UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

RHETORIC AND POLITICAL POWER IN THE LAST CENTURY OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

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BY

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A Thesis submitted to the Department of Classics and Philosophy of the Faculty of Arts, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Masters of Philosophy in Classics Degree

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this piece of work was undertaken by me and affirm that this work has never been submitted to any other university in part or in whole for a degree or diploma.

Candidates signature: ……. Date: ……

Name: Emmanuel Koomson

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal supervisor's signature: …… Date: ……

Name: Prof. R. V. Cudjoe

Co-supervisor's signature: …… Date……..

Name: Mr. Jonathan Asante Otchere

ABSTRACT

Rhetoric in the last century of Republican Rome was so much entrenched in the fabrics of the Roman political society in such a way that, politicians who lacked the ability to speak persuasively denied themselves the opportunity to effectively affect the politics of the time. During the last century of the Roman Republic, Rome had an excellent military might which ensured that Rome was acclaimed the mistress of the world and inevitably controlled the Mediterranean region. Consequently, Rome's military prowess became a universally accepted phenomenon; due to this, it is often the case that more attention is given to militarism with regards to political power in Rome than to *rhetoric* or *oratory*. The importance of rhetoric to attaining political power is most often than not treated in silence or in extreme cases, glossed over. In order to achieve the purpose of this research, I will employ the historical narrative approach, that is, a narrative explanation, presumably, presenting an account of the linkages between events as a process leading to the outcome I seek to explain. This outcome is that rhetorical prowess was very crucial to Roman politicians who had the intent of winning and or exercising political power. With the nature of the Roman Republican system of governance being rhetoric friendly, politicians simply needed the art of persuasion so much that, even the likes of Caesar and Pompey who had armies behind them simply could not rely on their armies to exercise political power all the time but, had to use rhetorical prowess to get the job (exercising political power) done when necessary.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

How rhetoric/oratory is to be understood in this essay:

- An orator is he who, with rhetorical education, is able to see the available means of persuasion and has the capacity to use it to influence politics.

Forms/Means of Persuasion as understood in this essay:

- Non- artistic approach which is the use of un-invented direct evidence such as facts, emotional appeal, and witnesses or to aid the speaker in his persuasion, while artistic is a logical argument constructed by the speaker.

Other Terms:

Kairos - Kairos is, for Aristotle, the time and space context in which the proof will be delivered.

Contio - was used to designate those unofficial meetings where nothing was legally enacted.

Pathos - anger evoked by hatred

Ethos - anger tempered with understanding

Kylos or *anacyclosis* - is a cyclical theory of political evolution; this theory is based upon the Greek typology of constitutional forms of rule by one, the few and the many.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Mrs. Jennifer Koomson and Mrs. Lydia Lartey.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The term 'rhetoric' is derived from the Greek word *rhetorike* which means a kind of argumentation and in Latin it is called *rhetorice* which also means a kind of interaction (Harper, 2001, p. 3). Rhetoric makes use of simple rhetorical devices such as: repetition, digression, irony, etc. as well as pitch and volume to convey a message whose intent is compelling upon the one or those doing the listening. Rhetoric is also a component of all human communication. It has always been a key component in Roman culture and is firmly entrenched in the fabrics of their society due to its beauty and uniqueness. The history of rhetoric, however, begun in Sicily in the fifth century BC, with Corax and Tisias. The art of public speaking or speech, as a matter of fact, was in existence before their (Corax and Tisias) time, for as long as the Greek language had dominated, it had been spoken eloquently (Aristotle, Trans., Kennedy, 2007). But as far as history is concerned, there is no reason to dispute the validity of the ancient tradition, which goes back to Aristotle, that Corax and Tisias were the first to put down methodical principles of speaking. If that is the case, then we can rightly pronounce them as the founders of rhetoric (Clarke, 1953).

According to Cole (1991), the rhetoric of Corax and Tisias emanated from various experience of the law courts. The Sicilian tyrants, Thrasybulus and his brother Hieron, saw the end of their dominion and were evacuated from the city. Claims from all angles for the restoration of private property began trooping into the courts from all those who had lost their properties to

the tyrants (Aristotle, trans., Kennedy, 2007). The man who possessed the knowledge of how one could present and deliver his case would do it, not for pupils in class, but for the numerous private individuals who desperately needed their properties back. This according to Clarke (1953) seemed to be what Corax and Tisias did. Their art was utilitarian and associated with the law courts; that is, it was in the interest of the majority who saw in the expulsion of the tyrants as a step toward gaining their properties back. For all the acrimony which rhetoric experienced in the course of centuries, its founders set the tone.

Ancient rhetoric was very much more connected to forensic oratory than with any of the other types. It was as suited as its practical character, concerned largely with argumentation. Its leading idea, as Clarke records, was the argument from probability. Let me employ an example in a similar fashion as Clarke does to explain the argument from probability. A tiny man has slapped a stout tall man and he (tiny man) has to defend himself in court. According to Clarke (1953), his (the tiny man's) best argument will be in the fashion that, considering the size of the prosecutor, he would never think of such an act not to talk of performing it. The tall stout man could also draw similar type of argument by alluding that, it will be of no benefit for him to harm the tiny man being well aware that the argument from probability would be much in his opponent's favor. It was Corax and Tisias who discovered the possibilities of an argument in this nature, as Clarke puts it, in affirmation to Aristotle (Clarke, 1953: p. 1). Since I have mentioned forensic oratory as the type that Corax and Tisias were much involved with, it is important I afford

space as part of the background to the study to explain briefly the various types of rhetoric.

Broadly speaking, rhetoric falls under three divisions determined by the various classes of listeners that exist. The three components in speech-making include: the speaker, subject, and the person being addressed. Among these three components, it is the person being addressed (hearer) that determines the speech's end and object. The hearer must be either a judge, with a decision to make about things past or future, or an observer. A member of the audience or persons being addressed decides about future events, a juryman about past events; while those who merely decide on the orator's performance are observers. From these components, it can be deduced that there are three divisions of oratory. There is political, forensic and epideictic or ceremonial oratory (Roberts, 2010: p. 6).

According to Aristotle (Roberts, 2010: p. 6), political speaking convinces us to either take a particular action or not; for example, Cicero's orations against Catalina. In his (Cicero) orations, he urged the city to open its eyes to Catalina's treachery. In his fourth speech, Cicero managed to convince the Senate to issue him a death penalty instead of imprisonment as suggested by the likes of Caesar. This example is in conjunction with Aristotle's definition of political oratory given above, that is, it persuades listeners to either take or abandon a particular step (Aristotle, Trans., Roberts, 2010). Political speeches are, most often than not taken by private counselors, as well as by men who address public assemblies.

Forensic oratory also attacks and defends somebody; one or other of these two things must always be done by parties in a case. Tisias and Corax

began with the forensic type where they helped citizens or individuals at the court of law to regain their lost properties. With forensic oratory a wide range of examples can be cited but due to the time frame of this research, the best example to be cited remains Cicero as he was the most prominent orator during the last century of the Roman Republic. His (Cicero's) speech in defense of Marcus Caelius Rufus is an example of forensic oratory. Here Cicero defended Caelius Rufus against charges such as inciting civil disturbance at Naples, assault, murder of Dio, among others (Dorey, 1958).

Lastly, ceremonial oratory concerns itself with praise or blame as Aristotle explains. Isocrates' encomium of Helen is an example of the ceremonial type. In this speech, Isocrates praises Helen for her beauty and thinks Helen's beauty was worth the great Trojan War.

The most important thing to note here is that, the three kinds of oratory, indicated above, represent three different kinds of time. Political oratory is for the future, that is, it advises on issues yet to happen and tries to urge the city or hearers onto a particular direction which it advocates as the best cause of action. The party in a case at law is concerned with the past, one man being the accuser and the other, the defendant. In the Caelius' example, the accusers were Lucius Sempronius Atratinus, Publius Clodius and Lucius Herennius Balbus while there were men like M. Licinius Crassus, Cicero and Caelius himself helping with his defense (Dorey, 1958). Ceremonial oratory is a blend of the two kinds stated earlier (political and forensic oratory). It is a blend in that, the ceremonial orator speaks of present issues since all men praise or blame in view of the state of things existing at the time; but to do that, the orator finds it necessary to remember the past and to make deductions

into the future. Let me turn my attention back to the origin of oratory so as to show how the Romans became fond of it.

Rhetoric soon migrated from Sicily to Athens where it saw an overwhelming perfection. The Greek city state of Athens is responsible for the development of the art. Gorgias, sent on a diplomatic mission to Athens, was the man who opened the eyes of the Athenians to rhetoric. Gorgias was a Greek from Leontini, a city-state in Sicily, sent to Athens in search of military help for the beseeched Leontini. According to Clarke (1953), the Athenian assembly met to listen to Gorgias, and history has it that, his speech to the people was so marvelous that Athens, without a blink of an eye, agreed to help Leontini. Gorgias' speech became the talk of town forcing Athens to adopt the art.

The growth of rhetoric became more sporadic and soon the sophists took over, seeing a variety of tutors professing the art of speaking persuasively. Clarke (1953) refers to Gorgias as the most original of the sophists in the rhetorical field. Though writers believe Gorgias might have had some connection with Corax and Tisias, his interest in the field of rhetoric went beyond the founders (Corax and Tisias). Laying down methodical principles for speaking was not enough for Gorgias; to him, speech was the medium of persuasion and, above all, of power. His oratorical display at the Athenian assembly was not only persuasive but also powerful. Rhetoric trended, not only by argumentation, but also by every method necessary to work on the personality of the audience (Clarke, 1953: p. 12). Gorgias appealed to the ear by creating a kind of prose poetry in which sense counted for little and sound for so much, whereby phrase balanced phrase and word

singled with word. Gorgias left an indelible imprint on rhetoric; his influence continued to live in all those who studied the writing of artistic prose even after his death. According to Clarke (1953), the Romans called that which he added to rhetoric as 'elocution', meaning, the skill of clear and expressive speech.

Though sophistic rhetoric arose, there was no single form of rhetoric by the sophists. Different men toed diverse angles in the same rhetorical field. Thrasymachus, for instance, is credited with the development of appeal to emotions; Theodorus of Byzantium categorized the parts of a speech (Clarke, 1953: p. 2). There existed practitioners of rhetoric in the narrow sense, these were authors of textbooks, as well as of verse mnemonics. Among the sophists were men such as Prodicus and Hippias who concentrated on studying words and their meanings, and Protagoras whose actions, according to Clarke (1953), touched on rhetoric at varying points. Protagoras is believed not to have tutored the art of speech in isolation but he taught it as part of the art of politics and claimed, in the famous phrase, 'to make the worse course appear better'. (Clarke, 1953: pp. 102).

As Athens declined in power, a new force emerged in faraway Italy, the Roman Republic. Its Senate was the only permanent governing body and the only body where debate was possible. For the purpose of debate, one had to know the persuasive art of public speaking. Greek rhetoric penetrated Republican Rome in the middle of the second century BC. The teachers of rhetoric were Greek and they taught in both the Greek and Latin dialects; consequently, Roman teachers were produced. The remarkable thing about Roman rhetoric, according to Murphy and Katula (1995) is that, it appeared

for the first time in its fullest form around 90 B.C, with scanty evidence as to how it transformed into its completed form.

The Romans could boast of having knowledge of the art before adopting it formally from the Greeks by appealing to the regal period. According to Roman history, early in the beginning, Romulus had gathered the leaders of the noble clans and formed a hundred member *Minores Gentes*. They (*Minores Gentes*) served as the king's advisory body and were also in charge of formulating policy for implementation. This body became known as the Senate when Rome abolished monarchy and adopted Republican government (Cary and Scullard, 1975). By looking at the nature of Rome's senatorial proceedings and how speeches were employed to defend positions and policies, one is right to infer that, speech delivery began or was in existence during the era of the *Minores Gentes*. The *Minores Gentes* becoming known as the Senate does not pre-suppose that their (*Minores Gentes*) workings still existed in the same manner as it used to be. Nonetheless, it would not be far-fetched to suggest that they also employed speeches just as the Senators of the Republican period did. Rhetoric had been part of the Roman culture as far back as the name, Rome, was born, but history makes it emphatic that the Greeks were the masters of the art in its formalized form, and the Romans were quick to adopt it. A Roman could not be successful in his political career if he lacked military prowess or the ability to speak and speak persuasively. To be successful, the Roman politician needed both persuasive speaking skills and military might or one of the two. Men who possessed rhetorical skills and were equally good soldiers always stood tall in Roman politics (Morstein, 2004). Statesmen such as Tiberius Gracchus, Gaius

Gracchus, Marcus Tullius Cicero, Gnaeius Pompey, M. Porcius Cato and Julius Caesar shall be used to demonstrate the connection between rhetoric and political power in the last century of the Roman Republic. These statesmen have been chosen for a couple of reasons. The first being the fact that, they all possessed rhetorical education which Aristotle states as an important factor in achieving the desired end of rhetoric, which is, persuasion. Secondly, the political careers of some of the statesmen mentioned above was characterized by so much military success that, most of the sources do not pay attention to the immense contribution of their rhetorical prowess.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As regards militarism, Rome occupies a very tall position above all nations of the western cultures. Only nations such as Athens and Sparta are ranked as Rome's equals. One who is eager to find a stronger military nation could go beyond the west and argue for the Chinese military or the Persian army. Those could match the Romans and their military achievements in antiquity. As Polybius rhetorically queries; who is not curious to find out by what means and government system that the Romans used to subdue almost the whole world under their dominion within a short time? (Polybius, bk. 1). Because Rome's military strength is of universal acceptance, it is often the case that contemporary writers (for example David Shotter in his book: *The fall of the Roman Republic* among others) gives much attention to militarism with regard to politics in Rome than to rhetoric or oratory. The picture is often painted as though all one needed to be a distinguished politician and wield political power was to be a distinguished soldier and nothing else. The importance of rhetoric in achieving political power is often treated in silence

or in the extreme case, glossed over. This research does not seek to debunk the fact that being an excellent and shrewd soldier was an important requirement for winning a political office and actually exercising political power. Rather, the study intends to re-establish that rhetoric was equally an important component to becoming a successful politician in Rome.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research work is to first and foremost provide examples of politicians who won and exercised political power to illustrate how important rhetoric was to the attainment of political power in Republican Rome. Again, this research work also seeks to show the nature of Roman rhetoric during the Republican period.

1.4 Methodology

As far as this topic is concerned, my research is purely qualitative. Per the demands of qualitative research, I will employ books and articles related to my topic from the library, as well as online materials both primary and secondary sources to help achieve the objective of this research work. Online materials to be used include journals, books, and articles relevant to the topic chosen. In order to achieve the purpose of this research, I shall also employ the historical narrative approach, that is, a narrative explanation, presumably, presenting an account of the linkages among events as a process leading to the outcome I seek to explain (Roth, 1988). This research is in five chapters and did not employ either conceptual nor a theoretical frame work, however, the work is built on the ancient's conception of rhetoric. As such, I have made available a page where the core terms I used in the work has been explained.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

Rhetoric has always been a key component entrenched in the cultural fabrics of the Romans. Before the Romans formally adopted the art from the Greeks, public speaking was already known to them (Romans). But so far as this research is concerned, the focus is the last century of the Roman Republic (from 133 B.C. to 46 B.C.) when rhetoric had reached its highest point. In order for one to understand how firmly rhetoric was connected to political power, traces will be drawn before the last century of the Roman Republic but then, this research shall not travel beyond the last century. Inability to read Latin is one of the limitations my work will suffer. As such, I will rely on translated versions of the primary materials needed for my work. Again, this topic demands I make references to specific speeches to prove how politicians used rhetoric to attain and exercise political power, but access to the speeches will be difficult to come by. This is because many of them did not survive, but the few that did, gives a powerful glimpse of the importance of rhetoric to Roman politicians.

1.6 Literature Review

Plato famously outlined the difference between true and false rhetoric in a number of dialogues; notably the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus.* In his (*Gorgias*), Gorgias defines rhetoric as power produced by the ability to persuade others to do one's bidding through the use of words. That is, “rhetoric is a producer of persuasion (Plato, *The Gorgias*). Plato’s view of rhetoric is not unanimous as far as rhetoric is concerned. While Isocrates (Trans: Papillion, 2004) held a positive belief of the sophists in man and his powers, his greatest contemporary, Plato, considered these powers as useless and dangerous if not

directed to the pursuit of justice and truth. Rhetoric which Gorgias had held in high esteem and praised as the best of arts was, in Plato's own view, no art at all, but a mere skill (Plato, *The Gorgias*). Plato disregarded the power of rhetoric because he deemed it not based on knowledge; rather, a form of trick where the orator needed only to make the ignorant think he knew more than the expert. This, according to Plato, is the job of the orator and this is not based on knowledge but trickery, through the use of words. Rhetoric gave people what they wanted, not what will serve their best interest (Altman, 2010: p. 60).

Rhetoric, as interpreted by the sophists, enabled man to manipulate or influence his fellow men; a thing Plato considers as a dangerous gift. According to Plato (Trans: Altman, 2010), he manifestation of the power of words by an individual led to the manifestation of power itself. This assertion by Plato is true and was made evident in the last century of the Roman Republic when Cicero, by the power of words, set a bad precedence in the Republic by putting the *Catilinarian* conspirators to death. As Plutarch records on the life of Cicero, he explains that Cicero was able to uncover the treachery of Catilina but afterwards he managed to convince almost the entire house of the Senate to put the conspirators to death even when that was against the Republican constitution. Caesar was among the few who stood against the death penalty and insisted on imprisonment which was actually the right form of action (Plutarch, 1961: pp. 240). But as Plato (Trans: Altman, 2010) rightly says, the manifestation of the power of words by an individual led to the manifestation of power itself and rightly, Cicero had the power to sway the Senate in violation of the constitution.

The submission above was Plato's perception of rhetoric in the *Gorgias.* In the *Phaedrus*, however, his attitude is surprisingly sympathetic to rhetoric. He makes his stance much clearer in the *Phaedrus* that, he was not entirely against rhetoric but willing to come to terms and if possible accept the art. Ending his dialogues in the *Phaedrus*, Plato praises Isocrates, a hint perhaps that he (Plato) is in agreement with rhetoric that is based on philosophy (Plato, *The Phaedrus*). Plato, trying to inculcate philosophy into rhetoric is not surprising, considering his argument for the ideal state which he believes will only be possible with the philosopher as king. Plato believes philosophy is wisdom and the mother of all disciplines; as such, anything (discipline) devoid of philosophy is unacceptable. As Clarke indicates, there was no mistaking the hostility of the *Gorgias*, and its echoes are heard in rhetorical literature throughout the centuries. Rhetoric could, however, and ultimately did admit the view of the *Phaedrus* that the speaker must have a detailed knowledge of what he is speaking about and of the minds (audience) he is trying to effect (Clarke, 1953: p. 108).

Aristotle shared to a large extent the views of Plato, who proclaimed that rhetoric is not an art. Aristotle agreed with his tutor only that he (Aristotle) modified his view slightly. To Aristotle, rhetoric is an art, but one of a special kind, not a science with its own distinct subject matter but a discipline similar to dialect and like dialectic, rhetoric is unconcerned about truth (Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*). With regard to morality, Aristotle holds that, the art is beneficial for bringing the truth to light since some people cannot be persuaded by facts. If it is good to be able to defend oneself by force; it is good to do the same by words. Aristotle believes rhetoric should not be so

much scrutinized based on the misuse of the power of words. He holds this opinion due to the basic fact that all good things can equally be misused (Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*). Cary and Scullard (1975) record that Cicero's vigilance saved the Republic from doom as he managed to get the entire city, on four occasions by the power of words, to see Catiline's treachery. This affirms Aristotle's belief that rhetoric should not be so much scrutinized based on the misuse of power because some good can come out of it as in the case of Cicero against Catiline. Considering that Cicero had to deliver four speeches against *Catiline*, it affirms Aristotle's assertion that, indeed, some people cannot be persuaded by fact to come by truth and for that matter, the need for persuasion by force of words. According to Kennedy**,** Aristotle was the earliest to give serious consideration to drawing a map of learning and to defining the relationship between the numerous disciplines of the arts and sciences, which were developing as separate studies for the first time in the fourth century B.C (Trans: Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*: pp. 80).

Aristotle provided a distinction between intellectual activities. In his opinion, there are three ways by which intellectual activity can be divided. The first being theoretical science, where the objective is 'knowing', that is, knowledge for its own sake and which also includes mathematics, physics, biology and theology. Second, is practical art, where the main objective is 'doing' something, including politics and ethics. The third is productive arts of 'making' something, including architecture, crafts, medicine, etc. (Aristotle, *On Rhetoric:* bk. 1). What Aristotle says in books one and two (*On Rhetoric*), however, is that rhetoric is a kind of mixture. It is in one way a method in the shape of dialectic; with no special subject of its own while in the other, a

practical art derived from ethics and politics on the basis of conventional uses (Kennedy, Trans: Aristotle, *On Rhetoric* 2007).

Defining rhetoric in *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle says it is an ability of "seeing' the available means of persuasion and using it effectively. With regard to seeing the available means of persuasion, Aristotle emphasizes that the individual who sees them must not necessarily use them himself. Thus, one thing that is clear is the theoretical element emphasized in Aristotle's definition which produces persuasion, speeches and texts. In Aristotle's discourse *On Rhetoric*, he explains that there are two basic forms of persuasion as long as rhetoric is concerned. He calls the forms artistic and non-artistic means of persuasion, with the artistic further divided into two. Non- artistic is the use of un-invented direct evidence such as facts, witnesses or documents to aid the speaker in his persuasion, while artistic is a logical argument constructed by the speaker (Buckley, 1967). Since artistic persuasion has got to do with logic, it can be constructed in an inductive (drawing a particular conclusion from one or more parallels) or deductive argument (drawing a conclusion from stated or implied premises).

Rhetoric may be defined also as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion but this is not the job of any art. Every art has the capability of persuasion within its own jurisdiction or subject matter. For instance, medicine is about what is healthy and unhealthy, geography about the weather conditions, arithmetic about numbers, and this can equally be said about the other disciplines. But rhetoric is the ability of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject matter presented to it. Of the various modes of persuasion, some belong strictly to the art of

rhetoric and others do not. By those that do not we are looking at things that are not supplied by the speaker but are available at the out-set; witnesses, evidence given under torture, written contracts, etc. The former means that we can construct ourselves by following the principles of rhetoric; the first is they are merely to be used while the other has to be invented, the key to rhetoric (Trans: Buckley, *On Rhetoric* 1967).

In Aristotle's view, there are three types of persuasion by way of the spoken word. The immediate kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second is by putting the audience in a certain frame of mind and the third on the proof or apparent proof, provided by words of the speech itself (Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*: sec 5). Naturally, we believe good men more fully and more readily than others (perceived not to be good) so in cases where exact certainty cannot be achieved and opinions are divided, the speaker's character then comes into play. This mode of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by the perception people have about his character before he speaks (Kennedy, 2007). The speaker's character contributes a lot to his power of persuasion in as much as following the principles of rhetoric does. This is because no matter how eloquent one speaks on a subject matter, his personal character, whether good or bad, most often than not, informs the hearers and the decision they arrive at. As discrete as the conspiracy was, it took a man of good reputation to get the city's attention of the treacherous act. Not any ordinary citizen could have achieved what Cicero achieved, though he was not born a noble, the reputation he had built for himself through rhetoric and the kind of people he associated with made him highly respected in the society. Secondly, persuasion may come through the

hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions. Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question. These three ways, according to Aristotle, are the means of effective persuasion. He continues that the man who is to be in authority of them must be able to understand the emotions. To understand their emotions, Aristotle means, knowing their causes and the manner in which they are excited (*On Rhetoric*, 2007: pp. 90).

Isocrates, born to a wealthy family in Athens, was one of the ten Attic orators and among the most significant Greek rhetoricians of his time; he made many contributions to rhetoric and education through his teaching and written works. He was massively influenced by his sophist tutors such as Prodicus and Gorgias. In Norlin's translation, Isocrates defined rhetoric as outward feeling and inward thought of not merely expression, but reason, feeling and imagination. Like Aristotle, Plato and others who wrote treaties on rhetoric before him, Isocrates believed it was used to persuade ourselves and others but equally used in directing public affairs (Trans: Norlin, 1928). Isocrates went ahead to describe rhetoric as an endowment of human nature which raises us above mere animalism and facilitates us to live the civilized life. In his treaties, *Against the Sophists,* Isocrates' rhetorical ideals are much evident. But in this treaties Isocrates refutes the assertion of he being a rhetor and practicing rhetoric, he considers his study as *philosophia*, that is, philosophy, which he claims as his own (Trans: Papillion, 2004).

In his rhetorical ideals, Isocrates emphasizes the ability to use language to address practical problems. In his school, Isocrates is believed to have

emphasized three things that the student of rhetoric needs. The first is a natural aptitude which was inborn, the second being knowledge training granted by teachers and textbooks, and applied practices designed by educators. In his estimation, he considered natural ability and practice to be more important than principles of rhetoric. Instead of setting fixed rules, he stressed fitness for the occasion or what he called *kairos*, that is, the rhetor's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and situations as the most important (Trans: Papillon, 2004). Morstein presents us with good evidence in his book, *Mass Oratory and Political Power*, affirming to why most of the ancient rhetoricians favored natural abilities more than all the other requirements. According to Morstein, as everyone who climbed the Rostra and confronted the pool of faces across the forum and around the nearby temples, it always boiled down to natural ability since the Roman people themselves had a voice during an oration. Morstein explains that the voice of the Roman people was loud and sometimes terrifying. This indicates that the Roman people loved public speaking and always came in their numbers to listen to speaker's touch on issues (Morstein, 2004).

Morstein presents us with a practical case scenario which helps explain why the ancient writers believed natural abilities was the most important principle for the orator. According to Morstein, when the tribune who opposed A. Gabinius' law creating a special command for Pompey alone against the pirates confronted the loud crowd to present his case, he angered the crowd by indicating with his finger that two commanders should be chosen instead of one. Morstein explained that he employed the sign language because he lacked the ability to speak above the noise of the multitude, incurring their

displeasure in the process. Morstein reports in accordance to Plutarch and Dio that, the shout of displeasure from the crowd, knocked a crow out of the sky (Morstein, 2004). Clarke (1953) also indicates how necessary it was for one to possess the gift of nature above all other things as rhetor so that Cicero had to stop oratory of public speaking due to health reasons associated with his voice and rather commit to the oratory of writing. To be an ideal or a good orator, one must possess above all thing's natural gifts, but also a wide knowledge of philosophy, science and the arts. Just like Plato, Aristotle and Cicero postulated, Isocrates also believed to be an orator meant to have knowledge in diverse areas. That, according to him and those who came before and after him, makes oratory a unique area which demands highly learned people. Isocrates' innovations in the art of rhetoric paid closer attention to expression and rhythm than any other Greek writer (Papillon, 2004).

Isocrates was a sophist who shared in Gorgias' vision about rhetoric being capable of making old appear new and vice versa. Isocrates was a sophist in the fourth century, carrying with him the sophistic ideal with its pleasure in the exercise of the art of speech and its high-flown praise of its capabilities. Isocrates unlike the other sophists was not a teacher of rhetoric in the truest sense of the word teaching. For him, rhetoric should be perceived as something higher and greater; it is a part of that practical wisdom joined with general culture which he calls philosophy (Papillon, 2004). This assertion is true when one pays attention to the rhetorical life of the Romans. It was not just an art, to them; it was more of culture which then becomes a philosophy of life. One just had to be eloquent if one had social progression in mind, but the question is, who did not have social progression in mind? The answer is

everybody had; only that some were prevented by economic conditions to partake in politics which happened to be the surest way of social progression (Papillon, 2004). Just like Gorgias had done, he also paid particular attention to style but unlike Gorgias, unnecessary rattles were not of importance to him, artistic balance symmetry was. With Isocrates, gaps are shunned; allowing sentences to travel their distance smoothly and stylishly. All that is harsh, vigorous and interesting, is removed from the style as from the matter (Clarke, 1953).

Cicero's views on oratory is much evident in his book *De Oratore* which he is believed to have written or published in the year 55 B.C when he was about fifty-two years old. History has it that he wrote this masterpiece upon the request of his brother, Quintus, so as to make his views on oratory much better than he (Cicero) did in his book *The Invention*. Cicero starts by praising the art which he is engaged in. Though rhetorical, Cicero tries to assert the reason why a greater number of people are successful in every other pursuit than in speaking. But this is a clear case of propaganda, a way by which Cicero uses to praise the act of speaking. Cicero distinguishes between the magnanimity and prestige between oratory and poetry by alluding to the fact that there exist far fewer good orators than good poets. This simple fact makes oratory a much higher pursuit than poetry which is often compared with oratory. In the early stages of his writing, (*De Oratore*), Cicero is quick to glorify the Greeks for their tremendous role in oratory and pronounces them as holders of the first place in eloquence, and Athens as the designers of all literature in which the paramount power of oratory was brought to perfection. Like Aristotle, Isocrates and the other ancient writers on oratory, Cicero also

states that oratory is a very broad discipline. He explains that knowledge on a wider scale is needed without which the quality of talking fluently will be impossible. Speech itself, according to Cicero, is to be formed not merely by choice but by careful construction of words and all the emotions of the mind which nature has gifted to man, must be intimately known (Cicero, *De Oratore bk. 1*).

Of the numerous things which all the ancient writers agree upon with regard to oratory, its wide scope is one that they often emphasize. To be an orator means to be a lawyer, politician, mathematician, doctor, geographer etc. because one must be able to speak eloquently on a particular subject-matter even if it is outside ones field so well that those who have even mastered in that field will think that the speaker possessed real knowledge of the subject-matter before approaching them for insight. On the method of delivery, Cicero explains that it must be ordered by action of body, by gesture, by look and by modulation_and variation of the speaker's voice (*De Oratore*, bk. 2). Cicero makes a vital point to the whole pursuit of oratory. He considers memory as the most vital to an orator because it (memory) is the storage facility for the matter (subject- matter) and words that are the fruits of thought. Without the memory performing this duty, all the talents of the orator will be to no avail. On the relationship between philosophy and oratory which always happened to be a bone of contention, Cicero simply referred to the philosophers as orators as well:

> And if Plato spoke divinely upon subjects, most remote from civil controversies, as I grant that he did; if he also like Aristotle and Theophrastus and Carneads, were eloquent, and spoke with sweetness and grace on those matters which they discussed; let the subjects on which they spoke belong to other studies, but their speech itself, surely is the peculiar offspring

> of that art of which we are now discussing (Cicero, *De Oratore, bk. 2*).

Cicero considers philosophers as orators as long as they speak eloquently to people concerning their respective subject-matter. This shows that almost all the ancient writers agree that rhetoric was philosophical. Nonetheless, Cicero admits that no matter the power exerted behind a speech to effect its object by eloquence, a philosopher will never be affected; for the philosopher has obtained a thorough insight into the nature of mankind and all the passions of humanity, and those causes by which our minds are either impelled or restricted. No wonder Caesar was one of the Senators who opposed his (Cicero's) death sentence for the Catiline conspirators, this is because, Caesar himself is an orator and by extension a philosopher. That is why no matter how eloquently Cicero spoke, Caesar opposed his (Cicero) stand only that the majority might not have been philosophers and as such were affected by Cicero's eloquence.

Socrates is noted to have said that "all men are sufficiently eloquent in that which they understand" (Cicero, *De Oratore, bk. 1*). Cicero admits this statement is probable but debunks its truth value. This statement makes everyone an orator in his specific line of pursuit. According to Cicero, it would have been nearer truth if Socrates had held that no man can be eloquent on a subject that he does not understand. And that, if he understands a subject very well but is unable to arrange, form and style of his speech, such a man cannot express himself eloquently even on issues he understands. Therefore, if one yearns to define and understand the power of an orator, it is simple, an orator is he who, with rhetorical education, is able to speak thoughtfully and eloquently and from memory on any subject-matter that comes before him

(Cicero, *De Oratore, bk. 2*). I will use Cicero himself as an example to show how this definition reflects the last century of the Roman Republic.

As Plutarch indicates in his life on Cicero, he (Cicero) received education on the theory and practice of rhetoric from the Greek rhetorician, Apollonius (Plutarch, 1961). This explains why Cicero, became a great public speaker according to his own definition. The same can be said for the likes of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus who received rhetorical education from Greek tutors, Cato the younger who also received education from the stoics, among other notable names all of whom became distinguished public speakers of the latter Republic affecting their audience and the politics of the time (Plutarch, 1961). Cicero places orators under a political spotlight when he mentions that the orator understands only what concerns the discussions and practice of the forum, yet if he is required to speak on the other arts, he will when he has learned from others well-vested in those other arts. This statement by Cicero explains why Morstein indicates that rhetoric, though useful in the law courts as well, it was at the forum that its truest effect was felt. That is, since politics was like food to the Romans, it turned the orators into politicians because of the political demand and how the *Contio* and forum was always busy with one political deliberation or the other (Morstein, 2004). From here, Cicero's stand is very clear with regards to oratory and the orator. Cicero believes the true nature of the orator is at the forum which makes them politicians (*De Oratore*, bk. 2).

Cicero uses Sulpicius and Marius as practical examples in his dialogue. Marius is a well-known general who won fame for himself as a distinguished soldier while Sulpicius is known for sweetness of tongue, oratory. In Cicero's

words, though Sulpicius lacks knowledge on combat or military affairs, he will be able to speak on military matters so well that even Marius from whom he inquired about issues of militarism will think he (Sulpicius) understands military affairs better than himself (Marius). To distinguish between the poet and orator, Cicero makes it simple. The poet in his opinion is nearly allied to the orator only that the poet is more restricted in numbers but less restricted in the choice of words. But the truest difference between an orator and a poet is that the orator is thoroughly accomplished in all branches of knowledge requisite for a man of good breeding (Cicero, *De Oratore*, bk. 2). Oratory or rhetoric has always been linked to philosophy as evident in Aristotle, Plato, and Isocrates and now in Cicero. Cicero employs Mnesarchus' view to throw more light on the orator. Mnesarchus saw an orator as one who is vested with true wisdom, this is because eloquence which the orator possesses is a virtue and he who possesses one virtue possessed all. Thus, the eloquent man possessed all virtues and was a man of true wisdom.

In a nutshell, Crassus, as Cicero employed, considers nature and genius above every other requirement for one to become a good orator. Cicero in his dialogue presents us with a division of the whole business of an orator. There are five things for the orator to do; the first being finding out what he should say, followed by disposing and arranging his matter, next is to clothe and deck his thoughts with language, then to commit them to memory and finally to deliver them with dignity and grace. On the method of delivery, Cicero advocates that before an orator speaks on the main subject, the minds of the listeners must be prepared by an exordium; next, that the cause should be established, followed by supporting what he (Orator) maintains by proof; next

is to refute whatever the opposition is, and in the conclusion, the orator must amplify and enforce all the points in his favor as well as weaken and invalidate the strength of the opponent. Cicero emphasizes that eloquence has not sprung from art but art from eloquence. Cicero is influenced by Crassus' opinion and hence considers art as secondary to oratory, that is, not essentially necessary, yet proper for a man of liberal education to learn. Cicero dominated the thinking on eloquence and persuasion of practically all the scholars of the medieval Age and Renaissance and, hence, provides the main connection between the ancient and the modern world (Stem, 2006).

On the issue of invention, Antonius begins by stating the importance of an orator having in-depth knowledge and understanding of his case. This is important because it is only out of knowledge and understanding that invention becomes possible. Invention is always at its best with talented orators, hence, Antonius like Crassus fancy's talent. In his conclusion on invention, Antonius tells Sulpicius that when speaking his (Antonius) ultimate goal is to do well and if he is unable to procure some kind of good, then he hopes to refrain from inflicting harm. Let me now turn my attention to Quintilian, the last writer to consider as far as my literature review is concerned.

Quintilian, born in Northern Spain, was probably educated in Rome, where he afterward received some practical training from the foremost orator of the time, Domitius Afer. Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria,* believed to have been published shortly before the end of his life, greatly expresses his rhetorical ideals. He had thoroughly mastered earlier rhetorical literature; both Greek and Roman and he followed it wisely. If the reason which scholars

allude as motivation for Quintilian's work is right, then he provides us with a great deal of balance as far as the interpretation of oratory and rhetoric is concerned. His purpose, historians claim, was not to invent new theories of rhetoric but to judge between existing ones, and this he did with great diligence. He discriminated and rejected anything he considered absurd and always remained conscious of the fact that theoretical knowledge alone was of little use without experience and good judgment. His *Institutio Oratoria* is unique by its emphasis on the moral code. Quintilian's aim was to mold the student's character as well as to develop his mind. His core idea was that a good orator must first and foremost be a good citizen; eloquence serves the public well and must be merged with virtuous living (Trans: Odgers, *Institutio Oratoria,* 1935).

Quintilian indicates that rhetoric as an art was a later invention dating from about the time of Tisias and Corax; oratory, therefore, existed before art. But this is no concern to him (the date oratorical teachings began) because in Homer, we are presented with a number of oratory and various styles of speaking are represented by the speeches of three of the chiefs. Even young men are set to compete among themselves in contests of eloquence while Homer, through Achilles' shield, demonstrates law suits and pleaders. Quintilian with reference to Homer is only trying to make readers understand that the date or period when oratory began to be taught does not exonerate it from being an art. Also, it is his aim to make readers aware that everything which art has brought to excellence originated from nature (Trans: Odgers, *Institutio Oratoria,* 1935).

If that is not the case then we can reject the title of art to medicine, which was discovered from the observation of sickness and health; wounds were bound up long before medicine developed into an art, as Quintilian explains. In his view, eloquence or persuasive speaking (oratory) has always been an art and it is as old as nature itself. Quintilian uses the primitive man as an analogy; if the primitive man built himself a hut without the help of art then building should not be termed an art. If consequently any kind of speech is to be called eloquence, it should have existed before it was an art; oratory is simply the product of art and did not exist before it. To those who over-emphasize talent being the key to effective speaking so as to claim that some men speak who have never learnt how to speak, and that which a man does without being taught can never be considered an art (Trans: Odgers, *Institutio Oratoria,* 1935).

Quintilian strongly rejects this reasoning and argues that no man can be an orator untaught. This assertion from Quintilian is by far the truth when one takes a critical look at most of the prominent speakers of the last century of the Roman republic who greatly affected the politics of the last century of the Roman republic. Statesmen such as L. Licinius Crassus, Marcus Antonius, Cato (the younger) Julius Caesar, Tiberius Gracchus, Gaius Gracchus, Cicero, Sulpicius Rufus etc. were all good speakers who received rhetorical education. Plutarch's lives on some of these men provide us with the evidence of their rhetorical education. There are two strong arguments against rhetoric being an art. The first claims that no art admits falsehood and also every art has its subject-matter and direct goal but rhetoric does not. Quintilian admits that, indeed, rhetoric perpetrates falsehood just as Plato argues but Quintilian, just

like Aristotle, as evident above, does not admit that it is enough to exclude rhetoric from being an art. He explains that rhetoric's opinions are true, since there is always the difference between holding a certain opinion oneself and persuading someone else to adopt an opinion. The fact that orators persuade people into believing falsehood means not that they are themselves unaware of the truth, he deceives others but not himself (Trans: Odgers, *Institutio Oratoria*, 1935).

On the issue of direct goal or purpose he (Quintilian) debunks by alluding that the ultimate aim of rhetoric is speaking and speaking well. He continues that so far as an orator speaks well or eloquently, irrespective of the results, he has lived to the expectation of the art, which is, speaking well. Eloquence is derived from both education and nature; some writers pick either education or nature (talent) as the most important requirement but Quintilian believes a blend of the two is what the ideal orator needs (Trans: Odgers, 1935). Despite a blend making one an ideal orator, Quintilian favors education over natural talent, as others like Cicero believe. To him (Quintilian), nature alone will make one an average orator while the perfect orator owes more to education. If one is endowed by nature with a good voice and other gifts from nature but lacks the needed education, one cannot be a good orator.

Just as Cicero admits that to be an ideal or perfect orator means not that one should be a master of all the arts, Quintilian also thinks in the same direction. He declares that an orator who needs to speak on an issue he is ignorant about needs to inquire from masters of that particular issue and when he has received enough tutorials, he will speak and appear to have a better understanding than his tutors. That is the job of an orator, to speak eloquently

on all matters but without acquiring information from the masters of the art subject of which the orator is to speak, he will speak as poorly on the issue as an illiterate will (Odgers, 1935).

Invention, arrangement, expression, memory and delivery or action as the five parts of oratory is almost agreed by all writers of oratory and Quintilian is not an exception. He is quick to however reject those who believe oratory should be divided into three parts on the ground that memory and delivery are not given to us by art but by nature. Although, the orator's task is to speak well, rhetoric is the science of speaking well. That is, the task of the artist is to persuade, while the power of persuasion resides in the art (Odgers, 1935). Consequently, while it is the responsibility of the orator to invent and arrange, invention and arrangement may be considered as belonging to rhetoric.

Quintilian, shares with his readers the importance or usefulness of emotional appeal as a means of persuasion. According to Quintilian, he believes both the orator or advocate is capable of arranging the facts to suit its purpose, therefore, the judge might find it difficult to decide for one should the facts be the only consideration in decision making (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*). Just as it happens in the court of law, it equally is the case that a political orator cannot only rely on facts to persuade his audience. The deduction here is that, Quintilian, like Cicero and Aristotle, also acknowledges the presentation of fact as well as emotional appeal as means of persuasion. Winning the minds of your audience alone is not enough but through emotional appeal, an orator wins the heart of his audience or the judge when it bothers on forensic speech. Quintilian explains that the soul of rhetoric is the

ability of the orator to sway the feelings of the judges or listeners. For his (Quintilian's) orator, his biggest achievement is a tear in the eye of a judge or listener which he believes can be achieved only through the skill of emotional appeal (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*).

Though Quintilian does not clearly provide a definition of emotional appeal, it is quite obvious that emotional appeal is the manner in which the facts are presented to appeal to the inner self of the audience. One must know how to evoke emotions such as pity, hatred, love and other emotional attributes when it becomes necessary. Quintilian further divides the emotions into two types; ethos and pathos. Pathos, he explains as the *affectus* while ethos refers to moral behavior or qualities of character that one displays (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*). Pathos is anger evoked by hatred; ethos being anger tempered with understanding. Emotional appeals based on ethos are those originating from qualities of a person's character, the sincerity of the orator during an oration which is most often affected by his character in real life. Emotional appeal established on Pathos is derived from the psychological states through which a judge may pass spontaneously during the course of a trial; the anger, hatred, fear, envy, joy sympathy, pity, an orator may invoke at the appropriate moment. Facts according to Quintilian helps the audience to know or gets them informed but emotions make them feel. An audience moved by emotions begins to wish the orator right and once an audience are in such mood, they are most likely to grant the orator his request (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*). The importance of emotional proof, then is that, it persuades when the facts are not in one's favor or when the facts alone do not. The extract above when situated into political rhetoric can be explained as, a

politician who aims at persuading his audience to either vote him into office or get his policy implemented may achieve that by emotional appeal if the facts are not in his favor or when the facts alone proves insufficient as a result of the earlier stated claim that at least every orator is capable of presenting the facts.

In Munz's (1990) view, rhetoric is the art of persuasion. He goes along to explain that, mostly, persuasion is done by way of language; but it can equally be done by ceremonies, body language or by stage displays of sounds and images. In defining rhetoric he concluded by saying that any persuasion qualifies as rhetoric so long as it does not rely on physical force. Nonetheless, Munz acknowledges that there is one very important exception where persuasion takes place without rhetoric. Or there is one instance whereby a form of persuasion qualifies not as rhetoric. This exception is whereby we are dealing with persuasion by truth which is backed by concrete or rational evidence. In that instance, no further persuasion is required other than the rational and concrete evidence provided. This exception as Munz explains further is due to the fact that we rely on rhetoric when there is little or no evidence for a given logical argument to support it (Munz, 1990). When a statement can be shown to be true, no rhetoric is required to persuade people to support it. To a very large extent this assertion is true, this is because truth is less argumentative. But a problem arises when we try to delve into what truth is, that is, what is the measure of truth? At which point do we accept something or a phenomenon as true so that it does not require rhetoric to prove or persuade people to believe it? Truth itself is quite relative as people or societies have what they consider to be true. This reflects Aristotle's explanation in defense of rhetoric when he says rhetoric is necessary for the

simple reason that not everybody can be persuaded by truth (Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*). This statement from Aristotle first and foremost presupposes that truth in one way or the other does not need rhetoric and also goes to explain that even in the light of what one considers as truth, rhetoric is relevant for those who cannot be persuaded by truth either for the reason that they cannot identify truth or perhaps some other reason.

As indicated earlier, the relative nature of truth in my own opinion makes Aristotle's assertion valid. Is it the pragmatic, the coherent, the correspondent or perhaps the African conception of truth which Kwasi Wiredu explains as truth being that which the community accepts which is to be considered as truth (Wiredu, 1998)? As dicey as politics is, the term truth becomes a complex issue to deal with; as such, the more reason why rhetoric is important. Again, this casts a shadow on Cicero and his Catilinarian orations when even in the light of evidence, he still had to employ rhetoric. But to draw an analogy into Munz's assertion, let us infer that provided truth is able to show itself as truth, it will then facilitate approval naturally (Munz, 1990). Therefore, at what point do we consider a particular speech to pass as rhetoric?

1.7 Organization

This work is divided into five chapters. Chapter one basically concerns itself with definition of terms and treats into detail a number of primary texts in order to understand ancient oratory and rhetoric. The works of Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero and Quintilian will be reviewed. M. L. Clarke and his historical survey of rhetoric at Rome, including other commentaries on Roman rhetoric, will be employed as secondary sources for this chapter. Some of the issues concerning rhetoric include definition, its relation with

philosophy, and whether it can be considered an art or not. With the help of contemporary writers or secondary sources, this chapter will try to reveal how the views of the ancient writers reflect the situation of the last century of the Roman Republic.

Since the topic has to do with political power, chapter two is very crucial to understanding this research. For the sake of clarity, it is imperative to describe briefly the nature of Roman politics that made it possible for rhetoric to thrive and play an important role in Rome. To do this, some level of attention must be given to the various political structures in Rome which saw to it that deliberations became a major component of politics with much attention given to the senate where deliberations best thrived. Again, materials from Tacitus, Livy, Plutarch, Suetonius, Cary and Scullard, P. A. Brunt, David Shotter, among others will be used to achieve the purpose of the chapter.

Chapter three will then concentrate on an analysis of the art of rhetoric before the last century of the Roman republic. This is to help establish how important a tool rhetoric became as far as politics was concerned than it used to be before the last century of the Roman republic. Plutarch, Tacitus and Livy will be the main primary texts to be employed among other secondary texts, articles among others.

Chapter Four being the trust of this research will build upon the previous chapters to show how rhetoric developed to its highest becoming a tool for political power like never before. Rhetoric is not only about persuasive speaking as a means or requirement for one to win an election but also politicians who were good in rhetoric managed to exercise political power by getting their policies or decisions implemented. One could lack political

power (that is, not being a magistrate) but because one is a good public speaker one is able to exercise political power by influencing decision-making. Various politicians shall be employed to tie the knot on rhetoric and political power. Cicero's speeches against Catalina before the people and at the Senate will be the clearest examples among others to be used. The aim of this chapter is to show how persuasive speakers controlled the politics of the day.

Finally, chapter five will provide a general summation of the research from chapter one to four and make known the relevance of the research and how beneficial such a study is to contemporary times.

1.8 Chapter Summary

Conclusively, though my literature review has provided enough treatment of the terms 'oratory' and 'rhetoric', it is important to indicate a few of their similarities and differences in isolation as well as establishing their usage as far as this research is concerned. Rhetoric, from a general perspective, can be understood as a form of mental or emotional energy exerted to a communication to affect a situation in the interest of the speaker or better still the art of using language, especially public speaking, as a means of persuasion. Oratory on the other hand can be defined as the art of public speaking, especially in a formal, expressive or forceful manner **(**Corbett, 1997). From these definitions deduced from the literature review above, it is evident that oratory and rhetoric possess more similarities than differences. One of such similarities is that both are the ability to deliver speeches in public or in a closed meeting. Also, both words are nouns with persuasion being their end product. However, the clearest difference is that while oratory is more

spontaneous and cares little about method or principles, rhetoric deals with formality and less spontaneous. That notwithstanding, it is clear that both words are more similar than they are different. In view of this, the terms 'rhetoric' and 'oratory' shall be employed interchangeably in this research work.

Rhetoric as explained into details from the points of view of renowned ancient writers above, became a major component in the Roman political set up. Obviously, it flourished better during the last century of the Roman Republic. Under a Republican political regime, public speaking, which even now has a distinct potency in state affairs, must have been more instrumental than it is today.

The traditional Roman set up, that is, right from the regal period through the Republican era was such that, social advancement was only possible through a successful political career. The Senate, the only permanent governing body and where major debate and deliberation was possible consisted of persons who had been elected to one or more of the three highest offices (quaestorship, praetorship and consulship). Hence, every ambitious Roman had to become a politician and follow the regular *cursus honorum*. To be successful at this during the Republican period (most especially the last century) one needed to be a good persuasive speaker, more especially for those of low rank of the ladder (political ladder) for such people was quite higher than those of noble birth. Rising through the ranks with the skill of rhetoric on one's side, one was certain to see success. As Livy rightly states, the politics of latter times was lucrative and filled with covetous souls, hence, the competition for political offices became keener and keener. The *curule*

magistrates were at once generals, judges and statesmen (Livy, bk. IV). To achieve success, therefore, a politician had to show ability in all these aspects. Occasionally, though, a man could succeed by virtue of a single talent; for example, Marius (157 – 86 B.C.) who owed his political success solely to militarism; but such instances was rare.

During the last century of the Roman Republican period, next to military fame was oratorical skill; it was the strongest recommendation to win the people's heart. Then as now, the rhetor's power to move multitude in public affairs was the readiest means of advancement. Further, political prosecution and private suits prompted by political motives, were of the commonest occurrence, and these afforded an eloquent advocate abundant opportunity to make himself known and to secure the favor of large bodies of supporters. Again, the Senate was a numerous and somewhat turbulent body, always more or less divided in a strictly partisan manner; and though it had no legislative function, it still exercised a very strong influence on politics. To be able to sway this large assembly by force of rhetoric was of great importance to an aspiring Roman politician. It was not an easy thing to achieve since the Senators were mostly the nobles in society and as such, were educated. This placed an obligation on young politicians to really advance their knowledge in persuasive speaking.

Finally, though the contention for office ceased with the Consulship, there still continued among the *consulares*, who formed almost a distinct class in society and public life, a vehement rivalry to be regarded as the leading man in the state. As the principle of collegiality ensured two magistrates as Consuls, it always boiled down to who was more eloquent to drive the

activities of the Republic, so that, it would not be a case of political power (as in office holding) without actually exercising political power (in the sense of controlling the affairs of the state). For all these reasons, rhetoric was perhaps more highly regarded and of greater practical value in the last century of the Roman Republic than at any other time in the history of Rome.

CHAPTER TWO

RHETORIC BEFORE THE LAST CENTURY OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

This chapter provides an outlook of the art of rhetoric before the last century of the Roman Republic. This is to establish how important a tool rhetoric became as far as political power was concerned than it used to be before the last century of the Roman Republic. Cicero's *De Oratore*, Livy's *History of Rome*, and *Plato's Republic* shall be the main primary texts to be employed among other secondary texts, articles etc. The previous chapter, as a foundation for this very chapter, has brought to bear the nature of the Roman Republican system of governance after the expulsion of the kings. Livy in his *History of Rome* (2006, bk. 1), indicates that the foundation upon which the Republican system was founded was freedom or liberty and he explains the basic components that kept it (the Republic) running. Government by annually elected officers or magistrates was a measure to limit the Consul's power so he would not turn into a tyrant and take the city for ransom. That was the brain behind the one-year term of office since the Consular-office was the first to be created until the Romans saw the need to create other magistracies to help the Consuls in their day-to- day administration of the city (Livy, bk. 1). The fruits of this thought were offices such as the office of the *Praetor, Aedile, Quaestor, Censor, Pontiff* and the *Tribunate* which was an office created to appease the Plebeians.

2.1 The Monarchical Period

One of the elements of governance that survived the collapse of the monarchical period was the Senate, formerly referred to as the *Minores*

Gentes. I will attempt an explanation as to why the Senate as a governing body survived after the end of the monarchical period. Livy's account provides us enough information to understand that the nobility were the most discontented about the rule by the kings. They hated the absolute power of the kings whom they saw as tyrants. With the rape of Lucretia (a noble man's wife) by Sextus; a son of the king, the nobility found enough reason to cause an uprising that ended what they saw as an arbitrary rule by the kings. With the absence of the kings, the nobility were now fully in charge, therefore, the *Minores Gentes* being made up of nobles was never going to be destroyed because the problem they had was with the kings and not themselves. As such, a mere change of name was required so as not to remind them of anything that has got to do with the monarchical period (Livy, bk. 1).

The purpose of this chapter, as stated above, is to give an account of the nature of rhetoric before the last century of the Roman Republic. This might suggest a very lengthy discourse but ironically the case is rather the opposite due to rhetoric's late arrival in Rome. The nature of Senatorial proceedings as made evident in the earlier chapter, makes it clear that oratorical practice was very rampant due to the deliberative nature of Senatorial proceedings. Since the Senate is a remnant of the monarchical era, speculations allow one to infer that speech delivery as it was with the Senate of the Republic equally was a component with the *Minores Gentes* of the monarchical period. Cary and Scullard (1975), describes the *Minores Gentes* as the Council of Elders that advised the kings and helped them with legislations. As such, it could be deduced that the *Minores Gentes* also employed speeches in their day-to-day

activities as an advisory body. But of course, the fact that they might have employed speeches does not necessarily make them practioners of rhetoric.

2.2 Oratory by the Elite

As in most ancient cities, Roman politics in the age of the Republic was also characterized by the form of interaction that connected all its political stakeholders and, for the most part, took the form of public, verbal debate. This was possible because of their Constitution and way of life as seen in the previous chapter. Consequently, every politician was a public speaker and an orator; one with the ability of creating speeches in front of larger crowds and persuading them (Rosenstein and Marx, 2006). Though the politics of deliberation was the order of the day, as simple as it appeared, it was not available to everybody. One who attempted to address the Senate or Roman people had to be someone of high repute in the society. The Senate at the very early stages of the Republican period was the sole prerogative of the aristocracy and for that matter, debates or addressing the Senate was left with members of the aristocracy so that they only enjoyed speech delivery or oratory (Morstein, 2004).

As Morstein indicates, addressing the people was done by the aristocracy or precisely, those who had once held office or possessed powerful social influence due to their wealth or clients. Office holding to a large extent was left in the hands of a few families who continued to ride in the achievements of their ancestors (Morstein, 2004). As such, the practice of persuasive speaking, the end product of rhetoric, was practised by a few. In short, it was one's *auctoritas* (authority) that gave him the opportunity to address the people and persuade them that his policies were the best. But the

situation changed with the influx of philosophy and rhetoric which brought with it Hellenistic ideals, and also due to Sulla's increase of the number of Senators from 300 to 600 in 82 B.C. that allowed *Novos Homo* (New Men) to penetrate the house of the Senate. These *Novos Homo*, as members of the Senate, could now take part in deliberations with the use of rhetoric. Though the earlier chapter made it clear the manner in which speakers spoke at the Senate (based on seniority and weight of the office held), at least being members of the Senate increased their chances in sharpening their rhetorical skills if blunt or learning the art (with respect to persons who knew not the art). When one took the podium, one had to speak in a clear, vibrant, coherent and loud manner since there was almost always a sea of citizens present during speech delivery. A well-argued speech, as Morstein agrees, had to be coherent, clear, and loud and delivered in a vibrant manner conforming to shared principles of the community (Morstein 2004).

There was in existence a form of persuasion which involved the display of honorable scars. 'Honorable scars' to the Romans were the ones suffered in battle and at the front of one's body not behind. Though wounds were a defect to one's body, once healed, the scars left were used by politicians as a form of exhibition to convince the populace of a political decision. Evans (1999) records on this very issue of the display of scars that these politicians hoped to enhance their standing in the community and it became a requirement to the attainment of political fame which entailed influencing policies. L. Scinius Dentatus, the tribune of the plebs about 454 B.C. is one such political figure who possessed so many scars and displayed them to convince the people of his honor and integrity. According to Evans

(1999), at the time of the elections, candidates went about dressed only in their togas. The rationale was to display the wounds as tokens of their valor, bravery and honor in order to secure victory.

2.3 The Sophists and Rhetoric in Rome

The word 'sophist' according to P.A. Brunt (1994), had originally referred to someone who imparted to others some kind of knowledge, or better still, skill and sometimes a sage. The famous sophists of the fifth century were teachers and some of them, P.A. Brunt calls polymaths. Above all, they taught rhetoric, for which they penetrated the Roman culture and left an indelible imprint. The difference between a sophist and a philosopher brought about great difficulty because the nature of their work had more similarities than differences. That notwithstanding, the terms philosopher and sophist do not imply one another. Though sophists were equally teachers of rhetoric, not all rhetors appear to have been acknowledged as sophists in the second century (Brunt, 1994). Plutarch spoke of rhetors and sophists as distinct classes; he divided rhetors into advocates and sophists and spoke of the rhetorical sophists as giving epideictic performances. Isocrates, known to be a teacher of rhetoric often presented himself as a philosopher and this, in P.A. Brunt's view, is an indication of how thin the line between sophists and philosophers was (Brunt, 1994). Aristotle in his rhetorical treatises even equated a rhetor to a philosopher, for it was his belief that the work of a philosopher made him eloquent. Logic, being an integral part of philosophy equipped one with knowledge on argumentation; hence, in view of Aristotle, the only person whom an eloquent speaker will find difficult to persuade is a philosopher (Aristotle, *Rhetoric, sec: 2*).

According to Clarke (1953), the introduction of grammar in the first half of the second century B.C. due to Rome coming into contact with Greek civilization was also a way by which Greek teachers found their way to the city of Rome. Amongst these teachers were rhetoricians, sophists and philosophers. Clarke (1953) continues that the rhetoricians found a ready market at Rome once the art of public speaking was already known to them. During the Roman Republican era, the successful speaker was honored and rewarded. After teaching and introducing the systematic and methodic principles involved in speaking, there came a conscious effort among the Romans for the study of speaking. The old system of oratory or persuasion based on *auctoritas* was now reduced to the ground, paving way for the art of rhetoric itself (Clarke 1953).

This new form of education raised the standard of speaking to another level. Orators now had to lift themselves to the higher intellectual tradition from Greece that had penetrated Rome. Appeal to personal authority, ancestral tradition etc. began fading away so that if one wanted to get involved in politics, rhetorical education became paramount. The basic rules in delivering a good speech and the techniques of argumentation had to be followed in conjunction with principles of truth and justice (Clarke 1953).

The point here is that, the sophists had brought rhetorical techniques to Rome but until the last century of the Roman Republic, the impact of rhetoric on politics was little felt. The obvious reason being that the art had not been fully accepted by the Romans. One may argue that most of the sophists were law court practitioners making their rhetoric more felt in criminal cases at the courtroom among other matters (Clarke 1953). But the point is that the

sophists brought the practice of rhetoric to Rome as a profession for which they taught others and helped others at the law court at a fee. Therefore, as long as they helped to popularize the art in Rome, its effectiveness in politics cannot be underestimated. They taught general principles in argumentation and styles of developing speeches; therefore, whether they were legal practioners themselves or not, their education was useful for political debates and speech delivery as well (Clarke, 1953). Rhetoric itself, as was made evident, developed first from forensic oratory before political and epideictic oratory. Corax and Tisias who are attributed with rhetoric began at the law courts, hence, the sophists can be exonerated from this charge. That notwithstanding, as indicated earlier, what they taught cut across all forms of speaking. In fact, their teachings influenced most of the politicians of the last century of the Roman Republic so that statesmen now had to gain rhetorical education whether from sophists or rhetors before they could effectively affect policies on the political terrain.

At this point it is important to try and give a brief account of the nature of things that were taught at the schools of rhetoric. The basic thing that was taught in these schools was of course formal rhetoric, but other exercises were also promoted to enhance fluency in self-expression. Some of the exercises enabled one to say the same thing in a number of ways; that is, so as to teach the pupil how to develop a theme in so many different ways. In the *Ad Herennium*, Cicero calls it *expolitio* and he gives an interesting example thus; the wise man will avoid no danger on behalf of the state' (*Ad Herennium*, sec. 2). According to him, the teachers of rhetoric taught their pupils how to say a sentence as the one stated above in different ways. One could say, 'No danger

is so great that the wise man thinks it should be avoided on behalf of the state'. Or it could also be said in this manner, 'when it is a question of the perpetual safety of the state, he who is inspired by sound reason will surely hold that no risk in life should be avoided on behalf of the prosperity of the state' (Clarke, 1953). This teaching as stated earlier enabled the pupil to develop a theme in so many different ways as well as dispute or make a point in so many different ways. According to Clarke (1953), there were variations between the versions taught in different schools. Inasmuch as there were differences in versions, the core things taught remained the same even till the latter part of the last century of the Republic.

In works such as *Ad Herennium, De Inventione* and *De Oratore*, all of the last century of the Roman Republic, we find some of the topics which the pupil of rhetoric was taught. These topics began back in the second century of the Republican period when the Greek teachers of rhetoric taught their pupils what they referred to as the functions of the orator or parts of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery). The parts of a speech could also be divided into exordium or opening, the statement of facts, division (the point of controversy), confirmation, that is, repudiation of one's opponent's arguments) and lastly conclusion (most often a summary of one's entire argument). But according to Cicero (*De Oratore*), some divided the parts of a speech into four or five, not six as stated above. This confirms the fact that the core issues or topics taught at the rhetorical schools remained the same with only slight differences in the versions of a particular subject matter. Even the parts of rhetoric which Cicero indicates as five are sometimes treated

as three because, according to Cicero, memory and delivery were believed to be owed to nature but not teachings.

Also, the different parts of speeches further had divisions just like other topics that were being taught. For example, under exordium (opening), there were two types, which were, principium and insinuation. According to Clarke (1953), these were taught after the students had been made aware of the four types of cases that there were. The honorable, base, doubtful and mean are the various cases which any of the two types of exordium suited. The principium was the type devoid of digression while insinuation was the indirect form which allowed digression. The art of rhetoric as it was taught is a broad area which deserves independent inquiry.

This new era had some implications that it came along with. One immediate implication was that it imposed on members of the aristocracy the need to acquire the principles and methods on which the new art of deliberative politics rested (Corbett, 1997). The Roman aristocracy was such that personal competition amongst themselves was a common phenomenon as each aristocratic family always wanted to prove the best among the aristocratic families. Therefore, this did not pose as an insurmountable problem at all because Greek education in rhetoric and philosophy was accessible from both Greek tutors in Rome and those Romans who had acquired this skill. Even families that did not belong to the aristocracy but could afford the services of tutors of rhetoric had to do so since politics was a cultural activity in Rome. One thing that is clear at this point is that public speaking had always been with the Romans as it had been with a number of societies. But like any other society, the rich were the major players in politics because of the obvious

necessities of political dealings, which included time, wealth and prestige (Corbett, 1997). Wealth to a large extent always brought prestige along with it, and since the rich had their farms being taken care of by peasants or tenant farmers and slaves, they could afford the time and money to get involved in politics in Rome.

Politics in Rome was more or less a full-time activity preventing the poor from getting actively involved except for voting which they almost always did show up in their numbers. This condition resulted, as earlier stated, in political speeches or orations being delivered by members of the nobility alone since they could afford the time (Corbett, 1997). Both in the Assembly and Senate, the aristocrats delivered speeches. But this practice was not yet considered rhetoric until higher intellectual education entered Rome. Now, methodic principles had to be adhered to when a speech was being delivered. Argumentation took another form necessitating an education in rhetoric in order for one to be able to conform to this new style. Cicero's definition of 'an orator' will help shed more light: 'an orator', "he says, is he who with rhetorical education, is able to speak thoughtfully and eloquently and from memory on any subject matter that comes before him" (Cicero, De Oratore, sec: 1). It is not surprising why in the last century of the Roman Republic almost all the statesmen acquired rhetorical education because it became the only way to conform to these new methodic principles of speaking. The oratory that the Romans practised was now influenced by rhetoric, making persuasion by auctoritas, family heritage and wealth fade out. This means that the centuries preceding the last century of the Roman Republic saw rhetoric at its developing stage and a stage where rhetoric was practised by a very few

who could afford this education and take active part in politics (Brunt, 1994). The plebeian faction of Rome at this point had not gotten properly involved in politics due to the patricians deliberately making sure they were kept away until they fought and won political independence in the famous Conflict of the Orders.

At the developing stages, one of the problems with regard to rhetoric was that a greater section of Romans, especially the nobility, tried to prevent the free flow of rhetorical education as some perceived it as a doctrine against the Roman culture. That is, rhetoric was considered as that which was against the fabrics of Roman society. The term 'sophist' had already acquired evil connotation before finding its way into Rome (Brunt, 1994). Unsurprisingly, most of Rome's elites were hostile to this new form of education. The early sophists charged fees from their pupils because they (sophists) taught them how to argue on different sides of a question and thus trained them to make the worse cause to appear the better (and vice versa), using clever fallacies of both the informal and formal types to outwit others. The Roman nobility who were in charge of the day to day administration of the state saw this form of education which could advance skeptical opinions as against the traditions and morals of Roman society. Thus, the sophists and teachers of rhetoric of the Republican period received hostile response from the Roman elite until the last century of the Roman Republic when the hostilities reduced significantly (Brunt, 1994).

Rhetoric then became a tool for political power and opened new avenues for the ambitious. The last century of the Roman Republic was the period under the Republican constitution when politicians made use of this

form of speaking the most. This is because by the last century, eloquence as a discipline had fully developed and faced lesser problems from its critics. To be great orators and effectively influence policies, politicians during the last century of the Roman Republic studied rhetoric and became orators themselves or sought assistance from better ones among their network of friends just as Marius did with Saturninus in 105 B.C (Millar, 1986). The sole means of communication by a Roman politician was through rhetoric which became a means to advertise oneself and be appreciated by the people. Rhetoric before the last century began as an aristocratic art and a philosophy of leadership but during the last century of the Roman Republic, the art became much more consistent because it had gained firmer grounds than previously. Now *tribune plebis* and other citizens who did not belong to the aristocracy could develop arguments on rhetorical lines.

One name that cannot be left out as long as dislike for Greek rhetoric in Rome was concerned is Cato the censor. Cato was the first to write a piece on oratory; as good an orator as he was, he disliked the Greek version for reasons which are not too clear but speculative (Clarke 1953). One reason being that the sophists who taught rhetoric charged fees for their teachings. The second being that as a good citizen he feared what the power of rhetoric could do to the society with its ability to argue on both sides of an argument and win. Thirdly, it has been speculated that just like some of the other Roman elite, he disliked Greek influence on Rome. Thus, during the second century B.C. when rhetoric penetrated Rome, the art was not a stable one, though it was spreading rapidly. It had not gained full acceptance until the last century of the Roman Republic. Though there was a ban placed on rhetorical teaching

and the expulsion of Greek rhetorical tutors, this law could not last long as Aemilius Paulua is believed to have employed the services of Greek rhetoricians to train his sons not long after the law (Clarke, 1953). As a matter of fact during the latter part of the second century B.C, Tiberius Gracchus was also believed to have been taught rhetoric by a Greek master of the art, Diophanes of Mitylene. This shows that by the latter part of the second century B.C, hostility towards rhetorical teachings had come to an end, if not entirely, at least from the Roman government. It could be assumed then that perhaps by then the art had grown much stronger and gotten much people involved in so that it now became difficult to do away with it; most especially when politicians had gotten hold of it for political advantage.

2.4 Patronage as a hindrance to rhetoric

Success in a political career in Rome during the Republican period was first and foremost dependent upon election, but it also drew upon a rigid system of patronage before a man pursued his first political office. This was the best way a man with political ambitions could make himself known. An apprenticeship in politics owed much to the methods of instruction used by tutors of oratory in as much as he owed to law but most especially to the practice of getting involved in debates among a circle of disciples (Corbett, 1997). Military service was also an important pre-requisite for the mandate to canvas for political office but this is not the focus of this work. According to Weingrod (1968), patronage originated from the give-and-take relations between patrons and clients. By patron, Weingrod explains as, a person who uses his power to support and protect some other people, who then become his clients who in return offer certain services for his patron. Patronage is

therefore an intricate relation between those who use their influence, social status or family heritage to assist and protect others and those who they so help and protect (Weingrod, 1968). In most Roman historical books, they refer to this practice as the *Clientella* system. Under this system, plebeian families or individuals, especially new settlers, get themselves affiliated or attached to patrician families. The patron family in exchange for economic and legal support received military service, labour service, money contribution as well as political support from his clients.

Almost all the decisions of the Roman people were preceded by speeches, be they elections, matters of legality (at the court room) or voting. Orators delivered their speeches during public meetings (*Contiones*) at the same place where the voting assemblies were to gather, that is, the *Campus Martius*. Critics of rhetoric are quick to allude that patronage in one way or the other rendered the politics of persuasion useless, especially when it was aimed at winning elections to gain political power. That is, being eloquent did not contribute much to winning elections or getting one's policies supported but rather patronage was the unseen hand which helped politicians to gain political power. The patron-client relationship ensured that clients (who were mostly plebeians) after receiving legal and economic support should also provide political support in return (Weingrod, 1968).

As such, no matter how eloquent one was, one could not have convinced a voter who had his patron in the race or who had been instructed by his patron to vote in a particular direction. But in my opinion, I rather think the situation was the opposite. This is because the patron-client system was rather the more reason why eloquence or rhetoric became very important. How

else could a politician have convinced a voter who had his patron in the race to vote for him (the politician) instead of his patron or whom their patrons have instructed them to vote for? The best way to do that was through rhetoric which produced a kind of power behind one's words. What of the other floating voters who neither had their patrons in the race nor under their patron's instructions to vote towards a particular direction? In the face of this difficulty, the surest way to succeed was to rely on rhetoric to get the job done, or bribery which became a common phenomenon in Roman history. But the illegality of the latter made the former the safest and surest way of breaking the patron-client relationship which influenced voting.

A typical example of how the patron-client system affected voting and other political policies is provided by Morstein in his book '*Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic'*. He records that C. Cicereius, a new man who lacked family heritage, pursued a high magistracy in 175 B.C. Cicereius vied for the *Praetorship* but had to step down at the time of voting when he realized that he was ahead of L. Scipio whose family his own *Campanian* family were clients of. Accordingly, L. Scipio was elected Praetor but returned the favor when in 173 B.C., the Scipios also used their vast *clientel* power to ensure that he was elected as Praetor. (Morstein, 2004). This instance goes a long way to prove how patronage affected voting and as such winning political power.

What made patronage an influential tool that affected voting was the fact that voting was not done in secret, hence, the difficulty in going against one's patron. But by a law enacted in 139 B.C, now casting of vote was done in secret making it less dependent on traditional clienteles (Clarke, 1953). This

also was an important factor to rhetoric getting to greater heights in the last century of the Roman Republic. New voters who had been persuaded by eloquent politicians feared not to cast their vote for whom they preferred because after all one's patron could not know whom his client voted for. Now the greatest stumbling block to rhetoric being effective to winning political power had been eliminated at the very last stages of the second century, making rhetoric and its effect be felt much more in the last century of Roman Republican politics.

At this point of my discussion in this chapter, it will be appropriate to try and provide reflections or glimpses of rhetoric in action before the last century of the Roman Republic. Most of the political speeches before and even during the early part of the last century of the Roman Republic are lost, therefore, I cannot cite instances or aspects of the speeches I intend to use to support my points. In 200 B.C., the Senate upon deliberations involving a number of speech deliveries on the affairs with Philip V. voted for war. The then Consul in the person of Sulpicius Galba, put a rogation proposing war to the *Comitia Centuriata* just as the Senate had declared (by way of voting). Aside the Senatorial proceedings which obviously by being deliberative provides us with glimpses of rhetoric at play, the more striking glimpse of rhetoric before the last century of the Roman Republic is how the *Tribunus plebis* of the time frustrated the Senate and Sulpicius Galba. At this period, the effect of rhetoric in politics had already begun to be felt; therefore, the *Tribunus plebis* knew the only way to affect decision making was to employ persuasive speaking. As such, Millar (1984) records that, a *Tribunus plebis* made public speeches against war and accused the Senate, causing the

proposal to be rejected by the people. This example clearly shows political decision being affected by the use of persuasive speaking by employing speeches. It confirms that rhetoric indeed began before the last century of the Roman Republic and glimpses of it already evident in the second century B.C. The remarkable point here in this example is not yet stated, and it is that, subsequently the proposal which was rejected by the people upon the *Tribunus plebis*' speeches, was passed. It is worth noting that it was passed after a speech to the people by the consul (Millar, 1984). This is where it becomes more obvious that rhetoric always played an important role before the last century of the Roman Republic. This is because the way by which the people rejected the proposal is the same way by which they accepted proposals. Through a speech the people got convinced that war was not needed and that the Senate was up to something and through a speech once again, they were now convinced that war was the best option.

To provide glimpses of rhetoric in action and not provide one from the man whom many consider second only to Cicero will be more or less a disservice to this chapter. Cato the elder is the one I refer to. This man has been described by both Plutarch and Livy as a great orator of his time and many contemporary writers have shared in this assertion. In 190 B.C. after he (Cato) had enjoyed an outstanding achievement serving as a Consul in 195 B.C., he decided to stand for election to be voted Censor for 189 B.C. Cato's opponents did not want him to succeed and the way they opted for was to level charges against him in connection with extravagance and personal benefits during his consulship. According to Williams (1969), the real nature of the charges are not quite clear but speculations suggest extravagance and personal

gains. Cato defended himself brilliantly in a way that was quite unique. Instead of Cato responding or defending himself against the charges, he eloquently decided to instead provide a poem of the achievement of his consulship. With that, the jury and the people gathered rather saw his accusers as haters and Cato was acquitted even before the end of proceedings (Williams, 1969. pp: 52). Subsequently, Cato won the Censorship and this achievement can be partly attributed to his eloquence which first saw him succeed in court without which he could not have achieved his political desire of becoming a Censor. This is a matter that was sent to and argued in court but I chose to employ it as an example of rhetoric in action because the matter bothers on politics. And the powerful Scipio family who are believed to have been behind the charges against Cato hoped to destroy him and prevent him from attaining a political office (Williams, 1963. pp. 51). That is, it was a political decision, therefore, the example fits into rhetoric and political power.

Another clear example of rhetoric and its impact before the last century of the Roman Republic is the debate of 167 B.C. after the Macedonian War was brought to a closure. This debate was to ascertain whether the Senate should allow L. Aemilius Paullus to celebrate a triumph or not. Apparently, the Senate had granted him the triumph but Sulpicius Galba accused Paullus of parsimony and mistreatment of his soldiers (Livy, bk. 3.). Although the Senate had already decreed the triumph to Paullus, Galba and his followers nearly convinced the house of Senate to deny Paullus until M. Servilius Pulex Geminus took the podium and in the rarest form of persuasion, managed to secure victory for Paullus. According to Livy (bk. 3), Geminus spoke very well, dwelling on his '*auctoritas'* to refute Galba's allegations which he

tagged as defamation of Paullus' character. But at the climax of his oration, he put up a spectacle by lowering his attire displaying his scars and extremely large inguinal hernia. Excessive horse riding without the use of stirrups, which Evans (1999) claims was unknown to the Romans was the cause of Geminus' large developed hernia. This spectacle coupled with his speech was enough to win the day for Paullus but much to the dismay of Galba and his followers.

2.5 Conclusion

Though the display of scars as a form of persuasion began very early in the Republican period, after the introduction of rhetoric, just like the other forms of persuasion, it also declined making room for the new form of persuasion based on methodic principles. One cannot say categorically that with the introduction of rhetoric, all these forms vanished into thin air but these other forms reduced significantly. The worst-case scenario was to employ both the rhetorical technique and the other forms such as persuasion based on *auctoritas*, exhibition of wounds, and depending on family heritage among others. This assertion has been made possible because according to Evans (1999), in the post-election oration attributed to Gaius Marius when he won the Consulship of 85 B.C., Marius made reference to his honorable scars which he suffered for the Republic. Here, Evans reports that Marius never displayed the scars, he only spoke of them and threatened to show them when required. This confirms that at this period of Republicanism (85 B.C.), rhetoric was in full flight and the cheap forms of persuasion were losing their relevance if not lost and that was why Marius never went ahead to display his scars. One could no longer rely on family heritage, scars and *auctoritas* without conforming to the methodic principles of speaking.

Though the latter part of the second century saw an established rhetorical teaching and practice, it was still largely in the hands of Greeks. At this point, looking at the nature of rhetoric before the last century of the Roman Republic, it is obvious that the art had little to do with regard to winning political power but had quite a lot to do with exercising political power. With the issue of patronage, nature of voting, and hostility towards the art discussed above, rhetoric had little effect on the politics of the time. But with voting no longer done in the open prior to the last century of Rome's Republicanism, the problem of patronage hindering rhetoric and its ability to help one gain political power had been dealt with, making the influence of patronage reduced to its barest minimum. Also, rhetoric did not have much to do because the art was not at a matured level in Rome before the last century as it continued to struggle for stability and acceptance.

Again, it has also been seen that the early beginnings of the Republican period saw public speaking at an entirely different level, a level whereby the aristocracy had taken absolute control over public speaking since they were the ones who participated actively in politics. As such, the politics of deliberation was practised by them almost exclusively. The methodic principles of speaking during the early Republican period had not been discovered yet, giving room for one to infer that the practice then cannot be considered as a matured rhetoric. This is because it was early days yet and also there were many hindrances to the arts ability to influencing the politics of the time as made evident in the discussion above.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LINK BETWEEN ROMAN POLITICAL ORGANISATION AND RHETORIC

Since the topic has got to do with political power, this chapter is very crucial to this research. For the sake of clarity, it is imperative to describe briefly the nature of Roman politics that made it possible for rhetoric to thrive and play an important role in Rome. To do this, some level of attention must be given to the various political structures in Rome that saw to it that deliberation became a major component of politics with much attention given to the Senate where deliberations best thrived. The Senate was the only permanent governing body and the only body where debate was possible. In order to debate, one had to know the persuasive art of rhetoric or public speaking. Again, Tacitus, Livy, Plutarch and Suetonius will be employed among others such as Cary and Scullard, P. A. Brunt, David Shotter etc.

The years prior to the rise of the Republic are lost to myth and legend and no real contemporary written history of this period has survived. Although much of this history had been lost, the Roman historian, Livy (59 B.C-17 C.E), was still able to write a history of Rome in 142 volumes. Much of this history, however, especially the early years, was based purely on myth and oral accounts. Contrary to some interpretations, the fall of the monarchy and the birth of the Republic did not happen overnight. Some scholars even claim it was far from bloodless and some historians also believe that the transformation from monarchy to Republic took place over a period of decades (Cary and Scullard, 1975). The constitution of the Roman Republic was a set of unwritten norms and customs, which together with various written

laws, guided the manner by which the Roman Republic was governed. The constitution emerged out of that of the Roman kingdom, evolved over the almost five hundred years of the Republic and was transformed into the constitution of the Roman Empire (Wasson, 2016).

The Roman constitution is often regarded as a mixed constitution, that is, a form of government that combines elements of democracy, aristocracy and monarchy **(**Polybius, 1982**).** This idea was highly popularized during the classical period in order to describe the stability, the innovation and success of the Republic as a form of government developed under the Roman constitution. Unlike classical democracy, aristocracy or monarchy, in a mixed government, rulers are elected by citizens rather than acquiring their positions by inheritance or sortation. The Greek philosopher, Plato in his book *The Republic*, divided governments into four basic types; government by the many (democracy), government by the few (oligarchy), government by one for himself (tyranny) and government by the best (aristocracy). He (Plato) found flaws with all existing forms of government and thus concluded that aristocracy, which emphasizes virtue and wisdom, is the purest form of government (Plato, *Republic* sec:2).

Aristotle, also a Greek philosopher, generally embraced Plato's views and, in his *Politics*, discusses three types of government systems in detail. Aristotle considers constitutional government as the ideal form of government but he observes that none of the three is healthy and that, states will cycle between the three forms in an unexpected and untidy process known as the *kylos* or *anacyclosis*. *Kylos* or *anacyclosis* is a cyclical theory of political evolution; this theory is based upon the Greek typology of constitutional forms

of rule by one, the few and the many (Aristotle, *Politics*: sec: 1). In his *Politics* he lists a number of theories of how to create a stable government. One of these options is creating a government that is a mix of all three forms of government. If we are to take Aristotle seriously, then it means the Romans, under the Republican constitution, had a stable government because according to Polybius, their constitution was a mixed one and can be divided into three main branches: the various Assemblies, the Senate and the Magistracies (Polybius, 1982). This chapter basically concerns itself with the political structure or governance system of the Republican government that allowed rhetoric to thrive or play an important role towards attaining political power and actually exerting political power as well as giving consideration to the social structure of Rome.

The three stated branches combined to form the working of the Roman Republican government down to the last century of the Republic. Though slight changes emanated in the course of time, it did not affect the core functions of these branches but rather it was their workings that saw slight changes. A complex set of checks and balances developed between these three branches (Crook, 1992). For instance, the Assemblies possessed great power by being in charge of electing officers, a power which mandated political aspirants to make frequent use of the *Contio* in order to make themselves popular. The Magistrates after securing their offices also governed the Assemblies and, by controlling discussions, exercised dominating influence over them. This political structure naturally created within the Republic the need for one to be rhetorical. Before one could win an election and occupy a particular magistracy, one needed to convince the Assembly why one must be

given the mandate instead of other aspirants. Rhetoric became a necessary tool towards winning elections, and actually exerting political power.

There were several magistrates: a Consul (the leading magistrate in Rome), a Praetor (the only other official with imperium) who served as a judicial officer with civic and provincial jurisdiction, a *Quaestor* who functioned as the financial administrator, the tribune who represented the interest of the plebeians and the *Aedile* who supervised urban maintenance such as roads, water supply and the annual games and festivals. Lastly, there was the highly desirable position of censor, who held office for only 18 months (Wasson, 2016). Elected every five years, he was the census-taker, reviewing the list of citizens and their property. There was, however, one final position which was unique and wielded so much power, the dictator. He was granted complete authority and was only named in times of crisis or emergency, normally serving for only six months. The most famous one in the history of the Republic, of course, was Julius Caesar, who was named dictator for life (Wasson, 2016).

3.1 The Magistracies

The Roman political system was made up of a number of institutions which they referred to as magistracies. The magistracies includes: the Consuls, Praetors, Quaestors, Aediles, Tribunes, and Censors. There were other institutions such as the Senate and Dictator which were not necessarily magistracies but important political institutions nonetheless. Just as ministers of state in our contemporary era are responsible for the management of their state, the Roman magistracies were equally responsible for the day to day administration of Rome.

To begin with, the office of the Consuls was the highest institution under the Roman Republican period. The Consuls were the chief civil and military magistrates, elected through the Assemblies by popular vote. They convened the Senate, and the *curiate* and *centuriate* assemblies. Initially, the office was only open to Patricians until the *Lex Licinia* opened it to Plebeian candidates in 367 BC (Cary and Scullard, 1975). According to the *Lex Villia Annalis* passed in 180 BC which established minimum age requirements for all political offices within the *Cursus Honorum*, Consuls had to be 42 years of age and above. Under normal circumstances, a Roman could only serve in such a capacity only once every ten years. At the end of their annual term of service, Consuls would take the title Proconsul and generally serve as provincial governors. However, it is important to note that the Pro-consular duties did not exist from the beginning of the Republican government but came into existence when Rome begun to amass a lot of colonies. In the case of the death of a serving Consul, an interim Consul would be elected as a replacement for the remainder of his term. They were entitled to twelve Lictors as a symbol of their authority (Lintott, 1999). The Consuls presided over or chaired Senatorial meetings; the presiding Consul began each meeting with a speech on an issue and then referred the issue to the house for deliberation, and this is where a consul who lacks effective speaking skills would be found wanting.

Though the Consuls opening speech is merely to make known to the Senators the issue at stakes, it might appear unimportant to necessarily persuade the house concerning the issue to be discussed as the end product of rhetoric is to persuade. But before a speech persuades its audience, it must first

be well delivered in accordance with certain rhetorical standards (Isocrates, II). Therefore, it can be noted that a Consul needed rhetoric to deliver a good opening speech to catch the attention of the Senators. Also, it would appear that there would always have been lots of issues for the Senators to discuss, so for the Consul to choose a particular issue, he would have to convince the house why that particular issue needed to be tackled at that point in time but not other equally pressing matters. It can be inferred that even if a Consul decided not to ever contribute to discussions in the house of the Senate due to lack of effective speaking, his position as a Consul required he always chaired Senatorial meetings which would be impossible to do without effective speaking. Clearly, the highest office in Rome was an office that mandated rhetoric, making it an important tool in Roman Republican politics.

Next was the office of the Praetor, the other magistracy aside the Consul bearing imperium. With its main functions being administration of civil law in Rome (Praetor *Urbanus*), military command, judges in courts of law (Praetor *Peregrinus*), and finally the governing of provinces. The required age for this magistracy was 39 years and above (Cary and Scullard, 1975). This magistracy was originally designed as a kind of third Consul and was established in 356 BC for Patricians only after they were compelled to share the Consulship with Plebes but this, however, changed when in 337 BC, the first Plebeian Praetor was elected so that by the last century of the Roman Republic, Plebeian Praetors became a common thing. They also assumed administrative duties of consuls when these were absent from Rome. When there were more than two Praetors, the additional Praetors were generally assigned as governors of Sicily, Sardinia, and the Spanish provinces. Like

Proconsuls, Praetors could hold the title of Pro-praetor after their annual term of service and be appointed as provincial governors (Shotter, 1994: pp.101).

The office of the *Aediles* had four officials occupying the magistracy. There were the Plebeian *Aediles* and the *Curule Aediles*. The Plebeian *Aediles* were established in 494 BC along with the office of the Plebeian Tribune. *Curule Aediles* were originally Patricians (and a higher-ranking position) and the office was established in 365 B.C. Eventually the *Curule Aedileship* became interchangeable with Patricians and Plebes. Aediles were in charge of religious festivals, public games, temples, upkeep of the city, regulation of marketplaces, and the grain supply in the city of Rome, while Plebeian Aediles also assisted the Plebeian Tribunes. According to the *Lex Villia annalis*, Aediles had to be 36 years of age and above else one was not qualified for the *Aedileship* (Lintott, 1999: pp.192).

Quaestors had to be 31 years old and above, (Sulla in the last century reduced the requirement as were all magistracies and raised back after his death), and could be a Patrician or Plebeian (though in the later period this was a matter of major contention because ex-*quaestors* were immediately eligible for a Senate seat). The *Quaestor* magistracy is believed to have been developed in the time of the kings and the position in the later Republic was a development of various earlier positions and responsibilities. There were two *Quaestores*: *Quaestor Parricidii*, who was responsible for prosecution of criminals, and *Quaestores Templorum*, who were financial officers and administrative assistants (civil and military). They were in charge of the state treasury at Rome and also served as quartermasters and Legionary officers under direct command of Pro-consular or Praetorian Governors. History has it

that their number was between two, as it is believed to have begun then it was increased to twenty (Shotter, 1994: pp.102).

The office of the Tribunes was one of the keenly contested offices occupied by ten magistrates. The position of the Tribune (or *Tribuni Plebis*) was established after the final Plebeian withdrawal from Rome in 494 B.C. Naturally, it was a position meant for only Plebeians which was established as a counter measure to Patrician domination in law and policy-making (Shotter, 1994). The Tribunes were responsible for protection of lives and property of Plebeians; they were considered sacrosanct, meaning they were not to be harmed, not even by the consul. In addition, they had the power of veto over elections, laws, decrees of the Senate, and the acts of all other magistrates (except a dictator) so as to protect the interest of the people (though this in itself became a powerful and manipulated political tool).

They convened tribal assembly meetings and elicited plebiscites which after 287 BC (*lex Hortensia*) had the force of law. This implies that the tribunes could go directly to the people rather than the Senate to propose and adopt policy (Crook, 2008). When a tribune decides to adopt this measure it then boils down to convincing the people through speeches why he (the tribune) has decided to bring a particular policy before them instead of the normal practice of passing it through the Senate. The people will require a conviction before they agree to adopt whichever policy has been brought to them. An example of such a measure was when Gaius Gracchus took a bill directly to the people regarding King Attalus of Pergamum's wealth that had been bequeathed to Rome. It took rhetorical skills for Gaius Gracchus to

succeed. Therefore, a tribune by virtue of his position needed to be a good talker, the political system designed it so (Cary and Scullard, 1975).

According to Lintott (1999), when rhetoric was deployed in defense of an individual Roman in the form of '*auxilium*', it was an effective guarantee of the legal rights of any Roman confronting those more powerful than himself; indeed, it was called into action even by members of the elite who were isolated and in danger, which confirms its perceived effectiveness, even if this may be thought a perversion of its original purpose. Lower-class Romans were unable to take political initiatives themselves, but in the tribune, they had at least potentially a dedicated spokesperson, whose leadership might at least in theory, allow them to make a significant impact in politics (Lintott, 1999).

However, critics have argued that, the tribunes were not truly in practice representatives of the people, and secondly, neither the assemblies nor the tribunes for the most part promoted the interests of the people but tended to serve the ambitions of members of the aristocracy (Shotter, 1994). But such an argument is neither here nor there as far as this research work is concerned. This is because, the constitution made it possible for the people to have a voice; and that is the office of the *Tribunate*. Therefore, whether the tribunes championed the course of the people or the members of the aristocracy, it does not absorb the constitution of making that provision. Once the constitution has made that democratic provision, people will battle it out for that position, and as long as there is a battle for a political position then rhetoric will always come into practice. Aside the Consulship, the office of the *Tribunate* was one of the hotly contested positions in Roman Republican politics (Tan, 2008) and both magistracies required effective speaking. Besides, Roman history is

replete with Tribunes who took it upon themselves to champion the course of the people and give the voiceless a voice; the Gracchi brothers are a typical example.

Censors were two in number and originally established under the kings. They were elected every five years to conduct census, enroll new citizens, review the rolls of senate and equestrians (principally determine eligibility and be sure that all criteria for inclusion were met). They were responsible for the policies governing public morals and supervised leasing of public contracts (Lintott, 1999). They ranked below Praetors and above *Aediles* in theory and they did not have imperium or entitlement to *Lictors*, but in practice, this was the pinnacle of a Senatorial career. It was limited to ex-consuls, it carried incredible prestige and dignity and was principally the highest point for elder statesmen (at least, prior to the development of various prestigious provincial governorships such as Asia Minor). The office was an oddity, in that, the elections were every five years, but that they served terms of 18 months. It was the only office that had notable lengths of time without any serving magistrates, and Rome often went for very long periods without a censor (Lintott, 1999).

The office of dictator, unlike the above-mentioned magistracies, had to be occupied by one person. This office was created in 501 BC, just nine years after the expulsion of the kings. In unsafe times, typically of military emergency or political disturbance, a dictator could be appointed by originally the acting Consuls, and later by the overall Senate body to have supreme authority. Typically, the position was intended for Patricians, but the first Plebeian was appointed in 356 BC in the person of C. Marcius Rutilius

(Crook, 2008). The dictator appointed a Master of the Horse (Magister *Equitum*) originally, as the name implies, to lead the cavalry while the dictator commanded the legions (though the position also evolved into an administrative position designed to assist the dictator). The dictator's tenure was limited to six months or the duration of crisis, whichever was shorter. Generally, aside from those of Sulla and Caesar, Roman dictatorships rarely lasted the entire six months term. Edicts of the dictator were not subject to veto (Shotter, 1994: pp. 102).

3.2 The Assemblies

Aside the above-mentioned magistrates, the workings of the numerous Assemblies also formed part of the government structure of the Roman Republic. These Assemblies were voices of the people (male citizens only), thereby allowing for the opinions of some to be heard. Only adult males possessing citizen status could vote in the Assemblies; the Senate, like a Greek Boule, could send proposals forward for decision (North, 1990). Magistrates in Rome as often in Greece were also elected by the voters. One fundamental difference which went back to a very early period was the organization of the meetings. Roman assemblies were purely voting assemblies at which no debate was held, and in which the decision was determined not by a count of individuals but by a count of fixed groups within which the citizens voted (North, 1990). Unlike the Greeks who normally had a single assembly of the citizens, the Romans had different assemblies with different groupings and complex distinctions of procedure for different purposes.

Foremost of all the Assemblies was the Roman Senate, though not considered as an assembly in its strictest sense as it implied in Rome.

Although unpaid, Senators served for life unless they were removed by a Censor for public or private misconduct (Wiseman, 1971: pp.116). The term 'Roman Senate' (Senatus) emanated from the Latin word *Senex*, to represent elders or council of elders, was a deliberative governing body (Haper, 2001). The Senate derived its authority primarily from customs and tradition. Their principal role was as an advisory council to the consuls on matters of foreign and military policies. At the early stages of the Republic, Senators were chosen by virtue of birth but by the late Republic, membership was controlled by the Consuls, though it fell into the hands of the Censors until late in the Republican period when laws were passed to formalize a sort of hearing before censorial decision.

The Senate was made up of about three hundred men but during the dictatorship of Sulla, their number was then increased to around six hundred (Cary and Scullard, 1975: pp. 234). A decree from the Senate was referred to as *Senatus consultum* and it was only a law that was passed by a popular assembly that was superior to the *Senatus consultum*, else, the *Senatus* consultation was obeyed by all. Meetings could take place either inside or outside of the *pomerium*, but the official meeting place was at the center of the Roman forum (Cary and Scullard, 1975). Apart from the Consuls, the Senate could also be called to meet by any of the praetors or tribunes, though praetors hardly did so unless the consuls were away and tribunes almost never did call the senate to meet.

The Consuls presided or chaired Senatorial meetings; the presiding consul began each meeting with a speech on an issue and then referred the issue to the house for deliberation. The house discusses the matter by order of

seniority. Minor issues could be voted on by a voice vote or by a show of hands, while important issues were voted on by the members of the house taking a particular stand or place in the house. For example, those in favor of a particular motion after deliberations could be asked to take the right stand while those against stood left, creating a division in the house (Cary and Scullard, 1975). All meetings had to end by nightfall but in cases where discussions did not end by nightfall, the case was revisited another day. After the Senate had discussed issues and given verdict, it took the veto of a tribune to quash such a verdict but without that, it was passed into a *Senatus consultum* (Cary and Scullard, 1975).

Despite its lack of actual law-making power, the Senate held considerable authority in Roman politics. As the representative figurehead of Rome, it was the official body that sent and received ambassadors on behalf of the city, appointed officials to manage and govern provinces, declared war and negotiated peace, and distributed funds for various projects such as public building construction (Lintott, 1999). Appointments of military Legates and the overall oversight of Roman religious practices remained under the control of the Senate as well. It was also the Senate that held the authority to nominate a dictator (a single leader who acted with ultimate authority and without fear of retaliation) in a state of emergency, usually a military one. In the late Republic, and in attempts to stop the escalation pattern of dictatorships, the Senate attempted to avoid the *dictatorate* by resorting to a *Senatus consultum de Republica defendenda,* or the *Senatus consultum ultimum*. This was the declaration of martial law, and it empowered the two Consuls, essentially, with dictatorial power in defense of the Republic (Lintott, 1999).

The legislative Assemblies of the Roman Republic were political institutions. There were two types of Roman Assembly; the first was the comitia, which was an Assembly of Roman citizens (Wasson, 2016). The *Centuriate* Assembly was divided into 193 (later 373) centuries, with each century belonging to one or three classes; the officer class, the infantry and the unarmed adjuncts. During a vote, the centuries voted, one at a time, by order of seniority. The president of the *Centuriate* Assembly could elect Consuls, Praetors and Censors, only it (the *Centuriate* Assembly) could declare war and ratify the results of a census (Lintott, 1999). The organization of the tribal assembly was much simpler than that of the *Centuriate* Assembly, in contrast, since its organization was based on only thirty-five tribes. The tribes were not ethnic or kinship groups but rather geographic divisions. The president of the tribal assembly was usually a consul and under his presidency, the assembly elected *Quaestors*, *Curule*, *Aediles*, and Military Tribunes. While it had power to pass ordinary laws, it rarely did so.

The assembly did not discuss or deliberate upon issues brought before them but as far as they elected the tribunes, consuls, praetors, *Quaestors* etc., people who stood for these positions owed it to themselves to find avenues to convince the assembly why they must be voted for. Due to the overwhelming influence of rhetoric and deliberation, the Roman system created a place such as the *Contio* where aspirants spoke and tried to convince and get people to buy into their ideas for the state. The principle of collegiality which saw to it that more than one person occupied a particular office, in effect, gave more room for rhetoric to thrive. This is because after winning an election, one had other co-magistrates to contend with as far as policies were concerned. It now

boiled down to who could convince the people that he had the best interest of the state at heart.

The second type of Assembly was the council (*concilium*), which was an assembly of a special group of citizens. For example, the plebeian council was an assembly where plebeians gathered to elect plebeian magistrates, pass laws that applied only to Plebeians, and try judicial cases concerning plebeians (North, 1990). The *concilium plebis* came into existence as a result of the conflict of orders, a conflict between the Plebeians and patricians for political power as indicated above. In the *concilium plebis*, aside passing laws pertinent to the wishes of the plebeians, the members elected a number of tribunes who spoke on their behalf (North, 1990). Although this *concilium* of the plebs initially gave the plebeians some voice in government, it did not prove to be sufficient. In 450 B.C, the twelve tables were enacted in order to appease a number of plebeian concerns and it became the first recorded Roman law code. The tables tackled domestic problems with emphasis on both family life and private property. For instance, plebeians were not only prohibited from imprisonment for debts, but also granted the right to appeal against a magistrate's decision (North, 1990).

A convention, in contrast, was an unofficial forum for communication, where citizens gathered to debate bills, campaign for office and decide judicial cases (Wasson, 2016). The voters first assembled into conventions to deliberate and then they assembled into committees or councils to actually vote. In addition to the curiae (familiar groupings), Roman citizens were also organized into centuries (for military purposes) and tribes (for civil purposes). Each gathered into an assembly for legislative, electoral and judicial purposes.

The *centuriate* assembly was the assembly of the centuries, while the tribal assembly was the assembly of the tribes. Only a block of voters (century, tribe or curia) and not the individual electors, cast the formal vote (one vote per block) before the assembly. The majority of votes in any century, tribe or curia decided how that century, tribe or curia voted (Wasson, 2016).

The Republican Constitution was not the rigid type that did not allow for amendment easily but rather the flexible type. Hence, the Romans easily amended their constitution to suit the demands of the time. The commoners initially lacked the right of appeal, one basic element of democracy, but it was granted them in the course of time. The Republican Constitution was all about precedents, as such, reference was always made to past occurrences to solve present situations and that to a large extent contributed to why the Republican era survived for many centuries until Julius Caesar, who is believed to be the final catalyst that brought it down (Shotter, 1994).

Now let me delve into the controversial Roman *Contio* where massive deliberations went on. The term *Contio* was used to designate those unofficial meetings where nothing was legally enacted. The *Contio* was an unofficial platform of massive attendance that the Romans love for rhetoric and deliberations naturally created to make room for more discussions. At the *Contio*, citizens gathered to listen to public pronouncements, edicts from magistrates, hear arguments in speeches, to witness the examination of alleged criminal cases etc. Normally, before a said date for the assembly to vote on a particular matter was due, various speakers tried to use the *Contio* as an avenue to explain to the citizenry the reason why they must vote towards a particular direction (Morstein, 2004).

Senators who wanted to ensure that a bill they supported was voted for had to use the *Contio* to convince the voting populace in attendance and vice-versa. Therefore, though the assembly was not deliberative, the system created an avenue for deliberation before voting (Rosenstein, 2000). As long as the Senate remained the only permanent governing body and the only body where debate was possible, and also as long as it was every politician's dream to be a Senator, rhetoric was always instrumental to political power. Even the most distinguished generals who were highly respected needed sweetness of tongue since their fame in military combat was not enough to exercise political control, and if they lacked it, they had to find an ally who could speak on their behalf or risk remaining ineffective**.** For example, the mighty Marius, noted for his distinction in militarism had to ally himself with Appuleius Saturninus (a distinguished speaker) so as to secure pension for his veteran soldiers. He (Marius) lacked rhetorical skills which prevented him from visiting the *Contio* and the Senate to ensure that bills were passed in his favor so he was compelled to ally himself with A. Saturninus who, in return for doing Marius' bidden, enjoyed security from Marius so as to carry out his own political ambitions. With a good talker as his ally, Marius managed to secure a good pension scheme for his veteran soldiers (Brunt, 1988: pp. 280). This issue will be treated extensively in chapter four of this research where I am mandated to establish the connection between rhetoric and political power.

Throughout the last century of the Roman Republic, the *Contio* or convention remained a place where incoming politicians tried to cement their popularity. Unless one was persuasive, the *Contio* would not be an ideal place. Aspirants for the various magistracies all visited the *Contio* to state their cases

on current issues and through rhetoric, try to convince the populace why the city needed them. For example, it is believed that Cicero was able to attain the Consulship as a new man (*novus homo*) because he had established himself by passing through the ranks and also by popularity gained by his frequent orations at the *Contio* (Tan, 2008). Not only did aspirants use the *Contio* to increase their popularity and win votes but also other people who disliked the candidacy of others could convene a *Contio* to defame them. A typical example is C. Calpurnius Piso's speech against the candidacy of the then M. Lollius Palicanus. C. Piso's refusal to allow the candidacy of the popular M. Lollius Palicanus in 67 B.C. was a straightforward rejection of the *popularis* belief that the *populus* should have whichever consul it chose. The *populus* were growing too comfortable in believing that whichever candidate they supported should become consul (Tan, 2008: pp. 167). When one wanted to champion a particular course, one went to the *Contio* to speak to the people and win their favor in terms of vote so he could see his ideals come to pass. Aspirants for the office of the Tribunate made use of the *Contio* the most. For instance, in 67 B.C., a Tribune named A. Gabinius managed to get his *lex Gabinia* passed in the face of Senatorial opposition and a colleague Tribunes veto (Tan, 2008: pp. 165) with numerous examples of Tribune's at the *Contio* being provided by Tan in his article, *'Contiones in the age of Cicero'*.

Another example of a Tribune at the *Contio* is Aurelius Cotta who in the face of a violent grain protest bill in 75 B.C., still managed to deliver a speech to convince the *popularis* why there was the need to restore the lost *Tribunician protestas*. According to Sallust (*Catiline Conspiracy*)**,** the angry mob could not but to forget about the grain protest and concentrate on the call

from Cotta. Plebeians alone voted for the office of the tribune and since the plebeians always held scrabbles with the patricians, they (plebeians) were always particular about whom they voted for. The statement on tribunes using the *Contio* the most is a valid statement because; history is replete with *popularis* making use of the *Contio* than more anti-*popularis*.

Since tribunes represented the *popularis*, it follows that Tribunes or people aspiring to become tribunes or people who held or aspired not for the *Tribunate* but were *popularis* made use of the *Contio* the most. Perhaps, since the Senate who were mostly Patricians had an avenue at the Senate to deliberate and put rhetoric into practice, the *Contio* became an avenue for the *popularis* who needed to deliberate on issues. It is important to explain that the *Contio* was not necessarily a place that always had people sitting and waiting for some politician to come and deliver a speech. Just like the other assemblies, it also went through some process before it could be assembled. Writers such as Tan believe the calling of a *Contio* went through a government process or there was a way of getting the information out there before the day of the *Contiones* (Tan, 2008: pp. 172). In chapter four of this research, this will be made much more evident.

The famous conflict of the orders between the plebs and patricians when the plebeians moved out of Rome because of the high level of injustice is a typical example of the above claim. As such, one contesting for the *Tribunate* had to convince the plebs beyond reasonable doubt that among the numerous aspirants, he was the one who had the best interest of the plebs at heart. To convince them, the power of rhetoric at the *Contio* and other assembly meetings was what aspirants used in stating their case. A convention

was not only a gathering for senators or their representatives or where political aspirants met to persuade the populace but also it served as an avenue where citizens gathered to debate bills for themselves before a set date for voting was due (Wasson, 2016).

According to Lintott (1999), in the late Republic the citizens in the city and its neighboring cities seem to have numbered 200,000 and above a quarter of the total registered citizen population. If according to Lintott we assume that the majority of these voted and a further 50,000 came in from outside for the elections, then the consuls, tribunes and other magistrates would have been elected by about a quarter of the registered citizen population. These speculations are probably optimistic; nevertheless, one may suggest that even if by the late Republican era the magistrates were elected by a minority of Roman citizens, they still would have owed their election to a great number of people. As for legislation, we are told that on certain occasions a considerable number of men came in from outside Rome to participate (Lintott 1999: pp. 245)

According to Appian (1952) as Horace White translates, Tiberius Gracchus' agrarian bill caused people to flock into Rome-colonists, Latin's and others and range themselves on either side of the issue of the bill (Appian, 1952). Later, when Gracchus wanted support for re-election to the *Tribunate*, he tried to summon the men from the countryside, but since these were preoccupied with the harvest, he resorted to the urban demos instead. In the city he was regularly accompanied, according to a contemporary, by an entourage of 5,000 men, and his total urban support is likely to have been considerably greater. We hear again of an invasion of rural voters at the time

of Saturninus' legislation of 100 B.C. and later that year at the time of his attempted re-election. Even if this was a comparatively small proportion of the citizen population at the time, over 300,000 is the number of participants in politics. With this, we are dealing with a greater raw total of participants in politics than could be ministered by any Greek city (Lintott 1999). This was the nature of Roman politics with regard to voting, as Lintott has made evident. Greece (specifically Athens) was a city well known for their political superiority in the ancient times but for Rome to manage to have more voter turnout than any Greek city, as explained by Lintott, meant the Romans were more political.

On the discussion of the various magistracies, it was made evident that each magistracy was handled by more than one magistrate which naturally meant that there was always going to be a battle of different ideologies, making rhetorical skills an important tool towards achieving one's objectives as a politician. Due to A. Gabinius' impressive rhetorical display at the *Contio*, he managed to get the crowd behind him, forcing L. Trebellius, a colleague Tribune, to withdraw his veto and allow his bill to be passed because the people had been convinced by his (A. Gabinius) speech and were not ready to listen to any counter argument. This bill sought to give to Pompey an overriding command of the then war against the pirates. Though A. Gabinius was believed to have been influenced by Pompey, it took rhetorical prowess on the part of Gabinius to influence the politics of the time and overpower his colleague tribune (Cary and Scullard, 1975: pp. 244). The all-powerful Senate, though unhappy about the bill, could not stop it because they had already committed themselves by giving a similar overriding command to

M. Antonius in 74 B.C.; therefore, all Gabinius had to do was to remind the voters through the powerful means of rhetoric at the *Contio* and there was nothing the senate could do to stop it (Cary and Scullard, 1975: pp. 244).

Looking at the description of the senate above, it is quite clear that the workings or mandate of the senate made rhetoric play an important role in the Roman Republic which developed much strongly in the last century. All the senators did was to deliberate upon issues and those they wished to be passed into law, they sent to the general assembly who had already discussed at the *contio* for votes to be passed, and those that were to be decided by themselves (such as appointing officials to manage provinces), they took the decision. One cannot belong to the senate and yet lack the skill of persuasive speaking; this is because one needed to convince the house why the house must vote in one's favor (Morstein, 2004). Before the Senate agreed that a particular bill was good enough to be made into law, it is argued out and if the majority were in support, the bill is then sent to the voting assembly to either accept or decline it. A Senator who lacked the skill of persuasion was the one who did not have political power in mind. That is, if political power is not merely being a member of the senate but rather one's ideas and thoughts championing the affairs of the city, then one needed to speak persuasively. The practice of one's ideas and thought championing the affairs of the state was every Senator's dream, and this naturally made rhetoric a crucial component. Lack of persuasiveness made it difficult, or better still impossible to join discussions at the senate (Clarke, 1953). The only way out for a senator who lacked persuasiveness was to join a particular faction within the senate so that other good speakers would indirectly champion his course.

Even if factionalism was anything to go by in the senate, every faction had to make sure their best speaker was the one to speak on their side of an issue; all this shows how important rhetoric was. For example, with the issue of the Catiline conspirators, Cicero spoke in favor of those who were in favor of the death penalty while Julius Caesar spoke for those in-favor of imprisonment (Cary and Scullard, pp. 247). There were times when skillful speakers talked on a proposal till night fall just to delay proceedings. Before the senators agreed and took a bill to the general assembly, they used the *Contio* as a platform to influence the outcome of the votes**.** Though it is an established fact, at least according to Shotter (1994, pp. 5) that patronage influenced the outcome of votes, it does not erase the fact that the Senators also used the *Contio* before or after using their patronage influence.

Roman society was such that political life was dependent on property qualification so that neither the rich nor the poor would have complete or absolute dominance. But as determined as the rich aristocrats were to continue to create a difficult environment for the poor to climb up, most of the important or superior magistracies more or less became their (nobles or aristocrats) birth right (Shotter, 1994)**.** There was general participation in politics but socially, the community was under the influence of farmers with moderate property or the free citizens with enough time to spare. In extreme democracies such as that of the Athenians, we observe that the law was sovereign, but in Rome, the popular assembly, instead of the law, was sovereign (Lintott, 1999). The symbol of democracy is the popular assemblies in Rome because it indicated an all-inclusive system of governance. All that democracy subscribed to was an all participatory government ensuring

freedom of speech and an enabling environment for all. There were no deep-rooted clauses and that was what made the popular assemblies sovereign. The most fundamental principles of the Republic could be replaced by a simple statute provided it was proposed and voted through appropriate procedure. The assembly was vested with the power to elect, legislate and decide on issues of peace and war, a clearly democratic endeavor (Lintott, 1999).

The degree of decisions taken by the assemblies was considerable. Not only were the assemblies responsible for electing the magistrates whose offices formed part of the *cursus honorum* (consuls, praetors, *quaestors*, tribune) but also a number of minor magistrates, such as the *tresviri capitales* and *monetales* (Wasson, 2016). A limited assembly of less than half of the number of tribes was used to elect the pontifex maximus (chief priest); and for two periods in the late Republic, members of the chief priestly colleges' legislation dealt with many different topics. Moreover, it was the assembly which ultimately controlled admission to Roman citizenship. Apart from these constitutional and legal enactments, the founding of colonies and the sharing of public land were set in motion by edicts passed in the assembly. The assembly passed a number of statutes on economic and social issues as well as laws about money lending, sumptuary laws controlling luxury and the grain laws of the late Republic (Lintott, 1999). The assembly wielded enormous power but lacked actual deliberative function and that is why there was the need to create an avenue so as to deliberate on the above-mentioned functions. The *Contio* was the product of this creation which gave the non-senators in the assembly the opportunity to also deliberate (in speeches) using rhetoric to influence decision making though senators also did visit the *Contio*.

3.3 The Judiciary

Before the establishment or creation of the *quaestio perpetua*, the people were the court that took charge of punishment but with the creation of the *quaestio perpetua*, the people delegated their powers of punishment to a jury, albeit one which might contain fifty men or more. This leads us to another aspect of the Roman socio-political life which ensured that rhetoric was key (Mulgan, 1984). As stated earlier, the *Praetors* were in charge of litigation in Rome with the *Praetor peregrinus* trying cases between foreigners and the urban praetor concentrating on suits between citizens (Cary and Scullard, 1975: pp.182). This is a clear case that not only the Senators or the Consuls who chaired Senatorial proceedings needed to be rhetorical but also the praetors per the demands of their job needed persuasive speaking to try cases. The praetors were part of the senate during their tenure of office and even if they remained ineffective during senatorial assembly, the duties of a praetor required one to be persuasive. The jury, charged with punishing offenders of various crimes, and as well as both prosecutors and defendants, used speeches in their dealings at the law court.

As long as speeches were the mode of communication at the courts, rhetoric was key to speaking persuasively. At the early stages of the Republic, both the defendant(s) and prosecutor(s) were responsible for arguing their cases out in court, and this made it difficult for those who lacked persuasive speaking. But with the influx of sophism, speech writers became readily available to help (at a fee) people who could not develop their speeches themselves. But as at the period of the last century of the Republic, people could employ what we call today lawyers to help them out in court. Ordinary

citizens and politicians could all employ the services of a lawyer to either defend them in court or to prosecute, an avenue which made the likes of Cato, Licinius Crassus and Cicero very popular.

Law court speeches are in abundance as long as Rome was concerned, but since my research is centered mainly on politics, political law court speeches are the only ones I shall cite as examples. In 62 B.C., a famous politician in the person of Lucius Murena, whose family had never held any office higher than the *Praetorship* stood for the consulship. Against all odds (considering the fact that he was a plebeian and facing stiff opposition from the wealthy L. Catilina and S. Sulpicius) he managed a victory when Cato, a great-grandson of Cato the Censor, decided to prosecute him on bribery charges. L. Murena was defended by Cicero, Quintus Hortensius and by Licinius Crassus in order to secure his acquittal (Lord, 1964: pp. 146. et. al). With Servius Sulpicius himself an eminent jurist teaming up with the influential Cato, it boiled down to who could speak persuasively enough and with Cicero at Murena's corner he was successfully acquitted.

Another classical example is the case involving Publius Cornelius Sulla who, like L. Murena, had won the consulship and had been slapped with a bribery suit. It took the rhetorical prowess of Hortensius and Cicero against a purported bias jury selected by the influence of one of the prosecutors to win the case for P. Sulla (Lord, 1964: pp. 259). Numerous examples can be provided but the point here is that the Roman socio-political structure even at the law court made rhetoric thrive during the last century of the Republic. Looking at the second example cited, it is clear that though the juries were not favorable, rhetorical skill was enough to exert political power by persuading

the jury and putting them in an impossible position other than to declare P. Sulla not guilty. Before Cicero and Hortensius could demonstrate their rhetorical might, the system had created an avenue for them so long as politicians were always going to drive one another to court mostly on electoral bribery cases.

Looking at the discussion above, it is quite obvious that the Roman system of government was based on their social structure with different class systems in existence. With class determined by birth, it is impossible for one to dispute the powerful influence of a number of landowning, senatorial families. From this short list of families were drawn, year by year, the senior officials or magistrates (*quaestors*, tribunes, Consuls, praetors, aediles) who administered the law, chaired the senate and assemblies, commanded the armies and, in general, were the caretakers of the Republic (Cary and Scullard, 1975). This is because Rome was a highly hierarchical and class-conscious society but by the second century BCE, class was not solely determined by birth.

The old patrician and plebeian distinction were replaced by the type with the Senate on top. From the above discussion, it was made evident that both patricians and plebeians alike qualified as senators though the patricians were always in the majority. Therefore, unlike the old system based purely on birth which saw the patricians almost solely on top of affairs, the new class standing that developed after the second century ensured that no single order monopolized the affairs of the state. Just below the senatorial class was the equestrian or equites class. Unlike the senatorial class, the basis for this class was purely business. A man could only belong to this order or class if he

possessed wealth that amounted to 400,000 sesterces and by extension his family members were also considered equestrians. If an equestrian was elected to a magistracy and entered the senate, he climbed up to the senatorial class; this was not very frequent, though Cicero managed it in 63 B.C (McManus, 2009). The Senatorial and Equestrian classes constituted the upper class in Roman society.

The lower class, however, had the commoners (Plebeians) at the top followed by the Latins, foreigners, freed people (Latins and foreign slaves who had bought their freedom) and with slaves at the very bottom. The plebeians comprised all other free born Roman citizens. In all this, women were treated as subjects of their husbands or fathers; therefore, a woman or a child belonged to the social class of his or her father or husband. Women were not to take part in politics as it was considered the affairs of men (McManus, 2009). All in all, the Roman political set up favored rhetoric so much that effective speaking became the order of the day in politics. Every politically minded person had to be effective in speaking in one way or the other. Even the Roman educational system saw rhetoric at the very heart of affairs. Rhetoric was taught at the higher level by Greek tutors and this was to prepare the ward for a political career. This goes a long way to affirm that the Roman political set-up was rhetorically inclined, seeing to it that it became difficult for those who lacked rhetorical skills to survive. As part of the Roman educational system, adolescent boys were to follow their fathers to the forum to listen to debates in speeches and have a practical experience of political life before they came of age (Akaah-Ennin and Otchere, 2014: pp.61). This means that, before a man entered into politics, he was well aware of the rhetorical

demand which he might have acquired in school already depending on his family (rhetorical education came at a fee or giving of gift which made it difficult for the men of lower standing to afford.). In the next chapter, I shall delve into the nature of rhetoric before the last century of the Roman Republic.

CHAPTER FOUR

RHETORIC AND POLITICAL POWER IN THE LAST CENTURY OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

This chapter as the main focus of my research work will build upon the previous chapters to show how rhetoric developed to its highest becoming a tool for political power like never before. For clarity sake, it is important to note that, scholars date the last century of the Roman Republic from 133 to 44 B.C., which is for political and historical convenience but not in practical context of a hundred-year period. By rhetoric and political power, in the last century of Roman Republican politics, we need to note that, it was not only about persuasive speaking being a means or requirement for one to win an election but more importantly, how politicians who were good in rhetoric managed to exercise political power by getting their policies or decisions implemented. One could lack political power, that is, not being a magistrate, but because he is a good public speaker, he is able to exercise political power by influencing decision-making. The exploits of various politicians shall be employed to tie the knot on rhetoric and political power. Cicero's speeches against Catalina, among other examples, will be used to show how persuasive speakers controlled the politics of the day. This chapter shall be divided into three parts; the first deals with provision of speeches to show clearly how the politician in question used rhetoric to persuade and exert political power. The second part shall not provide speeches but arguments based on inferences to show how a politician could use rhetoric to affect politics and, as such, to demonstrate political power. The third part deals with drawing inferences to show politicians who gained political power largely by the help of rhetoric or

persuasive speaking. This division has become necessary because some of the speeches are not in existence and others are but only in fragments, thus, making it difficult to cite. This division has also become necessary because there is no real period of campaigning back in the Republican era so that one can say for sure that this politician won elections by persuading the voters to vote for him.

The orator's power to move the crowd in public affairs was the readiest means of social progression and to exercise political power. 'Political power' is a concept in which, in Parson's (1963) view, there is no proper agreement both about its specific definition, and about the many conceptual context in which it should be placed. According to Parsons (1963), there is, however, a principal complex of its meaning, having to do with the capacity or ability of persons to get things done effectively, in particular when their goals are obstructed by some kind of human resistance or opposition. The problem of coping with resistance then leads into the question of the role of intimidating measures, including the use of physical force, which at the last century of the Roman Republic, became prevalent. By definition, 'political power' means any gain of power by one person means reducing or nullifying the political power at the disposal of other persons (Parsons, 1963). Again, Political power can simply imply winning an election and holding office. It is the sole purpose of this chapter to show how the above interpretations of political power were made possible by rhetoric.

From the earliest times of which we have historical knowledge, up to the establishment of the Empire as the result of civil war, the constitution of Rome was Republican, in so far as there was no monarchy, and all laws were

passed by the people and all magistrates elected by a vote of the entire citizenry. The principle of 'representation', however, which seems attached to Republicanism, seemed unknown to the Romans. All laws were passed, and all officers were elected, at what can be referred to as a mass meeting of the entire body of citizens, convened at the central seat of government (Polybius, bk. 6). To this must be added that, the fact that under Roman politics the only means of social advancement was success in a political career, the Senate, the Roman nobility consisted virtually only of persons who had been elected to one or more of the three highest magistracies of *Consulship*, *Praetorship* and *Quaestorship*. Hence, every ambitious Roman, of high or low repute, had to become a politician and follow the regular course of office-holding (Polybius, bk. 6). To achieve success, therefore, a politician had to show ability in diverse forms, the most common being militarism and rhetorical prowess.

Ask any student of Roman history to mention five distinguished statesmen of the last century of the Roman Republic, and the headache that will accompany this question might be much severe than living in a polluted environment. This is because the last century of the Roman Republic is the most documented period of Roman history providing us with a pool of great politicians who served with distinction, making the above question a difficult one to answer. From the onset, names such as Julius Caesar, Pompey, Crassus, Cicero and Sulla, might appear worthy names to mention but when the likes of the Gracchi brothers, Marius, Cato the younger, Livius Drussus, etc. spring to mind, the issue indeed becomes problematic and quickly, the doors to remembrance of further names will be closed to avoid a severer headache. This is to make a point that the last century of the Roman Republic is

brimming with renowned statesmen and the careers of politicians such as Tiberius Gracchus, Gaius Gracchus, Marcus Tullius Cicero, Gnaeius Pompey, M. Porcius Cato and Julius Caesar shall be employed to achieve the set target of this chapter.

The year 133 B.C. is the period which most writers of ancient Roman history quote as the beginning of the last century of the Roman Republic. This period equally signifies the Tribunate of one of the most famous martyrs of Roman history, Tiberius Gracchus. Tiberius Gracchus, son of T. Gracchus the elder, was born into a family that saw to it that he received enough rhetorical education from his Greek tutors (Plutarch, *Life of T. Gracchus*, p.: 126). Though Tiberius is well known for his martyrdom, he is equally popular for his noble birth, education and eloquence. Plutarch hints on Tiberius' eloquence when he compares him with his younger brother Gaius Gracchus. Plutarch indicates that, in their public speeches to the people, Tiberius was gentle and spoke in an orderly manner standing on the same spot throughout his speech, while Gaius as a more vehement character would walk about as he spoke (Plutarch, *Life of T. Gracchus* p.: 127). This description indicates two distinguished statesmen who, with rhetorical education, possessed significant eloquence.

As Tribune-elect, Tiberius proposed an agrarian bill which aimed at taking over the lands from those who possessed them in excess. According to this law, people who had transgressed on public lands were to relinquish them at a compensation so that those excess lands could be re-distributed to the needy on rental basis. But the nobility who were going to be affected the most by this law stood against the bill. Due to their covetousness and greed, they

vehemently opposed this bill by first trying to deceive the people that, Tiberius aimed at a general re-division of lands to overthrow the government (Plutarch: *Life of T. Gracchus* p. 132). But Plutarch records that with his rhetorical prowess, Tiberius managed to convince the people so that they saw the bill for what it truly was and by so doing, trashed that opposition attempt. This is where rhetoric and political power really comes into play. Devoid of eloquence, it would have been difficult for Tiberius to overcome those who opposed his bill and get the people by his side. This indicates that as a Roman politician, one needed to possess enough skill at speaking; a skill which Tiberius demonstrated when it mattered most. But that was the beginning of more orations to follow because the opposition now grew stronger and used Tiberius' colleague Tribune to oppose the bill.

As Epstein (1983) indicates, M. Octavius was forced by the anti-Gracchan faction to veto his colleague's bill to ensure it never passed into law. But again, it boiled down to persuasiveness, as Epstein again records that the two Tribunes were engaged in countless debates, both in front of the people and in the Senate. This fact portrays again that persuasive speaking or rhetoric was always important for a Roman magistrate as Epstein makes evident by recording that M. Octavius and T. Gracchus were engaged in a number of debates (Epstein, 1983). Finally, rhetoric wins the day when Tiberius manages to persuade the people to do what was constitutionally questionable. Though not categorically unconstitutional, it was quite unheard of for a Tribune to persuade the people to depose another Tribune from office. Tiberius managed this through the power behind his speech, that is, rhetoric. After persuading the Tribal Assembly and their subsequent vote which deposed Octavius,

Tiberius physically removed Octavius from office and his (Tiberius) Land Bill was successfully passed into law. By way of persuasive speaking, Tiberius exercised political power and saw to it that his policy was implemented.

Tiberius' opponents used his action of violating the sanctity of his colleague Tribune, Octavius, against him. Already unpopular within the Senate for his agrarian law, some of the *popularis* were also offended by his action against Octavius. This made him worried because he could not afford to lose the support of the people so he attempted a public speech to justify his action to the people and win back their total support:

> A tribune of the people is sacred indeed, and ought to be inviolable, because in a manner consecrated to be the guardian and protector of them; but if he degenerates so far as to oppress the people, abridge their powers, and take away their liberty of voting, he stands deprived by his own act of honors.... (Plutarch, *Life of Tiberius Gracchus*, p: 138).

The above is an extract from Plutarch, indicating Tiberius' speech to the people, justifying his actions which, according to Plutarch, he succeeded; for in no time, he again managed to persuade the people to challenge the constitution once again. In the above extract, we can deduce that the rhetorical means by which T. Gracchus persuaded the people was through logical reasoning. It is in line to accept that T. Gracchus' speech managed to help him exercise political power because, the people did not prevent the deposition of Octavius as per the demand of his speech. The extract above taken from Plutarch's work on T. Gracchus further establishes the fact that he persuaded the people, otherwise, why will Tiberius need a justification speech. Lastly the justification speech quoted above also proves that T. Gracchus was very persuasive as history makes us aware that, soon afterwards, Tiberius managed to get the people through persuasion, to challenge the constitution. This is

because had his justification speech not convinced the people that he did the right thing by getting Octavius deposed, the people would not have honored his next request. He convinced the people with his justification speech, through logical reasoning as the way and manner by which Tiberius was successful. Tiberius simply employed deductive argument by making it clear in his speech that the reason one is elected to be a Tribune is to protect the interest of the people and ensure their freedom in diverse ways. Therefore, a Tribune of the people who goes contrary to these basic demands of his duty is not a Tribune. As such, once a Tribune is not protecting the interest of the people, then automatically he loses his inviolability and this is because he was in the first place inviolable because of the interest of the people. One can construct a deductive argument with this logical reasoning in the form of Modus Tollens:

If 'P', then 'Q'.

Not 'Q', therefore, not 'P'. (Hurley, 2000)

This will translate as:

If you are a Tribune, then you protect the interest of the people. You do not protect the interest of the people; therefore, you are not a Tribune.

By employing logical reasoning, Tiberius Gracchus managed to persuade the people when his opponents tried to use his violation of the sanctity of his colleague Tribune against him. Tiberius by way of rhetoric exercised political power and the proof that he persuaded the people, can be found in his next action when he still had the people on his side when he violated the Senate's prerogative of foreign policy.

Unlike the situation with Octavius, Tiberius' next action was clearly against constitutional practice. He took away the Senate's power of deciding on foreign policy by bringing the matter of King Attalus, King of Pergamum's possessions before the people. King Attalus before he died had willed his kingdom to the Romans, therefore, his possessions were at Rome's disposal. Tiberius, denied money by the Senate to settle his new settlers of the agrarian law to get produce for their lands, employed oratory to persuade the people to take up the matter of how King Attalus' wealth was to be used (Cary and Scullard, 1975). He was obviously aware that per the constitution, the Senate was mandated to handle foreign policy but being denied money from the state coffers and knowing clearly that most of the Senators were against him, he knew the people were his only chance. Hence, with his rhetorical education, he possessed enough eloquence to persuade the people to decide on how the wealth of Attalus was to be dispensed, and the people gave him authority to the wealth which he distributed to his new settlers. This action once again was a blow to a majority of the Senators but with the help of rhetoric, Tiberius managed to exercise political power.

Next in line are Cicero's orations which led to the execution of the Catiline conspirators in 63 B.C. On this matter, Cicero made four orations, the most notable one being the fourth Catilinarian that decided on the kind of punishment for the conspirators. The level of its artistry is something that Cape (1995) commends. What necessitated this speech was Catiline's displeasure of yet another defeat to his quest of becoming a Consul (Walter, 1938). Upon his second defeat by constitutional means, Catiline resorted to force and planned a *coup de main* in Rome as Cary and Scullard indicate

(Cary and Scullard, p.: 246). On this issue, a debate arose in the Senate on the kind of punishment to administer to the conspirators. A number of speakers spoke, including Cato, Caesar, Silanus, Cicero, Catullus Lutatius etc. (Plutarch, *Life on Cicero*). One Senator after another spoke in favor of immediate action, that is, execution of the conspirators but Caesar almost turned the wave to his favor with his clever speech which sought to seek for imprisonment rather than the death penalty proposed by Cicero. Cicero's dual purpose speech had convinced almost the entire Senators to take immediate action. Though it was unconstitutional in nature for Cicero to request for the death penalty, yet, that is what makes his speech a genius and the reason why many believe that rhetorical prowess led to the exercise of political power.

By persuasive speaking and with help from Cato, Cicero managed to get the Senators to grant the unconstitutional punishment, putting the conspirators to death. This shows how powerful a tool rhetoric was in the last century of the Roman Republic. But by what means did Cicero manage to persuade the house of Senate? He did that by the presentation of evidence or fact and when it came to deciding the kind of punishment to be meted out to the conspirators, he appealed to logical reasoning. Now speaking in favor of the death penalty in his fourth Catilinarian, this is what Cicero said when he appealed to logical reasoning:

> I perceive that among those who claim to be among the popular party, a certain person whom I could name is absent. He shrinks, I imagine, from giving a vote on the life or death of Roman citizens. And yet this same person three days ago handed over Roman citizens into confinement, and decreed a solemn thanksgiving for my services... But he who distributes a prison to the culprit and congratulations to his judge... leaves no doubt as to his judgement on the whole case and its merits. But C. Caesar recognizes by his presence that the *Lex Sempronia* was passed in the interest of Roman citizens; and that enemies

> of the Republic can in no way be regarded as citizens (Cicero, *Catiline Conspiracy).*

It is obvious from this passage that Cicero was well aware that Crassus, the head of the popular party, had absented himself on the basis that to vote in the Senate on the life or death of Roman citizens was a violation of the *Lex Sempronia*, a law which empowers the Roman people to determine capital punishment on Roman citizens**.** But though Crassus was absent, Caesar was present, and had passed his sentence when he delivered his speech. But Cicero being persuasive enough found a loophole to base his argument on. This loophole is the appeal to logical reasoning. If the only reason preventing the Senate from passing the death penalty is the *Lex Sempronia*, then Caesar's presence was an admission that the *Lex Sempronia* was not necessarily being violated. According to Cicero, if the conspirators have been declared as public enemies, then they cease to be Roman citizens and in which case the Senate could present itself as a criminal court (Cicero, *Catiline Conspiracy*). The *Lex Sempronia* only apply to Roman citizens and once the conspirators by their action deny themselves of Roman citizenship, the Senate is by no means violating any law. Cicero concluded on his appeal to logical reasoning when he cited an example of a situation where C. Gracchus, the very man who passed the *Sempronian* law, was himself killed by Opimius who was not charged for violating the *Lex Sempronia* because Gracchus was said to be an open enemy under arms (Hardy, 1917: p. 212).

But before Cicero managed to persuade the Senators to opt for the death penalty, he had already persuaded them (in previous orations before the fourth) without doubt that Catiline was planning a conspiracy against the Republic. That earlier persuasion is the most important since without that the

Senators would not have sat to debate about the kind of punishment for the conspirators. To prove to the Senate that his first oration against Catiline was not motivated by sheer jealousy, Cicero by way of presenting substantial evidence got the Senators persuaded. We find reflections of the provision of evidence in the fourth Catilinarian speech:

> ...and of receiving Catiline; their letters are in your possession, their seals, their handwriting, and the confession of each individual of them; the Allobroges are tampered with, the slaves are excited, Catiline is sent for; the design is actually begun to be put in execution... last of all because yesterday you gave most ample rewards to the ambassadors of the Allobroges and to Titus Vulturcius (Cicero, *Catiline Conspiracy*).

But of course even upon intercepted letters by Cicero's spies, the conspirators would not yield easily so as to make persuasion easy for Cicero. Even in the face of evidence, one of the major means of persuasion, Cicero still had work to do by ensuring that the accusers will confess to their treacherous crime in order to make sure that he persuades the Senators and people of Rome beyond reasonable doubt. Cicero upon the provision of proof had all he needed to persuade the Senators but a confession from one of the accusers would have laid the matter to immediate rest. But Gabinius refused to confess to the allegations leveled against him and the other four involved in the conspiracy. Cicero did not need the full proof of a confession to achieve a guilty verdict against Gabinius (Shimizu, n.d). Nonetheless, he (Cicero) seemed to have been well aware that if Gabinius had persisted in refusing self-incrimination and accused Cicero's illegal uses of spies, this could have dented his legitimacy and given the possible fatality in his political life. Therefore, when Cicero finally got that confession, he attacked the conspirators quite severely as he secured witnesses on his side:

> What minds and spirits these are that, being convicted of such a treason, and by such a cloud of witnesses, dare yet retain their boldness. What would their rage have done if they had conquered (Shimizu, Catiline, His Conspiracy)?

By employing evidence, witnesses, forcing a confession from Gabinius and using certain rhetorical devices such as metaphor (a cloud of witnesses) and rhetorical question, Cicero persuaded the Senators. The fourth Catilinarian, according to Cape, figured as one of the actions that made the day when Cicero achieved his exceptional and immortal glory (Cape, 1995). According to Plutarch, this speech that saved Rome convinced the people to bestow on him the title 'Father of his country', the first man to be given such a title, all by the superior force behind rhetoric. A number of writers have written on the magnificence of Cicero's Catilinarian speeches. All of them seem to praise the rhetorical power of Cicero, and Meyer simplifies the issue when she says that Cicero saved the day with his speech, not as a Consul in office who possessed political power but by his speech which helped him to actually exercise political power. (Meyer, 1963).

Cicero's oration against the Catiline conspirators was a true demonstration of political power by way of persuasive speaking. Undoubtedly, Cicero made a name for himself by way of his oratorical abilities; that notwithstanding, his orations that put the Catiline conspirators to death is remarkable, even for his own high standards (Meyer, 1963). The opposition Cicero faced in the face of his speech yet managed to get the Senate to do the illegal by putting the conspirators to death is what makes his speech remarkable even by his own high standards. This reminds one of why Plato considered the powers of an orator as useless and dangerous if not directed to the pursuit of justice and truth.

Like most of the characters treated above, Caesar conforms to Aristotle's criteria of an eloquent speaker by taking a course in rhetoric from Apollonius Milo, believed to have been the best living exponent of the art at the time (Suetonius, p. 10). The debate about the kind of punishment for the Catilinarian conspirators serves as evidence of Caesar's ability to persuade by speech when he managed to convince the house of Senators to opt for imprisonment instead of death sentence if not for Cato's intervention which rolled the dice to its previous state (Blom, 2012). According to Sallust (*Conspiracy of Catiline*), Decimus Junius Silanus was the first to speak about the preferred punishment for the conspirators. He spoke in favor of the death sentence proposed by Cicero and right after, Caesar was called upon to speak as he started in this manner:

> Whoever, gentlemen, is deliberating upon a difficult question ought to clear his mind of hatred and affection and of anger and compassion. It is not easy to discern the truth when one's view is obstructed by such emotions, and all experience proves that those who yield to passion never make politic decisions. If you concentrate your mind on a problem, it can exert its full powers; once let passion come in, it will take control of you and reduce your mind to impotence (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*, p. 216).

The extract above is Caesar's opening words during the debate in the Senate and the punishment for the conspirators. His (Caesar) opening statement clearly shows one who intended to persuade the Senate by employing the truth by way of evidence. As such, he needed to clear the members of the Senate from attaching sentiments to the issue. Like he (Caesar) rightly said, when passion is involved, it becomes difficult to see the truth no matter how glaring it might be (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*, p. 216). Because Caesar made it a point to persuade them, he needed to get rid of

their emotions before going ahead to present his case. Caesar after his opening now found a clever way to let the Senate understand that the action they intended to take was not the proper one. Not proper in the sense that the law forbade the Senate from doing that, and that is the truth he hoped to persuade them with:

> Why in heaven's name did you not also propose that the prisoners should be flogged before being executed? Was it because the Porcian law forbids it? But there are other laws which provide that convicted citizens shall not be put to death, but shall be permitted to go into exile. Was it then because flogging is a severer punishment than death? But what penalty can be regarded as harsh or excessive for men found guilty of such a crime? If however it was because you thought flogging is a lighter punishment, how can it be logical to respect the law in a comparatively small matter when you have disregarded it in a more important point? (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*, p. 218)

It is evident in the above extract from Caesar's speech that he tried to persuade them not only by way of the truth of the law but also, by some logical reasoning. Truth is normally backed by evidence and for that matter, for his argument to be solid, Caesar went ahead to provide an example out of the Athenians. These were his words:

> The Spartans for example, set up in Athens, when they had conquered it, an oligarchy of thirty members. These men began executing without trial notorious malefactors whom everyone loathed, and the people rejoiced and said it was well done. After a time, they began to act more and more irresponsibly, killing good and bad alike as the whim took them, and intimidating all the rest. Thus Athens was oppressed and enslaved, and paid a heavy price for its foolish rejoicing (Sallust, Conspiracy of Catiline, p. 219).

In the extract above, Caesar was sending a clear signal to the Senators for what such an action could lead the city to. After constructing logical arguments backed by truth and evidence, his example serves as a caution to the Senate for it is indeed true that when the wrong thing is done for the right

reasons, humans by our nature get used to it and in no time, we are no longer doing the wrong thing for the right reason but instead, the wrong thing for the wrong reason against both the wrong and right people. It is not surprising that a speech as powerful as has been made evident in the extract provided achieved its purpose of changing the minds of most of the other Senators who Sallust claims contented themselves with a formal expression of agreement with one proposal or the other (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*). Therefore, exercising political power had become a matter of persuasive speaking which the politicians with rhetorical education had an upper hand.

Though Cicero is the name that comes to mind when one mentions the Catiline conspiracy, it is on record that Cato played a remarkable role by way of rhetoric to ensure that the conspirators were put to death other than imprisonment. Cary and Scullard (1975) indicate that the course of the debate at the Senate turned when Caesar spoke in favor of imprisonment. According to Cary and Scullard, Caesar's speech turned the tide at the Senate until Cato, by then a Tribune-elect, countered Caesar's speech (Cary and Scullard, 1975). Caesar spoke well and managed to convince the Senators using mainly the unconstitutional nature of Cicero's proposed punishment as his tool to convince the house. But Cato, who was in agreement with Cicero that death to the conspirators was necessary to serve as a deterrent to others spoke so persuasively that he managed to reiterate Cicero's point and ensure that the conspirators were put to death.

Cato's speech was brief and persuasive, employing a number of persuasive skills to achieve his objective. He started by appealing to the truth or fact and then at a point in time, he reminded the house of his personal

character. As has been made evident (in chapter one), one of the means of persuasion is the character of the speaker. A good man more easily persuades his audience than one considered to be bad on the basis that his personal character can be used against him. To reveal the fact of the situation to the house this is what Cato, according to Sallust *(Conspiracy of Catiline)*, is believed to have said:

> But the situation warns us rather to take precautions against them. Other crimes can be punished when they have been committed; but with a crime like this, unless you take measures to prevent its being committed, it is too late: once it has been done, it is useless to invoke the law. When a city is captured, its defeated inhabitants lose everything (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*, pp. 221).

The logical reasoning embedded in the above extract is one that makes Cato's speech a great one. The way and manner Cato draw the attention of the house to come to terms with the horrific nature of the attempt made by the conspirators is fascinating. There are certain crimes that the perpetrators can be punished after it has been committed but how can one who stages a coup be punished, once he is successful; he becomes the law. Therefore, the only way to prevent such a crime is to put the conspirators to death, for it is only when at death that there is absolute certainty that such a horrific crime will not be committed by them. In this statement, Cato clearly rubbishes Caesar's quest for imprisonment because once the conspirators are not dead, there is always the likelihood to rise and accomplish their mission. But when they are killed, there is a guarantee that they will harbor no such crime.

> I will address myself for a moment to those of you who have always been more concerned for your houses, villas, statutes, and pictures, than you have for your country... Many a time, gentlemen, have I spoken at length in this House; many a time have I reproached our fellow citizens for their self-indulgence and greed – and by so doing have made many enemies; for as I

> have never, in my own conscience, excused myself for any wrongdoing, I found it hard to pardon the sins which other men's passion led them to commit (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*, pp. 221-222)

The above lines taken from Sallust' *Conspiracy of Catiline* indicate the point where Cato moved from logical persuasion to remind the house of Senators of his own character or reputation over the years. Cato reminded the house of Senate of his honor and reputation of putting the Republic first in order to place their minds in a position where no one will doubt that his speech was still in the interest of the Republic. Therefore, for one who always places the interest of the Republic first to advocate the death penalty meant that, indeed, the Senate would be doing the right thing should they decide on death as the sentence for the accused. As one who is noted to always act in the interest of the Republic and by so doing making enemies out of those who are greedy and selfish and care less for the Republic other than themselves, Cato was able to persuade the Senators to opt for the death penalty. Apparently appealing to the patriotic nature of the typical Roman, reminding them of 'the good old days', as Cicero usually refers to I his speeches when the welfare of the state and the people was more important to the Roman than his personal wealth and property.

Cape (1995), in his article, *The rhetoric of politics in Cicero's fourth Catilinarian*, also recognizes Cato's role and records that Cicero provided the necessary grounds for Cato to build upon in his speech. Simply put, he states that, together, Cicero and Cato effectively turned the Senate around (Cape, 1995). Therefore, inasmuch as Cicero takes credit for the *Catilinarian* conspiracy and its reduction, Cato also played an instrumental role which led

to the conspirators being put to death. By demonstrating rhetorical abilities, Cicero and Cato ensured that political power was exercised by convincing the Senators to consent to putting the conspirators to death.

This is the second department of this chapter where Cicero, Marcus Cato, Gnaeius Pompey and Julius Caesar are the characters to be used to further prove that rhetoric was linked to political power during the last century of the Roman Republic. Pompey and Caesar will also provide the needed dynamics to help achieve the purpose of this chapter, but unlike the above discussions, references shall not be made to their specific speeches but instead, quotations.

Cicero made it clear right from the onset when he became Consul that he was going to govern by way of rhetoric. His first display upon being made Consul was to defeat Crassus, whom according to Cary and Scullard (1975), had instructed a Tribune in the person of Rullus Servilius to introduce a bill which on the surface appeared harmless. This bill was to redistribute land in Italy and the provinces but its truest purpose was to concentrate in the hands of the allotment commissioners all the territories which Pompey wanted to give to his soldiers. Its avowed object was to provide lands for the poor by establishing colonies in Italy. Now, there was very little public domain left in the peninsula, only the *Ager Campanus*, the region around the town Capua, that the Romans confiscated in the second Punic War, and the *Campus Stellatis*, located in Campania (Cary and Scullard, 1975). These were, of course, quite inadequate for the purposes of the law, which therefore, provided that the necessary additional 'land be acquired in Italy, and the purchase amount to be procured by the sale of many of the rich foreign possessions of

Rome and by the use of enormous revenues, such as those which would soon amass from the provinces which Pompey was organizing in the East (Cary and Scullard, 1975). The vast financial transactions involved in all this buying and selling were to be in the hands of a commission of ten men, chosen for five years from seventeen of the thirty-five tribes. These *decemvir*, the ten- man commission, were responsible to no court; they wielded a power so untrammeled but the real object was to procure for the leaders of the Democratic Party, a position similar to that which Pompey held by virtue of the Gabinian, Roman law that granted him an extraordinary command against the pirates in the Mediterranean and *Manilian*, a law granting Pompey the military command against Mithridates VI of Pontus' legislation. In a nutshell, the democrats wished to set up a rival power to that of Pompey and, to this end, Egypt was particularly the purpose of their desire (Cary and Scullard, 1975).

This is where the issue of political power comes into play. On the very first day of Cicero's Consulship, he laid the situation before the Senate by way of speech delivery in the presence of Rullus himself, whom he spoke of as the dishonest friend of the people, bringing forward a law rich in possibilities of harm to the state (Saunders, 1917). Concerning this law, Cicero delivered four orations in order to bring to light the true intention of Rullus to the entire city because that is where it had gotten to. It had gotten to the extent of an orator using persuasive speech to get the citizenry to be awake to a deceitful ploy by Rullus who hides behind the interest of the people for his own selfish gains. Of the four orations, the first is incomplete; the last is lost; the third is very brief,' merely refuting the charge of Rullus that Cicero's opposition was due to

sympathy with the beneficiaries of Sulla. The second speech, delivered before the people, is the main source for our knowledge of the law (Saunders, 1917). Cicero begins by thanking the people for electing him to the Consulship. He emphasizes the fact that he is the first Novus Homo in many years to be made Consul. Furthermore, he has reached the office at the earliest possible age, which has rarely happened even to men of noble birth. He reminds them of the troubled condition of affairs at the beginning of his term of office, and he promises to be a Consul *Popularis* and to give them *pax* and *otium* (peace and harmony). He goes on to explain that he has no objection to an agrarian law per se; that when, as Consul-elect, he learnt that the Tribunes-elect were framing such a law, he was attracted and tried to collaborate with them but they did not receive his advances in a friendly manner and kept their plans secret (Saunders, 1917). This is what according to Saunders, made Cicero probe further into their real intention behind the law. Showing his gratitude to the people for electing him Consul inspite of his youthful age, demonstrating his humility and obedience to the rule of law and his desire to serve his nation despite the initial difficulties, and hinting to the secret plans of the Tribunes-elect so the people would be on their guard against those plans.

With the kind of men backing this law (Crassus and Rullus Servilius) it was always going to be difficult for one to get the law cancelled. It was always the case that when bills were proposed, it was open to deliberations in the forum so that Senators could argue them out. It was equally the case that the kind of men who supported a particular bill also contributed to whether the bill was going to pass from the house of Senate to the Assembly or not. Despite this superior opposition in the person of Crassus, considering the fact that he

was a wealthy man, Cicero managed in an oration against the law of the ten commissioners to get the Senate to uncover the real intention behind the measure. Plutarch describes the genius of Cicero's oration in these words:

> "And therefore, in the Senate, making an oration against the law of the ten commissioners, he so confounded those who proposed it that they had nothing to reply" (Plutarch, *life on Cicero*, p.: 195).

This indicates how Cicero used persuasive speaking, the end product of rhetoric, to convince the Senators and dumbfound the supporters of Rullus' bill so much that Rullus' supporters became defenseless, making their ploy evident. Bell (1997 p.: 1) indicates on this very point that not only did Cicero persuade the Senators to uncover the ill motive behind the agrarian-looking bill which rendered the Tribunes and their supporters defenseless, but also that the Senators ensured that the bill was defeated in the ensuing voting of the tribal assembly. Bell, further alludes that eloquence was Cicero's greatest political asset and that, the *De lege agrarian II* can be read as a testimony to the power of words. Here in this example, Cicero used rhetoric as an asset to exercise political power by speaking against the agrarian bill, leading to its defeat irrespective of the powerful Crassus behind the bill.

Gnaeius Pompey is one renowned political character in Roman history who has seen much written about his exploits as a politician and statesman. In the sources, much space is given to Pompey's campaign against the pirates, his dictatorship, and his union with Caesar and Crassus that brought about the first triumvirate, including a host of other stories about him. Yet, one aspect of the life of such great a statesman which has received less attention is his power to speak and address the people. This aspect of his career has not been given the

needed prominence it deserves, due to obvious reasons. Particularly, Pompey achieved so much as a soldier and general that, the act of persuasive speaking or rhetoric as an aspect of his political game has been overlooked yet, constituted one of the key features of his political profile (Blom, 2011). Blom (2011), in an attempt to give credit to Pompey for his strength at speaking, first indicates that Pompey received rhetorical education from Manius Otacilius Pitholaus before emphasizing Cicero's praise of his eloquence. For a man like Pompey who made his political name by way of his outstanding exploits on the battlefield to speak at the *Contio* goes further to emphasize that at a point in time, every Roman statesman needed to be skillful at speaking. This is what Cicero says about Pompey in his *Brutus*:

> My contemporary, Gnaeius Pompeius, a man destined to excellence in all fields, would have reached a greater reputation for eloquence if ambition for even greater glory had not diverted him towards the prizes of a military career. His manner of speaking was sufficiently ample. (Cicero, Brutus: p. 239).

Cicero acknowledges how brilliant an orator Pompey would have been if the quest for military glory had not consumed him. According to Blom (2011), Pompey's speeches were almost always characterized by self-praise, a thing which he was so much good at. He was quick to remind the people of his numerous military achievements which made them shout in his admiration (his exact words). But rhetoric, as we have learnt from ancient scholars, acknowledges that its intent is to persuade with any available means devoid of violence. Therefore, for Pompey to dwell on his exploits at the battlefield as his means of persuasion is no crime but rather in conformity with rhetoric. This tactic worked as the people loved Pompey and almost did his bidding all

the time, including making him a dictator which saw to it that he exercised political power.

One major political feet Pompey achieved through his popularity with the people which was partly due to *Contiones* where he praised his own exploits, as he is believed to have done most often, was the command of the campaign against the pirates given to him. Pompey, as Blom (2011) explains, knew how to win the affection of the people, a thing he started right from the onset of his Consulship. A typical example is when in a particular speech at the *Contio*, Pompey decided to lay down his military imperium. This move, in Blom's opinion, got Pompey's popularity to its highest. Subsequently, the people backed him when he requested for the campaign against the pirates to be taken from Q. Metellus and given to him (Blom, 2011). By making himself popular through *Contiones*, this request by Pompey got the people to wrestle the direction of the war against the pirates from Metellus to him. In 67 B.C., the Tribal Assembly gave to him *imperium ifinitum* (infinite power to command) to drive the pirates away. Cary and Scullard (1975) also believe that Pompey's influence on the people was what led the people to hand over command against the pirates to him. But Blom indicates that the command given to him came under great and violent opposition in the *Senate*.

The point here is that Blom (2011) accepts that Pompey gained this special command partly through a speech in the *Contio* due to his popularity with the people. This is the most important point to this research as it indicates that, though Pompey was a great soldier, the reason for his popularity, yet, he never abandoned the *Contio*, as it was equally important as far as political power was concerned. This proves that indeed rhetoric had a link to political

power as we have realized that through his speeches in the *Contiones*, Pompey managed to gain and exercise political power by getting the people to take the command away from Metellus to him. This reminds us of how Parson defines political power when he said political power was the capacity of persons or ability to get things done effectively, and continued that, any gain of power by one person means reducing or nullifying the political power at the disposal of other persons (Parsons, 1963). Clearly, Pompey used the *Contio* to nullify the political power which was at Metellus' disposal.

Blom (2011), in reference to Seneca describes Pompey as not an accomplished speaker but a mere average speaker, and continues that Cicero's love for the man may have somehow clouded his judgment. To Blom, shyness made Pompey blush when speaking in public and coupled with his tendency not to relay his thoughts in the open. He did that in order not to commit himself to a particular point of view but this attitude has led to him being described as a less accomplished speaker (Blom, 2011). Despite these back and forth criticisms or comments however, and as I indicated earlier, Pompey did not have to commit to a particular course; all he had to do was to remind the people of his achievements and his capacity to achieve more for the Republic. This self-glorification was enough weapon to ensure that political power and its exercise never eluded him. Whether he was a great speaker or not, the fact that all his military achievements were at certain points not enough or the fact that he needed to employ persuasive speaking to convince or remind the people at the *Contio* of his military might is enough to establish that Pompey was an able speaker, and that rhetoric enhanced his political career.

Pompey's earliest speech according to Blom (2011), was the one he delivered to the people in 71 B.C., when he was Consul-elect. Pompey attained the Consulship in a unique fashion; a manner in which people could not even dream of, not to talk of accomplishing it. To attain the Consulship without first holding a lesser magistracy was a thing difficult to accomplish, though a few did achieve that, but to couple it with attaining it before the required age was quite unique. After attaining the Consulship, Pompey spoke to the people in a *Contio* to win their absolute support by carrying out a number of popular tactics. According to Cary and Scullard (1975), the first of such popular politics was his promise to the people that he was going to restore the Tribune's powers which they (Tribunes) had lost to Sulla's proscriptions; the second being to do away with the corruption of the all-Senators jury. According to Blom (2011), Pompey adopted these popular tactics to win over the people for his future endeavors, and he (Blom) goes ahead to describe his first speech as a success. Persuasion partly lies in addressing the concerns of the audience and as far as possible making it appear as though one is sympathetic and ready to help. By this art, in Blom's view, Pompey managed to achieve in his very first speech recorded in history. He appealed to the people's emotions because when Sulla stripped the Tribunes of their powers, it came at the displeasure of the people.

Caesar the conqueror of Gaul, the dictator, the conqueror of Britain and Germany, the Pontifex Maximus and a host of other accolades is how Caesar is best remembered. Like Pompey, Julius Caesar's political career was characterized by military success so much that, though unlike Pompey whose ability to speak persuasively is sometimes underestimated, Caesar on the other

hand is regarded for his eloquence, only that this aspect of his political life has been overshadowed by his military success. It is tempting to speculate that before his dictatorship, Caesar's political presence was felt much more outside of Rome than inside of Rome. Bryan James in his article titled: *Speech Authority and Experience in Caesar's Bellum Gallicum*, suggests to us how Caesar used his eloquence to work more on his soldiers than in the Senate or *Contio* (Bryan, 2000). The source of Caesar's political power aside his position as an Aedile, Quaestor Praetor and *Pontifix* Maximus, resided in his soldiers. He depended on his troops for his political power and success; therefore, it is not surprising that, that is where his eloquence was really demonstrated and that is the different dimension I hope to bring on board. Caesar's army was his source of political power, considering the number of political successes he achieved with his army.

Bryan (2000), provides an example of a situation where Caesar had to depend on his eloquence to get his soldiers back on track. Before the battle against the German leader Ariovistus, Caesar had taken leave of his army to refill supplies only for his Roman soldiers to cause a mutiny. The cause of the mutiny, according to Bryan (2000), was fear of the Germans whom the Gaul's and merchants who had been in contact with described in a horrific manner. This caused fear that disrupted the spirit of the entire Roman army, most especially the young soldiers. The Germans were described as being large, courageous and highly experienced in battle. In his *Bellum Gallicum*, Caesar indicates that not only did panic strike his young soldiers but his centurions who had plenty of experience in battle even interpreted the actions of the young one's as valid and they too became afraid (Bryan, 2000).

Caesar himself was afraid of a revolt so he took the unusual step of inviting centurions of all rank to the *consilium* instead of inviting only those of the first rank as was customary. In front of them, Caesar, then Praetor-elect, spoke eloquently enough with his rhetorical education persuading them not to fear the Germans. Bryan (2000) informs his readers that in no time Caesar managed to restore back their fighting spirit. For soldiers who were panic-stricken and almost at the point of boycott to have their fighting spirits rekindled means a great deal of persuasiveness on the part of the speaker. The troops went along to face the Germans fair and square and the result was victory for Caesar and his warriors. But all credit goes to Caesar for his ability to persuade his soldier's at the most crucial moment.

This is the final section of this chapter whereby I try to prove that people won elections or were voted into office due to their ability to speak persuasively or being orators. One of the strongest cases this chapter can make by drawing the connection between rhetoric and political power is to show how some politicians gained their office due to their ability to speak persuasively. Here, Gaius Gracchus, Cicero and Cato shall be the clearest examples.

The death of his brother forced him (C. Gracchus) to live a quiet life of studying eloquence. Soon, the study of eloquence which naturally compels one to move out of his covering to either become an advocate or pursue political glory saw Gaius Gracchus in the public domain. According to Plutarch, Gaius' first display of rhetorical prowess came at a trial involving his friend. Plutarch, explains that during the trial, the people were overwhelmed by the level of Gaius' eloquence and that became the talk of town, putting the powerful

citizens in fear of what he could use his eloquence to attain (Plutarch, *Life of G. Gracchus*, p. 144). Gaius' eloquence came not as a surprise, for he underwent the same rhetorical education as his elder brother who came before him.

As indicated in the second chapter, it was the case that up-and-coming politicians who had desire of holding office often visited the *Contio* to express their opinion on current affairs or champion a particular course in order to familiarize themselves with the people, that is, the 'campaigning period'. Rhetoric became necessary for such people in persuading the voters why they as politicians, needed to be voted for, or by displaying their skill in speaking so as to gain the good favor of the people when they needed it. This process is exactly how Gaius penetrated the political terrain. Plutarch reveals that before Gaius became a Tribune, one day, in an oration to the people, he persuaded them to vote him as Tribune and Caius Fannius as Consul. Plutarch claims that he (Gaius) made the request in such a way that the people thought he wanted to be voted Consul only for him to advocate Caius Fannius for the Consulship and himself for the Tribunate (Plutarch, *Life of G. Gracchus* p. 149). This explains that seekers of office declared their intention at the *Contio* and they did that through speeches intended to persuade the people beforehand. Therefore, rhetoric became an important tool to a politician. Gaius Gracchus becomes an example of politicians who won elections due to their rhetorical influence at the *Contio* and other significant places such as the court room. It is important to remember that before Gaius in an oration appealed for the Tribunate and for the Consulship for Fannius, he had already made himself popular through an eloquent speech in defense of a friend who stood for trial.

And with how Plutarch (*life on G. Gracchus*) explains the people's reaction towards Gaius after his first speech, it helps to affirm the point that eloquent speakers always stood a better chance in politics.

Among Gaius' numerous reforms that he achieved, arguably the greatest mark he left on Roman politics is being voted *Tribune* for the second continuous time. The likes of Marius managed four consecutive consulships and seven in total, making Gaius' second consecutive *Tribunate* a much less imprint on Roman politics (Shotter, 1994). But very early in the last century of the Roman Republic, such a success was a very difficult thing to achieve because the aristocratic faction made sure to make any *populares* who tried that unpopular through whatever means necessary, especially someone like Gaius who was a constant threat to their supremacy. Besides, Gaius did not have the kind of military backing that Marius had; he was a man who depended on his power to persuade. Considering how tragic his elder brother had fallen, Gaius had all the lessons to learn when he requested for re-election but with rhetoric as his strength, the people had fallen so much in love with him that Cary and Scullard (1975) record that he was re-elected *Tribune* for 122 B.C. without any opposition. He managed this because as a public speaker, he exercised a power which in Plutarch's words, is second only to Cicero (Plutarch's life of G. Gracchus).

At the very beginning of his *Tribunate*, he took his popular audience by storm, forcing them by the power behind his words to embrace and support his political ideals. During Gaius' term of office he achieved a lot of reforms, but irrespective of how eloquent he was, there were certain bills that the people denied him. Gaius, as a politician, achieved a lot due to his rhetorical

prowess; he exercised political power by controlling the affairs of the state because he won the heart of the people with his eloquence. This is what Cary and Scullard say about Gaius Gracchus and the level of his rhetorical abilities:

> Gaius Gracchus was a man of wider imagination and of deeper passions than his brother, and as a public speaker he exerted a power second only to that of Cicero. At the outset of his Tribunate, he took his popular audience by storm and intimidated the Senate into immediate acquiescence. He was re-elected tribune for 122 B.C. without opposition, so that for a year and a half he remained the uncrowned king of Rome (Cary and Scullard, 1975: p. 207).

Now let us shift our attention to Marcus Tullius Cicero, the man whose orations against the Catiline conspirators have been discussed above. Eloquence was Cicero's greatest political asset; as a matter of fact, there is little or perhaps no doubt at all that Cicero owes his outstanding political career more to the skill of persuasive speaking than to any other quality of his. Unlike statesmen such as Pompey, Sulla, Marius, Caesar etc. who were noted to have risen to prominence due to their superior military might, Cicero, like the Gracchi brothers, is a typical example of what this research seeks to argue out. That is, that in the last century of the Roman Republic, rhetoric became much more instrumental to the attainment and exercise of political power. Cicero's skill of persuasion has urged a renowned writer in the person of Plutarch to do a comparison between him, Cicero, and the great Demosthenes. To be compared with Demosthenes of Athens goes a long way to emphasize Cicero's skill at speaking. A comparison which Plutarch himself finds difficult to declare who was the better of the two (Plutarch, *life of Cicero and Demosthenes*). Plutarch, in his work, makes it known the connection between rhetoric and political power in the following words when he speaks about Cicero and Demosthenes:

> The power of persuading and governing the people did, indeed, equally belong to both, so that those who had armies and camps at command stood in need of their assistance (Plutarch, *Life of Demosthenes and Cicero*, p. 225).

In the above quotation, Plutarch admits that Cicero did not possess an army; yet he exercised political power so much that the likes of Caesar and Pompey who had armies needed his assistance. With the help of Plutarch's words about Cicero, one is right to infer that, indeed, Cicero rose to prominence and attained the Consulship because of his eloquence. In our contemporary days when there is an official period for campaigning so that during that period, politicians try to speak and persuade people to vote for them by mounting huge campaign platforms, the issue was, however, different in the days of the Republican government. The *Contio* had been created as a place for deliberation which allowed politicians and upcoming ones to go and speak to issues. Upcoming ones spoke with the intention of making themselves popular and seasoned politicians visited the *Contio* in order to maintain their popularity or dominance (Blom, 2011). Therefore, the *Contio* became more or less a campaign grounds. Only that, this campaign ground had no specific campaign period or time; each and every day was an opportunity for campaigning. Once Cicero never possessed any army and was not from a wealthy family so as to say that perhaps, he had family heritage as a tool to attain the Consulship, then the options become limited as long as trying to account for his winning the Consulship is concerned. The angle becomes much narrow when one considers the fact that Cicero was a Novus Homo (new man), an achievement that had not been recorded in the past thirty years (Sallust, *Conspiracy of Catiline*). Therefore, for a man who lacked almost all the necessary requirements that helped people to achieve the highest office of

the land to win that particular office, then, he should have possessed something special. It will make sense to conclude that the power of persuasion is that specialty that helped Cicero to attain the Consulship. This inference becomes much acceptable when one considers his many law court speeches that had made him popular and the fact that he had rhetorical education from the Greek rhetorician, Apollonius (Plutarch, 1961).

Yet another remarkable character in the field of rhetoric and its connection to winning political office is M. Porcius Cato. This Cato was a descendant of the Porcii and imitated the great Cato except that he had received a better Greek education than his ancestor. He assiduously promoted the interests of the common people, and admired no single man, but was entirely committed to the common interests of society; and suspicion of dominating made him hate anyone who had grown above everybody else, while his love for the common people was his weakness (Blom, 2012). According to Plutarch (Plutarch, *life of M. Cato*), he was becoming a friend to the people like no one else, and engaged in outspokenness on behalf of the right and just. He did all this not for power or glory or honor but entirely for the sake of a life of independence and freedom from tyrants. Cato's persuasiveness at the Senate is one key feature of his political career that most scholars try to emphasize.

That notwithstanding, Cato's dislike of the *Contio* has prompted some writers to assume that he was not as convincing and good at rhetoric as perceived. This has also influenced Blom (2012) to raise questions such as; by what means did Cato manage to convince the people to get him into office? Or was Cato not devoted to the people, the reason why he shuns the *Contiones*?

But whatever be the case, the first question by Blom presupposes that to get into office, a politician needed to persuade the people to vote for him; thereby, stating what this section of this chapter seeks to prove. It is quite acceptable that Cato lacks enough *Contiones* but it renders him not unpersuasive. This is because, the Senate is the official and only body where debate was possible, as such, being persuasive in the Senate was the most important or maybe we can assume without admitting for the purpose of argument that, Cato was not a fun of popular politics considering that the *Contio* was well noted for *popularis* politics. Cicero was not a fun of Stoicism but he appreciated how Cato was aware of when to and when not to speak like a Stoic, and this is a great sign of a good speaker (Blom, 2012). Cato, like Cicero, gained popularity in Roman politics by way of his power to speak and persuade.

Cato's first public performance or speech was delivered before a *Praetor* at the very early stages of his political life when he was still committed to learning but not in active politics. By then, Cato held no public office but took advantage of the civil suit brought up by the then Tribunes and chaired by the Praetor suggesting to pull down or move a pillar in the Basilica Porcia (first public building for court cases) built by Cato the elder (Blom, 2012). According to the sources, Cato's speech against the decision of the Tribunes (to pull down or move a pillar in the Basilica) won him great admiration. In Plutarch's words, his speech had no element of youthfulness but showed rather a matured speaker and that became the talk of town (Plutarch, *Life on Cato*, p. 33) When Cato decided to move into active politics, he had already cemented his name as one good politician to look out for just as Gaius Gracchus also did before fully entering into politics. Like Gaius, his (Cato's)

speech also won him admiration, a point establishing the Romans and their love for rhetoric as well as Cato's entry into the political terrain through rhetoric. One may be tempted to offer a counter argument by supposing that Cato delivered that speech against the decision of the Tribunes not because he wanted to prepare the grounds for his political career but because the issue had to do with Cato the elder. Therefore he was compelled by family ties not to sit adamant as a pillar in the Basilica built by his grandfather is pulled down. But be it as it may, it is equally in line for one to deduce that Cato saw an opportunity to state a claim into future Roman politics as he fought to preserve the achievement of Cato the elder which helped him to win office as he became a Tribune in 63 B.C. and later on a Praetor. Killing two birds with one stone is the inference being made here. Even if Cato did not focus on writing his name in the minds of the people for the future that was exactly what happened as the sources claim he won himself great admiration, which helped to cement his place in Roman politics.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Here, I provide a general summation of this research work from chapters one to four and also show the relevance of this research and how beneficial the study is to contemporary times.

As seen in chapter one this research work, the words rhetoric and oratory are used interchangeably. Once the statesmen employed all delivered speeches which are the oral presentations, then they were involved in a mixture of rhetoric and oratorical practice. Rhetoric, being the preparatory stage where the speaker with rhetorical education prepares his speech taking into consideration the five canons of rhetoric and other important elements needed for speech preparation such as, the means by which he intends to achieve persuasion among others. Once a politician has prepared his speech and the speech has achieved its most important purpose which is persuasion, then one can lay claim to rhetoric. This informed the reason ancient writers such as Aristotle, in his *Treaties on Rhetoric* and Cicero in his *De Oratore* defined rhetoric as "the ability to see the available means of persuasion and using it effectively" and "the ability to speak thoughtfully and eloquently and from memory on any subject-matter" respectively. The *Webster's New World Dictionary* also gives us a modern interpretation of rhetoric as the art or science of using words effectively in speaking or writing (Webster's Dictionary, 1990)

Once the statesmen employed in chapter four all had rhetorical education (had been thought rhetoric), it is in line to infer that their speeches were rhetorical, coupled with the fact that their speeches achieved the desired

end (persuasion). Also, by conforming to the available means of persuasion (persuasion by presentation of facts or evidence (truth), by appeal to logical reasoning, by emotional appeal, by the speaker's character, among others) as stated by ancient writers such as Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, which I have indicated in chapter one, then indeed all the politicians cited in chapter four possessed rhetorical abilities. With the change of the phase of public speaking in the second century from mere reliance on *auctoritas*, family heritage and dignity to the introduction and acceptance of technicalities and methodic principles in argumentation by the help of teachers of rhetoric, it can equally be accepted that at this point of Republicanism (the last century), rhetoric had gained firmer grounds. The technicalities and methodic principles which rhetoric had brought to Rome during the second century were firmly rooted at this point of the Republican era so that, most of the politicians were practicing the act as it had already begun in the second century (Millar, 1986).

Though during the last century of the Roman Republic rhetoric was believed to have been much free from hostile treatment, yet in 92 B.C., Clarke (1953) records an edict by the Censors of the period, Licinius Crassus and Domitius Ahenobarbus;

> There are men who have introduced a new kind of teachings, and that the youth are going to their schools; that these men have resumed the name of Latin rhetoricians; and that young men spend whole days in idleness with them. These innovations, which run counter to the customs and tradition of our forefathers, do not please us nor do we think them right (Clarke, 1953 pp.: 12).

This edict suggests hostility from the Roman elite towards rhetoric even in the last century of the Republic. But the edict, on the contrary, further entrenches my point on the stability of rhetoric in Rome during the last

century of the Republican period as hinted to in chapter three. The edict clearly mentions Latin rhetoricians, suggesting that, perhaps, the Romans were comfortable if Greeks were the ones doing the teachings but not Romans who had learned from the Greeks. Clarke (1953) infers that, could it be that the Romans believed the Greeks only could teach it better? Or the Romans felt if at least they could not prevent its (rhetoric) spread, allowing the Romans to be infested with these ill-teaching (as they saw it contrary to their custom) was something they could prevent? If Cicero's *De Oratore* is anything to go by, then the first assumption looks more plausible since Crassus is found offering an apology for his action against rhetoric. His apology sought to suggest that he believed more in the Greek tutors and considered the Latin tutors unfit for the job (Cicero, *De Oratore*). Even before the Greeks formally introduced the art to the Romans, it had already been established in my previous chapters that the Romans in one way or the other were practicing the art. It was only its formalized form that the Greeks with their higher form of education introduced to the Romans (Clarke, 1953).

As far as all nations was political (had a system of governance) and employed language in governance, the art of speaking publicly was in one way or the other known to almost every nation, unless of course, under extreme tyrannical and monarchical regimes. But even tyrants and monarchs at certain points in time do consult, and once consultation takes place, persuasion becomes inevitable. My point here is that, Africa can also lay claim to the art of rhetoric. Since the institution of chieftaincy and kingship is well rooted in Africa, persuasive speaking will always be a feature in traditional democratic system. African politicians employ persuasive speaking to get themselves

elected into office. Thus, rhetoric and political power as it were in Republican Rome, still is contemporaneous to Africa. Political rhetoric signifies the use of rhetoric to get elected into office as a politician. It also signifies the use of the art to get one's policies implemented, that is, exercising political power. In the case of contemporary Africa, and perhaps Ghana to be specific, the use of rhetoric for the purpose of winning elections is the commonest. To use Ghana as a case study, it is evident how politicians, during campaign periods use rhetoric to convince voters to get elected into office. Contemporary Ghanaian politicians use promises as a tool to convince voters to elect them into office. Whether those promises see the light of day, or not is another matter. It has become customary that politicians use rhetoric as a tool to make huge promises to get themselves elected into office. The contemporary Ghanaian House of Parliament can be likened to the Roman Senate of the Republican era, at least in their basic function of deliberating on national matters. Just as deliberations went on in the Roman Senate, so it is in the Ghanaian House of Parliament. Just as factionalism existed in the Roman Senate, factionalism also exists in the Ghanaian parliament in the form of political party factionalism. Therefore, the general assertion is that this makes the effectiveness of rhetoric hardly felt since it has become traditional in the Ghanaian politics that members of parliament who belong to the opposition party never support policies from the Government which is often made up of the political party in power. But because governments over the years always have the majority in parliament, whether they are able to persuade or not, they get their policies implemented (www.factcheckghana.com). However, in the face of such party factionalism, the best way for the members of the minority to affect policies

still remains with rhetorical prowess. Also, the nature of parliamentary proceedings just like it was with the Roman Senate is rhetoric friendly. Therefore, to contribute to proceedings, one had to be good at persuasive speaking.

By way of conclusion, Gaius Marius who is noted for his distinction in military affairs during the last century of Roman Republic shall be cited as an example to crown the whole research of how important it was for a politician to possess the art of persuasive speaking in the last century of the Roman Republic. Although he could boast of seven successful Consulships, he had to ally himself with A. Saturninus so as to secure pension for his veteran soldiers (Cary and Scullard, 1975). He lacked rhetorical skills which prevented him from visiting the *Contio* and the Senate to ensure that bills were passed in his favor so he was compelled to ally himself with Saturninus, a man noted for persuasive speaking, who in return for doing Marius' bidding, enjoyed security from Marius so as to carry out his own political ambitions. As good a speaker as his ally, Marius managed to wrestle the command against Mithridates from Sulla whom the Senate had given to. As Cary and Scullard admit:

> Sulpicius' oratorical powers marked him out for leadership by constitutional means and it is with this ability that he convinced the people to vote for his bill that transferred the Mithridatic command from Sulla to Marius which the people gladly did (Cary and Scullard, 1975).

Cicero uses Sulpicius Rufus and Marius' alliance as practical examples in his dialogue, *De Oratore*. Marius is a well-known general who won fame for himself as a distinguished soldier while Sulpicius Rufus is known for sweetness of tongue, rhetoric. In Cicero's words, though Sulpicius lacks knowledge on combat or military affairs, he will be able to speak on military

matters so well that, even Marius, from whom he inquired about issues of militarism will think he (Sulpicius) understands military affairs better than himself (Cicero, De Oratore, bk. 1). This to a very large extent proves that rhetoric, during the last century of the Roman Republic became an important tool towards exercising and winning political power.

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