Oratorical Stylistics according to Hermogenes of Tarsus

APOSTOLOS N. STAVELAS

Academy of Athens,

Research Centre for Greek Philosophy

14 Anagnostopoulou Street

106 73 Athens, Greece

stavelas@academyofathens.gr

ABSTRACT

Hermogenes of Tarsus (2nd century A.D.) is considered to be one of the most prominent figures of the theory of rhetoric, because of the categories, types or canons of literary style he introduced in the literary critique of oratorical texts. In the third book of his treatise *On the Art of Rhetoric*, bearing the title *On the Ideas*, he reconstructed the threefold arrangement of oratorical style (high, middle, low) developed previously during the Roman era. The seven-fold clarification of style he introduced directly engaged his theory to the philosophy of the Neo-Platonists. The types of oratorical style he proposed could be regarded as *aesthetic functions*, since they suggest both the function of processing thoughts, namely the *significata* concealed within the reason, and the meta-linguistic function, in the sense of reasoned speech employed in commenting on speech acts. In this sense, *On the Ideas* is a study not of the oratorical style –something equivalent to a survey on personal patterns of modifying the oratorical language, a subject formulated by the preceding rhetoricians under the title *Peri Characteron* – but a survey of oratorical *stylistics*, namely, a study of the systematic relations and strategies of oratorical deliverance.*

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— Hermogenes of Tarsus lived during the 2nd century A.D. He is considered to be one of the most prominent figures of the theory of rhetoric, because of the categories, types or canons of literary style he introduced in the literary critique of oratorical texts. The third book of his treatise *On the Art of Rhetoric*, bearing the title *On the Ideas*,¹ is a work quite distinct from any other reference book on oratory, as it proposes an advanced categorization of oratorical style. In this book he reconstructed the threefold arrangement of oratorical style (high, middle, low) developed previously during the Roman era. The categories he suggested derived from the Ciceronian idea of the perfect orator, the forerunner of which was Plato's theory of forms. Additionally, as the aim of

his book *On the Ideas* was an inquiry upon the essential nature of style, the seven-fold clarification of style he introduced directly engaged his theory to the philosophy of the Neo-Platonists. Within this framework of Neo-Platonic thought, his treatise proved mostly influential during the times of late Antiquity and during the Byzantine era; Sopater,² Troilos,³ Phoebammon,⁴ and many other authors wrote commentary works on his treatise, which influenced oratorical theory up to the 18th century, both in the printed and in the manuscript tradition.⁵

² Sopater 1833.

³ Troilos 1834.

⁴ Phoebammon 1931.

⁵ On the influence of Hermogenes' theory upon the Byzantine rhetoric, cf. Kustas 1970, pp. 55-73; Kustas 1973; Sevcenko 1981; Walker 2001. For a contemporary appreciation of Hermogenes' contribution to the theory of oratorical style, cf. Kennedy 1994; Hagedorn 1964; Lindberg

¹ All the references in this paper are assigned to the modern edition of the text, in Rabe 1913, pp. 213-413.

Seven fundamental categories of style (ιδέαι) subsist, according to Hermogenes, in the delivery and the critical study of oratorical speech, aiming at the effectiveness (δύναμις) of it: (a) *clarity*, (b) *magnitude*, (c) *beauty*, (d) *rapidity*, (e) *character*, (f) *truth*, and (g) *expertness*. From these categories, *clarity*, *magnitude* and *character* derive from, or are further resolved into sets, while *beauty*, *rapidity*, *truth* and *expertness* are considered to be self-sufficient. Clarity is resolved into the types of *clear* and *well-determined* speech; *magnitude* is resolved into *decency*, *vehemence*, *vigour*, *roughness*, *splendor* and the *encompassing* type of speech; *character* is resolved into *gravity*, *acrimony*, *mildness*, *leniency* and *naivety*. By reason of this, the histogram of the seven main categories of style becomes a chart of up to seventeenth different classes of oratorical style (1st diagram): (a) *clarity* (σαφήνεια) analyzed in (a¹) *clear speech* (καθαρότης) and (a²) *well-determined speech* (εὐκρίνεια), (b) *magnitude* (μέγεθος) analyzed in (b¹) *decency* (σεμνότης), (b²) *vehemence* (σφοδρότης), (b³) *vigour* (ἀκμή), (b⁴) *roughness* (τραχύτης), (b⁵) *splendor* (λαμπρότης), (b⁶) *encompassing* (περιβολή), (c) *character* (ἥθος) analyzed in (c¹) *gravity* (βαρύτης),

(c²) *acrimony* (δριμύτης), (c³) *mildness* (γλυκύτης), (c⁴) *leniency* (ἐπιεικία) and (c⁵) *naivety* (ἀφέλεια), (d) *beauty* (κάλλος), (e) *rapidity* (γοργότης), (f) *truth* (ἀλήθεια), (g) *expertness* (δεινότης). At the same time, up to eight parameters (ιδιότητες) subsist for each one of the above categories and subcategories (2nd diagram): (i) *notion* (ἔννοια), (ii) *method* (μέθοδος), (iii) *figure* (σχῆμα), (iv) *convention* (συνθήκη), (v) *diction* (λέξις), (vi) *cadence* (ἀνάπαισις), (vii) *clause* (κῶλον), and (viii) *composition* (σύνθεσις).

In this categorization of oratorical style, there are two things that need to be examined: one is the nature of the categories and sub-sets of style, and the other refers to the organization of the parameters of these categories and sets. As for the first subject in question in the Hermogenic text and in relation to the diverse function of the above categories, it is appropriate to acknowledge: (a) that beauty, rapidity, truth and expertness are self-determined and self-substantiated types; (b) that clarity and magnitude seem to stand rather as comprehensive essential natures of their resolved types, and (c) that the resolved categories, like those of clear and well-determined speech, are selfsubstantiated, but not utterly self-determinants, since in the arrangement of style they seem to act rather as differentiated material forms of expression, by the application of which clarity or magnitude may be asserted and determined in speech.

This leads us to the conclusion that in the Hermogenic system we deal with

1977. On the influence of the text *On Ideas* upon the oratorical theory from the Renaissance and thereafter, cf. Peterson 1970; Conley 1994; Wilson 1943. On the influence of Hermogenes' theory of ideas to early modern Greek thought, cf. Athanasios 1795, pp. 397 and thereafter. On modern interpretations of Hermogenes' text, cf. Wooten 1987; Patillon 1988; Rutherford 1992.

two different types of stylistic formation: (a) the self-determinating type of beauty, rapidity and truth (in respect of this, Hermogenes calls only the singular categories as genus,¹ and not all seven), and (b) the representational or referential type, namely the type of relation between clarity on the one hand and clear and well-determined speech on the other. For Hermogenes, all seven categories are considered prone to be conceived as of an elementary nature (οἰονεῖ στοιχεῖα), as they subsist during either the arrangement or the delivery of speech “as if they were the anew *out of which* elements of it”.² This statement is probably inferred rather as a simile, than a depiction of a reality. Literally, what Hermogenes means is that the nature of all seven categories is not genuinely, but quasi elementary.

Elementary (στοιχειώδης) nature should unquestionably be attributed only to the resolved sets of style, and in an extended way, to the self-determined ones. Hermogenes states additionally, that non-resolvable categories blend not with their resolvable associates directly, but with employing their resolved subtypes³. The aim of Hermogenes at this point is to differentiate between the three different types of categories: the resolved, the resolvable and the non-resolvable. Resolvable and non-resolvable categories are classified

together in the Hermogenic text as the seven categories of style;⁴ the true reason for this is that both are of a formal character. But this formal character is different for each case: clarity and magnitude constitute absolutely intimate and theoretical entities, while the formal model of rapidity, truth, beauty and expertness is material. On philosophical terms, the resolvable categories of clarity and magnitude should be accordingly identified as *artificial forms* of style; rapidity, truth, beauty and expertness should be conceived as *material forms* of it, while the clear, the well-determined, vigour naivety and the rest resolved types are purely *material elements* of style. Such a differentiation may be in accordance with the facts that:

(a) resolvable and non-resolvable types of style share a formal character;

(b) this character may be termed as artificial and material in their respective cases;

(c) both resolved and non-resolvable types of style share a material character, and

(d) this material character may be termed as being of a formal quality in the case of the non-resolvable, and of an elementary nature in the case of the resolved types of style.

As for the parameters of style, these are stated by Hermogenes⁵ in a straightforward aligned order: notion, method, figure, convention, diction, cadence, clause and composition. If we are to focus on their contribution to

1 The self-sufficient categories while “constituted on their own and through themselves”, in their blending with the other ideas of style “they participate not as simple ideas or species of them, but as genus of ideas”, Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 114.

2 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 275.

3 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 115.

4 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 105 and thereafter.

5 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 125.

the different categories of style, we see that their activity, namely the way they coalesce with the categories, varies from case to case, and that the congruence of one with the other is different in every category, not only in terms of its constituting characteristics, but mainly in terms of the dynamic manner in which they are combined. For example, if we are to compare the diagrams of the clear and the well-determined speech, we see that well-determined speech is primarily dealt with as a methodological issue, while the constitution of clear speech is mainly a matter of the notions involved (3rd diagram). Thus we may boost our analysis with the following observations:

(a) the performance of the parameters is not actually in the form of juxtaposition;

(b) their relation with the category they itemize in each case is not of the type relating something 'included' to its 'inclusive' state, and

(c) their interrelation progresses in the form of a dynamic complexity, different for each category, (1st diagram).

If we are to further analyze this dynamic employment of the parameters and try to form a conclusive schema of them, we are lead in classifying them into three major groups: one notional, concerned with the notions conceived, one methodological, and one depicting the style of discourse as enunciated, identified as the convention of diction. From them, method becomes actualized in two forms, the method of thought, contributing to speech its figures of

thought, and the method of diction, providing it with its figures of diction. From these two types, figures of thought act as the intermediate link between the methodological and the notional species of the parameters, while figures of diction act as a link between the methodological and the enunciated part of style and speech.

According to Hermogenes, two of the parameters of style are considered as essential in every speech: notion, namely the conceptual core of the content of a speech, and method, namely the manner in which both the intellectual and the settled as expressed content of a speech are arranged. Figure, clause, composition (namely, the manner in which the simplest parts of a clause are composed) and cadence, are ordered as properties or parameters of diction, while composition and cadence, conceived rather as tropes, constitute in the same time the *rhythm* of the oratorical delivery. This differentiation between parameters themselves and their properties leads us to admit that parameters progress actually on three different levels, which we may call parametrical levels: one practical and explicit, one mediating methodological, and one rather general and comprehensive. Thus,

(a) notion, method and convention constitute the more general state or sense of a specific style;

(b) method of thought, method of diction and diction as a whole formulate the special character of a style, and

(c) figures of thought, figures of diction, clause and rhythm (or

composition plus the cadence) constitute the particular expressed forms of a specific style.

These parametrical levels are actually constituent stylistic realizations of the procession leading from the particular style to the special and the general state of speech; and this, of course, works also the other way round: namely, in a descending order from the general to the particular.

Let us proceed now in investigating the puzzling term *idea*. In the Hermogenic text, *idea* is termed indifferently either the specific stylistic model of wording an established rhetorician follows (i.e. the *Platonic* or the *Demosthenic idea* of speech),¹ or the resolved forms and types of the oratorical style as stated above.² When referred to the style of Demosthenic oratory, Hermogenes notes: "... [Demosthenes] did not use one idea more than another, but portionally he employed [every] one, employing rather a special idea, that of encompassing, than a single one, [...] since this is rather a trivial portion of an idea than a special idea".³ Elsewhere in the Hermogenic text the awareness of ideas is substantiated as cognizance of their developing progress, an awareness of "the place *in what* and the manner *in which* they become formulated".⁴ This is rather a vague and technically imprecise statement, on which Syrianus the

Athenian established his perception that the creation of ideas resulted from the formation of particular oratorical *topoi*.⁵ Elsewhere in the Hermogenic text,⁶ it is stated that the critical analysis of an approved style of oratorical delivery includes: (a) the inquiry on *whence* and *of which* a style is constituted; (b) the inquiry on what kind a style is and by what means it is of a specific kind, namely the constituent ideas of style and the mode *in which* they coincide with each other; (c) the determination not just sufficiently but precisely of the elements and principles partaking of an idea of style, and (d) the determination of the modes in which the combination of these ideas creates the basic types of oratorical statement (poetic, epideictic, etc.).

It is apparent that the above are stated in reference to the Aristotle's causal determination of a concept: the critical conduct of an oratorical style may be thus respectively determined: (a) in relation with its afar off and its adjoining efficient subject; (b) as a special quality; (c) in relation with its afar off and its adjoining material subject, and (d) in relation with its final cause, which coincides with the type of the formation produced. Commenting on the above, Syrianus notes: "*whence* means the species of rhetoric out of which the style is advanced; *of which* means which ideas are mingling with some other, while the *kind* of ideas may be moral, practical or indifferent".⁷

1 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 37-38.

2 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 87.

3 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 96-119.

4 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 3.

5 Rabe 1892, v. I., 23,20, 57,16, 93,4.

6 Rabe 1913, 1, 1, 49-54.

7 Rabe 1892, 9, 26-10,2.

Syrianus determines the entire framework of categories in relation to the differentiation between the divisibility and the non-divisibility of the major categories of style,¹ an exceptional observation in comparison with those made by the rest Greek commentators of the Hermogenic text, and close to the dynamic approach we previously attempted. The condition of differentiating between divisible and non-divisible ideas corresponds to the Hermogenic differentiation between subordinate and subsequent ideas; but such a depiction contrasts the formative aptitude of the resolved ideas. Additionally, Syrianus identifies the Hermogenic term *part* (μέρος) with the eight parameters of style;² according to him, “an idea is a quality of speech appropriate to the subject persons and objects in relation to the *notion*, the *diction*, and the harmonious interlace of the whole;³ [...] *species* is different from *idea* in the same way *genus* differs from *species*, and *whole* from *part*; since *species* is inclusive of *ideas*, and *ideas* are elevated under the *species*, as it is impossible to constitute a judicial, an epideictic, or a deliberative species of oratory without mixing more than one idea”.⁴

Syrianus points out the coalescence in the Hermogenic text between the terms *idea* and *species* and considers this to be a cause of confusion.⁵ In the same

mood, an anonymous commentator of the *Peri Ideon* states: “we admit of meaning attributed to names either as pertaining to the formation of opinion or according to scientific knowledge”.⁶ In this wording “pertaining to the formation of opinion” is constituted upon the necessity and utility of our awareness of ideas, while the *scientific* approach is associated with the manifestation of objectives and the arrangement of ideas within their subsequent categories (e.g. *clarity*). What we view here is another example of confusion caused by the coalescence between the terms *idea* and *species*.

This complication results in the texts from the coalesce between the terms *genus* and *species*: oratorical speech, either when resolving one of its given structures, or when combining one from the beginning, should yield to a complete technical government; because of this, it must be delivered in a form, the rigidity of which would be quite prevalent upon the unrestrained rudiments of poetic expression. Moreover, the distinction between that which is subjected to *opinion* and that which is termed as *scientific*, and, even more, the cooperation between them, reflects the difference and, respectively, the harmony of the *ideas* conceived as empirically traceable and most likely legitimate *characters*⁷, as also their conception as undoubtedly established

1 Rabe 1892, 14, 6.

2 Rabe 1892, 14, 11.

3 Rabe 1892, 2, 16-19.

4 Rabe 1892, 2, 19-3.3.

5 Rabe 1892, 7, 15.

6 Walz 1834, pp. 862, 19-24.

7 I refer here to the well-known type of treatises on oratorical theory, bearing the title *On the Characters*; cf. Phoebammon 1931, 385,17, 386,16, 388,2. Johannes Siceliota 1931, p. 405,3; 405, 14.

objects of knowledge, in the manner in which Isocrates admitted of oratory as being a science and an issue concerning mainly the philosophers.¹ The pattern of the objectives set by the Hermogenic text, with the reversal between pertinence and targets' arrangement in the role of the factor establishing the necessity for our awareness of ideas, leads to the conception of *idea* and *species* as issues found in a state of analogy. In their Hermogenic layout, *ideas* seem semantically uncertain – something ascribed to the deficiencies of the technical orderliness of oratory Hermogenes attempted. Of course, this is not bizarre, if we consider that *stylistics* resists any attempt to become scientifically scrutinized;² nevertheless, we cannot expect Hermogenes to induce his classification of style into a structural type of charts.

The book *On the Ideas* is a work, which can be studied in relation not only to the traditional oratorical theory, but also within the framework of *descriptive stylistics*, as it accommodates the *functional* influence of an oratorical work to its reader, in the sense of employing its apparatus as commissioned to carry out a task. If the *character* of the Demosthenic style is the physically detectable substance of signs when delivered in the form of a speech, the comprehensive charts of style, compiled by the entirety of the examples set in the Hermogenic

text, consist the abstract part of the semantic analysis.

An attempt to give a structural interpretation of the Hermogenic text may further advance the clarification of the term *idea*. On structuralistic grounds, the Hermogenic *synthesis* corresponds to a *syntax* of oratorical *modules*; it embodies syntax, but it does this within the framework of the poetic residues which were inherited to oratory through the practice of *imitation* (μίμησις). The references of Hermogenes to the semantic type of imitation are actually evidences of the semantic coalescence between the *On the Ideas* and the other treatises on rhetoric theory, as also of its incorporation within the arts. The poetic-artistic derivation of the imitative model is nevertheless feeble, something favoring the distinction between the *referential-scientific* and the *poetic function* of speech, where the last one is a phenomenological dimension and thus here a shortcoming of the functional effectiveness of oratorical delivery. But on the other hand, the anti-scientific dimension introduced by the imitative model of speech is amplified by the pure phenomenological implementation of the category of *truth* as *quasi credibility*. The implementation by Hermogenes of *true reason* as a reason likely to be true, as an expression precisely intended to be imprecise, coincides of course with the literary hypostasis of rhetoric and its activation within the frameworks of social life. The oratorical engagement of reason obliges Hermogenes to consider *truth* not as the conceptual tool of oratorical delivery of reason

1 Sextus Empiricus. *Contra mathematicos*, II, 62,5-63,1.

2 Mounin 1984, p. 154.

but as a methodological problem: the subject matter of oratory does not involve true reason, but reason which is likely to be true. Moreover, the feebleness of the mannerism disclosed by the Hermogenic typology of style is traceable in the fact that the *creative imagination* and the *originality* of the artist-orator are excluded from the instruction in oratorical delivery, something coordinating with the conventional character of the semantic perspective of the work. However, the question entailed by this, on psychoanalytic terms, is traced in the contrariety, within the limits of oratorical theory, between the *extraordinary* Demosthenic *character* and the *criterion of reality* set by the diagrams of the Hermogenic stylistic parameters and properties.

If we are to accept the depiction of the Hermogenic *ideas* as *modules* and *levels of style*, we admit of a notional character, common between the traditional grammatical-linguistic and the Hermogenic model, which is identified with the *universal* realm of the traditional model, in the sense in which Jespersen defines universals as applicable in every language.¹ The Hermogenic perception of oratorical style may be termed structuralistic, especially if we take into consideration the conceivment of the resolved, or submitted, ideas as *vis-a-vis* elements, and the deliberate relativism or difficulty with which Hermogenes attempted to define the nature of relations between the two levels of ideas: *clarity* and the

rest ideas of the overriding realm are actually *totalities* of elements yielding to specific principles of composition, neither by accident, nor lastingly and permanently, but within the potential framework of a predictable transmutation; the resolved ideas are direct stylistic *micro-contexts* of their overlaid ones, which can be regarded also as *stylistic environment*. The Hermogenic stylistic typology is structuralistic (the *vis-a-vis* simply corresponds to the historical context of the issue) in the sense attributed to structuralism by Jean Piaget: “neither the element nor the whole is that which prevails upon the final result (as these two do not portray the manner), but the relations between the elements”.² In the implementation of Hermogenes’ stylistics of speech, the typology of charts as those of the clear and the well-determined speech is executed as a text delivered alongside the primary one; up to the point where this typology is tangible, as in the case of *clarity*, it is clear that we are dealing with a formalistic theory of oratorical style, where ideas may be termed as the *forms* and *types* of style.

Undoubtedly, the Hermogenic employment of the term *idea* is not symbolic, since the principle of *non-intentionality* does not subsist as a criterion of selection; the term is typically semantic, because of the conventional character of the meaning attributed to it; it is identified with the semantic types of the Ogden-Richards

1 Jespersen 1992, p. 48.

2 Piaget 1968, p. 5.

taxonomy¹ of the term *meaning* since:

(a) it is related to the platonic term *idea* in the apparent relation of the effect to its cause (definition XII),

(b) it constitutes a procedure of reflecting aforementioned imprints and it creates coherent associations and respective correspondences (definition XIII),

(c) it constitutes an act of idealization of those implied by the Hermogenic *idea*, (definition XIV),

(d) it employs the Platonic *idea* as a prospective point of reference, (definition XV) and

(e) it makes the receiver believe that the term refers to the platonic *idea*, whether the last is or is not really the point of reference (definition XVI).

The intertextuality of the Hermogenic sign *idea*, namely the general comprehension of the term in its Hermogenic version, seems to be denoted by the employment of it by the foregoing rhetoricians.² The ideas which Hermogenes acknowledges in oratorical speech and organizes in patterns are for the orator a language within the language, a structure within the structure of oratorical form: in the progression of the Hermogenic text the Demosthenic model (*Demosthenic idea*) succumbs in advance of the formation and systematization of stylistics, so that the chance for *selection* and *deviation* from the prototype model may subsist. In other words, the Demosthenic style yields from the position of the prototype model to that of the *norm*

and the *general macro-context*.³

Is the Hermogenic employment of the term *idea* metonymic or metaphorical? The *connotation* attributed by the employment of the term species (εἶδος) promotes the metonymic engagement of it; but the Hermogenic *idea* embodies in the transmission of its meaning an additional *temperament*, for which its employment may be thought as clearly metaphorical. On the basis of the tradition interpreting the Hermogenic text, we have to admit of the language of philosophy as the field from which the term originates, as the language of rhetoric is the field of its destination. As the oratorical deliverance of speech is a part of literature, the analogical nature of the metaphorical use of the term becomes apparent, since the coalescence of oratorical ideas with their philosophical subjects is inferred as a *similitude in operation*. The term *idea* is semantically traced in a rank superior when compared to the term *character*, normally applied by most of the rhetoricians; consequently, this terminological substitution intensifies the regularity which stylistics tends to impose on oratory, and, generally, on literary expression. The metaphorical engagement of the term *idea* has an exemplary function, especially if we agree with the principle that every stylistic theory leads to its oratorical systematization.⁴

The possibility of the Hermogenic *idea* to be homonymous to its Platonic

1 Ogden, Richards 1949, pp. 186-187.

2 Cf. Cramer 1963, vol. III(4), 126,4-5; Rabe 1892, 13,1-4.

3 For the application and the meaning of the term, cf. Enkvist 1973; Riffaterre 1959, p. 60.

4 Mounin 1984, p. 156.

and Neo-Platonic correlative, is an option incorporated within the metaphorical employment of language; this would add effectiveness to the theory of ideas by means of attributing the thing signified by the term to the bizarre, the *extra ordinary* (ξενίζον) of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.¹ But such a case would include both the abusive and the sophistically deceiving dimension of homonymy. If we were to follow Porphyry's interpretation of Aristotle's treatment of homonyms in the *Categories*,² we would notice that Hermogenes seems to render only the utterance of the term *idea* without giving the definition of the content denoted, or its description. In the same frame of mind, the relation of the Hermogenic *idea* with its Neo-Platonic correlative may seem as homonymic. But if it is legitimate to correlate the Hermogenic with the Platonic employment of the term, it is also legitimate, and thus preferable, to accept a correlation of the Hermogenic employment of the term and that of the oratorical tradition, depicting it as *literary form*, in the sense of *mode* or, better, *relation*, quite as Aristotle refers in his *Poetics* to the *iambic idea*.

If we would like to render the term *idea* as *category of style*, it would be evident that we would discharge any kind of metaphysical hypostasis; and indeed, the technical character and the material essence of the Hermogenic codification makes the whole enterprise

lacking of any metaphysical autonomy. But in such case, we endanger to coincide with the Neo-Platonic criticism over the Aristotle's *Categories*; if this is the case, it would be accepted to include in our interpretation the Iamblichian dimension of *intellective theory*, according to which we would be allowed to depict the seven central ideas as *loci* (τόποι), something promoted by Syrianus. But this would create further implications regarding the employment of the term *loci* or *loci communes* of Aristotle's rhetoric tradition; thus, it would be better to interpret the Hermogenic *ideas* as reason and principles, having in mind the Greek terms λόγοι and ρηαί, bringing into a compromise the Aristotelian ancestry of the term *idea* and the Neo-Platonic eclectic view on it of Ammonius, son of Hermias.³ It would be insufficient to designate these classes as *categories* or *sub-categories* of oratorical style. It would be preferable either to regard them as *codes* and *sub-codes* of an aesthetic structure, relating to the oratorical deliverance of speech, or to consider the resolved ideas as *codes of signs* or as *stylistic figures*, since they elevate the stylistic forms signified from the linguistic to the aesthetic level, and to regard the seven major ideas as constructed *systems of signs*.

Conclusively, both the major and the resolved types could be treated as *aesthetic functions*, since, as they are of a twin texture, they introduce both the function of processing thoughts,

1 Aristotle 1964, 1404 b 35.

2 Porphyry 1887, vol. IV.I, 59,34 and thereafter; Simplicius 1907, vol. IIX, 21,1 and thereafter.

3 Sorabji 1990, pp. 2-4.

namely the *significata* concealed within the reason, and the meta-linguistic function, in the sense of reasoned speech employed in commenting on speech acts. In this sense, the *Peri Ideon* is a study not of the oratorical style –something equivalent to a survey on personal patterns of modifying the oratorical language, a subject formulated by the preceding rhetoricians under the title *Peri Characteron*¹ – but a survey of oratorical *stylistics*, namely, a study of the systematic relations and strategies of oratorical deliverance.

1 Cf. Ioannis Doxapatris 1931, p. 420,19.

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