MICHAEL PSELLOS ON RHETORIC

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ABSTRACT. The present paper is focused on Psellos' letters, which contain a number of remarks on his role as a teacher of rhetoric and as a rhetor active at the imperial court, as well as many comments on his correspondents' and his own style – including considerations on kinds and levels of style, Atticism and sophistry, and judgements on the great rhetorical models of the past. The examination of all these passages makes it possible to highlight the way Psellos constructs his own image as an expert in rhetoric, familiar with Hermogenean theories, but also heavily influenced by Dionysios of Halikarnassos' aesthetic conceptions. The great diversity of models with whom he identifies testifies to his stylistic versatility and his frequent adoption of a polemical stance can be read as a claim to independence of mind and originality.

Keywords: rhetoric, epistolary genre, levels of style, aesthetic, Atticism.

The following investigation is focused on Psellos' letters, in link with some of his discourses or opuscula directly relevant to rhetorical matters (such as his technical treatises, stylistic commentaries², or encomia of people endowed with special proficiency in rhetoric). The large corpus of Psellos' correspondence offers indeed valuable material for the study of his views on rhetoric and the way he constructs his own image as an expert on the subject.

Quite a number of Psellos' letters picture him as a rhetor active at the imperial court. In letters sent to various emperors, he presents himself as a *demegoros*, ready to compose *encomia* celebrating the virtues and high deeds of the emperor.³ He also repeatedly describes himself in the role of a lobbyist who makes use of his rhetorical skills to praise his addressees or support their cause in front of the emperor or other powerful personalities⁴, sometimes

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² On these works of literary criticism, see Kriaras 1968, col. 1134-1138; Ljubarskij 2004, 379-382; Papaioannou 2013, ch. 2 ("The rhetor as creator. Psellos on Gregory of Nazianzos").

³ Psell. ep. 37 and 38 Papaioannou to Romanos Diogenes; Psell. ep. 86 Papaioannou to Konstantinos Doukas.

⁴ Such letters rank among "patronage" letters (cf. Angold 1997), 3.

successfully (he then congratulates himself on the efficiency of his eloquence)⁵, sometimes vainly (he then complains about the inadequacy of circumstances and/or the deafness of the recipient of his discourses).⁶

Psellos also appears as a teacher of rhetoric in some letters thus offering additional information to the autobiographical statements one can find in the *Encomium for his mother* (ch. 82-83 Riedinger), in the *Letter to Michael Keroularios*, in *epitaphioi* for former pupils (Anastasios Lizix, or the *referendarius* Romanos⁷), and in a series of *oratoria minora* addressed *ad discipulos*⁸. Psellos sometimes alludes to his work as a teacher, for instance in a letter to his fellow-student Romanos, where he speaks of two well-gifted ($\varphi \psi \sigma \epsilon \iota \delta \epsilon \epsilon \iota \sigma \iota$) students with a passion for $\sigma_X \epsilon \delta_{\eta}$: they have got through all the exercises Psellos had prepared for them and are asking for new ones, so that Psellos calls Romanos for help as a ταμιεῖον σχεδῶν καὶ σίμβλον⁹. On the contrary, in a letter addressed to Aristenos, whose son was one of his students, he complains about the latters' excessive fondness for Hermogenes, and pictures himself as a determined supporter of "ancient rhetoric", that is a kind of rhetoric which Plato would not have dismissed, for it is "political, genuine, and little concerned with artificial beauty".¹⁰ We also possess some letters addressed by Psellos to present or former students, notably those written to a certain Kyritzes¹¹, characterized by

⁵ Psell. ep. 76 and 99; 210.117-126 Papaioannou.

⁶ Psell. ep. 30 and 268 Papaioannou.

⁷ Cf. Gautier 1978, 105-112 (l. 38-53: "L'élève de Psellos") and 126-132 (l. 36-74: "L'élève doué de Psellos", "Ses études préférées").

⁸ See Psell. Or. min. 18-25 Littlewood. To this corpus one can also add various didactic poems, many of which were addressed by Psellos to Michael VII as a teacher, and passages featuring in the *Theologica*, the most part of which were intended for Psellos' students and shed light on his educational methods (cf. Maltese 1992, 236). On Psellos as a teacher, see also Kriaras 1968, col. 1169-1171; Lemerle 1977, 215-221; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein 1990, 123-125.

⁹ Psell. ep. 247 Papaioannou. Such references to "schede" show that Psellos was teaching not only at the highest level of the Byzantine educational system, but also at the second level (the encyclopaedic *paideia*): cf. Cavallo 2004, 571. On schedographia, a new kind of language training in use since the early 11th century, cf. Lemerle 1977, 235-241; Vassis 1993/1994; Chondridou 2002 (on the appearance of schedographia as an aftermath of 10th-century encyclopaedism); Efthymiadès 2005, 266-271; Agapitos 2014 (on the development of 12thcentury schedography into a literary art).

¹⁰ Psell. ep. 18.16-18 Papaioannou.

¹¹ Psell. ep. 145 and 146 Papaioannou; Psell. ep. 146 = KD 27 and 28, considered by Papaioannou (p. XLII, XLIX-L, CXLVII) as one and the same item, perhaps not a letter, but an essay on how to compose a "rational response", parallel to Psell. ep. 145, written by Psellos in response to Psell. ep. 144, a letter with a rather provocative tonality where Kyritzes, while acknowledging Psellos' superiority as far as rhetoric is concerned, puts forward the little importance of this discipline in the juridical sphere.

their rather aggressive, polemical tone¹²: Psellos is indeed discontent with Kyritzes' attacks against philosophy and rhetoric and his preference for law studies¹³, so that his letters offer a mix of reproaches, advice, and passionate advocacy of true rhetoric¹⁴.

Psellos' letters also include a rich amount of comments about his correspondents' and his own style. The abundance of such descriptive material is partly due to the self-referential character typical of the epistolary genre, but it is a result as well of Psellos' special concern with *logoi* – a concern testified by the place imparted in the *Chronographia* to remarks on the rhetorical capacities of all the actors of history¹⁵. Consequently, it is no surprise that Psellos, when complimenting his correspondents, regularly underlines the sweetness (γλυκύτης) of their style, its grace (χάρις), and enchanting power (θελκτήριον, θέλγητρον), in line with the theory of the epistolary genre, which valued the very same features¹⁶. More interestingly, in his stylistic comments, Psellos often makes use of technical terms, thus parading his expertise in rhetorical matters, for instance in Psell. *Epist.* 449.18-21 Papaioannou, where he enumerates enthusiastically the various qualities of a friend's letter ¹⁷; similarly, in a letter to John Doukas¹⁸, Psellos, evoking the latter's praise of his

¹² The same is true for most of the *oratoria minora* addressed *ad discipulos*: see for instance Psell. *Or. min.* 21 Littlewood (ὅταν ἕβρεξε καὶ οὐκ ἀνῆλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν σχολήν); Psell. *Or. min.* 22 Littlewood (ἑμβραδυνάντων τῶν μαθητῶν τῆ τῆς σχολῆς ξυνελεύσει); Psell. *Or. min.* 23 Littlewood (πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς ἀπολειφθέντας τῆς ἑρμηνείας τοῦ *Περὶ ἑρμηνείας*); Psell. *Or. min.* 24 Littlewood (ὑνειδίζει τοὺς μαθητὰς ἀπελοῦντας). Conversely, in the *Theologica* Psellos adopts a rather different tone: he appears as a thoughtful and understanding teacher, anxious not to overstrain the attention of his students (see the concluding lines of Psell. *Theol.* 1.78; 91; 95; 99; 103; 105 Gautier) and, more surprisingly, he is prone to profess humility in front of his students, as noted by Maltese 1992, 231 (see the concluding lines of Psell. *Theol.* 1.15; 22; 23; 51 Gautier). The discrepancy between both series of texts could be explained by the different level of the two groups of students (the second ones, studying philosophy, being more advanced and mature as the former). The main reason of dissension between Psellos and his first group of students seems to lay in Psellos' desire to promote a "philosophical rhetoric", while his students probably had more practical preoccupations and felt little concerned with philosophy (cf. Anastasi 1979, 370, n. 39).

¹³ Φεύγεις μέν γάρ τὸ κάλλος τοῦ λόγου ὡς προσανέχων τῆ νομικῆ, ἀκαλλεῖ μαθήματι καὶ ξηρῷ (Psell. ep. 145.32-33 Papaioannou).

¹⁴ On Psellos' hostility to the "Italian" science, cf. Anastasi 1974, 367 sq., with reference to the opening of the essay On philosophy (Psell. Phil. min. 2 Duffy). In his Encomium for his mother, Psellos clearly suggests that he taught law rather reluctantly (ch. 83 Riedinger: πολλοὶ δέ με... πρὸς τὴς Ἰταλικὴν σοφίαν κατήγαγον).

¹⁵ Cf. Gadolin 1970, 126-128 ; Reinsch 2006.

¹⁶ Grünbart 2015, 297.

¹⁷ τὸν νοῦν, τὸ κάλλος, τὴν συνθήκην τῶν λέξεων, τὸν τῶν νοημάτων ῥυθμόν, τὴν τῶν γραμμάτων ὡραιότητα, τὴν τῶν στίχων ἰσότητα, τὴν ἀστειότητα τῶν συλλαβῶν, τὴν γλυκύτητα. Papaioannou 2019 (ed.), LXXIV, CXLVII, CLI considers the authenticity of this letter very dubious.

¹⁸ On Psellos' relation with John Doukas, see Ljubarskij 2004, 111-119.

style, underlines the carefull attention he paid to every stylistic element, ἕγγοια, λέξις, σχήμα, μέθοδος, ἀρμονία, ὑυθμός, ἀνάπαυσις.¹⁹ Some letters even contain elaborate discussions on rhetorical questions, for instance Psell. Epist, 256 Papaioannou (to the *krites* of Aigaion), where Psellos, exploring the links between $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\eta\sigma(\alpha)$ and $\tau\epsilon\chi\nu\eta$, speaks highly of oblique, indirect ($\pi\lambda\alpha\gamma\iota\sigma\varsigma$) *logos*, maintaining that, as far as discourse is concerned, straight blows are less efficient than oblique ones, inflicted with art ($\tau \epsilon_{\chi \nu \eta}$). In Psell. *Epist.* 134.19-37 Papaioannou, in response to Nikephoros, nephew of the patriarch Keroularios, who had complained of the difficulty of his philosophical writings, Psellos vaunts the merits of $\dot{\alpha}\sigma\dot{\alpha}\omega\epsilon_{1}\alpha$, quoting as an example Aristotle and the Christian "philosophy". In Psell. *Epist.* 163 Papaioannou (to John Mauropous) and Psell. *Epist.* 454 Papaioannou (to Leon Paraspondylos?), he develops considerations about the rules of the epistolary genre²⁰ and the specificity of exchange through letters, whose aim (reflect the inner disposition of the writers) requires a minimum amount of art (the souls' union, he says to Mauropous, is $\kappa \alpha \tau \dot{\alpha} \tau \epsilon_{\chi \nu o \varsigma}$). Discussions of the kind are prominent in letters addressed to recipients with a professional interest in rhetoric: Mauropous, who had been Psellos' teacher and is repeatedly called the father of his eloquence²¹, is a special partner for in depth exchanges about ὑητορικὴ τέχνη²², and the three letters to a *maistor* of the rhetors published by Gautier 23 offer another striking example of rhetorical display. through which Psellos voices his intellectual complicity with the addressee.

Hermogenes was a cornerstone for the teaching of rhetoric in Byzantine education system²⁴, and Psellos was undeniably familiar with his theories²⁵. He epitomized Hermogenes' treatise *On forms of style*, and composed a didactic

¹⁹ G 5 = Psell. ep. 59.25-26 Papaioannou.

²⁰ τὸν τῶν ἑπιστολῶν νόμον (Psell. ep. 163.1-2 Papaioannou); οὶ τῆς ἑπιστολῆς τύποι (Psell. ep. 454.48 Papaioannou); Καὶ τὰ πλείω σιγῶ, ἴνα μή τισι δόξω φορτικὸν ποιεῖν καὶ παρὰ τὸν τῶν ἑπιστολῶν νόμον. (Psell. ep. 88.61-62 Papaioannou, with reference to the rule of brevity). These epistolary "rules" (conciseness, clarity of expression, elegance) are described in Gregory of Nazianzus' *Ep.* 51, 52 and 54 (cf. Dennis 1986).

²¹ Psell. ep. 175.46 Papaioannou: τῶν ἐν ἑμοὶ λόγων πατὴρ καὶ παιδαγωγός; Psell. ep. 163.26-29 Papaioannou: ὁ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγων πατήρ, ὁ καὶ διομαλίσας μοι τὴν ψυχήν, καὶ ἑμφυτεύσας τὰς πρώτας τῶν λόγων ῥίζας, ἡ συνεγκεντρίσας ἡμῖν τὰς σὰς ἀποσπάδας, καὶ τοῖς φυσικοῖς ἡμῶν βλαστήμασι τὰ σὰ συνουσιώσας καλά. On Psellos and Mauropous, cf. Kazhdan 1993; Ljubarskij 2004, 70-83; Lauxtermann 2017 (p. 105-106 on Psell. ep. 175 Papaioannou).

²² Besides Psell. ep. 163 Papaioannou, quoted above, see Psell. ep. 162 Papaioannou (reflexion on the capacity of rhetoric to change the meaning of things); Psell. ep. 167 Papaioannou (considerations on the beauty of *logos*). On these letters, Lauxtermann 2017, 108-111 and 123-125 (English translation of Psell. ep. 162).

²³ n° 18, 19, and 20 = Psell. ep. 376-378 Papaioannou.

²⁴ Valiavitcharska 2013b.

²⁵ In Psell. ep. 117.22 Papaioannou he presents the "rhetorical method", ἡητορικὴν μέθοδον, as his "hobbies", τὰ ἐμὰ παιδικά The expression is borrowed from Plato's *Gorgias*, 482a (where Socrates speaks of τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, τὰ ἐμὰ παιδικά). It was much imitated in Late antique epistolography (cf. Libanios, *Ep.* 251.1; 405, 13; Synesios, *Ep.* 91; Aeneas of Gaza, *Ep.* 1 Positano).

poem long of *ca*. 500 lines, synthesizing four major works of the Hermogenean corpus, *On issues* (*De statibus*), *On invention, On forms*, and the Pseudo-Hermogenean treatise *On the method of force* (*De methodo*)²⁶. But he also wrote epitomes of other ancient technical works (τέχναι), by Dionysios of Halikarnassos and Longinos²⁷. He makes several explicit references to these three theoreticians of rhetoric: Hermogenes is mentioned at least eight times in his whole work²⁸, Longinos seven times²⁹, Dionysios five times³⁰. Isolated references to other more or less famous τεχνικοί include Thrasymachos and Hegesias³¹, Nikagoras and Priskos³², Hadrianos of Tyre and Sopatros³³, and also Aelius Aristides as the presumed author of a rhetorical treatise³⁴. As for Byzantine theoreticians, Psellos never mentions either John of Sardis (mid 9th c.) or John Doxapatres³⁵ (mid 11th c.) – though they might well be the source of some of his allusions to ancient *tekhnikoi*'s works probably no longer available³⁶ –, and his two references to his contemporary John Sikeliotes³⁷ are of a disparaging kind.

²⁶ Σύνοψις τῶν ἡητορικῶν ἰδεῶν, éd. Walz, V, 601-605; Poema 7 Westerink (Τοῦ αὐτοῦ σύνοψις τῆς ἡητορικῆς διὰ στίχων ὑμοίων πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν βασιλέα), addressed to Michael Doukas.

²⁷ Περὶ συνθήκης τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν (Aujac 1975, 261-267); On Rhetoric (Gautier 1977, 196-199) = Longinos, F 49 (Patillon Brisson).

²⁸ Psell. *Chron.* 6.197bis Renauld; Psell. *Or. forens.* 3.279-282 Dennis; Psell. *Or. min.* 8.196-199 Littlewood; Psell. *Theol.* 1.19.82-84 Gautier; Psell. *Theol.* 1.27.146-147 Gautier (reference to Hermogenes' book on σεμνότης, that is chapter I, 6 of the treatise *On Forms*); Psell. *Poem.* 7.88 Westerink; Psell. ep. 18.20; 134.37; and 181 Papaioannou (about a commentary on Hermogenes' Staseis sent to the addressee: the author of the letter offers his help for interpreting the difficulties of the work, but his identification with Psellos is somewhat uncertain). There is one more reference to Hermogenes in Psell. *Poem.* 68.36 Westerink, but it belongs to the *spuria*.

²⁹ Psell. Or. min. 8.194 Littlewood; Psell. Theol. 1.56.6-8; 1.75.117-121; 1.98.30-33 Gautier; On the Style of the Theologian, l. 110 Mayer; On Rhetoric, l. 3-5 Patillon Brisson; Psell. ep. 146.37 Papaioannou.

³⁰ Psell. *Theol.* 1.98.26 and 41-42 Gautier; Psell. *Theol.* 2.16.8 Duffy Westerink; *On the style of the Theologian*, l. 107-108 and l. 132-133 Mayer.

³¹ Psell. *Theol.* 1.25.42-44 Gautier. On Thrasymachos, a sophist roughly contemporaneous with Gorgias, see Kennedy 1963, 68-70. He is mentioned several times by Dionysios of Halikarnassos, but always as an orator, not as a theoretician: cf. 2 (*Lys.*), 6, 1; 4 (*Isaeus*), 20, 2-3; 5 (*Demosth.*), 3 (where a long passage from his work is quoted as an example of "mixed style"). On Hegesias, see Grube 1965, 122-123.

³² Psell. ep. 146.37 Papaioannou.

³³ Psell. *Or. min.* 8.194-196 Littlewood. There are also two references to Aphthonios in Psell. *Poem.* 67.230-231 and 68.33 Westerink (both belonging to *spuria*).

³⁴ Psell. Theol. 1.98.41 sq. Gautier. This false attribution was commonplace in Byzantium: quotations from "Aristides" (that is Ps.-Aristides' *Rhetorical Arts*) are found in John Sikeliotes, Gregory of Corinth, or Planudes, according to Patillon 2002 (ed.), Ps.-Aristide, *Arts rhétoriques*, I, IX-X.

³⁵ Papaioannou 2013, 71, n. 66 speculates whether the commentary on Hermogenes mentioned in Psell. ep. 181 Papaioannou could be that written by John Doxapatres. If it is, the omission of the name of its author is symptomatic of the Byzantine *literati*'s widespread tendency not to mention their most immediate sources.

³⁶ John of Sardis, in his *Commentary on the Progymnasmata of Aphthonios*, names Sopatros on eight occasions (cf. Kennedy 2003, 173-175).

³⁷ Psell. *Theol.* 1.47.70 sq.; 1.102.18-23 Gautier.

Psellos' explicit allusions to Hermogenes testify his familiarity with both the latter's presumed biography³⁸ and his rhetorical theories: he twice underlines the centrality of Demosthenes to the Hermogenean doctrine³⁹ and also rightly alludes to Hermogenes' high esteem of clarity⁴⁰. In the above mentioned letters to a *maistor* of the rhetors, he makes repeated use of technical terms borrowed from Hermogenes' *On issues* and *On invention*, speaking of κατάστασις (exposition) and προκατάστασις (pre-exposition), άνθορισμός (counter-definition) and συλλογισμός (assimilation)⁴¹, he quotes the Hermogenean definitions of έπιφώνημα (epiphonema), περίοδος (period) and έπιχειρήματα (dialectical syllogism)⁴², and successively paraphrases the *incipit* of the treatises *On issues*, *On invention* and *On forms*⁴³, by way of playful connivance with his correspondent. Most conspicuous is the influence of Hermogenes' theory of forms (ίδεαί) on Psellos' stylistic judgments⁴⁴, heavily indebted to the Hermogenean terminology⁴⁵.

³⁸ Psell. *Chron*. 6.197bis Renauld.

³⁹ Psell. Or. forens. 3.279 Dennis; Psell. Theol. 1.19.82-84 Gautier. In the introduction to his treatise On forms, Hermogenes explains that Demosthenes can serve as a model for every type of style, for he has used the characteristics of all *ideai* in combination with one another (1, 1, 12). On the prominence of Demosthenes in Hermogenes' treatises, cf. Rutherford 1998, 18-21 ("Hermogenes on Demosthenes") and 80-95 ("The Demosthenic Canon").

⁴⁰ Psell. ep. 134.36-37 Papaioannou. Clarity (σαφήνεια) is the first of the forms studied by Hermogenes, who considers it as a product of purity (καθαρότης) and distinctness (εύκρίνεια): cf. On forms, 1, 2-4.

 ⁴¹ G 18 = Psell. ep. 376.47-48 Papaioannou: cf. On invention, 2.1-2 (κατάστασις, προκατάστασις);
4 (ἀνθορισμός) and 11 (συλλογισμός).

⁴² G 20 = Psell. ep. 378.3-9 Papaioannou: cf. On invention, 4, 9 (ἐπιφώνημα); 4, 3 (περίοδος); 3, 5 (ἐπιχειρήματα).

⁴³ G 19.1, 9-10 and 18-19 = Psell. ep. 377.1, 10, 18-19 Papaioannou. These borrowings are signalled by Gautier in his footnotes to the quoted passages; see also Papaioannou's *apparatus criticus* for additional references. Similar play in G 15 = Psell. ep. 15.33 Papaioannou (to the patriarch of Antioch), with references to έπιχείρημα and κατασκευαί (dialectical syllogism and confirmation: cf. *On invention*, 3, 2) and to ένθυμήματα (enthymemes: cf. *On invention*, 3, 8). Further references to *enthymêmata* in Psell. ep. 134.70; 163, 10; 507.23 Papaioannou.

⁴⁴ Psellos often alludes to *idea(i)*, "forms" or "types" of style (Psell. ep. 134.52; 146.135; 173.16; 210.75; 407.10 Papaioannou), to *ennoiai* (Psell. ep. 407.9 Papaioannou) or *noêma(ta)*, "thoughts" (Psell. ep. 124, 107; 161, 16; 185, 2; 449, 19 Papaioannou), *schêma(ta)*, "figures" (Psell. ep. 123.27; 124.108; 134.25; 163.9; 173.65; 185.3; 202.208 Papaioannou), or *lexis*, "style" (Psell. ep. 95.28; 117.21; 123.25 and 40; 124.114; 134.51; 275.93; 375.10; 445.3 and 15; 449.21 Papaioannou). Cf. Patillon 1997 (transl.), Hermogène, *L'Art rhétorique*, "Index des mots grecs", 589-622. Hermogenes is not the inventor of the idea-theory, which is already attested before his time, but he gave it the perfect form under which it was transmitted to the Byzantines (cf. Rutherford 1998, 6-21; Patillon 2002 (ed.), Pseudo-Aristide, *Arts rhétoriques*, I, 1-15 and 60-83, on the origins of the doctrine).

⁴⁵ References to ὄγκος ("majesty") in Psell. ep. 280.53 Papaioannou, ἀξίωμα ("dignity") in Psell. ep. 118.45 Papaioannou, ὥρα ("grace") in Psell. ep. 280.16 Papaioannou, ἦθος ("ethos") in Psell. ep. 305.9 Papaioannou and Psell. ep. 191.22 Papaioannou, δεινότης ("force") in Psell. ep. 33.2 Papaioannou; frequent allusions to γλυκύτης ("sweetness"), κάλλος ("beauty"), ἀφέλεια

But the part played by Dionysios of Halikarnassos on Psellos' aesthetic conceptions seems considerable too⁴⁶. His frequent use of musical images to describe rhetorical performances⁴⁷, his many references to harmony⁴⁸ may be a result of his close reading of Dionysios' treatises, for Dionysios' aesthetics is characterized by the importance given to the sonority of words: auditory impression is central in his appreciation of literary works⁴⁹, and he even defines the "science of political oratory" as "a sort of music"⁵⁰. Dionysios' contrasting description of an "austere harmony" ($\alpha \dot{\nu} \sigma \tau \rho \dot{\alpha}$) and a "smooth one" ($\gamma \lambda \alpha \phi \nu \dot{\alpha}$)⁵¹

^{(&}quot;simplicity") or ἀλήθεια ("sincerity") – but Psellos sometimes uses the correlative adjective or adverb, and not the name proper. See the corresponding chapters in Hermogenes, *On forms*, I, 5 (ὄγκος, ἀξίωμα); I, 12 (γλυκύτης); II, 2 (ἦθος); II, 3 (ἀφέλεια); II, 4 (γλυκύτης); II, 5 (ὄρα); II, 7 (ἀλήθεια); II, 9 (δεινότης). The three works of Psellos mostly indebted to the Hermogenean theory of forms are Psell. *Or. paneg.* 8 Dennis (To Constantine X), Psell. *Or. min.* 19 Littlewood (*Encomium of Italos*) and Psell. *Theol.* 1.25 Gautier (on Gregory of Nazianzus' *Or.* 40, 2). Hermogenes' theories exerted an outstanding influence on Byzantine literary criticism on the whole: on Photios, see Conley 2005, 674; on Eustathios of Thessalonike, Lindberg 1977, tempered by Conley 2005, 683-684: "It is true that <Eustathios'> scholia on Homer are full of Hermogenean terminology, but the role that the terminology plays in his critical observations is almost incidental"; Conley underlines Eustathios' special interest in points of argument, his sensitivity to speakers' intentions and awareness of audience reaction, and the importance he allows to the criterion of utility.

⁴⁶ Hörandner 1996; Papaioannou 2013, 64, 66-69, 84, 111-113; Arco Magri 1994 (on the opusculum *On the Style of the Theologian*). Conley 2005, 677, suspects the mediation of a Byzantine theoretician, who would have merged the Dionysian and the Hermogenean traditions, and he suggests the name of John Sikeliotes, who "attempts to assimilate to Hermogenean doctrine the lessons of the treatise on the composition of words by Dionysius of Halicarnassus". References to Dionysios are found in several passages of John's commentary on Hermogenes' treatise *On forms*: see for instance *RG*, VI, 226 and 242 (ed. Walz).

⁴⁷ e.g. Psell. ep. 23.70-78; 76.45-50; 325.7-19 Papaioannou; G 10 = Psell. ep. 63 Papaioannou, passim.

⁴⁸ Cf. Psell. ep. 28.31; 64.30 and 39; 95.78; 280.33 and 36; 496.3 Papaioannou. In Psell. ep. 455.31-32 Papaioannou Psellos professes to teach the way of arranging discourses rhythmically (τὴν γλῶτταν ὅπως δεῖ τοὺς λόγους ῥυθμίζειν διδάξω).

⁴⁹ Cf. Aujac and Lebel's introduction to *Denys d'Halicarnasse, Opuscules rhétoriques. Tome III: La composition stylistique,* 17 and 20.

⁵⁰ DH, 6 (*Comp.*), 11, 13. See also DH, 6 (*Comp.*), 12, 8 (on the importance of harmony, melody and rhythm). This very passage features in Psellos' paraphrasis of the treatise *On composition* (ch. 4-5: ed. Aujac 1975). Psellos was well aware of the prominence of musicality in Dionysios' theory, as testified by his comment on the "harmony" of Gregory of Nazianzus' style: φημὶ δὲ τὴν ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων ἀρμονίαν, περὶ ἢν καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ πάνυ ἑσπούδακεν (*On the style of the Theologian*, l. 131-133 Mayer). While the word ἀρμονία is extremely frequent in Dionysios' writings, it occurs only once in the Hermogenean corpus (*On invention*, 3, 15). On Psellos' sensitivity to the musicality of words, cf. Kriaras 1968, col. 1166. On his interest in music, Di Rella 1996. On the importance he attached to the power of rhythm, Valiavitcharska 2013a.

⁵¹ DH, 6 (*Comp.*), 21.3; the following chapter 22 offers a description of the austere harmony, and chapter 23 a description of the smooth one. See also DH, 5 (*Demosth.*), 38-39 (austere harmony) and 40 (smooth harmony). The word γλαφυρός was already used in Demetrios' On

is recognizable in Psell. *Epist.* 163 Papaioannou, where Psellos says to Mauropous that "the pursuit of smooth words" (l. 13: ἡ θήρα τῶν γλαφυρῶν λέξεων) is undesirable in epistolary exchange, or in Psell. *Epist.* 98 Papaioannou, where he apologizes for the plain style of his letter (l. 7: ἀφελῆ τὰ ἡμἑτερα), on the pretext that, living in a rustic environment, he has lost any talent for "smoothing" (γλαφυρόν)⁵². Another image frequently used in Psellos' letters and other texts dealing with rhetoric may have been inspired by his reading of Dionysios: that of a "theatrical" eloquence⁵³, exuberant and vulgar, Psellos opposes to more decent and philosophical modes of expression⁵⁴. Similarly, Psellos' frequent use of the adjective φυσικός to characterize simple style⁵⁵ is probably reminiscent of Dionysios, where it appears quite often with the same meaning⁵⁶. The interest Psellos expresses in Lysias, who comes second after Demosthenes for the number of references⁵⁷, may also be explained by the

style (it is one of the four styles defined by Demetrios, beside ίσχνός, "plain", μεγαλοπρεπής, "grand" and δεινός, "forceful": cf. § 36). It is not attested in the Hermogenean corpus.

⁵² Psell. ep. 163.12-14 Papaioannou: ή έξεπίτηδες ἀρμονία τῶν τοῦ λόγου μορίων, καὶ ἡ θήρα τῶν γλαφυρῶν λέξεων εὐρήματα κατὰ τῆς ἀπλάστου φιλίας ἐστίν; Psell. ep. 98.3-5 Papaioannou: εἴ που γὰρ ἐνῆν τι γλαφυρὸν καὶ περινενοημένον ἡμῖν, ἀφείλατο τοῦτο ἡ μετὰ τῶν ἀμούσων καὶ θηριοτρόφων ἀναστροφή.

⁵³ In Dionysios' treatises the adjective θεατρικός is often applied to polished harmony: cf. 5 (*Demosth.*), 39.4; 40.1; 43.12; 6 (*Comp.*), 22, 5; 23, 7: in the smooth harmony one appreciates the figures which are "dainty" (τρυφεροῖς) and "alluring" (κολακικοῖς) and contain much that is "seductive" (άπατηλόν) and "theatrical" (θεατρικόν). Psellos' opposition between a philosophical and a theatrical oratory seems to be borrowed from the prologue of the essay on *Ancient orators*, where Dionysios opposes one kind of oratory, άρχαία καὶ φιλόσοφος ῥητορική, to another, ἀφόρητος ἀναιδεία θεατρικῆ..., φορτική τις πάνυ (1, 2-4); he also calls the philosophical oratory "ancient and modest" (2, 7: ἀρχαία καὶ σώφρονι). Once again, the word θεατρικός and the image of a "theatrical rhetoric" are lacking in the Hermogenean corpus; they are absent in Demetrios as well.

⁵⁴ See Psell. ep. 28.32-34 Papaioannou, to Basileios, krites of Cappadocia, where τῆς δημώδους ταύτης ῥητορικῆς... τῆς πολυτελοῦς τε καὶ θεατρικῆς is contrasted with τῆς ἀφελοῦς καὶ λιτῆς καὶ τῆς σεμνοτάτης φιλοσοφίας; Psell. ep. 134.47-50 Papaioannou to Nikephoros, nephew of Keroularios, where Psellos professes to practise οὐ τὴν πάνδημον ῥητορικήν, οὐδὲ τὴν θεατρικὴν καὶ ἀκόλαστον, ἀλλὰ τὴν οίκουρόν τε καὶ σώφρονα). In his Encomium for Symeon Metaphrastes, Psellos presents the saint as practising exactly the same kind of "wise" and useful rhetoric: by adorning the old, artless hagiographical narratives, he was able to make people appreciate the high deeds of saints and ascetes at their true worth (Psell. Or. paneg. 7.156-206 Dennis).

⁵⁵ Psell. ep. 5.79; 163.28; 407.3 Papaioannou; Psell. *Chron.* 6a.45 Renauld; Psell. *Or. min.* 19.63 Littlewood.

⁵⁶ Cf. DH, 2 (*Lys.*), 10, 1; 3 (*Isocr.*), 2, 4; 4 (*Is.*), 7, 1; 5 (*Demosth.*), 13, 7. The adjective occurs only twice in Demetrios (*On Style*, 199, 200), once in Hermogenes (*On forms*, 1, 3).

⁵⁷ Demosthenes: 64 occ.; Lysias: 31 occ.; Isocrates: 22 occ.; Aeschines: 6 occ.; Isaeus: 2 occ. (results of an investigation on the TLG corpus, enlarged with Psellos' Letters, his Encomium for Symeon Metaphrastes, and his four treatises On the Style of the Theologian, On the Style of Gregory the Theologian, Basil the Great, Chrysostom, and Gregory of Nyssa, On the Style of certain Writings, and On John Chrysostom). According to Sosower 1987, 1-3, Psellos is first to indicate

influence of Dionysios who, as a champion of Atticism, highly valued the simple and elegant style of this orator⁵⁸.

The examination of the various images used by Psellos to characterize rhetorical performances may reveal the influence of further ancient models. As a matter of fact, a striking feature of his stylistic appreciations is their highly metaphorical character, far away from the more abstract and technical style of the ancient treatises to which he is so much indebted in other respects, first and foremost Hermogenes, where metaphorical expressions are scarce⁵⁹. Psellos resorts to a wide range of images to distinguish various forms of eloquence, speaking of bolts of lightning and thunder⁶⁰, of fire⁶¹, of sources, streams and rivers⁶², of honey⁶³, meadows and flowers⁶⁴, and comparing discourses with birds, musical instruments⁶⁵, or even weapons⁶⁶ or paintings...⁶⁷ Some of these images are very ancient, and originate in the oldest Greek literary tradition (the honey metaphor is evidently inherited from Homer⁶⁸, and liquid imagery is already present in archaic poetry⁶⁹), but one wonders if Psellos' very concrete way of describing types of style was not influenced as well by a reading of Ps.-Longinos' essay On Sublimity, which develops interesting considerations on the power of *phantasia*⁷⁰, makes frequent use of images to characterize the style of the great authors of classical Greece, and repeatedly compares Demosthenes'

⁶¹ Psell. ep. 263.2-3 Papaioannou.

63 Psell. ep. 63.52-53; 384.1-2.

a familiarity with several orations of Lysias, an author rarely read before the 11th century: Psellos' liking for Lysias probably stimulated the next generation of scholars to take a renewed interest in this author and may even have contributed to the decision by a scholarly patron to produce *Heidelb. Pal. gr.* 88, a copy of the Lysianic corpus achieved at the beginning of the 12th c.

⁵⁸ The same is true for Dionysios' friend Caecilius of Calacte, an Atticist as well, who put Lysias at the top of all orators of classical Greece (cf. T 45, ed. Woerther: he declared Lysias superior to Plato in everything). The special place assigned to Lysias in ancient rhetorical treatises may be partly due to his mention in Plato's *Phaedrus*, where a speech on Love, supposedly composed by him, is read by Phaedrus and criticized by Socrates (*Phaedr*. 234e and 264b). In his treatise *On forms*, Hermogenes alludes to Socrates criticizing the "Erotic Speech" of Lysias (I, 12).

⁵⁹ Images are also very few in Demetrios' *On style*; Dionysios of Halikarnassos' language is a bit more colourful and includes some metaphors (stream and river: 5, 4, 5 and 5, 2; sea breeze: 5, 13, 8; architecture: 6, 6, 23; music: 6, 11, 6-25; painting: 6, 21, 1-2).

⁶⁰ Psell. ep. 5.24-25; 223.2; 305.20; 376.5-6 Papaioannou.

⁶² Psell. ep. 161.6-7; 250.8-9; 276.2; 408.14-16; 442.18 Papaioannou.

⁶⁴ Psell. ep. 22.38-47; 167.51 Papaioannou.

⁶⁵ Psell. ep. 30.9-20; 63 passim; 76.45-52; 167.52-54; 268, passim; 325.7-19 Papaioannou.

⁶⁶ Psell. ep. 34.15-28; 256.8-16; 376.7-10 Papaioannou.

⁶⁷ Psell. ep. 116, passim; 146.1-10 Papaioannou; Psell. Or. funebr. 4.6 Polemis.

⁶⁸ Cf. Il. 4, 256; 6, 214, 343; 9, 113; etc.

⁶⁹ See for instance Pindar, Pyth. 4, 532; Nem. 4, 4-5; 7, 12; Isth. 6, 109; Olymp. 6, 85.

⁷⁰ Cf. *On Sublimity*, 15, 1 and 9.

rhetorical forcefulness with thunderbolt, a favourite among Psellos' images⁷¹. To be sure, the reception of Ps.-Longinos' treatise in Byzantium is somewhat shadowy⁷²: its manuscript tradition is poor (a sole ancient codex, the 10th-century *Parisinus graecus* 2036 has been preserved), but the presence of a few quotations from this work in the commentary of Hermogenes by John Sikeliotes ⁷³, contemporaneous with Psellos, suggests it could have been available to the latter as well, and Ps.-Longinos' remarks on *phantasia* were very likely to arouse the interest of an author with such a vivid imagination as Psellos. Another image recurrent in his work, that of the "Olympic trumpet⁷⁴", may have been borrowed from Philostratos' *Lives of the Sophists*, where it is used to characterize the sophist Polemo's style (I, 542). Philostratos was indeed among Psellos' favourite authors, and the latter's references to various orators representative of the Second Sophistic show he was familiar with Philostratos' history of this literary movement⁷⁵.

Considerations about kinds of style often interfere in Psellos' letters with remarks about levels of style⁷⁶. In quite a number of passages, Psellos incites his correspondents, supposedly impressed and reduced to silence by his high rhetorical skills⁷⁷, to write him in the simplest style: the motif occurs prominently in letters addressed to ecclesiastics⁷⁸, but also in letters to supplicants⁷⁹, or friends⁸⁰. In these letters Psellos urges his correspondents to

⁷¹ On Sublimity, 12, 4; 34, 4; Psell. ep. 5.24-25; 123, 10-11; 161.9-10; 176.25; 305.20 Papaioannou.

⁷² Cf. Kennedy 1989, 311: "Not much read, it seems, in ancient and Byzantine times, *On sublimity* had its great period in the Renaissance...". Fryde 2000, 162-163 says there is no certain evidence that Ps.-Longinos' work was known to the Palaeologan scholars.

⁷³ John Sikeliotes makes several allusions to "Longinos" (*RG*, VI, 93, 95, 120, 211, 225: cf. Poynton 1933, 1-2 and 13, n. 5); some of these passages are in fact fragments from the genuine, 3rd-century Longinos, author of a *Rhetorical Art* (F 53, F 56, F 59 Patillon Brisson), but at least one or two come from the treatise *On Sublimity* (*RG*, VI, 120 and 211, with a reference to the famous Biblical quotation featuring in *On Sublimity*, 9, 9).

⁷⁴ Cf. Psell. Or. paneg. 4.233 Dennis; Psell. Theol. 1.68.131 Gautier; Monody in honour of the metropolitan of Melitene, l. 50 and Monody in honour of the referendarios Romanos, l. 49 (ed. Gautier 1978).

⁷⁵ Cf. Jouanno 2009. See also *infra*, n. 101.

⁷⁶ Sevcenko 1981.

⁷⁷ In Psell. ep. 151.16-18 Papaioannou, he says that many of his correspondents experience such a feeling: Άλλά μοι πρός τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους πεπόνθατε, οἶόν τι πρὸς τὰς ἐπιστημονικὰς φωνὰς οἱ νεώτεροι · φρίττουσι γὰρ ἀτεχνῶς τὰ ξένα τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀκούοντες, τὸν "τόμον", τὰ "περίσωτα"...; *ibid.*, 26 : δεδοίκατε τὰς ἐμὰς φωνάς ὡς βροντάς.

⁷⁸ Psell. ep. 3 and 5 Papaioannou, to the patriarch of Antioch; Psell. ep. 387 and 507 Papaioannou, to monks. On Psellos and "monastic circles", see Ljubarskij 2004, 149-154.

⁷⁹ Psell. ep. 405 Papaioannou.

⁸⁰ Psell. ep. 375 Papaioannou to the metropolitan of Amaseia, l. 6-10: έν δέ γε τοῖς φιλικοῖς καθήκουσι, καὶ ταῖς πρὸς τοὺς φίλους ένδιαθέτοις ἑπιστολαῖς, οὑδὲ σοφίζεσθαι βούλομαι, οὑδὲ περιττὸς εἶναι, οὕτε τὴν συνθήκην, οὕτε τὴν μέθοδον ἀρκέσει δέ μοι ἡ *ίδιωτεία* τῆς λέξεως, καὶ τὸ ἀφελὲς κάλλος καὶ ἄτεχνον; Psell. ep. 281 Papaioannou to Choirosphaktes, l. 6-8:

write as plainly as they speak.⁸¹ He often associates plain language with high spirituality⁸², but also links disregard for the beauty of words with philosophical *ethos*⁸³ or with old age's disinterest in stylistic embellishments.⁸⁴ Other letters present a reversed picture, with Psellos apologizing for his use of low style in letters to correspondents some of whose are described as prominent intellectuals⁸⁵: to explain his choice of a low register, Psellos puts to the fore his closeness to the addressee,⁸⁶ special *kairos* making rhetoric undeserved or impossible⁸⁷ or, with typical Constantinopolitan snobbery, the deleterious influence of a rustic/barbarian environment.⁸⁸ In letters exploiting the topos of self-deprecating⁸⁹, Psellos sometimes recurs to a typically self-referential play of words⁹⁰ by introducing the verb $\psi \epsilon \lambda \lambda (\zeta \epsilon iv)$ or its compounds ($\dot{\upsilon} \pi \phi \psi \epsilon \lambda \lambda (\zeta \epsilon iv)$, $\pi \alpha \rho \alpha \psi \epsilon \lambda \lambda (\zeta \epsilon iv)$) as a pretence of simplicity or modesty, such as in Psell. *Epist*. 167.52, Papaioannou to Mauropous⁹¹, in Psell. *Epist*. 38.53, Papaioannou to the

Γράφε θαρρούντως άφελῶς καὶ ίδιωτικῶς, πρὸς φίλον ἀληθινόν, καὶ τῆς μὲν ἐν γλώττῃ σοφίας καταφρονοῦντα, ἐραστὴν δὲ ὅντα τῆς ἀπλοϊκωτέρας καὶ ἀληθοῦς; Psell. ep. 35 Papaioannou, to Dalassenos (who had put forward his ἀμαθίαν... καὶ ἰδιωτείαν), l. 14-16: Θαρρούντως οὖν ὀμίλει καὶ γράφε ἰδιωτικῶς καὶ ἀφελῶς καὶ (τὸ ὅλον είπεῖν) στρατιωτικῶς · μάλιστα γὰρ τοῖς ἀπλοῖς τῶν φίλων γράμμασιν ἑφηδόμεθα, ἡ τοῖς δεινοῖς καὶ σοφιστικοῖς. On this letter, see Jeffreys 2017a, 48.

⁸¹ Cf. Psell. ep. 3.30-31 Papaioannou: Ώσπερ οὖν ἀφελῶς ὡμίλεις καὶ τὸ ὅλον πνευματικῶς, οὕτω δὴ καὶ καθαρῶς γράφοις, καὶ τὸ σύμπαν ἱερατικῶς.

⁸² Psell. ep. 3.30; 387.5-7 and 9-10; 507, passim Papaioannou.

⁸³ Psell. ep. 405.39-40 Papaioannou: φιλόσοφοι δὲ ὄντες, τὸ ἐν ταῖς λέξεσι κάλλος οὐκ ήγαπήκαμεν.

⁸⁴ Psell. ep. 3.31-34 Papaioannou, to the patriarch of Antioch: Τῶν δὲ μουσικῶν ὀνομάτων ἄλλοις παραχωρήσομεν· τὴν γὰρ ἀκμὴν τῆς ἡλικίας καταλελυκώς, καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ τούτοις φιλοτιμίαν συγκαταλέλυκα.

⁸⁵ Psell. ep. 33.30-31 Papaioannou: Psellos calls George πάντων... σοφώτατον καὶ ῥητορικώτατον; Psell. ep. 98.8 Papaioannou: he addresses the *vestiarios* George as τῷ λογιωτάτῳ.

⁸⁶ Psell. ep. 33.22-23 Papaioannou, to his fellow-student George: πρός σὲ ἀφελῶς πως καὶ ἀμαθῶς, οἶς ἔχω ἀντεπιστέλλω.

⁸⁷ Psell. ep. 358 Papaioannou: illness of his correspondent; Psell. ep. 263 Papaioannou: Psellos' sadness after the death of Lizix; Psell. ep. 118 Papaioannou: letter written during Romanos Diogenes' second Anatolian campaign (cf. Jeffreys 2017b, 76). See also the remarks in Psell. ep. 497, 9-11 Papaioannou about πραγμάτων φροντίς as an obstacle to the liking for beautiful words, for it focuses one's attention to itself, and does not let it enjoy "the graces of language" (ταῖς τῶν λέξεων χάρισιν).

⁸⁸ Psell. ep. 98 Papaioannou to John ostiarios; G 11 = Psell. ep. 65 Papaioannou to John Doukas.

⁸⁹ On the tension in Byzantine literature between a "discourse of display" and a "discourse of modesty", see Bernard 2014.

⁹⁰ On the "author-centered tradition" of Byzantine rhetoric, see Papaioannou 2014.

⁹¹ According to Karpozilos' edition of John Mauropous' letters (1990, 199-200), Psell. ep. 167 Papaioannou answers *Ep.* 1 by Mauropous, complimenting Psellos on the style of a letter he had addressed him. However, Kazhdan 1993, 97, considers such a hypothesis very dubious, for Mauropous' first letter is devoid of *lemma*, he argues, so that "we cannot be sure that its adressee was Psellos".

emperor Romanos Diogenes, or in Psell. *Epist.* 53.36 Papaioannou, to John Doukas⁹².

In the various letters dealing with levels of style, the contrast between highbrow and lowbrow expression is often expressed through references to "Atticism", meant to designate learned Greek, that is a language understandable only to the small part of educated Byzantines⁹³. Psellos contrasts ἀττικίζειν with ἀπλῶς λέγειν⁹⁴ and with κοινολεκτεῖν⁹⁵, he opposes "Attic language" (Άττικῆ τῆ γλώσσῃ) to "sincere and unelaborate" diction (ἀπλῶς καὶ ἀκατασκεύως), "simple expression" (ἀφελῆ) to "honey of the Hymettos" (Ὑμηττίου μέλιτος).⁹⁶ He regularly parades his ability to practise Atticism (see for instance, Psell. *Epist.* 42.35 Papaioannou, where he boasts of twisting a crown ἑξ Ἀττικῶν συνηρμοσμένον λειμώνων for Andronikos Doukas⁹⁷). In G 15 (Psell. *Epist.*

⁹⁴ Psell. ep. 454.13 Papaioannou.

⁹⁶ Psell. ep. 98.1-2 and 7-8 Papaioannou.

⁹² In Psell. ep. 53.36-37 Papaioannou, Psellos describes himself ψελλίζων καὶ στωμυλλόμενος; in Psell. ep. 38.13-16 Papaioannou, he contrasts his ψελλίζουσα φωνή with the voice of Homer and Aristotle, presented as ἄνδρας δεινοὺς τὴν γλῶτταν καὶ μέγαλα τὰ μικρὰ δυναμένους ποιεῖν, that is as sorts of sophists. On the reverse, in Psell. ep. 48.12 Papaioannou, Aristotle, who often appears as an *alter ego* of Psellos because of his role as a king's counsellor, is described as ὑπόψελλος τὴν γλῶτταν!

⁹³ Ronconi 2012. Dyck 1986, 114, observes that in Byzantium "Atticism had come to mean archaic language of almost any kind insofar as it was deemed worthy of imitation". On the encompassing nature of Byzantine "Atticism", see also Rollo 2008, 437-438: " 'Attiche' erano tutte le forme ormai obsolete, scomparse o in via di estinzione nell'ambito della *Volksprache"* – hence the frequent opposition άττικῶς / κοινῶς, and the equivalence άττικοί / παλαιοί. Aelius Aristides opened the way in regarding Homer as an Attic author: cf. *Panath.* (*Or.* 13), 328 (quoted by Wilson 1983, 98). Though Psellos usually employs "Attic" and "Atticism" in a stylistic sense, he knew very well that "Attic" was originally a Greek dialect: cf. his *Poema* 6 (*Grammatica*), l. 5 and 18 Westerink. However the authorship of this treatise is questioned by Guglielmino 1974, 432-442, who remarks it is lacking in Psellos' most important manuscripts, and suggests it could have been composed by the *grammatikos* Niketas, fellow-student and friend of Psellos, for Niketas' works are sometimes joined (and confused) with Psellos' ones.

⁹⁵ Psell. ep. 305.15-17 Papaioannou.

⁹⁷ In Psell. ep. 176.48-50 Papaioannou, he describes himself as ἕλληνι τὴν γλῶσσαν, and therefore delighted by the beautiful letters of Mauropous, a ἕλλην ὄντως ἀνήρ (Kazhdan 1993, 91-92, doubts the identity of the addressee, pretending that "the vocabulary of this letter is not typical of the Psellian correspondence with Mauropous", for the "crucial word *philia*, friendship" is lacking, but Ljubarskij 2004, 72, does not express any reservation; neither does Lauxtermann 2017, 103-104). In Psell. ep. 146.26-29 Papaioannou, Psellos offers his help to Kyritzes as an exegete of Demosthenes, presented as an extremely difficult, "hyperatticist" author: Ἐπεὶ δὲ οὐ πάνυ τῆς φωνῆς ἐκείνης ἤσθησαι (ὑπεραττικίζει γὰρ τὴν γλῶτταν, καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῆς συνήθους ἀποβέβηκε διαλέξεως), αὐτὸς ἐγώ σοι διερμηνεύσω, ἀπερ ἐκείνη δυσήχως σοι μάλα καὶ δυσηκόως προσεπιφθέγγεται. In the treatise *De Heliodoro*, l. 14-15 Dyck, Psellos associates "Attic" (Ἀττικόν) with "high-brow" (ὑπερήφανον) in opposition to "adorned" (κομμωτικόν) and "theatrical" (θεατρικόν). In Psell. *Theol.* 2.6.29-31 Westerink Duffy, describing the style of Gregory of Nazianzus, he says it was not distinguished by simplicity (ξὺν ἀφελείϙ), but "sublime and hyperatticist… and close to Thucydidean harshness" (ὑψηγορῶν καὶ ὑπεραττικίζων καὶ πρὸς τὸν Θουκυδίδειον ἑαυτὸν παρελαύνων στρυφνότητα).

15.40-52 Papaio α nnou), alluding to his international reputation as a teacher, he ironizes with feigned modesty upon the exaggerations of his correspondent (Aemilianos, patriarch of Antioch), according to whom he teaches the "Attic language" even to the Arabs⁹⁸!

In a letter to a (perhaps different) patriarch of Antioch, Psellos equates his own Atticism with "Platonic" style, he opposes to the "evangelic sincerity" of his addressee.⁹⁹ In Psell. *Epist.* 146 Papaioannou it is no longer Plato, but Demosthenes who is quoted as an example of Atticism¹⁰⁰, and contrasted with three sophists of the classical times, Gorgias, Hippias and Polos¹⁰¹. Gorgias and Polos are similarly associated in Psell. Theol. 1.98 Gautier, where Psellos explains to students admiring philosophy alone why he is interested in rhetoric too, and in which sort of rhetoric: he does not intend to imitate Gorgias. Polos and their kind¹⁰², but authors practising philosophical rhetoric, like for instance Dio of Prusa. Another reference to a similar sophistic triad should perhaps be assumed in Psell. Epist. 134 Papaioannou, where Psellos opposes a vulgar, theatrical form of rhetoric to a modest one, and curses Λυσίαι καὶ Πῶλοι καὶ $K\alpha\lambda\lambda\kappa\lambda\epsilon$ (l. 43), quoted as representatives of the first style. The combination. in the present form of the text, of Lysias' name with Polos' and Callicles' seems indeed quite surprising, all the more so since Psellos regularly cites the Athenian *logographos* as an example of a simple, natural mode of expression¹⁰³. in line with the rhetorical tradition, that considered Lysias as a model of apheleia. *katharotês* or *saphêneia*¹⁰⁴: one can perhaps suppose that, at some stage in the

⁹⁸ On the importance of *asteiotes* in Byzantine epistolography, see Bernard 2015, with references to several letters of Psellos.

⁹⁹ Psell. ep. 5.46-47 Papaioannou.

¹⁰⁰ Text quoted in n. 97.

¹⁰¹ Psell. ep. 146.22-26 Papaioannou: Καὶ δὴ πάρεστιν αὕτη (i-e rhetoric) ού Γοργιάζουσα οὕτε μὴν Ἱππιάζουσα, οὕτε τὰ τοῦ Πώλου φρυαττομένη, άλλὰ Δημοσθενικῶς σεμνυνομένη, καὶ τὸ ὅλον πολιτικῶς. The joined mention of Hippias, Polos, and Gorgias is obviously reminiscent of Platonic dialogues, where the three sophists feature as opponents of Socrates, but it may also reflect the influence of Philostratos' *Lives of the sophists*, where a few pages are devoted to each of them (I, 9: Gorgias; I, 11: Hippias; I, 13: Polos).

¹⁰² Psell. *Theol*. 1.98. 15-16 Gautier: ού γὰρ τοὺς περὶ Γοργίαν καὶ Πῶλον ἑζήλωκα.

¹⁰³ Psell. Chron. 7a.26 Renauld (simplicity) and 48 Renauld (restraint); Psell. Or. min. 19.64 Littlewood (natural beauty); Psell. Theol. 1.2.63-65 Gautier (restraint); Psell. Theol. 1.32.36-37 Gautier (clarity); On the style of the Theologian, l. 198-203 Mayer (plain style, ψιλός); On the style of Gregory the Theologian, Basil the Great, Chrysostom, and Gregory of Nyssa, 127.3-4 Boissonade (εύστομία) and 130.18-21 (simplicity); On John Chrysostom, § 5 Lévy (natural style, κατὰ φύσιν; ἀφελὴς ἰδέα καὶ ήθική); M 17 = Psell. ep. 135.49-53 Papaioannou (simplicity).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. DH, 4 (*Isaeus*), 3, 2. In his essay on Lysias' style, Dionysios insists on his qualities of purity (καθαρότης) and clarity (σαφήνεια). In Hermogenes' *On forms*, Lysias is quoted as an example in the chapters on simplicity, άφέλεια (II, 3) and modesty, έπιεικεία (II, 6); Hermogenes contrasts his style "that does not seem to be forceful but that is so in fact" with the style of the sophists, that "appears to be forceful but is not really so" (II, 9, on δεινότης): he quotes Polos, Gorgias and Meno.

transmission of the text, the name of Lysias inadvertently substituted for that of Gorgias, better fitted in the context¹⁰⁵.

Nevertheless, one must remark that Psellos' view of "sophistic" is somewhat fluctuating, for in Psell. *Theol.* 2.6.27-28 Westerink Duffy he quotes Gorgias' name in a positive way, when, presenting Gregory of Nazianzus as both a rhetor and a philosopher, he describes him $\acute{\nu} \pi o\lambda \lambda \tilde{o} \varsigma \Gamma o \rho \gamma i \dot{\alpha} \zeta \omega \nu \kappa \alpha i \tau \rho \upsilon \phi \tilde{\omega} \nu$ $\tau \tilde{\omega} \pi \lambda o \dot{\upsilon} \tau \tilde{\omega} \kappa \alpha \lambda \lambda \epsilon_i \tau \tilde{\omega} \nu \lambda \dot{\epsilon} \xi \epsilon \omega \nu$. Besides, his use of terms such as $\sigma o \phi (\zeta \epsilon \sigma \theta \alpha_i, \sigma \phi \phi \iota \sigma \upsilon \alpha, \sigma \sigma \phi \iota \sigma \tau \iota \kappa \dot{\sigma} \varsigma$ is characterised by its ambivalence. To be sure, we can find quite a number of passages where he employs these words in a critical way, to describe stylistic affectation, often in contrast with plain, unpretentious style¹⁰⁶, and he occasionally associates sophistic with a liking for dissimulation¹⁰⁷. But he also quite often uses the term "sophistic" to mean what we would call "science of language", when he wants to insist on the technical aspect of rhetoric (see in Psell. *Epist.* 2 Papaioannou the equation between

¹⁰⁵ Unless Psellos was influenced by his reading of Lysias in a manuscript where the latter's discourses were associated with sophists' works: that is the case in our earliest witness to Lysias, *Parisinus Coisl.* 249 (2nd half of the 10th c.), which includes both Lysias and Gorgias (cf. Sosower 1987, 3). Psellos may have read Lysias in a Constantinopolitan manuscript used as model by the copyist of *Palatinus gr.* 88, which also contains sophistic works by Alcidamas and Antisthenes (*ibid.*, 11).

¹⁰⁶ In Psell. ep. 375.8-10 Papaioannou σοφίζεσθαι is opposed to ή ίδιωτεία τῆς λέξεως, καὶ τὸ άφελὲς κάλλος καὶ ἄτεχνον; in Psell. ep. 35.7 and 14-16 Papaioannou we find on the one hand άμαθίαν, ίδιωτείαν, ίδιωτικῶς, ἀφελῶς, ἀπλοῖς, on the other hand δεινοῖς, σοφιστικοῖς. Further examples of pejorative use in the essay On the Style of the Theologian, l. 53-55 Mayer (ούχ οἶον οὶ παχύτεροι τῶν σοφιστευσάντων ἡσκήσαντο, ἐπιδεικτικόν τε καὶ θεατρικόν), in the Encomium for Symeon Metaphrastes (Or. hag. 7 Fisher, l. 113-114: juxtaposition of πλάσας, μεταπλάσας and τηνάλλως σοφιστευσάμενος; l. 248-249: association σοφιστεία / άγοραία κομψότης, in contrast with άληθεία / άψευδης διήγησις) or in the Encomium for John [Mauropous], Metropolitan of Euchaita (Or. paneg. 17 Dennis, l. 310-312: John knew τὴν σοφιστείαν τήν τε έν όνόμασι καὶ έν διανοίαις, but he drove it out of the city of his soul). As a matter of fact, Mauropous seems to have been rather hostile to sophistic, if he was the redactor of the 1047 novella about the foundation of the law school at Constantinople, as is usually maintained (cf. Karpozilos 1990 [ed.], The Letters of loannes Mauropous, 13): for sophistic in the novella is opposed to true rhetoric (in chapter 18, it is said that laws must use the *logoi* "as magnificent protectors", οἰονεί τισι λαμπροῖς δορυφόροις, against those who do not hesitate to denigrate them έκ τῆς θρασυτάτης σοφιστικῆς οὐ γὰρ δὴ ῥητορικὴν φαίην ἂν την τὸ πιθανὸν ἀπιθάνως ἡ καὶ πιθανῶς τὸ ἀπίθανον κατασκευάζουσαν τέχνην). Passage reproduced in Wilson, 1971, 65-66.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Psell. ep. 205.19-21 Papaioannou, where he puts τῶν σοφισμάτων on a par with τῷ παραλογισμῷ and τῶν ἐν λόγοις μεταμορφώσεων. See also the Monody in honour of an anonymous patrikios, where Psellos professes to say true things rather than είκότα καὶ πιθανὰ καὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης κεκοσμημένα σοφίσμασι, thus opposing sophistic to veracity (ed. Gautier 1978, l. 73-76). Nonethess in Psell. ep. 214.14-18 Papaioannou, he finds the flexibility of sophistic appropriate to worldly life: τῷ δέ γε καθ΄ ἡμᾶς βίω ἡ τῆς σοφιστικῆς ἀπόχρη δύναμις ἐπ΄ ἄμφω βάλλουσα καὶ διπάλτῷ χειρί, τῆ μὲν ώθοῦσα, τῆ δὲ προσιεμένη τὰ προσαγόμενα, ἰν΄ οὕτως μὲν τὸν τοῦ δικαίου τις λόγον πληροῖ, ἐκείνῷ δὲ ... πληροῖ τὸ βαλάντιον ἡμῶν.

σοφιστική and τέχνη on the one hand, φιλοσοφία and έπιστήμη on the other hand¹⁰⁸, or in Psell. *Epist.* 378.18-20 Papaioannou the use of περὶ τοὺς λόγους σοφίζεσθαι as an equivalent of τεχνίτην τοῦ λόγου [εἶναι]). Consequently, Psellos does not hesitate to mention his "sophistic" formation, when he sums up his intellectual career in his famous letter to Michael Keroularios (l. 52-53 Criscuolo: τὴν γλῶτταν ταῖς σοφιστικαῖς τέχναις ἐκάθηρα); he calls his chair of rhetoric in Constantinople a "sophistikos thronos"¹⁰⁹, and prides himself on his ability to combine philosophy and "sophistic"¹¹⁰.

If Psellos once compares himself to the sophist Gorgias, he also identifies with other orators of the classical times, Lysias¹¹¹, Aeschines¹¹², and of course Demosthenes, praised by all the ancient theoreticians for his unsurpassable $\delta \epsilon v \delta \tau \eta \varsigma^{113}$: Psellos even appropriates several of the latter's sayings, drawn from his speech *Against Midias*¹¹⁴ and from his celebrated self-referential discourse *On the crown*¹¹⁵. Such a role play reflects Psellos' well known versatility, for he successively endorses the *persona* of authors endowed with rather different rhetorical profiles, thus claiming his ability to succeed in

¹⁰⁸ Psell. ep. 2.8-10 Papaioannou: τὴν σοφιστικὴν ἐν τῆ φιλοσοφία συμμίξαντες, ήγεμόνες καὶ τῆς ἐπιστήμης καὶ τῆς τέχνης πᾶσιν οἰόμεθα. One can find another example of positive use of the term in the Funeral oration in honour of Niketas, maïstor of the school of St. Peter (Or. funebr. 4 Polemis), where Psellos evokes his own rhetorical formation and mentions successively his mastery of τοὺς σοφιστικοὺς τῶν λόγων and his experience of τῆς ῥητορικῆς παιδεύσεως (§ 4).

¹⁰⁹ Psell. ep. 280.20 Papaioannou to Chasanes.

¹¹⁰ Psell. ep. 2.8-9 Papaioannou. See also Psell. *Chron.* 7a.15 Renauld, where he boasts of his εύγλωττία and σοφιστική δύναμις. Psellos' pretence to being an expert in philosophy and rhetoric as well is present in many of his letters (see for instance Psell. ep. 28; 134; 150; 280 Papaioannou). On the much discussed question of Psellos' attitude towards both disciplines, see (among many others) Criscuolo 1981; Criscuolo 1990, introduction to the *Ep. ad Xiphilinum*, 36-38; Papaioannou 2013, ch. 1: "The philosophers' rhetoric" (esp. 29-39: "Philosopher-rhetor").

¹¹¹ Psell. Chron. 7a.26 Renauld: ζηλώσας τὴν Λυσιακὴν τῶν ὀνομάτων κοινότητα, τὴν συνήθη λέξιν καὶ ἀφελῆ τεχνικωτάτοις νοήμασιν κατεκόσμησα.

¹¹² Psell. ep. 146, 12-18 Papaioannou: protesting against Kyritzes, who dared attack his two favourite disciplines, philosophy and rhetoric, Psellos promises him the fate of Timarchos, defeated by a long discourse of Aeschines (*Against Timarchos*).

¹¹³ Dionysios of Halikarnassos says he assigns the palm for oratorical mastery (τῆς ἐν λόγοις δεινότητος) to Demosthenes, who "most certainly forms a sort of standard alike for choice of words and for beauty in their arrangement" (6 [*Comp.*], 18.15: ὄρος γὰρ δή τίς ἐστιν ἐκλογῆς τε ὀνομάτων καὶ κάλλους συνθέσεως ὸ Δημοσθένης). According to Hermogenes, Demosthenes "is forceful (δεινός) in every passage that he wrote…" (*On forms*, 2, 9, 14).

¹¹⁴ Or. 21, 72, quoted in Psell. ep. 397.26-30 Papaioannou.

¹¹⁵ Or. 18, 10, quoted in Psell. Or. min. 8.120 Littlewood; ibid. 179, quoted in Psell. Or. min. 9.50 Littlewood. The second of these two quotations from Or. 18 (ούδ' ἕγραψα μέν, ούκ ἑπρέσβευσα δέ) features in Hermogenes' treatise On forms as an example of klimax, in chapter 1, 12 on "elegance" (ἐπιμέλεια) and "beauty" (κάλλος).

every kind of eloquence ¹¹⁶. He often parades his stylistic flexibility, and describes himself ready to fit the capacities and expectations of any of his correspondents, in exploiting the whole range of the literary spectrum, from the most sophisticated style to the most humble, from the most purist Greek to the most colloquial, even Barbarian language¹¹⁷! Prone to identify with Proteus¹¹⁸, he also compares himself to the titmouse (α i γ i $\theta \alpha \lambda o \varsigma$), which imitates the voice of every bird it encounters¹¹⁹.

Psellos' adoption of a multiplicity of rhetorical models may be explained by his proclaimed dissatisfaction with any of them. Indeed, none of the orators of the classical Greece escapes Psellos' criticism. In Psell. *Epist.* 358 Papaioannou, he blames Isocrates for resorting to stylistic embellishments right in the middle of difficult circumstances, regardless of the constraints of *kairos*¹²⁰. In his *Encomium for John Mauropous*, he finds fault with Lysias' meanness, he scornfully contrasts with the grandeur of Mauropous' style¹²¹. In Psell. *Theol.* 1.98 Gautier, Demosthenes in his turn is criticized for his unevenness¹²², and proclaimed inferior to Gregory of Nazianzus, who outshines the ancient orator, as an eagle outshines a jay.

¹¹⁶ Hunger 1978, 142. See for instance Psell. ep. 5.47-65; 62, *passim*; 123.29-37; 124.118-120; 146.134-138; 280.53-65; 305.14-22 Papaioannou.

¹¹⁷ In Psell. ep. 5.57-59 Papaioannou (to the patriarch of Antioch), after protesting that he does not practise atticism (άττικίζειν) with anybody, but can also draw his *logoi* from the same craters as his correspondents, Psellos playfully adds he is even ready to speak Skythian or Barbarian, if necessary (Άλλ΄ έγώ σε μεταχειριοῦμαι τρόπον ἕτερον. Καὶ τοὺς τῆς ἐμῆς γλώττης ἀποσβέσας πυρσούς, σκυθιστὶ ἢ τὸ ὅλον [είπεῖν] ἐπιστελῶ σοι βαρβαριστί).

¹¹⁸ See for instance G 7 = Psell. ep. 62 Papaioannou and its comment by Papaioannou 2011.

¹¹⁹ Psell. ep. 5.63-65 Papaioannou (continuation of the passage quoted n. 117): Άξιολογώτερος γοῦν ἐγώ σοι τοῦ αίγιθάλου φανήσομαι καί σου τὴν φώνην παντοδαπῶς ἑπισπάσομαι. In his commentaries on the Homeric poems Eustathios of Thessalonike alludes to the *polytropia* of the nightingale (*Comm. in Il.* van der Valk, 1, 623, 21-23; *Comm. in Od.* Stallbaum, 1, 4, 34 - 5, 1) – according to *Od.* 19, 521, where the poet speaks of the nightingale's πολυηχέα φώνην. I was unable to find other references to the changing voice of *aigithalos*.

¹²⁰ Psell. ep. 358.5-7 Papaioannou: έν ού καιρῷ έφιέντες τῆ γλώσσῃ καὶ ἀβρυνόμενοι οὐδὲν δέον, ὥσπερ ὁ Ἱσοκράτης ἐν δυσχερείαις πραγμάτων τῆ περὶ τὸν λόγον ἀγλαΐα χρώμενος. Criticism perhaps influenced by Dionysios of Halikarnassos, who maintains that Isocrates is sometimes lacking propriety (5 [Demosth.], 18, 7-9).

¹²¹ Psell. Or. paneg. 17.283-287 Dennis: Λυσίαν δ' εί τις έπαινεῖν βούλοιτο, προσίεμαί τε καὶ άποδέχομαι, άλλ' οὕ μοι λόγος τὰ ῥητορικὰ ἐν πᾶσιν ἐπαινεῖν κλέμματα οὐδὲ τὰς ὑποκαθημένας φωνάς· τὸ δέ μοι μεγαλοπρεπὲς μᾶλλον ἀρέσκει τοῦ μικρολόγου καὶ κατατέχνου.

¹²² Psell. Theol. 1.98.124-130 Gautier: ὁ δὲ Δημοσθένης Παράσιος μὲν περὶ τὸν Ἐρμῆν, Μύρων δὲ περὶ τὴν τοκάδα· πρὸς γὰρ πᾶσαν τέχνην ἔξιν τε τῶν ἀκουόντων καὶ δύναμιν ἑαυτὸν συναρμόσας, νῦν μὲν καλλιεπής ἐστι καὶ ἡχῶν ἅγαν τῷ κρότῳ τῶν λέξεων, νῦν δὲ συνεσπακὼς τὰς τῶν λόγων ὁφρῦς καὶ σκυθρωπάζων τὰ πολλὰ κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον, καὶ νῦν μὲν ἅγονος καὶ στρυφνός, νῦν δὲ πότιμος καὶ τρυφῶν, καὶ νῦν μὲν λελυμένος τὴν φράσιν, νῦν δὲ συνεστοιβασμένος τῷ ποικίλῳ τῆς ἑκφωνήσεως.

In adopting a polemical stance, Psellos aims at putting forward his independence of mind and advertising his own originality. Such a pretence appears clearly in the various passages where he disparages the ancient theoreticians of rhetoric, and boasts he will be able to complete, correct, or improve their doctrines¹²³. It shows as well through the reluctance he sometimes expresses in following intellectual fashions¹²⁴ and conforming to norms, especially in the encomium for Constantine Monomachos he composed between 1048 and 1050¹²⁵, where he proclaims he does not want to imitate the orators who praise the emperor according to the rules of rhetoric (τεχνικῶς), for the observance of usual standards is in that case ἄτεχνον, inasmuch as the virtues of the *laudandus* are far above any standard¹²⁶: Psellos therefore professes to prove τεχνικώτερος by transgressing the rules of art (τοὺς τῆς τέχνης κανόνας)¹²⁷.

¹²⁵ Psell. Or. paneg. 5 Dennis.

¹²³ Psell. Or. forens. 3.278-288 Dennis (Psellos wants to compete with Hermogenes, τῷ τεχνικῷ ἀντεπιδεικνύμενος); Psell. Or. min. 8.194-199 Littlewood (he has made additions to Longinos' doctrine, corrected many points in Hadrianos' theories, criticized quite everything in Sopatros; he also blames Hermogenes for his lack of inventivity); Psell. Theol. 1.98.30-33 Gautier (Psellos ironizes about Longinos preferring Lysias' discourse on love to Plato's [F 41, Patillon Brisson]).

¹²⁴ In Psell. ep. 18 Papaioannou Psellos protests against his students' infatuation with Hermogenes' theories. Psellos' expressed reservation towards Hermogenes may be due to the fact that he was a mere technician, little concerned with the philosophical side of rhetoric (Anastasi 1979, 370, n. 39). Cf. Hadas 1963, 32-33: Hermogenes "is negligible as a thinker".

¹²⁶ Psellos is thus suggesting that the emperor is the sole law-giver and himself his sole worthy spokesman. On this text, see Chamberlain 1986, 20-21. On Psellos' desire to follow his own way even in ethical matters, see the testimony of Psell. ep. 120 Papaioannou, addressed to Constantine, nephew of Keroularios, who had invited him to attend the ceremony of his second wedding; as his monastic condition would normally prevent him to take part in festivities of the kind, Psellos expresses the wish he could be his own master and judge, before confessing his fear of *baskania:* "To be sure, I should live without caring the opinions of others and not be measured by alien hands, but become my own measure and norm, but..." (I. 20-22: Ἐχρῆν μὲν οὖν μὴ πρòς τὰς ἐτέρων ζῆν ὑπολήψεις, μηδὲ ζυγοστατεῖσθαί με ἀλλοτρίαις χερσίν, ἀλλ΄ αὐτὸν ἐαυτῷ κανόνα καὶ στάθμην καθίστασθαι). Passage quoted by Angold 1998, 233, with a translation that somewhat stretches the meaning of the original text ("*It is not necessary* for me to be measured by the hands of others: *I am* for myself both the measure and the norm").

¹²⁷ See also, in the *Monody in honour of Michael Radenos*, Psellos' remarks about his incapacity to respect τοὺς ὄρους τῆς τέχνης because of the violence of his sorrow (ed. Gautier 1978, l. 170-174). One can put Psellos' pretence to originality in relation with his proclaimed intention of making his students "outstanding people" (ἀπότροφοι τῶν κοινῶν ἑθῶν), as remarked by Lemerle 1977, 246. In his funeral oration for Constantine Leichoudes (*Or. funebr.* 2 Polemis), he praises his friend for having dealt more freely than Pericles with the rules of rhetoric (ch. 4, l. 7-10: οὐ παρ' ἐκείνης <τῆς τέχνης> τὰ πλείω ἐκεκανόνιστο, ἀλλὰ καλλίους ἐκείνης κανόνας τοῖς μανθάνουσιν είσηγήσατο – commented by its translator Criscuolo 1983, 129, n. 47: "L'apporto lichudiano alla retorica fu a livello di progresso della τέχνη, non meccanica riproduzione dei canoni, ma loro critica interpretazione ed elaborazione"). On the frequency of a polemic stance towards the laws of rhetoric in 12th century rhetorical texts, see Garzya 1973, 7: even the basic rules (*Grundgesetze*) of rhetoric are sometimes questioned by Byzantine writers (he quotes as an example Michael Italikos' *Panegyric of John II Komnenos*, § 2: ἕτερον

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γὰρ ἐγκωμίου εἶδος ὁ λόγος ἐνταῦθα προβάλλεται καὶ ἀφ΄ ἐτέρων ἀξόνων νομοθετούμενον; § 12: καινοτομῶν… καὶ παραδοξότερόν τι ποιῶν ἡ κατὰ τοὺς πολλοὺς τῶν ῥητόρων). Further examples in Loukaki 1996, 99-100; Loukaki 2005, 183, 197, 205.

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