

ARISTOTLE'S KNOWLEDGE OF ATHENIAN ORATORY¹

I

In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle frequently illustrates the points he is making with examples drawn both from oratory and from other literary genres. Although some of these citations have been used to date the work, they have never been systematically examined. It is the contention of this article that, when Aristotle gives examples from speeches, he quotes exclusively from epideictic works, and that this fact tells us much both about the circulation of written speeches at Athens and about the preoccupations of Aristotle and his pupils.

Aristotle fails in the *Rhetoric* to quote from or allude to the text of a single deliberative or forensic speech. Of the canonical ten Athenian orators active in the period down to 335, Antiphon, Andocides, Lysias, and Isaeus are not named. The Aeschines who is reported to have described Cratylus as 'hissing and violently shaking his hands' (1417b1–2) is almost certainly not the orator but the Socratic, Aeschines of Sphettos.² As for Demades, Aristotle gives as an example of the fallacious topic of *post hoc propter hoc* his claim that 'the administration of Demosthenes was responsible for all the city's troubles; for the war took place after it.' (1401b31–4), but does not attribute it to a particular speech. Demosthenes is named twice elsewhere in the work, but in neither passage is it clear that the orator is meant. First, Aristotle cites as an example of a simile 'Demosthenes' likening of the citizenry to those who are sick on board ship' (1407a6–8). The fact that the orator often uses similes in his deliberative speeches, particularly to describe the behaviour of his fellow-citizens, makes it likely that the allusion is to him, although his fifth-century homonym cannot be excluded.³ The simile does not occur in any of his surviving speeches. Second, as an example of the argument from correlatives, Aristotle refers to 'the trial of Demosthenes and those who killed Nicanor; for since the jury thought he had been justly killed, it seemed they justly killed him' (1397b7–9). Dionysius of Halicarnassus sought to identify the case with Aeschines' prosecution of Ctesiphon in 330, in the course of which Demosthenes delivered his speech *On the Crown*, but his argument has nothing to recommend it.⁴ Indeed, the orator, whose career is well-known, is never associated with the death of a man named Nicanor. It has been suggested that 'Nicanor' is a scribal slip for Nicodemus, an Athenian in whose murder Demosthenes was alleged by his enemies to have been involved.⁵ As far as we know, however, he was never prosecuted for the killing; nor

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² Thus H. Dittmar, *Aischines von Sphettos* (Berlin, 1912), pp. 293–4.

³ On Demosthenes' use of similes see G. Ronnet, *Étude sur le style de Démosthène* (Paris, 1951), pp. 176–82.

⁴ *Ad Ammaeum* 1.12.

⁵ The emendation was first suggested by Spengel. See further J. D. Meerwaldt, 'De Aristotelis erga Demosthenem anima', *Mnemosyne* 54 (1926), 348–69, at 348–58. On Nicodemus see Aesch. 1.170–73; 2.148; Dinarch. 1.30, 47; D. M. MacDowell, *Demosthenes: Against Meidias*

is it easy to see how he could have claimed that it was justified. Thus it seems more likely that another Demosthenes is meant.

There is also a reference to the dispute of 'the *rhetor* Mantias' over the paternity of his son (1398b2–3). Demosthenes wrote two speeches arising out of this dispute (Dem. 39 and 40), but there is no mention here of either work. Mantias was a prominent public figure, and it is likely that this colourful case was a matter of general interest and knowledge.⁶

As has already been noted, Lysias is never named in the *Rhetoric*, but there are several passages in which it has been thought that Aristotle alludes to his speeches. First, the paradox 'when in exile we fought to come home; having come home, we shall go into exile in order not to fight' is also found in a slightly different formulation in Lysias 34.⁷ Second, the final words of the work, which asyndetically recommend the use of asyndeton in the epilogue of a speech, are reminiscent of the end of Lysias 12.⁸ In neither case, however, is the correspondence exact. Since Aristotle generally quotes from memory, it is indeed possible that he means to refer his readers to these speeches. Yet he does not claim to be quoting from them, and both the paradox and the trick of ending a speech with asyndeton may have been widely familiar. I am therefore not persuaded that he knew either speech. The third instance is rather different. At 1411a30–b1 he quotes from what he terms 'the Funeral Speech'. Although there are some verbal differences, he is clearly here alluding to the funeral speech attributed to Lysias.⁹ What conclusion, if any, can be drawn from his failure to assign an author to it is unclear (it is conceivable that Lysias' name has dropped out of the text). Dover, rightly in my opinion, denies that Aristotle meant to call Lysianic authorship into doubt: 'He means by τῷ "the one which contains the words which I am quoting"'.¹⁰ What is significant for our purposes is that the allusion is to an epideictic speech (see below).

In addition, Aristotle frequently attributes statements or arguments to a particular speaker. Sometimes he gives the context of the speech, either a trial or a political debate, and often the speaker's words are presented in direct speech. The remark of Demades about Demosthenes, discussed above, falls into this category. There is in my opinion no reason to believe that Aristotle's source in any of these cases is a published speech. Certainly he never claims to be quoting from or referring to a text. This is in marked contrast to his style of citing epideictic speeches, where he generally gives the title of the work: 'as Isocrates says in the *Panegyricus*', or the like. Here, on the other hand, he refers only to the circumstances in which the remark was made. This suggests that he and his pupils knew about a particular debate or trial, but had not *read* the relevant speeches. Thus, he introduces his first such example as follows: 'as Leodamas said when he was accusing Callistratus, that the one giving the advice did more wrong than the one who carried it out ...' (1364a19–20). It is significant that he

(Oxford, 1990), pp. 328–30. Nicanor was well known as the officer of Alexander who presented the Exiles Decree to the Greeks in 324, and with whom Demosthenes dealt (Dinarch. 1.81, 103; Hyper. *Demosth.* col. 18; Diod. 18.8). He was also the son-in-law of Aristotle (Diog. Laert. 5.12), and his name would readily have sprung to mind in connection with either Demosthenes or Aristotle.

⁶ On Mantias' career see J. K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families 600–300 B.C.* (Oxford, 1971), p. 367.

⁷ 1399b16–8: ἡ φεύγοντες μὲν ἐμαχόμεθα ὅπως κατέλθωμεν, κατελθόντες δὲ φευξόμεθα ὅπως μὴ μαχώμεθα. Lys. 34.11: ὅτε μὲν ἐφεύγομεν, ἐμαχόμεθα Λακεδαιμονίοις ἵνα κατέλθωμεν, κατελθόντες δὲ φευξόμεθα ἵνα μὴ μαχώμεθα.

⁸ 1420a8: εἶρηκα, ἀκηκόατε, ἔχετε, κρίνατε. Lys. 12.100: ἀκηκόατε, ἐοράκατε, πεπόνθατε, ἔχετε· δικάζετε.

⁹ The allusion is to Lys. 2.60.

¹⁰ K. J. Dover, *Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), p. 26 n.3.

did not write 'As Leodamas says in the (speech) *Against Callistratus*'. Likewise he refers to the remark of Eubulus against Chares 'in the lawcourts' (1376a9–12), and to Callistratus' behaviour 'in the Messenian assembly' (1418b9–12). This last passage was taken by Sauppe, in his edition of the fragments of Athenian oratory, as evidence of a (written) 'Messenian oration' by Callistratus, but there is no reason to think that such a text ever existed, still less that Aristotle had acquired a copy of it.¹¹ Every other allusion of this kind, of which there are many in the *Rhetoric*, conforms to this pattern.

Dover has argued, against this view, that in such cases Aristotle is indeed quoting from forensic speeches, even if he does not make it clear that he is doing so.¹² Thus he takes 'what someone said in court against Peitholaus and Lycophron: "When these men were at home, they sold you, but coming here, they have bought you"' (1410a17–20) to be from a speech against them, about the authorship of which Aristotle was either ignorant or indifferent. This is surely unlikely. The vague manner in which the quotation is introduced suggests that Aristotle had only heard it, possibly not at first hand. We should note that the trial of Peitholaus and Lycophron was not a private dispute, knowledge of which could only have been acquired by reading the speeches occasioned by it. The two men were sons of Jason, the tyrant of Pherae; Peitholaus at least was awarded Athenian citizenship, only to be stripped of it on a later occasion.¹⁴ If the trial referred to is that in which this grant was rescinded, which is highly likely, the allusion is to a major and relatively recent political scandal; a pithy saying made during its course is likely to have been widely known at Athens, even if the identity of its utterer had been forgotten, or was regarded as unimportant.¹⁵

Dover's second example is Aristotle's attribution to Iphicrates of the following quotation: 'My path of words is through the midst of Chares' actions' (1411b1–3). The context of this remark is probably the impeachment of Iphicrates, as a result of the allegations of his fellow general, Chares, during the Social War (356/5).¹⁶ Dover argues that Aristotle is here citing a (now lost) speech defending Iphicrates on a charge of treason, misattributed to Lysias and known to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Lysias* 12). Dionysius suggests that Iphicrates himself wrote both this and a stylistically similar speech 'about the statue of Iphicrates', which was also attributed to Lysias (see below).¹⁷ Dover's interpretation is possible, although again no mention is made of a speech. It is, however, at least as likely that this striking metaphor had been on men's lips at the time, and that Aristotle had either remembered it or made a note of it.

¹¹ It was included by J. G. Baiter and H. Sauppe in their collection of fragments, *Oratores Attici* (Zurich, 1839–41). See in general M. H. Hansen, 'Two notes on Demosthenes' symbolaeutic speeches', *C & M* 35 (1984), 57–70 at 60–70, reprinted in his *The Athenian Ecclesia II* (Copenhagen, 1989), pp. 283–97 at 286–97.

¹² Dover [n. 10], pp. 25–6.

¹³ Kennedy's translation 'they have been bought' is apparently wrong: see LSJ s.v. *ὠνέομαι* II.

¹⁴ See [Dem.] 59.91 with M. J. Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens* (Brussels, 1981–3), vol. iii pp. 62–3. The problem is that the speaker says that Peitholaus and Apollonides of Olynthus were stripped of Athenian citizenship, but says nothing of Lycophron. Is 'Apollonides' a slip for Lycophron? Osborne suggests that both brothers were first enfranchised and then had the grant cancelled.

¹⁵ The grant was rescinded in court (*ἀφείλετο τὸ δικαστήριον*: [Dem.] 59.91). The date of the trial is uncertain: Apollodorus, speaking in the late 340s, describes it as recent.

¹⁶ See the discussion of M. H. Hansen, *Eisangelia: The Sovereignty of the People's Court in Athens in the Fourth Century B.C.* and the Impeachment of Generals and Politicians (Odense, 1975), pp. 100–1. A further passage (1398a17–22) probably refers to the same occasion.

¹⁷ Fr. 45–9 and 11–15 (Thalheim) respectively. That Lysias wrote both speeches is asserted at [Plut.] *Mor.* 836d.

The context of the second speech was the attempt of a certain Harmodius to block the erection of a bronze statue of Iphicrates. This case was also known to Aristotle, who twice cites remarks of Iphicrates against Harmodius: 'what Iphicrates said in the [case] against Harmodius: "If, before accomplishing anything, I asked to be honoured with a statue if I succeeded, you would have granted it. Will you not grant it when I have succeeded? Do not then make a promise in anticipation but refuse it in realization"' (1397b30–4); and 'As Iphicrates (argued), that the best person is the most noble, for there was no noble quality in Harmodius and Aristogiton until they did something noble, whilst he himself was more like them (than his opponent was): "At least my deeds are more like those of Harmodius and Aristogiton than yours are"' (1398a17–22). Again, it is unclear whether Aristotle had access to the speech that was known to Dionysius. His language in the former passage does not imply it: he does not refer to the *speech* against Harmodius (the noun to be supplied after *ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἀρμόδιον* is presumably *δίκη*).¹⁸ In both passages Aristotle attributes words to Iphicrates, but it cannot be assumed that he is quoting from a text of the speech. The words, or at any rate the thought, are concise and memorable. Aristotle tends to quote even literary texts from memory, as is shown by the number of slight mistakes that he makes in doing so, and his use of direct speech here may betoken a desire for vividness rather than a concern for, or knowledge of, Iphicrates' *ipsissima verba*.

What complicates the issue is the striking fact that no less than seven further sayings of Iphicrates are quoted in the *Rhetoric*.¹⁹ None of these need come from the two speeches already mentioned, and some clearly do not.²⁰ The frequency with which Iphicrates is cited clearly requires an explanation. One possibility is that Aristotle had known him, and had access to his papers.²¹ Another is that someone had made a collection of his famous sayings, and that Aristotle had made use of this. That material relating to Iphicrates was compiled at some stage is suggested by the extraordinarily large number of stratagems attributed to him by the military writer Polyaeus (3.9.1–63). Demades provides a parallel case of an orator of whom there survived into later antiquity sayings, but no published speeches.²² In short, Aristotle may have had access to a collection of sayings of Iphicrates, but need not have possessed texts of the two speeches later known to Dionysius.²³

In general, I suggest that most of the political and forensic quotations in the *Rhetoric* derive from oral tradition. Some of them are likely to have been famous sayings, and widely known, at least among those who took an interest in public life. Others were perhaps collected by Aristotle himself. In the fourth century, and among the Peripatetics in particular, the compilation of sayings and anecdotes enjoyed a

¹⁸ Thus E. M. Cope, *The 'Rhetoric' of Aristotle, with a Commentary* (Cambridge, 1877), *ad loc.* Kennedy in his translation supplies 'speech'.

¹⁹ 1365a28; 1367b18; 1398a4–7; 1399a35; 1405a19; 1411a11; 1416a10.

²⁰ 1398a4 is directed at Aristophan; 1405a19 gives both Iphicrates' words and the retort of Callias; 1416a10 is a reply to Nausicles.

²¹ There is no evidence that Aristotle knew Iphicrates, although, for what it is worth, they both had connections with the Macedonian court (see Nepos, *Iph.* 3.2; Aesch. 2.26–9 for Iphicrates).

²² Cicero (*Brutus* 9.36) and Quintilian (12.10.49) were adamant that Demades left nothing in writing, and the speech 'On the Twelve Years' attributed to him is generally thought spurious. On the other hand, numerous remarks of his were known in the later fourth century (see Demetrius, *On Style* 282–6), and it is possible that some of the fragments which constitute 'On the Twelve Years' are genuine. See V. de Falco, *Demade Oratore: Testimonianze e frammenti* (Naples, 1954), pp. 12–18 for the possibility of a 'gnomologio demadeo'.

²³ It is not even certain that these speeches were works of the fourth century, and not later fabrications.

considerable vogue.²⁴ It is clear that Aristotle and his pupils brought together and collated a vast amount of material on a variety of different subjects.²⁵ Assuming that the *Rhetoric* was written over a substantial period, and that the text represents Aristotle's own notes, it is not unlikely that he added examples piecemeal, as they came to his attention.

II

In sharp contrast to his failure to refer to deliberative or forensic speeches, Aristotle frequently cites epideictic works. I use the term epideictic in the Aristotelian sense, to denote any speech that was not written to be delivered in the assembly or in court, even if it is deliberative or forensic in form.²⁶ Thus the speeches of Isocrates, with the exception of the genuinely forensic Orations 16–21, are all here treated as epideictic.

Aristotle frequently refers to the speeches of Isocrates: several are cited by name,²⁷ and others are clearly alluded to.²⁸ Pericles' funeral speech and Alcidas' *Messeniacus* are each cited twice, and Gorgias' *Olympicus* and *Encomium of the Eleans* once.²⁹ The *Nomos* and *Socrates* of Theodectes were both apparently epideictic works,³⁰ and the same is probably true of the anonymous *Alexander*.³¹ Aristotle also quotes several passages from unnamed works of Gorgias, Alcidas and Lycophron, most notably as examples of 'frigid' style.³² Given what we know of their writings, most of these passages are likely to come from epideictic speeches.

The two references to Pericles' funeral speech probably derive either from oral tradition or from a biographical source, rather than from a text of it. In both passages Aristotle cites the famous simile that the death of the men who have died is like the spring being taken from the year. That he formulates it differently each time is unimportant, given that he usually quotes from memory. Since it is generally agreed that Pericles left nothing in writing, the simile was presumably a famous saying, although it is perhaps surprising that Plutarch does not include it in his list of Periclean *dicta*.³³

By no means all of the examples cited in the *Rhetoric* are taken from oratory. Most in fact are from poetry. Homer and Euripides predominate, but Aristotle quotes widely from epic, lyric, and tragedy. Authors cited include Hesiod, Pindar and

²⁴ A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography*² (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1993), pp. 66–73, esp. 72–3.

²⁵ Cf. the collections of 158 *Politeiai* (Diog. Laert. 5.27).

²⁶ See D. A. G. Hinks, 'Tria genera causarum', *CQ* 30 (1936), 170–6; V. Buchheit, *Untersuchungen zur Theorie des Genos Epideiktikon von Gorgias bis Aristoteles* (Munich, 1960); G. A. Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 152–203.

²⁷ *Panegyricus*: 1408b15–7; *Philip* and *Antidosis*: 1418b26–7; *On the Peace* (referred to as *Symmachicus*): 1418a32–33.

²⁸ Allusions to *Helen* (10.18–22, 41–8) and *Evagoras* (9.51–2) at 1399a1–6.

²⁹ Pericles: 1365a31–3 and 1411a2–4; Alcidas: 1373b18 (where the quotation is missing), and 1397a11–2; Gorgias, *Olympicus*: 1414b31–2; *Encomium*: 1416a1–3.

³⁰ *Socrates* (1399a8) was no doubt an apology, comparable to Plato's *Apology*; the *Nomos* (1398b6, 1399b1) seems from these references to have been a political pamphlet criticizing Athens' reliance on mercenaries: see Sauppe [n. 11], *ad loc.*

³¹ 1398a22, 1401b20. It was presumably an encomium or apology, perhaps an answer to Gorgias' and Isocrates' *Helen*.

³² Alcidas and Lycophron are criticized for frigidity at 3.3 *passim*. Gorgias: 1403b26; 1406b8–10, 15–9; 1408b20; 1418a34–8; 1419b4–6. As far as we know, these men never wrote forensic or deliberative speeches.

³³ Apophthegms: Plut. *Per.* 8.5–6. His speeches did not survive according to Plut. *Per.* 8.4 and Quint. 3.1.12 (this is also implicit in the claim at Plato *Phdr.* 257d that the 'compositions' which fifth-century politicians left to posterity were the decrees which they passed); contra Cicero, *De orat.* 2.93.

Simonides, the Presocratics, numerous lyric poets and tragedians, and even Aristophanes.³⁴ There are also a pair of allusions to Herodotus.³⁵ In addition, familiarity with Plato's dialogues is assumed, as well as with Aristotle's own works, which are often referred to, although not quoted.

Aristotle fails to use deliberative or forensic speeches even when he is discussing these two branches of oratory. Thus a point about the proem in deliberative oratory is illustrated from Gorgias' epideictic speech in praise of the Eleans (1416a1-3); the qualities of a forensic proem by examples from epic and tragedy (1415a8-21); the importance of character in the narrative of a forensic speech from Homer and Sophocles, rather than from Lysias, who could have provided many good instances (1417a16-36).³⁶ His practice in the *Rhetoric* is thus quite unlike that in the *Poetics*, where indeed he has his favourite plays, but where there are no wholesale omissions.³⁷ Here, by contrast, he systematically fails to cite two of the three types of oratory, even though these are accorded equal treatment with epideictic in the text of the work.

III

Any explanation of Aristotle's neglect of forensic and deliberative speeches must take account of its wholesale nature. Thus it cannot be simply a matter of chronology: Aristotle was still writing the *Rhetoric* in the early 330s, by which time most of the speeches of Lysias, Isaeus and Demosthenes, to look no further, had been written.³⁸ To be sure, different sections appear to have been composed at different times.³⁹ He may have started as early as 360, when he was certainly already interested in oratory.⁴⁰ If this is correct, the speeches of Demosthenes, at least, would not initially have been available to him. Yet, given that Aristotle cites epideictic speeches and anecdotes from the 340s and early 330s, it is scarcely credible that he imposed a much earlier cut-off point for other types of oratory. In any case, the forensic speeches of Lysias, for example, were all written by 360.⁴¹

We must also reject political explanations, such as that Aristotle deliberately ignored the speeches of Demosthenes because he disapproved of the orator's hostility to Philip and to Alexander.⁴² Whether or not this is a correct appreciation of Aristotle's political views,⁴³ his failure to cite the works of orators who were either

³⁴ For a full list of passages quoted or alluded to see A. Wartelle, *Lexique de la 'Rhétorique' d'Aristote* (Paris, 1982), pp. 493-500.

³⁵ 1409a27 (possibly an intrusion) and 1417a7.

³⁶ For Lysias' mastery of character-depiction see Dion. Hal. *Lys.* 8 with S. Usher, 'Individual characterization in Lysias', *Eranos* 63 (1965), 99-119.

³⁷ S. Halliwell, *Aristotle's Poetics* (London, 1986), pp. 39-41.

³⁸ See most recently Kennedy [n. 1], pp. 299-305. The claim of Demades (p. 371 above) was apparently made after the battle of Chaeronea in 338. Otherwise, the allusion to the death of Diopithes (1386a14) can hardly have been written earlier than 340.

³⁹ The classic statement of the 'evolutionary' view is F. Solmsen, *Die Entwicklung der aristotelischen Logik und Rhetorik* (Berlin, 1929). See too Kennedy [n. 26], pp. 82-7; J. M. Rist, *The Mind of Aristotle: A Study in Philosophical Growth*, Phoenix Suppl. 25 (Toronto, 1989), pp. 85-6, 136-44.

⁴⁰ On the reasonable hypothesis that the dialogue *Gryllus* or *On Rhetoric* was written shortly after the death of Gryllus in 362: see further A.-H. Chroust, *Aristotle: New Light on his Life and on Some of his Lost Works* (London, 1973), vol. i ch. 8 and vol. ii ch. 3.

⁴¹ On the chronology of Lysias' career see Dover [n. 10], ch. 3.

⁴² Kennedy [n. 1], p. 230 n. 61. Cf. Meerwaldt [n. 5], who believed, on no solid evidence, that Aristotle later came to agree with Demosthenes' view.

⁴³ Chroust [n. 40], vol. i chs. 6, 10-13; P. A. Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 282-342, at 290-9 and 334-7.

pro-Macedonian or politically neutral, such as Aeschines or Lysias, shows that a different explanation must be sought.

The omission of some orators may be fortuitous, or due to the fact that they composed only a handful of speeches, but that of Lysias is particularly striking. Not only was he very productive—233 speeches were attributed to him—but he was also regarded by later critics as the prime exponent of the depiction of character (*ethopoeia*), an aspect of oratory in which Aristotle shows a particular interest.⁴⁴

IV

It is obvious that Aristotle selected examples that would be familiar to his pupils, and would thus help to clarify his argument. We can therefore conclude that his pupils were assumed to be familiar with his methods and with his other works.⁴⁵ They were also expected to have read Plato and the earlier philosophers, and to have a good knowledge of literature. It seems to follow that they had read several epideictic speeches, but were not familiar with any forensic or deliberative speeches *as texts*. Two different explanations can be advanced for this: that such speeches were not readily available, or that, although copies could be acquired, Aristotle chose not to require his students to study them.

There is in fact very little evidence that deliberative or forensic speeches were widely read at the time, and none that they were the objects of literary appreciation.⁴⁶ Deliberative speeches were generally not even written down.⁴⁷ I have argued elsewhere that Demosthenes used writing as an aide-memoire before speaking in the assembly, and did not necessarily circulate his speeches after delivering them.⁴⁸ Forensic speeches by contrast were often written down, partly because they tended to be longer, partly because most were composed for clients, who needed a written text. There is, however, little reason to think that these were generally circulated, still less that they were seen as works of literary distinction. They were not widely read in educated circles, nor known by a title. All of this stands in sharp contrast to epideictic oratory, which was closely associated both with writing and with publication.⁴⁹ Only epideictic speeches were regarded as works of *kunstsprosa*, worthy of appreciation both for the elegance of their style and for the interest of their subject-matter.⁵⁰ In short, they counted as serious literature, whereas the other branches of oratory did not.⁵¹

⁴⁴ On the number of his speeches see Dover [n. 10], ch. 1. On character-depiction see n. 36 above.

⁴⁵ F. Hill, 'The Amoralism of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*', *GRBS* 22 (1981), 133–47 at 140, argues that his remarks on the enthymeme presuppose knowledge of the *Topics* and the *Prior Analytics* (to which in any case he often refers).

⁴⁶ This fundamental distinction between forensic and deliberative oratory on the one hand, and epideictic on the other, was briefly drawn by F. Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit*² vol. ii (Leipzig, 1892), p. 122.

⁴⁷ H. Ll. Hudson-Williams, 'Political speeches in Athens', *CQ* 1 (1951), 68–73; Hansen [n. 11].

⁴⁸ 'Did Demosthenes publish his deliberative speeches?', *Hermes* forthcoming.

⁴⁹ This emerges from Aristotle's comparison of the written and 'agonistic' styles at *Rhet.* 3.12. Alcidas limits the use of writing to 'epideixeis delivered before the masses' (*On the Sophists* 31), and the author of the (epideictic) Demosthenic *Eroticus* writes that the speech 'has been written in the manner which one would employ for putting in a book' (*Dem.* 61.2).

⁵⁰ We find the following accounts of an epideictic speech being read: the Lysianic *Eroticus* in the *Phaedrus*; the funeral speech of 'Aspasia' in the *Menexenus*; the *Philippus* of Isocrates in the *Letter of Speusippus* (*Epist. Socr.* 30.1–2).

⁵¹ Cf. my 'Between performance and text: written speeches in fourth-century Athens', forthcoming.

In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle simply takes his examples from the texts with which he and his pupils were familiar, that is to say from literature. Written examples of deliberative and forensic oratory, which after all constituted much of the subject-matter of his treatise, did not fall into this category. Even if some of them were circulated by their authors, he did not expect his pupils to know them.⁵² We do not have to think of Aristotle imposing a restricted syllabus on his pupils—a possibility which the sheer range of literary reference in both the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* makes implausible—to explain this.⁵³ Non-epideictic speeches simply did not fall within the purview of men of letters. There is an interesting contrast to be drawn between the *Rhetoric* and the humbler, and more practical, *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, probably to be attributed to Anaximenes. The author of this work provides, in place of Aristotle's literary allusions, invented examples to suit his immediate purpose. It has recently been suggested that by the later fourth century this was a somewhat old-fashioned practice, whereas that of Aristotle reflects the development of a more bookish culture.⁵⁴ Perhaps so, but a better explanation may be that the two works were the products of different cultural milieux.

V

Aristotle's lack of interest in non-literary speeches is mirrored in a certain fastidious disdain for forensic and deliberative oratory, and for those involved in it. The two allusions that he makes to the practice of public speakers at Athens are dismissive: they are prone to the use both of hyperbole and, when they are at a loss for something to say, of digression.⁵⁵

In a number of passages he also belittles the capacities of the audience before whom such speeches are delivered. For example, the judge should be assumed to be a simple person who is incapable of following a complex argument (1357a11–12); maxims are useful because of the uncultivated mind of the audience (1395b1–2); the uneducated are more persuasive than the educated before a crowd (1395b27–31); remarks to the audience in the proem of a judicial speech are outside the real argument and are addressed to hearers who are morally weak (1415b5–9); a speaker should not interrogate his opponent at length, since the audience's mental weakness makes it impossible for it to follow a series of questions (1419a17–19).

Aristotle shows no real interest in the delivery of a speech, a matter to which, he claims, the speaker should pay attention not because it is right but because it is necessary (1403b36–1404a1). He regards it as a vulgar matter, which 'has great power because of the corruption of the audience' (1404a7–8).⁵⁶ It is interesting to contrast

⁵² Thus Blass [n. 46], p. 122: 'Nur so kann man es verstehen, dass Aristoteles, der den Demosthenes doch selbst gehört haben konnte, ihn doch nur ganz beiläufig und ohne ihm irgend grössere Bedeutung beizulegen erwähnt.' So too E. Drerup, *Demosthenes im Urteile des Altertums* (Würzburg, 1923), p. 23 and M. J. Lossau, *Untersuchungen zur antiken Demosthenese-xegese, Palingenesia* 2 (Bad Homburg, Berlin and Zurich, 1964), pp. 22–31, arguing that Demosthenes' speeches were not on Aristotle's syllabus (see next note).

⁵³ For the idea of a syllabus see H. Diels, 'Über das dritten Buch der aristotelischen Rhetorik', *Abh. Akad. Wiss. Berlin phil.-hist. Cl.* (1886), 1–37, esp. 5.

⁵⁴ T. Cole, *The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Baltimore and London, 1991), p. 174 n. 16.

⁵⁵ *Hyperbole*: 1413b1–2; *diatribai*: 1418a29–33.

⁵⁶ He does, however, recognize that delivery is important, and his statement that a manual has not yet been written suggests the possibility of his writing such a work in the future. The deficiency was later made good by his pupil Theophrastus (Diog. Laert. 5.48). See in general W. W. Fortenbaugh, 'Aristotle's Platonic attitude toward delivery', *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 19 (1986), 242–54.

the importance attached to delivery by a practising orator.⁵⁷ Instead, Aristotle lays heavy emphasis on the need for logical rigour: the authors of earlier handbooks 'say nothing about enthymemes, which is the "body" of persuasion, while they give most of their attention to matters external to the subject' (1354a14–6). He regards rhetoric as the *antistrophos* of dialectic (1354a1). Ideally, it should be a logical science, and he shows frustration that this is not possible in practice: 'for verbal attack and pity and anger and such emotions of the soul do not relate to fact but are appeals to the juryman. As a result, if all trials were conducted as they are in some present-day states and especially in those well governed, they [the handbook writers] would have nothing to say' (1354a16–21).

Aristotle, being a metic, could take no part in the political life of Athens. Moreover, he showed little enthusiasm for democracy, the one form of constitution under which deliberative and forensic oratory flourished.⁵⁸ Politicians such as Demosthenes would have counted in his book as demagogues. Moreover, although he rejects Platonic idealism, he still brings a set of strong ethical presumptions to the study of rhetoric. This emerges most clearly at the beginning of Book 1, where he argues that the prime function of rhetoric is to prevent truth and justice from being defeated (1355a21–b7). He asserts, as Gorgias had maintained against Socrates, that rhetoric is in itself a neutral tool that can be used for good or ill. But this means not that it should be despised, as Plato had argued, but that good men must be able to use it in defence of the truth.⁵⁹

For Aristotle, rhetoric was not a (or the) central discipline, as it was for the rhetoricians. Rather, it was one element of a course of instruction that was built upon an ethical philosophical system. He was said to lecture on rhetoric only in the afternoons, implying that he treated it less seriously than other subjects.⁶⁰ Even if his lectures were open to the public, the *Rhetoric* is clearly directed not to a lay audience but to those who are already familiar with his methods and terminology.⁶¹ Few of his pupils were potential politicians; as Philodemus acidly noted, none of them became famous orators from the instruction that they received from Aristotle.⁶²

In short, the *Rhetoric* is largely philosophical in its outlook, and in the assumptions that shape it. Aristotle reveals a detached and somewhat unsympathetic attitude towards 'real-life' oratory and its practitioners. The point must not be exaggerated: he does after all refer often enough to remarks made in the courts or in the assembly. Yet it is easy to understand why he should have made so little attempt to acquire the texts of deliberative and forensic speeches. It was only later that these were recognized as among the masterpieces of Greek prose literature. In his lack of interest in them, he simply reflects the attitudes of the fourth-century literary and philosophical intelligentsia.

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⁵⁷ Plut. *Dem.* 7; [Plut.] *Mor.* 845b (both referring to Demosthenes).

⁵⁸ Democracy was one of the three perverted constitutions in the *Politics* (4.2), and Athens could hardly be said to exemplify the best (i.e. most agrarian) form of it (6.4). See further A. Lintott, 'Aristotle and democracy', *CQ* 42 (1992), 114–28.

⁵⁹ See 1355a20–b2 with Hill [n. 45].

⁶⁰ Philodemus, *Rhetoric* II p.50 (Sudhaus); Quint. 3.1.14.

⁶¹ That they were open to the public is stated by Gellius *N. A.* 20.5.1–5. For the extent of the knowledge of Aristotle's system that is assumed see n. 45 above.

⁶² *Rhetoric* II p.59 (Sudhaus).