Today

• Quiz
• A Brief history of Greece
• Rhetoric in 5th century Athens
• The Sophists
• Encomium of Helen
• Mycenean Age (1300-800 BCE)
• Archaic Age (800-500 BCE)
• Classical Period (500-400 BCE)
Greece in the Archaic Age
political structure in 750-490 BCE

- Cities
- Districts where many city-states developed
- Districts where old tribal organization persisted
What makes 5th century Athens so ripe for the development of rhetoric?

1. There was a tradition of persuasion in Greek writing
   – Logos: word, thought, the content of language, the thinking which language expressed, often implied logical reasoning
   – Peitho: persuasion
What makes 5th century Athens so ripe for the development of rhetoric?

2. Speech offered social mobility as never before
In short, I say that as a city we are the school of Hellas…And that this is no mere boast thrown out for the occasion, but plain matter of fact, the power of the state acquired by these habits proves. For Athens alone of her contemporaries is found when tested to be greater than her reputation, and alone gives no occasion to her assailants to blush at the antagonist by whom they have been worsted, or to her subjects to question her title by merit to rule.
What makes 5th century Athens so ripe for the development of rhetoric?

3. There was a rhetorical consciousness (Kennedy)
   – growing interest in the forms of proof and argument
   – an awareness of the possibilities of artistry and structure
   – experimentation with rhetorical style
   – the beginnings of a science of philology and grammar
What makes 5th century Athens so ripe for the development of rhetoric?

4. There was a significant rise in writing
• Gorgias (480-375)
• Socrates (469-399)
• Isocrates (436-338)
• Plato (429-347)
• Aristotle (384-322)
Who were the sophists?

• They were foreigners
• They taught for money
• They often claimed to teach arête
• They often held dangerous views about truth
Know your Sophists--Gorgias

• Concept of kairos attributed to him

• Had a deep belief in the magical/hypnotic effects of speech

• Used antithesis like it was going out of style
Encomium of Helen
Encomium of Helen

Helen went with Paris for one of 4 reasons
- It was the will of the gods
- She was taken by force
- She was persuaded by speech
- She was overcome by love
Encomium of Helen

Basic Structure
- Intro (Prooemium)
- Narration of the facts (prothesis)
- Proof (pistis)
- Conclusion (Epilogue)