

The Rhetoric of Socrates

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Plato (along with Xenophon) emphasized Socrates' anti-rhetorical attitudes. Time and again he tells us that rhetoric characterized quite a different kind of people, the Sophists, while Socrates made it a point of honor to unmask the lack of knowledge hidden behind their seeming wisdom and skillfulness. As a result, we have been led to believe that anybody wishing to study Greek rhetoric should pay careful attention to the Sophists and their argumentational (not to speak of strictly oratorical) devices. We examine Plato's dialogues in order to learn how Socrates became more and more conscious of Sophistic trickery, and fail to consider whether the Sophists' chief opponent himself had recourse to rhetorical strategies, either similar or different.

In such circumstances, it is understandable why no history of rhetoric has taken even fleeting notice of Socrates' own kind of rhetoric, and why it is still possible to deal extensively with Plato's attitude towards rhetoric without a word about his own way of producing a highly sophisticated semiotic machinery in which rhetoric plays a first-order role.¹ It is also intelligible how Aristotle could speak of *sophistikoi elenchoi* without feeling himself obliged to explain the adoption of what looks like a neologism, if compared with the lack of such a qualification in the *Topica*. In addition, we can understand Aristotle's attitude in studying the argumentative maneuvers which are at work throughout a dialogue without sensing their rhetorical connotations.² We may say that in Aristotle's time the belief already existed that, for anyone interested in the early history of rhetoric, it would be quite pointless to look for rhetorical maneuvers in Socrates' own conversational practices, much as if they ought to be analyzed only under such headings as Method, Irony, Maieutic, Dialectic, Dialogue, or, at the very best, Eristic.

If this is the case, a kind of preconception, a traditional but ungrounded attitude, is preventing us from calling a spade a spade, and from treating Socrates' rhetoric as rhetoric—with the notable

consequence that a whole set of analytical tools has remained for a long time (with very few exceptions)³ unavailable because supposedly inappropriate. Let us therefore abandon this sort of attitude and make an attempt to see what would happen if we were in fact to call a spade a spade.

I.

As a preliminary step let us consider a passage by Jacqueline de Romilly,⁴ for it provides a good example of how Socrates' rhetorical practices can be disguised under different headings.

Those who complain that they cannot resist him, or cannot see where they stand after having discussed with him, are merely bewildered by the power of thorough analysis. They do not understand what happens to them, but we do: they are just confronted with unyielding logic. Whereas the magic of the sophists aimed at producing illusion, Socrates' magic rests on the obstinate destruction of all illusions. It is the magic of implacable truth: and certainly it is not just by chance that those who describe that magic spell of Socrates are young men or laymen, not used to thorough reasoning, men such as Meno and Alcibiades. It is therefore one magic against another, the one taking the former's place, but with opposite aim and means. . . . Socrates represents the stimulating power of reasoning and discussion when devoted to the search for truth. But in both cases this power was bewildering, amazing, magical.

A notable feature of this passage is its vagueness, which allows the writer to speak of Socrates' "magic spell" and simply to point out his desire to enlighten other people's minds, without considering whether the philosopher's "magic," being a kind of enchantment, takes advantage of a special kind of rhetorical strategy, no doubt different from that of the Sophists, but nevertheless rhetorical in character. De Romilly's way of describing Socrates' "magic spell" leaves unnoticed a whole set of certain undesirable features, such as the following: his (the philosopher's) ability to conceal and not just to enlighten (Socrates seemingly pretends to offer nothing but the latter); a temptation to think that, while the partner has very much to learn from the philosopher, Socrates has nothing to learn; the risk that the superior cleverness of the philosopher may leave his partner unable to resist his suggestions and therefore incapable of arguing skillfully for his own point of view (leaving himself too ready to yield to what Socrates argues for, regardless of the quality

of Socrates' arguments). It is almost incredible how close to taking into account the philosopher's rhetorical maneuvers De Romilly comes, without being able to make the crucial step.

De Romilly not only portrays Socrates for the hundredth time as an angel, but in addition takes the liberty of concealing some relevant features of his dialogical practices. I want to suggest that it is not enough to take account of the beneficent attitude of the philosopher, i.e., the ends. We should also focus on the means whereby he works his "magical spell," and ask questions like the following: What are the criteria governing his dialectical strategies? What precisely makes his discourse succeed? Which of its features are characteristic and typical? What is it precisely that invites the reader invariably to take the side of Socrates? and so on.

As to the sources for the present investigation, it is obvious that one must look for primary evidence in the earliest Socratic dialogues, i.e., those dialogues (not just by Plato) that show Socrates at work. Within this field, instead of concentrating on points of doctrine, we should rather focus on his peculiar—indeed, unmistakable—way of shaping his verbal interchanges. As a matter of fact, these dialogues show a notable agreement in their way of re-creating a unique style and of presenting the philosopher at work.⁵ Their evidence seems to offer a suitable starting point for the present inquiry.

II.

Another reason why many scholars neglect the rhetorical side of Socratic dialogue will introduce us directly to the core of our subject. For a long time rhetoric has been taken to be a kind of outer covering or embellishment of thought, a mere accident that not only can be eliminated at any time without serious drawbacks, but also fails to exert more than a superficial influence upon the particular subject under discussion (still less upon the doctrinal body of a philosophical inquiry). But this kind of rhetorical elaboration really has little or nothing to do with Socrates.

Consider the fallacious inference placed at the beginning of Plato's *Apology* (17 B9–C1), where Socrates adduces the lack of "speeches finely tricked out with words and phrases, carefully arranged"⁶ as evidence of his own complete harmlessness as a speaker. The inference deliberately suggests that there could be deceptive speaking only if it happens that relatively rare and sophis-

ticated words are chosen and symmetrically arranged (possibly according to Gorgianic usage), much as if rhetoric were the same as stylistic adeptness.⁷ In fact, Plato here has Socrates inferring from the absence of certain stylistic features the necessary absence of every kind of subterfuge in his discourse, although both the writer and his hero are aware of how fallacious and intentionally misleading such an inference is. What does this awareness imply? The answer is, I think, that Plato's Socrates is here deliberately concealing his own rhetorically elaborated prose, i.e., concealing, by means of a fallacious inference, the fact that rhetoric is rhetoric even when, as in this case, it works only underground and with no use of stylistic adeptness.

In order to establish how Socrates' rhetoric works here (as well as in the dialogues) and at which levels it is effective, we must considerably enlarge the range of possible rhetorical devices to be taken into account. Let us consider first what the philosopher requests from his audience instead of requesting that the usual attention to be paid to a sustained development of a certain subject (as customary in the sophistic usage). He not only begins by stressing the innocuousness of what he is going to say, thus assuring his audience or interlocutor that it is unnecessary to be on its guard, but also breaks up what he has to say into a number of brief remarks and questions. He looks for a single interlocutor, and without fail induces him to give his advice on a certain subject, so that the turn taken by the dialogue necessarily is, at least in part, unpredictable. Replacing a speech with a talk or conversation, he is able at once to bewilder his interlocutor by neutralizing the arguments of the latter and to convey the impression of opening new avenues for his thought and/or for his way of life. Since Socrates is able to exercise this remarkable ability on any subject whatever, it is reasonable to conclude that an overall strategy is at work, and that we should regard this strategy as rhetorical in character, i.e., as an astuteness in communication that allows Socrates to reach a given goal despite the presumed unpredictability of free and unrestrained conversation. As a matter of fact, the character of these talks becomes part of the overall (macro-rhetorical) strategy and the philosopher avails himself of it both in order to lead the interlocutor into letting down his guard and to impose upon him a number of conversational obligations.

So the rhetorical strategy displays its effectiveness first of all in preparing a whole situational context, a whole semiosis suggesting

to the partner that he has nothing to fear, that a talk with Socrates can only be beneficial (though perhaps not very pleasant from certain points of view), that the philosopher's attitude has nothing to do with eristic, that he has no interest outside such noble things as truth, genuine friendship, genuine *arete*, and so on.

Of course, it is very likely that, generally speaking, such a semiosis corresponds to a real inner attitude on the philosopher's part, but it is no less likely that to a certain extent it gives him a misleadingly benevolent look, whether or not intended by the philosopher, but in any event such as to deceive the interlocutor.

At a second level, such a semiosis (i.e., a typical macro-rhetorical move) leads the interlocutor to take Socrates' remarks, objections, and suggestions as more than just the opinions of a respected person, but rather as the voice of truth, enunciating a genuine enlightenment which it would be shameful not to listen to, or as if a sort of *katharsis* were being carried out.

Whatever Socrates' real merits, the semiosis encourages too great a confidence in him (just the confidence in "the magic of implacable truth" that de Romilly speaks of). It also conveys the idea of a hierarchical relation which inevitably puts the interlocutor well beneath the philosopher. Thirdly, it suggests that only the interlocutor deserves to be examined. The philosopher is in the position to help him to become aware of incoherences either in his behavior or in his opinions; it would be absurd to expect any such advantage whatsoever from the inversion of roles.

Insofar as all this renders credible an idealized image of Socrates independent of whatever his real harmlessness and trustworthiness may be, and given that the philosopher himself encourages this kind of idealization of himself, it follows that he conveys a biased image of himself, not without pharisaic overtones.

III.

However, the story has another side to be taken into account: if Socrates, at least in the last decades of his life, was in fact aware of having a certain mission to accomplish and felt himself engaged in accomplishing it; and if he understood this mission as an attempt to make other people aware of how badly they needed to submit their behavior to radical change, it is likely that he realized both how difficult it is to convince other people that they behave in a radically improper way, and how crucial it is to conquer other people's

reluctance to blush with shame in front of another person. At this point, he may have come to appreciate the benefit of certain conversational devices fitting for his own purposes and suitable to prevent a defensive reaction on the part of his potential audience. He may have especially appreciated the device of letting other people believe that they have discovered for themselves what he was anxious to instill in their minds.

Thanks to these rather uncontroversial conjectures, we may easily understand how important it could have been for him to convey to his interlocutor the impression of having literally nothing to fear (and, for that matter, perhaps nothing much to expect) from him, so that the interlocutor could feel quite at ease. That is, indeed, a very good way to strengthen the interlocutor's surprise at a later stage in the dialogue, and even more to get him to feel a sense of genuine emotion under the impression that he has discovered by himself alone what the philosopher, without obtruding himself, is trying to convey.

The strategical value of all this is apparent, and it seems to differ in a major way from the Sophists' strategy. While they were delighted to offer long and well-organized speeches in the hope of arousing a sense of wonder and admiration, as well as of securing the acknowledgement of their intellectual superiority, Socrates opted for a different approach: the unassuming tone, the abolition of long speeches, the disarming simplicity of his remarks, questions, and analogies. A whole machinery, all conveying the same message ("no danger, no suspicion, no need of being on guard") is set going. Clearly he thought up a new formula, a new key for breeding confidence in a potential audience, and this is genuine rhetoric (more precisely: a kind of anti-rhetorical rhetoric) no matter how fairly he used it (but, as we have seen, he was not always perfectly fair).

It is also plausible to conjecture that Socrates was exercising a sense of timing in changing the overall strategy of communication. He sensed in his own time that the Gorgianic formula (which we may summarize as showering the audience with a continual flow of arguments in such a way as to make calm assessment impossible⁸), after enjoying success for some years, would eventually be felt as conceited and intolerably boring, let alone unfitting for Socrates' own purposes. Likewise, cinema in the eighties often prefers meaningful monosyllables to the streams of loquacity common in the fifties and sixties.

IV.

Particularly fitting, within this global orientation, is Socrates' marked preference for allusive communication: if Gorgias was almost as loquacious as Shakespeare, Socrates was almost as deliberately reticent as a Beckett character. Instead of indulging in the analytical consideration of various sides of the same story, so that "everything" is in one way or another said (a prominent feature in Gorgias' rhetoric⁹), Socrates prefers to leave much unspoken; he suggests, hints, insinuates, he says what he does *not* think. This is more than irony or dissimulation. Socrates not only disparages himself in words, but in his silence on many propositions expresses them obliquely if at all; he prefers to wait for his interlocutor (or some bystander) to decode the covert message, and sometimes he speaks in such a way that only some among the bystanders are able to detect the insinuation, while the interlocutor isn't, at least immediately.¹⁰

However, if we try to take into account more definite devices, a whole gamut of very different maneuvers should be considered one by one, all aiming at the same goal: to ensure a good degree of concealment of what the philosopher is trying to do at each step of the dialectical interplay. Let us briefly consider at least some of them, without trying to draw up an exacting classification.

A minor device, but one of some importance, consists in getting a bystander (possibly a friend of the interlocutor) to open a conversation instead of opening it himself, or in concealing himself under the mask of a third person who is said to be much less compliant when submitting a concept to careful analysis.¹¹ If he takes advantage of such a device only from time to time, much more common is the propensity to concentrate, each time, upon a small subject, or a question of detail, or a banal analogy. In so doing, he seems to pursue the special aim of decreasing the interlocutor's ability to follow his line of argument. With a similar intention he is often pleased to give the impression of suddenly abandoning a particular subject and of wishing to turn to quite another kind of question. That is apparent in a papyrus fragment from Aeschines' *Alcibiades* (POxy 1608, fr. A), but also in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (e.g., IV 2.31) and, for instance, in a passage of Plato's *Protagoras* (332A).

Another device he makes use of very often is the technique of insinuating, i.e., of "saying something without assuming the responsibility for having said it," a maneuver allowing him "to enjoy

at the same time both the force of word and the innocence of silence."¹²

He also often exploits the "persuasive definitions" to which Charles L. Stevenson devoted a well-known article in 1938.¹³

In addition, he makes an extensive use of examples and analogies; and it is well known how selective and biased they can be, how much they may conceal while emphasizing only one side of the story. Noteworthy also is the trick of offering two very obvious analogies before passing to a much more controversial one in order to elicit from the interlocutor the same answer to the third, too, as if it were much of the same order as the previous ones.

Even more noteworthy is the contrivance of a pseudo-analogical inferential formula which, while *prima facie* leading to a given conclusion, in fact stresses how misleading a set of analogies may be, despite their seeming plausibility. It unquestionably functions too, as a trap for the interlocutor, but it overtly aims at stimulating the search for a less superficial answer or settlement of the matter, and thus at enlightening the interlocutor *via* a momentary puzzlement. By means of this device Socrates is able to stress, e.g., how unlikely it is that we should look for another, more lovely woman to replace our own wife, as if searching for a better horse than our own.¹⁴ The device allows Socrates momentarily to lead the unprepared interlocutor in the wrong direction, but only in order to get him to realize immediately afterwards that to regard the conclusion so reached as sound would be absurd. This kind of analogical inference is curiously self-destructive and self-repudiating. Unlike the other examples we have considered, it emphasizes, rather than conceals, a certain point; but insofar as it initially bewilders the interlocutor (and possibly some of the bystanders), it is also of such a nature as to emphasize the naivety of the latter, and hence his inferiority to the man who for a moment was able to produce this disorientation. Moreover, the trick, though beginning by intimidating, goes on immediately to suggest that in fact Socrates' attitude towards the interlocutor is purely beneficent, so that the interlocutor has absolutely nothing to fear from him.

Such a covert message has the additional ambivalence of being an undeniably rhetorical maneuver and, at the same time, a message giving rise to the feeling that one has earned a gratifying intimacy with the keen but so outstandingly fair philosopher. This feeling is an invitation to consider the philosopher's tricks as absolutely harmless. Yet to accept this invitation brings about the very goal of rhetoric. It forces the interlocutor's hand, drawing from

him more confidence than the speaker can possibly deserve. And it is far from only when a pseudo-analogical shift of this kind is at work that an ambivalence of this kind takes place. We will return to this point in a moment.

The fact that so many different means pursue the same end makes clear how conscious the goal must have been and to what extent the same overall strategy must have governed the selection of each device. This variety also stresses the importance of taking into account the strategical aspect of Socrates' rhetorical machinery in order to appreciate the value of each move. Thirdly, it allows us to reach a conclusion with which we can be comfortable about the kind of man Socrates must have been (it is unlikely that the Socrates we are confronted with was nothing more than the product of a convergent literary tradition in which at least three different authors of Socratic dialogues participated).

V.

While it is rather easy to acknowledge that a tendency to concealment systematically marks Socrates' peculiar way of shaping dialogical interplay, it is not so easy to say to what extent the philosopher, his interlocutors, and various bystanders could have been aware of each move. When, for instance, Socrates wants to ensure a better dissembling of a certain argumentational (and possibly pragmatic) goal and therefore lets a friend start the conversation, who becomes, for a moment, an accomplice (possibly a smiling and benevolent one), should we assume that they are consciously and intentionally deceiving the interlocutor? I am not sure that this is the case, because a full awareness would have seriously affected such things as their self-esteem, their claim to be radically different from the Sophists, the sense of engagement, and the genuineness of the leader's attitude towards the dialogue. Were each device taken for what it was, i.e., for a rhetorical contrivance, how could Socrates have still been emotionally engaged in the attempt at overcoming his friend's unawareness of how badly he (say, Alcibiades) needed to start a new life, or of how sincerely he (Socrates) believed that he was behaving as a true friend and benefactor of his interlocutor? And wouldn't he risk losing the "devotion" of at least those coworkers who had witnessed his argumentative activities on several occasions? Besides, how could Plato have continued sincerely to admire him?

The traditional answer, as I have indicated, consists in merely

refusing to acknowledge the rhetorical nature of these devices. I would prefer to believe that not unlike the interlocutors, Socrates himself and his occasional accomplices were only confusedly aware of this rhetoricity, and that the sensation of being impassionedly engaged in the pursuit of noble aims without evil intentions may well have veiled the true nature of the means he usually used in order to attain his ends.

A passage towards the end of Aeschines' *Alcibiades*, where Socrates claims to be genuinely engaged and unaware of exploiting any *technique* whatsoever, may be produced as evidence. He says:

If I thought I could benefit him by art (skill) I would certainly plead guilty to gross folly. But as it is, I thought this (advantage) over Alcibiades was given to me by Providence. . . . On account of the passion that I happened to feel for Alcibiades, I experienced nothing different than the Bacchanals: for when they are inspired by the god, the Bacchanals draw honey and milk where others cannot even get water from the wells. It was especially so in my case; I knew no doctrine which I could teach a man and (in so doing) benefit him: nevertheless, I thought that by associating with him and loving him, I might by my companionship make him better.¹⁵

Since, despite these claims, Aeschines very clearly portrays the philosopher in the act of concealing several things from Alcibiades (in order that the lad's emotional reaction to the conclusion may be strengthened), we cannot be sure whether Socrates is sincere or insincere in what he says—or rather: Aeschines must have felt that his own way of representing Socrates at work could have left room for doubt (“Great soul or fearful rhetorician?”), and therefore felt the need of doing something in order to prevent the rise of such doubt. Though knowing and clearly appreciating a number of rhetorical devices (and how to exploit them), he thus wished, not unlike Plato and Xenophon, to stress how much a Socratic dialogue goes beyond mere argumentational techniques. However, in so doing, Aeschines too conceals, rather than dissolves, their technical nature.

VI.

All that I have written so far may hopefully settle the question of fact (Socrates' rhetoric does exist, may be described, plays an important role in the dialectical interplay, may be taken as highly innovative, is strongly marked by a “rhetoric of anti-rhetoric.”

exploits macro- rather than micro-rhetorical devices, etc.), but perhaps leaves still open a question of right. Can we afford to take Socrates' rhetoric as both dangerous and beneficial, both worrisome and reassuring? Does it make sense to say that his conversational strategies are intrinsically shaped in order both to prevail over the interlocutor and to lead people to think for themselves, both to circumvent the interlocutor and, at the same time, to offer to him a splendid opportunity either for an unrestrained conversation (with time enough for making a point, refining or rectifying it, offering reasons, and considering some counterexamples) or else for discovering the contradictory nature of some mode of behavior that the interlocutor was accustomed to regard as reasonable? Is it enough to say that the story is two-sided? Let me assume that to acknowledge the existence of a rhetorical side in Socrates' conversational style is not yet to explain how it interacts with other prominent features of this style.

I have already suggested (section II) that we should understand such interaction in terms of a means/ends relation (rhetorical means toward "noble" ends). It may be advisable to add that the "anomaly" we have just found in Socrates' conversational practices should be taken instead as an intrinsic feature of rhetoric (at least with "rhetoric" taken as a kind of manipulation of what one says in order to affect the audience's opinion). In fact, when the occasion calls for more than a remark (an opinion, a piece of advice, a reminder), but the speaker wishes instead to shake a certain audience, to instill a new idea and lead people to realize how far-reaching it is, or when he wishes at least to establish a sense of relevance, an atmosphere of intimacy, of confidence, of communication in depth, it is strictly necessary for him to set up a whole semiosis, to be careful to avoid what may be felt as disturbing, to concentrate only upon certain sides of the subject-matter, in a word, to select what one has to say (or to suggest) in order to give a highly coherent picture of the state of affairs—that is, to be strictly functional in what one chooses to say or not to say.¹⁶

Therefore, I would venture to say that Socrates' ambivalence is important in that it throws light on a structural ambivalence of rhetoric (indeed, it is possible that he established a complete and highly creative mode of communication in order to attain goals of quite a new kind, almost wholly unknown in Greece). This ambivalence shows that the same rhetorical machinery that proves invaluable for the attainment of such goals as successful advertising,

propaganda, and other even more fearful manipulations of opinion, is equally needed in order to let people feel at ease and understand one another in depth (or at least believe that this is the case). Besides, high quality advertising too often tries to create a reassuring and fascinating (or a familiar) atmosphere. The semiosis aims at being global. In order to set up a certain atmosphere one must be highly selective and leave many things out (much as if they didn't exist), so that the audience ceases for a moment to remain in full command of its own beliefs and adheres, instead, to the world-picture that the speaker is going to suggest.

I hope these sketchy remarks make it understandable what at first sight is rather bewildering in Socrates' manner: the coexistence of his "magic spell" and his implacable rhetoric, his sincerity and his patent aptitude in forcing his interlocutor's hands, and therefore in prevailing over them not by argument, but by clever devices.¹⁷

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Notes

1. As an outstanding example of this attitude Erickson (1979) may be cited. Let me add that we still lack a study either of Plato's own rhetorical strategies or of the semiotic apparatus(es) he establishes and exploits.
2. Ar. *Topics*, Book VIII. In *Top.* 156b17–157a8 in particular, although considering what is clearly a set of rhetorical maneuvers (at 157a6 he puts them under the heading "In order to dissemble": *eis . . . krupsin*), Aristotle fails to recognize their rhetorical character.
3. So far as I know, only Rossetti (1984) and Farness (1987) overtly mention Socrates' rhetoric in their titles. Even so, the latter studies not so much Socrates' rhetoric as the structural ambiguity of the philosopher's self-defense in Plato's *Apology*. This meager list could be supplemented, with those few articles (e.g., Parlebas 1980 and Rossetti 1988) which point to certain rhetorical maneuvers that consciously aim at conveying a certain degree of misunderstanding to Socrates' interlocutor. Other scholars have skimmed over our present subject in the process of concentrating on the unsympathetic overtones of Socrates' discourse in Plato's *Apology* (see Allen 1976, Verstraetens 1977, Brann 1978, Gontar 1978, West 1979, Fewer & Hare 1981, and Brickhouse & Smith 1984), but they have viewed Socrates' concealed aggressiveness not as rhetoric but rather as a regrettable though unavoidable aspect of his self-defense. Moreover, they do not attempt to form a more balanced picture by including a comparison with what happens during Socrates' dialogical skirmishes.
4. *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1975) reprinted in Erickson 1979, 153–169 (I quote from p. 163).
5. For some further developments see Rossetti 1989. In fact, though it is customary to pay the greatest attention to Socrates' doctrines, it can hardly be doubted that Plato and the other authors of Socratic dialogues show us more about Socrates' conversational practices than about his thought.
6. Loeb translation by Henry North Fowler.

7. E. Norden's famous *Die antike Kunstprosa* (Leipzig 1898) may have greatly contributed to the movement that encouraged the reduction of rhetoric to style. It is astonishing, for example, how he overlooks what is strategic in Gorgias' rhetoric and concentrates only on matters of style (e.g., "Zerhacktheit des Satzbaus, Wortstellung, rhythmische Diktion . . ." p. 64 ff.). It is noteworthy that G. Calboli, when commenting upon Norden's book in his otherwise remarkable "Nota di aggiornamento" (which is appended to the Italian translation of the book, *La prosa d'arte antica* [Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1986] pp. 975-1185), says little to remind us that style is only part of a much wider story.

8. Given that this is a very prominent feature, it would be worth knowing why historians of rhetoric (including Norden and Calboli: *supra*, note 7; but see Rossetti 1984, 143) usually fail to pay the least attention to it.

9. A good example of such a practice may be found in Diels-Kranz Fr. 6 (from Gorgias' *Epitaphios*).

10. A prominent example is Plat. *Gorg.* 447B9-448A5 (see Rossetti 1988), but also Xen. *Mem.* IV. 2.1-3 is relevant.

11. The passages listed in the previous note are good examples of the former device, while Plato's *Hippias Maior* (286C-289D) may be taken as the standard example of the latter.

12. I quote from Ducrot 1972, p. 20, where no reference to Socrates is made. Another good example may be found in Plat. *Gorg.* 447B9-448A5.

13. See Stevenson 1938. Nobody has yet classified the dozens of "persuasive definitions" we find in Plato's aporetic dialogues in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (e.g., III 9.9) and elsewhere.

14. This example comes from Aeschines' *Aspasia* (fr. 9 Kraus = fr. 31 Dittmar, from Cicero). For other examples, as well as for a more detailed analysis, see Rossetti 1984a.

15. Fr. 3-4 Kraus = fr. 11 Dittmar (from Aelius Aristides).

16. What I am envisaging here has much in common with McKeon's theory of rhetoric as an instrument of cohesion (McKeon 1987, *passim*).

17. I am very grateful to Professor William W. Fortenbaugh for the stylistic changes he suggested throughout my article, and for his extensive revision of the English translation of Aeschines Fr 3-4 that I originally used—a revision indeed so extensive that the translation as it now stands should in fact be credited to Fortenbaugh.

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