

## 2 / *The Divisions of Rhetoric*

Richard Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

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## RHETORIC

### The three branches

**Deliberative** (legislative; to exhort or dissuade; L. *genus deliberativum*; G. *genos symbouleutikon*).

**Judicial** (forensic; to accuse or defend; L. *genus iudiciale*; G. *genos dikanikon*).

**Epideictic or Panegyric** (ceremonial; to commemorate or blame; L. *genus demonstrativum*; G. *genos epideiktikon* or *panegyrikon*).

Aristotle explains the basis of this division thus:

Rhetoric falls into three divisions, determined by the three classes of listeners to speeches. For of the three elements in speech-making — speaker, subject, and person addressed — it is the last one, the hearer, that determines the speech's end and object. The hearer must be either a judge, with a decision to make about things past or future, or an observer. A member of the assembly decides about future events, a juryman about past events: while those who merely decide on the orator's skill are observers. From this it follows that there are three divisions of oratory — (1) political, (2) forensic, and (3) the ceremonial oratory of display.

(*Rhetoric*, I, 1358a)

Epideictic rhetoric, the rhetoric of “praise or blame,” has always seemed to me to cause a classificatory problem. The kind of display rhetoric often called “epideictic” was, for a start, frequently found in the forum and the lawcourt. And isn't “praising” a category different in kind from “legal” and “judicial,” which have to do with particular arenas and social purposes? To correspond to them, it ought to be “domestic,” or “private,” but those don't fit either. Perhaps we might better follow Aristotle in calling it “ceremonial.” That term, at least, would correspond to “judicial” and “deliberative.” Might we also say that deliberative and judicial rhetoric are fundamentally purposive in motive, epideictic fundamentally playful? That the self-pleasing aspects of rhetorical performance have tended to cluster in this third category? Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca suggest this possibility when they point out that epideictic oratory “seemed to have more connection with literature than with argumentation.” The first two kinds of rhetoric, they continue, judicial and deliberative, were appropriated by philosophy, and epideictic became a part of literary prose (*The New Rhetoric*, pp. 48–49).

Aristotle argues that from these three kinds of oratory follow different kinds of time, of purpose, and of argument:

*Time:*

These three kinds of rhetoric refer to three different kinds of time. The political orator is concerned with the future. . . . The party in a case at law is concerned with the past. . . . The ceremonial orator is . . . concerned with the present, since all men praise or blame in view of the state of things existing at the time.

(*Rhetoric*, I, 1358b)

(Aristotle seems to feel the sponginess of this distinction himself, for he adds that ceremonial orators “often find it useful also to recall the past and to make guesses at the future.”)

*Purpose:*

Rhetoric has three distinct ends in view, one for each of its three kinds. The political orator aims at establishing the expediency or the harmfulness of a proposed course of action. . . . Parties in a law-case aim at establishing the justice or injustice of some action. . . . Those who praise or attack a man aim at proving him worthy of honour or the reverse. . . .

(*Rhetoric*, I, 1358b)

*Argument:*

. . . in political oratory there is less inducement to talk about non-essentials. Political oratory is less given to unscrupulous practices than forensic, because it treats of wider issues. . . . There is no need, therefore, to prove anything except that the facts are what the supporter of a measure maintains they are. In forensic oratory this is not enough; to conciliate the listener is what pays here.

(*Rhetoric*, I, 1354b)

(The oratory of praise would, on this model, seem to be all conciliation.)

The three branches of oratory have sometimes, by a kind of triadic magnetism, been confused or conflated with the other big triadic division, that of the three levels of style and the occasions appropriate for their use. For this other distinction, see **Style: The three types**, below. The whole dispute about the branches of oratory or rhetoric in classical times is handily summarized by Quintilian, III.iv.

### The five parts

Invention	(L. <i>inventio</i> )	(G. <i>heuresis</i> )
Arrangement	(L. <i>dispositio</i> )	(G. <i>taxis</i> )
Style	(L. <i>elocutio</i> )	(G. <i>lexis</i> )
Memory	(L. <i>memoria</i> )	(G. <i>mneme</i> )
Delivery	(L. <i>actio</i> )	(G. <i>hypocrisis</i> )

. . . since all the activity and ability of an orator falls into five divisions, . . . he must first hit upon what to say; then manage and marshal his

discoveries, not merely in orderly fashion, but with a discriminating eye for the exact weight as it were of each argument; next go on to array them in the adornments of style; after that keep them guarded in his memory; and in the end deliver them with effect and charm.

(Cicero, *De oratore*, I.xxxi.142–143)

The Ramists (see **Rhetoric** in chapter 1) would reduce these five parts to two, style and delivery, giving invention and arrangement to logic, and leaving out memory altogether, as a subsidiary classification. Father Ong remarks that the five parts “had originally been not ‘parts’ of an ‘art’ but more or less successive activities involved in ancient Greek liberal education” (*Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*, pp. 56–57). They were the activities any orator must pursue.

## INVENTION

### Two kinds of proof

(after Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*)

1. **Inartificial proof:** All that today would be called “evidence” — sworn testimony, documents, scientific analyses, laws.
2. **Artificial proof:** Three main types.
  - a. Establishing the persuader’s good character and hence credibility. This is called **Ethos**.
  - b. Putting the audience in an appropriate mood, by playing on its feelings. This is called **Pathos**.
  - c. Proving, or seeming to prove, the case. The plainest term for this is rational argument or, to use a word which carries many meanings, **Logos** (*logic*).

### Two types of logical proof

1. **Deductive**
  - a. If the premises are scientifically demonstrated, the term for the argument is **Syllogism**.
  - b. If the premises are only probably true, the term for the argument is **Enthymeme**. (Enthymemes are either demonstrative or refutative.) This is the more common form in rhetoric.
2. **Inductive**
  - a. If all instances of the phenomenon are accounted for, the induction is scientific.
  - b. If only selected instances are cited, the argument is from example. This is the more common form in rhetoric.

### Two kinds of topics (*topoi*)

(after Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*)

1. Topics useful in a special area of knowledge only (*idioi topoi*).
2. Topics useful in arguments of all kinds (*koinoi topoi*). Four main ones are given:
  - a. What can and cannot happen
  - b. What has and has not happened
  - c. What will or will not happen
  - d. Size

At another point in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle introduces twenty-eight valid and ten invalid topics useful in devising enthymemes. They follow.

### Twenty-eight valid topics

(after Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*)

1. Restate your contention in an opposite way: e.g., instead of “Excess is bad,” say “Moderation is good.” If the opposite statement holds, so will the original one.
2. Redefine a key term slightly to support your contention, or suggest a synonym that seems better to support it.
3. Use a correlative idea. You want to prove *B* justly punished, so prove *A* just in punishing him.
4. Argue *a fortiori*. Prove *A* has acted in a cruel way at one time by showing that at another he acted still more cruelly.
5. Argue from circumstances of past time. What has been promised at one time must be performed at another, even though times and circumstances may have changed.
6. Turn an accusation against the accuser. The implied moral superiority of the accuser is thus attacked. The topic will not work if the accusation is obviously just, since if you do something, you cannot effectively reproach others for doing the same thing.
7. Define your terms so as to place the argument in a favorable light.
8. Play upon various senses of a word.
9. Divide your argument into its logical parts.
10. Argue from plain induction (parallel cases).
11. Argue from authority or previous verdict.
12. Argue your contention part by part.
13. Argue from consequences, good or bad.
14. When an action may have good or bad consequences, invert your opponent’s arguments. Aristotle’s example: Don’t take up

- oratory. If you say truth, men will hate you; if you lie, the gods will hate you. Take up oratory. If you lie, men will love you; if you say the truth, the gods will love you. (Variation of 13.)
15. Oppose an argument by seeming to allow it and then maintaining that things are not what they seem. If the opponent maintains thus, argue things are what they seem.
  16. Argue from logical consequences. If a man is old enough to fight for his country, he is old enough to vote. Are we then to say that those too sick to fight should not vote?
  17. Argue that if two results are the same, their causes must be the same.
  18. Apply an opponent's earlier decision to a later case, to his disadvantage.
  19. Take the possible motive for the one actually prevailing.
  20. In arguing individual motive, point to general motives or prohibitions (for or against, depending on which side you have taken).
  21. Make people believe an improbability by pointing to an even greater one that is yet true.
  22. Catch your opponent out on inaccuracies and self-contradictions.
  23. Refute slander by showing that it was evoked by a mistaken view of the facts.
  24. Prove effect by showing the presence of its cause, or vice versa.
  25. Show that a client or a cause had a better argument and failed to use it. Only trustful innocence would make such a mistake.
  26. Disprove an action by showing it inconsistent with previous actions.
  27. Use previous mistakes as a defense (or explanation) for present ones.
  28. Support an argument by playing upon the meaning of names. ("Mr. Stern is a harsh man.")

For the purposes of prose exposition, these topics are often presented in reductive form as the arguments from time, analogy, cause and effect, class, comparison and contrast, etc. A version of these can be found in Cicero's *Topica*, II.6ff. and *De oratore*, II.39ff.

## Ten invalid topics or fallacies of arguments

(after Aristotle's *Rhetoric*)

1. Conclude an argument, as if at the end of a reasoning process, without having gone through the process.
2. Play on illogical, fortuitous similarity of words. ("A sauce pan must be noble, for so was the great god Pan.")

3. Make a statement about the whole that is true only of individual parts, or vice versa.
4. Use indignant language.
5. Use a single, unrepresentative example.
6. Take the accidental as essential.
7. Argue from consequence.
8. Argue *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*.
9. Ignore crucial circumstances.
10. Suggest, from fraudulent confusion of general and particular, that the improbable is probable, and vice versa.

## The commonplaces

(L. *loci communes*; G. *koinoi topoi*)

The term is a vague one, and the category so large as to prohibit enumeration. A commonplace was a general argument, observation, or description a speaker could memorize for use on any number of possible occasions. So an American statesman who knows he will be asked to speak extempore on the Fourth of July might commit to memory reflections on the bravery of the Founding Fathers, tags from the Declaration of Independence, praise of famous American victories, etc. A few scattered traditional *loci*: death is common to all; time flies; the contemplative vs. the active life; the soldier's career vs. the scholar's; praise of a place as paradisiacal; the uses of the past; a short, celebrated life vs. a long, obscure one. The commonplace is the general term for, or at least overlaps, the device Aristotle defined more narrowly, and placed specifically in the definition of invention, in the lists above. Thus *loci*, properly speaking, has two overlapping meanings: commonplace observations, and common *sources* of arguments. Collections of rhetorical commonplaces, of whatever sort, have always been surveys, as Kenneth Burke writes in blending the two meanings, "of the things that people generally consider persuasive, and of methods that have persuasive effects" (*A Rhetoric of Motives*, p. 56). Another distinction frequently made from antiquity onward has been the difference between general commonplaces, suitable for any subject, and particular or special ones, restricted to a single subject.

Pope humorously described this confusing body of doctrine in the *Peri Bathous*: "I therefore propose that there be contrived with all convenient dispatch, at the public expense, a *Rhetorical Chest of Drawers*, consisting of three Stories, the highest for the *Deliberative*, the middle for the *Demonstrative*, and the lowest for the *Judicial*. These shall be divided into *Loci*, or *Places*, being repositories for Matter and Argument in the several kinds of oration or writing" (chapter xiii, "A

Project for the Advancement of the Bathos"). Pope's satiric stance here draws attention to a characteristic oscillation, in such discussions, between places in the mind and places in the world. The commonplaces are always the places where we are "on familiar ground." Thus the complicated doctrine of the commonplaces veers off, in one direction, toward smaller-scale figures like **Epitheton** and **Proverb**, and in another direction, toward the larger-scale design of a full memory theater. The fondness for the collage and the ironized cliché in contemporary art would seem to constitute a visual analogue to a generalized cultural memory theater, indicating perhaps that in a period of secondary orality some of the old primary oral habits such as the commonplace are reasserting themselves.

Modern persuasive techniques have tended to make much less use of the commonplaces than did earlier periods, largely, as Howell makes clear (*Logic and Rhetoric in England*, pp. 23–24, and elsewhere), because we no longer trust traditional wisdom, are far more interested in investigating the world anew. For an oral culture, of course, commonplaces, like all formulas for thought, were where thought and utterance began, not just where they were conveniently parked. Thus in addition to a spectrum of meaning defined by argument at one end and ornament at the other, we can construct a spectrum with creation at one extreme and amplification at the other.

An interesting parallel to the classical verbal commonplaces has arisen recently in the world of electronic, computer-based text, where large libraries of images and icons — visual commonplaces — have been made available cheaply to anyone needing them.

For an illuminating discussion of literary use of commonplaces, see Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, pp. 284 ff. See also Ong's discussion in *The Presence of the Word*, pp. 31ff., 81ff., and elsewhere. Sister Joan Marie Lechner's *Renaissance Concepts of the Commonplaces* begins with a thorough survey of previous doctrines. See also **Proof** in chapter 1.

## The main points at issue

*Stasis* is the Greek term for the main point at issue in a legal argument (the Latin term is *constitutio* or *status*): who has done what, when, and how. Some theorists further narrow the definition to the starting point of a case — the circumstances that give rise to it — or to the first point raised by an opponent in a legal case. (For fuller discussion see **Issue** in chapter 1).

## Thesis and hypothesis

Hermagoras divided political questions into two types:

1. **Thesis**: a general argument, one that does not deal with particular cases (L. *quaestio*).
2. **Hypothesis**: argument about a particular case (L. *causa*). Its two subdivisions:
  - a. Question of fact or justice
  - b. Question of law
 Its seven elements:
  - a. Actor
  - b. Action
  - c. Time
  - d. Place
  - e. Cause
  - f. Manner
  - g. Starting point

## ARRANGEMENT: THE PARTS OF AN ORATION

From the Greeks onward, the various parts of an oration have borne a body of theorizing so dense and extensive as almost to defy summary. Various theorists argue for various numbers of parts, from two up to seven (e.g. Wilson, pp. 209ff.) or even more when one further subdivides. Some theorists think four the norm, others five or six. To avoid the unnecessary confusion of overlapping classifications, I reproduce here the basic six parts according to the well-known discussion in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (I.iii.4), adding only a few common equivalent terms. For a comparative table of the parts according to various other authorities, see Lausberg, vol. 1, pp. 148–149.

1. **Exordium** (G. *prooimion*; L. *exordium*) — catches the audience's attention.
2. **Narration** (G. *prothesis*; L. *narratio*) — sets forth the facts.
3. **Division** (L. *divisio* or *propositio* or *partitio*) — sets forth points stipulated (agreed upon by both sides) and points to be contested.
4. **Proof** (G. *pistis*; L. *confirmatio* or *probatio*) — sets forth the arguments that support one's case.
5. **Refutation** (L. *confutatio* or *reprehensio*) — refutes opponent's arguments.
6. **Peroration** (G. *epilogus*; L. *conclusio* or *peroratio*) — sums up arguments and stirs audience.

Aristotle saw two essential elements, the statement of the issue (*πρόθεσις*) or what is usually called the narration, and the arguments for and against it (*πίστις*) or proof. At most, he thought, an introduction and conclusion framing the two essential parts would

make a total of four. "A speech has two parts. You must state your case, and you must prove it. . . . It follows, then, that the only necessary parts of a speech are the Statement and the Argument. These are the essential features of a speech; and it cannot in any case have more than Introduction, Statement, Argument, and Epilogue" (*προοίμιον, πρόθεσις, πίστις, ἐπίλογος*, *Rhetoric*, III, 1414a–b). This might be thought of as a common-sense four-part core organization in which argument is enveloped by emotion: (1) ingratiating introduction; (2) state your case; (3) prove your case; (4) sum up in an ingratiating way.

Aristotle goes on to comment in exasperation on the needless additional parts being specified by other writers. His exasperation did not prevail and additional parts kept multiplying. Quintilian argues for five parts instead of four: *prooemium, narratio, probatio, refutatio, peroratio* (III.ix.1ff.). The author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* adds a sixth, *divisio*, between *narratio* and *confirmatio*. And later a *digressio* was added after the *narratio*. There are also discussions of the various parts in book I of *De inventione*, and in numerous later rhetorical treatises.

The only principles which might be said to govern the number of divisions used were the nature of the speech (whether it was deliberative, judicial, or epideictic), and the circumstances of presentation. Different occasions called, not so surprisingly, for different arrangements. The only consistent practice followed in the expansions beyond the Aristotelian four parts was to subdivide the central statement-and-proof section in various ways, leaving the exordium and peroration as constants.

If there is any characteristic form to be found among the various schemes for the parts, it would seem to be a strategy of alternating emotional and evidential appeals, first cultivating the good will of the hearers (judge, jury, or legislators) and then setting forth the facts of the case.

*Simplest structure:* State your case and prove it.

*First complication:* Encapsulate this statement with emotional appeals fore and aft.

*Second complication:* Interrupt the factual statement with one or more emotional appeals.

*Third complication:* Divide your argumentation into subsections.

*Da capo:* More interpolated emotional appeals and argumentative subdivisions.

Quintilian, for example, argues that emotional appeals are appropriate in the "statement of facts" — why not conciliate the judge there, too? (IV.ii.111). Ever since Aristotle argued that emotional ap-

peals have no place whatsoever in a proper argument (*Rhetoric*, III, 1414a), entering only because of our weak and fallen nature, it has been taken for granted that emotional appeals are a necessary evil only; a needful trick but still a trick. We might reason, though, if we can put aside this persistent Platonism for a moment, that "facts" do not occur in an emotional vacuum, and that there might be something to be said for recreating the emotional atmosphere in which the "facts" occurred. That, too, is part of a full human truth. That atmosphere can be distorted and manipulated, of course; but so can the "facts." Perhaps, then, the alternating structure of the oration, however many parts either argument or emotional appeal contained, has worked — almost against its own advice, and certainly unawares — to create a complex and fully social "factuality."

How easily such a basic expansive technique can generate subsections can be seen from a short statement about the peroration in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: "Conclusions, among the Greeks called *epilogoí*, are tripartite, consisting of the Summing Up, Amplification, and Appeal to Pity. We can in four places use a Conclusion: in the Direct Opening, after the Statement of Facts, after the strongest argument, and in the Conclusion of the speech" (II.xxx.47). Thus the final section should not only sum up the argument but sum up the emotional appeal as well. "Amplification" here means using a series of commonplaces to intensify the emotional appeal to the audience. And so, presumably, it would generate its own subcycles of argument and emotion!

How easily the proliferating terminology can become confused when moving from Greek to Latin to English can be seen by looking at the Rhys Roberts translation of the passage in *Rhetoric* 1414a cited above. As translated, after asserting that there are only two essential parts to a speech, stating your case and proving it, Aristotle goes on to ridicule "narration" as *not* an essential part. Aristotle's term for "statement of the case" is *πρόθεσις* and his word for "proof" is *πίστις* (τούτων δὲ τὸ μὲν πρόθεσις ἐστὶ τὸ δὲ πίστις). For everyone else following, *πρόθεσις* is "narratio." And yet the word Aristotle uses when he is repudiating "narration" as an essential term is *διήγησις*, which may indeed mean "narration."

Although extensively discussed in its component details, the form of the oration has not received the scholarly attention it deserves, as the form not only of formal speeches but of much writing and speaking not specifically rhetorical. Its structure has influenced the way we think and argue for intellectual positions of every sort. Thus we always try to establish a specific controllable relation to an audience, always *seem* to take our opponent's arguments into account (paraphrase his weak ones, distort his strong ones), always dilate on our

own good reasons, always offer a loaded summary before we stop. The ingredients of the form, then, vary considerably, but the form itself is used, albeit unknowingly, by an enormous number of people. As Father Ong remarks, apropos the parts of the oration: "A glance at the texts in use, whether classical or medieval or . . . Tudor, for all coexisted, reveals an extraordinarily strict discipline in composition. It reveals also the degree to which the oration as such tyrannized over ideas of what expression as such—literary or other—was" (*Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*, p. 53). The opposite way of thinking to the linear development of the formal oration is the associative pattern, which, at its worst, gives us Mistress Quickly's rambling monologues, and at its best, *Tristram Shandy*. The best example today of this nonlinear way of argumentation surely must be electronic hypertext.

Beyond its rhetorical use, the basic oration structure often can be detected, writ large, where the formal argumentative element is secondary. We tend to take the basic oration structure as an inevitable pattern of dialectic thought. In fact, there seems no more reason to regard such a structure as an inevitable form for an argument than there does to regard beginning-middle-end as the only form for a narrative. The oration's primary assumption, for example, is that all arguments are or can be polar opposites (the *dialectic* assumption, odd as this seems), and such an assumption does violence to any issue that falls into the "both-and" rather than the "either-or" category. The classical oration structure, that is, can offer a form for argument but not for compromise. How many compromises, it is then reasonable to ask, have been hindered by the *form*? See *Dissoi logoi*.

## STYLE

### The three types

1. The low or plain style (*genus humile* or *extenuatum*)
2. The middle style (*genus medium* or *modicum* or *mediocre* or *temperatum*)
3. The grand style (*genus grande* or *grave*)

An analogous, but not identical, set of categories is often found:

1. The Attic, or unornamented, brief style
2. The Asiatic, or ornamented, full style
3. The Rhodian, somewhere between (1) and (2)

The Greek critic Demetrius, in *On Style*, offers a fourfold division:

1. Plain

2. Grand
3. Elegant
4. Forceful

One modern scholar of rhetoric has maintained that two fundamental styles existed in Greece from the earliest times. If so, this two-part division provided the first categorization of style in Western Europe. The three-part division has been by far the most common, however, probably because it is so vague. This division has been made on the basis of one or more of the following: (a) subject (generally, the more important the topic, the higher the style); (b) diction (presence or absence of figurative language); (c) effect on the audience (the grand style had the greatest emotional effect); (d) syntax or composition (the grand style was made up of balanced elements in intricate arrangements; the plain style used shorter periods, followed more closely the processes of discursive thought). The three-part division represents a most useful tacit bargaining pattern: the high style will represent a maximum of the entity measured; the low a minimum; the middle, somewhere in between. The high, middle, and low styles each had defective counterparts, of course: the swollen, the loose (*dissolutum*), and the meager.

Kenneth Burke, paraphrasing Cicero, suggests the following rationale for the three levels of style:

In his *Orator* . . . Cicero distinguishes three styles (*genera dicendi, genera scribendi*): the grandiloquent, plain, and tempered. And he names as the three "offices" of the orator: (1) to teach, inform, instruct (*docere*); (2) to please (*delectare*); (3) to move or "bend" (*movere, flectere*).

He also refers to styles in a more personal or individual sense, when observing that orators are next of kin to poets, and that each poet has his own way of writing (and in a critical digression he gives a catalogue of formulas for succinctly characterizing and savoring the distinctive qualities in the personal style of various writers well known to antiquity). However, the three over-all styles of oratory are not thought of thus, as personal expression, but as a means for carrying out the three "offices." That is, the plain style is best for teaching, the tempered style for pleasing, and the ornate (grandiloquent) style for moving. Though human weakness makes an orator more able in one or another of these styles, the ideal orator should be master of all three, since an oration aims at all three functions.

(*A Rhetoric of Motives*, pp. 73–74)

The original Ciceronian discussion is in *Orator*, sections 69 and 100–101; Augustine takes up and elaborates this distinction in *On Christian Doctrine*, IV.34–35.

It might also be possible to use as metaphor not "level" but "spectrum." We might, for example, place styles on a spectrum of opacity. At one extreme would be a style like Lyly's in *Euphues*, an extremely

opaque style that we are meant to notice as stylistic surface. We do not, that is, condemn it for hiding a clear prose meaning—a plain narrative—behind it, because there is none behind it. Such meaning as it creates comes from the stylistic surface. To galvanize a modern critical cliché, the style is the meaning. At the other end of such a spectrum, the aim would be translucence, the purely denotative style which mandates “one word, one thing.” Such an ideal has operated strongly in the English-speaking world ever since the rise of science in the seventeenth century. At this extreme, the style would be pure means to describe event. At the opposite end, style would be itself the event. A way of bending the spectrum into a circle might be found by trying to place a prose like Hemingway’s on it. Such a style, which continually calls attention to itself by its mannerisms but whose mannerisms all aim to create the effect of an extremely denotative, translucent prose—nothing but the facts—partakes of both ends of the spectrum. In other words, such a style suggests that the degree of ornament of a style and the self-consciousness of a style are not the same thing. Two further categories would then seem to be possible: the style (plain or ornate) which acknowledges that it is a style, a rhetoric, an effort at persuasion, and the style (plain or ornate) which does not. The final conclusion that this train of reasoning suggests is this: as an addition to the classical categories of style—based on the degree of ornament, largely—we might categorize on the basis of the degree of self-consciousness with which the style presents itself.

G. M. A. Grube has called the whole distinction between levels of style into question:

The formula of three styles is even less likely to have originated with [Cicero]. It occurs in the first century only in Roman writers where each style has its own diction *and* word arrangement; even then every writer or speaker is expected to use all three styles at different times, so that the notion of three equally acceptable styles, plain, grand, and intermediate, is largely a myth. . . . The main evidence here is alleged to be a passage of Dionysius of Halicarnassus which quotes Theophrastus as saying that Thrasymachus of Chalcedon originated a *τρίτη λέξις*, between the poetic and the simple.

(*The Greek and Roman Critics*, pp. 107–108)

One can be sure, however, that so handy a distinction will endure, mythical though it be.

### The three, four, or twenty virtues

As an alternative to *levels*, we can think of style in terms of *types* or *virtues*. Theophrastus, in his lost *On Style*, isolated four virtues,

which Cicero used in the *De oratore* as the basis for his discussion of style:

1. Purity (correctness)
2. Clarity
3. Decorum (G. *to prepon*—that which is fitting to time, place, etc.)
4. Ornament

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* offers three categories:

1. *Elegantia*
  - a. *Latinitas* (correctness, good Latin)
  - b. *Explanatio* (clarity)
2. *Compositio* (avoiding harsh sound clashes and excessively figured language; making the style uniformly polished)
3. *Dignitas* (embellishment by a variety of figures tastefully used)

Quintilian offers a slightly different threefold division: “Style has three kinds of excellence, correctness, lucidity, and elegance (for many include the all-important quality of appropriateness under the heading of elegance).”

The most complex traditional division into types, however, has been that of Hermogenes, a second-century A.D. theorist who distinguished no fewer than twenty types and subtypes of style. The basic types were *Clarity*, *Grandeur*, *Beauty*, *Rapidity*, *Character*, and *Sincerity*. Taken together, these created the stylistic ideal for Hermogenes, *Force* or *Awesomeness*. From *Clarity* depended two subtypes, *Purity* and *Distinctness*. *Grandeur* was subdivided into *Solemnity*, *Asperity*, *Vehemence*, *Brilliance*, *Florescence*, *Abundance*. From *Character* subdepended *Simplicity*, *Sweetness*, *Subtlety*, and *Modesty*, and from *Sincerity* the subtype *Indignation*. (I’ve followed here the diagram contained in Cecil W. Wooten’s excellent introduction to his recent translation, *Hermogenes’ “On Types of Style”*.)

Of the relation of Hermogenes’s system to the simpler three-level distinction, a modern scholar has written:

In contrast to the Latin stylistic system of the three *genera dicendi* which unimaginatively classified all styles as high, middle, or low, the Hermogenean forms offered a technique by which one could create or judge a precise set of physical, moral, and emotional qualities. Hermogenes . . . reconstructed the basis of each form by analyzing it into its notional contents, figures of thought, diction, figures of diction, kola, periodization, and rhythms. The Hermogenean forms are the descendants of earlier “virtues of speech” found in Aristotle, Isocrates, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and others. The culminating Hermogenean form, awesomeness (*δευότης*), which was the utilization of all the forms in a manner perfectly suited to the occasion, clearly reflects the traditional stylistic virtue of *τὸ πρέπον*, or *decorum* in Latin.

(Monfasani, *George of Trebizond*, pp. 252–253)



## The figures

The term *figure* in its most general meaning refers to any device or pattern of language in which meaning is enhanced or changed. The term has two subcategories:

1. Figure of words
  - a. **Trope**: use of a word to mean something other than its ordinary meaning — a **Metaphor**, for example.
  - b. **Scheme**: a figure in which words preserve their literal meaning, but are placed in a significant arrangement of some kind.
2. Figure of thought: a large-scale trope or scheme, or a combination of both — **Allegory**, for example.

This categorization is prescriptive (see **Trope** in chapter 1). All these terms have been used interchangeably at one time or another to refer to the numerous devices of language which were classified first by the Greek rhetorical theorists and later, in increasing numbers, by the Latin rhetoricians. Sometimes the same verbal pattern was given two different names, depending upon whether it was thought to be a trope or a scheme. J. W. H. Atkins's *English Literary Criticism: The Medieval Phase* gives in an Appendix (pp. 200ff.) a list of the figures categorized as above. For readers wishing further charts breaking down in different ways the figures as between trope and scheme, and kinds of both, Sonnino (pp. 244ff.) gives charts based on Quintilian, Trapezuntius, Scaliger, Fraunce, and Melancthon, and Murphy (*Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, pp. 36–37) compares those in the *Ad Herennium* to those in Donatus's *Barbarismus*. Sister Miriam Joseph offers a chart which gives a numerical breakdown of the different types of figures in three classical and many Renaissance theorists. In the Renaissance, Peacham offered various kinds of diagrammatic breakdowns in *The Garden of Eloquence*.

In trying to control the vertigo such lists often induce, I have sometimes found useful G. N. Leech's suggestion that difficult ornaments may be called "difficult" because they create "a disruption, at one particular level, of the normal patterns of linguistic organization," whereas easy ornaments are "easy" because they include "a superfluity of meanings among which we must choose" (p. 153). For a discussion of the trope and scheme in the world of Ramist rhetoric, see Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, pp. 274ff.

## MEMORY

The classical doctrine of memory as one of the five parts of rhetoric distinguished two kinds of memory: natural and artificial. Nat-

ural memory is self-explanatory. Artificial memory is trained using one of the "memory-theater" mnemonic methods common since classical Greece; these exploit the power of the visual cortex by associating a particular pattern of argument with a particular visual scene. Such scenes comprise two elements, backgrounds and images (i.e., foreground figures in background scenes). Usually a familiar building, room, or public place served as the visual model.

The first step was to imprint on the memory a series of *loci* or places. The commonest, though not the only, type of mnemonic place system used was the architectural type. . . . We have to think of the ancient orator as moving in imagination through his memory building *whilst* he is making his speech, drawing from the memorised places the images he has placed on them. The method ensures that the points are remembered in the right order, since the order is fixed by the sequence of places in the building.

(Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p. 3)

And since, as we now know, the experiences which move the limbic system most deeply are the best remembered, both background and foreground information should be as dramatic as possible. It is as well to remember, too, that a memory theater, for a culture still partly oral, was a machine for spontaneous invention of a speech; for us in a wholly literate culture, it is much more likely to be simply a device to memorize a speech already written down, a device of replication.

Perhaps the memory-system most familiar to us now is the icon-based "desktop" introduced as a user interface for personal computers. The spread of electronic text, the accompanying growth of animation, and the resultant radical change in the icon/alphabet ratio for ordinary communication, will surely revive the classic mnemonic techniques. It is also interesting to reflect on the classic doctrine in light of current thinking about memory; see, for example, Israel Rosenfield's *The Invention of Memory: A New View of the Brain*. For discussions of the classic doctrine, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III.xvi–xxiv, and Quintilian, XI.ii.

## DELIVERY

Delivery, as one of the five basic parts of rhetoric, was itself divided into two parts — voice and gesture — and these were variously and greatly subdivided. Voice training of a very basic sort was obviously needed in an unamplified and very long-winded age, just to condition the lungs. And following that, a doctrine of appropriate voices for various occasions was developed. For gesture, an elaborate catalogue of body poses and hand positions was to be mastered;

the stage was sometimes held up as an appropriate model for such mastery. The doctrines of delivery lasted well into the nineteenth century and were, for most of Western history, centrally important.

B. L. Joseph's *Elizabethan Acting* contains illustrations of typical histrionic poses. Plates of hand gestures are included in John Bulwer's *Chirologia: or the Natural Language of the Hand* (1644) and Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* (1806). A good short introduction to the subject is John Mason's *Essay on Elocution and Pronunciation* (1748). Henry Siddons's *Practical Illustrations of Rhetorical Gesture and Action; Adapted to the English Drama* (1822) does what the title says and is illustrated with fascinating plates. A delightfully comic, though little-known, nineteenth-century treatise is Andrea de Jorio's discussion of classical gestures as they survived on the streets of Naples, *La mimica degli antichi, investigata nel gestire napoletano* (1832). There was also in the Middle Ages an elaborate system for counting by hand gestures, and Guido of Arezzo used a map of the hand to indicate notes on the musical scale. The whole signifying baggage carried by formalized gesture is splendidly parodied by Rabelais in the debate between Panurge and Thaumaste (*Gargantua & Pantagruel*, II.xix).

Delivery has been much studied in our own time, but not by students of rhetoric. The behavioral biologists and psychologists call it "nonverbal communication" and have added immeasurably to our knowledge of this kind of human expressivity. See, for example, *Non-Verbal Communication*, edited by Robert A. Hinde. Silent films offer a less academic catalogue of the basic gestures of emotional reenactment. And another area where students of rhetoric seldom look, cartoon animation, offers much for a student of gesture. See, as a striking example, *Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life*, by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston. As the use of animation continues to grow in electronic communication, and as the icon/alphabet ratio in everyday communication continues to tilt from word to image, Delivery may find itself returned to its traditional eminence.

For discussions of the classic doctrine, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III.xi.15, and Quintilian, XI.iii.

### 3 / The Terms by Type

These lists aim to help a student move from a text to the term that describes it. No accurate, dependable, airtight division into discrete categories exists, to my knowledge, even for the figures alone. (It is hard to see how one could make such a division, so fundamentally and dynamically do the categories mix and match. For a brief example of how difficult categorization can be, see the discussion of the trope-scheme division under **Trope**.) This categorization hopes for nothing beyond easy reference to the alphabetical list.

Addition, subtraction, and substitution:

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Words, phrases, and clauses — 182

Amplification — 183

Balance, antithesis, and paradox — 184

Brevity — 185

Description — 185

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Example, allusion, and citation of authority — 188

Metaphorical substitutions and puns — 188

Repetition:

Letters, syllables, and sounds — 189

Words — 189

Clauses, phrases, and ideas — 189

Techniques of argument — 191

Ungrammatical, illogical, or unusual uses of language — 195