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Abstract

Most histories of western rhetoric begin with the discussion of Greek rhetoric as the starting point for rhetorical studies. Over the past two-hundred years western ethnocentrism has denied the rhetorical systems of “the others” their rightful place in a comprehensive and accurate rhetorical timeline. However, it is difficult to believe that some cultures that thrived for thousands of years prior to the Greeks did not have a good understanding of how to communicate effectively. After all, oral and written systems of composition were in operation long before rhetoric was recognized as a discipline, and it is the development of these systems that eventually established rhetorical principles and facilitated rhetorical practices. In this thesis I argue that in order to understand the rhetoric of a nonwestern civilization it is important to examine in detail not only its cultural setting but also how it relates to classical rhetoric. This interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to the rhetorical system of ancient Egypt emphasizes three major areas: writing and literacy, rhetorical norms and practices, and possible connections between Egyptian and Greek rhetorical precepts, such as the ethical concern reflected in the works of Plato and Isocrates.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RHETORIC

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Chapter 1

Introductory Notes on Nonwestern Rhetorics

The two great hindrances to any proper appreciation of the literature and civilization of ancient Egypt are the Bible and the glory that once was Greece. These two sources – and the civilizations that produce them – are the twin bastions of our Western culture ; and since they have so undeniably formed us and the very ways we think, it is no wonder we approach other cultures in terms of what they have taught us. Our view of ancient history is conditioned by what we understand as true from ancient Greece and, particularly, Israel. Indeed, our very idea of what constitutes ancient history is filtered through the accounts of Genesis and Exodus. (Foster, Ancient xi-xii)

Given that the term “rhetoric” derives from the Greek *rhetorike* and was first defined by Aristotle as the art of discovering all “the available means of persuasion” (24), it is not surprising that most histories of western rhetoric begin with the discussion of Greek classical rhetoric as the starting point for rhetorical studies. However, due to the increasing interest in alternate and nonwestern rhetorics during the past decade, this historical approach generates a new set of problems.¹ According to Lipson and Binkley, not only does this approach establish Greek classical rhetoric as the norm for the western rhetorical system but it also suggests that Aristotle’s system reflects the rhetorical practices of other early or even earlier cultures (5). Moreover, this view implies that these early cultures developed such rudimentary rhetorical systems that they are not worthy of attention or study. It is true that Greek classical rhetoric has prevailed in the western world for over 2,000 years, but it is difficult to believe that some cultures that thrived for thousands of years prior to the Greeks did not have a good understanding of how to communicate effectively and how to convince and persuade. As George A. Kennedy suggests, “the conceptualization and discussion of something analogous to what we call “rhetoric” occurred in other literate cultures besides the Greek: in ancient Egypt and ancient China, where there were even something resembling handbooks of good speaking and good writing” (*Comparative* 3). It is therefore important not to approach the ancient history of rhetoric in isolation, but in a much broader cultural context, both diachronically and synchronically.

But before one proceeds to uncover the rhetorical practices of other early cultures in an attempt to fill in the gaps of rhetorical history, one must look into the reasons why these gaps occurred in the first place. Why is it generally agreed that rhetoric started

with the Greeks? Where does this centuries-old attitude of rejection towards the rhetorical practices of other early cultures stem from? This exclusion of everything nonwestern (or nonclassical) as unworthy of consideration falls into what Edward Said describes as the Orientalist approach to the cultures outside the European sphere. The opposition of superiority and inferiority that lies at the heart of the sciences of cultural comparativism of the past two hundred years is, ironically enough, rooted much further back in history: “In classical Greece and Rome geographers, historians, public figures like Caesar, and poets added to the fund of taxonomic lore separating races, regions, nations, and minds from each other; much of that was self-serving, and existed to prove that Romans and Greeks were superior to other kinds of people” (Said 57). If, along with the Greek and Roman philosophical principles, this dichotomy of superiority versus inferiority is also part of the western heritage, then it is fair to assume that the rhetorical historiography from the nineteenth century onwards has led to the more or less deliberate marginalization of major ancient rhetorics.

Fortunately, the scholarship of the later twentieth century has shown an increased interest not only in alternate rhetorics but also in the examination of nonwestern rhetorics, and particularly in ancient nonwestern rhetorics prior to and contemporary with the development of the Greek classical rhetoric. A pioneering work in the field of nonwestern rhetoric is George A. Kennedy’s *Comparative Rhetoric*, published in 1998. His main argument is that rhetoric is a universal phenomenon characteristic of individuals everywhere, and therefore the aim of comparative rhetoric is “to test the applicability of Western rhetorical concepts outside the West” (*Comparative* 5). But instead of viewing classical rhetoric as the culmination in the development of ancient

rhetorical systems, one should take into consideration the cultural background of these early civilizations and try to examine their rhetorical practices outside the western tradition. Also, by analyzing the rhetorics of ancient cultures in their own rights, one might even uncover possible influences on the Greek classical rhetoric. As Lipson and Binkley point out, today`s scholars should develop “better understanding of how different historical approaches functioned and were situated within very different cultures, because [...] such knowledge can help illuminate how a range of rhetorics can and do function within our culture” (3).

Given that rhetorical historiography depends almost exclusively on surviving texts, the recovery of the rhetoric of ancient cultures requires an understanding not only of their cultural settings but also of their textual practices. Although none of the surviving texts of these ancient cultures presents theoretical analyses of their own rhetorical systems, there are a series of maxims and wisdom texts that offer advice rhetorical in nature with regards to how to speak in certain situations, when to speak, when to keep silent, and so on. Some Mesopotamian texts provide examples of debates, disputations, and monologues (Lipson and Binkley 7). In ancient Egypt such wisdom texts were often fictionalized, presented either as advice coming from a father to a son, or as arising from a very ancient and famous figure.

As Lipson and Binkley point out, in the field of rhetoric and composition, there are about half a dozen studies that address ancient Egyptian rhetoric, all of them article or chapter length. The first to have appeared is a major contribution by biblical scholar Michael Fox, in 1983, in the first volume of *Rhetorica*. This study identifies the Egyptian conception of rhetoric in the wisdom texts (or instructions). Thus, Fox

delineates and discusses five major canons of ancient Egyptian rhetoric: (a) the value of silence in communication, (b) the art of knowing when to speak, (c) the art of restraint and self-control, (d) the canon of fluency, and (e) the canon of truthfulness. An article by Egyptologist Barbara Lesko on ancient Egyptian women's rhetoric is published in Molly Werthiemer's collection of essays. In "Ancient Egyptian Rhetoric: It All Comes Down to *Maat*," Carol Lipson analyzes the culture's central concept of *Maat* as the underlying factor in the Egyptian texts. Within Egyptology itself, much of the work on rhetoric has involved literary analysis of tropes and figures, whereas other studies have focused mainly on the elite and the more formal aspects of eloquence expressed in literary and monumental texts.² All this scholarship, however, is far from being exhaustive. Apart from the relatively new interest in the rhetoric of ancient Egypt, there are still untranslated texts as well as undiscovered papyri and monumental inscriptions that may reveal new opportunities for rhetorical study.

Nevertheless, since the present project is an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to ancient Egyptian rhetoric, I have derived my scholarship of reference from the fields of both Egyptological and rhetorical studies. Furthermore, in order to describe and exemplify the ancient Egyptian rhetorical practices, I have included a set of primary texts in translation which required a careful process of selection given the relatively wide array of alternatives. After reading a series of translated texts, I have chosen Miriam Lichtheim's translations of epistolary texts and monumental inscriptions because her work has an outstanding reputation and is often cited in the field of Egyptological studies. As for literary texts, I have examined John L. Foster's and R. B. Parkinson's respective anthologies of ancient Egyptian literature, trying to find an appropriately

contextualized translation of texts such as the “Instructions of Ptahhotep” and the “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant,” which are key primary texts for my current project. My choice of R. B. Parkinson’s *Voices from Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings* has been an easy one: his translations are accompanied by descriptive and explanatory notes about the historical setting and the various functions of the script, which broadened my understanding of the texts.

But given that the term “rhetoric,” first developed by Plato and then theorized by Aristotle, implies a set of well-grounded definitions, the question is whether or not it would be accurate to apply it to cultures with very different values and practices. Aristotle’s definition focuses on persuasion, which is a key element in rhetorical theory from classical to modern times. Although the study of rhetoric has been mostly confined to western culture and texts, persuasion also occurs in the oral practices and written texts of other ancient civilizations. James W. Watts identifies persuasion as the key motivating factor in the creation of many ancient Near Eastern texts. According to him, the royal inscriptions are concerned with dynastic propaganda, while the instructional and literary works exhort their audience to conform to social norms: “Ancient texts display their persuasive intentions overtly in the militaristic boasts and threats of kings or the promises and warnings of sages or, most obviously, by invoking blessings and curses from the gods on their readers and hearers” (197).³ On the other hand, the paradigmatic text in Aristotle’s rhetorical system is the argument. Yet it has been noted that in some ancient cultures there is no overt argument *per se* within written texts, and in some other cultures, the maxims even reflect a distaste for direct argument in general in cultural life, though the argument is seen in specific, well-defined locations (Lipson

and Binkley 9). This is the case with ancient Egypt, where one of the canons for “perfect speech” is restraint rather than argument, although in judicial contexts the rhetorical register is entirely different.

It is not the purpose of this project to do injustice to Aristotle’s system by applying his terminology to the rhetoric of other ancient cultures. After all, it was not his intention to create an appropriate analytical system for cultures other than the Athenian one. However, as the developer of classical rhetoric, his theoretical framework provides an understanding that *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* are key factors in the success of a text, and that *ethos* and *pathos* must be appropriately suited for the particular audience. Hence, it is possible to look at rhetoric in a broader cultural context, with different practices, values, and norms.

As described so far, in analyzing the rhetorical systems of cultures other than the Greek, there are two possible approaches. The first one, suggested by George Kennedy, involves the application of classical rhetorical concepts to the surviving ancient texts of different cultures. A second approach is proposed by Claude Calame, who contends that the rhetorical system of a culture must be analyzed from an anthropological perspective, “involving as much a scholarly immersion as is possible in the ancient culture being studied, and an effort to let the resulting understanding of the culture guide the analysis” (12). In this case, one should attempt to let the culture itself provide both the analytical framework and the terminology. Although both approaches are rather extreme, they do provide two useful starting points and two different ways of addressing the rhetorical systems of different ancient cultures. Thus, the following analysis of the ancient Egyptian rhetoric is a fusion of the two approaches, since the rhetoric of a culture must

be examined not only in its anthropological setting but also in a larger conceptual and inter-cultural context.

The present project is an attempt at reconstructing the rhetorical system developed in ancient Egypt, with emphasis on three major areas: writing and literacy, rhetorical norms and practices, and possible connections between the ancient Egyptian and Greek rhetorical precepts. The focus of my analysis may seem broad, but we must not ignore that ancient Egyptian rhetoric is still a pristine area of research and most of the studies in the field are fairly limited in scope. It is my contention that in order to understand the rhetoric of a nonwestern civilization it is important to examine in detail not only its cultural setting but also how it relates to classical rhetoric whose legacy has been transmitted to the present day. Therefore, my goal is to contextualize ancient Egyptian rhetoric within the cultural and intellectual parameters of the society at the time and to investigate the cross-cultural elements that characterize its relationship to the philosophy and rhetoric of ancient Greece.

Starting from the premise that writing greatly facilitated the possibility of conscious creation, analysis, and criticism of discourse, Kennedy contends that “metarhetoric, or a theory of rhetoric, is a product of writing and is first to be found in early literate societies” (*Comparative* 4). Thus, in proceeding with the analysis of the rhetoric of an ancient culture, it is necessary to begin the discussion with the advent and the development of writing as well as its impact on the consciousness of the society in which it occurred. But since the rhetorical analysis of the ancient Egyptian culture depends exclusively on the surviving texts and none of them are theoretical treatises *per se*, the attention falls on the literary texts, letters, testimonials, monumental inscriptions,

and so forth. It is in these texts that one can identify the ancient Egyptians' rhetorical principles and practices.

The second chapter is a comprehensive examination of the ancient Egyptian rhetorical precepts and their application in a cultural setting governed by the principles of righteousness, justice, harmony, and balance. All these are elements of the pivotal ancient Egyptian cultural concept of *Maat* towards which all human behavior was geared. Among the earlier Egyptian philosophical works, the "Instructions" of the Old Kingdom vizier Ptahhotep best represent the traditions of the moral order because they provide an in-depth discussion not only of moral behavior but also of a set of precepts for "fine speech" which mark the beginning of the codification of ancient Egyptian rhetorical principles. Following a discussion of Ptahhotep's five rhetorical canons as identified by Michael Fox, the focus of my analysis will shift towards a series of texts ranging from wisdom literature to monumental inscriptions in order to examine the various rhetorical practices in relation to the principles of "fine speech" and the concept of *Maat*.

Furthermore, given that the rhetoric of ancient Egypt is the reflection of a nonwestern set of values, it is important to see whether or not these values are recognizable in the Greek rhetorical system in the context of the centuries-long economic and cultural exchange between the two Mediterranean civilizations. Therefore, the last section of this project is a cross-cultural examination of the ancient Egyptian and Greek rhetorical systems with emphasis on those nonwestern elements that have permeated the western set of values. Given that "by the time the Greeks found Egypt, the seat of ancient wisdom and knowledge, the ancient Egyptian philosophers had been

reflecting on the nature of human relationships and the meaning of life for several thousand years” (Asante viii), it is fair to assume that the interaction between the two civilizations resulted in cultural borrowings ranging from religious to scientific through philosophical elements.

Notes on Chapter I:

¹ In the field of rhetoric and composition, the term “alternative rhetoric” is being used to describe rhetorical approaches in particular cultures that differ from the dominant paradigm (Lipson and Binkley 10).

² In “Law, Rhetoric, and Gender in Ramesside Egypt,” archaeologist Deborah Sweeney studies ancient Egyptians’ everyday utterances in texts that present and describe legal practices and proceedings.

³ Watts further notes that the persuasive strategy of “story-list-sanction” was employed to influence an audience’s ideas and behaviors. It shaped the form and content of texts from a wide variety of periods and cultures in ancient Near East and eastern Mediterranean, including the foundational scriptures of Judaism and Christianity (198).

Chapter II

Writing and Literacy

The appearance of writing, which coincided with the upsurge of an entire civilization, marked the point of maturity of a way of life.

(Henri-Jean Martin)

And so Ptah was well pleased after he had created all things and all hieroglyphs.¹

(The Memphite Theology qtd. in Assmann 353)

Man dies, his body is dust,

his family all brought low to the earth;

But writing shall make him remembered,

alive in the mouths of any who read.

Better a book than a builded mansion,

better than body's home in the West,

Splendid above a fine house in the country

or stone-carved deeds in the precinct of God.

(Papyrus Chester Beatty IV qtd. in Foster *Echoes* xv)

Egyptian writing first appeared in the late fourth millennium BCE, and it evolved until the earliest continuous written language was recorded in the late First or Second Dynasty, around 3100 BCE. During this long period, writing was a very limited instrument and it may not have even been considered that it could provide a medium for writing down communications in full linguistic form (Bard and Shubert 882). At this stage, writing reflected the world faithfully not only in its graphic symbols but also in the words of which it was composed. Each written thing necessarily corresponded to something real. However, because the Egyptians made no strict distinction between writing and pictorial art, they sought for a minimal way of representing objects visually, through simplifying the task of chiseling outlines in stone. These minimal representations (or hieroglyphs) thus often designated objects iconically, but, as Carol Lipson suggests, they often proved to be somewhat general or ambiguous for the reason that “a particular sign can be read three ways: pictorially, as representing the entity depicted; phonetically, as representing any words with the particular combination of consonants; and as an ideogram, representing a particular meaning that might relate to the entity depicted” (*Recovering* 96). The underlying characteristic of hieroglyphic writing is its maximum iconicity, the written signs being subjected to multiple possible interpretations. Thus hieroglyphs, like all other written signs, are related to language; but unlike other written signs, they also relate visibly to things, in a realistic way that puts them in the same category as pictorial representations.²

For the Egyptians, hieroglyphs far transcended a simple system of communication, and they were regarded as symbolic entities which would function magically not only within written texts but also in many aspects of life in general. Hence, hieroglyphic

writing had only one name: “divine words.” As Henri-Jean Martin points out, “The Egyptians believed that the images used to write a text could develop superior truths by constituting a metalanguage capable, in the final analysis, of revealing the text’s internal ideology. For them, speech and image were linked to the substance of the being that they reproduced or designated” (18). The Egyptians believed in the creative virtues of words and their dangerous power. After all, Isis had become mistress of the universe by forcing Ra, the old sun-god, to reveal his name to her, by which she could disarm him (Watterson 81). Accordingly, personal names, which usually included an invocation to or a relationship with the divine powers, were not simple signs of identification. The writing of a word had the same power as the word itself, and this was equally true of images, which, according to an extremely ancient belief, had a life of their own. On the other hand, writing, as “divine language,” was the medium through which the Egyptians sought to give tangible form to the sacred and ensure an unbroken communication with it. Thus, given that language contained a cosmic force, words were not employed randomly, which may explain both the systematic exploitation of the evocative possibilities of the hieroglyphic script and the subsequent efforts to enrich it with new signs (Martin 103).

Representation and writing crystallized and drew together around the beginning of the First Dynasty, when the artistic principles of register composition were also elaborated, the whole forming a stable system which changed very little over the next two centuries (Bard and Shubert 883). However, by the beginning of the Second Dynasty, writing already divided into hieroglyphs, used in artistic compositions, and cursive forms used for administration and mostly written in ink; these later are the

forerunners of the hieratic script. Also, early Egyptian writing does not seem to have been invented in order to record history, but was used both for administration and more generally for display. Very soon after its invention, the ideological aspect of writing had become extremely important, which is reflected in the royal contexts and usages at the time. Thus, with its limited capacity to convey linguistic messages, but with its great symbolic potential, writing was vital in the administrative and ideological consolidation of the Egyptian society. In this sense, according to Roccati's analysis, writing coincided with the official language of the state (or rather, of the temple from which the state emanated) and was, by definition, the only "true" language (62).

Writing in early Egypt was integrated with the ruling group. Just as the royal style of art developed as a court-centered institution, so did writing. As previously stated, the early Egyptian state used writing in two major contexts, for economic and administrative purposes, and in royal art. As Ian Shaw suggests, the economic function of writing must have developed as more resources of the state came under control (81). Hieroglyphs appear on royal seal impressions, labels, and potmarks to identify goods and materials organized for and by the state, as well as on seals of officials of the state. The second use of early writing was on royal commemorative art, such as the Narmer palette,³ which, according to Goldwasser, stands out as the most normative text: "Its proportions, its subject matters, and the particular manner in which these subjects are realized became in time the hallmark of Egyptian decorum" (4).⁴ Hieroglyphs identify specific persons and possibly places in representational scenes that are symbolic of the king's legitimacy to rule. By the middle of the Fourth Dynasty, the hieroglyphic script became a fully developed system employed for monumental purposes, and its cursive counterpart

(hieratic) was used for writing on papyrus. Thus, as writing developed from strictly pictorial to more stylized forms, in the Middle Kingdom (2025 BCE) writing came to display approximately seven hundred signs, not all in common use but many with two or three usages (Ruffle 153). Shaw explains this by pointing out that the Middle Kingdom was a time when art, architecture, and religion reached new heights, but, above all, it was an age of “confidence in writing, encouraged by the growth of the ‘middle class’ and the scribal sector of society, which was in turn due in no small measure to the expansion of bureaucracy under Senusret III” (183).

The ability to read and write was a prerequisite for a successful career in the administrative bureaucracy. The highest officials of the land were certainly literate, but, like the king, they had under them corps of professional scribes who often did the actual writing. At what point down the ladder of bureaucracy an official ceased to have the assistance of a subordinate scribe is uncertain, but Meltzer suggests that the majority of officials, even at the bottom of the hierarchy, were literate, given the extreme emphasis placed on the acquisition of scribal skills for embarking on a career in the civil service (6). It is then hardly surprising that the Egyptians regarded scribal education as a national priority and an economic asset to the country. Scribal training was the only kind of education that was strictly scholastic, and it required a certain maturity (Roccati 71). Given the difficulty of the writing system, it was unlikely that training would begin at an early age (probably not much more before the age of ten). As Roccati further explains, the family needed to possess not only an awareness of the need not only for education but also for sufficient means of support. In addition to this, the privileges of scribal training contributed to the formation of a strong professional circle – the scribal class.

Being a scribe was not simply a profession. Other, more personal and intellectual aspects were involved. In the second millennium, a well-to-do cultured class developed, and education, the use of writing and books, and the training of clerks were greatly encouraged. It had become the custom for important people to be accompanied on their journey beyond the tombs by coffins completely covered with texts whose reading and recitation might help the deceased. Apart from the religious texts, a kind of literature that was intended to be read for pleasure was promoted by the royal palace, leading to the written production of gnomic works and narratives characterized by an increasing degree of stylistic sophistication.⁵ As Roccati notes, the scribe now moved from being an “inventor of writing” to being “an inventor of texts” (69). In their turn, these texts were rigidly codified. The Prisse Papyrus containing the complete text of the “Instruction of Ptahhotep” and the papyrus containing the “Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor” bear a final annotation stating that they are exact copies of what was “found in writing”, that is, in another papyrus (70). These texts were not, therefore, simply transmitted by memory, as must have been the case earlier. George Kennedy wisely points out that scribes were more than simply copiers of texts and they “might reasonably be regarded as the first intellectuals for they could master a body of texts not available to others and create new texts” (*Comparative* 116). It is thus pertinent to assume that writing created a certain form of elitism separate from traditional social hierarchies: the class of writers, readers, and thinkers. Furthermore, writing also created personal authorship since writers began to identify themselves in contrast to the impersonality of oral transmission.⁶

Another role attributed to the scribe was to interpret the sculpted word for the majority of people, who could neither read nor write. Reading aloud was not specifically intended for an audience but had an essentially ritual significance. In this case, the scribe (or the reader) possessed a special title, literally translated as “bearer of the ritual (book),” or as “ritualist” or “lector priest” (Roccati 63). He was an essential figure in activities surrounding the recitation of sacred texts, being the exclusive possessor of the title to that role, and “this exclusiveness derived from his capacity to avoid the dangers and deleterious effects inherent in the written text, at both the graphic and linguistic level” (64). Thus, the scribe was not only a reader or “lector priest” but also a theoretician of writing.

The polyvalence of the scribe’s role was reflected in the characteristics of the tutelary deity. This figure played an indispensable role in the divine world. Every aspect of the intellectual life was governed by the moon god Thoth because he was the creator of languages and writing, as well as of everything reflected in language and writing, such as science and magic (Watterson 312). Thoth was viewed as the scribe of the gods and the author of books (especially on magic), but he was also the divine vizier. As Roccati explains, the two roles are typically emphasized in an important story from the Ramesside period describing a scene from the “Book of the Dead” (68). As a social type, Thoth is contrasted with the god Ptah, the ancient patron of crafts and guilds. Moreover, given the divine nature of writing and the immediate patronage of Thoth, the god not only of language and writing but also of knowledge, the scribes were considered superior beings, assured of immortality, as attested in the following fragment from Papyrus Chester Beatty IV:

The scribes, they are the supreme ones of all.

Gates and chapels were made for them – they have crumbled.

their mortuary priests have gone hence,

their altars are besmirched with dirt,

their tomb chapels forgotten.

But their names are recalled on their writings,

that they have created,

as they endure by virtue of their perfection.

(qtd. in Assmann 67)

The importance of the scribe led to the creation of a special iconography in reliefs and statuary: the seated scribe. The scribe was presented sitting on the ground, knees bent, with an unrolled papyrus on his lap and, on occasion, a pen in his right hand. As Roccati notes, these details, along with a hint of plumpness, indicated the importance of the scribe's role and demonstrated that he was the person who actually wrote in ink on papyrus (Roccati 69). Furthermore, the respect in which the scribes were held is indicated by the tombs of some that achieved positions of power in the government. Their tombs reached almost royal splendor, often decorated with elaborate murals showing scenes of their service to the pharaohs and of their private lives. Khaemhet, a scribe and keeper of the royal granaries under Amenhotep III, in the new Kingdom, had beautifully modeled reliefs in his tomb, with a superb figure of Khaemhet himself just inside the entrance door (White 86).

With writing being so valued in the ancient Egyptian society, one would assume that literacy was a widespread phenomenon. However, given that the preserved material

from the Old Kingdom comes from tombs and often relates to the small elite of the high officials and their subordinates, it is safe to assume that literacy at the time was extremely limited.⁷ As R. B. Parkinson explains, this was not necessarily because of the difficulty in learning the script, but it must have reflected the fundamental cultural and economic divisions of the Egyptian society (*Voices* 18). Consequently, the surviving documents can illustrate only the life and thought of this elite, and the rest of the society still remains a fairly unknown domain. On the other hand, Leonard H. Lesko argues that literacy was more widespread because the preserved monumental inscriptions prove that the Egyptians were exposed to writing to a greater degree than other communities in the ancient Near East. He further contends that, although Egypt was primarily agricultural, such exposure to, and high regard for writing presumably would have motivated more Egyptians to understand it (“Literacy” 297).⁸ Given the impossibility of assessing the exact number of literate people, the literacy rate in ancient Egypt still remains a matter of controversy. Nevertheless, it is certain that scribes were concentrated in palaces, in administrative centers linked to royal residences, and in temples, where the number of people able to write was probably extremely high. Throughout the rest of the country, however, most of the population was illiterate. A saying from the Coffin Texts (c. 2134 BCE) proves the dependence of the vast majority of the population on the services of the scribe: “I was the scribe of the multitude” (qtd. in Roccati 77). Irrespective of the social class to which they belonged or the level of education they had, the Egyptians vastly preferred to use a scribe as the medium for their writing.

However, from the Middle Kingdom (2025-1550 BCE) a wide variety of official documents have survived, including reports, letters, and accounts, which not only help to

make up for the overall picture of the period but also indicate that literacy was more widespread than it had been during the Old Kingdom. Ian Shaw refers to the Middle Kingdom as “an age of greater humanity” (183). At least by the early Twelfth Dynasty (2000 BCE), the classic period of the Middle Kingdom, a standard system of formal elementary education in literacy was established.⁹ The main evidence for this consists of numerous schoolboys’ exercises from the village of Deir el-Medina, which have various direct and indirect references to literary texts (Eyre and Baines 93).

With literacy being a more or less limited phenomenon, it is important to note its gender-based distribution in the ancient Egyptian society. The literacy rate among women was undoubtedly much lower than that among men. As Leonard Lesko pointed out, there was, however, a goddess of writing, Seshat, which is also the feminine form of the word for a scribe, showing that this activity was acceptable for women (“Literacy” 297).¹⁰ In several instances, women were depicted in tombs with scribal equipment beneath their chairs. Although women were not generally afforded the advantages of school education and did not compete with men for posts in the bureaucratic system, there were certain positions that were reserved for women, such as priestesses and chantresses surrounding the Divine Votress of Amon (Meltzer 9). Furthermore, even though women did not officially compete with men, they were occasionally given considerable authority, especially to act on behalf of their husbands. There are a large number of letters that provide evidence of women functioning with various degrees of authority, which may also prove that some of these women were indeed literate. Also, a few ostraca from Deir el-Medina were addressed to wives who should have been able to read them without assistance (9).¹¹

Lower class women were certainly illiterate, whereas middle class women and the wives of professional men were slightly more educated. On the other hand, many royal women at court had private tutors, and most likely, these tutors taught them to read and write (Sweeney “Women”). A similar class distribution of literacy can be noted among the ancient Egyptian men. The majority of the surviving texts indicate that princes were instructed in reading and writing, while the sons of the high officials probably benefited as well. The ancient Egyptian schools, or “Houses of Instruction” were usually associated with temples, whereas others were connected with the palace, treasury, and army (Ruffle 157). Therefore, it is pertinent to assume that the student body of the “Houses of Instruction” was exclusively male, whereas the girls’ education depended mostly on private tutoring.

Notwithstanding the small number of literate men and women, writing was the most valued skill in ancient Egypt, as it granted not only personal and professional growth but also royal and divine favor. As Henri-Jean Martin points out, ancient Egyptian culture is the first in which the writing system became central to the life of the culture (15). The advent and development of writing, therefore, not only marked the birth of a semiotic system but also the creation of a body of literature, a corpus of knowledge, and a code of ethics.

Notes on Chapter II:

¹ Since Ptah was the primordial mound, and he called creation into being, he was considered the god of craftsmen, and in particular stone-based crafts (Watterson 155).

² In discussing the graphic realism of hieroglyphic writing, Jan Assmann points out that the “intentional suspension in the development of writing arrested the progress of art in general” (71), which proves their interdependence.

³ The Narmer Palette is dated around 3000 BCE and was designed for ceremonial use. For a more detailed description of the palette, see Margaret Bunson’s *The Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*.

⁴ Orly Goldwasser also offers an interesting Saussurean analysis of the recto of the Narmer Palette, which he considers to be “a cluster of different linguistic components whose novel composition represents the birth of a semiotic system, in which a constant point of balance and tension is maintained through the triadic support of picture, emblem, and phonetic sign; a triple coexistence that will not cease to be until the very final phases of the Egyptian civilization” (6-7).

⁵ For more on ancient Egyptian literature, see Jan Assman, John L. Foster, and Miriam Lichtheim.

⁶ In his book, *From Icon to Metaphor: Studies in the Semiotics of the Hieroglyphs*, Goldwasser proposes a possible reconstruction of the cognitive processes and semiotic structuring efforts which may have contributed to the “new intellectual order” (4) in the Egyptian society.

⁷ In “Interactions between Orality and Literacy in Ancient Egypt,” Eyre and Baines suggest that only one percent of the population in the Old Kingdom was literate (91).

⁸ Peter Der Manuelian contends that even the erasures of Egyptian inscriptions (as a means of *damnatio memoria*) indicate the level of literacy of the ancient Egyptians: “an erasure primarily represents a directed and highly focused attack on some aspect of the scene, which in turn presupposes a certain amount of knowledge on the part of the attacker, or at least of his superior” (285).

⁹ The Twelfth Dynasty of the Middle Kingdom represents a cultural apogee in the history of the Egyptian civilization: in the New Kingdom, the literature of this period was elevated to the canonic status of classics, and the language of the Middle Kingdom remained in use for sacred purposes until the end of pharaonic history. Later epochs considered the cultural achievements of the Middle Kingdom as ‘the timeless and definitive expression of Egyptian civilization’” (Assmann 118).

¹⁰ Because there are numerous references to *seshat* in the Middle Kingdom writings, John Ruffle agrees that it is quite possible that one woman with this title was indeed a scribe, but the others were clearly from a non-elite class. He also points out that *seshat* could have been an abbreviated word for cosmetician. He concludes that there may have been a few women scribes, but the position was still almost exclusively reserved for men, as no woman achieved prominence in the bureaucracy of the government (156).

¹¹ Pieces of pottery (or limestone) used for writing on.

Chapter III

Rhetorical Principles and Practices

If you are an excellent man,

who sits in the council of his lord,

concentrate on excellence!

You should be quiet! This is better than a potent herb.

You should speak when you know you understand:

only the skilled artist speaks in council.

Speaking is harder than any craft:

only the man who understands it puts it into work for him.

(“Instructions of Ptahhotep” qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 258)

Be an artist in public speaking so that you may prevail, for the power of a man is his tongue, and speech is mightier than any fighting. He that is skilled at speech, the sensible will not attack, if he is sensible, and no harm happens to the skillful. (“Instructions of King Merikare” qtd. in Asante 57)

There is currently much debate among historians of ancient rhetoric about the specific time rhetoric was recognized as a discipline in western culture. Some claim that rhetoric emerged as a discipline in Syracuse, Sicily, and credit Corax and Tisias with its founding around 467 BCE, while others argue for a much later date (Corbett and

Connors 16). Clearly, the debate here is over the beginning of rhetoric in *western* culture, with no reference whatsoever to cultural elements from outside the western sphere. This is, of course, a question of western ethnocentrism that denies the rhetorical systems of “the others” their rightful place in a comprehensive and by far more accurate rhetorical timeline. However, the attempt to pinpoint a precise moment in history when rhetoric emerged as a discipline also generates a need to understand the processes that led to the establishment of rhetoric, especially since “it did not originate at a single moment in history; rather, it was an evolving, developing consciousness about the relationship between thought and expression” (Enos ix). Therefore, it is reasonable to presume that earlier ancient cultures must have had their own rhetoric. After all, oral and written systems of composition were in operation long before rhetoric was recognized as a discipline, and it is the development of these systems that eventually established rhetorical principles and facilitated rhetorical practices. From this perspective, it is necessary to examine the surviving texts of these ancient cultures in order to identify and understand their rhetorical systems.

By the end of the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the Middle Kingdom (c.2100 BCE), the ancient Egyptians developed not only a sophisticated system of writing but also a vast and unified literary corpus.¹ Although none of the surviving texts are genuine rhetorical treatises, the literature of pharaonic Egypt does provide references to rhetorical principles, in a conceptual and rather unsystematic form, “expressed both incidentally and explicitly in the context of advice about the efficacy of speech” (Fox 9). The ancient Egyptians did not use a word like “rhetoric,” but they did teach the principles of “fine speech,” which Fox recognizes as the equivalent for “rhetoric” (9). In the “Houses of Instruction,” didactic texts

(or what is also known as wisdom literature) were copied for generations by school boys who learned their precepts while training to be efficient, loyal servants in their society. These “Instructions in Wisdom” (the Egyptians used to call them simply “Instructions”) were the second major literary genre in the Old Kingdom (Lichtheim, *Ancient* 5). Living in a strict hierarchic society, the intellectuals of the Old Kingdom considered the order of human society as imitating the order that governed the universe. Within this framework, pragmatic thought and experience, in addition to religious feeling and speculation, combined in the form of brief teachings or maxims (Lichtheim, *Ancient* 11).

Ancient Egyptian rhetoric was built upon a central cultural concept – that of *Maat*. As Bard and Shubert explain, *Maat* is an ethical concept that incorporates a web of interconnected cosmic and social principles that formed “the collective conscious of the Egyptians” (458). Diverse features such as truthfulness in business dealings and personal relationships, as well as the state of the universe, including the most basic events such as the rising of the sun, the inundation of the Nile and life after death, were all interrelated aspects of *Maat*. Because all facets of *Maat* were intertwined, to transgress against a principle of *Maat* risked upsetting the cosmic balance of the world. Therefore, each member of society was individually responsible for the good of the entire cosmic order, given that his or her actions and behavior affected other aspects of *Maat*. The association of general aspects of culture with *Maat* contributed to the creation of a conservative society that viewed social change as a potentially dangerous deviation from *Maat*. As noted by Bard and Shubert, the moderating effect of *Maat* upon the Egyptians’ social behavior also had implications for the fairly placid response to political change (459). In the “Instructions of King Merikare,” the phrase “Do Maat that you may endure upon earth” (qtd. in Asante 57) is particularly

relevant to the ancient Egyptians' awareness of the importance of Maat in all facets of their lives.

Furthermore, given that *Maat* ensured the permanence of art, dress, and ritual, the artistic styles and socially acceptable behavior were canonized in the wisdom texts. And given that their main concern was appropriate communication in various situations, they offer, in many ways, rhetorical principles and guidelines for speech and behavior. Unlike other Egyptian texts, where the author is usually anonymous, wisdom texts were attributed to named, identified sages of the past. The most important of these texts for the history of rhetoric is what is known as the "Instructions of Ptahhotep," dating from the late Old Kingdom (c. 2345 BCE). This can perhaps be regarded as "the oldest known rhetorical handbook" (Kennedy, *Comparative* 128), taking into consideration that Ptahhotep's instructions (or maxims) focus on the qualities of human communication over two thousand years before the same concern appeared in the Greek texts.

After the title, a short prologue locates the sage in the grand court:

The Teaching of the Lord Vizier Ptahhotep,
Under the Majesty of the Dual King Isesi,
may he live for all time and eternity.

(qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 250)

The "Instructions" open with Ptahhotep's address to the godlike king, which paints a dark picture of the vizier's condition in contrast with the usual idea of a good old age expressed in official inscriptions. He is almost on the point of death and he proposes to teach his son, so as to enable him to support his father. As Assmann notes, "the poem itself becomes a restorative against the onslaught of time and a process of renewal is enacted by the

pronouncing of the Teaching”(246). The main substance of the text is a series of thirty seven maxims, which are introduced by a second title describing their aim of teaching men to be wise. Although the prologue states that the teaching is addressed specifically to Ptahhotep’s son, this title proclaims that it is actually intended for a much wider audience:

Beginning of the verses of perfect speech
spoken by the Patrician and Count,
the God’s father, whom the God loves,
the eldest King’s own son,
the Lord Vizier Ptahhotep,
in teaching the ignorant to be wise,
and to be the standard of perfect speech,
good for him who will hear,
woeful for him who will transgress it.
(qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 251)

Each of the thirty-seven maxims deals with a social situation that can exemplify wisdom. Many of these situations are presented in a manner identified by Assmann as resembling “a medical text, in a diagnostic fashion” (246): if such and such happens, then this is the appropriate response. A common pattern for a maxim is an introduction giving a particular context, a personal injunction, and a concluding summary in reflective generalizing terms. The recurrent general idea is that wisdom is a restorative for all the ills of humanity:

Do not be proud because you are wise!
Consult with the ignorant as with the wise!
The limits of art are unattainable;

no artist is fully equipped with his mastery.

Perfect speech is more hidden than malachite,

yet it is found with the maidservants at the millstones.

(qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 251)

Clearly, while interested in the informative and graceful dimensions of human communication, Ptahhotep puts great emphasis on the power of words. The fundamental notion in his maxims is that the right words will resolve problems in a variety of contexts. It is therefore important to note that the advice about “perfect speech” is never differentiated from moral philosophy, as all is meant to follow the principles of *Maat*, the ethical conception of “truth” and cosmic balance:

If you encounter a disputant in his moment,

an authoritative man, who is better off than you,

bend your arms, bow your back!

When your heart defies him, he will not support you.

You will make little of such a one who speaks evil,

by not supporting him in his moment.

He will be summoned as “this ignoramus,”

your self-restraint having matched his riches.

(qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 251)

Michael Fox identifies five canons of ancient Egyptian rhetoric among the maxims of Ptahhotep: keeping *silent*; waiting for the *right moment* to speak; *restraining* passionate words; speaking *fluently* but with great deliberation; and *truthful* speaking (12-15). Silence is the initial calmness that listens to what others say and shows respect for them and self

dignity. The value put on silence is not a denial of the power of words, and, as Fox suggests, it must not be confused with passivity either, since it actually is a deliberate strategy for success.² Finding the right time to speak and restraint can hardly be separated from each other as the wise man will use those words appropriate to the situation. As Kennedy notes, the “right moment” resembles the concept of *kairos* in classical rhetoric, which is the need to judge what to say and when; no rules are adequate to teach this, but it can be learned through observation (*Comparative*130). Therefore, restraining passionate words in the course of a speech is the counterpart of the original silence and the way *ethos* is maintained. Given that the speaker must also give an impression of security and stability, fluency in speech helps create that impression through knowledge and competence. Although fluency was said to have been learned from the study of texts, the reference to good speech “found with maidservants at millstones,” quoted above, seems to suggest that it may also have been a natural gift, as will be shown in the “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant.” Lastly, but by far the most important, truthful speech is viewed as effective in itself, both because it creates an *ethos* and because it is ultimately persuasive. Truthfulness is synonymous with the will of the gods. Therefore, throughout the instructions, there is an assumption that the truth will emerge from discussion, falsehood will be defeated, and then justice will prevail. All in all, Ptahhotep strongly recommends conformity to social norms, obedience to superiors and fathers, listening to others, good will, forbearance, and cheerfulness even in difficulty. Through these qualities, a man will achieve a character that gives his speech more credibility.

In his analysis of the Egyptian rhetorical canons, Fox suggests that *ethos* was in itself a form of proof because “The didactic wisdom literature gives no thought to argumentation as

such and shows no awareness of the possibility that argumentation could operate independently of ethos. Ethos stands on its own” (16). However, one should not assume that Egyptians did not sometimes engage in debate or that they did not seek to support statements with reasons that might help persuade the listener. As Kennedy points out, full syllogisms are very rare, but enthymemes are rather ubiquitous (*Comparative* 131). In one of the early pyramid inscriptions, the sky goddess says to the dead king, “Make your seat in heaven, among the stars of heaven, for you are the Lone Star, the comrade of Hu!” (qtd. in Lichtheim, *Ancient* 33). Here, the second clause reinforces the first by repeating the thought with a different image, but it may also explain the assertion or give a reason for believing it. Also, in the maxim of Ptahhotep quoted above, advising silence in response to the attack of a powerful man, the reader is told: “bend your arms, bow your back! When your heart defies him, he will not support you” (qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 251), which means that to defy the adversary will not make him easier to persuade.

Nonetheless, argumentation was not a concept included in the didactic texts, suggesting that the school boys were trained to be obedient servants in a totalitarian state. As Barbara S. Lesko explains, the “Houses of Instruction” did not encourage inquiring minds or independent thinking (*The Rhetoric* 90). Self-control was particularly important in a strictly ordained hierarchical society, where social order was considered divinely designed and where the individuals’ main duty was to bring themselves into harmony with that order. Therefore, the society offered perfect grounds for propaganda, and, as Barbara Lesko suggests, it is naïve to believe that the ancient Egyptians “could not have conceived of an instrumental rhetoric of deceit” (91) that did not follow either the guidelines for “perfect speech” or the principles of *Maat* in general. Indeed, Egyptian civilization gives the initial

impression of great continuity over thousands of years.³ However, there were recurrent crises, economic distress, civil wars, and foreign invasions that sometimes created serious disruptions. From the surviving historical records, it is possible to trace an official rhetoric by which those in power sought to solidify their position,⁴ not only by means of spoken and written words, but also through art, architecture,⁵ and religious institutions. There are also a number of surviving propagandistic texts which mention about demeaning adversaries, skimming over political reversals, and praising victories that did not exist.

In the “Story of Sinuhe” from the Twelfth Dynasty, there is a scene remarkable for its propagandistic function.⁶ In their first encounter, Sinuhe is asked by Amunenshi, the Syrian chieftain who later becomes his father-in-law, about the state of things back in his homeland. The Egyptian asylum seeker extols the new king Sestoris as follows:

He is a god who has no peer;
no other has been born who could exalt him.
A lord of knowledge he is,
excellent in planning, effective in command.
One sallies forth and returns home at his behest.
He is he who subjugated the mountain lands
while his father was in his palace;
he reported to him to be the fulfillment of his orders.
A hero he is who acts with his sword,
a warrior unequalled by any. (qtd. in Assmann 140)

In more than forty verses the text paints the classic picture of a ruler who combines military bravery with indulgence and leniency. The king is a god, a lord of knowledge, a hero, one

who smites the enemy, who rejoices in battle, a gift from the gods. Amunenshi, who wants to know about the king of Egypt, receives his answer. Sinhue takes his knowledge of the king out into the world, where he “propagates” it, as Kennedy points out, in the original sense of “propaganda” as dissemination of the word to the heathens: “From the Egyptian viewpoint, Amunenshi is a heathen, one who has to be won over to the cause of the pharaoh” (*Comparative* 122).

The Egyptians had high regard for the person who could speak well because reverence for the word, based as it was on the future life, was the source of the main concern for *Maat* and precision in language. Therefore, eloquence was highly valued in ancient Egypt, and the most remarkable evidence of this is the “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant.” It was written during the Middle Kingdom and it is considered “the earliest persuasive discourse ever recorded” (Asante 80). The tale consists of two parts – prosaic and rhetorical - the former consisting of the plot, and the latter of the peasant’s complaints against the legal establishment. It is the tale of a peasant who is tricked out of his goods by a low-ranking official. The peasant turns to the High Steward, Rensi, the acting judge, and demands justice. After consulting with his advisors, the High Steward takes the story to the king, who orders him to have the peasant persist in his complaints and write his words down for the king to enjoy the peasant’s rhetoric. Thus, in a series of nine complaints, the peasant presents his case to the High Steward after which the king orders Rensi to pronounce the verdict, and the peasant’s goods are returned to him.

The nine petitions are characterized by shifts in emotional tone – from eulogy to denunciation, from subtle criticism to direct abuse – all of them marking the peasant’s desperate recourse to different approaches in order to obtain the justice he is seeking. As

Assmann notes, "this rhetorical exuberance is in part the point of the Tale, it is a dazzling display of poetry as entertainment and impassioned expression" (54). Throughout his speeches the peasant does not argue about his own case, and he does not demand for witnesses to be heard, as he was probably entitled to do. His speeches are powerful appeals to the judge's sense of justice. The eloquence that ensures the peasant's eventual success is also the cause of his prolonged suffering. He is so eloquent that the king commands no response be given, simply to force the peasant to continue talking. On the other hand, the peasant assumes that his words are unheard, so he speaks on, while his audience pretends not to acknowledge him.⁷ His complaint thus becomes what Foster recognizes as "a larger questioning of why society ignores justice" (*Echoes* 82). Here follows an excerpt from the Eighth Petition, in which the peasant tries to raise the listeners' awareness of the need for justice:

Do justice for the Lord of Justice
The justice of whose justice is real!
Pen, papyrus, palette of Thoth,
Keep away from wrongdoing!⁸
When goodness is good it is truly good,
For justice is for eternity:
It enters the graveyard with its doer.
When he is buried and earth enfolds him,
His name does not pass from the earth;
He is remembered because of goodness,
That is the role of god's command.

(qtd. in Lichtheim, *Ancient* 181)

Justice here does not carry its usual individual connotation, but refers to the positive force of social justice, of man`s humanity towards others, which is a fundamental principle of *Maat*.⁹ Emphasis here is not on the rights of the pharaoh, as is usually the case, but on the rights of his subjects. At the discourse level, as Lichtheim remarks, this fragment`s fluency of speech and eloquence reflect a remarkable combination of a plea for justice with a demonstration of the value of rhetoric (*Ancient* 169). Furthermore, the peasant seems to coin what in the Western rhetorical tradition are called *sententiae*, maxims of general application, resembling proverbs (Kennedy 127). These, and the examples of injustice and neglect he cites, are the peasant`s major rhetorical techniques.

Although the Egyptians considered eloquence to be an innate faculty improved by instruction, it is, as Ptahhotep says in the quotation above, to be found among “maids at the millstones,” and the “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant” is undoubtedly proof of this. The peasant`s perfection of speech not only makes a strong impression on his audience but it also grants him the justice he is pleading for. His eloquent discourse is highly unlikely the result of his education but much rather a natural gift, combined with remarkable knowledge of the fundamental principles of *Maat*. Thus, the “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant” is at the same time a “parable on the utility of fine speech” (Lichtheim, *Ancient* 170) and a moving discourse on doing justice and serving Truth – the main pillars of *Maat*.

Another body of texts that needs to be addressed from a rhetorical perspective is the vast number of letters surviving from ancient Egypt. These letters, mostly written in the hieratic script, provide the opportunity to observe the Egyptians` daily concerns and activities and to gain a better understanding of the workings of the ancient Egyptian

language. In other words, the letters provide what Meltzer identifies as “an important means for penetrating the psychology of the Egyptians and determining something of the logic of their minds in dealing with immediate situations as well as the values that underlie their approach to problems”(1). The letters, written and read by scribes, served as ways to communicate with superiors and with families, even for those who were not literate. In addition, decrees announcing official policies would be read and posted. Both decrees and petitions were written in the form of letters (Lipson, “Ancient” 85). Letters were thus common in this culture among the bureaucratic and administrative circles.

Many Egyptologists have tried to uncover how many of these letters were actually penned by the writer and literally read by the recipient. Meltzer claims that two possible situations would allow for the writing of a letter by someone other than its author. The individual writing the letter may have been literate, but if he was a high official, he may have used the services of one of his secretaries who wrote letters from dictation. On the other hand, the author might have been illiterate and resorted to a scribe to write the letter on his or her behalf (6). There is reasonable evidence to suggest that most kings were able to read and writ, but it is also known that the pharaoh had letter-writing scribes, who took care of much of the royal correspondence. In the illiterate layer of the society, most letters would have been read aloud by scribes to the receivers. Thus, as Lipson notes, the letters were public texts, with broader audiences than just the designated receivers (“Ancient” 85). The fragment below demonstrates many of the common conventions of letter writing, including the response to elements from a prior letter. The letter is addressed by a king to his chief administrator from the Thirteenth Dynasty in the Middle Kingdom:

[Year 5], third month of the second season, day 20. [Copy of] a royal decree that was brought to the office of the [reporter] of the southern City (Thebes).

Royal decree [to the] city [prefect], vizier, and overseer of the six law courts, Ankhu:

Now this decree of the king is brought to you to inform you that the elder of the portal Ibiyau, son of Remenyankh, has made petition saying, "May a warrant be put in writing, drawn up in the pavilion of the king's servant [...] against the assistant accountant of prisoners, Pay, who has been making illicit use of fugitive Sankhu, in having him (Pay) brought to the Residence in order that he may be interrogated about the misappropriation he has committed," so he said.

Now it (the petition) has been granted. Have him [Pay] brought in custody (?) to the Residence so that you may then take action against him.

Now the King, 1.p.h.¹⁰ is prosperous [and flourishing].

(qtd. in Meltzer 25)

One can see here the use of quotation, the actual words of the petition to which this decree responds. The statements of the petitioner Ibiyau are not just reported in this fragment, but they are quoted. According to Lipson's analysis, the use of quotations "grounds itself in a sense of attentiveness to reproduce the voices and particular words of the other" ("Ancient" 87). Also, the opening of the letter does not say "I write to inform you," as a writer might do today. The reason behind the use of this rhetorical device is that because the scribe read

this letter aloud, it would have been unusual for him to be presenting himself in the first person, using the king's voice. In fact, as Meltzer suggestively remarks, "the prose accommodates the fact that the scribe writes the decree and reads it aloud" (26). In the final line, the king declares himself "prosperous and flourishing," as a reminder of the value system in the Egyptian culture: *Maat*. Since the king is the symbolic center of his people, he reinforces the idea that, for the people of the country to prosper, the king must prosper.

Ancient Egyptian rhetoric, in its various media of expression ranging from wisdom texts and literary works to personal letters and royal decrees, is a reflection of the culture's concern with maintaining the cosmic balance through truth, justice, and perfect speech. It is, as Lipson suggestively states, "a rhetoric of accommodation to the ideal" (*Recovering* 110), a rhetoric constructed upon the principles of *Maat*. Although Ptahhotep's maxims do not offer theoretical rhetorical guidelines in classical terms, they are nevertheless principles rhetorical in nature, reflecting the ancient Egyptian culture's system of values and beliefs. As Fox points out, the virtues of silence, good timing, restraint, fluency of expression and, above all, truthfulness contribute to create one's ethos, which is the major mode of persuasion in Egyptian rhetoric. The ethos created by following the canons of fine speech is that of harmony with the universe, with the governing principles of *Maat*. Fox further draws a connection between the Egyptian instructions and those of Quintilian by pointing out that Egyptian rhetoric can be encapsulated in Quintilian's dictum that only a good man can speak well, which can also be translated as "The quality of a man's speech displays his moral quality" (16). Therefore, Ptahhotep's instructions are both rhetorical and moral in essence because it is the author's promise to teach "the ignorant to be wise, and to be the standard of perfect speech" (qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 251). However, given that ancient Egyptian

rhetoric reflects a nonwestern set of values, it is important to investigate whether or not these values permeated the Greek rhetorical system in the context of the centuries-long interaction between the two civilizations. By examining the various cultural borrowings ranging from educational to religious to philosophical elements, the following chapter will try to establish the degree to which the nonwestern Egyptian elements penetrated into the Greek rhetorical set of values.

Notes on Chapter III:

¹ In discussing the unity of the literary corpus in the Middle Kingdom, Christopher Eyre notes: “One may visualize a limited group of ‘authors’ using a common literary stock to create a range of ‘genres’: memorial inscription, autobiography, hymn, teaching, wisdom, propaganda, lament, narrative. Yet these distinctions are not significant to the form the text takes, for the texts show a community of concepts, phraseology, style and metrical patterns that speak for a community of background and purpose in composition and audience. This literature, whether written on papyrus and self-evidently belles letters, or whether used as inscription, is remarkable for the closeness of interrelationships rather than distinctions of genre, form or content” (162-3).

² The same idea is to be found in the “Instructions of King Merikare”: “Speaking is more powerful than any fighting” (qtd. in Fox 14).

³ The use of “fine words and choice of phrases” to divert the hearers is mentioned in the “Prophecies of Neferti,” and although not necessarily related to deceit, it is seemingly used to disarm (Lesko, *Listening* 248).

⁴ King Akhenaton of the Eighteenth Dynasty resorted to an intensive propagandistic program to solidify his power, including “the change of the king’s name from Amenhotep (“Amon Is Satisfied”) to Akhenaton (“He Who Serves Aton”), the founding of a new capital, far from Thebes, the encouraging of naturalistic art, and the composition of poetry celebrating Aton” (Kennedy 133). The program was a failure. With Akhenaton’s death, the priests reasserted their power, the capital returned to Thebes, and Egyptian art returned to a traditional style.

⁵ The propagandistic function of ancient Egyptian monuments is a widely addressed

topic in Egyptological studies. An interesting observation pertains to Betsy Bryan who claims that monumental Egyptian art was not intended as argument, but rather as statement: “Although that statement was not intended as argument to the viewer, its very monumentalization and its limited accessibility made it likely to have been prestigious” (31).

⁶ Another example of propagandistic text is the “Satire of the Trades” in which Khety describes the ridiculous and unpleasant aspects of twenty trades in order to convince his son that the scribal profession is better than any other. See Foster’s *Ancient Egyptian Literature: An Anthology*.

⁷ Fox assumes that the official class would have enjoyed the story simply because it provided a nice contrast to their own daily lives governed by the principles of fine speech (11).

⁸ Writing is here a metaphor for the High Steward’s duty to maintain Truth.

⁹ In *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies and Related Studies*, Lichtheim suggests that the nine speeches have to be read in full to appreciate the eloquence, skill, and poetic imagery employed to emphasize two major concepts: people live by *Maat* (which is, in essence, truth and justice) and dispensing *Maat* is the foremost duty of the judge (42).

¹⁰ This abbreviation is used by Egyptologists to stand for the ubiquitous prayer-like phrase “may he have a long life, be prosperous, and healthy” (Lipson, “Ancient” 87).

Chapter IV

Toward an Analysis of Nonwestern Elements in Classical Rhetoric

One argument is indisputable: if Egyptian civilization had ended with the New Kingdom, it could never have become a part of our tradition. Egyptian civilization found its way into that [western] tradition through two channels: the authors of classical antiquity and the Bible. The former would have had no first hand experience of Egyptian civilization as a living entity, and would at most have been able to inform us about the ruins, just like the Arab authors of the Middle Ages and European travelers of the modern period. But in fact, the classical authors tell us much more, for they transmit not only an image but the Egyptians themselves, in the form of both messages and memories of their own culture – in short, the Egyptian self-image of the Late Period. And the image thus transported to western tradition has been a fruitful one indeed. (Assmann 282-3)

As stated in the introduction, most discussions of the history of rhetoric are based on the assumption that the western philosophical tradition started with the Greeks. To a large extent this is the result of an intellectual development that began more than two centuries ago in Europe. Scholarship was marked by a consistent ideological protectionism that constructed an image of “a pure, classical Greece in splendid isolation” (Assmann 12). Nevertheless, as Walter Burkert points out, this image of self-contained Hellenism was overtaken in the nineteenth century by three groups of new discoveries: the reemergence of the ancient Near East and Egypt through the decipherment of cuneiform and hieroglyphic writing, the unearthing of Mycenaean civilization, and the recognition of an orientalizing phase in the development of archaic Greek art (3). Since then, classical philology has been approaching these discoveries with a great deal of skepticism. Therefore, irrespective of the increasing amount of evidence that Greek culture did not develop in a vacuum but was influenced by early Near Eastern civilizations in a myriad of ways, rhetorical historiography has been very reluctant to acknowledge this fact.

According to Roberta Binkley, the texts produced by the civilizations prior to the classical age of Athens become “prerhetorical” or “protorhetorical,” that is, they display a primitive type of rhetoric (54). By applying Edward Said’s orientalist theory to this binary of rhetoric/protorhetoric, the Other assumes the same connotation as in the dichotomy East/West. From this perspective of cultural comparativism, the Other, particularly the geographic other, is automatically considered intellectually inferior. Thus, Egypt, in the geographic area of the Middle-East, forms part of the conception of the Orient as the hostile and inferior Other. It is this geographical area that Van de

Mieroop identifies with “the otherness of the east in antiquity, which provided the Greeks with a means of self-identification” (166). Consequently, as Said and Martin Bernal have asserted, the East continues to provide the contrasting oriental and racial otherness. In this orientalist context, ancient Egyptian rhetoric is viewed as intellectually suspect not only because of its two-thousand years of precedence to Greek rhetoric but also because its being part of a geographic hostile Other. Nonetheless, it is important to see culture as a “complex of communication with continuing opportunities for learning afresh, with conventional yet penetrable frontiers, in a world open to change and expansion” (Burkert 7). Hence, given that it becomes more and more clear that the civilizations of the ancient world were deeply interconnected, it is fair to assume that some of the Greek literary and intellectual tradition grew out of or were influenced by the Near Eastern world.

In this context of continuous cross-cultural exchange, the impact of a written culture upon another is perhaps the most dramatic example of transformation wrought from the outside, through borrowing. It is my contention that cultural borrowings provide a starting point for closer interpretation because the form of selection and adaptation to a new system is revealing and interesting in each case. Therefore, my emphasis in this chapter will be on providing evidence for correspondences as well as for the likelihood of Egyptian borrowings in Greek philosophy and rhetoric. Given the limited amount of scholarship concerned with a cross-cultural analysis of the Egyptian and Greek rhetorical systems, more research is needed in order to demonstrate rhetorical influences per se. In his *Comparative Rhetoric*, Kennedy offers a groundbreaking cross-cultural overview of rhetoric, but even as the most reputable figure in the study of

nonwestern rhetoric, he is still aware of the need for the development of a standard cross-cultural rhetorical terminology through further research not only in the field of rhetoric but also, in philosophy, anthropology, archaeology, and Egyptology. If, in certain cases, the following analysis does not provide incontestable evidence of cultural transfer, establishing similarities will still be helpful to achieve what Burkert calls the “liberation of both the Greek and the oriental phenomena from their isolation” (7) and to create an arena of possible comparisons that may be of assistance for future study.

Before proceeding with the examination of the nonwestern set of values and concepts that permeated classical rhetoric, one must take into account the high regard the Greeks had for the Egyptian system of education. This appreciation indicates not only the Greeks’ openness to other cultures but also the existence of favorable grounds for the borrowing of a whole range of philosophical and rhetorical elements. The Egyptian educational principles were summarized in a number of treatises commonly known as “Books of Instruction.” Schoolboys learned how to write through learning old texts by heart and then rewriting them from memory, line by line.¹ Thus learning to write automatically meant acquiring a fund of established knowledge. As Assmann points out, this knowledge was the basis of the normative and formative attitudes of the Egyptian culture, the acquisition of which turned the schoolboys into “educated, right-thinking Egyptians” (123). When they entered the “Houses of Instruction,” the schoolboys were taught how to control their thoughts and actions, how to have faith in the ability of their masters to teach them the truth, how to have faith in themselves to assimilate and wield the truth, how to develop a sense of values by distinguishing the real from the unreal, and how to be free from resentment and persecution.²

According to Assmann, in the Saite age (664 -525 BCE), the art of the past became the model to be copied to the fullest degree of perfection.³ The pictographic nature of Egyptian art, its predilection for graphic formulae as found in the hieroglyphic script, asserted itself now as never before (343). Both the reference back to the glorious past and the increased normativity of artistic expression during this period are present in Plato's famous account of the Egyptian art. In his *Laws*, he explains how the Egyptians had formulated the models (or "schemata," in Greek) that were later canonized as artistic prototypes:

Long ago, apparently they [the Egyptians] realized the truth of the principle we are putting forward only now, that the movements and the tunes which the children of the state are to practice in their rehearsals must be good ones. They compiled a list of them according to style, and displayed it in the temples. Painters and everyone else who represent movement of the body of any kind were restricted to these forms; modification and innovation outside this traditional framework were prohibited, and are prohibited even today, both in this field and in the arts in general. If you examine their art on the spot, you will find that ten thousand years ago (and I am not speaking loosely; I mean literally ten thousand), paintings and reliefs were produced that are no better and no worse than those of today, because the same artistic rules were applied in making them. (Plato, *Laws* 1345)

It is important to note here the idea of canonization of artistic practices: add nothing, take nothing away, change nothing.⁴ As Assmann points out, by forbidding artistic development, one maintains contact with the original knowledge (343). Equally significant is the figure of ten thousand, a deliberately exaggerated assessment which indicates that in this immense stretch of time nothing had changed, and that the Egyptians maintained the same set of values. The third important aspect of this fragment is the centrality of the “art of the muses” in the Egyptian education system. Plato’s account underlines what Assmann identifies as “the generally prescriptive character of art as a cultural grammar, a metatext of right forms and instruction” (344). Clearly, what interests Plato is the perpetuation of a model in the sense of a well-established set of guidelines for behavior. Plato thus transposes this “model” aspect of Egyptian art to his own ideas on education.

Furthermore, Plato’s fascination with the Egyptian system of education is reflected in the *Protagoras*, where Socrates strongly emphasizes the moral aspect of education, the development of the personality and the inner life.⁵ After talking about the importance of early home training, he continues,

After this they [the parents] send him to school and tell his teachers to pay more attention to his good conduct than to his grammar or music lessons. The teachers pay attention to these things, and when the children have learned their letters and are getting to understand writing as well as the spoken language, they are given the works of good poets to read at their desks and learn them by heart, works that contain numerous exhortations, many passages describing in glowing

terms good men of old, so that the child is inspired to imitate them and become like them. (52)

On reading this passage, one cannot ignore the striking similarities with the education schoolboys received in Egypt. Clearly, both societies recognized the importance of the moral aspect of education. For the Egyptians moral values were not only synonymous with the central cultural concept of Maat but also they were what Fox calls “a form of proof” in their own rights. Similarly, for the Greeks, as Aristotle notes in his *Rhetoric*, the ethical appeal was considered to be the most potent of all three modes of persuasion.⁶ Thus, the quality most to be desired in a boy was “good conduct,” and the whole course of training both at home and in school was designed to foster this quality.

All these various references that Plato makes to the Egyptian set of values are the result of his own observations during his thirteen-year period of philosophical and religious initiation by the priests in Heliopolis. In his *Geography*, Strabo confirms that the Greek intellectuals benefited from the wisdom of the Egyptian priests, when he writes about Plato and Eudoxus,

After arriving at Heliopolis, they [Plato and Eudoxus] stayed there for thirteen years among the priests. These priests, so profoundly knowledgeable about celestial phenomena, were at the same time mysterious people who did not talk much, and it is after a long time and with skillful maneuvering that Eudoxus and Plato were able to be initiated into some of their theoretical speculations. (qtd. in Asante 79)

A good example of Plato's versatility with Egyptian religious and philosophical elements is to be found in the *Phaedrus*. According to him, fifth-century Greek politicians were afraid of being regarded as sophists if they published speeches, which indicates their fear and suspicion of writing. Plato thus tells an elaborate story about the Egyptian god Thoth, who invented the alphabet and was told by the god Thamus that the invention was harmful, for instead of being an aid to memory, the letters would destroy all memory: "For this invention will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it, because they will not practice their memory. Their trust in writing, produced by external characters which are not part of themselves, will discourage the use of their own memory within them" (140). However, Plato's account of the conversation between Thoth and Thamus implies that the Egyptians also viewed writing with fear and suspicion. In reality, the Egyptians believed that the magic of writing ensured the immortality of all the great writers of the past, as confirmed by the following fragment from Papyrus Chester Beatty IV:

These wise men who prophesized the future,
What they said has come to pass.
One found it as a saying written in their books
And its magic extends to all who read them.
They are gone, their names would be forgotten,
But their writings keep their memory alive.
(qtd. in Foster, *Echoes* xvii)

The ancient authors owed their immortality to the "magic of writing" that extended to all who read their books. Thus, given that writing not only triumphed over time but also

pressed the march of time into its own service, Thoth, as the patron god of this magic art, held a most important place in Egyptian thought. Plato, however, chooses to manipulate the myth of Thoth so that it suits his own views on writing. First, despite the Greeks' appropriation of Thoth under the name of Hermes, Plato insists on using the god's Egyptian name to emphasize his cross-cultural reference.⁷ Second, by using the imported myth of Thoth as a parable for the condemnation of writing, Plato attempts to ensure universal validity to his theory.

Also in the *Phaedrus*, one can trace a connection between Ptahhotep's rhetorical canon of truthful speech and Plato's emphasis on the importance of truth in rhetorical discourse: "A real art of speaking [...] which does not seize hold of truth does not exist and never will" (131). According to H. I. Marrou, Plato built his system of education on a fundamental belief in truth, and on the conquest of truth by rational knowledge (66). In Plato's view, the philosopher is the one who deals with reality and truth, through dialectic, whereas the rhetorician deals with appropriateness and opinion. On the other hand, truthful speech in Egyptian rhetoric is considered to be effective in itself because it creates an ethos and is ultimately persuasive (Fox 16). For the Egyptians, truthfulness is synonymous with the immortality of the soul:

Great is Truth, enduring in potency;
it is undisturbed since the time of Osiris.
The man who transgresses its laws is punished –
it is a transgression even in the eyes of the selfish.
When the end comes, Truth endures;
a man will then say, "It is my parental heritage."

(qtd. in Parkinson, *Voices* 252)

Therefore, truth is not reserved for just a select few, as in the case of Plato's philosophers; on the contrary; truth is an ethical concept incorporated in *Maat*, which formed "the collective conscious of the Egyptians" (Bard and Shubert 28).

Plato's criticism of rhetoric was answered by Isocrates, who tried to provide a practical reply by claiming to be a follower of the traditions of the sophists.⁸ According to Kennedy, Isocrates's earlier speeches show some experimentation toward finding a proper subject for rhetoric, great and philosophical, by attempting to attribute deeper significance to mythological subjects and to offer moral and political advice to individuals in the traditions of the gnomic poets (*The Art* 17). In his *Busiris*, Isocrates portrays a flattering picture of the land and people of Egypt. As Martin Bernal notes, Isocrates's speech is a "eulogy to Busiris as a mythological lawgiver and to the perfection of the constitution he had devised for Egypt" (104).⁹ In addition to this, Busiris is presented as responsible for the development of philosophy in Egypt. Isocrates's knowledge of and admiration for the moral aspect of Egyptian philosophy are reflected in the prevailing ethical concern of his rhetoric (Marrou 89). Isocrates believed that virtue could be learned as a kind of knowledge and that the mental application to any subject ensured the development of character and the nobility of soul: "True words, words in conformity with law and justice, are images of a good and trustworthy soul" (135). Therefore, from this brief overview of Egyptian elements in Plato's and Isocrates's works, it is pertinent to conclude that, despite their ambivalence of ideas, both philosophers not only recognized but also adopted some of the cultural borrowings from Egypt into their own theories.

The theoretical refutation of Plato's ideas came from Aristotle, who recognized the usefulness of rhetoric as a tool. Although Plato recognized and used various patterns of reasoning and argumentation, Aristotle was the first not only to give a systematic account of such patterns but also to evaluate which patterns of argument are logically valid and which are not. Aristotle recognizes that demonstration is impossible if the argument is flawed or the premises are false; hence, those speaking the truth and doing so justly have an obligation to be persuasive: "Persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question" (25).¹⁰ Also in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle emphasized the importance of invention techniques to find points of dissension in a dialogue, with an elaborate system of questions to determine the differences and the points at issue.

On the other hand, as Carol Lipson suggestively points out, Egyptian rhetoric is a rhetoric of "accommodation to the ideal" (*Recovering* 110). Here the invention process seems focused on seeking points of connection, points of resonance with the ideal framework of *Maat*, and reality is interpreted in culturally-sanctioned ways. In contrast to Plato's and Isocrates's rhetorical principles, Aristotle's theory moves away from the idealism and prevailing ethical concern of his predecessors. Therefore, by making use of "all available means of persuasion" (24), Aristotle's rhetorical system focuses on points of dissension from rather than connection to an ideal, through argument. Yet, as I pointed out earlier, in the Egyptian culture there is no overt argument as such in written texts. Moreover, the maxims even reflect distaste for direct argument in general cultural life, though argument is seen in specific, well-defined locations. One of the Egyptian

canons for “perfect speech” is restraint rather than argument, although in judicial contexts, such as in the “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant,” the rhetorical registry seems to take more of an argumentative shape. It thus becomes increasingly clear that the Aristotelian rhetorical system not only marks the departure from the Egyptian ethical borrowings recognizable in Plato’s and Isocrates’s works but also lacks the universal value and applicability that most classicists have upheld as incontestable.

In his essay, “The Art of Rhetoric at Rhodes,” Richard Leo Enos claims that Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* may have been a rhetorical treatise that was not meant to provide a *universal* explanation of rhetorical principles and practices but rather as a study of rhetoric indigenous to Athens (186). It is thus possible that Aristotle’s treatment of rhetoric was based on rhetoric as practiced in Athens, and that his theory would be based on his observations of the civic functions in Athens. However, regardless of whether or not Aristotle wrote his *Rhetoric* as an Athenian rhetoric, it is obvious that western scholars have taken it to be synonymous with Greek rhetoric, despite the growing awareness that other representations existed not only in Greece but also in other parts of the world.¹¹ Furthermore, any other forms of rhetoric are typically referred to as derivative or inferior versions of one true rhetoric: Aristotelian (or Athenian) rhetoric. Therefore, the dominance, or in Enos’s terms, the “hegemony” (185) of Aristotelian rhetoric has prevented western scholars not only from recognizing other rhetorical principles and practices but also from constructing a historically accurate rhetorical timeline.

In today’s global culture, acknowledging the value of nonwestern rhetorics and trying to establish points of connection with our understanding of rhetoric help us create

new venues for a better cross-cultural communication. Moreover, in order to gain a good understanding of today`s nonwestern rhetorical practices, we need to choose as a starting point the clarification of the existing historical inaccuracies in today`s rhetorical scholarship. Therefore, the exploration of ancient Egyptian rhetoric helps us to provide a vision of future possibilities of an “enhanced rhetorical consciousness” (Binkley 59), one that advocates a more culturally complex inherited literacy whose representation simultaneously works to undermine western discourses and the representation of the Other. Ancient Egyptian rhetoric challenges our definitions and conceptions of nonwestern rhetorics, or the rhetorical Other, offering an invitation both to enlarge and to extend the conception of origins two thousand years before the Athenian Greeks.

In conclusion, ancient Egyptian rhetoric, although not recognized for its true value in the development of Western thought, is not only worthy of consideration but also of further research. The recognition and study of the rhetoric of other traditions allow the development of a culturally diverse rhetoric that reflects universal values and celebrates the variety of rhetorical practices. An understanding and appreciation of multicultural rhetoric can facilitate intercultural communication and, as a result, expand the realm of research in rhetorical studies. As Enos suggests, to engage in this new challenge, we need nothing less than to “enact our tool-building creativity and develop new research methods for an archaeology of rhetoric” (*The Art* 187).

Notes on Chapter IV:

¹ For more on additive learning, see Eyre and Baines.

² According to Professor Kwame Nantambu, Plato derived his three cardinal virtues from the goals that the young Egyptians had to attain during their education. Thus, Plato's "virtue of wisdom" corresponds with the Egyptians' control of thoughts and action; the "virtue of fortitude" with the freedom from resentment under the experience of persecution; and the "virtues of justice and temperance" with the Egyptians' ability to distinguish between right and wrong, between the real and the unreal.

³ As Roccati points out, the Saite Dynasty witnessed the revival of erudite research. Knowledge of Egypt's remote past was increased by gathering quotations from ancient monuments, by collecting rare works, and by recovering and reproducing ancient models (81).

⁴ Gay Robins also notes that in ancient Egypt conformity was highly valued, and both men and women had predetermined roles in a society which looked to the past for its models: "Although Egyptian society was by no means unchanging, change was slow and at any given time the *status quo* was unlikely to be questioned" (19).

⁵ Isocrates's teaching was also concerned with morality. Kennedy claims that the most likely source of Isocrates's view was the Socratic circle that he belonged to (*The Art* 183).

⁶ Cicero and Quintilian also stressed the need for high moral character. For Quintilian, the ideal orator was a "good man skilled in speaking" (qtd. in Dobson 42).

⁷ Because of Thoth's close association with magic, learning, and the mysteries of the world beyond, the Greeks equated him with their god Hermes, who had several similar

attributes. The Alexandrian period saw a profuse development of mystic and alchemical writings in Greek, and this mystic corpus of “Hermetic” texts was attributed to Thoth, whom the Greeks called **Hermes Trismegistos**, “Thrice-greatest Hermes” (Kaster 71).

⁸ Plato and Isocrates occupied different intellectual positions and viewed each other’s schools with disapproval.

⁹ Isocrates has apparently derived his knowledge of Egyptian institutions from Herodotus’s second book, and he simply attributed these institutions to Busiris by a sophistic argument of probability (Kennedy, *The Art* 181).

¹⁰ This clearly resembles the ancient Egyptian insistence on truthful speaking for creating the ethos as a form of proof in itself.

¹¹ Enos argues that Rhodian rhetoric developed separately from the Athenian one.

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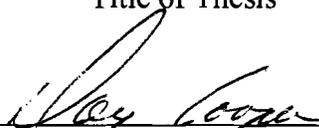
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