

distrahor ut ventis discordibus acta phaselos,
dividuumque tenent alter et alter amor.

This is a standard use of the word; cf. *OLD* s.v. *distraho* 8. It might be added that the loss of *distrahor* is easier to explain; a scribe might jump from one *dis-* to the next and then fail to restore all that he thus passed over.

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THE INVENTION OF THE YOUNG CICERO¹

This article is a re-evaluation of a passage of Cicero's *De Inventione* which seems to have been unfairly overlooked by the critics and which offers a glimpse of a typical Ciceronian attitude familiar in his later works. The passage is in the section where Cicero, in concluding the discussion on one of the traditional parts of an oration, namely *partitio*,² points out:

Ac sunt alia quoque praecepta partitionum quae ad hunc usum oratorium non tanto opere pertineant, quae uersantur in philosophia, ex quibus haec ipsa transtulimus quae conuenire uiderentur quorum nihil in ceteris artibus inueniebamus. (1.33)³

Here Cicero claims that he has introduced philosophical precepts which are relevant to rhetoric, and that this introduction is an original device, not found in the other handbooks of rhetoric. In what follows my intention is to show (i) that Cicero does effectively present some philosophical concepts in his treatment of *partitio*; and (ii) that the only existing text that is contemporary and thematically similar to *De Inventione*, namely *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, reinforces the originality Cicero claims. In so doing, I hope to modify the idea that Cicero at the time of *De Inventione* was an immature student who, in Hubbell's words, simply recorded the dictation of his teacher.⁴

I

Cicero clarifies that *partitio* is the part of an oration where speakers, first, guide the audience to a clear understanding of the controversy involved in a case and, second, introduce briefly the matters they will discuss in the argumentation:

Recte habita in causa partitio inlustrem et perspicuam totam efficit orationem. Partes eius sunt duae . . . Vna pars est quae quid cum aduersariis conueniat et quid in controuersia relinquitur ostendit; ex qua certum quiddam destinatur auditori in quo animum debeat habere occupatum. Altera est in qua rerum earum de quibus erimus dicturi breuiter expositio ponitur distributa; ex qua conficitur ut certas animo res teneat auditor, quibus dictis intellegat fore peroratum. (1.31)

¹ I owe special thanks to Dr Hans Gottschalk and to Professor Maltby. I wish also to thank my dear friend Dr Elisabeth Pender and *CQ*'s anonymous reader for their helpful comments on this piece.

² See F. Solmsen, 'The Aristotelian tradition in ancient rhetoric', *AJP* 62 (1941), 35–50 and 169–90. Reprinted in R. L. Enos and L. P. Agnew (edd.), *Landmark Essays on Aristotelian Rhetoric* (Mahwah, 1998), 215–43; G. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton, 1972), 103–48.

³ Text after G. Achard (ed.), 'Cicéron, *De l'Invention* (Paris, 1994).

⁴ See H. M. Hubbell (trans.), 'Cicero's *De inuentione*, *De Optimo Genere Oratorum*, *Topica* (Harvard, 1976), xi.

Up to this point of the explanation, Cicero does not present any specific philosophical concept. However, in the section immediately following, where Cicero elucidates in detail how to set forth briefly the matters of discussion, some ideas of a clear philosophical origin enter the picture. The section reads:

Quae partitio rerum distributam continet expositionem, haec habere debet: breuitatem, absolutionem, paucitatem. Breuitas est, cum nisi necessarium nullum assumitur uerbum. . . . Absolutio est per quam omnia quae incidunt in causas genera, de quibus dicendum est, amplectimur in partitione. . . . Paucitas in partitione seruatur, si genera ipsa rerum ponuntur neque permixte cum partibus implicantur. Nam genus est quod plures partes amplectitur, ut animal. Pars est quae subest generi, ut equus. Sed saepe eadem res alii genus, alii pars est. Nam homo animalis pars est, Thebani aut Troiani genus. Haec ideo diligentius inducitur descriptio ut, aperte intellecta generum et partium ratione, paucitas generum in partitione seruari possit. Nam qui ita partitur: 'Ostendam propter cupiditatem et audaciam et auaritiam aduersariorum omnia incommoda ad rem publicam peruenisse', is non intellexit in partitione exposito genere partem se generis admiscuisse. Nam genus est omnium nimirum libidinum cupiditas: eius autem generis sine dubio pars est auaritia. Hoc igitur uitandum est, ne cuius genus posueris eius aliquam sicuti diuersam ac dissimilem partem ponas in eadem partitione.

(1.32–3)

Cicero notes that, in order to be clear and effective, the statement of the topics to be discussed has to have three qualities: brevity (*breuitas*), completeness (*absolutio*), and conciseness (*paucitas*). For securing the first two qualities orators do not have to know any particular philosophical concept. To achieve brevity, they must simply avoid adding words which are unnecessary. To preserve completeness, they have to be careful not to omit the mention of any of the topics they will then use for pursuing their lines of argument.

With conciseness the situation is different. According to Cicero, conciseness is secured when orators present the *genera* of the topics they intend to discuss and do not mix them with their species, as if the genera and their species were something essentially different. The mention of the species, he warns, is best left for the section after the *partitio*. To help orators to understand the precepts, Cicero makes a brief and basic explanation of the term 'genus' as that which embraces several species—for example 'animal'—and of the term 'species' (*pars*) as that which falls under a genus—for example 'horse'. He then mentions the concept of the hierarchy of genera and species, and explains that the same term may be a genus in relation to one concept, as 'man' in relation to 'Thebans', and a species in relation to another, as 'man' in relation to 'animal'. Finally, he shows an application of the precept: given that 'desire' (*cupiditas*) is the 'genus' of all the 'appetites' (*libidines*), a speaker who intends to blame an opponent for a specific appetite—such as 'avarice' (*auaritia*)—has to mention in the *partitio* the genus of 'avarice' and never present 'desire' and 'avarice' as if they were essentially different.

The reasons behind the above precepts are not mentioned by Cicero, but they can be inferred. Orators must avoid mixing genera with their species in order to preserve the logical relationship which exists between the genera and their species. Again, this mix has to be avoided for otherwise it would lead the audience to expect the discussion of two different concepts in the section following *partitio*. And this would be misleading, since one concept (the genus) is actually part of the essence of the other (the species), and thus is treated within the discussion of the other.

The relevant factor here is that the process of reasoning which is required for securing *paucitas* implies an attention to the logical characteristics of the concepts which have to be presented in the *partitio*, namely their being genera or species. And this supports the claim Cicero makes in the passage at 1.33 that he has introduced

philosophical elements in the description of *partitio*. Moreover, it can be shown that the precepts in question come from a clear Aristotelian source.

The ideas of genus and species *per se* were first systematized by Aristotle himself. But what is more interesting is that, in a passage of the *Topics*, Aristotle presents an idea which, although useful for a different purpose, is close to that behind Cicero's concept of *paucitas*. In the *Topics* Aristotle discusses a list of strategies of argumentation (called *τόποι*) for either attacking or refuting the adversary's assertions or establishing someone's own assertions.⁵ One of the *τόποι* suggests attacking a definition made by an adversary on the ground that the adversary, having stated a generic term, has then added one of its species:

Πάλιν εἰ τοῦ καθόλου εἰρημένου προσθείη καὶ ἐπὶ μέρος, ὅλον εἰ τὴν ἐπικείκειαν ἐλάττωσιν τῶν συμφερόντων καὶ δικαίων· τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον συμφέρον τι, ὥστε περιέχεται ἐν τῷ συμφέροντι. περιττὸν οὖν τὸ δίκαιον, καθόλου γὰρ εἶπας ἐπὶ μέρος προσέθηκεν. καὶ εἰ τὴν ἱατρικὴν ἐπιστήμην τῶν ὑγιεινῶν ζώων καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἢ τὸν νόμον εἰκόνα τῶν φύσει καλῶν καὶ δικαίων· τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον καλόν τι, ὥστε πλεονάκης τὸ αὐτὸ λέγει.
(*Topics* 141a15–22)⁶

The addition of a species—in Aristotle's example 'man'—next to its genus—'animal'—in stating a part of the definition is superfluous. And this reduces the clarity that a definition must have in order to be effective.⁷ Thus, if in an attempt to define the term 'medicine' the interlocutor has stated that it is 'the knowledge of things healthful for animal and man', the proposition may be questioned.

As mentioned earlier, Aristotle's and Cicero's contexts are different. However, Cicero, as Aristotle in the *Topics*, warns speakers not to state a species after mentioning its genus because this would prevent clarity.

II

Cicero's second claim of having introduced in the *partitio* devices that are not found in his contemporaries' handbooks of rhetoric is supported by considering the section on *partitio* in *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

Due to a lack of fixed terminology in early Latin rhetoric, the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* calls the part of an oration which corresponds to Cicero's *partitio* 'diuisio'. For the author, *diuisio*, like *partitio* in Cicero, is the section of a speech where orators first clarify the core of the controversy involved in a case and then set forth briefly the matter they will discuss:

Causarum diuisio in duas partes distributa est. Primum . . . debemus aperire quid nobis conueniat cum aduersariis . . . quid in controuersia relictum sit. . . . Deinde, cum hoc fecerimus, distributione uti debemus. Ea diuiditur in duas partes: enumerationem et expositionem. Enumeratione utemur cum dicemus numero quot de rebus dicturi sumus. . . . Expositio est cum res quibus de rebus dicturi sumus exponimus breuiter et absolute.
(1.17)⁸

When the author explains how orators are to present the subjects for discussion, he mentions, like Cicero, the qualities of brevity and completeness. However, he does not

⁵ See J. Brunschwig's Introduction in *Aristote, Topiques I, livres I–IV* (Paris, 1967), vii–cxliii; O. Primavesi, 'Die Aristotelische Topik', *Zetemata* (1996).

⁶ Text after W. D. Ross (ed.), *Aristotelis Topica et Sophistici Elenchi* (Oxford, 1958).

⁷ This is explicitly pointed out by Aristotle in *Topics* 139b12–17: 'Ἔστι δὲ τοῦ μὴ καλῶς μέρη δύο· ἐν μὲν τὸ ἀσαφὲς τῇ ἐρμηνείᾳ κεχρησθαι . . . δεύτερον δ' εἰ ἐπὶ πλείον εἴρηκε τὸν λόγον τοῦ δέοντος· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ προσκείμενον ἐν τῷ ὀρισμῷ περιέργον.'

⁸ Text after G. Achard (ed.), *Rhetorique à Herennius* (Paris, 1989).

introduce the concept of *paucitas*, which is the philosophical concept in Cicero's description of *partitio*. The passage is the following:

Expositio est, cum res, quibus de rebus dicturi sumus, exponimus breuiter et absolute. (1.17)⁹

Cicero's claim to originality seems to be well grounded, even if *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is only one of *De Inuentione*'s contemporary handbooks of rhetoric.¹⁰ Again, I am aware that the introduction of the concept of *paucitas* in rhetoric could be due to Cicero's direct source rather than to himself. But, in the light of the existing evidence, any further discussion on this point would be purely speculative.

What, however, I intend to stress in conclusion is that Cicero in the section on *partitio* recognizes and correctly illustrates how the qualities of a speech may be improved by using philosophical devices. In so doing, the young Cicero shows an early anticipation of his later programme of blending rhetoric and philosophy as the aim of the orator. And it is an achievement with which he seems to be very pleased.

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⁹ Text after F. Marx (ed.), *Ad C. Herennium libri IV* (Lipsiae, 1894). Marx, differently from Achard (n. 3), places commas after *res* and *sumus* and makes the text easier to understand.

¹⁰ Achard (n. 3), 88, claims that the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* presents a precept that is similar to Cicero's *paucitas* in 2.34, but this claim can be challenged. The passage underlined by Achard reads: *Item uitiosa expositio est quae constat ex falsa enumeratione, si, cum plura sunt, pauciora dicamus, hoc modo: Duae res sunt, iudices, quae omnes ad maleficiū impellant, luxuries et auaritia (Rhetorica ad Herennium 2.34)*. The author does warn orators not to present as separate concepts that are connected. However, he does not introduce the distinction between genera and species, which is fundamental to understanding and applying Cicero's precept. Moreover, the author does not himself seem to be aware of such a distinction, for he presents an example that, from a logical point of view, is wrong. He argues that 'distress' (*aegritudo*) is necessarily conjoined with 'fear' and 'desire', but this is evidently false. 'Distress' is neither a genus of 'fear' nor of 'desire'. It is simply a different species of passion.

VERGILIUM VESTIGARE: AENEID 12.587–8

Do objects have a soul? Or perish must
Alike great temples and Tanagra dust?

The last syllable of 'Tanagra' and the first three letters of 'dust' form the name of the murderer whose *shargar* (puny ghost) the radiant spirit of our poet was soon to face. 'Simple chance!' the pedestrian reader may cry. But let him try to see, as I have tried to see, how many combinations are possible and plausible. 'Leningrad used to be Petrograd?' 'A prig *rad* (obs. past tense of read) *us*?' (Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*)

In 1963 Edwin Brown (*Numeri Vergiliani*, Latomus 63) noted the possibility of an acrostic at *G.* 1.429–33. The would-be onomastic comprises five interlocked lines, each of which either begins with the initial syllable of one of the poet's three names (Publius Vergilius Maro) or ends with a characteristic autobiographical detail:

Luna, reuertentis cum primum colligit ignis,
si nigrum obscuro conprenderit aera cornu,
maxumus agricolis pelagoque parabitur imber;
at si virgineum suffuderit ore ruborem,