Aristotle

Rhetoric

Translated
With Introduction and Notes
By

C. D. C. Reeve

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Preface

A worthwhile translation of the *Rhetoric* must be accurate and consistent and accompanied by sufficient annotation to make it accessible. Some of this annotation can consist, as it does here, of texts selected from other works of Aristotle, so that, while traveling through the region of the Aristotelian world the *Rhetoric* describes, the reader can also travel through other regions of it, acquiring an ever-widening and deepening grasp on the whole. But much of it must simply be explanatory, clarificatory, and interpretative. To make the journey as convenient as possible sequentially numbered endnotes take the place of footnotes and glossary entries, so that the information most needed at each juncture is available in a single location. The non-sequential reader, interested in a particular passage, will find in the detailed Index of Terms a guide to places where focused discussion of a term or notion occurs. The Introduction describes the book that lies ahead, explaining what it is about, what it is trying to do, and how it goes about doing it. It is not a comprehensive discussion of all the important subjects discussed in the *Rhetoric*, nor is it an expression of scholarly consensus on those it does discuss, but rather my own take on them. The same is true of many of the more interpretative notes. They are a place to start, not a place to finish—a first step in the vast dialectical enterprise of coming to understand Aristotle for oneself. The place of the *Rhetoric* in the history of rhetoric is itself a large and complex subject, and one best explored in works, necessarily substantial, devoted to it. Some of these are mentioned in the section on Further Reading.

Some readers will, I have assumed, be new to the *Rhetoric*, so I have tried to keep their needs in mind. But it is resolute readers Aristotle most repays, and it is these, whatever their antecedent level of knowledge or sophistication, that my edition is intended to serve.

I have benefited from the work of previous translators and commentators, especially Edward Cope, John Freese, William Grimaldi, George Kennedy, and Christof Rapp, and from essays in the collections edited by David Furley and Alexander Nehamas and by Amélie Rorty. It was Amélie, indeed, who first encouraged me to work on the *Rhetoric* by commissioning a paper for her collection. For that and for her many kindnesses in the forty years we have been friends I thank her warmly.

I come now to my greatest debt, which, as in the case of my *Nicomachean Ethics*, is to Pavlos Kontos, who read carefully every line, correcting errors,

suggesting improvements, indicating the need for additional notes (for example, those mentioning the anonymous Byzantine commentator), and carefully recording more differences between the Oxford Classical Texts (OCT) edition and that of Kassel than I had initially done. For each hour spent on this labor of love, and there must have been hundreds, I and all my readers have good reason to be grateful.

I renew my thanks to ΔΚΕ, the first fraternity in the United States to endow a professorial chair, and to the University of North Carolina for awarding it to me. The generous research funds, among other things, that the endowment makes available each year have allowed me to travel to conferences and to acquire books, computers, and other research materials and assistance, without which my work would have been much more difficult.

I renew them also to Deborah Wilkes who encouraged me to undertake the mammoth task of translating and overseeing the translations of all of Aristotle's works for the New Hackett Aristotle series, and for her support and that of her colleagues helping me carry it out.

Finally, and very warmly, I thank my graduate student Philip Bold for his generous help with correcting the page proofs.

Abbreviations

Aristotle

Citations of Aristotle's works are made to Immanuel Bekker, *Aristotelis Opera* (Berlin: 1831 [1970]), in the canonical form of abbreviated title, book number or letter (when the work is divided into books), chapter number, page number, column letter, and line number. In the case of the *Rhetoric*, however, the title of the work is usually omitted. An * indicates a work whose authenticity has been seriously questioned; ** indicates a work attributed to Aristotle but generally agreed not to be by him. The abbreviations used are as follows:

APo.	*Posterior Analytics*
APr.	*Prior Analytics*
Ath.	*Constitution of Athens*
Cael.	*De Caelo (On the Heavens)*
Cat.	*Categories*
DA	*De Anima (On the Soul)*
Div. Somn.	*On Divination in Sleep* (Ross)
EE	*Eudemian Ethics*
GA	*Generation of Animals*
GC	*On Coming to Be and Passing Away (De Generatione et Corruptione)* (Rashed)
HA	*History of Animals* (Balme)
IA	*Progression of Animals (De Incessu Animalium)*
Insomn.	*On Dreams*
Int.	*De Interpretatione*
Juv	*On Youth and Old Age, Life and Death, and Respiration* (Ross)
LI	*On Indivisible Lines***

Long.	*On Length and Shortness of Life* (Ross)
MA	*Movement of Animals* (Nussbaum)
MM	*Magna Moralia*
Mem.	*On Memory* (Ross)
Met.	*Metaphysics*
Mete.	*Meteorology*
NE	*Nicomachean Ethics*
PA	*Parts of Animals*
Ph.	*Physics*
Po.	*Poetics*
Pol.	*Politics*
Pr.	*Problems**
Rh.	*Rhetoric*
Rh. Al.	*Rhetoric to Alexander*** (Fuhrmann)
SE	*Sophistical Refutations*
Sens.	*Sense and Sensibilia*
Somn.	*On Sleep*
Top.	*Topics*

I cite and translate the Oxford Classical Texts (OCT) editions of these works, where available, otherwise Bekker or the editions noted:

Balme, D. *Aristotle: Historia Animalium* (Cambridge, 2002).

Fuhrmann, M. *Anaximensis Ars Rhetorica* (Leipzig, 1966)

Mayhew, R. *Aristotle: Problems* (Cambridge, MA, 2011).

Nussbaum, M. *Aristotle's De Motu Animalium: Text with Translation, Commentary, and Interpretative Essays* (Princeton, 1978).

Rashed, M. *Aristote: De la Génération et la Corruption* (Paris, 2005).

Rose, V. *Aristotelis Fragmenta*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1886).

Ross, D. *Aristotle Parva Naturalia* (Oxford, 1955).

Plato

Alc.	*Alcibiades*
Ap.	*Apology*
Chrm.	*Charmides*
Crat.	*Cratylus*
Euthd.	*Euthydemus*
Euthphr.	*Euthyphro*
Grg.	*Gorgias*
Hp. Ma.	*Hippias Major*
La.	*Laches*
Lg.	*Laws*
Ly.	*Lysis*
Men.	*Meno*
Mx.	*Menexenus*
Phd.	*Phaedo*
Phdr.	*Phaedrus*
Phlb.	*Philebus*
Prm.	*Parmenides*
Prt.	*Protagoras*
Rep.	*Republic*
Smp.	*Symposium*
Tht.	*Theaetetus*
Ti.	*Timaeus*

Translations of Plato in the notes are based on those in J. Cooper, ed., *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, 1997) and on my *Trials of Socrates* (Indianapolis, 2002) and *Plato: Republic* (Indianapolis, 2004).

Other Abbreviations and Symbols

Allen, J. *Inference from Signs: Ancient Debates About the Nature of Evidence* (Oxford, 2001).

Athenaeus = Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*.

Barnes = J. Barnes, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation* (Princeton, 1984).

Bowra = C. M. Bowra, *Pindari Carmina* (Oxford, 1947).

Burkett = J. Burkett, *Aristotle,* Rhetoric III: *A Commentary* (Ph.D. diss., Texas Christian University, 2011).

CAG = M. Hayduck, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* (Berlin, 1882–1909).

Campbell I–V = D. Campbell, *Greek Lyric*, 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1991–1993).

Cope = E. Cope, *The Rhetoric of Aristotle with a Commentary*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1877).

Diodorus = Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History.*

DK = H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker,* 6th ed. (Berlin, 1951).

DL = Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (Cambridge, 2013).

Dufour = M. Dufour, *Aristote Rhétorique*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1931–1973).

Edmonds I–IIIa, b = J. Edmonds, *The Fragments of Attic Comedy*, 4 vols. (Leiden, 1961).

Freese = *Aristotle: The "Art" of Rhetoric* (Cambridge, MA, 1926).

Gagarin & Woodruff = M. Gagarin and P. Woodruff, *Early Greek Political Thought from Homer to the Sophists* (Cambridge, 1995).

Grimaldi = W. Grimaldi, Aristotle, *Rhetoric I: A Commentary* (New York, 1980), *Aristotle Rhetoric II: A Commentary* (New York, 1988).

Henderson = J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy* (New Haven, 1975).

Herodotus = Herodotus, *Histories.*

Homer, *Il.* = Homer, *Iliad*.

Homer, *Od.* = Homer, *Odyssey*.

Janko = R. Janko, *Aristotle on Comedy: Towards a Reconstruction of "Poetics II"* (Berkeley, 1984).

Kaibel = G. Kaibel, *Epigrammata Graeca: Ex Labidus Conlecta* (Berlin, 1878).

Kassel = R. Kassel, *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica* (Berlin, 1976).

Kennedy = G. Kennedy, *Aristotle on Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (Oxford, 1991).

Kinkel = G. Kinkel, *Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1878).

Kock = T. Kock, *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1880–1888).

MacDowell = D. MacDowell, *The Law in Classical Athens* (Ithaca, 1978).

Nauck = A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1889).

Page = D. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962).

Prince = S. Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens: Texts, Translations, and Commentary* (Ann Arbor, 2015).

Quint. = Quintilian, *Instituto Oratoria*.

R^3 = V. Rose, *Aristotelis Fragmenta*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1886).

Rapp = C. Rapp, *Aristoteles Rhetorik I, II* (Berlin, 2002).

Richards = H. Richards, *Aristotelica* (London, 1915).

Roberts = W. Rhys Roberts, *Aristotle Rhetorica*, in D. Ross, *The Works of Aristotle*, Vol. VI (Oxford, 1930).

Roisman = J. Roisman, I. Worthington, and R. Waterfield, *Lives of the Attic Orators: Texts from Pseudo-Plutarch, Photius, and the* Suda (Oxford, 2015).

Sauppe = H. Sauppe, *Oratores Attici* (Zurich, 1845–1850).

SSR = G. Giannantoni, *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae* (Naples, 1990).

Striker = G. Striker, "Emotions in Context: Aristotle's Treatment of the Passions in the *Rhetoric* and His Moral Psychology," in A. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's* Rhetoric (Berkeley, 1996), pp. 286–302.

Tarán = L. Tarán, *Speusippus of Athens* (Leiden, 1981).

TEGP = D. W. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy: The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics* (Cambridge, 2010).

Thucydides = Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War.*
Welldon = J. Welldon, *The Rhetoric of Aristotle* (London, 1886).
West = M. L. West, *Delectus ex Iambis et Elegis Graecis* (Oxford, 1980).
A = B = A is identical to (equivalent to) B.
A ≈ B = A is roughly the same as or roughly equivalent or analogous to B.
A ⊃ B = If A then B, or A implies B.

Introduction

Life and Works

Aristotle was born in 384 BC to a well-off family living in the small town of Stagira in northern Greece. His father, Nicomachus, who died while Aristotle was still quite young, was allegedly doctor to King Amyntas of Macedon. His mother, Phaestis, was wealthy in her own right. When Aristotle was seventeen his guardian, Proxenus, sent him to study at Plato's Academy in Athens. He remained there for twenty years, initially as a student, eventually as a researcher and teacher.

When Plato died in 347, leaving the Academy in the hands of his nephew Speusippus, Aristotle left Athens for Assos in Asia Minor, where the ruler, Hermias, was a patron of philosophy. He married Hermias' niece Pythias and had a daughter by her, also named Pythias. Three years later, in 345, after Hermias had been killed by the Persians, Aristotle moved to Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, where he met Theophrastus, who was to become his best student and closest colleague.

In 343 Aristotle seems to have been invited by Philip of Macedon to be tutor to the latter's thirteen-year-old son, Alexander, later called "the Great." In 335 Aristotle returned to Athens and founded his own institute, the Lyceum. While he was there his wife died and he established a relationship with Herpyllis, also a native of Stagira. Their son Nicomachus was named for Aristotle's father, and the *Nicomachean Ethics* may, in turn, have been named for him or transcribed by him. In 323 Alexander the Great died, with the result that anti-Macedonian feeling in Athens grew stronger. Perhaps threatened with a formal charge of impiety (*NE* X 7 $1177^{b}33$), Aristotle left for Chalcis in Euboea, where he died twelve months later, in 322, at the age of sixty-two.

Legend has it that Aristotle had slender calves, small eyes, spoke with a lisp, and was "conspicuous by his attire, his rings, and the cut of his hair." His will reveals that he had a sizable estate, a domestic partner, two children, a considerable library, and a large circle of friends. In it Aristotle asks his executors to take special care of Herpyllis. He directs that his slaves be freed "when they come of age" and that the bones of his wife, Pythias, be mixed with his "as she instructed."

Although the surviving writings of Aristotle occupy almost 2,500 tightly printed pages in English, most of them are not works polished for publication but sometimes incomplete lecture notes and working papers. This accounts for some, though not all, of their legendary difficulty. It is unfair to complain, as a Platonist opponent did, that Aristotle "escapes refutation by clothing a perplexing subject in obscure language, using darkness like a squid to make himself hard to catch," but there is darkness and obscurity enough for anyone, even if none of it is intentional. There is also a staggering breadth and depth of intellect. Aristotle made fundamental contributions to a vast range of disciplines, including logic, metaphysics, epistemology, psychology, ethics, politics, rhetoric, aesthetics, zoology, biology, physics, and philosophical and political history. When Dante called him "the master of those who know," he was scarcely exaggerating.

What the Rhetoric *Is*

One thing we might mean by the *Rhetoric* is what we now find inscribed on the pages that make up David Ross's OCT edition of the Greek text, first published in 1959, which is the basis of the present translation, and which the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* uses. This is the descendant of texts derived—via manuscripts copied in the Byzantine period (from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries AD)—from manuscripts that derive from the edition of Aristotle's works produced by Andronicus of Rhodes in the first century BC. Ross's edition, like most other modern editions, records in the textual apparatus at the bottom of the page various manuscript readings alternative to the one he prints in the body of his text. In quite a few cases, I have preferred one of these readings and have indicated so in the notes, often relying on the generally superior, but less readily available, edition of Kassel. Divisions of the text into books and chapters are the work of editors, not of Aristotle himself. Also present in Ross's text are the page numbers of Bekker, *Aristotelis Opera*. These appear here in the margins of the printed version and enclosed in vertical lines (| |) in the electronic one. Occasional material in square brackets in the text is my addition.

The second thing we might mean, and are perhaps more likely to mean, by the *Rhetoric* is the work itself—that more abstract thing that is embodied in a good Greek text and (ideally) in any translation of it. Aristotle identifies its subject matter as "a sort of offshoot of dialectic and of work in ethics, which it is right to call politics" (I 2 $1356^{a}25$–27), and it itself as "composed of the science of analytics and the [part of] politics concerned with ethics, and is like dialectic on the one hand and sophistical arguments (*logos*) on the other" (4 $1359^{b}9$–12). It is, he says, "a capacity

to get a theoretical grasp on what is possibly persuasive in each case" (2 1355^{b}25–26). We need to determine, therefore, what this craft is, what evidence it is answerable to, and how its success or failure is to be determined. To do this we need to begin with Aristotelian sciences generally, before turning to politics, which is the science most pertinent to rhetoric. Then it will be time to discuss rhetoric itself, its differences from dialectic, and the contribution that dialectic and analytics make to it.

Aristotelian Sciences

Aristotle usually divides the bodies of knowledge that he refers to as "sciences" (*epistêmai*) into three types: theoretical, practical, and productive (crafts). But when he is being especially careful, he also distinguishes within the theoretical sciences between the *strictly theoretical* ones (astronomy, theology), as we may call them, and the *natural* ones, which are like the strictly theoretical ones in being neither practical nor productive but are unlike them in consisting of propositions that—though necessary and universal in some sense—hold for the most part rather than without exception:

> If all thought is either practical or productive or theoretical, natural science would have to be some sort of theoretical science—but a theoretical science that is concerned with such being as is capable of being moved and with the substance that in accord with its account holds for the most part only, because it is not separable. But we must not neglect to consider the *way* the essence or its account is, because, without this, inquiry produces no result. Of things defined, however, that is, of the "whats" that things are, some are the way the snub is, others the way the concave is. And these differ because the snub is grasped in combination with the matter (for the snub is a concave *nose*), whereas the concavity is without perceptible matter. If, then, all natural things are said the way the snub is (for example, nose, eye, face, flesh, bone, and, in general, animal, and leaf, root, bark, and, in general, plant—for the account of none of these is without [reference to] movement, but always includes matter), the way we must inquire into and define the what-it-is in the case of natural things is clear, as is why it belongs to the natural scientist to get a theoretical grasp even on some of the soul, that is, on as much of it as is not without matter. That natural science is a theoretical science, then, is evident from these considerations.

> Mathematics too is a theoretical one, but whether its objects are immovable and separable is not now clear; however, it is clear that *some* parts of mathematics get a theoretical grasp on their objects insofar as they are immovable and insofar as they are separable. But if there is something that is eternal and immovable and separable, it is evident that knowledge of it belongs to a theoretical science—not, however, to *natural* science (for natural science is concerned with certain moveable things) nor to mathematics, but to something prior to both. . . . If, then, there is no other substance beyond those composed by nature, natural science will be the primary science. But if there is some immovable substance, this will be prior and will be primary philosophy. (*Met*. VI 1 $1025^{b}25$–$1026^{a}30$)

When we hear, as we soon do in the *Rhetoric*, that "while some of the premises on the basis of which enthymemes [rhetorical demonstrations] are stated will be necessary, the majority will hold for the most part" (I 2 $1357^{a}30$–32), we should bear in mind that all the natural sciences—which for us are the paradigm cases of science—are in a similar boat.

When science receives its focused discussion in the *Ethics*, however, Aristotle is explicit that if we are "to speak in an exact way and not be guided by mere similarities" (*NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}19$), we should not call anything a science unless it deals with eternal, entirely exceptionless facts about universals that are wholly necessary and do not at all admit of being otherwise:

> What admits of being known scientifically is by necessity. Hence it is eternal. For the things that are unconditionally necessary are all eternal, and eternal things cannot come to be or pass away. (*NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}22$–24)

Since he is here explicitly epitomizing his more detailed discussion of science in the *Posterior Analytics* ($1139^{b}27$), we should take the latter too as primarily a discussion of science in the exact sense, which it calls *epistêmê haplôs*—unconditional scientific knowledge. It follows—and we should acknowledge this—that only the strictly theoretical sciences are sciences in the exact sense. Hence rhetoric is not such a science and neither is physics or biology or any other natural science.

Having made the acknowledgment, though, we must also register the fact that Aristotle himself mostly does not speak in the exact way but instead persistently refers to bodies of knowledge other than the strictly theoretical sciences as *epistêmai*. His division of the *epistêmai* into theoretical,

practical, and productive is a dramatic case in point. But so too is his use of the term *epistêmê* within the *Rhetoric*, which we encounter being applied to rhetoric itself: "one person is an orator (*rhêtôr*) in virtue of his scientific knowledge, another in virtue of his deliberate choice" (I 1 $1355^{b}19$–20). Even boxing and wrestling are classed as *epistêmai* (*Cat*. 8 $10^{b}3$–4).

So the interesting question is not whether rhetoric is a science, since the answer to that is obvious: it is not a science if we are being absolutely exact about the matter, but it is a science if we allow ourselves to be guided by Aristotle's own general use of the term *epistêmê*, on the assumption that it was itself guided by the similarities between the things he applies it to and the strictly theoretical sciences. The interesting question is, what are these similarities? Just how like a canonical or theoretical science is rhetoric?

An Aristotelian science of any sort is a state of the soul, not a body of propositions in a textbook—although the state does involve having an affirmational grasp on a set of true propositions:

> Let the states in which the soul grasps the truth by way of affirmation and denial be five in number: craft knowledge, scientific knowledge, practical wisdom, theoretical wisdom, and understanding. (*NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}14$–16)

Some of these propositions are indemonstrable starting-points, which are or are expressed in definitions, and others are theorems demonstrable from them. We can have scientific knowledge only of the theorems, since—exactly speaking—"what is scientifically known is demonstrable" (*NE* VI 6 $1140^{b}35$). Yet—in what is clearly another lapse from exact speaking—Aristotle characterizes "the most exact of the sciences," which is theoretical wisdom (*sophia*) or primary philosophy, as also involving a grasp by understanding (*nous*) of the truth where the starting-points themselves are concerned:

> A theoretically-wise person not only must know what follows from the starting-points but also must grasp the truth where the starting-points are concerned. So theoretical wisdom must be understanding plus scientific knowledge. (*NE* VI 7 $1141^{a}16$–20; compare *Rh*. I 11 $1371^{b}28$)

He does the same thing in the *Metaphysics*, where theoretical wisdom is the *epistêmê* that provides "a theoretical grasp on the primary starting-points and causes"—among which are included "the good or the for-the-sake-of-which" (I 2 $982^{b}7$–10). Indeed, the grasp a person has of such starting-points must result in their being "better known" than the theorems

he demonstrates from them if he is to have any scientific knowledge of the exact sort at all: "if they are not better known than the conclusion, it is in a coincidental sense that he will have scientific knowledge" (*NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}34–35$).

How like that is rhetoric? Are there starting-points there too and things demonstrable from them? We might think this is an easy question to answer. After all, the methodical inquiry the *Rhetoric* itself exemplifies (I 1 $1355^{b}22$, III 10 $1410^{b}8–9$) does not seem to include any demonstrations whatsoever, and neither do the *Ethics* or *Politics* on which it draws (I 2 $1356^{a}25–27$). For a demonstration is, among other things, a deductively valid argument that is syllogistic in form, and deductions of any sort are scarcely to be found in the *Ethics*, *Politics*, or *Rhetoric*. This is also a problem with the vast majority of Aristotle's works, even those that are usually classed as "scientific treatises"—for example, *Meteorology* and *Parts of Animals*. For none of them seems to fit the description of a science as developed in the *Posterior Analytics*. Attempts have certainly been made to find elements of demonstration and axiomatic structure in these treatises, but the results are somewhat underwhelming. In large part, this is because the search seems misconceived from the outset.

If we think of a science in the exact sense as consisting exclusively of what is demonstrable, as we have seen that Aristotle himself sometimes does, we will be right to conclude that a treatise without demonstrations in it cannot be scientific. But if, as he also does, we include knowledge of starting-points as parts of science, we will not be right: a treatise could contribute to a science not by demonstrating anything but by arguing to the starting-points themselves—an enterprise that could not possibly consist of demonstrations from those starting-points, since these would be circular. We might reasonably infer, therefore, that the rhetoric is a sort of science—a craft (*Rh*. I 4 $1359^{b}6$)—just because it contributes to the correct definition and secure grasp on starting-points without which no science can exist. The same idea might be employed in the case of many of Aristotle's other treatises. They too, we might suppose, are scientific in just this sense.

But even if rhetoric does have starting-points, it will not be a science unless it is also possible to demonstrate things from these. Yet here too we seem to face an obstacle. For Aristotle tells us that we cannot demonstrate things that admit of being otherwise:

> Things whose starting-points admit of being otherwise cannot be demonstrated (for all of them also admit of being otherwise). (*NE* VI 5 $1140^{a}33–35$)

And this seems to include much of the subject matter of rhetoric:

> Few of the premises from which rhetorical deductions are composed are necessary (for most of the things that judgments and investigations are concerned with admit of being otherwise). (*Rh*. I 2 1357^{a}22–24)

Elsewhere, though, he allows that there can be demonstrations of what admits of being otherwise provided it holds for the most part:

> What admits of being otherwise is spoken of in two ways: in one, it means what holds for the most part, that is, when the necessity has gaps (*dialeipein*)—for example, a man's turning grey or growing or decaying, or, in general, what belongs to something by nature (for this does not belong by continuous necessity, since a human being does not exist forever, although if a human being does exist, it belongs either necessarily or for the most part); in the other, it means what is indeterminate, which is what is capable of being thus or not thus—for example, an animal's walking or an earthquake's taking place while it is walking, or, in general, what is the result of luck (for it is not more natural for it to be that way rather than the opposite). . . . Science and demonstrative deductions are not concerned with things that are indeterminate, because the middle term is irregular, but there is scientific knowledge of what happens by nature, and argument and investigations are pretty much concerned with things that are possible in this way. (*APr.* I 13 32^{b}4–21)

Apparently, then, the notion of a demonstration is a bit like that of a science. Speaking exactly, there are demonstrations only in the theoretical sciences, since—speaking exactly again—these alone are sciences. Speaking less exactly, though, there are also demonstrations in other bodies of knowledge. Thus we find Aristotle referring to "rhetorical demonstration" (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{a}6), "rhetorical deductions" (I 2 1357^{a}22–23), and to their starting-points (II 21 1394^{a}27, III 17 1418^{a}27). Indeed, if we do not allow there to be demonstrations of what admits of being otherwise in the sense of holding for the most part, it is not only rhetoric that will lose its putative scientific status; natural science will too.

A penultimate problem. Scientific knowledge seems to be exclusively about universals—about what is common to many particulars: "every account and every science is of universals" (*Met*. XI 1 1059^{b}25–26); "scientific knowledge is supposition about universals and things that are by

necessity" (*NE* VI 6 1140^{b}31); "no craft investigates what is particular" (*Rh*. I 2 1356^{b}30). Yet rhetoric must clearly also deal with particulars and particular cases: it is this individual who is to be accused or defended, praised or blamed, this particular situation that needs to be deliberated about, and, moreover, in this political community with this sort of constitution. Again, it seems an easy inference that rhetoric cannot be a science.

The first point to make in response is that even theoretical sciences, though they deal with eternal and unchangeable necessary truths about universals, can be "coincidentally useful to us where many of the necessities of life are concerned" (*EE* I 6 1216^{b}15–16). Knowledge of astronomy, for instance, helped Thales to make a killing in the olive business (*Pol*. I 11 1259^{a}5–33). The second point is that Aristotle allows that sciences dealing with universals can also deal—albeit coincidentally—with (perishable) particulars:

> There is neither demonstration nor unconditional scientific knowledge of what is subject to passing away, but only the coincidental sort, because it does not hold of this universally, but at some time (*pote*) and in some way (*pôs*). (*APo*. I 8 75^{b}24– 26)

The scientific theorem that all light meats are healthy (*NE* VI 7 1141^{b}18–19) may enable me to infer that this meat is healthy now, but it does not tell me whether it will still be healthy tomorrow (it may have rotted in the meantime) or whether, though it is healthy for most people, it is healthy for me (I may have a fever that makes meat of any sort a bad choice). It does not even tell me either whether the meat will so much as exist tomorrow (it might have been eaten in the meantime). Similarly, while "rhetoric does not get a theoretical grasp on a particular reputable belief either (for example, one persuasive to Socrates or to Hippias)," it does get one on "people of such-and-such a sort" (*Rh*. I 2 1356^{b}33–34), and this has obvious application to the particulars that are of this sort.

While each of these points does something to take the edge off our problem, even collectively they do not seem to go quite far enough. And the reason is this. It is quite possible to have craft knowledge or scientific knowledge of universals without knowing how to apply it in particular cases, but it is not possible to have a grasp on political science—which is in a way the same state of the soul as practical wisdom (*NE* VI 8 1141^{b}23–24)—without knowing this. In fact, it is almost the other way around:

> Nor is practical wisdom knowledge of universals only. On the contrary, it must also know particulars. For it is practical, and action is concerned with particulars. That is why, in other areas

> too, some people who lack knowledge—most of all, those with experience—are more effective *doers* of action than are others who have knowledge. For if someone knows that light meats are digestible and healthy but is ignorant about which sorts of meat are light, he will not produce health; but someone who knows that bird meats are healthy will produce health more. But practical wisdom is practical, so one must possess both sorts of knowledge—or this one more. (*NE* VI 7 1141^{b}14–21)

At the same time, knowledge of universals is a crucial part of politics. This emerges most clearly in the final discussion in the *Ethics*, where we learn not only about the importance of experience of particulars to politics but also about the need to "take steps toward the universal" (X 9 1180^{b}21), on the grounds that "the best supervision in each particular case" will be provided by the person who has "knowledge of the universal and knows what applies in all cases or in these sorts (since the sciences are said to be—and actually are—of what is common)" (1180^{b}13–16).

Once we register the fact that politics must include both a scientific knowledge of universals and an experience of particulars that enables us to apply those universals correctly to them, we can see that something similar must apply to rhetoric, since it is partly composed of politics. Rhetoric, in other words, is something like an applied science as opposed to a pure one. And this seems to be what Aristotle has in mind by classifying it as a craft that deals with, or "get[s] a theoretical grasp on (*theôrêsai*) what is possibly persuasive (*pithanon*)," possibly productive of conviction, "in each case" (*Rh*. I 2 1355^{b}25–26). When we look for the similarities that may justify him in classifying it as a productive *science*, then, we must look not at its particularist component but at its universalist one, since a science, as we saw, is always of what is universal. A productive *science*, then, might to some extent be usefully thought of as a combination of something like a theoretical science (in any case, in the sense in which natural science is theoretical) and the experience-based knowledge of how to apply it.

Legislative Science

What the universalist component of politics consists in is uncontroversial, since Aristotle tells us plainly that it is *nomothetikê*, or legislative science:

> Maybe, then, someone who wishes to make people—whether many or few—better because of his supervision should also try to acquire legislative science, if it is through laws that we

> can become good. For producing a noble disposition in anyone whatever—in anyone put before him—is not a matter for some random person, but if indeed anyone can do it, it is a person who knows, just as in medicine and in all other matters that involve a sort of supervision and practical wisdom. (*NE* X 9 $1180^{b}23–28$)

What legislative science does, as its name suggests, is produce a set of universal laws—for "all law is universal" (*NE* V 10 $1137^{b}13$)—that will "make citizens good by habituating them" (II 1 $1103^{b}3–4$). Thus one very important subset of these laws bears on education, since "what produces virtue as a whole are the actions that are ordained by the laws concerned with education that looks to the common good" (V 2 $1130^{b}25–26$). Another subset, however, governs the actions of already educated adults:

> It is not enough, presumably, that when people are young they get the correct nurture and supervision. On the contrary, even when they have grown into manhood they must continue to practice the same things and be habituated to them. And so there will need to be laws concerning these matters as well, and, in general, then, concerning all of life. (*NE* X 9 $1180^{a}1–4$)

The phrase "concerning all of life" nicely captures the ideal extent of the laws: "it is fitting for laws that are correctly laid down to define everything themselves, wherever possible, and leave the fewest things up to the jurors" (*Rh*. I 1 $1354^{a}31–33$), since "the wish of human beings . . . is not a safe standard" (*Pol*. II 10 $1272^{b}6–7$).

We are now able to solve a final problem. Theorems in canonical theoretical sciences are not just universal, they are also necessary: they are about relations between universals that do not "*at all* admit of being otherwise" (*NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}20–21$). The theorems of natural science too, although not as strictly necessary as this, also describe relations between universals that are far from simply being matters of luck or contingency. Were it otherwise, there would, as we noticed, simply be no such thing as natural *science*. Obviously the theorems of politics, which are universal laws, are not like either of these, since they govern voluntary action, which, as something whose starting-point is in us, is up to us to do or not to do (III 5 $1113^{b}7–8$). This difference, however, is due to a difference in direction of fit. Theorems of a theoretical science *describe* how things must be; practical laws *prescribe* how they must be. Thus when Aristotle gives an example of an ethical proposition, it is this: "whether we *should* obey our parents or the laws, if they disagree" (*Top*. I 14 $105^{b}22–23$). What practical laws prescribe

will be correct, if it is what the virtues require of us (*NE* V 2 1130^{b}22–24), and it will be what the virtues require of us if it is what the practical wisdom they presuppose would prescribe, and it will be what practical wisdom would prescribe if it is what best furthers happiness or the human good, not some random apparent good (VI 9 1142^{b}31–33, 10 1143^{a}8). For the law owes its compulsive force to the fact that it is "reason that derives from a sort of practical wisdom and understanding" (X 9 1180^{a}21–22).

Although it is through laws that we can "become good" (*NE* X 9 1180^{b}25), it is not just through any old laws. Rather, we need *correct* laws—laws that really do further genuine happiness by inculcating genuine virtues. The question arises, therefore, of how such laws are to be found. A good place to start, Aristotle thinks, is by collecting the laws and constitutions that are in use in different places, as well as those ideal ones suggested by wise people, such as Plato, who have thought a lot about the issue. But this by itself will not be enough, since selecting the best ones from these requires "correct discernment" (X 9 1181^{a}17), correct judgment, based on knowledge of what virtue and vice really are. In Aristotle's view, there is only one such constitution:

> [The constitution] consisting of the those who are unconditionally best in accord with virtue, and not those who are good men relative to a hypothesis, is the only constitution that it is just to call an aristocracy. For only in it is the same person unconditionally a good man and a good citizen, whereas those who are good in the others are so relative to their constitutions. (*Pol.* IV 7 1293^{b}3–6; compare *NE* V 7 1135^{a}5)

Thus when the subject of the best constitution is taken up in the *Politics*, Aristotle begins by noting that "anyone who is going to make an inquiry into the best constitution in the appropriate way must first determine what the most choiceworthy life is" (VII 1 1323^{a}14–17), referring us for a fuller discussion to "external accounts," whose subject areas significantly overlap those of the *Ethics*. Other constitutions, however—and this is a point that we shall return to in a moment—can come close enough to the best one that something approximating full virtue can be acquired in them; these are the non-deviant constitutions (kingship, aristocracy, and polity) described in the relevant parts of the *Politics*.

It is scarcely a step at this point to see what the *Ethics* contributes to legislative science. After all, the *Ethics* is devoted in large part to defining the virtues of character, which are starting-points of politics (*Met.* XIII 4 1078^{b}17–30, quoted below), as well as to correctly and clearly defining the fundamental starting-point, happiness, which is the end or target that

politics aims at (*NE* I 2 1094^{a}26–^{b}7, *Pol.* VII 1 1323^{a}15–21). It is a contribution to the philosophy of human affairs, as we saw, and "the political philosopher is the architectonic craftsman of the end to which we look in calling each thing unconditionally bad or good" (*NE* VII 11 1152^{b}1–3)—namely, happiness.

This helps us to understand something that is much more mysterious than is usually recognized, namely, how it is that Aristotle can do the following three things: First, characterize the *Ethics* as "not undertaken for the sake of theoretical knowledge . . . but in order to become good people, since otherwise there would be nothing of benefit in it" (II 2 1103^{b}26–29; also I 3 1095^{a}5–6). Second, insist that we become good in large part through habituation, not through reading books (II 2 1103^{b}23–25). And, third, that we must already have been "nobly brought up if, where noble things, just things, and the things belonging to politics as a whole are concerned, we are to be an adequate audience" (I 4 1095^{b}4–6). For "argument and teaching . . . do not have strength in everyone," but only in those whose souls have been "prepared beforehand through habits to enjoy and hate in a noble way, like earth that is to nourish seed" and may not even be comprehensible to anyone else (X 9 1179^{b}23–31). The heavy lifting of the *Ethics*' practicality is done, then, not so much by the book itself, which presupposes an already existing noble condition in a comprehending reader, but by the contribution it makes to legislative science, ensuring that the laws it selects will habituate people in genuine virtues that have happiness correctly conceived and clearly defined as their end. The *Politics* comes into play at this point to actually find those laws and the constitution to which they belong.

Because the heavy lifting is done by legislation and habituation, it matters enormously that the legislation and habituation in question are not required to be of the ideal or very best sort available only in a true aristocracy of virtue. For such a constitution does not exist, and never has existed. But even if it had, Aristotle was not brought up in it—Stagira and Athens were certainly not such true aristocracies—and his audience and fellow Lyceum members were not brought up in it either. What *is* required, though, is that we not be "disabled in relation to virtue" (*NE* I 9 1099^{b}19), that we have the natural resources needed to develop it—which may include possession of the so-called natural virtues (VI 13 1144^{b}5–6), that we have been sufficiently well brought up that we do not, like children, pursue each thing in accord with our feelings, but rather form our desires and perform our actions to some extent at least "in accord with reason" (I 3 1095^{a}4–11), and that we have "sufficient experience of the actions of life," since "the arguments are in accord with these and concerned with these" (1095^{a}3–4). Aristotle does not go into detail in the *Ethics* about just how

much experience of just what sorts of actions we need, but there is clear evidence in the *Rhetoric* that we may not have it until we have reached the age of around forty-nine (II 14 1390^{b}9–11; compare *Pol.* VII 9 1328^{b}34–1329^{a}17). Because our nature, upbringing, and experience are unlikely to have been ideal, moreover, we must not expect too much, but rather "be content if, when we have all the things through which it seems we become decent people, we achieve some share of virtue" (*NE* X 9 1179^{b}18–20).

The bearing of all this on rhetoric, given its defining aim of getting a theoretical grasp on what is possibly persuasive in each case, is made plain in the following three texts:

> With a view to safety, it is necessary for [a deliberative speaker] to be capable of getting a theoretical grasp on all these things, but not least to have knowledge of legislation. For it is in the laws that the preservation of the city is based. So it is necessary to know how many kinds (*eidos*) of constitution there are, and what sorts of things are advantageous for each, and by what sorts—whether proper to it or the contrary—it is naturally destroyed. (*Rh.* I 4 1360^{a}18–22)

> In relation to legislation it is useful for the person who has a theoretical grasp on the matter not only to get knowledge of what constitution is advantageous on the basis of its past but also to know the constitutions present in others, that is, which ones are fitting for which sorts of people. So it is clear that in relation to legislation reports of world travelers are useful (for there one can get hold of the laws of [foreign] nations), and in relation to political deliberations, the researches of those writing about actions. (*Rh.* I 4 1360^{a}30–37)

> The greatest and most controlling of all things as regards being capable of persuading and giving good advice is to get a grasp on all constitutions and to distinguish the characters, customs, and advantages of each. For all people are persuaded by what is advantageous, and what preserves the constitution is advantageous. (*Rh.* I 8 1365^{b}21–25)

But rhetoric itself does not have to develop these resources. Instead, just as it draws on the *Analytics* for its knowledge of deduction, on the *Topics* and *Sophistical Refutations* for its knowledge of dialectic, so it draws on the *Ethics* and *Politics* for its knowledge of constitutions and laws and the different sorts of characters that go along with each: "All these are a function

of politics, however, not of rhetoric" (*Rh*. I 4 1360[a]37). When we see that honest practitioners of rhetoric subject themselves to ethical norms, the bearing of politics on rhetoric will acquire yet another dimension.

Deliberation

We turn now to the particularist part of politics, which is concerned with deliberation:

> The part concerned with particulars has the name common to both—"politics." This part is practical and deliberative, since a decree is doable in action, as the last thing. (*NE* VI 8 1141[b]25–28)

Just because this part is particularist, it cannot itself be a science, since—to repeat—sciences are always (anyway non-coincidentally) about universals. Nonetheless, it is some sort of knowledge or ability that makes its possessor a competent deliberator—someone who is reliably able to deliberate correctly by working out the best means to the best end (*NE* VI 9 1142[b]28–33), this being happiness or the human good. Since only a practically-wise person is in this position and since practical wisdom is as much if not more concerned with particulars than with universals, the function of such a person is "most of all . . . to deliberate well" (VI 7 1141[b]9–10).

Now the sphere of deliberation is the part of what admits of being otherwise that deliberators can change through their own actions:

> We do deliberate, though, about things that are up to us and doable in action. . . . For the causes of things seem to be nature, necessity, luck, and, furthermore, understanding and everything that comes about through a human being. Among human beings, however, each group deliberates about what is doable in action through itself. (*NE* III 3 1112[a]30–34)

Hence it is also the sphere of the practical and productive sciences, such as rhetoric, which helps deliberators make good choices within that sphere. But once these sciences are factored into the equation, the scope of deliberation within the sphere is affected, so that as their scope expands, that of deliberation contracts:

> There is no deliberation, however, where sciences that are both exact and self-sufficient are concerned—where writing the letters of the alphabet is concerned, for example, since we have

> no hesitation about what way to write them. We do deliberate, however, about those things that come about through ourselves, but not always in the same way (for example, about the things that medicine or moneymaking deals with). And we deliberate more about navigation than about athletic training, insofar as navigation is less exactly developed. Further, deliberation is involved in a similar way where the rest are concerned, but more where crafts are concerned than sciences, since we are more hesitant about them. (*NE* III 3 $1112^{a}34$–$^{b}9$)

As Aristotle succinctly puts it at one point: "Craft does not deliberate" (*Ph*. II 8 $199^{b}28$). He means, as we see, that a craft, insofar as it is exact, fully developed, and self-contained, does not do so.

Even when the productive sciences are less exact or developed, however, as is true, for example, of medicine and wealth acquisition, their universal laws should generally be followed:

> Those who think it advantageous to be ruled by a king hold that laws speak only of the universal, and do not prescribe with a view to particular circumstances, so that it is foolish to rule in any craft in accord with what is written down. And so it is a good thing that in Egypt the doctors are allowed to change the treatment [prescribed by the manuals] until after the fourth day—although, if they do so earlier, it is at their own risk. It is evident, therefore, that the best constitution is not one that is in accord with what is written down and laws, due to the same cause. But then, the rulers should possess the universal account as well. And something to which the passionate element is wholly unattached is better than something in which it is innate. This element does not belong to the law, whereas every human soul necessarily possesses it. But presumably it should be said, to balance this, that a human being will deliberate better about particular cases. That he must, therefore, be a legislator is clear, and that laws must be laid down, but they must not be in control insofar as they deviate from what is best, although they should certainly be in control everywhere else. (*Pol*. III 15 $1286^{a}9$–25; also 16 $1287^{a}33$–$1287^{b}5$)

It is when the universal laws fail us—as the Egyptian doctors imagine them doing by the fourth day of a patient's unresponsiveness to the prescribed treatment—that deliberation comes into play. It is then that the practical wisdom possessed by the better practitioners of the science becomes

important. We "speak of people as practically-wise *in some area*, when they rationally calculate well about what furthers some excellent end, concerning which no craft [prescription] exists" (*NE* VI 5 1140^{a}28–30).

The element in practical wisdom particularly involved in the kinds of cases where the end is "living well as a whole" (*NE* VI 5 1140^{a}27–28) is decency (*epieikeia*):

> All law is universal, but about some sorts of things it is not possible to pronounce correctly in universal terms. . . . So whenever the law makes a universal pronouncement and a particular case arises that is contrary to the universal pronouncement, at that time it is correct (insofar as the legislator has omitted something, and he has made an error in pronouncing unconditionally) to rectify the deficiency—to pronounce what the legislator himself would have pronounced had he been present and would have put into his law had he known about the case. . . . And this is the very nature of what is decent—a rectification of law insofar as it is deficient because of its universality. For this is also the cause of not everything's being regulated by law—namely, that there are some cases where it is impossible to set up a law, so that decrees (*psêphismata*) are needed. For the standard of what is indeterminate is itself indeterminate, just like the lead standard used in Lesbian building. For the standard is not fixed but adapts itself to the shape of the stone and a decree adapts itself to the things themselves. (*NE* V 10 1137^{b}13–32)

Though this comment applies primarily to the context of political deliberation by members of a city's ruling deliberative body, it is the model for Aristotle's account of an individual agent's deliberation as well. This is particularly clear when an individual's action-controlling beliefs—the guiding premises of his deliberative reasoning—are analogized to decrees (*NE* VII 9 1151^{b}15, 10 1152^{a}20–21). But it is similarly in operation when the last thing reached in deliberation is identified as a decree (VI 8 1141^{b}26–28). Practical wisdom is prescriptive (VI 10 1143^{a}8) indeed because it issues in decrees which, like laws, have prescriptive force.

The picture that finally emerges of politics, therefore, is of a science that has three elements. The first is legislative science, which, since it issues universal laws that have the right sort of modal status (allowing for differences of direction of fit), makes politics similar enough to a canonical theoretical science to justify its classification as a science. The second is deliberative ability (*bouleutikê*), which is particularistic enough to justify its classification as practical. The third is the judicial science (*dikastikê*), which is

primarily exercised in the administration of legal justice (*dikê*) (*NE* VI 8 1141^{b}33, *Pol.* I 2 1253^{a}36–38). But this is a picture of politics that has, as it were, a concealed element, which is the one providing an argument for the starting-points—happiness, the virtues—that are crucial to it. These, as we learned, it is the job of the methodical inquiry of the *Ethics* to provide.

The Foundations of Politics

We know that scientific starting-points cannot be demonstrated: they are what we construct demonstrations from, not to. Of scientific starting-points, therefore, we have understanding, not scientific knowledge (*NE* VI 6 1141^{a}7–8). How, then, do we get this understanding? Where do we start the process? "We must," Aristotle says, "start from things that are knowable. But things are knowable in two ways, since some are knowable to us, some unconditionally. So presumably we should start from things knowable to us" (I 4 1095^{b}2–4). For the sake of clarity, let us call these *raw starting-points*. They are what we start from when we are arguing to *explanatory scientific starting-points*. It is important not to confuse the two.

In the case of the methodical inquiry of the *Ethics*, we are told that a raw starting-point is "the fact that something is so" (*NE* I 4 1095^{b}6; also I 7 1098^{b}2–3) and that this fact concerns "noble things, just things, and the things belonging to politics as a whole" (I 4 1095^{b}5–6). But since no explicit examples are given of these starting-points, we need to do some detective work to get a better understanding of what exactly they are.

An important clue to their nature derives from the way that we gain access to them: "it is virtue, whether natural or habituated, that teaches correct belief about the starting-point" (*NE* VII 8 1151^{a}18–19). Hence Aristotle's insistence on the importance of being well or nobly brought up: "it makes no small difference whether people are habituated in one way or in another way straight from childhood; on the contrary, it makes a huge one—or rather, *all* the difference" (II 1 1103^{b}23–25). Equally important is the account of the way that failure to be brought up well affects or blocks our access to raw starting-points:

> Ordinary people naturally obey not shame but fear, and abstain from base things not because of their shamefulness but because of the sanctions involved. For living by feeling as they do, they pursue the pleasures that are properly their own as well as the things through which these come about, and avoid the opposing pains. Of what is noble and what is truly pleasant, however, they have no understanding at all, not having tasted it. What

> sort of argument, then, could reform such people? For it is not possible—or not easy—to alter by argument what has long since been locked up in traits of character. (*NE* X 9 1179^{b}11–16)

By being habituated badly where pleasures and pains are concerned, people are prevented from experiencing what is noble and truly pleasant. When such people read in the *Ethics* that we should sacrifice wealth, power, honor, the satisfaction of their appetites, and other such so-called external goods (*Rh*. I 5 1360^{b}25n) in order to gain what is noble for ourselves, they should disregard it:

> The truth in practical matters must be discerned from the facts of our life, since these are what have the controlling vote. When we examine what has been previously said, then, it must be discerned by bringing it to bear on the facts of our life, and if it is in harmony with the facts, we should accept it, but if it clashes, we should suppose it mere words. (*NE* X 8 1179^{a}18–22)

After all, their own life experience, which is what casts "the controlling vote," tells them in no uncertain terms that words is all it is. For ordinary people "judge by external goods, since these are the only ones they can perceive" (*NE* X 8 1179^{a}16), and so when they see someone who lacks these, they cannot see how he could be happy, and when they see him sacrifice these for the sake of what is noble, they cannot do otherwise than take him to be sacrificing his self-interest for an empty dream. An orator speaking to an audience of such people will need to keep this in mind if his speech to them is to prove persuasive.

One kind of raw political starting-point, then, is a belief about the sort of value that noble things (as well as just things) have. People who have been correctly habituated to enjoy and hate in a noble way see correctly that these things are intrinsically valuable or choiceworthy for their own sake and that they are more valuable than external goods. People who have been inadequately habituated cannot see this, and so reject one of the raw starting-points of politics right off the bat. When they read the *Ethics* and *Politics*, therefore, they simply cannot see the truth in them, and so these works are of no practical value. They do what virtue requires of them from fear of penalties rather than for the sake of what is noble: "ordinary people obey force rather than argument; and they obey penalties rather than what is noble" (*NE* X 9 1180^{a}4–5).

Happiness is also a raw starting-point of politics (*Pol*. VII 1 1323^{a}15–21, *NE* I 12 1102^{a}2–4), about which people quite reasonably get "their suppositions . . . from their lives" (*NE* I 5 1095^{b}15–16). Hence happiness too can

seem as variable as good things generally (I 3 1094[a]16–17). As a result, ordinary people—anyway "the most vulgar ones"—suppose that happiness is bodily pleasure, since their bad habituation, especially where bodily pleasures and pains are concerned, leads them exclusively to pursue "money, honors, and bodily pleasures . . . on the supposition that they are the best goods" (IX 8 1168[b]16–18). Yet, as Aristotle points out, they "have an argument for their choice," since people in positions of power, like Sardanapalus, who are able to do what they want, pursue these goods (I 5 1095[b]18–22). It is this argument that makes their views worth examining (I 4 1095[a]28–30). The same goes for people whose upbringings have led them to pursue honor as if it were the best good.

Raw political starting-points, we now see, are socially mediated and language-mediated facts (or putative facts) that are accessible only to properly socialized subjects and so only to subjects who are members of societies—that is, groups that socialize or habituate their members into some common form of life. Here is Aristotle himself on the subject:

> The voice is a signifier of what is pleasant or painful, which is why it is also possessed by the other animals (for their nature does extend this far, namely, to having the perception of pleasure and pain and signifying them to each other). But speech is for making clear what is advantageous or harmful, and so too what is just or unjust. For this is special to humans, in comparison to the other animals, that they alone have perception of the good and the bad, the just and the unjust, and the rest. And it is community in these that makes a household and a city. (*Pol.* I 2 1253[a]10–18)

It follows, then, that the beliefs of properly socialized subjects—or the way things noble, just, and so on appear to them as a result of such socialization—are the rawest data available. It is to these that politics is ultimately answerable.

It is useful to juxtapose this picture of politics to a picture Aristotle gives of the canonical sciences and of the importance in them of experience and ultimately of perception:

> The cause of our being incapable of taking a comprehensive view of the agreed-upon facts is lack of experience. That is why those who are at home among natural things are better able to posit the sort of starting-points that can collect together a good many of these, whereas those who from their many arguments do not get a theoretical grasp on the facts, but look at only a

> few, make their declarations too recklessly. One can see from this too how much difference there is between investigating in the way appropriate to natural science and in a logico-linguistic one. (*GC* I 2 316^{a}5–11)

We might advisedly see "those who are at home among natural things," in other words, as the equivalent in a canonical science of the well brought up or properly socialized and habituated subjects of the *Ethics* and *Politics*, who, "because they have an eye formed from experience, . . . see correctly" (*NE* VI 11 1143^{b}13–14). And one reason we might do so is that canonical scientists too are socialized subjects, albeit of a somewhat specialized sort. For it is only within scientific communities or communities of knowledge that, through complex processes of habituation and teaching, canonical scientists are produced: we learn science from other scientists (X 9 1180^{b}28–34). But communities of knowledge, both in Aristotle's view and in reality, are parts of the political community and are regulated and sustained by it. When we first meet politics, indeed, it is as an architectonic science that oversees the others, ensuring that all sciences work together to further human happiness:

> Politics seems to be [the most architectonic science], since it is the one that prescribes which of the sciences need to exist in cities and which ones each group in cities should learn and up to what point. Indeed, we see that even the capacities that are generally most honored are under it—for example, generalship, household management, and rhetoric. And since it uses the other practical sciences and, furthermore, legislates about what must be done and what avoided, its end will circumscribe those of the others, so that it will be the human good. (*NE* I 2 1094^{a}26–^{b}7)

As he moves from a city with one constitution to a city with another, this too is something a speechwriter or speechmaker will need to keep in mind, since not every sort of speech is permitted in every one (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}18–23).

Because the things that appear to be so to appropriately socialized subjects are the raw starting-points in canonical sciences just as much as in politics, the only difference between them lying in the sort of socialization involved, we must be careful not to think of an appeal to "the things we say (*ta legomena*)" (*NE* I 8 1098^{b}10, VII 1 1145^{b}20) as an appeal to evidence of a sort quite different from the sort appealed to in a canonical science. We are not in the one case appealing to conceptual considerations or intuitions

and in the other to empirical facts or findings. We are not looking at analytic matters as opposed to synthetic ones. Instead, what we have in both cases are socially mediated facts, some closer to the conceptual or the analytic, some closer to the empirical or synthetic. Political subjects who disagree about the intrinsic choiceworthiness of what is noble, for example, are not disagreeing about a concept or about the meaning of a word but about a substantive issue concerning how to live. Aristotle's account of happiness and his definition of virtue of character as a sort of medial state are to be evaluated not by appeal to our intuitions but, as we saw, by appeal to the facts of our lives (X 8 $1179^{a}18$–22 above).

The significance of these conclusions about raw political starting-points and the kinds of subjects who can detect them is most easily seen when we run across—as readers of the secondary literature on the *Ethics* and *Politics* inevitably will—discussions related to the "foundations" of Aristotle's ethics and politics. Often a central exhibit in these is the famous function (*ergon*) argument (*NE* I 7 $1097^{b}22$–$1098^{a}20$), where it is thought that the notion of a function is introduced into politics as something already grounded in the facts (or putative facts) of Aristotle's biological or metaphysical investigations and that politics then inherits these grounds and becomes hostage to these facts—facts that are not themselves political facts or putative facts. Another frequent exhibit is the use Aristotle makes, at various junctures, of his own account of the soul—an account supported not by political facts or putative facts, apparently, but by biological or psychological ones (*NE* I 13 $1102^{a}14$–26, *Pol.* I 5 $1254^{a}34$–$^{b}4$, 13 $1260^{a}4$–14).

What these discussions fail to give proper weight to is the difference between *empirical* foundations, or the facts to which politics or any other body of knowledge is ultimately answerable, and *explanatory* foundations, or the explanatory notions that politics makes use of in explaining those facts. To be sure, these notions may also often play explanatory roles in various other Aristotelian bodies of knowledge, including various theoretical sciences, and may for that reason recommend themselves to Aristotle for use elsewhere. It would be strange if it were otherwise. These notions may well, then, also be epistemically sanctioned within these other bodies of knowledge providing correct explanations of the relevant sorts of facts. But this does not mean that politics must be committed to them as fixed points of its own explanatory enterprise. Rather, it takes them on board wholly and entirely as answerable to raw political starting-points and must reject them if they prove inadequate for those purposes. In the only really important sense, then, politics has political facts as its sole foundations. Biology, metaphysics, and other bodies of knowledge have no foundational role in politics whatsoever. When rhetoric draws on politics, therefore, it

is ultimately on political facts that it draws, and less ultimately on what political science does by way of explaining those facts.

When such knowledge enters rhetoric, however, it undergoes some pruning in the process, which fit it to serve the persuasive functions definitive of rhetoric. Aristotle tells us about this at the very start of the *Rhetoric*:

> Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic. For both are concerned with such common things as are in a way known to all and belong to no definite (*aphôrismenês*) science. (*Rh.* I 1 $1354^{a}1$–3)

These common things stemming in part from politics are grouped for the purposes of rhetoric into so-called *topoi*, or topics (*Rh.* I 2 $1358^{a}12$–21). The concept of a topic, like that of an enthymeme or rhetorical demonstration or deduction (1 $1355^{a}6$, 2 $1356^{b}4$–5), is thus belonging to rhetoric, and is important, as we shall see, to understanding the sort of craft or science rhetoric is.

Explanatory Starting-Points and Dialectic

In the case of canonical sciences, the most important explanatory starting-points consist of definitions that specify the genus and differentia of the real (as opposed to nominal) universal essences of the beings with which the science deals:

> Since a definition is said to be an account of what something is, it is evident that one sort will be an account of what its name, or some other name-like account, signifies—for example, what triangle signifies. . . . Another sort of definition is an account that makes clear why it exists. So the former sort signifies something but does not show it, whereas the latter will evidently be like a demonstration of what it is, differing in arrangement from a demonstration. For there is a difference between saying why it thunders and saying what thunder is. In the first case you will say: because fire is being extinguished in the clouds. And what is thunder? The loud noise of fire being extinguished in the clouds. Hence the same account is given in different ways. In one way it is a continuous demonstration, in the other a definition. Further, a definition of thunder is a noise in the clouds, and this is a conclusion of the demonstration of what it is. The definition of an immediate item, though, is an indemonstrable positing (*thesis*) of what it is. (*APo.* II 10 $93^{b}29$–$94^{a}10$)

> The definitional account must not only make clear "the that," which is what most definitions state, but must also include the cause and make it evident. As things stand, though, definitional accounts are like conclusions. For example, What is squaring? Making an equilateral rectangle equal to one that is not equilateral. But such a definition is an account of the conclusion, whereas the one that says that squaring is the finding of the mean proportional states the cause of the thing. (*DA* II 2 $413^{a}13–20$)

Since scientific definitions must be apt starting-points of demonstrations, this implies, Aristotle thinks, that the "extremes and the middle terms must come from the same genus" (*APo*. I 7 $75^{b}10–11$). As a result, a single canonical science must deal with a single genus (I 28 $87^{a}38–39$)—a fact to which we shall be returning.

The question is, how do we arrive at these definitions by beginning from raw starting-points. Well, first we have to have the raw starting-points ready at hand. Aristotle is clear about this, as he is indeed about what is supposed to happen next:

> The way [of inquiry] (*hodos*) is the same in all cases, in philosophy as well as in the crafts or any sort of learning whatsoever. For one must observe for both terms what belongs to them and what they belong to, and be supplied with as many of these terms as possible. . . . When it is in accord with truth, it must be from the terms that are catalogued (*diagegrammennôn*) as truly belonging, but in dialectical deductions it must be from premises that are in accord with [reputable] belief. . . . Most of the starting-points, however, are special to each science. That is why experience must provide us with the starting-points where each is concerned—I mean, for example, that experience in astronomy must do so in the case of astronomical science. For when the appearances had been adequately grasped, the demonstrations in astronomy were found in the way we described. And it is the same way where any other craft or science whatsoever is concerned. Hence if what belongs to each thing has been grasped, at that point we can readily exhibit the demonstrations. For if nothing that truly belongs to the relevant things has been omitted from the collection, then, concerning everything, if a demonstration of it exists, we will be able to find it and give the demonstration, and if it is by nature indemonstrable, we will be able to make that evident. (*APr.* I 30 $46^{a}3–27$)

So once we have a catalogue of the raw starting-points, the demonstrative explanation of them from explanatory scientific starting-points is supposedly fairly routine. We should not, however, demand "the cause [or explanation] in all cases alike. Rather, in some it will be adequate if the fact that they are so has been correctly shown (*deiknunai*)—as it is indeed where starting-points are concerned" (*NE* I 8 1098^{a}33–^{b}2). But what exactly is it to show a starting-point correctly or adequately? It can't be to demonstrate it, we know that.

Aristotle categorizes what he is undertaking in the *Ethics* as a "methodical inquiry (*methodos*)" that is "a sort of politics" (*NE* I 2 1094^{b}11), and categorizes rhetoric as a "methodical inquiry that is within the province of craft (*entechnos methodos*)" (*Rh.* I 1 1355^{a}4; also 1355^{b}22). And to the explanatory scientific starting-points of such inquiries, he claims, there is a unique route:

> Dialectic is useful in the philosophical sciences because the capacity to go through the puzzles on both sides of a question will make it easier to discern what is true and what is false in each. Furthermore, dialectic is useful as regards the primary [starting-points] (*ta prôta*) in each science. For it is impossible to say anything about these based on the starting-points properly belonging to the science in question, since these starting-points are, of all of them, the primary ones, and it is through reputable beliefs (*endoxa*) about each that it is necessary to discuss them. This, though, is a task special to, or most characteristic of, dialectic. For because of its ability to examine (*exetastikê*) it has a route toward the starting-points of all methodical inquiries. (*Top.* I 2 101^{a}34–^{b}4)

Prima facie, then, the *Politics*—and also the *Rhetoric* to the extent that it involves new starting-points—should correctly show the explanatory starting-points of politics or rhetoric by going through puzzles and solving them by appeal to reputable beliefs.

Now Aristotelian dialectic is recognizably a descendant of the Socratic elenchus, which famously begins with a question like this: *Ti esti to kalon?* What is the noble? The respondent, sometimes after a bit of nudging, comes up with a universal definition: what is noble is what all the gods love, or whatever it might be (I adapt a well-known answer from Plato's *Euthyphro*). Socrates then puts this definition to the test by drawing attention to some things that seem true to the respondent himself but that conflict with his definition. The puzzle, or *aporia*, that results from this conflict then remains for the respondent to try to solve, usually by reformulating

or rejecting his definition. Aristotle understood this process in terms that reveal its relationship to his own:

> Socrates . . . busied himself about the virtues of character, and in connection with these was the first to inquire into universal definition. . . . It was reasonable, though, that Socrates was inquiring into the what-it-is. For he was inquiring in order to deduce, and the what-it-is is a starting-point of deductions. . . . For there are two things that may be fairly ascribed to Socrates—inductive arguments and universal definition, both of which are concerned with a starting-point of scientific knowledge. (*Met*. XIII 4 $1078^{b}17$–30; also I 6 $987^{b}1$–4)

In Plato too dialectic is primarily concerned with scientific starting-points, such as those of mathematics, and seems to consist in some sort of elenchus-like process of reformulating definitions in the face of conflicting evidence so as to render them puzzle free (*Rep*. VII 532a1–533d1). Aristotle can reasonably be seen, then, as continuing a line of thought about dialectic which, in the *Topics* and the *Sophistical Refutations*, he explores, systematizes, and elaborates.

Think now about the respondent's first answer, his first definition: what is noble is what the gods love. Although it is soon shown to be incorrect, there is something quite remarkable about its very existence. Through experience shaped by acculturation and habituation involving the learning of a natural language, the respondent is confident that he can say what nobility is. He has learned to apply the word "noble" to particular people, actions, and so on correctly enough to pass muster as knowing its meaning, knowing how to use it. From these particular cases he has reached a putative universal, something the particular cases have in common. But when he tries to define that universal in words, he gets it wrong, as Socrates shows. Here is Aristotle registering the significance of this:

> What is knowable to each person at first is often knowable to a very small extent and possesses little or nothing of what is real [or true]. All the same, we must start from what is but badly knowable to us and try . . . to proceed through this to a knowledge of what is entirely knowable. (*Met*. VII 3 $1029^{b}8$–12)

The route by which the respondent reaches the universal that he is unable to define correctly is what Aristotle calls "induction" (*epagôgê*), or that variant of induction, which also involves the shaping of feelings and the development of character, namely, habituation (*ethismos*).

Induction begins with (1) perception of particulars, which leads to (2) retention of perceptual contents in memory, and, when many such contents have been retained, to (3) an experience, so that for the first time "there is a universal in the soul" (*APo.* II 19 100^{a}3–16). The universal reached at stage (3), which is the one the respondent reaches, is described as "indeterminate" and "better known by perception" (*Ph.* I 1 184^{a}22–25). It is the sort of universal, often quite complex, that constitutes a nominal essence corresponding to the nominal definition or meaning of a general term. Finally, (4) from experience come craft knowledge and scientific knowledge, when "from many intelligible objects arising from experience one universal supposition about similar objects is produced" (*Met.* I 1 981^{a}5–7).*

The *nominal* (or analytic, meaning-based) definition of the general term "thunder," for example, might pick out the universal *loud noise in the clouds*. When science investigates the things that have this nominal essence, it may find that they also have a real essence or nature in terms of which their other features can be scientifically explained (*APo*. II 10 93^{b}29–94^{a}10, quoted earlier). A real (or synthetic, fact-based) definition analyzes this real essence into its "constituents (*stoicheia*) and starting-points" (*Ph*. I 1 184^{a}23), which will be definable but indemonstrable. It makes intrinsically clear what the nominal definition made clear only to us by enabling us to recognize instances of thunder in a fairly—but imperfectly—reliable way. As a result, thunder itself, now clearly a natural and not just a conventional kind, becomes better known not just to us but entirely or unconditionally (*NE* I 4 1095^{b}2–8). These analyzed universals, which are the sort reached at stage (4), are the ones suited to serve as starting-points of the sciences and crafts: "People with experience know the fact that but not the explanation why, whereas those with craft knowledge know the explanation why, that is, the cause" (*Met*. I 1 981^{a}28–30).

Socrates too, we see, wanted definitions that were not just empirically adequate but also explanatory. Thus in telling Euthyphro what he wants in the case of piety, he says that he is seeking "the form itself *by dint of* which all the pieties are pieties" (*Euthphr*. 6d10–11). That is why he rejects

* "Unconditionally, what is prior is more knowable than what is posterior—for example, a point than a line, a line than a plane, and a plane than a solid, just as a unit is more so than a number, since it is prior to and a starting-point of all number. Similarly, a letter is more so than a syllable. To us, on the other hand, it sometimes happens that the reverse is the case. For the solid falls most under perception, the plane more than the line, line more than point. For ordinary people know things of the former sort earlier. For to learn them is a task for random thought, whereas to learn the others is a task for exact and extraordinary thought" (*Top*. VI 4 141^{b}5–14).

the definition of piety as being what all the gods love. This definition is in one way correct, presumably, in that if something is pious, it is necessarily loved by all the gods, and vice versa, but it is not explanatory, since it does not tell us what it is about pious things that makes all the gods love them, and so it does not identify the form by dint of which, or because of which, they are pious (9e–11b).

Let us go back. We wanted to know what was involved in showing a scientific starting-point. We were told how we could *not* do this, namely, by demonstrating it from scientific starting-points. Next we learned that dialectic has a route to it from reputable beliefs. At the same time, we were told that induction has a route to it as well—something the *Ethics* also tells us: "we get a theoretical grasp on some starting-points through induction, some through perception, some through some sort of habituation, and others through other means" (I 7 $1098^{b}3$–4). This suggests that induction and dialectic are in some way or other the same process. It is a suggestion to keep in mind.

What shows a Socratic respondent to be wrong is an example that the respondent's definition does not fit. The presentation of the example might be quite indirect, however. It might take quite a bit of stage setting, elicited by the asking of many questions, to bring out a puzzle. But if the example is one the definition does not fit, it shows that the universal grasped by the respondent and the definition he produces are not entirely or unconditionally knowable and that his state is not one of clear-eyed understanding:

> A puzzle in thought reveals a knot in its subject matter. For thought caught in a puzzle is like people who are tied up, since in either case it is impossible to make progress. That is why one must get a theoretical grasp on all the difficulties ahead of time, both for these reasons and because those who inquire without first going through the puzzles are like people who don't know where they have to go, and, in addition, don't even know whether they have found what they were inquiring about, since the end is not clear to them. But to someone who has first gone through the puzzles it is clear. (*Met*. II 1 $995^{a}30$–$^{b}2$)

But lack of such clear-eyed understanding of a scientific starting-point has serious downstream consequences:

> If we are to have scientific knowledge through demonstration, . . . we must know the starting-points better and be better persuaded of them than of what is being shown, but we

> must also not find anything more persuasive or better known among things opposed to the starting-points from which a contrary mistaken conclusion may be deduced, since someone who has unconditional scientific knowledge must be incapable of being persuaded out of it. (*APo*. I 2 $72^{a}37$–$^{b}4$; also *NE* VI 3 $1139^{b}33$–35)

If dialectical examination reveals a puzzle in a respondent's thought about a scientific starting-point, then, he cannot have any unconditional scientific knowledge even of what he may well be able to demonstrate correctly from it. Contrariwise, if dialectical examination reveals no such puzzle, he apparently does have clear-eyed understanding, and his route to what he can demonstrate is free of obstacles.

At the heart of dialectic, as Aristotle understands it, is the dialectical deduction (*dialektikos sullogismos*). This is the argument lying behind the questioner's questions, partly dictating their order and content and partly determining the strategy of his examination. In the following passage it is defined and contrasted with two relevant others:

> Dialectical arguments are those that deduce from reputable beliefs in a way that reaches a contradiction; peirastic arguments are those that deduce from those beliefs of the respondent that anyone must know (*eidenai*) who pretends to possess scientific knowledge. . . . Contentious (*eristikos*) arguments are those that deduce or appear to deduce from what appear to be reputable beliefs but are not really such. (*SE* 2 $165^{b}3$–8)

If we think of dialectical deductions in this way, a dialectician, in contrast to a contender, is an honest questioner, appealing to genuinely reputable beliefs and employing valid deductions. "Contenders and sophists use the same arguments," Aristotle says, "but not to achieve the same goal. . . . If the goal is apparent victory, the argument is contentious; if it is apparent wisdom, sophistic" (*SE* 11 $171^{b}27$–33). Nonetheless, he does also use the term *dialektikê* as the name for the craft that honest dialecticians and sophists both use:

> In dialectic, a sophist is so called in virtue of his deliberate choice, and a dialectician is so called not in virtue of his deliberate choice, but in virtue of the capacity he has. (*Rh*. I 1 $1355^{b}20$–21)

If dialectic is understood in this way, a dialectician who deliberately chooses to employ contentious arguments is a sophist (*Rh.* I 1 1355^{a}24–^{b}7).* We need to be careful, therefore, to distinguish *honest dialectic* from what we may call *plain dialectic*, which—like all crafts—can be used for good and evil (*NE* V 1 1129^{a}13–17). In an exactly parallel way we will need to distinguish *honest rhetoric* from *plain rhetoric*—an honest orator from a plain one: "in the case of rhetoric, however, one person is an orator in virtue of his scientific knowledge, another in virtue of his deliberate choice" (*Rh.* I 1 1355^{b}18–20).

The canonical occasion for the practice of the Socratic elenchus, obviously, is the examination of someone else. But there is nothing to prevent a person from practicing it on himself: "How could you think," Socrates asks Critias, "that I would refute you for any reason other than the one for which I would refute myself, fearing lest I might inadvertently think I know something when I don't know it?" (*Chrm.* 166c7–d2). Dialectic is no different in this regard:

> But the philosopher, who is investigating by himself, does not care whether, though the things through which his deduction proceeds are true and knowable, the answerer does not concede them, because they are close to what was proposed at the start, and he foresees what is going to result, but rather he is presumably eager for his claims to be as knowable and as close to it as possible. For it is from things of this sort that scientific deductions proceed. (*Top.* VIII 1 155^{b}10–16; compare *Ph.* VIII 263^{a}15–23)

> An inquiry with another person is carried out by means of words (*logôn*), whereas an inquiry by oneself is carried out no less by means of the things at issue themselves. (*SE* 7 169^{a}38–40)

What we are to imagine, then, is that the political philosopher, to focus on him, surveys the raw political starting-points (the empirical foundations of politics), constructing detailed catalogues of these. He then tries to formulate definitions of the various universals involved in them that seem to be candidate scientific starting-points (virtue, happiness, and so

* Compare: "There are some things that cannot be put in only one genus—for example, the cheat and the slanderous accuser. For neither the one with the deliberate choice to do it but without the capacity, nor the one with the capacity but not the deliberate choice, is a slanderous accuser or a cheat, but rather the one with both" (*Top.* IV 5 126^{b}8–11).

on), testing these against the raw political starting-points by trying to construct demonstrations from them. But these definitions will often be no more than partial; our political philosopher is on his way to complete definitional starting-points, just as the demonstrations will often be no more than proto or nascent demonstrations. The often rudimentary demonstrations that we find in Aristotle's scientific treatises are parts of this process of arguing *to*, not demonstrating *from* starting-points: we argue to them in part by seeing whether or to what extent we could demonstrate from them.

So, first, we have the important distinction between dialectic proper, which includes the use of what appear to be deductions from what appear to be reputable beliefs, and honest dialectic, which uses only genuine deductions from genuine reputable beliefs. Second, we have the equally important distinction between the use of dialectic in examining a potentially hostile respondent and its use by the philosopher in a perhaps private pursuit of the truth. Third, we have an important contrast between honest dialectical premises and philosophical ones or scientific ones. Honest dialectical premises are reputable beliefs; philosophical and scientific premises must be true and knowable. Fourth, we have two apparently equivalent routes to scientific starting-points, one inductive, which starts from raw political starting-points, and the other dialectic, which starts from reputable beliefs.

According to the official definition, genuine reputable beliefs are "things that are believed by everyone, by the majority, or by the wise—either by all of them, or by most, or by the most notable and most reputable" (*Top*. I 1 $100^{b}21–23$). Just as the scientist should have a catalogue of scientific truths ready to hand from which to select the premises of his demonstrations, so a dialectician ought also to select premises "from arguments that have been written down and produce catalogues (*diagraphas*) of them concerning each kind of subject, putting them under separate headings—for example, 'Concerned with good,' 'Concerned with life'" (*Top.* I 14 $105^{b}12–15$). We should be reminded of the collections of laws and constitutions that enjoy "a good reputation (*eudokimountas*)," from which the legislative scientist selects the best ones (*NE* X 9 $1181^{a}12–^{b}12$, *Pol.* II 5 $1263^{a}39$).

Clearly, then, there will be considerable overlap between the scientist's catalogue of raw starting-points and the honest dialectician's catalogue of genuine reputable beliefs. For, first, things that are believed by reputably wise people are themselves reputable beliefs, and, second, any respondent would accept "the beliefs of those who have investigated the subjects in question—for example, on a question of medicine he will agree with a doctor, and on a question of geometry with a geometer" (*Top*. I 10 $104^{a}8–37$).

The catalogues also differ, however, in that not all reputable beliefs need be true. If a proposition is a reputable belief, if it would be accepted by all or most people, it is everything an honest dialectician could ask for in a premise, since his goal is simply this: to reveal by honest deductions that a definition offered by any respondent whatsoever conflicts—if it does—with other beliefs that the respondent has. That is why having a complete or fairly complete catalogue of reputable beliefs is such an important resource for a dialectician.* It is because dialectic deals with things only "in relation to belief," then, and not as philosophy and science do, "in relation to truth" (I 14 $105^{b}30$–31) that it needs nothing more than reputable *beliefs*.

Nonetheless, the fact that all or most people believe something leads us "to trust it as something in accord with experience" (*Div. Somn.* 1 $426^{b}14$–16), and—since human beings "are naturally adequate as regards the truth and in most cases hit upon it" (*Rh.* I 1 $1355^{a}15$–17)—as containing some truth. That is why, no doubt, "true and better [things] are always by nature more easily deduced and unconditionally more persuasive" ($1355^{a}37$–38). But it is in any case why, having catalogued some of the things that people believe happiness to be, Aristotle writes:

> Some of these views are held by many and are of long standing, while others are held by a few reputable men. And it is not reasonable to suppose that either group is entirely wrong, but rather that they are correct on one point at least or even on most of them. (*NE* I 8 $1098^{b}27$–29)

Later he generalizes the claim: "things that seem to be so to everyone, these, we say, are" (*NE* X 2 $1172^{b}36$–$1173^{a}1$). Raw starting-points are just that—raw. But when refined, some shred of truth is likely to be found in them. So likely, indeed, that if none is found, this will itself be a surprising fact needing to be explained: "when a reasonable explanation is given of why an untrue view appears true, this makes us more convinced of the true view" (VII 14 $1154^{a}24$–25). It is in the perhaps mere grain of truth enclosed in a reputable belief that a philosopher or scientist is interested, then, not in the general acceptability of the surrounding husk, much of which he may discard.

The process of refinement in the case of a candidate explanatory starting-point is that of testing a definition of it against reputable beliefs.

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* Compare: "One must seek [premises] in the same way, looking not to indefinite things but to the facts the argument is about, marking off as many facts as possible and the ones closest to the thing at issue" (*Rh.* II 22 $1396^{b}6$–8).

This may result in the definition being accepted as it stands or in its being altered or modified: when a definition is non-perspicuous, Aristotle tells us at *Top*. VI 13 151^{b}7–8, it must be "corrected and reconfigured (*sundiorthôsanta kai suschêmatisanta*)," until it is made clear. The same process applies to the reputable beliefs themselves, since they may conflict not only with the definition but also with each other. Again, this may also result in their being modified, often by uncovering ambiguities within them or in the argument supporting them or by drawing distinctions that uncover complexities in these. Thus Aristotle's view that it is "from oneself that all the features fitted to friendship also extend to others" is in accord with the reputable beliefs embodied in "all the proverbs" (*NE* IX 8 1168^{b}5–10). But both conflict with the view that there is something shameful about being a self-lover, since a base person "does all his actions for the sake of himself," whereas a decent one "seems to act because of what is noble . . . and for the sake of a friend, disregarding his own interests" (1168^{a}31–35). As a result, "it is reasonable to be puzzled . . . as to which side we should follow, since both carry conviction." Hence, to ease our puzzlement not just in this case but in all others like it, "we need to draw distinctions in connection with the arguments and determine to what extent and in what ways they grasp the truth. If, then, we were to find out what those on each side mean by 'self-love,' perhaps this would be clear" (1168^{b}10–15). By the end of the chapter, this is just what has been accomplished. If, as ordinary people do, we think of self-lovers as those who gratify the non-rational part of their soul (as if it were their true self) with money, honors, and bodily pleasures (as if these were the greatest goods), we can see why they are right to think that "self-love" is a term of reproach. But if we recognize that noble things are better than these other goods, and that the true self is the understanding, we will also see what is wrong in their view and what is right in the opposing one, and agree that we should be "self-lovers" in that sense of the term.

A more extreme possibility, as we saw, is that a reputable belief is not modified at all but is rejected entirely and has its appearance of truth explained away. This is what happens in the case of bodily pleasures. These are not more choiceworthy, Aristotle argues, yet they appear to some people to be more choiceworthy. So we must explain away their false appearance of choiceworthiness, one source of which is that they "knock out pain," and "get their intensity (which is why they are pursued) from the fact that they appear alongside their contrary" (*NE* VII 14 1154^{a}26–31). Sometimes all the reputable beliefs on a certain subject stemming from a certain group can be excluded en masse:

> To investigate all the beliefs about happiness held by different people is superfluous, since little children, sick people, and lunatics apparently have many views, but no one with any understanding would go through these. For these people need not arguments but, in some cases, time in which to mature, in others, medical or political correction [or punishment]—for a drug is no less correctional than a flogging. Similarly there is no need to investigate the beliefs of the majority, since they speak baselessly on pretty much every subject but most of all this one. On it, only the beliefs of wise people need be investigated. (*EE* I 3 $1214^{b}28$–$1215^{a}2$)

We might see Aristotle's account of the distorting effects on beliefs about happiness of inadequate habituation where pleasures and pains are concerned as the justification of this bold claim. Readers who think that Aristotle gives the life of enjoyment shrift that is much too short (*NE* I 5 $1095^{b}19$–22, X 6 $1176^{b}9$–$1177^{a}1$) should not overlook its bearing on their concern.

The canonical occasion for the use of honest dialectic, as of the Socratic elenchus and plain dialectic, is the examination of a respondent. The relevant premises for the questioner to use, therefore, are the reputable beliefs in his catalogue that the respondent will accept. Just how wide this set of beliefs is in a given case depends naturally on how accessible to the untrained subject the subject matter is on which he is being examined. In this regard our target candidate science, politics, is in a somewhat special position, since all adequately socialized subjects have access to the relevant subject matter and are even likely to have received some—however vestigial—training in politics itself. That is no doubt why Socrates' respondents are so confident, prior to examination, that they do know how to define the virtues. We might usefully compare the case of religious beliefs about the nature of human beings and the origins of life and cosmos in a society where all the citizens practice the same religion and all the schools teach it. In other more esoteric areas the class of reputable beliefs may be substantially narrower. We may all have some beliefs about thunder and other phenomena readily perceptible to everyone, that are—for that very reason—reputable. But about Mandelbrot sets, Bell's theorem, or messenger RNA we may have none at all. We can already see, then, why an orator, facing an audience of non-experts, or a mixed audience, will not be able to draw on them, and why rhetoric is an offshoot of ethics and politics, not of physics.

When a scientist is investigating by himself, the class of premises he will select from is the catalogue of *all* the raw starting-points of his science, despite a natural human inclination to do otherwise:

> People seem to inquire up to a certain point, but not as far as it is possible to take the puzzle. For it is customary for all of us to make our inquiry not with an eye to the thing at issue but with an eye to the person who says the contrary. For a person even inquires within himself up to the point at which he is no longer able to argue against himself. That is why a person who is going to inquire well must be capable of objecting by means of objections proper to the relevant genus, and this comes from having a theoretical grasp on all the differentiae (*Cael*. II 13 $294^{b}6$–13)

Hence our scientist will want to err on the side of excess, adding any reputable belief that appears to have any relevance whatsoever, to his catalogue. When he formulates definitions of candidate scientific starting-points from which he thinks he can demonstrate the raw ones, he must then examine himself to see whether he really does in this case have the scientific knowledge he thinks he has. If he is investigating together with fellow scientists, others may examine him: we all do better with the aid of co-workers (*NE* X 7 $1177^{a}34$), among whom time figures as one (I 7 $1095^{a}23$–24). What he is doing is using honest dialectic on himself or having it used on him. But this, we see, is little different from the final stage—stage (4)—of the induction we looked at earlier. Induction, as we might put it, is, in its final stage, (possibly self-directed) honest dialectic.

In a famous and much debated passage Aristotle writes:

> We must, as in the other cases, set out the things that appear to be so and first go through the puzzles, and, in that way show preferably all the reputable beliefs about these ways of being affected, or, if not all of them then most of them, and the ones with the most control. For if the objections are refuted and the reputable beliefs are left standing, that would be an adequate showing. (*NE* VII 1 $1145^{b}1$–7)

The specific focus of the comment is "these ways of being affected," which are self-control and its lack as well as resilience and softness. Some people think that the comment applies only to this and should not be generalized, even though "as in the other cases" surely suggests a wider scope. And as we can now see, that scope is in fact entirely general, since it describes the honest dialectical or inductive route to the starting-points of *all* the sciences and methodical inquiries, with *tithenai ta phainomena* ("set[ting] out the things that appear to be so") describing the initial phase in which the raw starting-points are collected and catalogued.

Rhetoric as a Transgeneric Science

An Aristotelian science, we have just seen, must deal with a single genus: the nature of definition and demonstration mandates as much (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}3n(5)). Yet rhetoric, though a productive science or craft, "does not deal with a definite (*aphôrismenou*) genus" (I 1 1355^{b}8–9), and so is not itself a "definite (*aphôrismenês*) science" (1354^{a}3; also 2 1355^{b}33–34). Once again, then, its scientific status seems in jeopardy.

It is a cliché of the history of philosophy that Aristotle is an empiricist. And like all clichés there is some truth in it. But he is not just an empiricist at the level of the definite, genus-specific sciences; he is an empiricist at all levels. To see what I mean, think of each of the definite sciences as giving us a picture of a piece of the world, a region of being—a definite first-order genus. Then ask, what is the world like that these sciences collectively portray? For precision (and concision) focus on the part of it that the mathematical sciences—arithmetic, geometry, and so on—collectively portray. What does mathematical reality as a whole look like?

Many theorems in mathematics are of course special to some branch of it, and describe only the correlative first-order genus. But there are also "certain mathematical theorems of a universal character" (*Met*. XIII 2 1077^{a}9–10):

> That proportionals alternate might be thought to apply to numbers qua numbers, lines qua lines, solids qua solids, and times qua times, as used to be demonstrated of these separately, although it is possible to show it of all cases by a single demonstration. But because all these things—numbers, lengths, times, solids—do not constitute a single named [genus] and differ in form from one another, they were treated separately. But now it is demonstrated universally: for what is supposed to hold of them universally does not hold of them qua lines or qua numbers but qua this [unnamed genus]. (*APo*. I 5 74^{a}17–25)

But "it is impossible that what is shown should cross from one genus to another" (*APo*. I 23 84^{b}17–18). Hence the reason why the theorem about proportionals holds in the case of lines and also in that of numbers, which is what the demonstration reveals, "is different" in each case (II 17 99^{a}8–9), so that separate demonstrations seem to be needed for each. Yet, "qua such-and-such an increase in quantity" (*APo*. II 17 99^{a}9–10), the demonstration is the same, so that the theorem "holds in common of all quantities" (*Met*. XI 4 1061^{b}19–21). For "while the genera of the beings are different, some

attributes belong to quantities and others of qualities alone, with the help of which we can show things" (*APo*. II 32 88^{b}1–3).

The universal theorem not only holds of all quantities, however, it does so in a distinctive way:

> Of the items used in the demonstrative sciences some are special to each science and others common—but common *by analogy*, since they are only useful in so far as they bear on the genus falling under the science. Proper—for example that a line is such-and-such, and straight so-and-so. Common—for example, that if equals are taken from equals, the remainders are equal. (*APo*. I 10 76^{a}37–41)

Thus the genus to which lines, numbers, and so on belong, which is the ontological correlate of any theorem of universal mathematics, is not a first-order genus, but an analogical unity—a quantity. And about quantities as such there is much to say—enough indeed to suit them for explanatory scientific purposes in mathematics (*Cat*. 6). Indeed, Aristotle often refers to quantity, as to the other so-called categories, as genera: things are "one in kind (*genos*), those whose figure of predication [= category] is the same" (*Met*. V 6 1016^{b}33–34).

Something similar, we must suppose, is true of topic, enthymeme, and the other such notions that rhetoric needs for its explanatory purposes. They too are not first-order genera, but higher-order ones—analogical unities that have sufficient foundation in sciences that are themselves based on first-order genera to support a genuine science. If quantity can do this for mathematics, topic and enthymeme can surely do it for rhetoric. As universal mathematics is a transgeneric science, so too is rhetoric. The difference is that one is theoretical, the other productive.

The Definition of Rhetoric

We have seen in passing that rhetoric is "a sort of offshoot of dialectic and of work in ethics, which it is right to call politics" (*Rh*. I 2 1356^{a}25–27), and that it is "the capacity to get a theoretical grasp on what is possibly persuasive in each case" (1355^{b}25–26). We have explored in some detail what evidence politics is based on and noticed in a cursory way why it is the sort of evidence that a speaker might draw on. Our task now is to explore rhetoric itself and to see why Aristotle defines it as he does.

He starts in his usual way with an implicit nominal definition of rhetoric as what is involved when people defend or accuse someone

(*Rh.* I 1 1354[a]5–6). Extemporaneously or by habit, ordinary people do this, but it is possible to get a "theoretical grasp on the cause due to which some succeed because of habit and others because of chance" (1354[a]10–11), which "all would immediately agree, is the function of a craft" (1354[a]11). Hence it is this grasp that constitutes the explanatory foundation of rhetoric as a craft. It enables us to say not just that certain means of persuasion succeed in persuading people, but also—and this is the mark of a craft or science—to explain why they do. Thus if "only the means of persuasion (*pisteis*) are within the province of craft" (1354[a]13), anything that fails to focus on them will fail to have the real essence that constitutes something as genuine *rhetoric*.

This, Aristotle claims, is in fact pretty much the lot of those who have previously written about the subject:

> Now as things stand those who have put together works on the craft of speeches [= rhetoric] have provided (one might almost say) no part of it. For only the means of persuasion (*pisteis*) are within the province of craft; the other things are appendages. But these writers say nothing about enthymemes, which just are the body of the means of persuasion, but mostly busy themselves with matters that are outside the thing at issue. (*Rh.* I 1 1354[a]11–16)

What gives means of persuasion their special salience to rhetoric, we see, is that they alone focus on the thing at issue.* And what makes previous works on rhetoric largely irrelevant to the craft is that they have not focused on it. If we ask what, in turn, gives the thing at issue its special salience, it is to the nominal essence of rhetoric that we are returned: "all try . . . to defend someone and accuse someone (*apologeisthai kai katêgorein*)" (*Rh.* I 1 1354[a]5–6). So all bring in the thing at issue—did he do it or didn't he, should it be done or shouldn't it, and so on.

The thing at issue is the pertinent thing and the means of persuasion bear on it. But other things, such as narratives, stories, poems, and the like, might surely bear on it too. So why of all these is it the means of persuasion that are alone relevant to the craft of rhetoric? The answer is determined by the end or goal of speaking, which is to *persuade* the listener of something. Thus a craft that aims to achieve this end or goal will need to take not just any means to it, but the best possible one. And this is just what a means of persuasion is:

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* For some elaborations and qualifications necessitated by the different functions of different sorts of speeches, see *Rh.* III 17.

> A means of persuasion is a sort of demonstration (for we are most persuaded when we take something to have been demonstrated). (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{a}4–6)

So if we want to be better at persuading people than those who do so extemporaneously or by habit, it is the means of persuasion we will want to learn how to produce.

Aristotle has now explained what previous writers did not focus on, but when he turns to explain what they did focus on, we encounter an apparently difficult problem. For what they focused on, he says, is "accusation (*diabolê*), pity, anger, and such feelings of the soul [that] do not have to do with the thing at issue, but are related to the juror" (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}16–18). And this is strange on two different fronts. First, accusation is not a feeling of the soul, and strife (*eris*), which is substituted for it later on (III 19 1419^{b}25–27), is not one either. Second, when Aristotle tells us what the means of persuasion are, he includes those that depend on "disposing the listener in some way" (I 2 1356^{a}3), and defines them as follows:

> Persuasion is through the listeners whenever they are led to feel things by the speech. For we do not give the same judgments pained and pleased, or loving and hating. It is with this, and only with this, we say, that those people busy themselves who now treat the subject as within the province of craft. (*Rh*. I 2 1356^{a}14–17)

So aren't these means of persuasion just what Aristotle should *not* be including within the province of craft?

The fact that accusation and strife—*diabolê* and *eris*—are not feelings indicates that the issue is not so much feelings themselves as how people are led to them: the verb *diaballein* means, among other things, "to make hostile, to engender a mutual dislike between two parties." When they are led to them by the argument, which is about the things at issue, it is one thing, however, when they are led to them by other means it is another. What Aristotle says in further criticism of his predecessors explains why:

> If all trials were conducted as they now are at any rate in some cities, especially those that are in good legislative order, these writers would have nothing to say. For everyone thinks that the laws should proclaim this way of doing things, and some even make use of such laws and prohibit speaking of matters outside the thing at issue, as they in fact do in the court of the Areopagus, which correctly legislates against this. For

> one should not distort [the judgment of] the juror by arousing anger, fear, or pity in him, since this would be as if someone who is going to use a standard, made it crooked. (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}18–26)

But the explanation needs some unpacking.

What the standard is that feelings distort or make crooked is identified for us this way:

> Each state [of character] has its own special set of things that are pleasant or noble, and an excellent person is perhaps distinguished most by his seeing what is true in each case, since he is like a standard and measure of them. In the case of ordinary people, however, deception seems to come about because of pleasure, which appears to be a good thing when it is not. So they choose what is pleasant as good and avoid what is painful as bad. (*NE* III 4 1113^{a}31–^{b}2)

Pleasure and pain, then, are the culprits. But the feelings relevant to rhetoric involve these:

> The feelings are those things due to which people, by undergoing a change, differ in their judgments, and that entail pain and pleasure—for example, anger, pity, fear, and other such things, and their contraries. (*Rh*. II 1 1378^{a}19–21)

So when speakers arouse these feelings, pleasure or pain go along with them, and these influence judgment:

> The assemblyman and the juror are actually judging about present and definite issues, in relation to which they already feel both love and hatred, and with which their own private advantage is already knitted together, so that they are no longer capable of adequately seeing the truth, but instead their own private pleasure or pain overshadows their judgment. (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{b}6–11)

Fair enough. But are enthymemes—the very body of the means of persuasion that are rhetoric's stock in trade—supposed then to influence feelings in a way that is not distorting of judgment? Here is Aristotle's incisive answer:

> When you are trying to arouse feelings, do not speak in enthymemes. For an enthymeme either knocks out feeling or

> is spoken pointlessly, since simultaneous movements knock out each other and either extinguish each other or make each other weak. Nor, when the speech is expressive of character, should you look for an enthymeme at the same time. For demonstration involves neither character nor deliberate choice. (*Rh*. III 17 1418^{a}12–17)

It is not to the enthymeme, therefore, that we should look for an effect on feeling—but then there is more to a means of persuasion than an enthymeme.

Large questions arise at this point about the nature of feelings but we can keep them in check by narrowing our attention to just one problematically "negative" feeling, namely, anger. Aristotle defines it this way:

> [Anger is] desire, involving pain, for apparent revenge (*timôrias phainomenês*), because of apparent contempt (*phainomenên oligôrian*) on the part of someone unfitted to treat the person himself, or one of those close to him, with contempt. (*Rh*. II 2 1378^{a}30–32)

Anger, like other relevant feelings, we see, is aroused not by how things actually are (real contempt) but by how they appear to us (apparent contempt). Here is Aristotle himself making the point in speaking explicitly about definitions:

> Further, in the case of desires, and in the case of any other things where it is fitting, look to see whether he [namely, the one giving the definition] has not added "apparent"—for example, in saying that wish is a desire for good, or appetite a desire for pleasant, instead of for apparent good or pleasant. For often the thing that is good or pleasant escapes the notice of those who feel desire, so that what they desire is not necessarily good or pleasant but only apparently so. He should, then, have made [the definition] he assigns in this way. (*Top*. VI 8 146^{b}36–147^{a}5)

But how things do in fact appear to us is affected by our feelings:

> We are easily deceived by our perceptions when we are in the grip of feelings (*en tois pathesin*), some when in the grip of one, others in the grip of others (for example, the coward when in the grip of fear, the lover when in the grip of passion), so that even from a very slight resemblance the coward thinks he sees

> his enemy and the lover his beloved, and the more in the grip of the feeling he is, the smaller is the similarity required to produce the appearance. In the same way both in fits of anger (*en orgais*) and in the grip of all appetites, everyone is easily deceived, and the more easily, the more they are in the grip of the feelings. (*Insomn*. 2 460^{b}3–11)

As a result, means of persuasion that aim to get us to see things as they actually are may have to so influence how they appear to us as to bring appearance (perhaps distorted by feeling) into congruence with reality. We might remember in this regard what Thucydides said about Pericles:

> Whenever he perceived that the majority were in any way over confident in their wanton aggression beyond what the situation justified, he shocked them into a state of fear by his speaking, and again, when they were unreasonably afraid, he restored them to confidence. (II.65.9)

A means of persuasion can arouse anger or other feelings, then, not in order to distort judgment, but to un-distort it.

When, as a result of the feelings that a speaker's means of persuasion has aroused in them, listeners' judgment is other than the one that excellent (or virtuous) people would make, the speaker is guilty of distorting the very standard of judgment that a constitution in good legislative order, aiming at wise deliberative decisions and just judicial judgments, would seek to inculcate in its citizens. By the same token, when a speaker's means of persuasion arouses feelings that so influence judgment that it becomes congruent with that of an excellent person, it is not distorting the measure but preserving it, if it is already correct (as it will be if the listeners are excellent), or un-distorting it—straightening it out—if it is crooked. For "it is characteristic of virtue to be pleased and pained at the things we should and in the way we should" (*NE* IV 1 1121^{a}3–4).

Though this is and will remain the solution to the problem of feelings and their place in means of persuasion, there is more to the story. For when Aristotle again characterizes the errors made by his predecessors, he adds an apparently problematic detail, which I have italicized:

> If this is so, however, *it is evident that those who define the other things are attempting to treat matters outside the thing at issue as being within the province of craft—for example, what the introduction or the narration should contain, as well as each of the other parts. For they busy themselves only with how to produce a*

> *certain quality in the judge*, whereas about the means of persuasion that are within the province of craft they show nothing, but it is on the basis of these that one would become enthymematically competent. (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{b}16–22)

And the reason it is problematic is this: Aristotle himself discusses what the introduction and the narration should contain, as well as each of the other parts (III 13–19). Why is it all right for Aristotle to do this but not all right for his predecessors?

The solution to the problem, though not presented as such (the problem is ours, not Aristotle's), lies in the difference between things that are inside or outside the province of craft and things that are inside or outside the thing at issue. Consider the case of the means of persuasion (*pisteis*). Only these are within the province of craft (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}13). But what this amounts to, we soon discover, is not that all the means of persuasion are inside it, but that nothing except a means of persuasion is inside it:

> Of the means of persuasion, though, some are outside the province of craft, whereas others are within the province of craft. By outside the province of craft I mean those that are not provided by ourselves [as orators] but are there at the start—for example, witnesses, results of torture, contracts, and the like. And by within the province of craft I mean those capable of being furnished by the methodical inquiry and ourselves. (*Rh*. I 2 1355^{b}35–39)

Now turn to Aristotle's predecessors and ask, which means of persuasion did they fail to discuss—those that are inside or those that are outside the province of craft? Again Aristotle is clear: "about the means of persuasion that are within the province of craft they show nothing" (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{b}21). Since these are the ones on the basis of which one would become competent with enthymemes (1354^{b}21–22), their silence about them amounts to a silence about the things that "just are the body of the means of persuasion" (1354^{a}14–15).

Now turn to the thing at issue and to the parts of the means of persuasion in a speech that bear on it:

> There are two parts to a speech. For it is necessary to state the thing at issue and also to demonstrate it. . . . The necessary parts [of a speech], therefore, are the statement of the case and the

> means of persuasion. These, then, are its special ones, and the most it has are: introduction, statement of the thing at issue, means of persuasion, and epilogue. For the replies to the opponent belong to the means of persuasion, and the reply by comparison is amplification of one's own case, so that it is a part of the means of persuasion. For one who does this demonstrates something, whereas the introduction does not and neither does the epilogue, but rather serves as a reminder. (*Rh*. III 13 $1414^{a}31–^{b}13$)

Thus:

> What one should in fact do [in the introduction] is state the thing at issue, in order that it not escape notice what the judgment is about, whereas in the epilogue one should speak in summary form (*kephalaiôdôs*) of the things through which the conclusion has been shown. (III 19 $1419^{b}30–33$)

In ignoring enthymemes, Aristotle's predecessors ignored the body of the means of persuasion—the demonstration of the thing at issue—and focused instead on the introduction and the other ancillary parts in isolation from that body: the adverb *kephalaiôdôs*, which derives from *kephalê* ("head"), preserves the metaphor. But if the introduction should state the thing at issue and the epilogue should summarize the enthymematic demonstration, which is alone within the province of the craft, any attempt to discuss the contents of these in isolation must result in "attempting to treat matters outside the thing at issue as being within the province of craft" (*Rh*. I 1 $1354^{b}16–18$). However, when the function of these parts is properly understood to be that of "appendages (*prosthêkai*)" (I 1 $1354^{a}14$), they are properly treatable as within the province of craft—which is precisely the way Aristotle does treat them in III 13–19.

An important case in point is that of so-called remedies (*iatreumata*):

> The other kinds (*eidos*) of introduction that are used are remedies and are common [to all the kinds of speeches]. These say things based on the speaker, the listener, the thing at issue, and the opponent. *Those based on the speaker himself and the opponent are all those concerned with refuting or making an accusation* (*diabolên*). But these are not done in the same way. For in the defendant's case things having to do with the accusation

> come first, whereas in the accuser's they come in the epilogue. Why this is so is quite clear. For the defendant, when he is about to introduce his own case must do away with any hindrances to it, and so must first refute the accusation. But the one attacking him should put his accusation in the epilogue in order that the listeners may remember it better. (*Rh*. III 14 1415^{a}25–34)

Again, I have italicized the crucial element. For what it shows—and shows unequivocally—is that what defendants and accusers say about each other (to stick to judicial examples), whether in the introduction (defendant) or epilogue (accuser), is not separate from the enthymematic body of the means of persuasion, but serves rather to clear away the sorts of prejudicial beliefs that are likely to prevent enthymemes from having their proper weight with judges. This, for example, is what Plato presents Socrates doing in his speech of defense:

> The first thing justice demands, then, men of Athens, is that I defend myself from the first false accusations made against me and from my first accusers, and then from the later accusations and the later accusers. You see, many people have accused me in front of you, and for very many years now—and nothing they say is true. And I fear them more than Anytus and the rest, though the latter are dangerous too.* But the earlier ones, gentlemen, are more dangerous. They got hold of most of you from childhood, and persuaded you with their accusations against me—accusations no more true than the current ones. (Plato, *Ap*. 18a–b)

Remedies thus serve the enthymeme, and are not, as in the sort of introductions favored by Aristotle's predecessors, an independent alternative to it, biasing the listeners one way or the other in total disregard of the thing at issue. But they are sufficiently important—people being what they are—that Aristotle devotes an entire chapter to the topics appropriate to them, mentioning twelve (*Rh.* III 15).

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* Anytus was a democratic leader who helped restore democracy to Athens in 403 BC after the overthrow of the Thirty Tyrants (*Rh.* II 23 1400^{a}18n), under whom he had lost most of his wealth. Perhaps believing him responsible for the ruin of his son (Xenophon, *Apology* 29–31), and passionately opposed to sophists (Plato, *Meno* 89e–92c), he joined Meletus and Lycon in bringing a formal charge of impiety and corruption of the youth against Socrates in 399 BC.

With all this behind us we are in a position to understand the following text in the correct way:

> But since rhetoric is for the sake of judgment (for people judge deliberations and a trial is a judgment), it is necessary for the speaker to look not only to the argument, that it be demonstrative and persuasive, but also to himself, that he be of a certain quality, and to the judge, to produce a certain quality in him too. For it makes a great difference with a view to persuading—especially in deliberative speeches, but next in judicial ones—both that the speaker appear to be of a certain quality and that his listeners take him to be disposed in a certain way toward them, and if, in addition, they too will be disposed in a certain way. (*Rh*. II 1 1377^{b}20–28)

The argumentative body of a speech is a dispassionate demonstration, involving neither the character of the speaker nor the feelings of the judges. But for this to do its work successfully other elements in the speech, which do relate to feelings and character, will need to do theirs. And the greater the external political disorder, the more debased the listeners, the more extravagant the lies and accusations, the greater their work will be: "For it is not possible—or not easy—to alter by argument what has long since been locked up in traits of character" (*NE* X 9 1179^{b}16–18).

This provides a nice point of transition into another important element in Aristotle's account of rhetoric, I mean the distinction, already noticed, between honest rhetoric and plain rhetoric:

> It is evident that it is a function of the same craft to see what is persuasive and what is apparently persuasive, just as in the case of dialectic it is to see the deduction and the apparent deduction. For sophistic is what it is in virtue not of the capacity but of the deliberate choice. Here, in the case of rhetoric, however, one person is an orator in virtue of his scientific knowledge, another in virtue of his deliberate choice, whereas there, in dialectic, a sophist is so called in virtue of his deliberate choice, and a dialectician is so called not in virtue of his deliberate choice, but in virtue of the capacity he has. (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{b}15–21)

So when we discuss what is inside and what is outside the province of the craft of rhetoric, we need to be clear about what we have in mind. For while an honest orator, possessed of the plain craft, must know about apparent enthymemes and the topics they are based on, so as to better detect and

refute them when other less scrupulous orators use them against him, and so as to persuade non-virtuous audiences to do what is in fact best, he will not use them himself to achieve bad ends:

> One should be capable of persuading people of contraries, just as in the case of [dialectical] deductions, not so as to do both in action (for one should not persuade people of base things), but in order that it not escape our notice how things stand, and, if someone else uses arguments (*logos*) in an unjust way, so as to be able to refute them for ourselves. (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{a}29–33)

A plain orator, by contrast, will use whatever craft resources he needs to persuade his listeners of whatever end he happens to have, whether virtuous or vicious. When in II 24 we find Aristotle discussing apparent enthymemes and the topics on which they are based, then, we should not be surprised.

In addition to the arguments we have been considering, Aristotle also gives a number of others in support of his claim—on which his (real) definition of rhetoric will be based—that rhetoric is concerned exclusively with means of persuasion (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{a}3–4, 4 1359^{b}9–16). One of these, we noticed, is that the rhetoric of his predecessors, since it is focused almost entirely on something else, would be useless in cities that are in good legislative order (I 1 1354^{a}18–24). Another focuses on the fact that in judicial cases, "the task of the opponent is nothing at all outside of showing that [the thing at issue] is or is not the case, or did or did not occur" (1354^{a}26–31). Another focuses on the nature of good legislation itself, arguing that "it is fitting for laws that are correctly laid down to define everything themselves, wherever possible, and leave the fewest things up to the jurors" (1354^{a}31–^{b}16). Rhetoric that focuses on the jurors, therefore, independently of the enthymeme, is for this reason too focusing on the wrong thing.

With rhetoric's goal now established, Aristotle turns to the question of utility. He does the same thing in the *Topics*, where dialectic is concerned:

> Our next task . . . is to say how many areas, and also of what sorts, our work is useful in. It is useful, then, in three: in training, in argumentative encounters, and in the philosophical sciences. (*Top*. I 2 101^{a}25–28)

The four uses of rhetoric he mentions (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{a}21–^{b}7) are discussed in the associated notes and need not further detain us here. What is important to register, however, is the relevance of utility to rhetoric, since its

aim, as a productive science, is not theoretical knowledge, but usable knowledge.

Aristotle is now ready to give not merely the nominal but the real definition of rhetoric. He does this by first specifying its function (*Rh.* I 1 1354^{a}11), which is "not to persuade but to see the persuasive factors belonging in each case, just as in all the other crafts" (1355^{b}10–12). Armed with these, like a chef with a good universal recipe, a speaker is then able to produce a particular speech that—everything else being equal—will persuade his audience. Next, the definition itself is stated as a conclusion of the preceding critique of his predecessors: "Let rhetoric, then, be a capacity to get a theoretical grasp on what is possibly persuasive in each case" (I 2 1355^{b}25–26)—that is to say, on the possibly persuasive means of persuasion. Aristotle does not describe this critique as dialectical in nature, or represent it as going through and resolving puzzles, but it is not difficult to recast it as such.

Means of Persuasion, Enthymemes, and Topics

To get a grip on what a *pistis* ("means of persuasion" in the translation) is it is useful to begin with a text that we have already looked at for other purposes:

> Of the means of persuasion, though, some are outside the province of craft, whereas others are within the province of craft. By outside the province of craft I mean those that are not provided by ourselves [as orators] but are there at the start—for example, witnesses, results of torture, contracts, and the like. And by within the province of craft I mean those capable of being furnished by the methodical inquiry and ourselves. (*Rh.* I 2 1355^{b}35–39)

Focus first on those outside the province of craft. They are special to judicial oratory and there are just five of them: "laws, witnesses, contracts, [results of] torture, and oaths" (*Rh.* I 15 1375^{a}22–25). What they have in common with things that are within the province of craft is what makes "means of persuasion" a good translation of both, namely, that they are probative items—items productive of persuasion, or conviction (I 1 1354^{a}13n). And a witness, a contract, or an oath (anyway in places where oaths are taken seriously) can be as probative as an argument. What puts these outside the province of craft is that the craft of rhetoric is not in a position to

provide them: they are either there at the start or they are not. Having said that much about them, then, we may leave them aside, and restrict the rest of our discussion to those that are within the province of rhetoric.

Beginning again, then, let us ask what a means of persuasion is in that narrower sense. And here we may distinguish the logical aspects of a means of persuasion from other aspects. From the logical point of view a means of persuasion is a certain sort of deduction or demonstration, and, as such, is no different from any other deduction or demonstration. That is why rhetoric is in part "composed of the science of analytics" (*Rh.* I 4 1359^{b}9–10): it draws its logic from there. What makes a demonstration or deduction a peculiarly rhetorical one—an enthymeme (I 1 1355^{a}6, 2 1256^{b}4–5)—is not its logic, therefore, but something else, namely, the shape the deduction takes and what it is based on, both of which are dictated by the special goals or purposes of rhetoric.

We may begin, then, with the first of these factors and with the notion, characterized in the following text, of a primary deduction:

> It is possible, though, to deduce and draw conclusions either from previous deductions or from things that are not deduced, but which are in need of being deduced because they are not reputable beliefs. The former, however, are of necessity not easy to follow due to their length (for the judge is assumed to be a simple person), while the latter are not persuasive because they are not drawn from things that are agreed nor from reputable beliefs. So it is necessary for both an enthymeme and a paradigm to be concerned with things that for the most part admit of being other than they are (a paradigm being an induction, an enthymeme being a deduction), and to be composed of few premises and fewer often than those that compose the primary deduction. For if one of these is known, there is no need to state it, since the listener himself supplies it. (*Rh.* I 2 1357^{a}7–19)

The primary deduction, then, is the analogue of a dialectical syllogism: as the latter lies in the background guiding in the one case the questioner's questions, in the other the answerer's answers, so the primary deduction lies in the background guiding the speaker's enthymeme. And, again like a dialectical deduction, a primary deduction is a syllogistic deduction, or chain of such deductions. By contrast, the enthymeme that the speaker actually presents to his listeners is sculpted in accord with their beliefs (if they know a premise, there is no need to state it), with their capacity to follow long chains of deductions, their level of education, and so on:

> Now, that the enthymeme is a deduction was stated earlier, and in what way it is a deduction, and in what respect it differs from those in dialectic. For it should not draw its conclusion from far back, nor by necessarily including everything, since the former is not perspicuous because of length, while the latter amounts to babbling, because what is said is evident. This is the cause of the uneducated being more persuasive than the well-educated in front of crowds of people—as the poets tell us, the uneducated are "more accomplished at speaking before a crowd." For the well-educated say the common things and universals, while the uneducated say things on the basis of what they know and things close at hand. So one should not speak on the basis of all the things that seem to be so but on the basis of definite ones—for example, those accepted by the judges or of those they approve. And in fact it should be clear that what is said appears so to all or to most. And one should not only draw the conclusion from what is necessary, but also from what holds for the most part. (*Rh*. II 22 $1395^{b}23$–$1396^{a}3$)

In this regard enthymemes are no different from deductions used for other productive or practical purposes:

> As sometimes happens in asking [dialectical] questions, however, so here [in practical deliberation] thought does not stop to consider the other premise, the one that is clear. For example, if taking walks is good for a man, he does not linger over the thought that he is a man. (*MA* 7 $701^{a}26$–29)

An actual enthymeme, then, is always the tip of a deductive iceberg, just enough of which it exposes to achieve its end. But while a speaker "should compress enthymemes as much as possible" (III 18 $1419^{a}19$), that does not mean that he will never have to expose the whole iceberg.

None of this need imply, either, that primary deductions are always explicitly articulated by speakers, or that speakers work from them, as from an explicit recipe, to which they have access. They may be—and no doubt usually are—further removed from actual practice than that. What they do is make fully explicit to students of rhetoric what is needed in order to rationalize or make fully intelligible what skilled speakers are doing when they argue as they do. They articulate part of the craft knowledge—the competence—of a skilled speaker but not necessarily by giving the protocols he actually follows.

Though their logic is that of deductions generally, enthymemes, like dialectical deductions, are not categorical ones, of the sort found in the sciences (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}3n(6)), which prove their conclusions unconditionally, but so-called hypothetical ones:

> In every case the deduction leads up to the substituted premise,* but what follows from the starting-point is concluded through an agreement or through some other hypothesis. (*APr*. I 23 41^{a}38–^{b}1; also 29 45^{b}17–19)

> An enthymeme suited to showing draws its conclusion from what is agreed to. (*Rh*. II 22 1396^{b}25–26)

But as with their length or degree of compression, this seems to be typically, rather than essentially, true of them. In any case, that seems to be the message of the following text:

> The better someone is at selecting premises, [the more] he will—without noticing it—produce a science that is distinct from dialectic and rhetoric. For if he hits upon starting-points, it will no longer be dialectic or rhetoric, but instead will be that science whose starting-points he possesses. (*Rh*. I 2 1358^{a}23–26)

Thus, while the premises of enthymemes may be scientific starting-points, rhetoric does not select them as such (which is why the speaker who selects them is unaware of the fact that he is doing a bit of science), but on other grounds altogether.

Before turning to what these grounds are, which was our second factor, we should also notice that enthymemes, understood in the way we have been discussing, are further divided into two kinds:

> One lot are suited to showing that something is or is not the case, while another lot are refutative, and the difference is like that in dialectical ones between refutation and deduction. (*Rh*. II 22 1396^{b}23–25)

But while these differ in their popularity—

* See *Top*. I 18 108^{b}12–19, II 5 112^{a}16–23.

> Refutative enthymemes are more popular than demonstrative ones because a refutative enthymeme is a bringing together of contraries in a small space, and when these are set side by side they are more evident to the listener (*Rh.* II 23 1400^{b}26–29)

—they are not two distinct species, but rather the very same one used for distinct purposes:

> Nor are refutative enthymemes some one species (*eidos*) of enthymemes. For it is clear that one refutes by showing something or by bringing an objection. In the first case they show the opposite in reply—for example, if he showed that something happened, the other shows that it did not. So this is not a differentiating feature (*diaphora*), since they both use the same [topics]. For they bring in enthymemes to show that something is not the case or that it is the case. (*Rh.* II 26 1403^{a}24–29)

There is nothing formally or logically distinctive about them, therefore, that requires special notice or discussion.

What is true of them formally or logically is also true of what they are based on, to come now to that factor, and this we learn in the very opening (Greek) sentence of the *Rhetoric* consists of "such common things as are in a way known to all and belong to no definite science" (I 1 1354^{a}1–3). Later these are identified as including topics:

> Dialectical and rhetorical deductions are those concerned with what we call topics, which are common when they concern what is just, what is natural, what is political, and many things that differ in species (*eidos*)—for example, the topic of the more and the less. (*Rh.* I 2 1358^{a}10–14)

Then topics themselves are identified with (1) elements of enthymemes:

> Let us now speak of the elements of enthymemes. And by element (*stoicheion*) and topic, I mean the same thing. (*Rh.* II 22 1396^{b}20–21)

Then, in what looks like a definition, both elements and topics are described as (2) items "into the province of which many enthymemes fall (*eis . . . empiptei*)" (*Rh.* II 26 1403^{a}17–18).

Now an enthymeme has two sorts of things in it that we might intuitively call elements: premises and a logical form determinative of its

syllogistic mood (*Rh*. I 1 1354[a]3n[3])—which is something like a rule of inference. And in fact common things seem to include such rules or premises expressing them:

> By the starting-points of demonstration I mean the common beliefs (*koinas doxas*) on the basis of which we all prove things, such as that in every case it is necessary either to affirm or deny, and that it is impossible for something at the same time to both be and not be, and any other propositions like that. (*Met*. III 2 996[b]27–29)

And this makes perfect sense. For if an enthymeme is to persuade listeners it must at least appear valid to them (*Rh*. II 24 1401[b]20–28). This does not mean, though, that the proposition expressing the rule need be a premise in the demonstration. Instead, the belief in it disposes a person having it to accept demonstrations or deductions exemplifying the rule. It is an element in that sense.

In keeping with the idea in (1) that topics are elements of enthymemes—propositions expressing common beliefs—is the implication that they are themselves reputable beliefs:

> It is clear that it is possible to produce the stating of a counter-deduction on the basis of the same topics [as a deduction]. For the deductions are based on reputable beliefs, and many things that seem to be so are contrary to one another. (*Rh*. II 25 1402[a]32–34)

And this too makes perfect sense. For reputable beliefs must be, or must include, common ones—ones that apply transgenerically. But if that is what a topic is, what could it possibly mean to say that (2) many enthymemes *fall into the province* of an element or topic? Here the following provides the essential clue:

> One must also try to get possession of the [headings] into the province of which many arguments fall (*eis . . . empiptousin*). For just as in geometry it furthers the work to be trained in the elements (*stoicheia*), and in arithmetic to have the multiplication table up to ten at one's fingertips (*kephalismous*) (it makes a great difference also to knowing the multiples of the other numbers), so likewise in arguments too does having things

> at hand about starting-points.* For just as in mnemonics, the mere mention of their places (*topoi*) straightaway makes the things themselves be remembered, so these [headings] will make one more capable at deducing (*sullogistikôteron*) because one sees these items defined and numbered. And a common (*koinên*) premise should be committed to memory rather than an argument. For to be well-equipped with a starting-point—that is, a hypothesis—is [only] moderately difficult. (*Top*. VIII 14 163^{b}22–33)

A common premise (for a dialectical deduction), we now see, is also something that can serve as a mnemonic device—a *topos*—for arguments, and as such is an item into the province of which these arguments fall. It is this, surely, that allows Aristotle to speak of topics in the two ways we distinguished. In (1) they are common propositions; in (2) they are common propositions serving as reminders of correlative arguments. They are thus at once headings in those catalogues of evidence we looked at that are all important in any science and items falling under them.

Though these two features are possessed by topics in both dialectic and rhetoric, the topics they are possessed by typically differ and have different purposes. Rhetoric is the "counterpart (*antistrophos*)" (*Rh*. I 1 1354^{a}1) of dialectic; it is not dialectic itself. Thus:

> Someone who is about to ask [dialectical] questions (*erôtêmatizein*) must first find the topic from which he must make his attack; second, formulate them [the things in the province of the topic] as questions (*erotêmatisai*) and arrange them (*taxai*) each by each for himself; thirdly and lastly he must go on to address them to the other party [the answerer]. (*Top*. VIII 1 155^{b}4–7)

A speechmaker, by contrast, is typically not going to be asking questions, though in some cases he might (*Rh.* III 18). Consequently, he is typically not going to be formulating what is in the province of his topic as questions, or addressing them to anyone. What a speechmaker needs to find in the province of his mnemonic topics are the bases, not for attacking or defending a proposition, but for arguments that his audience should find persuasive. (That the two may overlap goes without saying.)

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* Secluding καὶ τὰς προτάσεις ἀπὸ στόματος ἐξεπίστασθαι ("and learning their premises by heart until they are at the tip of one's tongue").

I have thus far been understanding the notion of a *stoicheion*, in the way Aristotle himself usually does, as an element in the intuitive sense of an elementary component. It is also possible to understand it, however, not as explaining what a topic is by adding a semantic contribution of its own to the mix, but simply as meaning what *topos* does. This is the sense one gets from, for example, the following texts:

> Again, for [getting people] to say contradoxical things, look to see what school (*genos*) the one arguing dialectically belongs to, and then question him on something it says that to most people is contradoxical. For in the case of each school there is something of this sort. A *stoicheion* in these cases is having the theses of each school among the premises one has hold of. (*SE* 12 $172^{b}29–32$)

> With a view to refutation, one thing is length. For it is difficult to keep many things in view at the same time. And to produce length the *stoicheia* that have been mentioned must be used. One is speed. For when people are left behind they see less far ahead. Further, there is anger and rivalry. For when people are agitated they are all less capable of being on their guard. *Stoicheia* having to do with anger are: making it evident that one wishes to act unjustly and to be altogether shameless. (*SE* 15 $174^{a}21–23$)

But, as in the case of *topos* itself, there is nothing to prevent us from taking a leaf from both books. The *stoicheia* of anger, like the *stoicheion* that consists in having theses of the various schools among the premises from which one constructs one's enthymemes or dialectical deductions, are things one is to remember and have ready at hand when one wishes to produce anger in an opponent so as to agitate him and put him off his guard. But it is equally true that just as these premises will be elementary constituents of one's deductions, so what produces anger relies on what the elementary constituents of anger itself actually are. It is because anger is "desire, involving pain, for apparent revenge, because of apparent contempt on the part of someone unfitted to treat the person himself, or one of those close to him, with contempt" (*Rh*. II 2 $1378^{a}30–32$) that it can be aroused by an evident intention to act unjustly and shamelessly.

A final point. Topics fall, Aristotle claims, into two kinds: so called species or special topics, which are "premises special to a given genus" (*Rh*. I 2 $1358^{a}31$); and common ones, which "will not make someone wise about

any genus" (1358[a]21–22), since they are transgeneric. The latter on one occasion actually usurp the name "topics": "by topics [I mean] those equally common to all" (1358[a]32). But the predominant and clearer nomenclature is that of special and common topics, so I shall stick to that. Perhaps the use of the term *eidos* for the former derives from the fact that species generally—including canonical biological species—are special to their genus. Be that as it may, the fact that special topics are explicitly stated to be premises further supports our view of them.

There is more to a means of persuasion, as we saw, than its enthymematic body; there is also, for example, its typically non-enthymematic introduction and epilogue. When, as a result, we ask what rhetorical topics—whether special or common—are, we need to keep in mind that some of these will be topics for enthymemes proper, while others will be topics for other parts of the means of persuasion. Thus while Aristotle speaks of topics "concerning each of the kinds (*eidos*)" of enthymemes (*Rh*. II 22 1396[b]28–29) and for apparent enthymemes (II 24 1401[a]1), he also speaks of topics that "those who wish to make their listeners mild-mannered should speak from" (II 3 1380[b]31–32), topics from which one should establish that someone is excellent or base (III 19 1419[b]18–19), and, of course, topics related to accusation, which bear exclusively on the introduction and epilogue (II 23–24). While many enthymemes do fall into the province of a topic, then, they are not the only contents of a means of persuasion to do so.

Consider in this regard the topic of anger. Aristotle's discussion of it begins with a definition:

> Let anger be desire, involving pain, for apparent revenge, because of apparent contempt on the part of someone unfitted to treat the person himself, or one of those close to him, with contempt. (*Rh*. II 2 1378[a]30–32)

We might think of this as falling under the rhetorical analogue of the dialectical maxim that "one should be well-equipped with definitions. . . . For it is through these that deductions come about" (*Top*. VIII 14 163[b]20–22). But we should notice what sort of definition it is. And here we are helped by the following contrast:

> A natural scientist and a dialectician would define each of these [affections of the soul] differently—for example, what anger is. For a dialectician it is a desire for retaliation or something like that, whereas for a natural scientist it is a boiling of the blood and hot stuff around the heart. Of these, the natural scientist

> gives the matter, whereas the dialectician gives the form and the account. (*DA* I 1 403^{a}29–^{b}2)

Focus on the final clause: "the dialectician gives the form and the account." No doubt this implies that the definition is based on reputable beliefs, which are the dialectician's ground-level evidence. But because dialectic is also "useful as regards the primary [starting-points] in each science" (*Top.* I 2 101^{a}36–37), and because reputable beliefs about things like anger and the raw starting-points of scientific psychology (or the science of soul) overlap, we cannot cavalierly assign the definition to popular thought rather than to science. And indeed Aristotle goes on in the *De Anima* to assign to the natural scientist knowledge of both the form and the matter of those affections of the soul that, like anger, are inseparable from the body (I 1 403^{b}9–19).

That the definition, which is clearly Aristotle's own, is scientific is evidenced by its very content, which is hardly what untutored popular thought would come up with, but also—and more importantly—by the fact that it must be a scientific one if indeed rhetoric is to get a theoretical grasp on "the *cause* (*aitian*) due to which some succeed [in persuading] because of habit and others because of chance," in the way requisite in a genuine craft, a genuine productive science (*Rh.* I 1 1354^{a}10–11). For it is clear that rhetoric will not specify the cause of a speaker's arousing anger in his listeners if it does not have a correct (real) definition of anger available to it. To know which reputable beliefs are true, we must know the truth of the matter:

> It belongs to the same capacity [= craft] to see the truth and what is like the truth. . . . That is why the capacity to aim at and hit upon the reputable beliefs belongs to the person who has a similar one with regard to the truth. (*Rh.* I 1 1355^{a}15–18)

But this does not mean, of course, that rhetoric establishes such scientific definitions for itself: it is exclusively "a capacity to get a theoretical grasp on what is possibly persuasive in each case" (I 2 1355^{b}25–26). Instead, it derives these from the associated sciences. Politics, for example, which Aristotle names as one of these (*Rh.* I 4 1359^{b}9–12), must itself know quite a lot about the soul:

> A politician must in a way know about what pertains to the soul, just as someone who is going to take care of people's eyes must know about the body generally—more so, indeed, to the extent that politics is more estimable and better than medicine—and that doctors (the ones who are more sophisticated) occupy themselves greatly with knowing about the body. It is also for

> a politician, then, to get a theoretical grasp on what concerns the soul. But his theoretical grasp should be for the sake of the things in question and of an extent that is adequate to the things being looked for, since a more exact treatment is perhaps harder work than the issues before us require. (*NE* I 13 1102^{a}18–26)

We might say the same sort of thing about rhetoric itself.

The second point we should notice about the definition of anger, related to the first, is that it is not intended to figure as a premise in a speaker's enthymeme: he is not giving a scientific lecture on anger, aimed at teaching the truth about it (*Rh*. I 1 1355^{a}24–26). Instead, it is serving as a topic, telling or reminding him of what anger is in such a way as to have bearing on how to arouse or quiet it by means not of his enthymeme but of the other parts of his means of persuasion. Thus when anger is relevant to his rhetorical purposes, the topic comes immediately to his mind, and with it the argument-relevant definition.

By and large, then, one should cast a cautious eye on claims that the sorts of, for example, definitions found in the *Rhetoric* are loose and popular rather that strict or scientific. The truth is more nuanced. Whatever actually appears in a rhetorical argument must, of course, be accessible to the audience, and so must be based on common and reputable beliefs. But when, as in the case of anger, it guides the speaker's persuasive strategy, it must be based on scientific knowledge of genuine causes. Even then, however, whatever scientific bells and whistles it contains must be justified by its contribution to crafting persuasive arguments.* Moreover, many of the elements in a topic, though themselves based on causes, are clearly selected for their special relevance to rhetoric, rather than because of their importance to the sort of scientific psychology we find in *De Anima*. The following remarks about anger are a case in point:

> It is already evident from these considerations by being disposed in which way people are angry, at whom they are angry, and because of what sorts of things. For they are angry when they are pained; for the one who is pained seeks something. If, then, anyone in any way directly obstructs, for example, a thirsty man from drinking, or if he does not do so directly, appears to be doing the same thing, or if he acts against him or does not assist him in acting, or annoys him in some other respect when he is so disposed [namely, seeking something], at all such people he is angry. That is why those who are ill, poor,

* See III 1 1378^{a}8–19 and the associated notes.

relative frequency, so that, at a first pass, to say that "for the most part all crabs have the right claw bigger and stronger than the left" (*HA* IV 3 $527^{b}6$–7) is to say that *most* crabs do. One obvious problem with this proposal is that the statement about crabs will now involve two potentially inconsistent quantifiers, "all" and "most." A second problem with it pertains to validity. On Aristotle's view, syllogisms with universal premises and conclusions remain valid even when these hold for the most part:

> One must take also the for-the-most part things that follow (*ta hôs epi to polu hepomena*) and the ones they follow from; for in the case of problems about what holds for the most part, deductions depend on premises that, either all or some of them, hold for the most part (for the conclusion of each deduction is similar to its starting-points). (*APr.* I 27 $43^{b}32$–36)

The corresponding syllogisms with "most" (**m**) in place of "all" (**a**), on the other hand, are not always valid. For example, all syllogisms of the form, **a**AB, **a**BC | **a**AC (all As are Bs, all Bs are Cs, therefore, all As are Cs), are valid. But this is not true of all syllogisms of the form, **m**AB, **m**BC | **m**AC (most As are Bs, most Bs are Cs, therefore, most As are Cs): most centenarians are women; most women are under seventy; but no centenarians are under seventy. Similarly, if something is a centenarian, it is rare that it is not a woman; if it is a woman, it is rare that it is not under seventy; but it does not follow that, on the condition that something is a centenarian, it is merely rare that it is not under seventy. Thus if propositions that hold for the most part are of the form **m**AB or the like, the logic Aristotle provides for them is inconsistent.

Besides associating what holds for the most part with a notion of relative frequency, Aristotle also associates it with what holds "provided there is no impediment" (*Ph.* II 8 $199^{b}18$). It might seem, then, that propositions that hold for the most part might be transformed into propositions that hold necessarily and always by incorporating an explicit reference to the conditions under which the impediments are missing, so that **m**AB would then be analyzed as, **a**AB on condition C. The problem with this suggestion is that the conditions under which **a**AB holds need not be the same as those under which **a**BC does. And when they are not, the validity of what holds for the most part deductions is again compromised. For **a**AB on condition C_1, **a**BC on condition C_2 | **a**AC on condition C_x, is not generally valid.

Since what holds for the most part rarely fails to occur, it seems that whatever impediments prevent something that does hold for the most part from holding always must themselves occur rarely. Yet this Aristotle seems to deny:

> Nature tends, then, to measure the coming to be and end of animals by the regular movements of these bodies [the sun and moon], but nature cannot bring this about exactly because of the indefiniteness of matter, and because many starting-points exist which impede coming to be and passing away from being according to nature, and often (*pollakis*) cause things to occur contrary to nature. (*GA* IV 10 778^{a}4–9)

But since the "indeterminateness of matter" seems to be a standing condition, while the many starting-points that impede do not, we should presumably divide things up as follows. The indeterminateness of matter explains why propositions hold for the most part, and so have contraries that are rarely true, while impediments explain why what otherwise would occur rarely may occur quite often. All human beings are quadrupeds, and this would remain true even if some freak accident or genetic disorder resulted in all or most human beings having only one leg. Nonetheless, absent impediments, frequency is a good guide to holding for the most part, and for the most part does imply frequently.

If we want to explain what it is for a proposition to hold for the most part, then, it is useful to begin not with the propositions themselves but with their ontological correlates or truth-makers—with the state of affairs A*B that makes **a**AB true rather than with **a**AB itself. Whenever we have a true proposition **a**AB, whether holding always or for the most part, the fact that A (the thing) and B (the thing) are related by the relation * is what makes it true. If, as we may suppose, * is transitive, the states of affairs A*B and B*C cannot obtain unless A*C does, the corresponding deduction, **a**AB, **a**BC | **a**AC, is valid. That is step one. The second step brings in the indefiniteness of matter. It is a standing and unchangeable condition. It is also one that cannot be captured in universal terms, which might then be used to transform what holds for the most part into something that holds always and without exception. The effect of introducing the indefiniteness of matter is not to threaten the existence of A*B, the transitivity of *, or the validity of the corresponding deduction. Instead, it explains why, even though the indefiniteness of matter does not threaten them, the proposition **a**AB can be false because of it: the necessity in it is gappy.

Take away from this discussion just these two things: gappy necessity of the sort involved in what holds for the most part is not the same as contingency; and this gappy necessity is first and foremost a feature of propositions, not of deductions—a deduction holds for the most part if and only if one of its constituent premises does. Now ask, what is it to refute a likelihood, or an enthymeme based on one? Here is the key text:

so in refuting the deductions—in the case of rhetoric, the enthymemes—of which they are a part.

Signs, Proofs, and Paradigms

Enthymemes, to repeat, are "based on likelihoods (*eikotôn*) and signs (*sêmeiôn*)" (*Rh*. I 2 1357^{a}31–32), and signs, to come now to them, are divided into proofs (*tekmêrion*) and a nameless sort that Aristotle refers to simply as signs—and we shall now follow him in this. Proofs, for their part, are necessary signs, that is to say, "those from which a deduction comes about," and which, as such, are irrefutable, if true (I 2 1357^{b}5–9, II 25 1403^{a}10–12). Thus proofs are reasonably easy to understand, given what we have already said about enthymemes: they are rhetorical premises that hold "necessarily and always" (II 25 1402^{b}18–19), and so can be parts even of demonstrations (1403^{a}14–15). We may reasonably conclude that their role in rhetoric is a minor one. For "while some of the premises on the basis of which enthymemes [rhetorical demonstrations] are stated will be necessary, the majority will hold for the most part" (I 2 1357^{a}30–32). It is on signs proper, then, and not on proofs, that rhetoric should more particularly focus.

Signs are of two sorts: related as (1) particular to universal or (2) as universal to particular (*Rh*. I 2 1357^{b}1–3). An example of (1): "if someone were to say that since Socrates is wise and just it is a sign that the wise are just" (1357^{b}11–13); an example of (2): "if someone were to say that there is a sign that a person is feverish, since he is breathing rapidly" (1357^{b}18–19). Both of these are refutable (1357^{b}13, 19–20). Yet, as Aristotle puts it in the *Prior Analytics*, "truth may be found in signs whatever their sort" (II 27 70^{a}37–38). The question is what sort of truth? Not necessary truth, we know that: signs are not proofs. But is it contingent truth or the sort of gappy necessary truth characteristic of likelihoods? And if it is the latter, are signs distinct from likelihoods or the very same thing?

It is useful in this regard to turn first to paradigms, which are rhetorical inductions (*Rh*. I 2 1356^{b}5–6). A paradigm involves showing "on the basis of many similar cases that things are a certain way" (1356^{b}14–15):

> It is not the relation of part to whole, of whole to part, or of whole to whole, but of part to part, and like to like—and it is a paradigm when both fall under the same kind (*genos*), but one is more knowable than the other. For example, [someone might claim] that Dionysius is aiming at tyranny in demanding a bodyguard, since Pisistratus too, when aiming at tyranny

> previously, demanded a bodyguard and, having got one, made himself tyrant, and Theagenes did the same in Megara. (*Rh*. I 2 1357^{b}27–33)

How, then, should a paradigm be refuted? Here is the answer:

> The refutation of enthymemes based on paradigms is the same as that of likelihoods. For if we have one case that is not so, there is a refutation, because the argument is not a necessity, even if more cases on more occasions are otherwise, but if more cases or more occasions are that way, we should contend that his present one is not like them, or not like them in the relevant way, or at least has some differentiating feature (*diaphora*). (*Rh*. II 25 1403^{a}6–10)

An enthymeme based on an induction is a putative deduction with a premise based on an induction. Dionysus is aiming at tyranny in demanding a bodyguard. Why should we believe that? Answer: Pisistratus aimed at tyranny in demanding one. Dionysus is relevantly like Pisistratus. Therefore, Dionysius is aiming at tyranny in demanding one. This can be refuted by presenting the case of X who demanded a bodyguard but did not try to establish a tyranny. If more favorable cases than just Pisistratus are presented, what we should do to refute the argument is establish a relevant lack of similarity between these cases and Dionysus, or some differentiating feature that provides grounds for thinking that inductively-supported claim that people who demand bodyguards aim at tyranny does not apply to him. What we do not have to do—but which we do have to do to refute a likelihood—is to show that it is not *likely* that Dionysius in demanding a bodyguard is aiming at tyranny. That, as we have seen, is much harder to do.

With the difference between signs and paradigms clear in our minds we can turn to our second question, which is that of the relationship between signs and likelihoods. And there is a text that seems to tell us the answer in no uncertain terms:

> A likelihood and a sign are not the same, but rather a likelihood is a premise that is a reputable belief. For what people know happens or does not happen for the most part, or is or is not for the most part, is a likelihood—for example, "people hate those they envy" or "people love those they sexually desire." A sign, on the other hand, is meant to be a demonstrative premise, whether a necessity or a reputable belief. (*APr*. II 27 70^{a}2–7)

What is difficult about the answer, though, is that it seems to treat signs as if they were proofs (necessary signs), whereas the *Rhetoric* is careful to distinguish the two. What it tells us, in other words, is just that proofs are not likelihoods. But we already knew that.

To some extent, then, we must go part way back to the drawing board. A likelihood is something that holds for the most part: the *Rhetoric* and the *Analytics* are united on that front. So ask yourself this: what sort of proposition holds for the most part? The answer is obvious: a universally quantified one, like the one we encountered about crabs. For it certainly cannot hold for the most part that *some* crabs have their right claw bigger than their left. Their right claw is either bigger than the left or it isn't. The same goes for any particular crab. With signs, by contrast, there are some that are related as particular to universal, as the fact that Socrates is wise and just is a sign that the wise are just. Therein lies the difference we were looking for between likelihoods and signs. A sign can be a particular proposition; a likelihood cannot. At the same time, though, a sign is not just one of a bunch of similar things in a rhetorical induction, or paradigm. For it is not just a contingent fact that Socrates is both wise and just, as it might be that he was married to Xanthippe, but something (putatively) more robust than that, namely, a particular instance of a likelihood, or gappy necessity.*

What rhetoric itself is, then, and what its distinctive starting-points—means of persuasion, enthymeme, topic, likelihood, sign, proof, and paradigm—are have now been, if not determined, at least discussed and explored. It is an appropriate moment, therefore, for a backward look.

The Shadow of Plato

The soul, whether divine or human, Socrates claims in the *Phaedrus*, is like "the natural union of a team of winged horses and their charioteer" (246a6–7). But whereas in a divine soul all three elements are "good and come from good stock," in a human soul the white horse (familiar from *Republic* IV as the honor-loving spirited part) is "beautiful and good, and of similar stock," while the black one (the *Republic*'s appetitive element) is "the opposite and of the opposite stock," so that "the driving in our case is necessarily difficult and troublesome" (246a7–b4). When spirit together with the charioteer (the *Republic*'s rational element, there too identified with what is truly human rather than bestial in us [588b10–589a4])

* Aristotle uses signs in support of claims of his own more than thirty times in the *Rhetoric*, always, it seems, on the supposition that the sign has this sort of character. See Index of Terms, s.v. Sign(s).

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