THE WORKS OF ARISTOTLE. VOL. XI: RHETORICA; DE RHETORICA AD ALEXANDRUM; DE POETICA

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ARISTOTLE & W. RHYS ROBERTS & E. S. FORSTER & INGRAM BYWATER

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THE
WORKS OF ARISTOTLE

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH
UNDER THE EDITORSHIP

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VOLUME XI

RHETORICA
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DE RHETORICA AD ALEXANDRUM
E. S. FORSTER

DE POETICA
INGRAM BYWATER

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BOOK I

c. 1. RHETORIC is the counterpart (*ἀντίστροφος*) of Dialectic. It is a subject that can be treated systematically. The argumentative modes of persuasion (*πίστεις*) are the essence of the art of rhetoric: appeals to the emotions warp the judgement. The writers of current text-books on rhetoric give too much attention to the forensic branch (in which chicanery is easier) and too little to the political (where the issues are larger). Argumentative persuasion (*πίστις*) is a sort of demonstration (*ἀπόδειξις*), and the rhetorical form of demonstration is the enthymeme (*ἐνθύμημα*). Four uses of rhetoric. Its possible abuse is no argument against its proper use on the side of truth and justice. The honest rhetorician has no separate name to distinguish him from the dishonest.

c. 2. Definition of rhetoric as 'the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion'. Of the modes of persuasion some belong strictly to the art of rhetoric, and some do not. The rhetorician finds the latter kind (viz. witnesses, contracts, and the like) ready to his hand. The former kind he must provide himself; and it has three divisions—(1) the speaker's power of evincing a personal character (*ἦθος*) which will make his speech credible; (2) his power of stirring the emotions (*πάθη*) of his hearers; (3) his power of proving a truth, or an apparent truth, by means of persuasive arguments. Hence rhetoric may be regarded as an offshoot of dialectic, and also of ethical (or, political) studies. The persuasive arguments are (*a*) the example (*παράδειγμα*), corresponding to induction (*ἐπαγωγή*) in dialectic; (*b*) the enthymeme, corresponding to the syllogism; (*c*) the apparent enthymeme, corresponding to the apparent syllogism. The enthymeme is a rhetorical syllogism, and the example a rhetorical induction. Rhetoric has regard to classes of men, not to individual men; its subjects, and the premisses from which it argues, are in the main such as present alternative possibilities in the sphere of human action; and it must adapt itself to an audience of untrained thinkers who cannot follow a long train of reasoning. The premisses from which enthymemes are formed are 'probabilities' and 'signs'; and signs are either fallible or infallible, in which latter case they are termed *τεκμήρια*. The lines of argument, or topics, which enthymemes follow

may be distinguished as common (or, general) and special (i. e. special to a single study, such as natural science or ethics). The special lines should be used discreetly, if the rhetorician is not to find himself deserting his own field for another.

c. 3. There are three kinds of rhetoric: A. political (deliberative), B. forensic (legal), and C. epideictic (the ceremonial oratory of display). Their (α) divisions, (β) times, and (γ) ends are as follows: A. Political (α) exhortation and dehortation, (β) future, (γ) expediency and inexpediency; B. Forensic (α) accusation and defence, (β) past, (γ) justice and injustice; C. Epideictic (α) praise and censure, (β) present, (γ) honour and dishonour.

c. 4. (A) The subjects of Political Oratory fall under five main heads: (1) ways and means, (2) war and peace, (3) national defence, (4) imports and exports, (5) legislation. The scope of each of these divisions.

c. 5. In urging his hearers to take or to avoid a course of action, the political orator must show that he has an eye to their happiness. Four definitions (of a popular kind: as usual in the *Rhetoric*), and some fourteen constituents, of happiness.

c. 6. The political speaker will also appeal to the interest of his hearers, and this involves a knowledge of what is good. Definition and analysis of things 'good'.

c. 7. Comparison of 'good' things. Of two 'good' things, which is the better? This entails a consideration of degree—the lore of 'less or more'.

c. 8. The political speaker will find his powers of persuasion most of all enhanced by a knowledge of the four sorts of government democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, monarchy, and their characteristic customs, institutions, and interests. Definition of the four sorts severally. Ends of each.

c. 9. (C) The Epideictic speaker is concerned with virtue and vice, praising the one and censuring the other. The forms of virtue. Which are the greatest virtues?—Some rhetorical devices used by the epideictic speaker: 'amplification', especially. Amplification is particularly appropriate to epideictic oratory; examples, to political; enthymemes, to forensic.

c. 10. (B) The Forensic speaker should have studied wrongdoing—its motives, its perpetrators, and its victims. Definition of wrongdoing as injury voluntarily inflicted contrary to law. Law is either (a) special, viz. that written law which regulates the life of a particular community, or (b) general, viz. all those unwritten principles which are supposed to be acknowledged everywhere. Enumeration and elucidation of the seven causes of human action, viz. three involuntary, (1) chance, (2) nature, (3) compulsion; and four voluntary, viz. (4) habit, (5) reasoning, (6) anger, (7) appetite. All voluntary actions are good or

apparently good, pleasant or apparently pleasant. The good (or expedient) has been discussed under political oratory. The pleasant has yet to be considered.

c. 11. Definition of pleasure, and analysis of things pleasant.—The motives for wrongdoing, viz. advantage and pleasure, have thus been discussed in chapters 6, 7, 11.

c. 12. The characters and circumstances which lead men to commit wrong, or make them the victims of wrong.

c. 13. Actions just and unjust may be classified in relation to (1) the law, (2) the persons affected. The law may be (*a*) special, i. e. the law of a particular State, or (*b*) universal, i. e. the law of Nature. The persons affected may be (*a*) the entire community, (*b*) individual members of it. A wrongdoer must either understand and intend the action, or not understand and intend it. In the former case, he must be acting either from deliberate choice or from passion. It is deliberate purpose that constitutes wickedness and criminal guilt. Unwritten law (1) includes in its purview the conduct that springs from exceptional goodness or badness, e. g. our behaviour towards benefactors and friends; (2) makes up for the defects in a community's written code of law. This second kind is equity. Its existence partly is, and partly is not, intended by legislators; not intended, where they have noticed no defect in the law; intended, where they find themselves unable to define things exactly, and are obliged to legislate as if that held good always which in fact only holds good usually.—Further remarks on the nature and scope of equity.

c. 14. The worse of two acts of wrong done to others is that which is prompted by the worse disposition. Other ways of computing the comparative badness of actions.

c. 15. The 'non-technical' (extrinsic) means of persuasion—those which do not strictly belong to the art (τέχνη) of rhetoric. They are five in number, and pertain especially to forensic oratory: (1) laws, (2) witnesses, (3) contracts, (4) tortures, (5) oaths. How laws may be discredited or upheld, according as it suits the litigant. Witnesses may be either ancient (viz. poets and other notable persons; sooth-sayers; proverbs); or recent (viz. well-known contemporaries who have expressed their opinions about some disputed matter, and witnesses who give their evidence in court). Ancient witnesses are more trust-worthy than contemporary. How contracts, and evidence given under torture, may be belittled or represented as important. In regard to oaths, a fourfold division exists: a man may either both offer and accept an oath, or neither, or one without the other—that is, he may offer an oath but not accept one, or accept an oath but not offer one.

BOOK II

c. 1. Since rhetoric—political and forensic rhetoric, at any rate—exists to affect the giving of decisions, the orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief; he must also (1) make his own character look right and (2) put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind. As to his own character: he should make his audience feel that he possesses prudence, virtue, and goodwill. This is especially important in a deliberative assembly. In the law courts it is especially important that he should be able to influence the emotions, or moral affections, of the jury who try the case. Definition of the several emotions. In regard to each emotion we must consider (*a*) the states of mind in which it is felt; (*b*) the people towards whom it is felt; (*c*) the grounds on which it is felt.

c. 2. In cc. 2–11 the various emotions are defined, and are also discussed (with incidental observations) from the three points of view just indicated. In c. 2, Anger is the subject. The orator must so speak as to make his hearers angry with his opponents.

c. 3. Calmness (as the opposite of Anger).

c. 4. Friendship and Enmity.

c. 5. Fear and Confidence.

c. 6. Shame and Shamelessness.

c. 7. Kindness and Unkindness.

c. 8. Pity.

c. 9. Indignation.

c. 10. Envy.

c. 11. Emulation.

c. 12. The various types of human character are next considered, in relation to the various emotions and moral qualities and to the various ages and fortunes. By 'ages' are meant youth, the prime of life, and old age; by 'fortunes' are meant birth, wealth, power, and their opposites. The youthful type of character is thereupon depicted.

c. 13. The character of elderly men.

c. 14. The character of men in their prime.—The body is in its prime from thirty to five-and-thirty; the mind about forty-nine.

c. 15. The gifts of fortune by which human character is affected. First, good birth.

c. 16. Second, wealth.

c. 17. Third, power.

c. 18. Retrospect, and glance forward. The forms of argument common to all oratory will next be discussed.

c. 19. The four general lines of argument (*κοινοὶ τόποι*) are: (1) The Possible and Impossible; (2) Fact Past; (3) Fact Future; (4) Degree.

c. 20. The two general modes of persuasion (*κοιναὶ πίστεις*) are: (1) the example (*παράδειγμα*), (2) the enthymeme (*ἐνθύμημα*); the maxim (*γνώμη*) being part of the enthymeme. Examples are either (*a*) historical parallels, or (*b*) invented parallels, viz. either (*α*) illustrations (*παραβολαί*), or (*β*) fables (*λόγοι*), such as those of Aesop. Fables are suitable for popular addresses; and they have this advantage, that they are comparatively easy to invent, whereas it is hard to find parallels among actual past events.

c. 21. Use of maxims. A maxim is a general statement about questions of practical conduct. It is an incomplete enthymeme. Four kinds of maxims. Maxims should be used (*a*) by elderly men, and (*b*) to controvert popular sayings. Advantages of maxims: (*a*) they enable a speaker to gratify his commonplace hearers by expressing as a universal truth the opinions which they themselves hold about particular cases; (*b*) they invest a speech with moral character.

c. 22. Enthymemes. In enthymemes we must not carry our reasoning too far back, nor must we put in all the steps that lead to our conclusion. There are two kinds of enthymemes: (*a*) the demonstrative, formed by the conjunction of compatible propositions; (*b*) the refutative, formed by the conjunction of incompatible propositions.

c. 23. Enumeration of twenty-eight topics (lines of argument) on which enthymemes, demonstrative and refutative, can be based [*see* Index, under 'argument, lines of']. Two general remarks are added: (*a*) the refutative enthymeme has a greater reputation than the demonstrative, because within a small space it works out two opposing arguments, and arguments put side by side are clearer to the audience; (*b*) of all syllogisms, whether refutative or demonstrative, those are most applauded of which we foresee the conclusions from the beginning, so long as they are not obvious at first sight—for part of the pleasure we feel is at our own intelligent anticipation; or those which we follow well enough to see the point of them as soon as the last word has been uttered.

c. 24. Nine topics of apparent, or sham, enthymemes [*see* Index, under 'fallacious arguments'].

c. 25. Refutation. An argument may be refuted either by a counter-syllogism or by bringing an objection. Objections may be raised in four ways: (*α*) by directly attacking your opponent's own statement; (*β*) by putting forward another statement like it; (*γ*) by putting forward a statement contrary to it; (*δ*) by quoting previous decisions.

c. 26. Correction of two errors, possible or actual: (1) Amplification and Depreciation do not constitute an element of enthymeme, in the sense of 'a line of enthymematic argument'; (2) refutative

enthymemes are not a different species from constructive. This brings to an end the treatment of he thought-element of rhetoric—the way to invent and refute persuasive arguments. There remain the subjects of (A) style and (B) arrangement.

BOOK III

c. 1. (A) Style. It is not enough to know what to say; we must also say it in the right way. Upon the subject of delivery (which presents itself here) no systematic treatise has been composed, though this art has much to do with oratory (as with poetry). The matter has, however, been touched upon by Thrasymachus in his 'Appeals to Pity'. As to the place of style: the right thing in speaking really is that we should fight our case with no help beyond the bare facts; and yet the arts of language cannot help having a small but real importance, whatever it is we have to expound to others. Through the influence of the poets, the language of oratorical prose at first took a poetical colour, as in the case of Gorgias. But the language of prose is distinct from that of poetry; and, further, the writers of tragic poetry itself have now given up those words, not used in ordinary talk, which adorned the early drama.

c. 2. Still, in the main, the same definition and methods apply alike to poetical and to prose style. Style, to be good, must be clear; it must also be appropriate, avoiding both meanness and excess of dignity. How these qualities may be attained. Rare, compound, and invented words must be used sparingly in prose; in which, over and above the regular and proper terms for things, metaphorical terms only can be used with advantage, and even these need care. The language of oratorical prose should, in fact, be like that of ordinary conversation. Some discussion of metaphor.

c. 3. Four faults of prose style, with illustrative examples: (1) misuse of compound words; (2) employment of strange words; (3) long, unseasonable, or frequent epithets; (4) inappropriate metaphors.

c. 4. The simile is a full-blown metaphor. Similes are useful in prose as well as in verse; but they must not be used often, since they are of the nature of poetry. Instances of simile, from Plato and the orators. Metaphors can easily be turned into similes, and similes into metaphors. The proportional [as defined in the *Poetics*, c. 21] metaphor must always apply reciprocally to either of its co-ordinate terms.

c. 5. The foundation of good style is correctness of language, which is discussed under five heads: (1) right use of connecting words; (2) use of special, and not vague general, terms; (3) avoidance of ambiguity; (4) observance of gender; (5) correct indication of grammatical number. A composition should be easy to read and therefore easy to deliver; it should avoid (1) uncertainties as to punctuation, (2) zeugma, (3) parenthesis.