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Recommended Citation

Mifsud, Mari Lee. "On Being a Simple Judge: Exploring Rhetorical Citizenship in Aristotelian and Homeric Rhetorics." In *Contemporary Rhetorical Citizenship*, edited by Christian Kock and Lisa Villadsen, 223-38. Chicago: Leiden University Press, 2014.

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On Being a Simple Judge: Exploring Rhetorical Citizenship in Aristotelian and Homeric Rhetorics

MARI LEE MIFSUD

The gifts of rhetorical history and theory

What does rhetorical history have to offer contemporary theorizing of rhetorical citizenship? Turning to Aristotle for answers to this question is commonplace.¹ Many resources reside within Aristotle, yet not without complications. Rhetorical citizenship in an Aristotelian mode could be defined as citizens enacting their duties to judge various contingent matters whether political, judicial, or cultural via civic discourse. The “citizen” as “judge” means at once someone requiring qualification, namely in ancient Greece birth into a qualifying family and gender, and someone requiring no qualification, as audiences are assumed to be unqualified, simple people. Aristotle tells us that the rhetorical audience serving as “judge” (*kritēs*) must be “simple” (*haplous*) (*Rhet.*1357a11-12). John Henry Freese translates *haplous* as “a simple person” (1982, 25), and Rhys Roberts translates “an audience of untrained thinkers” (1954, p. 27).²

¹ Recent work in rhetorical studies related to deliberative democracy, rhetorical citizenship, and publics demonstrates various returns to Aristotle. See for example van Haften, Jansen, De Jong, and Koetsenruijter, eds. (2011); Kock and Villadsen, eds. (2012); and van Belle, Gillaerts, van Gorp, van De Mieroop, and Rutten, eds. (2013). The significance of the ancient Greek rhetorical tradition, in particular Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, is being noticed in political theory as well. Chantal Mouffe calls for politics to connect with the great tradition of rhetoric originating in ancient Greece (1993, pp. 4-6; see also qtd. in Ivie 2002, p. 278). Danielle Allen turns to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* for guidance on producing trust in democratic citizen discourse (2004). Iris Marion Young turns to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* to advance a communicative theory of political discourse that could, via empathy (*ēthos* and *pathos*), support the democratic inclusion of difference (2000).

² For working with Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, I use translations by J.K. Freese, Rhys Roberts, and

The contemporary view of the classical conception of audience is not a positive one, caricaturing the classical view as wrongly viewing the audience as passive, needing to be acted upon by the rhetor, like a billiard ball by a cue (Benson 1989, p. 293). This critique of classical notions of audience is not unwarranted – the Platonic Socrates actually does describe the rhetor’s audience as so simple as to be persuadable to take an ass into battle rather than a horse based on resemblance (Plato, *Phaedrus*, 260c)! And immediately prior to the key passage in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* describing the audience as *kritēs ... haplous*, we can find another less than flattering description of audience members, namely that they cannot follow a long chain of syllogistic reasoning, hence need rhetoric to simplify complex matters (Aris. *Rhet.*, 1357a3-4). Plenty of evidence exists to warrant a contemporary critique of the classical conception of the citizen-judge as simple.

Yet, something about being simple seems lost in translation. Other places in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* suggest being simple is a *virtuous* quality of mind, one related to divining universals at play in any particular situation, universals that must be acknowledged to live happily together in a polity. But we do not hear much about these other places. If we want to make the argument that rhetoric matters to citizenship and that the two – rhetoric and citizenship – are mutually benefitted by their exchanges, then we need to deal with this charge of citizens as simpletons that rings through the rhetorical tradition. We need to go to these other places. In juxtaposition with an approach relegating classical conceptions of agency and audience as outdated and over, I wish in this essay to avoid such a negative approach, or perhaps I should say such a “negating” choice. I wish to take being simple as a citizen judge creatively. Rather than negating citizen judges as simpletons, might we create something new? In this essay, I wish to try.

What can be created anew from primary text when seen with different eyes, thought within other contexts, enacted with new tropes, lived in different bodies? Texts can be figured otherwise, or *alloiostrophically* (Sutton and Mifsud 2012, and Forthcoming). *Alloiostrophic rhetoric* make meaning otherwise: through turns toward difference, the other, the strange, *alloiosis*. And indeed something other, different, and strange lies lurking in the

George Kennedy, along with my own, to navigate the ancient Greek of the *Oxford Classical Text*. I consider as well William Grimaldi’s commentary on Books 1 and 2, and Edward Meredith Cope’s commentary in 3 volumes.

ancient Greek concept of being a simple judge, *kritēs* ... *haplous*. For the purposes of this preview, I call this *kritēs* (judge) who is supposed to be *haplous* (simple) “strange” for involvement in the divination of universals, the Homeric culture of the gift, and the *telos* of happiness. Rationality, contingency, the needs of the polis, and the *telos* of judgment continue to figure the conditions in which the *kritēs* ... *haplous* acts, but in this essay, I turn toward the weird parts of being simple, the parts that are not easy to represent. I do so lest these weird parts be forgotten, their resource lost for theorizing, envisioning, imagining contemporary rhetorical citizenship. Before starting though, we should call to attention how I have just set up my project for failure by way of claiming to represent the unrepresentable. We ought to be always aware that this and other such paradoxes of communication are ever-present, yet we must communicate anyway.

I begin with tracings in Aristotle’s primary text on being a judge and being simple. These traces take us to the Homeric culture of the gift. Creating in the limen “betwixt and between” the archaic and the classical, I offer considerations of rhetorical citizenship through the figure of the rhetorical citizen as a judge, being *haplous*.

On being a judge: *kritēs*

Aristotle uses three different terms to identify the rhetor’s audience: hearer, *akroatēs*, judge, *kritēs*, and observer, *theōros* (cf. 1358b2-3). Scholarly controversy exists on whether Aristotle meant different things by the various terms he uses for the audience of rhetoric, in particular whether the subcategories of *akroatēs*, namely *kritēs* and *theōros*, mean different things. Some like Freese and Roberts hold the observer in a lesser position than the judge. Freese’s translation takes a significant interpretive liberty by qualifying the “observer” as “mere:” “Now the hearer must necessarily be either a mere spectator or a judge” (Freese 1982, p. 33). Roberts’ translation is not so loose, “The hearer must be either a judge ... or an observer” (Roberts 1954, p. 32), but his note affirms Freese’s reading of the *theōros*: “a mere onlooker, present at a show, where he *decides* no grave political or legal issue (cp. 1391b16-20) and plays no higher role than that of speech taster, or oratorical connoisseur” (32 n. 1). Yet, when we follow Roberts’ direction to compare with 1391b16-20, we find that even though Aristotle expresses some level of privilege about the audience as *kritēs* proper being those deciding questions at issue in civic controversies, he recognizes that judgment cannot be restricted just to deliberative and judi-

cial rhetoric. He says that the *theōros* is also a *kritēs* for the epideictic speech is put together with reference to the spectator as a judge (Aris. *Rhet.* 1391b15).

I side with Grimaldi who affirms no evidential need to force a firm distinction between the *kritēs*, *theōros*, and *akroatēs*, though he says, “I believe it is clear that for A. as far as judgment is concerned the auditor in each class of rhetoric can rightly be called *kritēs*” (Grimaldi 1980, p. 81). I consider then *kritēs* as the operant term for the citizen who must judge the various contingent affairs of civic life, whether political, judicial, or cultural. Moreover, I see being *kritēs* as being in a position of power and an opportunity for agency, making for meaningful rhetorical citizenship, hardly the position of being simple, as in “simpleton.”

On being simple: *haplous*

What quality of mind ought we to assume the *kritēs* has when the *kritēs* is described as *haplous*? While a translation of *haplous* is indeed “simple,” the meaning in use is anything but. As Grimaldi notes (1980, p. 56), the term is related in use to “*haplōs*” which has several meanings:

- (a) “singly, by itself, without the admixture of anything else,” and, so, “simply,” in either a physical or moral sense. Connected with this use is one in which [*haplōs*] is employed in a derogatory sense, “negligently, without sufficient care”; e.g. *Met.* 987a21: “to treat a subject too simply.” (b) A second meaning is a development out of the first; here [*haplōs*] is the same as [*kath’ auton*], “in itself, absolutely, without reference to anything else,” and thus is it opposed to [*pros ti*] “the relative”; e.g., *Top.* 115b33-35. (c) There is a third meaning, “generally, universally,” which is used in opposition to *kath’ ekaston* or *kata meros*, “individually, particularly, specifically.” This third meaning is the meaning in our passage [1356a7] and is a common usage of the word (Grimaldi 1980, p. 41).

Only a small part of the semantic range of *haplous* suggests a “derogatory sense” of the word. The more prominent meanings are “singular,” “universal,” “without reference to anything else,” “given,” “simple.”³ Moreover, Lid-

³ A review of Liddell, Scott, and Jones (LSJ) on *haplous* and related terms reveals evidence across Aristotle’s corpus showing these terms signifying that which is singular, absolute, uncomplicated in its being, given for the whole to see or know or divine: See *Pol.* 1268b.39, *EN.* 1149a2, and *Metaph.* 989b17, 1025b7, 1030a16.

dell, Scott, and Jones indicate that beyond the reference to Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* (which Grimaldi notes), only Isocrates, *To Nicocles* (2.46) uses *haplous* for its derogatory sense (LSJ 1977, p. 191). What if the interpretive industry has over-determined the translation of *haplous* to convey a derogatory sense of the audience as judge, with the simple judge then being akin to a simpleton, in need of rhetoric to make complex things simple? What if this regard for the judge eventuates in a democratic citizenry living in accordance with this diminished view of itself? Can we imagine democracy surviving if rhetorical citizenship were envisioned and embodied as such?

What if within the text lies something other lurking, something resourceful, forgotten, perhaps even never understood or turned into “knowledge” in the first place? Grimaldi’s range of definitions of *haplous* gives us a sense that indeed something other is present, a sense Liddell, Scott, and Jones confirm. Following the traces in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, which take us to the Homeric epics, will give us an even better sense.⁴

The use of the term *haplous* in the *Rhetoric* reveals a range of meaning suggesting not only much more than “simpleton,” but perhaps just the opposite. In a key passage suggesting as much, 1367a 38, Aristotle describes being *haplous* as a virtuous quality of a person. When one needs to praise another who shows excessive qualities (*hyperbole*), one can turn to the best sense of these attendant qualities. For example, Aristotle tells us that if one who needs to be praised is *manikos*, or “manic,” this person could be praised for the virtuous part of these qualities, namely in this case being *haplous*.

Common translation of this line takes *haplous* to mean “outspoken,” “straightforward,” and “frank and open” (Roberts 1954, p. 59; Kennedy 2007, p. 79; and Freese 1982, p. 97). But this seems to miss the significance of Aristotle’s use of *manikos*. Mania in ancient Greece, albeit considered an excessive quality, was also recognized as a desire to speak the divined truth of a matter. Think of Cassandra in ancient Greek mythology, a priestess fated not to be believed; her divinations, never to be given credence, proved, nonetheless, true. Using Aristotle’s suggestion, if we were to choose to praise

⁴ For working with the Homeric epics, in addition to my own readings of the *Oxford Classical Texts*, I am guided by Richmond Lattimore’s translations of both epics, as well as translations provided in the Loeb editions by A. T. Murray for both epics. Stanford’s commentary on the *Odyssey* is a steady source of consideration, along with Kirk, et al., and Heubeck et al. commentaries on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* respectively.

her rather than blame her, we could praise her for being *haplous*. The positive quality of *mania* is its connection to divination of the universal at play, and its capacity to discern the simple truth of any given matter. Think as well of Plato's *Phaedrus* in which the Platonic Socrates defines *mania* as connected with the noblest of arts, for it foretells the future, gives prophecy (Plato, *Phaedrus*, 244c). Later the Platonic Socrates calls true Love, as in the true Love of the ideal forms of Beauty, Truth, Justice, and the Good, a *mania* (249d). If being *haplous* is being *manikos* without the hyperbole then *haplous* is connected to all that *mania* is connected to, only in moderate form, hence all the more an Aristotelian virtue.⁵

This textual evidence suggests being *haplous* means something other than simple-minded in a derogatory or minimalizing sense. Another key passage demonstrating this point arrives when Aristotle is addressing a matter of style and organization. Here, Aristotle explains that a speech refraining from detail in the narrative (*diēgēsis*) about the facts is preferable in that it is a simpler (*haplousteros*) speech, and avoids being unnecessarily complicated. For example, you ought not to develop a complicated narrative "if you wish to praise Achilles; for all know of his actions" (Aris. *Rhet.*, 1416b 20-28).

One who is in a position to judge, namely any citizen, ought not need a long chain of reasoning or a complicated *diēgēsis* to discern what is good, just, and praiseworthy. That which is known by all is given, hence needs no complicated story. Givens are simple to discern. This discernment is something other than rational if "rational" is understood as syllogistic production. Aristotle tells us these givens, which he describes as general ideas of the just and unjust, can be divined (*manteuontai*) by all (Aris. *Rhet.* 1373b6-8). Note that Aristotle uses *manteuontai* and in doing so calls attention all the more to dimensions of *mania* that are involved in being *haplous*.

But what are these givens? One prime example of a given in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is happiness. Exploring this given provides all the more insight into being *haplous*.

Happiness, being *haplous*, and the Homeric gift

Aristotle identifies happiness (*eudaimonia*) as the primary topos for rhetors needing to derive arguments for exhortation (*Rhet.* 1360b4-7). With this topos, rhetors can argue that one should do the things that procure happiness

⁵ For consideration of *mania* in ancient Greek culture see Dodds (1951).

or one of its parts, or increase instead of diminish it, and avoid doing those things that destroy or hinder happiness or bring about its opposite. Aristotle gives an extended account of the *topoi* of happiness, namely those things which are good such as a good birth, good children and numerous children, wealth, good reputation, honor, health, beauty, strength, stature, good old age, many friendships and good friendships, good luck, virtue (1360b19-21). He follows this list by going into some detail revealing the given beliefs and opinion in each *topos*, the *endoxa* at play.

Endoxa become topical resources for exhortation, and these *endoxa* are givens of Homeric gift culture. Moreover the *endoxa* can be seen circulating via Aristotle's citation of Homer and reference to his works. Grimaldi notes that the *topoi* of happiness that Aristotle uses are specifically noted as marks of honor in the *Iliad* (1980, p. 114), and again Grimaldi notes that when Aristotle cites "eloquence and capacity for action" as a given good at 1362b22-23 in the *Rhetoric*, that the same idea is "aptly expressed in Phoenix's words to Achilles" at *Iliad* 9.442 (Grimaldi 1980, p. 130). Moreover, Aristotle cites Homer three times in this section, to exemplify the significance of honor (*timē*) in these happiness *topoi*: 1) *Iliad*, 2.160 cited at Aris. *Rhet.* 1363a6: Hera appeals to Athene to prevent the dishonor and unhappiness that would befall the Greek people if the Greeks were to retreat leaving Helen for the Trojans to boast of; 2) *Iliad*, 1.255 cited at Aris. *Rhet.* 1362b36: Nestor uses an honor appeal to Achilles and Agamemnon to point out how their enemy would be happy if he heard all the truth about the Achaeans' quarrelling; 3) *Iliad*, 2.298 cited at Aris. *Rhet.* 1363a6-7: Odysseus appeals to his men to hold out lest they be disgraced and bring upon themselves unhappiness returning unsuccessfully after having stayed so long.

Aristotle's happiness *topoi* draw their material substance from archaic *givens*, in particular the *endoxa* of honor, *timē*, exemplified in Homeric epic. *Timē* in the archaic archive is so immense that trying to track its presence is like trying to track the presence of *logos* itself. The paths go in every direction. But perhaps the most important point to make here is that in the Homeric lexicon, *timē* means first and foremost recompense, compensation, or indemnity (Cunliffe 1977, p. 383; see for example *Il.* 1.159; 3.286; 16.92; *Od.* 14.70, 117). Indeed *timē* also means honor in terms of the respect one is given, but so does *kleos* for that matter, a term that Aristotle does not use in these passages. The meaning of *timē* is more robust than "honor" as its primary register is that of exchange, in particular in an economy of reciproc-

ity and mutual benefaction typifying ideals of Homeric gift culture. *Timē* is an act of giving honor as recompense for one who has done good deeds, who has benefitted many and in ways that are not easy to do.

In Aristotle's catalogue of happiness *topoi*, the specific topic of the gift is an organizing dynamic of the *endoxa*. The key passage on the gift occurs within this section on the *topoi* of happiness:

Honor (*timē*) is a token of a reputation for doing good; and those who have already done good (*euergetēkotes*) are justly and above all honored, not but that he who is capable of doing good is also honored. Doing good relates either to personal security (*sōterian*) and all the causes of existence; or to wealth; or to any other good things which are not easy to acquire, either in any conditions, or at such a place, or at such a time; for many obtain honor for things that appear trifling, but this depends upon place and time. The components of honor are sacrifices, memorials in verse and prose, privileges, grants of land, front seats, public burial, State maintenance, and among the barbarians, prostration and giving place, and all gifts which are highly prized in each country. For a gift is at once a giving of a possession and a token of honor ... (Aris., *Rhet.*, 1361a 27-38).

Aristotle's description of the materials of happiness deriving from honor shows an intimate connection with the gift and giving. Honor is recompense for doing good, *euergetein* (*eu*=well; *ergon* = work) (1361a30). Doing good means giving well, hence Kennedy's translation of *euergetein* as "benefaction" (2007, p. 59). One who does good works is a benefactor, a giver of good things.

Continuing to follow the tracings in the text, we can see that to give well is to offer what Freese calls "personal security" (1982, p. 53), and Kennedy calls "safety" (2007, p. 59), along with all the causes of existence, and things that are hard to come by. To give security is to give not just the resources that support existence but also preservation. In divine form the *sōtēr* or *sōtērian* are providers of safety, givers of safe passage, preservers or maintainers of security. Zeus is known as a *sōtēr*. And Aristotle references the Savior Goddesses in Book 3 of the *Rhetoric* (1419a3), who were honored for protection and preservation. Human benefactors are *sōtēr*, doing good work to ensure civic safety and preservation.

Aristotle's description of the ways in which a benefactor should be justly honored brings to light the archaic ethic of reciprocity in gift-giving, mutual benefaction. As Marcel Mauss' classic work (1990) on archaic gift

culture reveals, receiving a gift sparks a cycle of obligatory reciprocity, where in the receiver honors the gift and the giver with some kind of return gift, typically either equal to what was received or surpassing it. Aristotle's passage on honor in happiness *topoi* shows how reciprocity forges civic relations as both givers and receivers are benefitted mutually, the receivers by way of safety and benefits for the happy life, and the giver by way of being honored for giving, ideally for giving in abundance and of those things which are hardest to come by. And nowhere in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is it clear that the receivers and the givers are mutually exclusive persons.

These classical happiness *topoi* are figured through the Homeric gift in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and serve as examples of *givens*. In short, giving well makes for a happy polis. The highest form of giving, like giving safety and honor, inspires the greatest happiness. This *endoxa* circulates from the archaic Homeric gift culture into the classical culture of the polis via Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and envisions a rhetor's agency as a preparation for being *haplous*, and audience agency as discerning the simple givens that in their universal connection to all that is good ought to be judged simply. No need for lengthy and complex syllogisms exists when the principles at play are so easily divined, so universal, singular, so simple.

To complement this theoretical figure of being *haplous*, let's consider a poetic figure, one presented by Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. Here is the scene: To forge a peace between the embattled states of Sparta and Athens, in the context of a Panhellenic sex strike by the women until peace is settled, Lysistrata, assuming the role of citizen out of care for the security of her home, appeals to the Magistrates via the gift. She reminds Spartan Magistrates about the time when Spartans came to Athens to sit at the altars as suppliants seeking defense against attack. Athenians responded with great generosity, rescuing them. She reminds the Athenian Magistrates how, when Athenians were enslaved by the Thessalians, the Spartans came to their aid, liberating them, and replacing slaves' rags with warm cloaks, as suits a free people (Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 1149-1156).

Lysistrata brings to light the circulation of the gift between the two warring states, mutual benefaction and solidarity. She then brings to light the violation of the gift ethic by displaying the disgrace of failed reciprocity. She asks the Magistrates why, after being treated with generosity by the other country, they are now out to ravage this one that treated them so well (1137-1146). More than once she asks, "So why, after so many mutual bene-

factions are you fighting instead of calling a halt to your misbehavior" (1161)? Aristophanes then portrays how *Lysistrata's* gift appeals, offered generously as questions rather than arguments, succeed. Reconciliation ensues, along with much feasting and dancing. Married couples are reunited. Peace and lovemaking resume. Solidarity in ever-lasting friendship becomes their lasting future.

What a poetic vision! In it we can see *Lysistrata* as the simple judge having no need for qualifications, no need for complicated reasoning, to make the simple offering of a universal happiness via solidarity and mutual benefaction. The magistrates, too, are simple judges, being asked by *Lysistrata* to discern the simple, universal goods at play. But of course these Magistrates, for more than once exclaiming their willingness to agree to anything for the return of sex, seem simple in the derogatory sense of being *haplous*, despite their qualification as Magistrates. Still my point holds. If they judge peace and friendship to be theirs, rather than war, based only on desire for the return of sex, then still they are being *haplous*. What is a more singular, universal principle of exchange than sex? As Georges Bataille writes, "It should come as no surprise to us that the principle of the gift, which propels the movement of general activity, is at the basis of sexual activity" (p. 41). Halting sex is not just a cunning comedic tactic in *Lysistrata*, it is the primary means of halting the gift.

We can see being *haplous* at work in *Lysistrata*, discerning that the simplest path to happiness is the idealized and friendly ritual of the gift. To be a rhetorical citizen in this Homeric mode of Aristotle's rhetoric is to be a simple judge of the gift, so that happiness via solidarity and mutual benefaction guides one's choices. Commonplace in gift studies is the expression that the theory of the gift is a theory of human solidarity. Likewise commonplace is the expression that there are no free gifts.⁶ That which is given by way of the gift obligates simple acceptance. Something so simple about human solidarity ought not to need much by way of dialectical investigation, or proof by way of lengthy syllogistic reasoning. Such complications make the gift something quite other than a gift.⁷ For the gift to be given, it must be

⁶ See Douglass (1990), who frontloads these ideas in her foreword to Mauss' classic work on the gift.

⁷ See Derrida (2000) and Calvin O. Schrag for their critiques of the conditions of the gift. Schrag's position is recorded well and in brief in Ramsey and Miller (2003, p. 41). See also Mifsud (Forthcoming) which offers a rhetorical history and theory of Homeric and Aristotelian rhetorics of the gift.

given *simply*. Yet lurking still is the possibility of the duplicitous gift, hostility in the guise of hospitality, the classic Homeric example being the gift of the Wooden Horse to the Trojans.⁸ The gift, as many have pointed out, is both remedy and poison.⁹ The gift offers no guarantees of happiness nor of the resolution of enmity between peoples, only a spark of possibility, and an agent of change in the rhetorical citizen as simple judge.

Contemporary resourcefulness of being *haplous*

How we do rhetoric's history and theory matters for what we can know about rhetorical citizenship. Perhaps for the very reason that being *haplous* is connected to divination means it must be negated as rhetoric's history gets written through the privilege of rationality. Ideas, terms, and practices that seem to undercut or at least fail to affirm the traditionally privileged ideas, terms, and practices get negated in any number of ways, all to ill effect. In a history privileging the rational means of knowledge production, divination falls into nothingness and the remnants of being *haplous* are reduced to a rather diminutive form of the simpleton. Negating these Homeric dimensions of being *haplous* leaves only a view and an attitude of the rhetorical citizen as simpleton. Or, said another way, negating these Homeric dimensions of being *haplous* is killing the spark of possibility that could have been the rhetorical citizen.

From recent work in rhetorical citizenship and in deliberative democracy, we can see a return to Aristotle as a source of affirming the significance of rhetoric to civic life and theorizing the art of citizens in a democracy.¹⁰ Bolstering critical reception of what can be seen in this "eternal return" to Aristotle seems an imperative lest we create what Hélène Cixous calls "the empire of the self-same," a form of cultural colonization that has no place in

⁸ See Derrida's deconstruction of hospitality in his response to Anne Dufourmantelle that shows hospitality's relation to hostility (2000). See also Serres' classic work on hostility and the parasite (2007). See also Davis (2010, p. 132).

⁹ Benveniste (1997) points out that across Indo-European languages "to give" means simultaneously "to take." This paradox is addressed in a range of work from the original sociological work by Mauss (1990), to the philosophical deconstruction of the gift by Derrida (2000; 1997).

¹⁰ In addition to work cited earlier, see Gross and Walzer (2000) as an excellent demonstration of the return to Aristotle and the significance such a return continues to offer.

democratic practice nor the happy life (2001, pp. 78-83). This exploration of being *haplous* offers what Cixous calls a “*sortie*” an escape from the traditional story of the death of the other (2001, p. 78). By way of going back to Aristotle to see that which is strange anew for its resourcefulness, acknowledgement is given to the resources within rhetorical history to create new structures for exchange, structures oriented towards what Cixous calls joy and Aristotle happiness. The strangeness that we see anew in this essay is the virtue of being simple in rhetorical judgment, exemplified theoretically and poetically through rhetoric and the gift. In Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and its related citation of Homeric epics we see the gift as directed towards happiness and the greatest universal good. In *Lysistrata*, we see the gift used rhetorically as a simple path to peace. To shape rhetorical citizenship in and through the gift is to allow the most singular and simple forms of human solidarity to be discerned, divined, judged, and lived.

But to conclude that a rhetoric of being *haplous* is a *technē* of rhetoric would be mistaken. Being a simple judge is a quality prior to *technē*, prior to the need to be persuasive about anything in particular. Being a simple judge is not an appropriative position where the given is only ever acknowledged for what it can give the rhetor by way of persuasiveness. *Lysistrata* is no technician. Nor Homer. Being a simple judge marks a kind of judgment other than one wrought by *technē*. To be simple is to be untrained, and to be appropriate as is, both qualities stand in juxtaposition to being *technē*. To be *technē* is to have an awareness of awareness towards the end of greater, even absolute, efficiency in achieving desired ends, namely rational judgment on the contingent matters of civic life. Technical efficiency works against the grain of democracy’s messiness, and some describe *technē*’s *telos* as ensuring mutual destruction rather than mutual benefaction. Kenneth Burke describes the human condition as separated from its own nature by instruments of its own making, goaded by the spirit of hierarchy, and rotten with perfection (Burke 1966, p. 16). Henry Johnstone describes a brutalizing effect of technical communication (Johnstone 1982). David Lovekin argues that a technical orientation towards symbols and society has an alienating effect, turning us all into strangers in a political landscape (Lovekin 1991). Even Aristotle is careful to note that rhetoric deals with things about which we deliberate but for which we have no systematic rules, no *technai* (Aris. *Rhet.*, 1357a2), and this despite *technē* being much of the focus of and on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. This paradox turns out to be a very good thing. Rhetoric has a *technē*, and

rhetoric has this other dimension, this dimension that is other than *technē*, incapable of being translated into *technē*, this simple dimension, connected to that which is given, not technically produced, but free. To be free and enact freedom, rhetoric must be more than a *technē* of persuasion, or even a *technē* of rhetorical citizenship. Bringing this strange dimension of rhetoric to light, we see it can serve as an irritant to the whole of our thinking about rhetoric, like sand in an oyster making a pearl.¹¹

¹¹ See Sutton and Mifsud (2012, p. 230) for discussion of *alloiostrophic* rhetoric as irritant. See as well, Sutton and Mifsud, Forthcoming. For a robust consideration of how theorizing rhetoric through the gift, beyond *technē*, offers resource to rhetorical citizenship in new media spaces via a concept of “netoric,” see Petra Aczél (2013).

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