

21W.747 Class 2

14 September 2009

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Agenda

- Historical Background of Classical Rhetoric
- Examples of Different Rhetorical Stances in Modern Politics
- Introduction to Rhetorical Figures and Topics
- Republican Response to Obama's Speech on Health Care
- Congressman Joe Williams' Video Explaining His Outburst
- Class Exercise

Class Exercise

1. Form groups of three
2. Read each other's postings
3. For each posting note:
 - What was persuasive
 - How could the person been more persuasive
 - Missing details that would make the narrative more vivid.

Historical Background of Classical Rhetoric

Western Rhetoric Began in Greece

- Literacy
- Democracy

Greeks Adopt the Phoenician
(Semetic Alphabet) ~700 BCE

Rise of Democracy in Athens

- Mycenaean & Homeric Ages
- Archons & Oligarchies
- Dracon & Solon

Solon Establishes Courts & Trial by Jury

- 501 to 2000 citizens
- Several courts
 - Areopagus
 - Heliaea

The Persian Wars



Courtesy of wikimedia.org

Persian Wars

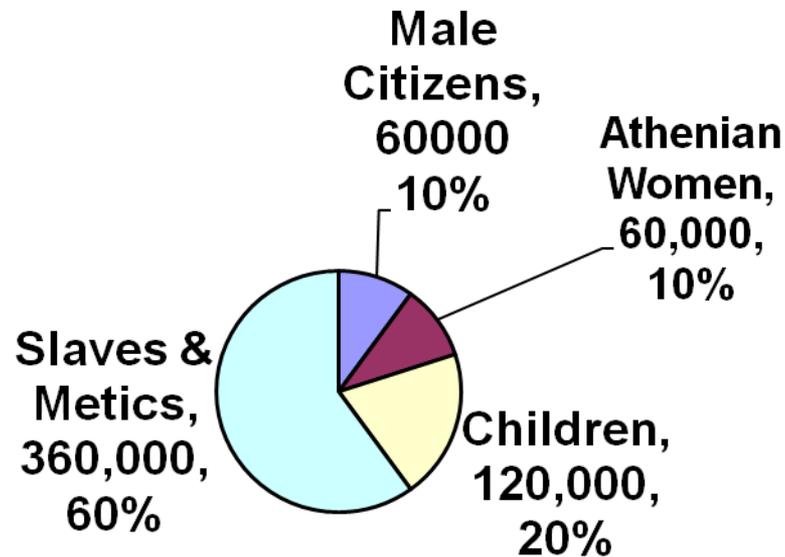
- Marathon 490 BCE
- Thermopolae 480 BCE
- Salamis 480 BCE
- Plataea 479 BCE

The Age of Pericles

461 BCE – 429 BCE

- Athenian Empire
- Flowering of literature and arts
- Pure democracy
 - Pericles reelected every year
 - Subsidy so all citizens could serve on courts and the assembly
 - Any citizen could propose new laws
 - Complete freedom of speech

But was Athens really a Democracy?

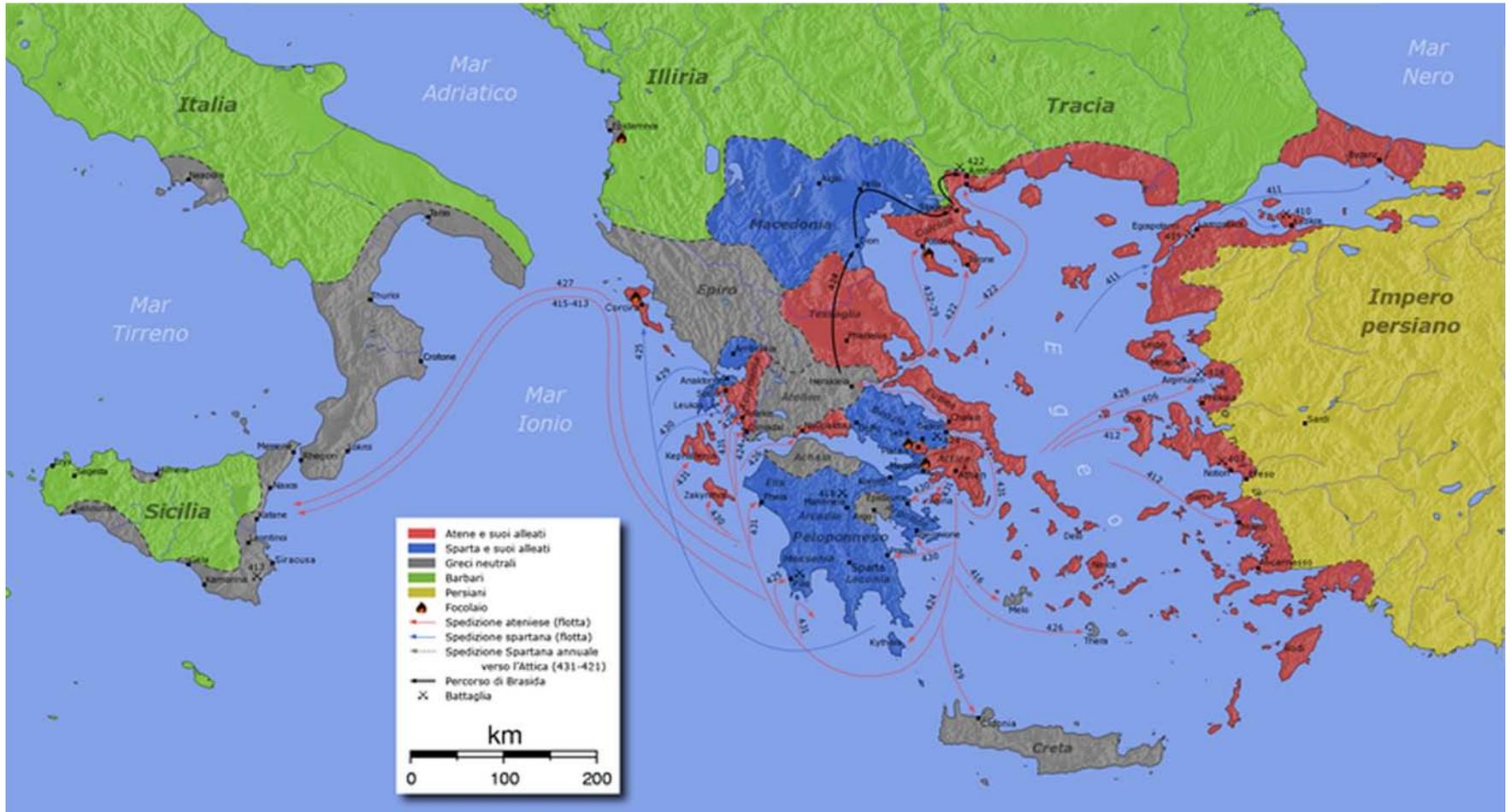


The Athenian Empire



Courtesy of [wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Athenian_Empire_431_BCE.jpg)

The Peloponnesian War



The Decline of Athens

- 412 BCE Mass revolt of Athenian “allies”
- 405 BCE Sparta destroys Athenian Navy
- 404 BCE Surrender of Athens
 - The 30 tyrants
- 403 BCE Restoration of Athenian Democracy
- 399 BCE Trial & Death of Socrates

And the Rise of Rhetoric

- Each person spoke for themselves in courts and assemblies.
 - There were no advocates
- Writing allowed the profession of *logographer*, speech writers
- Professional coaches
- Teachers of systems of persuasion

The Case of Corax & Tisias

- Corax and Tisias are reputedly the inventors of the art of rhetoric.
- Facts of the case
 - Tisias contracts to pay Corax for instruction in rhetoric on the condition that he wins his first lawsuit.
 - Corax instructs Tisias in rhetoric.
 - Tisias refuses to pay.

Corax sues Tisias in court for payment.

- **Tisias's argument**

- If I win, I do not need to pay.
- If I lose, I should not have to pay. For if I lose, it proves that Corax's instruction is worthless.

- **Corax's argument**

- If I win, Tisias must pay.
- If I lose, Tisias should have to pay. For if I lose, it proves that I have taught Tisias well.

What the case of Corax and Tisias tells us about issues in rhetorical theory

- **Language is ambiguous.**
- **Knowledge is constructed by human beings.**
- **There are at least two sides in every case—often more.**
- **Persuasion does not deal in certainties but rather probabilities.**
- **The need for action obviates the need for absolute truth.**

The Sophists

- From Greek *sophos* “wise” & *sophia* “wisdom”
- Philosophers who deal with many topics besides rhetoric
- Major theme was *relativism*

Two Major Concepts

Paidea

Learning

Education

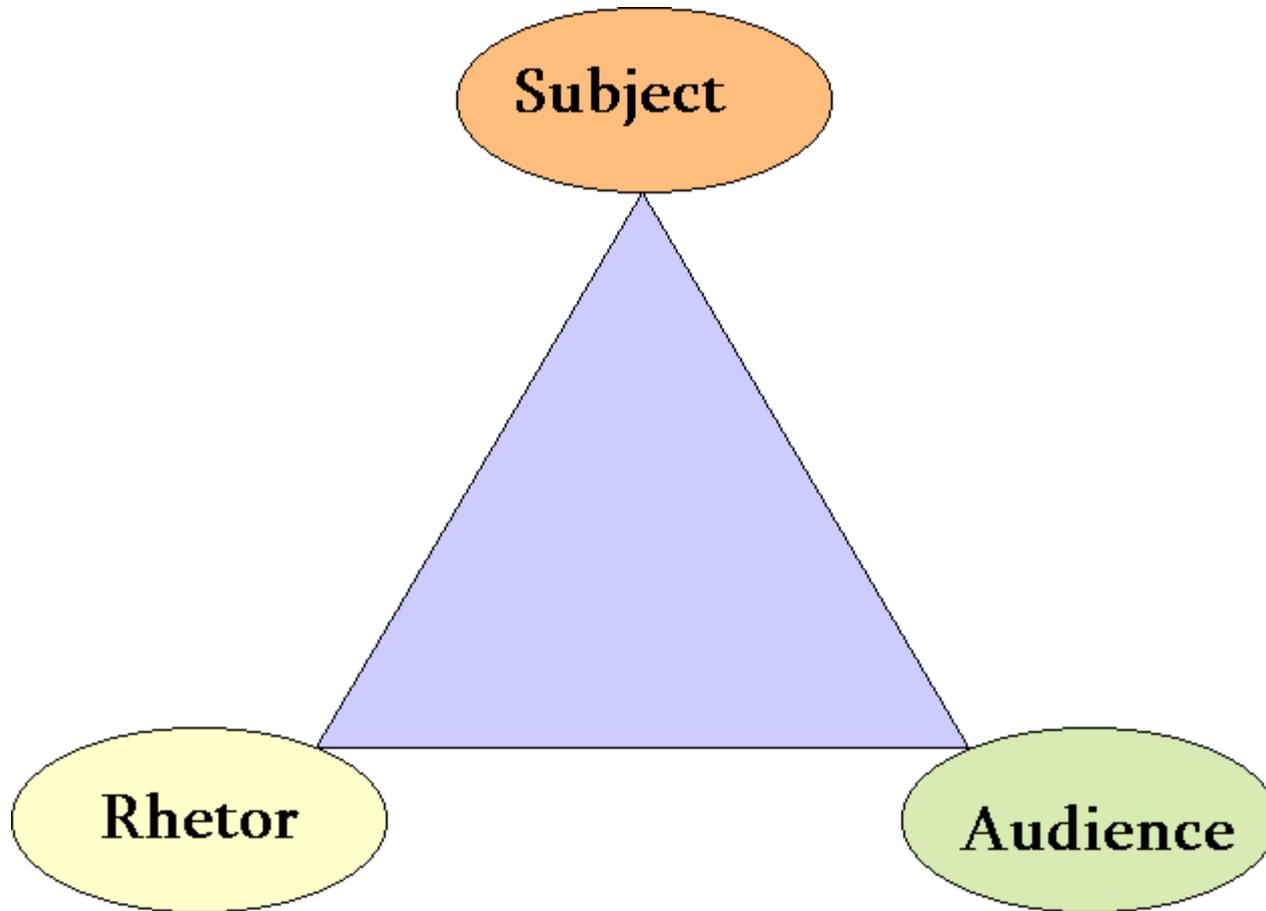
Nomos / Physis Controversy

- Protagoras
 - “Man is the measure of all things”
 - Teach *areté*
- Gorgias
 - Nothing exists
 - If anything exists it cannot be thought of or known by man
 - Even if can be known, it cannot be communicated to another
 - Teach skill in persuasion; there is no *areté*

Rhetorical Timeline

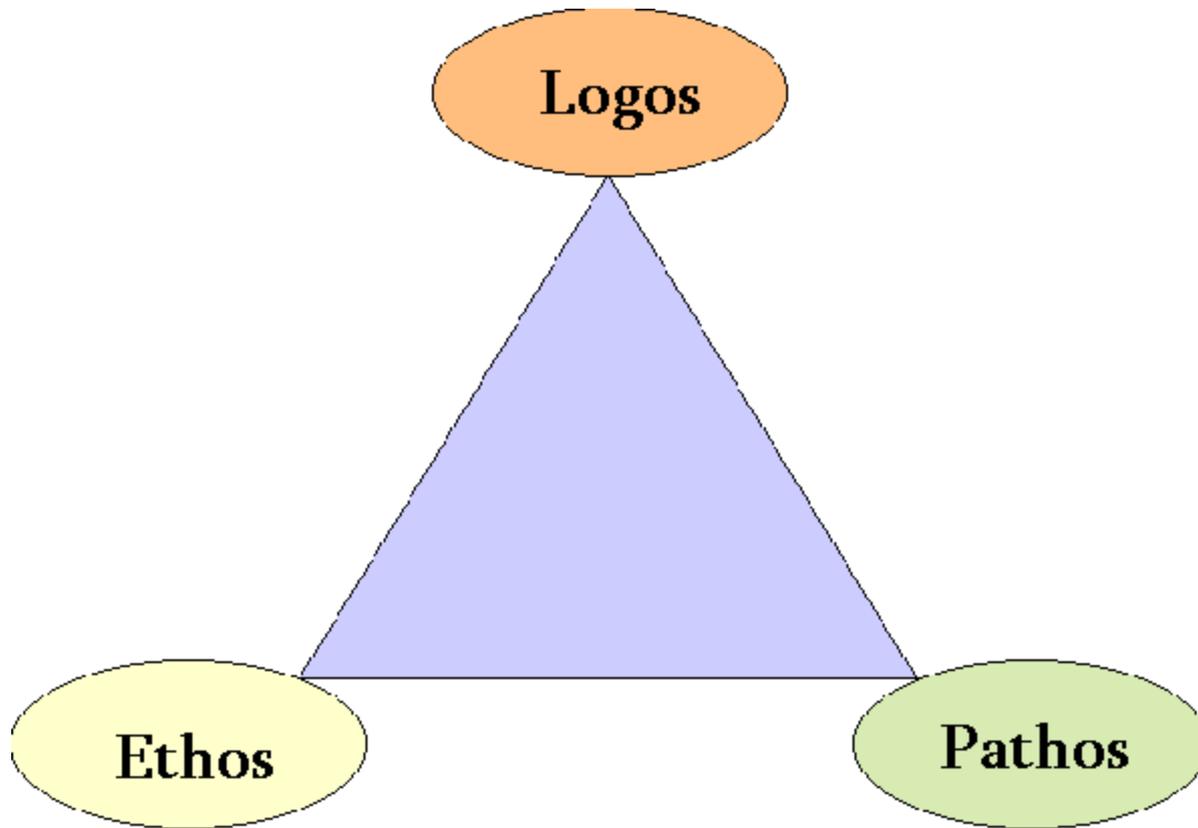
- 476 BCE Corax & Tisias
- Sophists
 - Gorgias 485-380
 - Protagoras 485-410
 - Isocrates 427-338
- Socrates 469-399
- Plato 427-347
- Aristotle 384-322
- Demosthenes 384-336

The Rhetorical Scene



The Rhetorical Triangle

Three Kinds of Artistic Proof



Three Rhetorical Situations

- Forensic
 - The law court
- Deliberative
 - The assembly or senate
- Epideictic
 - Ceremonial
 - Nominating speeches
 - Eulogies
 - Modern roasts
 - Award ceremonies

The General Type of Situation and the Particulars Combine to form *kairos*

- Place
- Time
- Opportunity
- Setting

The Rhetorical Situation

Kind of Discourse	Audience	Time	Ends (<i>teloi</i>)	Means (<i>topoi</i>)
Forensic	Decision-makers	Past	The just and the unjust	Accusation and defense
Deliberative	Decision-makers	Future	The expedient and inexpedient	Persuasion and dissuasion
Epidictic	Spectators	Present	The noble and shameful	Praise and blame

Rhetorical Building Blocks

- **Topoi**
 - Universal
 - Particular
- **Figures of Thought**
- **Figures of Style**

The *Departments* of Rhetoric

- **Invention**
- **Arrangement**
- **Style**
- **Memory**
- **Delivery**

Invention

- **Finding ways
to persuade**

Arrangement

- **Putting together the structure of a coherent argument**

Style

- **Presenting the argument to stir the emotions**

Memory

- **Speaking without having to memorize a speech word-for-word**

Delivery

- **Making effective use of voice and gesture**

Different Rhetorical Stances

As you view the speeches

- What is the speaker trying to accomplish?
- What is his attitude toward the audience?
- What is his attitude toward his opponents?
- How does the speaker try to convince the audience?
- Do you think he was/is/will be successful?

Carter Crisis of Confidence Speech

Obama's Speech on Stimulus Package – Feb. 7 2009

Rhetorical Figures

- Obama uses the Figure of Thought:
Dilemma
- Does Carter formulate a *Dilemma*?

Another Rhetorical Strategy

- *Licentia*
 - Frankness of speech
- What is the effect of Obama's confession in this recent interview?

For Wednesday

- Read Book I, Chapters 1-3 of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*
- Use the reading guide and study questions on the web site
- Watch Nixon's *Checker's Speech*. Why was the speech successful?

In-Class Exercise

- Persuasion papers
 - Questions
 - Did the writer give sufficient detail and background?
 - What was the goal of the persuasion?
 - What worked?
 - What, if anything, did not work?
 - How could the argument been more persuasive?
 - Report Out: Common characteristics of successful persuasion
 - Participants:
 - V Barrera, N Monroe, Lauren Chai, Noah Caplan

In Class Exercise

- Read each others papers in the context of the following questions:
 1. What was President Obama's purpose in giving the speech?
 2. Who were the audiences for the speech?
 3. What parts of the speech were effective to each audience?
 4. What do you think were the most effective parts of the speech overall?
 5. What parts were the least effective?
- Discuss each point and try to reach a consensus to report out

Groups

- Group A
 - G Downs, J Boortz, R McIntyre, I Luccero
- Group B
 - X Jin, S H-J Li,, D Beauboef

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