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READING AND THE "WRITTEN STYLE" IN ARISTOTLE'S *RHETORIC*

Abstract. *At* Rhetoric *3.12 Aristotle describes differences between a "written"style,which he associates with the epideictic genre, and a "debating"style suited to deliberative and forensic oratory. This paper argues that this seemingly unproblematic distinction constitutes a crucial indicator of the orientation of Aristotle's style theory as a whole. Passages throughout* Rhetoric *3.1-12 offer precepts oriented toward the medium of writing and the reading of texts–that is, they describe a specifically "written" style of prose. In contrast, Aristotle largely neglects the agonistic style of practical oratory, a fact that can be taken as another indication of the literary, and literate, bias pervading Aristotle's account of prose* lexis. *In addition to disclosing nuances in the text of* Rhetoric *3, this study contributes to our understanding of the ways in which early rhetorical theory responds to and is constrained by the circumstances of written composition and oratorical performance.*

The idea that Aristotle stands in a pivotal position in the Greek transition from orality to literacy has become something of a commonplace in the scholarly literature. His observation in the *Poetics* that a well-constructed drama can achieve all its tragic effects by being read is often cited as a decisive step in the history of literary criticism, a striking instance of the text being considered on a par with—even ahead of—the spoken word and its presentation in staged performance.[1] Similarly, the notion that Aristotle's theory of rhetoric is both enabled and conditioned by the availability of written texts has been suggested with increasing confidence and frequency. In several recent studies this position has been advanced in the service of challenging received views concerning the disciplinary status of rhetoric in the fifth and early-fourth centuries BCE. Thomas Cole and Edward Schiappa, for example, have argued that a rather advanced literacy—such as is reflected in the works of Plato and Aristotle—is a necessary precondition for the sort of analysis and abstraction needed for a truly theoretical understanding of rhetorical art (Cole; Schiappa; see also Thomas and Webb). Others have extended this insight to the interpretation of specific aspects of the *Rhetoric*. Aristotle's literacy, or text-centeredness, has been used to explain his literary preferences, notably his distaste for the "oral" elements of Gorgias' poetic prose (Connors 46-57; Schiappa 98-105; see also Enos 85-90, 119-120). The illustrative quotations inscribed in the *Rhetoric* have been studied as markers of the work's intended audience, presumably one consisting of literate members of the Athenian cultural elite (Trevett). Aristotle's characterization of

epideictic as aestheticized written form and his analytic parsing of the *endoxa* of oral culture have been identified as features of the *Rhetoric* that at once betray an epistemology tinctured by literacy and delimit the social and political influence of vital rhetorical practices (Schiappa 185-206; Haskins, "Rhetoric between Orality and Literacy").

Somewhat surprisingly, though, in all this work premised on claims derived from Aristotle's (hyper-) literacy, attention has rarely focused on those statements in the *Rhetoric* that most clearly reflect Aristotle's own awareness of his placement in a literate environment. There are several statements in the treatise where consideration of the written word appears to take priority over that of the spoken.   Indeed, as Bernard Knox has observed, "[i]t is in this work [the *Rhetoric*] that for the first time we are presented with critical remarks which refer specifically to the text visualized as a written page rather than conceived of as something heard" (Knox, "Books and Readers" 13). In what follows, I aim to show that this emphasis on the visual dimension of texts is especially prominent in the account of style *(lexis)* in book 3, which at several points reveals Aristotle's sensitivity to the opportunities and challenges presented by the medium of writing and the practice of reading. I begin with perhaps the most obvious instance—the final chapter on rhetorical *lexis, Rhetoric* 3.12, in which Aristotle discusses differences between what he terms the "competitive" and "written" styles of prose. Although this distinction has seemed unproblematic to commentators, I argue here that Aristotle's recognition of a specifically written style provides a crucial but to this point undervalued indicator of the generally bookish character of Aristotle's style theory and the *Rhetoric* as a whole. The brief account of the *lexis graphikê* in *Rhetoric* 3.12 is supplemented by many passages elsewhere in *Rhetoric* 3 where Aristotle gives special attention to the difficulties involved in composing a readable text. And though some of his remarks on the written style are anticipated by earlier authors, Aristotle's analysis offers several important and what appear to be unprecedented insights into the material conditions of literacy and special circumstances of literate activity in the fourth-century BCE.

After a brief analysis of *Rhetoric* 3.12, I situate Aristotle's remarks on the *lexis graphikê* in the context of earlier reflections on the style of written speeches. I then concentrate on those passages where Aristotle commends stylistic features not for any demonstrable contribution to the task of persuasion, but rather for their capacity to facilitate the reading process. What emerges from this analysis is a conspicuous emphasis on what might be called (adapting a notion of Roland Barthes') a "readerly" style of writing, one that makes itself unambiguous to the reader and thereby reduces the amount of creative guesswork that goes into the oral interpretation of the ancient text. In the final section of the paper, I attempt to reconstruct Aristotle's views on

the other style identified in *Rhetoric* 3.12, the *lexis agônistikê* of practical oratory. I observe that in the whole of 3.1-12 references to the distinct stylistic features of deliberative and forensic speeches are surprisingly rare; further, Aristotle's rather lukewarm appraisal of such oratory bespeaks a curious disregard of the most characteristically "oral" forms of rhetorical practice.

While I do not here advance any claims regarding the larger social consequences following upon the spread of literacy and increased acquaintance with texts, I will argue that these features of *Rhetoric* 3 have significant implications for the interpretation of several well-known Aristotelian stylistic precepts. More broadly, this study aims to encourage continued examination of early, foundational rhetoric texts for the sometimes quite subtle signs of their having been composed with an eye to very specific sorts of discursive practice. Rather than interpreting these signs as simply symptomatic of the cultural and psychic developments that come in the wake of major advances in communication technologies, the sort of revisionist approach advocated here reads texts like the *Rhetoric* as historically situated responses (or challenges) to existing conditions of oral and/or written rhetorical performance.

THE WRITTEN STYLE

Rhetoric 3.12 contains Aristotle's account of the competitive and written styles of rhetorical prose. The competitive or "agonistic" style *(lexis agônistikê)* is said to be suitable to forensic and deliberative speeches, while the written style *(lexis graphikê)* is associated with *epideixeis* (3.12 1413b4-5; 1414a5-17). Complementing this division based on oratorical genre, the two styles are assigned distinct functions *(erga)*. The function of the agonistic style is delivery *(hupokrisis)* (1413b18); it fulfills its purpose in oral performance before an audience. The *ergon* of the written style is a reading *(anagnôsis)* (1414a18); as will be shown later, by "reading" Aristotle here undoubtedly means a reading aloud, but presumably one lacking the dramatic vocal and gestural accompaniments of full *hupokrisis*. Concerning specific qualities of the two styles, Aristotle presents only the briefest sketch. Asyndeton and repetition are identified as features of the competitive style, particularly inasmuch as these devices encourage effective delivery (1413b17-31); a passage in asyndeton, he says, requires active delivery and modulations of the "character and tone" *(êthei kai tonôi)* of presentation (1413b30-31). The only quality identified with the written style is its exactness or precision *(akribeia)* (1413b9, 13). Finally, although demegoric and dicanic speeches both use the agonistic style, Aristotle states that they differ in the degree of *akribeia* required (1414a7-17). What results is a continuum, with the written style displaying the most *akribeia*, the demegoric style the least, and the forensic something in between.[2]

This, in brief, is Aristotle's analysis at *Rhetoric* 3.12. The careful differ-

entiation of styles appears for all intents a codification of distinctions latent in earlier authors. Aristotle's account has antecedents in works of the early-to mid-fourth century authors Alcidamas and Isocrates, and analogous sortings into the language of written epideictic and a style more suited to delivery and persuasion can also be found in other sources roughly contemporary with the *Rhetoric*. [3] The distinction persists in later antiquity, too, as Aristotle's description is clearly called to mind in Demetrius' *On Style* and is echoed in the works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintilian as well. [4] Indeed, Aristotle's discussion at 3.12 has frequently been cited as a significant early manifestation of the ancient penchant for proposing broad classifications of style types, even as a prefiguration of the *genera dicendi* ubiquitous in these later rhetorics and style manuals. [5] By and large, however, commentators on the *Rhetoric* have failed to appreciate the extent to which Aristotle's distinction figures in his own stylistic theory beyond its explicit invocation in 3.12. In his influential studies of the origins of the characters of style, for example, G. L. Hendrickson argued (against the more recent consensus) that Aristotle's conception of stylistic excellence could not tolerate the notion of distinct style types, but he did so only by virtually ignoring the contents of *Rhetoric* 3.12. [6] On the other extreme, Neil O'Sullivan has called the "written/spoken division" suggested in 3.12, "the basis of [Aristotle's] stylistic analysis of prose" ("Written and Spoken" 126). This, it seems to me, overestimates the significance of Aristotle's account, inasmuch as the distinction and its specific terms are nowhere mentioned prior to 3.12. Indeed, earlier chapters of book 3 had made no reference to different style-types nor suggested anything like distinctive, genre-specific stylistic variations. The twelfth chapter and the stylistic distinction it contains have the character of an afterthought and so could hardly be called the "basis" of an analysis that runs from the beginning of book 3.

Rather than studying Aristotle's classification as in some way fundamental to later theories of style "characters," I would direct attention more specifically to the implications following from Aristotle's recognition of a type of prose intended for reading and of a corresponding "written" style. As noted earlier, Aristotle's account is not entirely original. Such notions were evidently of considerable interest to certain of Aristotle's predecessors, especially Isocrates and Alcidamas. A brief examination of these sources provides a crucial context for understanding the ways in which style was conceived to impinge on the practice of reading and on oratorical delivery.

In a passage of *To Philip*, Isocrates attempts to defend his practice of publishing his views in carefully composed written discourses rather than through conventional public address. In so doing, he acknowledges certain advantages of performed oratory:

> I do not fail to realize what a great difference there is in persuasiveness
> *(to peithein)* between discourses which are spoken *(hoi legomenoi)* and
> those which are read *(tôn anagignôskomenôn)*, and that all men have
> assumed that the former are delivered on subjects that are important
> and urgent, while the latter are composed for display and personal gain
> *(pros epideixin kai pros ergolabian gegraphthai)*. And this is not an
> unreasonable conclusion; for when a discourse is deprived of the pres-
> tige of the speaker, the sound of his voice *(phônê)*, the variations in
> delivery *(metabolôn. . .en tais rhêtoreiais)*, and, besides, of the advan-
> tages of timeliness and zeal concerning the subject matter [. . .] and
> when someone reads it out unpersuasively and without investing it with
> character *(anagignôskêi de tis auton apithanôs kai mêden êthos
> ensêmainomenos)*, but rather as one would recite statistics—in these
> circumstances it is natural, I think, that it should seem trivial to its
> hearers.   *(To Philip* 25-26; trans. adapted from Norlin)

It has been suggested, by Cope and others, that Isocrates' remarks here may
have influenced Aristotle's treatment of the written and agonistic styles.[7] Op-
posing this view, O'Sullivan contends that Isocrates is not making a stylistic
distinction at all, but simply commenting on the relative audience-effects of dif-
fering modes of presentation (live speech vs. writing) *(Alcidamas* 54-55). While
it is true that Isocrates notes no strictly stylistic differences between speeches
spoken *(hoi legomenoi)* and those to be read *(tôn anagignôskomenôn)*, the
parallels with *Rhetoric* 3.12 are striking. They extend beyond the associa-
tion of writing with ("mere") display or *epideixis,* a popular assumption to
which Isocrates clearly objects. Consistent with Isocrates' account of the
dynamism of spoken oratory, Aristotle recognizes the agonistic style's ca-
pacity to express the emotion and character of the speaker.[8] Also like Isocrates,
Aristotle attributes this quality to variations *(metabola)* in delivery and, spe-
cifically, to vocal modulation.[9] The two authors, in short, cover much of the
same ground, and Isocratean influence on Aristotle cannot be discounted es-
pecially in light of the fact that style and delivery were not clearly differenti-
ated in this period or by either author.[10]

What is lacking in Aristotle's account is the self-defensive posture as-
sumed by Isocrates. Isocrates' remarks in *To Philip* are designed to counter
the apparently widespread suspicion of writing and, more specifically, writ-
ten oratory.[11] Indeed, they can be considered a late riposte in Isocrates' ongoing
feud with rival educators, notably the sophist Alcidamas, who criticized Isocrates
for his reliance on the written word. Isocrates' dispute with Alcidamas centered
essentially on the capacity of the written discourse to do the work of the
performed oration. However, the debate was, as O'Sullivan has put it, "as
much stylistic as anything else."[12] Alcidamas, the champion of extempora-

neous speaking, granted that the fine style made possible by the technology of writing was expected in *epideixeis,* but considered such a style ineffective in the *agônes* of the courts or assembly *(On Sophists* 12-14, 29-31). A work written with "precision and rhythm" *(met' akribeias kai rhuthmou),* he asserts, "may have some striking effects when viewed in a book *(ek bibliou <men> theôroumenos echei tinas ekplêxeis),"* but its fixity *(akinêtos)* renders it of no help in the heat of oratorical struggle (16, 28). Like both Isocrates and Aristotle, Alcidamas also suggests that such a style is unsuited to a plausible or moving delivery.[13]

Although Alcidamas nowhere singles out Isocrates by name, his critique of finely written speeches is perfectly consistent with the standard view of Isocrates' style in later antiquity. Demetrius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Cicero, and Quintilian all praise the artistic finish of Isocrates' writings, but criticize it for its artificiality and lack of persuasive force. More tellingly, Isocrates' ancient critics stress the inability of his prose to be delivered energetically and in such a way as to convey emotion or character, and do so in terms often reminiscent of Alcidamas' complaints against written works in *On Sophists.*[14] Significantly, the passage of *To Philip* quoted above shows that Isocrates disagrees only partly on these counts. He admits that a text read aloud, but lacking the energy of the actual author, is bound to suffer somewhat in "persuasiveness" *(to peithein).* However, Isocrates counters by alleging that this loss in persuasiveness need not be absolute: the reader need not read out the discourse entirely unpersuasively *(apithanôs)* and should at least attempt to invest it with "character" *(êthos ensêmainomenos).*

Isocrates asserts, in short, that a text can be read well or it can be read poorly. Being himself confined to the written medium,[15] it is not surprising that Isocrates expresses this concern on more than one occasion. In the *Antidosis,* Isocrates advises his readers not to attempt to recite the entire discourse all at once and to fix their attention on the text in front of them in order to adjust their tone of delivery and so avoid monotony *(Antidosis* 1, 12). In the *Panathenaicus* Isocrates laments faulty recitations of his works, lashing out at certain rival teachers who use his discourses as models, yet "abuse [them], reading them in the worst possible manner side by side with their own, dividing them up *(diairountes)* in all the wrong places, cutting them up *(kataknizontes),* and in every way spoiling their effect."[16] His motive is, again, clearly polemical. Isocrates was apparently the first author to compose works in oratorical form intended to influence the outcome of public debate—works, that is, that were intended expressly to be published *as texts* (Kennedy, *Cambridge History* 186). This innovation was, however, the source of considerable misunderstanding and adverse criticism in Isocrates' lifetime. Among other criticisms, Isocrates' texts were apparently open to the charge of being nothing more than empty displays of virtuosity (see *To*

Philip 11, *Letter to Archidamus* 15, *Panathenaicus* 16). Consequently, Isocrates repeatedly emphasizes his works' political seriousness and pedagogical value. His *politikoi logoi,* though written in an "epideictic" *(epideiktikôs)* style *(Panegyricus* 11), were, he asserts, genuine attempts to influence public opinion. But they were also designed to serve as models, stylistic and substantive, to be imitated by his students.[17] And the care which Isocrates lavished on their style is indicative of his intention for them: they are works to be read carefully and capable of being reread with profit (see especially *Panathenaicus* 233-270).

In light of Isocrates' grand claims for his (carefully written) works, no less his identification of the central elements that go into a "good" reading or effective recitation of them, it would seem reasonable to expect Aristotle's account of the written style to give some clues as to the particular qualities that make this style suitable for reading. *Rhetoric* 3.12, however, provides very little information of this sort, and indeed, disappointingly little information at all on the written style. A cursory survey of the chapter shows that whereas approximately 39 lines of the Greek text are given to the agonistic style and to its applications in deliberative and forensic oratory, a scant 8 lines treat the written style. Consequently, scholars have struggled to enlarge on Aristotle's account, typically proffering interpretations that invest the *lexis graphikê* with a heightened aesthetic sense. Seemingly led by later style theories, in which epideictic oratory was firmly associated with the middle or florid style (e.g., Cicero, *Orator* 37-38, 42; Quintilian 8.3.11-12), several commentators have taken Aristotle's account of the written style to imply elaborate ornamentation and brilliance of language. Cope, for example, thought *akribeia* in 3.12 suggests "high artistic finish. . .the artificial graces of a *finished* composition, such as appear for instance in the writings of Isocrates" (Cope 324 n. 4, 328 n. 1). Atkins saw even more: "[the written] style in general [Aristotle] describes as exact and finished, capable of minute and delicate touches, expressive of all the finer shades of feeling. . . [A]nd from the other two styles [dicanic and demegoric] it is said to differ materially, being more ornate than the forensic, less broad in its effects than the deliberative style" (Atkins 1:148).

It should be clear that Atkins' interpretation goes far beyond anything stated in *Rhetoric* 3.12. As noted above, Aristotle identifies the *lexis graphikê* as suitable to *epideixis* and assigns to it the function *(ergon)* of reading, but concerning the style *per se* Aristotle says only that "the written style has *akribeia* in the highest degree" *(lexis graphikê. . .hê akribestatê)* (3.12 1413b8-9; see also 1413b13, 1414a9, 11, 16).

An accurate reconstruction of the written style obviously hinges on a correct understanding of Aristotle's use of the term *akribeia.* Unfortunately, *Rhetoric* 3.12 provides little elucidation on this point.[18] Here, another look

back to the Alcidamas-Isocrates debate may help fill out Aristotle's sketchy
account. *Akribeia* is the same quality identified by Alcidamas as a primary
feature of finely written speeches, and by Isocrates as characteristic of his
own discourses.[19]   Though a precise meaning is difficult to pin down, as a
term for prose style in these authors *akribeia* carries a fairly consistent set of
associations.[20]   For Alcidamas, *akribeia* is the product of painstaking written
composition and revision; it is "worked out" *(exergazesthai)* of the raw ma-
terial of ordinary language *(On Sophists* 12, 16, 25). A discourse with *akribeia*
is thoroughly opposed to the style of extemporaneous speech and, as such,
gives the speech an air of artificiality and marks it as having been prepared in
advance (12-13, 33-34). Similarly, Isocrates draws a line between the *akribeia*
of his carefully wrought *logoi* and the simplicity, or slovenliness, of speeches
typically delivered in the courts *(Panegyricus* 11; *Panathenaicus* 2, 24).   In
both authors, then, *akribeia* is antithetical to spontaneous utterance; it is a
sort of stylistic exactitude or refinement that can be achieved only with great
effort.   Their respective evaluations of the quality are, however, quite op-
posed.   For Alcidamas, *akribeia* may bring admiration to the composer of
epideixeis, but it should be avoided in forensic and deliberative oratory, where,
he says, the orator should hide his art.   Never one to advocate the conceal-
ment of art, Isocrates' contrary view is that *akribeia* is something to be delib-
erately sought and praised as a sign of the rhetor's preparation in the higher
art of discourse (such as he himself taught and practiced).

Whether considered a virtue or a vice, *akribeia* is consistently linked
with facility in written composition. But while complexity of style or elabo-
rate ornamentation is clearly conveyed in several passages of Alcidamas and
Isocrates, it is hard to get this sense out of the pithy analysis in *Rhetoric* 3.12.
While such qualities may be implied in the notion of the *lexis graphikê,* they
are subordinated to an emphasis peculiar to Aristotle's account and absent
from those of Alcidamas and Isocrates.   In 3.12, the precision or exactitude
of the written style is not identified as the quality that makes it artistic (or
artificial), but rather as that which makes it suitable for reading.   Considered
in this light, Aristotle's association of the written style with *akribeia* implies
not an aesthetic virtue but a more humble concern for making the text acces-
sible to the reader.   This sense is captured in D. A. Russell's terse summary:

> When we write to be read, we no longer have expressiveness of voice
> or gesture to help us in making our meaning clear.   Punctuation and
> word-division hardly existed in Greek at this time; and Aristotle is com-
> mending a kind of *akribeia* ("exactness") which makes the written word
> unambiguous, even in these conditions.[21]

Russell offers these remarks without further comment or reference to the text

of the *Rhetoric*. His interpretation proves quite plausible, though, when considered in light of several passages in *Rhetoric* 3 where something very like *akribeia* in this sense is consistently implied as essential for the reading and adequate comprehension of prose texts.

PROSE FOR READING

We have seen already, in Alcidamas, explicit reference made to the physicality of written texts. Indeed, to bolster his claim that works composed with care have "certain startling effects when viewed in a book" but limited practical efficacy, Alcidamas draws a rather lush analogy with sculpture. Bronze statues and stone monuments, he says, "give delight to the view *(terpsin epi tês theôrias echei)*," but, like written speeches, "are of no use in human life" *(On Sophists* 27). Aristotle, too, makes frequent, though usually more subtle, allusions to the visual character of the written speech. Unlike Alcidamas', however, his references are often starkly literal and directed to issues of a very pragmatic—by modern standards, even elementary—nature. Aristotle frequently commends stylistic features specifically for their capacity to facilitate the reading of a text—if not exactly in Isocrates' sense of investing the text with character and persuasiveness, then at least in order to enhance the reader's comprehension of it.

Near the end of *Rhetoric* 3.8, for example, Aristotle comments on a notable advantage of rhythm as an aid to reading. For the close of an utterance, he recommends the paeonic rhythm terminating on a long syllable, for, he says, "[an expression] should be cut off with a long syllable and be a clear termination, not through the action of a scribe *(mê dia ton graphea)* or the presence of a marginal mark *(paragraphê)*, but through the rhythm" (3.8 1409a19-21). There are, of course, benefits to the hearer in having an utterance conclude with a definite stop. But Aristotle's account here emphasizes the benefits to the reader: the rhythm should dictate when he should pause in his recitation of the text. For reasons that will become clear very shortly, it is perhaps best to speak of "recitation" here and elsewhere, so long as it is understood that the recitation is performed with the text before the eyes of the one reciting and, quite possibly, on a "first run through" the speech. That Aristotle is thinking here not of the delivery of a speech to an audience of jurors or assembly members is unambiguous. It is quite unlikely that a fourth-century orator would appear in the assembly or in court while holding the text of his speech,[22] so the scribal notations mentioned at 3.8 1409a19-21 would not be of any use even if they were marked on the text.

Aristotle evidently prefers the rhythmic stop to the orthographic symbol, an essentially aural, as opposed to visible, punctuation "mark." The crucial lesson of the passage on the paean, however, is that the desired aural effect is *got off the page* and that the style of writing in fact compels the

reader-reciter's voice to achieve it. Thus, if Aristotle rejects written punctua-
tion as gratuitous, his recommendation of the terminal paean amounts to a
creative substitute for such orthographic aids. It represents a convenience
for the reader, even casual peruser, of words written on papyrus or parch-
ment.

Similar consideration of the reader is found elsewhere in *Rhetoric* 3. In
3.5, after he has listed the several rules for "speaking Greek" (*to hellênizein*),
Aristotle appends a passage where he considers some of the sources of ob-
scurity in writers such as Heraclitus. His general advice for the avoidance of
ambiguity is as follows:

> What is written should be easy to read *(euanagnôston)* and easy to
> speak *(euphraston)* — which is the same thing. Use of many connectives
> does not have this quality; nor do phrases not easily punctuated *(oud'*
> *ha mê rhaidion diastixai)*, for example, the writings of Heraclitus. To
> punctuate the writings of Heraclitus is a difficult task because it is un-
> clear what goes with what, whether with what follows or with what
> precedes. For example, in the beginning of his treatise he says, "Of the
> Logos that exists always *(aiei)* ignorant are men." It is unclear whether
> *always* *(aiei)* goes with what precedes [or what follows].
>
> (3.5 1407b11-18)

Aristotle's contention that a text which is easy to read *(euanagnôston)* is
also easy to speak *(euphraston)* is a pertinent reminder that reading in Classi-
cal Greece was often an oral affair.[23] However, the more significant implication
of this passage for my purposes is that it focuses attention on the demands of the
reading text as opposed to the script to be memorized and delivered with full
histrionic accompaniment. Presumably, texts of the former sort would be best
composed in the "written style" identified in *Rhetoric* 3.12, the style whose "func-
tion" is a reading *(anagnôsis)* (3.12 1414a18). In the case of scripts intended
for delivery, though, ease of casual perusal would be less a concern. Rather,
advanced preparation and close familiarity with the text would be assumed
of the speaker, whose vocal inflections, gestures, and facial expressions in
performance would all serve to disambiguate the meaning for the audience
—a process that would be virtually impossible in an unprepared or unre-
hearsed "reading-out" of the same words.

The passage on *to hellênizein* again reveals Aristotle's concern that texts
be written in a way that simplifies the activity of reading. In Classical Greece,
this required considerable care on the part of the writer. As Russell notes in
the passage quoted earlier, Greek manuscripts typically did not include punc-
tuation marks or even space to separate words.[24] In most cases accents, pauses,
smooth or rough breathings, and inflections to indicate questions or excla-

mations had to be determined, and then supplied, by the reader. Overcoming such orthographic challenges could be difficult, as the case of Heraclitus' "Logos fragment" shows. A glance at the physical makeup of ancient manuscripts should make the challenge of reading them even more apparent (Figure 1). Nevertheless, the reader's comprehension of the text, no less that of his potential hearers, required accuracy in such matters. And Aristotle appears to be the earliest source testifying to the fact that the reader's decisions are often constrained—but, ideally, enhanced—by the author's manner of composition.
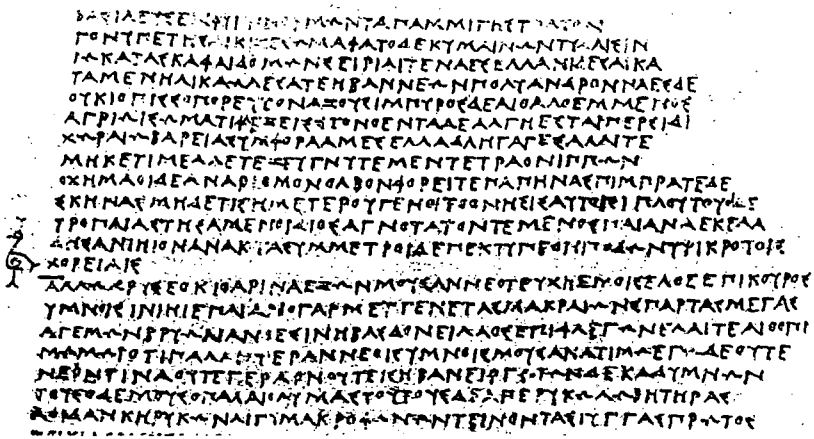

FIG. 1: Papyrus, Timotheus' *The Persians* (P. Berol. 9875), dating to the fourth century BCE and among the oldest surviving literary manuscripts. Note that, although the work is composed in metre, metrical divisions are not consistently indicated by line breaks. The handwriting veers from a stable horizontal baseline and punctuation is minimal—only a *paragraphe* (underscore) at the beginning line 13 and a bird figure in the left margin indicating a section break. For more discussion of this papyrus, see C. H. Roberts, *Greek Literary Hands* 1 and *Oxford Classical Dictionary* s.v. "Timotheus (1)". The figure is reproduced from Roberts, *Greek Literary Hands* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), by permission of Oxford University Press. Size is here reduced to approximately 40 percent that of the original papyrus.

Walter Ong has argued that such basic requirements of a reading text are symptomatic of the increasingly analytic modes of thought and expression facilitated by the spread of literacy (Ong 78-138). Although I will not here enter into the issue of the presumed "restructuring of consciousness" involved in the transition from orality to literacy in Classical Greece, I believe Ong's observations concerning the demands of the reading text represent a particularly apt summary of the analysis to this point:

> To make yourself clear without gesture, without facial expression, without intonation, without a real hearer, you have to foresee circumspectly all possible meanings a statement may have for any possible reader in

> any possible situation, and you have to make your language work so as
> to come clear all by itself with no existential context. The need for this
> exquisite circumspection makes writing the agonizing work it com-
> monly is. (104)

Of course, in the case of ancient literary works, which were frequently, per-
haps usually, intended for oral reading before at least a small gathering, there
is a "real" hearer (or hearers) and *some* existential context in the actual reci-
tation. But Ong's point is well taken: these elements are inaccessible to the
writer of the text as he is writing. On this point, Aristotle's remarks on rhythm
and the obscurity of Heraclitus can be said to anticipate Ong's conclusion.
Aristotle urges the writer to agonize over his style of writing in order to help
relieve some of the difficulties faced by his future readers.

The account of the period in *Rhetoric* 3.9 provides yet another illustra-
tion of Aristotle's tendency to commend or explain stylistic devices in terms
of their assistance to the reader. Aristotle observes that the cola that make up
the period must be of an appropriate length, neither too short nor too long
(3.9 1409b17 ff.). While his reasons for this requirement involve benefits to
the hearer —short cola "cause the hearer a bump. . . he is pulled up short by
the speaker's pausing," whereas long ones "cause him to be left behind" (3.9
1409b17-24) —, Aristotle also emphasizes its benefits for the potential speaker
or reader. He observes that *"Lexis* in cola is completed and divided and
easily uttered by the breath *(euanapneustos),* not in its division, but in the
whole" (3.9 1409b13-16). In this case, the stylistic device's conformity to
the breath is equally advantageous to the performing orator and the non-
dramatic reader.[25] Earlier in the chapter, however, Aristotle had defined the
period in terms that suggest he has the interests of the reader foremost in
mind. He states that "a period *(periodos)* [is] an expression *(lexis)* having a
beginning and an end in itself and a magnitude *easily taken in at a glance
(eusunopton)"* (3.9 1409a35-b1; my emphasis). In a literal gloss, the "size"
of the expression is here said to be optimal when it is capable of being "viewed
all at once" *(eu-* = "readily", *sunoran* = "to see together, at the same time").
And while there is precedent for a looser interpretation of Aristotle's ocular
imagery here,[26] the evidence compiled to this point strongly suggests that it
should be appreciated literally as well. The period should be easily *seen* in
its entirety, on the page, by the reader.

Here, it is important to note that Aristotle does not mean by the period
the lengthy sentences of writers like Isocrates, but rather the structural units
on which these sentences are built, such as antitheses and similar figures of
symmetry or balance (Kennedy, *Aristotle* 239). This meaning is clear from
the examples of period in two cola Aristotle quotes, ten relatively compact
specimens from Isocrates' *Panegyricus* (3.9 1409b33-1410a16). A sample

of these citations is revealing, even when recast according to modern typographical conventions and in English:

> *Lexis* in cola is either divided or contrasted. It is divided in this example:
> "Often have I admired those organizing panegyric festivals and those instituting athletic contests."
> It is contrasted when in each colon opposite lies with opposite or the same is yoked with its opposites, for example . . .
> "It happens often in these circumstances that the wise fail and the foolish succeed" [and]
> "Straightway they were thought worthy of meeds of valor and not much later they took command of the sea."
> <div align="right">(3.9 1409b33-1410a9; cf. Panegyricus 1, 48, 72)</div>

As is apparent, these smaller quoted units can indeed be scanned visually in a way a complete Isocratean sentence cannot. Hence, Aristotle's point seems to be, as Tony Lentz puts it, that "a period is easy to see all at once *and* to say in one breath" (Lentz 132; his emphasis). Just as Isocrates had recommended in the *Antidosis* (12), Aristotle is suggesting that it befits the reader to look ahead in the text, presumably in order to anticipate the vocal modulations it demands.[27] Composition in periods, as Aristotle defines the period, enables the reader to do just this.

The analysis to this point has attempted to capture those moments where Aristotle's attention passes from "ear-language" to "eye-language." Here, though, a caveat seems in order, as Aristotle's propensity to couch his analysis in visual terms can suggest some rather risky interpretations of other passages of *Rhetoric* 3. For example, an especially difficult section of *Rhetoric* 3.2 contains expressions that might suggest a special fascination with the visual appearance of written words. In the course of discussing the sources and appeal of metaphor, Aristotle refers briefly to previous authors' views on the subject and then offers an opinion of his own:

> And the source of metaphor should be something beautiful; verbal beauty, as Licymnius says, is in the sound *(en tois psophois)* or in the sense *(tôi sêmainomenôi)*, and ugliness the same; and thirdly is what refutes the sophistic argument: . . . [O]ne word is more proper than another and more like the object signified and more adapted to making the thing appear "before the eyes" *(oikeioteron tôi poiein to pragma pro ommatôn). . .* These are the sources from which metaphor should be taken: from the beautiful either in sound or in effect *or in sight* or in some other form of sense perception *(apo kalôn ê têi phônêi ê têi*

> *dunamei ê têi opsei ê allêi tini aisthêsei).* It makes a difference whether
> the dawn is called "rosy-fingered" *(rhododaktulos)* or "purple-fingered"
> *(phoinikodaktulos)* or worse still, "red-fingered" *(eruthrodaktulos).*
>   (3.2 1405b5-21; trans. adapted from Kennedy, my emphases)

In an appendix to his *Greek Metaphor,* W. B. Stanford suggested (albeit rather tentatively) that the reference here to "sight" *(opsis)* might be meant literally, as opposed to the standard interpretation in which Aristotle is taken to refer to a metaphor's appeal to the "mind's eye" or "visual imagination" (63-69; see also Stanford, "Quality of *Opsis*"). In Stanford's account, Aristotle is made to attend to the direct effect of the *visual shapes* of written letters or words. This rather fanciful suggestion does not seem to have gained any supporters, however, nor does it explain why Aristotle would restrict a need for visual appeal in the written form of words to those that are functioning as metaphors. If Aristotle is indeed interested in the aesthetic appeal of written tokens, why would he not invoke this idea as a more general principle of composition? While it is unnecessary to deny that certain Classical authors did make much of the physical appearance of writing,[28] in the case of *opsis* at *Rhetoric* 3.2 it is probably best not to force a strict, literal reading of Aristotle's visual imagery (see also terms discussed in note 26, above).

George Kennedy is surely right to warn against exaggerating the consequences of literacy in antiquity, a period when "sound remained an integral part of the literary experience" *(Cambridge History* 88; see also Kennedy, *New History* 28). But while caution in handling Aristotle's ocular vocabulary is clearly called for, there seems no denying his exceptional sensitivity to the ways in which the visual arrangement and physical layout of the written text will bear on the eventual actualization of the text in sound. In *Rhetoric* 3 we witness how thoroughly sound has become bound up with sight: What is easy to read *(euanagnôston)* is, he says, also easy to speak *(euphraston),* for these are "the same thing." Moreover, an implicit privileging of vision is contained in Aristotle's insight that desired acoustic effects can be achieved most consistently when care is given to the manner in which words are arranged visually on the "page."

Aristotle's frequent commendation of techniques that aid the reader reveals a more general bias toward a written or "readerly" style of prose. From this, it should go without saying that Aristotle presumes a literate audience for his treatise. On this topic, several scholars have argued more specifically that the *Rhetoric*'s lessons are for a quite exclusive group, students trained in philosophy and intimately acquainted with Aristotle's political and ethical theories (Poster; Lord; Trevett). Such arguments would seem to encourage closer consideration of some of the more problematic aspects of the *Rhetoric* only implied to this point in the present analysis. If the *Rhetoric* is directed

to readers—potentially sophisticated and philosophically motivated readers—is it aimed to teach writers even before speakers? While Aristotle presents precepts that will assist the writer in composing a readable text, to what extent is his style theory adapted to the practice of persuasive speaking in the contexts of the fourth-century Athenian assembly or law courts? The passages I have examined so far fail to give clear answers to such questions; indeed, my reconstruction of *lexis graphikê* does not even indicate whether Aristotle is interested in an effective, persuasive reading-recitation such as Isocrates desired for his works *(To Philip* 25-26, above), or is concerned only with a clear, accurately intoned one. What is needed, then, is some inquiry into the status of the other style identified in *Rhetoric* 3.12, the "agonistic" style.

ARISTOTLE ON THE STYLE OF PRACTICAL ORATORY

In demonstrating the prevalence of precepts oriented especially to the demands of reading texts I have not meant to suggest that the style of performed oratory is totally neglected in Aristotle's stylistic theory. However, the topic figures much less prominently than one might expect in a treatise ostensibly devoted to *rhetorical* style. In this final section I address the question of Aristotle's familiarity with the practical oratory of his day and offer a brief reconstruction of his appraisal of the style of such oratory. Two related aspects of *Rhetoric* 3.1-12 bear directly on this issue. The first concerns the kinds of citations Aristotle chooses to illustrate the effective, or defective, use of specific stylistic devices; the second, the nature of Aristotle's evaluative remarks on the agonistic and written styles in 3.12.

It has long been remarked that Aristotle rarely refers to the forensic and deliberative works of the most notable speechwriters of classical Athens. While citations of Isocrates are frequent, in the whole of the *Rhetoric,* the logographers Antiphon, Lysias, and Isaeus are never mentioned by name. Aristotle only twice alludes to forensic speeches by Lysias, though in neither case is there an exact quotation.[29] A clearer citation of Lysias comes from his Funeral Speech, an epideictic work (see *Rhetoric* 3.10 1411a30-b1). Particularly glaring is Aristotle's reluctance to cite works by political speakers. An Aeschines is mentioned, but the reference is probably not to the orator *(Rhetoric* 3.16 1417b1-2; Trevett 371 with n. 2). There are but two citations of the words of one Demosthenes, who may or may not be the famous speaker.[30] Hyperides is never referred to.

The practically wholesale omission of Demosthenes is especially curious. It has often been explained as due to the orator's anti-Macedonian politics (see Cope 45-46, Kennedy, *Art of Persuasion* 84 n. 73). Recently, however, Jeremy Trevett offered a very different account. Trevett argues that Aristotle

systematically fails to quote from the text of a single true deliberative or forensic speech in all of the *Rhetoric*. Trevett maintains that the omissions are due, in part, to the scarcity of published copies of deliberative speeches in the mid- to late-fourth century, but even more importantly, to Aristotle's lack of interest in such oratory. When Aristotle does quote from oratorical works (as opposed to poetry, philosophy, or history), these are exclusively speeches of an epideictic sort—that is, works, such as Isocrates', intended for (eventual) circulation as texts. This, Trevett contends, reflects the literary preferences of Aristotle and his pupils: while the citations suggest a genuine appreciation of epideictic prose literature, they give little evidence of extensive study of, or regard for, the two major branches of practical oratory of his day (Trevett 377).

Trevett arrives at his conclusions from an analysis of the citations in all three books of the *Rhetoric* and does not consider the implications of his findings specifically for Aristotle's style theory. However, his insights can easily be extended to reveal how this same literary bias pervades *Rhetoric* 3.1-12. In the chapters on *lexis*, citations of prose authors (besides Isocrates) are largely confined to three passages, *Rhetoric* 3.3, 3.4.3, and 3.10.7. *Rhetoric* 3.3 is the chapter on the topic of frigidity in diction *(ta psuchra)*, and is made up almost entirely of examples of inappropriate, unclear, or "poetic" language quoted from works by Alcidamas and two of his reputed associates, Gorgias and Lycophron. The sources for the quotations in 3.3 are unknown, but it is doubtful that they come from works of deliberative or forensic oratory. More likely, they are from lost epideictic works, although it has been suggested that Aristotle's source for the Alcidamas material is a lost handbook by the sophist (see Solmsen 184-195). Regardless of the sources of this material, Aristotle's disapproval of the style of these authors is unambiguous. If the quoted "frigidities" do in fact come from works epideictic in nature, it shows that Aristotle could be discriminating in the context of his own expectations for each oratorical genre. Note that the works of Isocrates' are, by contrast, referred to frequently throughout 3.1-12 but are invariably cited with approval.[31]

The second and third passages, 3.4.3 and 3.10.7, contain what look like examples of genuine deliberative or forensic oratory. Here, Aristotle quotes well-known statesmen (notably Pericles) and imaginative phrases drawn from a number of lesser or otherwise unknown political speakers, many of them his contemporaries. Nearly all of these speakers are cited only once or twice, and many of them are cited nowhere else in the *Rhetoric*.[32] Trevett examined these sorts of citations and Aristotle's manner of introducing them throughout the *Rhetoric*, and determined that none could be demonstrated to come from the text of a published speech (Trevett 373-374). Rather, Trevett suggests that the striking metaphors taken from most of the public speakers Aristotle cites would have been current in oral tradition or compiled in col-

lections of popular sayings; these nuggets could be added to the *Rhetoric* "piecemeal, as they came to [Aristotle's] attention."[33] The quotations in 3.4.3 and 3.10.7 conform nicely to this explanation. Both sections consist entirely of striking images (similes in 3.4.3, metaphors in 3.10.7), all of the examples are cited with minimal regard for the context of the speech in which they occur, and none is explained any more than to clarify the stylistic device it is intended to illustrate.

Remarkably, when 3.4.3 and 3.10.7 are set aside, Aristotle's discussion of style contains almost no references at all to actual forensic or deliberative oratory.[34] And when 3.3 on *ta psuchra* is also removed, there are practically no citations of oratorical prose of any kind, excepting the works of Isocrates. What remains are quotations from epic, tragic, and lyric poets, and a few philosophers. Aristotle illustrates prose rhythm with samples of lyric poetry (3.8 1409a14-17). For examples of hyperbole and asyndeton, he quotes Homer (3.11 1413a31-34, 3.12 1414a2-3). And, in 3.12, to point up the distinctions between the agonistic and written styles he refers to poets and actors, and fails to mention even a single prose writer or orator.

If Aristotle's citation practice shows a curious neglect of genuine political and forensic oratory, some of his remarks concerning the agonistic style in 3.12 would seem another indicator that he held it in rather slight regard. It has usually been claimed that Aristotle does not propose the written/agonistic distinctions in order to assert the superiority of one style or the other, but rather to offer a neutral description of standard generic differences. D. M. Schenkeveld, for example, maintains that whereas previous writers like Isocrates and Alcidamas "had used [the stylistic contrast] to express their opinions on the values of the written style and its opposite, Aristotle introduces the words *graphikê* and *agônistikê lexis* without any judgment of value."[35] On this point, the few openly evaluative comments on the written and graphic styles in 3.12 should be considered: "On comparison," writes Aristotle, "written works seem thin *(stenoi)* in debates *(agônes)*, while speeches delivered by the rhetors seem amateurish *(idiôtikoi)* in the hands *(en tais chersin)*," that is, when examined as texts; "things that are intended for delivery, when delivery is absent, seem silly *(euêthê)*" (1413b14-19; my trans.); the exactness of the written style is "wasted work" *(perierga)* when the crowd is large and requires, instead, a "loud voice" *(megalê phônê)* (1414a8-10, 15-17). As is apparent, these judgments are relative and largely offsetting. Aristotle recognizes that written works and oratory intended expressly for performance have separate stylistic standards. This does not mean, however, that he considers the styles *qua* styles equal or equally worthy of study and emulation. For the statements also indicate that he considers works in the agonistic style, whatever their pragmatic efficacy, of negligible *literary* merit. Indeed, the only specific features Aristotle identifies as character-

istic of the agonistic style, asyndeton and repetition, are, he says, "rightly criticized *(orthôs apodokimazetai)* in writing but not in speaking" (1413b19-21).

CONCLUSIONS

Commenting on the account of the agonistic style in *Rhetoric* 3.12, W. Rhys Roberts wrote that "[Aristotle's] remarks on the effect of dramatic delivery in producing liveliness and variety and also in hiding weak literary worksmanship, are so true that we feel he must often have listened with pleasure to good speakers and actors" (56). From the foregoing, it would appear that Roberts' statement can be at best half true. For all the sense of fitness to the realities of oratorical performance of the day, Aristotle's analysis of the rhetorical art does not, as is sometimes maintained, give a particularly appreciative account of such performances. Indeed, references to actual oratory-in-delivery are strangely absent from *Rhetoric* 3. When Aristotle refers to specific performers, they are always dramatic actors, never public speakers. At 3.2, by way of emphasizing the importance of "concealing one's art," Aristotle commends the actor Theodorus, whose voice, he says, "seems the voice of the actual [dramatic] character" (3.2 1404b22-24). Similarly, as noted earlier, Aristotle's examples in 3.12 of both the agonistic and the written style are poets and dramatists. For the effective delivery of repeated words or phrases, for example, Aristotle refers specifically to the actor Philemon's performance of a comedy by the poet Anaxandrides (3.12 1413b25-27).

It seems clear from this evidence, combined with that of the *Poetics*, that Aristotle "listened with pleasure" *to good actors;* the *Rhetoric* does not give much sense that he listened at all to good orators. While it is unlikely that any resident of fourth-century Athens could remain entirely shielded from impressive oratorical performances, Aristotle seems to be generally less fascinated with oratory than with poetry, or rather tragedy. As Michael Leff has put it, "Aristotle has an interest in the products of the poetic art which is not matched, as it is in Cicero, by an interest in the products of the rhetorical art" (Leff 320-321; see also Kennedy, *Art of Persuasion* 123). This seeming lack of interest shows itself especially in the chapters on style, where such figures as Lysias and Demosthenes, who could have provided many examples of effective oratorical prose—as indeed they did for all later rhetoricians—are virtually ignored in favor of poets and Isocrates, a prose author whose works later antiquity thought fine for reading, but impossible to perform publicly "with modulation of the tone of voice, and with the appropriate techniques of delivery that are used in live oratory" (Hieronymous of Rhodes, qtd. by Dionysius, *Isocrates* 13).

All this, while consistent with the generally bookish, "literate" orienta-

tion of Aristotle's stylistic theory as I have reconstructed it, should not be taken as indicating a wholesale disregard of "live" rhetorical activity. Quite the contrary, throughout the *Rhetoric* Aristotle is much more likely to refer to "hearers," "audience members," even "spectators," than to "readers."[36] But as regards a theory of style for practical use, the remarks in *Rhetoric* 3.12 are interesting for the light they cast on the omissions of the earlier chapters of book 3. For, besides rather jejune advice to avoid a manner that will convict the speaker-writer of artificiality—the high-flown diction of poetry, for example, or too fine a rhythm *(Rhetoric* 3.2, 3.3, 3.8, and *passim)*—there is very little acknowledgement in the chapters on style of the special circumstances faced by the rhetor plying his trade before the assembly or in the courts.[37] Most of his remarks in *Rhetoric* 3.1-12 have at least as much relevance to the actor as to the orator; the stylistic theory it advances is at least as applicable to prose literature as to oratorical performance, and perhaps more so.

It is in this regard that the recognition of a distinctly agonistic style at 3.12 takes on added significance. The final chapter on style makes up considerable ground in terms of addressing the needs of the practical orator. Undoubtedly, it contains some of Aristotle's characteristically sharp analysis of the material and social situation of oratory—concerning the effects of asyndeton and repetition, the need for a "strong voice" as opposed to refinements of style that will be lost on a large audience, and so forth. Admittedly, its placement and its content give *Rhetoric* 3.12 the character of an afterthought in the context of the preceding chapters on style. However, its very presence marks Aristotle's account of *lexis* as an important contribution to the evolution of ancient stylistic theory, which in later periods would come to rely increasingly on more elaborate systems of style-types or "characters."

It has been my aim to show that the written/agonistic distinction, and Aristotle's style theory more generally, can be fully appreciated only when considered in light of the specific circumstances of rhetorical performance in the fourth century BCE. The idea that precept reflects and is reflected in practice is hardly debated in rhetorical studies today. Yet, historical scholarship in rhetoric has traditionally focused tightly on the explication of precepts to the neglect of the challenging and variable character of the rhetorical practices toward which these precepts are directed. My analysis here shows how consideration of the peculiarities of literate activity in antiquity can enliven and refine the interpretation of portions of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. It has also, I hope, suggested a useful approach to other early rhetorical treatises wherein the theory can be shown to reflect, or be constrained by, ancient habits of writing and reading.

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Notes

[1] *Poetics* 26 1462a11-13, 16-17, with the comments of Russell 34 and Knox, "Books and Readers" 13-14. See also *Poetics* 6 1450b17-18 and 14 1453b3-6.

[2] For this discussion, I follow Kassel's edition of the *Rhetoric* and Kennedy's English translation, with alterations indicated in text. Texts and translations of other Greek authors treated in the analysis are given in the Works Cited.

[3] For parallels, see Alcidamas, *On Sophists* 12-14, 27-33, and Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 11 (both discussed below). Compare also Isocrates, *Antidosis* 46-47, *Panathenaicus* 2; [Demosthenes], *Eroticus* 2; and *P Oxy.* III 410 (in Radermacher 231-232). Plato observes a similar distinction between carefully written *logoi* (often of the class of epideictic oratory) and extemporaneous speeches; see *Menexenus* 234c-236b, *Phaedrus* 228a, 234c-e, 236b-d, 278d.

[4] Demetrius, *On Style* 193-194, is obviously little more than a restatement of sections of *Rhetoric* 3.12. See also *On Style* 226, 271, and, e.g., Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Isocrates* 2, 13, *Demosthenes* 18; Quintilian 3.8.61-64 (with direct reference to Aristotle's discussion), 12.10.49-57. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.13.23, too, though concerned primarily with delivery rather than style, is strongly reminiscent of *Rhetoric* 3.12; see Caplan's note ad loc. (Caplan 196).

[5] See Quadlbauer 60-69; Kennedy, "Theophrastus"; Kennedy, *Art of Persuasion* 112-113; Kennedy, *Cambridge History* 193-194; Trimpi 134-143. Neil O'Sullivan has argued emphatically that the partition into written and agonistic (or "unwritten") styles is the most fundamental early division of prose styles, providing the origin of the *genera tenue* and *grande,* respectively (O'Sullivan, *Alcidamas* 7-22 and passim); similarly, Shuger 14-20, who, like O'Sullivan, follows Quadlbauer in most particulars.

[6] In his 1905 article, "The Origins and Meaning of the Ancient Characters of Style," Hendrickson makes but one reference to the graphic/agonistic distinction at *Rhetoric* 3.12 , only to then deny its significance to the later development of the "characters" of style (see "Origins" 287). Earlier, in "The Peripatetic Mean of Style and the Three Stylistic Characters," Hendrickson argued forcefully that Aristotle's conception of stylistic *aretê* based on the principle of the mean could not admit distinct, equally valid style "types," but he did so without taking note of 3.12 at all (see espc. "Peripatetic Mean" 136).

[7] Cope 328 n. 1; see also Morpurgo-Tagliabue 324-325. On the topic of influences, Robert Sonkowsky (253-258) identifies some suggestive verbal parallels between *Rhetoric* 3.12 and the works of Plato.

[8] Aristotle identifies two species *(eidê)* of the agonistic style, the "characterful" *(êthikê)* and the "emotional" *(pathêtikê) (Rhetoric* 3.12 1413b10; cf. *Rhetoric* 3.7 1407b10-1408a32, b10-19).

[9] Aristotle observes that these variations in delivery are encouraged by the features of repetition and asyndeton characteristic of the agonistic style (3.12 1413b21-22, 30-31); see also Demetrius, *On Style* 194.

[10] Aristotle himself appears to confuse style *(lexis)* and delivery *(hupokrisis)* in the first chapter of book 3; see, e.g., 3.1 1404a8-13 with Cole 122 and Kennedy's note ad loc. (Kennedy, *Aristotle* 219 n. 7). As for the possible influence of Isocrates on *Rhetoric* 3.12, one point of chronology should be noted: If we accept the idea that this portion of Aristotle's lecture notes on style dates to his first residence in Athens (367-

347 BCE), it would appear that the influence flows the other way, from Aristotle to Isocrates, given that *To Philip* dates from 346.

¹¹ On the idea that audiences will trust spoken words or speeches delivered extemporaneously more readily than written texts, see also Isocrates, *Letter to Dionysius* 2-3; Alcidamas, *On Sophists,* 12-13; [Anaximenes] *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* 36 1444a18-35. Plato's critique of the written word in *Phaedrus* (274b-277a, 278c-e), though focused primarily on epistemological concerns, is also pertinent here.

¹² "Written and Spoken" 126. That Alcidamas' *On Sophists* is at least partly motivated by a rivalry with Isocrates is now generally accepted; see, e.g., O'Sullivan, *Alcidamas* 24-31; Muir xiv-xv.

¹³ At *On Sophists* 14, Alcidamas does remark that the delivery of a carefully polished written work is more like a theatrical performance or rhapsodic recitation *(hupokrisei kai rhapsôidiai)* but this is clearly meant as part of his criticism of the "precision," artificiality, and general stiffness of written speeches; cf. O'Sullivan, *Alcidamas* 49 n. 148. More frequently Alcidamas emphasizes the idea that the habit of writing speeches renders the writer "voiceless" or "stammering" in actual debate; see *On Sophists* 15, 16, passages that may be intended as "sideswipe[s] at Isocrates" (Muir 53).

¹⁴ See especially the judgments of Philonicus the grammarian and Hieronymous the Peripatetic reported by Dionysius, *Isocrates* 13, and Philodemus, *Rhetorica* I, 198 col. XVa Sudhaus. In these reports, Hieronymous, like Alcidamas, points specifically to the need for "energy" *(kinêsis)* and "animation" *(empsuchos)* if one is to move an audience. Compare also Demetrius, *On Style* 27-28; Cicero, *Orator* 37-38, 42, 207-9, *De optimo genere oratorum* 6.17; Dionysius, *Isocrates* 2-3, *Demosthenes* 4, 18, *On Composition* 19; Quintilian 12.10.49-50; Hermogenes, *On Types of Style* 301, 397-398; and, for discussion, Jebb 64-68.

¹⁵ According to his own repeated admissions, Isocrates lacked both the vocal strength and the nerve to speak before an audience; see *To Philip* 81, *Panathenaicus* 10, *Letter to the Rulers of the Mytilenaeans* 7. For creative interpretations of these admissions, see Too 74-112 and Haskins, "Orality, Literacy."

¹⁶ *Panathenaicus* 16-17; trans. adapted from Norlin. For discussion of these passages as providing instructions to would-be reader-reciters of Isocrates' discourses, see Hudson-Williams, "Isocrates and Recitations"; Usener 74-97.

¹⁷ On Isocrates' discourses as *paradeigmata* for imitation by his students, see *Against the Sophists* 17-18. It is clear from *To Philip* 27 that Isocrates taught style largely by imitation, and he frequently implies that other, rival teachers used his discourses for the same purpose; see *To Archidamus* 15, *Antidosis* 74, *To Philip* 11, 94,

¹⁸ Other chapters in book 3 provide no help. Aristotle alludes to *akribeia* in only one other passage on the topic of prose style, observing that in order for rhythm to avoid an overly "poetic" cast it must not be too precise *(mê akribôs)* (3.8 1408b31).

¹⁹ Alcidamas, *On Sophists* 13, 14, 16, 20, 25, 33, 34; Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 11, *Evagoras* 73, *To Philip* 4, 155.

²⁰ Kurz's wide-ranging study of *akribeia* has a brief discussion of Alcidamas' and Isocrates' usage (32-34) but offers no clarification of *Rhetoric* 3.12. Pollitt (117-125) presents a helpful collection of passages from Greek and Roman sources where *akribeia* is used by critics as a term denoting attention to detail in the execution of a

painting or sculpture. In further discussion of these passages (124-125), Pollitt suggests that rhetoricians may in fact have borrowed the term from the criticism of the visual arts.

[21] Russell 136. Similarly, Cole 74, with reference to the style of early Attic prose texts like those of Gorgias.

[22] See Alcidamas, *On Sophists* 11; Dover 123; Thomas 124-125; and, more generally, Hudson-Williams, "Political Speeches." But cf. Hansen 142 with n. 189.

[23] The extent to which the ancients practiced silent reading is still a matter of some debate. Despite Saenger's recent arguments to the contrary ("Silent Reading"; *Space Between Words*), the studies of Knox ("Silent Reading"), Gavrilov, and Burnyeat would seem to have finally demonstrated that they *could* and *did* read silently. However, in his fine review of this recent scholarship, Johnson rightly stresses that silent reading would not be typical in the case of literary works (612-621).

[24] For more on the appearance of ancient Greek manuscripts, focusing especially on the issues of (lack of) punctuation and use of continuous script *(scriptio continua)*, see Kenyon 67-69; Turner, *Athenian Books* 5-15; Turner, *Greek Manuscripts* 1-23; Johnson 609-615.

[25] Indeed, consideration of the breath would become standard in later accounts of oratorical composition. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.7.21; Cicero, *De oratore* 3.173; Quintilian 9.4.17, 67-68, 125; 11.3.53; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On Composition* 22-23.

[26] Compare Aristotle's use of the terms *eusunopton* ("easily taken in by the eye") at *Rhetoric* 3.12 1414a12 and *sunoran* ("to see in one view, at a glance") at 1.2 1357a4 and 3.10 1410b32. In these instances, optical terms *(opsis/oran*, sight/to see) are applied metaphorically to what can only be mental or cognitive processes of discernment; see also *eusunopton* at Isocrates, *Antidosis* 172. The case is the same with certain other characteristically Aristotelian phrases, for example, the capacity of metaphors and other devices of style to "bring-before-the-eyes" *(pro ommatôn poiein;* 3.10-11). "Eyes" in this formula must certainly refer to something like the "mind's eye" or "visual imagination"; see Stanford, *Greek Metaphor* 64. George Kennedy has offered some pertinent remarks on Aristotle's use of other terms drawn from the sphere of vision in the *Rhetoric*, especially of the verb *theôrein* and cognates ("Reworking Aristotle's *Rhetoric*" 169-171).

[27] The importance of scanning ahead while reading aloud was recognized by educators throughout antiquity; see, e.g., Quintilian 1.1.33-34, 10.7.1; Lucian, *Adversus indoctum* 2; and, for general discussion, Calinescu 181-185. Johnson observes (610-612) that the reader's "eye-voice" span of 15-20 letters corresponds closely to the width of a line of text in most ancient texts written in *scriptio continua;* thus, the crucial unit of the line, which typically terminates at a logical breaking point, could indeed be taken in "at a glance."

[28] As Stanford observes *(Greek Metaphor* 66), an interest in the visible appearance of written words is clearly apparent in several ancient sources—notably, in Plato (*Cratylus* 426b), Aeschrion (Walz, *Rhetores graeci* 3.650), Theophrastus (in a difficult fragment preserved by Demetrius, *On Style* 173), and in the Alexandrian practice of composing "shape-poems" *(technopaignia)*.

[29] The most striking allusion is in the concluding sentence of the *Rhetoric*, "I have spoken; you have listened; you have [the facts]; you judge" (3.19 1420a8), which

is close to the asyndeton that concludes Lysias' *Against Eratosthenes* (Lysias 12.100). *Rhetoric* 2.23 1399b16-18 seems to be derived from Lysias 34.11. Trevett (372) remains unconvinced that Aristotle knew either of Lysias' speeches, but this seems unlikely.

[30] *Rhetoric* 2.23 1397b7-9 and 3.4 1407a6-8. *Rhetoric* 2.24 1401b34-35 contains the only certain reference to the famous orator, but does not actually quote from one of his works.

[31] Quotations of or allusions to the works of Isocrates in Aristotle's chapters on style occur at *Rhetoric* 3.7 1408b15-17 (two quoted phrases), 3.9 1409b33-10a16 (ten quotations), 3.10 1410b29-30, 1411a30-31, 1411b11-16 (three), 3.11 1411b28-29 (two), 1412a16-17 (possibly), 1412b5-10 (possibly). On none of these occasions is there even a hint of disapproval for Isocrates' diction or manner of composition. While I cannot here enter further into the interesting question of Aristotle's appraisal of Isocrates' rhetorical practice, it would seem that despite differences in other areas, the two shared very similar views on style; for brief notices of this fact, see Cope 42; Hendrickson, "Peripatetic Mean" 127.

[32] Once: Androtion and Theodamus in 3.4 1406b26-32; Leptines, Moerocles, Polyeuctes, and Lycoleon in 3.10 1411a4-5, 15-18, 21-23, 1411b6-8. Twice: e.g., Peitholaos in 3.10 1411a13-14.

[33] Trevett 374-375. Contrast Kennedy, *Aristotle* 246 n. 124, who suggests that Aristotle may have heard the original performances of the speeches in question.

[34] The only exception appears to be at 3.2 1405a19-23, where Aristotle quotes two metaphors apparently used in an exchange between the Athenian general Iphicrates and the nobleman Callias. This material is undoubtedly taken from a deliberative context, though the historical circumstances of the exchange are unclear.

[35] Schenkeveld 65-66, similarly at 77; see also Quadlbauer 64; Shuger 17.

[36] Indeed, terms related to the activity of reading *(anagnôsis, anagnôstikoi)* are restricted exclusively to *Rhetoric* 3.12 and the passages surveyed above. To that, contrast the numerous references to "auditors" and "spectators"; see Kassel's index, s.v. *"akroatês," "theôros."*

[37] To my mind, the only notable exception to this statement is contained in the chapter on propriety of style, *Rhetoric* 3.7, especially in Aristotle's remarks on the need for style to be expressive of emotion and character *(lexis pathêtikê kai êthikê)* (3.7 1408a10-36, 1408b10-20). Brian Vickers seems correct, though, in taking these remarks as quite exceptional. Vickers observes that elsewhere in book 3 Aristotle does not take a "functional, persuasive view of language and style. . .being more concerned [in book 3] with the artifact than with the speaker-hearer relationship [and] the persuasive process" (80).

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