has been thinking of metrical rhythms throughout.⁸

The latter is a more persuasive argument than the former; but let us consider the objections which can be brought against the rhythmical definition. First, in 3. 8 there is no mention of periods, and in 3. 9 none of metrical patterns; at the end of 3. 8 the author clearly feels he has made an end of one topic, and is moving on to another.⁹ Second, as already mentioned, the imposition of rhythms does not satisfy the central definition of the period – that it should have a beginning and end in itself. Third, it is difficult to understand how Aristotle thought the use of rhythms alone would allow the audience *καθορᾶν τὸ τέλος*. They will know, once the practice becomes established, that a paeon at the outset implies one at the end; but there is no way of telling when it will come. Fourth, this view assumes that the use of paeans is regular and noticeable; but Aristotle recommends the paeon because, of all the rhythms, it is most likely to remain undetected (1409a9).¹⁰ Fifth, regular use of it would constitute excessively *ἔμμετρος λέξις* (1408b21). The audience would have its attention distracted, and begin to lie in wait for the anticipated clausula; this Aristotle wants to avoid (1408b22 ff.). Sixth, few of Aristotle's quoted periods have a paeon at beginning or end, and none have both.¹¹ Finally, it is hard to see how these paeans helped the audience to remember the whole period; they would recall only the first and last words.

The only solid argument for the metrical period is 1409b8, *δεῖ δὲ τὴν περίοδον καὶ*

⁶ The terms *περίοδος* and *κῶλον* themselves come from metrical terminology; see Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 2. 84 ff. and O. Schroeder, *Nomenclator Metricus* (*Bibliothek der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, hrsg. v. J. Geffcken, Bd. v, 1929), p. 36; E. Norden, *Die Antike Kunstprosa*³ 1. 42 n. 2; Zehetmeier, p. 274 n. 53.

⁷ Zehetmeier, pp. 257, 261; Schmid, op. cit. (n. 3), pp. 116, 118 f.

⁸ Zehetmeier, p. 263; cf. Primmer, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 47.

⁹ *ὅτι μὲν οὖν εὐρυθμον δεῖ εἶναι τὴν λέξιν καὶ μὴ ἄρρυθμον, καὶ τίνες εὐρυθμον ποιοῦσι ῥυθμοὶ καὶ πῶς ἔχοντες, εἴρηται.*

¹⁰ cf. Kaibel, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 89, who is right to maintain that the remarks at 1409a8 ff. do not mean that a paeon should be placed at the beginning and end of every sentence.

¹¹ To this Zehetmeier replies (p. 272) that by the time Aristotle gets around to quotations, he is concerned to illustrate antithesis, and all of his examples do so at the expense of the earlier point. Moreover, they are taken from the *Panegyricus* of Isocrates, who is of course very fond of antithesis, but not so much of the paeanic rhythm. The practice of the orators on whom Aristotle must draw for examples is sometimes at variance with the precepts of his rhetorical theory.

τῇ διανοίᾳ τετελειώσθαι. In light of the disadvantages which obtain if a metrical definition is accepted, it is preferable to find some explanation for this statement other than the *prima facie* one. The distinction between grammar and semantics has, I think, intruded on Aristotle's train of thought. He realizes here that it is possible to put together a grammatically correct and complete unit which is nevertheless meaningless or misleading. The *καί*, then, is there to correct a potential misinterpretation; the period is not merely a formal concern, it is a marriage of form and content.¹² The *καί* is complementary, not supplementary. It emphasizes and makes explicit what had been partially obscured by the preceding theoretical discussion. It should be remembered that the whole of book 3 is scrappy, and that the real logic of Aristotle's arguments must often be extracted by digging beneath the surface. To attach too much importance to a single word is hazardous, and in this case the consequences are very unattractive.

'Number' in 3. 9 is best interpreted, then, as referring to the general principle of proportion and balance.¹³ However, it is true that 'number' as a general principle, and specific examples of number, are closely related things. It cannot be wholly accidental that these two sections (3. 8 and 3. 9) are back to back. Style must have rhythm, says Aristotle; it must be either in periods or continuous; if it is in periods, it will have 'number'. The two – periods and metrical patterns – are bound to coincide on most occasions. At 1409a 19 ff., where Aristotle says the 'end' must be clearly marked by rhythm, he means in the first instance 'the end of (some of the) sentences'; but some of these will be periods. It can be allowed, then, that metrical patterns go hand in hand with periods; but it remains true that the period is not defined metrically.

So much for 'exegetical' arguments; we may now advance two others which are based on evidence outside Aristotle's own text. The first is simply that Demetrius' discussion (*Eloc.* 1–35), in which the definition is without doubt the logical one, is based on and supplementary to Aristotle's. This had always been assumed without much thought; after all, Demetrius quotes Aristotle for his basic definition of the period, and elsewhere makes his Peripatetic inclinations very clear.¹⁴ Zehetmeier, however, claims that there are several discrepancies between the two authors which show that Demetrius misunderstood Aristotle because he had a fundamentally different understanding of the period – logical, not rhythmical.

The differences between the two are not as fundamental as Zehetmeier supposes. Most can be argued away, and the rest can be accounted for by the supposition that here, as elsewhere, the students of Aristotle expanded on their master's teachings, perhaps changing the occasional emphasis, but not contradicting him. If any book needed clarification, it was *Rhetoric* 3.

¹² Hermogenes, *Inv.* 176. 23: ἡ δὲ ἀληθινὴ περίοδος οὐ τῷ σχήματι μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ νόῳ συνάγει τὸ ἐπιχείρημα, ὃ τινες καὶ ἐνθύμημα καλοῦσιν. Cf. also Demetr. cc. 30 f., and the *Auct. ad Her.* 4. 19. 27: 'Continuatio [= period] est et densa <et continens> [1] frequentatio verborum [2] cum absolute sententiarum.'

An alternative explanation of this sentence might be to say that Aristotle conceives of discourse as a continuum which would be incomprehensible if it were not punctuated (or 'limited') at various intervals (so Theophrastus, cf. below p. 96). Punctuation marks are indicated by metrical clausulae. So far is pure theorizing; but then it takes only a moment's thought to realize that these clausulae cannot simply be sprinkled about indiscriminately. Their actual position is 'also' determined by the sense. The central importance of the latter is obvious; Aristotle's roundabout way of expressing the point takes nothing away from it.

¹³ On this cf. R. G. Bury, *The Philebus of Plato* (1897), appendices C–E; De Groot, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 18.

¹⁴ See F. Solmsen, *Hermes* 66 (1931), 241–67.

The discrepancies on which Zehetmeier fastens are as follows.

(1) In the illustration used by Aristotle at 1409a32, *καμπτήρ* means 'goal', and the author is thinking of the stade-race. Demetrius, just after quoting Aristotle's definition of the period (c. 11), employs the same illustration; but he is thinking of the *δίαυλος*, because in his conception the period has a curve to it.¹⁵ But the curve of the period is deficient, in that *αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ μέγεθος εὐσύνοπτον* is omitted. word *κατεστραμμένη*, and by the word *περίοδος* itself. This aspect of the theory has merely been made explicit, and the illustration re-applied accordingly. It is, however, surprising that Demetrius uses it immediately after quoting Aristotle's definition of the period. Probably he did not have Aristotle's text before him, but was working through an intermediary. Alternatively, he was quoting Aristotle from memory; or a combination of both factors was at work.¹⁶

(2) Zehetmeier points out that Demetrius' quotation of Aristotle for the definition of the period is deficient, in that *αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ μέγεθος εὐσύνοπτον* is omitted. The first phrase in particular is essential, and if Demetrius had understood Aristotle he would have included it.¹⁷ But the words immediately following the quotation in Demetrius assume the whole of Aristotle's definition. The rest of the discussion also makes it quite clear that Demetrius' periods have a beginning and end in themselves (and what sense does it make anyway to say that something has a beginning and an end, unless you mean 'in itself'?).

(3) Aristotle allows only two cola in his periods,¹⁸ but Demetrius permits more. This is because he has a logical definition of the period. The colon in Aristotle is only a part of the period, not a unit of thought.¹⁹ But a colon most certainly is a unit of thought in Aristotle; it is either one half of an antithesis or parallelism,²⁰ or it is the whole of a single-colon period. If Aristotle's definition of the period is rhythmical, his cola must be rhythmically determined subdivisions; but they will then be indistinguishable from periods, since they will have a 'beginning and end' in themselves. In fact, cola have a place in Aristotle's discussion only because his definition is logical.

(4) Demetrius uses the term *διηρημένη* (along with *λελυμένη*) to describe non-periodic style; it had previously been assumed, naturally, that Demetrius'

¹⁵ Zehetmeier, pp. 428 f.

¹⁶ cf. Solmsen, loc. cit. p. 249 n. 2, p. 266 n. 0; A. Kappelmacher, *Wiener Studien* 24 (1902), 452 ff.

¹⁷ Zehetmeier, p. 428.

¹⁸ Some (e.g. G. M. A. Grube, *A Greek Critic: Demetrius on Style* (Phoenix supplementary volume 4, 1961), p. 35 n. 41) suppose that in the sentence *κῶλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἕτερον μῶριον ταύτης* (1409b16), *ταύτης* (sc. *τῆς περιόδου*) refers to the period of 'Sophocles' just cited. If however *ὥσπερ ἡ εἰρημένη περίοδος* at b 15 (so A; *ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ περίοδος, β*, which is utterly senseless) is to be removed, this view becomes difficult. The phrase *μὴ ἐν τῇ διαιρέσει κτλ.* is an explanation of *εὐανάπνευστος*; some later student, misunderstanding and relating *διαίρεσι* in 1409b15 to *διαίρεσθαι* in b 11, inserted *ὥσπερ κτλ.* With the offending phrase removed, one understands *ταύτης* to mean *τῆς ἐν κώλοις περιόδου*.

Why then does Aristotle apparently restrict the number of cola to two? Perhaps because his is a highly theoretical analysis; he probably thought that two cola and no more most perfectly reflected the principles of balance and proportion. Also, he is shortly to pronounce his doctrine of the two types of periods in cola: *διηρημένη* and *ἀντικειμένη*; of necessity these sorts of periods are built from two cola. Theory may be getting in the way of practice here, but one will hardly condemn Aristotle for it; the point is not central. Zehetmeier (p. 274) notes that in metrical theory of the time, periods had two cola; cf. O. Schroeder, *Vorarbeiten zur griechischen Versgeschichte* (1908), p. 12.

¹⁹ Zehetmeier, p. 424, cf. p. 430.

²⁰ 'Parallelism' is probably what Aristotle intends by the phrase *διηρημένη περίοδος* (1409b33), and such a description fits his one example. Other meanings have however been assigned (see e.g. Zehetmeier pp. 272 f.).

διηρημένη was the same as Aristotle's εἰρομένη. Zehetmeier argues that the two words cannot mean the same thing, and that the change in terminology points to a completely different understanding of the two styles.²¹ There is, in this context, no necessary contradiction between the two terms. A sentence can be διηρημένη or λελυμένη in contrast with the ἀρμονία (Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 2. 7. 16, 20) of the period; but, just considered by itself, it is a heap of clauses one after the other, εἰρομένη. Conversely, *continuatio* can mean 'period' (Cic. *Orat.* 204, *Auct. ad Her.* 4. 19. 27), while *oratio continua* can mean 'non-periodic style' (Cic. *De Or.* 3. 186), depending on the point of view.

(5) Demetrius quotes the opening sentence of Herodotus as an example of a single-colon period (c. 17), but Aristotle (1409a27) quotes the same sentence as his principal example of λέξις εἰρομένη. Of all the supposed discrepancies this is the most serious.

Zehetmeier (p. 426) says simply that for Demetrius the opening sentence is a period in the logical sense; the demonstrative ἥδε gives the punch at the end of which Demetrius is fond, and keeps some of the sense hidden until that point.²² In Aristotle, he says, the example is just meant to refer us to the whole of Herodotus' first sentence, which is not periodic because it has more than two cola and lacks rhythm. That Aristotle did not bother to give us a complete instance is, however, implausible;²³ and it is odd that a quotation, apparently a stock example in the Peripatos, should be used to illustrate first one type of style and then an altogether different one.²⁴

W. Sauppe tried to explain the problem by assuming that Demetrius introduced a slight modification into the master's doctrine (while following him in the general outline, particularly in the logical definition of the period).²⁵ The modification is reflected in the differing terminology. Whereas Aristotle says that all archaic style is εἰρομένη, Demetrius recognizes that Herodotus is more advanced than Hecataeus and others (only τὰ πλείστα of Herodotus, not all, is διηρημένη – c. 12.). Herodotus has some periods; for example, the opening sentence. Demetrius therefore has two terms for archaic style: one is διηρημένη, referring to Hecataeus and others; the other is presumably εἰρομένη. In this way Herodotus is an example of λέξις εἰρομένη for both Aristotle and Demetrius. It is to be noted, however, that the word εἰρομένη does not occur in the *De elocutione*. Sauppe wishes to say that Demetrius has a special meaning for this word; why he does not tell us is a mystery.²⁶

²¹ Zehetmeier, pp. 198 ff., 277 f.

²² There is some doubt as to what a monocolon period is (among the ancients as well as us, e.g. Aquila Romanus 28. 16 ff. Halm). The explanation given by Zehetmeier for the first sentence of Herodotus is the one accepted by most. In Demetrius' other example, the phrase ταῖς τῶν ἀκούοντων διανοίαις gives a snap at the end which may count as a καμπή. See further J. D. Denniston, *Greek Prose Style* (1952), p. 7; Schmid, op. cit. (n. 3), pp. 123 f.; Wilkinson, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 171 n.; Schenkeveld, op. cit. (n. 3), p. 27. Generally, a single-colon period ought to meet the same requirement as a multicolon one: the parts should be logically arranged. Demetrius (c. 17) and Quintilian (9. 4. 124) also specify that it should have a respectable length.

²³ J. Vahlen, *Sitz. Berlin* (1902), 166–94 = *Gesamm. Philol. Schr.* 2. 619–51, shows that quotations in the *Rhetoric* which are given to illustrate a point of style are always sufficient in themselves.

²⁴ The adaptation of the runner-illustration is not of the same order.

²⁵ *Die Anfangsstadien der griechischen Kunstprosa in der Beurteilung Platons* (Diss. Leipzig 1916), pp. 9 ff.

²⁶ Sauppe is right of course to the extent that διηρημένη has a different meaning in the two authors; Aristotle uses it for one type of the περίοδος ἐν κώλοις. How διηρημένη and λελυμένη came to replace εἰρομένη is not clear, but they do perhaps express the contrast with the periodic style better. It is true that in Caecilius (apud Aq. Rom. 27. 12 Halm, cf. [Aristid.] 2. 507. 2 ff. Sp.) the λέξις λελυμένη and the λέξις εἰρομένη are distinguished. This I take to be an innovation, of no relevance to the problem here or the related one discussed above, p. 93 (no. 4).

G. A. Kennedy's solution is unconvincing.²⁷ He supposes that the opening sentence of Herodotus is in fact a single-colon period for Aristotle. We must distinguish between 'period' and 'periodic style', he says; from our knowledge of what follows the first sentence in Herodotus, we can see that this style is not periodic, although his first sentence is a period. Neither Cope²⁸ nor Roberts²⁹ mentions the contradiction. Grube thinks that Demetrius may have been momentarily confused by his own terminology;³⁰ knowing that his *διηρημένη* equals Aristotle's *εἰρομένη*, but knowing also that he is discussing the 'looser' or simpler period (Aristotle's *διηρημένη περίοδος* – Grube thinks this is somehow 'looser' than the *ἀντικειμένη περίοδος*), he stupidly quotes Aristotle's example of *λέξις εἰρομένη*. Most will agree that this view is too subtle.

One might argue that the difference in the actual wording given by Aristotle and Demetrius is significant. Demetrius correctly quotes the passage, which is actually well put together (cf. above, n. 22); Aristotle on the other hand disturbs the word order so that the sentence becomes an example of *λέξις εἰρομένη*. This is implausible; Aristotle could easily have quoted a genuine example. The difference in the texts is a product of Aristotle's memory. Another possibility is that by quoting the first sentence, Aristotle means to refer to 'Herodotus' *Histories*' in general (so Jacoby, *RE* Supp. Bd II (1913), 206 f.). This view is in itself more plausible. However, it is odd that the same sentence crops up in Demetrius to provide an illustration in itself; the inference is fairly certain that the example was a stock one, and was intended as an illustration of *λέξις εἰρομένη* by whoever put it in the text of the *Rhetoric*. If Aristotle had meant 'Herodotus in general', he would more likely have said *ὥσπερ τὰ Ἡροδότου*.

The only solution left is to remove the quotation from the text of the *Rhetoric*. 'Manifestum emblema', says Kassel in his apparatus; *ταύτη γὰρ πρότερον κτλ.* is the explanation of *ἡ μὲν οὖν εἰρομένη λέξις ἡ ἀρχαία ἐστίν*. That the example is interpolated is beyond doubt; the question is whether the later hand that inserted it was Aristotle's. We have seen that to assume so involves grave difficulties; and one may certainly wonder why he would choose such an 'example', for it illustrates the point very poorly. Some confused student interpolated this stock quotation.

Any differences between Aristotle and Demetrius are, then, merely differences of emphasis; there is no fundamental contradiction, and Demetrius did not misunderstand Aristotle. Demetrius' Peripatetic inclinations are announced with his quotation of Aristotle for the definition of the period; they are reiterated elsewhere in the book, and are in fact clearer than any other extant rhetorician's. We can continue to believe that his discussion supplements Aristotle's.

A final argument depends on what we know about schoolmen's and philosophers' rhetoric. Generally, the former wanted practical rules, whereas the latter were looking for the underlying principles. For the doctrine of periods Theophrastus, Aristotle's pupil and successor, may represent the philosophers; the schoolmen find spokesmen in Anaximenes and several pupils of Isocrates whose views, together with their master's, are reported by Cicero. It will hardly be a surprise that both Aristotle and the logical definition of the period belong in the philosophical camp.

Theophrastus' views on the subject are found conveniently in Cicero, *De Or.* 3. 184–7. The extent of the borrowing is made very clear; the section begins 'Namque ego illud

²⁷ 'Aristotle on the Period', *Harv. Stud.* 63 (1958), 283–8.

²⁸ E. M. Cope, *Aristotle's Rhetoric with a commentary*, ed. J. E. Sandys (1877); *An introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric* (1867).

²⁹ In his commentary on Demetrius.

³⁰ G. M. A. Grube, *op. cit.* (n. 18), p. 65.

adsentior Theophrasto, qui putat . . . ' and ends 'Atque haec quidem ab eis philosophis quos tu maxime diligis, Catule, dicta sunt'. These philosophers are the Peripatetics (182). As if to make the passage all the more suited to our purposes, Cicero goes on to contrast its content with the teaching of the schools, to whom 'vulgaris ista disciplina' refers.³¹ Theophrastus says that sentences should be divided into *membra* (κῶλα), because a continuum has no 'number' – i.e. no 'intervals' or pauses of regular or varied spacing which allow one to perceive structure – and is incomprehensible. An analogy is provided: we can count falling drops of water, because they are drops, but a rushing stream is immeasurable.³² These generalities are very much the sort of thing a philosopher would be interested in. *Membra*, he further advises, should be varied in length, and the last *membrum* should be no shorter, and preferably longer, than the preceding ones (so Demetrius c. 18). Otherwise, 'infringitur ille quasi verborum ambitus; sic enim has orationis conversiones Graeci nominant'. The point seems to be that, if the last colon is shorter, what was a nicely developing 'circle' remains incomplete. The sentence ends prematurely. If on the other hand the last colon is the same length or longer, the period comes to its natural close, with a decisive καμπή, as Demetrius would say, at just the right time.

Theophrastus' and Demetrius' discussions seem in fact to have been very similar. κῶλα and κόμματα are the building-blocks of the period.³³ The unity of cola in the period must be a function of their content, for Theophrastus as for Demetrius, since the dictum about the length of the final colon makes no sense in a purely metrical definition. Theophrastus' definition of the period, then, was the 'logical' one; he was interested in the inner cohesion of the period, the principles whereby the parts have a relation to one another and to the whole.

With Theophrastus we may contrast the views of the Isocratean school. The word περίοδος itself does not occur in Anaximenes, but we may assume it was known to him (and to Isocrates) in its rhetorical sense, since the word κῶλον occurs twice in his handbook (1435b25 and 36a6). The contexts in which the word occurs are important: in the definitions of pariosis and paromoiosis. Cicero (*Orat.* 174 ff.), discussing the invention of 'numbered', i.e. periodic, prose, gives the credit to Isocrates, and characterizes his accomplishment as the union and moderation of the styles of Thrasymachus and Gorgias – the former being responsible for the introduction of poetic rhythms into prose, the latter being known chiefly for his use of σχήματα. The pupils of Isocrates – Naucrates, Ephorus, Theodectes – are quoted by Cicero for their opinions on the value of different metrical feet, but not for any other aspect of

³¹ cf. 208 f. I should note that 'common teaching' refers strictly to the later Hellenistic schools (cf. *De Inv.* 1. 6); to be taught by Isocrates is something quite different (*Orat.* 191). Cicero's remarks here reflect the standard charge of philosophers that rhetoricians did not base their teaching on any sort of broader wisdom; rhetoric was no real art, therefore, but as Plato says, a mere 'knack'. Cf. *De Or.* 1. 83 ff.; W. Kroll, *RE Supp Bd VII* (1940), 1080 ff.

³² It is perhaps in this illustration of Theophrastus' that the recurring description of the λέξεις εἰρομένη as *fluctuans*, *vagans* or the like finds its ultimate origin: e.g. Cic. *Orat.* 77, 220, 233; *Auct. ad Her.* 4. 11. 16.

³³ κῶλον is already in Aristotle, of course; κόμμα was perhaps not in Theophrastus, if we may judge from its absence in this part of the *De Oratore* (cf. *membra et pedes*, 185; not *membra et incisae*). I find no evidence that the term was used by Stoic grammarians, a thought first encouraged by the (admittedly unlikely) suggestion that the Archedemus quoted by Demetrius (c. 34, see Roberts ad loc.) for his modification of Aristotle's definition of the colon is the Stoic Archedemus of Tarsus. A more likely source of this term is the Asiatic school of rhetoric: cf. Zehetmeier, pp. 434 f; Cicero, *Orat.* 212 ff. on speaking *incisim*; and κομματικῶς λεγόμενον in the Homeric scholia (e.g. schol. A in *Il.* 2. 112, Nicanor; further instances in Erbse's note ad loc.) If this is so, we have an example of the influence of schoolmen on philosophers, though only in a matter of detail and terminology (as often), so that the argument here is not affected.

the period. From these indications it may be concluded that in school rhetoric of the fourth century a period was defined by the simple formula *ῥυθμοί + σχήματα* (parisosis, isocolon, paromoiosis, homoioteleuton, antithesis). The need of the schoolman to have practical, teachable rules is here obvious; generalities about the qualities of structure are of no use to him.

If we believe that Aristotle defined the period metrically, then we should have to place his *Rhetoric*, or at least this part of it, on a par with the schoolbooks of Anaximenes and the pupils of Isocrates. Against all of them would stand Theophrastus, apparently now the inventor of the 'logical' definition and the sophisticated understanding that goes with it. The picture is absurd. The whole point of Aristotle's book is to give rhetoric a philosophical basis; the section on periods is no different. In 3. 8 he begins with vulgar doctrine; in 3. 9 he goes beyond it.

Theophrastus follows Aristotle; the third book of the *Rhetoric* is the basis of his *περὶ λέξεως*. If confirmation were needed of this, it is attested specifically by Cicero (*Orat.* 228),³⁴ at least in respect of the doctrine of periods. We may also point out here some important parallels between the *Rhetoric* and that section of the *De Oratore* (3. 184 ff.) which is professedly taken from Theophrastus. The section begins: 'I agree with Theophrastus, that style *non astricte sed remissius numerosam esse oportere*'. That is another way of saying that it should be *μήτε ἔμμετρος μήτε ἄρρυθμος* (*Rhet.* 3. 8 1408 b 21). There follows a sketch of the history of prose rhythm which finds no parallel in Aristotle, but may have taken its start from 1409 a 27 f. (*ταύτην γὰρ πρότερον μὲν ἅπαντες, νῦν δὲ οὐ πολλοὶ χρώνται*). The thoughts on the nature of a continuum are easily read as an expansion of Aristotle's remarks on the *λέξις ἐιρομένη*. The reason for lengthening the final colon of a period, so that it will not seem 'broken', may be compared with Aristotle's remarks (1409 b 18 ff.) about the impression one has of 'stumbling' if either cola or periods are too short (cf. also Demetrius c. 18). Cicero has picked out of Theophrastus' book some essential points which are of interest for his discussion; it is probably not accidental that their order is the same in the *Rhetoric*.

Already in the fourth century, then, the philosophers and the schoolmen find themselves disagreeing on this as on other points of rhetorical doctrine. It is not an altogether easy task to trace the subsequent influence of either group; the quarrel between them might lead one to expect opposite stands on any issue, but as it happened neither side was above pilfering a good idea from the other. It is often difficult to determine the origin of any particular tenet, even during the period of the greatest enmity, and all the more so when the two streams finally become one. I offer here only a few brief observations.

The *Auctor ad Herennium* is an author who gives us an idea of what rhetorical manuals probably looked like in the Hellenistic period. Cola and periods are for him simply figures of speech (cf. below) to be used for certain stylistic effects; here again is the practical concern of the teacher. Peripatetic influence is visible, however, in his advice to use periods in gnomes, antitheses and syllogisms (4. 19. 27). The connection of gnomes and enthymemes (which are defined by Aristotle as rhetorical syllogisms) with the period is implicit in the *Rhetoric*, in that one of the two parts of the enthymeme may be gnomic, and enthymemes are good material for periods: compare *Rhet.* 2. 21. 1-6, 1. 2 1356 b 3 ff., 3. 9 1410 a 22 f.³⁵ Conversely, the influence of the

³⁴ '... numerum... adhibere necesse est... quod ait Aristoteles et Theophrastus, ne infinite feratur ut flumen oratio, quae non aut spiritu pronuntiantis (*Rhet.* 3. 9 1409 b 15) aut interductu librari (ibid. 3. 8 1409 a 20), sed numero coacta debet insistere.'

³⁵ cf. also Hermog. *Inv.* 176. 23 ff., 180. 12-14.

schools on a Peripatetic writer can be illustrated from Demetrius. The former were the authorities on figures of speech;³⁶ most of the technical names of figures in Demetrius come from their tradition, as well as the doctrine of logical and verbal antitheses (cc. 22 ff.), which is found in Anaximenes (1435b27 ff.).

Cicero thinks with justification that he is several cuts above the 'vulgaris disciplina', but he cannot claim to be purely philosophical either. His eclecticism is usually successful, but can sometimes cause difficulty. In the present case his use of the word 'numerus' vacillates between the meaning 'metrical patterns' and the abstract principle of 'number'. The result is occasional vagueness and confusion of thought, the clarification of which has caused much scholarly effort.³⁷

By the time of the late Republic the old quarrel was losing much of its vigour, and the two streams were becoming reconciled.³⁸ A century later the quarrel was for practical purposes finished. In the case of the doctrine of periods, the teachings of schoolmasters and philosophers effectively merged in the book of Caecilius of Calacte *περὶ σχημάτων*,³⁹ which was decisive in that topic for the rest of antiquity. (The period had already been classified as a figure in the *Auctor ad Herennium*, therefore presumably in earlier Hellenistic manuals as well; cf. also Philodemus – who does not cite Caecilius – *Rhet.* 1. 164. 23 Sudhaus. That Caecilius perpetuated the classification is evident from his follower Alexander, *περὶ σχημάτων* 3. 27. 12 ff. Sp., and Alexander's follower Aquila Romanus, *De figuris sententiarum et elocutionis* 27–8 Halm; cf. also Hermog. *Inv.* 178. 19.) Caecilius' was a schoolbook, but he seems to have taken over a fair amount of old Peripatetic teaching. At least traces of it can be found in most later books, when allowance is made for the usual autoschediasms and oddities of classification and terminology. Among the more noteworthy of the Peripatetic echoes is, first, the idea that a period can consist of one colon: Hermog. *Inv.* 180. 4 ff.; [Aristid.] 2. 507. 18 Sp.; Alex. 3. 27. 23 Sp. This can only be an Aristotelian notion, since it is a largely theoretical one, of little use to speech-writers. (Cicero, *Orat.* 225, denies the existence of such periods; in other writers they receive only incidental treatment, or are a matter of some embarrassment: Quint. 9. 4. 124; Demetr. c. 34; Aquila Romanus 28. 15 Halm.) The monocolon period should not therefore be emended out of the *Rhetoric*; the difficulties of the text are not at any rate so great as to force such action.⁴⁰ Secondly, the definition of a period as an 'articulate' or 'self-contained' thought (*ἀπηρτισμένον/αὐτοτελές*, cf. *Rhet.* 3. 9. 1409a36 *τελευτὴν αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτήν*) can safely be said to betray Peripatetic influence (Demetr. c. 10): Alex. 3. 27. 18 Sp., [Aristid.] 2. 507. 8 Sp., [Herodian] 3. 93. 8 Sp., Hermog. *Inv.* 178. 19–20, Anon. 7. 25. 30 Walz, Lachares *apud* Anon. 7. 930. 28 Walz, Anon. Seg. c. 242 (1² 395. 26 Sp.), Anon. in Arist. *Rhet.* 3. 9, *Comm. in Arist. Graeca* 21. 2 p. 195. 35 ff. Finally, that hyperbaton⁴¹ characterizes the period is implicit in

³⁶ cf. in general W. Barczat, *De figurarum disciplina atque auctoribus* (Diss. Göttingen, 1904).

³⁷ A. Primmer, op. cit. (n. 3), is a thorough attempt; reviewed by H. Drexler, *Gnomon* 41 (1969), 654–62 (esp. 658 f.). For examples of Cicero's varying use of 'numerus' see *Orat.* 170, 199, 204, 207 f., 228; *Brut.* 8. 34; cf. also Quintilian's remarks, 9. 4. 55–7. The casual reader is not much troubled by this; Cicero himself is not one to fuss over distinctions anyway, although this is not to say he is unaware of them (*Orat.* 219).

³⁸ W. Kroll, *RE Supp.* Bd vii (1940), 1089 f.

³⁹ Fragments, ed. E. Ofenloch (Teubner, 1907).

⁴⁰ See above nn. 18, 22, and the translation on p. 90. A. Primmer, *Rh. Mus.* 109 (1966), 73 ff., is the scholar who suggests emendation; considerable rewriting is necessary. Mr Russell points out to me the difficulty of supposing that *λέξις* in 1409b14 means 'sentence' (as it must), when it means 'style' almost everywhere else in this book; but it is protected by 1409a35 *λέγω δὲ περίοδον λέξιν ἔχουσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ τελευτὴν κτλ.*

⁴¹ Defined as abnormal word order, in which an essential idea is left suspended until the end of the sentence.

Demetrius, in his liking for the *καμπή* at the end (cc. 10, 17) and in the conception of the period as a circle (cc. 11, 30, 31)⁴² – implicit for that matter also in Aristotle (see above, pp. 90 f., 93); explicit in Hermogenes, *Inv.* 178. 21, 180. 8 f.; cf. Quint. 9. 4. 26, Alex. 3. 27. 21 Sp.

To recapitulate the main arguments of this paper: that Aristotle's conception of the period is what we have designated the 'logical' one may be gathered from a proper understanding of his own words; from the amplification provided by Demetrius and Theophrastus; and by grasping the proper place of Aristotle's discussion within the history of the whole question.⁴³

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⁴² cf. also c. 20: τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς περιόδου συνεστραμμένον τὸ εἶδος καὶ κυκλικὸν... οἶον... σχεδὸν γὰρ ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἡ περίοδος ἢ τοιάδε συνεστραμμένον τι ἔχει καὶ ἐμφαίνειν ὅτι οὐκ ἂν ἀπολήξειεν εἰς ἀπλοῦν τέλος.

⁴³ I wish to acknowledge the generous and acute criticism of earlier drafts by Dr D. C. Innes, Mr D. A. Russell and Professor Dr Rudolf Kassel; various suggestions of a non-technical nature from Professor J. C. Yardley; and the time afforded by a fellowship at the Calgary Institute for the Humanities, the University of Calgary.