The work of Mikhail Bakhtin has been ambivalently appropriated for the rhetorical tradition, despite Bakhtin’s recurrent disparaging remarks about rhetoric. The range and power of his general theory of discourse have attracted rhetorical theorists to his work, even as the place of rhetoric in his work has put them on the defensive. His placement of rhetoric on the monologic side of his fundamental distinction between dialogic and monologic discourse has provoked Halasek (1998) to show that rhetoric is more dialogic than Bakhtin allows, Walzer (1997) and Murphy (2001) to reaffirm its essential monologism, and Dentith (1997) to deny the distinction between dialogic and monologic discourse altogether.

This debate has addressed itself to a relatively small number of passages in which Bakhtin makes explicit pronouncements about “rhetoric” rather than to his discourse theory as a whole, where issues of concern to rhetoric arise without being named as such. And it has also answered his charges against rhetoric by mobilizing some commonplace version of the art against them, without acknowledging the variety of “rhetorics” on offer in the rhetorical tradition or situating Bakhtin among their authoritative expositors. The debate has established Bakhtin’s pertinence to the rhetorical tradition, but it has not yet established his place within it or gauged the extent to which his admission to it might transform it. One inevitable and essential expositor of rhetoric in relation to whom Bakhtin’s measure must be taken is Aristotle.

I have suggested elsewhere that Bakhtin structures his work on Dostoevsky’s poetics against the background of Aristotle’s Poetics. His Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics is organized as a full-scale rearrangement of Aristotle’s hierarchy of parts of the tragedy – first plot, then character, thought, diction, and spectacle in that order. Bakhtin devotes chapters to developing the importance of the subordinated parts of character (“the hero”), thought (“the idea”), and diction (“discourse”). He displaces plot and plot-governed classical genres like tragedy with the multi-voiced, serio-comic, and open-ended genre of Menippean satire in which the person–idea unites
character and thought and in which dictions too are united with ideologies. His discourse theory gives primacy to the act of utterance itself, making the performative part of tragedy, spectacle, precede all others. Bakhtin does not merely deconstruct Aristotelian hierarchies by making marginal Aristotelian topics central; he articulates a world of artistic practices beyond the boundaries Aristotle established with the same thoroughness with which Aristotle settled the territory within those boundaries. Bakhtin brings into focus a “classical” tradition of anti-classical discursive practices and analyzes their principles, doubling the field covered by poetics instead of undermining its ground (Bialostosky 1989: 217).

Bakhtin's thoroughgoing rewriting of Aristotle's Poetics at the level of its organizing distinctions raises the question of whether Bakhtin might engage Aristotle's Rhetoric at the same level and expand and reconfigure the “province of rhetoric” as he does the domain of poetics. I shall argue here that he does. Bakhtin turns the hierarchy of parts in Aristotelian rhetoric on its head as he does that of poetics, and he synthesizes some parts of the art with others in ways that parallel his uniting of character with thought and thought with diction in his poetics. In his theory of discourse, he rehabilitates the most abjected part of Aristotle's rhetoric, delivery, and he subordinates Aristotle's most important part — invention — to arrangement, style, and delivery. He makes the parts of poetics that Aristotle refers to the arts of rhetoric and delivery — thought and intonation — crucial to discourse in general and therefore to both rhetoric and poetics, which consequently share constitutive parts in his system instead of the secondary parts in which they overlap in Aristotle's. To begin to think the implications of Bakhtin's overhaul of Aristotle's rhetoric will take us beyond defending some commonplace version of “rhetoric” against his deprecations to reimagining what rhetoric might be and how its parts might relate to one another in a theory of utterance rather than a theory of argument.

**Aristotle's Hypocrisy**

I have chosen this provocative section title to identify a crux at which Aristotle chooses to diminish, or refer elsewhere, matters of hupokrisis (usually translated as “delivery” or “elocution”), a concept that Bakhtin magnifies and repeatedly takes as a starting point for his accounts of discourse. The etymological matrix of this word is profoundly salient for both traditional rhetoric and for Bakhtin's dialogics, and I would like to explore it briefly before I turn to the passages in the Rhetoric and Poetics where Aristotle sets it aside and puts it down. According to the standard lexicon (Liddell 1889), Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric are the only Attic sources for the two meanings translated as “delivery,” one the delivery of the actor, the other that of the orator. In Ionic, however, the word and its correlative verb hupokrinomai have the dialogically central sense of “reply” or “answer.” Both noun and verb shade over into the meaning familiar from the English “hypocrisy,” that of playing a part, feigning, or
pretending. The *krisis* at the root of the word is the root of our “crisis,” and it carries the rhetorically central senses of choice, decision, judgment, and the related senses of trial or dispute and the issue of trials and disputes. The verb *krino* can mean “to question,” as *hupokrinomai* can mean “to answer,” making such paradigmatic dialogic interchange available along with the paradigmatic situation of rhetorical debate and decision in the same word history.

That the act of distinguishing or separating is yet another meaning for *krino* makes it dialectically salient as well, and reminds us of the dialectical work Aristotle undertakes to distinguish the discursive practices and arts of discourse that he takes up in his several treatises, and of the field of shared or overlapping meanings from which he has decided to separate those practices and arts. If he proceeds as if the domains of those practices and arts are already distinct so that he can refer topics to one rather than another, we can recall that at least some of the lines that separate those arts and practices from one another have been distinguished, separated, and established by his own decisions. We may reasonably wonder, for example, whether the architectonatic art of delivery or elocution was already there to be the receptacle of the matters Aristotle refers to it from poetics, or whether it comes into being by his fiat to receive matters for which he needs to find a place other than poetics.

The chapter of the *Poetics* in which Aristotle refers some matters to the art of delivery or elocution is also the chapter in which he refers a whole part of poetics to rhetoric. Chapter 19 is brief and the choices it makes are critical to articulating Aristotle’s views with Bakhtin’s, and for these reasons I quote Butcher’s translation in its entirety (Aristotle 1951: 69–71):

It remains to speak of Diction and Thought, the other parts of Tragedy having been already discussed. Concerning Thought, we may assume what is said in the Rhetoric, to which inquiry the subject more strictly belongs. Under Thought is included every effect which has to be produced by speech, the subdivisions being: proof and refutation; the excitation of the feelings, such as pity, fear, anger, and the like; the suggestion of importance or its opposite. Now, it is evident that the dramatic incidents must be treated from the same points of view as the dramatic speeches, when the object is to evoke the sense of pity, fear, importance, or probability. The only difference is that the incidents should speak for themselves without verbal exposition; while effects aimed at in speech should be produced by the speaker, and as a result of the speech. For what were the business of a speaker, if the Thought were revealed quite apart from what he says?

Next, as regards Diction. One branch of the inquiry treats of the Modes of Utterance. But this province of knowledge belongs to the art of Delivery and to the masters of that science. It includes, for instance, what is a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth. To know or not to know these things involves no serious censure upon the poet’s art. For who can admit the fault imputed to Homer by Protagoras – that in the words, “Sing, goddess, of the wrath,” he gives a command under the idea that he utters a prayer? For to tell some one to do a thing or not to do it is, he says, a command. We may, therefore, pass this over as an inquiry that belongs to another art, not to poetry.
The two matters touched upon here are aspects of speech or speaking, but Aristotle refers the first to rhetoric and the other to an “art of Delivery” that belongs in neither poetics nor rhetoric.

The speech that bespeaks “Thought” here seems to encompass more than what Aristotle first attributes to the category of “Thought,” when he earlier distinguishes it from the speech that bespeaks “Character” in chapter 6. There he restricts thought to the speech that “is required whenever a statement is proved, or it may be, a general truth enunciated,” excluding it from the speech that “reveals moral purpose, showing what kind of thing a man chooses or avoids” – the speech that reveals character (Aristotle 1951: 29). In chapter 19, however, speech that enacts proof and refutation is supplemented with speech that shows “the excitation of feelings,” and with speech that magnifies or minimizes importance. Evaluative speech, not just the relatively value-neutral speech of proof and the enunciation of maxims, here falls under “Thought,” even though this wider scope for thought-producing speech will make it more difficult to distinguish it from character-revealing speech. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how a thought-producing speech derived from the art of rhetoric, which is defined by its orientation to advocating what to choose and what to avoid, could be separated from ethos-revealing discourse and made purely to prove or disprove or state general principles. Aristotle might have better referred “Thought” thus restricted to dialectic instead of rhetoric; moreover, one would reasonably have expected that “Thought” encompassing proof and refutation and the excitation of feelings would also encompass the projection of ethos, completing its embodiment of the three types of proof Aristotle lists in the *Rhetoric*.

The distinction between character and thought as manifestations of speech would then be called into question by the referral of “Thought” to rhetoric, and the possibility of a theory of poetics that found thought and character united in diction or speech would emerge to challenge Aristotle’s subordinated sequence of character, thought, and diction. Bakhtin, as I have already shown, develops this theory of poetics in his book on Dostoevsky (Bakhtin 1984). What we can now see is that it is a poetics that posits rhetorical discourse in its conceptual, emotional, and ethical fullness as one object of poetic imitation. Such a poetics might even be said to take rhetorical discourse thus understood as paradigmatic of the impassioned defensive discourse revelatory of person–ideas that is the dominant discourse of Dostoevsky’s novels. If we take seriously Aristotle’s referral of the subject of thought in poetics to the inquiry of rhetoric, Bakhtin’s dialogic poetics is one of the places to which that referral may lead us.

The matters that Aristotle refers from poetics to the art of delivery or elocution (*hupokrisis*) will lead us to another Bakhtinian locus, but before we follow them there, let us first again set Aristotle’s account of this topic in *Poetics* XIX against what he says about it elsewhere, specifically in *Rhetoric* Book III, chapter 1. There, in the earliest extant account of delivery in the rhetorical tradition, Aristotle ambivalently acknowledges the power of this aspect of rhetoric and deprecates the influence of it. It is rare to see him take as many conflicting turns of evaluation as he does in the brief section in which he takes up this topic. In chapter 19 of the *Poetics* his deprecation of
its importance for poetics is accomplished in a dismissive rhetorical question, while his referral of the topic elsewhere is relatively neutral, but in *Rhetoric* III.1 (Aristotle 1991: 258–9) his tone vacillates: delivery “has the greatest force,” but its power to win victories in political contests is due to “the sad state of governments.” Consideration of it “seems a vulgar matter when rightly understood,” but one should pay attention to delivery, not because it is right but because it is necessary, since true justice seeks nothing more in a speech than neither to offend nor to entertain; for to contend by means of the facts themselves is just, with the result that everything except demonstration is incidental; but nevertheless, [delivery] has great power, as has been said, because of the corruption of the audience. The subject of expression, however, has some small necessary place in all teaching; for to speak in one way rather than another does make some difference in regard to clarity, though not a great difference; but all these things are forms of outward show intended to affect an audience. As a result, nobody teaches geometry this way.

Applying the standard first of forensic rhetoric, then of teaching, then of geometry teaching to all rhetoric, these gestures would retract not just attention to delivery but to everything beyond arguments from logos in the *Rhetoric*; indeed, the turn to geometry would retract all the probabilistic arguments that Aristotle has carefully developed for the kinds of questions rhetoric ordinarily addresses. He seems to be struggling here to name a rational discourse of sufficient power and purity to dismiss definitively the inescapable but apparently scandalous irrational force of delivery, which seems even more troubling in the province of rhetoric than in that of poetics.

His account of delivery in *Rhetoric* III.1 also reveals that the art of delivery to which he confidently referred the “Modes of Utterance” in the *Poetics* “has not yet been composed.” There has been some attention to it in matters of poetics, he says, but in rhetoric it is not there yet. It is interesting that Aristotle, who rarely holds back from being the first to investigate a subject or formulate the art of a practice, dismisses this one as too vulgar to be worthy of his attention. Nevertheless, he provides a brief outline of the art in *Rhetoric* III.1: “It is a matter of how the voice should be used in expressing each emotion, sometimes loud and sometimes soft and [sometimes] intermediate, and how the pitch accents [*tonoi*] should be entoned, whether as acute, or grave or circumflex, and what rhythms should be expressed in each case; for [those who study delivery] consider three things, and these are volume, change of pitch, [*harmania*], and rhythm.”

It is not immediately clear how this brief enumeration of the parts of the art of delivery is related to Aristotle’s brief referral to that art in *Poetics* XIX of inquiry into the modes of utterance, “which includes, for instance, what is a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer, and so forth.” Perhaps the difference between “Sing, goddess” as command and as prayer may be a matter of intonation, and the same expression may become quite distinct types of utterance depending on its intonation. Bakhtin and his close collaborator Voloshinov were fascinated by this fact, and recurred to it as a starting point for investigating the utterance, the elemental unit of speech communication. Anecdotes regarding the adverb “Well!”
(Voloshinov 1976), “a certain widely used obscenity” (Voloshinov 1973: 103), or the noun “joy” (Bakhtin 1986: 87) allow Voloshinov and Bakhtin to trace the evaluative relation of the utterance to its “immediate social situation” (Voloshinov 1973: 104) made evident in intonation. In the next section, I will show that what emerges from these discussions of the intoned utterance is an account of discourse in general that resembles nothing more than the Aristotelian rhetorical discourse to which intonation is an afterthought and a near irrelevancy. Bakhtin, starting from a topic Aristotle pushes to the margin, theorizes all discourse in ways that resemble Aristotle’s theorizing of rhetorical discourse, even as Bakhtin pushes rhetoric more narrowly conceived to the margins of his inquiry. But Bakhtin’s starting point in delivery also foregrounds aspects of the rhetorical utterance that Aristotle’s subject matter-centered account of rhetoric minimizes or overlooks.

### Bakhtin’s Rhetorical Theory

This section title, then, will be intoned to emphasize the third word in a way that points toward Bakhtin’s theory of discourse as having rhetorical qualities, before (in the next section) the title will emphasize the second word in a way that would make the reader expect to hear about Bakhtin’s theory of rhetoric as discourse.

Much that appears in Aristotle’s work as specific to rhetorical communication appears in Bakhtin as characteristic of all speech communication. This is not quite the same thing as “extending rhetoric’s gaze to every act of speaking and writing” (Bizzell and Herzberg 1990: 926); it is rather to see many characteristics usually attributed to rhetoric as in fact properties that belong to discourse in general. Aristotle and the Bakhtin School identify the same participants in the speech situation, and both determine genre by the role of the addressee. Aristotle writes in chapter 3: “a speech [situation] consists of three things: a speaker and a subject on which he speaks and someone addressed, and the objective of the speech relates to the last (I mean the hearer).” In “Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art,” Voloshinov writes, “Any locution actually said aloud or written down for intelligible communication is the product of the social interaction of three participants: the speaker (author), the listener (reader), and the topic (the who or what) of speech (the hero)” (Voloshinov 1976: 105). Elsewhere Voloshinov adds that “the dimensions and forms” of “the outwardly actualized utterance...are determined by the particular situation of the utterance and its audience” (Voloshinov 1973: 96). Aristotle identifies two possible roles for the hearer, judge, or spectator, and three genres of rhetoric corresponding to those roles: deliberative, epideictic, and forensic rhetoric. Bakhtin sees numerous roles for the hearer in an “inexhaustible” number of spheres of social communication that produce of a “boundless” number of speech genres (Bakhtin 1986: 60): “Each speech genre in each area of speech communication has its own typical conception of the addressee, and this defines it as a genre” (Bakhtin 1986: 95). These speech genres include all types of utterance, from the military command to flirtatious drawing room banter,
from the toast to the scientific treatise, from the greeting to the multi-volume novel, including the discursive genres characteristic of Aristotle’s public rhetorical forums. In addition, all the “Modes of Utterance” that Aristotle refers to the art of delivery in *Poetics* XIX (Aristotle 1951: 71) – “a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer” – are among Bakhtin’s list of primary speech genres in everyday discourse.

And even the discourse of everyday and intimate settings, organizational and artistic settings, indeed *all* discourse is, like Aristotle’s rhetorical discourse, situated and evaluative. Its functions resemble those of Aristotle’s epideictic and deliberative rhetoric. “Discourse,” Voloshinov writes, “sometimes ‘resolves the situation, bringing it to an evaluative conclusion . . . [M]ore often, behavioral utterances actively continue and develop a situation, adumbrate a plan for future action, and organize that action” (Voloshinov 1976: 100). Bakhtin does not attribute to all utterances the ends of the forensic and scientific genres that Aristotle emphasizes, the ones that putatively require only value-free attention to the facts and arguments to determine the case, because Bakhtin takes all utterances to be evaluative and addressed. “Even the so-called neutral and objective styles of exposition that concentrate maximally on subject matter, and, it would seem, are free from any consideration of the other still involve a certain conception of their addressee” (Bakhtin 1986: 98), he writes, and “No utterance can be put together without value judgment” (Voloshinov 1973: 105).

By making rhetoric a counterpart of dialectic, Aristotle makes the social participants, audience orientation, and evaluative work of rhetoric seem peculiar to rhetoric and even aberrant from the relatively impersonal and value-neutral perspective of dialectical argument among philosophers. But by making all discourse involve social participants, audiences, and evaluations, the Bakhtin School includes both rhetorical and dialectical discourse within a common understanding of discourse, in which each type of discourse defines its audience, genres, and evaluations according to its function in its sphere of communication. For the Bakhtin School, rhetorical discourse exemplifies unproblematically, even paradigmatically, the common social and evaluative features of all discourse, and it is dialectical and scientific discourse that attempt, unsuccessfully, to transcend those features.

Aristotle’s linking of rhetoric to dialectic also foregrounds rhetoric’s reliance upon reasoning. Aristotle’s account of the enthymeme or rhetorical syllogism identifies its departure from the fully elaborated and explicit syllogism of dialectic, and Aristotle devotes a large proportion of his treatise to cataloging the propositions that might be enthymematically invoked in arguments in the three rhetorical forums he focuses on. Again, the Bakhtin School generalizes this feature of rhetoric to all discourse. Voloshinov writes, “The situation enters into the utterance as an essential constitutive part of the structure of its import. Consequently, a behavioral utterance as a meaningful whole is composed of two parts: (1) the part realized or actualized in words and (2) the assumed part. On this basis, the behavioral utterance can be likened to an enthymeme” (Voloshinov 1976: 100). He goes on in a note to define the enthymeme
as “a form of syllogism one of whose premises is suppressed” and to conclude his discussion of the assumed part of the utterance with the claim “every utterance in the business of life is an objective social enthymeme” (Voloshinov 1976: 101). Every utterance, then, depends upon shared unstated premises and makes its point enthymematically from those premises.

Aristotle’s extensive elaboration of those premises in his long lists of the topoi upon which the three kinds of rhetoric draw, his explicit listing of what audiences for deliberative, epideictic, and forensic arguments might take for granted, reveals that his rhetoric presupposes a rhetor who does not necessarily belong to the community he is addressing and tacitly share its beliefs. The artistic rhetorician appears to be an outsider who can refer to anthropological accounts like Aristotle’s of the community he is addressing to understand what his auditors might believe. He can find grounds for argument elsewhere than in his own heart and mind – the thumos in which unstated enthymematic premises are lodged (Voloshinov 1976: 100). The Bakhtin School, on the other hand, begins its inquiry into the utterance from a situation in which two interlocutors share a common space, a common view, and common values, so that one can express their shared evaluation of their situation in an indignantly intoned adverb: “Well!” (Voloshinov 1976). The Bakhtin School’s discourse theory is in the first instance grounded in a model of native speakers’ use of their first language and their unanimous unconscious assimilation of their communities’ tones and values, and it moves from there to encompass sophisticated and controversial genres in which less is taken for granted.

Aristotle’s perspective in the Rhetoric is more like that of a foreign scholar trying to codify the beliefs and language of a community alien to him, a position that may explain Voloshinov’s parenthetical remark: “Aristotle is a typical philologist” (Voloshinov 1973: 71), since philologists, in his account, view all language as if it were a foreign language and approach it from the outside, making explicit and formal features that for native users would remain tacit. Another way to draw this contrast, this time in terms Aristotle uses, is to recall Aristotle’s remark (here in the Loeb translation): “the ignorant [are] more persuasive in the presence of crowds . . . for the educated use commonplaces and generalities, whereas the ignorant speak of what they know and of what more nearly concerns the audience” (Aristotle 1991: 289). The ignorant know what they know as native speakers know their language, and they can speak successfully to others like themselves with ease. For Aristotle, this success of the ignorant is clearly not to their credit, but it does lead him to advise his educated rhetor to adjust to his ignorant listeners and not to “argue from all possible opinions, but only from such as are definite and admitted, either by the judges or those whose judgment they approve” (Aristotle 1991: 289). Aristotle thus starts from the position of the learned and makes even the beliefs and practices of the ignorant something for the learned to learn about and simulate through artful effort, while the Bakhtin School’s discourse theory seeks continuity between the everyday discursive practices of the ignorant and the sophisticated practices of the learned, among which the art of rhetoric is one well developed practice.
Bakhtin’s Rhetorical Theory

Bakhtin proposes to consider rhetorical and literary genres “as specific types of utterances distinct from other types, but sharing with them a common verbal (language) nature” (Bakhtin 1986: 61). One of the earliest Bakhtin School texts, translated as both “Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry” and “Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art,” starts from the simplest of everyday utterances to discover the common verbal nature that such utterances share with poetic works. From that earliest Bakhtin School text to Bakhtin’s latest notes, there is a consistent and insistent positing of “the whole utterance as speech performance” (Medvedev/Bakhtin 1978: 132) as “the real unit of speech communication. For speech can exist in reality only in the form of concrete utterances of individual speaking people, speech subjects” (Bakhtin 1986: 71). This unit is bounded by the change of speaking subjects, shaped for the response of listeners or readers to whom it is addressed, and responsive to prior utterances on its topic in its sphere of communication. It takes its form as a definite speech genre, a “relatively stable typical form . . . of construction of the whole” (Bakhtin 1986: 78) with “relatively stable thematic, compositional, and stylistic” features and relatively stable “types of relations between the speaker and other participants in the speech communication” (Bakhtin 1986: 64). In the “utterance as speech performance,” those relations among participants are always expressed through intonation, which is always “oriented . . . with respect to the listener as ally or witness and with respect to the object of the utterance as the third, living participant whom the intonation scolds or caresses, denigrates or magnifies” (Voloshinov 1976: 104–5) and “toward others’ utterances” regarding the object (Bakhtin 1986: 92). Intonation, “the verbal factor of greatest sensitivity, elasticity, and freedom” expresses “a living, forceful relation with the external world and with the social milieu—enemies, friends, allies” (Voloshinov 1976: 104–5). In particular, “it is in intonation above all that the speaker comes into contact with the listener or listeners” (Voloshinov 1976: 102). Intonation is a feature of all viva voce discourse, and it is inferred in written discourse from choices of words, the manner of unfolding, and the rhythm of the written work.

There is no “Discourse in Life and Discourse in Rhetoric” in the Bakhtin School corpus, but we may begin to construct one from this account of the utterance and from explicit remarks on rhetoric in a number of texts. Bakhtin (1986: 61) recognizes that

Rhetorical genres have been studied since antiquity (and not much has been added in subsequent epochs to classical theory). At that time more attention was already being devoted to the verbal nature of these genres as utterances: for example, to such aspects as the relation to the listener and his influence on the utterance, the specific verbal finalization of the utterance (as distinct from its completeness of thought), and so forth. But here, too, [as in the classical study of literary genres], the specific features of rhetorical genres (judicial, political) still overshadowed their general linguistic nature.
This could certainly be said of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, which defines rhetoric not primarily as an art of utterance in special spheres of communication but as an art of finding arguments for speeches addressed to judicial, political, and ceremonial occasions. For Aristotle, it is regrettably necessary, after treating these central questions, to pay some attention to verbal matters of delivery, style, and arrangement (I think this last is what Bakhtin means by “the specific verbal finalization of the utterance”). Aristotle concentrates his attention on enriching what *might* be said in cases of these kinds, whereas Bakhtin’s theory of utterance focuses on the saying itself and the types of saying characteristic of various spheres of social communication.

A collection of relevant premises and lines of argument is not an utterance any more than a collection of possible grammatical forms is an utterance. An utterance must present its arguments in a determinate order with or without repetition, it must present them in certain words that exclude other words, and it must present them in a definite tone that bespeaks the speaker’s relation to listener, topic, and precedent utterances. All of these features of the utterance have great rhetorical salience, as Aristotle acknowledges at the outset of Book III: “it is not enough to have a supply of things to say, but it is also necessary to say it in the right way, and this contributes toward the speech seeming to have a certain quality” (Aristotle 1991: 217).

The tone of delivery is not just barely relevant to “clarity,” as Aristotle grudgingly allows (Aristotle 1991: 219). Any argument can be intoned to represent the topic in a way that indicates a speaker’s ironic reversal of its apparent semantic force (“And Brutus is an honorable man”). An argument’s tone can insult or alienate listeners or produce conviction and identification without or despite explicit argument, and it can indicate speakers’ membership in the community they address or expose their foreignness. It is thus critical to the projection of the good will that is essential to an effective ethos. Tone is also essential to the arousal of emotions, for emotions depend upon impressions of the hierarchical social relations and degrees of intimacy among speaker, listener, and hero – impressions that are reflected in and projected by the tone of the utterance (see Voloshinov 1976: 110–12). It can show respect toward precedent speakers and opponents or it can reveal contempt or distrust toward them, rhetorically modifying the “inartistic” arguments made available through the testimony of witnesses as well as affecting the audience’s judgment of rhetorical antagonists. Tone, indeed, *is* an argument, a minimal enthymeme in which the intoned expression calls up the unstated premises of the situation and moves the listener to share the speaker’s evaluation of the subject in question (see chapter 17, this volume). A rhetorical theorist of philosophic disposition may be scandalized by such an argument, wanting explicit reasons to be declared and made available for critical examination, but auditors in a rhetorical situation will often identify aliens to their community precisely by their stating what should go without saying and will recognize compatriots by their taking just the right things for granted.

In “Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art,” Voloshinov identifies arrangement and style – “the manner of the unfolding” and the “evaluative impetus of the epithet or
metaphor” – along with the rhythm (Voloshinov 1976: 108) as aspects of the form of the utterance that contribute to the evaluation of content. They play, in effect, the same role as tone and make it possible for written utterances to convey an analogue of the tone conveyed in oral delivery. This should be clear enough in the aspect of style concerned with choice of words. The rhetor, like Voloshinov’s poet, “selects words not from the dictionary but from the context of life where words have been steeped in and become permeated with value judgments. Thus he selects the value judgments associated with words and does so, moreover, from the standpoint of the incarnated bearers of those value judgments” (Voloshinov 1976: 107). These selections evaluate the speaker’s relation to the audience, as stylistic choices reflect the relative status and degree of familiarity in that relation, and the speaker’s relation to the topic or hero. Again, clarity is not the only thing at stake in these choices.

Aristotle himself in the *Rhetoric* recognizes not only clarity but also appropriateness as virtues of style, but his initial distinction in appropriateness comes from the *Poetics*, though he holds that poetic style is not appropriate to speeches. He distinguishes between flat style and ornamented or unfamiliar style that “makes language seem more elevated. His advice on this head is surprising: “To deviate [from prevailing usage] makes language seem more elevated; for people feel the same in regard to lexis as they do in regard to strangers compared with citizens. As a result, one should make the language unfamiliar, for people are admirers of what is far off, and what is marvelous is sweet” (Aristotle 1991: 221). The Loeb translation makes the point more strikingly but backs off from it in a footnote: “In this respect men feel the same in regard to style as in regard to foreigners and fellow-citizens. Wherefore we should give our language a ‘foreign air’: for men admire what is remote, and what excites admiration is pleasant.” The note goes on, “‘Foreign’ does not really convey the idea, which is rather that of something opposed to the ‘home-like,’ – out-of-the-way, as if from ‘abroad.’ Jebb suggests ‘distinctive’” (Aristotle 1926: 351). The uneasiness of the translator here calls attention to the oddity of the advice. It seems out of place at least for deliberative occasions, in which the speaker’s credentials as fellow citizen would seem to be crucial and stylistic consanguinity most appropriate. Perhaps in epideictic occasions – those closest to the poetic – where admiration of the speaker is sometimes paramount, the advice might hold.

Aristotle’s distinction between citizen’s and stranger’s style marks a socially constituted stylistic line of the sort the Bakhtin School draws, but it is only one among many such distinctions grounded in social distinctions that carry with them different styles. Differences of social class, gender, profession, organizational role, and family relation within a given community all affect stylistic choices in the same way as differences between members and non-members of the community. Aristotle recognizes several additional distinctions of this kind in his elaboration of the topic of appropriateness in III.7. Differences of age, gender, citizenship, or those between “a rustic and an educated person” have stylistic implications that he links to rhetorical ethos.

The same chapter describes style in terms of tone in the expression of emotion:
Emotion is expressed if the style, in the case of insolence (*hybris*), is that of the angry man; in the case of impious or shameful things, if it is that of one who is indignant and reluctant even to say the words; in the case of admirable things, [if they are spoken] respectfully; but if [the things] are pitiable, [if they are spoken] in a submissive manner; and similarly in other cases. (Aristotle 1991: 235)

Aristotle says he is distinguishing styles but seems to be describing tones, expressed evaluative relations between speaker and topic. The question of what stylistic choices would express these several tones remains open, but the close connection between style and tone is evident here.

Though it is easy to see the evaluative and therefore tonal implications of style, it is more difficult to see those implications of the “manner of unfolding” or arrangement. Traditional accounts of this topic enumerate the sequence of parts of the oration, usually based on the standardized forensic speech, sometimes subdivided and elaborated. Aristotle has little patience with the handbooks that standardize and multiply parts but fail to distinguish their function, and he sees only two essential functional parts, stating the subject and demonstrating it. Nevertheless, he goes on to show how other parts, the proem, narration, interrogation, and epilogue, function differently in each of his three rhetorical genres. His nuanced account deserves more attention than it has received from commentators on the *Rhetoric*, who, like recent rhetorical theorists, ignore arrangement altogether (see Fahnestock 1996, 2001).

Bakhtin and Voloshinov do not devote extensive attention to arrangement either, but their placement of rhetoric as a type of utterance opens several new ways of thinking about the topic. First of all, it helps us recognize the “parts” of the utterance as primary speech genres incorporated into the more extended and elaborate secondary genres of rhetorical argument. Greeting, introducing, narrating, declaring, and giving reasons are elementary discursive moves familiar from everyday conversation that take a regular place in rhetorical utterances. They are the building blocks of “compositional structure” that Bakhtin identifies as the most important feature of genre recognition (Bakhtin 1986: 60).

The selection and sequence of discursive moves in an utterance, rhetorical or otherwise, will depend upon the sorts of utterances that have preceded it and the sphere of communication in which it takes place. How the given case is given or what is given in it will enable and constrain how a rhetorical utterance responds to it. Aristotle is sensitive to this principle, recognizing that the accused and the accuser will bring in different matters at different times in a forensic utterance or that everyone will already know what the issue is in a deliberative utterance so that no preliminaries may be necessary. Indeed, it may not be necessary even to state the subject, Aristotle’s first essential part of the oration, if all know the subject, or to state one’s position on the subject, if one takes the podium as the accuser, the defender, the nominator, or the celebrator. What we call the question in some formal rhetorical settings is more than metaphorically a question; it is an institutional or socially constrained asking that invites certain kinds of answers and rules out others. The
giving of a case, however institutionally and formally, is a move in a dialogue to which the rhetorical utterance called for is a reply.

Highly standardized and formalized situations like that of the judicial speech will be most subject to the standardization of the number and sequence of parts of an utterance addressing it. This is why the forensic speech has provided the standard account of the parts of the oration that Aristotle complicates by considering the possible function of those parts in deliberative and epideictic situations. Less formalized situations may open the way for different sequencing or elaboration of parts. The utterance that has to create its situation instead of taking it as given will be much more elaborate in its preliminaries than the one that can take its given situation for granted and address it. This difference is especially crucial to the difference between *viva voce* utterances and written ones.

In addition to the utterances that give cases, the utterances of other participants in the rhetorical situation, opponents — judges, the accused, the celebrated, those who have evaluated the hero or the situation previously — are also provocations and constraints on the types of subordinate utterances that will appear in an oration and the order in which they will appear. Aristotle, too, recognizes that the orator who comes second has a different situation to respond to than the one who comes first and may organize the "parts" of the response accordingly. And since elaborate secondary speech genres like rhetorical addresses are composed of simpler primary genres, another shaping feature of the number and sequence of parts of an utterance will be other parts of that utterance itself. Internalized questions will call ordinarily for internalized answers, unless those answers can be presupposed, making the questions rhetorical, and quotations will enable interpretations or refutations, unless they can be assumed to "speak for themselves." Claims, as Aristotle recognizes, will call for demonstrations, unless, of course, they are restating what everyone knows, and digressions will need to be followed by returns to the main point, at least if the matter at hand is a serious one.

Arrangement is thus dialogically shaped and constrained, externally and internally. It is productive of tone when, like tropes and figures, it calls attention to itself by violating established expectations or by making noticeable patterns beyond what is minimally called for. Questions or exclamations or declarations can appear out of standard sequence or interrupt familiar patterns or repeat themselves. Turns away from the subject toward the speaker or the audience or the utterances of others or the hero — what have come to be called figures of thought — call attention to evaluations of all these parties to the discourse and stand out against the backdrop of the subject-centered decorum of serious genres. Speakers’ dwelling upon themselves or worrying their relations to their listeners instead of getting to the point are matters of disposition that create tone. Expected parts of standard generic arrangements can be deferred, hurried, omitted, or expanded disproportionately. Delaying the introduction of expected considerations can give the impression of their evaluative importance or of their inconveniency to the case. Starting with things, returning to them, delaying them, repeating them, are all indices of evaluation that provoke us to make inferences.
of tone. Even sticking to a standard pattern for standard purposes is a sign of serious and businesslike tone, just as Shandean deferral of the expected point is a sign of comic intent.

**Utterances and Arguments**

Rhetorical utterances, then, like utterances in general, deliver evaluations of their subjects and enact identifications with their listeners through *viva voce* intonation and through written signs of tone in style and arrangement. They are differentiated from other utterances by their public sphere of communication and their institutionalized occasions, which have stabilized genres of deliberation, adjudication, and celebration. Those genres call upon relatively stable lines of argument, a range of styles, and resources of arrangement suited to the several genres, some standardized, others open to expressive choice. Aristotelian rhetoric gives first and most extensive attention to the lines of argument available for those institutionalized occasions; Bakhtin’s rhetoric attends to the signs of intonation in the enacted utterance that bespeak the speaker’s or writer’s evaluation of subject and relation to audience.

The two rhetorics are complementary, but I believe that Bakhtin’s rhetoric is functionally prior to Aristotle’s and ultimately governs it. There can be persuasion without argument, grounded in shared evaluation expressed through intonation, and the selection and disposition of arguments in rhetorical utterances must be ruled by their provocations and their anticipations of response, not by their availability alone. Rhetors possessed of a storehouse of available means of persuasion like the one Aristotle compiles will lack means of choosing and ordering them unless they can respond to the questions posed to them and select among those means with knowledge of what their auditors already know, believe, and hold dear. They cannot decide what to say just by knowing what might be said; they must also know what has just been said by others and what goes without saying for their audience. Their ethos and their ability to move their auditors’ or readers’ emotions will be as dependent on their knowing to whom and after whom they are speaking as their choice of arguments on the subject at hand. Without attention to the aspects of rhetorical utterance that Bakhtin emphasizes, Aristotelian rhetors would risk failure as pedants who bring too many arguments to bear or as outsiders who bring the wrong ones. Their audiences would distrust them as the proverbial pointy headed intellectuals or not laugh at their jokes or be moved by their sentiments. Entechnic argument is no substitute for enthymematic utterance that shares the unspoken beliefs and evaluations of those it aims to persuade and delivers that unspoken understanding through persuasive intonation.

**References**


**Further Reading**


